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## **DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **MEETING WITH CABINET MEMBER, HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES**

**4 September 2020**

#### **Report of the Director of Public Health**

### **ALLOCATION OF DERBYSHIRE'S CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19): LOCAL AUTHORITY EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GRANT FOR FOOD AND ESSENTIAL SUPPLIES**

#### **1. Purpose of the report**

To update the Cabinet Member for Health and Communities on the internal allocations of the Coronavirus (Covid-19): Local Authority Emergency Assistance Grant for Food and Essential Supplies.

To seek approval as outlined in the report, to enable allocation of grant funding to the external organisations.

#### **2. Information and analysis**

Derbyshire County Council has received £0.808m in the form of a Local Authority Assistance Grant for Food and Essential Supplies. This grant is being provided by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to support people who are struggling to afford essentials due to the impact of Covid-19.

Local authorities have the discretion to identify and support those in most need. As such Public Health has been liaising with key partnership groups to develop ideas being put forward and seek assurance that the grant is meeting local needs.

Stakeholders who have informed the recommendations in this report include:

- Assistant Director of Finance - DCC
- Derbyshire Community Recovery Unit (part of the Local Resilience Forum)
- Locality Leads Group
- Foundation Derbyshire
- Derbyshire Homelessness Officers Group (DHOG)
- Domestic Violence Service Commissioner
- Derbyshire Healthy Homes Program
- Derbyshire Discretionary Fund
- Derbyshire County Council Policy Team (CCP)
- South Derbyshire Community Response Group
- Derbyshire County Council Children's Services

Funding is geared towards meeting immediate need, to help those struggling to afford food and other essential supplies. The grant can be used to fund existing schemes to meet rising demand. This will also ensure that money is mobilised quickly and robustly. Funding can either take the form of cash/vouchers for direct payment to clients or supporting advice and information given to help people in the longer term. A mixed approach to allocation of the funding is recommended in this report.

The Government anticipates that most of the funding will be spent within 12 weeks of the funding being announced on 10 July 2020. It will be paid as a grant, and whilst the funding is not ring-fenced, the Council will be required to provide monthly information on how much has been spent and on what interventions, alongside responding to a Government monitoring survey in October 2020.

Derbyshire’s existing local welfare assistance offer, the Derbyshire Discretionary Fund (DDF), has supported residents during Covid-19 with a rise in applications of 38%. The DDF criteria have not been changed during the pandemic. There has been an increase in applications from families, and from those who have previously been working or self-employed. Referral pathways to other sources of support have been strengthened and the ‘system’ response to the pandemic has proved an opportunity to build stronger working relationships with partners – out of urgency and necessity.

Aligning some of the assistance to the Derbyshire Discretionary Fund (DDF) will strengthen working across the system, meet demand and support the management of risk by ensuring only those in genuine need are able to access financial support.

Other proposed allocations will work in collaboration with the DDF scheme to ensure as far as possible the avoidance of duplication of provision.

Following conversations with stakeholders, the proposals for funding set out in Appendix One were approved by the Corporate Management Team (CMT) on 6th August 2020.

In addition, the following proposals for funding to external partners are put forward for approval in this report.

Cabinet member approval sought in this report			
£50,000	County Shopping Service/Buddy system	VCS	VCS infrastructure grant to develop county wide approach to shopping for vulnerable/shielding residents in the event of a 2nd wave
£51,000	Eviction advice service	Derbyshire Law Centre	Derbyshire Law Centre additional court duty / eviction advice service capacity and 'prevention' short term crisis relief pot. Mitigate against

			demand once eviction suspension is lifted at the end of August.
£40,000	School holiday food program	Rural Action Derbyshire	Feed vulnerable young people over the school holiday to mitigate against financial strain on families
£25,000	Vulnerable population support	North East Derbyshire District Council (holding on behalf of Derbyshire Homeless Officers Group)	Support the 'everyone in' Homelessness Recovery Plan with essential supply needs
£5,000	Face coverings	TBC – grant to community group	Stock of face masks/coverings for those in financial difficulty (e.g. to be included in food bank parcels)

### 3. Risks

Given the unpredictable nature of the pandemic there is a risk that demand will outstretch resources.

The impact of Covid-19 on our vulnerable communities is constantly changing, making it hard to predict future needs and pressure points. To mitigate against this, the report recommends that a level of contingency funding is set aside in the budget that can be allocated at a later date to meet any emerging needs that haven't already been considered in the recommendations, or to strengthen ones that require more funding than anticipated.

Whilst consideration has been made to the needs of our vulnerable communities, the rapid pace required for allocation of this funding, and the ever-changing data situation has made it difficult to evaluate need exactly.

### 4. Social Value considerations

Health and wellbeing is intrinsically linked to the wider social determinants of health including access to food, unemployment and education. Poorer individuals experience worse health outcomes than people better off.

Socioeconomic deprivation puts some people at a much higher risk of catching and dying from Covid 19 (Health Foundation, 2020). Measures put in place to control the virus are also having a disproportionate effect on some communities, which is likely to deepen health inequalities in the longer term (Health Foundation, 2020).

The interventions outlined in this report are aimed at supporting those most in need.

## **5. Other considerations**

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

## **6. Background papers**

- Report for Public Health Senior Management Team: 'Allocation of Derbyshire's Coronavirus (COVID-19): Local Authority Emergency Assistance Grant for Food and Essential Supplies' (4 August 2020)
- Report for Corporate Management Team: 'Allocation of Derbyshire's Coronavirus (COVID-19): Local Authority Emergency Assistance Grant for Food and Essential Supplies' (6 August 2020)

## **7. Key Decision**

No

## **8. Call-in**

Is it required that call-in be waived for any decision on this report?

No

## **9. Officer's Recommendation**

1. To note the information contained in this report; and
2. To approve the recommendations regarding allocation of external grants to support provision of services relating to the Local Authority Emergency Assistance Grant for Food and Essential Supplies.

**Dean Wallace**  
**Director of Public Health**

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**Appendix ONE**

Approved by CMT 11.8.2020			
Amount	Activity	Lead Partner	Rationale
£100,000	Emergency Food (Wave 1)	DCC	To relieve financial strain on those not yet already invoiced for food they have had during the emergency
£58,000	Emergency Food (Wave 2)	DCC	Distribution Centre set up costs, and emergency food parcels stock in prep for another Covid-19 related emergency response
£150,000	Emergency Cash Payments	DDF	To strengthen support to those in financial difficulty and prepare for potential second wave demand.
£20,000	Fuel Poverty Grants	DDF/Derbyshire Healthy Homes	To support those in fuel poverty as a result of the pandemic - Fuel card top up/portable heating for up to 400 people
TBC	Vulnerable population support	DDF/ Domestic Violence Support Service	Domestic Violence Support Service with essential supply needs
£150,000	Back to school learning grants	DDF/Children's Services	Remove financial barrier to attending school for families affected by Covid-19 - 1,500 children at £100 each administered by DDF. (Uniforms, school shoes, sports clothes, study materials, stationery, equipment for courses e.g. safety clothing etc)
£143,000	General contingency	DCC	Grant contingency to respond to local outbreaks or other emerging needs not already considered
£16,000	Admin Costs	DDF	Maintaining one additional decision maker at DDF Sept 2020 - March 2021
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