



**PERTH &
KINROSS
COUNCIL**

COST OF LIVING CRISIS

STRATEGY

September 2022

COST OF LIVING CRISIS



The cost of living crisis is currently a source of real worry and concern for most of our citizens. Many will struggle to heat their homes or feed their families this winter. Perth and Kinross Council wants to work with our Community Planning Partners and others to get help and support to those who need it most, when it is needed.

THE PROBLEM



The Cost of Living Crisis has seen massive increases in the cost of food, fuel and energy making it difficult for many and impossible for some to heat their homes, put food on the table and afford transport. This is made worse for many of our residents who are forced to pay higher prices for food, fuel and transport because they live in rural areas.

OUR APPROACH



Tackling the cost of living crisis is based on

- Setting aside significant funding to help households in Perth and Kinross that are struggling to meet their basic needs
- Working with partners to ensure that we co-ordinate and maximise the impact of our collective efforts
- Ensure our residents have the information they need to access all the support that is available to them.



7 POINT PLAN

1

Target financial packages of support to help households in Perth and Kinross that need it most

2

Help residents to manage and pay their bills through the provision of information and advice on benefits, money and debt to those who risk not being able to meet their basic needs

3

Support residents with energy efficiency measures which result in lower bills

4

Help people to access emergency and community food so that they need not go hungry

5

Identify and support the most vulnerable residents to ensure they keep warm and well nourished

6

Find out what local communities need and build their capacity to deliver local services and reach out to local residents to ensure their basic needs are met

7

Co-ordinate with partner organisations across the private, public and third sector to maximise the impact of our collective efforts to keep our residents warm and well-nourished and ensure their basic needs are met.



HELP WHERE IT IS NEEDED MOST

The following groups are likely to be affected more deeply than others

- Single people on low incomes (on benefits or in work)
- Families with children – especially lone parents and large families
- Those living with disabilities or long-term medical conditions
- Families without recourse to public funds
- Pensioners, especially those living alone or who have no income other than the State Pension.

URGENT ACTION - SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2022

Perth and Kinross Council will provide funding to organisations who are opening their doors to provide warm spaces, activities and information and advice to residents to help with the additional heating and activities costs incurred.

Perth and Kinross Council will provide funding to community organisations who wish to purchase and distribute warm home packs to vulnerable residents.

Perth and Kinross Council will top up the Community Food Fund to enable community organisations to provide community food (this can be delivered alongside warm spaces) this winter.

We will continue to invest significantly to improve the energy efficiency levels within our council properties by installing a range of measures such as triple glazing, internal and external wall insulation. We will also look to install new technologies within our tenants' home to support energy efficiency and behavioural changes

We will develop a data driven approach to identifying vulnerable individuals and households for targeted support. We will quantify the financial support that we are able to provide to these households once we are appraised of the augmented package of support which the UK Government will put in place in Autumn 2022.

7 POINT PLAN - WHAT WE CAN DO

This is the Perth and Kinross Cost of Living Crisis Offer. Our 7 Point Plan sets out how we will support our most vulnerable individuals and families through this crisis.

1

FUNDING

We will use additional funding to:-

- Top up funding provided by the UK and Scottish Governments to help with bills ensuring that the funds are targeted at individuals and households in the greatest need.
- Provide grant funding to community and third sector organisations to enable them to provide warm spaces, community food, social activities and information and advice across our localities
- Provide grant funding to community and third sector organisations enabling them to distribute warm home packs to those they identify as in need of additional support
- Provide grant funding to community and third sector trusted partners to enable them to provide financial support to people they are in touch with who are not known to the Council and who have not been able to access benefits

2

BASIC NEEDS AND DIGNIFIED LIVING

We will help residents who are at risk of not being able to meet their basic needs with help to buy food and pay their bills.

- We have already increased funding for the provision of welfare benefits, money and debt advice to Council Tenants through our Financial Inclusion Project, and to our in-house welfare rights team.
- We will use the Financial Insecurity Fund to provide cash payments to help with food, fuel and payment of energy bills.
- We will use the Tenancy Sustainment Fund to provide financial support to PKC tenants facing significant financial challenges.

3 WARM HOMES

We will bring forward investment in energy efficient homes and provide funding to organisations providing advice and support around energy efficiency and fuel poverty.

- We will invest in improving the energy efficiency providing triple glazing, internal and wall insulations across council properties.
- We will provide funding to third sector partners to provide energy efficiency advice to residents.
- We will provide funding for community groups to supply vulnerable residents with warm home packs

4 EMERGENCY AND COMMUNITY FOOD

We will continue to support Perth Foodbank, Fareshare and the network of community food outlets across Perth and Kinross.

- We will continue to provide funding and support for Community Food Initiatives and will ensure that residents know where they can access emergency and community food offers.
- We have already committed to fund community food initiatives and will increase this funding further to enable community organisations offering warm spaces to provide community food.

5 DATA DRIVEN APPROACHES TO TARGET THOSE IN MOST NEED

We will use data driven approaches to identify vulnerable individuals and households and multi disciplinary and partnership approaches to connect them to the help and support they need to keep warm and well nourished through this crisis.

Key workers and frontline workers who identify individuals and families in need of support, will be encouraged and empowered to connect people to the help and support available.

6

LOOKING AFTER EACH OTHER

We will invest in the capacity building and support of community organisations, especially those delivering frontline services and support to individuals and households who are at risk because of the cost of living crisis. We will listen to communities and shape our responses to the Cost of Living crisis around their needs and capacities to give help to those who need it most.

7

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

We will at all times endeavour to work with partner organisations across the private, public and third sector to ensure that our residents are able to meet their basic needs in a dignified manner through the period of the cost of living crisis.

WE ASK THAT YOU LOOK AFTER YOURSELF AND OTHERS

- **Maximise your income by claiming all that you are entitled to in welfare benefits, and seek debt or money advice if you need it**
- **Check on elderly or vulnerable neighbours to make sure they are warm and well-nourished - and if you are concerned, let us know on (01738 475000)**
- **If you have time, volunteer to help in your local community; if you have spare money, donate food or cash to the local foodbank, Perth CAB or other local community organisations offering warm spaces and community or emergency food.**
- **Use the warm spaces available in your local community and take up community and emergency food offers if you need to.**