

Proposed by Cllr Saima Ashraf

Motion – Cost-of-Living Crisis

The United Kingdom is in the grips of a cost-of-living crisis. Inflation is at 9.9%, the highest level for a generation, while wages today are broadly the same as they were in 2008. Fuel costs, supply chain issues, labour shortages and the Russian invasion of Ukraine have all pushed up prices for families. Even with the Government's proposed two-year cap on average energy costs from October 2022, households will still be paying double what they were in October 2021.

The number of Barking and Dagenham residents attending foodbanks, Community Food Clubs and the Homes and Money Hubs has been increasing throughout the year. We expect more people to require assistance from the Council and its community partners through the winter and beyond.

The Government provided some funding in May 2022 for local authorities to provide discretionary payments to help households with the rising cost of living and energy costs. However, more funding is urgently required to continue these schemes and also to provide additional help to our community partners who are doing crucial work on the frontline throughout this cost-of-living crisis.

The community and faith groups who are running schemes and initiatives that are helping people when they need support the most are also facing rising costs and are affected by energy price rises. The Government needs to provide local authorities with extra funding to help these groups to continue their important work in the community.

Last year, bonuses paid out to bankers in the City reached their highest levels since 2007, before the financial crash, and this trend is set to continue.

In light of the City's banking sector enjoying booming bonuses while families struggle to make ends meet, and our community partners struggle to meet both rising demand and rising costs, this Assembly calls on the Chancellor of the Exchequer to introduce a tax on bankers' bonuses. This Assembly asks that income raised from this Bonus Tax is ringfenced for local authorities to spend on discretionary payments to hard-pressed residents and hard-working community partners.