

Report to Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board

1 November 2022

Subject:	Working with the Voluntary and Community Sector to Tackle the Cost of Living Crisis
Director:	Director of Public health Lisa McNally Director of Housing Gillian Douglas Director of Finance Simone Hines
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1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Board considers and comments upon reports relating to working with the Voluntary and community sector to tackle the cost of living crisis.
- 1.2 That the board comments on:-
 - a) The findings and actions arising from the reports
 - b) The approach taken by the council and voluntary and community sector organisations in the borough of Sandwell




2 Reasons for Recommendations

The Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board has a key role to play in commenting upon the approach and shaping future



thinking around the Council's and voluntary and community sector group's response to the cost of living crisis.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>Best start in life for children and young people</p> <p>Young people must be taken into account when working with the voluntary and community sector to deliver against this priority.</p>
	<p>People live well and age well</p> <p>Elderly people may be disproportionately impacted by increasing costs as they get older and their needs change and increase. The approach taken by Sandwell therefore needs to deliver against this priority.</p>
	<p>Strong resilient communities</p> <p>The cost of living crisis is projected to have adverse impacts upon the borough, Sandwell has higher rates of deprivation than the national average and therefore may be less equipped to absorb higher costs without support. It is therefore important that an appropriate and wide- reaching response takes place to support our population.</p>

4 Context and Key Issues

4.1 The voluntary and community sector in Sandwell is crucial in supporting residents across our six towns, with the demand for advice, resources and financial support increase exponentially.

Inflation in the United Kingdom as of 19 October 2022 is at 10.1%, with certain sectors (food and drink) higher at 15%

As the cost of living crisis continues to evolve it is important that the input of members and scrutiny is received to steer and develop council policy. Communications to residents, community resources and locations where support can be obtained must actively be shaped by members to ensure the service offer from the council is effective.



5 Implications

Resources:	Significant financial costs are expected to be associated with this project to provide a high level service offer to the communities.
Legal and Governance:	The Board has a responsibility to scrutinise all matter as appropriate in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary and Community sector support • Partnership working to strengthen the third sector in Sandwell • Community development
Risk:	There are no direct risk implications as a result of his report.
Equality:	There are no direct equality implications associated with this report.
Health and Wellbeing:	Implications on health and wellbeing of our communities will be set out in further detail in the appendixes.
Social Value:	Engagement with the Board allows an opportunity to participate in service improvement and development.
Climate Change:	There are no direct climate change implications associated with this report.

6 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Submission from the Directorate of Public Health
Appendix 2 - Submission from the Directorate of Housing

