

Blaby District Council

Meeting of Council – 20 September 2022

Agenda Item 6: Position Statement on the Councils response to the Cost of Living Crisis from Cllr. Terry Richardson - Leader of the Council

Blaby District Council recognises that the current cost of living crisis is significantly affecting the wellbeing of our residents and businesses. In this respect it welcomes the Governments response on energy prices and will carefully monitor the detailed information that will follow especially if there is action we are required to take to support any initiatives.

In response the Council has considered what practical measures it can take now to provide support during this difficult time and has committed to the following;

- Appointing a Cost-of-Living Support Officer through utilising external funding to ensure our residents are accessing all the support that they are entitled to.
- Working closely with all partners and agencies including Leicestershire County Council, Citizens Advice Bureau and Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) to maximise available support.
- Communicating and signposting through a wide range of channels all the available advice, guidance, and support.

In particular:

- Utilising our Hardship Fund, Hardship Reserve Fund and Council Tax Support Fund to provide any needed support as well as signposting to the County Council Household Support Fund.
- Hosting DWP coaches in the Council Offices offering back to work interviews for residents currently out of work.
- Hosting Job Fairs to highlight job opportunities and to help residents into employment.
- Referring residents to our funded Citizen Advice Bureau service for support with debt advice and benefits claims.
- Using our recently enhanced Housing Team to support increased demand for homelessness cases and providing tenancy support.
- Bidding with partners for additional funding to undertake a range of green energy efficiency measures within social housing stock and for homeowner initiatives to lower utility costs in the longer term.
- Continuing to support our community Food Banks in complying with best practice guidance where possible, providing assistance where appropriate and facilitating the sharing of local information through quarterly forums.
- Providing cost-of-living grants which our community groups can apply for to support them in covering their rising costs.
- Offering Green Grants through our Lightbulb service to contribute to making more properties energy efficient.

- Liaising with businesses, community groups and Parish Councils to support the potential future provision of warm room initiatives and community fridges.
- Keeping our MPs fully up to date with the on-going local situation as well as working via the District Council Network and the Local Government Association to ensure that central government are fully aware of the pressure on our residents, businesses and indeed ourselves.

The Council will continually review its response to the current crisis and utilise a variety of communication channels to keep everyone up to date with the actions it has taken and will continue to take.

Cllr. Terry Richardson

Leader of the Council

Blaby District Council