

**Southwark Community Hub Response Plan**

1. The community hub is currently seeing a significant decline in both the number of calls and emails that it receives. In addition, we have seen a significant decline in the need for case management and referrals including for food. We are currently reviewing this with a view to scaling down the council team to reflect the current workload. In doing this we are also considering potential to scale up in the event of any potential future spikes or local lockdowns. To enable this to happen we would implement the following plan.

**Coordination Arrangements**

2. The partners involved in the Community Hub work to date have learned much from the way the partners have worked together. This has relied on co-ordination and working together through the Steering Group and related working groups that are about co-ordinating practical work together. Strong and clear arrangements for co-ordination will be essential should there be a need to scale up the effort once more with good communication between the partners, quick access to decisions makers and a practical focus for this work.
3. Should there be a need to scale up support the following will be implemented:

<b>Coordination Arrangements</b>
Public health will provide regular updates on the infection rate to all key hub partners via the weekly multi agency steering group meetings and local hubs meetings.
Detailed briefings on any concerning rises in the infection rate, or likely local lockdown measures will be provided to these groups.
Plans to rescale up support will be coordinated through the steering group.
The council will work with Community Southwark to provide timely briefings for the wider voluntary and community sector, using Community Southwark's established networks.

**The Borough wide point of contact for referrals**

4. The council's contact centre has multi- skilled agents within it and so will retain staff with the community hub skillset as staffing scales up to meet the projected demand of the winter period. The council has the ability to quickly increase the number of agents available to answer calls or to reassign staff to the inbox in line with workload. For case management an agreement is in place with Residents services) to utilise the complex cases team who have previously worked on many of the complex cases within the hub but have recently been stood down due to reducing demand.

5. The process of developing and managing the hub means that these functions are able to operate much more efficiently than previously having developed a wide range of tools to support the wide range of enquiries that have been received. The introduction of airtable has simplified the referral process to the local neighbourhood hubs and partners have worked collaboratively to agree referral criteria and a triage process with the Voluntary & Community Sector.
6. Establishing quick channels of communication VCS and external partners have been critical to the operations of the hub, ensuring that residents can access the support that they require close to home. With central triage and assessment functions carried out at the centre through the single point of access, a simple and quick means of making outwards referrals and linking residents to neighbourhood food hubs or other local means of support was required.
7. Should there be a need to scale up support the following will be implemented:

<b>The Borough wide point of contact for referrals</b>
The council will continue to provide the phone, email and web-form via the Contact Centre throughout the pandemic.
Cross skilled agents will be retained within the council's contact centre, including those with the community hub skillset.
The ability is in place to quickly increase the number of agents available to answer calls or reassign staff to the inbox in line with workload.
Case Management – an agreement is in place with Residents Services to utilise the complex cases team if needed, they have previously worked on many of the complex cases within the hub but have currently been stood down.

## **Maintaining Data on Vulnerable People requiring support**

8. Effective use of data and intelligence has been critical to the response throughout the crisis. The new CRM system adopted by the council to manage the shielding lists has offered the capability to merge existing internal databases and lists in new ways. On top of this, the new referral systems with the VCS and health partners have offered quick interfaces that have not otherwise been in place. Taken together, this has led to sharing of information in smarter, more effective ways and offers a more rounded and real-time picture of vulnerabilities and needs across the borough.
9. Should there be a need to scale up support the following will be implemented:

<b>Data on vulnerable people requiring support</b>
The existing Microsoft/Hitachi CRM system will continue to be maintained to retain the contact details of those requiring support in the first lockdown. With regard to shielding these records continue to be made available to the authority by central

government for this purpose.

## Proactive welfare calls

10. In addition to receiving referrals a significant number of outbound wellbeing calls were made to all shielded residents and to wider groups of vulnerable residents. This was supplemented by efforts of partners to contact existing service users and share and rationalise lists of those in receipt of support where appropriate and safe to do so.

11. Should there be a need to scale up support the following will be implemented:

<b>Proactive Welfare Calls</b>
If appropriate partners will undertake proactive welfare calls of people known to require support during the first lockdown.
Work to be undertaken in readiness to identify how this can be coordinated between the council, primary care and VCS.

## Food delivery

12. Provision of food parcels has been one of the main focal points of the Community Hub, although by no means the limit of the offer (see below). Broadly, food parcels have been arranged through two means:

- a. Direct from the council - over 20,000 food parcels have been delivered by the council directly to residents. Southwark Building Services staff have sorted and delivered food packages to residents on the council delivery list. These packages have included non-food and non-perishable goods purchased wholesale, supplemented by two donated Fareshare deliveries per week (150 parcels) and fresh produce sourced from New Covent Garden and Borough Markets.
- b. Distributed through neighbourhood food hubs - food deliveries also worked through a network of neighbourhood food hubs, located across the borough: Pecan, Pembroke House, Albrighton Community Centre, Central Southwark Community Hub, St George the Martyr, Time and Talents, Paxton Green and Lewington.

13. These neighbourhood hubs all stepped forward to offer additional support through the crisis and have developed delivery and collection models to distribute food parcels to local residents. The council has provided funding, logistics and supply support to these hubs based on local needs and capacity. Individual hubs have also leveraged their own resources and external funding to grow and develop activity, often significantly. The neighbourhood hubs have also been bolstered considerably by the efforts of the local private sector, as businesses including Hubbub, Fooditude

and Bermondsey Employment Skills and Training have pivoted to provide access to equipment or cooked meals to supplement food parcels.

14. Should there be a need to scale up support the following will be implemented:

<b>Food Delivery</b>
Where people can afford food the Council will provide access to a range of supermarket options (priority online or telephone order/pay at door or voluntary support for shopping (over 50's).
Where the above is not appropriate, the council will in the first instance make referrals to the local hubs based on agreed triaging process for individual deliveries. Local hubs will use their own delivery service or Pedal Me.
Should demand exceed the capacity of local hubs, the council will resume direct deliveries.
If relevant council services (e.g. repairs) are able to stay open council deliveries will be Pedal Me.
If wider lockdown measures require the suspension of relevant council services council officers will resume direct deliveries.

### **Financial support for VCS partners**

15. Although the council has stepped forward with critical emergency funding, the wider community hub response has been a cooperative effort: VCS organisations have brought mothballed buildings into use for food distribution, church and informal groups have stepped forward with self-generated funds, local funders have combined funding pots to offer larger strategic grants to established organisations and smaller grants to grassroots outfits, social prescribers have joined the borough through new 5-year central funding streams, and local businesses and social enterprises have cooked meals and taken on the burden of deliveries.

16. However, should the effort need to be scaled up again there will need to be clear arrangements in place for providing financial support to partners who are dealing with referrals from the council.

17. Should there be a need to scale up support the following will be implemented:

<b>Financial support for VCS partners</b>
A clearly defined service level agreement will cover arrangements for costs associated with referrals from the council and operational support during a crisis.

## Support to ensure people can access medicine

18. The partners worked with the NHS, GP Federations and local pharmacies to support the delivery of prescriptions to shielded and vulnerable residents. Should there be further lockdowns then this service will be scaled up again.

19. Should there be a need to scale up support the following will be implemented:

### Access to medicines for vulnerable people

This will as before be provided through the NHS working with the local pharmacy service.

## A collective approach to re-scaling up volunteer support

20. A clear feature of the past 5 months has been the groundswell of residents stepping forward to offer time and resources to help in their local communities and the wider borough including through mutual-aid groups, faith groups and Tenants & Residents Associations.

21. Should there be a need to scale up support the following will be implemented:

### A collective approach to re-scaling up volunteer support

The partners will take a collective approach to volunteering by working through Community Southwark who will manage referrals of volunteers to the relevant VCS organisations.

## Collective calls for donations.

22. In the first phase of the response to the pandemic local and regional funders stepped forward to support the huge scale of community activity meeting the needs of vulnerable people impacted by Covid-19. Businesses and others also came forward with donations of food, other goods and services. Should further lockdowns take place then co-ordination of this activity will be essential.

23. Should there be a need to scale up support the following will be implemented:

### Collective calls for donations

Where there are calls for or offers of donations of food or other materials these will be co-ordinated through the Steering Group. Where there are offers of financial support these will be referred through the Southwark Community Response fund.