

Cost of Living impact

Due to the increased cost of living to providers and those that they support the Head of Commissioning, Policing and Crime undertook a consultation with Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) funded providers regarding issues, pressures and impact.

An overview of the responses we received from funded providers on behalf of their service and the victims/survivors they support is below.

Impact is the cost of living having on victims/survivors accessing services.

- Increased new referrals.
- Previous service users returning/requesting more support.
- Increased numbers of victims due to the further pressures on families.
- Those supported by services going without food in order to feed families.
- Domestic abuse victims are less likely to flee due to financial implications.
- Increase in everyday living is making it difficult for victims to engage in a therapeutic process to deal with significant trauma.
- Families going without heat.
- Family / relationship challenges leading to increased abuse, control, similar to 'lockdown' as not able to afford to go out.
- Increased risk of exploitation if lack of funds or lack of clients who have less funds to spend means taking riskier jobs (sex workers).
- Increasing risk for young people as parents' mental health needs or increased work leaves young people neglected.
- Increase in request for advocacy around maximising income, seeking emergency food parcels, support with utility bills etc.
- Concerned about the costs of food, utilities, travel costs, telephones /data and buying wider items essential items e.g., clothing, essential toiletries.

Impact is the cost of living having on your staff / volunteers.

- Pay rise requests to meet cost of living increases.
- Staff retention and staff/volunteers leaving due to increased costs e.g., childcare, travel, utilities and food.
- Staff retention – employees seeking alternative employment or in public sector where salaries and benefits are higher.
- Increase in the need for more immediate reimbursement of costs.
- Negative impact on mental health.
- Living wage employers only able to provide a % of salary uplift.

Impact is the cost of living having on your service

- Increase in rent of service delivery locations.
- Increase in utility costs.

- Increased demand on services for access / transport costs.
- Increased in demand for support.
- NJC cost of living increase pay awards.
- Made cost of living salary increases, backdated to 1st April 2022.

The funding was identified within the MoJ grant and a decision was sought from and agreed by the Head of Policing and Crime under the delegated decision process to allocate a 9% Cost of Living grant payment for 2022/23 to a total of 23 VCSE providers for a total value of £168,410.

The Head of Commissioning has shared the findings with the MoJ informing them of our decision to provide a cost-of-living uplift payment for 2022/23. This also stressed it is essential that the increasing cost of living pressures are taking into urgent consideration for the remainder of the multi-year grant allocations for 2023/24 and 2024/25.