

West Sussex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2024 – proposed cost of living pressures addendum

Dani Plowman

Public Health Specialty Registrar

03 November 2022



Today's presentation will cover...

- 1) Background and Context
- 2) Cost of living pressures and potential impacts on our local population's health
- 3) Service Impacts
- 4) Proposed strategic approach and principles to tackle cost of living pressures in West Sussex
- 5) Recommendation to West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) for inclusion as an addendum in West Sussex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2024 (JHWS)



Background and Context

- In July 2022, the Director of Public Health provided an update to the West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) on the Board's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2024 (JHWS).
- In discussion, Board members highlighted that the JHWS required an update with respect to emerging cost of living pressures.
- A proposed strategic approach and principles to tackle this countywide have been developed and are recommended to the HWB for inclusion as an addendum in the JHWS.
- Whilst this presentation specifically focuses on the proposed cost of living pressures addendum to JHWS, it's important to highlight in addition to this, the JHWS will be reviewed in light of current national policy to ensure it continues to meet the health and wellbeing needs of our residents and communities.



Cost of living pressures and potential impacts on our local population's health

What does the evidence tell us?

Key areas:

- Poverty in West Sussex
- A review of the evidence: Poverty and health
- Food insecurity
- Fuel poverty
- Finance and debt
- Employment
- Housing and homelessness
- Service impacts



Poverty in West Sussex

- The cost of living pressures will lead to more people living in poverty (Legatum Institute, 2022)
- Whilst West Sussex is one of the least deprived areas in the country, this masks inequalities within the county.
- Adur, Worthing, Crawley and Arun have neighbourhoods in the 30% most deprived in England, with Arun and parts of Crawley having some neighbourhoods in the 10% most deprived in England.
- Local authority level data is not currently available regarding impacts of cost of living pressures on population groups and those potentially at increased risk.
- However, national surveys indicate the increasing cost of living is already disproportionately impacting those living in the most deprived areas, people who are disabled, older people, ethnic minority groups and low income families with children (ONS, 2022), (New Economics Foundation, 2022).



A review of the evidence: Poverty and health

Locally, we undertook a review of systematic reviews and institutional reports that consider the health and wellbeing impacts of poverty through its effects on food, fuel, housing, finance, employment and service impacts.

Key points :

- For some health impacts, it is generally accepted that a two way relationship exists between a factor and a health outcome (e.g. homelessness and poor mental health)
- It is challenging to attribute causality between poverty and health. However, there is a substantial body of evidence consistently highlighting these associations.
- Therefore, the evidence is sufficient to suggest we should monitor these as markers of the health of our population related to poverty.



Food insecurity

- Food insecurity may result in an increase in behavioural problems, poorer academic function and poorer mental health in children and young people (Shankar et al, 2017)
- Evidence suggests food insecurity impacts the cognitive function and mental health of adults via stress, anxiety and depression (Royer et al, 2021)
- Food insecurity reduces access to sufficient and/or nutritious food, which may reduce the proportion of children, young people and adults who maintain a healthy weight (St Pierre et al, 2022)



Fuel poverty

- Cold temperatures can increase the risk of respiratory infections and exacerbations of asthma and COPD (Public Health England, 2014)
- Living in cold homes can result in raised blood pressure and increased blood viscosity, which can increase the risk of stroke and heart attacks (Institute of Health Equity, 2022)
- Living in cold and damp conditions may also increase the risk of arthritic symptoms, impacting on strength and dexterity, which can lead to falls in older or more frail groups (PHE, 2014)
- It is estimated that 10% of excess winter deaths are directly attributable to fuel poverty (Institute of Health Equity, 2022)
- There is also evidence that links living in a cold home to multiple mental health risks in children, young people and adults (Public Health England, 2014)



Finance and debt

- Insufficient income may lead to some people taking on unsecured personal debt
- Evidence suggests there is a significant relationship between debt and a range of mental health impacts, including depression, suicidal behaviours and substance misuse (Richardson et al, 2013)

Employment

- Increasing rates of unemployment may be a longer-term effect of the cost of living pressures.
- Unemployment is associated with lower healthy life expectancy, poorer self-rated health and poorer mental health.
- These impacts appear to be more pronounced in men & in people unemployed due to health issues (The Health Foundation, 2022).



Housing and homelessness

- Homelessness may be a longer-term impact of the cost of living pressures.
- People experiencing homelessness are more likely to report a long-term health condition, mental health issues, and substance misuse compared to the general population (LGA, 2017)
- There is also increased risk of infectious disease such as TB, HIV and Hepatitis C in homeless groups compared to the general population (LGA, 2017)



Service Impacts

- The health impacts noted are likely to increase demand for health and care services.
- There may be indirect impacts on service delivery due to workforce impacts, such as staff wellbeing and morale, retention and recruitment issues (OHID, 2022).
- In the longer-term, we may see an increased number of children taken into care; poverty has been associated with an increased risk of children taken into care (Bennett et al, 2022).



How can we address this in West Sussex?

A proposed strategic approach and principles to tackle cost of living pressures countywide have been developed and are recommended to the HWB for inclusion as an addendum in the JHWS.



Overview – proposed Addendum to JHWS

Purpose: to describe the high-level collaborative approach to tackling cost of living pressures across West Sussex, and addressing some of the potential negative impacts on the local population's health

The Addendum will:

- Describe the cost of living pressures as they relate to our local population
- Consider high level potential impacts to our population's health and wellbeing
- Describe the approach and principles to addressing cost of living pressures locally.



Proposed strategic approach and principles

- As we continue to develop our response to the cost of living pressures we propose working to the following four key principles:
 - I. **Optimise our use of data and intelligence:** To understand how the cost of living pressures are impacting our local population (and which groups specifically) and to target our response. We will share intelligence where possible with partners to support a coordinated response and collaborative local plans.
 - II. **Utilise community insight:** Insight from operational teams and engagement with residents will provide valuable insight to develop our response.
 - III. **Work in partnership as anchor institutions:** To avoid duplication, reduce gaps in provision and signpost to the cross-organisational support available, to residents and staff.
 - IV. **Maximise the benefit of existing services and schemes:** Ensure that existing services are widely promoted, accessible and optimised to maximise the benefit, ensuring that they reach those that need support the most.



Recommendations

The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to;

- (1) Acknowledge the potential impacts of cost of living pressures on our local population's health and wellbeing.
- (2) Provide feedback on the proposed strategic approach and principles to tackle cost of living pressures in West Sussex as outlined in the Public Health Specialty Registrar's presentation.
- (3) Approve the Public Health Specialty Registrar to progress inclusion of the proposed cost of living addendum in the West Sussex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2024 (JHWS).



References (1/2)

- Institute for Government, "What is the cost of living crisis?," The Institute for Government, 07 February 2022. Available: <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/explainers/cost-living-crisis> [Accessed: 29 September 2022]
- Legatum institute, "Modelling the poverty impact of rising energy costs," 2022.
- Office for National Statistics, "What actions are people taking because of the rising cost of living?," 05 August 2022. Available: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/personalandhouseholdfinances/expenditure/articles/whatactionsarepeopletakingbecauseoftherisingcostofliving/2022-08-05> [Accessed: 29 September 2022]
- New Economics Foundation, "Losing the inflation race," May 2022. Available: <https://neweconomics.org/2022/05/losing-the-inflation-race>. [Accessed: 29 September 2022]
- Shankar, P.; Chung, R.; Frank, D.A., "Association of Food Insecurity with Children's Behavioral, Emotional, and Academic Outcomes: A Systematic Review," *Journal of developmental and behavioural paediatrics*, 2017.
- Royer, M.F.; Guerithault, N.; Braden, B.B.; Laska, M.N.; Bruening, M. , "Food Insecurity Is Associated with Cognitive Function: A Systematic Review of Findings across the Life Course," *Int. J. Transl. Med*, 2021.
- St Pierre, C.; Ver Ploeg, M.; Dietz, W.H. et al, "Food Insecurity and Childhood Obesity: A Systematic Review," *American Academy of Pediatrics*, 2022



References (2/2)

- Public Health England and UCL, "Fuel poverty and cold home-related health problems," 2014
- Institute of Health Equity, "Fuel poverty, cold homes and health inequalities in the UK," 2022
- Richardson T.; Elliott P.; Roberts, R., "The relationship between personal unsecured debt and mental and physical health: a systematic review and meta-analysis.," *Clin Psychol Rev*, 2013
- The Health Foundation, "How does work affect our health," [Online]. Available: <https://www.health.org.uk/news-and-comment/charts-and-infographics/unemployment>. [Accessed 29 September 2022]
- Local Government Association, "The impact of homelessness on health," 2017
- Bennett, D.L.; Schluter, D.K.; Melis, G.; Bywaters, P.; Alexiou, A.; Barr, B., "Child poverty and children entering care in England, 2015–20: a longitudinal ecological study at the local area level," *The Lancet*, 2022
- Office for Health Improvement & Disparities, "Cost of Living: Opportunities for action. A briefing," 2022.

