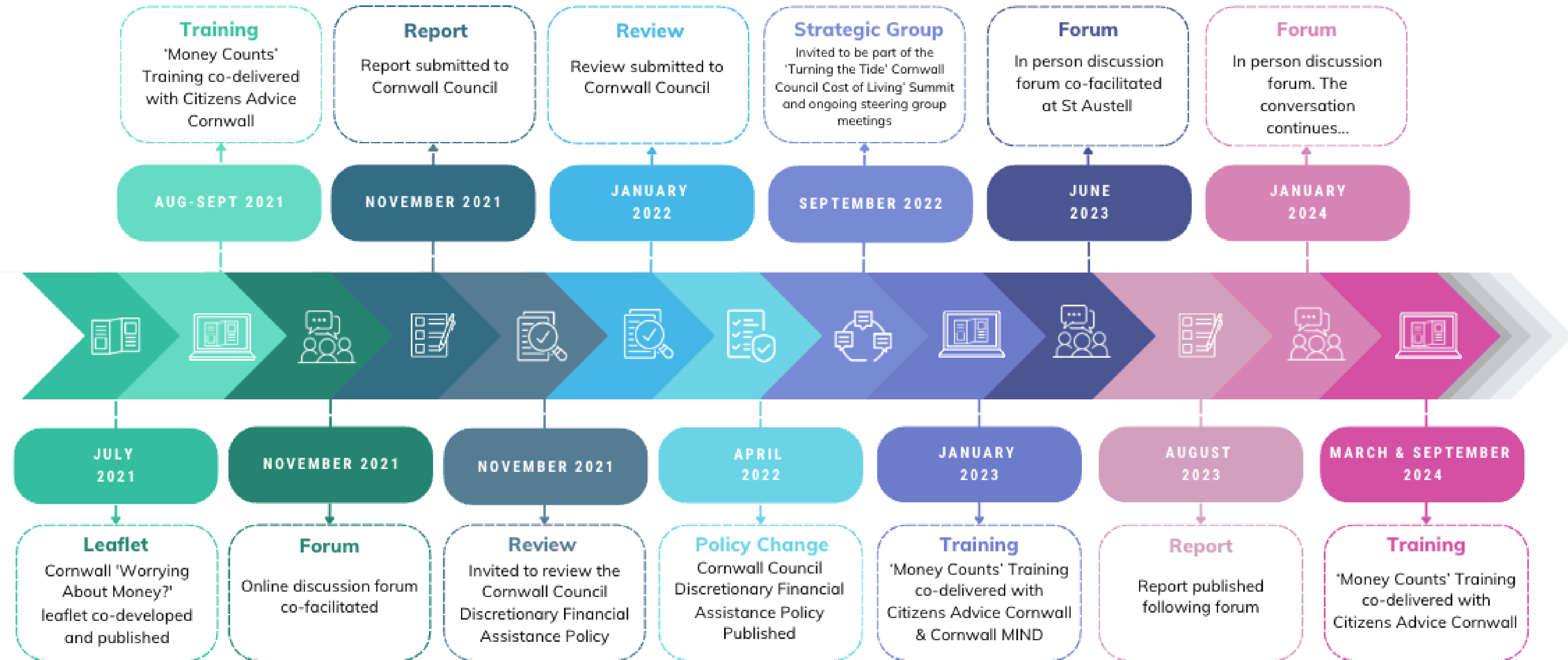


Supporting people facing financial hardship in Cornwall – a timeline



November 2021 Focus Group

**A review of
Cornwall
Council's Local
Welfare
Assistance
Scheme by
frontline
organisations
supporting
people
experiencing
financial
hardship**

Questions:

- What support do people signpost to, or access, for people in need? What works
- in terms of accessing crisis and care grants and other financial support from the council? How might the process be
- improved



Key recommendations included in the report were that:

- there is better promotion and awareness of options available to Cornwall residents in financial crisis and the organisations that support them
- eligibility criteria are made much clearer
- in order to improve approval rates that eligibility criteria are widened
- there is greater flexibility in terms of how any grant can be used
- there is a holistic understanding across the council as to the impact of financial crisis that would enable dignity, agency and power for those approaching them for support
- routes for feedback and appeal are set up and highlighted
- Cornwall Council builds on the momentum generated by this process and works alongside local community support organisations to implement a process for ongoing monitoring and review of Cornwall Council's LWAS
- Cornwall Council draws on the expertise of those who have experienced financial insecurity as partners in the process of designing, monitoring and reviewing their LWAS

Taking the review's recommendations on board

Cornwall Council also invited Transformation Cornwall, The Trussell Trust and IFAN to review their Discretionary Financial Assistance Policy and internal guidance notes for staff around eligibility criteria based on the review's recommendations.



Discretionary Financial Assistance Policy April 2023

V1.6

What has changed?

- Webpages reviewed and made clearer LWAS application form reviewed, form now
- uses intelligent questioning making it easier for applicants to complete We've
- reviewed and increased the value of cash grants for food based on the Eatwell
- Guide and doubled the amount we award to people needing emergency grants for home energy costs Even if all other social security benefits are in payment, household income may not be sufficient to meet an emergency situation. We no
- longer automatically refuse applications on the grounds of the need arising from a budgeting issue Continue to build on the network we already use for referral and signposting to other forms of advice and support Establishing new partnership
- working opportunities through in local food banks and other community settings More emphasis on a cash first approach through our local welfare provision
- scheme and also the Household Support Fund
-

Outcomes of St Austell conference

- **Collaborate**
 - Work closely with other volunteer agencies
 - Improve engagement/offer of support for people in financial hardship
- **Council Crisis and Care Funds (CCA) and Household Support Fund (HSF)**
 - Raise awareness on how to access HSF
 - Increase signposting to council funds
 - Research accessibility of CCA and HSF
- **Develop participatory approaches**
 - Engage with lived experience



Finding ways to improve availability and access to financial support in Cornwall

Transformation Cornwall, the Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN) and the Trussell Trust in collaboration with Cornwall Council

Read the report: www.bit.ly/cornwall-lwas



Supporting people facing financial hardship in Cornwall – a timeline

