

9th April 2020

HUNDREDS HELPED BY CORONAVIRUS HUB TEAM

A team set up to help Pembrokeshire residents during the coronavirus pandemic has handled more than 900 calls and assisted hundreds of people in just two weeks.

The Community Coordination Hub, run by Pembrokeshire County Council, PAVS and Delta Wellbeing staff, acts as a central point to access support, information and practical help.

The majority of calls received have been questions from residents concerned with accessing food while under lockdown restrictions.

The Hub team can signpost callers who have no other support available to them to local community groups or provide help to find shops or services with home delivery options.

Calls are triaged with staff – including Council employees who have been redeployed from other services – providing assistance over the phone if possible.

The help can also include determining whether the person phoning, who may be elderly or vulnerable, may need further emotional support.

An example is accessing the Age Cymru check in and chat service to ensure a friendly voice is available.

If further or more urgent assistance is needed, the details are passed to the Solution Response Team.

A team of drivers, comprising redeployed Council staff, is available if required.

Following one call where concerns were raised, a Council employee drove to the resident to make sure they were safe and well.

Work is also taking place with PAVS to support over 430 people who have offered their time to volunteer and help others, as well as supporting the development and registration of community support groups and networks across Pembrokeshire, with over 40 groups registered so far.

The response the team has received has been overwhelmingly positive, said Tessa Hodgson, Pembrokeshire County Council Cabinet Member for Social Services.

Cllr Hodgson added: "It is a concerning time right now but those calling the Hub have been delighted to find a calm, reassuring voice at the end of the phone that is able to talk to them about their situation and find solutions to the issues they are facing.

"What has been particularly pleasing is to see the staff who have been redeployed from other Council services really take to the task and enjoy talking to and helping out fellow Pembrokeshire people.

"I'd like to thank everyone for their hard work setting up the Hub, and all those helping out in the community with local groups doing fantastic work in their areas."

The Hub has also now taken on the role of liaising with the 1,800 Pembrokeshire residents classed as Extremely Vulnerable who are shielding at home.

Extremely Vulnerable residents have pre-existing and long-term health conditions that puts them at very high risk of serious illness if they are exposed to coronavirus.

The team is making proactive calls to those residents assessing their requirements and, if necessary, registering them for free weekly food box deliveries made available by the Welsh Government.

Information on the Community Coordination Hub can be found at <https://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-community-information/community-hub>

The details are updated regularly and now includes searchable directories of support available at a community, Pembrokeshire and national level.

The Hub can also be contacted on 01437 776301 or emailing communitycovid19@pembrokeshire.gov.uk

The Hub is open Monday to Friday between 8am and 6pm and 10am-2pm at weekends.