



Exeter City Council

A meeting of **EXETER CITY COUNCIL** will be held at the **GUILDHALL, HIGH STREET, EXETER** on **TUESDAY 18 OCTOBER 2022**, at 6.00 pm, at which you are hereby summoned to attend. The following business is proposed to be transacted:-

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15 Notice of Motion by Councillor Pearce under Standing Order No. 6 Cost of Living Emergency Declaration	3 - 4

This Council declares we are in a Cost of Living Emergency and calls on the Government to introduce an Emergency Budget, to take urgent action to protect the people of Exeter from further harm.

Council notes that:

- Energy costs have more than doubled since October 2021, from a unit cap of £1277 to £2500 currently for average households. Before this hike there were more than 6000 households in fuel poverty in Exeter.
- Food prices are soaring, some basic staples by as much as 20%.
- Inflation has soared above 10%, its highest level in 40 years.
- Personal Taxation is now at its highest level in 70 years yet public services continue to face a funding crisis.
- The real value of pay is falling at its fastest rate since records began.
- Universal credit has been slashed and there appears to be no prospect of an appropriate uprating of welfare payments for those most in need. Current proposals will see families, and others, plunged further in to hardship as they fail to keep pace with rising costs.
- In 2020/21 more than 4,000 children in Exeter lived in poverty.
- Meanwhile £11.8bn of public money has been lost to fraud through the Governments covid support schemes

Council therefore resolves to write to the Prime Minister, copying in our Exeter MP's, urging her to:

- Introduce an immediate Emergency Budget to protect children, families, and pensioners from the worst fall in living standards in generations.
- Cut business rates for small businesses.
- Cut the VAT rate on energy bills.
- Increase the support available to all claimants through the welfare and benefits system.
- Deliver on the calls made by UNISON, the NEU and other education unions to expand the free school meals programme to all families receiving universal credit or an equivalent benefit.

Office of Corporate Manager Democratic & Civic Support			
Civic Centre, Paris Street, Exeter, EX1 1JN	Tel: 01392 277888	Fax: 01392 265593	www.exeter.gov.uk

The Council believes that the Emergency Budget must include real help for residents and local businesses in Exeter.

Date: Monday 10 October 2022

Karime Hassan
Chief Executive &
Growth Director

NOTE: Members are asked to sign the Attendance Register

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HM Treasury, 1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ

John Street
Corporate Manager
Democratic and Civic Support
Exeter City Council
Civic Centre, Paris Street
Exeter, EX1 1JN

Your ref: Nom190722
10 March 2023

Dear Mr Street,

Thank you for your letter of 27 October to the Prime Minister enclosing correspondence outlining Exeter District Council's call for immediate financial support to help people to manage the cost of living and noting Exeter District Council have resolved to declare a 'Cost of Living Emergency'. Your letter has been passed to HM Treasury and I am replying as the Minister responsible for public spending. I would like to offer my sincere apologies for the delay in responding.

I am sorry to hear of the difficulties your constituents find themselves in.

The Government understands that people are worried about the cost of living challenges ahead. That's why decisive action has been taken to support households across the UK, whilst remaining fiscally responsible.

At the Autumn Statement on 17 November 2022, the Government announced further support for this year designed to target the most vulnerable households.

This cost of living support is worth £26 billion in 2023-24. This action taken by the Government means that over 8 million of the most vulnerable households across the UK will continue to be supported through next winter via additional Cost of Living Payments. The Government will provide households on means-tested benefits with an additional Cost of Living Payment of £900 in 2023-24. In the same year, pensioner households will receive an additional £300 Cost of Living Payment, and individuals on disability benefits will receive an additional £150 Disability Cost of Living Payment. The Government is also protecting the most vulnerable in society by increasing benefits from April 2023 in line with inflation, measured by September CPI – 10.1 per cent. This uprating is worth £11 billion to working age households and people with disabilities.

This support for 2023-24 is in addition to the generous support already in place to support households this winter. The Government has announced £37 billion of support for the cost of living in 2022-23. As part of this financial year's cost of living support millions of the most vulnerable households will receive £1200 of support this year through the £400 Energy Bill Support Scheme, £150 Council Tax rebate and one-off £650 Cost of Living Payment for those on means-tested benefits, with additional support for pensioners and those claiming disability benefits.

For those in need of additional support, the Government has provided a further £1 billion to enable a twelve-month extension to the Household Support Fund. This will enable Local Authorities to support households with the cost of food, energy and other essentials.

Regarding energy and fuel poverty, the Government acted across the UK to bring down the cost of energy and support households and businesses. This winter, the Government are spending £55 billion to directly help households and businesses with their energy bills - amongst the largest support plans in Europe. The Government will continue to provide support to all households through the Energy Price Guarantee, which will save the typical household around £900 this winter and £500 in 2023-24. The Government has also doubled to £200 the level of support for households that use alternative fuels, such as heating oil, LPG, coal or biomass, to heat their homes. This support will be delivered as soon as possible this winter.

Finally, through the Energy Bill Relief Scheme the Government is providing a discount on wholesale gas and electricity prices for all non-domestic consumers (including UK businesses, the voluntary and public sectors), protecting them from soaring energy costs and providing them with the certainty they need to plan through the acute crisis this winter. In addition to this, the Government will also provide a fixed payment of £150 to all UK non-domestic consumers who are off the gas grid and use alternative fuels, with additional 'top-up' payments for large users of heating oil based on actual usage.

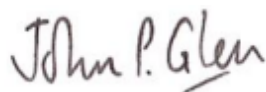
The Government is also prioritising the health sector. At the Autumn Statement, in November, the Government provided £3.3 billion to the NHS in each of the next two years to ensure that the NHS can take rapid action on issues such as improving urgent and emergency care and getting elective performance back to pre-pandemic levels.

The Government is also providing a generous Business Rates package worth £13.6 billion over the next five years to support high streets and protect businesses from large bill increases. This includes over £500 million of support to the smallest businesses with a three year Supporting Small Business (SSB) scheme. The SSB will cap bill increases at £600 per year for any business losing eligibility for some or all Small Business Rate Relief or Rural Rate Relief at the 2023 revaluation.

The Government is continuing to keep the situation under review and focus support on the most vulnerable whilst ensuring whilst acting in a fiscally responsible way.

Thank you for taking the trouble to make me aware of these concerns and for the actions you are taking to support the most vulnerable in your council.

Yours sincerely,



THE RT HON JOHN GLEN MP