

**MOTION TO EAST LoTHIAN COUNCIL**  
**23 August 2022**

**Emergency Relief for the Cost of Living Crisis**

It is noted that the Council has implemented various supporting packages for residents on low incomes as part of the Scottish Government's COVID response and we commend the excellent work and initiatives.

Unfortunately, we find ourselves in unprecedented times with a "perfect storm" causing a cost of living crisis, the likes of which most of us will never have seen before. National governments have done some work in setting up emergency one-off payments to those on certain benefits, but far more must be done if we are to assist the residents and businesses of East Lothian through this crisis.

While plenty of evidence exists in relation to rates of absolute poverty in East Lothian, there is an ever-growing issue of "hidden poverty". The number of working poor in East Lothian is expected to grow exponentially during this crisis, with East Lothian Foodbank already reporting having helped 7496 people with a food parcel in 2021. Amongst those were 2837 children.

Council Leader, Cllr Hampshire, has previously stated "Now is not the time to do nothing". This Council fully agrees with this sentiment and aims to provide practical assistance to those with least resources during such exceptionally difficult times.

This Council therefore commits to having the following emergency and temporary measures fully costed for decision as soon as possible, with an update to be provided at the next full Council meeting:

1 – All Council-run schools open up for breakfast clubs and after-school clubs, giving parents the opportunity of additional hours to their working day and also ensuring children and young people have a safe and secure environment.

2 – To offer universal free school meals across the Council-run schools estate, including breakfast and/or a meal to those who attend after-school clubs.

3 – To offer free places to both breakfast and after-school clubs (including free access to food) to all children and young people who attend, with a voluntary payment system for those who can afford to pay.

Proposed by: Councillor Lee-Anne Menzies  
Date: 11 August 2022

Seconded by: Councillor Cher Cassini  
Date: 11 August 2022

Received by (officer): Jill Totney, Team Manager, Democratic & Licensing  
Date: 11 August 2022