

**COVID-19 Chesterfield Community Recovery
Approach**

**Supporting and promoting community
wellbeing**

September 2020

COVID-19 - Chesterfield community recovery approach

1.0 Introduction

2.0 COVID-19 Derbyshire and Chesterfield Community Response

- *Derbyshire Community Response Unit*
- *Chesterfield community response to the COVID--19 outbreak*
- *Community support provided by Chesterfield Borough Council*

3.0 Establishing a Chesterfield COVID-19 Strategic Health and Wellbeing Group

4.0 Understanding the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on society

- *Feedback from multi-agency partnerships*
- *Feedback from voluntary and community sector groups*
- *Data intelligence on the impacts COVID-19 on our society*
- *Work of the Derbyshire Local Resilience Forum – Strategic Recovery Group*

5.0 COVID-19 Chesterfield community recovery approach - Supporting and Promoting Community Wellbeing

- *Our underlying ambition*
- *Impact areas for direct focus*
- *Cross-cutting commitments and enablers*
- *Delivery approach and resources*

Table A4.1: Overarching COVID-19 impact areas

Figure A3.1: Chesterfield Strategic Community Resilience Framework

Appendix A1: Discussion paper and questionnaire

Appendix A2: Anonymised feedback from discussion paper

Appendix A3: Invitees and attendees at meeting with the Voluntary and Community Sector

Appendix A4: Derbyshire Local Resilience Forum – Strategic Recovery Group Overview

Chesterfield community recovery approach

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The primary focus of this report is to set out the approach that the Council and its partners have adopted in supporting our communities to adapt and recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 1.2 As individuals and communities, we have a simple underlying ambition; ‘to live healthy and fulfilling lives’. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a seismic effect on all of our abilities to achieve this ambition. We must work relentlessly and resiliently together to tackle the impacts and the widening inequalities gaps that this pandemic is likely to cause, and to keep our focus on regaining that overall outcome; to live healthy and fulfilling lives.
- 1.3 Achieving this outcome ‘to live healthy and fulfilling lives’ it at the heart of this Chesterfield COVID-19 community recovery approach. The approach is centred around supporting and promoting community wellbeing; creating healthy, safer and stronger communities.
- 1.4 This community recovery approach sets out three key impact areas that the community-based partnership groups across Chesterfield should look to focus on in their joint work programmes, and proposes a set of over-arching commitments and enablers to underpin this activity and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of delivery.
- 1.5 The report also sets out the work that was carried out in the initial response to the pandemic, as this has also formed a key input into the development of the proposals for the way forward.

2.0 COVID-19 Derbyshire and Chesterfield Community Response

Derbyshire Community Response Unit

- 2.1 A county-wide Community Response Unit, CRU, was established by Derbyshire County Council. The establishment of the unit was at the request of national government; it was for upper tier authorities to take a lead role in the COVID-19 pandemic community response to support, predominantly, shielded (extremely vulnerable) and vulnerable people where the advice to those people was to remain isolated in their homes for an estimated 12 weeks, as they are at greatest risk of being severely affected should they contract the virus. The CRU was developed with the direction and support of the Derbyshire Local Resilience Form.
- 2.2 One of the primary functions of the CRU has been to provide a contact centre with a single phone number and online registration form. This was established essentially to provide a triage unit, for any individual who feels they need help, and for those willing to volunteer to support the community efforts. Depending on the request for assistance, individuals were either directed through to lead

Appendix A

local voluntary agencies in each district area, to then work with the local voluntary sector network, or they were directed to more specific support through the County Council's adult social care service or the CCG/ PCN.

- 2.3 The other key role of the CRU was to provide more direct assistance to those identified as extremely vulnerable due to underlying health conditions, known as the 'Shielded population'. The CRU, as well as NHS and other organisations, were contacting these individuals, through a list provided by government, to determine their specific needs and whether they required assistance from the unit. To date the CRU had received around 2400 calls for service. This may be through emergency food parcels, assistance with food shopping, prescriptions, or for more specific medical assistance and social care needs. The Borough Council has provided support to DCC in delivering emergency food parcels.
- 2.4 The CRU also sought to ensure that prescribed medicines have been able to reach individuals and have arranged to support Pharmacies in delivering prescriptions. The Council has provided direct resource to Peak Pharmacy to assist with home deliveries.

Chesterfield community response to the COVID-19 outbreak

- 2.5 The development and coordination of the borough's community support response was complex; not least because in Chesterfield there is not one lead community and voluntary sector organisation. Whilst this meant that it was perhaps more complex in the first instance to rapidly mobilise an integrated community response, the borough can be encouraged by the strength and depth that the community and voluntary sector network affords us and ultimately this will provide resilience going forward.
- 2.6 The community and voluntary sector organisations that have been taking a lead in supporting the CRU response in Chesterfield are Derbyshire Voluntary Action (DVA), Chesterfield Volunteer Centre (CVC) and Links CVS. As the roles required for the response have emerged each organisation has taken on a different element, working together to deliver a joint outcome:
- DVA – Commissioned by DCC as the lead agency to receive referrals and link with other networks of support.
 - CVC – The lead to register volunteers and co-ordinate the volunteer effort to support the vulnerable.
 - Links CVS – To support voluntary organisations in terms of governance and structure.
- 2.7 The voluntary and community sector, supported where appropriate by the Council, have undertaken a range of direct intervention roles including food shopping and medicine collection. Hundreds of people have been supported through this network.

Community support provided by Chesterfield Borough Council

- 2.8 The Council has been providing a range of support during the pandemic, including;
- up to five members of staff, into Derbyshire Voluntary Action, to support the coordination and communication with all CRU referrals and volunteer coordination, enabling same day contact and response to be given to the most vulnerable
 - prescription deliveries to Peak Pharmacy – over 10,000 prescriptions have been delivered
 - direct delivery of emergency CRU food parcel to shielded individuals
 - providing waste collection services to local voluntary organisations
 - the production of safe systems of work and risk assessments for some community and voluntary groups
 - a staffing resource for the COVID-19 testing drive through facility at the Technique Stadium
- 2.9 The Council has continued to adapt and react based on identified need, whilst at the same time ensuring that critical functions around the contact centre, revenues and benefits, waste collection, environmental services, bereavement services, environmental health, housing and homelessness, for example, are appropriately resourced so that as an organisation we continue to put our communities first.
- 2.10 The COVID-19 pandemic has been complex and fast moving however the response from the local voluntary networks has been truly humbling and it has only strengthened the need to recognise the valuable contribution that they make to our communities.

3.0 Establishing a Chesterfield COVID-19 Strategic Health and Wellbeing Group

- 3.1 As the role of the CRU developed, it became apparent to partners that there would be benefit in setting up a strategic framework across the County, to ensure that the overarching County approach could be tailored at a more local borough / district level.
- 3.2 Public sector partners that work across Chesterfield, through a range of community based partnerships, have looked to provide support to this developing strategic community response requirement. This has included partners in the;
- Health and Wellbeing Partnership,
 - Community Safety Partnership,
 - Place Alliance
 - Childrens Locality Partnership

Appendix A

- 3.3 The chairs, and convenors, of these partnership groups, prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, had been exploring the creation of a strategic partnership, and it seemed appropriate that this set of public sector organisations, together with a lead individual representing the CVS, look to create this strategic group, to take on the role of responding to the COVID-19 outbreak. Partners on the group include Chesterfield Borough Council Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing, officers from the Borough Council and Derbyshire County Council, including public health and children's and adults services, representatives from the Clinical Commissioning Group and the Primary Care Network and Derbyshire Voluntary Action.
- 3.4 The first meeting of this group took place on 15 April, and it has met on a largely weekly basis since then.
- 3.5 The initial focus of the group was to ensure we could respond to the immediate needs of people, through connecting those that had contacted the CRU with voluntary and community groups and the significant numbers of volunteers that came forward to help. As referenced above to support this the council allocated up to 5 staff to provide additional capacity to DVA to manage the referrals from the Derbyshire CRU.
- 3.6 The current focus of the group has been aimed at understanding the overall community resilience structure that is in place across Chesterfield and establishing ways to ensure that the vast range of partners can improve the ways that they work in a coordinated way to tackle the wide ranging impacts of COVID-19, in a way that improves our overall community wellbeing.
- 3.7 Figure A3.1 sets out the Chesterfield Strategic Community Resilience Framework; showing the links from our local community through to the strategic agencies that are there to support them.

4.0 Understanding the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on society

- 4.1 Having established that the immediate response activities were working well, the strategic group then set out to consider how we should be ensuring that we could help people in the medium to long term, as it was becoming apparent that there would be significant long term consequences from the impacts of the pandemic, both directly and indirectly on a range of individuals, families and communities.
- 4.2 The strategic group put together a discussion paper and questionnaire to seek experiences and views from the members on the multi-agency partnership groups and also by talking directly to the many voluntary and community sector organisations who have been helping their members and new individuals to cope with the issues that have been created.
- 4.3 Other information that has been used to assess the impacts of the pandemic has been data intelligence from public health colleagues and the work that has

Appendix A

been done by the Derbyshire Local Resilience Forum – Strategic Recovery Group to assess and consider the impacts of the pandemic on our society.

Feedback from multi-agency partnerships

- 4.4 The discussion paper, with a series of questions, was developed to help the Strategic group engage with the four main partnership groups and gain their insight into the impacts of the pandemic and how we should work together to tackle the issues. The paper is attached at Appendix A1.
- 4.5 The feedback from partner agencies is set out in Appendix A2. Although the responses were specific to the questions, a set of headline messages came through very clearly;
- Create strong communication channels and clear messages
 - Value joined-up working across partners and agencies, from voluntary and community through to statutory bodies
 - Recognise the voluntary and community sector as an equal partner
 - Be data and insight led in developing solutions; listen to people and communities, as well as using technical data
 - Develop accessible centralised digital platforms to enable the delivery of joined up services across organisations
 - Focus the community recovery solutions on tackling the key impacts on individuals and communities; these will be increases in material insecurity, mental health difficulties and social isolation
 - Identify resource gaps to ensure that all partners can support our community resilience network
- 4.6 The summary of the responses and these headline messages will be fed back to the partnership groups, to enable the groups to review their strategies, objectives and action plans, and look to incorporate these headline messages, and where appropriate strengthen the initiatives and activities within their partnership and their own organisations.
- 4.7 It is also proposed that the strategic group consider whether there are further cross-cutting activities that should be developed to embed these headline messages across organisations in a coordinated way, to further support and promote community wellbeing across Chesterfield.

Feedback from voluntary and community sector groups

- 4.8 In July, Chesterfield Borough Council invited voluntary and community organisations across Chesterfield, who had been at the forefront of supporting individuals and communities through the pandemic, to a virtual meeting to share their experiences with the Council and one another, and seek their views on what we needed to focus on going forward in the continued response and recovery from this very challenging situation.

Appendix A

- 4.9 The feedback from the voluntary and community sector groups just showed what a dedicated group of people they are and how resilient and innovative they have been in continuing to provide vital services for the people that they support, in an immensely challenging and ever changing situation.
- 4.10 The overwhelming issue that came across was related to the social isolation that many of their members were suffering from, including older people, disabled people, and those in the LGBT and Black and Minority Ethnic communities. They talked about this from a social contact perspective, but also related to the lack of digital connectivity and hardware that was available to help people to connect.
- 4.11 A number also raised the issue of their funding, which largely comes through the delivery of projects and outputs; but many projects had to be paused or stopped due to the response to the pandemic, and therefore funding for core posts is difficult - although again their resourcefulness in identifying new opportunities for bidding did shine through. Appendix A3 sets out a list of the organisations that were involved in this discussion.
- 4.12 The feedback from the groups was that they also valued the opportunity to share their experiences and to hear from other groups about the work that they had been doing, sharing their challenges, knowledge and solutions. Further discussions are progressing about how this type of forum can continue and help to strengthen this valuable contribution that is being made by our voluntary and community sector organisations and their volunteers.

Data intelligence on the impacts COVID-19 on our society

- 4.13 Data and detailed analysis have also been pulled together by public health colleagues around the impacts of the pandemic on individuals, and groups of individuals who were likely to be most affected by the impacts. What the analysis highlights quite starkly is that an overall impact will be the widening gap in health and wider inequalities across our communities; this is the key challenge that we must have at the forefront of our minds as we develop our recovery plans.
- 4.14 Although the analysis from public health, is very detailed, it can be summarised into seven broad impact areas, shown in Table A4.1. These impact areas reinforce the data that has been gathered through the multi-agency partnerships and the voluntary and community sector.

Work of the Derbyshire Local Resilience Forum – Strategic Recovery Group

- 4.15 The other strategic area of work that has progressed at a Derbyshire level, in parallel with the local focus on Chesterfield, has been the work of the Derbyshire Local Resilience Forum and in particular the Strategic Recovering Group and associated sub-groups. More detail on this work is included in Appendix A4.

Table A4.1: Overarching COVID-19 impact areas

<p>COVID--19 and Health Impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing impacts of infections • Delays for other serious conditions 	<p>Material Insecurity - Food, Housing, welfare support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase in emergency food parcels • people at risk of homelessness through evictions, especially in private rented sector • increasing financial hardship
<p>Economic Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rise in unemployment • job insecurity • 20-40% increase in people on Universal Credit from March to April 	<p>Population Mental Health and Wellbeing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the impact at a population level; existing vulnerable people will be hit the hardest • from short to long term effects;
<p>Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • impacts on children and young people's attainment levels now and into their futures • youth unemployment and the uncertainty of an unstable labour market 	<p>Social Connection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • impact of lockdown – especially for shielded • loneliness risk factors increasing - bereavement, low income, material deprivation, poor mental health
	<p>Lifestyle – activity, diet, drinking, smoking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an ageing population at higher risk of deterioration • increased out-of-school time • rising obesity levels; eating and drinking habits

5.0 COVID-19 Chesterfield community recovery approach - Supporting and Promoting Community Wellbeing

Our underlying ambition

- 5.1 As individuals and communities, we have a simple underlying ambition; 'to live healthy and fulfilling lives'. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a seismic affect on all of our abilities to achieve this ambition. We must work relentlessly and resiliently together to tackle the impacts and the widening inequalities gaps that this pandemic is likely to cause, and to keep our focus on regaining that overall outcome; to live healthy and fulfilling lives.
- 5.2 Achieving this outcome 'to live healthy and fulfilling lives' it at the heart of this Chesterfield community recovery approach. The approach is centred around supporting and promoting community wellbeing; creating healthy, safer and stronger communities.
- 5.3 This community recovery approach to seeks to set out the priorities that each of the multi-agency partnership groups should look to focus on in their joint work programmes.

Impact areas for direct focus

- 5.4 Three key impact areas that have emerged as priorities for Chesterfields community recovery work to directly focus on.
 - Material insecurity - supporting individuals and families that are feeling the effects of material insecurities, such as food, housing, financial hardship
 - Population mental health and wellbeing – supporting vulnerable individuals that need low level and clinical mental health support, recognising that there are increasing numbers of people struggling with specific mental health and wellbeing issues stemming from the increasing challenges brought about by COVID-19
 - Social connectedness – supporting those significant numbers of individuals that are showing signs of loneliness and that lack social connection, and without support will begin to suffer from more significant mental health difficulties
- 5.5 A significant amount of work is progressing across the partnerships in Chesterfield and Derbyshire to understand the impacts of COVID-19 in more detail and to develop targeted activities to tackle these impacts. It should also be recognised that individual organisations will be heavily focussed on their day to day activities and working more directly with key partners to respond to the challenges from the pandemic; this recovery plan is not seeking to set out all activities that all organisations are doing, as that would simply be impossible and inappropriate.

Cross-cutting commitments and enablers

5.6 To support the way in which these key impacts can be more effectively tackled, a range of cross-cutting commitments and enablers have been identified that are proposed to be adopted by the multi-agency partnerships. It is also proposed that the Strategic Group should look to develop and lead a range of more detailed actions to make progress in these areas. These cross-cutting enabling initiatives are to:

- Create strong communication channels and clear messages
- Value joined-up working across partners and agencies, from voluntary and community through to statutory bodies
- Recognise the voluntary and community sector as an equal partner
- Be data and insight led in developing solutions; listen to people and communities, as well as using technical data
- Develop accessible centralised digital platforms to enable the delivery of joined up services across organisations
- Focus the community recovery solutions on tackling the key impacts on individuals and communities; increases in material insecurity, mental health difficulties and social isolation
- Identify and plug resource gaps to ensure that all partners can support our community resilience network

Delivery approach and resources

5.7 It is proposed that the Chesterfield COVID-19 Strategic Health and Wellbeing Group, change its name to the Chesterfield Strategic Community Wellbeing Coordination Group, to better reflect the role of this group going forward.

5.8 This strategic group will continue to:

- provide a link between the Derbyshire Local Resilience Forum activities and those of the partnership groups across Chesterfield;
- provide a lead for the delivery of the cross-cutting commitments and enablers and
- provide links into the multi-agency partnership organisations to seek to ensure that the key impact areas and activities to tackle the more specific impacts of COVID-19 are identified and delivered

5.9 Chesterfield Borough Council will continue to provide a key leadership role in bringing together key agencies to focus of supporting initiatives to improve community wellbeing across Chesterfield borough.

5.10 The next stage of this work will be to work through the Chesterfield Strategic Community Wellbeing Coordination Group to develop more detailed work programmes, considering the delivery mechanisms and future resource requirements.

Figure A3.1 Chesterfield Strategic Community Resilience Framework

