

Gedling Borough Council's Covid-19 Emergency and Humanitarian Response

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Author: Incident Management Team

Version 10



Civic Centre lit up blue to say thank you to key workers on Thursday 14 April at 8pm

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1 Introduction and Purpose

1.1 This report documents Gedling Borough Council's Emergency Planning and Humanitarian Response to the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020.

1.2 It provides an overview of the circumstances leading up to a Major Incident being declared in Nottinghamshire and the subsequent rapid and dynamic response that was required by the Council to deal with this once in a generation scenario. This included using its Emergency Plan and responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) to engage with the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Resilience Forum (LRF) as a Category One Responder and to enable the rapid deployment of a dedicated Incident Management Team (IMT). This team coordinated business continuity planning employee redeployment, workforce management, emergency decision making measures, the humanitarian and business support arrangements and on-going service support for vulnerable people in the community. The report highlights action taken during the unprecedented emergency response, the lessons from which will inform on-going and future emergency planning and our phased approach towards delivery of the Council's Reset Strategy.

1.3 Prior to Covid-19, the Council's Health and Safety and Emergency Planning Officer had led on Council preparations for these types of emergencies, supported by a County-wide Service Level Agreement whereby Newark and Sherwood District Council performed some LRF related Emergency Planning functions on our behalf. This included an updated Emergency Plan, the adoption of an IMT structure and dynamic principles of its operation and an internal Strategic Resilience Group which meets quarterly in normal time.

1.4 The Council has participated in earlier LRF work to develop the county-wide pandemic plan that had regard to, humanitarian assistance, mass fatalities, spontaneous volunteering and recovery planning. Training of senior managers and Councillors in emergency planning and business continuity exercises have also been key to preparations. Council officers LRF collaboration has ensured officers had received multi-agency operational response (MORT), recovery, strategic and tactical training.

2 Declaration of the Emergency and Local Resilience Forum

2.1 On 31 December 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) was informed of a cluster of cases of pneumonia of unknown cause detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China. On 12 January 2020 it was announced that a novel coronavirus had been identified in samples obtained from cases and that initial analysis of virus genetic sequences suggested that this was the cause of the outbreak. This virus is referred to as SARS-CoV-2, and the associated disease as COVID-19.

2.2 Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses with some causing less-severe disease, such as the common cold, and others causing more severe disease such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) coronaviruses. On 11 February, the WHO named the syndrome caused by this novel coronavirus COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019).

2.3 In light of the current national and international public health emergency situation, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire LRF declared a major incident on 20 March 2020. This activated the multi-agency response arrangements in line with the LRF generic response plan and the pandemic flu plan. The Prime Minister's unprecedented announcement at 8.30 pm on Monday 23 March set out the seriousness of the situation and the expectations of all residents, businesses and public services. Then for a number of weeks specific guidance and new legislation has been enacted informing the Council's actions and response.

2.4 The Coronavirus Act 2020 received royal assent on the 25 March 2020. The Act has extensive schedules setting out a wide range of powers covering a huge range of matters giving a framework to life under lockdown. Some of the schedules to the Act include emergency financial support measures and enforcement powers for social distancing. The legislation also allows for the holding of virtual council meetings and the postponement of elections.

Gedling Borough Council Covid-19 Response

3 Incident Management Team

3.1 Political direction, influence and support has proved central to enabling the IMT structure to work well throughout this period. Daily telephone conferences between the Leader, Cllr Clarke, the Deputy Leader, Cllr Payne and the Chief Executive has enabled issues to be dealt with dynamically ensuring that risks have been well managed, and where necessary resources prioritised to meet daily demand. The involvement in these daily meetings of the Director for Health and Community Well-being has proved beneficial in enabling effective decision making in accordance with the National Decision Making Model used within the IMT meetings.

3.2 Initial planning and response to the emergency began as early as January 2020, with officers keeping abreast of LRF updates and making initial preparations for any potential escalation of circumstances.

3.3 On 12 February 2020, the first of the Council's Incident Management Team (IMT) was convened. While at this time, things remained largely business as usual for the Council, this initial meeting considered the LRF updates, teleconference calls between the LRF and Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and Public Health England (PHE) briefings. The LRF Pandemic Influenza Plan and situation updates. It also started to define our Business Continuity and Communications Strategies for a full scale emergency response.

3.4 The first LRF Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) took place on 12 February 2020. On 2 March, a second IMT was called which included all Service Managers and other key operational managers. This reflected on updated travel advice from the LRF SCG, along with updates from MHCLG and Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC). This prompted the initial direction towards business continuity planning, an effective communications approach and the further development of the IMT action plan.

3.5 The LRF’s SCG meeting on 5 March 2020 prompted escalated action from the Council to prepare for a potential emergency. By 9 March, the third meeting of IMT saw a part-time redeployment of both the Service Manager Community Relations and the Corporate Project Manager to support the Emergency Response as policy leads, to coordinate communication to service managers and to support the compilation of the Business Continuity Assessment (BCA) documents. As the crisis rapidly escalated, these roles were redeployed full-time by the following week and an IMT Response Command Structure was established, deploying the skills and experience of a wider dedicated team to tackle the urgent crisis the Council was facing.

3.6 The IMT Command Structure outlined a Gold, Silver and Bronze structure, referred to in Table A. This encompassed the National Joint Decision Making model (Figure 1), known as the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP), in line with emergency planning protocols. The Structure now at Version 15 had dynamically changed during the course of the Response phase.

Figure 1: National Joint Decision Making model (JESIP)

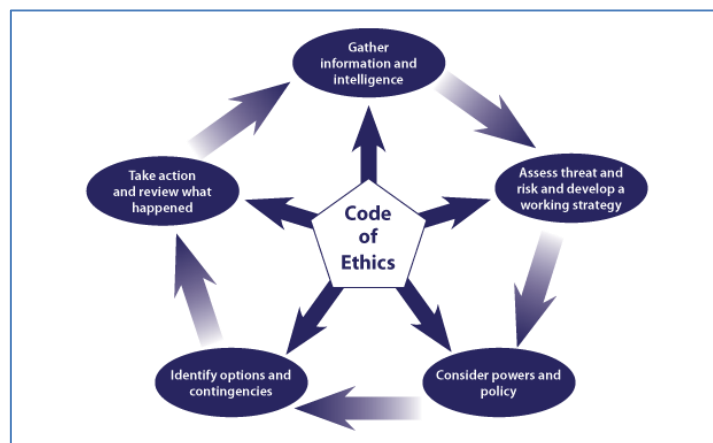


Table A: Covid-19 Response Command Structure		
Command Level	Role	Lead
Gold Strategic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define the strategy • Set the policy • Allocate resourcing • Risk management • LRF Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) Member 	Mike Hill Acting Chief Executive
Silver Tactical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational planning • Resource requirements • Policy & decision log • Media management • LRF Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG) Member 	David Wakelin Director Health and Wellbeing
Bronze Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tactical delivery • Briefing staff 	Various managers across the Council

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross council working • Budgets • Risk mitigation • Briefing upwards • Recording decisions 	
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3.7 The Council's emergency plan and templates defined the governance of running IMT, from business continuity planning, logging actions, activity and situational reports, communications and the emergence of a humanitarian response requirement. Table B highlights the officers and roles within the IMT Response.

3.8 IMT meetings quickly became daily, every morning, with an end of day de-brief to keep abreast of the rapidly changing national and local situation. As the situation has changed, then the regularity of the meetings have been stood down. Between 12 February 2020 and 4 June, there had been 419 IMT Response meetings in total. IMT Response now only meets once a week with an additional IMT Reset meeting to focus on Recovery.

Table B: Roles within the Covid-19 Incident Management Response Team	
Officer	Role
David Wakelin Director Health and Wellbeing	IMT Chair and Tactical Lead
Helen Barrington Director Organisational Development and Democratic Services	IMT Vice-chair and deputy Tactical Lead
Lance Juby Service Manager Community Relations	IMT and Tactical Emergency Planning Coordination Daily Cabinet Updates
Rhonda Churchill Corporate Project Manager	IMT and Tactical Emergency Planning Coordination Support Action and Timeline Logging
Grant Ilett Health and Safety and Emergency Planning Officer	Emergency Planning, Business Continuity and Health and Safety Practitioner lead Tactical Coordination Support
Andrea Snodin Senior Personnel Officer/Training Officer	Action and Timeline Logging Operational Situation Reports
David Archer Service Manager Organisational Development	Organisational Development lead
Rob McCleary Communications Manager	Communications lead
Jane Ansell Community Investment Manager	Humanitarian Response: Lead and Coordination
Sam Palmer Food Health and Housing Manager	Humanitarian Response: In Need Requests and Call Handling

Kevin Nealon Community Protection Manager	Humanitarian Response: Logistics
Andy Fretwell Centre Manager Richard Herrod and Arnold	Humanitarian Response: Richard Herrod Hub and Call Handling
Alec Dubberley	Government Information Updates

3.9 Since 19 March 2020 a daily update has been produced for Cabinet informing of the details of the response effort as it has progressed. From 26 May, the flow of operational information was reducing and the Cabinet update decreased to twice weekly, as our response resources had become fully deployed and we had started to edge towards developing our Reset Strategy. Our communications team also produced a weekly Councillor e-bulletin to keep all elected members informed of service changes and response work.

4 Business Continuity Planning and Defining Critical Functions

4.1 In the first week of March 2020, a Business Continuity Assessment (BCA) template was adopted and all service areas asked to complete this based on the Covid-19 related advice that was available at that time.

4.2 A Critical Staff list template developed and adopted. This listed critical functions and current staff roles; its purpose to ensure the continued operation of these key roles. The template sought to identify additional staff who could step in to critical roles in the absence of established staff. It also considered the training needs of staff being redeployed to ensure operations could continue for defined critical functions. All service areas were asked to complete the critical staffing template. Responsibility for compiling BCAs and the critical staff list sat with IMT's Silver Command Support.

4.3 The information from these templates supported IMT in the definition of key critical functions for the Council as part of its Covid-19 Business Continuity Plan. Final decision on critical functions and their priority order sat with Senior Leadership Team (SLT), following recommendations from IMT. Table C shows the critical function list of the Council during the emergency response.

Table C: Covid-19 Emergency Response, GBC Critical Functions, as of 02/06/20	
Front Line	
Waste	Housing Benefits
Cemeteries	Building Control
Street Cleaning	Giving for Gedling Humanitarian Team
Housing Needs	Disabled Facility Grants and other vulnerable people support
Pest Control	
Support Services	
Transport	Customer Services
IT	Communications
Finance – Payroll	Human Resources
Finance – Revenues	Opening Key Council buildings (Civic, Depot)

4.4 There remains an ongoing assessment of which services need to retain a minimal on-site presence in the delivery or support of critical functions.

5 Emergency Decision Making

5.1 In adopting the JESIP model, the Council faced the pressure of making swift decisions on service provision, while also fulfilling the decision making compliance of its constitution.

5.2 An emergency decision making process was adopted whereby decisions required by IMT could be quickly documented and agreed by the Leader. Embedding these measures ensured governance arrangements were maintained and a swift approach to deal with the crisis and its impact on Council operations was then possible. From the early days of the emergency response, the Leader was making all essential Covid-19 related decisions and these were being published in accordance with decision making protocols. Appendix B provides a list of all published decisions during course of the emergency response.

6. Local Resilience Forum (LRF) Involvement

6.1 The LRF is the Gold or strategic level emergency group for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. It meets regularly in normal time to discuss the emergency planning and preparation work that is being undertaken across the City and County amongst all statutory Category One and Two responders.

6.2 In the event of an emergency, or activation due to a major incident, the LRF would come together to provide the strategic command of the event. In the case of Covid-19, the LRF has coordinated the effort across the City and County from the early onset, being the direct feed up to central government. Emergency planning officers from Nottingham City Council and Nottinghamshire County Council have under the direction of the Strategic Coordinating Group (SCG) and Tactical Coordinating Group (TCG) established a comprehensive response structure and sub-groups and utilised the secure on-line platform Resilience Direct to enable collaboration and coordinate action across the area. Figure 2 details the Covid-19 Structure for the LRF, as of 2 June 2020.

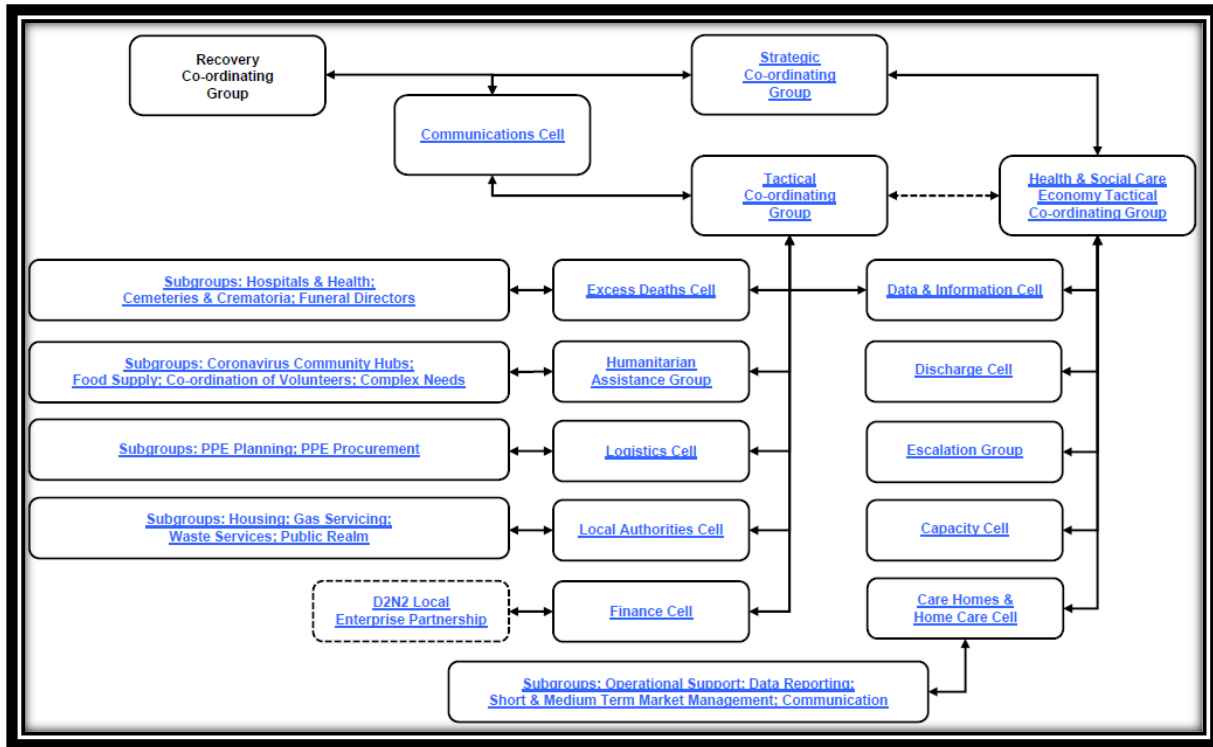
6.3 The scale of this emergency response structure was unprecedented and required the Council as a statutory Category One responder to free up its own resources to engage in the structure.

6.4 The seven Emergency Planning and Business Continuity statutory duties that apply to the Council are:

1. Risk Assessment
2. Emergency Planning
3. Warning and Informing the Public
4. Co-operating with Partner Agencies
5. Sharing Information with Partner Agencies

- 6. Business Continuity
- 7. Business Continuity Promotion

Figure 2: Nottingham and Nottinghamshire LRF Multi-agency Response Structure (Covid-19)



6.5 Officer participation on the strategic, tactical and various sub-groups ensured the Council could update its own IMT structure when making key decisions based on the latest good practice and guidance. It also presented an opportunity for the Council, via its officers, to shape the Countywide approach through key groups. For example, the Health and Safety and Emergency Planning Officer and Director for Health and Community Wellbeing were instrumental in establishing the Local Authority Cell, with the Director acting as Vice-chair. Equally, the Humanitarian Assistance Group saw our Community Investment Manager play a key role in shaping and developing support both at a County and local level. Table D highlights the Council’s officer representation within the LRF multi-agency response structure.

Table D: GBC officer representation on LRF Covid-19 multi-agency response structure		
Group or Cell	Lead Officer	Deputies
Strategic Coordination Group (SCG)	Mike Hill Acting Chief Executive	David Wakelin Director Health and Wellbeing
Tactical Coordination Group (TCG)	David Wakelin Director Health and Wellbeing	Helen Barrington Director Organisational Development and Democratic Services Grant Ilett Health and Safety and Emergency Planning Officer
Communications Cell	Rob McCleary	Nathan Greenwood

	Communications Manager	Communications Officer
Excess Deaths Cell	Mel Cryer Service Manager Parks and Street Care	Amanda Rhodes Cemetery Administrator
Humanitarian Assistance Group (HAG)	Jane Ansell Community Investment Manager	Sam Palmer Food Health and Housing Manager
<i>HAG Sub-groups:</i>		
<i>Coronavirus Community Hubs</i>	<i>Jane Ansell Community Investment Manager</i>	<i>Sarah Cook Arts Strategy and Development Officer Fiona Hextall Sports and Health Development Officer Nancy Woodroffe Community Wellbeing Co-ordinator</i>
<i>Food Supply</i>	<i>Andy Fretwell Centre Manager Richard Herrod and Arnold</i>	<i>Conor Payne Leisure Duty Manager</i>
<i>Coordination of Volunteers</i>	<i>Jane Ansell Community Investment Manager</i>	<i>Lance Juby Service Manager Community Relations</i>
<i>Complex Needs</i>	<i>Dave Jayne Community Safety Officer</i>	<i>Niki Petal ASB and Troubled Families Coordinator</i>
Logistics Cell	Lance Juby Service Manager Community Relations	Grant Ilett Health and Safety and Emergency Planning Officer
Local Authorities (LA) Cell	David Wakelin Director Health and Wellbeing	Helen Barrington Director Organisational Development and Democratic Services Grant Ilett Health and Safety and Emergency Planning Officer
<i>LA Cell Sub-groups:</i>		
<i>Housing</i>	<i>Paul Whitworth Housing and Welfare Support Manager</i>	<i>Alison Bennett Development and Regeneration Manager</i>
<i>Waste Services</i>	<i>Mark Hurst Service Manager Transport and Waste</i>	<i>Mel Cryer Service Manager Parks and Street Care</i>
Finance Cell	Alison Ball Assistant Director - Finance	Tina Adams Principal Finance Business Partner
Other LRF related roles - Covid-19 testing GBC staff	Rebecca Dearlove Personnel Assistant	

7. Workforce Management

7.1 There were some crucial considerations for IMT regarding on-going workforce management as part of the Response:

- Maintaining critical function operations
- Effective communication and guidance to staff

- Managing redeployment of staff
- Ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all staff and third parties.
- Management of workplace absence

Redeployment

7.2 A daily Situational Report of staffing resilience was deployed where all services were asked to report their daily staffing situation to IMT. This enabled IMT to quickly uncover emerging trends of staff absence within critical functions and enact the redeployment of staff from non-critical functions. In the first two weeks, this saw:

- Managers and staff from Leisure Services trained and deployed to support Waste Services and Parks and Street Care
- Community Relations, Locality Coordinators and Public Protection staff re-deployed to support a Humanitarian Response
- Additional emergency planning support from Organisational Development, Democratic Services and Legal Services.

7.3 During the course of the response, further re-deployment of staff has taken place to assist the business support requirements, including the provision of agency staff, and leisure centre staff designated to establish and manage a Humanitarian Hub from the Richard Herrod and Carlton Forum Leisure Centres. The willingness of staff to take on new roles and receive fast tracked training has been unprecedented and the Council is grateful for their commitment and efforts to keep services running and to support vulnerable local people. In total 49 employees have been redeployed as part of the response required.

7.4 Table E below shows the situation report regarding redeployment, staff isolation and Covid-19 related sickness absence as of 22 May 2020. New methods of recording will improve our insight as we start to report our workforce status to the Local Government Association. This is requirement as part of a national survey to inform the sector. It should be noted that many of the isolating but not working staff will have be due for return to work on 8 June, following an amendment to staff guidance issued to managers.

Table E: Gedling Borough Council Covid-19 Related Staff Redeployment, Self-Isolation and Sickness Absence, as of 01/06/20

No. of Staff	Situation
62	Redeployed to other teams around the council
40	Isolating* but working.
42	Isolating* but not working
6	Sickness absences attributed to Covid-like symptoms
* This is due to being in a vulnerable category or due to possible symptoms in themselves or family member	

Staff Guidance and Communications

7.5 Working with managers, information to staff has been regularly updated and provided and this has included:

- Latest national updates

- Public Health advice
- Health, safety and welfare
- Guidance for employees
- Information about Council buildings and Staff
- Home Visits
- School closures and Key Worker Status
- IT Support
- Working at Home Tips
- Covid-19 testing for Staff

7.6 Staff guidance has focused on managing sickness absence due to Covid-19, absence from work due to self-isolation and advice to high-risk staff such as those with chronic underlying health conditions or aged 70+. Protocols on time off to care for dependents, home working, meetings, travel and training, non-attendance and flexi time have also been amended and shared with employees.

7.7 Due to the pandemic the Council has changed its conditions to allow up to 20 days' holiday to be carried forward into 2021/22, but under Working Time Regulations employees will still need to take at least 20 days' holidays this year (pro rata for part time employees).

Home working

7.8 Following the announcement from Government, all staff who were able to work from home have been supported to do so. In accordance with current Government guidance, this remains the case until further notice. Changing to an organisation that predominantly works remotely has been a huge challenge for all parts of the Council but is working well.

7.9 Enabling home working on this scale and so quickly, has involved a rapid deployment of guidance and equipment and has resulted in only a limited disruption to service. IT services prioritised this work with coordination support from IMT who identified equipment need across the Council to inform the process.

7.10 This work was split into two phases. Phase 1 commenced on 16 March 2020. Critical function employees who were sent home as they fell into a vulnerable category were initially prioritised, followed by vulnerable staff not working in a critical function. Phase 2 followed the Prime Minister's announcement on 24 March 2020, requiring all those who could work from home to do so. All further employees who could work from home and were undertaking critical functions were prioritised first, followed by staff from non-critical functions.

7.11 Due to a limited number of laptops being available a decision was made whereby some employees in a critical function were allocated a laptop, but these had to be taken from staff in the non-critical areas. These non-critical staff were then offered I pads, as an example, in the short term.



Giving for Gedling Humanitarian Centre at Richard Herrod Centre lit up to say thank you to key workers on Thursday 9 April

7.12 There was also the challenge of enabling phone access for front line staff. There was a limited number of licences for both remote use teleworkers and softphones. The teleworkers were reserved for Customer Services as they were essential for these staff to work. The Council only had a few softphones at the start of March, purchased as part of a pilot, therefore our softphone licences were increased and prioritised.

7.13 The complex two phase approach required careful coordination by the Corporate Project Manager, requesting equipment information, employee details and additional requirements from relevant service areas at the different stages. This delivered effective prioritisation and roll out and enabled IT staff to focus of the necessary work of building the desktops and laptops without interruption, essential for ensuring the rapid implementation of home working. Once home working had been established, IT Services worked to advise remote working staff on appropriate on and off-line working to save our bandwidth capacity for critical staff working on the emergency response. This was identified as a key risk during the early weeks and staff following this advice prevented service failure during the Response period.

7.14 Fully agile worker combined assessments have also been rolled out for staff. This was prompted by a teleconference training session, led by the Health and Safety and Emergency Planning Officer, which walked managers through the guidance Mental health awareness advice was also circulated for those working in isolation at home.

7.15 Following some initial success at IMT and other team meetings, the video conferencing software MS Teams has also been rolled out across the organisation for the use of internal video meetings. This has enabled efficient remote and virtual meetings and will be used as a platform for more formal future meetings of the Council while social distancing measures remain.

Covid-19 Testing of Council Staff

7.16 On 27 April 2020, Council staff or members of their household were eligible for testing in certain circumstances where there were symptoms of Covid-19. The HR team responded rapidly to ensure a signposting pathway was in place for staff. Following the Government's launch of the new Employer Referral Portal, the Council has been able to make direct referrals into the portal on behalf of staff when the criteria has been met. As of 22 May, only 3 members of staff have been referred for testing.

8 Health and Safety

8.1 An essential aspect of keeping abreast of the daily changes to Government guidance during the Response phase has been the review, update and issue of the Council's health and safety guidance.

8.2 In response to the Covid-19 crisis, the Council has been reviewing many health and safety risk assessments and other guidance to support new and existing operational delivery. This includes agile home working assessments, many risk assessment revisions, new RIDDOR guidance relating to employees contracting Covid-19 while on duty, handwashing and hygiene and some comprehensive guidance on the use of PPE adopted.

8.3 In total just over 100 new sets of health and safety guidance and instruction documents have been produced as part of the Response. Of these, 16 supported the establishment of the Giving for Gedling Humanitarian Response and 16 related to PPE guidance. Guidance for managers and employees has ensured safe working practice during the outbreak, many of which have required numerous versions following the regular Government and LRF updates. Table F highlights some notable examples of this collaboration across service areas.

Table F: Service Area Health and Safety Collaboration during the Covid-19 Pandemic	
Taxi Licensing	Public Protection, Waste and Transport and Health and Safety and Emergency Planning responded by taking the opportunity to review the wider taxi licensing procedure.
Waste Collection	Joint work involving Waste Services, Parks and Street Care and Health and Safety has seen a revision to the Waste Collection Operating Procedure Loading Training Pack. This not only offered Covid-19 specific instructions but a wider overhaul and update of the procedures. Service Managers and officers worked together to produce an up to date and comprehensive guiding document considering the latest Waste Industry Safety and Health Forum (WISH) guidance. This includes specialist advice on reversing, bulky waste, manual handling assessments and activity assessments. In addition, training was provided to Leisure Centre staff redeployed to support Waste Collection and to backfill parks

	operations where required. Managers from Leisure also offered management support at the Depot.
PPE Returns	An agreement through the LRF was for each district to provide a weekly return on our available PPE stock to inform the wider supply chain across the County and further up to a national level. An Assistant Leisure Manager has stepped in to do the weekly stock take, working with Property, the Depot services, Public Protection and the Health and Safety and Emergency Planning Officer to provide the completed template to the LRF.
Giving for Gedling Volunteers and Food Hub	<p>The Health and Safety and Emergency Planning Officer led work with Leisure Centre Managers to deploy volunteers our Giving for Gedling team had recruited. This required immediate work to draft activity risk assessments, design safe procedures and create toolbox talks for volunteers, both for the food parcel delivery service and packing. In the background the previously prepared Volunteering Policy, handbook and induction forms were finalised and formal approval for adoption obtained by a decision from the Leader of the Council.</p> <p>The rapid establishment of a Richard Herrod food distribution centre saw the team, with help from Environmental Health colleagues, establish a logistical plan for storage, packing, collections, catering and deliveries. Leisure Managers worked on a site layout and logistics, including social distancing measures.</p>

9 Waste and Transport Services

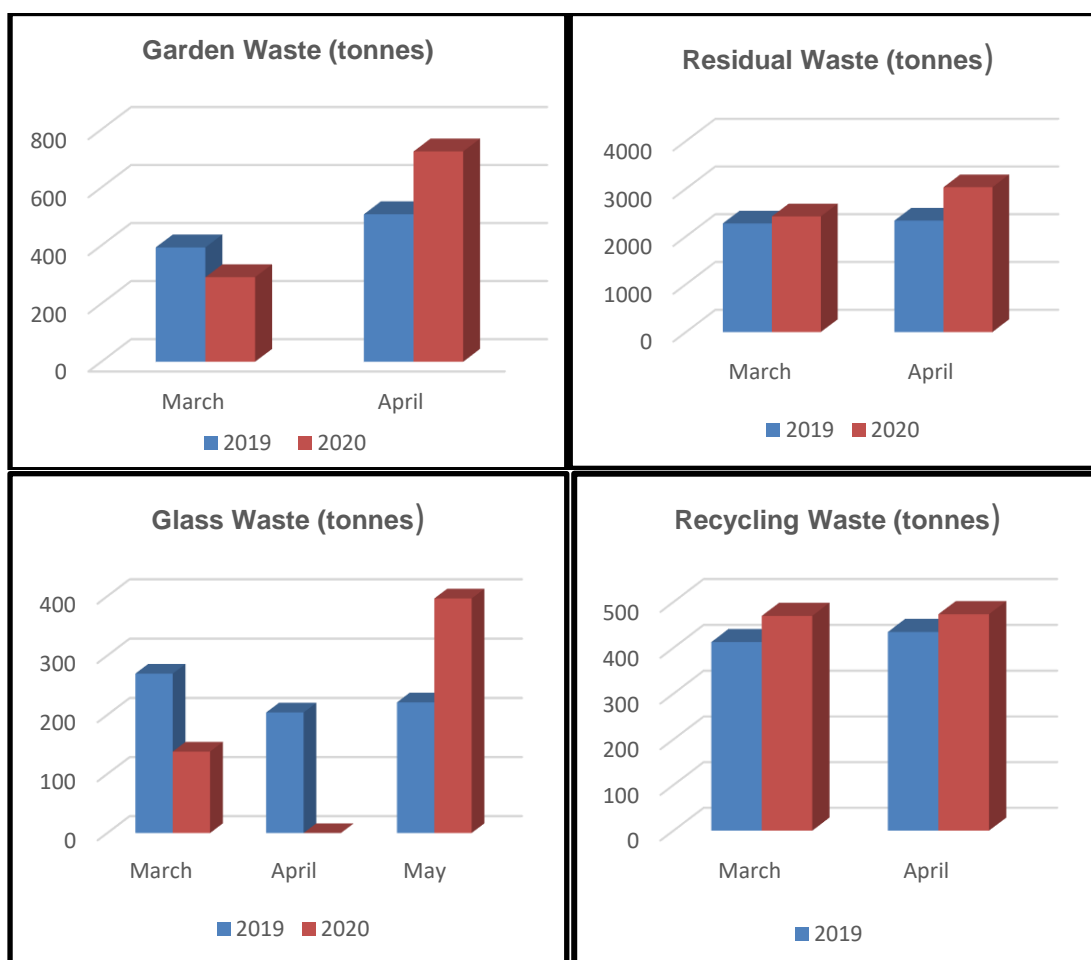
9.1 Waste and Transport was determined to be a critical service early on given the integral nature of the Council's fleet on front line operations, the public health and statutory importance of waste collection and the risk of a low number of drivers and other fleet personnel in these areas. Section 7 has already referred the significant plan for redeployment of leisure centre staff and management to the depot services as back-up in the occurrence of staff absence due to underlying health conditions and Covid-19 symptoms. This was implemented in March 2020 as soon as it was clear there would be a need for leisure centre closures.

9.2 As need for back-up staff became a necessity, Leisure staff were trained for waste collection duties and other parks operative roles. The initial approach was to redeploy Parks and Street Care (PASC) staff who had some previous experience on waste rounds and back-fill the PASC roles with leisure colleagues. The leisure centre managers was also redeployed to help oversee the transition from leisure centre to manual roles.

Waste	April 2019	April 2020	% change
Garden	507.84	724.52	+30%
Glass	204.18	0	-100%
Recycling	434.63	473.34	+8%
Residual	2331.50	3030.98	+23%

9.3 To support the staffing situation within Waste Services additional agency personnel were employed as drivers and loaders; three agency drivers and two additional loaders to cover staff off due to underlying conditions and Covid-19 related absence. Between 6 April 2020 and the end of June, the estimated agency driver cost was £5800, while the estimated cost of employing agency loaders was £4900.

Figure 3: Waste Collection tonnage, 2019 and 2020 Comparison



9.4 Due to the strain on service, a decision was made to cease glass collections in April 2020 and this enabled an on-going collection service for residual waste and other recyclables throughout the period, supported by the redeployment of the leisure staff, parks employees and agency cover. One off glass collections were resumed from 2 May and then the scheduled weekly collections started from 11 May.

9.5 Due to the lockdown, it can be assumed that the additional time residents have stayed at home has had an impact on waste collection levels. Table G and Figure 3 above show that April 2020 has seen a significant increase the tonnage of garden, recycling and residual waste compared to April 2019. At the time of writing this report the figures for May 2020 are not available apart from glass collections. Table H below shows a 44% increase in glass collection in May 2020 compared to that month the previous year.

Table H: Glass Waste Collection comparison May 2019 and May 2020 (tonnes)			
Waste	May 2019	May 2020	% change
Glass	221.18	396.2	+44%

10 Cemeteries

10.1 Given the nature of the pandemic, preparation for excess deaths in the community were being prioritised by the LRF. The planning for this would potentially have a significant impact on the Council's cemetery services and the small team that operates within this.

10.2 The Council has been able to keep the Cemetery grounds open throughout the response period for funerals and as a green space for exercise. Government guidance was followed and local restrictions implemented for the purposes of safe social distancing. Mourners were limited to 15 at the graveside and 6 in the Chapels. These restrictions remain in place.

10.3 Burial numbers per week rose from 6-7 per week to 12–13 per week at the height of the peak period and 4 extra grave digging staff were trained up to cope with this increase. Staff were informed of new workplace guidance and existing risk assessments reviewed to take account of the Covid-19 epidemic, supported by Health and Safety and Emergency Planning Officer. Guidance was established for working with funeral directors, PPE, cleaning and washing procedures, social distancing rules, opening procedures and staff roles.



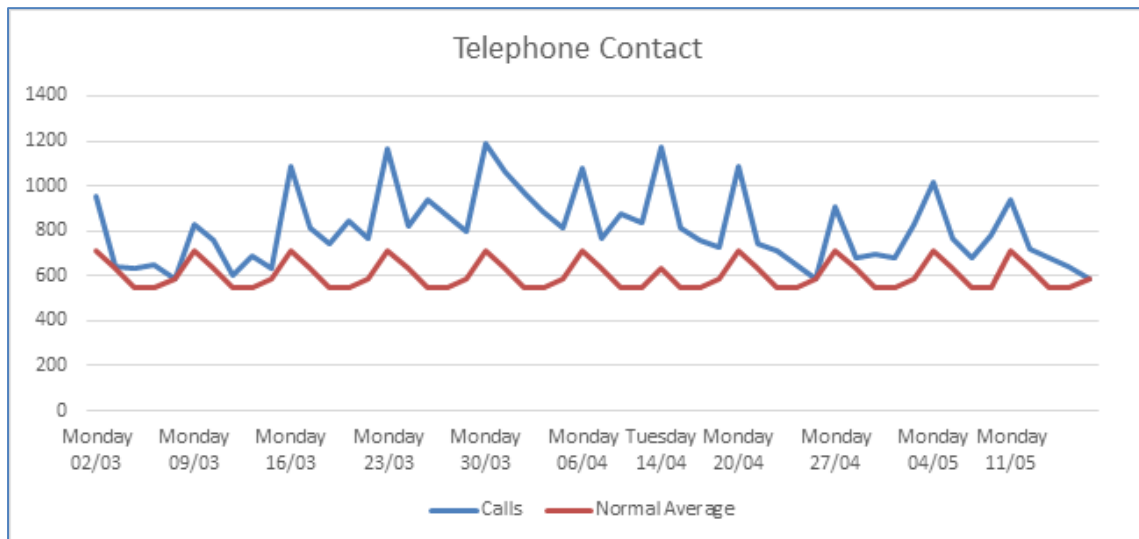
Food Hub at Giving for Gedling Humanitarian Centre stocked up

11 Customer Services Contact Centre

11.1 Since mid-March 2020, telephone contact with the Council increased significantly, with the Customer Services team taking significantly more calls than the previous year's averages for those particular days, as can be seen in Figure 4 below.

Over the last few weeks this has reduced, although, apart from a couple of Fridays, remains higher than normal.

Figure 4: Customer Services Telephone Contact 02/03/20 to 11/05/20



11.2 Despite this increase in demand, performance in terms of telephone answering has increased. Generally the first time answer rate has hovered between 92 – 94%; the previous highest rate of 96% was achieved at the end of quarter 3 in 2019/20. Since mid-March daily performance has more often than not topped 99% and on 3 April, handling 812 calls (around 250 more calls than a normal Friday), the team hit 100%. This meant that every single customer who called us that day was answered the first time they contacted us. Calls have ranged from customers worried about the current situation and seeking referral for assistance, wishing to discuss normal services like waste collections, needing advice on their Council Tax/Benefit account, to business owners querying their grant payments.

11.3 Civic Centre reception was closed to the public after the lockdown was implemented, but Customer Services have been open to take emergency face to face appointments. There have been no requests for an emergency appointments as all issues have been resolved with customers over the telephone. Existing taxi drivers who are licensed with us continued to attend until the 2 April 2020, however, since this date more efficient, non-contact processes are followed, which means existing drivers do not need to attend the Civic Centre.

11.4 In terms of home working, staff with underlying health issues (which rendered them at risk from Covid-19), were sent home and provided with a home working kit, to enable continued working. Following the lockdown announcement the remainder of staff who could work from home were provided with home working kits over the following weeks.

11.5 Those Customer Services staff who have been unable to work from home, along with other necessary staff on a rota basis, attend the Civic Centre to perform administration and post duties, cash receipting and the physical/manual parts of the licensing process that currently cannot be undertaken remotely.

11.6 The Council received some good news in April with the Customer Services team awarded a Certificate of Excellence by the iESE, which recognises the work that has been undertaken towards making a difference in the public sector.

12 Our Humanitarian Response: Giving for Gedling

12.1 The Council's humanitarian response has helped 800 residents during coronavirus pandemic. The Richard Herrod Centre has been transformed into a humanitarian centre helping local families, assisting with shopping or collecting prescriptions for those unable to leave their home.

Giving for Gedling Portal

12.2 In March 2020, the Council swiftly launched its Giving for Gedling response. The portal for this was a local dedicated [webpage](#) hosted on the Council's website, which offered information on:

- Good Neighbour Guide
- NHS Volunteer Responders
- Food shopping and deliveries
- Food bank fundraiser appeal
- Volunteer recruitment
- "I need support" links
- Community support groups
- Information on the Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) Support Hub

Giving for Gedling Humanitarian Team

12.3 By the end of March 2020, a rapidly established new Giving for Gedling service was in place. The team included redeployed staff from Community Relations, Economic Growth, Public Protection and Leisure. Appendix A details the team, structure and roles. IMT designated this as a new critical function for the Council and this service led the way to:

- liaise and work with local foodbanks and Church Leaders
- recruit, train and induct volunteers, in line with a new Volunteer Policy
- support local community groups responding to the crisis
- receive and process requests for need
- establish and operate a food and household supply distribution centre
- represent the Council on numerous emergency response LRF planning groups.

Food Banks and Church Leaders

12.4 From the outset, the Council continued to work closely with local Foodbanks, establishing a local coordination role with them and local Church Leaders. They have guided the Council throughout and provided advice on the systems used at the Richard Herrod Hub helping us consider the most appropriate approach to food parcelling, volunteers and distribution. Likewise the two foodbanks in Netherfield

and Carlton have been supported with additional food and items provided from the Hub.

12.5 Arnold Food Bank has offered great support by providing parcels to the Hub in the first couple of weekends. Since then there have been swaps of items between the Hub & Arnold Food Bank whenever stocks have run low. Further information relating to food parcel distribution appear later in this section.

12.6 The Council received a grant allocation of £54,182 from Government. It used a proportion of this to allocate a grant to local foodbanks in the Borough. Arnold, Carlton, Netherfield and Gedling foodbanks all received £2,000 each. A further £2,000 grant was also issued to Sharewear and St. George's Centre in Netherfield to support their local Humanitarian effort, offering supplies and hot food to those most in need.

Giving For Gedling Good Neighbour Guide

12.7 With Church partners the Council has developed a Good Neighbour Guide and circulated this to volunteers, while local churches and Foodbanks have distributed copies further within the community. The Guide offered advice on befriending, food deliveries, volunteering, NCC support phone number, Giving for Gedling website, as well as support for self-employed workers and local businesses.

Advice on local shopping

12.8 In April 2020, a [web page](#) with information about a number of local online food shopping options available plus guidance on safe shopping was published.

Giving for Gedling Food Bank Appeal

12.9 While working with the local foodbanks it was agreed that the Council would receive financial donations rather the food donations to support local people. Subsequently, in order to support the local humanitarian effort, the Council launched the Giving for Gedling Food Bank Funding Appeal on 3 April 2020. A Spacehive fundraising webpage was established to receive donations - <https://www.spacehive.com/givingforgedling>. The cross-party agreement to donate the funds of £10,250 from councillors pots kick-started the food bank appeal with the Mayor calling on residents to help match the councillors donation and raise an additional £10,000. The original target of £20,000 was reached and surpassed in record time, raising £25,175 in total. This enabled us to close the appeal by 17 April.

12.10 The majority of donations have now been collected and a decision process to agree fund allocation has been agreed that will incorporate consultation with the Churches and Foodbanks group. All donations will either be given directly to registered food banks who support residents across the borough or be used by the Council's Hub to purchase additional food and essential items for onward distribution to residents who are most in need.

12.11 In early April, the Council had been contacted by both Newark and Sherwood District Council and Kirklees Council who were keen to found out more about our local fundraising approach that was being promoted across the country by

Spacehive. Of particular interest was the speed of its fundraising success and the local partnership with foodbanks.

Giving For Gedling Volunteer Registration

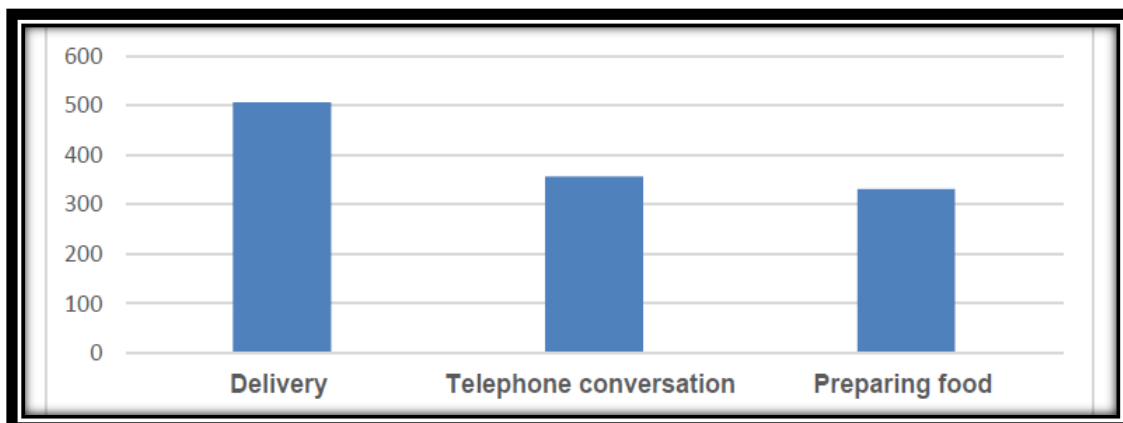
12.12 In March, Council established a volunteer registration portal on its website. The response saw 520 volunteers registered, which has more than adequate for local needs for now, and the portal has therefore now been closed. A thank you letter from the Leader and Deputy Leader has been sent to all those volunteers who have offered their support. The deployment of our volunteers has been kept under constant review.

12.13 Figure 5 shows that 500 of the volunteers registered an interest in supporting deliveries and highlights other types of assistance offered.

12.14 After the first two weekends of the Food Hub being established, when Neighbourhood Wardens were used to do deliveries, all parcels have been delivered by a bank of volunteers. 25 volunteers have been actively engaged in the Richard Herrod Food Hub working on deliveries to date. In addition 10 volunteers from the currently closed Phoenix Farm Gedling Foodbank have supported the Hub, working alongside Leisure staff to pack food parcels for distribution. Case studies of our volunteers can be found at Appendix C.

12.15 Individual volunteers have been contacted regularly being made aware of volunteering opportunities with local groups and wider charities.

Figure 5: Number of volunteers per type of assistance offered



12.16 Deploying volunteers required significant preparation work. A Volunteer Policy was completed and a new Volunteer Handbook and induction form implemented. New activity risk assessments, tool box talks and processes were rapidly developed and tested through dynamic risk assessments. This work is documented in Table F earlier in the report.

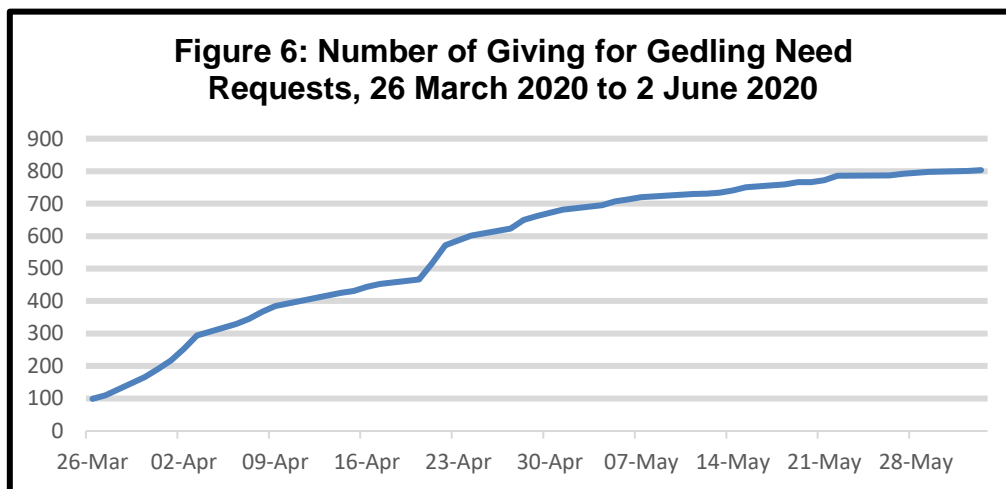
Requests for Assistance

12.17 The Giving for Gedling portal offered an opportunity for local residents to request support from the Council. As of 9 June 2020, the Council had dealt with 824

people requesting support; 135 of these have come through the Nottinghamshire County Council Hub, the remainder through our Giving for Gedling team. Figure 6 below shows the rise in the number of requests received during the course of the outbreak.

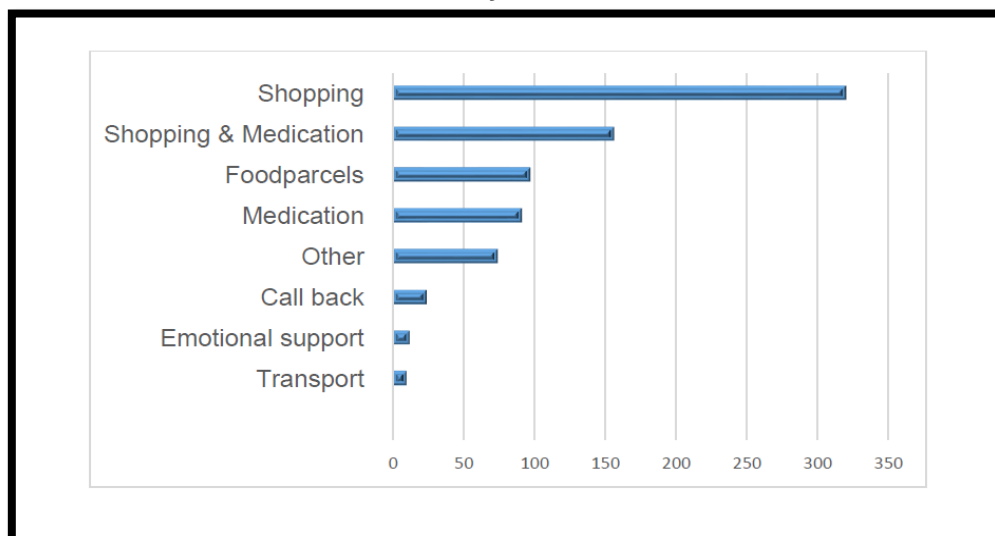
12.18 753 of these cases had been completed after initial advice and follow up. The remaining individuals have been contacted and offered advice and are due a further follow up call to check their status. 97% of all customers had been contacted within 2 days of the initial report for need.

12.19 In April we assessed 414 of these customers. 92% of these have identified themselves as vulnerable according to the Government definitions and 54% of these customers were aged over 70.



12.20 Analysis shows that the highest number of requests refer to shopping and medications delivery to residents' homes. Figure 7 below gives a breakdown of the requests for support of 690 residents who registered between 20 March and 28 May 2020.

Figure 7: Resident "In Need" Requests to Giving for Gedling, 20 March 2020 to 28 May 2020



Richard Herrod Food Hub

12.21 The Richard Herrod Centre, normally an indoor bowls and conference centre, was turned into the main headquarters for the Council's humanitarian response to the coronavirus outbreak. The centre became a super food bank as part of the Giving for Gedling campaign. Since the Hub opened in March 2020, it has provided food parcels for 620 residents. GBC has been cited as good practice in terms of the preparation and establishment of the Hub and this is referred to later in the report.

12.22 The Hub managed by Leisure centre staff was quickly stocked up with food and other supplies using a £20,000 allocation from the Council. An initial supply chain was established by Economic Growth, Community Relations and Leisure staff working collaboratively and this has been managed on an on-going basis by staff at Richard Herrod Centre. By the start of June the total £20,000 allocation had been spent on food and other household supplies for people in need of support and a further £10,000 allocation made from the Giving for Gedling donation fund, agreed in consultation with local Foodbanks and Church Leaders.

12.23 As part of the food and household supply chain work, Armitage Pet Care donated £7,000 worth of pet food supplies to the Giving for Gedling Distribution Hub.

12.24 Following its mini launch, which coincided with the 'Clap For Carers' on Thursday 9 April, the hub has regularly despatched 40–60 parcels per week, additionally covering weekends and bank holidays.



Emergency Food Parcels at Richard Herrod on Friday 3 April ready for dispatch.

12.25 On 14 April 2020, some great partnership support was received from Nottinghamshire Fire Rescue Service crews and Police colleagues who joined the Hub to pack food parcels. Stockhill Fire Station also delivered goods to the centre.

12.26 A great deal of work has been done to develop the calls triaging script, used as residents are contacted by our Giving for Gedling team. This offers a range of referral options to specialist support agencies, charities and sources of help for those

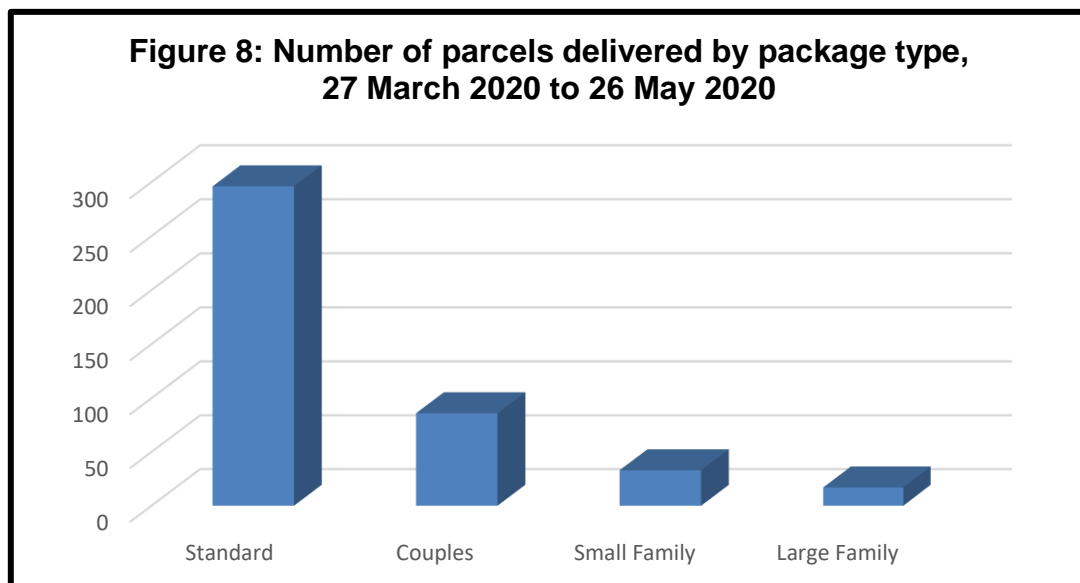
in crisis or with complex needs. We have also added a 'paid for' service which is available to those with unlimited means but who are experiencing difficulty accessing food. This may include Key Workers, those in work but isolating and the over 70s who are in long term isolation but with means to pay.

12.27 Week commencing 18 May 2020 saw the highest demand with 94 food parcels being dispatched from the Hub. These trends indicate the ongoing additional need for this service for now, working collaboratively alongside existing Foodbanks. Data suggests that although requests by the designated Extremely Vulnerable People (EVPs) seem to have decreased, it is within the Vulnerable People (VP) population where increasing demand exists.

12.28 The type of parcels packed and delivered fall into four types to meet the different needs of households as follows:

- Standard
- Couples
- Small Family
- Large Family

Figure 8 shows the proportion of different package types delivered up until 26 May 2020.



12.29 Fresh food has been produced on-site by local caterer "Inn At The Bank" who offered their support during the crisis. They have been operating from the kitchen at Richard Herrod Centre, which was re-commissioned in March in preparation for action. The fresh food is being sent out with all food parcels. This required a risk assessment and tool box talk for the catering functions.

12.30 As of 26 May 2020, 526 food parcels had been delivered, 448 in response to Giving for Gedling need requests and 78 from Nottinghamshire County Council Hub requests. Many case studies regarding the work of the Food Hub and the wider Giving for Gedling team can be viewed at Appendix C.



Emergency Food Parcels being collected from County Hall on 3 April

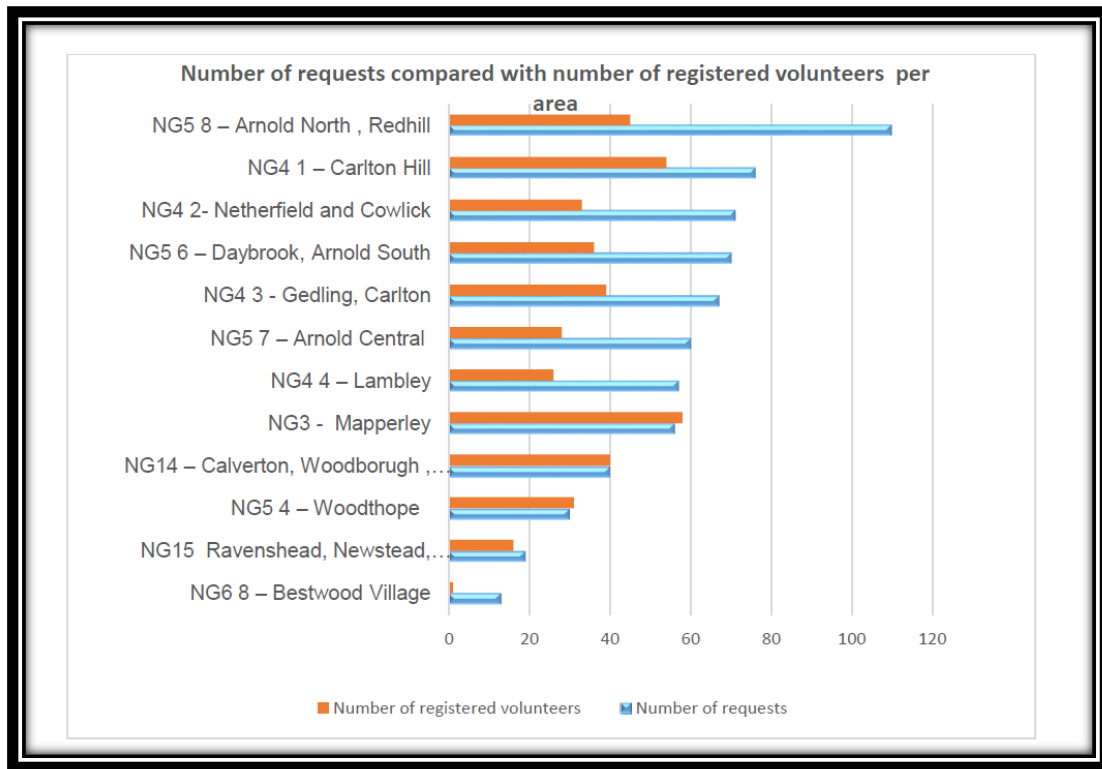
Analysis of Giving for Gedling requests and Volunteering

12.31 The Customer Insight Officer has been supporting the Giving for Gedling team by reporting the analysis of the council's data in relation to Covid-19 related residents' requests for help and registered volunteers. For the period 20 March to 28 May, the main findings have been:

- They were 690 residents' requests for help during this period and about 500 registered volunteers offering to provide help to the local residents
- The majority of residents requests refer to food and medication delivery
- About 50% of residents asking for help are of the age of 70 and over
- The comparison of the age profile of the residents asking for help with the borough's age profile confirms that the council's messages/promotion successfully reached the main age groups within the borough.

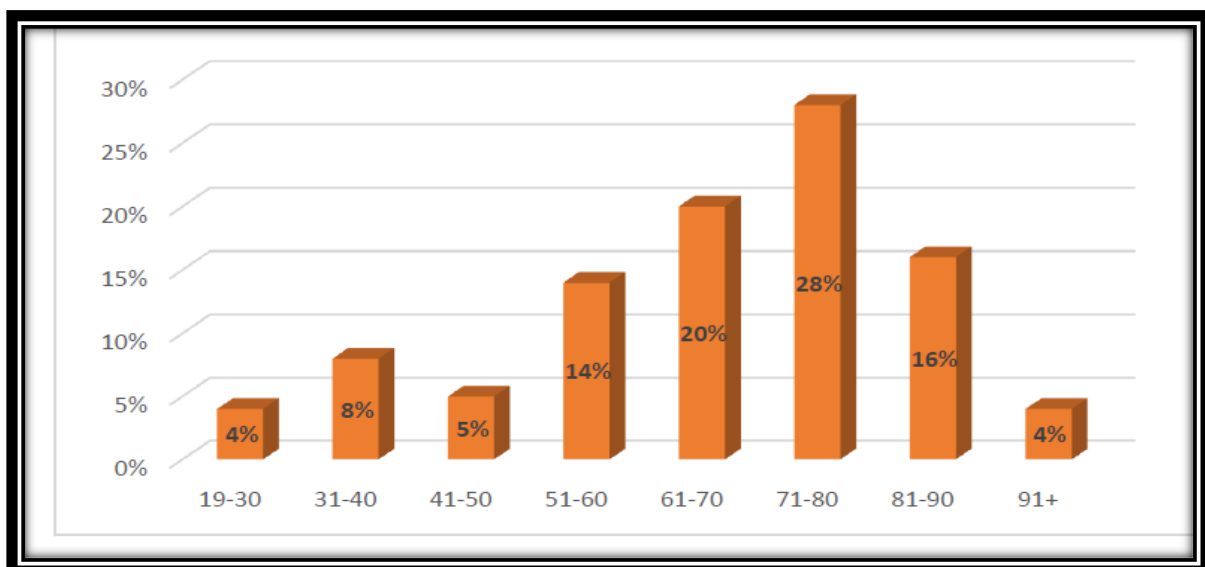
12.32 When comparing the number of the residents' requests with the number of volunteers per local area, analysis shows that there is a sufficient number of registered volunteers to provide assistance per area if required. This is highlighted in Figure 9 below.

Figure 9: Number of requests compared with number of registered volunteers per area, 20 March 2020 to 28 May 2020



12.33 63% of residents who asked for help had their age recoded. 71-80 years old represents the highest proportion of residents asking for help, followed by 61-70 years old and 81-90 years old. The age profile of supported residents is highlighted in Figure 10 below.

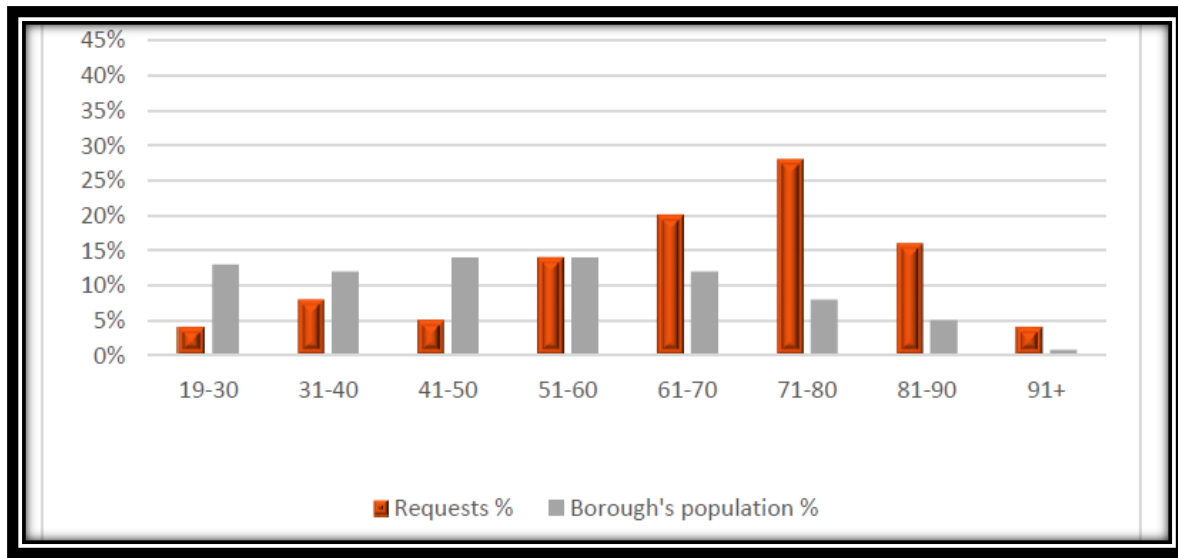
Figure 10: Percentage of “In need” requests per age group, 20 March 2020 to 28 May 2020



12.34 In Figure 11, the comparison of the age profile of the borough’s population and the proportion of residents who asked for help shows that:

- the proportion of residents who asked for help is overrepresented by older age groups when compared with the borough's profile, which in this case is a positive outcome as the need for help is expected to be higher in older population
- the council's messages/promotion reached the main age groups.

Figure 11: Percentage comparison of the requests for help and population of the borough per age group



On-going Funding and Support for Local Groups

12.35 Contact with the local Gedling based groups offering assistance started in May 2020 with a view to assess their on-going needs. This included continuing to signpost groups to the Nottinghamshire County Council Community Support Grant scheme. Officers have been circulating the Community and Voluntary e-Newsletter to all local groups on the Council's database. The May edition was a funding special signposting to a range of opportunities.

12.36 Table I highlights the local groups that have received funding from the Nottinghamshire County Council Coronavirus Community Support Grant scheme:

Table I: Gedling groups receiving Nottinghamshire County Council Coronavirus Community Support Grant scheme funding, as of 11/05/20		
Trussell Trust Arnold Food Bank	£5,000	Providing emergency food, essential toiletries and other household items to individuals and families in need, to help prevent or relieve poverty
Sharewear Clothing Scheme	£1,250	Supplying clothing to families and vulnerable individuals, including 13 wards at Nottingham University Hospital and families supported by Adult Social

		Care and Children's services across the county.
WeRHere	£2,000	One to one counselling support by telephone, Skype or video calling. They also provide support for people who are suffering from anxiety and mental health issues stemming directly from the COVID-19 emergency.
Netherfield Forum	£5,000	Freshly cooked hot lunches, delivered by community volunteers to the surrounding area. They also provide emergency packs of food, toiletries and essentials to those in need.
Cornwater Evergreens Foundation Trust	£3,500	Supporting local older people, including those with early stage dementia by providing cooked meals, food shopping, collecting medication and through regular telephone contact.

12.37 A celebration of the fundraising and spontaneous volunteering effort is scheduled in June and the Giving for Gedling team has engaged with our local spontaneous volunteering groups to build resilience and actively promote a range of National and local VCS funding opportunities. 22 local groups are registered on the NCC Live Volunteer Support Hub. The engagement with these groups involves a regular check in to advise on safe practice, link groups up with funding and other support, and to offer additional volunteers from our register as needed. Case studies of local groups, such as the Calverton Core Centre and Gedling Borough Coronavirus Support Group can be found in Appendix C.

Maintaining Social Prescribing Support

12.38 The Council's has been funded by the South Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Partnership to develop Community Development work and managed to continue to engage with community groups interested in working with NHS Link Workers to support social prescribing. Existing and emerging Facebook groups and a list of community groups that offer support to vulnerable people have been compiled and shared with the Link Workers.

Partnership at a County level

12.39 All districts have worked together to support the roll out of the Nottinghamshire Golden Number as a key humanitarian contact point for the area. Plans to coordinate volunteering were also developed to coincide with the Golden Number launch in early April.

12.40 Officers have played a lead role with colleagues across the County to help synergise approaches, including the mobilisation of volunteers, and this informed our own Giving for Gedling approach. Detailed triage, data exchange and mobilisation between the County Hub and district delivery structures were established. Our local

Giving for Gedling team was structured to support this. Table D shows the representation from the team on LRF Response Cells.

Befriending Project

12.41 The Council has offered a match funding contribution of £2,167 to support a bid led by Rushcliffe CVS to the Nottinghamshire County Council Coronavirus Community Fund for a collaborative Humanitarian response across Gedling, Broxtowe and Rushcliffe. This approach includes the initiation of a bespoke Volunteer Telephone Befriending Service in Gedling led by Rushcliffe CVS, to run for up to a year, focusing on the most vulnerable in our community. We are keen to extend this bid to cover a 12 month period to align better with the existing community development work we have already been leading on, linking with NHS Link Workers. The befriending service will also provide further opportunities for the volunteers we have recruited.

Activity Pack for families

12.42 With Government announcing a staggered return of children to schools in June, there would be many families with children remaining at home for the foreseeable future. In response the Council has been compiling a resource pack for families that are seeking access to free resources. A call out was made to our local volunteers asking if they could help us by providing information on links to free resources via websites and social media. These activities for any age that can be either fun or educational.

Supporting Vulnerable People

12.43 A letter of support was sent to 11,000 elderly Gedling residents in April 2020 offering support and important information during the coronavirus outbreak. The letter asked if the recipient was in need of any support and included contact details for the NCC Community Support Hub and our own Giving for Gedling webpage.

12.44 Once the NHS Volunteers scheme became live in early April the Giving for Gedling team started to refer requests for prescription collections to these volunteers. Council staff had been managing calls for service, doing collections and deliveries, as an interim measure.

12.45 There have been 6 safe and well checks carried out by Neighbourhood Wardens for registered Extremely Vulnerable People.

13 Business Support

13.1 As the Government increased its lockdown restriction grave pressure has been put on businesses locally of all sizes and from all sectors. It soon became apparent that the Council would play a key role in the front line for our businesses, as the Government decision to allocate grant funding and other support was made. Likewise, the Council's role to facilitate and signpost key information and advice has

been vital over the last two months. Assessing Government information and presenting and sharing this with local businesses has been a priority, including through a regular e-newsletter for businesses subscribed to our Keep Me Posted service. We also established a dedicated Support for businesses web page - <https://www.gedling.gov.uk/support-business/>.

Business Support Grants

13.2 During the early weeks of the Response, the work put in by colleagues in Revenues Service and Finance was quite exceptional. This included rapidly interpreting new Government legislation and identifying risks, to managing new substantial budgets, establishing and implementing the new business grants, as well as applying new business rates relief for nearly 50% of business rate payers.

13.3 Central to our support offer has been the allocation of small business and retail, hospitality and leisure grants locally. Careful planning was required to meet expectations of local businesses, while implementing the means and capacity to issue such a significant grant scheme from nothing in the context of staff being re-located from the office into a home working situation. Some agency staff were secured to cover “day to day duties” whilst large resources from the team were focussed on granting business rates reliefs and administering grant payments. A new ICT system was also tested and installed to help manage the sophisticated process of issuing grants.

13.4 Table J below highlights the business grant allocations made by the Council since this fund was open for applications.

	Applications Received	Grants Paid	Total £10K Grants	Total £25K Grants	Total Value of Grant Payment
Cumulative Totals	1,300	1,253	1,102	151	£14,770,000.00
Estimated Eligibility			1,257	158	£16,520,000.00
Percentages Paid			87.67%	95.57%	89.41%

Business Rates Relief

13.5 At the outbreak of Covid-19, the government introduced a new limit to the existing business rates retail discount, increasing the relief amount to 100% of the rates bill. The government then further increased the scope of this relief to include businesses in the hospitality and leisure sectors which were mostly required to close due to the lockdown rules. In addition, an extra business rates relief was introduced to provide 100% relief to providers of early stages childcare (nurseries). These reliefs were administered by the Revenues Service team again with the testing and implementation of new software.

Coronavirus Discretionary Business Grant Fund

13.6 On 2 June 2020, the Council launched the Coronavirus Discretionary Business Grant Fund for local market traders, charities and small and micro businesses in shared offices, which were not previously eligible for business grants. Eligible businesses had two weeks to apply. The council has been awarded a total of £897,250 from Government that can be allocated to support eligible businesses. The Revenues Services team is leading on the management of this. This grant scheme is entirely discretionary and unlike any administered by the team before. All information relating to discretionary business grants, including the application form, can be found at www.gedling.gov.uk/discretionary-grants.

Rental Holiday for Business Tenants

13.7 In addition to awarding business grants the Council made a decision early in April 2020 to offer 35 commercial business tenants additional financial aid to help relieve potential cash-flow issues. This financial aid was in the form of a three month rental holiday to cover the period of April to June, with no requirement to repay the rent after this time. The cost to the Council of awarding the rental holiday was in the region of £101,000 and this amount is included in the figures highlighted in Section 16 Financial Impact Table N.

Guidance for re-opening businesses

13.8 In light of the Government's Covid-19 Recovery Strategy published, the Council has created a [Guidance on reopening businesses](#) web page with relevant documents and additional guidance for businesses.

Arnold Market Food Stalls

13.9 Although Government restrictions had significant impact of the trading opportunities for the retail sector, they still allowed for some food premises to operate in certain circumstances. This enabled us to work with our 3 food market stallholders, to ensure there remained some limited trading on Arnold Market.

14 Homelessness and Housing

Issues facing Gedling

14.1 There have been a number of issues the Council has had to consider with regard to housing provision during the Covid-19 outbreak:

- **Current homeless applicants** - providing them with accommodation so they can social distance and self-isolate, if required.
- **Future homeless applicants** - this includes prisoner release, hospital discharges and domestic violence victims, in addition to the cases who present to the Housing Needs team every week.
- **Rough sleepers** - where it's difficult to social distance and/or self-isolate – limited cases of this in Gedling.

- **Care leavers** - not identified as a significant problem presently.
- **Key workers** - potential to house key workers – ongoing work is being led by Rushcliffe Borough Council which the Council is feeding into.
- **Complex needs** – there is now a new triage process in place, which see all 7 local district authorities in Nottinghamshire working in partnership with NCC to share information about homeless households. This has been implemented within the Housing Needs Team.
- **Student accommodation** – Nottingham City Council have been taking the local lead with this and we will review the findings and any implications.
- **Funding** – a need to understand the government funding pots announced and if there are any other funding opportunities we can bid into.

The Council's Housing Response

14.2 By mid-April 2020, the trend for homelessness presentations had increased nationally, however in Gedling there fortunately had not been a significant increase. Nonetheless, our Housing Needs team continued to work hard from the outset of the crisis to ensure our homeless applicants were kept safe. The situation was made more difficult with existing key nightly accommodation providers having to close due to the lockdown. Work was undertaken to review all remaining accommodation available to ensure the most effective social distancing measures were in place. There was also a requirement to ensure providers supplied basic facilities such as a kettle, fridge and adequate equipment to cook food. Housing Officers have arranged and personally delivered food parcels to all our households in temporary accommodation to ensure those most vulnerable were supported.

14.3 By the end of March 2020, social landlords had ceased the majority of their services including the advertising and allocation of empty properties. This meant that homeless households in temporary accommodation had little prospect of finding permanent move on accommodation during the lockdown. This has resulted in an overall increase in the numbers of individuals placed in temporary accommodation. Government guidance was issued at the end of April stipulating that social landlords should focus on essential activity including the facilitating of move on accommodation from those in temporary accommodation and a small amount of void properties are now being made available. As of 20/05/20, the Council were accommodating 34 households.

14.4 The Council has sought to complete work on securing a variety of temporary accommodation contracts with serviced apartments. Such contracts are in place in case we need these types of units. In March 2020, Legal Services and Welfare Support colleagues worked together to put in place framework agreements to access this temporary accommodation swiftly.

Assessing on-going and future demand

14.5 A 25% increase in domestic violence presentations has been reported nationally, but this has not been reflected in Gedling with only a small number of cases requiring support. The support required for prison release has also been minimal during this period.

14.6 A summary of the options appraisal for temporary accommodation is being finalised at the time of writing this report. Once approved, officers can progress with

the next steps to increase the amount of temporary accommodation available to the Council in the medium to long term.

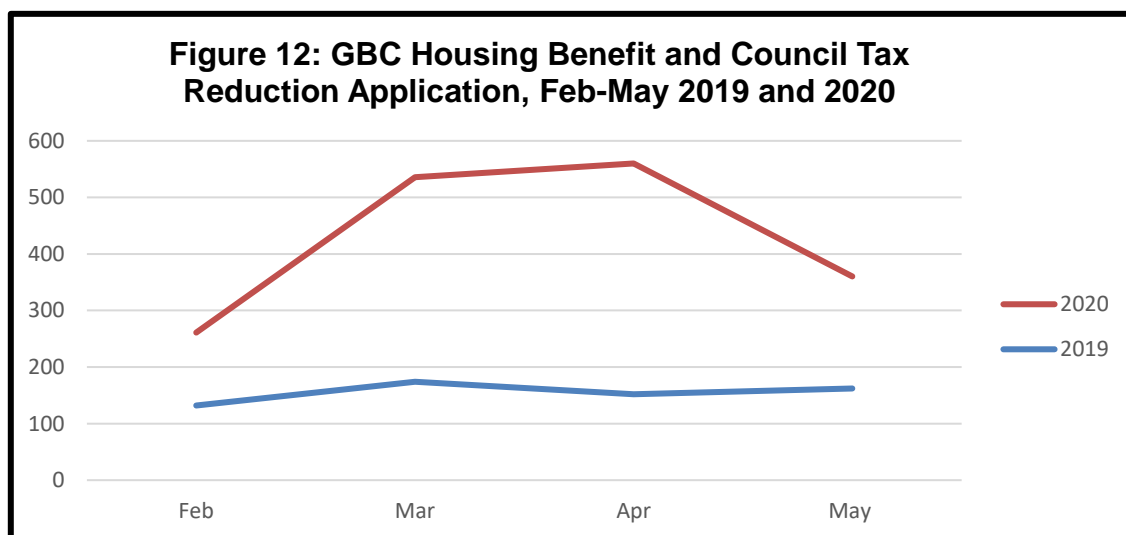
Rough sleepers

14.7 These are currently being housed, directed by the Government’s “everyone in” approach. There has been an increased numbers of referrals to Framework across Nottinghamshire. We are working with partners such as Street Outreach where we receive any referrals regarding on-street begging and seek to offer temporary accommodation. Across the County it is still proving difficult to get rough sleepers tested for Covid-19.

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction Scheme

14.8 During the course of the Covid-19 Emergency Response, Table K and Figure 12 show there has been a considerable peak in applications for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction compared to the same periods in 2019. However, it appears towards the end of May 2020 the application number had started to drop.

Table K: GBC Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction Applications, Feb-May 2019 and 2020 comparison		
	2019	2020
February	132	129
March	174	362
April	152	408
May	162	198



Council Tax Hardship Fund

14.9 The Council has used government grant funding to establish a Council Tax Hardship Fund to assist residents who need support with their finances as a result of the Coronavirus outbreak. The Fund helps working age families who are in receipt of Council Tax support, meaning they could receive a reduction of up to £300 in their Council Tax. Qualifying households automatically receive the reduction and do not need to contact the council in order to get the discount. By the beginning of June, awards totalling £346,042.11 had been made to 1462 individual households.

14.10 An additional discretionary hardship scheme was also made available to anyone in receipt of council tax support who are experiencing financial difficulties. This is not an automatic award and an application from needs to be submitted. There is no automatic entitlement guarantee and awards are allocated depending on the individual circumstances of each claim received.

Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates increased

14.11 LHA rates have been static for several years but it was announced earlier in the year that they would be increasing from April 2020. The increases were applied early March 2020 prior to the pandemic outbreak. However, further Government guidance issued announced that the rates were to be updated again due to the Covid-19 situation. Affected claims were reworked on the 8 April 2020 and 1263 households had had their Housing Benefit increased backdated to 1 April 2020.

Additional Earnings Disregard

14.12 The Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) increased both Working Tax Credit (WTC) and Universal Credit (UC) by £20.00 per week for 2020/21 as part of its Covid-19 measures. DWP also made a corresponding change to the Housing Benefit regulations to offset the impact of the income increase by increasing the current weekly earnings disregard applied in that calculation from £17.10 to £37.10 per week. This change has two additional effects on claims. Firstly that a proportion of the claims with earnings would benefit from this change where they are not in receipt of WTC, so receiving an enhanced award. Secondly, claims would have an enhanced benefit between the 6 April and the actual date of increase in WTC as applied to the claim. A total of 432 Housing Benefit claims were updated on the 8 April 2020 following this announcement.

14.13 Council Tax Reduction is a local scheme. The current scheme for 2020/21 allows updating changes to be applied retrospectively when required. The current earnings disregard had been set in line with the Housing Benefit regulations at £17.10 per week. This has now been updated again in line with the Housing Benefit changes prescribed by the Minister of State for Pensions to £37.10 per week. This increase was applied on the 23 April 2020 and 395 existing Council Tax Reduction customers benefited from the increase in earning disregard.

Overpayment recovery suspension

14.14 The Government announced that recovery of all overpayments should be suspended for a period of 3 months. As such, deductions for the recovery of Universal Credit and other legacy benefit overpayments, Social Fund loans and Tax Credit debts were paused. Although there was no Government guidance issued, Local Authorities could follow this example and stop recovery of outstanding overpayments from ongoing Housing Benefit. A decision was made to implement these measures and 310 existing Housing Benefit customer had a 3 month "holiday period" applied to their claims. For the period 20 April 2020 to the 20 July 2020 those 310 customers will receive their full entitlement to Housing Benefit with no deductions being made. From the 21 July, the original weekly recovery instalments plans will again be applied.

15 Community Safety

Crime Trends

15.1 Partnership working has been on-going between the Council and the local Neighbourhood Policing Team. The local Neighbourhood Policing Inspector has reported that Operation Reacher continued to be successful during the lockdown period. In terms of the general crime trends:

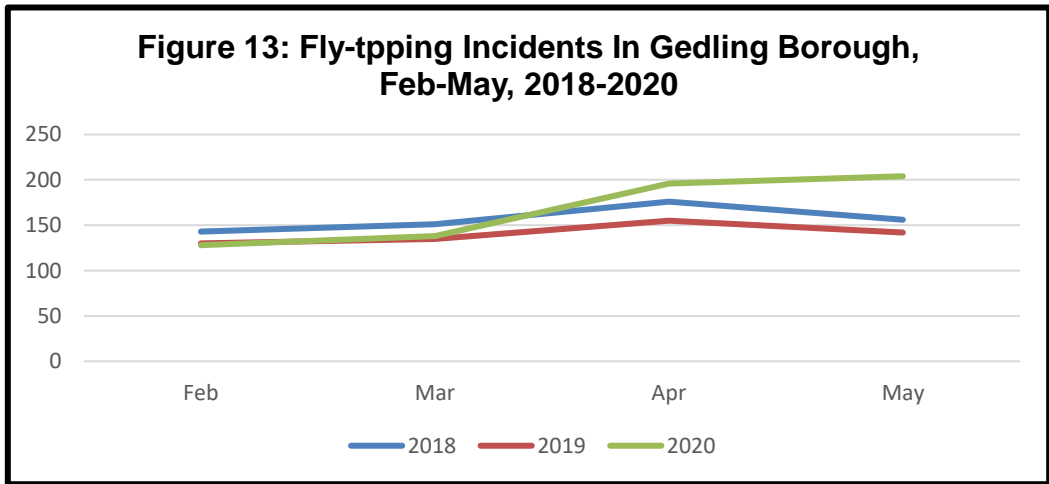
- Burglary and vehicle crime levels are down on a 12 month rolling average
- Violence crime has remained static with some small increases in domestic abuse
- Anti-social behaviour had initially fallen during the period but some increases are now being reported
- Due to the closure of many retail businesses, shop theft has also reduced.

Trading Standards

15.2 The Council has also shared advice from the National Trading Standards Scams Team on how to protect yourself from scams and Nottinghamshire County Council listings on coronavirus-related scams operating across Nottinghamshire.

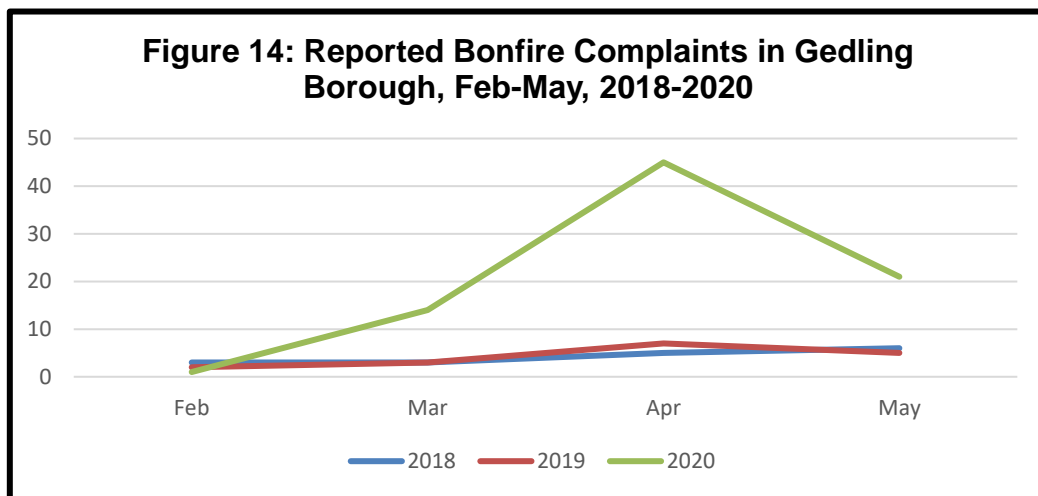
Fly-tipping and other nuisance

15.3 Local reports of fly-tipping, bonfires and noise nuisance reports have increased during the pandemic. Figure 13 shows below that in May 2020 the level of fly-tipping reports were almost 30% higher than 12 months previously.

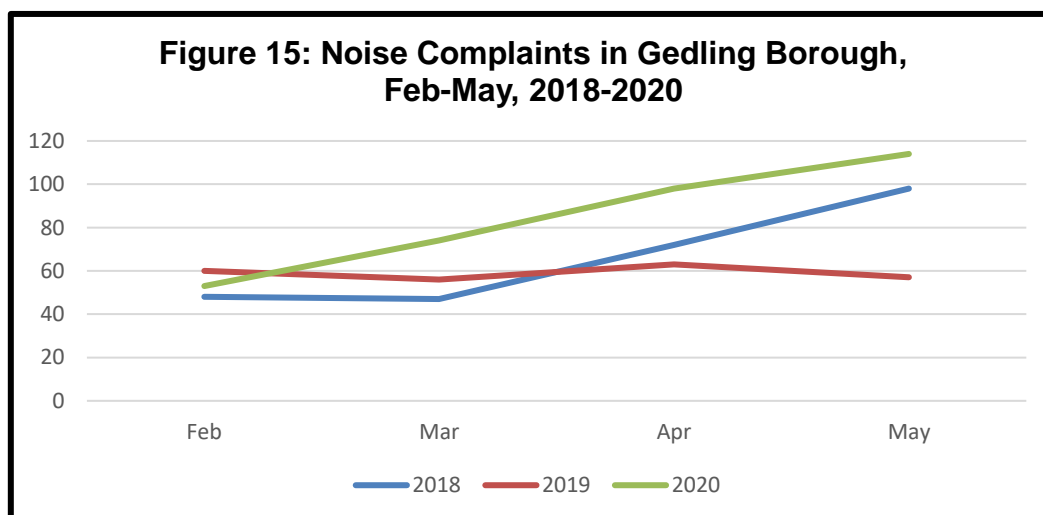


15.4 Local Police figures now show an increase in anti-social behaviour. This may reflect bonfire issues and noise related incidents, rather than on street incidents given the enforced nature of the lockdown. Police colleagues will be exploring these data further. Although, reported bonfires had reduced in May 2020 they were still four times higher than 12 months previously. The number of bonfire reports in April 2020 were 85% higher than April 2019, perhaps reflecting residents' prolonged stay at home and the closure of waste and recycling centres during the lockdown period. The Council did undertake some external communications to advise the community

regarding bonfire safety in April. Figure 14 shows a comparison of bonfire reports for February to May in years 2018, 2019 and 2020.



15.5 Noise complaints have also increased during lockdown with May 2020 50% higher than May 2019. Comparisons with 2018 and 2019 are shown in Figure 15.



Safeguarding support pages

15.6 A [new section on the council's website](#) with details on safeguarding for children, adults and vulnerable adults, as well as information on domestic abuse, has been developed. The pages have links and contact details for a number of agencies who can offer help, advice and support on safeguarding as well as a link to report any concerns online to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

Domestic Violence

15.7 Given the challenges faced by those affected domestic abuse, the Council has supported the Home Office domestic violence campaign, #YouAreNotAlone. The Home Office has worked with a number of key partners and charities to launch this new national campaign and we pushed this information out to our staff and communities in April 2020.

15.8 The Council has also promoted Equation’s launch of a new helpline email address for male domestic abuse survivors.

16 Communications

16.1 As part of the early health and safety response, initial messages regarding hand washing and coronavirus awareness posters were circulated with the organisation. However, from March 2020, when the pandemic was scaled up, the role of the Corporate Communication Team became key. This team have been involved from the first IMT meeting which considered the emerging crisis. The Communications Manager became a key member of the IMT and ensured the communications response involved a regular feed of information to elected members, staff and the public through wide ranging digital media.

16.2 Table L below shows the headlines from the Communications Covid-19 Response. This included regular press releases about the closure of facilities or suspension of services, e-circulars, staff information, social media and website information.

Table L: Gedling Borough Council Covid-19 Communications Response, March to May 2020
23+ press releases sent out
28+ press enquiries received
14 Latest News emails sent
26 Intranet Articles published
21 staff email newsletters
10 Councillor Contacts emails sent
Supported / promoted 17+ Social Media campaigns
17,000 visits to the council’s coronavirus website
80% engagement rate for Keep Me Posted emails in May
3,000 new Keep Me Posted subscribers, now at 32,178
5,000 messages sent through the Council’s social media accounts
188 social media posts over the three month period

Dedicated webpage

16.3 A dedicated web page was established with all the latest information relating to Coronavirus - <http://www.gedling.gov.uk/coronavirus/>, as well dedicated web space for Giving for Gedling and Business support.

Weekly Communications Update

16.4 The Communications Team also produced a weekly Communications update throughout the Response period, which informed all Councillors and senior managers, of the previous week’s activity and reach on social media and the Keep Me Posted e-circular platform, website visits, press releases and plans for the week ahead.



Example Giving for Gedling Food Parcel

Blue lights shone on Richard Herrod Centre and Civic Centre

16.5 The blue lights were beamed onto our new Food Hub in support of Key Workers on Thursday 9 April 2020 and this was promoted on social media. The Council paid a further tribute to NHS and key workers fighting coronavirus on Thursday 17 April by lighting up the Civic Centre at 8pm to coincide with the Clap for Carers.

Council Staff Show Support for Fellow Key Workers

16.6 Council staff were asked to create a film to show their support for key workers. Employees were asked to film themselves clapping on a mobile phone and then send it to the Communications team who edited and merged it into one film to show our support for key workers across the country.

Weekly Councillor Update

16.7 With the lockdown underway and social distancing a requirement the Council recognised the challenge of not only keeping its staff informed of developments but also its Councillors. As a result, the Communications Teams have produced a weekly e-newsletter for our elected members to keep them abreast of the changes to services and our evolving emergency response and humanitarian efforts.

National Recognition for Gedling's Covid-19 Response

16.8 The Council received national recognition for the work undertaken in response to the COVID-19 outbreak from three sources and this was also cited separately on a regional circular.

16.9 GovDelivery (Granicus) wrote a case study about the Council following our successful campaign to raise money for local food banks and the effective use of

email - <https://uk.granicus.com/blog/this-councils-covid-19-email-campaign-raised-21k-for-local-food-banks/>. This positive feedback highlights the effective impact using of the Council's communications channels.

16.10 The Local Government Association (LGA) made reference to the Council in their national COVID-19 good council practice case studies for the work done on the Giving for Gedling campaign. This is great national recognition this local campaign. Two case studies can be viewed on the LGA website - <https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/coronavirus-information-councils/covid-19-good-council-practice>.

16.11 The New Local Government Network also included us in their national weekly roundup of Council responses to the COVID-19 outbreak. This was again national recognition for the work being done - <http://www.nlgn.org.uk/public/2020/councils-and-covid-19-the-response-5/#>.

16.12 In addition, East Midlands Councils' recognised the Council in one of its weekly Policy Briefs, as a COVID-19 good practice council, referencing our Giving for Gedling funding campaign. The brief can be viewed [here](#).

VE Day Commemoration

16.13 While plans to commemorate VE Day in the community had to be put on hold, the Council promoted to residents how they might wish to mark the day at home on Friday 8 May 2020. This included:

- Circulating an online pack to help plan a party at home
- Sharing photos or videos of VE Day celebrations to the Countywide Inspire Picture Archive
- Signposting to Home learning packs for 7-14 year olds
- Itinerary of key milestones for remembering on the day
- Promoting activities and information on GBC Facebook, Twitter and Gedling Events webpage.

17 Health and Wellbeing

Promoting Well-being

17.1 The Council has been regularly circulating the Health and Wellbeing e-newsletter offering advice during the Coronavirus crisis. This has included information on:

- Giving for Gedling
- NHS online services
- Nottinghamshire Healthcare Trust (NHT) Mental Health Helpline
- Free leisure online workouts
- Harmless support for those at risk of harm
- Change4Life advice
- Advice on staying fit and healthy during lockdown, including for children and the over 65s
- Health for Kids and Health for Teens websites

- The Warm Homes Hub
- Mental Health Awareness Week 18-24 May, including Every Mind Matters, Harmless, MIND and NHS advice
- Guide for overcoming anxiety for children 9+
- Bereavement support
- Supporting people with dementia
- Advice on managing long-term conditions.



Hot Food Meal provided with Giving for Gedling food parcel

On-line Leisure Workouts

17.2 Leisure staff have uploaded a number of free, online workout videos. Residents were asked to visit the [Carlton Forum Leisure Centre Facebook page](#) and give their 'As Many As You Can Manage' workout a go.

Blood Donors UK

17.3 Blood Donors UK have been able to continue to use our Richard Herrod Centre despite many locations across the county having to close. This is a vital service to the NHS that we were pleased to be playing our part in helping this to continue.

Other Outcomes from the Response Phase

18 Financial Impact

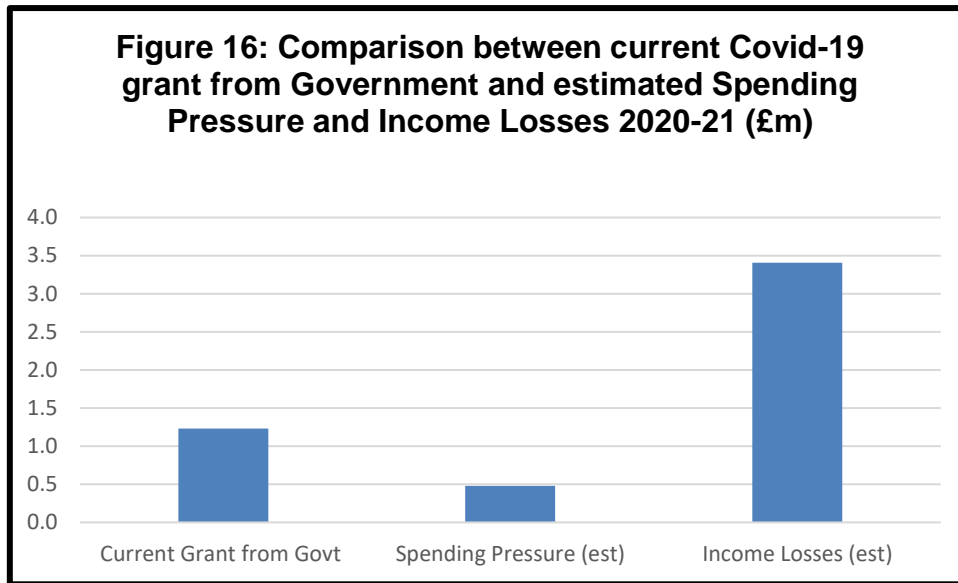
18.1 As part of the nationwide Response assessment, the Council has been submitting a Covid-19 financial report to Government. The May 2020 submission showed that the Council had received £1,232,567 of the £3.2bn grant funding issued

to local government. Tables M and N below show the total estimated spending pressure faced by the Council for 2020-21 to be £478,000 and the total estimated income losses for this period to be £15,120,000. It should be noted, the estimated income loss figure includes the impact of Business Rates Reliefs of £10,783,000 that are funded by government grants, and the collection fund losses of £930,000 that relate to precepting authorities. Therefore, the total income loss forecast to be suffered by Gedling in 2020/21 is £3,407,000.

Table M: GBC Estimated spending pressure, source Covid-19 financial return, May 2020			
	April 2020	May 2020 (estimate)	2020-21 (estimate)
Housing: homelessness services	£0.077m	£0.022m	£0.099m
Finance and corporate: ICT and remote working	£0.052m	£0.016m	£0.072m
Finance and corporate: Revenues and benefits	£0.008m	£0.013m	£0.022m
Other: shielding	£0.039m	£0m	£0.039m
Other: PPE	£0.023m	£0m	£0.023m
Other: Unachieved savings/delayed projects	£0.036m	£0.036m	£0.143m
Other: Excluding above	£0.113m	£0.051m	£0.265m
Total Estimated Spending Pressure	£0.260m	£0.107m	£0.478m

Table N: GBC Estimated Income Losses, source Covid-19 financial return, May 2020			
	April 2020	May 2020 (estimate)	2020-21 (estimate)
Business Rates	£ 0.964 m	0.964 m	£ 11.358 m
Council Tax receipt losses total	£ 0.055 m	£ 0.370 m	£ 0.650 m
Total Collection Fund Losses	£ 1.019 m	£ 1.334 m	£ 12.008 m
Cultural & Related SFC losses	£ 0.242 m	£ 0.208 m	£ 1.965 m
Planning & Development SFC losses	£ 0.049 m	£ 0.079 m	£ 0.207 m
Other SFC income losses	£ 0.179 m	£ 0.075 m	£ 0.326 m
Total Sales, Fees and Charges Losses	£ 0.480 m	£ 0.382 m	£ 2.672 m
Commercial income losses	£ 0.088 m	£ 0.089 m	£ 0.195 m
Other income losses	£ 0.048 m	£ 0.033 m	£ 0.245 m
Non-collection Fund Losses Total	£ 0.616 m	£ 0.504 m	£ 3.112 m
TOTAL ESTIMATED INCOME LOSS	£ 1.635 m	£ 1.838 m	£ 15.120 m

18.2 Figure 16 below highlights the estimated spending pressure and income losses due to Covid-19 as a comparison to the Government grant received to date.



Emergency Response Budget Allocations

18.3 Outside of the business grant and hardship support funding, other specific budgets have been allocated to support the Council's Emergency Response operations. These include allocations from Council budgets, Government grants and donations from the Giving for Gedling Appeal. Table O shows the expenditure from the four key Response Budgets as of 2 June 2020.

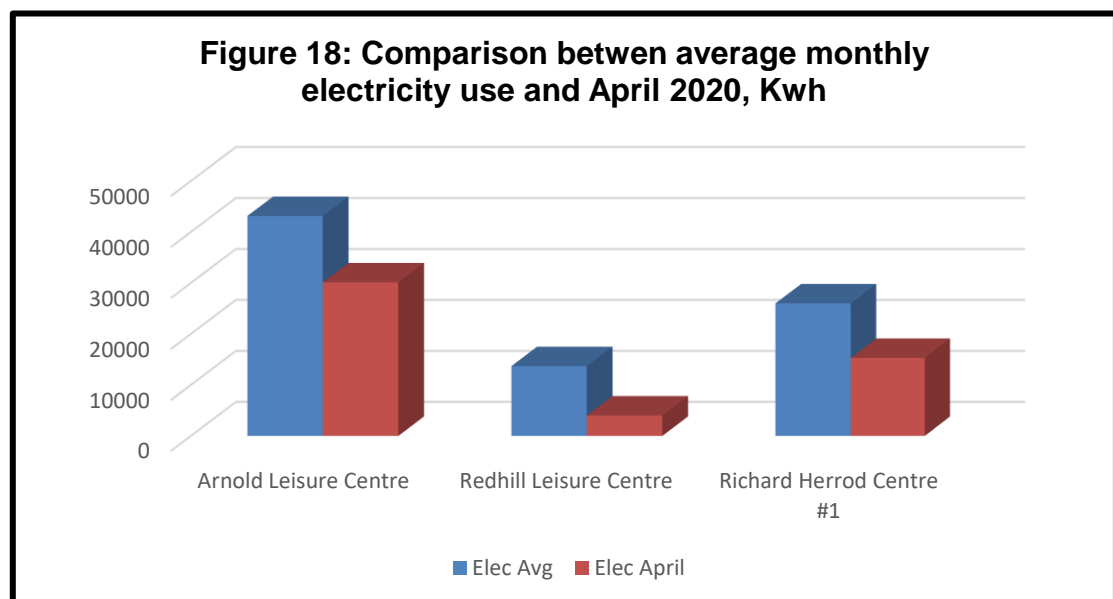
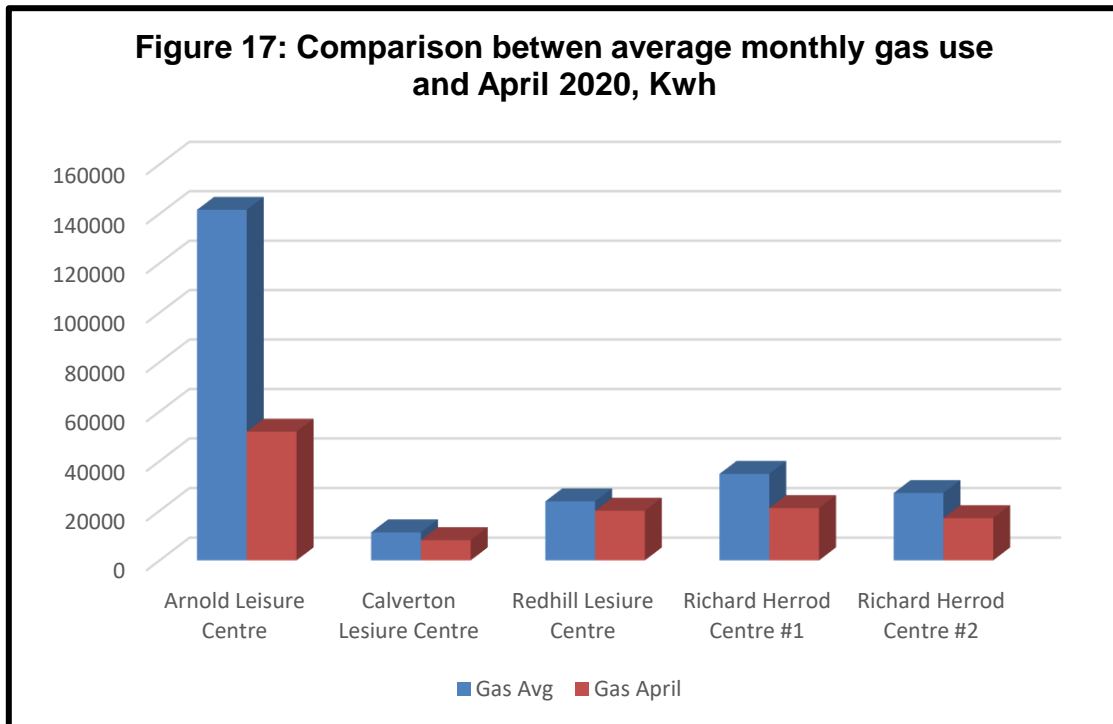
Table O: Gedling Borough Council Emergency Response Budgets, 9 June 2020			
Budget	Source	Expenditure	Allocation
Covid-19 Response Fund	GBC Reserves: £50,000	£49,966	PPE Revs and Bens Agency Staff Richard Herrod Kitchen Tele conferencing Lighting and banners Over 70s Letters postage
Covid-19 Emergency Fund	Government Grant: £54,182	£54,000	Foodbanks Richard Herrod Hub St. George's Centre Sharewear Forecasted Allocation for Homelessness Support
Humanitarian Hub	Covid-19 Emergency Fund: £20,000	£21,002	Emergency food and household supplies*
Giving for Gedling	Donations from Spacehive fundraiser and elected members: £26,414	£10,000	Allocated to support ongoing emergency food parcels and local Foodbank needs

*An additional donation of £7,000 worth of pet food from Armitage Pet Care not included

19 Energy Usage

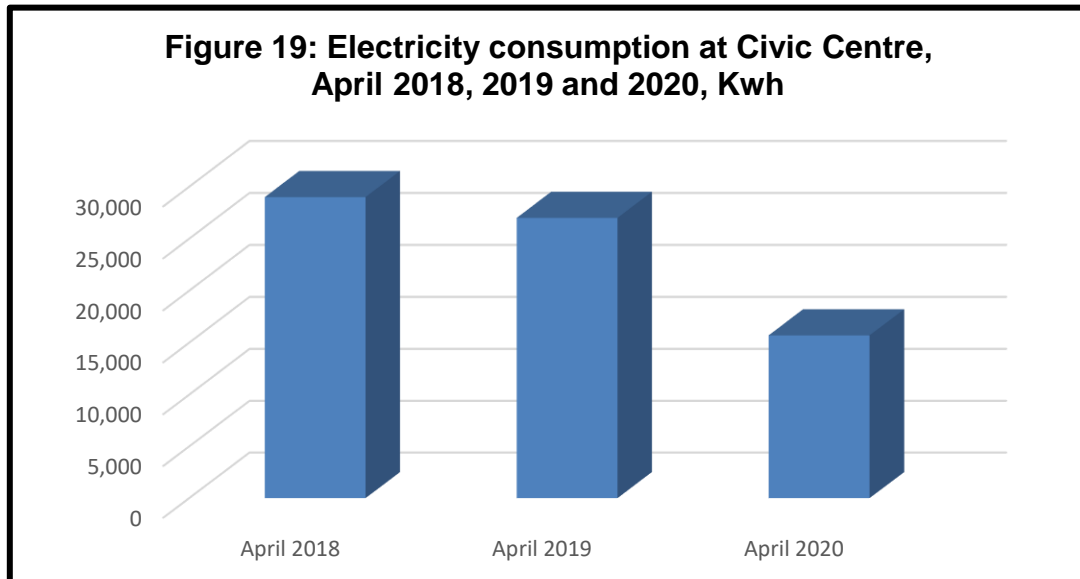
Leisure Centres

19.1 There has been a reduction in energy usage at all leisure centre sites during the period of closure. Joint use provision figures have not been available at this stage. Fuel oil is also used at Calverton but there are no figures for this either as it is a joint use recharge also. Figures 17 and 18 below show a comparison between the average monthly energy use and use in April 2020 for each leisure centre site.



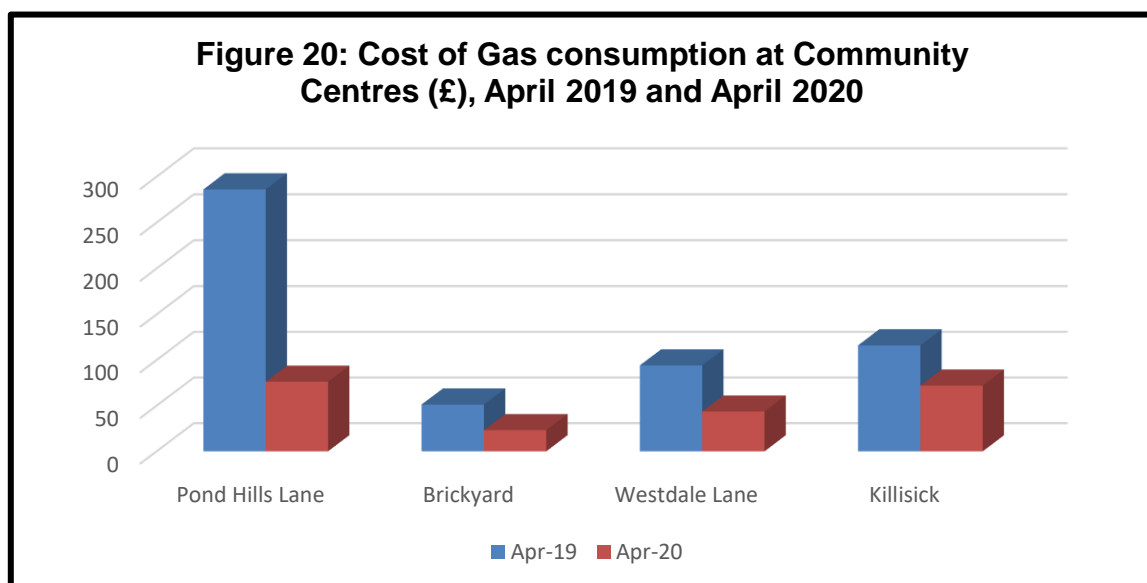
Civic Centre

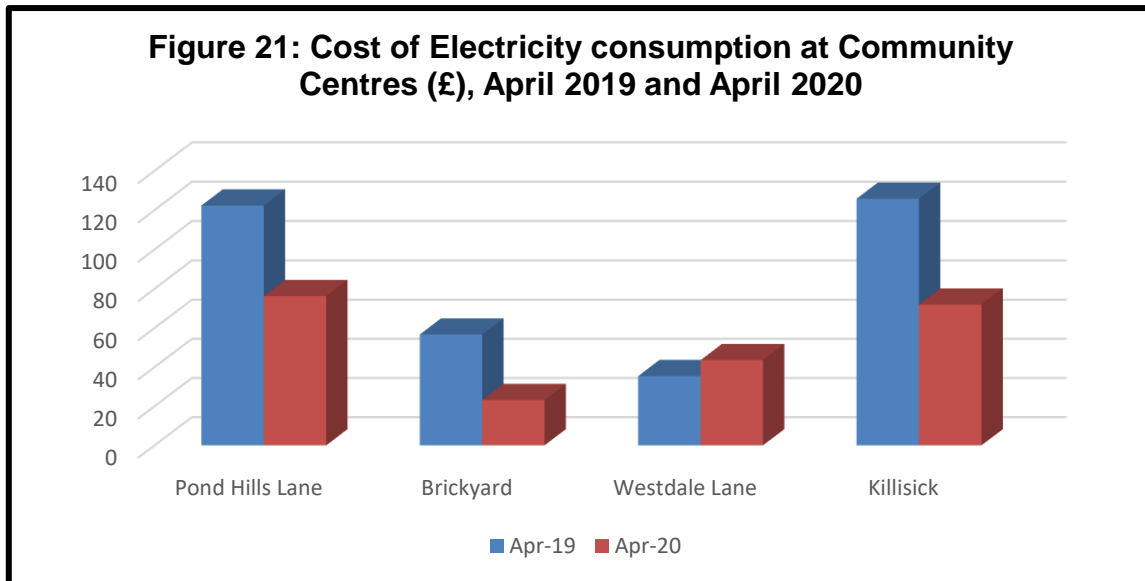
19.2 Figure 19 below shows a considerable reduction in electricity use in April 2020 compared to April 2018 and April 2019 for the Civic Centre. In terms of the Depot and Jubilee House site, this hasn't shut down at all so we do not expect any reduction in usage across these sites. In terms of gas we have still been heating the buildings, as there has been some limited usage across the sites, so limited change regarding gas consumption is anticipated.



Community Centres

19.3 Community Centres were closed to bookings in March 2020. Figures 20 and 21 below, show a reduction in energy costs for all community centres, excluding Burton Road, when comparing April 2020 with April 2019.





20 Air Quality

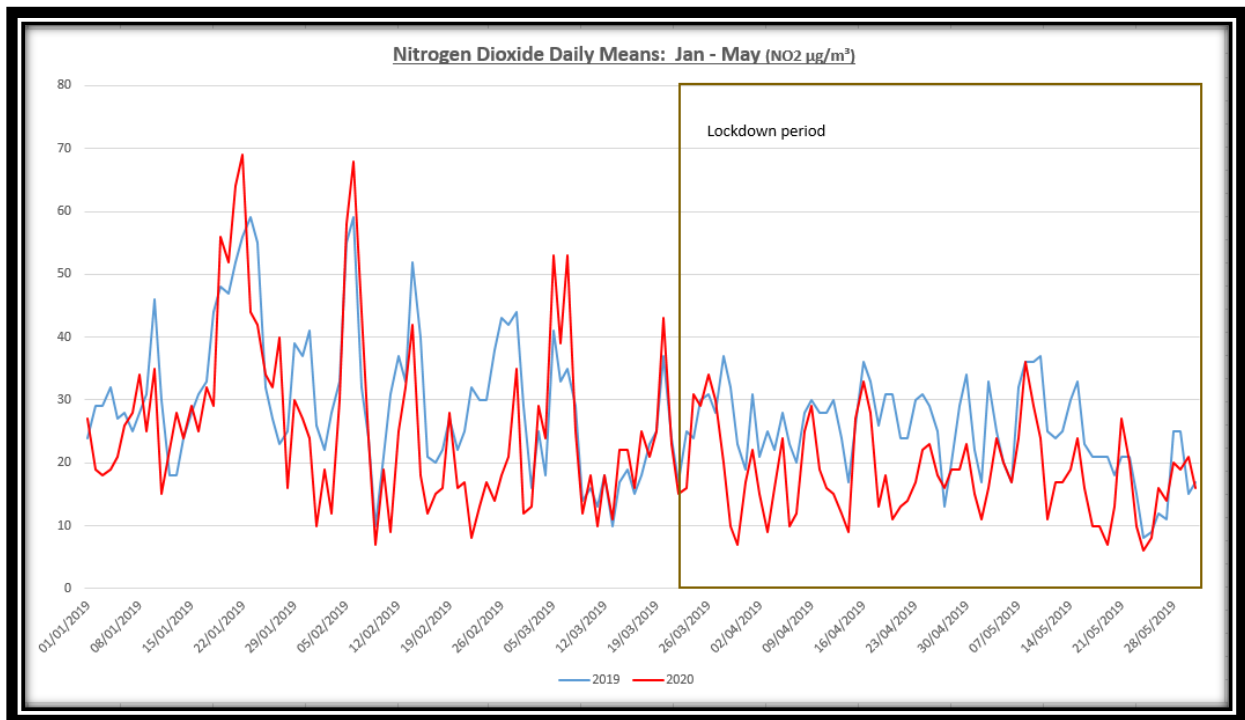
20.1 A report from the Council’s Scientific Officer in Public Protection highlights it is not easy to make comparisons with air quality data. The weather has a bearing on pollution levels that makes direct 2019 to 2020 comparisons very difficult. The lockdown happened to coincide with the dry, warm and unusually predominantly easterly breezy spring weather.

20.2 The Council monitors for one pollutant of concern Nitrogen Dioxide (NO²) using two methods, one a continuous monitor in Daybrook Square and then throughout the Borough using diffusion tubes (these are left in place for a month so giving a monthly average reading). The diffusion tube data is fed into an annual average so it will take a while for any meaningful analysis of this.

20.3 Figure 22 below shows NO² levels at our continuous monitor in Daybrook Square between January and June in both 2019 with 2020. When comparing monthly figures during the 2020 lockdown period with those 12 months earlier, there was a 46% decline in levels of NO² in April and a 29% decline in May. However the true nature of a reduction in air pollution remains uncertain. It should be noted the percentage change during lockdown period will be influenced by both a reduction in traffic and the weather conditions. The Scientific Officer has reported the monitor was perhaps recording levels that you would normal find in urban background sites (as opposed to road side).

20.4 As for the other pollutant of concern which is particle pollution the outlook here is even less conclusive as the weather meant that particle pollution (including from natural sources) was brought up from mainland Europe and so we actually had a pollution episode for particles during April 2020. Ground level Ozone too has also been a problem and many cities have seen large increases in levels.

Figure 22: NO² levels at Daybrook Square monitor, January to June, 2019 and 2020



21 Other Support Offered by the Council

Gardening for the NHS

21.1 Staff from Parks and Street Care (PASC) have helped the City hospital by cleaning up one of its overgrown garden areas making it a much better for staff working long and unsociable hours to take a break.



Parks and Street Care staff supporting City Hospital

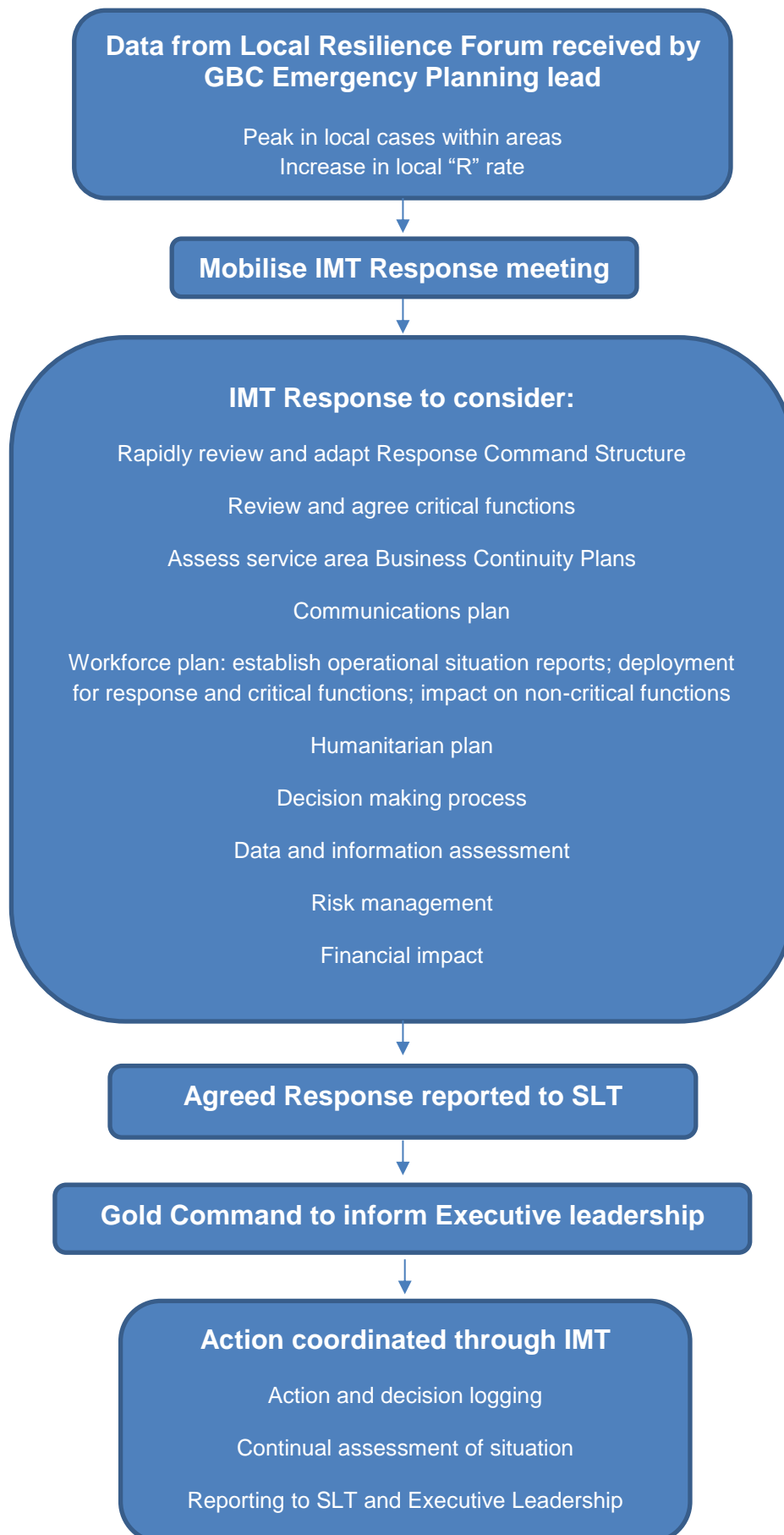
Leisure Check-in with Customers

21.2 Leisure colleagues have been calling customers on their database to offer support and enquire if they were aware of the on line exercise sessions that had been prepared. Feedback from customers has been positive, with some stating that it went above and beyond what they were expecting from the Council.

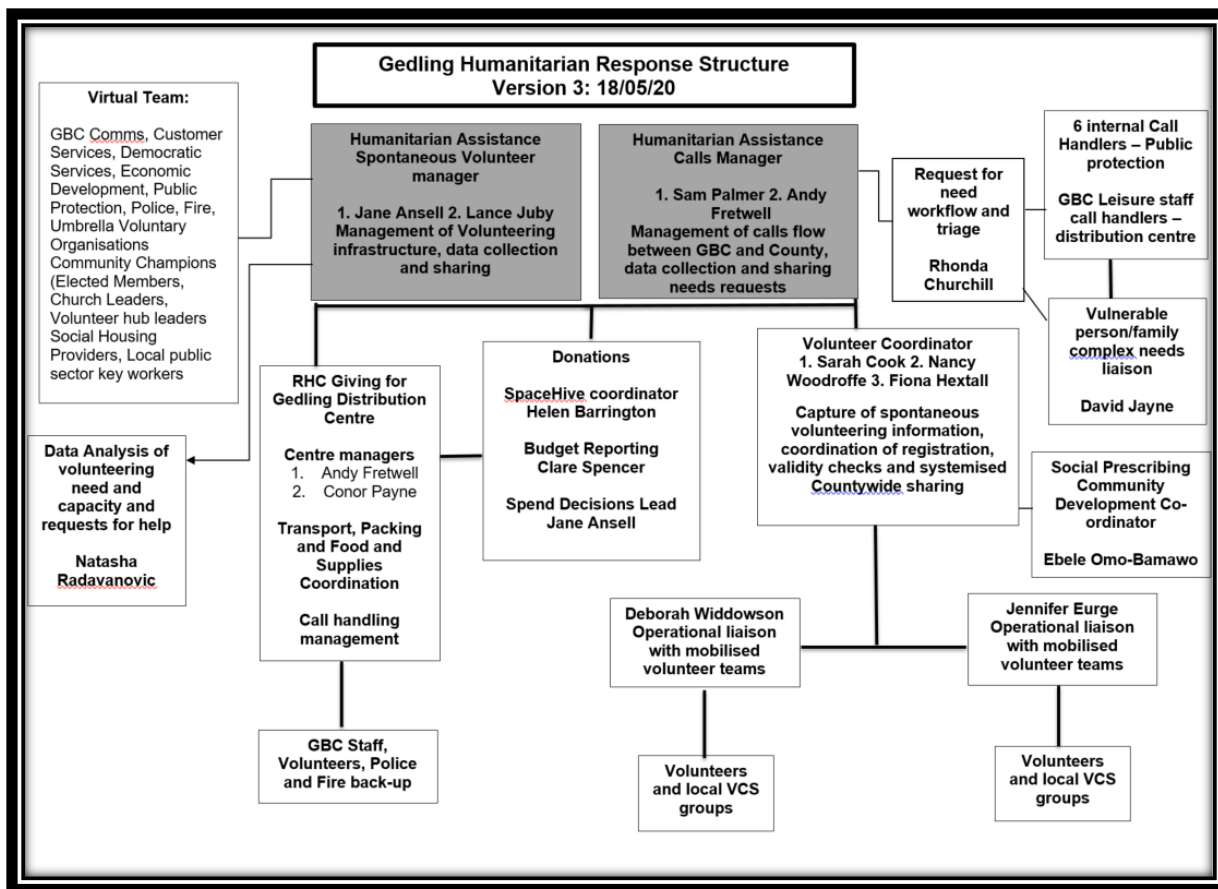
22 On-going Response to Covid-19

22.1 As the nation begins to emerge from lockdown, and the Council starts to focus on its Reset Strategy, the Covid-19 Response phase will continue at a reduced level over the next few weeks and months. Understanding the Council's role in Contact tracing will be part of this, as will the on-going humanitarian support offer for those still in need. IMT Response will review and assess this situation regularly not only to recommend a possible stand down of Response functions, but also to consider a re-mobilisation of this phase in the event of a second local wave of Covid-19 cases. The Council will remain on stand-by for this possibility. Figure 23 below, highlights the workflow for mobilising our Response for a second wave scenario.

Figure 23: Covid-19 Second Wave: GBC Response Mobilisation Process



Appendix A: Giving for Gedling Team



Appendix B

Table Q: Leader Decisions to Suspend, Restrict or Reinstate Services during Covid-19 outbreak, as of 22/05/20	
Date	Decision to suspend/restrict
20/03	Temporary closure of Council operated Leisure Facilities to the public, from Saturday 21 March 2020.
20/03	Temporary closure of Council operated Community Centres to the public, from Saturday 21 March 2020.
20/03	Temporary closure of Council operated Carlton Hub to the public, from Saturday 21 March 2020.
20/03	Temporary closure of Council operated Bonington Theatre to the public, from 21 March 2020.
20/03	Cancellation until further notice of all Council run and commissioned community events with immediate effect
20/03	Cancellation until further notice of all existing temporary licences issued for privately run events on Council parks and opens spaces with immediate effect.
20/03	Prohibition until further notice of the issuing of temporary licences to use the Council's parks and open spaces for privately run events, with immediate effect.
23/03	National Non-Domestic Rates – expanded retail discount 2020/21.
23/03	National Non-Domestic Rates – Nursery discount 2020/21.
23/03	Temporary closure of the Council operated children's play areas and play facilities in Council parks and open spaces, from close of business on 23 March 2020.
23/03	Closure of Council operated public conveniences from close of business on 23 March 2020.
23/03	Closure of Gedling Country Park Café 1881, from close of business on 23 March 2020.
24/03	To suspend administration of taxi licences - the knowledge test and safeguarding test by the Council.
24/03	Administration of taxi licences, in that the Council will no longer be able to administer new applications from drivers for licences.
25/03	A restriction on the operation of stalls at Arnold Market, so that only essential retail is available for sale at the market such as grocery and food items.
25/03	The restriction of access by the public to the Civic Centre building, except for emergency appointments which must be conducted face to face.
27/03	Temporary closure of Council car parks which serve Council parks and open spaces, from close of business on 26 March 2020.
30/03	Temporary suspension of bulky waste services from 31 March 2020
30/03	Temporary suspension of glass collections from 31 March 2020.
31/03	National Non-Domestic Rates – expanded retail discount 2020/21.
01/04	Relief for Council Taxpayers – Hardships Fund 2020/21 – Council's scheme of discretionary discounts to deliver relief to council taxpayers.
01/04	Temporary suspension of all Gedling Borough Council Commercial Tree services to domestic households.

03/04	Rent Holidays on Council Commercial Property. To allow a three month holiday from rental payments due to the Council under commercial leases.
03/04	Cemeteries: a restriction on the number of mourners attending each burial service to 15.
03/04	Cemeteries: temporary suspension of the back filling of graves.
03/04	Cemeteries: to restrict the number of burial services held per day at Carlton, Redhill and Gedling cemeteries, should this become necessary.
03/04	Cemeteries: to close Cemeteries to the public save for those attending funerals or burial services, should this become necessary.
08/04	Variation to Customer Complaints. Comments and Compliments Policy – to allow a longer response time to complaints.
24/04	Cemeteries: authorise until further notice a restriction on the number of mourners attending services inside Cemetery buildings to 6.
24/04	Cemeteries: authorise the temporary amendments to booking terms and conditions.
27/04	Cemeteries: authorisation to carry out funerals and burials during weekends and bank holidays.
27/04	Cemeteries: authorisation to set the fees and charges for weekend burials at the same rate as those approved for week day burials.
27/04	Rent Holidays on Council leases to Community Organisations and Voluntary Groups – a three month holidays from rental payments or licence fees due to the Council under leases or licences.
27/04	Rent Holidays on Council leases to Community Organisations and Voluntary Groups – to provide any further holidays from rental payments or licence fees or deferrals after the initial 3 month period.
	Suspension of council, committee and cabinet meetings
10/05 and 12/05	Rules for holding remote meetings agreed 10/5. Schedule of meetings to recommence meetings in June agreed 12/5.

Appendix C: Giving for Gedling Case Studies

Volunteer Case Studies

Case Study A

Amanda Wheldon, from Carlton, was one of the volunteers who has been supporting her community. After seeing the call out on the council's Facebook page she got in touch and has been delivering food parcels through the local area.

Amanda said;

“This was my first time volunteering but I felt I wanted to help in some way to support those in need and it was an absolute pleasure to help and support the community. I've been delivering food parcels throughout the local area, as well as speaking to many of the people I visited to make sure they were ok and checking if they need anything else.

It's definitely made me feel more outgoing. I started out feeling a little nervous but the process really helped with my confidence and I'm keen to continue volunteering in the future.”

Case Study B

Melissa Gossington, also from Carlton, is another volunteer who has been helping the community. Melissa has previous experience volunteering for the Alzheimer's Society and helping others is something Melissa was happy to do with the extra spare time she had.

Melissa said;

“Volunteering just makes me feel happy, I can fit it in around working from home and I've enjoyed helping out the community, driving around to pick up and deliver food parcels.

It's made me realise just how vulnerable some of the elderly residents in my community are and I just wish I could do more to help them, but it's been important to follow the social distancing rules. The parcels have been full of good quality food items and freshly cooked meals, it's been wonderful for many of the people receiving the parcels. I'm really glad I've been able to help”.

Humanitarian Aid Case Studies

Case Study C

Hayley Figura-Scott, in our Giving for Gedling team, contacted a local resident following a humanitarian request. The female resident was living alone and had been unwell for two weeks with possible symptoms of coronavirus and decided to self-isolate. She had mentioned that a family member had passed away the same day due to the virus and was understandably upset.

She is disabled and has limited support, her son lives abroad and her friend is currently self-isolating. Following contact it was established the lady had no food in her fridge and limited toilet roll. The only food she had in her home was a bag of rice and some super noodles.

Concerned she only had food supplies to last for two days, St Georges Centre in Netherfield were contacted for assistance. They were able to put together a care package and a hot meal.

Hayley delivered the care package to the lady's home and left it on her door step. She was incredibly grateful for the service.

Case Study D

On Good Friday our Richard Herrod Centre team were contacted by Stenhouse Medical Centre. A patient urgently needed an oxygen tester which we were able to deliver immediately. The patient and the surgery were extremely grateful to the team.

Case Study E

One resident thanked our refuse staff for delivering vegetables to her terminally ill mother, who is one of our "assisted pull-out bin customers". She was incredibly grateful.

Case Study F

10 food parcels were urgently delivered by our Neighbourhood Warden Rachel Bryant to a refuge house of vulnerable people all on lockdown. The call came in from East Midlands Homes Cooperative.

Case Study G

The County hub referred two Extremely Vulnerable People (EVPs) to GBC on 17 April, who they has not been able to make contact with over the last two weeks. That afternoon Neighbourhood Wardens visited the addresses and reported that both cases are fine and well.

Case Study H

Following a referral to an NHS Volunteer

"Thank you for keeping in touch, I just thought that I would update you upon the fact that I have managed to secure delivery of my medication by Manor Pharmacy and also Boots Pharmacy will be delivering my wife's medical prescription in the future.

Thank you once again to you and your team for all your help."

Case Study I

Comment from a family member:

“Mrs A received her parcel, thank you, and I made a donation to the Gedling Giving site as a token of appreciation.

I really must thank you for your efforts with providing help at this difficult time.

I trust you and your family are well and remain safe.”

Case Study J

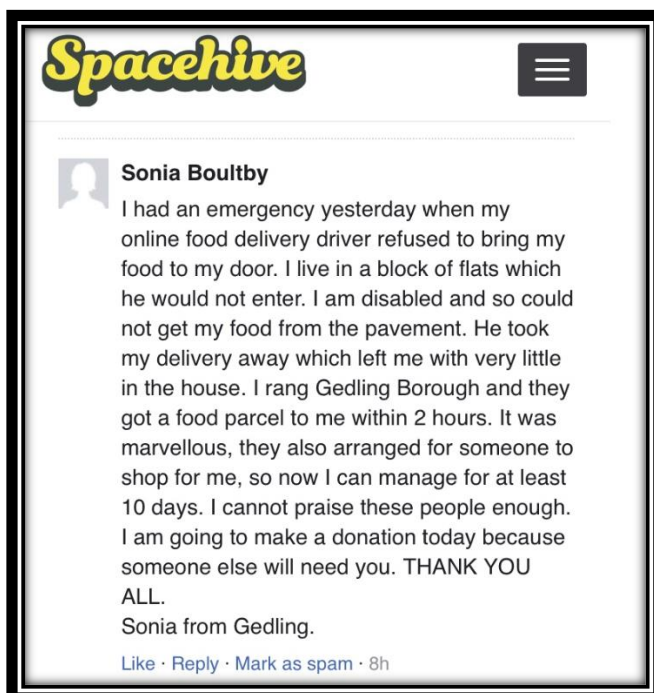
A housing tenant had various health issues and symptoms of the virus and was running out of food. A member of the Giving for Gedling team spoke with her 25 March and emailed Arnold food bank. They delivered the same afternoon.

Case Study K

It was reported to the Giving for Gedling team that a resident with learning difficulties, anxiety, depression and limited verbal communication was running out of food and toilet paper and unable to attend local super market as they have changed from 24hrs to restricted times. They usually shopped after midnight when it is quiet. Liaison took taken place with a family member who lives out of the area. Carlton Foodbank were contacted and they delivered a parcel to the resident on 28 March 2020. The family member was so thankful for this service.

Case Study L

Comment posted on the Spacehive fundraising page:



Case Study M

A referral was received from an elderly couple in the Daybrook area to say that they were experiencing problems getting their medication. It had been sent to their local pharmacy but they were not delivering. Due to the customer requiring her medication fairly urgently a member of the Giving for Gedling team visited the pharmacy to collect the prescription and then delivered it to the residents. Upon arrival the couple came to the door and thanked our staff member.

Local Community Group Case Studies

Case Study N

The Core Centre in Calverton is a registered charity set up in 1994 in the wake of the pit closure in Calverton to support the community with retraining, job search, debt, mortgage and other advice. They work with one and a half paid staff members and around 20 volunteers at any one time.

Several of the Centre's volunteers are over 70 or have underlying health conditions so have had to self-isolate. Those that were able have been happy to serve their community in any way. Since the lock down the Centre has been unable to continue with its normal face to face activities. Therefore it has set up the following support during the crisis:

- Telephone helpline and email contact point. Work in conjunction with other volunteers who have offered to do shopping and other essential tasks for those self-isolating. Every street in the village has been covered. The Centre is registered on the Gedling Borough and Nottinghamshire County Council websites as a point of call and help for residents, social workers etc.
- Offering direct help to solve problems if other services are not available, e.g. collect and deliver prescriptions.
- Phoning self-isolating residents who use our normal services to check they are okay and to keep up morale especially as we have lots of elderly users, many living alone.
- Offering a chat line to anyone lonely and anxious.
- Calling on volunteers for jobs, such as dog walking, as and when required.
- Giving out or delivering NHS hearing aid batteries since the lockdown.
- Job Club team operating remotely on-line, with a new dedicated telephone line for help with CVs, careers advice, interview preparation, well-being and anxiety coaching.

The Centre hopes to be able to deliver normal services once again and are planning what changes they may have to make in order to do this safely. They are planning a needs analysis on what new activities and services they can provide to help their whole community process the experience and come out of it positively. The Centre recognises that sections of the community, such as those older and vulnerable, may feel very anxious about resuming social contacts and this may affect both their

mental and physical well-being. A consideration is recording an oral and video history book taking experiences from the Centre's clients in one to one or small group interviews which will help them come to terms with the lock down and form a local history resource for posterity. An increase in demand for the Job Club services is also expected, as unemployment deepens. Plans are being considered as the Centre may need to increase staffing hours for this.

Case Study O

Gedling Borough Virus Volunteers was established in March 2020 in a response to the Government's announcement that people vulnerable to Covid-19 should shield at home and in anticipation of some residents across the borough would possibly find it difficult to organise their shopping, getting their prescriptions and would feel isolated at home. Although a new group, the main organisers represented a mix of seasoned community volunteers, people working in the community sector as well as people for whom volunteering is quite new.

The volunteers have offered collection of shopping and prescriptions, befriending and dog-walking for anyone who maybe struggling in the Gedling borough.

The group is currently focussing on preparing for a possible second wave so that they can react quickly and re-offer our services if needed.

The group felt overwhelmed by the many people who answered their call-out for volunteers – “so great to see the massive community spirit across the borough.” However, there were a number of challenges they faced as a new group:

- one of the main organisers and initiators of this group falling ill
- confusion around what is safe/what isn't safe with regards to collecting shopping, delivering flyers, how long the virus lasts on different surfaces and how best to protect vulnerable people and our volunteers
- difficulty to organise shopping for people without exchanging large amounts of cash and money.
- covering the costs of basic safety equipment (hand sanitizer and face masks) for our volunteers with some being covered by the personal finance of a volunteer. A “gofundme” page was set up which has covered some of these costs.
- As an informal group they have struggled to access grants but are now looking into possibly working in partnership with a local foodbank to be able to apply for grants and activate some of our volunteers to support with local food provision services run by the foodbank.

The group feels the amazing response from residents across the borough is one of the biggest positives of this crisis. A group contact told us they would love to see informal and formal volunteering and neighbourhood groups and local government work better together in the future to really harness the positive energy and

willingness to help each other in our communities and neighbourhoods to build resilience into our communities.