

Meeting Date: 20th July 2021

Public/Private*: Public

Title: **Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder's Report –
Councillor Elizabeth Mallinson**

CUSTOMER SERVICES

Customer Services have been working from home since 1st April 2020. As reported in the April Portfolio Holder's Report, demand increased last year by 73% telephone contact and 81% for email contact. Whilst demand is slightly decreasing, mainly due to Business Grants drawing to a conclusion, demand is still significantly higher than normal service levels.

From 1st April 2021 to 22nd June we have handled:

- 40,257 Calls
- 7,931 Emails

We are continuing with Supervisor Call Backs, which allows us to process claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction for the less digitally aware. This appointment systems allows these residents to book an appointment and gather the appropriate evidence, before a Supervisor completes an online claim on their behalf, whilst the customer is on the line. Our approach has two distinct advantages:

- Claims are completed accurately first time as it is a guided process, avoiding delays in gathering additional evidence if a form is completed incorrectly
- Once submitted, the claim goes directly for assessment. There is no delay for postage or the additional administration in entering the claim onto our assessment systems

Throughout the pandemic, we have completed 94 call back appointments.

DOMESTIC ABUSE ACT 2021

On 29th April 2021, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 was enacted and new duties on Carlisle City Council came into force. The Act introduced a new category of priority need which effectively removes the 'vulnerability' test for those who are homeless as a result of being

a victim of / or at risk of domestic abuse; requiring the Council to secure suitable accommodation for occupation for the applicant together with any person who may be reasonably expected to reside with them as a member of the family.

A Domestic Abuse Local Strategic Partnership Board is already established, which reports to Safer Cumbria, and will provide advice in performing certain specified functions including: to assess the need for support for all victims of domestic abuse and their children within safe accommodation and prepare and publish strategy based on the needs assessment; deciding what support services are required and commissioning these accordingly. The Homeless Prevention and Accommodation Services Manager has ensured the draft homelessness prevention priorities contained within the strategy for 2021 - 2026 are aligned with local and national Domestic Abuse strategies where relevant and is represented on the Local Partnership Board.

HEALTHY CITY TEAM

Walking for Health

The Health Walks Programme has restarted with eight walks scheduled over the summer. The first walks were held on the 23rd June at Hammonds Pond with 19 people joining the walk in the morning and 13 in the afternoon. To ensure that the walks are COVID secure places on each walk need to be pre-booked and places are limited to 30 people on each walk, in line with Government and Ramblers' guidance.

Carlisle Holidays and Activity Partnership (CHAP)

The Communities and Participation Officer within the Healthy City Team has taken on the interim chair of the CHAP group. Through the CHAP Carlisle City Council are supporting local community groups and third sector organisations to develop a coordinated and strategic approach to holiday provision across the City and District, both for summer 2021 and in the longer term. The group is currently focussing on school holiday provision during the upcoming summer holidays and will produce a brochure of summer activities to be circulated to all schools in the Carlisle and District area.

Holiday Activity Fund

The City Council is supporting the Carlisle Holiday Activity Fund (HAF) (for summer activities for children and young people within the City and District during the summer of 2021) through attendance on the steering group and decision panel meetings. This funding is being coordinated by Cumbria County Council and has been made available to every local authority in England to coordinate free holiday provision, including healthy food and enriching activities. The programme will cover the Summer and Christmas holidays in 2021, however the initial focus is for summer 2021. The HAF is targeted at anyone of school age who is eligible for free school meals or who is classed as vulnerable and will enable these children and young people to access free activities during the school holidays.

Play Areas and Active Spaces Hammonds Pond. A full refurbishment of the infants (0-6 years old) play facilities has been completed. The juniors play area (6+ years old) refurbishment is starting in July. The total investment of £115,000 was fully funded from S106 contributions from a nearby development.

A partial upgrade to the play facilities at Hunters Crescent, Garlands, was completed in June. S106 funding was used to replace several end of life items of play equipment and completely resurface the whole site with new wet pour safer surfacing.

Work to construct a new tarmac cycling “Pump Track” at Dale End Field, Harraby, will be completed in early July. A pump track is similar to a conventional BMX track but physically smaller and suitable for younger users and beginners. The track is being funded by a grant from Cumbria Waste Management Environment Trust raised by Carlisle South Community Association.

Food Carlisle

A successful Plant, Food and Wellbeing Fair was held in Bitts Park last month. There was something for everyone at the event, regardless of their income or background. There was the offer of free fruit plus free pizza which was cooked on site. A variety of wellbeing and health information was available alongside gardening advice from local experts.

Community Centres

From July onwards various Community Centres will be having open days to celebrate the re-opening of the Centres and to promote the services they provide:

- Morton – Sunday, July 25th
- Harraby – Friday, August 27th
- Brampton – Sunday, August 29th
- Longtown – Sunday, September 11th

CARLISLE COMMUNITY RESILIENCE GROUP

The Carlisle Community Resilience Group and 4 subgroups continue to meet to support resilience, recovery, problem solving, and in ensuring communication between agencies. We are grateful to our partners for their ongoing support, commitment and work over the past 16 months.

WHO CARLISLE HEALTH FORUM

WHO Carlisle Health Forum and partners continue to meet despite the ongoing pandemic.

The last meetings focused on the following areas:

- An update on the current situation – including key Covid Public Health, Community and the latest data updates (and the impact in Carlisle)
- Healthy Aging
- Health Impact Assessment (St Cuthbert’s Garden Village)

- Healthy Weight – a paper was shared around the current provision and position of the healthy weight agenda with support from partners
- Space to talk
- Online Carlisle Health Mela
- Sharing of the latest guidance, funding and policy information with Partners

ARMED FORCES WEEK

A Flag-Raising Ceremony on Monday 21st June 2021 and Flag Lowering Ceremony on Saturday 26th June 2021 was held in front of the Old Town Hall, to mark Armed Forces Week at which The Mayor presented RAF Spadeadam with a Citation of Appreciation.

Armed Forces Covenant Partnership

The Partnership met via Teams on 29th June where an update on the Carlisle and Eden Armed Forces Link Project was provided by Cumbria CVS. Excellent contacts have been made and networking has already taken place. The online veteran's hub call continues to take place weekly. The City Council continue to support this project.

An update on the Council's activities including working towards the Gold Award under the Ministry of Defence Employer Recognition Scheme, 'Space to Talk', RAF Spadeadam receiving the Citation of Appreciation during Armed Forces Week which the City supported the various stalls show casing the Armed Forces on 26th June in city centre.

CONNECTING HEALTH COMMUNITIES 2021-2022

An Expression of Interest bid was submitted to the Connecting Health Communities 2021 - 2022 programme for an 18-month facilitation support package –

- To enable cross-sector partnerships to address health inequalities in Integrated Care Systems and Primary Care Networks. If successful the focus will be to build on the priority areas of need which have come from resilience work, WHO and older people discussions

CUMBRIA Local Resilience (LRF) Funding Pilot Expression of Interest (EOI) CARLISLE AND EDEN

Carlisle City Council have supported Cumbria CVS to submit a EOI to the Local Resilience Funding pilot. Building on previous local community response work, and the learning that has come from the community groups involved in this work, it has been highlighted that there is a need to look again at coordination between groups, and a collective local approach to regular and long term planning, prioritising and being prepared for future shocks. The project aims are the development of a clear, connected, community centered network of organizations who are resourced, prepared and practiced in preparation for future emergency responses across Carlisle and Eden District.

A Community Coordinator role will put in place a framework for community groups, Carlisle and Eden Resilience Groups, Carlisle Partnership, Cumbria CVS and Local Authorities to

continue to work together across the District. The project will also identify and support meeting the needs for any additional resources. For example, community wardens, future training, and will work with partners to ensure these are in place if needed.

DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT UPDATE

In 2020/21 Carlisle City Council delivered a total of 403 home improvements through the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) with a total spend of £1.9 m. Housing and Pollution delivered 152 mandatory grants with stairlifts, level access showers and building works being the most common works. Homelife delivered 251 discretionary grants with heating improvements, electrical improvement and house clearances being the most common works approved.

Disabled Adaptation Trusted Assessor Update

The City Council's Disabled Adaptation Trusted Assessor role continues to develop and has far exceeded expectations. The Officer in the post has spent the last 12 months working across multiple agencies to promote the service offer available for the most vulnerable members of our community, they have been able to carry out most of the assessment required for any stairlift adaptations, these would previously have been undertaken by Adult Social Care. From April 2020 to March 2021, 37 stairlifts needing assessments were completed and the adaptation installed. From July 2021 the Trusted Assessor will be able to start to carry out assessments for those who have single bathing needs in their home, we haven't been able to include this in our offer previously as vital training was delayed due to the ongoing impact of Covid on some agencies who carry out face to face health professional training. Level Access shower adaptations, which follow the needs assessment, account for around 60% of the disabled adaptation undertaken by the team. The post, by streamlining the assessment process, is being very successful in speeding up the delivery of essential works.

Hospital Discharge Grants

Our Homelife Liaison Officer has been working to promote the non-means-tested Hospital Discharge Grants with various health teams to help facilitate quicker hospital discharges. As a result, the number of referrals are increasing, running at about two referrals a day for hospital discharge grants, including for measures such as supply and fit of key-safes, deep-cleans and heating repairs. The Homelife Liaison Officer is able to offer a follow up home visit once patients are discharged. As well as checking whether people require our Discretionary Housing Grants to help with safety, improving health and keeping independent we also carry out holistic home assessments, including assessing for gas safety checks, boiler services, draught-proofing and energy advice and whether a referral for a DFG is required.