

**NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
SCARBOROUGH AND WHITBY AREA CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE
24th March 2023**

Stronger Communities Update

1.0 Purpose of Report

To provide Members with an update on the Stronger Communities Programme and an overview of progress made in the Scarborough and Whitby Constituency area.

2.0 Background

2.1 Despite the ever-changing landscape of the pandemic over the past 12 months, the community support infrastructure through the Community Support Organisation (CSO) network has remained largely in place since March 2020. As we moved into recovery, a minority of CSOs wound down or scaled back their pandemic response activities. A significant number have however continued to work with the programme on supporting communities with the challenges they face in relation to cost of living and winter pressures. This has been alongside exploring how the successful CSO model could be built upon and developed further to support the health, wellbeing and prevention agenda, and wider community resilience in localities, through the Community Anchor Organisation (CAO) model concept.

2.2 In addition to this work, the programme has also been able to resume pre-pandemic projects and has taken the lead role on a number of new countywide programmes.

2.3 A number of new national initiatives have been launched over the past 12 months particularly around alleviating the cost of living pressures being felt by families and residents on low incomes. Stronger Communities are leading on a number of these programmes and work in partnership with others within the Council and externally.

3.0 Community Support Organisations (CSOs) & Community Response

3.1 The work of the CSOs has shifted focus in 2022/23, moving from pandemic response to recovery. Instead of supporting people who were self-isolating or shielding, their efforts have been on building confidence and independence and helping to remove some of the dependencies that emerged during the pandemic. This has included activities such as supported shopping trips, accompanied walks, social events and support groups and activities.

3.2 In acknowledgement of broader community resilience challenges including cost of living and winter pressures, the CSOs have been retained until the end of March 2023; continuing to work in partnership with NYCC to act as a place based single point of contact for locally based support, in collaboration with their volunteers, partners and networks.

3.3 A total of £924,700 has been invested in the CSO infrastructure across the county in 2022/23; this includes a £22,000 contribution from the Humber and North Yorkshire

Integrated Care Board (ICB) to support the development and rollout of the Rockwood Frailty Toolkit. A breakdown of CSO investment by geography is outlined below.

District	No. of CSOs	Total Value
Craven	3	£92,000
Hambleton	4	£138,000
Harrogate	6	£203,500
Richmondshire	5	£126,000
Ryedale	2	£68,000
Scarborough	3	£173,200
Selby	3	£124,000
Total	26	£924,700

3.4 Future Opportunities for CSOs

Stronger Communities has also been working alongside the CSOs to identify elements of the model that could be retained and developed further to support the wider health, well-being and prevention, and community resilience agenda. Following a well-attended 'Response to Recovery' event that took place in May 2022 for those organisations that had undertaken the CSO role, followed by the 'Learning Together and Co-Creation' day in early November, the development of a Community Anchor Organisation network across North Yorkshire has been progressed. This is building on the successful CSO model, and further exploring the role that locally rooted, place based organisations can play in building resilience in communities.

3.5 In February 2023, as part of its established 'Achieve Together' Investment Programme, Stronger Communities opened a new opportunity to establish a Community Anchor model for North Yorkshire. Grants of £15,000 a year (for up to 3 years) will be made available from April 2023 for place rooted organisations, based in principal service towns or centres, who are able to serve a wider hinterland. This investment supports the core aims of the wider Stronger Communities Programme which include:

- Prevention and reducing health inequalities
- Community resilience
- Social regeneration

3.6 After gathering insight from other local authorities and community development programmes and gaining insight from voluntary and community sector organisations (including CSOs), a number of characteristics and activities which we would hope to see in a Community Anchor Organisation have been developed. This encompasses:

Characteristics

- Crucial to the place and the community in which it is based.
- A voice for local people.
- Collaborative, open and encouraging of other contributions.
- Proactive with a can-do mindset.

- Already delivering services.
- Independent and community led.
- Financially resilient.

Activities

- Building local partnerships and alliances to deliver services.
- Improving physical and mental wellbeing and reducing health inequalities.
- Regeneration of their communities.
- Building community resilience.
- Improving people's financial resilience.

3.7 The funding currently being used to support this work is non-recurring and as such, the challenge will be to develop financially sustainable options for CAOs in order for them to become less dependent on public sector grants and establish diverse income streams – which could include earned income through contracts and charging.

3.8 Community Grants

In addition to the work with CSOs, Stronger Communities has awarded £114,696 in Community Grants supporting 109 groups and / or projects to date in 2022/23. This investment has allowed communities and small grass roots groups and organisations to recover from the pandemic and to re-establish local events and activities in their communities. A geographical breakdown of the grants awarded is outlined below.

District	No. of Grants	Total Value
Craven	8	£10,000
Hambleton	8	£7,300
Harrogate	14	£13,990
Richmondshire	10	£10,000
Ryedale	15	£14,500
Scarborough	37	£35,214
Selby	16	£15,692
Countywide	1	£8,000
Total	109	£114,696

3.9 A breakdown of grants awarded in the Scarborough and Whitby Constituency area is attached at **Appendix A**.

4.0 Wider Stronger Communities Programme Work

4.1 The Stronger Communities programme has been able to resume some of its pre-pandemic work over the past twelve months; it is also leading on a number of large new national programmes.

4.2 The range of activities the team are leading on, or are contributing to, is broad and varied:

- Holiday Activities and Food Programme for free school meal eligible children (Department of Education funded)
- Household Support Fund - awards to low-income households (Department of Work and Pensions funded)
- Homes for Ukraine Programme (Home Office)
- Wellbeing and Prevention investment – Stay Healthy, Independent and Connected
- Digital Inclusion
- Cost of living
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)
- Mental health programmes (NHS)
- Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

4.3 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. Coordination of the programme has been undertaken by North Yorkshire Together who in conjunction with a network of locally placed clubs and community organisations, deliver a range of enriching activities over holiday periods.

The new Holiday Activities and Food Coordinator is now in post and is working with North Yorkshire Together partners, as well as colleagues in CYPS, Stronger Communities and Public Health to develop the programme further with a particular emphasis on providing a wraparound service for families, its nutrition and healthy food offer, building stronger relationships with schools, and increasing the number of teenagers engaging with the programme.

4.4 Household Support Fund

In the last 6 months, Stronger Communities have continued to administer the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) funded Household Support Fund.

The third phase of the scheme aimed to support those most in need with significantly rising living costs between October 2022 and March 2023, particularly focussing on those who missed out on national government cost of living support. In line with the expenditure guidelines and the agreed eligibility framework developed in partnership with the seven District and Borough Councils, 23,395 eligible households across North Yorkshire have received a direct award in the form of a shopping voucher in January 2023. This encompassed eligible families, pensioners and working age adult households, as well as those who missed out on other forms of national Cost of Living support. In addition to this, supplementary funding was awarded to North Yorkshire Local Assistance Fund (NYLAF), Warm and Well, and 16 food providers across the County.

Household Support Fund will continue from 1 April 2023 for a further 12 months; guidance for the scheme has been received and work will commence on how this will be deployed shortly.

4.5 Homes for Ukraine Programme

Following the launch of the national Homes for Ukraine programme, officers from the Stronger Communities team have continued to lead on North Yorkshire's multi-agency approach to ensuring arrangements are in place for host families (sponsors) are approved (home and welfare checks) and procedures are in place to distribute the government funding for sponsors and guests. The approach also supports the many local groups who have set up across the county to help welcome and support the Ukrainian refugees with things such as language lessons, social events and peer support.

The current number of Ukrainian guests residing in North Yorkshire, through the Homes for Ukraine sponsorship programme is approximately 838. In addition, 346 guests, who initially arrived in North Yorkshire, have either moved into private rental accommodation, to another Local Authority area, or returned to Ukraine, making a total of 1184 arrivals since March 2022. Of the guests who have moved on from their sponsor, 78 groups, or 191 individuals are now living in rental properties within North Yorkshire.

The government has recently announced a number of updates to the scheme; this includes an extension to the maximum sponsorship term from 12 to 24 months, an increase to the thank you payment once guests have been in the UK for 12 months, and additional funding to acquire housing and support for guests to move into their own homes and reduce the risk of homelessness.

4.6 Wellbeing and Prevention – Stay Healthy, Independent & Connected

The Stronger Communities team have continued to support colleagues in Targeted Prevention (Health and Adult Services) to develop options for future investment in well-being and prevention, learning from the place-based pilots operating in Craven and Selby. The Stay Healthy, Independent and Connected Grants scheme was launched in late 2022, with new providers starting work in their localities on 1 April 2023.

4.7 Digital Inclusion

The digital buddies and champions programme delivered in partnership with Citizens Online, libraries, Living Well and community volunteers has proved a vital resource during the pandemic helping people to access online services and stay connected to friends and families. This has been delivered in tandem with the recycling of ICT equipment and devices project Reboot North Yorkshire. Awareness of Reboot North Yorkshire continues to grow, with an increased number of organisations and services referring their beneficiaries into the scheme, particularly those who are socially isolated, or those in need of a device to access training or education.

4.8 Cost of living - Food Insecurity

Following the Council's investment of a Defra grant in 2020/21 for a range of community projects that help combat food and fuel insecurity arising out of the

pandemic; additional funding was made available to deliver the Food for the Future programme, aiming to embed local sustainable food support options, which also support beneficiaries to build their levels of confidence and independence. An additional 44 have also been made available to food banks and / or providers of free or low-cost food through the three rounds of HSF.

The food insecurity research and insight work continues to progress well in conjunction with City of York Council (CYC), with the report expected in Spring 2023. This broadly encompasses the following areas:

- Developing and utilising an evidence base of interventions including associated outcomes.
- Building our understanding of the realities faced by food providers, the unmet needs, the real-life outcomes, and thoughts about sustainability /viability.
- Developing a clearer map of provision across York & North Yorkshire and gaining a feel for possible gaps in areas / or models.
- Innovating / experimenting with an approach that involved people with lived experience.

The team continues to work closely with the Public Health Healthier Lives, Community and Economy team who are looking to bring together a range of organisations in the food sector to establish a food system framework and ultimately a food partnership to address the immediate to long term challenges presented. Joint work on exploring the impact of Cost of Living on Health Outcomes will also commence in Spring 2023.

4.9 Broader Cost of Living work

In conjunction with internal and external partners and coordinated by Stronger Communities, the cost-of-living support page on the NYCC website has been updated and reconfigured to provide as comprehensive a picture as possible. This encompasses links to more local level sources of information, including the District and Borough Councils and Community Support Organisations (CSOs), as well as detailing information on Warm Spaces, and support available for community and voluntary groups wishing to tackle cost of living challenges in their communities.

The programme has also supported the development of the NYCC Cost of Living Communications Campaign utilising a variety of tools. This includes the development of a range of social media assets and an A5 leaflet that has been made available in hard copy and digitally, which will drive people to the updated cost of living page on the website, their local CSO, and potentially to NYCC's Customer Service Centre by telephone as an alternative.

4.10 UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)

As part of the government's Levelling Up agenda the Council submitted its proposals for its allocated UKSPF funding, which have now been approved. There is a strong emphasis within the criteria for UKSPF on place shaping, community empowerment, engagement and strengthening the voluntary and community sector, and Stronger Communities are taking the lead role in the delivery of the Communities and Place

strand. An advisory group is in place made up of public and voluntary sector partners and the year one allocations have been signed off with contracts being prepared.

4.11 Mental health programmes (NHS)

The Stronger Communities Programme has worked in partnership with colleagues in Public Health and the NHS to deliver a range of community led mental health projects since 2019. These include grass roots suicide prevention programmes and other specialist mental health services. As part of the national Community Mental Health Transformation programme, Stronger Communities continue to work in partnership with the NHS to transform mental health services for people with a serious mental illness through building capacity within communities and the voluntary sector. The approach includes NHS financial investment, managed by Stronger Communities, working with four place based multi-agency partnerships to develop and/or pilot new community -based services and projects through grant funding to voluntary organisations and community groups with the over-arching aim of enabling people with a serious mental illness to live well in their communities.

4.12 Children and Young People

In conjunction with Children and Young People Service (CYPS), the Stronger Communities team continues to work with Early Help to deliver their Get Going grants scheme that seeks to grow community capacity by working alongside and with our communities to stimulate, support and develop activities that enable children, young people and their families to be happy, healthy and achieving.

4.13 Capacity Building

The Stronger Communities Programme has continued to strengthen local community assets and infrastructure; this has included encouraging relationships and collaborations between voluntary and community sector organisations as well as stabilising, and / or building capacity within them if required. The impact of the pandemic on income and capacity within the sector, together with concerns in relation to rising fuel costs is resulting in concerns about their long-term viability and sustainability. Stronger Communities continues to work with colleagues such as Community First Yorkshire, The Two Ridings Foundation, the Lottery and other partners to identify issues and concerns and develop joint responses.

5.0 Planning for the future

5.1 Independent Evaluation

The Stronger Communities Programme is subject to a 5-year independent evaluation, conducted by Skyblue Research; evaluation of the CSOs has been encompassed within this, alongside continuing to develop our ten-year strategy, People, Place and Power.

5.2 The Learning Review Evaluation (2018 – 2022) highlighted a number of key achievements of the programme. Some of the headlines include:

- 1,100 community projects supported in over 200 communities in North Yorkshire since 2018. This rises to 1,415 projects since the programme's inception in 2015.
- Over 600 Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations have received financial and / or relational support from the programme.
- An estimated 100,000 benefitted from the programme between 2015 and 2020, with 60,000 benefitting in 2020/21.
- £3.45million of external funds have been secured as a result of Stronger Communities organisational development investment in to VCSEs or place based collaborations.

5.3 Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

The Stronger Communities team is involved in a number of work-streams to support the formation of the new unitary council. Stronger Communities also delivered elements of the Let's Talk campaign in partnership with Borough and District Councils between September and December 2022.

6.0 **Local Area Information**

6.1 Community Support Organisations (CSOs)

The Scarborough and Whitby constituency area is currently served by three CSOs, with the current agreements ending at the end of March 2023. The remit for CSO's this year has been to support recovery, encourage people to become as independent as they can be and to strengthen the local provision of VCS activities in their area. With each organisation's focus being on supporting the wellbeing and independence of their beneficiaries there has been a large reduction in the pandemic-related support provided previously, such as shopping and prescription delivery but an increase in the offer of a range of activities, especially ones encouraging active participation. The CSOs are as follows:

- Age UK North Yorkshire Coast and Moors & SWR Mind
- Coast and Vale Community Action
- Revival North Yorkshire

These organisations have over the winter period focused their offer on broader community resilience issues such as cost of living and winter pressures and have acted as a place based single point of contact for locally based support. This has included the publication of individual CSO's contact information on the NYCC website so that residents can access information about local support which may include access to warm spaces or food provision.

6.2 Wellbeing and Prevention – Stay Healthy, Independent & Connected

As referenced in Section 4.6, the new SHIC grants will be delivered in the Scarborough and Whitby constituency area through three new partnership models involving a combination of place-based organisations (some of which are currently acting as CSOs), as well as specialist support organisations. Through this model all communities

will have access to specialist advice and guidance as well as an opportunity to make local social connections.

6.3 Mental Health Support

The Community Mental Health Transformation programme for this area, is being managed by the Scarborough, Whitby, Ryedale Mental Health Task and Finish Group. The group see it has an opportunity to try to improve the quality of life for people with a serious mental illness, or people at risk of developing a serious mental illness, in Scarborough, Whitby and Ryedale through access to early support from a variety of services. Two key areas of the programme are the Access and Connect Grant Fund 2022/23 which has a total budget of £200,000 and its work on how to streamline clients' experience of accessing mental health support, ensuring co-production underpins the transformative approach. A number of workshops have taken place throughout the year involving those with lived experience, the VCSE and specialist medical and social care professionals.

6.4 Work with local Organisations

SeeCHANGE, the innovative cross sector partnership funded for three years by the National Lottery Community Fund, is progressing on each of its three thematic areas.

- Giving a voice to the local Voluntary and Community Sector with the health service through a vibrant and responsive Community Collective for Scarborough
- Working with businesses and other employers to work across sectors to improve workforce wellbeing, look at business led initiatives too address health inequalities and explore the potential of joint working between sectors.
- Pilot new ways of working from small community groups and groups of people in the town to achieve change using participatory grants.

They are also receiving interest from health and academic projects and organisations keen to work with them.

Several organisations, including Sparks Project, the Rainbow Centre and Gallows Close, are working with Stronger Communities looking at how they develop their offer, streamline their practices, become more sustainable and are able to evidence to a variety of stakeholders and funders the difference that they make to their communities.

7.0 **Recommendations**

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

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13th March 2023

Appendix A – Breakdown of Community Grants Awarded

District	Organisation Name	Project	Value
Scarborough	Whitby Evangelical Church	Cooking with Children and Young People	970
Scarborough	Yorkshire Energy Doctor	Slow Cookers - food & fuel poverty	1000
Scarborough	CAVCA	Community transport to reduce barriers to wellbeing	1000
Scarborough	Calm and Connect	Calm and Connect Baby Massage	991
Scarborough	Egton Parish Council	Community Event and Engagement	1000
Scarborough	Active Filey	Active Filey Run and Ride Leader training	900
Scarborough	WH DAG	Ready to Go!	1000
Scarborough	Citizens Advice Mid North Yorkshire	CORUS Orthodox Easter Celebration	450
Scarborough	Ravenscar Cricket Club	Providing Support for Afghan Refugees in Scarborough	1000
Scarborough	Scarborough Over 50s Friendship Centre	Building it back up	1000
Scarborough	Newholm cum Dunsley Village Hall	Community Film Events	720
Scarborough	CaVCA	Grow and Learn Family meet up	1000
Scarborough	Whitby Rugby Club	Community Sports Day	659
Scarborough	Animated Objects	Rainbow Project Seed funding	1000
Scarborough	WH DAG	Getting Around	970
Scarborough	Basketball Developments CIC	Young person development through sport	1000
Scarborough	Filey Childcare	New kitchen	1000
Scarborough	Whitby Area Development Trust	Thursday at the Coliseum	1000
Scarborough	Newby Hub	Pause for the Menopause Calendar	1000
Scarborough	West Ayton & Snainton Patient Participation Group (PPG)	Living Warm and Well	1000
Scarborough	Coastline Sight and Hearing	The FW Hub	1000
Scarborough	Multi-Ethnic Minorities Befriending Society ((MEMBERS)	Informal English language classes	1000
Scarborough	Active Filey	Active Filey Development	750
Scarborough	WH DAG	Step Free Access Whitby	980
Scarborough	Carers Plus	Beating the Squeeze Eastfield	1000
Scarborough	PANDAS	PANDAS Whitby Peer Group Support	1000
Scarborough	Feeding and Sling Support Whitby	Feeding and Sling Support Group	982
Scarborough	CaVCA	Finding Our Voice	1000

Scarborough	Age UK Scarborough & District	50plus LGBTQIA+	1000
Scarborough	St Hilda's Old School Committee	Meet up and warm up	1000
Scarborough	WHISH	Bringing Parents Together	1000
Scarborough	Whitby Railway Community Shop Limited	'Community Elevenses' and 'Warm Drop in Cafe'	1000
Scarborough	Goathland Community Hub	Equipment for wellbeing hub	940
Scarborough	Staithe Stay and Play	Staithe Stay and Play	1000
Scarborough	Calm & Connect Baby Massage	Calm & Connect Baby Massage	992
Scarborough	MTB Community Library	Winter Welcome	890
Scarborough	Ryedale Carers Support	Lythe Community Bacon Buttie Breakfast	1000