

Feeding Bradford and Keighley Network Meeting 14th July 25 (by teams)

Main topic new Crisis and Resilience Fund

Attended by Rose Bray (Feeding Britian), Kathy Hughes (Bingley Community Kitchen) Josie Barlow (Bradford Central FB) Rudo Chengeta (Bradford 7th day Adventist church) Juli Thompson (Inn Churches) Jane Lees (Community Works) Maria Varley-Tawfik (relationships manager FoodSavers Inn Churches) Carlton Smith (Trident) Laura Chalmers (area Manager Trussell) Dan Palmer (Keighley area office Bradford council) Lynsey Earl (Royds Community Association Social Prescribing Team) Morgan Eloi (The Sutton Centre)

Apologies – Graham Walker who couldn't get on to the meeting for unknow technical reasons.

Introductions

Busy meeting particularly focused on policy developments

Participants introduced themselves.

Policy Updates and campaigns

Reform of eligibility criteria for free school meals announced in the spending review – from next year all children whose families receive universal credit will now qualify for Free school meals. This means that many more low-income children will get fed and particularly supports low-income working families. They will also have access to free holiday schemes via the Holiday Activities and Food Scheme (HAF) and the school benefits with additional funding.

Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF) – more later but it allocates £842 million on a multi-year basis and replaces the Household Support Fund (HSF). It incorporates Discretionary Housing Payments. Focus on providing preventative support working with the voluntary and community sector and assisting people in crisis. Multiyear commitment is a real step forward. Funding is at a similar level as the current year.

Warm Home Discount will automatically be granted to a much broader group of households on low incomes – this was a Feeding Britian recommendation that has been adopted. It's worth £150, and we will now see 2.7 million more people able to access it including 900,000 families with children. This is a commitment for 2025/26 we will need to push for that to continue.

Healthy Start on-going commitment to the scheme and a 10% increase in its value. We are still campaigning for auto enrolment for Healthy Start. Increase will come in in April 2026 and is the first increase since 2021.

Personal Independence Payments (PIP) Like many we were concerned that the proposed reforms if PIP would risk directly contradicting the government's manifesto to end the UK's mass dependence on emergency food parcels. These reforms have been

halted with more of a chance for consultation and reviews. What is a useful part of those reforms was the default recording of all PIP assessments something we have been campaigning for as it has been shown to lead to fewer needs for appeals with the right decision taken in the first instance. We are pushing for this part of the proposal to go ahead while the bulk of it is being reviewed.

Upcoming policy work

Two child limit on benefits ahead of the publication of the Child Poverty Strategy we are continuing to push for the end of the two-child limit and call for a comprehensive policy auto enrolment for free school meals and Healthy Start.

HAF programme We are also conscious that the future of HAF has yet to be confirmed and we are launching a campaign with other partners for this to become a long term funded programme, rather than year on year. Watch this space!

Quarterly policy update sessions We are conscious that lots of our partners would like to have more opportunities to feed into our policy work. We are going to start doing quarterly zooms. The first one will be 22nd July at 10 am Book here <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe5dqyMWMfNPKXNxvQdno6c2ZYFYAO4RsflkNCoQQoWzaxs7w/viewform>

Questions for Rose

- **Dan P** do we have any indication of the split between Crisis and Resilience, will it be 50/50, will there be guidance?

Rose B – nothing out yet as far as I am aware, Andrew F might know more. We have a meeting tomorrow with DWP might clarify more.

Cathy H I spoke to Iain Macbeath who is the Strategic Director - Adult Social Care & Health asking if he could come along to this meeting, and he echoed that he hadn't seen any further guidance, was unable to attend the meeting but keen to hear our ideas.

- **Jane L** are there any parts of your plans around encouraging a wealth tax. It seems that would be a good way of getting money to improve things on our lists.

RB I will ask Andrew his thoughts on that and get back to you on that one.

- **Kathy H** you talked about extension of Warm Homes Discount – can you say a bit more about the thresholds and how people can apply.

RB my understanding is that till now there has been a hard to heat criteria so it going to those with high energy bills, but this is changing – so and additional 2.7 million people can now get it. It is now going to be based on means tested benefits and will be automatically received as a discount on your electricity bill.

The MSE page is helpful on Warm Homes Discount -

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/news/2025/06/warm-home-discount-expansion-confirmed/>

And here's the government page sharing the news on Warm Home Discount - <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/expanding-the-warm-home-discount-scheme-2025-to-2026/expanding-the-warm-home-discount-scheme-2025-to-2026-consultation-document-accessible-webpage>

- **Laura C** – is Feeding Britain producing any guidance for local authorities on best practice for this new fund?

RB Yes, we are planning on doing a webinar for local authorities on their approach and pull together a paper. We might well do this in partnership with the Local Government Association

- **Franco B** – are we able to attend the meeting with the DWP – it would be very useful to have an idea of their strategy so we can develop ours.

RB I will try and find out more details and get back to you or Cathy if it is appropriate.

Affordable Food Report – Feeding Communities RB

<https://feedingbritain.org/new-report-shows-the-community-impact-of-affordable-food-clubs-and-their-role-in-fostering-resilience/> recently published report on the role and impact of affordable food clubs across the UK. We have started doing a series of 6 monthly pieces of research with projects and the households accessing those projects. 2.5 households took part. Thanks for any groups that took part. Lots of stories of people having a stepping stone out of foodbank use or preventing the need for a foodbank visit. Headlines include 2/3 people using affordable food clubs have reduced their need for foodbanks, ¾ are eating more fruit and vegetables and a similar proportion say their wellbeing has improved. Also 2/3 of people responding have accessed wrap around services. We will be repeating this survey on a 6 monthly basis. Please do share.

New Crisis and Resilience Fund CRF CH

This is a new fund but is replacing HSF. I thought it might be useful to summarise how Bradford spent it HSF, before we go on to talk about how we see this new fund. I must stress we are not drawing up plans and are not the only people who will have a voice on this. Iain said he would welcome our ideas. He is on the senior Executive of the council officers.

Historically HSF In 25/26 Bradford got just over £10 million. The money got distributed in lots of different ways. Around a 3rd of it going directly to low-income households. A significant amount went to community groups to give out food parcels, which is distinct from money went to foodbanks and pantries. Most of those receiving money via the this fund were originally organisations who received money for the Holiday Activities and Food programme, some goes to pantries and foodbanks you will be familiar with how there has been a shift from getting food via Inn Churches to getting direct funding this year.

Some key organisations including Carers Resource, a care leavers group, the baby bank and lots of other groups have also been given money for additional support. The Credit Union has been given funding to underwrite some of its schemes to enhance financial inclusion. In addition, the council uses money to provide things like their white goods scheme and their fuel top up vouchers.

CRF

This is a new fund, we do not yet know what our Bradford allocation will be. HSF was weighted towards low-income parts of the country. We expect this will be similar. There is £One Billion. It is the first ever multiyear Crisis and Resilience fund, those of you familiar with HSF know it as always been in 12 month and 6-month chunks often announced very late on. Its expressed purpose is to reform crisis support and to reduce the reliance on emergency food parcels.

The Council letter sent to me by Iain said the same sort of thing pushing work with the voluntary and community sector and adding in discretionary housing payments with extra funds over and above what was in HAF to cover those.

We will split into 3 groups to talk about what we would like to see. How would you like the money to be spent. Then we can bring ideas back to the big groups

Split into 3 groups, then returned after 15 minutes.

CH I will write a report based on our recommendations.

Group 1

Laura mentioned that there is a Trussel guide to this too – I will certainly be looking at that.

LC important to stress this is a new fund not a new name for HSF, and it shouldn't be seen through the same lens. It's very much about prevention. We talked about where the responsibility sits for prevention. We agreed we should do the bits we are good at. But it shouldn't just be split up and farmed out to the charity sector in small chunks. There is a chance for some real planning. We need some sort of crisis support by the council before they need crisis support of a food bag. Advice and wrap around support needs to be key. They shouldn't just be chucking money at what we do. We know that lots of little charities need money, and HSF has been a source of this, but we need to move away from this.

Juli T – we were all in agreement re that. We have a well-established Warm Homes Healthy People fund and there is triage on that. This sort of venture could be expanded. We haven't had many referrals for food, and that is good, it is good that they can get the other help they need.

CH yes this is not a post COVID emergency fund. It needs to be used in a different way. So group 2, including Carton, Jane and others.

JL, we talked about self-sufficiency methods, gardening, cooking budgeting, early intervention and housing issues. Also about tackling the black economy in Bradford particularly the way that dodgy employers and landlords keep very vulnerable people stuck.

Lastly group 3 – Josie and Franco

J B we talked a lot about housing and this discretionary housing fund. At the moment it takes too long to process those application – about 3 months. If people need a deposit or the first month's rent – it takes just too long so not very helpful as landlords are not going to wait around. People also get very stuck in emergency accommodation which is expensive £1200 a month ok when the council is paying it but as soon as you get a job you become eligible for the full rent – it is unaffordable, so people are stuck. You can't save up for a deposit to find somewhere affordable. You get caught in an expensive cycle of emergency support – if the discretionary payments could have funding to allow them to do all this loads quicker it would save money and be lots better for both the council and the person in that situation. It needs more like a week's turnaround. People are stuck they can't get a job; they can't move.

Also, fuel grants the council does. They are useful. I need to pay someone to administer these, and I understand that places like the CAB and Gillington Advice have stopped because it is so much admin and the charities get no funding to do this. So less charities are supporting people to apply. They need to be made more accessible to charities who are supporting households with debt or money management.

The white goods scheme is a loan, and it ties people into buying from certain places which can be quite expensive – it would be better as a grant to allow people to go the 2nd hand route for those goods.

FB Just adding that the housing thing it would be good to make it faster and to take the client out so that the council is dealing directly with the landlord. Getting people into affordable homes can really help them help themselves and get back into employment.

We need **a proper partnership with the local authorities** working with us on strategic things to redirect this funding. We don't want it to just be another funding pot that gets divided out.

We need to be removing obstacles from people who are trying to get back into work and make the priority of welfare support.

Less projects but with very good stringent parameters about how its spent and evidential work about what is actually working. Not spreading it too thinly.

We need a proper partnership – not just giving our ideas but working together. We can provide data and evidence. We need to make sure we lift people out of poverty not just give them a handout. It needs to be more than how many people have you served food to, and a tick box about support. Support is key and needs to be funded.

All – general agreement

JL, we do need to be aware of the transition – foodbanks are already busy. If we suddenly stop other food parcels overnight in April there will be a huge demand – so their needs to be a process of winding that down. We need to educate groups and people about the new system and wean people off reliance on handouts.

JT, we need to show that the money is working hard – for the £1 million we as Inn Churches had we showed that it gave £10 million in return in impact. We need a real appetite to measure impact.

FB we can change the landscape and work with the council.

JT, we know that some of the council are really against direct payments, a cash first model so they would rather it go out as food spreading it out to lots of small organisations in every ward but there is not very much accountability in what's fed back. We need a seat at the table.

Morgan E one thing we need to take account of is that many low-income working households who are living in poverty can't access our services as we are working 9 to 5, we are missing those people who are falling deeper into poverty.

CH my first steps are to pull this together with what Trusell has written. Rose has there been anything useful from other Feeding Britain partners?

RB very similar

FB we can show the way if we all work together with the council and show evidence-based support and let Bradford be an example to the rest of the UK.

JL it's important that the council take part in the Feeding Britain briefings etc. we need to work at pushing evidence-based work.

LC evidence is key and as Trussell we have lots of that from our financial inclusion services – it really shows that people who access this support need to use the foodbank less 30-35% we can show that.

Carlton S – we need to be aware that not everyone can access help from some advice centres as they can't do things for them. Some just need more support and advocacy. It's hard for some to get what they are entitled to without this, debts, digital poverty etc. This 3 years should be a chance to line things up – get the ducks in a row.

We need to involve the credit union in this discussion as well.

CH we also need all the preventative measures – the savings habit like FoodSavers. The budgeting courses, cooking on a budget enabling people to live as well as they can on their income. Of course I know that if incomes are too low there is little we can do and that is why we need to keep on with the other campaigns.

Dialogue with MPs

3 out of 5 of our MP's and one of the others is deputy speaker, supported the rebellion re PIP. We wrote to all 5 of our MPs about this and offered to set up meetings. We were pleased to get personal positive responses from the 3, Bradford West, East and Shipley.

Updates from the meeting

JT, we opened our new facility in Darley Steet Market on Saturday – We have a wellbeing hub we are calling the Well Nest and a cooking school. It will be the 3 FoodSavers hub and the credit union will be having drop ins there and offering lots of support and advice not just giving away free food. A cookery school right in the produce market encouraging people to buy fresh produce.

And our nourishing communities' vouchers – we are soon launching a new phase of this but are still finalising details with the council so can't tell you that much. We have some good evidence as to their success.

Healthy Start – We will be doing some NHS Healthy Start Champions training again in the autumn. We have been doing these for 3 or 4 years now for our members. Watch this space – Katie has emailed some updates – I will add to the minute's most important no real change and all the details are on the website. Reminder that a while ago the phone number for activating the card changed. – Please see Katie Smiths note at the bottom of this document.

CS –Adversity, trauma and resilience training – Plug for our trauma informed practice for frontline workers courses – tier 1 and 2 – free to any Bradford based organisation – statutory or 3rd sector. <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/resilient-bradford-66696317823>

CH, I did tier 1 and can really recommend it.

Bradford Street Support Network a group of meal providers and others offering outreach including Bradfords Homeless Outreach Partnership. We meet with group to share best practices and work together – responding to requests we have put on training. Next week we are holding training sessions on Alcohol and Drugs awareness and harm reduction and the use of Naloxone. We are opening this out to other groups so let us know if you are interested. It's the morning of Wednesday 23rd July face to face in Bradford please book.

Training by Bradford New Vision on Drugs and Alcohol including how to administer Naloxone.

Please book via links – book on both sessions if you want to come to both and bring lunch to have in between – we will provide drinks.

9.45-11.45 Drug & Alcohol Awareness <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/basic-drugs-and-alcohol-awareness-tickets-1446930280419?aff=oddtcreator>

12.15 to 1.45 Naloxone & Harm reduction <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/harm-reduction-and-naloxone-tickets-1448231191479?aff=oddtcreator>

If it proves popular or there are lots of people saying they can't make that date I will ask if we can put it on again in the autumn,

Baking Breaking Bread We are running some sessions – funded by City of Culture we are calling Baking Breaking Bread. They are a gentle social cohesion events where everyone is invited to bring bread – homemade or brought, to share a lunch together talk about what this basic pretty universal food means to them, watch some short films and talk about food poverty (or not having enough bread) we have held one in Riddlesden (self-funded) one in Keighley, one in Frizinghall and have one to go in West Bowling. Cathy experienced bread and gravy or the first time as a stand-alone dish!

Future meetings we are keen to get suggestions for future meetings what would be useful to you. Sometimes something like this arises and there is an obvious choice of topics – but on other occasions what would you like to have as a topic? What would make it worthwhile to come? Perhaps we could have someone giving a little bit of a taster on Trauma Informed practice>

Next meeting is our AGM. It will be a face-to-face meeting probably at storehouse details on our next newsletter. **Save the date 13th October.**

Steering Group members – we are always open to new members who have attended a few meetings. We meet an additional 4 times a year , and occasionally other times as a working group for something. Let us know if you are interested or speak to any of the steering group.

Meeting ended.

NHS Healthy Start scheme information – The NHS Healthy Start scheme helps families and pregnant people on low incomes to get healthy food, milk and vitamins. This scheme runs in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. (Scotland have their own scheme called Best Start Foods.)

There are no new updates for the Feeding Bradford and Keighley July 2025 Network meeting, but please note that this year there have been a few administrative changes, (including the ones mentioned in the April Network meeting.) Please see below for further details, thank you.

- 1) **Updates to the NHS Healthy Start scheme eligibility criteria** = Please see the NHS Healthy Start scheme website for the scheme's current eligibility criteria and for the most up-to-date information on how to apply for the scheme at healthystart.nhs.uk/how-to-apply/
- 2) **Change of an email address = If you are not a British Citizen, but your child is** – there is a new email address (from April) for an application form to apply for the NHS Healthy Start scheme. The new email address is healthystartNRPF@nhsbsa.nhs.uk Please see the schemes website for further information and for the scheme's eligibility criteria – healthystart.nhs.uk/how-to-apply/

- 3) **Telephone number change = The automated telephone line has a new number – 0118 338 5810.**

This is the new number for the 24 hours, 7 days a week automated line. Please use this telephone number to activate your Healthy Start card, to get your PIN, to check your balance or to report a card lost, damaged or stolen.

- 4) For families and people who are pregnant, who are on the scheme, there is a **new “update your details” section on the website**, please go to healthystart.nhs.uk/update-your-details/
- 5) **Promotional Resources for the scheme for Staff Colleagues and Retailers** – there is a “Communications Toolkit” and a “Retailer Toolkit” available, please go to the website - healthystart.nhs.uk/healthcare-professionals/ for the link to the promotional resources. (The link is under the second paragraph – “promoting the scheme.”)
- 6) **information for Retailers**, further information is on the scheme’s website - healthystart.nhs.uk/retailers_ (including the links to resources for Retailers.)

If you would like more information about becoming a **local NHS Healthy Start Champion**, please speak with Cathy for further information.

For full details and further information regarding the NHS Healthy Start scheme, please see the website healthystart.nhs.uk

Thank you.

Katie Smith

Nutrition Improvement Dietitian

Please note I work Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 8am-2.30pm.

Nutrition & Dietetics | SLH.

Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust