



FOR PUBLICATION

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

DERBYSHIRE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

5 October 2023

Report of the Director of Public Health

Winter Preparedness and cost of living update - Overview of support to Derbyshire residents.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to:
- a) Note and actively share the overview of support that is being offered to Derbyshire residents, outlined in this report, to help reach the most vulnerable communities.
 - b) Review the current position and consider any further opportunities that could encourage and strengthen the broad partnership response on this key issue to help mitigate the adverse effects of the cost-of-living and winter pressures.

2. Information and Analysis

- 2.1 Across Derbyshire there has been a wide partnership response to help mitigate the adverse effects of the cost-of-living pressures. This report to the Health and Wellbeing Board, and the associated presentation, highlights the existing support to Derbyshire residents and the achievements to date.
- 2.2 The first two quarters of 2022 saw the highest rates of inflation since records started, with inflation outstripping wage growth. The affordability of essentials such as energy, food, fuel, and housing – fundamental drivers of overall health and wellbeing – is reducing. Although everyone is affected, this isn't experienced equally across our population. The

starkest difference in the ability to afford basic goods and services, and therefore at higher risk of exposure to and consequence of health damaging factors, is between those with the highest and lowest incomes.

2.3 Increased cost-of-living pressures bring considerable risk for population health and exacerbation of health inequalities. The direct impacts threaten physical and mental health in the immediate and longer term and have far reaching impacts across the wider determinants of health.

2.4 Work to support Derbyshire residents focuses on nine 'pillars' that have been identified as being significant factors in addressing key cost-of-living concerns:

- Energy affordability
- Food insecurity
- Housing sustainment
- Debt support/relief
- Income maximisation
- Affordable credit
- Employment opportunities
- Digital inclusion
- Mental health support

2.5 Cost-of-living Support

The legacy of the rising cost of living is still being felt by many people. While some pressures are easing, for instance fuel prices falling and summer meaning less reliance on heating for some, there are still many Derbyshire households who are feeling the impacts. Some of the current support in place for Derbyshire residents includes:

- Derbyshire Discretionary Fund – The fund supports residents who have an urgent need for food or heating; or who need support with specific items to help them return home or avoid admission.
- Household Support Fund – offers help to Derbyshire residents facing financial hardship by providing grants and other financial support. This funding is provided to by the Department of Work and Pensions.
- Public Health Advisory Service – Delivered by Citizens Advice, embedded in GP Surgeries and Community Settings. This service Provides local people with financial advice to help with cost of living.
- Welfare Rights Service – The service offers advice and support to residents to access their benefits entitlement. Every person

discharged from hospital and 'notified to adult social care' is contacted and offered a benefit check

- Feeding Derbyshire Network – offers sustainable solutions to address food insecurity across the county. Funded by Public Health, the programme seeks to help those struggling with low incomes, debt and poor access to affordable, nutritious food.
- Time Swap - enables people to feel more supported at home or in their community. Low level support which helps with basic tasks by swapping time. Reduces loneliness and isolation.
- Communications and Signposting – key themes include pension credit take-up; free school meal eligibility; healthy start vouchers for pregnant women and young babies; council tax support; low-cost bus travel; safe low-cost lending (avoiding loan sharks).

2.6 Winter Pressures Support

The colder months can impact on everyone health and wellbeing but especially older and vulnerable members of our community or those living with ill health or long-term conditions. Challenges have been intensified since the onset of the cost-of-living crisis. To help alleviate these challenging circumstances, various additional support measures were stood up during winter 2022, and will again be available this winter:

- The Winter Pressures Professional Signposting Service –
A single contact point for professionals to signpost people who require help with various challenges during the winter period. The service was relaunched on the 1 October 2022 for a period of 6 months to March 2023 offering support with:
 - warm homes advice and support
 - financial support
 - housing related issues including homelessness
 - food and shopping support
 - friendly phone call for people who are lonely and isolated
 - prescription collections
 - slips, trips, and falls
 - health improvement

The service will recommence from 1 October 2023 to 31 March 2024, in line with previous years.

- A Warm Spaces Grants Programme 2022/23 –
In October 2022 small grants were made available to organisations with accessible and appropriate community venues for the creation

or improvement of Warm Spaces for local communities in Derbyshire during the winter. A maximum of £1,000 per organisation was awarded, and this could be spent on a variety of project costs including:

- Additional energy costs
 - Furniture and improvement to facilities
 - Additional staffing costs to cover extended hours
 - Additional cleaning costs to ensure compliance with health protection guidance
 - Activities and refreshments
 - Additional activity costs
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- Winter Rough Sleeping Support Scheme – Each year local authorities face fresh challenges in how they will protect vulnerable people who are rough sleeping from coming to harm and prevent homeless deaths. Funding has again been agreed for the Winter Rough Sleeping Scheme for 2023/24 and 2024/25, with the service to be coordinated by Derbyshire Homelessness Officer Group, on behalf of participating boroughs and district councils.
 - The Healthy, Warm and Well Booklet – Staying healthy, warm, and well in winter is important. However, it can be hard to know where to look for trustworthy information and services. A comprehensive guide to everything residents need to know about staying healthy, warm, and well in Derbyshire has been developed and available in previous winters.

3. Alternative Options Considered

- 3.1 For the Health and Wellbeing Board not to have oversight of this issue and the support available. This is not favoured as cost-of-living and winter pressures are likely to have far reaching health impacts across the population of Derbyshire for the foreseeable future.

4. Implications

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

5. Consultation

5.1 No consultation has been undertaken.

6. Partnership Opportunities

6.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board and its partners are asked to fully engage in promoting and disseminating the overview of support available to Derbyshire residents through relevant local networks and partnerships to help increase the scope.

7. Background Papers

7.1 6 October 2022 Health and Wellbeing Board paper:
[Health impacts of the cost-of-living pressures in Derbyshire](#)

8. Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1 – Implications.

9. Recommendation(s)

That the Health and Wellbeing Board:

- a) Acknowledges the cost-of-living and winter pressure support outlined and agrees that Health and Wellbeing Board members actively share this information.
- b) Review the current position of support in Derbyshire and highlight any further partnership opportunities to increase the scope of the response to mitigate and reduce associated health impacts.

10. Reasons for Recommendation(s)

- 10.1 To ensure that the Health and Wellbeing Board remains informed on the support available and so members can disseminate this information through local networks and partnerships.
- 10.2 To ensure that the partnership actively engage on this key issue to help shape the local response to this matter.

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Implications

1. Financial

- 1.1 There are no direct financial implications of this report, albeit that it is recognised that the challenging financial climate impacts on all organisations delivering services, or offering support, to residents facing financial pressures.

2. Legal

- 2.1 There are no legal implications of this report.

3. Human Resources

- 3.1 There are no human resource implications of this report.

4. Equalities Impact

- 4.1 There are no equalities implications of this report.

5. Partnerships

- 5.1 There are no partnership implications of this report, although it is recognised and highlighted that key support is better delivered with all partners working together effectively and all Health and Wellbeing Board stakeholders are encouraged to promote sharing of information about the services highlighted in this report.

6. Health and Wellbeing Strategy priorities

- 6.1 Increased cost-of-living will have far reaching impacts across the wider determinants of health. This will result in direct and indirect health harms. This report to the Health and Wellbeing Board and associated presentation highlights the wide overview of support available to Derbyshire residents this winter. This range of support can contribute positively to people's financial, physical, and mental health wellbeing, and enable people in Derbyshire to live healthy lives.