



Rushmoor Voluntary Sector Forum. December 14th 2022

Questions and Answer Session

Citizens Advice Rushmoor - Alex Hughes, Chief Officer

The full presentation is attached.

Q. Are local people aware of the cost-of-living support available from Citizens Advice (CA) and other local organisations?

A. Whilst not all residents may be aware of the support available, local service providers are aware and can signpost their clients to CA for support and advice. CA is keen that older people are encouraged to seek support when needed. Not everyone has access to the internet to seek help and advice, which is why it is important that intermediaries are able to support people.

The Rushmoor Borough Council website 'cost of living page, could help promote the energy grant.
<https://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/housing-benefits-and-support/cost-of-living-help/>

Q. Is media coverage of the cost-of-living crisis in line with what you are seeing?

A. Yes, it is.

Q. Over 1 million people living in the private rental sector are facing hardship and have difficulty with pre-payment meter costs. What is happening to support them?

A. The issue with private landlords is more difficult. CA work to influence government policy on issues like this to bring about change and recognition that more regulation of the energy sector is needed.

The Vine Centre - Tracey Ashton, Operations Manager

Tracey gave a verbal update which is summarised below and information on Vine programmes are attached.

The Vine serve the Rushmoor community and bordering areas offering wrap around support to meet the client's needs. Mental health referrals are received from the NHS and clients are offered wrap around support to address barriers, around, debt, housing, schooling for children.

The cost-of-living crisis has resulted in a huge increase in the need for support services.

Community Cupboards, The Vine is part of Hampshire Pantry System who work with local supermarkets and Hampshire County Council to offer food for those who can't afford it. It is not a food bank; it provides a top up of the weekly food shop to provide items customer cannot afford. People can attend four times (Vivid residents have 8 visits – funded by Vivid) with no questions asked. Individuals can have up to 15 items and a family up to 20 items. Fresh fruit and vegetables are always available and are not included in the number of items that can be taken.

On the fourth (8th) visit a discussion takes place to identify the reasons why support is needed. This leads to one of the following outcomes.

1. Continue and review at later date.
2. Carry on using the cupboard but pay a contribution - £2-£5
3. Advice given to move them on, and the customer can no longer access Community Cupboard.

No waste cooking – this programme offers food hygiene and health and safety training, cook your own lunch, learn how to make healthy meals on a budget and the opportunity to do level 1 and 2 food hygiene training. carla.green@thevinecentre.org.uk

Cosy Hub – a warm hub open on Wednesday and Thursday 10am to 4pm – Refreshments and soup available. <http://www.thevinecentre.org.uk/>

Questions for Tracy

No questions.

Manager Communities and Partnership Team, Rushmoor Borough Council - Emma Lamb

The presentation is attached.

Questions for Emma

Q. Young people's mental health is a big issue, and we need to discover why this is.

A. There are several provisions for young people in the borough, so the structure is there for people who need it. RBC recently held a Young Peoples Forum, where mental health was one of the key issues raised. The NHS Frimley have three workstreams, mental health, physical activity and hypertension. The main aim of the work is to gather information on available provision. A directory of services for local areas is currently being compiled and will be shared with the Voluntary Sector when available.

Q. Is the requirement for use by dates on food affecting donations to food hubs?

A. No, it increases the amount of food donations as more food has limited shelf life.

Q. RBC have a Council Tax Hardship fund, what happens to people who don't pay Council Tax?

A. The Council Tax fund may be an option and each case would be considered on an individual basis.

NHS Frimley - Charlotte Mason, Associate Director for Communities and Partnerships

The full presentation is attached.

Questions for Charlotte

Q. In the last few days there has been a statement from Chief Medical Officer on the cause and effect of pollution on health. The Net Zero report from an independent group of MPs regarding the condition of properties in UK is due out in January, the sheer extent of failures on properties in this country is astonishing. The Local Authority need to identify what they will do about it.

Q. What is the NHS relationship like with social care teams within communities – is it working effectively

A. Social Care Teams are under pressure and find it hard to engage in local work.

Q. Will people living outside of the most deprived areas be supported?

A. Because of the links with Partner organisations, it is hoped that even those who are not in the area of focus will be picked up by teams in the community.

Q. The figures shown in NHS research are the tip of the iceberg as they rely on diagnosed conditions. The consequences of difficulties getting appointments with GP's mean there are many more people who could be suffering with these conditions not being diagnosed.

A. The NHS are aware of these issues and are trying to understand how they can help everyone. There are no immediate solutions.

New from other organisations.

Aldershot, and Farnborough Libraries - Rachel Brewer

Rachel gave a brief outline of Warm Hub sessions running from Aldershot and Farnborough libraries. <https://www.hants.gov.uk/costofliving/warm-spaces>

Q. Who is funding extra work to provide Warm Hubs?

A. Aldershot Library has received funding from Morrisons, Farnborough Library have not needed funding to date, as they have a café on site, however, funding is in place to provide free tea and coffee in the near future.

Christians Against Poverty - Ken Evans

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) provide support people to manage their debt in Rushmoor – they visit people in their homes and work with them until they become debt free. CAP is seeing more in work poverty where one parent is out of work or a single parent is in work, but income does not match outgoings – insolvency is increasingly the solution as budgets cannot support a debt clearance plan. Even where they can help to clear debt, the budget is often unsustainable going forward. People are stressed about affording Christmas.

No Questions.

Rushmoor Repair Café – Debbie Whitcombe

The Rushmoor Repair Café offers free repairs to small household items, free of charge (donations welcome). Flyer attached for full information. A great way to reduce waste and save money by repairing instead of buying new. Open on the 3rd Saturday of each month at the West End Centre Aldershot between 10.30am and 1.30pm (last repair booked in at 1pm)

No questions.