

AGENDA ITEM

**REPORT TO HEALTH AND
WELLBEING BOARD**

30 SEPTEMBER 2020

REPORT OF CATALYST

COMMUNITY HUB UPDATE

SUMMARY

To update the Health and Well Being Board about the activities of the Community Hub.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board considers the report.

DETAIL

1. The Community Hub was established in March 2020, to enable vulnerable members of the public who were affected by COVID-19 to receive food supplies and other essential services, many of whom were shielding and unable to leave their homes. The hub was a partnership venture between Stockton Borough Council (SBC), Catalyst, and a number of voluntary sector organisations. The majority of the delivery in the first few months was carried out by SBC, with food supplies also being provided by Little Sprouts, BCT Aspire and the Moses Project, with Catalyst's involvement being around coordination and publicity.
2. From 17 August the hub delivery transferred entirely into Catalyst, with further activity around food supply being undertaken by Little Sprouts and the Moses Project.
3. The services provided by the hub have been:
 - Supply and delivery of food parcels
 - Ordering, collecting and delivering supermarket shopping
 - Collecting and delivering prescriptions
 - Looking after pets (walking dogs, essentially)
 - Emotional support
4. A food distribution centre was established in Stockton town centre, to receive food for the food parcels, and from which food parcel deliveries took place.

Delivery, 30 March – 14 August

5. In this time, SBC colleagues staffed a phone line and then delivered the services listed above, on a voluntary basis. The following bullets illustrate the extent of the service:
 - 3234 individual customers received help
 - 10,049 incoming calls were received
 - 3397 food parcels were delivered, 1257 of which were for shielding customers
 - 3024 prescriptions were delivered, 1847 of which were for shielding customers
 - 936 shopping requests were met, 637 of which were for shielding customers
6. Calls for emotional support were recorded and then passed to a suitable service-delivering organisation, such as MIND.
7. As the number of calls reduced during July, the following decisions were taken:
 - To transition delivery of the services to Catalyst, from 17 August
 - To close the food distribution centre from 30 August
 - For remaining food parcel delivery to be undertaken by Little Sprouts and The Moses Project

Community Hub delivery under Catalyst

8. Catalyst's delivery model is different to SBC, with the majority of the work being undertaken by 12 volunteers, including call-handling, and collecting and delivering shopping and prescriptions. The only paid member of staff is a Community Hub Manager, a role initially undertaken on a temporary basis by an existing Catalyst Colleague, and from 14 September by a new recruit, Lucy Owens.
9. From 17 August to 4 September, the following services were delivered:
 - 94 individual customers made requests during this period
 - 111 requests were received (the difference being because some customers made requests on more than one occasion)
 - 17 requests for food parcels, 13 of which were for people who declared themselves to be shielding
 - 64 requests for prescriptions, 63 of which were for people who declared themselves to be shielding
 - 26 requests for shopping, all of which were for people who declared themselves to be shielding
 - 2 request was from someone requiring emotional support, who were referred to relevant support organisations
 - 1 request was from someone requiring a dog to be walked.
10. Little Sprouts and the Moses Project continue to operate services during the pandemic, including the supply of food parcels. They have indicated that some of

their customers also require support to help them access other services, such as completing forms or using the internet as a service access channel.

Next steps

11. Clearly, the demand for Hub services has reduced significantly since the height of the pandemic. Catalyst works closely with SBC to monitor the number of new COVID infections in Stockton, and we will flag up any trends which indicate a rise in demand. We are always keen to receive new volunteers, and we will train them and ensure that they are safeguarded during these activities.

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