

Communities Can...



Cost of living support

Overview of current schemes,
partners supporting residents & actions so far

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September 2022



Working together

DWP

Communities Can

NEE Health Alliance

One Colchester

ECC & Active Essex

Tendring District Council

Community 360

Various Charities

Colchester Borough Homes

Refugee Action Colchester



Cost of living support - Overview of current schemes and partners supporting residents

Key Teams within CBC - Communities

Bereavement Services

Digital Access

Community Enabling

Healthy Homes

Private Sector Housing



Cost of living support - Overview of current schemes and partners supporting residents

Key Teams within CBC - Customer

Financial and Employment Support

Council Tax and Corporate Debt

Housing Benefit



Cost of living support - Overview of current schemes and partners supporting residents

Financial and Employment Support

- Focus on working families and people that have not needed help before
- Benefits uptake campaigns
- Community outreach and drop in sessions
- Council Tax Rebate
- Discretionary Housing Payment
- Employment support and advice (with DWP)
- Exceptional Hardship Payment
- Funeral cost support
- Household Support Fund
- Housing Benefit & LCTS
- Welfare Benefits Advice



Example of multiple support provided to resident

Dear Cllr [REDACTED]

Referral re : [REDACTED]

Thank you for passing on this referral with regards to financial support for [REDACTED]

I have been in contact with [REDACTED] and would like to update you on the support that has been provided.

- A Discretionary Housing Payment has been awarded to support with rental arrears and ongoing rental shortfall
- A Household Support Fund payment has also been awarded to support towards a new washing machine, clothing and items of specific need for her baby
- A referral was made to C360 who supplied a Coop voucher to exchange for goods
- A food bank referral was made for a parcel to be delivered
- We have escalated the Universal Credit issue with the Manager at Job Centre Plus and have requested they contact [REDACTED] direct

I hope these measures will relieve some of the financial worry that [REDACTED] is experiencing at present.

[REDACTED] has been provided my personal contact details should she need any further advice or support.



Cost of living support - Overview of current schemes and partners supporting residents

Working with Partners

Financial Support Services through Partners

Direct Financial Support

- Essential living fund
- Credit Union
- Community 360 funding

Advice and Employment Support

- Citizens Advice (CBH funded dedicated post)
- Christians against poverty
- Step Change



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Housing & Energy Efficiency Support

- Private Sector Housing Enforcement
- Disabled Facility Grants
- Emergency Loan Heaters
- Energy efficiency advice and support – LAD3 and more
- CBH – energy efficiency improvements to Council housing



Working with Partners

Energy Efficiency

- Essential living fund
- Green Doctor

Transport

- C360 community Transport
- Hospital / Health transport schemes
- Active Travel/Cycling/Bike donations & recycling
- Shopmobility

Help with Clothing

- Anti loo roll brigade community shop
- One Colchester Hub
- School Uniform Project
- North Essex Support Team
- Tots to teens
- Clothing for Job interview



Working with Partners

Help with Hunger

- Holiday Hunger schemes – FirstSite, Essex ActivAte
- Colchester Foodbank
- Cultural Foodbank (RAMA)
- BOAZ Outreach Project
- North Essex Support Team (NEST)
- GO4 Café - Foodbank & Community Fridge
- C3 Church – Community Supermarket
- Refugee Action Colchester

Crisis Support

- Hospital Discharge bursaries at C360
- Mental Health bursaries at C360 – can also be used for practical support
- Essential Living Fund
- Hygiene Bank
- Catalyst grants for people with support needs
- Buttle UK
- Friends of the Elderly



Action so far.....

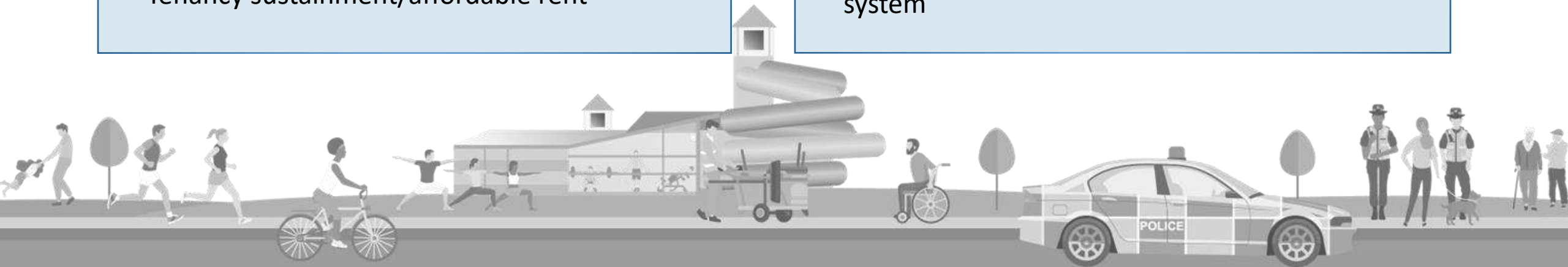
- Additional investment for 4 Colchester based foodbanks
- Increase in community outreach and drop in sessions
- Dedicated CBC comms campaign and website pages
- Support for employees
- One Colchester & CBC working groups set up
- CBC debt recovery processes reviewed
- Conversations with LGA to promote Colchester as good practice
- Monthly updates to all Ward Councillors
- Applications to Social Prosperity Fund for food poverty
- Energy efficiency post recruitment underway
- Essex Pedal Power coming to Greenstead
- Link to Neighbourhood Model



Future considerations

- Resource/funding issues
- Recruitment/retention issues
- Measurement/metrics
- UC Managed Migration
- Government rebates & support via LA's
- Tenancy sustainment/affordable rent

- Communications campaign
- Ukraine/Refugee crisis
- Ongoing Covid implications
- Sustainable solutions, not just short term crisis reaction
- Maximise other funding & resource across the system



#CostOfLivingColchester Campaign

Campaign launched in July 2022

- Organic posts on social media, using stories and feed on Facebook and Instagram & Twitter feed
- Using hashtag #CostOfLivingColchester to tie all the relevant messages together
- Social media graphics showing positive impact support has made to a person's life
- Council Community team signposting in Colchester's largest Facebook Community Groups
- Web banner on homepage of Council website
- Articles in Council's monthly newsletter 'Borough News'
- Press releases around topical support or decisions made to support residents in Colchester

www.colchester.gov.uk/cost-of-living



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#CostOfLivingColchester Campaign

www.colchester.gov.uk/cost-of-living

I didn't know that
I could get **support**
with job applications
and CV skills to
find a job.



I didn't know that
I could get **free**
advice to make sure
I am receiving the
right benefits.



I didn't know that
I could get **free**
debt advice to help
me get my finances
under control.



Filip, Warehouse worker
Colchester

#CostOfLivingColchester Campaign

Supported by Museums and Visit Colchester #Free campaigns – also using #CostOfLivingColchester



Cost of living support - Overview of current schemes and partners supporting residents

#CostOfLivingColchester Campaign

Please help amplify our social media content through your own channels:

Twitter: @YourColchester

Facebook: /EnjoyColchester

Instagram: @BetterColchester

Follow #CostOfLivingColchester

We will be regularly sharing from a mix of One Colchester partners who post relevant cost of living support information too

www.colchester.gov.uk/cost-of-living



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#CostOfLivingColchester Campaign

Next Steps

- Research ongoing to locate the households who are most likely facing financial hardship now or in the coming months, using MOSAIC profiling
 - Research data will enable us to target digital and print advertising to those that are most likely to need support, especially those that have not been in this position before and don't know where to go
 - Working to identify case studies that can be used to create media interest and coverage
 - Promote Colchester good practice with Local Government Association (LGA)
 - How do we join this up with Seasonal Resilience work?
- Regularly sharing posts from partner social media feeds, to really show the breadth of support that is available across the borough and signpost. Using the #CostOfLivingColchester to tie the campaign messages together
 - Planned media stories around Household Support Fund payments and energy efficiency funding
 - Internal comms to our council staff, signposting to support if needed. Looking at a system wide staff info/advice video
 - Consider Warm Space in public buildings in Colchester through One Colchester
 - Arrange a programme of outreach public events – SOS bus, Town Centre etc....