

# People and Communities Policy Committee

## Agenda

### Members of the People and Communities Committee:

Cllr D Bills (Chairman)  
Cllr S Blundell  
Cllr M Dewsbury  
Cllr B Duffin  
Cllr T Holden

Cllr J Hornby (Vice Chairman)  
Cllr N Legg  
Cllr S Nuri Nixon  
Cllr J Wilby

### Date & Time:

Thursday 15 September 2022  
10:00 am

### Place:

Colman and Cavell, South Norfolk House, Cygnet Court, Long Stratton, Norwich, NR15 2XE

### Contact:

Leah Arthurton tel (01508) 533610  
Email: [committee.snc@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk](mailto:committee.snc@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk](http://www.southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk)

### PUBLIC ATTENDANCE:

If a member of the public would like to observe the meeting, or speak on an agenda item, please email your request to [committee.snc@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk](mailto:committee.snc@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk), no later than 5.00pm on Monday 12 September 2022.

### Large print version can be made available

If you have any special requirements in order to attend this meeting, please let us know in advance.

# AGENDA

1. To report apologies for absence and to identify substitute members;
2. Any items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency pursuant to section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act, 1972. Urgent business may only be taken if, “by reason of special circumstances” (which will be recorded in the minutes), the Chairman of the meeting is of the opinion that the item should be considered as a matter of urgency
3. To receive Declarations of Interest from Members  
(Please see guidance form and flow chart attached – page 3)
4. Minutes of the meeting of the People and Communities Policy Committee held 21 April 2022  
(attached – page 5)
5. Cost of Living Response;  
(attached – page 9)
6. South Norfolk Allocations Scheme Family connection;  
(attached – page 25)

## DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AT MEETINGS

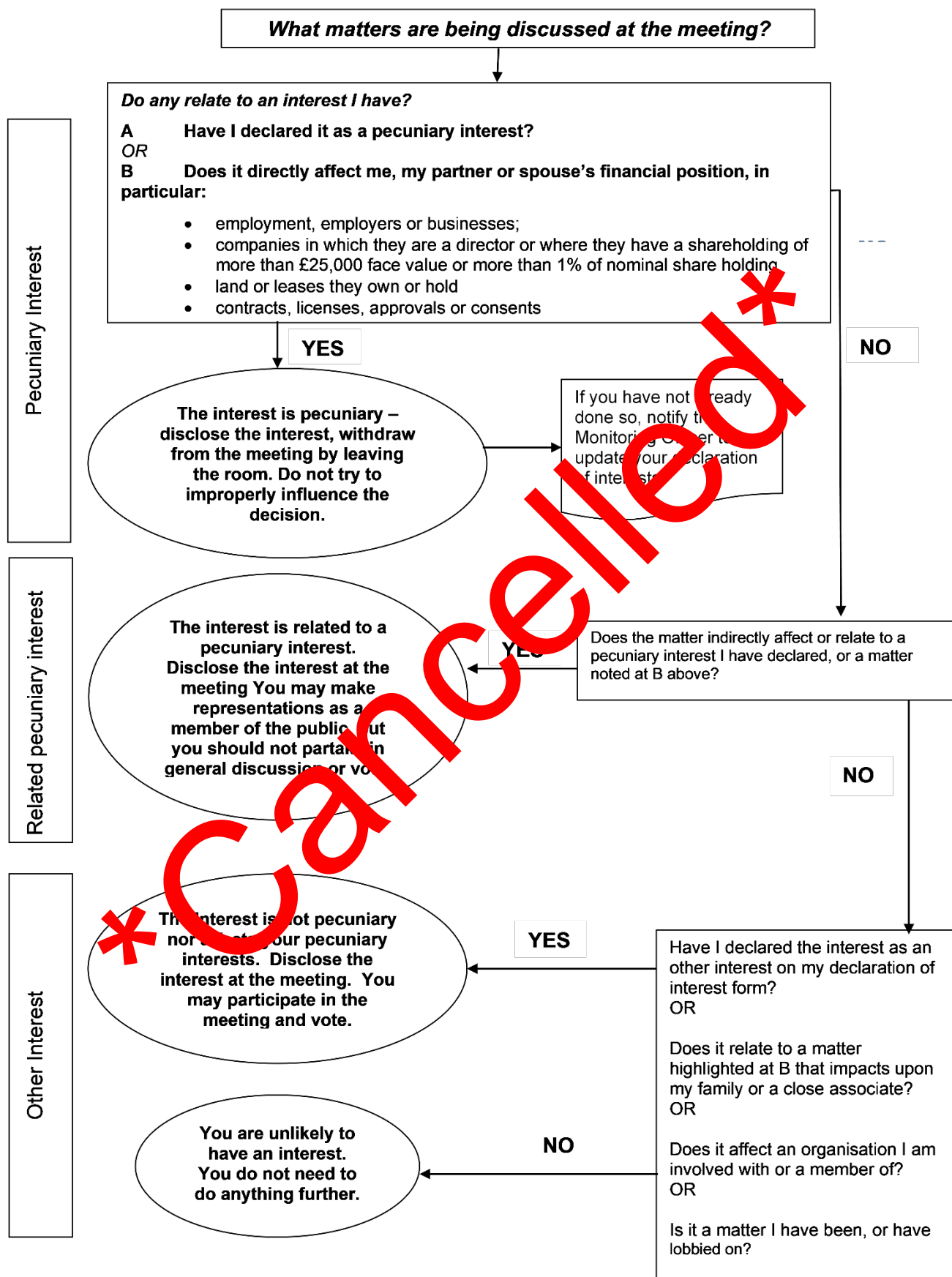
When declaring an interest at a meeting Members are asked to indicate whether their interest in the matter is pecuniary, or if the matter relates to, or affects a pecuniary interest they have, or if it is another type of interest. Members are required to identify the nature of the interest and the agenda item to which it relates. In the case of other interests, the member may speak and vote. If it is a pecuniary interest, the member must withdraw from the meeting when it is discussed. If it affects or relates to a pecuniary interest the member has, they have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public but must then withdraw from the meeting. Members are also requested when appropriate to make any declarations under the Code of Practice on Planning and Judicial matters.

<p>Have you declared the interest in the register of interests as a pecuniary interest? If Yes, you will need to withdraw from the room when it is discussed.</p>
<p>Does the interest directly:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. affect yours, or your spouse / partner's financial position?</li> <li>2. relate to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to you or your spouse / partner?</li> <li>3. Relate to a contract you, or your spouse / partner have with the Council</li> <li>4. Affect land you or your spouse / partner own</li> <li>5. Affect a company that you or your partner own, or have a shareholding in</li> </ol> <p>If the answer is "yes" to any of the above, it is likely to be pecuniary.</p> <p>Please refer to the guidance given on declaring pecuniary interests in the register of interest forms. If you have a pecuniary interest, you will need to inform the meeting and then withdraw from the room when it is discussed. If it has not been previously declared, you will also need to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days.</p>
<p>Does the interest indirectly affect or relate any pecuniary interest you have already declared, or an interest you have identified at 1-5 above?</p> <p>If yes, you need to inform the meeting. When it is discussed, you will have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public, but you should not partake in general discussion or vote.</p>
<p>Is the interest not related to any of the above? If so, it is likely to be an other interest. You will need to declare the interest, but may participate in discussion and voting on the item.</p>
<p>Have you made any statements or undertaken any actions that would indicate that you have a closed mind on a matter under discussion? If so, you may be predetermined on the issue; you will need to inform the meeting, and when it is discussed, you will have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public, but must then withdraw from the meeting.</p>

**FOR GUIDANCE REFER TO THE FLOWCHART OVERLEAF.**

PLEASE REFER ANY QUERIES TO THE MONITORING OFFICER IN THE FIRST INSTANCE

## DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF



**Agenda Item: 4**

## **PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES POLICY COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of a meeting of the People and Communities Policy Committee of South Norfolk District Council held on Thursday 21 April 2022 at 10.00am.**

**Committee Members Present:** Councillors: D Bills (Chairman), S Blundell, M Dewsbury, T Holden, N Legg and S Nuri Nixon

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillors: J Easter and J Wilby

**Substitutes:** Councillors: F Ellis (for J Wilby)

**Officers in Attendance:** The Director of People and Communities (J Sutterby), the Assistant Director Individual and Families (M Pursehouse), the Housing and Benefits Manager (L Sayer), Domestic Abuse Support Specialist (G Bloomfield) and the Democratic Services Officer (L Arthurton)

### **42 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Easter and J Wilby.

### **43 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interests were made.

### **44 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the People and Communities Policy Committee held on 31 March 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.

### **45 ENERGY REBATE SCHEME**

The Housing and Benefits Manager introduced the report which outlined details of the £150 Energy Rebate Scheme which was to be administered by Council tax billing authorities. The report also sought approval for the Discretionary Payment Scheme policy.

Members noted that the Government guidance termed the scheme as the 'Council Tax Rebate Scheme 2022-2023' however as this was independent of any other Council Tax rebates, Officers had decided to amend the name to 'Energy Rebate scheme'.

Officers explained that the Council was working in collaboration with an external company to deliver the scheme, which would allow for timely payments to residents, whilst mitigating the administrative burden on the Council Tax and Benefits Teams. The Councils would also provide further support through the Hardship and Discretionary Schemes for residences in need. Members noted that the recommendation listed in the report allowed officers to efficiently engage with any future schemes which might come forward.

In response to a question regarding whether the delegated authority was placed with the individual or with the post, officers confirmed that the post had the authority, but this could always be reviewed by councillors.

Officers confirmed to members that the increase in staff would see two extra positions in both the Council Tax and Benefits teams. Members noted that each area would have the ability to offer full support to those who needed it and would be funded by the New Burdens Fund.

Conversation turned to the external company that would help administer the payment to residents. Members noted that the company would provide support and the best efficiency when processing the payments. A follow-up question was asked regarding the cost and security of using a private company. The Assistant Director for Individuals and Families confirmed that the £15,000 charge to the Council from the external company was the most efficient way forward when factoring systems and admin costs. He also confirmed that the company had the right security and data protection procedures in place. It was confirmed to members that an external company would only manage the admin and payments with all decisions on funding made by officers at the Council.

The Chairman thanked officers for their report, and it was

## **RESOLVED**

**TO RECOMMEND THAT CABINET** delegates permission for future discretionary schemes to be determined by the appropriate Assistant Director and the Section 151 officer in collaboration with the Portfolio Holder

The Domestic Abuse Support Specialist introduced the report which provided members with an overview of the Council's work in tackling domestic abuse. The Committee heard that the Domestic Abuse Act became law in 2021, and that there was two key areas of statutory responsibility for tier two local authorities:

- Under Part IV of the act, tier 1 local authorities must provide support within safe accommodation, such as refuge to victims of domestic abuse. Tier 2 authorities must support and cooperate with tier 1 authorities to achieve this. And;
- All eligible homeless victims of domestic abuse automatically have 'priority need' for homelessness assistance

Following this a requirement for two new trained members staff was needed to provide help and support with accommodation matters. Members noted that the New Burdens Funding would help achieve this for the Council. The Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance Accreditation linked with the two posts would enhance the One Team's approach to domestic abuse by strengthening procedures and policies. This would also enable the Council to provide a high quality of service to customers and staff.

Members noted that the structures in place would ensure that contact and help could be easily accessed by all. The Chairman thanked the officers for their report and invited debate from members.

In response to a question, officers explained that staff approached every case professionally and had adopted a victim lead approach. Members also noted that there had been a push in providing training for officers in the Council to provide further support.

One member raised a query regarding the quality of the accommodation, and the Assistant Director explained that the Council provided bespoke accommodation for domestic abuse cases. He also confirmed that the right security measures were in place for the properties. The Council currently had three furnished properties and two self-contained unfurnished properties for family use. The Council did not use unfit properties and would always ensure that people were in suitable accommodation.

In response to a query on the aftercare the Council offered domestic abuse victims, officers confirmed that a support worker would work with individuals for six weeks. Following this, the Community Connectors would continue to work with individuals and offer support. A further question was raised on the out of hours support available, and it was confirmed that the properties would be managed nine to five Monday to Friday and national helplines would be the

point of contact after hours. Support workers provided welcome packs to individuals which included telephone numbers and points of contact.

Discussion turned to how the Council could prevent victims from returning to their abusers, officers explained that wider resources were available and wrap around care would be offered to help prevent this. A further question was raised over how the cases which involved children would be managed and members noted that the Council worked closely with Children's Services at Norfolk County Council in such cases.

Reference was made by a member to the range of victims of domestic abuse and the importance that support was provided for both men and women. Officers confirmed that a recent review of policy had led to the definition and boundaries being widened to become more inclusive.

One member noted that cases of domestic abuse had risen over the pandemic and asked officers if numbers would start to decrease as the country moved out of the pandemic. The Domestic Abuse Support Specialist explained that the Council did see a rise in the number of cases reported over the lockdowns but did not believe that numbers would drop. He further explained that an increase in publicity and access to help would allow victims to come forward for support.

One member suggested that working with the younger generation would help to educate and prevent cases from arising in the future. Officers noted the importance of delivering the message as early as possible and added that this was currently being discussed with wider partners of the Council.

The Chairman thanked officers for their report and it was;

**RESOLVED:**

To note the report.

(The meeting concluded at 11.42 am)

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Chairman



## **COST OF LIVING RESPONSE**

**Report Author:** Mike Pursehouse  
Assistant Director  
01508 533861  
[mike.pursehouse@southnorfolkandbrodland.gov.uk](mailto:mike.pursehouse@southnorfolkandbrodland.gov.uk)

**Portfolio:** Better Lives

**Ward(s) Affected:** ALL

### **Purpose of the Report:**

The rise in cost-of-living is being widely reported in the media. This report sets out the potential options for the Council to support residents with cost-of-living rises, and how these fits into the wider Government response.

### **Recommendations:**

The committee is asked to:

1. Recommend that Cabinet agrees the proposed programmes and direction of travel to support the cost-of-living rise, as set out in appendix one, and
2. Comment on other potential areas to explore, as set out in appendix two.

## 1. Summary

- 1.1 The cost-of-living for South Norfolk residents has already increased significantly during 2021/22, and with changes to energy prices, and inflation will continue to increase during this year.
- 1.2 With inflation, a likely recession, and still dealing with the effects of Covid, the cost-of-living will likely have an impact on all residents, businesses, and growth.
- 1.3 Due to the size of response required, the main financial support will have to come from central Government, which will be partly administrated by the Council.
- 1.4 Whilst the main framework of financial support will be centrally driven, the Council, with its ability to work closely with our communities, is best placed to identify, and support residents who are in most need, and galvanise community capacity and infrastructure.
- 1.5 This report focuses on the Council's response to supporting the cost of living and how we use our resources and assets to enable direct support and lobby Government. This is an initial response that we can start to implement straight away, with a further report to Cabinet once we have investigated options and have an understanding of potential support from central Government.
- 1.6 Many of staff also living in the district and the increase in cost of living will affect them, particularly our lower grade staff, who will also be able to benefit from these programmes. However, staff may also choose to leave lower paid roles, and this may have a potential impact on service delivery. This will be monitored separately.
- 1.7 Officers will be assessing the impact on resources to deal with contact with the Council to ensure we are able to meet demand, which will be part of the Cabinet report.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 Millions of households across the UK are struggling to make their incomes stretch to cover the rising cost of living. Central Government is providing over £15 billion in further support, targeted particularly on those with the greatest need. This package is in addition to the over £22 billion announced previously, with government support for the cost of living now totaling over £37 billion this year.
- 2.2 This means that almost all the eight million most vulnerable households in the UK will receive £1,200 of one-off support in total this year to help with the cost of living, with all domestic electricity customers receiving at least £400.
- 2.3 Increases in the cost of living will affect all households however, households on lower incomes will be affected more than richer households. See figure 1 This winter, low-income households will have to reduce their spending by three times as much as high-income households to afford their energy bills. This is due to poorer households spending a larger proportion of their budget on energy and food, as fig 2 below shows.

- 2.4 People aged between 55 and 74 years were more likely to be cutting their energy use than those in many other age groups. Around 6 in 10 of those aged 55 to 64 years (58%) and 65 to 74 years (59%) reported doing so.

Figure 1

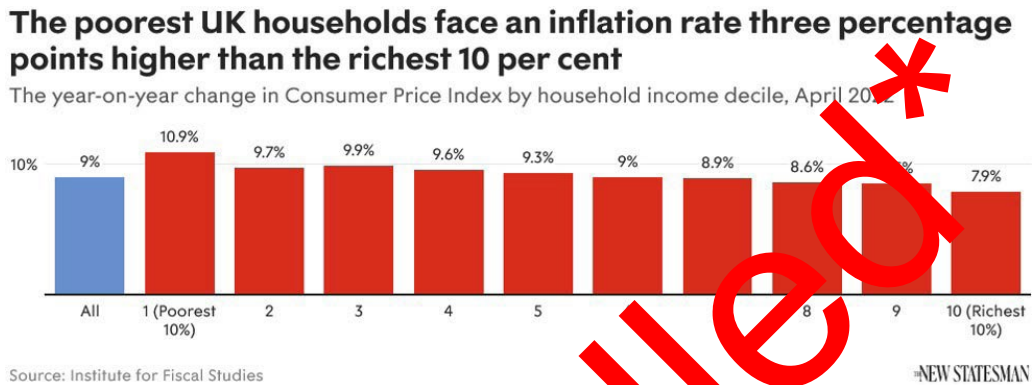


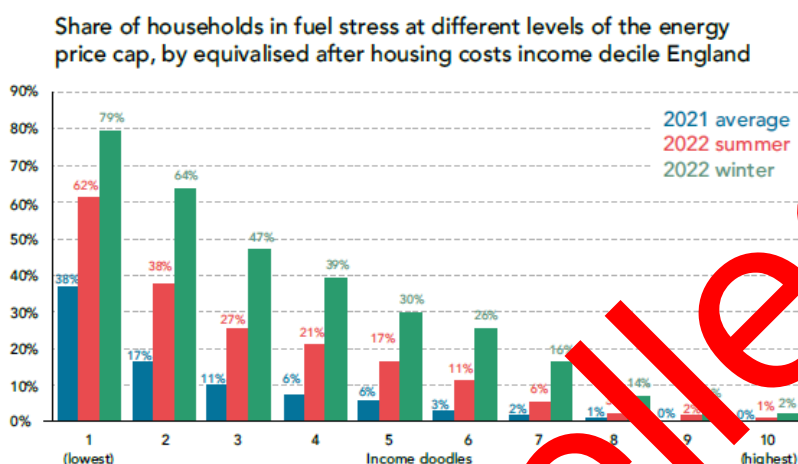
Figure 2



- 2.5 In terms of energy prices, fig 3 below shows the increase in fuel stress over the last three years. As clearly shown, the lowest income families are harder hit than the richest households.

**Figure 3**

**Energy price rises hit poorer households harder because they spend **11%** of household budgets on gas and electricity, compared to **4%** for the richest households.**



Source: resolution Foundation, 2022, Screened Out

- 2.6 As part of the overall Government support, the Council is administering the Household Support Fund, in partnership with Norfolk County Council. An initial fund was allocated between September 2021 and March 2022, with a second tranche allocated in April 2022. Although not confirmed, indications are that the third tranche is likely in October. This fund provides small payment directly to households to provide immediate payments for support including food, energy, transport, clothing. The average payment is currently £150 and is targeted at families who need the most.
- 2.7 The energy rebate scheme administered by the Council, provides support according to Council tax bands directly to households. A £150 payment is provided to band A-D properties with a discretionary award available to other households.
- 2.8 Between January 2022 and June 2022, the Help Hub issued 479 food bank vouchers to vulnerable customers. In the first round of the Household Support Fund (December 2021 to March 2022) 464 households were supported with grants to buy food. Whilst we don't have comparative data for the same periods in previous years the size of the numbers shows a significant number of people in severe hardship
- 2.9 In June 2021 the Help Hub had 51 referrals with financial issues listed as a presenting need. In June 2022 this figure had risen to 179.

- 2.10 In July 2021 30 people were referred into the Financial Wellbeing Team for debt or money management support. By July 2022 this figure had risen to 55 for the same period. This includes specialist debt advice and more general budgeting support.
- 2.11 Across all the available data sets from Help Hub services engaged in tackling financial hardship we can see these common trends. The number of people in need of these services is likely to increase in line with increased economic pressures.
- 2.12 Times of domestic financial hardship (food, fuel and energy costs) inevitably lead to potential increases in crime, disorder and community safety concerns. Previous experience of acute economic austerity saw significant additional demands on policing, regulatory, community safety and environmental services to deal with more domestic disturbances and neighbourhood issues, petty and semi-organised crime, and greater needs for environmental clean-ups.

### **3. Current position/findings**

- 3.1 With the onset of winter, and increasing energy costs from September, we are likely to see a significant number of residents affected by the cost-of-living rise. The predictions are suggesting that inflation will start to fall next year and be back to the target of 2% in around two years (Bank of England forecast).
- 3.2 Whilst costs will go up for all residents, we will be using reactive data, as well as using our new modelling tool 'LIFT' (low income family tracker) to identify cohorts of households that will be the most adversely affected.
- 3.3 Through our help hub approach, we are well placed to respond quickly to need. We demonstrated through the Covid pandemic that we can flex resource quickly to meet demand, and working collaboratively with our partners and communities, provide support locally, right down to street level.
- 3.4 Through the in-year savings we have increased capacity within the help hub triage and assessment team and debt and welfare team to support residents who are in need. Whilst direct payments to households have been invaluable, our approach will continue to be to complement immediate support with resources to help households to support themselves, reducing the likelihood of needing support in the future.
- 3.5 The Warm Homes Programme can provide expert advice on saving energy as well as mediating with energy companies on behalf of our most vulnerable residents who are questioning their energy bills or are in energy debt.
- 3.6 The Warm Home Programme is also able to provide insulation and renewable heating systems at no cost to low-income residents living in poor energy efficiency homes. Thereby reducing the amount of energy needed to heat homes and as a consequence lower energy bills.
- 3.7 Through the emerging Health and Wellbeing Partnership, we are utilising covid money to increase hardship support, community capacity, healthy living and supporting secondary care. Staff have also been working with Citizens Advice to

look at further ways we can collaborate to improve joint working and information sharing.

- 3.8 The pilot of two early intervention / antisocial behaviour Officers funded until March 2023 is providing for rapid response to new incidents, high visibility, and community reassurance in local neighbourhoods, making a strong positive impact with excellent customer feedback. This additional service element in Regulatory services has been kept very busy but is able to prioritise incoming calls during the pilot and respond to escalating cost-of-living related community impacts, working closely with the council's prevention, diversionary activity and help hub services.

#### 4. Proposed action

- 4.1 A framework of support is proposed to be adopted that will support residents through the cost-of-living rise. The aim of our approach will be to:
- Reduce the impact of cost-of-living rise on households
  - Reduce the ongoing impact on Council, and partners agency services
  - Offer community interventions where necessary to protect and keep people safe
- 4.2 While all households will be affected, lower income households will be unduly affected and therefore we will aim to focus particularly on households who are unable to:
- Meet fuel bills
  - Pay rent
  - Buy food
  - Run a vehicle to access work, essential services and medical appointments
  - Ascertained from doorstep early interventions as having specific further needs
- 4.3 Data and intelligence will be critical to identify residents in need. Through Covid learning, it was clear that good quality data, mixed with local intelligence on the ground enabled a targeted approach. Using the new LIFT programme (see 3.2), we will be able to build up a local intelligence picture. Our aim will be to include partnership data where we are able to have access, including DWP and Housing Association data.
- 4.4 We successfully stood up a silver coordination group for both districts, to engage with our partners to coordinate activity. Since Covid, this model has been used to engage the partnership around Homes for Ukraine, Asylum dispersal and will again morph into support cost-of-living rise.
- 4.5 Our approach will be split into three work streams:
- **Crisis minimisation** – immediate response to hardship
  - **Recovery** – formal advice to address need
  - **Crisis prevention** – support households to reduce costs and to increase income.
- 4.6 Our residents need support now, therefore we will focus on key areas where we can mobilise quickly, to support residents during the winter months. This support will be largely within existing resources and utilising existing funding already

allocated from Government. Alongside this, we will explore longer term support options which will require lobbying of Government and strategic programmes.

- 4.7 To ensure we maintain pace, these programmes will be explored and implemented as required through the existing delegation powers within the Council, in consultation with the relevant portfolio holder. Where needed, programmes will go through the formal governance process.
- 4.8 The proposed programmes are at Appendix One which are the initial tranche. This appendix details specific programmes we will be working on and is a high-level summary. An action plan will sit under this programme summary which will look at specific timescales and resource requirement which the portfolio holder will be regularly updated on.
- 4.9 An internal officer working group will start early September to drive forward this programme. Alongside this we will repurposing the partnership steering group, which was set up to deal with Covid, and morphed to focus on Ukraine. This group currently meets monthly but will be refreshed to ensure we have a total partnership response.
- 4.10 As with Covid and Ukraine workstreams, learning and feedback from residents and partners, along with data, will help inform us to amend and develop programmes as we progress through the winter.
- 4.11 We will be working with public health to see if we can request a reserve to support cost of living rise, to provide funding for programmes should we need additional funding. The Norfolk County Community Safety Partnership (CSP) has adopted an underpinning public health model for identifying and addressing root causes of problems, and we will be working with the CSP to monitor and respond to community safety needs.
- 4.12 The opportunities in appendices one and two are the potential programmes we can move forward. Further work will be completed to understand what programmes the resources must move forward now, and which need additional resource or funding, with the intention to bring to Cabinet in November.

## 5. Issues and risks

- 5.1 **Resource Implications** – There is insufficient resource to support this programme of works. Workstreams that can go ahead with existing resources will be moved forward quickly, other ideas in appendix one and two will need to be further developed and prioritised according to available resources. For major programmes, a business case will be completed for each programme which will include resource requirements.
- 5.2 Officers will also be working separately on resources required to deal with the increase in contact with the Council to present to Cabinet.
- 5.3 **Legal Implications** – There are no known legal impacts
- 5.4 **Equality Implications** – the cost-of-living rise will dis-proportionally affect low-income households and therefore this cohort will be targeted as a priority.



- 5.5 **Environmental Impact** – Whilst there are no direct environmental impacts for this proposal, inefficient homes will cost more to heat as well as producing more carbon emissions. This link will be explored further in the development of these proposals. Household and business financial difficulties are likely to lead to increased fly tipping and potential environmental pollution impacts of localised incidents and poorer maintenance of drainage, waste and fuel storage systems.
- 5.6 **Crime and Disorder** – Cost-of-living will put further tension on households and mental health, which is an underlying factor in crime and disorder. Increasing poverty is commonly linked with increases in acquisitive crime, anti-social behaviour, and environmental offending.
- 5.7 **Risks** – no specific risk identified.

## 6. Conclusion

- 6.1 We are at a crucial time in supporting our vulnerable families through the escalating cost-of-living. The Council is closest to our communities, and as throughout Covid, can react quickly to identify and support vulnerable residents. As well as using our existing resources and our partners/communities' assets, we can look at longer term programmes /lobbying to reduce some of the impact of the cost-of-living on residents.

## 7. Recommendations

The committee is asked to:

1. Recommend that Cabinet agrees the proposed programmes and direction of travel to support the cost-of-living rise, as set out in appendix one, and
2. Comment on other potential areas to explore, as set out in appendix two.



## Appendix one – fully funded, and business as usual programmes Crisis minimisation

Programme	Funding	Timescales
Hardship identification. Learning from Covid, through internal and external sources, we will identify specific cohorts of households who are specifically at risk, who are likely to need immediate support.	Within existing budgets	September
Energy rebate scheme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>£150 payments to council tax band A- D</li> <li>Discretionary payment £166450.00 of the total £185100.00 remaining</li> </ul>	Externally funded	Currently operational To be spent by November 2022
Household Support Fund <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small grant payment to provide direct support to pay for essential costs. The average grant is circa £150.</li> </ul>	All funding allocated from two tranches	Second tranche complete by Sep 22, third tranche likely Oct 22.
Discretionary Housing payment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short term payments to assist in shortfall in welfare payments, to allow people to remain in their homes</li> <li>£64362 remaining of the initial £113509.00 allocation</li> </ul>	Within existing budgets	Ongoing
Whatever it takes fund <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Short term payment to relieve, or prevent homelessness</li> <li>SNC - £20448.00 of the initial £32559.00 allocation</li> <li>£32328.00 of the initial £52879.00 allocation</li> </ul>	External funding	Operational, Funding due to run out March 2023

<p>Council tax discretionary relief</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short term payment to assist with shortfall in Council tax</li> <li>• £30862.00 remaining of the initial £35k allocation</li> </ul>	<p>Within existing budgets</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Rough Sleeper Initiative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct support to resolve rough sleeping</li> </ul>	<p>External funding</p>	<p>Current scheme operational until March 2025</p>
<p>Temporary accommodation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-house and private sector leased accommodation to provide short terms housing support to resident</li> </ul>	<p>Within existing budgets</p> <p>Current budget deficit</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Overspend likely to be gross £10,814.00, net £27,592 (across both Councils)</p>
<p>Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff resource to ensure correct payments and support working age claimants into work / more income</li> </ul>	<p>Within existing budgets</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Community led support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communities Team enabling and supporting communities/ Mutual Aid Groups to offer hyper-local responses and identified including engagement with food banks</li> </ul>	<p>Within existing budgets</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Community protection, anti-social behaviour, community safety and regulatory interventions and Enforcement</p>	<p>Within existing budgets plus COMF funding in 2022/23</p>	<p>Review in Q3 2022-23 to decide whether to mainstream the two Early Intervention Anti-social Behaviour Officers from April 2023 following the pilot year</p>

## Recovery

Programme	Funding	Timescales
Financial Wellbeing Team, combining Debt Advice, Welfare Rights and money management support. 7 x staff directly focused on tackling debt, supporting financial wellbeing and stability	3 x staff permanent 3 x staff budget until Sept 2025 1 x staff budgeted until June 2023	Scaled up programme until 2025.
Partnership development with Citizen Advice to explore further collaboration including joint bids	£9,750 from Health and Wellbeing Partnership	Proposal ready quarter 4 2022/23
Support via help hub to access prevention help including, finance, mental and physical wellbeing, domestic abuse and housing.	Within existing budgets	Ongoing
Community Safety focussed problem-solving and reassurance work to maintain order and harmony in locally impacted communities.	Within existing budgets subject to review of Early Intervention Anti-social Behaviour Officers pilot	Ongoing Pilot service review in Q3 2022/23

## Prevention

Programme	Funding	Feasibility	Timescales
Improving energy efficiency in the home through retrofitting existing homes and provision of energy and bill saving advice	Externally funded, Government under the Sustainable Warmth Scheme and the Social	Programme agreed	March 2023
	Housing Decarbonisation Fund circa £6m for Norfolk		

Green loans for low-income families to upgrade their home with efficiency measures	Already agreed	Programme agreed	Start quarter 3 2022/3
Food waste Prevention - Recycling Team are looking at proactive work to increase impact to reduce household bills	Within existing budgets	Existing programme	Ongoing
Launch affordable cookbook, cooking for family for four for £40 per week	Within existing budgets	Cookbook being prepared ready for launch	Start quarter 3 2022/3
Pass on suitable bulky waste to Emmaus to recycle to families	Within existing budgets	Within internal existing capacity and skills resources	Start quarter 3 2022/3
Run two 'pop-up' reuse events next year to provide residents with access to free household items	Within existing budgets	Within internal existing capacity and skills resources	Start quarter 4 2022/3
Enforcement of minimum energy requirements in the rental sector. To ensure no property is rented below an E unless an exemption.	Within existing budgets	Within internal existing capacity and skills resources	Ongoing
Improved focus on Scams Partnership to promote about scamming dangers.	Within existing budgets	Within internal existing capacity and skills resources We currently offer free half day sessions on cyber security for personal & business users in partnership with the police. Community Protection focus on deterring doorstep scammers.	Ongoing
Run courses on educating reducing your bills, managing household budgets etc.	£5k	Highly likely if funding found.	Start quarter 1 2023/4

New Business Builder Programme – Broadland small business grants	Norfolk Strategic Fund	Two-year programme Approved by Cabinet July 22 – only in BDC	Start quarter 3 2022/3
One stop shop for business regulatory support for successful start-up and assured compliance.	Pilot funded to January 2023	12-month pilot service to be reviewed in Q3 2022/23	Service beyond January 2023 to be determined
Support and compliance inspection business visits to food, safety and licensed premises, events and activities	Within existing budgets (service subject to review)	Within internal existing capacity and skills resources	Ongoing
Improving energy efficiency in the home through retrofitting existing homes	Externally funded, circa £6m for Norfolk	Funded by Government under the Sustainable Warmth Scheme and the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund	March 2023  Further funding expected 2023-2025

**\*Cancelled\***

**Appendix two – unfunded programmes which need funding identified or additional business cases**

Programme	Funding	Feasibility	Timescales
Improving energy efficiency in the home through retrofitting existing homes	To be agreed	Initial discussions with District Council Network have resulted in a small working group set up to lobby Government to release further funding to districts to retro fit existing homes through loans/grants.  Major UK wide programme that would need significant project planning and Government investment	
Employment support for those who are under-employed, including young	Choices programme core funded, enhanced will	Current choices programme running review of future support programme instigated	Quarter 4 2022/3
people and second income.	require additional funding - Covid funding in SNC	which will include learning from choice, work4all and kickstart.	
Affordable transport	To be determined	One of the key barriers to employment opportunity. Lobbying programme to provide cheaper transport / improved infrastructure options  Major programme that would need significant project planning and Government investment	To be agreed
Improving Private Sector rented sector housing	To be determined	Significant reforms proposed in Government white paper which affects both enforcement and supply. Major programme that would need significant project planning	To be agreed

Warm Spaces – provide funding to existing community groups to provide warm, safe spaces to reduce heating costs and links to support services	£15k	Business case being drawn up	Start quarter 3 2022/3
Social supermarket. Access to affordable food and learning how to cook efficiently	£10k	Will need business case and additional funding.  Work with our existing foodbanks to explore who have potential access to facilities to offer cookery sessions using the ingredients available within the bank. There is potential to work with the Joy of Food to provide this as a offer.	Start quarter 4 2022/3
Digital courses to support people to access on-line discounts	£5k	Highly likely if funding found. Potential to work with adult learning and libraries	Start quarter 4 2022/3
Proactive assessment and support to ensure older people are claiming the benefits that they are eligible for.	£5k	Within internal existing capacity and skills resources	Start quarter 3 2022/3
Run courses on educating reducing your bills, managing household budgets etc.	£5k	Highly likely if funding found.	Start quarter 1 2023/4
Supporting people with Chronic Obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) who are in fuel poverty to prevent cold homes aggravating the condition.	To be determined	Raised at the Health and Wellbeing Partnership, discussions progressing,	To be confirmed

Cold winter packs created to provide extra clothing, blankets, food, warm containers to people who need immediate support.	To be determined	The Council has operated these before with NHS funding, this will be explored	Start quarter 3 2022/3
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**\*Cancelled\***



## **South Norfolk Allocations Scheme: Family connection**

**Report Author(s):** Richard Dunsire  
Housing and Wellbeing Senior Manager  
01508 533620  
richard.dunsire@southnorfolk.gov.uk

**Portfolio:** Better Lives

**Ward(s) Affected:** All

### **Purpose of the Report:**

To propose an amendment to the South Norfolk Allocations Scheme and to provide the rationale for doing so.

### **Recommendations**

1. Committee to note the proposed change to the South Norfolk Allocations Scheme and recommend to Cabinet for approval.

#### **1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report outlines our proposal to ensure equity of local connection criteria across South Norfolk and Broadland through an additional family connection clause in the South Norfolk Allocations Scheme.
- 1.2 Although this is not a Ukraine specific policy change, it will have the advantage of enabling Officers to further support evacuees in our district, in particular those who have entered the UK under the Ukraine Family Scheme and who are now in need of housing advice and support.

#### **2. Background**

2.1 The current Allocations scheme requires those not yet homeless, but seeking a place on the housing register to meet local connection criteria including:

- Be resident in South Norfolk for 6 of the last 12 months
- or
- Be resident in South Norfolk for 3 of the last 10 years

2.2 In terms of Ukraine, officers have been very proactive in supporting those fleeing the ongoing combat in Ukraine. We have been providing community support to all evacuees whether that be through the Ukraine Family scheme or the Homes4Ukraine scheme. A summary of the two schemes is given below:

#### **Ukraine Family Scheme**

Guests will be accommodated by family members.

Guests have 3 years leave to remain and can access public services

District statutory housing and homelessness duties can apply here (placement breakdown and move-on)

#### **Homes for Ukraine (England)**

Guests have 3 years leave to remain and can access public services

Guests have a named sponsor. A host will offer accommodation for at least 6 months

Hosts can receive a £50 per month thank you payment

Sponsors/Hosts are subject to checks, including DBS, Housing and Welfare

Norfolk County Council receives £10,500 funding per person

District statutory housing and homelessness duties can apply here (placement breakdown and move-on)

2.3 Unfortunately, placement breakdowns can occur, however within the Homes4Ukraine scheme we have been able to successfully rematch those guest with new hosts. To add all but a few will be covered by the criteria at 2.1 above as Homes4Ukraine placements must last at least 6 months therefore point one will allow them access.

2.4 Within the Ukraine Family Scheme, as there is no designated checking procedure, many family placements are wholly unsuitable, for example with 2 bed flats, already fully habited by a 4 person family welcoming 4 further fleeing family members. This is placing them in a very difficult position. If they were to present to the Council as homeless, they would go into TA and then onto the register. However many of the families are happy to continue accommodating in the short-term providing there is access to the register. At present we cannot provide this access until the 6 month mark due to lack of residency.

### **3. Current position/findings**

- 3.1 This issue is specific to South Norfolk as a clause already exists in the Broadland Allocations scheme to provide local connection for those who:  
*'Have a family member (parent, adult child or adult sibling) who lives in and has lived in Broadland for a continuous period of at least five years'.*
- 3.2 Information has been collected that shows that since its inception in April 2021, a total of 46 (5.5%) applicants have qualified via the Broadland family local connection criteria. 11 of these had a need for sheltered housing. 10 out of the 46 also had a local connection to South Norfolk. This represents a very small number in relation to the overall number of applicants who qualified to join the Housing Register during this period.

#### 4. Proposed action

- 4.1 In order to provide equity of local connection criteria across South Norfolk and Broadland, it is proposed to amend section 3.2 the South Norfolk Allocations Scheme: Qualification Rules to include:  
*'Have a family member (parent, adult child or adult sibling) who lives in and has lived in South Norfolk for a continuous period of at least five years'.*
- 4.2 We do not wish to offer a different service to Ukrainians by virtue of the authority that they have family in. Aligning the Allocations Policies will allow us to ensure that they are treated equally.
- 4.3 There will be some cases where we will need to exercise discretion, for example, where a Ukrainian has moved in with a family in our area, however, the family have resided in our area for less than 5 years. In such cases, we will need to consider the housing need of the Ukrainian household. If they have a housing need then we will utilise manager discretion on a case by case basis to waive the requirement for the 5 year residency of the family member.
- 4.4 There are discrimination concerns regarding only making this change for Ukraine nationals as it will be unfair and have potential political concerns if this is not also afforded to residents of South Norfolk. By going through the Allocations Scheme the overall need will be represented in the band provided meaning those in greatest need will have more favourable access than those in less need. This will mean their needs are assessed in line with all residents in South Norfolk

#### 5. Issues and risks

- 5.1 **Resource Implications** – There are no resource implications in making this amendment to the Allocations Scheme
- 5.2 **Legal Implications** – This amendment is proposed to support us to meet our statutory housing and homelessness duties under the Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- 5.3 **Equality Implications** – The proposal seeks to provide equity across the South Norfolk and Broadland Allocations Schemes. As noted in the report, this will

support officers in preventing homelessness within Ukrainians accommodated in South Norfolk. However amending the Allocations Scheme as a whole, rather than a stand-alone Ukrainian policy, will ensure that no one particular group would benefit above others.

5.4 **Environmental Impact** – There are no known environmental impacts.

5.5 **Crime and Disorder** – There are no perceived impacts

5.6 **Risks** – There are no other risks associated with these proposals.

## 6 Conclusion

- 6.1 The proposal to amend the South Norfolk Allocations Scheme strikes a balance in:
- Providing equity of service across South Norfolk and Broadland
  - Ensuring officers can continue to work hard to support and prevent homelessness in our Ukrainian guests.
  - By amending the Allocations Scheme as opposed to a targeted policy, it does not favour one particular group or exclude others

## 7 Recommendations:

1. Committee to note the proposed changes to the South Norfolk Allocations Scheme and recommend to Cabinet for approval

## Background papers

None