

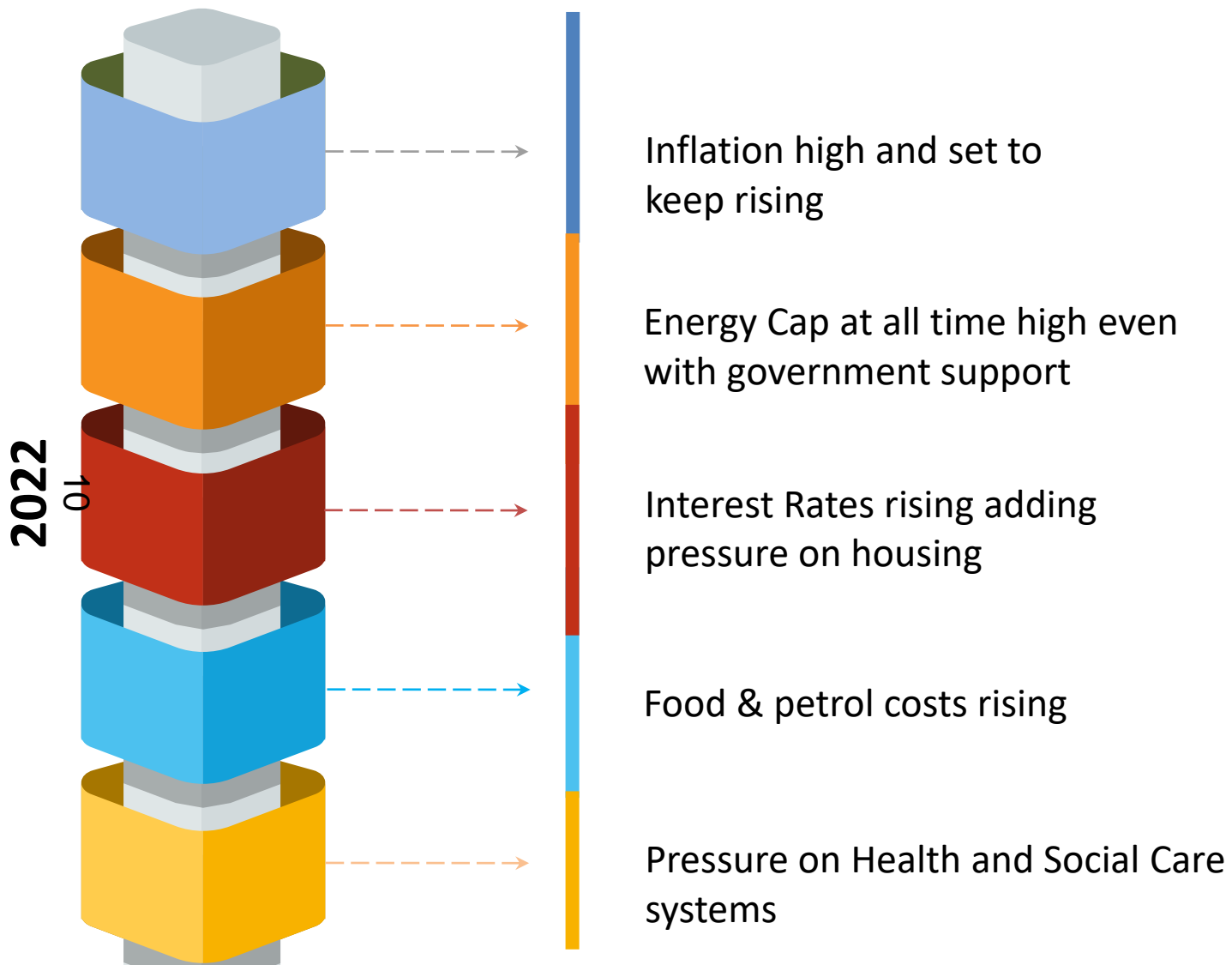
# Cost of Living Crisis Response

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October 2022



# Where are we now



Disposable household income due to drop by 2.2% - biggest fall in living standards since the 1950s

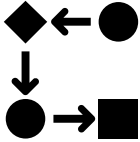


Lack of comprehensive government response to COLC



COVID-19 likely to resurge in Autumn with growing pressures on local hospitals and ambulance services already being felt

# How can we respond



## Governance

Develop a community led response driven through the Hardship Alliance, supported by the Council, working with many groups and partners



## Partnership

Engage stakeholders early to create a shared narrative and plan, agreed direction and collaborative response



## Innovation

Recognise the financial constraints locally and seek innovative ways to support the community, raise funds and positively enhance the offer to the borough

# Workstreams

## Developing Needs Led Approach



Workstream Lead:  
Jake (CAB) with Ingrid Slade & Viki Elliot-King

## Funding



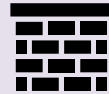
Workstream Lead:  
Amy (WUC) with Graham Cadle

## People Based Resources



Workstream Lead:  
Mark Gwynne with Zulfiqar Mulak

## Logistics



Workstream Lead:  
Emma (First Days) with Sarah Morgan

## Essentials



Workstream Lead:  
Anette Medhurst (Foodbank) with Rhian Hayes

## Data



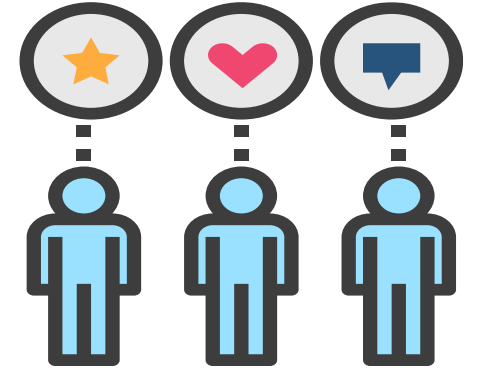
Workstream Lead:  
Emily Higson with Will Roper

## Comms



Workstream Lead:  
Fiona Price (Age UK) with Dave Allen & Sal Thirlway

# Developing a Needs Led Approach



## UNIVERSAL RESPONSE

To support the needs of all residents across the borough irrespective of their circumstances, linked to:

- Mental health decreasing due to rising poverty
- Extreme food & fuel poverty
- Housing needs and rising costs
- Businesses struggling leading to employment risks

## TARGETED RESPONSE

Establishing the cohort of residents who are most at risk, leading to death or significant illness linked to those who are elderly / frail and living alone or those with specific conditions such as cardiovascular / respiratory / dementia

- Extreme food & fuel poverty
- Mental Health
- Housing

Ensuring those at greatest risk of death or serious illness are supported, whilst delivering a wider universal response to the whole community.

# Funding the Response

## COORDINATED FUNDING

### Approach

Working across sectors to centralise the funding available to have the biggest impact for the community. Reducing duplication of effort and ensuring ease of access to grant funding.

### Includes:

- Household Support Grant circa £525k for Oct-Mar for food / energy / FSM
- Explore one off funding already ear marked for Hardship within WBC to establish how this can be brought together to deliver a needs based model
- Engaging with Town & Parish Councils, charities and trusts to explore how hardship funding can work differently in the emergency, linked to application, frequency of approvals, etc
- Crowd Funding opportunities inc Business Engagement to support a Community desire to help
- Understanding funding opportunities, developing bids for existing and new grants that can support local efforts



Working together to  
have the biggest  
community impact  
with limited financial  
resources

# People Based Resources



## REFOCUSING OF EXISTING RESOURCE

Potential to redirect, supplement and re-prioritise resources to support the Hardship Response:

- Training library staff in Income Maximisation to support early intervention
- Diverting community based staff to support the Hardship Response / VCS as required
- Redirect Inclusion Comms role to support Hardship Response
- Work with HFU response team to identify ways of collaborating and building capacity
- Working with Wokingham Volunteer Centre to increase volunteers to help in providing support

## OPPORTUNITIES TO INCREASE CAPACITY

- Potential (subject to funding) to create a dedicated team for vulnerable clients working within WBC (e.g. taskforce) to support the targeted cohort with wellbeing needs
- Opportunity to follow sector models to support Asylum hotel residents to become volunteers and support better engagement within their local communities

Using existing resources differently to meet needs where possible and exploring innovative ways to support the response

# Logistics to deliver



## ACCOMMODATION

Work with VCS & Health partners to establish accommodation needs to support:

- Storage required to hold bulk purchasing
- Explore a shared office location to provide a one stop shop for support, including private meeting space
- Explore the opportunity to open a Health Hub
- Utilise community buildings as Warm Banks / Community Kitchens & maximise engagement with:
  - ➔ • Libraries / Community Centres
  - Churches
  - Town & Parishes

Making best use of community buildings schemes and goodwill to solve complex logistic issues

## TRANSPORT

- Review how existing vehicles could be used to transport stock to various locations e.g. food
- Explore community interest in delivery needs
- Opportunity to engage with Asylum hotel volunteers with a cycle scheme provision



# Essentials to Support

## FOOD, ENERGY SAVING & OTHER NEEDS

Working across the VCS to provide essential support by way of food, energy and other needs for struggling families:

- Linking into and building on the existing offer
- Enabling provision in local areas
- Responding to changing needs and emerging opportunities
- Enabling people to live sustainably and within their means

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Making easiest access to support with food and other essentials to reduce people's outgoings

## EXISTING AVENUES OF SUPPORT

Linking with and building on existing support through other opportunities such as the Household Support Fund, Local Welfare Provision, Essential Items Grants and other opportunities.

# Data

## UNDERSTANDING CHANGING DEMAND

Establishing a data scorecard with more real time information

- Drawing data from the Hardship Alliance and wider VCS partners on demand
- Developing fortnightly reporting

Understanding emerging Census and CACI household income data to look at demographics - enabling the targeting of support and communications at people likely to be in need.

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Understanding data in real time to inform approaches and enable a rapid response

## MONITORING TAKEUP & IMPACT

- Monitoring take-up of support
- Opportunity to engage with Asylum hotel volunteers with a cycle scheme provision

# Communications

## SUPPORTING WORKSTREAMS

Working with workstream leads and VCS partners to get the message out to people in need of support:

- Providing practical help
- Supporting direct advice
- Signposting to support available

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This will enable de-stigmatising the need to ask for help, through using real examples and story telling to get increased engagement



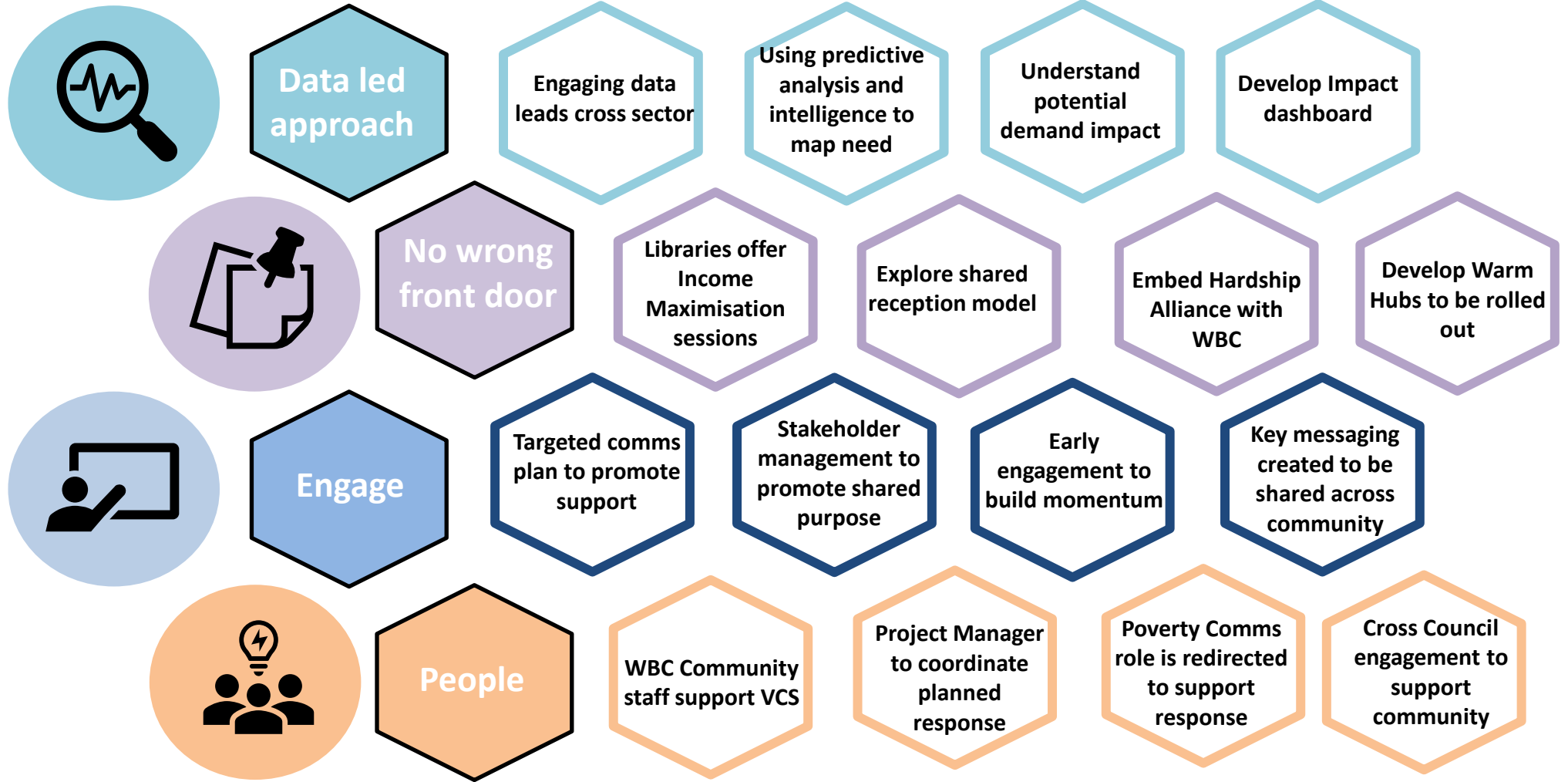
Raising awareness of support available for residents, particularly people who have not previously needed support so may be unaware of what is available

## JOINT MESSAGING

Supporting messaging from WBC and Hardship Alliance – working together to amplify reach.

Increasing recruitment of volunteers and donations to support the response.

# Some Early<sup>2</sup> Opportunities



# Innovations and Opportunities

## CONSIDERING IDEAS AND OPPORTUNITIES TO INNOVATE

Thoughts from members to inform planning the response and widening reach to people in need of support:

- Supporting working with our VCS partners
- Working with town and parish councils
- Working with local communities



What good things have you heard to further develop our shared approach?

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