

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL
SELBY AND AINSTY AREA CONSTITUENCY COMMITTEE – 28 APRIL 2023
Stronger Communities Update

1.0 Purpose of Report

To provide Members with a general update on the Stronger Communities' Programme and an overview of progress made in the Selby and Ainsty Constituency area.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Despite the move away from covid response and recovery, the community support infrastructure through the Community Support Organisation (CSO) network has remained largely in place since March 2020 coming to a final full stop at the end of March 2023. As the covid recovery phase gathered pace, a minority of CSOs wound down or scaled back their pandemic response activities. A significant number, however, continued to work with the programme to support communities face new challenges in relation to the cost of living and winter pressures. This has been alongside exploring how we might build upon and develop the successful CSO model to contribute towards 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 various 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 some of these programmes and working in partnership with others within the Council and externally.

3.0 Community Support Organisations (CSOs) & Community Response

- 3.1 The work of the CSOs shifted focus in 2022/23, moving from pandemic response to recovery. Rather than primarily supporting people who were self-isolating or shielding, their efforts prioritised building confidence and independence and helping to remove some of the disempowering 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 were retained until the end of March 2023. They continued to work in partnership with NYCC as place based single points of contact for locally based support, in collaboration with their volunteers, partners and networks.
- 3.3 A total of £924,700 was invested in the CSO infrastructure across the county in 2022/23; this included 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 and able to serve a wider hinterland. This investment will support 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) we identified a number of characteristics and activities which we would hope to see in a Community Anchor Organisation. These include:

Organisational 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.
- Regenerating their communities.
- Building community resilience.
- Improving people’s financial resilience.

3.7 The funding currently being used to support this work is non-recurring. This means that CAOs will need to become less dependent on public sector grants by developing financially sustainable options and establishing diverse income streams which could include earned income through contracts and charging.

3.8 Community Grants

In addition to the funding support for CSOs, Stronger Communities has awarded £155,639 in Community Grants supporting 141 groups and / or projects in 2022/23¹. 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	17	£27,750
Hambleton	8	£7,300
Harrogate	14	£13,990
Richmondshire	14	£13,500
Ryedale	20	£20,277
Scarborough	43	£42,194
Selby	24	£23,628
Countywide	1	£7,000
Total	141	£155,639

3.9 A breakdown of grants awarded in the Selby and Ainsty 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.

¹ These figures have been updated for Selby and Ainsty area since previous ACC reports presented.

- 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

Over the last 6 months, Stronger Communities 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 and who had missed out on national government cost of living support to cope with significant increases in living costs between October 2022 and March 2023. 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 received a direct award in the form of a shopping voucher in January 2023. Those eligible included 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) to be approved (home and welfare checks) and procedures are established to distribute government funding for sponsors and guests. The approach also supports the many local groups which have sprung up across the county to help welcome and support the Ukrainian guests to settle and make local connections by providing things such as language lessons, social events and peer support.

The number of Ukrainian guests residing in North Yorkshire, through the Homes for Ukraine sponsorship programme was approximately 838 at the end of Q3. 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-provided accommodation, 78 households, comprising 191 individuals are now living in rental properties within North Yorkshire.

The government recently announced a number of updates to the scheme. These include extending the maximum sponsorship term from 12 to 24 months; increasing the thank you payment once guests have been in the UK for 12 months and providing additional funding to councils to acquire housing and support 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 wellbeing and prevention, learning from the place-based pilots trialled in Selby and Craven. 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 proved a vital resource during the pandemic, helping people to access online services and stay connected to friends and families. The programme has been delivered in tandem with project Reboot North Yorkshire which recycled ICT equipment and devices. Awareness of Reboot North Yorkshire continues to grow, with more 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 into a range of community projects which helped combat the food and fuel insecurity arising out of the pandemic, additional funding was made available to deliver the Food for the Future programme. Food for the Future aimed to embed local sustainable food support options, which also support beneficiaries to build their levels of confidence and

independence. An additional 44 grants have 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 undertaken in conjunction with City of York Council (CYC) continues to progress well, with a report expected in Spring 2023. This work broadly encompasses the following areas:

- Developing and utilising an evidence base of interventions and 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 and / 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, previously 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, local support, and potentially to NYCC's Customer Service Centre by telephone as a back stop.

4.10 UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)

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

As indicated at 3.0 the Community Support Organisation arrangements continued with funding ending on 31 March 2023. The CSOs in Selby district were Selby District AVS; Sherburn in Elmet Community Trust working closely with Sherburn Visiting Scheme and Tadcaster Volunteer Car and Services Association. Boroughbridge Community Care Association, Harrogate and District Community Action (HADCA) provided support to Ainsty residents.

6.2 General VCSE developments

There have been some recent significant developments within the local voluntary and community sector as organisations look to the future and re-position or refocus to ensure they are well placed to move forward. Selby developments include:

- Sherburn Visiting Scheme has changed its organisational structure to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). The organisation has recruited a number of new Trustees and has a new Chair who will build on the hard work of the previous long-serving and committed Board. SVS will retain its focus of supporting older residents of Sherburn in Elmet and neighbourhood.
- Tadcaster Volunteer Car and Services Association has become Tadcaster Volunteer Community Support Association retaining its TVCSA brand but recognising its wider support remit. The organisation will be moving into new premises in Tadcaster shortly having succeeded in purchasing a building to provide greater stability and expansion potential for the future.
- In the final round of Selby Business Awards run by Selby District Council Tadcaster and Rural Community Interest Company who run The Barn in Tadcaster won the Social enterprise/community interest company category with Sherburn in Elmet Community Trust who run both Sherburn and Villages Community Library and the Old Girls' School Community Centre in Sherburn being the runners up. These awards are particularly pleasing as voluntary and community sector organisations need strong local examples of good financial management and approaches.

- Selby District AVS has undergone a period of consultation and reflection and has relaunched as Up for Yorkshire recognising the work it undertakes outside Selby area but will remain firmly rooted in Selby where it now manages 3 community buildings – Community House, Brayton Community Centre and Riccall Regen Centre. This change is possibly particularly reflective of the context of the new unitary council which will offer opportunities for organisations to consider working across a wider footprint to introduce new services to an area and/or to build new partnerships to share expertise and extend good practice.
- In Green Hammerton local residents contacted the Council's Library Service and have piloted a Library Outlet to assess interest and feasibility. Take up was positive with residents borrowing 200 books. Community First Yorkshire and Stronger Communities are now working with the small committee to help the group set up in a way which will allow it to raise funds and meet running costs with the intention of the Library Outlet opening in the village on a timetabled basis from Summer 2023.

6.3 Cost of Living Initiatives

As well as the support available through the CSO structure other organisations, including Town and Parish Councils have been involved and/or have led on local cost of living support over Winter. The Trussell Trust Selby District Foodbank continues to demonstrate strong resilience and the informal foodbank in Tadcaster previously run by the Salvation Army has moved into the Barn where it is managed by Tadcaster and Rural CIC. Boroughbridge Community Larder, a partnership initiative between the Methodist Church, Boroughbridge Lions and Boroughbridge Community Care, opens each Wednesday lunchtime whilst Boroughbridge Community Care in partnership with Ripon Community House distribute emergency food parcels when required.

6.4 Community Mental Health Transformation (CMHT)

The Stronger Communities Team are supporting the NHS programme Transforming Community Mental Health Services across North Yorkshire, excluding Craven. The Stronger role includes managing investment into the local VCSE.

Successful funding applications from the Big Communita (£35k) and Selby District AVS / Up for Yorkshire (£29,599) will allow them to provide activities etc aimed at maintaining and/or improving the mental health of residents across both Selby Town and Tadcaster and rural Selby Primary Care Networks. Other local groups have received around £1-2k of funding for low level preventative work. Everyday Enable are running welfare support sessions to help people access benefits information and address financial worries, Eggborough Methodist Church is providing line dancing / social sessions and Spirit of Christmas will be supporting parents of young people with SEN and parents whose mental health is impacted by financial or other worries related to parenting through social sessions / game playing with their children.

In Harrogate and Rural District Route One to Wellness which is a collaboration between Harrogate MIND, Wellspring Counselling Services, Claro Enterprise and The Orb has been awarded £50,000 to offer community-based support services via direct referral from PCN social prescribers. The Orb has also received £35,000 for development work to enable partners within statutory and voluntary sector

organisations to work better together and, it is hoped, create Wellbeing hubs across the area.

Funding opportunities continue to be available in both Selby and Harrogate and indeed county wide through the CMHT work.

6.5 Moving Forward

As indicated at 3.4 – 3.7 a significant focus of work over the next 3 years will be the development of a network of locally rooted community anchor organisations.

We expect that there will be several opportunities for the local VCSE as well as for Town and Parish Councils to benefit from opportunities to deliver services for or alongside the new Council. The Staying Healthy Independent and Connected model first tested by Health and Adult Services in Selby and Craven but now operating county wide is an example of this type of opportunity.

We will be re-instating our “Inspire” small grants fund for small community projects of up to £1000 following the covid and initial post-covid period where we moved to a community grant model in recognition of the need for additional flexibility during the extraordinary covid related challenges.

7.0 **Recommendations**

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

Report Authors

Tom Jenkinson, Stronger Communities Delivery Manager (Selby District)

Liz Meade, Stronger Communities Delivery Manager (Harrogate District)

Marie-Ann Jackson, Head of Stronger Communities

(18 April 2023)

Appendix A – Breakdown of Community Grants Awarded

Locality	Organisation Name	Project	Grant Value	Match Funding (possibly in kind)
Ainsty	Boroughbridge Lions	Boroughbridge Community Larder	£1000	£250
Selby	The Bridge Project, Tadcaster	Time for Tea – warm space project	£1000	£1170
	Burton Salmon Village Hall Trust	Boosting use of the village hall	£1000	
	Burton Salmon Village Hall Trust	Internet provision for village hall	£1000	
	The Clothing Bank, Brotherton	Clothing bank – support to buy new underwear,	£1000	£492
	Eggborough Methodist Church	Re-engaging residents in activities	£1000	£2000
	Everyday Enable	Raising awareness of benefits	£1000	£32
	South Milford Parish Council	Provide equipment for Grove House to be a warm space, provide hot food	£1000	
	Hambleton Village Hall	Community Cinema	£1000	£2424
	Hemingbrough Bowls Club	Boosting membership	£792	
	Home Start Goole and District	Support work in Selby	£1000	£47000
	Riccall Regen Centre - Windmill Nursery (Funds managed by Selby District AVS)	Nursery revamp to increase use	£1000	£7800
	Second Chance Ostomy	Menopause Support	£1000	
	NLY Community Sport	Selby Disability Football Club	£1000	
	Sherburn Visiting Scheme	Health and Safety Training and Equipment	£1000	£1504
	SYPCO	Outdoor garden / de-stress space	£1000	£800
	Tadcaster Historical Society	New website – build on local interest proved during covid	£1000	£5432

Locality	Organisation Name	Project	Grant Value	Match Funding (possibly in kind)
	Tadcaster and Rural CIC	Warm and well community project	£1000	£1500
	TVCSA	Hot food provision	£1000	
	Eggborough Weekends (new group – funds managed by Eggborough Village Hall)	Provide weekend activity for older and vulnerable – coffee mornings.	£976	
	Project Wild for Selby Sustainability Partnership	Energise Brayton – fuel poverty	£920	£500
	Selby District AVS	Engagement with young people in Brayton – improving outdoor space at Brayton Village Hall	£1000	£400
	Selby Community Choir	Boost participation - song books, instruments etc to support practices and performances	£940	
	SiECT	Young people's project with community performance	£1000	£2207
	Spirit of Christmas	Banana Box toy Project – support for SEND children	£1000	£1850
Total			£24,628	£75,361