

<p>Title of Report:</p> <p>NI Executive Support programmes: Warm, Well and Connected and the Volunteering programme Update</p>	<p>Officer Presenting: Director of Health & Community</p> <p>Author: Head of Community Development & Leisure</p>
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1 Purpose of Report/Recommendations

- 1.1 To update Members with further details on the Warm, Well and Connected programme, the Volunteering programme and the Meals and Wheels programme, which was approved by Members at Full Council in December 2020. (Appendix 1)

2 Background

- 2.1 Members will recall the verbal update provided by the Director of Health and Community to Members at Full Council in December 2020 (C457/20). Details were provided to Members on the Warm, Well and Connected programme, the Volunteering programme and the Meals and Wheels service. These programmes were delivered over the Christmas period providing much needed support to those in need within our communities.
- 2.2 It was imperative that the funding was released prior to Christmas to allow the Community and Voluntary sector to put appropriate response initiatives in place. Following approval at Full Council in December 2020, Service Level Agreements and Letters of Offer were issued to the Lead groups week beginning 21st December 2020, allowing them to draw down 50% of the funding allocation and provide cash flow to deliver the community response initiatives over the Christmas period. This report will provide Members with further details on the programmes outlined and the funding received from the Department for Communities for each of the programmes outlined.

3 Key Issues

- 3.1 The NI Executive has provided funding to DCSDC totalling £60,331.10 for the Warm, Well and Connected programme. The Department for Communities (DfC) outlined to Council that the Warm, Well and Connected programme was to be distributed to target areas of greatest deprivation within each Council area and

provided a list of the designated Neighbourhood Renewal Areas, and a small pocket of deprivation where funding was to be targeted. The areas outlined by the DfC were the five Neighbourhood Renewal (Strabane Town, Moor, Ballyarnett, Waterside and Foyleside) including a small pocket of deprivation in Strathfoyle which falls within the Faughan DEA.

- 3.2 DfC has also made resources available to the Rural Areas in relation to the Warm, Well and Connected programme through the Rural Support Networks. The Rural Area Partnership in Derry (RAPID) has been allocated £93,203 to deliver services across the Rural area in relation to this programme. DfC has also provided resources to the Healthy Living Centre(s).
- 3.3 Prior to Christmas, Officers had met with the Neighbourhood Renewal Partnerships to discuss the Warm, Well and Connected programme, who outlined there was an immediate need for financial resources to tackle the Fuel poverty that many people/families were experiencing. The approval at December's Health and Community Committee allowed for the release of 50% upfront payment of the Warm, Well & Connected funding to each of the five NR Partnership Boards. This has allowed the five NR partnership Boards to respond to the growing need of Fuel Poverty in our communities and provide much needed support via a Fuel Poverty Initiative in each of the 5 Urban DEAs.
- 3.4 Each of the Lead organisations for the Access to Food (Tranche One & Two) have Helpline Numbers in place for each of the 7 DEAs and Strabane Town. The Strabane Community Project has extended the service that they provide within Strabane town to the neighbouring Rural DEAs of Sperrin and Derg. The Waterside Local Community Growth Partnership (LCGPB) has extended the service that they provide to include the rural DEA of Faughan. It has also been recommended that the Waterside Neighbourhood Partnership is provided with the allocation in relation to the small pocket of deprivation in Strathfoyle as outlined by the DfC. Waterside Neighbourhood Partnership and RAPID Ltd will work with the Community groups in Strathfoyle to put in place a Fuel Poverty Initiative for the Strathfoyle area.
- 3.5 Council has also been awarded funding of £55,264.20 from the DfC for Volunteering. The two key objectives of the Volunteering programme are as follows;
 - (1) The reimbursement of volunteer expenses, based on actual incurred costs (such as mileage, refreshments of PPE), and
 - (2) Support for building the volunteer capacity e.g. recruitment, training, personal development, volunteering governance including safeguarding and Access NI Checks.

- 3.6 Members will note that during the verbal update provided on the Volunteering programme by the Director of Health and Community at Full Council in December 2020, it was recommended that an allocation would be provided to each of the Lead Organisations in the five Urban DEA who are leading on the Access to Food programme. This approval at Full Council has allowed for the release of 50% upfront funds to the Lead organisations week beginning 21st December 2020.
- 3.7 In relation to a Volunteering Initiative in the Rural DEAs of Sperrin, Derg and Faughan, officers have consulted with the Rural Area Partnership in Derry (RAPID) and the Volunteer Bureau in relation to implementation of these funds. The lack of paid staff in the Rural DEAs has highlighted the difficulty in relation to the administration of the Volunteering funding programme. This is particularly heightened with the level of administration that is involved in dealing with expenses claims etc.
- 3.8 Officers have met with the Volunteer Bureau and the Rural Area Partnership in Derry and it is recommended that the Volunteer Bureau work with the Local Growth Partnerships and RAPID to design and deliver an appropriate intervention across the three rural areas. This would ensure that there is a volunteering programme in the three Rural DEAs of Sperrin, Derg and Faughan without the administrative burden being placed on small rural groups.

4 Financial, Equality, Legal, HR, Improvement, Rural Needs and other Implications

- 4.1 DfC has provided the Letter of Variance for each of the above programmes to Councils on 10th December 2020. As this funding was earmarked for the implementation of emergency response initiatives to support families over the Christmas period the approval at Full Council in December 2020 allowed for the Service Level Agreements and Letters of Offer to be issued to the Lead groups week beginning 21st December 2020 including the issue of 50% upfront payment to the Lead groups. The short timescale available to develop and implement this funding has been challenging.
- 4.2 No match funding is required.
- 4.3 There are no further implications.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 That Members note the allocations to the Lead Organisations approved at Full Council on December 2020 in relation to Warm, Well and Connected programme;

Volunteering programme and Meals and Wheels programme as set out in Appendix 1.

Background Papers

Appendix 1: Additional NI Executive funding

Mins Refs: HC235/20; C457/20