

Item 16(a) – Motion – Cost of Living Emergency

Alternative Proposal to be moved by Councillor Freebody

“This Council notes that:

- On 1st April 2022, Ofgem increased the energy cap by 54%.
- Additionally – and in this same timeframe – food prices and fuel are rising caused by global inflation post pandemic and the conflict in Ukraine.
- National Insurance contributions are set to increase to fund the response to the Covid NHS backlog and new investment in adult social care.

This Council, therefore, recognises the unprecedented financial pressures that all our residents will face in the incoming year, and notes with serious concern, that for those with low or insecure income, these pressures could prove overwhelming.

This Council also recognises that it has a part to play and in response, the Council will:

1. **PUSH UPTAKE OF PENSION CREDIT IN EASTBOURNE**
Using its data, communication channels, local partnerships – and any other resources as appropriate – amplify Government publicity and the MP’s local work to maximise the take-up of Pension Credit in Eastbourne.
2. **HELP PREVENT HOMELESSNESS AND TOXIC DEBT**
Reviewing its processes around arrears and evictions for Eastbourne rate payers and Eastbourne Homes tenants.
Building on the work to proactively engage with residents at risk and identifying affordable payment plans.
3. **ESTABLISH A COST OF LIVING EMERGENCY FUND**
Ringfencing a percentage of asset sale proceeds to establish a local cost of living emergency fund. The Council has evaluated its extensive £40m property holdings portfolio as part of its response to government bail-out requirements.”