

**North Yorkshire County Council  
Scarborough and Whitby Area Constituency Committee  
25 November 2022**

**Stronger Communities and Community Response to Cost of Living**

**1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To provide Members with an overview of the support provided to and by local communities in response to the Cost of Living crisis, and an update of the Stronger Communities Programme in the Scarborough and Whitby Constituency area.

**2.0 Overview**

2.1 [NYCC Website – Cost of Living Support](#)

[Cost of living support | North Yorkshire County Council](#)

2.2 [North Yorkshire Local Assistance Fund \(NYLAF\)](#)

[Local assistance fund | North Yorkshire County Council](#)

- The fund provides practical support for vulnerable people who are moving into or seeking to remain within the community including help with food and fuel costs or other essential household items.
- The scheme has been enhanced in 2022/23 using additional funding from the national Household Support Fund to enable applicants to apply for up to four awards of food and/or utility/utility top-up in a rolling 12 month period.
- For other items provided under the fund, a maximum entitlement of two items may also be awarded within the same 12 month period, only one of which may be a white good item.
- There will be no minimum period that eligible applicants will have to wait before making another application during this time. An applicant may apply again in the same period where entitlement has run out only where it can be evidenced that circumstances have changed however.
- Eligibility for support – groups of people:
  - carers
  - families who are under exceptional pressure
  - individuals recently released from prison
  - people with learning or physical disabilities
  - people with mental health problems
  - people who have a drug or alcohol dependency
  - those who are homeless
  - those who have experienced domestic abuse
- To be eligible for Local Assistance Fund support in North Yorkshire you must also be able to demonstrate that you:
  - are 16 years old or over

- live in, or are moving into North Yorkshire
- receive a means-tested benefit or have a household income below the low income threshold (currently £16,105) and less than £1,000 in capital
- have exhausted all other forms of support
- are receiving support from an Authorised Agent
- Applications are made through authorised agencies that will provide support to those who are eligible and are identified as vulnerable.

### 2.3 Household Support Fund (National DWP Funded support)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/household-support-fund-guidance-for-local-councils/household-support-fund-final-guidance-for-county-councils-and-unitary-authorities-in-england>

- Round three of HSF has been announced covering Oct 2022 to March 2023
- Grant determination is different from Phase 2 – although the ring-fences in the funding have been removed for this round, DWP have outlined that there should be a particular focus on those most in need including:
  - Those who have missed out on Cost of Living payments and Energy Support;
  - Those who are vulnerable to rising costs, including families, pensioners, unpaid carers and those with a disability.
  - Particular focus on energy and offsetting rising bill costs.
- Support will include direct awards in the form of a shopping voucher to households identified through our eligibility framework.
- NYLAF: maintaining the uplift to the maximum number of applications (4 emergency awards for food and / or utilities) in a 12 month rolling period.
- Warm and Well: maintaining support for those in need of support with their energy bills, including access to energy vouchers and / or direct supplier payments.
- Food Banks: grants scheme launched last week for the winter period in order to maintain capacity in the free food infrastructure across the County.
- Eligibility criteria needs Executive sign off
- Round two – support given to 38,692 households across county

### 2.4 Food Banks and other Food Support

- Grants for foodbanks – funded through HSF budget
- 4<sup>th</sup> round of grants launched 26 October 22

### 2.5 Warm and Well

<https://www.warmandwell.org.uk/>

- Public health commissioned service
- Contract held by CAB
- Advice, information and direct grants for help with fuel costs

### 2.6 Free School Meals for eligible families

- Children and Young People's Services - [Free school meals | North Yorkshire County Council](#)
- All reception, year 1 and 2 children

- Other ages subject to being in receipt of any of the following:
  - Universal Credit, provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods (£616.67 per month)
  - Income Support
  - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
  - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
  - support under part six of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
  - the guarantee element of Pension Credit
  - Child Tax Credit, provided you are also not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual household gross income that does not exceed £16,190 (as assessed by HMRC)
  - Working Tax Credit run-on, paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

## 2.7 Support with Childcare Costs

- Government funding is available to support childcare costs including tax free childcare which is for all working families with children under 12 years old (or under 17 for children with a disability).
- Some two-year-old children are eligible for 15 hours of free childcare, depending on income and the receipt of certain benefits. See if you qualify for [15 hours of free childcare for two-year-olds](#).
- Children are automatically eligible for 15 hours of universal funding for up to 38 weeks per year the term after their third birthday.
- In addition to the universal 15 hours of government funding, some families may be entitled to claim an extra 15 hours of childcare per week, bringing the total to 30 hours. This is known as [Extended Entitlement government funding](#).

## 2.8 Holiday Activity and Food Programme – DfE funded

- Free holiday activities and food for free school meal eligible children in Easter, Summer and Christmas main school holidays
- Delivered in partnership with range of community providers

## 2.9 Digital Support –Reboot North Yorkshire

<https://rebootny.co.uk/>

- The Reboot initiative involves distributing unwanted laptops, tablets and other devices which have been donated. To access the scheme you need a referral from a local voluntary sector organisation, a school, the county council's Early Help or Living Well team, or a faith group.
- Digital buddies available through Citizens Online.

## 2.10 Warm Welcome – warm places and spaces

<https://www.warmwelcome.uk/>

- Network of community spaces offering a warm welcome.
- Grants available (Stronger Communities and Locality Budgets) to local VCSE groups to help with costs
- Promoted through national warm welcome network which includes a map of all registered spaces

## 2.11 Local Community Support Organisations

- County-wide network of voluntary sector partners established during covid-19 pandemic offering a range of help and support including practical help at home and signposting to local groups and advice.

### **3.0 Local Area Information - Scarborough and Whitby**

#### **3.1 Community Support Organisations (CSOs)**

This County-wide network of voluntary sector partners established during covid-19 pandemic to offer a range of help and support including practical help at home and signposting to local groups and advice. The CSOs covering the Scarborough and Whitby areas are:

- Scarborough & Filey Areas – Age UK Scarborough and District and Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale Mind
- Whitby Area – Coast and Vale Community Action (CaVCA)
- Esk Valley – Revival North Yorkshire

3.2 Working with local networks and partners the CSOs have continued to provide a core offer of community support as well as activities and services aimed to help build people's confidence and independence, and to support them to re-engage in their communities. These new activities place emphasis on improving wellbeing through appropriate activity and social interaction. The CSOs have been called upon to be a local point of contact to help promote County initiatives and to support people with navigating what benefits and support they are entitled to for instance with regard HSF.

3.3 In addition to running 'warm spaces' of their own the CSOs are helping with the identification and mapping of groups and organisations offering additional activities and warm spaces across the Whitby and Scarborough area. This information is then used by individuals and referring organisations to find suitable activities local and relevant to their needs and interests.

#### **3.4 Holiday Activities and Food Programme**

Stronger Communities continue to lead on the delivery of this programme, which was launched with the branding of FEAST (Food, Entertainment, Arts & Sport Together) in partnership with Children and Young People's Service (CYPS) and the voluntary and community sector. Planning is well underway for the delivery of activities around the Christmas holiday period with eleven organisations having already being approved to provide 67 sessions supporting 2836 free places in the Scarborough and Whitby area. These free places will be for children in receipt of free school meals but also could include other identified vulnerable children. As usual for a number of these providers there is the flexibility to increase places if there is demand.

#### **3.5 Digital Inclusion**

Work on Reboot North Yorkshire continues to progress with a particular focus on enlisting the support of our local communities and voluntary sector groups as Community Partners to allow a network of community Reboot projects to grow and develop across the county. Scarborough library is one of the two key centres in North Yorkshire for making sure that Reboot devices are safe and fit for purpose. While all libraries in the area are collection and distribution points.

#### **3.6 Health and Wellbeing**

Stronger Communities continues to strengthen its relationships with NHS partners and has administered a range of NHS mental health grants for the last two years, including grass roots suicide prevention, a self-harm co-design project and postvention support. The programme is also supporting the transformation of Community Mental Health programme in partnership with North Yorkshire and Vale of York CCGs the grant programme 'Improving the lives of people with mental illness' is open to Scarborough and Whitby organisations is currently open with the closing date of 20th November 2022.

3.7 Stronger Communities also continues to develop strong working relationships with social care colleagues, with sustained involvement in the Prevention and wellbeing

contracts. The 'Stay Healthy, Independent and Connected' grant opportunity is now live with four grants covering Scarborough and Whitby area with the closing date being 27th November 2022.

### 3.8 Capacity Building

In parallel to the support given to the three Community Support Organisations in the Scarborough and Whitby area, the Stronger Communities Programme has continued to strengthen local community assets and infrastructure; this has included continuing to encourage relationships and collaborations between voluntary and community sector organisations as well as stabilising, and / or building capacity within them if required. Currently six VCSE organisations in the Scarborough and Ryedale area are receiving some specialist support to assist them with areas such as re-modelling their services, strengthening their monitoring and outcomes model and providing additional capacity for fundraising; all of which have been crucial in trying to ensure their future sustainability.

## 4.0 **Recommendations**

4.1 It is recommended that Members note the content of this report.

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14 November 2022