



Subject:	Belfast Community Response Closing Report
Date:	8 th September 2020
Reporting Officer:	Ryan Black, Director of Neighbourhood Services, CNS
Contact Officer:	Kelly Gilliland, Neighbourhood Services Manager (North), CNS

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of Main Issues
1.1	Council had produced two previous summary reports outlining the activity and achievements undertaken as a result of funding made available (via Council/DfC) to local community and voluntary groups as well as the development of Belfast City Council's Covid 19 Community Response Hub (food distribution, helpline, contact centre and area support).
1.2	Given that committees were not meeting at this time these previous reports were presented to Party Group Leaders before being shared with stakeholders inside and outside of the organisation.

1.3	Council officers have now produced a closing report which details all of the significant outputs and outcomes achieved by Council and its statutory and community and voluntary partners in terms of leading on the Covid 19 response efforts in Belfast during the 16 week period (Apr-Jul 2020).
1.4	The report itself is included as an Appendix and will be promoted and circulated widely internally & externally with our partners as a formal acknowledgement to all that was achieved collectively and how we intend to build on that going forward.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The committee is asked to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the content of the report.
3.0	Main report
3.1	<p>BCC Community Response Hub</p> <p>31 March 2020 – Department for Communities requested that each Council develops a local response hub. By the 8th April 2020, Belfast City Council’s helpline is live and the food distribution hub based within the Ulster Hall is making its first food parcel deliveries to Belfast residents. Staff from across Council were redeployed to work in the distribution hub, the contact centre and in the North, South, East and West area teams to link residents in with relevant and timely support services available close to them. And organisations such as SOS Bus and Red Cross to name but a few assisted us in delivering the food parcels.</p>
3.2	<p>VCSE Response and Council Funding to Support Local Efforts</p> <p>At the same time community and voluntary groups had already mobilised and were leading the local response efforts. Council was able to provide £120k emergency response funding to 9 strategic C&V partners at an early stage, followed by a further £635k a few weeks later which enabled these groups to expand their services and reach more and more residents in need of help and support. An additional £210k was awarded to 12 organisations providing support at a thematic level e.g. mental health, domestic violence, LGBT needs, etc.</p>
3.3	<p>Key Achievements during the 16-week Period (report itself goes into more detail)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 107,407 food parcels and hot meals were delivered to Belfast residents (50,533 via Council’s hub and 56,874 via funded VCSE partners).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9,770 calls were handled by the BCC Helpline/contact centre whilst local C&V Helplines handled a further 5,115 calls. • 9,320 deliveries or prescription pick-ups were made on behalf of residents. • 1,273 resilience packs were provided. <p>Recovery Phase</p> <p>3.4 As lockdown restrictions eased, Council and its statutory and VCSE partners shifted focus to recovery. A further £486k recovery funding has been allocated to the 9 C&V strategic partners to be spent between now and the end of March 2021.</p> <p>At the request of Councillors, officers have also developed a relatively simple and quick response ‘Summer Funding’ programme (currently live) whereby over 150 grassroots organisations have been awarded grants of up to £1,000 (£150k initially allocated) to enable them to take forward initiatives under the themes of; Children and Young People, Civic Pride, Preventing Isolation, Emotional Wellbeing and addressing Anti-Social Behaviour (taking account of government and council restrictions or guidance in relation to Covid 19 in terms of what they plan to deliver and with each applicant being assigned a Council officer to support them in the development and delivery of their project).</p> <p>Next Steps</p> <p>3.5 Over the coming months, Council officers will continue to work closely with stakeholders to develop citywide and local area recovery plans which will build on both the knowledge and learning, as well as the relationships and partnerships, that have developed or further developed as a result of the collective effort that went into developing and implementing the response to Covid 19 in Belfast.</p> <p>Financial & Resource Implications</p> <p>3.6 There are no financial or resource implications contained within this report.</p> <p>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</p> <p>3.7 There are no Equality or Good Relations Implications and no Rural Needs Assessment required for the recommendations outlined above.</p>
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached
	Appendix 1: Copy of Belfast Community Response Closing Report

