



FOR PUBLICATION

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES

28 November 2022

Report of the Director - Public Health

Support for the cost of living in Derbyshire through warm spaces grant funding (2)

(Cabinet Member for Health and Communities)

1. Divisions Affected

1.1 County-wide.

2. Key Decision

2.1 No.

3. Purpose

3.1 To seek approval from the Cabinet Member for Health and Communities to utilise Contain Outbreak Management Funding to support Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) provision for vulnerable residents and their families, specifically those affected by the current challenges associated with the cost of living through the following:

- a) £0.100m grant funding to support VCS organisations looking to provide warm spaces through the Council's corporate grants framework

4. Information and Analysis

- 4.1 Residents across Derbyshire are feeling the impact of significant increases in the cost of living. High levels of inflation, driven by increasing energy and food costs, are leading to disproportionate impact on those on the lowest incomes. The Government has announced a range of measures to support residents however, there remains a significant risk that some households will be put under severe pressure this winter.
- 4.2 Evidence suggests that those on the lowest incomes are also disproportionately likely to be experiencing poor health outcomes, poor nutrition, and low resilience to illness. Those living in deprived areas experienced higher levels of mortality from Covid-19. These individuals are more likely to have low Covid-19 vaccination uptake rates and are the least likely to be able to self-isolate when required. People impacted by the cost of living crisis are also likely to live in poorer quality accommodation. The Government's Living with Covid-19 Plan outlines the need to encourage safer behaviours, particularly to those most vulnerable to Covid-19. The co-ordination of warm spaces across the County, with criteria to keep people safe, will ensure both the requirements of 'Living with Covid-19' and the Cold Weather Plan for England are being met alongside community need. The Contain Outbreak Management Fund is time limited grant funding, which enables councils to consider additional activity and approaches that help mitigate the ongoing impact of Covid-19 in local communities. Helping people to keep warm, will contribute towards building resilience in some individuals.
- 4.3 On 17 October 2022, the Cabinet Member for Health and Communities approved £0.050m support to address the adverse effects of Covid-19 and additional cost of living pressures in Derbyshire through a Warm Spaces grant funding scheme. Utilising Contain Outbreak Management Funding, Derbyshire County Council will support Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations looking to provide warm spaces.
- 4.4 Applications must adhere to the Derbyshire Warm Spaces Pledges and meet additional criteria and minimum requirements for award, relating to opening hours and venue capacity. This also includes following public health protection advice on infection control. Warm Spaces staff and volunteers will also be provided with signposting information to refer people into the Winter Pressure Single Contact Point as appropriate.

- 4.5 Groups can apply for up to £1,000. The corporate grants approach will be used to distribute funding to the VCS in a consistent and co-ordinated manner. The awards are agreed by a panel of Public Health Officers, Commissioning Officers and the Corporate Grants Team.
- 4.6 Regular updates will continue to be given to the Cabinet Member for Health and Communities on the award of grants and progress of warm space take up.
- 4.7 The Warm Spaces Fund has received a total of 36 applications to date. 22 of these applications have been approved, 1 rejected and 13 have queries which have gone back to the provider. Analysis by District or Borough is summarised below. Areas with lower numbers of applications will be asked to promote the funding via local networks to encourage further applications.

District	Applications Received	Approved	Rejected	Awaiting further information
Amber Valley	3	3		
Bolsover	1	1		
Chesterfield	8	6		2
Derbyshire Dales	10	4	1	5
Erewash	4	1		3
High Peak	4	3		1
North East Derbyshire	3	1		2
South Derbyshire	3	3		
Derbyshire wide				
Multiple Districts				

Warm Spaces support

- 4.4 The Council understands there are increasing concerns that vulnerable residents may find it increasingly difficult to heat their homes and the likely impact on physical and mental health needs. In response to this, VCS organisations with accessible and appropriate community venues and spaces are looking at ways in which they can increase their provision. The VCS is currently looking to the Council to provide guidance and support to set up warm spaces. There is also likely to be interest from other public and private sector organisations or venues to offer warm spaces.

- 4.5 To support these community spaces across the county, this report proposes that a further £0.100m of grant funding is provided to support the Warm Spaces grants scheme. This funding will offer a contribution towards additional costs, on condition that venues have a minimum offer for the public during the winter. This can extend and/or enhance an existing facilities provision, allowing spaces to remain open and would include financial assistance towards a range of things including additional energy costs, refreshments, cleaning and activities.
- 4.6 In January 2022 Cabinet established a new corporate grants approach to distribute funding to the VCS in a consistent and coordinated manner. This already agreed grants framework, allows the Council's funding to flex and adapt to reflect the Council's aims and priorities at any given time. It is therefore proposed that an additional funding priority for supporting warm spaces is added onto the Council's existing corporate grants framework.
- 4.7 It is recommended that this funding is ringfenced to small grants only, for awards up to £1,000 per organisation, which will enable applications to be submitted on a rolling basis, through a central point of contact. Small awards have an agreed accelerated process for awards and therefore payments can be responsive and issued swiftly to successful applicants.
- 4.8 Officers will be delegated responsibility for assessment of applications and making recommendations for determination of award. It is proposed that these are signed off through existing financial and/or control systems at regular intervals throughout the financial year.
- 4.9 Awards will be made to successful applicants upon confirmation that the relevant organisation has met the Council's requirements. The budget will be centrally managed and regular reports on progress will be made to the Cabinet Member for Health and Communities in line with existing Contain Fund reporting.
- 4.10 Monitoring including take up of the grants and geographical coverage, will take place on a regular basis to ensure equality of access across different communities in Derbyshire, particularly over the first few months.

5 Alternative Options Considered

- 5.1 Alternative Option 1 Do Nothing – Risk that vulnerable residents without alternative options will go cold this winter.

6 Implications

- 6.1 Appendix 1 sets out the relevant implications considered in the preparation of the report.

7 Background Papers

Support for the cost of living in Derbyshire through Warm Spaces Grant Funding, Cabinet Member for Health and Communities, 17 October 2022
<https://democracy.derbyshire.gov.uk/documents/s17023/Support%20for%20the%20cost%20of%20living%20in%20Derbyshire%20through%20warm%20spaces%20grant%20funding.pdf>

8 Recommendation(s)

That the Cabinet Member for Health and Communities:

- a) Approve the award of £0.100m from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund to support VCS organisations looking to provide warm spaces through the Council's corporate grants framework, ringfenced awards for small grants for up to £1,000 each.

9 Reasons for Recommendation(s)

- 9.1 To put in place the budget and resources required to enable VCS and other partners to support Derbyshire residents, by responding to current cost of living pressures through a series of Warm Spaces and other locally developed cost of living interventions.

10 Is it necessary to waive the call in period?

- 10.1 No.

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Implications

Financial

- 1.1 Since the start of the pandemic, the Council has received a number of different grants to support the response to Covid-19, one of which is managed by Public Health. For 2022/23, based on allocations carried forward from 2021/22, there is £17.627m available from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund. A sum of £0.100m will be allocated from Contain Funding to support the Warm Spaces grants scheme. Uncertainty exists regarding the Contain Outbreak Management Fund after April 2023, therefore this allocation of funding to support warm spaces will be a one-off using current available funds. If the cost of living pressures extends into next winter an alternative funding source would need to be identified.
- 1.2 The costs of providing additional grant funding to the corporate grants framework for a priority regarding supporting warm spaces and wider support can be met through the Contain Outbreak Management Fund.

Legal

- 2.1 The Council has power to provide grants under the general power of competence set out in section 1 of the Localism Act 2011.
- 2.2 The Council's Financial Regulations state that grants below £0.100m require Cabinet Member authorisation.
- 2.3 The Council's standard grant agreement shall be used to set out the terms and conditions for which the grant is made. This includes conditions for clawback of funding in certain circumstances.

Human Resources

- 3.1 The funding will enable local VCS organisations providers to deliver activities, projects and support their costs.

Derbyshire County Council accepts no employment or future redundancy liability, with all employment and related matters to be managed by the organisation in receipt of funding.

Other

- 4.1 With regard to any organisation providing services to children or vulnerable adults, approval of financial support is conditional on the existence within these organisations of appropriate procedures assessing suitability to work with children or vulnerable adults.

Consultation

- 5.1 Not applicable. There has been no consultation on the proposals outlined in this report.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 6.1 The recommendations in this paper support delivery of the following deliverables for the next year in the Council Plan:
- Continued to deliver the ongoing Covid-19 response and recovery in relation to health protection, alongside wider partnership action to tackle health inequalities
 - Worked with partners to promote positive mental wellbeing and improve support for local people