

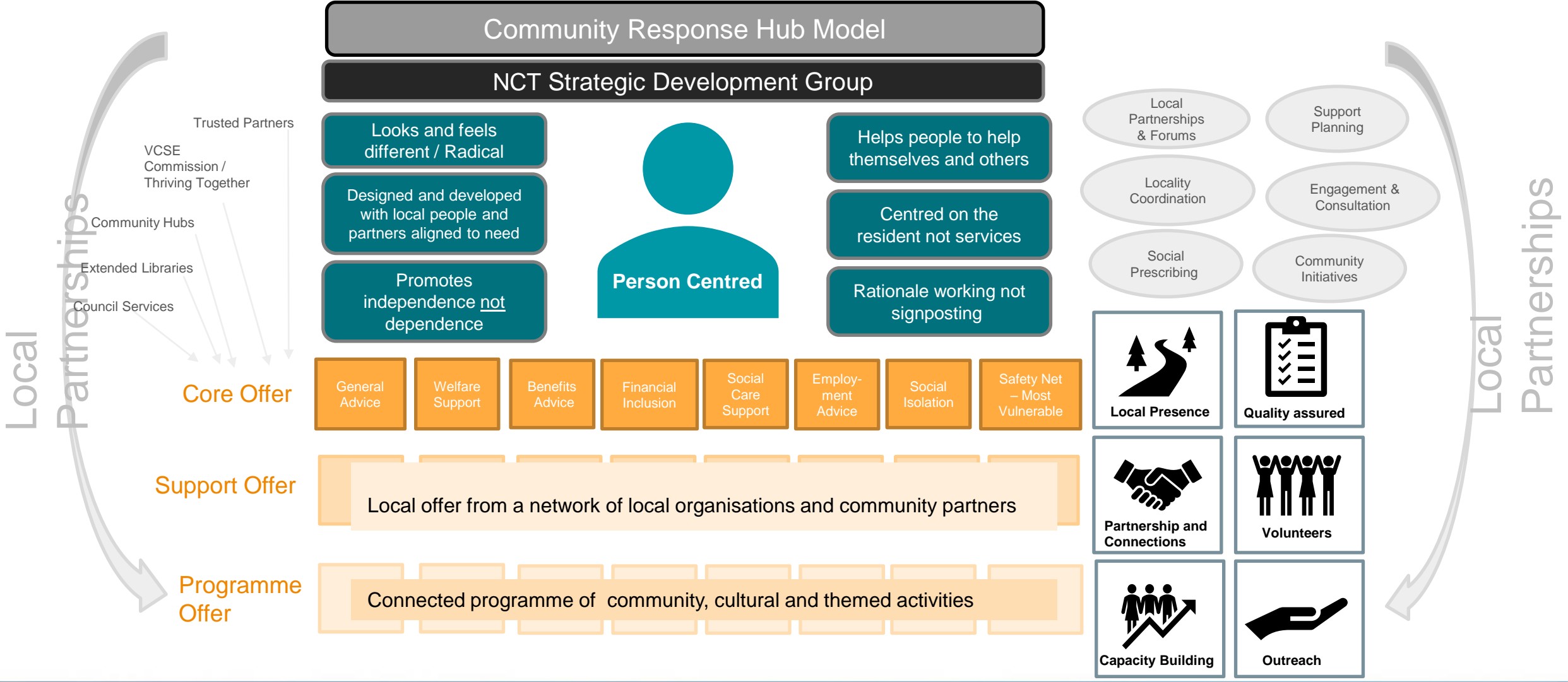


## **Update to Health and Wellbeing Board 8th December 2002**

- Northumberland Communities Together (NCT)
- Corporate touchpoints with Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE)
- Northumberland County Council response to cost of living pressures

Emma Richardson  
emma.richardson@northumberland.gov.uk

# Northumberland Communities Together - refresh



# Northumberland Communities Together: Core Support

- NCT supports residents with the most appropriate and effective support, makes best use of existing resources, and works in close partnership with our VCSE colleagues.
- **The Household Support Fund is to support households in the most need (current grant £2.4m)**
- Connects to county wide partner led support and prevention
- **Northumberland Emergency and Transition Support – Welfare Assistance (£215k granted since 2020)**
- NCT and Citizens Advice have for two years delivered a successful energy pathway, now open to all to refer in for hardship fuel grants and energy efficiency advice (452% increase in CAB energy demand in 2022)
- **Funding allocated to cover FSM payments in the non-term time October 2022, Christmas 2022, February 2023 and Easter 2023 (£1.1m)**
- Targeted expansion of the HAF programme (£1.2m)





The poster features a warm orange background. At the top left, the text 'Warm Welcome' is written in a large, white, cursive font. To the right of this text is the Northumberland County Council logo and a circular logo with the text 'Northumberland communities together'. Below the main title is a circular photograph of three elderly people smiling and talking. To the right of the photo is a block of text: 'If you want to come and say hello face to face, we've got a network of community spaces that you can visit this winter. They are warm, welcoming places where you can pop in, spend some time and even have a chat (about cost of living or anything else). For you, your family and friends Find your nearest warm space at nland.cc/warmspaces'.

Northumberland County Council

Northumberland communities together

If you want to come and say hello face to face, we've got a network of community spaces that you can visit this winter.

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For you, your family and friends

Find your nearest warm space at

[nland.cc/warmspaces](http://nland.cc/warmspaces)

## Northumberland Communities Together – in the community

- Community hubs – local and in partnership for an inclusive economy – 5 key hubs with additional grant support across the county, eg CVA Blyth Valley hub
- Warm Spaces and Places – A warm welcome to stay well and connected this winter and beyond
- Locality Coordinators, patch profiles, and local leadership
- Pop up programmes and take up campaigns
- Volunteering and Corporate Social Responsibility
- Teaching and learning opportunities, eg catering
- Leaning in – eg Active Thru Football (Onside)
- Cost of Living response (to follow)

# Corporate touchpoints with VCSE



**THRIVING  
TOGETHER**

- **VCSE Support Contract – known as Thriving Together**

- Stakeholder review to redesign and futureproof existing commission
- Platform, facilitator, and conduit for cross sector working and innovation
- Awarded to Northumbrian Citizens Advice
- Connects to traditional infrastructure support
- Builds relationships, county wide and hyperlocal, building partnerships and collaboration
- Enables mixed, new investment for Northumberland

**Where are we now:**

- Best fit representation at strategic table
- 13 networks across Northumberland – VCSE, NCC, and NHS involved, including **VCSE Taskforce** for Inequalities plan
- Secured more than the value of the contract per year for the VCSE sector in Northumberland (£700k to this point)
- Handling of investment from NHS, DLUHC, NCC, ICB, ASSURA, and North of Tyne
- Works with North of Tyne Combined Authority, and the Integrated Care B



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# VSE Support contract – Thriving Together

Communication, visibility of work and opportunity

Network and capacity building

Builds on/ promotes existing work / activities



**THRIVING TOGETHER**

VCSE Support Contract

Networks:  
ILO, Learning Disability, EDI, Women, Health and wellbeing, Culture, North Northumberland, Employability, Ageing Well, Blyth Valley, Young People, VCSE Taskforce ++

Events, training, one off opportunities, external activities and engagement, spotlighting



Draws from wider community for best fit representation



Equipped and informed to influence funding and funders



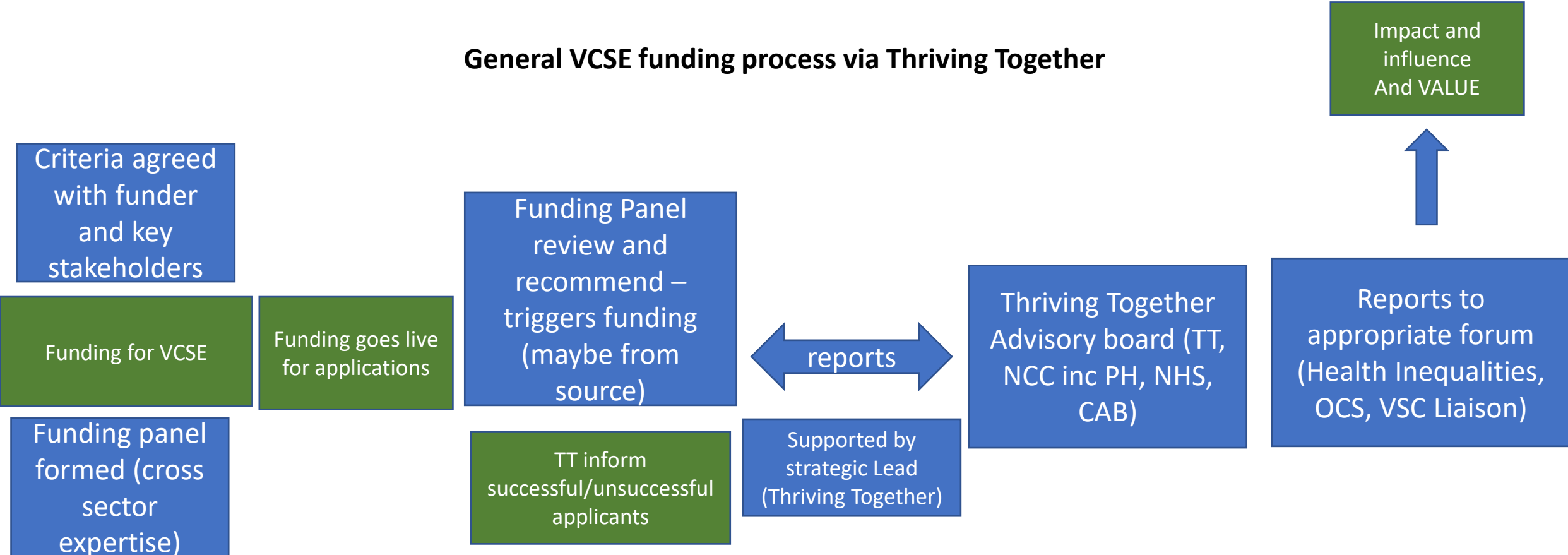
Relevant, hyper local intervention and activity

**Multi sector**



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# General VCSE funding process via Thriving Together



**Multi sector**

# Why Thriving Together matters?

- Able to make 360 decisions with existing resources, avoid duplication, innovate, and find best value.  
Eg Population Health Management / Health Inequalities
- Reach and meaningful contribution allows us to influence regional and national policy and funding to further Northumberland's ambitions.  
Eg HAF+
- Collaboration, funding and commissioning arrangements readies Northumberland to mobilise bids, activity and impact at pace and with confidence.  
Eg Shared Prosperity Funding, Employability multiplier
- Community led messaging has great local reach – as many of our solutions can be found in our communities.  
Eg Adult social care pilot/new models of volunteering
- New money allows us to try new things together, and make change for the future  
Eg DLUHC school readiness



# VCS Liaison Group

- Council recognises the expertise, partnership, value, and capacity in our communities
- Important to come together to discuss emerging opportunities and concerns, and to explore shared solutions.
- Refreshed Liaison Group in 2022 – Chair Cllr Paul Ezhilchelvan, and Deputy Cllr Veronica Jones
- Bi-monthly meetings with co-led agenda
- Core attendees from NCC and Thriving Together, with best fit VCSE and NCC officer representation for agenda items
- Task and Finish activity where appropriate

## Why this helps?

- Visible agenda – TT facilitates county wide input to shape relevant agenda
- Showcases vibrant community sector activity
- Relationship and trust building with open discussion
- Knowledge and resource sharing

## Example: Sarah McMillan - Shared Prosperity

TT and VCSE colleagues mobilised ahead of launch to explore best approach for Northumberland  
Successfully secured Multiplier funding on a collaborative bid, worth £170k -previously only NLT and CAB would have been eligible as single organisations.

# Northumberland's Response to Cost of Living, Poverty, and Hardship

## The plan

- Forms part of the Inequalities action plan (section 4.5)
- Builds on significant work in progress, learning, and existing investment
- Creates further opportunities to work more closely with our communities
- Acknowledges current pressures but ties short and longer term actions for future resilience
- Recognises the need to prevent widening of inequalities during current cost of living pressures

## Focuses on key pressures:

- Targeted hardship support
  - Food
  - Fuel
  - Children and young people
  - Access to advice and information and building resilience
- 
- **Nominal allocations from Public Health reserves – proposals will be agreed over the 18month course of the action plan**
  - **Exploring additional funding from Integrated Care Board (ICB) to join up our approaches across the system**



## **Effective targeted hardship support and applied business intelligence**

- Working collaboratively Northumberland Communities Together have successfully targeted and administered hardship support totalling more than £9.8m
- £15.4m has been administered in Council Tax reduction payments.
- Over £200,000 has been provided to community organisations such as Foodbanks to provide local practical support and to develop sustainable interventions to reduce need and increase financial resilience.
- Working with and in our communities to ensure supports are visible and accessible to residents where needed is key, allowing us to build relationships and insights to how best to address challenges for the longer term.

### **Support in place:**

- Cost of Living web hub and support pack for ALL
- NCT administer Household Support Fund and Northumberland Emergency and Transition support to households in most need
- NCT core team providing up to date and impactful support, information, and signposting including to externally administered grant funds
- Energy pathway – additional funding provided for crisis support with prevention
- Dynamic and targeted pop up programming, asset mapping, and partnership building

### **Next steps:**

- Policy in Practice LIFT tool for best use of council held data for targeting limited resources and funding
- Business Intelligence mapping collective data insights to inform delivery and demonstrate impact



## Areas of particular attention to the Public Health funding allocation

### **Food:**

- Inflation highest since early 1990's with fresh food prices increased by 10%, and lowest priced (value range) foods by 17%, additional pressure on rural residents
- Food prices currently inconsistent
- Restricted availability to groups and organisations as supermarkets face stocking challenges.
- Reduced food donations from public
- Access to fresh and affordable food is key for health and wellbeing

### **Support in place:**

- Northumberland Communities Together 7 day support hub/website 37% of calls concern food
- Free School Meals voucher allocation until Easter 2023 and associated take up campaign
- Holiday Activity and Food programme
- Nourish Northumberland strategy re food insecurity, surplus, and healthy affordable food

### **Proposed nominal allocation from Public Health reserve £130,000**

- Nourish Northumberland and food providers work with NCT to ensure the continued provision of quality and food support over coming months.
- 120+ Warm Spaces, this funding will allow hyper local food support such as a hot free or affordable meal in local community venues, training for volunteers, and local solutions for affordable fresh food.
- Data led expansion of community food models such as community fridges, larders, and shops

## Areas of particular attention to the Public Health funding allocation

### **Fuel:**

- Energy price cap increases, and while frozen until April 2023, most people will pay around £1,570 more per year meaning more residents in fuel poverty or facing fuel insecurity.
- Average household's bills capped at £2,500, the government has also offered some further assistance for low income households, pensioners, and residents who receive a disability benefit.
- Increased anxiety particularly with older residents
- A warm home is key to keeping residents safe and well

### **Support in place**

- Energy pathway via self or partners referral for crisis and prevention support
- Warm Homes leaflet for partners to navigate support
- Effective management and targeting of Central Government fuel support
- Cost of Living support hub and information leaflets into communities

### **Proposed nominal allocation from Public Health reserve £230,000**

- Energy Plus pathway – Warm Homes on Prescription
- Data led prioritisation of households for energy efficiency and support intervention
- Targeted to residents with chronic conditions adversely affected by cold homes
- Home visits, warm home, and appropriate and effective next steps (eg boiler replacement)



## Areas of particular attention to the Public Health funding allocation

### **Children and young people:**

- High number of children from working families experiencing poverty (70% of 14682 children)
- Younger and larger families at greatest risk
- Free School Meal entitlement is growing, but many children living in low income households ineligible
- For the best start in life children must be able to access opportunities available to them

### **Support in place**

- Broad ranging hyper local universal supports such as breakfast clubs, uniform recycling, after school activity including family support, also Family Hubs.
- Free School Meals – hot school meal day and holiday voucher in place, and associated take up efforts
- Healthy Start payments for fresh food, milk, and vitamins for eligible families with a child under 4
- Holiday Activity and Food programme

### **Proposed nominal allocation from Public Health reserve £200,00**

- Addressing child poverty through school setting
- Work with EY, education, and further education colleagues to find best approaches to support
- Eg school uniform, hygiene support/period poverty, breakfast clubs



### **Access to advice and information and building resilience:**

- Builds on Empowering Communities and Northumberland Communities Together
- Northumberland Communities Together (NCT) 100% increase in requests for information and support, average 116 calls per week in 2021 to 203 in 2022 increasing partnerships
- Citizens Advice Northumberland (CAB) 551% increase in energy/utility support, 640% charitable (eg food support), and energy advice 452%
- Accessing reliable information from trusted sources is a key aspect of residents feeling secure and able to manage

### **Support in place:**

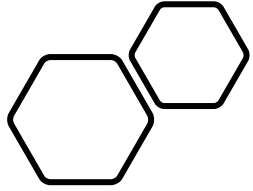
- Cost of Living hub website with reliable up to date information and support
- **Frontline referral platform** for partners and residents to find and access support and information
- Warm spaces and places mapped and opening ahead of the colder months
- Targeted community programming and pop ups and take up activity eg pension credit, free school meals, energy efficiency, affordable credit etc
- Citizens Advice commission increased to expand core offers – welfare and debt advice
- Targeted leaflet, digital, and trusted partner information sharing

### **Proposed nominal allocation from Public Health reserve £240,000**

- Expand NCT team appointing locality based fixed term staff to further embed asset based community development approaches

### **Poverty resilience nominal allocation £200,000**

- Robust yet nimble resource available to mitigate poverty and as yet unforeseen challenges
- Includes training and upskilling, innovation, and hardship responses not covered in this plan



Thank you  
Emma Richardson, Senior Manager,  
Specialist Services