



Dear Member,

You will be aware that we recently asked for your views in our 'Cost-of-Living' Crisis Survey. A big 'Thank you' to everyone who took the time to respond. Your views are really important to us, as your participation helps us to support you in addressing this immediate crisis which threatens the delivery of vital services.

We won't take up too much of your time but just wanted to share with you some of the key findings from the survey, so here goes:

- 123 responses were received;
- The majority of people reported that the primary areas where they have experienced an increase in living costs were with energy, fuel and food. People also reported a rise in general bills but to a slightly lesser extent;
- The rise in cost of living saw household bills increase for the majority (77%) by between £100 and £300 per month. Nearly 22% of respondents have seen an increase of over £300 per month;
- 72% of members stated that the HMRC mileage rate of 45p was no longer sufficient to meet their costs;
- When asked what have members had to do to meet this increase in living costs, the common theme was 'cutting back' on many essential and non-essential items, changing spending habits on food and reverting to cheaper brands. Many have taken on 2nd jobs, and many homes are going unheated unless absolutely necessary;
- 27% reported that in the coming months they saw themselves having to make enquiries or applying for in-work benefits to be able to meet the increase in living costs;
- Of those working from home, 62% reported that they felt this had not helped them financially to manage the increase in living costs due to the rising prices to heat their homes and additional lighting and electricity needed to run a home office (charge laptops, phones etc.);
- 25% of people reported that they had employed strategies such as grouping work together or making more virtual/telephone meetings instead of meeting people face to face in order to save on fuel.
- 50% of respondents commented that the employer had a role to play in easing the burden and suggested that a home working allowance be introduced, reducing Council Tax, and increasing the current mileage rate above 45p to more realistic levels.

If you'd like to see the full survey report please don't hesitate to get in touch and we can share that with you.

We've shared the full report with the Chief Executive and Leader and have already put forward suggestions that we believe could help based on the feedback received.

We hope you find the information useful.