

North Yorkshire County Council
Selby and Ainsty Constituency Committee

13 January 2023

Cost of Living – Activity Update

1.0 Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To update Members on the overarching activities being undertaken by the County Council to provide information and support to assist residents around the cost of living.
- 1.2 To update Members on cost of living related issues or activities relevant to the Selby and Ainsty Constituency area.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 This report provides an update on work being led by NYCC in conjunction with partners around the cost of living crisis.
- 2.2 The report also provides information about voluntary and community sector work mitigating cost of living impacts within the Selby and Ainsty Constituency.
- 2.3 Cost of living increases are having adverse impact on people's lives. The annual rate of inflation eased slightly to 10.7% in November from 11.1% in October 2022 which was a 41-year high, affecting the affordability of goods and services for households. The Office for Budget Responsibility predicts a post-tax reduction in household income of 4.3% in 2022-23, the biggest fall since comparable records began in 1956.
- 2.4 Price increases affect low-income households most as they spend an above average proportion of income on energy and food. Food bank charities report increased demand with the Trussell Trust providing almost 1.3 million emergency food parcels in April-September 2022, a third more than in the same period in 2021 and 50% more than pre-pandemic levels.
- 2.5 91% of adults in Great Britain reported an increase in their cost of living in October-November 2022 according to the Office for National Statistics. In North Yorkshire we are collecting feedback on cost of living impacts through the Let's Talk conversation. 1,579 responses received by 7th November indicate that most people have been impacted to some extent. 73% of those affected say they are using less heating, 52% are spending less on leisure and 51% are taking fewer journeys. 24% report cutting back on food, 12% are using credit and 10% are increasing debt. This picture may change before the survey ends and more in-depth analysis will be undertaken.

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3.0 Direct support for households

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Scheme/Activity	Details	Activity												
Household Support Fund Scheme (Government scheme)	<p><i>Phase two (April-September 2022)</i> Required to allocate at least one third of funding to families with children and at least one third to pensioners. Payments had to help in 1 of 4 eligible categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • food, energy and water • essentials linked to energy and water • wider essentials • exceptional emergency housing costs <p><i>Phase three (Oct 2022 - March 2023)</i> No ring-fencing but focus on reaching people not supported by other government schemes and on help with energy.</p>	<p><i>Phase two (April – September 2022)</i> 39,023 households directly supported by HSF with 22,495 households benefitting from the direct award element of the scheme. Redemption rates of voucher support were 92.7% across the county and 92.5% across Selby district.</p> <p><i>Phase three (October – March 2023)</i> We expect HSF activity to support c40,000 households, with c.24,000 eligible households benefitting from a direct award in the form of a shopping voucher in January 2023. Support is also available through Warm and Well, NYLAF and Food Banks.</p>												
North Yorkshire Local Assistance Fund (NYLAF)	Provides emergency financial support such as energy or food vouchers and can supply necessities or household goods such as a fridge.	<p>NYLAF applications have increased over the past three years in all Districts with a 33% increase between 2020/21 and 2021/22. Comparative Quarter 1 (April – June) figures over the 3 years for Selby and Harrogate were:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Q1 2020/21</th> <th>Q1 2021/22</th> <th>Q1 2022/23</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Harrogate</td> <td>249</td> <td>366</td> <td>473</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Selby</td> <td>107</td> <td>117</td> <td>244</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Q1 2020/21	Q1 2021/22	Q1 2022/23	Harrogate	249	366	473	Selby	107	117	244
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Harrogate	249	366	473											
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Warm and Well North Yorkshire	Offers practical solutions to reduce fuel poverty including access to hardship funds and energy vouchers.	Warm & Well North Yorkshire saw a 129% increase in demand in 2021/22. Across Q1/Q2 in 2022/23 Warm and												

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		Well received 1,978 referrals compared to 527 in the same period last year an increase of 275%. 11.5% of referrals into the scheme during Quarter 2 were from Selby District, compared to 13% from Harrogate and 44% from Scarborough.
Free School Meals	All children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled to free school meals. Parents and carers eligible for certain financial support can apply for Free School Meals for children in Year 3 and above in both primary and secondary schools.	<p>The School Census shows a statistically significant year on year increase in the proportion of children known to be eligible for Free School Meals in each of the past 4 years. Eligibility across North Yorkshire has risen from 9.8% in 2018/19 to 15.4% in 2021/22. This trend reflects the national position, where eligibility has grown from 15.4% to 22.5%. However, whilst a higher proportion of the North Yorkshire school population are eligible for FSM, the number who are taking FSM has reduced, from 88.3% in 2020/21 to 78.3% in 2021/22.</p> <p>Work undertaken to promote Free School Meals and improve the application process should increase uptake. New data should be available in January 2023.</p>
Holiday Activity and Food programme (HAF)	Provide a wide range of activities for children and young people in North Yorkshire and York. The activities are free to children on benefits-related free school meals and include a hot meal or packed lunch each day	Over summer 2022, 26,260 free activity places were taken up by primary aged children and 3,104 by secondary aged children. Alongside those accessing free places, 39,624 paid for places were taken up by primary aged children and 912 paid for places were taken up by secondary aged young people. Provision is also made available at Christmas and Easter (not half terms) in accordance with Department of Education guidance.
NYCC Local Food Support	Following one off grant awards made through Defra's Local Authority Emergency Assistance Grant for Food and Essentials to support food supply during the pandemic, the	Monitoring and evaluation of the Food for the Future grant programme is ongoing and supports the food insecurity

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	<p>Food for the Future Grants fund launched in 21/22. The fund aims to embed local sustainable food support options, which also support beneficiaries to build their levels of confidence and independence.</p> <p>A further 44 grants were awarded to food banks, and / or organisations that supply food to those in need, to boost capacity in the County's free food infrastructure, via the three phases of Household Support Fund (one off grants made available to Local Authorities by Department of Work and Pensions).</p>	<p>research and insight work being done with City of York Council.</p> <p>5,484 households were directly supported through phase one of the Food Bank Support Fund (HSF funded); this almost doubled to 10,164 households in phase two over the summer. Within Selby and Ainsty 1,646 households had been supported by the end of phase 2. Interim monitoring on the third phase of this scheme is due in January 2023.</p> <p>The 3rd phase of funding was considerably oversubscribed which is likely to be a proxy measure of the increasing demands being made upon organisations supporting the most financially vulnerable.</p> <p>Within Selby and Ainsty Constituency 13 organisations benefitted and/or continue to benefit from £77,500 of investment. Some of this related to covid support eg support delivered by BRIGHT in Selby but the most recent awards will focus on reducing cost of living impacts. Funding within Selby district has gone to organisations including Tadcaster Salvation Army who deliver a food bank, Selby District AVS for its Community Fridge and to a consortium of providers including Sherburn Visiting Scheme, Libraries in Tadcaster and Sherburn and Tadcaster Swimming pool, Stutton Village Hall and local Churches with offers ranging from providing free hot drinks to expanding luncheon club capacity. Feedback from Harrogate based Resurrected Bites is that residents from Great Ouseburn and Spofforth make use of the Community Grocery operating in Knaresborough.</p>
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4.0 General support

- 4.1 In conjunction with internal and external partners, the cost of living support page on the NYCC website has been updated and reconfigured (screenshot of landing page attached at **Annex A**) to provide as full a picture as possible of available support and advice. There are links to more local level sources of information, including the District and Borough Councils and Community Support Organisations (CSOs). Information will be updated as new offers and / or initiatives become available.
- 4.2 NYCC has also developed a communications plan for cost of living support using a variety of tools. This includes developing a range of social media assets and an A5 leaflet which will be available in hard copy and digitally and will push people to the updated cost of living page on the website, their local Community Support Organisation (CSO), and / or to NYCC's Customer Service Centre. Digital, telephone and in person access to support will be available through this combined approach. 6,000 hard copy leaflets will be distributed to CSOs and other key voluntary and community sector delivery partners such as Food Banks, our Library networks and to front line teams in Health and Adult Services (HAS) and Children and Young People's Service (CYPS).
- 4.3 We will also be running a weekly media and communications campaign with key messages covering the following key areas:
- Support for children and families
 - Food Insecurity
 - Advice on money
 - Free Wi-fi and digital
 - Transport
 - Energy saving
 - Support for voluntary and community groups delivering cost of living activity

Officers running the communication campaign will liaise with relevant teams to keep messages up to date and relevant. All social media assets will be made available to District and Borough Councils and voluntary and community sector partners.

- 4.4 In addition to information provided by NYCC the CSOs are ideally placed to access granular knowledge about local help as they continue to support residents through business as usual or extension activities. The CSOs in the Selby and Ainsty Constituency area are Selby District AVS, Tadcaster Volunteer Community Support Association (previous name Tadcaster Volunteer Cars and Services Association), Sherburn in Elmet Community Trust who are working ever more closely with Sherburn Visiting Scheme, Boroughbridge Community Care, Harrogate and District Community Association and Knaresborough Connectors.
- 4.5 There has been a lot of publicity around warm spaces for people to access over winter. In North Yorkshire the agreed Warm Welcome approach is to encourage those managing community buildings such as libraries or community hubs to consider extending their opening hours and/or offering a hot drink and food. This is a more affordable option than seeking to open additional venues. We are encouraging

venues to sign up to the Warm Welcome Network (<http://www.warmwelcome.uk>) so that people can find local offers.

- 4.6 Some funding is available for community and voluntary groups wishing to support cost of living challenges in their communities including Stronger Communities Community Grants, Locality Budgets and some District Council schemes. Two Ridings Community Foundation (TRCF) has launched a Cost of Living Crisis Fund which will be increased by £140K through UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Links have been made with Warm and Well to distribute Warm Packs through our network of local delivery partners.

5.0 Food Insecurity Specific Work

- 5.1 Food insecurity research and insight work is continuing in conjunction with City of York Council (CYC). This broadly encompasses:
- developing and utilising an evidence base of interventions including outcomes
 - building understanding of the challenges faced by food access providers, the unmet needs, the real-life outcomes and thoughts about sustainability / viability
 - developing a clearer map of provision across York & North Yorkshire and identifying possible gaps in areas / or models
 - innovating / experimenting with a lived experience approach
- 5.2 The final report will be published in 2023 but information from the project is already in use and has contributed to the Stronger Communities Programme's decision-making process for the heavily over-subscribed grants programme for the Food Bank Winter Support Fund.
- 5.3 A study by the University of Sheffield mapped the UK looking at 3 descriptors of adult food insecurity and identified that in January 2021 7.4% of Selby residents identified as hungry which was defined as having skipped food for a whole day or more in the previous month or been hungry but not eaten because they couldn't afford or access food. 14.7% were struggling ie they had sought help to access food or had skipped a meal or reduced its size or gave a reason for having insufficient food. 7.85% were worried about obtaining food. We believe that residents of Selby, Scarborough and Craven are most likely to be hungry or struggling.
- 5.4 The NYCC Corporate & Partnerships Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered a report on the use of food banks and other food support services. on 24th October 2022 and agreed to undertake a scrutiny review on the use of Food Banks and other food support services across the county with a focus on the medium–long term situation. As part of the review Committee members will visit their local food support services.
- 5.5 The NYCC Public Health Healthier Lives, Community and Economy team will work with Stronger Communities and Local Enterprise Partnership colleagues to bring together a range of food sector organisations to establish a food system framework and ultimately a food partnership to address the immediate to long term challenges identified

6.0 Fuel Poverty

- 6.1 In April 2022 the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy published the Sub-Regional Fuel Poverty Report 2020. Report data is based on the Low Income Low Energy Efficiency (LILEE) fuel poverty metric which classes a household as fuel poor if it lives in a property with an energy efficiency rating of band D, E, F or G according to the most up-to-date Fuel Poverty Energy Efficiency Rating (FPEER) Methodology; and its disposable income (income after housing costs and energy needs) is below the poverty line (disposable income 60% or less of median income). Yorkshire and Humber has the second highest regional fuel poverty rates in England.
- 6.2 Although both Selby district and Harrogate borough have household fuel poverty rates below the English average of 13.2% two Lower Super Output Areas in Selby town ward are amongst the 20 North Yorkshire LSOAs with the highest proportion of households in fuel poverty, one in 7th place and the other 20th .
- 6.3 Yorkshire Energy Doctor Community Interest Company, an excellent VCSE organisation based in Selby, provides advice on energy - understanding bills, price rises, dealing with energy debts, financial grants, schemes for energy efficiency improvements, energy saving tips, the Priority Services Register – and on water bills. They deliver one to one advice and attend sessions at community venues like Selby Community House and the Communitea Centre both in Selby town. They are also delivering a community energy ambassadors course giving attendees the knowledge and skills to pass information and tips on to neighbours, friends and residents in their communities. The Stronger Communities programme has also funded them to deliver advice sessions in each district and to provide slow cookers to 40 individuals/families from target groups attending these sessions. They are also the Selby partner for the Warm and Well service managed by Citizens Advice.

7.0 Activities within Selby and Ainsty Constituency Area

- 7.1 Several VCSE organisations and Town and Parish Councils have initiated local support networks to share information, increase local offers for residents and raise awareness of help available. Some of these organisations have benefitted from the local food support funding referenced at 3.1 and from small community grants through the County Council's Stronger Communities programme.
- 7.2 In terms of warm space initiatives both Tadcaster and Selby Town Councils brought together interested groups to co-ordinate and enhance Winter support offers. Further information about support available in Selby under the banner of "A Selby Warm Welcome" can be accessed here <https://selbytowncouncil.gov.uk/your-town/selby-warm-welcome/> . In Tadcaster a flyer entitled "Tadcaster Community Support" has been prepared and circulated giving residents information of a support line and local activities with a focus on cheap food and staying warm and connected.
- 7.3 Harrogate Borough Council has produced a helpful leaflet "You are not alone" [You are not alone - financial and wellbeing support \(harrogate.gov.uk\)](https://www.harrogate.gov.uk/you-are-not-alone-financial-and-wellbeing-support) . Local support schemes are setting up in Boroughbridge, Green Hammerton and Tockwith and local CSOs will hold detailed information about local support provision. Harrogate venues on the

Warm Welcome site in reasonable proximity to some Constituency residents are the Library and Chain Lane Community Centre in Knaresborough, Boroughbridge and District Community Care and Gateway Church in York. Other activities available will meet the general aims of warm spaces, for example

- 7.4 Selby Anti-Poverty Partnership deliver “Winter Support and Advice Drop in Sessions” on Wednesday afternoons in Community House where people can get information and other support. The timing ties in with a Community Fridge session and people accessing the Fridge are encouraged to access the drop in.
- 7.5 Residents can access the Trussell Trust’s Selby and District Foodbank and we know that residents in the lower part of Selby access Knottingley Food Bank and residents from Tadcaster area and places like Green Hammerton or Tockwith may also look to Wetherby Foodbank. Boroughbridge Community Care can supply emergency food parcels to the Tockwith & Green Hammerton area and Knaresborough has a Trussell Trust foodbank. Selby and District Foodbank gave out 1,798 food parcels between April and September 2022 up on the same period in the preceding two years and with many first-time users. Selby District AVS Community Fridge which is positioned around avoiding food waste clearly also addresses poverty is well used. The Fridge also offers a hot meal on Fridays at a cost of 50p - £1. The Salvation Army operates an independent foodbank in Tadcaster and there are contingency plans for Tadcaster and Rural CIC / The Barn to take over operations if the Salvation Army moves out of Tadcaster in 2023.
- 7.6 As stated at 4.5 NYCC is encouraging venues to register on the Warm Welcome website if they are offering access to free, warm and welcoming spaces over winter <https://www.warmwelcome.uk/#find-a-space>. Venues registered include Selby Library, Sherburn and Villages Community Library which is opening on Wednesdays to support this initiative, Charles Street Social Café run by SDAVS at Selby’s Coultish Centre from 0900 – 1500 on Mondays with a hot, 2 course meal available for £4, Carlton Methodist Church began opening 1300-1500 on alternate Tuesdays from 8 November and offers hot drinks and St Wilfrid’s Parish Hall in Brayton will open 0900-1300 on Mondays from 16 January 2023 to offer hot drinks and food.
- 7.7 Not all offers in Selby district are listed on the Warm Welcome site. Tadcaster Community Library offers free hot drinks and a biscuit and is reminding residents who may struggle to get to the library because of the cold weather of the Home Library Service option and Barlby Community Library recently put on a display of money saving ideas and highlighted budget friendly recipes in their Recipe Corner. Tadcaster Volunteer Community Services Association (formerly The Car Scheme) which is expanding its offer to provide low cost hot drinks and will be providing cheap simple snack meals and the Tadcaster Community Support initiative worked with two local eateries to provide two free Christmas lunch events for older residents before Christmas. Several local cafes in Tadcaster are offering regular low cost pensioner lunches and resident volunteers are offering activities in Calcaria House, Kelcbar Community Centre and Rosemary House. Selby Salvation Army is offering Tuesday Kitchen 11- 1230 with free coffee, social time and a free lunch at 1230 and Toastie Wednesday 10 – 1230 for chat, newspapers and tea and toast. Selby’s Communita Centre also offers free or low cost hot drinks and food.

- 7.8 As well as new provision many other events provide people with opportunities to connect and receive support. Horton Housing deliver regular sessions across the district with a mental wellbeing focus and in Eggborough these are supplemented by a local volunteer providing coffee, cake and activities on the alternate Wednesdays when Horton don't attend. Sherburn Visiting Scheme offer meals on wheels and hold a weekly luncheon club and other social events including at Burton Salmon Village Hall. The Barn in Tadcaster has a particular focus on support for children and families.
- 7.9 Additional resources and initiatives prompted by or supportive of efforts to address cost of living include the Clothing Bank in Brotherton, Baby Bank which runs from The Barn in Tadcaster, the Barn's Tadcaster Grammar School upcycling project, cheap goods made available through the TVCSA charity shop and the AVS clothes swap initiative. Selby town also has the long-standing and valued Hands of Hope charity with its two shops and focus on supporting local people in need. Spirit of Christmas, another local charity, once again ran its "shop" out of Abbots Staithe to give struggling families the opportunity to choose and wrap a free new gift, book and game for their children. Spirit of Christmas has been supported to develop stronger links with local primary schools, particularly in areas of deprivation to ensure it reaches the most in need. Selby residents have long benefitted from the Community Furniture Store and Communita are also providing access to recycled / pre-used furniture.
- 7.10 Despite the challenges there are a good number of established and new organisations and initiatives stepping forward to support residents to the best of their capacity.

8.0 Recommendations

- 8.1 That Members note the contents of this report.

Tom Jenkinson
Stronger Communities Delivery Manager (Selby and District)

Liz Meade
Stronger Communities Delivery Manager (Harrogate)

16 December 2022

Appendix

Annex A – NYCC website screenshot

Cost of living support

There are a wide variety of support schemes and organisations in North Yorkshire which may be able to help or advise if you are struggling to pay for essentials.

- [The North Yorkshire Local Assistance Fund \(NYLAF\)](#). This provides emergency financial support to those unable to meet essential living costs, such as energy bills or food. NYLAF can also make awards in kind, such as supplying basic necessities or household goods such as a fridge.
- [Warm and Well North Yorkshire](#). People can also apply for hardship funding, or help with minor repairs to make their homes warmer under this scheme. Contact Warm and Well on [01609 767555](tel:01609767555) or email www@northyorksica.org.uk
- [Council tax reduction and support scheme](#). If you're on a low income or claim benefits you can apply for a reduction in the council tax you pay. Find [information about the council tax reduction and support scheme](#) and a postcode checker that will take you to your local borough or district council.
- There is also a range of national available on the [Help for Households section of the government website](#) and the [cost of living support section of the government's website](#).

[Advice on money, debt or benefit entitlement](#) >

[Children and families](#) >

[Free wifi and digital support](#) >

[Transport](#) >

[Energy saving](#) >

[Food](#) >

[Community based support including Warm Welcome Spaces](#) >

[Support in your district of North Yorkshire](#) >

Further support