



Community & Children's Services Committee

Date: FRIDAY, 22 MAY 2020

Time: 11.30 am

Venue: VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING (ACCESSIBLE REMOTELY)

Members:

Randall Anderson (Chairman)
Ruby Sayed (Deputy Chairman)
George Abrahams
Munsur Ali
Rehana Ameer
Matthew Bell
Peter Bennett
Mary Durcan
Helen Fentimen
John Fletcher
Marianne Fredericks
Alderman John Garbutt
Alderman Prem Goyal
Alderman David Graves
Caroline Haines
Deputy the Revd Stephen Haines
Graeme Harrower

Angus Knowles-Cutler
Natasha Maria Cabrera Lloyd-Owen
Deputy Catherine McGuinness
Benjamin Murphy
Deputy Joyce Nash
Barbara Newman
Dhruv Patel
Susan Pearson
William Pimlott
Henrika Priest
Jason Pritchard
James de Sausmarez
Deputy Philip Woodhouse

Co-opted Members:

Laura Jørgensen
Matt Piper

Enquiries: Julie Mayer tel. no. 020 7332 1410
julie.mayer@cityoflondon.gov.uk

This meeting can be viewed on the following link:
https://youtu.be/P_fivadahgE

John Barradell
Town Clerk

AGENDA

Part 1 - Public Reports

1. **APOLOGIES**
2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**
3. **MINUTES**
To agree the minutes of the previous Committee meeting.

For Decision
(Pages 1 - 20)
4. **COVID- 19: UPDATES FROM THE VARIOUS SERVICE MANAGERS**
Director of Community and Children's Services to be heard.

For Discussion
5. **COVID-19: TESTING AND CONTACT TRACING**
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

For Decision
(Pages 21 - 26)
6. **INTERNET ACCESS**
Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

For Decision
(Pages 27 - 34)
7. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
8. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**
9. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**
MOTION - That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

For Decision

Part 2 - Non-Public Reports

10. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**
To agree the non-public minutes of the previous Committee meeting.

For Decision
(Pages 35 - 38)

**11. INSTALLATION OF SPRINKLERS IN SOCIAL HOUSING TOWER BLOCKS:
GATEWAY 1-4: ISSUE REPORT**

Report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

For Decision
(Pages 39 - 52)

12. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

**13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND
WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE
PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 3

COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE Friday, 24 April 2020

Minutes of the Virtual Meeting which could be viewed
on You Tube at 11.30 am

Present

Members:

Randall Anderson (Chairman)	Laura Jørgensen - Co-optee
Ruby Sayed (Deputy Chairman)	Angus Knowles-Cutler
George Abrahams	Natasha Maria Cabrera Lloyd-Owen
Munsur Ali	Deputy Catherine McGuinness
Rehana Ameer	Benjamin Murphy
Matthew Bell	Deputy Joyce Nash
Peter Bennett	Barbara Newman
Mary Durcan	Dhruv Patel
Helen Fentimen	Susan Pearson
John Fletcher	William Pimlott
Marianne Fredericks	Matt Piper - Co-optee
Alderman Prem Goyal	Henrika Priest
Alderman David Graves	Jason Pritchard
Caroline Haines	James de Sausmarez
Deputy the Revd Stephen Haines	
Graeme Harrower	

Officers:

Andrew Carter	- Director of Community and Children's Services
Carol Boswarthack	- Community and Children's Services Department
Anne Bamford	- Community and Children's Services Department
Gerald Mehrtens	- Community and Children's Services Department
Paul Murtagh	- Community and Children's Services Department
Chris Pelham	- Community and Children's Services Department
Simon Cribbens	- Community and Children's Services Department
Jason Hayes	- Community and Children's Services Department
Andy Liggins	- Public Health Consultant
Mark Jarvis	- Chamberlain's Department
Michael Harrington	- Chamberlain's Department (Procurement)
Christopher Bell	- Chamberlain's Department (Commercial Director)
Chandni Tanna	- Town Clerks (Communications Department)
Angela Roach	- Assistant Town Clerk
Julie Mayer	- Town Clerks
Lorraine Brook	- Town Clerks
Mark Lowman	- City Surveyors

In attendance

Jeremy Mayhew	Director of Finance
---------------	---------------------

At the start of the meeting, the Chairman welcomed Members and those watching the first live broadcast of a City of London Corporation Committee Meeting. The Chairman thanked residents and volunteers in the community for their contributions during the COVID-19 crisis. The Committee also congratulated the Director and officers of the Community and Children's Services Department on their recent success in achieving an Outstanding Ofsted Inspection rating for the Children's Social Care Service.

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Alderman John Garbutt and Philip Woodhouse.

2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations. Susan Pearson reminded the Committee that, as a resident of Golden Lane Estate, she was able to pose questions on the COLPAI Development (at Agenda Item 14) but not take a vote.

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that – the minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2020 be approved.

4. **COVID RESPONSE**

The Director of Community and Children's Services invited the Department's Service Managers to provide updates on Homelessness, Adults and Children's Services, Housing Services, Education, the Library Service and Public Health.

The Director opened the presentation by advising Members that the COVID-19 website was up and running; providing information on areas such as benefits, waste management, funerals etc. The Director thanked Members for their suggestions and contributions; particularly noting the Portsoken mailout to local residents and to Marianne Fredericks for the posters on ward notice boards.

Additionally, City Resident has been distributed and a newsletter created that residents can sign up for. As part of triage processes for those 'shielded'; the department are seeking to assess anyone within the group without internet access. The Lord Mayor and Chairman of Policy and Resources have written a letter to all residents and the C&CS Chairman has sent an open letter thanking all volunteers. A letter and advice in relation to 'Ramadan at Home' is on the website and the Director thanked Munsur Ali for his input. A mail-out entitled 'At Home' has gone to all housing tenants.

Members thanked officers for their presentations and asked if their notes could be provided after the meeting.

In response to questions, the following points were noted:

Comms and residents without Internet

As this is a rapidly changing environment, written communications quickly go out of date. The Director welcomed discussions with Members outside of the meeting as to how we might keep pace.

Out of Borough Estates/Shielding

Those living in the City Corporation's Out-of-City Estates and who have been asked to shield will be contacted by their local authority who will assess their need for support. City Corporation Housing Managers are also contacting residents they know are vulnerable to check on their wellbeing, and if necessary, put them in touch with relevant support services.

Redeployment

Community and Children's Services were required to fill specialist, critical roles, which is difficult from a generic redeployment register. Managers were sourcing additional capacity from specialist agencies. Furthermore, the Team were looking to engage final year social work students as assistant social workers. Some library staff with relevant experience and skills have assisted with contacting NHS Shielded and other vulnerable groups.

Capital Programme

Whilst some aspects of the capital programme had slowed, the windows programme was proceeding, with full resident engagement. The Assistant Director, Barbican and Property Services had been meeting twice weekly with contractors and architects. The team were looking to appoint consultants to prepare for forthcoming planning applications. Members noted that the overall impact would depend on how quickly we came out of lockdown.

Public Health

Members noted that the National Website stated 13 deaths in London (and not 5) as this had included deaths at St Barts Hospital of non-City residents.

The City of London Corporation's Public Health Consultant was due to meet with Public Health England and the Chief Medical officer, directly after this meeting, in respect of a London wide contract tracing strategy. Members felt that, as part of any future 'opening up plan', and to give confidence to workers and residents, it was very important to get testing up and running as soon as possible. The PH Consultant agreed to raise this at the forthcoming meeting with PHE and the CMO. Members were asked to be mindful of the fact that, generally, anyone with symptoms, self-isolating or shielding were not coming into the City and urged caution against being out of step with the government's response in relation to Walk-in testing sites.

Food Banks

Members were very supportive of the food distribution and voucher schemes and wanted to give thanks to all City volunteers. Officers advised that food distribution /banks were self-organising and, therefore, the City Corporation is only aware of those residents it had referred following contact with the resident

and not those going directly to the food banks. The use of food vouchers provides an additional response to hardship. They can be issued by City Advice service and are not given directly to the food banks. The Director explained that the longer-term aim was for residents to return to self-sufficiency and other forms of help, but in the interim there was a need for support during the crisis. The Department would continue to work with established food banks in respect of supporting activity and procedures on an interim or longer-term basis.

Education

In respect of the potential of challenge around GCSE and A-Level results, an appeals process will be in place, but appeals are likely to be able to be made only on process not on the professional decisions made by the teachers.

Homelessness

Members were pleased at the provisions being offered for the homeless and noted that the Youth Hostel provision (for 12 weeks) was in addition to that provided by the City Travelodge. Furthermore, the GLA had sourced a number of hotel places in London. The City team have continued to work with Hackney and other providers to secure accommodation as required. Moving forward, work is underway regionally to ensure a fair distribution of accommodation pathways are available to rough sleepers in accommodation. Members noted that a Local Task Group on the Exit Strategy had been established, aiming to keep people off the streets post Covid19.

Concerns were expressed about homeless/rough sleeping individuals residing at the Travelodge. Allegedly, they had been leaving the hotel, going to shops, begging and thereby potentially intimidating members of the public. Officers advised that support services were being offered through a number of organisations across the City. Additionally, a Task Action Group was meeting weekly to address a range of issues; including consideration of those not practicing social distancing. There were currently 6 outreach shifts a week; checking on the welfare of rough sleepers and their needs. Mental health, drug and alcohol support workers continued to reach out to people on the streets.

BAME Communities

Members raised concern re: the potential disproportionality of BAME communities in terms of COVID 19 deaths and hospitalisations. Officer advised that this was being explored with partners and that we are currently in the 'explore and understand' phase. Officers would be happy to discuss with Members how this might be shaped.

COLPAI

Whilst concerns about disturbance from the site was understandable, providing the contractor is able to operate within government and PHE guidelines, work can continue. Officers are fully aware of the concerns of Members and residents and are monitoring compliance very closely. CCTV has been installed to assist this and officers are poised to intervene if the terms of government and PHE guidance are not adhered to. Members might recall that this was the case in March, which resulted in the contractor stopping work for several days whilst it addressed the concerns raised. NB. Notwithstanding this, residents and other

partners can also assist by continuing to report non-compliance and other issues to the dedicated email address: info@colpai-project.co.uk

5. STRATEGY TO ENHANCE ENGAGEMENT WITH SUPPLIERS IN THE HOUSING CATEGORY TO YIELD MORE BIDDER RESPONSES

Members considered a report of the Chamberlain in respect of poor bidder responses for some projects. In response to a resolution from DCCS Committee on this matter, the Procurement Sub Committee approved a recommendation to set up a bespoke Housing Working Group, which has met bi-monthly for the past year. Members noted that the Housing Working Group, its action log and this report now provided a clear way forward. The report before Members therefore proposed that the Housing Working Group be closed, and the actions monitored regularly by the Construction Category Board.

RESOLVED, that:

1. The recommended strategy proposed by the Working Group, on behalf of the Procurement Sub-Committee, be approved.
2. The disbandment of the Housing Working Group be noted.

6. YORK WAY ESTATE, LONDON N7, COMMUNAL HEATING REPLACEMENT – GATEWAY 5 – ISSUES REPORT

Members considered a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services in respect of communal heating replacement at York Way Estate. In response to a question, the Assistant Director advised that the City Corporation was in discussions with Cadent Gas to ensure that any future plans Cadent has to remove the gas supply from our buildings are properly discussed, developed and implemented with the City Corporation to prevent a recurrence of this situation.

RESOLVED, that:

1. The contents of this report be noted;
2. An additional budget of £40,000 be approved, from the Housing Revenue Account, for connecting eight flats to the new communal heating system at the York Way Estate.
3. A further budget of £22,500 be approved, from the Housing Revenue Account, for temporary heating to be provided at the eight flats due to the existing gas supply being disconnected.
4. That approval be given for TSG to undertake the works outlined at 2 and 3 above;
5. The revised project budget of £3,150,490 (excluding risk) be noted;
6. The total estimated cost of the project at £3,150,490 (excluding risk) be noted.
7. Option 1, to supply temporary electric boilers and then connect the new communal heating system to the eight previously converted flats at Kinfold House, be approved.

7. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

In response to a question, Members noted that work was ongoing to make the webpage links to the You Tube feed for virtual Committee Meetings as easy to navigate as possible.

8. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

There were no items.

9. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED, That - under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

Items No	Para No
10 – 16	3

10. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that – the minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2020 be approved.

11. **HOUSING DELIVERY PROGRAMME - FINANCE UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

12. **SUMNER BUILDINGS SUMNER BUILDINGS – ISSUE REPORT – GATEWAY 3**

The Committee considered and approved a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

13. **YORK WAY ESTATE PROVISION OF SOCIAL HOUSING – GATEWAY 3 – OUTLINE OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

The Committee considered and approved a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

14. **CITY OF LONDON PRIMARY ACADEMY ISLINGTON (COLPAI) - GATEWAY 5 – ISSUE REPORT**

The Committee considered and approved a report of the City Surveyor

15. **HOLLOWAY ESTATE, ISLINGTON ARTS FACTORY (IAF)**

The Committee considered and approved a report of the Director of Community and Children's Services.

16. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

One question was asked whilst the public were excluded.

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED

There were no items.

The meeting ended at 13:50pm

Chairman

**Contact Officer: Julie Mayer tel. no. 020 7332 1410
julie.mayer@cityoflondon.gov.uk**

APPENDIX:

Notes from COVID Response Session at Item (4) above.

COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE
24 APRIL 2020 – SERVICE UPDATES IN RESPECT OF COVID-19

Support for vulnerable residents – Simon Cribbens

1. Priority has been to identify and contact those who are most vulnerable or at risk to ensure they have adequate support.
2. top priority has been those identified by government as **shielded** (very vulnerable to c-19).
3. We have been alerted to these residents by the health service in three tranches – most recently a further 45 people on Wednesday of this week - bringing the total to 154.
4. WE are contacting every shielded person – to offer assistance. Until the recent addition we'd managed to make contact or account for all but one.
5. Beyond the shielded, and those we know through adult and children social care services, we are contacting everyone who is registered for Telecare services (as indicator of possible vulnerability).
6. and our housing management teams on the Barbican, Golden Lane and Middlesex Street estates (and estates outside of the City) have contacted those did not include the groups I've mentioned, but who they identify as vulnerable.
7. Guinness Trust is also contacting vulnerable residents on Mansell Street – many of whom we have already contacted because they fall into the categories I've mentioned.
8. Finally – we have spoken to all those who contacted us or have been referred to us through our dedicated webform, email address or telephone number that we've been publicising.

Need

1. There is an excellent network of family, friend, neighbour and volunteer support. Where there is need, we are putting them in touch with relevant services
2. Therefore, our experience has been that very few people have wanted or needed help from us: – of 108 shielded 12 asked for some kind of help. Shopping, social contact, advice.
3. Across all we've contacted – only one person needed emergency food
4. Overwhelming the response is gratitude for contact and for having a number people can contact if needs change.
5. We have invested in additional support to ensure we can respond to changing needs or demand – including financial and hardship:
 - a. Increased home care capacity
 - b. £25k in emergency support scheme
 - c. Redeployed staff to provide social contact
 - d. Invested in food vouchers – that City Advice can issue to provide emergency help

- e. We have also approved grant in support of foodbank that's developed in the city
- f. Practical support through staff and partners.

Adult and Children Social Care – Chris Pelham

Staff levels across Adult and Children Social Care have remained good throughout the Covid 19 crisis. Across both service areas , we have recruited 2 Student Social Workers as unqualified Social Workers on 3-month contracts to help build capacity during this period.

Skeleton staffing levels from both areas are working from the Guildhall 3 days a week to support collection and distribution of PPE as well being able to respond to any emergencies.

Across both areas, contact has been made with all vulnerable people who have an allocated Social Worker. This contact will be a mixture of face to face ; virtual contact using different social media platforms and phone calls. Any direct visits require risk assessments undertaken and if necessary, in accordance with PHE guidance, PPE will be used.

Adult Social Care

We have 85 service users with an allocated social worker. All cases have been risk assessed to inform the level of contact required during this crisis. Contact has been made with all allocated cases and or family members where required.

We have 22 City residents who are living in residential care homes outside of the City . We have risk assessed all in respect of their wellbeing and safety. We carry out reviews on all cases remotely and will increase the number of reviews during this period depending on presenting circumstances , if required. Our commissioning team also link with the home Local Authority Areas where the homes are to ensure we are aware if there are any concerns emerging which might impact on the residents.

We have had to increase capacity in the service to develop and deliver a Discharge To Assess model to support new discharge arrangements under the Coronavirus 2020 legislation. This allows for the discharge of patients from hospital within 2/3 hours of being medically signed off, to be discharged back into the community. Our model operates 7 days a week , 12 hours a day.

In order to deliver this scaled up model we have recruited an additional Occupational Therapist; procured a small number of hotel beds just outside of the City to accommodate any need for intermediate care and; we have also increased our domiciliary care provision by 10% to support potential need for home care support. To date the use of the beds has been low but this supply will remain during this crisis.

Children's Social Care and support for vulnerable children

There are currently 48 City of London children and young people on our Covid 19 'vulnerable list' that we are supporting in various ways. This includes a very small number of Child Protection Plans, 24 Children in Need cases, 25 Children in Care and 33 Care Leavers .

The Social Workers are in regular contact with all children via home visits and virtual visits using Face Time/ WhatsApp etc., as well as telephone calls. All children in care and Care Leavers continue to have their Care and Pathway Plans independently reviewed and for care leavers we have included additional mid-way reviews to ensure they have the right support at this time.

All children are connected to the Participation service who continue to provide virtual support for the Children in Care Council

The majority of children are engaged in learning , either by going direct to school or through the on line resources that are provided by the schools and the virtual school. Where necessary equipment has been purchased to support learning capacity.

We also have 19 children with an Education, Health and Care Plans. We have received assessments from all the schools these pupils attend. A small number of these children are attending school. As a minimum, we are in weekly contact with all children in this cohort , and in some instances daily contact. All children have access to laptops / WiFi to access relevant resources.

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping – Chris Pelham/Will Norman

The following is an update on activity regarding rough sleeping and builds on the previous update circulated to the Members of the sub-committee.

1. Since 1/3/20 we have supported 72 people were assisted into accommodation- the following is split into 2 groups- those with connections to City and those without.
2. We have assessed that 33/72 have connections to the City- 16 have long term connections and 17 have more recent connections but it is reasonable to expect we will have a duty to support them in their accommodation pathway in the future.
3. 14/33 have No Recourse to Public Funds – this will be placing additional capacity / resource burdens on us as we work to support this group- will need a potential case management approach given potential interface with other agencies / issues re settled status etc.
4. We have assessed that 27/33 have supported living needs with a range of issues linked to substance misuse , mental health etc...that would be met via hostel type accommodation with keyworker and specialist services type support .
5. The remaining 39/72 don't have any obvious connections based on historical information/ CHAIN database etc...they were all placed in the

accommodation from within the City of London area. This would be the new flow of rough sleepers.

6. The above have been placed in mixture of ours and GLA accommodation.

The current cohort on the streets;

There were 27 people counted on the streets in the audit last week. There will be fortnightly counts to help get a consistent picture of the numbers. There is a lot of movement of people coming in and out of the City and this fortnightly audit feels the most useful way to get a consistent reflection on numbers. The team are working on building picture of these 27 in terms of who we would assess as likely to come into accommodation and definitely not likely.

Support Services for Rough Sleepers still on the streets;

1. Weekly tasking meetings between Outreach, CoLP, Mental Health Services and Substance Misuse services are used to target wrap around support and intervention for rough sleepers.
2. There are currently 6 outreach shifts scheduled per week. Every shift includes critical welfare checks and the outreach team are prepared to offer basic assistance within the shift itself.
2. Every week we include outreach shifts augmented by mental health practitioners and drug and alcohol professionals.
3. One shift per week is currently provided by Doctors of The World which is tasked directly from the weekly tasking and action meeting.

Accommodation update:

We are very close to securing a 20-bed occupancy at the City Youth Hostel. There are issues re locking systems and cleaning contracts which are being finalised, but we are hopeful that we will be able to go live with this by middle of next week. It will be for 14 weeks - It will be staffed 24/7 plus security 24/7

Covid 19 Information

1. Of the 27 on the street 1 person presented as symptomatic
2. Currently none of the 72 are reporting as symptomatic
3. The presentation of C19 symptoms across the RS cohort has been much lower than first anticipated. Of course, current analysis doesn't capture those infected but not displaying symptoms.

Next Steps

1. We have established a Task and Action group has met twice and will meet weekly going forward.
2. Subject to range of regional / national agreements / direction we are modelling a potential need of up to 100 people to go on the accommodation pathway – this is a bit crude but is based on us having to take responsibility for the 3 groups above (32; 39; 27)-

HOWEVER there is still a lot to be determined regarding who would be responsible for which groups/individuals .

3. The GLA are going to be convening their own Task and Finish group to drive next stages forward. This will be key to assisting in our local strategies.

Barbican & Community Libraries – Carol Boswarthack

1. Libraries all closed at the end of March, but the staff are working extremely hard from home. I challenged them to create a library without walls and that's exactly what they've done.
2. We now have a large number of online experiences including
 - a. videoed and streaming online Rhymetimes for families
 - b. temporary online membership so people can access our eBooks, eAudiobooks, eMags and eComics. Staff have also been working hard on buying extra stock and building up collections to assist with the main needs e.g. home schooling, stress and anxiety.
 - c. access to streaming music and video and a number of other incredible resources that have been made available to us since the pandemic started
 - d. answering enquiries on anything (regular service)
 - e. giving 121 IT tuition via Zoom
 - f. a virtual Dragon Café in the City on 29 Apr
 - g. Virtual reading groups
 - h. We've created a timetable of our virtual activities - it's going on the website and is available on all our social media.
3. Additionally, library staff with substantial experience of working with the elderly and vulnerable have been phoning residents on the NHS Shielded and Telecare lists to see if they need any additional help with e.g. shopping or collection of medicines. It's been very well-received. They are also making weekly befriending calls to those people who in normal times would receive a home delivery service from us
4. Customer feedback has been quite extraordinary and very gratifying.
5. We are now working on a detailed recovery plan so when we're able to reopen, we'll be ready to do that safely.

Virtual Events

#LibrariesFromHome #LibrariesWithoutWalls

Monday

9.30 *Artizan St FB* Visit the Virtual Garden
11.00 *Barbican Joel on YouTube* Live Rhymetime
13.00 *Shoe Lane FB* Daily Kids Colouring Page
15.00 *Barbican Children's FB* Children's Rhymetime
Barbican Instagram - Daily Dingbat Challenge

Tuesday

9.30 *Artizan St FB* Visit the Virtual Garden
11.00 *Barbican Joel on YouTube* Live Rhymetime
13.00 *Shoe Lane FB* Daily Kids Colouring Page
15.00 *Barbican Children's FB* Children's Rhymetime
16.00 *Barbican FB & Twitter* Classic Album Club
Barbican Instagram - Daily Dingbat Challenge

Wednesday

9.30 *Artizan St FB* Visit the Virtual Garden
11.00 *Barbican Joel on YouTube* Live Rhymetime
12.00 *dragoncafeinthecity.com* Dragon Café in the City *
13.00 *Shoe Lane FB* Daily Kids Colouring Page
15.00 *Barbican Children's FB* Children's Rhymetime
16.00 *Barbican FB* Best of the Book Club
Barbican Instagram - Daily Dingbat Challenge

* Fortnightly from Wed 29th April -email - shoelane@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Thursday

9.30 *Artizan St FB* Visit the Virtual Garden
11.00 *Barbican Joel on YouTube* Live Rhymetime
Noon *Barbican FB* Most Listened to on Naxos
13.00 *Shoe Lane FB* Daily Kids Colouring Page
14.00 *Barbican FB* Librarian eLibrary Recommendations
15.00 *Barbican Children's FB* Children's Rhymetime
17.30 *Zoom* Comic Forum *
Barbican Instagram - Daily Dingbat Challenge

*Every third Thursday of the month - email joel.janiurek@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Friday

9.30 *Artizan St FB* Visit the Virtual Garden
11.00 *Barbican Joel on YouTube* Live Rhymetime
13.00 *Shoe Lane FB* Daily Kids Colouring Page
15.00 *Barbican Children's FB* Children's Rhymetime
16.00 *Barbican Facebook* - Music Quiz Challenge
Barbican Instagram - Daily Dingbat Challenge

Saturday

11.00 *Barbican Joel on YouTube* Live Rhymetime

Housing Management – Paul Murtagh

Staff numbers

- Number of staff working remains high (only 1 member of staff not at work).

Cleaning and Caretaking Service

- Operating a reduced service (50%);
- Focusing on critical tasks such as sanitisation (touch points etc), fire safety, bins, dealing with bulk waste.

Estate Services

- Operating a reduced service (80%);
- No home visits;
- Parking enforcement suspended until 15 May.

Housing Needs

- Operating a reduced service (50%);
- Biddings and viewings suspended;
- Assessing new applications;

- Housing Census.

Rents

- Service running almost as normal;
- New rent notifications and direct debit notifications sent out (3500);
- Monitoring arrears carefully and, contacting residents in arrears to offer support and advice;
- Unable to issue full parking permits – temporary ones issued for now.

Income Recovery

- Operating a reduced service (80%);
- Helping with increased Universal Credit claims (100 applications since lockdown);
- 91 households been in contact to advise of the adverse impact of COVID-19;
- Suspended arrears action sheds, garages and parking until 15 May (unofficially).

Sheltered Housing

- Operating a reduced service (80%);
- Staff supporting residents by telephone;
- Liaising with care agencies and social services as normal;
- Communal lounges closed;
- No known cases of COVID-19 in our schemes.
- Lots of excellent work being done by residents on all our housing estates to help the more vulnerable residents

Repairs and Maintenance

- Number of staff working is high;
- Call Centre operating fully as normal;
- Operating an emergency repairs service only (P0, P1 and P2);
- All statutory inspections being carried out in full – gas, electric, asbestos, legionella, lifts etc;
- Looking at how we may start doing less urgent repairs going forward without endangering staff, contractors and residents.

Major Works and Improvements Programme

- Live projects on hold – access to homes and contractors deciding to furlough staff;
- Design process on several projects still ongoing for now – windows, sprinklers, door programme;
- Several projects could start up quickly after lockdown lifted.

HRA Commercial Premises

- Many of our commercial tenants on our social housing estates are closed either, directly as a result of government instructions for the lockdown or, indirectly as a result of a drop in trade, difficulty in obtaining supplies and staffing issues etc.
- In line with the agreed Corporate approach to assisting our commercial tenants during these difficult times, we have offered the following concessions to those who fall within the relevant categories:
 - o Switch to monthly rent rather than quarterly (Phase 1);
 - o 3-month rent deferral period (Phase 2).
- Several commercial tenants have subsequently indicated that they need further assistance from the Corporation to help them through the crisis. We are working corporate colleagues and Members to see what, if anything more, can be done.

Education – Anne Bamford

School openings

All schools have reopened and there are both online offers and face to face provisions for relevant vulnerable groups of learners and the children of key workers. Despite considerable efforts from schools to encourage eligible pupils to attend, low numbers have taken advantage of this offer, with most schools only having on average around 4.8 pupils each day.

John Cass has been available as a primary hub provision should it be needed. The City of London School is available as a secondary hub should that be needed.

A survey has occurred this week within the family of schools to determine if there are any City secondary-aged children as pupils without access to computers and WiFi. The results confirmed that on average there are a total of 21 pupils per secondary school without access and while these numbers are quite evenly spread across year groups, the least access is currently in Year 7 and Year 9. The best access (i.e. the least numbers of pupils without access)

seems to be in Years 8, 10 and 11. Also see the later section on online learning.

Childcare and early years

This week there were an average of 11.2 children each day accessing childcare and early years provision in the City.

National Offer Day

The primary National Offer Day occurred as expected on 16 April. Admission appeal panels will not go ahead at present, but it is likely over the coming weeks to allow some kind of 'virtual' appeals process to occur. There is no Pupil Place Planning National Offer Day Survey this year, instead Local Authorities will complete a shorter summary of place sufficiency.

FSM Vouchers

The demand for the FSM vouchers has overwhelmed the system for distribution. While there were some delays, most people are now reporting receiving weekly vouchers for £15 per child per week. Sir John Cass is supporting the City Emergency Support Scheme as a pickup point for vouchers if families are unable to access them online. It has been announced that 16-19 providers can also claim FSM vouchers. Other 16 – 19 providers with an allocation for free meals will now be able to apply to the national voucher scheme, with the value of the vouchers being claimed back via Free Meals in FE/ 16 – 19 Discretionary Bursary allocations.

Disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils

The DfE have issued guidance on supporting vulnerable children and young people during the COVID-19 outbreak. The government encourages the following vulnerable children and young people to attend their educational settings, and for those settings to follow up with children and families in the case of absence:

- Children and young people who have a social worker (unless their social worker decides that they are at less risk at home or in their placement, for example, due to underlying health conditions)
- Children and young people who have an EHC plan whose needs cannot be met safely in the home environment
- Children and young people who have been assessed as otherwise vulnerable by education providers or local authorities (including children's social care services), and who are therefore in need of continued education provision

The guidance also provide advice to education providers, social workers and parents on how to determine whether a child should be attending their educational setting and how to encourage children, and their parents, to attend where this is in the best interests of the child. While families stay at home to

reduce the spread of the coronavirus, some children and young people may face increased risk of abuse or neglect at home or from strangers online. The Government will make funding worth £1.6 million available immediately for the NSPCC to expand and promote its national helpline for adults to enable many more adults to know how and where to raise concerns and seek advice or support about the safety and wellbeing of any children they are worried about. The DfE have also published guidance for families on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing during COVID-19 and while they are learning from home.

Access to online learning

Following the announcement by the Secretary of State for Education on Sunday 19 April, laptops and tablets will be made available to help the most disadvantaged young people access online learning and social care services. Young people and families eligible for devices must not already have access to one, and must be in one of the following groups:

- Children with a social worker
- Care leavers
- Disadvantaged children in Year 10, ahead of sitting their GCSEs next year

Today, the Secretary of State wrote to local authorities, academy trusts and other responsible bodies overseeing schools, colleges and children's social care outlining the process for ordering devices for vulnerable and disadvantaged young people.

We have updated our guidance for school and colleges on how to order internet access and digital devices and access support to provide remote education during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

The guidance can be found here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/get-help-with-technology-for-remote-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

Responsible bodies will work with schools to identify eligible young people, and then place an order through our website when it launches later this week. Where care leavers, children with a social worker at secondary school and disadvantaged children do not have an internet connection, they will also receive a 4G router.

Schools will be able to keep these devices once they have re-opened, allowing children and young people to continue to learn and receive support at home in the future.

Any 16 to 19-year olds in education without a suitable device and/or connectivity to study remotely and whose family can't afford these costs will also be eligible for support via the 16-19 Bursary Fund. Decisions on support will be made by education providers.

The country's major telecommunications providers will make it easier for families to access selected educational resources by temporarily exempting these sites from data charges.

In addition, to support the hard work of schools in delivering remote education, the Oak National Academy launched on Monday 20 April. This will provide 180 video lessons each week, across a broad range of subjects from maths to art to languages, for every year group from Reception through to Year 10.

The final details of the access and distribution of the devices and content are being made available by the end of this week, but you can read further details on the following links:

- The Oak National Academy can be accessed here <https://www.thenational.academy/>
- The press release about the provision of free computers can be accessed here <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-major-package-to-support-online-learning>

Assessment: GCSE and A-Level

Announcements have been made regarding Assessment of GCSE and A-Level results. A process will be followed which is a combination of school-based professional assessment and system-wide standardisation. The proposed aims of the standardisation process are as follows:

1. To provide students with the grades that they would most likely have achieved had they been able to complete their assessments in summer 2020
2. To apply a common standardisation approach, within and across subjects, for as many students as possible
3. To use a method that is transparent and easy to explain, wherever possible, to encourage engagement and build confidence
4. To protect, so far as is possible, all students from being systematically advantaged or disadvantaged, notwithstanding their socio-economic background or whether they have a protected characteristic
5. To be deliverable by exam boards in a consistent and timely way that they can quality assure and can be overseen effectively by Ofqual

Students will be given a 'fair grade' based on previous work.

Ofqual still intends to release the results on the scheduled release dates for both GCSEs (20/08/20) and A-Levels (13/08/20). There will be a process for schools to appeal on behalf of students, but it is proposed that appeals can only be about process not the professional judgements made. There will be provision for tests to be taken in the summer and autumn if this is needed by some students. There is a consultation open for a very short time (the

consultation closes at 11:45pm on 29 April 2020) and the details can be found at this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/exceptional-arrangements-for-exam-grading-and-assessment-in-2020>

Skills

Changes to assessment arrangements for apprentices and accredited adult learning

An updated summary information sheet was sent this week to all the apprentices and all the relevant managers, tutors and stakeholders outlining the arrangements for their programmes of learning and assessment. Concurrently, an information sheet was also sent to all learners undertaking accredited adult education courses including foundation maths and English study, which also outlines the continued programme of study and assessment arrangements. The intention is to enable learners to be able to take online tests from home using remote invigilation. To date, this approach has received approval from most of the external quality assurance (EQAs) for end-point assessment (EPA) standards. ASES is awaiting further confirmation from the remaining EQAs.

Communication with adult learners

It has been Easter holiday break for adult learning, but the tutors are continuing to maintain email, phone and 'hard copy' via learning packs and postcards connection with the learners. Courses which can be delivered remotely have been advertised for the summer terms and seem to be well-subscribed so far. You can apply for 'extraordinary bursary support if you have any learners aged 16-19 to get them computers and Wi-Fi access. <https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund> Also Finally, Learning partners are using St Luke's Community Centre which has remained open as a space to distribute 'hard copy' materials to the most vulnerable adults and families. ASES are providing 1:1 support for individuals experiencing 'technical support' issue and staff are able to access targeted technical support on:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-further-education-provision/maintaining-education-and-skills-training-provision-further-education-providers>.

Staff can also raise specific online learning issues and request additional resources to train staff in online learning

FEC.OPERATIONS@education.gov.uk

Culture

Culture Mile Learning partners are using St Luke's Community Centre which has remained open as a space to distribute 'hard copy' creative play pack for young children to the most vulnerable families. They are also enabling the distribution of adult learning packs and resources to any adult learner without access to the online offers.

Public Health – Andy Liggins

Cases

- City residents = 16 residents have tested positive for coronavirus to date <https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/#local-authorities>

Deaths

- fewer than 5 deaths of City residents. During the meeting, Members noted that the National Website stated 13 deaths in London (and not 5) as this had included deaths at St Barts Hospital of non-City residents.

Testing

NB ALL testing of CoL staff is currently only for those key workers who have symptoms or household members have symptoms

Essential workers and those prioritised for testing list now expanded further overnight <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>

Testing options

- O2 and Lea Valley drive thru (and another 30-50 regional drive thru sites)
- Stratford walk-in - IS NOW NOT HAPPENING
- mobile testing units
 - Mobile testing units are being developed. They will operate out of a regional testing site and travel to offer tests where they are needed.
- home testing
 - apply online
 - currently only 8am - 8pm
 - home testing kit delivered to house (Amazon)
 - tests collected from house (Royal Mail)
 - results within x days

Contact Tracing

Contact tracing is a well-established role for PHE, local authorities and the NHS. Based on government guidance as it develops and in conjunction with PHE and local systems, the City of London Corporation is committed to its role in supporting an evidenced based, responsive and effective contact tracing function.

My understanding is that it will be local authorities (not GPs) who will be asked to support PHE with the contact tracing effort (alongside digital/apps and a new expanded contact tracing workforce), but this is yet TBC.

Committee:	Date:
Community and Children's Services	22 May 2020
Subject: Covid-19 testing and contact tracing	Public
Report of: Andrew Carter, Director of Community & Children's Services	For Decision
Report author: Dr Andy Liggins, Public Health, DCCS Dr Sandra Husbands, Director of Public Health	

Summary

Management of the COVID-19 pandemic has required a number of public health, NHS and wider societal measures, including hygiene advice, social distancing, capacity building and the 'Stay at Home'/'Stay Alert' lockdown policies.

Once conditions allow, social distancing measures will be further relaxed. At this point, continued wide-scale testing and enhanced contact tracing are crucial to help prevent a rapid rise in community transmission of COVID-19.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- To support the current approach to planning for contact tracing in City and Hackney.
- To receive an update on progress (including in relation to responding to any national announcements) from the working group at the next meeting.

Main Report

Background

1. COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus. This new virus and disease were unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. COVID-19 is now a pandemic affecting many countries globally.
2. Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness.

3. At this time, there are no specific vaccines or treatments for COVID-19. However, there are many ongoing clinical trials evaluating potential treatments.
4. Management of the COVID-19 pandemic in the UK has required a number of public health, NHS and wider societal measures, including hygiene advice, social distancing, capacity building and 'Stay at Home' / 'Stay Alert' lockdown policies.
5. Following the peak in hospital admissions, the Government has started to relax social distancing measures, as per the [UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy](#). At this point, continued wide-scale testing and enhanced contact tracing are crucial to help prevent a rapid rise in community transmission of COVID-19.

Current Position

6. The UK government has developed plans for a national COVID-19 contact tracing service as part of a strategy to partially relax social distancing measures and release the country from lockdown.
7. The national programme will combine digital and phone-based contact tracing approaches to identify cases and their close contacts so they can rapidly self-isolate to maintain a steady state of low level or no transmission in the community.
8. The digital approach has 2 components:
 - a. An NHS CV19 app which is an automated system for rapid symptom reporting, ordering of swab tests and sending tailored and targeted alerts to other app users who have been in close contact with a symptomatic and/or lab confirmed COVID-19 app user.
 - b. A web-based tool, the Coronavirus Contact Tracing and Advice Service (CTAS) to contact trace those not identified through the app. This will receive details of lab-confirmed cases of COVID-19. Cases will be categorised into automatic follow-up (have provided email details/can use web-based tool) or phone-based follow-up. Cases following the automated pathway upload details of contacts into CTAS which are then followed up either automatically or by phone.
9. A dedicated phone-based contact tracing service (PBCT) is being established for individuals who cannot use the app or CTAS.
 - a. This phone-based contact tracing will be carried out by 3,000 health professionals who will be recruited and employed by NHS Professionals (Tier 2). The expectation is that most of this workforce will be sourced from NHS returners.
 - b. An additional 15,000 call handlers (Tier 3) will communicate with and give advice to contacts according to Standard Operating Procedures and scripts, which are being developed by PHE. Recruitment to this service will be via a commercial contract.

- c. Tier 1 of the contact tracing service will comprise Health Protection Teams and PHE Field Service who will manage complex outbreaks and situations (as they currently do). There will also be a regional and local authority component to this service tier:
- d. A regionalised network will have an overview of the programme, review regional performance and assess wider impacts across the region. It will link into the national programme and LRFs and local authorities.
- e. A local authority response which will address issues such as shielding, supporting vulnerable individuals/households to self-isolate and impacts on inequalities, the local economy, essential services and workforce.

10. Whilst awaiting further clarification of a regional/local COVID-19 contact tracing service model, PHE London has initiated work to develop a London-wide contact tracing programme plan, to include:

Operational Process Mapping

- a. Work is underway to map the 'user' journey through the contact tracing service, identifying touch points for a local response (specialist Health Protection, testing and local authority support).
- b. Additional Tier 1 specialist Health Protection workforce capacity and capability requirements are being modelled based on high, medium and low outbreaks assumptions.
- c. Local authority and regional level data and information needs are being assessed and mapped to data flows and reporting requirements.

Establishment of a multi-agency external Contact Tracing group

- d. This is a sub-group of the London Testing Co-ordination Group with membership drawn from PHE, Health Protection, DsPH, environmental health, NHS and GLA.
- e. The group will oversee the development of London plans to deliver the local elements of the national contact tracing service and provide assurance on the implementation and delivery of these plans to the Regional Oversight Group.

Local Authority response planning

- f. A London Local Authorities Test, Track and Trace Task and Finish Group, chaired by the London Borough of Newham chief executive, was established on 5 May 2020 to collaborate with PHE and support local authority preparation for the national roll-out of contact tracing.
- g. This group has identified the regional and local actions needed to support implementation of contact tracing, with a six-point plan covering

the support and protection of vulnerable groups, understanding and mitigating wider community impact, leading the local partnership response, connecting and engaging local communities and building London regional resilience and mutual aid.

11. As more details on the national operating model emerge, PHE London will consider how to integrate mass testing in London with a regional contact tracing service, including the need to mobilise testing for surge capacity and integration of data systems to allow for seamless reporting. This will be built into the programme plan.
12. Further work is being done to establish links with COVID-19 community engagement groups/work to ensure that contact tracing messaging is consistent and culturally sensitive.

Action taken by the City of London Corporation

13. The requirement for a robust testing and contact tracing system has been highlighted at Member, strategic and departmental / operational levels. This has included:
 - a. Discussion at Community & Children's Services Committee on 24 April 2020;
 - b. Briefing of Town Clerk, Chief Officers via Covid-19 Gold;
 - c. Discussion with Markets & Consumer Protection in order to ascertain current specialist contact tracing capacity;
 - d. Cooperation with Public Health England and other resilience colleagues at national and London levels;
 - e. Full participation in a City & Hackney contact tracing working group, which is focussing on scoping out the local implications, in terms of capacity and resources required to participate fully in a local contact tracing arm, linked to the national system. In addition, Local Authorities are likely to be asked to initiate a local response and DsPH will have a leadership role in local implementation of the national programme.
14. Throughout this engagement, consideration has been given to the specific role of the City Corporation in developing and implementing these systems. Whilst understanding the desire to proactively develop a local function and exploring the possibility of this, it has become clear that it is impractical to do without the following:
 - a. The resources necessary to provide contact tracing information systems, staff, training and communications materials;
 - b. Access to accredited, quality-assured testing capacity for residents and workers through a number of routes (hospital, care home, mobile, satellite, drive through and home testing), as currently provided through DHSC and PHE;
 - c. Access to national IT systems and information flows on test results, etc., which are crucial infrastructure in order to enable effective and efficient system operations;

- d. Rapid progress in the resourcing, development and implementation of the national systems;
- e. Understanding of the national standard operating procedure, to ensure alignment with this and compliance with standards;
- f. Clear identification of local authority roles within these systems;
- g. Redeployment and training of City staff with relevant backgrounds (e.g. environmental health officers) and where necessary, backfill of their substantive roles by redeploying others;
- h. Support from PHE for complex cases or contexts that might emerge through contact tracing in the City.

15. The director of public health, who chairs the local working group, is in regular communication with PHE and receiving updates on progress of the national and regional contact tracing and testing systems. The group is planning to ensure that the Corporation (and the wider City and Hackney system) is prepared to participate fully and effectively in contact tracing, as soon as the national process is rolled out later this month.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

16. There are no direct legal or financial implications.

Implications

17. The financial, legal and equalities impacts of contact tracing are not fully understood yet. These are being worked through by the working group for evaluation at the next iteration of this paper.

Conclusion

18. City of London Corporation will ensure that robust testing and contacting tracing systems are in place for residents and others working within the City, through proactive engagement with the national and regional COVID-19 response. As far as capacity and competing demands allow, Public health specialists, environmental health officers and others with appropriate backgrounds will be recruited to this work and provided with protocols and training by PHE.

19. Members are asked to support the current approach to planning for contact tracing during the next phase and receive a report back from the working group at the next Committee meeting.

Appendices

- None

Dr Andy Liggins

Consultant in Public Health

T: 02073321907

E: andy.liggins@cityoflondon.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

Agenda Item 6

Committee:	Dated:
Community and Children's Services	22/05/2020
Subject: Internet access	Public
Report of: Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children's Services	For Decision
Report author: Simon Cribbens, Assistant Director, Commissioning and Partnerships	

Summary

The City has provided targeted support to help some vulnerable or low income households access the internet to support learning. Members have asked for an expanded scheme to support those who are unable to afford the internet and unable to leave their homes to benefit from free access.

This report sets out an option for an expanded scheme limited to the duration of the current pandemic restrictions to targeted groups. It notes that a budget will need to be identified to deliver such a scheme.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- i. Note and endorse the current targeted approach to supporting internet access among City households and other mitigating support

Or

- ii. Agree:

an expanded offer to those meeting the criteria of being:

- Low income households in receipt of benefits, and
- Defined as:
 - clinically extremely vulnerable ("shielded")
 - clinically vulnerable (advised by government to "self isolate")

that such a scheme will provide a hotspot device as the primary offer

that additional budget will be identified to support the scheme.

Main Report

Background

1. During the lockdown period many have relied on access to the internet for securing services (food shopping for instance), education and social contact. While some choose not to use the internet there will be others who would use it but cannot for several reasons.
2. Internet access requires a digital device (laptop, tablet or smartphone), a modem, router or hotspot device (a preloaded dongle providing limited internet access), and an internet service provider (ISP).
3. Some people are also digitally excluded by not having the knowledge or skills to access the internet regardless of whether they have the means to access.
4. Support has been given to some households to access the internet. Members have proposed further targeted support for those without the financial means to secure internet access (limited to the duration of the pandemic restrictions).
5. Another proposal by Members is that the City of London Corporation make a commitment, in principle at least, to make the internet available to all residents.

Current Position

6. Those who would like to access to the internet, but are either unable or cannot get sufficient access to it, can be categorised as:
 - Isolating / Shielding residents – who have a digital device but rely on - and cannot access - free Wi-Fi
 - Isolating / Shielding residents – who have neither digital device nor Wi-Fi
 - Residents who cannot afford home broadband/data and/or a digital device and cannot access free provision
 - Residents who have limited data (which may prevent access to education for instance)
 - Residents with too few devices to support access for all who need the internet
7. There is limited quantitative evidence of need against these categories, but it is likely to be small in scale given the size of the City's population and recorded levels of deprivation.
8. The City has provided targeted support to some households to access the internet as set out below.

Current City Corporation approach

9. The department has supported families and young people with funding for, or direct provision of, digital devices and hotspot devices. This has ensured access to education. The beneficiaries were those identified by services from among:

- families of children with disabilities
- families with children subject to a child protection plans
- children in care and care leavers
- targeted families supported by social care or Early Help services
- children with an Education, Health and Care Plan.

10. Other households identified as potentially vulnerable (those shielding, those who have contacted the city for support, and those known to adult social care, tenancy support or housing management), have been contacted by the department to offer support to mitigate the impact of lockdown on shopping, medicine supplies and social contact. Among these groups, internet access has not been raised as an issue of concern.

Response by other local authorities

11. The current city approach is in step with other local authorities.

12. Where we have identified local authority schemes promoting free devices and internet access, they have been advertising the offer of government (see below) which is being administered through local authorities and targets specific children and young people.

13. Westminster City Council (WCC) has a targeted scheme where they are providing a router and internet access through an ISP contract that the Council holds. This is given to a group of 27 families with children known to social services who are part of a long-term project tackling multiple disadvantage.

Government Support

14. The Department for Education (DfE) has committed to provide laptops and tablets for disadvantaged families, children and young people who do not currently have access to them through another source, such as their school. Digital devices can be requested for:

- care leavers
- children and young people aged 0 to 19 with a social worker
- disadvantaged year 10 pupils

15. Internet access will be provided through 4G hotspot devices. The City has been allocated 16 devices.

Industry response

16. BT provides a low-cost internet option available to those receiving:

- Income support
- Income based Jobseeker's allowance (JSA)
- Guaranteed pensions credit
- Income based Employment and Support Allowance
- Universal Credit, with zero earnings

17. For those eligible, the BT's Basic + Broadband service costs £9.95 a month for a phone line and broadband.

Options – expanded City Corporation approach (short term)

18. Should members wish to expand the current approach to all City residents who desire internet access it would require addressing the needs of those who cannot afford digital or hotspot devices - or a homebased internet connection from an ISP. It may also require support to those whose access is hampered by knowledge and skills gaps.

19. The circumstances of the lockdown – and resources – make it unlikely that all these barriers can be addressed for all potential groups.

Eligibility

20. It is likely that affordability is the primary barrier – whether to meet the cost of a digital device or the cost of internet access. Therefore, a targeted response could be based on an indicator of low income that meets the threshold for benefit payments.

21. Beyond affordability, it is proposed that those eligible for a scheme are those people who are most restricted by Covid-19, defined as;

- clinically extremely vulnerable (“shielded”)
- clinically vulnerable (advised by government to “self isolate”)

22. See appendix for definitions.

23. It would not be proposed to support those people self isolating for short term periods, or others able to leave their homes to access free Wi-Fi within open spaces in the Square Mile.

Duration

24. The scheme would be offered to those eligible while restrictions on their movement remain in place.

Hotspot device or ISP contract

25. The WCC scheme provides beneficiaries with a router – purchased outright (£85) and gifted to the household, and an internet service through a contract the council holds with the ISP (at £15 per month). The ISP “Three” provides this rate for this scheme because the contract is held by a local authority or a charity – it is not available to the individual. Such a contractual arrangement (where the City holds the contract on the beneficiary’s behalf) may be appropriate where the beneficiary has a link to the authority through a longer term targeted project or there is some type of guardianship arrangement.

26. The department and government responses to date have used hotspot devices that can be purchased for a one-off cost preloaded with a data allowance. The

cost starts from as little as £30 per unit – but at lower cost offer very little data. A 20GB wireless router offering 4G Wi-Fi connectivity costs in the region of £90. There is no contract or obligation beyond the purchase.

27. Such a device would require the user to be able to install and set it up. They also require a digital device to connect to – either through a USB port (for a laptop) or Wi-Fi connection. This option can be delivered to the beneficiary's home.
28. Either option is only effective if a digital device is owned or provided.
29. It is recommended that provision of a hotspot device is the main response to need.

Digital device

30. Laptops have been provided to support some specific children and young people.
31. Within the adult population there will be a group whose access to the internet relied on use of digital devices such as public terminals in the City's libraries. Their closure creates a barrier to access that could only be resolved if the department loaned or gifted a digital device – or provided funding for the purchase.
32. The gifting of a device to an adult could echo the approach of children's social care by targeting those known to services and assessed by social workers as in need. Beneficiaries would also have to meet any other eligibility criteria.
33. Given short term situation, administration and additional cost, it is recommended that the scheme does not provide digital devices.

Knowledge and skills

34. The circumstances of the lockdown hamper skills and knowledge support that is not delivered online. Therefore, it is recommended that applications are only encouraged from those with pre-existing knowledge and skills to access the internet.

Cost

35. A scheme based on the provision of a hotspot device to low income households identified through basic criteria will be determined by the device cost and take up.
36. Assuming a maximum of 250 households who receive a 20GB device, the cost net of administration would be a maximum of £22,500. A more limited data offer, and lower take up would significantly reduce the cost.
37. A further £5,000 should be set aside for administration.

Options - medium term

38. The department has initiated contact with a social change charity, the Good Things Foundation that supports socially excluded people to improve their lives through digital access and inclusion. The aim will be to explore the development of a longer term proposal linked to financial and social inclusion.

Further considerations

39. Digital inclusion is a major policy objective of government. However, it is not separately or specifically funded through the welfare system.

40. Local authorities have been given detail of those who have been told to shield but are not given details of those who are advised to self isolate.

Implications

41. Legal advice was not available at the time of drafting.

42. There is no identified budget for such a scheme.

Conclusion

43. Targeted support has ensured some children and young people can access education during this period. A 'targeted' expanded scheme may assist other households.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Definitions

Simon Cribbens

Assistant Director, Commissioning and Partnerships
Department of Community and Children's Services

E: simon.cribbens@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Appendix 1 - definitions

Clinically extremely vulnerable:

People who fall in this group should have been contacted to tell them they are clinically extremely vulnerable. They include:

- Solid organ transplant recipients.
- People with specific cancers:
 - people with cancer who are undergoing active chemotherapy
 - people with lung cancer who are undergoing radical radiotherapy
 - people with cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma who are at any stage of treatment
 - people having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
 - people having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
 - people who have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppression drugs
- People with severe respiratory conditions including all cystic fibrosis, severe asthma and severe chronic obstructive pulmonary (COPD).
- People with rare diseases that significantly increase the risk of infections (such as SCID, homozygous sickle cell).
- People on immunosuppression therapies sufficient to significantly increase risk of infection.
- Women who are pregnant with significant heart disease, congenital or acquired.

Clinically vulnerable:

People who are:

- aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions)
- under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (that is, anyone instructed to get a flu jab each year on medical grounds):
 - chronic (long-term) mild to moderate respiratory diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis
 - chronic heart disease, such as heart failure
 - chronic kidney disease
 - chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis
 - chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), or cerebral palsy
 - diabetes
 - a weakened immune system as the result of certain conditions, treatments like chemotherapy, or medicines such as steroid tablets
 - being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above)
 - pregnant women

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank