



Media Release – 31st March 2020

Tipperary County Council to support local voluntary organisations providing assistance to vulnerable citizens during Covid-19

Community support helpline to be available from Wednesday 1st April – 0761 06 5000

At the request of Minister Eoghan Murphy TD, Tipperary County Council COVID-19 Community Response Forum has been established to enable the coordination of a multi-agency response in the delivery of much needed services to vulnerable citizens across County Tipperary. In the current crisis the Government of Ireland is relying heavily on the goodwill of Communities and Volunteer groups as more and more resources will be diverted towards taking care of the unwell in hospital settings. As a result, Tipperary county Council has been asked to coordinate the efforts of the many groups assisting people in their communities.

A dedicated community support helpline will be established in Tipperary County Council to assist at risk members of the public in accessing non-emergency and non-medical supports and advice during the current public health emergency. The confidential phonenumber service is being established by the new COVID-19 Tipperary Community Response Forum, which includes over a dozen agencies and organisations. The helpline is focused primarily on ensuring that vulnerable members of the community or those living alone can access deliveries of groceries, medicine and fuels. The role of the Forum is to ensure that there is a co-ordinated community response and to enable all voluntary statutory agencies to collaborate in support of our communities and particularly of our most vulnerable members.

Included in the COVID-19 Tipperary Community Response Forum are:

- Tipperary County Council
- Health Service Executive – South East and Mid-west
- An Garda Síochána
- Tipperary Public Participation Network
- Tipperary Volunteer Centre
- Tipperary Sports Partnership
- Civil Defence
- GAA
- An Post
- IFA
- Local Link Tipperary

- Age Friendly Tipperary
- Healthy Tipperary
- North Tipperary and South Tipperary Leader companies
- Citizen's Advice
- Scouting Ireland
- Other community, voluntary and sports representatives

The new phonenumber is just one aspect of the Forum's work. Its core aim is contributing to the community-wide effort to limit the spread of COVID-19. There is the wide variety of voluntary groups working across County Tipperary, working to assist those in need. The phonenumber is designed to ensure that voluntary services are organized in a collaborative and targeted way. The Council's COVID-19 Community Response Forum is there to ensure the very best use of the many resources assisting vulnerable persons with their daily needs at this unprecedented time, whether that is collecting medication, food shopping, social support and contact.

Chief Executive of Tipperary County Council, Joe MacGrath explains "There are a number of agencies and voluntary groups currently doing excellent work in delivering care to older and vulnerable people in our communities. These groups are currently operating independently of each other and Tipperary County Council's role is to provide a targeted, integrated and coordinated approach to the delivery of these much needed services to our more vulnerable citizens across the Tipperary during the COVID-19 pandemic. Tipperary County Council is ideally placed both statutorily and regionally to channel this great work and provide the governance structure in partnership with all stakeholders. This public health crisis has changed life for so many, and we are there to help with that change. Our own staff whose day-jobs have changed due to this crisis, will be a key resource in the management and operation of this community support programme along with our partner agencies/groups".

Set to come into effect from Wednesday 1st April, Tipperary County Council is providing a contact number **0761 06 5000** and email covid19@tipperarycoco.ie with the lines open from **8.00am to 8.00PM** seven days a week."

Contact details of this new service will be promoted on www.tipperarycoco.ie

If you are **a group** currently volunteering, or a group interested in volunteering during the current crisis, you are asked to register with The Tipperary Volunteer Centre response@volunteertipperary.ie.

For Individual volunteers interested in volunteering it is suggested that they would speak to their local Tidy Towns, Community Group or GAA/Sports Club.

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