

Annex D -

Local Welfare Provision - What is happening in other Local Authorities

CYC has close contact with North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) and its District Council Benefit Services and with Hull Benefits Service, which have provided the following information:

NYCC contracted out their provision. Between April and end August they received 509 applications of which 428 were successful. Applications can only be made by agencies that specialise in the 9 vulnerabilities covered (e.g. homeless, learning/physical disabilities, families under exceptional pressure) and who have been nominated by the fund. 35% of successful applications have been from families experiencing exceptional pressure.

Initial contact is handled by NYCC who exceptionally will approve food parcels and utility top ups, (still provided by the contractor), for applicants who do not fulfil all the criteria of the scheme. Customers fulfilling the criteria are directed to the approved agency who deals with their vulnerability, the agency applies to the fund on their behalf. Awards are goods in-kind not cash and do not have to be repaid. Expenditure of their grant is comparable to YFAS at around 30% of the budget. NYCC do not anticipate that their fund will be under spent at 31st March 2014, as they expect increased winter demand.

Hull manages their scheme in-house with a combination of grants and loans. Up until 11th August (19 weeks) they had 450 applications for Community Support grant of which 53% were successful, paying out £128,844 (an average award of £541.36). The main reason for claiming is seeking to move into more suitable accommodation (66% of successful applications & 34% of expenditure).

Applications for Crisis Loan claims amounted to 3,853 (84% successful) paying out £179,000 (average of £55.08). The main reason for application is that people have no money. This accounts for 76% awards and 72% of expenditure. Repayment of loans is optional but if no repayments are made only two awards can be made in a 12 month period or 1 each 6 months. 275 re-payments had been made back against the loans totalling £2,255.

By August Hull had spent 21% of their grant budget of £1,48m and expect a surplus even with winter months bringing extra demand.

Hull bench-marked locally and nationally following the first three months of operation. Against 16 local authorities Hull had the highest number of claims for Crisis Loans compared with the benchmark group and the 2nd highest number of applications to the scheme. Their expenditure at the end of the first quarter was 13% of the grant and they were second highest in the group. Therefore proportionally demand in York is consistent with or higher than other authorities locally.