



## Planning a Cost of Living Summit; Sharing learning

Community leaders planned a Cost of living summit in North East Wales as a response to the current crisis. We are sharing our learning with you and some of the tools that we used to make the event happen. Please feel free to adapt and use what would work in your community.

‘Many thanks for an excellent event from which I learnt a great deal’

‘Thank you for the invite! The day was brilliant’

### Pack includes:

1. Tips and learning
2. Example summit schedule
3. Example event script
4. Equipment needed
5. Example press release



## 1. Tips and learning

**Preparation:** The preparation and relationship building before the event was an integral part of its success. We did a listening exercise talking to groups and individuals affected by the crisis over several months. Community leaders who were energised then came together to plan and lead the event. They represented diverse groups of people who are affected by the crisis. TCC staff (community organiser role) did the coordinating role, planning meetings, managing invites and coordinating the press release and scripts.

**Timing:** The summit was 1 hour 30 mins long. Starting at 1pm, a time when people were not dropping off/picking up at school or having their evening meal. It was on a Friday so that we knew elected leaders would be in their constituencies. It did exclude those working so a weekend event may be a better alternative if elected leaders are available to attend. Elected decision makers are very busy so if you want them to stay for the whole event a shorter session is better.

**Venue:** The summit was held on the communities' terms – it was in an accessible venue that the host community members felt familiar with. Community leaders worked to encourage people to come along and share their stories, they also provided support on the day to those attending.

**Online space:** We also ran an online space for people who couldn't attend in person, this was run following the same agenda as the in-person room. Preference would have been to connect the two rooms but the internet was not strong enough at the venue.

**Invites:** We work across three counties, we invited local members of UK parliament, Welsh members of the Senedd, local councillors, business leaders, funders, support services as well as community and faith groups and community members from those areas. On the day we had a good mix of different people. We confirmed elected decision makers 6 weeks before the 30<sup>th</sup> and then invited others when we had initial confirmation from them.

**Set up:** We had an [exhibition of posters](#) showing how people were affected, a video of these posters set to music. There were 5 tables, each facilitated by a community leader. We encouraged decision makers to sit on different tables around the room, everyone else could sit where they felt comfortable. Everyone took part in the discussions on equal terms and the facilitators ensured that everyone took part where they wanted to.

**Follow up:** We sent a report of discussions to all attendees and will be using the report to look at the issues we want to work on in the future.

## 2. Example summit schedule

Activity	Timing	Method	Outcome	Resources
<b>Welcome</b>	5 mins	A community leader read a welcome script and set the tone for the event.	Set up and tone of the event – we are here to listen, share and focus on action.	Pre – written speech. PA system
<b>Spoken word performance</b>	5 mins	Someone with lived experience performed a spoken word poem.	An engaging and creative way of sharing experience.	<a href="#">Poem</a> PA system
<b>Lived experience story shared</b>	5 mins	A community leader shared a story of lived experience.	Lived experiences shared – this enabled someone's story to be told who couldn't come in person.	Story PA system
<b>Round table discussion – question 1</b>	15 mins	Participants were asked: What are the main issues you and your community are experiencing?	Smaller groups have the opportunity to discuss issues. We asked a decision maker to sit on each table.	Facilitator Scribe Flip chart Pens
<b>Round table discussion – question 2</b>	15 mins	Participants were asked: What local and national solutions would be most effective for you and your community?	Smaller groups have the opportunity to discuss issues. We asked a decision maker to sit on each table.	Facilitator Scribe Flip chart Pens
<b>Pledges</b>	15 mins	Each participant was asked to make a pledge on what they would do as a result of the event.	A wall of pledges available for all to see.	Facilitator Scribe Post cards for pledges Pens
<b>Closing statement</b>	5 mins	People were thanked for coming and next steps shared.		Pre- written script PA System

### 3. Example Event Script

## Cost of Living Summit (Location) (Time), (Date) (Location)

**Set up 10am:** Sign in table on entry. PA set up to the right of door. Exhibits, tables, banners, tech. **Play video with music from 11 – 11:15am**

**Staff will make sure speakers ready to go on stage in order:**

- 11:15 – Spoken word
- 11:20 – Opening statement
- 11:30 – Roundtable discussion
- 12:20 – Closing statement

## 11am: arrivals, welcome and introduction

**As we welcome people: people on doing sign-in**

- Hello and welcome, please could I ask you to sign in and agree/disagree to photography – please take a badge if you would prefer not to be photographed
- The posters you will see are in the words of people who are affected, have a look
- Please help yourself to refreshments
- Toilets are in the corridor
- Breakout room is next door (show where)
- Allocate people to tables to ensure a spread of elected decision makers/funders

### 11:15 Spoken word

Poet on her own.

Moment for applause.

*When finished piece, say: "Thank you for listening. Now, I will pass over to (Name) who will make an opening statement."*

### 11:20 Big welcome / opening statement

**Speaker:** Bore da pawb! Good morning and welcome to the (Organisation) cost of living summit. A very warm welcome to everyone! I am (Name) from (Organisation)

**Example welcome text:** A big thank you to everyone for coming and especially for the powerful performance we just heard. (pause for possible applause)

Thanks also to (Name all organisations involved) who have worked with us to bring you all together today.

With the cost-of-living crisis set to worsen, we're all facing worrying times. As issues escalate for the people in our communities, we need to be in a position where we can offer them the support to live comfortably; especially during winter months but also beyond that.

Charities, local groups and volunteers, alongside keyworkers are at the front line of the current cost of living crisis and have supported people through many difficult years with limited resource.

**We need your support to continue to do this and we need to work together.**

### 11:23 Context setting

**Speaker:** Bore da, I am (Name) from (Organisation)

**Example setting context text:** In Wales, we've enacted the socio-economic duty, meaning that some public bodies must think about how their strategic decisions can improve inequality of outcome for people who suffer socio-economic disadvantage. **Let's not forget about this duty as we tackle the cost-of-living crisis together.**

This morning, we will have a chance to listen and learn from each other about the real concerns that people have. We are a diverse group, and we are asking you to put your differences aside, share and listen. We hope this conversation can improve relationships between us and lead to solutions that support those most affected.

**We started this morning hearing a powerful performance. Sometimes it falls on each of us to be brave and to be that single voice in the crowd, speaking up about what is happening. But we want everyone here to know that you are not alone.**

### 11:25 Story sharing

**Speaker:** I am (Name) from (Organisation)

**Example story telling text:** I work with disabled people and their families to make sure that people can live independently, living the lives they want and deserve. We are here because we are all affected by the cost-of-living crisis.

Here is an example of how one person we work with has been affected:

*“When my wife's mother died her father gave her the wedding ring [...] I'm not sure how much the ring is worth. She feels she needs to sell it. I'm quite upset because the ring is supposed to be passed down to our eldest daughter one day when my wife dies. I have asked her not to sell it.*

*Because of the predicted rise in energy costs in January on top of the already rising energy costs this October, even with a price cap, we are panicking and worry that we'll be in a desperate situation that could send us into extreme poverty. This is not a price cap we can afford. We will NOT use heating. We haven't got a fireplace either, so I can't even go collect wood to burn. My wife's health will suffer even further as she needs heat to help with her pain, but she has accepted that she will suffer. We WILL use food banks; I have used food banks twice already beginning of the year. We will probably survive on the kindness of others.”*

We will now pass over to (Chairs name)

## Roundtable discussion

**11:30 Chair:** Hello, I am (Name) from (Organisation) and am going to explain how the morning will run:

- You will now be having discussions in smaller groups
- We would like to encourage all voices to be heard and have a strong focus on local as well as national solutions
- Thanks in advance to those who have told us that they would need to leave early for other commitments – please let your table know
- Your facilitator will lead you through the exercise and everyone will be encouraged to commit to an action
- Each table will then give a quick feedback to the whole room
- We know that this topic can be very emotive and we encourage people to be honest, but to also respect your own personal boundaries and respect other people's boundaries too.
- If you would like to step out at any time, please do

**11:35 Chair:** I am now going to hand over to the facilitators on each table to. I will let you know when we need to move on to the next question. We also have a timekeeper (ask them to wave) who will help us stay on track.

**11:36 Facilitators:** Hello all, I am xxx from xxx and I will be facilitating this discussion. We will discuss two questions and then all think of a pledge of action to do after the event. Please feel free to help yourself to refreshments or use the loo if you need. I will facilitate and ensure that everyone has a chance to speak if they wish to.

XXX will take notes.

If anyone is needing to leave early, please take a pledge card and see TCC staff on the way out. Any questions?

**By 11:40 latest**

**The first question is:**

**What are the main issues you and your community are experiencing?**

You have 15 mins to discuss this as a group.

**11:55: Chair/timekeeper:** You have 5 mins left

**12pm Chair:** Please move on to the second question.

**Facilitators:** The second question is:

**What local and national solutions would be most effective for you and your community?**

We have 15 mins to discuss this as a group.

**12:10: Chair/timekeeper:** You have 5 mins left

**12:15 Chair:** Please move on to your action pledges if you haven't already.

**Facilitators:** We all have the power to act towards positive change. Can you now write down an action you will take on a postcard.

This could be asking a question, agreeing to meet again, writing a letter or bringing these issues to debate. **No action is too small.**

You have 5 mins for this, you can take pictures of your pledge to remind you.

Encourage people to write name.

**12:20 Chair:** Each table will now summarise for the larger group.

**You have 2 minutes per table to give a quick summary.**

**12:21 Table 1, please will you speak up and share with the room?**

**(facilitator to do this)**

**(timekeeper prepared to interrupt)**

**12:23 Table 2...**

**12:25 Table 3...**

**12:27 Table 4...**

**12:29 Table 5...**

**12:31 Chair** – Thank you all for your time and for the valuable contributions. We know that the conversations will have raised a lot of questions. We will be in touch with a short report from the event and to follow up with everyone.

Please use the remaining time to talk with others and look at the posters on the wall written by people affected by the cost-of-living crisis. Table facilitators will pin the pledges up on the pledge wall (signal where). You might have some questions – feel free to write these on the question sheet by the pledges.

If you have any further thoughts or questions after this morning’s event, please contact TCC or any of the organisations involved directly – details are on the wall by the entrance.

Thank you and take care.

**From 12:30 Close – 2 people on the door to say goodbye.**

**Also, play video quietly in background.**

<b>Role</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Fallback</b>	<b>Note taking</b>
Opening statement			
Chairing event			
Timekeeping event			
Welcome/Signing in			
Facilitating table 1:			
Facilitating table 2:			
Facilitating table 3:			
Facilitating table 4:			
Hosting online table			
Recording			
Collecting pledges			

#### **4. Equipment needed:**

- Blank and pre-prepared flip chart papers
- Marker pens
- Normal pens
- Post its
- Post cards
- Stickers (Extra activity if there is extra time to put next to most important)
- Posters
- Blue Tac
- High table for projector
- Projector
- Screen
- Name badges (for staff and facilitators)
- Photography badges
- Camera
- Stephen - recording equipment
- Table numbers
- Branded event things
- Cups and jugs

#### **Print /prep for slides**

- Sign in sheets, include sign up to org newsletter? (Y/N or tick)
- Instruction sheets for welcome and tables
- Agendas for speakers/facilitators
- Plates with statistics/quotes
- Slides for online meeting
- Set up zoom link
- Video
- Welcome PPT slide
- Agenda slide
- Questions slide
- Next steps and thank you
- [Jamboards with Qs and topics](#)

## 5. Example Press Release

### Communities get organised for Cost-of-Living Summit

Community groups are planning a cost-of-living summit on (date and time) at (Location). (Name organisations involved) have worked together to organise the event.

Charities, local groups, keyworkers and volunteers are at the front line of the current cost of living crisis and have supported people through difficult years with limited resource.

The summit will be hosted by (Organisation), an organisation already supporting people through the crisis by e.g organising social sessions, affordable activities, a transport scheme for people to attend GP appointments and get their weekly shopping.

We understand that the UK Government are planning a further budget announcement in the coming days, where we anticipate cost of living support will be clarified. The event aims to strengthen the dialogue between communities, elected leaders, local businesses and funders about local and national solutions that will support people in the years ahead.

This is a complex socio-economic situation experienced differently by different people living in (insert area), (Name) of (Organisation) says;

*e.g "Many disabled people depend on electric powered equipment stair lifts, oxygen machines, hospital beds, rise and recline chairs, mobility scooters and power wheelchairs. They cannot choose to turn these machines off, some of them would deteriorate rapidly without this support. Many have extra washing and drying because of their condition. We need help and we need it now."*

(Name) and (Organisation) attending the event, says:

*e.g "People are currently relying on us, and this will increase, especially in the winter months. We have also seen our energy bills and the cost of food almost double. I myself am classed as the working poor with my partner in full time employment and myself part time; we are also struggling and worry for the future. The working poor fall into the gap of no support but there is a big impact on our daily living costs."*

(Name) and (Organisation) says:

*e.g "This is just the start of the conversation and will hopefully pave the way for improved communications and improved support to ensure no-one gets left behind during these difficult times"*

We want the event to focus on diverse groups of people working together for positive solutions, creating a hopeful space focusing on what we can – and will – do together. For more information on the event and our ongoing cost of living work contact.