

Report to: Central Area Committee

Report of: Brinnington and Central Ward Councillors

Meeting of Thursday 20th August 2020

WARD FLEXIBILITY FUNDING

1. Purpose of the Report

To set out proposals for the allocation of Brinnington and Central Ward Flexibility Funding in 2020/21 to support the social and economic impact of Covid.

2. Context

The Covid pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on all residents of Stockport but those on the lowest income have been disproportionately affected. Lockdown, shielding and self-isolation have had a greater impact on the incomes of self-employed, those in insecure employment or zero hours contracts and those unable to work from home.

Unemployment in the ward has risen 55% to 1,435 since lockdown and there are currently 1163 children eligible for Free School Meals.

3. Current Position

Whilst Covid has disrupted much of the traditional support infrastructure within communities it has also mobilised a new wave of volunteers and community led activity. The small spaces occupied by both Penny Lane and Mottram Street Pantry could not operate in a Covid secure way, and many community groups and centres shut their doors. Remote and delivery offer emerged, bringing food to the doors of those in greatest need. Those experiencing food poverty have been helped in a number of ways including:

- Hot meal delivery schemes
- Stockport Homes Pantry delivery offer
- Foodbank parcels
- DfE vouchers for FSM children.
- Local mutual aid support

Going forward there is a need to ensure that where there is an ongoing need, activity mobilised as a direct response to Covid can continue. Where an offer needs to be redesigned to meet the challenges of living with Covid this can equally take place. Where gaps in the community offer remain, they can be filled.

This needs to be done balancing the immediate needs of the community with the future uncertainty that living with Covid presents and a recognition that further iterations of the community offer are likely to be required.

To test a local approach to this collaboratively a virtual partnership of front-line workers from Council, Schools, CCG, Stockport Homes, GMP etc. has been stood up in Lancashire Hill to work proactively with the newly formed mutual aid group. This will support improved local understanding as well as building relationships between services and between services and community to respond effectively and build resilience.

4. Proposed Allocations

Brinnington and Central Ward intend to invest their Ward Flexibility monies as set out below:

Investment	Amount
Developing the community offer operating from Heaton Norris Pavillion	£1k
Supporting the development of the Lancashire Hill Mutual Aid group	£1k
Working with the local Team around the Place to support further community capacity	£1k

It is also recognised that the resources available through ward flexibility funds will in isolation be insufficient to meet the needs of the community and working with local community partners, businesses and borough-wide organisations will complement the above.

5. Recommendations and Next Steps

Area Committee are asked to note the above allocations.

Detailed proposals will be worked up with partners.

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