

Lothians MSP urges constituents to seek help with energy bills

Advice Direct Scotland held a parliamentary reception at Holyrood where Lothians MSP Foyso1 Choudhury met them to find out ways they can help his constituents.

The charity provides free practical advice to anyone who is worried about money, offer advice on understanding their energy bills, support on issues around meters, or helping to move suppliers.

Staff from the body also highlighted their moneyadvice.scot service which also provides free advice and support on a wide range of debt-related issues. Households have now begun to receive the first instalments of the £400 Energy Bill Support Scheme payments with their October electricity bill, and this will be applied in six instalments until March 2023. Anyone who has a prepayment meter will receive vouchers by post. Advice Direct Scotland is also keen to make sure that people avoid scams and fraudulent messages.

The charity encourages people to check their benefits with its calculator here www.advice.scot.

Mr Choudhury said: "It was great to learn more about Advice Direct Scotland's service and how they can provide free, practical, and impartial advice on a range of issues including debt, energy bills and consumer rights.

“These are issues which many of my constituents are unfortunately facing during this cost-of-living crisis.

“I know that households across Lothian and Scotland are struggling and worried about the coming winter months, especially with the rise in energy prices.

“Please be assured that we are here to support and assist you wherever possible.

“I would urge you to use Advice Direct Scotland’s resources and to reach out to your local representatives if you need further help.”

Andrew Bartlett, chief executive of Advice Direct Scotland, said: “It was encouraging to see so many MSPs keen to find out how they can support households through the cost-of-living crisis and difficult winter ahead.

“With the recent rise in energy prices, and more on the horizon, we know that many households are facing financial difficulties.

“Right now, we have qualified advisers ready to provide free, practical support to anyone in Scotland through the [energyadvice.scot](https://www.energyadvice.scot) service – and we can also help any customers having difficulties reaching their supplier.

“Anyone with debt worries should speak to our advisers at [moneyadvice.scot](https://www.moneyadvice.scot) for possible solutions, and it’s vital that everyone checks they are receiving their full entitlement to benefits by using our calculator at www.advice.scot.”



Pic Greg Macvean – Advice Direct Scotland event with MSPs at Scottish Parliament