



**West
Northamptonshire
Council**

Anti-Poverty Strategy and Action Plan 2022/23 – A Year in Review

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 3rd
May 2023**

Anti-Poverty Strategy

Overview

- **April 2022** – Anti-Poverty Strategy signed off by Cabinet following its co-production by an Oversight Group comprising a range of stakeholders across the VCS, Primary Care, the Council, and education partners.
- In addition to the data, we listened to the lived experiences of people in poverty. The Poverty Truth Commission has provided the opportunity to listen and learn from the lived experiences of people in poverty. A website has been set up for the Poverty Truth Commission in West Northants poverty-truth.org.uk which is encouraging real life stories, from those with lived experienced of poverty. These case studies are coming from seldom heard groups within our communities, those that are vulnerable and those most in need.



Anti-Poverty Strategy

2022-2025



Three priorities were identified within our 3-year strategy:

Supporting people who are struggling in poverty now

Preventing people from falling into poverty in the first place

Continue to influence Government and other national organisations to get a better deal for our communities in West Northants

Our priorities are supported by 8 strategic objectives and 33 commitments, high level ambition statements that collectively support the shared vision and are aligned to the 3 priorities.

June 2022 – Ambitious Action Plan developed – over 100 Actions. Oversight Group agree the need to focus on **must do actions** for year 1

July 2022 - implementation begins

The strategy is underpinned by some key principles, that we collectively work to:

Key Principles

	Principle
1.	A true partnership between the VCS, Primary Care, WNC ,and other partners will enable this to work
2.	A communication and engagement strategy is vital
3.	Deliver against need in local and trusted settings across our urban and rural geography
4.	Utilise the emerging framework of the neighbourhood areas and link these actions with developments in the creation of the Integrated Care System in Local Area Partnerships
5.	Wraparound - develop broad multi-service models that may be wrapped around an initial primary concern such as the provision of food, primary care, or a key form of advice
6.	Joined up working - as recommended for the various consortium approaches – across long term food aid, debt, immigration support and advice, and learning and employment - will be essential
7.	Funding of local partners to deliver actions and build capacity and ensure local reach to most vulnerable
8.	Keep reflecting and maintain a ‘real time’ list of evolving key actions that we must continue to implement in priorities 1 and 2
9.	Provide a balance of alleviating immediate hardship and providing progressive solutions

Must Dos

Must Do	RAG Rating
Establish an APS Community Training Partnership: provide training for all frontline workers and volunteers (FLWVs) on the key social welfare issues in West Northants	GREEN
Household Support Fund: review the current method of allocating funding to ensure it is reaching those in severe hardship/ Work in partnership with The Food Aid Alliance for WN (FAAWN) - an alliance of foodbanks - and other food aid providers to enable partners to develop long term food aid to support those in severe hardship.	GREEN
Fuel poverty: Establish as a matter of urgency a cross sector fuel poverty working group identifying all possible interventions ahead of the 22/23 winter period.	GREEN
Money and debt: Review and expand the financial wellbeing service offer within West Northants.	GREEN
Immigration support and advice: Create a sustainable approach to address the shortfall in immigration support/advice to ensure all eligible residents achieve settled status/ Establish a task and finish group to move this work forwards urgently.	AMBER
Social mobility, employment and skills: Initiate and establish an emphasis on the development of a holistic approach to learning and employment for residents - forming a learning and skills consortium that delivers in local and trusted settings.	AMBER / RED
Communications: Create a range of approaches to communicate the availability of all support and services, plus public health and primary care provision to all partners working with residents.	GREEN

Household Support Fund

- The total expenditure for the 12-month schemes (HSF1 and HSF2) between October 2021 and September 2022 was **£5,459,156** . Over 60,200 households were supported during that period.
- A further **£2,599,628** was distributed to households between October 2022 and March 2023 via the HSF3 scheme. This funding is directed at **circa 16,000 households** who are experiencing extreme food and energy hardship over the winter period, of which:
 - Over £1m allocated to the **School Holiday Food Support Scheme**
 - £884k distributed to **residents working but receiving a low wage** (under net £400 income per week) via an online application portal. A payment, in 2 parts, of £250 is made directly into their bank accounts which can be put toward essential costs.
 - To reach as many vulnerable residents as possible a significant proportion of the HSF 2 and 3 funding rounds was awarded to the Northamptonshire Community Partnership for distribution by VCS partners.
 - In HSF 3 – 6009 vouchers to the value of £751,125 were awarded by 21 partners – see next slide
 - Over £240,000 was allocated to our Foodbanks via FAAWN
 - An additional £100k public health grant funding has been allocated for "wraparound" wellbeing support for those in receipt of supermarket vouchers via the voluntary sector

Household Support Fund 3 - Partnership with VCS

Name of organisation	Number of vouchers distributed
Daventry Food Bank	562
Northampton Hope Centre	1206
The McCarthy-Dixon Foundation	873
Weston Favell Foodbank	172
United African Association	1025
NPH - Happy To Help CIC	452
Shine CIC	376
Ramgarhia Board	35
Springs Family Centre	125
Peak Empower	81
Community Law	96
Right Resolutions CIC	82
Re:store	71
Food for Thought	502
Daventry Citizens Advice	25
West Northants Money Advice	59
Brackley Foodbank	59
Towcester Foodbank	60
SNVB	102
Braunston Heart	17
West Northants Customer Service	49

Household Support Fund 4

As part of the Household Support Fund (HSF) 4 scheme, West Northamptonshire have been allocated **£5,199,257** to distribute between 1st April 2023 and 31st March 2024.

As with previous tranches of HSF this fund is to be used is used to meet immediate needs and help those who are struggling to afford energy and water bills, food, and other related essentials, however in this latest tranche of funding there is provision to deliver advice services (though this should not represent a large proportion of the allocation).

The proposed fund distribution in 2023/24 includes

- 47% allocated to holiday food support for low-income families with children (those eligible for free school meals)
- 32% in financial support to other vulnerable households or those experiencing significant hardship
- 16% in voluntary sector grants to support food aid, energy saving measures, and money and debt advice.
- The remaining 5% is allocated for administration.

Tender process
launched– End Jan
2023

Tender closes after 4
weeks – End Feb
2023

Evaluation Board
awards contract to
The Hope Centre and
the Community Law
Service – April 2023

Launch event &
taster courses –
Early Summer

Full timetable
launched -
September 2023

Warm Welcoming Spaces – The Journey

- Steering Group stood up 25 Sept 2022 in response to the Cost of Living Crisis
- £180,000 funding secured to develop / enhance Warm Welcoming Spaces
- Online Cost of Living Hub and Online Warm Welcoming Spaces register developed - live Nov 2022
- WWS Grants Programme live - Nov 2022
- WWS toolkit to support promotion of individual offers delivered - live Nov 2022
- Grant funded 45 organisations between Nov 2022 – March 2023 (50% of our registered spaces)



Headlines Outcomes – Jan to Mar 2023

Key Metric	Outcome
No of Warm Welcoming Spaces registered online	96
No of attendees (Grant Funded Spaces)	52,932
No of clients referred on to wraparound services	3,371

£1.89

The cost of each attendance

Bugbrooke Parish Council

One of our newer regular visitors is a partially sighted elderly man with a guide dog. His wife died at the end of last year so he now lives alone. He really enjoys coming to the warm room to chat to friends, he is sometimes tearful, but his friends are very supportive. He is determined to learn to cook for himself and has been getting advice from some of the other attendees.

Daventry Volunteer Centre

B & R (friends) come into the café more regularly since our warm space has been open and have now joined several of our social activity sessions and have made new friends. Both live in a sheltered scheme in Daventry and come into the New Street Centre, we encouraged R to see their GP when he was complaining of memory issues. We have given them both a blanket to take home donated to us by the Town Council. They were thrilled.

Welcoming Spaces – next steps

Concept and implementation into Welcoming Spaces

- Explore survey and performance results and lessons learnt, map needs including by locality, attendee age group, health conditions etc providing an evidence base to inform next steps - April / May 2023
- Event in May 2023 to celebrate success of spaces in partnership with Community Training Partnership

Grants Programme

- In response to evidence of continued need of Welcoming Spaces (cost of living, tackling social isolation & supporting mental health), small grants programme to be rolled out to spaces to cover summer period
- Planning for Winter 2023/24 using best practice learnt from the 2022/23 programme

Wraparound Services

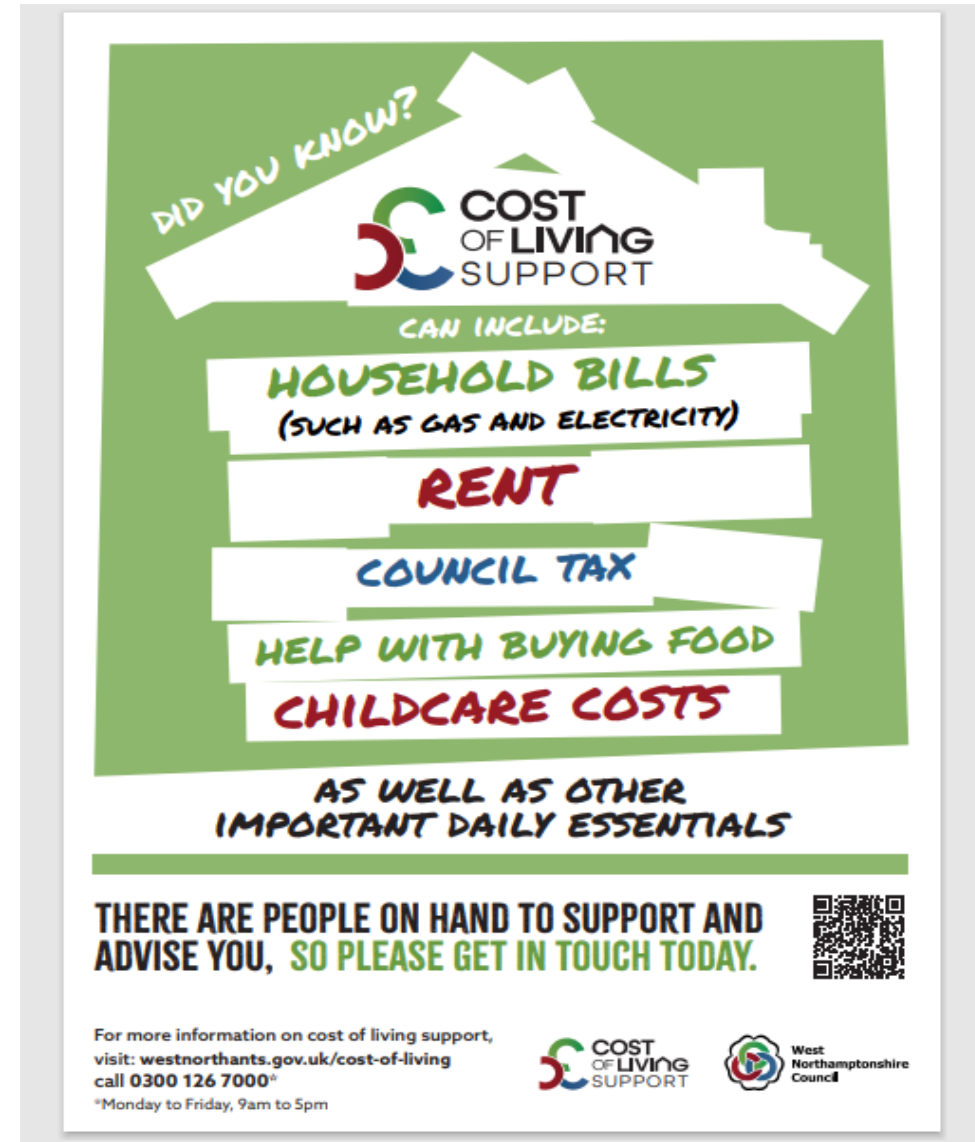
- Act as catalyst to bring Welcoming Spaces together wraparound services driven by needs analysis
- Work with our local infrastructure organisations to expand offer – ensure reach to VCS groups
- Align with the ongoing asset mapping work and LAP development

Serving our rural communities

- Use the principles of **Rural Proofing for Health** toolkit to identify future need and shape
- Pilot Northamptonshire ACRE Rural Proofing for Health Toolkit - **Rural Mental Health Matters**

Money and Debt – Emergency Response

- £180,000 funding proposal awarded to 3 VCS partners to provide 12 months (of 4.4 FTEs) emergency Money and Debt Advisors in response to the escalating cost of living crisis demands
- Providers: Community Law Service, Citizens Advice North Oxon and South Northants, Citizens Advice Daventry
- Go live: early summer 2023
- WNC Transformational change team planning new joined up approach for delivery from late 2023 onwards – holistic focus on the provision of debt and money advice provided by the VCS and internal services within WNC



DID YOU KNOW?


COST OF LIVING SUPPORT

CAN INCLUDE:

- HOUSEHOLD BILLS**
(SUCH AS GAS AND ELECTRICITY)
- RENT**
- COUNCIL TAX**
- HELP WITH BUYING FOOD**
- CHILDCARE COSTS**

AS WELL AS OTHER IMPORTANT DAILY ESSENTIALS


THERE ARE PEOPLE ON HAND TO SUPPORT AND ADVISE YOU, SO PLEASE GET IN TOUCH TODAY.



For more information on cost of living support, visit: westnorthants.gov.uk/cost-of-living call 0300 126 7000*

*Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

COST OF LIVING SUPPORT



This is a proposal to work within the transformational change team's work – business case currently being written – the purpose of the role is to:

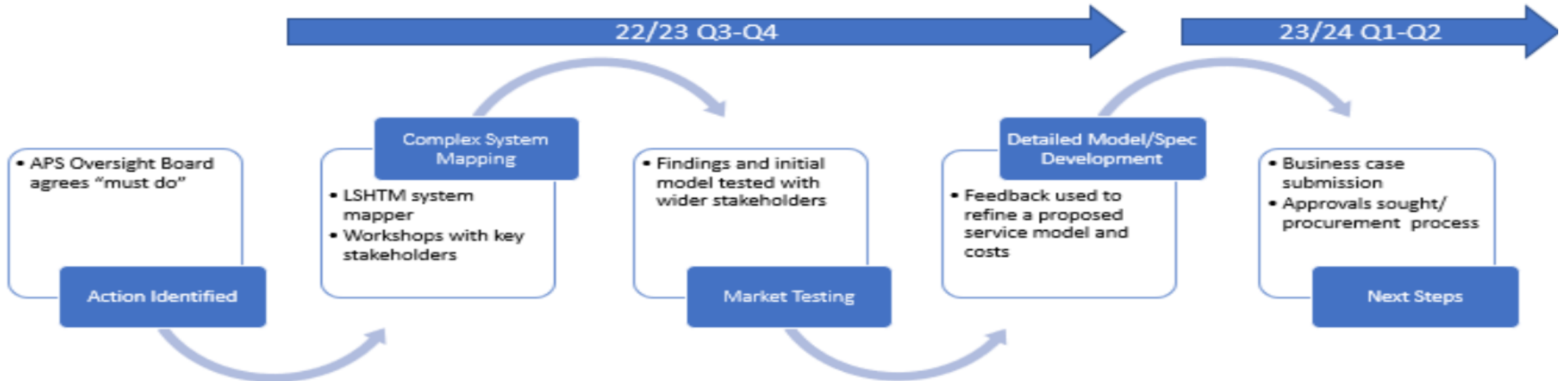
- **Increase our resident's financial capability and resilience** through direct support, education, and awareness – and carefully managed distribution of hardship funds.
- Provide cross sector leading services to help our residents develop **skills to manage their finances and access mainstream financial services.**
- Build **strategic and cross sector partnerships that help deliver pioneering solutions** to help communities to overcome problems of debt, employment and housing rights, poverty and exclusion.
- **Identify all sources of hardship funding and other support funds/ provisions to enable WNC and partners to target and support those in severe hardship.**

Immigration Support and Advice

The Anti-poverty Strategy notes that:

People with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) including vulnerable migrants are at high risk of experiencing poverty including destitution:

- Four times more likely to be behind on at least one essential bill (81% vs. 20% of general population)
- Almost half (48%) report living in overcrowded accommodation and 1 in 5 (18%) have experienced homelessness or housing insecurity.
- Three-quarters (75%) have suffered from at least one negative consequence of having NRPF, including going hungry or cold



Proposed 'Hub and Spoke' Model

Local Support

A network of 5 to 10 local immigration support and advice hubs across West Northamptonshire

Located in greatest areas of need – greater concentration in LAPS with the most vulnerable residents – e.g. N4

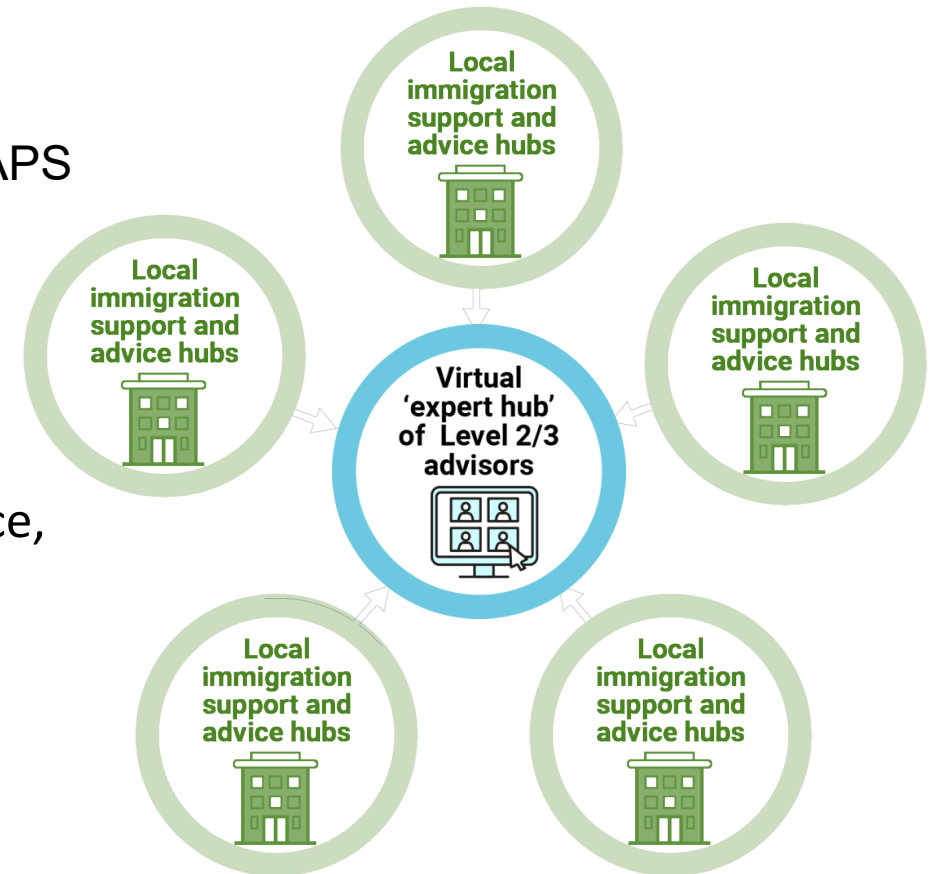
Providers of these hubs will likely be VCS partners

Expert Hub

Free level 2 and 3 accredited advice and casework

Offering a mixed, flexible delivery model – of community, office, and online options

Operating with formal referral protocols



The clearest hard financial benefits are from bullets 1-4

LESS DIRECT FOR LAS



1. Reduced (potential) demand of families supported (under S17)



NRPF families are assessed and supported under s17 of the Children Act 1989. The majority are referred at crisis point and at which point their grant of leave to remain has expired and accordingly they become unlawfully present in the UK.
Housing + subsistence for one family of 3 /4 with 2 very young children = £623 per week = £32,396 PA

2. Housing provision to adults – from rough sleeping to other accommodation help

3. Schools gaining pupil premium



Undocumented children do not receive the £1345 (primary school), £955 (secondary school) pupil premium. In other words, schools are losing substantial sums of money.

4. NHS acute help

5. Gain taxes (people allowed to work, or working more)

If we help 500 primary school students achieve 'enhanced status' = £672,500 PA

6. Social cohesion/capital



So important/ difficult to quantify.

- Initiate and establish an emphasis on the development of a holistic approach to learning and employment for residents - forming a learning and skills consortium that delivers in local and trusted settings
- Initial meeting of stakeholders to held December 2022
- Working group established to map the initial offer and how to showcase it
- Progress has been slow and this 'Must Do' needs urgent attention from May 2023 onwards

- Good progress however being made on Care Leavers:
 - Mentoring proposal currently being explored
 - Care Leavers and Anchor Institutions – a session is being held on 4th May to support to support anchors to become more inclusive when recruiting and supporting care leavers.

Achieved so far:

- Cost of living resource hub live on WNC website with accompanying promotional comms (www.westnorthants.gov.uk/cost-of-living)
- Social media campaign successfully launched and shared on a rolling basis through WNC and partner channels
- A toolkit created for Warm Welcoming Spaces and shared with partners for use
- Approx. 80 community groups/organisations distributed cards/posters to over 40,000 residents across the West signposting to the CoL resource hub and phone number
- Media coverage received from local media outlets signposting to WWS and CoL hub

Next steps:

- Translation of materials including videos and document handouts – includes filming of community organisations / leaders and supports signposting to key information
- Revised comms plan to be developed in alignment with HSF4 distribution looking at key milestones and/or activities for consistent promotion until March 24
- Comms to be revised in alignment with welcoming spaces next steps
- Review and update CoL resource hub and WWS map to ensure up to date and accurate

