



ADUR & WORTHING  
COUNCILS

Adur Joint Strategic Committee  
Sub-Committee  
29 September 2022

Key Decision [~~Yes~~/No]

Ward(s) Affected: All

## Responding to cost of living impacts in Adur

### Report by the Director for Communities

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### Executive Summary

#### 1. Purpose

1.1 There is growing evidence to show the impact that rising costs and inflationary pressures are having on residents in Adur. Whilst all households are impacted upon, increases in energy, food and fuel prices are disproportionately affecting lower income families, lone parents, couples without children, those with disabilities, single income households, and those on fixed incomes. The cumulative impact of inflation is now having an impact on a growing number of households, including new households that have not had to access financial support to date.

1.2 Supporting residents to tackle cost of living pressures is a priority for Adur Council, and there is a clear recognition that following the impact of the pandemic on Adur communities, in particular for more vulnerable households, there is a need to help people to alleviate income pressures. This is not something that Adur Council can do alone - it needs to work collaboratively with other parts of the community, including business and voluntary sector organisations, residents, and local communities as well as other public sector organisations such as WSCC and Jobcentre Plus.

1.3 Assessment of Proactive data [(Proactive interventions to support low income residents - [July 2022](#)), shows significant numbers of households that are in food, fuel, water and overall relative poverty and who are struggling now. Some of the community food groups are reporting unprecedented demand outstripping their ability to help.

1.4 The Council has been working to alleviate the pressures of firstly the pandemic and then emerging cost of living issues, over the last few years. Supported by Council's budget and COMF funding this work has included working with and supporting local community food groups, establishing the Proactive response for those that are struggling, providing health and wellbeing support, and housing and homelessness initiatives.

1.5 In response to the ongoing pressures caused by cost of living impacts, an Adur Cost of Living Roadmap has been developed as a way to convene a range of partners to work together to support and enable as many people as possible to be able to cope over the next two years. The Roadmap aims to respond to both immediate and urgent need, whilst building a longer and more sustainable approach by:

- supporting households to be as financially resilient as possible
- supporting communities to help each other and those in most need
- helping to reduce cost impacts on people
- developing sustainable approaches to address income inequalities

1.6 There are four major areas of focus for the Roadmap:

- Providing Infrastructure support to where there is an immediate short term need
- Developing a sustained and co-ordinated community response to ensure that residents who are vulnerable and most at risk of experiencing financial exclusion are able to achieve better financial wellbeing and resilience
- That Adur Council considers its own organisational culture, policy and practice to ensure it addresses the cost of living crisis
- That partners in Adur work collaboratively to better utilise our resources to meet community needs and promote financial wellbeing and resilience

1.7 Critical to tackling cost of living impacts will be the need to balance the provision of immediate support for households with longer term sustainable measures that support better financial resilience, increased independence and community infrastructure. This report outlines why a co-ordinated and sustainable approach to tackling cost of living impacts is needed, and how Adur Council, through the Cost of Living Roadmap and a supporting Action Plan, will work with partners across government, non government and private sectors to collaboratively support residents. It describes the purpose of the Cost of Living Roadmap and Action Plan and the partnership arrangements that have been set up to support delivery of the Plan.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the Adur Joint Strategic Committee Sub-committee approves the Adur Cost of Living Roadmap (at Appendix 1) which sets out what Adur District Council will do to support residents to manage cost of living impacts.

## 3. Context

- 3.1. There is currently a national cost of living crisis and economic analysts suggest it will have a deeper and longer term impact than previously forecast. Global and national policy directions are delivering multiple adverse economic impacts for all UK households. In July 2022 forecasts for the main drivers for cost of living pressures were:

- Inflation **to peak at 13%** in October 2022, the highest annual rate since 1982
- From June 2021 to June 2022 **domestic gas prices increased by 95% and domestic electricity prices by 54%**
- The **UK Government's 'Energy Price Guarantee' announced on 8 September 2022** states that from 1 October 2022 a typical household will pay no more than £2,500 a year on energy bills for the next two years.

- 3.2. Household incomes are affected by cumulative impacts both price rises and incomes that are not keeping pace with inflation:

- 91% of adults reported an **increase in their cost of living** (June to July 2022)
- Incomes after tax and adjusted for inflation will **start falling in Q2 2022 and not recover until Q3 2024**
- Low-income households spend a larger proportion of their income on energy and food
- Annual food price inflation will be around 11% in 2022, **peaking at 15%**
- **Average annual grocery bills** will rise by £380
- Only 4% of people donated money to food banks in June 2022, down from the previous 12 months
- Trussell Trust's food parcels distributed in 2021-22 was 32% higher than pre-pandemic levels
- **Benefits increased in April 2022 by 3.1%**, far less than the forecast inflation rate at that date of 8% .

- 3.3. There is growing evidence showing the impact that rising costs and inflationary pressures are having on residents in Adur. Community groups such as food providers report increased demand for their services, support services are overwhelmed with demand, and impacts are being felt more

widely, for example the reported loss of private rental accommodation in the town.

- 3.4. Staff in government and non-government agencies with lower relative incomes are also being now affected by cost of living impacts, and there is increasing evidence that a broader group of households and lower income workers are starting to access food banks and other support services, and are falling into debt and rent or mortgage arrears. The housing affordability crisis, with sub-standard and expensive private rental, and the lack of social and affordable housing options, are compounding factors for many people struggling with price and inflation impacts.
- 3.5. The cost of living emergency comes on the heels of the Covid pandemic which also had a significant impact on the capacity of more at risk and lower income households to cope financially. In response to both of these emergencies, Adur and Worthing Councils have already invested significant funds and effort into supporting its most vulnerable and at risk residents using COMF funds to support:
- Investment in infrastructure and support to **food groups since 2021 of over £142k with a further £25k** to be allocated in 2022/23
  - Investment in **housing and homelessness initiatives of over £190k**
  - **Proactive additional funding of £40k** to provide more capacity to intervene early to support households who are at risk as a result of their financial circumstances.

In 2022/23 all available COMF funding is being used to address Cost of Living impacts. £25k will go directly to food groups and £75k is being used to develop infrastructure and support delivery of a cost of living programme of work.

- 3.6. More recent forms of relief for residents have been provided through the funding available through WSCC which often requires administrative investment by Adur Council. For example, the additional discretionary relief was provided in partnership with WSCC for working age residents claiming Council Tax reduction additional reliefs of up to £150 per household, worth £180k for Adur residents in 2022/23.

The County contributed £149,000 to the Adur scheme with the remainder being funded by the Council.

- 3.7. Tackling cost of living pressures is a priority for Adur Council. There is a clear recognition that following the impact of the pandemic on Adur communities, in particular for more vulnerable households, there is a need to act to help alleviate income pressures. This is not something that the Council can do alone - it needs to work collaboratively with other parts of the community,

business and voluntary sector organisations, residents, and local communities across Adur.

- 3.8. The Adur Cost of Living Roadmap details the high level actions that Adur Council and its partners in the not for profit, government and private sectors support to address the impacts of the rising cost of living. Further detail about the initiatives, including who will lead on their delivery, timeframes, and measures of success, are set out in an accompanying *Adur Cost of Living Action Plan*.

Initiatives set out in the Roadmap and Action Plan come from two Cost of Living Roundtables (March and June 2022) with representatives from a range of cross sectoral agencies. These Roundtables were an opportunity for stakeholders to acknowledge the cost of living problem, and to begin the conversation with partners about what the priorities should be moving forward.

- 3.9. Following the Roundtables, quarterly *Cost of Living Strategic Group* meetings comprising all local stakeholders, will be held to build a collaborative and cross stakeholder approach to developing and delivering the Roadmap. A smaller working group of key partners has also been convened to provide more immediate guidance on implementation of the Roadmap and Action Plan. A number of time limited working groups have also been set up to drive delivery of specific initiatives, including housing and homelessness, ethical debt and data sharing. Work on the ethical debt initiative is already underway and a paper addressing this will also be considered by the Joint Strategic Committee Sub-committee.
- 3.10. The Roadmap will also look to put in place ongoing sustainable measures to address more systemic issues, for example financial exclusion, debt management, and reducing people's energy use. It will also consider place based initiatives in response to the cumulative needs of neighbourhoods within Adur.

#### **4. Issues for consideration**

- 4.1. It is critical that cost of living initiatives in Adur engage with, and are delivered by, Council's partners. Adur Council's role is one of stewardship - coordinating and supporting implementation of this programme of work. Whilst Council is the lead agency for some actions in the Roadmap, its role is to facilitate its collective delivery by partners, including WSCC, the NHS, education services, voluntary and community sector partners and local businesses, and most importantly, the community.

- 4.2. The Cost of Living Roadmap and Action Plan are recommended as the most cogent way of pulling together the disparate strands necessary to address the cost of living emergency across multiple service areas - energy, food, support services, housing and financial inclusion amongst others. These documents establish the infrastructure needed to ensure that action can be measured and monitored and that the full range of activities are addressed.
- 4.3. Measuring cost of living impacts is complex as most of the levers driving inflationary upward pressure are not in Council's control. Part of the ongoing work will be to establish what are reasonable measures of performance that can be directly influenced by the work undertaken. A dashboard of indicators will be developed to help Council to understand what is happening in key sectors such as employment, homelessness, and health outcomes, and this will be supported by specific measurement of take up and impact for activities in the Roadmap.

## **5. Engagement and Communication**

- 5.1. There has already been significant consultation with stakeholders about what they consider to be priorities for a cost of living action plan. Two roundtables, a partnership working group, specific sub-working groups and a range of conversations have identified the issues and some possible solutions.
- 5.2. This work does need to have greater input from consumers and it is proposed that a 'resident panel' be set up to provide ongoing input and advice. The Roadmap and Plan need to be flexible and responsive to new input and will be reviewed regularly to take the outcomes of additional consultation into account.
- 5.3. The Council will look to grow its own capabilities around 'participation', and involve people and communities more as the Roadmap is implemented, enabling them to take a more active and influential part in decisions that will affect them.
- 5.4. A Communications Plan will also be in place to support a multi-pronged strategy to engage people and let them know how to access advice and support for cost of living issues. This Plan will consider how to reach a range of communities, including more disadvantaged neighbourhoods and people from ethnic minorities. Communication activities will include offering joint information pop ups across Adur with partners, using traditional and social media mechanisms to reach different groups, developing shared information that provides easy access to advice and signposting, and a toolkit/training for front line staff across the service system.

- 5.5. The Director of Communities will oversee an annual review of the Action Plan to monitor whether targets are being met and what needs to change over time. Councillors will also receive a Cost of Living report from officers annually.

## **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1. The majority of the initiatives identified within the plan are funded from existing Council budgets and external funding.
- 6.2. Within the Leaders portfolio there is a budget of £120,000 which could be used to support the programme of work if this cannot be contained within existing budgets

## **7. Legal Implications**

- 7.1. Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to do anything that is calculated to facilitate, or which is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.
- 7.2. s1 of the Localism Act 2011 empowers the Council to do anything an individual can do apart from that which is specifically prohibited by pre-existing legislation
- 7.3. Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 1999 (LGA 1999) contains a general duty on a best value authority to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

## Sustainability & Risk Assessment

There is significant risk associated with delivering such an extensive programme of work with a large range of partners. Co-ordinating and monitoring activity over such a broad remit will require strong governance and oversight. The scale of the task also means that targeted resources will be needed to support the roll out. However, there is a greater risk in not acting, as this would mean that Adur residents might not get the assistance they need.

The Roadmap has been designed to deliver a balance of immediate and more sustainable supporters, for example, energy efficiency and retrofitting work will ensure long term savings on energy costs or householders, developing an ethical lending product for people with very little, or no, income will help tackle payday lending and loan shark activity over the long term.

### 1. Economic

Economic outcomes are a critical underpinning for any cost of living work. The economic fortunes of the town have an impact on employment rates and wages. Developing employment initiatives through the Council's Good Work scheme as well as identifying new opportunities with DWP and the Chamber of Commerce to enhance training and employment opportunities in the town are included in the Roadmap and Action Plan .

### 2. Social

#### 2.1 Social Value

This Cost of Living Roadmap forms a key part of Council's Thrive Mission: **People are healthy and resourceful and can access the right help when they need it.** It aims to respond to both immediate need and to build longer term resilience by:

- supporting households to be as financially resilient as possible
- supporting communities to help each other and those in most need
- helping to reduce cost impacts on people
- developing sustainable approaches to address income inequalities

The Adur Cost of Living Roadmap sets out a series of initiatives that will deliver significant social value to Adur residents in both the immediate and longer term.

#### 2.2 Equality Issues

An equalities impact assessment was carried out for the cost of living project at an early stage of its development. In summary it found that:

- Vulnerability to rises in the cost of living are closely associated with poverty and social exclusion. Issues around health, employment, education and wellbeing are all exacerbated by financial stress but can also be factors that lead to its creation. Therefore, those already most socially disadvantaged are likely to be those most at risk of not coping.
- Those already most socially disadvantaged are likely to be those most at risk of not coping. This includes groups such as those protected through the Equality Act 2010, but also those living in Adur and Worthing most disadvantaged neighbourhoods and in relatively expensive private accommodation where rents are rising.

- Many residents will experience cumulative disadvantages as they are from a number of affected communities and are living in areas or have tenures characterised by most challenging circumstances. For example older people, lone parents, carers or those residents who have a known disability and are unable to work, struggling to find work and are on benefits are particularly vulnerable.

Further work will be undertaken to ensure that equalities assessment is part of all of the initiatives captured in the Roadmap.

### **2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)**

There are risks of growing social discontent as cost of living impacts escalate so intervening to try to support the community more effectively is a mitigating strategy.

### **2.4 Human Rights Issues**

No, this proposal does not impact adversely on people's human rights.

## **3. Environmental**

The energy efficiency components of the Cost of Living Roadmap also meet climate action goals.

## **4. Governance**

The Cost of Living Roadmap aligns with Council's core objectives as set out in its Thrive Mission as well as with a number of Council policies such as the 'HealthyAWC' 2021-2024 Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Adur and Worthing, which identified that 'many of our residents are only just surviving. They lack sufficient money to live - to feed themselves and their families, to heat their homes'.

This is an important strategy in reputational terms and Council will need to ensure that it is responsive to partners and to the community in the delivery of the Roadmap.

This programme of work requires extensive resourcing, both within existing workstreams for Council teams, but also as a project in itself. It needs project management and communications support at a minimum to ensure that it can be delivered effectively.

## Appendix 1

### A Cost of Living Roadmap for Adur

There is growing evidence to show the impact that rising costs and inflationary pressures are having on residents in Adur. Whilst all households are impacted upon, increases in energy, food and fuel prices are disproportionately affecting lower income families, lone parents, couples without children, those with disabilities, single income households, and those on fixed incomes. The cumulative impact of inflation is now having an impact on a growing number of households, including new households that have not had to access financial support to date. There is evidence of more severe, and wider effects of cost of living increases, and this will only grow over the winter months and into 2023.

Supporting residents to tackle cost of living pressures is a priority for Adur Council, and there is a clear recognition that following the impact of the pandemic on Adur communities, in particular for more vulnerable households, there is a need to help people to alleviate income pressures. ***This is not something that the Adur Council can do alone - it needs to work collaboratively with other parts of the community, including business and voluntary sector organisations, residents, and local communities.***

This work builds on the initiatives Adur Council put in place to respond to the Covid pandemic. In March and June 2022, officers held two *Cost of Living Roundtables* with representatives from a range of cross sectoral agencies. The Roundtables were an opportunity for stakeholders to share their understanding of the cost of living problem, and to begin the conversation with partners about what the priorities should be moving forward. Following the Roundtables, quarterly *Cost of Living Strategic Group* meetings comprising all local stakeholders, will be held to build a collaborative and cross stakeholder approach to developing and delivering a Cost of Living Roadmap for Adur.

The *Cost of Living Roadmap* details the high level actions that Adur Council and its partners in the not for profit, government and private sectors will support to address the rising cost of living. Further detail about the initiatives, including who will lead on their delivery, timeframes, and measures of success, are set out in an accompanying Cost of Living Action Plan. A 'partnership working group' has been convened to provide more immediate guidance on implementation of the Roadmap and Action Plan. A number of time limited working groups have also been set up to drive delivery of specific initiatives, including housing and homelessness, ethical debt and data sharing.

Adur Council is providing and funding administrative support and project management for implementation of the Roadmap which will be supported by a *Cost of Living Action Plan* which will detail the work to be carried out, assign clear timeframes and accountabilities, and outline how the initiatives will be measured.

### **A Roadmap for Change**

This Roadmap builds on significant work that has been done and is already underway. It recognises that there are several compounding impacts converging on households now and which are likely to continue for some time given the current economic climate. This means that the Roadmap has to incorporate multiple approaches to providing residents with support with an emphasis on longer term solutions that deliver a more sustainable service system. The Roadmap recognises the complexity of a broad range of actions to be taken across the service system and looks to balance short term needs with longer term outcomes.

Adur Council's role is one of stewardship - coordinating and supporting implementation of this programme of work. Whilst Council is the lead agency for some actions in the Roadmap, its role is to facilitate delivery by partners of the full suite of initiatives.

There are four major areas of focus for the Roadmap:

1. Providing Infrastructure support to where there is an immediate short term need
2. Developing a sustained and co-ordinated community response to ensure that residents who are most at risk of experiencing financial exclusion are able to achieve better financial wellbeing and resilience
3. That Adur Council considers its own organisational culture, policy and practice to ensure it responds to cost of living impacts
4. That partners in Adur work collaboratively to better use resources to meet community needs.

Immediate action is being taken by the Council and its partners to support households facing the most severe impacts, including maximising benefit and income support entitlements, and supporting food provision. The Roadmap will also look to put in place ongoing sustainable measures for addressing underlying issues, for example financial exclusion, debt management, and reducing people's energy use. It will also consider place-based initiatives in response to the cumulative needs of neighbourhoods within Adur.

Whilst the Cost of Living Roadmap is facilitated by the Council, the effort to deliver it has to be collective involving its partners (WSCC, the NHS, education services, voluntary and community sector partners and local businesses), and most importantly, the community. The Council will grow its own capabilities around 'participation', involving people and communities and enabling them to take a more active and influential part in decisions that are likely to affect them.

It appears likely that there will be further assistance from the UK Government in the lead up to winter and any new arrangements will be reflected in the Roadmap and Action Plan.

### **What do we want to achieve?**

As part of our new and emerging plan, this work sits as part of the Councils' Thriving People agenda, with everyone having the means to lead positive, healthy and independent lives, rather than simply having to make ends meet. People need to be included and valued in their local communities, participating in decisions about their area and the services and support they receive.

This cost of living roadmap forms a key part of Councils' Thrive Mission: **People are healthy and resourceful and can access the right help when they need it.** As part of this we want to challenge and change:

- Structural inequality which exists within our communities and relative deprivation
- Power imbalance in the system
- Reliance on national / global rather than local supply
- Optimise Adur's position in respect of Levelling up bids

In addition we want to optimise Adur's position by investing additional funds into local infrastructure that will deliver economic benefit to residents and businesses in Adur through both the Growth Deal, in partnership with West Sussex County Council, and a Levelling Up Fund bid to target town centre regeneration. This is being prepared for Round Three.

The Cost of Living partnership and Roadmap are designed to address the question ***'how can we all best support residents during a time of challenging cost of living pressures'***. The Cost of Living Action Plan sets out the measurable impacts that will be used to test the success of both the overarching strategy and also specific initiatives. Impact measurement is focused on what it is that the Council and partners can actually influence/change.

In particular, the Roadmap represents an approach that addresses all cost of living impacts, including:

- Energy and utility costs
- Housing costs
- Access to food

- Financial exclusion - access to ethical loans and ethical debt management

There are also broader objectives that have to be considered in supporting the community to be resilient in the face of cost of living impacts. Continuing to deliver a sustainable economy for Adur is fundamental in providing support for many households and enabling residents to thrive, be resilient and connected. This Roadmap will focus on how finite resources are used to support and deliver this work and leverage other resources from our system partners. We want to ensure that we use these resources as efficiently and effectively as possible so that the system works for residents and more simple, accessible arrangements are in place.

Resident engagement and equalities impact assessment will be incorporated into activities in the Roadmap, including for people facing barriers in accessing support or services, and this work will support the Council's wider participation agenda.

The cost of living landscape will change over the three year period of the Roadmap which means it will need to be a flexible and nimble document. Some initiatives can be more detailed in the early phases, but some will require time for more significant development. The Roadmap has a number of impact measures to reflect progress and will be reviewed by the Strategic Group annually and amended to reflect changing circumstances as needed.

### **Why do we need a Cost of Living Roadmap?**

Recent forecasts are that inflation will rise to above 11% in 2022. This is an average figure for all households - for low income households who spend much more of their income on energy and food costs, the inflationary impact will be higher. The energy price cap is predicted to rise to £3,244 per year in October 2022, and food costs are set to rise by upwards of 15% in 2022, the highest level in 20 years. Fuel costs are also at record levels with a record monthly price rise in July 2022.

Staff in government and non-government agencies with lower relative incomes are also being now affected by cost of living impacts, and there is increasing evidence that a broader group of households and lower income workers are starting to access food banks and other support services, and are falling into debt and rent or mortgage arrears. The housing affordability crisis, with sub-standard and expensive private rental, and the lack of social and affordable housing options, are compounding factors for many people struggling with price and inflation impacts.

Harder to measure but as important, is how the pressures on people managing household budgets during the cost of living emergency will impact on their mental health and emotional wellbeing. The Money and Mental Health Policy Institute has said that around half of people in debt also have a mental health issue. Demands for support services will increase and represent some of the hidden costs of the crisis.

The 'HealthyAWC' 2021-2024 Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Adur and Worthing identified that 'many of our residents are only just surviving. They lack sufficient money to live - to feed themselves and their families, to heat their homes'. This was apparent even before recent inflationary increases. The Marmot Review and The Human Rights Commission both found that the pandemic disproportionately affected those communities already experiencing significant health and wellbeing inequality, including older people, those with pre-existing health conditions (including mental health), those on low incomes and in insecure employment and housing. The pandemic also significantly affected minoritised ethnic communities, young people and those with disabilities. This means that for many Worthing residents, most cost of living impacts are serving to compound existing inequalities.

Specific information about what is happening to vulnerable households in Adur has been collected as part of the Proactive pilot. Proactive seeks to intervene early to support households who are at risk as a result of their financial circumstances. The Low Income Family Tracker (LIFT) provides information predominantly about residents in receipt of Housing Benefit, or Council Tax Support. Locally, about 25% of Universal credit recipients also receive council tax support, so LIFT shows us what is happening to a quarter of Universal Credit recipients as well as to those receiving council administered benefits. The Proactive pilot demonstrated that contacting people directly to talk about their financial situation is a successful approach.

Data for July 2022 shows that a total of 10,657 households appeared in LIFT in both Adur and Worthing with 3975 households in Adur . 4,208 households were in relative poverty of which 1,621 live in Adur. In Adur, 1,910 were in fuel poverty, 3,622 in water poverty and 361 in food poverty<sup>1</sup>. Looking at all those Adur and Worthing households who appear in LIFT, the numbers "coping" (i.e those where household income exceeds expected costs by £100+pcm) is relatively stable but showing a small decrease between June and July. The number of households struggling (i.e. those where household income exceeds costs by £0-£100 pcm) has increased by 51 households to 422 June to July and the number of households in crisis (i.e. those where household income is insufficient for housing) increased by 1 household to 58 June to July.

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<sup>1</sup> See Policy in Practice [Metrics/definitions](#)

### **What's been done so far?**

There has been significant investment by the Councils in supporting lower income households and those in financial difficulty prior to the current emergency. A number of initiatives have already been put in place to support residents affected by cost of living impacts, including discretionary housing payments, and the Council Tax Support Scheme. Information about the support that Council has already made can be found [here](#). The Roadmap represents an opportunity to consolidate that investment and put in place longer term and more sustainable solutions.

In 2021 the Councils' established a Proactive Pilot. Proactive was designed to offer support to people at an early stage of debt, Council Tax or social housing debt to try to prevent an increase in that debt and to ensure people were accessing all their entitlements and income supports. The Pilot trialled a new way of working for the Councils with staff working in a cross-service, person centred and data led way designed to empower people and build their capacity to manage debt related issues.

To date Proactive has attempted to establish telephone contact/support with approx 900 households in Adur & Worthing and has made contact with 350 of those and advised/supported 250 (across both councils). The pilot enabled us to test the success of a five step pathway that identifies/contacts/supports residents and which also measures the financial impacts of our work. We can demonstrate improved household incomes and/or reduced household debts for a high proportion of those we work with, so there is strong case that the proactive model is able to contribute to helping people impacted by the increasing costs of living and will form a key learning for Adur Council in developing a more responsive and integrated front facing service for more 'at risk' residents, and one that can be scaled up.

Between 2021 and 2022 Adur and Worthing Councils Received Contain Outbreak Management Funding (COMF) totalling £859,000 which was allocated across a number of core areas of work including many designed to address the financial and social impacts of Covid on more vulnerable communities and residents. These included:

- Supporting and enabling financial capability for our communities:
- Supporting and enabling people back into Good Work
- Prevention and early intervention work with vulnerable groups, including mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Assisting the 'emergency food partnership'
- Engaging and supporting vulnerable young people in our communities and places
- Undertaking development work with minoritised communities, including volunteering

## **Principles guiding the Roadmap**

The following principles will guide implementation of the Roadmap. We will:

- build equity into all of the work we do to meet the needs of our diverse communities
- focus on early intervention and prevention responses - moving from the reactive to the preventative
- build capacity, resilience and cohesion for people and communities to support their independence
- work in a participatory way with people and communities
- collaborate with service partners and communities

Appendix 1

**The Adur Cost of Living Roadmap  
September 2022 to August 2024**

Our role	Now: 0 to 6 months	Next: 6 to 18 months	Future: 18 - 24 months
<p><b>Support our food banks which are the frontline of community action:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Support access to funding to support emergency food distribution and infrastructure support for the food network</li> <li>● In collaboration with the Food Network establish a 'food hub' for use as a co-working space for food groups and associated community based groups tackling the cost of living</li> <li>● Support the wider development of a partner led Adur Food Poverty Action Plan, focusing on:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- work with businesses to increase food supplies to local groups</li> <li>- enhancing collaboration between groups around shared food opportunities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Phase two of the food hub to be developed and shaped</li> <li>● Continue to develop the food poverty action plan and associated actions</li> <li>● Community fundraising model developed / embedded</li> <li>● Develop a partnership food supply system which ensures that surplus food waste is being directed to food banks</li> <li>● Engage with businesses to provide support to food providers</li> </ul>	

	<p>and infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sustaining food supply focusing on food waste</li> <li>- build on Fareshare / UKHarvest relationships</li> <li>- a local supply chain for food banks</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Maximising ways to address fuel poverty:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Accessing funding</li> <li>- Working with providers locally</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Work with Southern Water and local energy suppliers to support the cost of living work and the ethical debt approaches</li> <li>● Work with Southern Water to identify funding/support for this work</li> <li>● Work with WSCC and other partners to explore fuel vouchers for key workers or alternative supports</li> <li>● Implement legislation relating to the effectiveness, efficiency and economy of heating in the private housing sector through Private Sector Housing compliance work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Deliver an energy efficiency engagement campaign</li> <li>● Deliver grants and administrative capacity to target and support households in fuel poverty through energy efficiency and energy reduction measures (UK Shared Prosperity Fund)</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with others to provide 'warm spaces' in Adur for people unable to pay fuel bills</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Keep people in their homes safely:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Interventions with landlords</li> <li>- Maximise supply of social housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Join up with other social landlords around ethical debt practices and management</li> <li>• Review use of 'affordability assessments' by social housing landlords</li> <li>• Opening Doors - working with private sector landlords to improve move on options</li> <li>• Consider options to support small landlords considering selling up</li> <li>• Work with the Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust to put in place a Housing Specialist working in mental health settings</li> <li>• Use Personalised Housing Plans to support those in housing need maximise income/manage debt and access support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look to re establish the County-wide housing and homelessness group</li> <li>• Relaunch the Homelessness Forum and establish a Landlord Roundtable to support a cohesive partnership approach to sustaining tenancies and develop our supplies of affordable homes.</li> <li>• Develop an older persons strategy to ensure the housing needs are met for our older residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy</li> <li>• Support our partners to increase supply of affordable homes</li> </ul>

<p><b>Target financial support where its most effective:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Accelerate ethical debt work</li> <li>- Open up options for ethical borrowing</li> <li>- Pooling internal support scheme across communities directorate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensure the Councils' website effectively signposts people to cost of living support</li> <li>● Offer at risk households early intervention services in relation to income and debt through Proactive</li> <li>● Introduce an ethical debt recovery approach for Council Tax debt</li> <li>● Support people financially and co-ordinate access to financial support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Household Support Fund</li> <li>- Council Tax Support</li> <li>- Additional discretionary payments</li> <li>- Discretionary Housing Payments (£86,187 for Adur)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Maximise resident take up of entitlements and supports</li> <li>● Provide information to staff about support, including relaunching the payroll loan scheme for Council staff with Boom Community Bank</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide financial support to people through an extension of the Proactive Project (UK Shared Prosperity Fund)</li> <li>● Develop a toolkit and training package for staff, councillors and other stakeholder across the service system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Establish a No Income Lending Scheme (NILS) for the most financially excluded residents (UK Shared Prosperity Fund)</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Create person centred pathways - always moving 'upstream':</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Building on the work we have done with proactive</li> <li>- Create a pathway from community groups into proactive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Develop shared information about how to access support across the service system to support a no wrong door approach</li> <li>● Ensure the Councils' website effectively signposts people to cost of living support</li> <li>● Offer at risk households early intervention services in relation to income and debt through Proactive</li> <li>● Implement a Make Every Contact Count approach including through training people to prevent homelessness and locating staff in a food hub</li> <li>● Improve access to free digital services across the service system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Improve access to data and information across the system through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- understanding who is most at risk</li> <li>- developing Adur and Worthing profiles and forecasting demand and gaps in service</li> <li>- piloting data sharing across the service system about communities and individuals commencing with the Wellbeing Team</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Develop opportunities for the co-location of partner services, including drop in sessions</li> <li>● Introduce the Telljo system of wellbeing self assessment for more vulnerable people, helping to signpost them to support more effectively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Explore options for improved access to online support including a single online portal for the service system for residents accessing information and support</li> <li>● Restructure Council support services to deliver a multi-disciplinary and person centred approach including exploring a one stop approach to support provision with 'no wrong door'</li> <li>● Develop a case management response for people with complex and enduring needs within Council and with external partners</li> </ul>
<p><b>A whole system approach:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How are we joining up with other partners?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Hold quarterly Cost of Living Strategic Group meetings</li> <li>● Hold regular Partnership Working Group meetings</li> <li>● Develop communications</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Develop cost of living support initiatives with Worthing businesses and the local Chamber of Commerce</li> </ul>

	<p>capacity and a plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Hold three pop up cost of living information sessions with partners in venues across Adur</li> <li>● Set up a 'resident panel' to advise the partnership on implementing the Roadmap and its actions</li> <li>● Provide support to Cllrs to resource residents through the training and toolkit</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Build relationships and shared approaches with Public Health based on objectives in the Adur and Worthing Health and Wellbeing Strategy</li> <li>● Build a relationship with WSCC in relation to the education sector in Worthing</li> <li>● Work with the DWP and other partners to develop employment and training initiatives</li> </ul>
<p><b>Funding and resources:</b> where are we looking for additional resources?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NHS</li> <li>- WSCC</li> <li>- Grant funding for innovation</li> <li>- Crowdfunding with local businesses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Work with the West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board and system partners around the cost of living and resources</li> <li>● Design and implement a community fundraising model and match fund business contributions</li> <li>● Work with WSCC around good access to the HSF and other resources to support the cost of living</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Develop a commissioning and contracting approach that targets funds to address cost of living impacts and optimises the use of existing assets</li> <li>● Identify opportunities to secure additional resources to address cost of living impacts</li> </ul>	