

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

MEETING OF CABINET MEMBER – HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES

4 September 2020

Report of the Director of Public Health

REVIEW OF URGENT DECISION OF CHANGES TO DELIVERY OF PUBLIC HEALTH DELIVERED SERVICES

1. Purpose of the report

To update the Cabinet Member on changes made to Public Health delivered services due to the COVID19 pandemic.

2. Information and analysis

The COVID19 pandemic has resulted in the implementation of national guidance for social distancing, self-isolation and the closure, and subsequent partial re-opening, of schools. In light of these requirements changes have been made to the delivery model for Public Health services, including the suspension of some services.

The Council's Constitution allows for Executive Directors to make urgent decisions:

Notwithstanding any other provision of this constitution, the Executive Directors shall have power, after discussion, if practicable, with the leader of the Council or the relevant Cabinet Member or Chairman, to take such action deemed to be necessary and expedient in matters requiring urgent consideration and which, because of the time scales involved, or the need to safeguard the interests of the County Council, cannot be dealt with by submission to the next following meeting of the Council, Cabinet, Cabinet Member or Committee.

Changes to the delivery of Public Health services were approved by the Director of Public Health and the Executive Director for Adult Social Care and Health following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health and Communities in March 2020, and subsequently ratified by Cabinet on 23 April 2020. The decision has been reviewed on a fortnightly basis by the Director of Public Health, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Health and Communities.

Current delivery of Public Health delivered services is as follows:

Live Life Better Derbyshire - Stop Smoking, Weight Management, Physical Activity and the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP)

Live Life Better Derbyshire provides support to Derbyshire residents who wish to stop smoking, lose weight or increase levels of physical activity. It also delivers the National Child Measurement Programme, a mandated Public Health function for the Council, that measures the height and weight of children in Reception class and year 6, to assess overweight and obesity levels in children within primary schools.

Face-to-face service delivery was stopped on 18th March, and remains paused. Support continued to existing and new clients through phone and video-call support, in conjunction with online resources. Smokers and clients with a BMI of over 40 have been prioritised for support due to their increased risk of serious illness as a result of COVID19.

Live Life Better Derbyshire advisors continue to support individuals wanting to stop smoking through phone and video-call support, with Nicotine Replacement Therapy provided by mail. Between April and June 2020, there were 596 quit dates recorded, with 391 Derbyshire residents reporting having stopped smoking at 4-weeks. This is an increase on the same period in 2019.

The full Weight Management digital offer was launched on Monday 17 August. All clients that were being supported at the time of lockdown have been contacted and offered a slot on the new programme. The first cohort of new clients have received their induction phone calls, and will subsequently be offered a slot in one of the follow-up telephone clinics. Clients will be able to access a range of online educational and communication options that are fully supported by the Weight Management Health Improvement Advisor team. Individuals who meet the service criteria can self-refer for support or be referred by a professional.

We have been informed that there is an expectation that NCMP should recommence in early 2021 and will ensure service delivery aligns with COVID19 practices within school settings. On receipt of further guidance the service will plan accordingly to ensure delivery for the 2020/21 academic year.

School Crossing Patrols

Following the national policy announcement for a phased return to schools starting from 1 June, the service has assessed sites where a service can resume. This requires consideration of staff availability, a risk assessment of each site to ensure that social distancing can be safely implemented for the School Crossing Patrol and children and their parents/carers, and confirmation from schools as to their arrangements for children to be able to return to school.

The service is now in a position to open all but 5 sites at the start of the new term in September. Out of these sites 3 are unable to accommodate social distancing guidance and the other 2 are where the schools have made temporary changes to site entrances and exits, meaning that the patrol is not required at the site whilst these are in place. These sites will be reviewed in the new term.

During the school holidays the service has been reviewing patrol duty times with each school to ensure that each site is on patrol when schools need them at the start and end of the school day. Many schools have introduced “staggered” start and finish times to comply with COVID19 guidance, requiring Patrols to be in attendance for a longer period each day. Confirmation is still required from all schools, but increasing the length of each patrol by 30 minutes a day (15 minutes at the start of the school day, and 15 minutes at the end of the school day) will result in additional service costs of up to £70,000 for the current financial year.

Time Swap, Safe Places, Local Area Co-ordination, Disability Employment Service, First contact, 50+ Forums and the Pension Credit Project

Time Swap is an initiative that encourages local communities to help each other by sharing time and talents. Time Swap members earn 'time' by giving help and support to other members in your community, and in return spend that time on getting help from other members.

Safe Places are public buildings in towns and communities across Derbyshire, such as libraries, shops, pharmacies and GP surgeries. A Safe Place is somewhere vulnerable individuals can go if they feel scared, are lost or need help when they are out and about.

Local Area Co-ordination is a way of supporting people with disabilities, mental ill health, older people and their families and carers. Local Area Co-ordinators support people to live fulfilling lives, stay safe and be well connected with their local communities. Local Area Co-ordinators work in the Bolsover, Amber Valley and High Peak areas.

The Disability Employment Service supports disabled people to find training, work experience, voluntary work and paid employment.

First Contact provides an easy way for Derbyshire residents to get in touch with local services who can support wellbeing and help with staying independent. The Council runs the scheme in partnership with a variety of local agencies.

50+ Forums provide an opportunity for Derbyshire residents aged 50 and above to become involved in the services that are delivered in their area. The majority of 50+ Forum members are aged over 70 years old, and therefore are recommended to implement stringent social distancing and social isolation practices due to their increased risk of more severe illness from COVID19.

The Pension Credit project identifies and supports older people entitled to, but not claiming, pension credit. New contacts with clients were suspended from 13 March and the team has been following up on existing contacts by telephone. Support remains available to older people through the work of the Welfare Rights Service more widely, but not on the scale achievable by the project.

All the above Public Health services were suspended across Derbyshire on 20 March, with the exception of the Pension Credit Project which was suspended on 6 April. The services remain suspended, with staff redeployed to support the Council's response to COVID19, for example within the Community Response Unit and ongoing community recovery work.

3. Financial considerations

Due to the potential increase in length of time required of School Crossing Patrols, there will be an additional cost of up to £70,000 for the current financial year. This figure is an estimate until all schools have confirmed their arrival and leaving processes and timings. This increase will be met by the Public Health budget.

4. HR considerations

Where possible, staff working in the Public Health services detailed above have been redeployed to support the Council's response to COVID19, for example within the Community Response Unit.

5. Legal considerations

The Council has powers in accordance with s1-6 of the Localism Act 2011 to do that which will be to the 'benefit of the authority, its area or persons resident or present in its area'. The proposed benefit of this action is to support the reduction in COVID19 infections and reduce the transmission of the virus. Due to the timescales involved it has not been possible to consult affected persons but arrangements have been put in place to continue to support people most vulnerable to COVID19 complications. The decision is a proportionate and reasonable response to COVID19 risks. The Director of Public Health, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Health and Communities, will review on a fortnightly basis the decision to change or suspend delivery of these services, particularly in light of any changes to the Government's social distancing and self-isolation recommendations.

6. Other considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has also been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, equality of opportunity, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

7. Background papers

Cabinet report 23 April 2020: Officer decisions

Cabinet Member report 8 July 2020: Review of urgent decision of changes to delivery of Public Health delivered services

Cabinet Member report 22 July 2020: Review of urgent decision of changes to delivery of Public Health delivered services

Cabinet report 30 July 2020: Review of urgent officer decisions taken to support COVID19 response that have been in place for longer than 8 weeks

Cabinet Member report 3 August 2020: Review of urgent decision of changes to delivery of Public Health delivered services

Cabinet Member report 21 August 2020: Review of urgent decision of changes to delivery of Public Health delivered services

Fortnightly reports to the Director of Public Health: available on request from Public Health Department

8. Key Decision

Yes

9. Call-in

Is it required that call-in be waived for any decision on this report? No

10. Officer's Recommendation:

That the Cabinet Member approves the ongoing changes to delivery of Public Health services as a result of the COVID19 pandemic.

Dean Wallace
Director of Public Health