



Poverty – Winter Pressures Plan 2022

Purpose – Keep Warm, Keep Fed, and Keep a roof over your head.

The national cost of living crisis has created an urgency to implement some aspects of our Poverty Strategy urgently and dynamically, and for the 2022 winter to ensure that vulnerable groups are able to keep warm, fed and well housed, therefore we will:

- 1) Co-ordinate Government Support to ensure it reaches those people who need it.
- 2) Exercise discretion when providing welfare support and advice to support those people who could potentially go into crisis.
- 3) Utilise Council resources set aside for poverty relief towards hardship payments and advice on debt relief.
- 4) Maximise partnership working and coordinate efforts with our partners in the statutory, voluntary and community sectors towards poverty prevention.
- 5) Promote affordable warmth, insulation and energy saving schemes, to improve heat retention and better insulated homes.
- 6) Use our annual Communities Together event to focus on cost of living crisis actions.
- 7) Liaise with others including Devon County Council and local NHS organisations to help maintain and support residents in good physical and mental health, including engaging in community-led health & wellbeing initiatives, volunteering and socialising via local initiatives.
- 8) Liaise with others to support access to food and nutrition, including healthy eating exercises/initiatives, organising a community garden to grow produce, setting up of a Community Larders or providing extra support to local food banks to meet unmet need.
- 9) Prepare for a possible 'rent shock' or increased Council Tax arrears as households in the district may prioritise between heating and eating instead of paying their rent or council tax.
- 10) Increase capacity to provide housing advice that focuses on tenancy sustainment and preventing homelessness.
- 11) Utilise Housing Community Centres as community facilities that support residents and communities combat cost of living threats.
- 12) Working with Team Devon, Town and Parish Councils and the voluntary sector to explore the warm places project and how that can be delivered in East Devon.
- 13) Assist tenants in furnishing and providing white goods in their new homes and avoid furniture poverty.
- 14) Implement the Corporate Debt Policy to help residents avoid going into debt.

Poverty Strategy high level Actions:

- 1 Helping people on low incomes to maximise their household income and minimise their costs, building financial resilience and reducing indebtedness.
- 2 Strengthening families and communities, including supporting groups of people that are more likely to experience poverty, and community and voluntary groups working to combat poverty.
- 3 Promoting an inclusive economy, by raising skills and improving access to a range of employment opportunities for people on low incomes.
- 4 Addressing the high cost of housing, improving housing conditions, creating affordable warmth and reducing homelessness.
- 5 Improving health outcomes for people on low incomes, including access to good diet, health care and ill health prevention.

