



**Concurrent Meeting of the  
Prosperous Communities  
and Corporate Policy and  
Resources Committees**

**Thursday, 23 April 2020**

**Subject: Community Defibrillator Scheme**

Report by:

Chief Executive

Contact Officer:

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Purpose / Summary:

To agree changes to the Community Defibrillator Scheme that will introduce a maintenance element service for parishes to join.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

1. Approve Option 1 to establish a defibrillator maintenance service as part of the Community Defibrillator Scheme.
2. Approve the charge of £100 (incl. VAT) to be included in the Fees and Charges schedules from 2020/21.

## IMPLICATIONS

### Legal:

Service terms and conditions will be put in place to govern how the service is delivered to parishes/customers. Existing agreements for new defibrillator installations will continue to be used.

### Financial : FIN/9/21/SL

Option 1 (preferred option) would result in an initial outlay for stock which is anticipated to be recovered through the annual fee of £100 (incl. VAT) per community, to be included in the Fees and Charges schedule from 2020/21.

Prosperous Communities Committee		Communities		
	2020/21	VAT Amount	2020/21 Charge Inc. VAT	VAT Rate
	£	£	£	
Defibrillator maintenance service (annual charge)	£83.33	£16.67	£100.00	S

Cost recovery will be monitored through monthly budget monitoring and any budgetary implications will be reviewed over the budget setting process for 2021/22.

As highlighted in Appendix A, there are currently 79 defibrillators in the community, if 60 (76%) were to sign up to the scheme this would result in a small surplus of £300.

Officer time and expenses will be met from within existing Communities service budgets.

### Staffing :

Not applicable

### Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :

Not applicable

### Data Protection Implications :

No medical history information is collected as part of this scheme. Contact information for individual parishes is secured in-line with council policies.

**Climate Related Risks and Opportunities :**

Not applicable

**Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations :**

Not applicable

**Health Implications:**

The provision of community accessible defibrillator has and will continue to help keep residents in West Lindsey alive following a cardiac arrest. This can only occur when a defibrillator is fully operational and this report proposes a scheme to ensure greater maintenance and reliability.

**Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

Not applicable

**Risk Assessment :**

Not applicable

**Call in and Urgency:**

**Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?**

*i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)*

Yes

No

X

**Key Decision:**

*A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications*

Yes

X

No

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Automated External Defibrillators (AED's) are portable devices that can be used on someone having a cardiac arrest. They check the heart rhythm and send an electric shock to the heart to try and restore a normal rhythm. They have been in wide use for many years and form part of the standard equipment that paramedics, ambulances and first responders carry. In the event of someone suffering a cardiac arrest, the time it takes to administer aid is critical.
- 1.2 Having access to a nearby defibrillator can greatly reduce the amount of time it takes to administer lifesaving support. They give the best possible chance for someone to survive until medical services arrive.

## **2. Current Position**

- 2.1 The council currently delivers a Community Defibrillator Scheme which was approved by Prosperous Communities Committee on 30 January 2018. It is a 5 year programme consisting of:
  - Total allocation £50,000 over 5 years
  - Total spent: £29,700
  - Total remaining: £30,300
- 2.2 The scheme arranges the installation of devices in key community locations across the district at a heavily subsidised cost.
- 2.3 Since January 2017, the Council, in partnership with LIVES, have installed 79 Defibrillators across the district

## **3. Challenges**

- 3.1 Throughout administering the scheme we have identified numerous challenges, mainly finding suitable locations for installation due to the necessary power source.
- 3.2 As such, there are still a handful of key geographic locations that are awaiting installation which would mean greater coverage across the district. Once these have been installed, we are expecting fewer applications over the next few years.
- 3.3 The second challenge we are now facing is ensuring the devices are regularly checked and maintained. Each organisation that applies for a device commits to checking it weekly, logging any faults and replacing consumable parts when used or expired. Most communities are proactive and consistent in doing so, ensuring the devices are operational.

- 3.4 However, when consumables are used/expired or faults are logged, there can be a delay in replacing them. As such, this can lead to the device not being operational and an asset redundant.
- 3.5 The cost of replacing the defibrillator battery and pads can be up to £200 depending on the device. Indeed, in cases such as Keelby, if the device is activated three times in six months there is some considerable associated costs for the guardians.
- 3.6 During a spot check exercise, 1 out of 10 devices was inactive due to the battery and pads being expired. This would equate to 8 across the network in some of our most remote areas of the district.
- 3.7 In light of the COVID-19 outbreak, the increased demand on the NHS is likely to have an impact in West Lindsey. Response times for Ambulances are likely to increase and the need for deployable devices. This will also add pressure on LIVES, who currently support communities in sourcing replacement consumable parts.

#### **4. Options**

##### **4.1 OPTION 1: (PREFERRED OPTION) Offer a package to guardians for a set annual fee**

For a set annual fee of £100 (including VAT) per device, each defibrillator guardian would receive:

- Replacement battery and pads when activated.
- Replacement battery and pads when expired.
- Online reporting tool.
- Out of hours contact.
- Annual check.
- Access to First Aid Roadshows around the district.

The focus is still on the community owning the asset and volunteers from the community taking responsibility. As such, the online reporting would allow for an easier identification of communities that require assistance. For example, if the volunteer has moved away from the area or develops a long term health condition.

The annual fee would allow each community, usually a parish council or active community group, to budget or fundraise for the annual charge as they see fit. This will reduce the likelihood of unexpected costs and reliance on fundraising from the same sources.

There would be some risk with a small amount of devices that have been installed in association with small community groups and Parish Meetings, as there is the potential that they could not pay the costs. However, this would be overcome by establishing the group's ability to pay the maintenance fee on signing up.

The annual fee has been determined by the calculations available in Appendix A.

## **APPENDIX A – Community Defibrillator Proposal Cost Breakdown**

Advantages to this option

- All defibrillators on the scheme checked and deployable.
- Cost of replacement consumables covered.
- Built in resilience fund in case of increased usage.
- Cost for organisations that can be budgeted for annually.
- Any surplus reinvested into new installations.

Disadvantages to this option

- Increased expectation of paid for service.
- Holding of a limited amount of stock.

### **4.2 OPTION 2**

#### **Offer a package to defibrillator guardians free of charge**

This package would consist of the same elements as option 1, without a charge incurred for the guardian.

Advantages to this option

- All defibrillators in the district checked and deployable.
- WLDC providing more for community groups.

Disadvantages to this option

- No resilience in case of increased usage.
- Definite reduction in new installations regardless of demand.
- Expectation of organisations for WLDC to take control of the asset.
- Reputational risk if the service is withdrawn.

### **4.3 OPTION 3**

#### **No changes made to the Community Defibrillator Scheme**

Advantages to this option:

- No financial risk

Disadvantages to this option:

- Possibility of a high number of un-deployable devices as time progresses.
- Limited data on state of defibrillators in the district.
- Reputational risk if a device is called upon but not deployable.

## **5. Reporting and Monitoring**

- 5.1 A new annual Community Defibrillator report will be produced for Prosperous Communities Committee. This report will update on the take up of the scheme, number of guardians and other positive outcomes achieved.