

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director (Communities)	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Thursday, 26 January 2023

Period Poverty Update

Is this report confidential?	Yes/Partly/ No Delete as applicable. If confidential please give a short explanation as to why.
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Is this decision key?	Yes/ No delete as applicable and bold the reason below if key
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Savings or expenditure amounting to greater than £100,000	Significant impact on 2 or more council wards
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Purpose of the Report

1. To provide an update of existing support for Period Poverty in Chorley and highlight any gaps in provision, or opportunities to enhance support.

Recommendations

2. To consider any gaps and to continue to align relevant grants to supporting partners to provide period related essentials to those who are struggling to afford them, particularly during this time of increased pressure on household budgets.
3. Update information channels so that staff, residents and partners know where to access support for this essential item.

Reasons for recommendations

4. Provision appears to be well covered in communities and there is currently funding available to support the voluntary sector to provide essential items. Mechanisms are in place with community support organisations to be able to react to any changes and the relevant teams can monitor this feedback on an ongoing basis.

Other options considered and rejected

5. No other options have been considered at this stage as access to this support appears to be being met currently.

Corporate priorities

6. The report relates to the following corporate priorities: (Please bold one)

Housing where residents can live well	A green and sustainable borough
An enterprising economy with vibrant local centres in urban and rural areas	Healthy, safe and engaged communities

Background to the report

7. Period poverty pertains to a lack of availability of sanitary products, and understanding of menstruation, with key risk indicators being economic status, housing status and students. 1 in 10 women and girls are affected by period poverty in the UK, with a YouGov poll forecasting 1 in 8 women facing affordability issues with sanitary products in the coming 12 months [[Period poverty: one in eight likely to struggle to afford sanitary products they need in next year | YouGov](#)].

Existing Support

8. Consultation with community groups, organisations and schools has highlighted the following existing support.

Community

Community Group / Organisation	Available Support	Uptake	Gaps
Living Waters	Ample supply of sanitary products available to service users, as well as individuals signposted by other services. Have a sanitary product sharing understanding with local schools.	There is more than enough supply to meet demand	Other hygiene products such as shampoo, body wash and deodorant.
Chorley Help the Homeless	Ample stock of sanitary products and for service users and other individuals signposted by other services.	Main uptake amongst women in 20s and 30s.	
Chorley Women's Centre	Ample stock of products available to those seeking support.	Supply meets demand	
Chorley URC	Ample stock of products made readily available for people to take as needed.	Products are in greater demand recently. Refugees and Asylum seekers attending the ESOL classes have access to these sanitary products.	
Homestart	Able to provide products as a need is presented.	Not a significant uptake, however many individuals make use of provision at Morrisons	

Emerging Futures	Sanitary products are made available in the toilets	Supply meets demand	
Emergency Chorley Together Food Group	Ensure the availability of products to share between groups	Supply meets demand	Other hygiene products such as shampoo, body wash and deodorant.
Morrisons	Run a scheme where customers can use a code word to access free products at checkout. The code word is available in the supermarket's toilets.		Not widely advertised, and relies on prior knowledge

Schools

9. All schools have access to free sanitary products for students via the Department of Education, which many reports making good use of. Schools also report that they make sanitary products freely and readily available for their students at various points around school, to avoid the need for pupils to have to ask for support. These supplies may also be used to supplement a lack of availability at home.

Further Opportunities to Support

10. Period poverty also relates to education and understanding around menstruation, and as such more information could be gathered about the availability of this information for individuals living in Chorley.
11. There is an opportunity for all Council managed buildings, offices, and venues to evaluate the cost of making available free sanitary products for visitors and staff, enhancing the current availability of sanitary products.
12. As highlighted by Living Waters and the Chorley Together Food Group, there is a frequent deficit of other hygiene products available for individuals accessing these services, which will have a detrimental impact on their ability to care for themselves and their family properly. Avenues of support to help meet this need could be investigated further.

Climate change and air quality

13. The work noted in this report has some impact on wider Climate related concerns.
14. In particular the report impacts on the following activities:
 - a. waste and the use of single use plastics
 - b. green areas and biodiversity.
15. Any relevant opportunities to highlight the process for of proper disposal of period products, and the impact of not disposing correctly, can be taken to mitigate impacts.

Equality and diversity

16. There is a broad offer in a variety of community settings, who work with a diverse mix of the population and the ability to translate and provide supported communication methods to people who may need it, to communicate the provision available, is available.

Risk

17. There would be financial impacts of introducing any free provision within Council managed buildings.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

18. There are no direct financial implications of this report.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

19. Any purchase of products by the Council would need to comply the best value duty and with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

Background documents (There are no background papers to this report)

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