

Appendix

Covid-19 – the Sheffield response to date

Overview

The aim of this paper is to give a clear and easily digestible picture of the depth and scale of the work which has taken place across the city. By definition, it is a snapshot of the range of activity and is by no means comprehensive in terms of its content or the scale of work undertaken by organisations in the city and communities in response to Covid-19. Work is ongoing with partners to capture a longer-term and more detailed city-wide overview.

1. Keeping people safe and well

'Vulnerable people'

It should be noted that this paper makes frequent reference to support for 'vulnerable' people. This sometimes refers to those who are particularly vulnerable to Covid-19 itself, which might include those who are 'shielding' (sometimes referred to as 'ultra-vulnerable'), those who are in more at-risk groups (such as over 70s and pregnant women), and people who are self-isolating due to potential/actual Covid-19 symptoms who don't have support networks.

Vulnerable people also refer to those who are more likely to be disadvantaged by lockdown and other aspects of this crisis. They can include people who are homeless, those who are in poverty, people with disabilities or mental health conditions, those who are experiencing domestic abuse, people with particular language needs, children and young people and adults with learning disabilities, those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities and Refugees.

A significant number of people will fall into both medical and wider categories of vulnerability, particularly as there is a strong relationship between socio-economic disadvantage and health inequality. We don't yet fully understand the scale of the impact of the crisis on different groups but our understanding from working with and supporting communities in Sheffield so far is that the people who were already classed as vulnerable before this crisis are growing more vulnerable, and that more people will be falling into vulnerability due to losing their jobs or other changes in their lives.

Our community response has been substantial and has necessitated a variety of new approaches, as well as further developing our established partnership working with the voluntary and community sector (VCS) and illuminating the strong foundations built by the sector within our communities. This work has consisted of supporting all of our local residents in this completely new context, as well as specific support for those who are most vulnerable (medically and more broadly).

In March the Government launched the national scheme where approximately 1.5 million people across the UK have been identified as being vulnerable and needing to self-isolate for 12 weeks. A commitment was made for those who need support to get a national package of basic food and household essentials directly to their homes. At the same time, we were working locally to develop a wide infrastructure of support. Below are some examples of the key activity.

Locality Community Response Teams & SCC Helpline

In Sheffield, the Director of Communities has led the establishment of Locality Community Response Teams (LCRTs). These are 7 'virtual' Teams who are working with representatives from: VCF sector, Housing, Adults, Children & Families, Education and Skills, Repairs and Maintenance, Libraries plus Police, Fire Service, Schools, Health):

- To ensure that individuals are kept safe and well and supported through this time, both practically with supplies, and emotionally for their well-being.
- To coordinate the provision of multi-agency support that is accessible and meets the needs of individual/families.
- To co-ordinate support for community organisations e.g. VCF, Food Banks, Mutual Aid groups etc.
- To provide clear and effective two-way communications between, and with, these target groups.

The LCRTs are set-up to help with shopping, collecting medication from the pharmacy where needed (requested via the helpline), for example when people are in the vulnerable category or self-isolating and there is no-one else to help them. Beyond this, they are there to connect the communities, community organisations, services and partners and in particular work with elected members, facilitating everyone to work together and enabling this to happen.

This work is supported by an Emergency Food Parcel (EFP) Operation which was implemented within 72 hours to meet demand. Below are some headlines about what has been achieved with this significant operation, which has been operating out of the Moor Market, thus far:

- Went live with first parcels delivered on Fri 03/04
- Delivered almost 700 EFPs in the first 6 weeks since go live
- EFPs will feed one adult for 1 week and is nutritionally balanced + contains non-food essentials as well (soap, loo roll, etc.). Also we will vary contents where required (e.g. dietary needs, baby products, etc.)
- Each EFP box costs approx. £32 to put together
- SCC is spending approx. £4000 per week on EFPs (approx. 120-130 parcels pw)
- Any ongoing support needs are picked up during triage to ensure that people are catered for longer term (in addition to their EFP)
- We liaise closely with Housing Solutions and Shelter to ensure that city homeless receive EFPs where required

We have also established a dedicated Coronavirus helpline for Covid-19 related concerns and enquiries. From 8:45 – 4:45pm seven days a week, members of the public can call 0114 273 4567 and select option 0 to ask any questions relating to the virus. The SCC helpline was set-up to assist with:

- collecting shopping or medication
- emergency parcels of basic food and toiletries for anyone who urgently needs food within 24 hours and has no money to buy it
- support for anyone who is feeling isolated or needs extra help

Community Support Workers are working in the Contact Centre supporting Contact Centre colleagues by triaging cases so people get the right service first time. Community Support Workers out in the Localities are supporting over 700 people with weekly check and chat calls, shopping and medication pick up.

Between the helpline being set up and 10th May, it has taken approximately 8000 calls. In the week ending 10th May it took approximately 170 calls, which is a reduction from approximately 300 per week during its first few weeks of operation.

In the week ending 10th May, the call statistics show that more than half of calls were resolved at the point of the call. For those that were referred on, pathways included:

- emergency food parcels
- urgent shopping, medication or social contact that were referred on to the Community Response Teams
- shopping or medication requests that could wait 72 hours that were therefore referred on to GoodSAM (the NHS volunteer scheme)
- food banks
- Department for Work and Pensions
- Citizens Advice Sheffield.

Each household in the city has received a postcard through their letterbox with information about how to get help and support from Sheffield City Council if they or a friend or relative is shielding or self-isolating.

Council staff (this includes staff from Library Services, Aids and Adaptations Teams, Adult Social Care, Housing and Commissioning) are proactively calling approx. 30,000 'shielded' citizens / people across the city to ensure they are safe and well and receiving the support they need. We have not only received some absolutely fabulous feedback from people receiving the calls, stating how much they appreciate that someone cares how they are doing but also from the staff making the calls stating they feel they are making a difference for people.

In addition to the Helpline and calls from council staff, the SCC Communications team has co-ordinated a large number of proactive social media, website, print media and leaflet campaigns to keep Sheffield's citizens informed about keeping safe, the support available to them and their families from SCC and statutory and voluntary sector partners in the City, and good news stories. Some can be found on the [newsroom site](#).

Community Hubs & VCS Infrastructure

The LCRTs are linked at community level with a range of support services (historic and new) provided by the VCS. These services, both formal and informal, have proved invaluable during the current crisis. Whilst everyone working in communities has been operating under unprecedented strain and demand, they have continued to work together constructively and to provide vital support to the most vulnerable people in our city. This work has also been supported by a strong network of individuals, co-ordinating virtually and sharing information online and through weekly update calls.

A key aspect of the VCS architecture is the community hubs. There are currently 18 community hubs as identified by VAS. They are defined as an organisation that is constituted, a registered charity or faith based organisation with a track record in supporting their community.

Each hub will be taking a different approach to supporting people where they live. A way that best suits their community, and the resources that the hub has available to them. Hubs may offer services such as:

- Supporting those who are most at risk to get the support they need.
- Provide information, advice, health and wellbeing support over the phone.

- Taking on volunteers from the community and pointing their own volunteers to areas of need.
- Supporting people who need it with access to food.
- Directing to appropriate support.
- Trying to be social, in spite of social distancing, with emotional and social wellbeing support where possible.

SCC are providing parcels of emergency basic food as described above and the NHS are providing food packages delivered weekly for 12 weeks to those who are extremely vulnerable/shielding and register for these on the gov.uk page.

Moreover, foodbanks are continuing to play a crucial role, and are currently holding up to the additional pressures brought by the COVID-19 Pandemic. Nonetheless, they have had to adapt in many ways and a number of existing food projects have been unable to continue within the current restrictions. Demand has grown exponentially and the pressure is considerable and sustained. Foodbanks are clear that they remain for people who are financially challenged. They remain the last resort for people who cannot afford food i.e. people who are vulnerable, isolating, who can pay need to be referred to the Community Hubs, NHS Volunteers, mutual aid etc.

SCC, VAS and the sector have been working together to help with co-ordination of the foodbank infrastructure since the onset of the crisis. There are currently 27 foodbank sites for which we have data. Across these 27 sites the total number of people fed in the week commencing 20th April was 3587. This was a 14% increase from the previous week. The total number of households served was 1598, a 9% increase on the previous week. The ratio of households in Sheffield supported was 1 in 144. Please note that these figures are based on data which has been collected by those who are supporting the foodbank network and has come directly from foodbanks themselves.

To support this foodbank infrastructure a SCC foodbank support operation was established early April to run alongside the Emergency Food Parcel operation:

- This supports 20 foodbanks in the city providing them with mutually agreed 'units' of food stock
- Each unit costs approx. £500 and contains a range of core essential items required by foodbanks
- Approx. 16 units pw are currently being supplied to foodbanks, costing approx. £8000 per week
- We purchase, stock and deliver the units to the foodbanks according to their individual instructions/needs
- A large multi service team is involved in the EFP and Foodbank operations – staff from Lifelong Learning, Parking Services, Investment Team, Events Team, Communities, BCIS, Customer Services, Transport Team, Finance and Commercial Services, etc.
- Current spend by SCC to date (after almost 6 weeks) = approx. £75K. This is split approx. £24K EFP and £51K foodbank.
- Many very kind donations have been received, small and large, from a range of organisations including wholesalers, retailers, charities, garages, hotels and more. These have included food and essentials, sanitary and baby products, equipment and more. These donations have been used for both EFP and foodbank operations.

Bereavement Support

There is a range of specialist support available over the phone and online for those affected through local support provided by Sheffield Flourish (on behalf of SCC and NHS Sheffield). Contact 0114 2737009.

Sheffield City Council has launched a new service to help people bereaved during Covid-19. The accredited service, an adult counselling helpline delivered in the city by Listening Ear, is available through a free phone number 0800 048 5224. This is for anyone who has lost a loved one and/or needs support or advice (this includes individuals and affected staff on the frontline).

With financial support from SCC Public Health, local community organisation Faith Star has launched a compassionate listening service for bereaved families 'Here to Hear' (0333 344 5659). It is a multi-faith, multi-language pastoral support line for those recently bereaved by Covid-19. Open to all, but particularly focused on supporting Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities.

Funding for local voluntary and community organisations

During this pandemic, numerous voluntary, community and faith sector organisations across Sheffield have provided a huge amount of support to many people across the city, making sure those who are shielding from the virus have not gone without vital supplies.

In order to support some of these critical organisations during this time, Sheffield City Council has provided additional funding (over £156,000) to help them to secure essentials such as extra staff, PPE, emergency food and more. Voluntary Action Sheffield have worked with the sector in order to understand those organisations most at risk, which has helped to inform the council's approach to prioritising this funding.

Universal Credit and Welfare

Regular meetings have been taking place between SCC officers (including Policy, Revenues and Benefits, Council Housing and Customer Services), DWP, Citizens Advice, Shelter and SY Police to share information about how we are supporting vulnerable people, and ensure that people are able to get the right support locally. There have been 2.3 million new claims for Universal Credit (UC) since the beginning of the crisis, with approximately 20,000 in Sheffield over March and April. There was a significant delay in processing those new claims but DWP has redeployed resources and has brought down their processing times to normal levels. We have had approximately 1000 tenants go onto UC during this period, which is a substantial increase (roughly double the normal amount), but not as significant as we would have expected from the large Sheffield figures. This, along with intelligence from DWP, suggests that a lot of people going on to UC are those who may not have experienced the benefit system before, or who were previously only on Tax Credits. Citizens Advice Sheffield have quickly relocated all its staff to work from home and is providing support via phone, email and webchat to approximately 120 contacts a day.

Council Tax

The Council Tax Service has set up a new email account, counciltax.payments@sheffield.gov.uk, which taxpayers can contact if they're struggling to pay and want to make a change to their Council Tax instalments. This allows us to take residents' individual circumstances into account and provide further support where necessary, including making an application for Council Tax Support if eligible. Further details can be found at <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/council-tax/difficulty-paying>.

As part of the Government-funded Council Tax Hardship Fund, we will be reducing the remaining Council Tax liability for all working age Council Tax Support recipients in 2020-21 by £150. The process will be automated, and no additional application will need to be completed in order to receive this. However, please note that this is separate to Sheffield's own Council Tax Hardship Scheme, and taxpayers who receive the Government funded £150 reduction in their Council Tax, can still apply for additional assistance at www.sheffield.gov.uk/dhp. We are expecting a significant increase in applications for Council Tax Support, and as such, the Government Council Tax Hardship Fund is to be ring fenced to provide support towards Council Tax, and will be reviewed in 3 months, to see if the anticipated increase in demand for Council Tax Support has materialised.

Domestic Abuse

It has been recognised from the beginning of the crisis that the impact of lockdown on children and adults experiencing domestic abuse is likely to be significant. We have been working extremely closely with voluntary and public sector partners including South Yorkshire Police to ensure that support is still available for those who need it. Further information about the support available can be found here <https://sheffielddact.org.uk/domestic-abuse/>. Helplines have been operating, refuges have remained open and the police have been responding.

Online reporting options and webchat have been expanded to help make accessing services easier. Although Howden House has reduced its walk in service, urgent appointments have been available there to anyone fleeing domestic violence and police stations have also remained open to support people in those circumstances. We have also used our communications channels to remind residents of the support available (e.g. <https://sheffieldnewsroom.co.uk/news/support-services-for-those-affected-by-domestic-abuse-in-sheffield/>) to highlight the range issue of abuse from young people towards their parents, and ask people to consider if their behaviour is abusive and direct them towards help. The domestic abuse helpline has also been included in other information, including the Director of Public Health's videos updates on Covid-19 and the new Relationship Matters Strategy. This is because DA support information can sometimes more easily reach people when it is included with non-DA related information.

People Keeping Well

People Keeping Well (PKW) is Sheffield's community based approach to supporting health and wellbeing. PKW has played an important role in supporting many vulnerable people during the Covid-19 emergency.

In other areas, PKW would be described as social prescribing. In Sheffield, we shy away from this unhelpful term because we believe what we have is a more effective and embedded approach than just a 'signposting service for primary care'.

By ensuring people are connected to, and feel part of their local community, we can help them stay independent and well for longer and increase their quality of life. By resolving social issues and connecting people to 'what matters to me', through PKW, we hope to empower people and develop their skills.

In response to the pandemic and social distancing guidance, the VCF community organisations that deliver PKW moved quickly to protect the people they support (many in

the vulnerable group) and their staff. PKW services continue to be delivered but through digital / telephone approaches – organisations have been flexible and innovative:

- 1:1 casework continues, in the main this is via telephone / zoom but also could be face to face in rare situations. Contact with people who are most worried has been increased
- Referrals and working closely with local partners such as primary care, housing and other VCF organisations is ongoing
- PKW activities, which are a lifeline to many people have transitioned to online – there are some details below but many are on sharing local VCF Facebook pages:
- Zoom dementia cafes
- Online cookery and learning classes (they are very busy)
- Zoom exercise and fitness
- Using volunteers to connect small groups of people to have virtual coffee mornings
- Working with Care Homes, so the care home staff can continue chair aerobics
- Providing instructions on how to use apps / teleconferencing such as whatapp, Messenger, Zoom so people can stay connected with family and friends
- Where people are known to PKW services (and other funded services) needed practical support in response to covid such as shopping / food / utilities etc – they have immediately responded

Some of the PKW organisations are working as a Community Hub as part of the VCF Covid response. This work is in addition to the council funded activity and the recent funding allocated will cover immediate expenses that they incurred responding to the crisis; greater volunteer expenses, PPE, ad hoc emergency food and more hours for staff who have been working longer.

Library Services

Libraries are currently closed across the city and therefore library members have been given extensions to return dates, with no late return fees. SCC has also given the eLibrary service a £20,000 boost to ensure that members can continue to access free online resources while the library buildings remain closed. Existing and new library members can access a range of resources including books, audio books and other reading materials such as e-magazines and comics.

There is a huge selection of books for children and young adults. The service is accessible on any digital platform and is completely free of charge to use. Library members can subscribe using smart phones, tablets or computers and it is still possible for new members to join and for people to access the eLibrary online [here](#) via the council website. Over 2, 000 new members have joined the e-library since lockdown began.

2. Supporting children, young people and adults

Children & Young People’s Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health

Communications and Early Intervention

Citywide coordination of a wide range of practical resources for supporting mental health and emotional wellbeing for pupils, teachers and parents/carers have been offered through the Sheffield Schools platform link developed by Learn Sheffield.

The CAMHS Early Intervention Team and the Healthy Minds offer in schools has produced a number of materials for schools and pupils to help with emotional wellbeing (available also on the schools platform above), including a day planner, the purpose of which is to support engagement with pupils in thinking about their day and the things which help them to feel motivated and comforted. There is also advice for parents and carers [here](#) and [here](#).

Alongside this, young people working with the Healthy Minds team have developed the accompanying social media campaign #BeatTheBoredomSheff, encouraging Sheffield's young people to use the hashtag to promote examples of how they're staying motivated. Sheffield is hoping to recruit local celebrities and leaders to help promote the campaign and provide their own examples of staying healthy.

Sheffield City Council Children's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST) continue to provide individual support, group work, consultations and information provision advice sessions. Further information can be found on the MAST website [here](#) and they are contactable via EHWB@sheffield.gov.uk

Advice and information videos have been developed by SCC Public Health team including from [Director of Public Health Greg Fell here](#) and also by Sheffield Futures on their Twitter , Facebook and Instagram accounts.

CAMHS, Crisis and Online Support

Sheffield Children's Foundation Trust Community and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) have operated a flexible model in providing a response to the needs of children during the COVID-19 crisis. For example, some staff have transferred from the wider community CAMHS to bolster the crisis service provision from the STAR team and CAMHS have risk assessed everyone that is currently receiving a service and are offering telephone and video conferencing support as a way of continuing provision whilst maintaining social distancing rules

Sheffield continues to provide the Kooth online Counselling and Support service for Children and Young People aged 11-18 <https://www.kooth.com/> with online forums and self-help articles available 24/7 and online counselling from 12 noon -10pm on weekdays and from 6-10 pm at weekends

VCS Support - SAYIT, Sheffield Young Carers, Sheffield Futures, Chilypep and Gold Digger Trust continue to offer telephone support and virtual groups to support vulnerable young people's emotional health and wellbeing.

Schools and SEND

There is a support video focusing on SEND, produced in an accessible format <https://youtu.be/ck-XABAMmok> . SEN Transport continues to operate for eligible children and a guide for children with SEN has been produced.

Governance and Long term planning

Sheffield City Council and partners from Sheffield CCG and Sheffield Children's Foundation Trust and the voluntary and community sector have implemented structures for both immediate responses and the planning for the post-crisis and longer-term impact on Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health for Children and Young People:

- A subgroup of the Sheffield All-Age Psychology board meets weekly to look at the dynamic need in the city and oversee consistency and coordination of the communications sent out to young people on mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- Mapping of current provision and analysis of expected future need to align and link providers

- Fortnightly discussions at executive level between public health, children's social work and SCFT CAMHS assess and react to the population's current needs and any identified trends and longer term issues.

Fostering and adoption services

The overwhelming majority of our foster carers have continued to provide foster placements to children already living with them before lockdown and for those who have vacancies, they have continued to offer foster placements to new children who have needed placement during the lockdown period. As a group foster carers have remained very resilient and really focussed on the task in what are difficult circumstances. We are asking them to isolate as a family where household members have any Covid-19 symptoms and to practice social distancing as per the national guidance at all times. We have delivered PPE to carers where household members have developed symptoms. We have had to move two or three adolescents from foster carers with health vulnerabilities where that young person refused to maintain social distancing, as their regular going out in the community presented a risk to those foster carers.

The Fostering Service has continued to support and supervise foster carers using virtual means, such as video conferencing. We have used video conferencing to undertake social worker support sessions with individual carers, support group meetings, and assessment and training sessions for applicant foster carers so that we continue to recruit and approve new foster carers over the coming months. In addition our in-house fostering psychologist has been providing therapeutic support to carers by video conference. We have provided many of our carers with food and care packages, all of which have been very gratefully received and delivered Easter eggs to all of our fostered children.

All direct contact for children with birth family members ceased at the commencement of lockdown, so carers are supporting children to have indirect contact with family members. Some of the children are not in school and some are attending. For those who are not attending, our Virtual School have provided advice, support and guidance to foster carers on home schooling.

Through lockdown placement stability has remained good. In addition, foster carers have been working with us to move some children on to adoption placements where that is the child's plan and we have assessed that there is no additional Covid-19 risk in doing so.

Our Adoption Service has coped through lockdown in much the same way as the Fostering Service. We are supporting adoptive families via video conferencing, and recruiting, assessing, training and approving new adopters through video conferencing sessions. As already noted, we are continuing to move children into adoptive placements where this will best meet their needs and there is no additional Covid 19 risk, so as to avoid delay to children moving to their forever family.

Schools and Free School Meals

123 schools are partially open in Sheffield a for few key groups of children: children of key workers; vulnerable children (e.g. cases open to children's social care); children with education health care plans (EHCPs) (e.g. children with special needs).

In Sheffield there are 2,948 children designated as being vulnerable. So far, 503 of them attended school which is just over 17%, and therefore a higher percentage than nationally (5%). However, we would like to increase this further.

The local authority has been given the duty to oversee and co-ordinate capacity and provision in schools, academies, independent schools, private and voluntary nurseries and childminders.

Both vulnerable and EHCP children have been risk assessed jointly by schools and local authority professionals/officers. Officers and schools have cross referenced risk assessments so that children who are at greater risk in both groups (e.g. with an EHCP and also vulnerable (open to children's social care)) have greatest support. Lower risk children have been supported at home.

Regular (often daily) checks are made on vulnerable and EHCP children by school staff and social workers. This includes phone calls, video calls, and some home visits (e.g. seeing a child through the window or at the door). Records are being maintained by schools and officers alike.

Individual schools have provided work and activities to be undertaken at home by children supported by their parents and carers.

Statutory processes for both EHCP children and vulnerable children remain in place although there is a recognition that some flexibility will need to be applied.

Free School Meals

New ways of ensuring the provision of free school meals have rapidly emerged and approaches are frequently evolving as the situation changes. Where schools are open for key worker and vulnerable children, some of whom may be eligible for free school meals, hot meals are available if schools want to have that arrangement. A cold, 'grab bag' type of service is also offered if preferred. As free school meal children are at home, schools can opt to

1. Use the national voucher scheme via Edenred (Cost to be covered nationally)
2. Have a daily or weekly 'grab bag' offer to pupils, which can be either delivered by school staff or collected from school by parents. (Cost to be covered by schools)
3. Obtain a voucher from a chosen supermarket if the national voucher scheme is not appropriate for eligible FSM children who are not attending schools and claim the costs back from the DfE as part of the additional costs measures.

An audit of educational food provision was sent to all Sheffield schools by SCC on Monday 4th May for response within 24 hours. 161 Sheffield schools responded

- 59 settings had provision available on the VE Bank Holiday on Friday (42% of respondents)
- 185 settings responded and this included 161 Sheffield schools.
- When adjusted for responses for multiple schools - 169 Sheffield schools are included.
- The figures below represent 94% school coverage – 11 schools need following up.
- 160 schools are using the national FSM voucher scheme (95% of responding schools).
- Nine schools are not using the national scheme. Several of these schools indicate that they have attempted (and in some cases continue to attempt) to use the national voucher scheme but have an alternative in place until this works.

- 111 schools reported that national FSM voucher scheme was working fully (69% of the schools who are using the scheme and responded to the survey).
- Conversely, 49 schools (31%) are using the national FSM vouchers but reporting that they are not yet working fully.

Additional Food Provision

- 65 responding settings (including 63 schools) are providing additional food provision to families – when multiple responses are included this rises to 67 Sheffield schools.
- This means that 40% of the Sheffield schools who responded are providing some additional food provision.
- This included many approaches including the distribution of both food parcels (of various types) and additional vouchers. Some additional provision is organised routinely for identified families and some is used as a follow up to conversations with families. Some schools are linking additional food to home learning by providing the ingredients to complete a recipe which is shared alongside the food parcel. Settings are working with a variety of partners to secure this additional provision – most notably local food banks, local and national charities and local shops and supermarkets. Some of this provision is being funded by sponsors.

Family Centres/Family Support

Whilst most family centres are closed (some are still open for Midwifery pre-and-post natal services), our Early Years and Parenting Teams continue to work with families allocated to them offering extra support where possible. The types of support we can offer allocated families are

- Support with coping with your under 5 at home;
- Tips/ideas whilst you are home with your family;
- Signposting to other services if possible.

We have a team of infant feeding support workers also offering advice on feeding your baby.

Inclusion and Attendance - Key Workers continue to support families to co-ordinate packages of support linked to transition:

At this time when children are not accessing schools as normal we will:

- First and foremost we will ensure families have access to support to meet their needs then we can consider:
- What transition can / could look like for their child / children;
- What are key areas of support children / families would need through this time linked to transitional arrangements;
- Ensure children and families understand the process of transition and how children and families can cope with the changing landscape and then a new year group / school / post 16 provision when the time comes.

Adult Social Care

Care Homes

In common with the rest of the country, the Covid-19 pandemic is significantly impacting care homes in Sheffield. In Sheffield, there are 111 care homes of which 75 (2,991 beds) are for older adults. From the week before lockdown started, the council's Adult Social Care commissioning team put in place a comprehensive provider support response based on the following principles:

- Monitoring of the whole sector (including non-contracted provision)
- Early identification of issues emerging by sector or in individual providers

- Single point of access for all provider related enquiries
- Regular communication and distribution of policy and practice guidance and FAQs
- Support, guidance and problem solving including access to other services

Support provided by Sheffield City Council so far:

All council payments to care homes to be fixed at levels paid in early March. This to provide assurance and stability of cash flow and income for the next three months (end of June).

Providers also recommended to keep records of additional Covid-19 related expenditure to enable SCC to reconcile these.

- Single monitored inbox set up for all provider enquiries.
- All care homes asked to submit situation report twice a week to Commissioning Team to help monitor emerging issues.
- At least weekly call to each SCC funded care home to check in on how they're coping.
- Regular updates from the ProviderCovid19 inbox on information as it becomes available, digests of PPE guidance, Mental Health support etc.
- Webpage on SCC website for providers to access single source of guidance, request PPE via new portal etc.
- Named social worker support to care homes for care and support queries and concerns, working with families of residents and providing moral support to home managers.
- Staffing capacity (from SCC new recruits, STIT or social care trained redeployees) where homes are struggling to deliver safe care including out of hours response.
- Negotiated support for up to 20 homes with tablet devices with sim cards to link residents with families.
- Provision of PPE where required
- Direct number to contact moving and handling team.
- Offer to link with school meals service to deliver meals or ingredients where homes are struggling.

Work underway with STH, CCG, St Luke's, etc to ensure Care Homes have straight forward access to clinical support even if they initially approach the local authority. Examples include End of Life training and support, staff psych support, out of hours prescriptions etc.

The Council is analysing the developing information about Covid-19 cases and deaths in care homes from different sources, including Public Health and NHS Sheffield Clinical Commissioning Group. The challenges of correlating the various data, delays in reporting and confirming causes of death mean the full equality implications are not yet known. We are looking at all the information we have to gain a deeper understanding and in order to take appropriate action as soon as we can.

Anticipated demand

Through May and June 2020 an additional 280 people may require social care support following COVID-19 hospital discharge, 250 of these at home and 30 in a bedded setting. To date, 95% of people hospitalized for Covid-19 and being discharged have returned to their usual place of residence

We sent various forms of Easy Read guidance on COVID- 19 out to Autism partnership board members, Learning Disability partnership board members, Adult SIF members and Sheffield Carer Voice members.

Adult Social Care volunteers

The Practice Development Team (PDT), led by Simon Richards is leading on the recruitment, training and ongoing support for volunteers. We are working closely with Voluntary Action Sheffield (VAS) to recruit these volunteers. A three hour training has been developed in response to the Coronavirus pandemic to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the day to day provision of adult social care and support.

The Council is now in a high state of readiness to respond robustly to the Coronavirus so we can offer a high degree of assurance that:

- We are able to maximise the effectiveness of our adult social care support;
- Respond effectively to the outbreak;
- Arrange for the continuation of essential services, to maintain normal business for as many people as possible for as long as possible;
- Enable safe and effective care and support to be provided to those most in need whilst minimising the risk of infection to staff, and those receiving support.
- To date we have trained:
 - 31 VAS volunteers and we have a 16 potential volunteers waiting to be trained next week;
 - 10 non adult social care volunteer redeployees; and
 - 23 voluntary redeployees from adult social care.
- A number of the above volunteers and redeployees have already been deployed to provide care and support in care homes.
- All volunteers have been CRB checked and have been provided with a photo ID Badge and SCC polo shirts to wear when volunteering. We have also issued volunteers with a SCC Key Worker letter.
- The PDT maintain routine and regular written communication with VAS volunteers to ensure they feel appreciated and valued and we have a volunteer coordinator in place to ensure that our volunteers are well supported.

Dementia Care

- People with dementia and their carers are being very stoical and resilient, but it is obviously a very unsettling and confusing time, with particular pressure on family carers. This pressure will continue to increase the longer that lockdown principles continue and the respite that carers usually access remains mostly unavailable.
- Dementia day centres and People Keeping Well community dementia memory cafés and dementia-friendly groups have had to cease meeting face-to-face. However dementia workers have been proactive in doing regular keep-in-touch calls to attendees, posting out dementia-friendly activity packs, linking people to Community Hubs for practical support and Sheffield Carers Centre for carer support, and even arranging memory cafés on Zoom with singers, entertainment, information and live chair-based exercise.
- Dementia workers are being supported with daily and weekly updates of activity-at-home ideas and sources of support from Dementia Advice Sheffield and the Council's commissioning team.
- Dementia Advice Sheffield can also respond to any queries about dementia from professionals, and is offering online training for any workers who support people living with dementia.
- The Sheffield Directory dementia webpage, which can be accessed by the public, has been updated to reflect coronavirus changes and suggest activities and support services.

- A pilot service has been launched for GPs to be able to refer people with undiagnosed or higher needs dementia for a short term service through a period of crisis.
- SCC is continuing to work closely with Sheffield CCG as part of the dementia commissioning arrangements. For example, a new temporary Covid service is being commissioned via the CCG to ensure everyone in the community with dementia is contacted and offered support. This is in addition to the Memory Service contacting individuals on their register to ensure they have an offer of being linked into their local community.
- Sheffield CCG is leading work on supporting care homes, which includes offering guidance to care homes for dementia care with Covid19.
- The Dementia Strategy Implementation Group continues to meet (online) to ensure a citywide partnership response from all dementia organisations

Carers

The Carer's Centre has continued to support carers throughout the crisis. They instigated a weekly call immediately including Commissioning, Carers Centre and Adult Social Care – the purpose is to keep in touch / support, understand capacity, any changing trends, continued communication with Adult Social Care and for if / when statutory Care Act easement might happen. The Carers Centre have also been part of the wider VCF Community Hub response and Pauline Kimantus CEO of Carers Centre has been an active member of the City's Tactical Group advocating on behalf of all family carers

Most vulnerable carers: just under 200 carers were identified as those carers we were most concerned about. Locality Social Care staff have called all these carers to ensure 'they were ok' 'had a contingency plan' 'knew where to get support from the Council and Carers Centre' 'let them know about the new keep in touch service'. Carers were appreciative of the calls and there was follow up with about 20% of families. Many families had contingency plans in place and currently coping

- **Website:** 12% new visitors and 44% increase on total numbers visiting
- **Assessments continue (numbers are for the quarter Jan – March 2020):**
 - 408 Tier 1 assessments and 255 Tier 2 assessments (full statutory assessment)
 - 341 carers supported via Carer Advisor Line
- **Keeping in touch:** a 1:1 keep in touch service for carers who are lonely – this is not casework but a listening and empathetic ear. They have also bought a zoom licence to develop carer groups / coffee mornings on line

Emerging Vulnerability

A guidance document entitled 'Emerging Vulnerability and Early Help – COVID-19' was issued. Schools and services know from their experiences that a growing number of families are struggling to cope. These families are not necessarily identified as vulnerable or eligible for free school meals.

In the week beginning 20 April, for example, the network of food banks and other voluntary sector emergency food provision in the city provided food to 1464 households (28% up on the previous week). This equated to 1 in every 157 households compared with 1 in 200 households during the previous week. This did not include SCC deliveries, free school meal vouchers or the multitude of small food initiatives that are popping up – including those organised by some schools. The guidance document is designed to support schools and

settings in identifying and meeting the needs of pupils and families with 'emerging vulnerability' during the COVID-19 crisis and beyond.

3. Supporting our economy and businesses

The economic response of the Council has been multifaceted with the Council facilitating the payment of support grants, taking phone calls and supporting the local economy in as many ways as it can. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and consequential lockdown is expected to have a significant impact on the global economy and this is reflected in Sheffield. Sheffield City Council has been and will continue to lobby government for the appropriate level of support for the City and the region.

Business support grants

The government initiated funding to support businesses during this difficult time and business support grants have now been paid to 6,198 businesses in Sheffield, with the grants totalling over £74 million.

Current figures mean that 87% of applications received have now been paid. In order to process grants as quickly as possible the team have been working remotely to process them but have been advising it can take up to 10 days for the application to be processed. The Council has lobbied the government in relation to further grants for those businesses that were not eligible for the first business grants scheme. We are still awaiting further details of the additional scheme, including those who do not have a business rates liability.

The sectors that face immediate issues across the country as a result of COVID19 and the lockdown include non-food retail, accommodation, and leisure sectors. These three sectors alone make up 21.4% of Sheffield's workforce. There are direct knock on-implications for other business sectors including the Visitor Economy, Conferencing and Events all of which have ceased.

For many businesses the lockdown is impacting greatly on livelihoods, so to support businesses and community groups who are facing difficulties due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Sheffield Council have suspended rent arrears enforcement for three months for all non-residential Council tenants. A range of measures will be put in place to help those tenants affected.

Although we recognise that tenants in some sectors are benefiting from increased business activity at this time, the Council also recognises that most tenants who rent council-owned property for business purposes will be unable to pay rent during this period due to measures taken by the Government forcing them to close. Advice for businesses and those with employment related concerns can be found on the Council website:

<http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/coronavirus-business#relief>

The Council has also been supporting businesses through Business Sheffield. Business Sheffield is the business support programme of Sheffield City Council ordinarily providing growth support to larger businesses via a team of Growth Advisors (manufacturing and tech sector). Support for early stage, small and start-up businesses via one to one support and an extensive workshop programme and a large quarterly networking event.

During Covid 19 Business Sheffield has extended its existing Gateway Team (team handling phone calls from 3 to 19) and extended the number of Business Advisors providing specialist

business advise during this critical period for businesses to help them survive through the crisis. We have temporarily increased the team through temporary redeployment arrangements to increase capacity to take phone calls from businesses and refer to one to one advise with a Business Advisor during the same day wherever possible. The Business Sheffield inbox has also been inundated with businesses contacting us for support.

The service has been taking a high number of calls from businesses adversely affected by the closure of the retail, hospitality and leisure sector and the impact of social distancing and a reduction in demand for the vast majority of sectors. Many businesses need advice at this time and the Council is providing support and updating our own systems to increase our capacity to provide guidance to those who need it.

We have felt it critical to have advisors available on the phone to speak to businesses about their individual business circumstances and the Governments financial measures that they can access including job retention, business support grants, CBIL's, bounce back loans, self employment scheme as well as providing critical advice around managing cashflow through this critical period, providing advice around keeping going wherever possible following the Government guidance and more recently for some businesses getting back into production now that the lockdown has been eased for some industries. Advice has focussed on keeping operations open, pivoting business models and general survival.

Phone calls were at their busiest when the business support grant application was introduced at the end of March with up to 400 phone calls received each day.

The following statistics highlight the volume of calls and advise to businesses over the last two weeks to give an up to date picture of volumes and types of enquiries:

Average call information since 27th April 2020:

- 208 calls per day
- 20 call handlers per day
- 11 calls per handler
- Between 50-100 enquiries into the Business Sheffield inbox – 24 hour response period.

Business Advice via 1-2-1 phone calls from a Business Advisor - average figures since 27th April 2020

- 7 Business Advisors available daily
- 12 calls providing 1-2-1 support
- 50% of calls with businesses in connection with their business support grant application
- 50% providing business support to the business (around the themes described above)

Business Sheffield has delivered 3 webinars on the following:

- Business Under Lockdown – Pivoting Your Business
- Business under Lockdown – Planning to Survive
- Business under Lockdown – Building a business around software or an app

All have been well attended and will now inform a wider webinar programme which will be introduced over the next two months whilst we continue to offer critical one to one support to businesses over the phone or via zoom conference call.

Business Sheffield will move to the web-based Storm telephone system from Thursday, 14th May which will should be far superior to what has been a glitchy system which utilised a temporary "hunt group" solution . The temporary measure has resulted in some businesses making numerous attempts to get through to the Business Sheffield team which should be resolved from tomorrow.

Business Sheffield continues to work with partners across the Council and are working closely with colleagues in Health Protection where businesses can access specific support around getting back to work and back to operation following the Government guidance. Business Sheffield is exploring the possibility of handing over enquiries on the business support grants which are reliant on business rates eligibility and processing so it can concentrate on business survival and recovery advice. Alongside managing a discretionary grants pot for businesses that have not been able to access the business support grants but are paying fixed, property costs in relatively small premises or in the retail, leisure and hospitality sector and where their cashflow has been significantly affected by Covid-19. A Business Response Group has also been formed, a group made up of Sheffield's leading business networks who are working together to help address the issues businesses are facing now and in the future. The Council is a member and is currently running a business survey on behalf of the Business Response Group, to understand the issues facing businesses. The survey can be found here: <https://sheffieldnewsroom.co.uk/news/covid-business-survey/>

The Council has also been helping residents through Opportunity Sheffield. Since social distancing became further enforced on 19th March, Opportunity Sheffield started to receive contact from people who were self-employed, on zero hours contracts and desperate for work as theirs had dried up overnight in the wake of the virus. The team saw the opportunity to help these people by matching them to the surge in demand for 111 call handlers, care workers, domestic assistants, delivery drivers, assembly workers etc etc. The team conceived a way they could work together remotely to support these local people and since then the team have submitted 325 cvs for to 113 unique jobs with 86 employers. 51 have been offered employment and to date 49 of those started. The Opportunity Sheffield team have registered 388 new candidates since lockdown.

As well as the current advice, help and provision of grants the Council is also looking ahead and creating an economic plan for the future. This is something which was already being examined and will now include recovery post-COVID-19.

4. Delivering our core services

Council services have by and large been maintained with large numbers of staff successfully working from home using new technologies (see 'Workforce' below). At the present time only a small number of staff have been redeployed into new roles. Staff who are unable to work from home have been supplied with PPE and have been carrying out a range of incredibly important roles to keep Sheffield safe and functioning as near to normal as possible during this crisis. More detailed information about key services is below.

Housing & Neighbourhood Services

The service as a whole is making concerted efforts to support staff to work from home through the rapid provision of mobile devices, digital solutions that facilitate secure remote access to Council systems and secure video conferencing. Where services require additional staffing resources we have worked with staff, corporate partners and the Trade Unions to redeploy staff into critical response roles that directly support the communities we serve.

Neighbourhood Teams are prioritising work focused on minimising health & safety risks on estates and **ensuring that our most vulnerable customers and the large numbers of customers who are shielding have any unmet support needs identified.** In addition to this staff in our Safer Neighbourhoods Team are maintaining partnership working to ensure

community safety is maintained and that safeguarding concerns and reports of domestic abuse are responded to.

Our Private Housing Standards team is continuing its work to support those living in the private rented sector on a rota basis. Emergency remedial or prohibition notices continue to be issued for serious hazards and support continues to be provided to those at threat of illegal eviction. The team is also looking at the implications for private sector housing and regulations in light of estate agents and student letting businesses starting to open after lockdown.

With respect to our Homelessness, Rehousing, Housing Options and Housing Advice services; Choice Based Lettings have been suspended and our primary focus is on arranging direct lets for the most vulnerable households and those in need of emergency housing. We are currently looking at ways to safely restart Choice Based Lettings. Our homelessness and rehousing services have maintained a skeleton staff in the office with the majority of our usual work now being handled remotely over the telephone. **We have responded to the government instruction to accommodate all rough sleepers by using hotel and student accommodation to house anybody found to be at risk of sleeping rough.** This accommodation is staffed in person by our officers seven days a week and on call in the evenings.

The service remains steadfastly committed to ensuring that **no council tenant should lose their home due to rent arrears at this time.** Whilst our Income Management and Financial Inclusion Team is continuing its important work to minimise rent arrears and customers are reminded that rent continues to be due, we are also urging those whose accounts fall into arrears to contact us so that we can discuss what financial support options may be available to them. Essential repairs have continued throughout the crisis. As lockdown eases, new build, maintenance and refurbishment work will start to resume in line with Government, Public Health and Health & Safety Executive Guidance on agreed safe systems of work.

Learn Sheffield – supporting education and learning from home

A Weekly Home Learning Supplement (see appendix) has been produced by Learn Sheffield in partnership with the Sheffield Star.

The first edition went out on Thursday 7 May and the second addition will be published on 15th May. The supplement will be available with the newspaper and also on the Learn Sheffield website as a PDF for schools and parents to access. In addition to the access people have through buying the paper and the Learn Sheffield website, Learn Sheffield will be buying and distributing over 10,000 copies (across 119 destinations) through the school network and other partners to try to reach families with the most limited access to resources online.

They are working with VAS (Voluntary Action Sheffield) to identify volunteers to support the delivery and the Sheffield Star to secure sponsorship to cover the cost (they have secured enough pledges to cover May so far). Distribution to vulnerable families will be through a variety of routes, for example food banks. To help target distribution to the neediest families, schools were asked to complete a short audit.

Boosting safe active travel

Following the massive rise in cycling and walking during the Covid-19 lockdown, we have set out initial plans for introducing temporary changes to the city's roads to encourage active

travel. The measures will help to maximise the uptake of alternative travel methods seen during the pandemic, and is encouraging everyone to consistently incorporate daily exercise into their everyday lives going forward.

The temporary measures will focus on supporting the social distancing of pedestrians and cyclists in shared spaces, and will include the widening of footpaths, amending signal timings at crossings to reduce the wait time for pedestrians, social distancing markings at bus stops and the introduction of temporary cycle lanes.

Temporary footpath widening measures will start to be installed over the coming days in the following locations:

- Chesterfield Road – between Houghton Road and Asda/Iceland Service Road
- Rowlands Pharmacy – on Dykes Hall Road
- Lloyds Pharmacy – on Far Lane/Wadsley Lane
- Fulwood Road – on Glossop Rd to Nile St. Broomhill centre
- Charles Street and Union St – from above Q-Park
- Five Weirs Walk – the diversion currently in place will be widened where the main footway is inaccessible due to construction work

Other changes will include the introduction of a temporary cycle lane between Shalesmoor Roundabout and Corporation Street, whilst Devonshire St will be partly pedestrianised from Eldon St to Carver St.

As we move into new stages of lockdown, with more people potentially commuting to work and able to exercise more freely and frequently, the infrastructure will make sure people are able to cycle, walk and run around our city's streets safely.

Sheffield Parks and Countryside

In line with Government guidance, all Sheffield parks and green spaces remain open but with the following restrictions, intended to help prevent the spread of Covid-19 and encourage social distancing:

- Outdoor play and exercise facilities are closed until further notice, and gates to playgrounds remain locked
- All cafes remain closed in parks throughout Sheffield
- All parks community buildings are closed to the public, unless they are being used for key workers' childcare facilities
- Car parks at all sites across Sheffield are closed to encourage people to use parks near their homes and not travel to more distant parks
- All dog owners are being politely directed to keep dogs on leads and to clean up after their pets whilst out on their walks. All litter and dog bins are being emptied regularly.

Throughout Sheffield parks and green spaces, we have now added clear signage showing how to exercise social distancing. Alongside this, we are frequently using social media and the Council website to inform people of the restrictions in place.

We are asking that people do not travel unnecessarily from home to parks, woodlands and countryside. In addition we are asking people with a garden to use their own outdoor space as much as possible to allow others, without outdoor space, to use parks and green spaces safely for their daily exercise.

We restarted selective grass-mowing to assist with social distancing from April 20th.

Refuse and Recycling

Sheffield is one of the few Local Authorities which has been able to keep its waste recycling centres open during COVID-19.