

## **COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 18 SEPTEMBER 2020**

**Statement from: Councillor Mrs S Woolley, Executive Councillor for  
NHS Liaison and Community Engagement**

### **NHS LIAISON**

#### **Lincolnshire Partnership Recovery Renewal Plan for Communities**

I am pleased to report that Lincolnshire County Council has received £823,000 of funding from DEFRA to support vulnerable people in immediate need due to Covid-19. The grant was supplied without application and the sum determined according to county population. Central government anticipates that most of the funding will be spent within 12 weeks, commencing 1 August 2020. The funding will be split as follows:

- £391,000 to support local food banks and access to cooking essentials for those people who do not have the means to sources these themselves;
- £215,000 to Community Lincs to support developing local schemes, such as the good neighbour scheme and food kitchens;
- £217,000 for the direct purchase of food parcels arranged through the Local Resilience forum.

The Covid-19 Community Support Pathway continues to provide an effective mechanism for residents to access advice and practical assistance and will be a key entry point for accessing the DEFRA funded support.

#### **Health and Wellbeing Board Reset and Refocus**

I have invited the Local Government Association (LGA) to work with Lincolnshire's Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) to help review the Board. In particular we will be focusing on the seven priorities in the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS) to ensure the HWB remains focused on promoting good health and reducing health inequalities in light of Covid-19. A formal proposal will be presented to the HWB at its meeting on 29 September 2020. Two workshops are planned for October/November, the first to review the purpose and membership of the Board, and the second workshop to re-prioritise the JHWS.

#### **Clinical Commissioning Group Focus on Inequalities**

The Covid-19 pandemic has shone a spotlight on inequalities and the impact the virus is having on certain groups in the population. NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSEI) have signalled that actions to improve inequalities needs to be an essential component of the recovery programme for local NHS organisations. In the Council, the Public Health Division is working with NHS Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group, local NHS providers and NHSEI to build on work begun before Covid-19, looking at the specific challenges facing rural and coastal communities and the opportunities to reduce health inequalities. A five year action plan is being co-produced between LCC, the CCG and East Lindsey District Council.

The HWB is also due to discuss this at the meeting in September to ensure key linkages are being made across partners and with the JHWS.

### **Covid Free Site and Operations**

Lincolnshire NHS providers are all continuing to operate their sites in accordance with the recovery and restoration plans:

As one of its objectives to create Green Sites and pathways to increase elective care services, the United Lincolnshire Hospital Trust (ULHT) Board recently approved plans to temporarily reconfigure services at Grantham as a Green Site (Covid-19 free patients only) with a Blue Isolated Urgent Treatment Centre. The Green Site at Grantham will be in place up to at least 31 March 2021; any proposal to make these arrangements permanent will be subject to public consultation. Elective surgery commenced at the Grantham Green Site on 1 July 2020.

At the time of writing this statement, Lincolnshire Community Health Service (LCHS) NHS Trust had no confirmed Covid-19 patients across any of its sites. It continues to work with its partners in supporting the restoration of services, and is supporting ULHT's temporary Green Site at Grantham.

Lincolnshire Partnership Foundation Trust (LPFT) has similarly reported no current Covid-19 incidents, and is progressing well with its implementation plans.

### **NHS Second Wave Planning**

Lincolnshire NHS, in line with the national planning guidance, is developing demand and capacity plans that sets out the impact on system capacity and operational performance should there be a second wave in infections. The scenario planning is taking account of local knowledge and assumptions, as well as being informed by the nationally defined scenarios:

- The 'Reasonable Worst Case Scenario' is an increased demand for Winter 2020 compared to 2019 plus a Covid-19 peak equal to April 2020.
- The 'Reasonable Best Case Scenario' is an increased demand for Winter 2020 compared to 2019 plus a Covid-19 peak at half April 2020.

Whilst the NHS nationally has been 'downgraded' to a Level 3 response, Lincolnshire's NHS Response Centre cells remain active, allowing for continued overview and planning. These cells cover all operational services, as well as workforce, estate, digital and communications capacity and planning. Lincolnshire NHS has been praised at both a regional and national level for a number of positive and effective measures implemented during the Covid-19 response. These include:

- Digital and telephonic access for staff and public.
- Staff health and wellbeing measures implemented ahead of the national schedule, and as a system measure, including primary care.
- 'all organisation' approaches to a number of 'enablers'. These include - volunteer recruitment, digital delivery, workforce redeployment, staff and

public communications and many others. These approaches will continue during wave two resilience planning

### **Independent Drug and Alcohol Review**

With the Council providing secondary care services for substance misuse, the announcement of Dame Carol Black's second phase of an independent review into drug misuse is welcome. The review will concentrate on prevention, treatment and recovery. I have already attended the first reference group meeting for the enquiry and consultations responses have been submitted by the Public Health team. Some key areas under review are causes of young people's substance misuse, the barriers to providing successful treatment and recovery services, and mental health related issues.

Dame Carol is expected to submit initial recommendations to the Government in September and her final report in December this year.

### **Joint Strategic Asset Assessment**

Covid-19 has highlighted the importance of strong resilient communities. Whilst there has been joint focus on understanding health and wellbeing needs, in particular through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), less attention has been given to identifying assets or strengths of the people, communities and population in Lincolnshire. The Joint Strategic Asset Assessment (JSAA) aims to identify a comprehensive range of assets, both physical and people resource, to understand the potential; maximise their use and help identify gaps. Connect to Support Lincolnshire has been agreed as the platform for the Joint Strategic Asset Assessment (JSAA). A 12 month temporary post will be recruited by the end of October to work with communities and partners to identify and map assets, build the register and establish future sustainability.

## **COMMUNITY ENAGEMENT**

### **Citizen's Advice Lincolnshire (CAL)**

Since the start of the pandemic CAL have seen an increase in requests for support on employment issues in comparison to last year; examples of enquiry areas include issues related to furlough, returning to the work place, redundancy and clients on zero hours contracts.

There was a decrease in money advice, which is expected and is reflected across the sector. The triggers that generally prompt a client to seek money advice are not currently there (Councils are not chasing Council Tax arrears, there are no evictions, payment holidays are available, bailiffs are not 'knocking on doors'), this is, of course, a short term situation, not only are we anticipating those who were experiencing debt issues to return but for there to be an increase in demand as the financial implications of the current situation start to hit.

Across the county Citizens Advice are offering telephone and web chat services, provided by staff and volunteers working remotely. They already have experience

delivering telephone and wechat services in projects such as UCH2C, their Consumer Service delivery and Martin Lewis On-Line Scams advice, indeed achieving 97% client satisfaction rate month by month.

Citizens Advice have engaged with key partners to look at ways to provide the best possible support, for example engaging with the Trussell Trust to utilise a new remote referral process for food banks.

At the latest CAL monitoring meeting which took place in August, we reviewed the outcomes delivered by CAL over this financial year, plus discussed their work during the Covid-19 pandemic. We also asked CAL to provide data for the report that is being compiled in order to support any future funding-related decision that LCC will make for the 2020-21 financial year.

### **Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils (LALC)**

LALC have experienced a high volume of calls/emails, particularly around making decisions, as they are unable to meet and prior to the legislation coming into force on 4 April, councils were not allowed to meet remotely to make decisions. Since 4 April, they can now meet via video or telephone conference to make decisions, but with some councillors/clerks not either having the equipment or ability to use these platforms, not all councils have relished this new way of working. Internet connection can also be a problem.

LALC have delivered sessions to clerks/chairs on the use of Zoom and we are now seeing quite a few councils meeting this way. They have also delivered training session to clerks via Zoom and will be delivering this training to the councillors within the coming weeks. LALC are reviewing their annual training programme with a view of it being delivered entirely on Zoom.

### **Community Resilience**

Over the past few months the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum (LRF), consisting of Lincolnshire County Council, all seven District Councils, the Voluntary and Community Sector, British Red Cross and others, have been supporting those that are shielding with arranging welfare visits and emergency food parcels via our Wellbeing Services.

British Red Cross, Brakes and Lincolnshire's Wellbeing Service all helped to ensure that people who needed food parcels received them, as well as referring those who were unable to collect their prescriptions. If a vulnerable resident expressed that they had no support, they were also referred to the Wellbeing Service.

A survey was carried out to capture the experiences of those within the 'shielded' category between March and July 2020 of the Covid-19 pandemic to understand any concerns for the future.

The LRF Recovery is preparing for the next steps including a potential local outbreak; this has included asking for comments and views about how we communicate with individuals and communities.

Experiences from the early part of the response to Covid-19 indicate that more needs to be done to communicate with groups of people with increased exposure to risk, for example; people in crowded or shared accommodation and people who attend work places with individuals working in groups in enclosed spaces. The LRF is developing a robust plan identifying the most appropriate way to engage with such groups of people, in order to confirm the best way to communicate key messages with them ensuring that the messages are passed on to targeted groups or people in particular.

### **Recruitment/retention of volunteers as we move into recovery**

418 groups (7,049 volunteers within those groups) have offered support. So far, 225 of these have completed and returned their indemnity forms and registered on the Connect to Support, an information and advice page for Lincolnshire.

Any individual volunteers who offered their support were also signposted to Connect to Support to register with indemnified groups.

The Connect to Support page provides the listings of the Covid-19 community groups around the county, arranged by district. The intention is that this page will evolve beyond the initial response phase to include information about recovery and resilience, and any groups which continue to provide services and support beyond this initial stage of Covid-19 can have their details embedded in the wider community directories on the website.

### **Funding enquires and use of the portal for July 2020**

Funding enquires and the use of the Lincolnshire Funding Portal increased by 132% in July 2020 compared to same period last year. There were 2,550 visits to the Lincolnshire Funding Portal and 126 funding searches made during this period. Enquiries received from a wide range of organisations including community buildings, town and parish councils and small community groups.

### **Town and parish council websites**

Training is now underway with parish councils across Lincolnshire with the roll out of the new 310 websites. So far, 205 parish councils have taken advantage of the virtual training sessions. New tools are also being produced including 'how to' videos and guidance on accessible content in order to support councils further.

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