



## **Civic Mobilisation Group Responses to Covid Inequalities**

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### 1. Purpose of Report

To appraise Overview and Scrutiny of the work undertaken by the officers and volunteers supporting the Civic Mobilisation response to Covid 19. This short report will be accompanied by a more detailed presentation at the meeting.

### 2. Background

The Civic Mobilisation Group was set up to ensure coordination of statutory and voluntary sector efforts in response to the pandemic. Early on in the development of the services it was clear there was a national disproportionate effect emerging of Covid in socio economically deprived and BAME communities. The work focused on targeted messaging and reducing barriers to complying with the advice to stay at home.

### 3. Summary of key activities:

- The Cohesion and External Equalities teams initially focused on communicating and translating key messages about the response and understanding community tensions. Calling community and faith leaders from a network of over 800 groups and individuals on a rotating basis to understand their concerns. sharing leaflets and maintaining two way dialogue.
- The Area Based and Community of Identify Grant leads were given flexibility in how they used the grant during Covid, they were very responsive in changing their services to meet local needs.
- The community hubs were set up and connected to the golden number, these enabled volunteers to connect to foodbanks and Neighbourhood Officers to coordinate and develop tailored support packages based on their knowledge of the local voluntary sector support landscape. At the end of June all of the 18,069 individuals who are either medically or socially vulnerable to Covid 19 had been contacted or accounted for.

- 73 volunteers were assigned to a support cluster between the 4th April 2020 to the end of June 2020 out of 116 enquiries received. From July onwards, these volunteers are linked up with volunteering agencies within the community to strengthen the network of volunteering groups within the Nottingham City Council area.
- The Civic Mobilisation Group worked with the Nottingham Project to ensure funding raised by the community through the Robin Hood Fund was spent where it was most needed. Urgent funds went for example to foodbanks, domestic abuse shelters and to support young people isolating in rooms in a YMCA hostel.
- Since May 163 organisations have been supported to undertake a health check, to ensure they could continue to operate differently or be assured of their resurgence beyond the lockdown. A partnership with Active Notts, NCVS, Nottingham Equal and the Area and Community Based grant leads was formed. This health check to consider their finance, building, paid and volunteer staff options.
- NCVS have redeveloped their website and now host a number of links to support groups through covid including risk assessment templates and funding options.
- Supported by the Cohesion team Corporate Communications now have a detailed prevention plan for Covid, with additional targeted messaging and communication channels identified to the need to get messages out to communities who may not trust or hear national guidance messages.
- The teams have worked to connect Public Health teams developing Outbreak management plans to faith, community and service leaders. Scenarios have been tested with the One Nottingham Faith Leaders meeting and the Refugee and Asylum multi agency meetings.
- Hate Crime responsive work continued both in response to incidents and in the development of publicity and training following emerging trends.

#### 4. Work still ongoing

- A significant number of youth projects have supported families in need with food and activity parcel delivery and funders have been flexible in supporting them to do so. These projects are now managing the competing demands of their pre-covid work and the additional support they provided during the outbreak, which has not gone completely and is likely to see a resurgence with a second wave. They report seeing a more diverse client group and see benefits when they work with whole families, but many are not funded in this way.
- Development of the Area Hubs continues now, with a focus on reducing inequality through access to employment and training opportunities.

- The Nottingham Together Board was set up to provide a check and challenge on the work of the Civic Mobilisation Group. This broad group now includes statutory and voluntary sector partners and a specific BAME sub group working closely with the Integrated Care Partnership on developing health equality proposals. The group has also reviewed the partnership Hate Crime Strategy and proposals in development from Public Health on reducing inequalities.
- Virtual training and events – from Volunteers Week, Refugee Week to training on responding to online hate a lot of work around celebrating the Nottingham Together more in common message has continued. With plans in place to do the same for Black History Month and Hate Crime Awareness week.

## 5. Recommendations

- It is recommended that Councillors note the contents of the report and presentation, ask any questions and discuss the implications and learning.