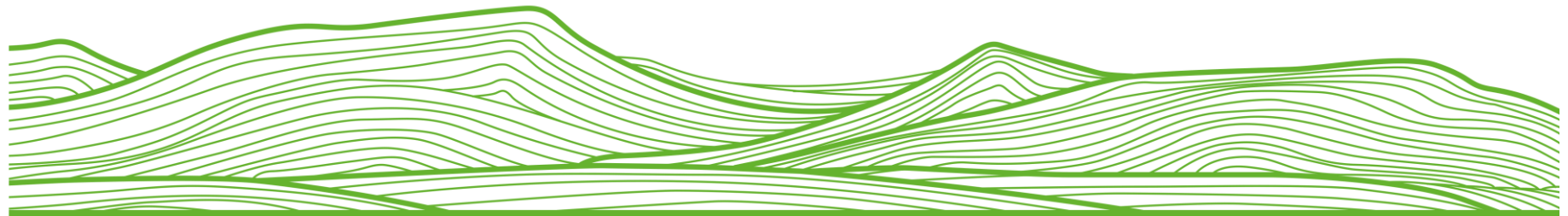


# Local Authority Responses to the Cost of Living Crisis

Jude Langdon  
Social Justice Innovation Manager  
Monmouthshire County Council

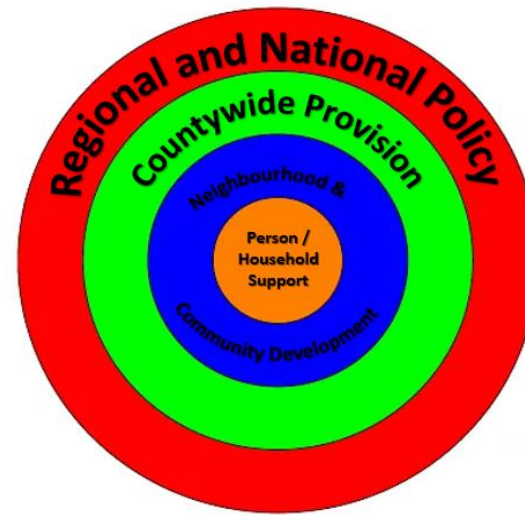


# Local authorities and tackling poverty

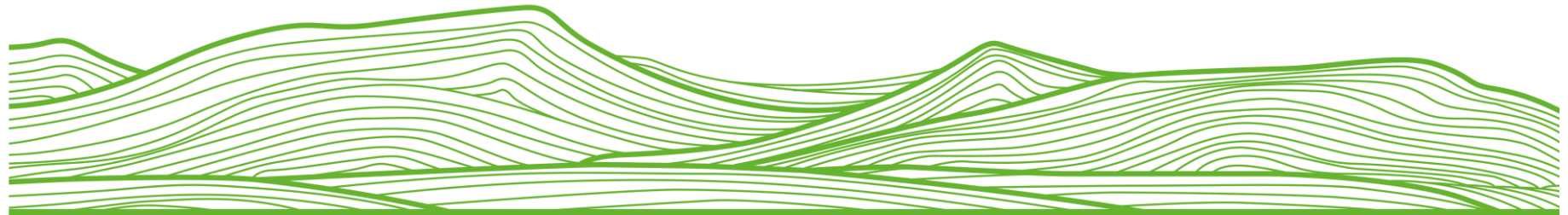
On one level, this is nothing new...

**Purpose:** We will **work together** to promote **equitable prosperity** in Monmouthshire and wherever possible to **prevent our citizens experiencing poverty**.

We recognise that, despite our efforts, there will be points in people's lives at which they experience financial hardship. When this does occur we will come together to provide support **to make that experience as brief, as infrequent and as manageable as possible**. We will help people to emerge from that experience with **greater levels of resilience**.



- Benefits
- Free School Meals
- Housing and homelessness
- Energy efficiency
- Housing support
- Employment
- Flying Start / Early Years
- Children and Families
- Vulnerable adults
- Community Development
- Leisure access
- Sustainable food systems



# Pressures and actions from Cost of Living Crisis

- **Varying picture across Wales**
- **The usual measures aren't necessarily helpful – those centred on low income (eg benefits entitlement)**
- **Substantial increase in foodbank use and referrals**
- **Access to energy vouchers**
- **Increase in rent arrears, council tax arrears?**



# Pressures and actions from Cost of Living Crisis

- Income maximisation: benefits checks, debt advice, scheduling CT payments
- Heating and eating: warm spaces, fuel vouchers, community food projects (e.g. community fridges, food clubs, secondary school breakfasts)
- Targeting: discretionary payments to e.g. temp accommodation, disabled households
- Cost of the school day: reviewing practices around additional expenses that come from schools, school hardship funds, uniform
- Workforce support: increase in mileage, quicker turnaround of expenses, 'financial first-aid'



# Communications

- Communicating in partnership – giving a joined-up message, everything in one place, Dangos
- Direct communication: leaflet drop to every household, targeted social media, drop-in information sessions
- Less direct – ‘warm welcome’ spaces, circular economy, preventing waste, games and grub



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monmouthshire.gov.uk

A leaflet titled 'Worrying about money?' with a torn paper edge. The top part shows a man and a woman sitting at a table with a laptop. The text on the leaflet includes: 'You are not alone. Money worries are more common than most of us realise. It might be an unexpected drop in income, bills starting to pile up, or finding it harder to cover the basics - these issues can affect anyone.' It lists various types of financial issues and provides contact information for Monmouthshire Council and Citizens Advice.

**Worrying about money?**

You are not alone. Money worries are more common than most of us realise. It might be an unexpected drop in income, bills starting to pile up, or finding it harder to cover the basics - these issues can affect anyone.

Remember, there's more help available than you might think. There are people and organisations who can help with some of the most common financial problems. These might include:

- Checking to see if you're entitled to more money in benefits or small grants.
- Help with reducing essential costs and connecting with local support.
- Advice on managing debts and ways to reduce your requirements.
- Help getting back into work or into more secure employment.
- Support to help you stay in your home.

If you're struggling it is always better to seek help and advice sooner rather than later - but it is also never too late to ask for help. You may be a applicant or have much can be done to help you get back on your feet.

We have a short guide to help you search the type of help and support that are available, with details of national organisations as well as local links and connections. Help may be available in places you might not expect.  
Visit: [monmouthshire.gov.uk/money-matters/](http://monmouthshire.gov.uk/money-matters/)

If you're not sure where to start, please see Citizens Advice or your landlord if you are a social housing tenant/see a great place to find all the help and support that is right for you.

You can also phone Monmouthshire County Councils contact centre or visit any of the council's Community Hubs in Aberavonny, Caerleon, Chepstow, Monmouth or Usk, where staff will be happy to have a conversation with you about some of the help you could access.

**monmouthshire sir fynwy**  
01633 644644  
@MonmouthshireCC  
[monmouthshire.gov.uk/money-matters](http://monmouthshire.gov.uk/money-matters)

Partnership with:  
Aberavonny: 01292 826466  
Caerleon: 01292 822179  
Chepstow: 01292 622165  
Monmouth: 01608 773287  
[citizensadvice.org.uk/cadocs](http://citizensadvice.org.uk/cadocs)

# Supporting Community-Led Action

- Begin with what's strong, not what's wrong
- Cost of living summits
- Importance of co-production
- Community responses are varied and creative – e.g. prom outfit loans, Cwtch Angels, winter coat rails, 'lad's lunch',



# Thanks for listening

**Jude Langdon**  
**Social Justice Innovation Manager**  
**Monmouthshire County Council**



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sir fynwy

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