

Policy and Oversight Board Action Sheet 2025/26

16 July 2025

No.	Item	Item / Action	Response / Update	Officer	Status
1.	4. Cost of Living Progress Report	Members encouraged officers to look at providing grants to help people move from gas cookers to electric cookers, both for energy efficiency benefits and improvement to air quality.	<p>The Council is actively working toward phasing out gas systems in its housing stock, with a target to complete the transition by 2030. While cooking is not the main contributor to gas use - heating and hot water account for the majority - we recognise the importance of transitioning all systems over time. Removing gas cookers is not currently a routine process, but it is being considered as part of broader electrification efforts.</p> <p>In the private rented sector, the Government's proposed Renters' Rights Bill includes a Decent Homes Standard, ensuring residents benefit from electrification and improved energy efficiency.</p> <p>Additionally, the Council's Climate Change team is also exploring energy efficiency grants from the Carbon Offset Fund, specifically to</p>	Christine Chung	Complete

Last updated: 03/09/2025

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			support residents replace gas stoves with electric alternatives as well as other energy efficient improvements. This would be offered through an application process open to eligible households.		
2.	4. Cost of Living Progress Report	Cllr Daly suggested looking at providing small cash transfers or supermarket vouchers (£30–£50) to avoid referrals to the foodbank.	<p>The Cost of Living Programme has a number of schemes that provide cash or voucher financial assistance to eligible residents in need.</p> <p>The Hardship Prevention Fund has been extended for 2025 and offers non-repayable cash awards to residents in financial hardship who do not have enough money for basics like food, gas or electricity. Up to £900 is available on a one-off basis. The fund also makes smaller cash awards, for example to residents on low income that need help to replace a child's school uniform, shoes or winter coat.</p> <p>As part of our comprehensive response, we also offer financial payments or vouchers to key</p>	Matthew Sales / Bathsheba Mall	Complete

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			<p>groups most impacted by the rise in everyday living costs, with more planned for 2025. Low-value cash and voucher awards are also offered to residents as part of our Children's Relief Fund, homelessness prevention and welfare assistance.</p> <p>The H&F Foodbank is an important partner of the Council's Cost of Living response programme, and a member of the Cost of Living Alliance Steering Group formed to help us target our help to those that most need it. We will continue to engage with the Foodbank on the best ways to offer cash and voucher support.</p>		
3.	4. Cost of Living Progress Report	The Board and PACs to look at the Council's strategies at future meetings.	On the agenda for POB in November	David Abbott / PAC Chairs	Complete
4.	5. Finance Peer Challenge Findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To arrange budget training for members ahead of the budget scrutiny meetings. • To include scrutiny training as part of the Council's member induction programme. 	Officers are planning finance training ahead of the budget scrutiny meetings and scrutiny training as part of the member induction process in 2026.	David Abbott	In progress