

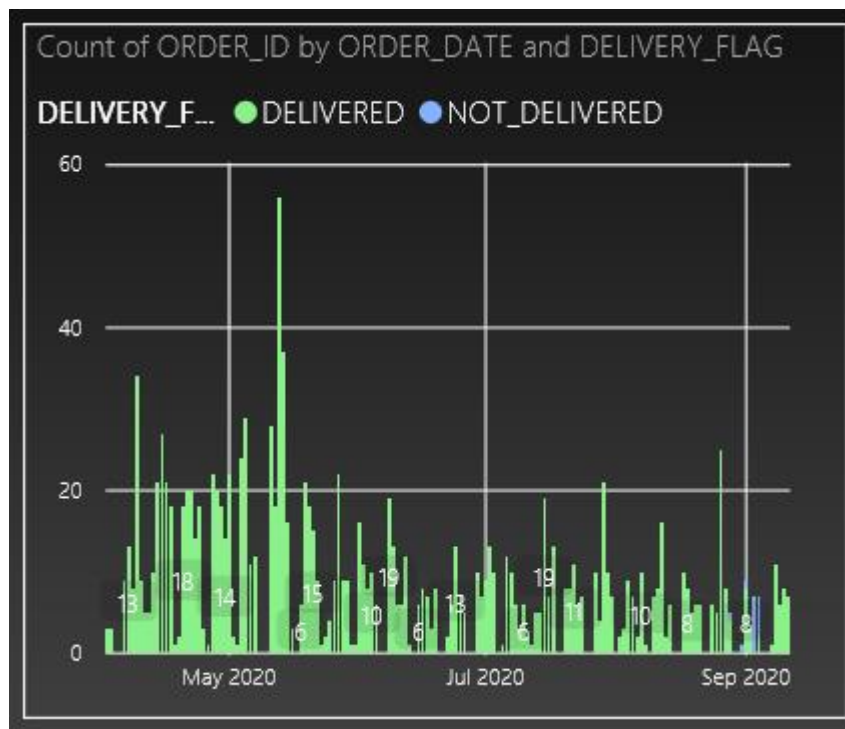
28 September 2020**Agenda Item: 5****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR – FINANCE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND
IMPROVEMENT****PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) PROCUREMENT IN
RESPONSE TO COVID-19****Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide Members with an update on the Council's response to COVID-19 in relation to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and outline the plans for procurement of PPE supplies as part of the Council's PPE Recovery Plan.

Information

2. The COVID-19 outbreak has had an unprecedented effect on the National Health Service (NHS) and community and social care sectors. The projected requirements for dealing with COVID-19 resulted in the closure of most routine and elective health pathways, in order to maximise capacity for COVID-19 positive patients. One of the second order effects of the outbreak is the increased demand for PPE to protect health and care workers across the system.
3. This increased demand, both nationally and globally, meant that usual supply chains for health and care providers were unable to meet demand. In Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) made the decision to take a co-ordinated approach to the management of PPE push stock and a collaborative approach to local sourcing of PPE for both community and social, health and care providers, to ensure PPE was distributed where required.
4. Nottinghamshire County Council have taken a lead for the collaboration by chairing the Logistics Cell which has had a primary focus on procuring and distributing PPE across the LRF. The County Council has also been receiving and distributing Government push stock on behalf of the LRF to other organisations in Nottinghamshire including Nottingham City Council and the Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group.
5. The County Council has been providing PPE to social care, health and other settings in response to the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020 in line with Government guidance. Furthermore, we have been agile to respond quickly and effectively to source PPE from all sources, at a time when PPE supplies were in crisis across the globe.
6. Whilst facing unprecedented demand, the County Council has fulfilled over 1,500 requests for PPE to date and over 1,000,000 items of PPE has been distributed by the County Council.

The graph below shows the continued support that is being provided to all health and social care settings.



Responsive Procurement Activity to source PPE

7. The supply of PPE, at the start of the pandemic, like elsewhere in the country was in critical stage. However the County Council Procurement team reacted with an urgent response to the unprecedented demand, successfully sourced PPE from a wide range of suppliers to ensure no service in the County went without their PPE needs being fulfilled.
8. The reactive way processes and procedures have been generated has ensured that providers have had access to PPE throughout the peak of the crisis, but the operating processes are not sustainable as business as usual (BAU) activity starts to return.
9. The supply of PPE has significantly improved over the previous weeks and we now in comfortable levels of PPE supplies. As we move into recovery, we are working with suppliers to explore opportunities for reusable PPE to improve sustainability whilst ensuring we adhere to national guidance.
10. We have developed very good relationships with central government department. The Central Government PPE Portal was rolled out in Nottinghamshire in June to support health and social care providers. In September, this has been widened to include all primary care providers and children's social care providers too. This portal is for emergency use only, where health and social care services are unable to source PPE directly themselves; with the County Council available for any requests not fulfilled by the Portal.

PPE Procurement Moving Forward

11. Procurement teams across the LRF continue to source PPE, however this has been as emergency measures and does not comply with Procurement Regulations. To maintain pace and ensure compliancy under the Public Procurement Regulations, a centralised framework contract or Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) is recommended. There are currently no regional or national procurement models in place and it is recommended that a framework contract/DPS is developed to meet internal service PPE requirements (and external where required in emergency situations) to ensure robust arrangements for this interim period¹. There may also be wider interest for this from other local authorities across the region. The City Council have already commenced this work pre-COVID, therefore the City Council will lead work to finalise contracts, utilising a catalogue style “call-off” system. This is expected to be operational in the autumn, subject to market readiness.
12. Requirements for the new DPS are being gathered from Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, Nottinghamshire CCG and Leicester City Council. Regular meetings are happening with all parties ready to publish the tender opportunity.
13. A go live date for the DPS of autumn 2020 is being worked towards.
14. Suppliers who have worked with the LRF during the pandemic will be informed once the opportunity is advertised to ensure they don't miss the chance to apply.
15. The DPS will be available nationally for all public sector bodies to use and discussions are taking place with the West Midlands Authorities to see if they want to commit to the framework before it is advertised.
16. The DPS will ensure quality of supply as well as giving participating authorities set terms and conditions with suppliers.
17. In addition, work is underway to explore opportunities for local manufacturing and supply chains of PPE, to maintain supplies and more competitive prices. This includes regional collaboration with East Midlands manufacturers and local suppliers through the Midlands Engine.
18. To assure the suitability of PPE for usage, Health and Safety colleagues have undertaken safety checks through the establishment of quality assurance processes. Continued assurance checks will be essential going forward, for any new contract arrangements and suppliers.

Other Options Considered

19. The County Council could stop providing PPE, which would see internal settings directed to Herts Full Stop (who operate the Council's County Supplies service) and external providers sourcing themselves, with some also able to access a Government Portal for emergency supplies. However, the PPE market is still fragile, COVID-19 is still prevalent, there could be a further peak in cases and Government guidance on PPE requirements is subject to regular review and revision in response to the pandemic.

¹ Until the market is stable and Herts Full Stop are able to meet internal service requirements.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

20. Provide members with an update on the work on PPE to date and inform members on the developments of a complaint procurement contract for PPE moving forwards.

Statutory and Policy Implications

21. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

Note the work undertaken on PPE to date and support the development of a compliant PPE procurement contract.

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Chief Executive's Department

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments (EP 13/08/20)

22. The Finance and Major Contracts Management Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of the report.

Financial Comments [RWK 13/08/2020]

23. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All.