

Report on	Update on Mid Ulster District Council Community Support Hub.
Date of Meeting	Thursday 28 th May 2020
Reporting Officer	Anne - Marie Campbell, Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation
Contact Officer	Anne - Marie Campbell, Director of Leisure and Outdoor Recreation

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To update members on the operation of Mid Ulster District Councils Community Support Hub to provide support to vulnerable people in Mid Ulster during the COVID-19 pandemic.
	Background
2.1	The Department for Communities (DfC) established a helpline through Advice NI - 0808 802 0020 to provide advice and support to those in need during the COVID-19 pandemic. Letters were also sent out by GPs to notify vulnerable individuals to shield and stay in their homes for 12 weeks.
2.2	Council established a Community Support Support which takes referrals from both Health Trusts and Advice NI. In addition, the Department for Communities (DfC) launched a weekly service to deliver food boxes to the most vulnerable in society during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Council is also supporting the distribution of the food boxes.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Shielding Letters
3.2	<p>In Northern Ireland over 80,000 shielding letters have been sent out. In Mid Ulster 6,012 shield letters were issued. The list of criteria set out below is based on guidance provided by Public Health England. All GPs were written to by the Health and Social Care Board at the end of March to commence issuing letters to patients who are in these categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions) under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (ie anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis chronic heart disease, such as heart failure chronic kidney disease chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), a learning disability or cerebral palsy

- diabetes
- problems with your spleen – for example, sickle cell disease or if you have had your spleen removed
- a weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as HIV and AIDS, or medicines such as steroid tablets or chemotherapy
- being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above)
- Solid organ transplant recipients
- People with specific cancers
 - People with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy or radical radiotherapy for lung cancer
 - People with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment
 - People having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
 - People having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors.
 - People who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs.
- People with rare diseases and inborn errors of metabolism that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as SCID, homozygous sickle cell disease)
- People on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection
- those who are pregnant with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired

3.3 Advice NI Helpline

Calls to Advice NI are triaged to assess need and individuals will be asked a number of questions regarding their ability to obtain food. The food box programme is targeted at anyone who cannot get out of their home to access food due to Covid 19 restrictions (e.g. have a shielding letter) and does not have support through family or friends or through access to food deliveries from local suppliers, and those facing food insecurity.

3.4 Community Support Hub

As of the 19th May 2020, the total number of referrals dealt with by the Council Community Support Hub is as follows:

Source	Number of referrals (from 6 th April)
Northern Trust	308
Southern Trust	492
Advice NI	464
Other	261
Total	1,525

3.4 A key element of the service provided is the distribution of food boxes. We receive food boxes organised through the Department for Communities and distribute them from the Mid Ulster Sports Arena in Cookstown.

3.5

	The boxes are distributed to a range of community and voluntary organisations who deliver them to the vulnerable individuals in need across the Mid Ulster. Over 40 community and voluntary groups are involved in the weekly distribution of 1,075 boxes. A total of 5,272 boxes have been delivered to date.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: Staff have been redeployed from within Council. Costs associated with the delivery of boxes.
	Human: None
	Risk Management: None
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: None
	Rural Needs Implications: None
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	Members are requested to note the content of this report.
6.0	Documents Attached & References