Dear Rachel Reeves MP,

**I am extremely concerned about the announcement to increase employer NICs.**

In addition to an already challenging landscape for charities due to current cost pressures, increasing need for charities to support people in my community, due to a reduction in effective support offered by statutory services, we are seeing more charities applying for the same pots of money, leaving them with an existing shortfall that cannot possibly be filled. Ultimately, this will have an enormous effect on my local community, and I’m very concerned.

Since 2005, my local charity, Reach Community Projects has been supporting many members of our community who experience financial hardship, through providing practical support to help alleviate these issues, while maintaining dignity, reviving hope, and enabling people to live life to the full. They offer support in a variety of ways including; debt advice, income maximisation, help with applying for benefits, housing applications and emergency food parcels.

They are seeing record levels of financial hardship in our community, and help people in my community increase their financial resilience and build networks of support so they no longer need help, or experience financial hardship, which helps Haverhill flourish and thrive as a town.

**The additional N.I. costs mean that they must reallocate desperately needed money, in an already challenging financial situation, where all charities are competing for the same limited funding resources. This will either lead to cut services, or to charities closing completely.**

I really cannot stress enough how deeply detrimental this will be to the very fabric of communities up and down the country. Charities like REACH and many others often fill in the gaps left by statutory services and if they are not there, this will put additional stress on already depleted services.

I strongly urge you to look of other ways of plugging the gaps before the situation that we are facing is far worse than it is now.

Yours sincerely,