



# SUPPORT FOR VULNERABLE RESIDENTS

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

REPORT 37/20

18 MAY 2020

The purpose of this Report is to provide Members with the latest information about the Town Council's remarkable support system that is now available to the town's vulnerable residents.

## No. DETAILS

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### 1) BACKGROUND

- a) The current arrangements for supporting vulnerable local residents started in the early days of the lockdown, led by the Town Council's Community Development Officer Tony McCarthy, supported by Assistant Town Clerk Alison Killick and Administrator Morgan Williams.
  - b) The arrangements flourished thanks to the amazing number of the town's residents willing to offer their support as volunteers.
  - c) Tony McCarthy will attend this meeting to provide Members with further information and answer their questions.
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### 2) SUMMARY

- a) The scheme now has a total of 40 volunteers providing collection and delivery services for shopping and medications with another 17 providing regular telephone support for isolated vulnerable residents.
  - b) To date, over 460 collection and delivery journeys have been completed by these volunteers.
  - c) Most requests for support come through the Town Council's three help phone lines with a small number of additional requests coming via referrals from the Isle of Wight Council and Community Action IW.
  - d) The Town Council's application to the Isle of Wight Council's Community Emergency Shopping and Delivery Fund for a grant of £5,000 to underpin the programme was accepted and the funding swiftly provided.
  - e) That funding enables the Town Council to reimburse volunteers' travel costs.
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### 3) SHOPPING ARRANGEMENTS

- a) The Town Council's staff team have developed a system to prevent the need for direct personal contact between volunteer and resident.
  - b) Requests for shopping support arrive through the help lines, a volunteer is identified who then phones the resident to gather the shopping list; the volunteer does the shopping and pays for it then sends a copy of the receipt to Alison or Morgan and are reimbursed against the receipt; the resident is then invoiced for the amount involved.
  - c) To date, a total of 75 shopping collections have been completed with a total spend of £2,566 of which £1,486 has already been reclaimed.
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### 4) MEDICATION ARRANGEMENTS

- a) The need to collect medications has been the major need for volunteers to fulfil and that has required the development of new arrangements to deal with problems of accessing the Boots pharmacy counter.
  - b) A combination of increased demand, limited numbers able to be in the shop at any one time, the closure of the Shanklin Boots and the need to maintain 2-metre social distancing resulted in queues at one stage stretching back as far as St Catherine's Church.
  - c) Tony McCarthy was able to establish direct contact with the shop manager and agree arrangements for dealing with the situation.
  - d) That resulted in some of the volunteers taking responsibility for the management of the
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queuing arrangements on a daily basis that reduced queueing time from the hours of the initial phase to the manageable times now regularly experienced.

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**5) POST OFFICE**

- a) As Members are aware, the closure of the Post Office raised real concerns for local vulnerable residents needing banking and postal facilities and access to pension payments.
  - b) Work by Tony McCarthy and Councillor Jason Mack's offer to manage the queuing has enabled opening hours of 10am to 2pm three days a week.
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**6) SUSTAINABILITY**

The matter of how long the services will be needed at or near the current level is under consideration by the staff team as demands on three staff in particular have been considerable.

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