

COST OF LIVING CRISIS

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF HOUSING SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee with an overview of the action taken across Sunderland to support resident financial wellbeing during the cost of living crisis.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Households in the United Kingdom have experienced a significant fall in living standards since late 2021. This is largely attributable to increased food, electricity, and fuel costs.
- 2.2 The UK has also seen rises in inflation, not seen for decades, that are not expected to fall below the Bank of England target until at least 2024. The war in Ukraine has also exacerbated inflation woes, particularly in relation to food and energy, the two sectors driving much of the high inflation.
- 2.3 The presentation attached will provide an overview of the situation in Sunderland and outline a number of the current actions and activities taking place to support residents during this difficult time.

3. CURRENT POSITION

- 3.1 A presentation is attached at **appendix one** of this report and covers a number of key issues including:
- Financial Wellbeing – the story so far;
 - Current Actions and Focus;
 - Understanding Lived Experience;
 - Case Studies;
 - Household Support Fund;
 - Links for Life; and
 - Cost of Living – Ongoing Activities.
- 3.2 Council officers will be in attendance at the meeting to provide the update on the situation and answer any questions that Members of the Committee may have.

4 RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 The Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee are asked to note and comment on the presentation.