

Cost of Living CVF Proforma Analysis (24 Responses)

Qualitative Insights Team

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Community, Voluntary and Faith Cost of Living Proforma

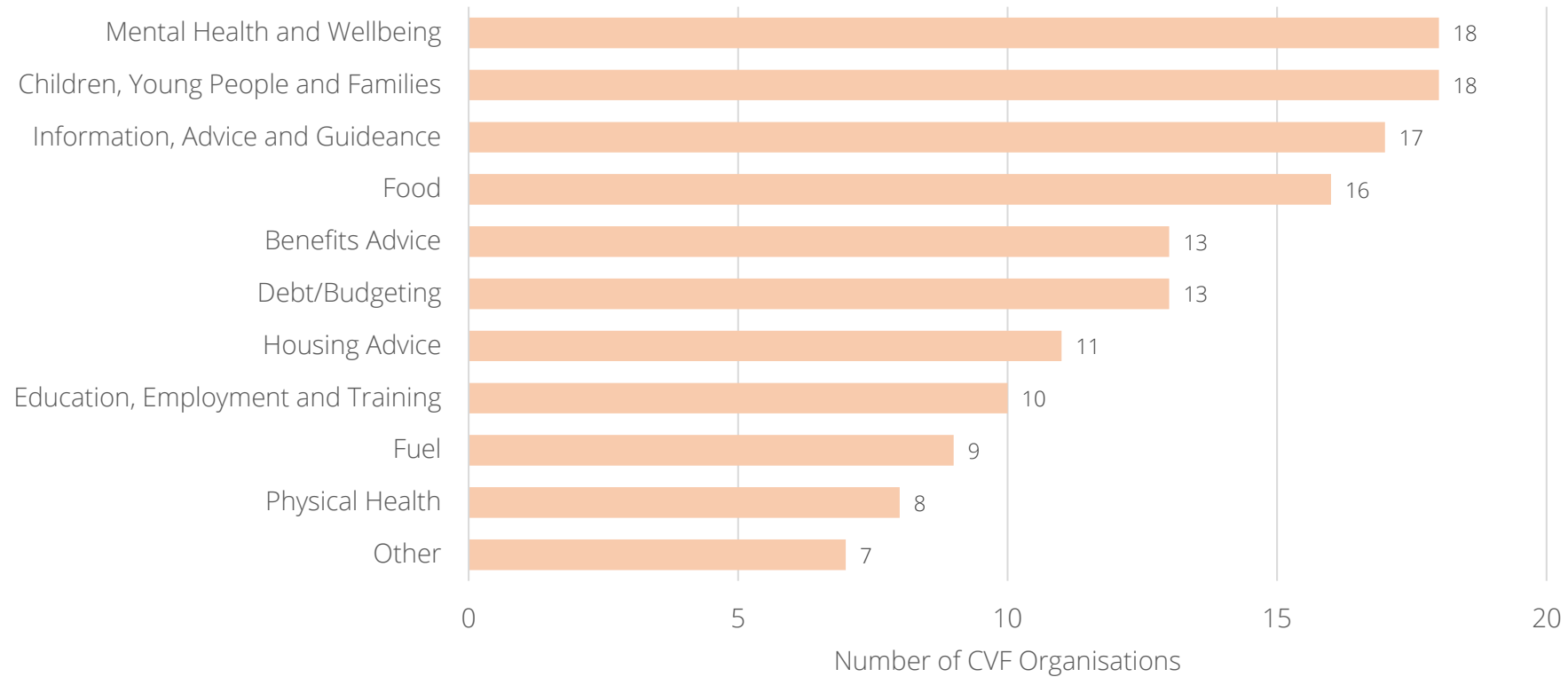
- The following presentation provides findings from the Community, Voluntary and Faith (CVF) Cost of Living Proforma which was distributed to CVF organisations from 26th August 2022 and closed on 30th September 2022.
- The proforma was distributed electronically via email through the Community, Voluntary and Faith (CVF) Forum and the Communities of Practice (COP) networks and had a potential reach of over 200 organisations.
- The following presentation includes responses from 24 CVF organisations that vary in size, capacity and support provided.
- The analysis presented here provides a snapshot of CVF organisations' experience at this time and as such may not fully representative of all views within the CVF sector.

Q1 – Q5: Organisations completing the CVF Cost of Living Proforma

- 24 organisations completed the Proforma between Friday 26th August and Friday 30th September.
- Organisations included smaller and larger organisations including commissioned services, voluntary led organisations, local community organisations and social supermarkets.
- 21 organisations provide services and support Wirral Wide.
- 3 organisations provide services and support to specific geographical locations (anonymised due to low sample size).

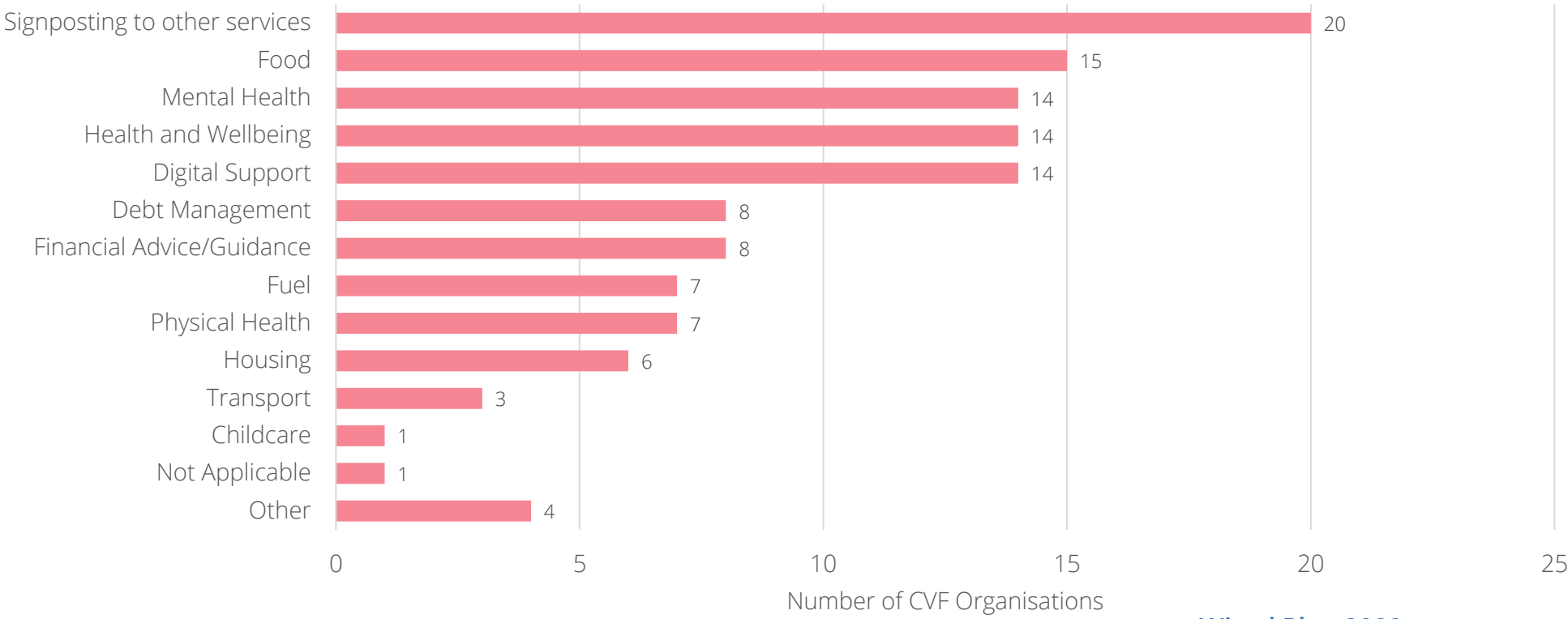
Q6: Which of the following sources of support does your organisation provide normally?

Chart 1: Which of the following sources of support does your organisation provide normally?
(Multi-response question)



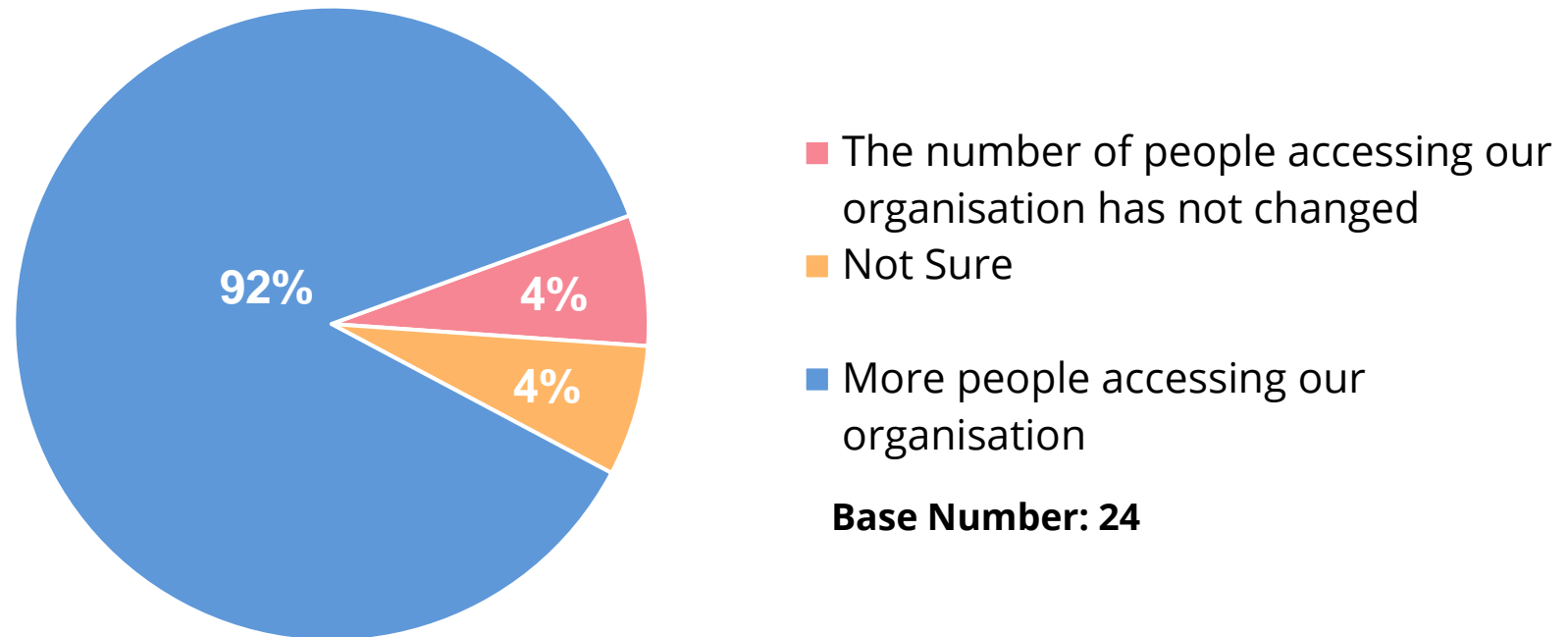
Q7: If any, what additional areas of support are you providing to people around the rising cost-of-living?

Chart 2: If any, what additional areas of support are you providing to people around the rising cost-of-living?
(Multi-response question)



Q8: How has your organisation seen a change in the numbers of people accessing your support due to the rising cost-of-living?

Chart 3: How has your organisation seen a change in the numbers of people accessing your support due to the rising cost-of-living?



Q9: In the month of August, approximately how many people have accessed your organisation?

- 22 out of 24 CVF organisations responded to this question
- 17,001 people were supported in the month of August (based on approximate values provided by CVF organisations)
- Figures ranged between 60 and 6,000 people accessing CVF organisations in the month of August

Q10: In the month of August, approximately how many people have accessed your organisation related to the rising cost-of-living?

19 out of 24 CVF organisations were able to quantify their response to this question.

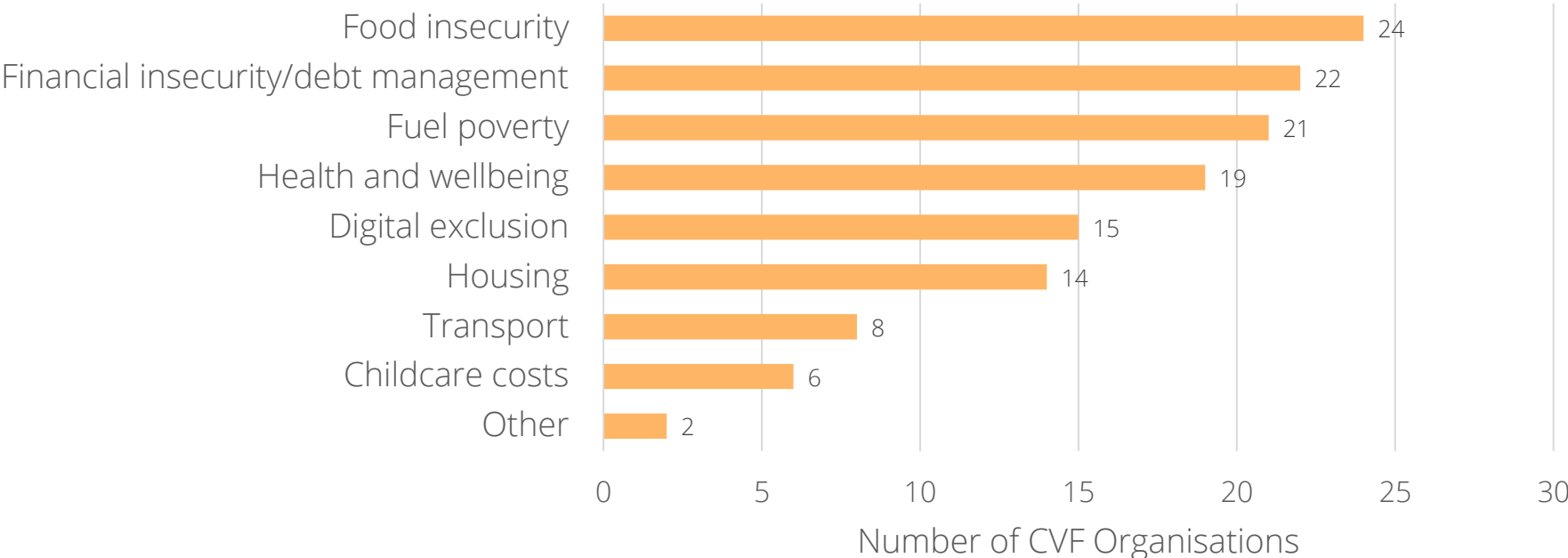
- Five organisations reported that **100%** of people accessing their organisation in the month of August did so related to the rising cost-of-living.
- Eight organisations reported that **over 50%** of people accessing their organisation in the month of August did so related to the rising cost-of-living (ranging between 50% and 90%).
- Six organisations reported that **less than 50%** of people accessing their organisation in the month of August did so related to the rising cost-of-living (ranging between 12% and 47%).

Using the approximate estimates provided by CVF organisations on the Proforma to compare baseline access figures to those related to the cost of living, this equates to approximately:

53% of people accessing these 19 CVF organisations in the month of August doing so related to the rising cost-of-living.

Q11: What issues related to the rising costs-of-living are people presenting to your organisation with

Chart 4: What issues related to the rising costs-of-living are people presenting to your organisation with?
(Multi-response question)



Q12: How would you describe the impact of the rising cost of living on individuals accessing your organisation?

CVF organisations provided a wide range of feedback for this question. The most common responses/themes are listed below:

- **People struggling to afford food, fuel and other essentials** (10 responses)
- **The impact on mental health** including anxiety, depression, panic attacks and suicide (8 responses)
- **Individuals worse off financially** including having less money to pay for things, benefits not stretching as far, income not as reliable, costs going up, etc. (7 responses)
- **Concern for the future/winter** (7 responses)

Three or more responses were provided for each of the following: **people adapting their financial behaviour** (5); **isolation** (4); **restriction of travel to support organisations** (4); **the cost of living impacting all people** (4), and **digital exclusion** (3).

Q12 (continued): How would you describe the impact of the rising cost of living on individuals accessing your organisation?

In response to this question, two or more CVF organisations expressed concern for the following social groups:

- Families (5)
- Older people (2)
- People with chronic health conditions (2)
- Vulnerably housed people (2)
- Young people (2)

Other social groups mentioned by CVF organisations in response to this question included:

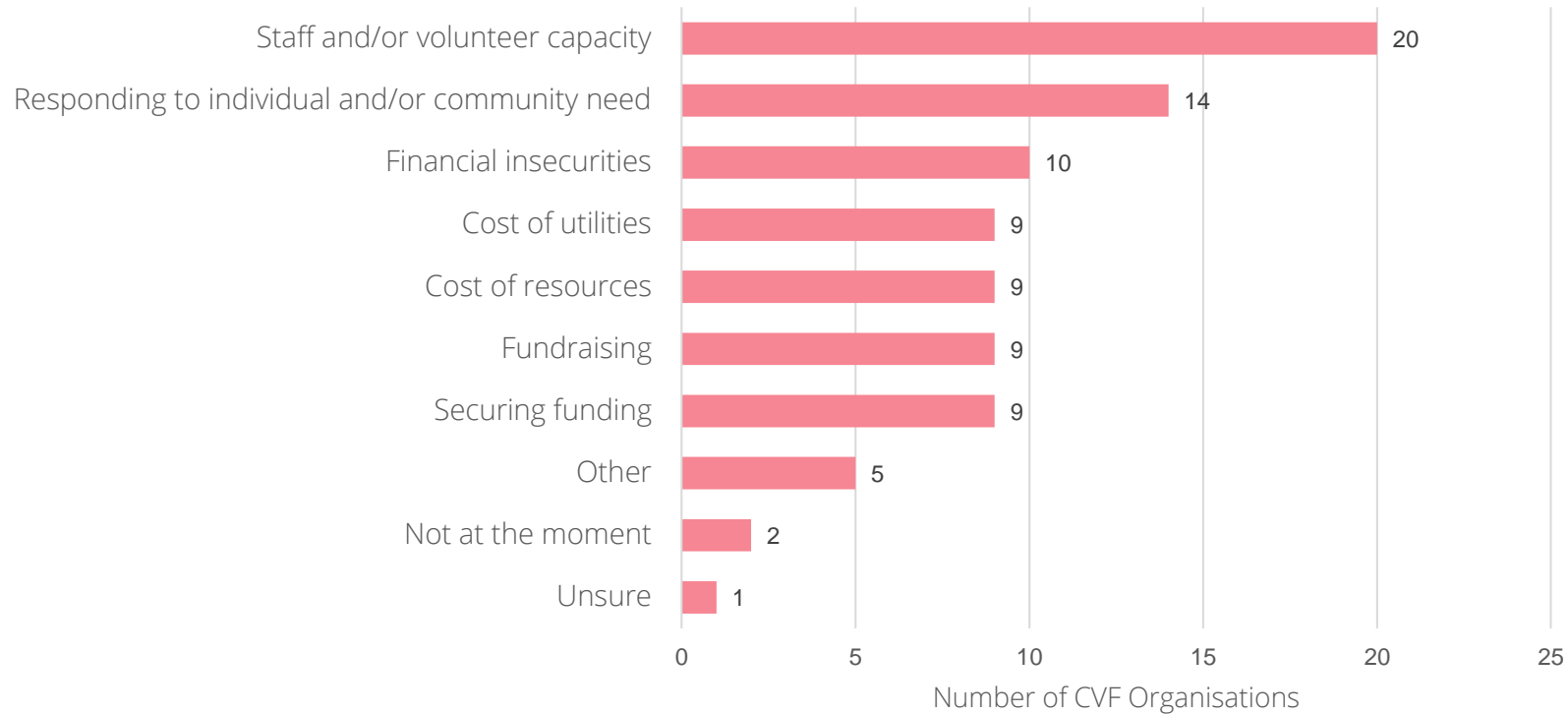
- Carers
- Digitally excluded people
- People in receipt of benefits
- People living in the poorest communities in Wirral
- People seeking asylum
- People with addictions
- People with no social support
- People with specialist diets
- Private renters
- Refugees
- Single middle aged men

Q13: What additional support would make a difference to people accessing your organisation?

- **Continued and/or additional funding:** to continue to support Wirral residents; to increase staffing levels and capacity; to support increasing energy costs; with less restrictive funding criteria;
- **Increase advice provision:** more debt and benefits advisers; more qualified debt and benefits advisers; accessible energy advice (i.e. for people who speak English as a second language), single point of contact for signposting advice services and information;
- **Training for staff of CVF organisations:** around cost-of-living issues (i.e. reducing costs, fuel efficiency, etc.); on what support is available across the CVF Sector for staff and users of services
- **Support for community members:** digital support for digitally excluded; greater provision of food and daily meals; funding transport to increase access to services; warm hubs; lower energy bills; greater disposable income; greater/easier access to Council Services, safe spaces to disclose risk of harm, access to spaces with free wifi; events to reduce isolation, fuel support for protected groups; localised support;
- **Support across CVF Sector:** more community spaces available for free for CVF organisations to use to deliver services and support; more strategic collaboration across the CVF sector, partnership working; zero waste food strategy; efficient use of warm hubs.

Q14: During the month of August, has your organisation had difficulties with any of the following issues?

Chart 5: During the month of August, has your organisation had difficulties with any of the following issues?
(Multi-response question)



Q15: What are the main concerns or challenges for your organisation related to the rising cost-of-living?

Increasing demand / decreasing capacity to support community members (11 responses)

including more people accessing their organisations for support; individuals using organisational buildings as warm spaces to reduce their own fuel costs; increasing requests for food and fuel support, limited capacity of staff and volunteers to support needs of people; concern for sustainability of support provision.

Rising organisational costs (9 responses) including increases in fuel and other utilities (5 responses); increasing cost of organisational resources.

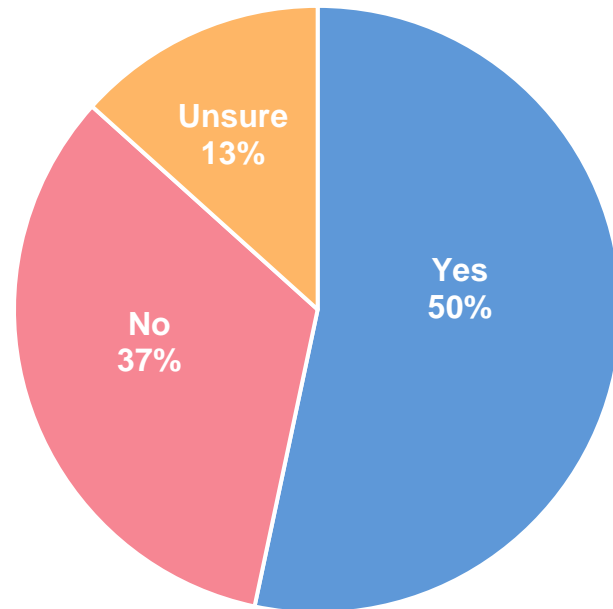
Limitations to funding and/or donations (8 responses): including funding sources staying at the same monetary level whilst organisational costs increase; a reduction in donations; concerns for future tender processes and funding opportunities; funding not enough to meet demand; unforeseen costs not including in funding bids.

Sourcing resources (3 responses) including sourcing low-cost food and essentials to provide to Wirral residents.

Impact on staff (3 responses) who are also facing cost-of-living issues themselves.

Q16: Do you collect information on how the rising cost-of-living is impacting on people who access your organisation?

Chart 6: Do you collect information on how the rising cost-of-living is impacting on people who access your organisation?



Base Number: 24

Q17: How is your organisation collecting information on the impact of the rising cost-of-living?

12 organisations (those who selected 'yes' to Q16) provided feedback on the methods they use to report on the rising cost-of-living:

- 'Case studies' were used by four different organisations
- 'Focus groups' and 'quantitative data collection' were used by two different organisations
- Further methods reported by VCF organisations included the following:
 - Interviews
 - Attendance reports
 - Third party reporting
 - University evaluation
 - Verbal
 - Impact statements
 - Comments feedback
 - Issue tracker
 - One to one reviews
 - Information capture on registration forms
 - Surveys

10 organisations stated that this question was 'not applicable' to them.

Q18: What further support could your organisation offer if you had access to additional funding?

CVF organisations provided a wide range of ideas to enhance the provision and variety of support available to Wirral residents related to this question. The following four key themes were identified during analysis:

- A) Increased provision of services and support**
- B) Organisational Development**
- C) Increase provision of food and other essentials**
- D) Increase knowledge around the cost of living, healthy practices and support available in Wirral**

The next four slides provide examples of potential interventions related to each of the themes above that could be actioned within the CVF Sector if additional funding were available to CVF organisations.

Q18: What further support could your organisation offer if you had access to additional funding?

A) Increased provision of services and support

The following suggestions were provided by CVF organisations:

- Travel/transport assistance to community members to aid them accessing organisations
- Establish a Cost-of-Living Drop-In
- Greater capacity for advisors on debt, benefits and staying warm
- Warm and safe spaces/hubs for individual and community use in the colder months
- Additional roles for staff and volunteers to increase to take on additional casework
- Additional community activities
- Digital support to community members
- Support for mental health

Q18: What further support could your organisation offer if you had access to additional funding?

B) Organisational Development

The following suggestions were provided by CVF organisations:

- Additional staff and volunteer roles
- Greater capacity for existing staff and volunteers
- Additional community participation
- Additional provision of services and support
- Build capacity to train and retain staff and volunteers

By doing so, CVF Organisations envisage being able to:

- Provide swifter referrals to other organisations
- Provide support to targeted communities
- Work collaboratively with and support other CVF organisations
- 'Keep up with demand'
- Have greater capacity to evidence on the impact of COL
- Support the wider promotion of cost-of-living messages

Q18: What further support could your organisation offer if you had access to additional funding?

C) Increased provision of food and other essentials

The following suggestions were provided by CVF organisations:

- Additional food for community members
- Additional stock for CVF organisations
- Wider variety of food (including fresh fruit and veg)
- Provision of meals (including hot meals)
- Emergency kits and/or hampers with food and other essentials
- Fuel support (including culturally appropriate fuel support for Travellers)

Q18: What further support could your organisation offer if you had access to additional funding?

D) Increase knowledge around the cost of living, healthy practices and support available in Wirral

The following suggestions were provided by CVF organisations:

- Education courses for residents including digital skills, cooking on a budget, personal resilience and maintaining mental wellbeing
- Provide additional signposting to residents
- Provide additional and more accessible advice and guidance on debt, benefits and staying warm

Summary:

Cost of Living Core Themes related to Individuals

- **General budgeting, benefits and debt advice:** more provision needed; more timely advice needed i.e. walk-in/drop-in appointments; more qualified advisers needed
- **Meeting basic needs:** rising costs of food, fuel and other essentials; choosing between heating and eating; these essential needs must be addressed first
- **Transport Costs:** considered non-essential for wellbeing activities as opposed to essential appointments; people may not be able to afford to attend medical appointments and/or CVF organisations to access support
- **Concern for the winter/future:** rising costs; financial insecurity; impact on mental health and wellbeing
- **Accessible Energy Advice:** more provision; local provision; accessible to those who do not speak English as a first language
- **Warm Options:** warm spaces; hot meals; emergency hampers; support to access warm spaces
- **Digital exclusion:** access to laptops/tablets; access to free wifi without additional costs
- **It may be too early to understand the full impact on individuals:** need may increase over winter; core issues may differ over time; unknown changes

Summary:

Cost of Living Core Themes related to CVF Organisations

- **Increasing demand on organisations:** more people accessing organisations for support; use of organisation buildings as warm spaces to reduce own fuel costs; increasing food and fuel support requests; greater level of need of individuals who are struggling to meet even their own basic needs
- **Rising organisational costs:** utility costs; resources to work effectively; resources to give to individuals
- **Concern for current funding:** based on previous estimates which do not reflect current need in our communities; not able to meet current and future demand with current resources; unforeseen costs not included in original bids; increase in overall organisational costs
- **Concern for future funding:** concerns for future tender processes; funding opportunities; competition
- **Impact on staff and volunteers:** facing their own cost-of-living issues; retention; impact on wellbeing
- **Staff capacity to support individuals:** more staff and volunteers required to meet future demand which is reliant on further funding; greater amount of time required to support individuals due to the increasing level of need; greater toll on staff and volunteers
- **Organisational capacity:** to plan; to train and support staff and volunteers; to evidence need related to the cost of living; to evidence organisational impact related to the cost of living