

Council launches dedicated support to those most in need of help with self-isolation

An emergency response for people living in west Cheshire has been launched to support those vulnerable groups at higher risk from serious complications as a result of COVID 19 infection.

The government is now advising people with the most serious underlying conditions to remain in strict isolation, to protect themselves and the NHS. Councils across the country have now established local hubs, to support people to access food, medical supplies and social support. This has been achieved by co-ordinating work between front-line council and NHS staff, partner agencies, local and national businesses and volunteers. Over 1500 people have responded to Cheshire West and Chester's call for a community response, to help ensure that physical distancing doesn't need to mean social isolation.

People in the most vulnerable groups, based on their medical condition, are being contacted by the government, and referred onto help from their local council if they can't meet their needs with the help of friends and families. The first packages of support have now been received.

A wider group of local people may also need support to protect themselves from the virus. Cheshire West and Chester Council have therefore launched a dedicated helpline 0300 123 7031 which will run 7 days a week from 8am to 7pm. The helpline will provide advice and support, and where necessary make arrangements for food, medicines and social contact. You can also email enquiries@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Louise Gittins, Leader of the Council said, "Whilst we understand that everyone now faces an enormous challenge from the unprecedented limitations put on our daily life by the Coronavirus outbreak, we need to focus our resources on supporting those members of our community who are vulnerable to serious medical complications as a result of infection from COVID 19. We've had an inspiring reaction from individuals and businesses who want to help at this time of crisis. Our co-ordinated community response has already begun to 'shield' those of our residents who are most at risk,

and we stand in solidarity and support for our most vulnerable residents at this challenging time.”

The Council has set up a Community Fund of £250,000 to help local causes as west Cheshire aims to fight COVID-19 together. This Community Fund will help new community initiatives when they are setting up, as well as those more established groups that will continue to provide valuable services during the fight against COVID-19.

More local information on ‘Coping at home with Coronavirus’ can be found at www.livewell.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk.

The latest government advice on staying at home can be found here : <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others>