

Proposal of support to the HAVA community during the Covid-19 pandemic

Introduction

The world is facing unprecedented threat from the virus covid-19 which is disrupting countries and communities globally.

The impact of this devastating virus cannot be underestimated. The enormity of the Government's response with a detailed fiscal support package alongside the almost daily ramping up and stripping back of our civil liberties to try to control the spread of this virus demonstrate to each one of us how seriously we should take this matter and how we should behave over the next few months.

HAVA as one of 150 of the UK's most deprived communities was awarded funds to improve the lives of people living in our community; arguably, in peace time, never has there been such a direct threat to the well-being of our community.

Our Community is one of the most vulnerable. The statistics show us that our community struggles across the board:

1. Our community covers LSOP in the lowest 5% and 10% in the country for poverty
2. Low paid wages – no savings to fall back on
3. High unemployment
4. High reliance on the Food Bank facility
5. Large older population
6. Large proportion of the community suffer with poor health

Access to Food and basic equipment

The panic buying that has accompanied the introduction of measures designed to ensure we self-isolate have left many low-income families struggling from the outset. Not having the money at the right time to be able to join in the bulk buying and little food, (particularly fresh food and household staples) being left when they are able to go.

The pressure on Foodbanks generally has been immense. There are Foodbanks in the area which have already had to close their doors for lack of provisions to distribute.

For this to happen in our community would be devastating and many families who rely on the Foodbank for their weekly food intake would be left hungry and without access to immediate support.

Older people who are generally looked after in the community (if they are members) by HOPS are now facing isolation; as HOPS have confirmed given the current situation they will no longer be able to provide warm meals to the homes of their elderly members who are in government instructed self-isolation.

Support being requested:

As a group HAVA have limited means of offering direct action but by using other established organisations in the area we are able to place financial support in the hands of people who are able to deliver directly to the community.

We propose a two-pronged approach to supporting HAVA residents. Food & access to resources are the two overriding needs of our community using two existing channels. St Andrews Church and the Foodbank

1. St Andrews, overseen by Cherie Cartwright

St Andrews propose to support the elderly residents in the area through the delivery of frozen meals which can be safely re-heated at home. They are currently providing a limited service based on the availability of ingredients and packaging materials they have been able to access through donations. These are limited

and despite the best intentions of people in the community, lack of ready access to these items in shops means these donations will 'dry up' in the coming days.

Their intention is to increase this to be able to provide meals to a wider range of homes and have the capacity to continue for 3 months.

Requirements:

£300 1x chest freezer (they have received donated freezers but still require additional space)
£700 to be able to fund the ingredients and packaging required to continue these meals for 3 months providing in excess of 2000 meals

Total: £1000

2. Foodbank Hawksworth, overseen by Alison Gordon:

The Foodbank offers users food to eat whilst at the Foodbank and to take away, advice, emotional support, clothing and toiletries. To many families in the HAVA area it is their only lifeline between benefit payments. The Foodbank is not able to continue during the Covid-19 pandemic to offer the same meal on-site, advice and emotional support because of the strict social distancing measures required to minimise the risk of spread. It runs 100% on donations, which are fast being used up and not replaced as everyone begins to self-isolate and turn their thoughts to their own needs and that of their families.

In addition, the Foodbank has received requests from families, the young and the old for equipment. The main items being thermometers and humidifiers.

The advice from the government and Public Health England is not to present at a Doctor's surgery, or hospital if you suspect you have symptoms, instead to manage, when you can, at home.

If we can provide a small number of items of equipment for the short-term loan to individuals in our community to self-manage some of the symptoms they may be experiencing prior to an escalation; we can make a positive contribution to the well-being and mental health of several our community. Removing the financial barrier they have to making the purchase or to alleviate the worry of not having access to these items.

Requirements:

£500 donation to fund the purchase of food and toiletry products for users of the Foodbank
£150 30 x Thermometers @ £5 per unit
£600 15 x Humidifiers @ £40 per unit
£70 Medical grade Isopropanol to clean the equipment when returned

Total1320

Total Combined HAVA Support requested: £2320

Summary

These are unprecedented days and an unprecedented response is required. HAVA Board are being asked to relax some of the stringent rules on grants to enable a level of autonomy to St Andrews & the Foodbank, both with proven track records of support to those most in need in our community, allowing them to ensure the funds allocated to them are spent in the most effective way they are able to, given a very difficult set of circumstances.