Food Initiatives Survey

Covid-19 Response

Community and Voluntary Sector Panel

Survey Report July 2020

Introduction

This survey was carried out on behalf of the Community and Voluntary Sector Panel, which provides a voice into Community Planning in the ABC council area.

The purpose of this survey is to collate information on the amazing work carried out by the community and voluntary sector in this time of crisis. The survey is primarily focused on food provision.

The information collated from this process will be used to inform planning for future food provision in the borough and to feed into the national conversation on crisis response with the Department for Communities.

It is hoped that in gathering this information, we can develop more collaborative thinking and innovative solutions to the need for food in our communities and target our services to where it is most needed.

Community and Voluntary Sector Panel: Food Initiatives: Covid response Survey

The survey ran from the 9th to 12th June and was re-opened from the 16th to 21st June. There were a total of 47 responses received.

2: Name of organisation:

47 respondents provided the name of their organisation.

Where is your organisation based?

There were 47 responses to this part of the question. More than a quarter of organisations (27.7%) are based in the Portadown area.

Location	Number	%
Armagh	6	12.8%
Banbridge	2	4.3%
Craigavon	8	17.0%
Donaghcloney	1	2.1%
Dromara	1	2.1%
Dromore	1	2.1%
Keady	1	2.1%
Laurencetown	1	2.1%
Lurgan / North Lurgan	6	12.8%
Maghery	1	2.1%
Middletown	1	2.1%
Portadown	13	27.7%
Rathfriland	1	2.1%
Tandragee	1	2.1%
Tanvally and Anaghlone	1	2.1%
Waringstown	2	4.3%
Base	47	

3: Did you work in partnership with other groups as part of your food initiative?

Working arrangements

There were 47 responses to this part of the question with 34 responding that they worked with other groups as part of their food initiative.

	Number	%
Yes	34	72.3%
No	12	25.5%
N/A	1	2.1%
Base	47	

a. If so, please provide details.

There were 37 responses to this part of the question. There was significant evidence of partnership working between community and voluntary groups and organisations and with both statutory sector agencies and businesses.

A large number of respondents named who they were partnering with including:

- Foodbanks
- Volunteering organisations, women's groups
- Sports clubs including GAC, football, rugby and swimming
- Faith and church based groups
- Supermarkets and local businesses including Tesco, Lidl, Asda, M&S, Irwins
- Social services, health visitors, carers

4: When did you start your Corona Virus response food Initiative?

Start date

There were 46 responses to this part of the question. Over three-quarters of respondents started their response food initiative in March (47.8%) or April (30.4%).

Start Date	Number	%
January	1	2.2%
March	22	47.8%
April	14	30.4%
May	2	4.3%
June	1	2.2%
Long-term	5	10.9%
N/A	1	2.2%
Base	46	

Food support before corona

There were 47 responses to this part of the question. The majority of respondents did not provide food support before coronavirus.

	Number	%
Yes	18	38.3%
No	29	61.7%
Base	47	

5: What criteria did you use when assessing the need for food?

Criteria

There were 46 responses to this part of the question. The most common response was those who were shielding, followed by those who had experienced a change in income or were already on a low income.

Criteria	Number	%
Elderly	8	17.4%
Vulnerable	17	37.0%
Shielding	23	50.0%
Referrals	16	34.8%
Speaking to individuals	7	15.2%
Local knowledge / experience of volunteers	4	8.7%
National Foodbank criteria	1	2.2%
Own criteria	14	30.4%
Low income / changes in income	21	45.7%
Isolated / no family support	14	30.4%
Trussel Trust	2	4.3%
N/A	1	2.2%
Base	46	

May not sum due to multiple response types

6: How many food parcels are you giving out on a weekly basis?

a) number of homes?

There were 46 responses to this part of the question. Around 4,400 homes were receiving food parcels on a weekly basis with a further 300 homes receiving one-off parcels. Please note these figures are approximate and should only be used to give an indications of the food support provided. Due to groups working together there may be some overlap which could lead to double counting.

b) number of people?

There were 45 responses to this part of the question. Around 11,800 people were receiving food parcels on a weekly basis. Again these figures are approximate and should only be used to give an indication of the food support provided. Due to groups working together there may be some overlap which could lead to double counting.

distributed

43 respondents answered this question. 2 respondents also completed the 'other' option where they mentioned delivering food vouchers and delivering to community groups for distribution.

Distribution	Number	%
Collected	1	2.3%
Delivered to homes	32	74.4%
Combination	10	23.3%
Base	43	

7: What percentage of the food that you have distributed has come with the Council's Food Box initiative?
Percentage (%)

There were 46 responses to this part of the question. Just over a third of responses indicated that none of the food distributed was from the Councils Food Box initiative. Just under a third of respondents said that 50% or more of the food that they had distributed was from the initiative.

Percentage Councils Initiative	Number	%
0%	16	34.8%
1% or less	2	4.3%
3%	4	8.7%
5 - 6 %	1	2.2%
25%	2	4.3%
30%	3	6.5%
50%	1	2.2%
73%	1	2.2%
75%	2	4.3%
80%	2	4.3%
90%	2	4.3%
95%	1	2.2%
99%	1	2.2%
100%	4	8.7%
Don't know / N/A	3	6.5%
Part of CAF data	1	2.2%
Base	46	

What percentage came from other sources? Please specify source.

There were 42 responses to this part of the question. Respondents provided a wide variety of percentages and other sources, the types of which are shown below.

Other sources	Number	%
Local shops / supermarkets	10	23.8%
Food Bank	4	9.5%
Grants / funding	9	21.4%
Donations / members of public	9	21.4%
Local companies / food producers	9	21.4%
Own resources	6	14.3%
Charities / community groups / voluntary organisations	8	19.0%
Base	42	

May not sum due to multiple response types

8: Please give details of what these food parcels/boxes contained on a typical week.

Contents

There were 45 responses to this part of the question. Responses covered a wide range of items with the majority including tinned foods such as soup, vegetables and fruit. Bread, pasta, rice, potatoes and dairy products were also commonly mentioned. Some also included nappies, toiletries, sanitizers and toilet roll. Three respondents also made note of vouchers being provided which could be used for food or utilities.

9: Did you provide any additional food support (e.g. food vouchers, cooked meals etc)?

addtional support

There were 47 responses to this part of the question. More than half of respondents answered that no, they did not provide any additional food support.

Additional food support	Number	%
Yes	21	44.7%
No	26	55.3%
Base	47	

Please provide details

There were 23 responses to this part of the question, the majority of which mentioned providing hot or cooked meals with a small number also providing frozen or ready meals. Five respondents also provided additional support which included help with utility bills. Vouchers, delivering of medicines and other donations including nappies and household items were also mentioned.

10: Demographic of people you are helping

Percentage(%) of adults?

There were 46 responses to this part of the question.

Percentage (%) children?

There were 42 responses to this part of the question.

Percentage (%) adults over 65?

There were 47 responses to this part of the question.

11: Which geographical areas did you work in?

(Please provide percentage)

There were 47 responses to this part of the question providing areas right across the borough. These included the main towns, smaller villages and rural areas.

12: Can you provide an approximate break-down of need based on the following categories:

Critical Food need for financial reasons

There were 32 responses to this part of the question. The majority of responses, 59.4%, reported that less than 50% of the critical food need was for financial reasons.

Financial reasons	Number	%
0%	1	3.1%
5%	2	6.3%
10%	1	3.1%
15%	2	6.3%
20%	5	15.6%
25%	1	3.1%
30%	3	9.4%
35%	1	3.1%
40%	3	9.4%
50%	1	3.1%
60%	1	3.1%
64%	1	3.1%
70%	2	6.3%
100%	3	9.4%
Unsure / don't know	1	3.1%
See CAF data	1	3.1%
N/A	3	9.4%
Base	32	

Critical Food need due to shielding

There were 39 responses to this part of the question. 24 of the 39 respondents noted that less than 50% of the critical food need was due to shielding.

Critical -Shielding	Number	%
0%	2	5.1%
5%	2	5.1%
5% to 10%	1	2.6%
10%	2	5.1%
12%	1	2.6%
15%	3	7.7%
20%	2	5.1%
30%	3	7.7%
35%	1	2.6%
36%	1	2.6%
40%	5	12.8%
46%	1	2.6%
50%	2	5.1%
55%	2	5.1%
60%	3	7.7%
70%	1	2.6%
80%	1	2.6%
100%	2	5.1%
See CAF data	1	2.6%
N/A	3	7.7%
Base	39	

Support with some food need due to shielding

There were 33 responses to this part of the question. Again the majority responded that those needing support with some food need to due to shielding accounted for less than 50% of need.

Support - shielding	Number	%
0%	1	3.0%
5%	4	12.1%
8%	1	3.0%
10%	4	12.1%
12%	1	3.0%
18%	1	3.0%
20%	4	12.1%
30%	5	15.2%
35%	1	3.0%
40%	1	3.0%
50%	1	3.0%
60%	2	6.1%
98%	1	3.0%
100%	1	3.0%
Unsure / don't know	1	3.0%
See CAF data	1	3.0%
N/A	3	9.1%
Base	33	

Support with food due to low income

There were 41 responses to this part of the question. 68.3% of responses reported that support with food due to low income was less than 50% of need.

Low income	Number	%
1%	1	2.4%
6%	1	2.4%
10%	7	17.1%
12%	1	2.4%
15%	4	9.8%
20%	5	12.2%
30%	4	9.8%
35%	1	2.4%
40%	4	9.8%
50%	3	7.3%
60%	1	2.4%
70%	3	7.3%
75%	1	2.4%
100%	1	2.4%
See CAF data	1	2.4%
N/A	3	7.3%
Base	41	

Support with food due to benefit delays and changes

There were 30 responses to this part of the question. Those receiving support with food due to benefit delays and changes have lower numbers of mentions than the other categories.

Benefits related	Number	%
0%	3	10.0%
2%	1	3.3%
3%	1	3.3%
5%	2	6.7%
10%	7	23.3%
20%	1	3.3%
21%	1	3.3%
25%	2	6.7%
30%	2	6.7%
40%	1	3.3%
60%	1	3.3%
Unsure / don't know	4	13.3%
See CAF data	1	3.3%
N/A	3	10.0%
Base	30	

Other (please specify)

There were 9 responses to this part of the question. Those that specified other reasons referred to those with health issues and disabilities, some of whom were not officially shielding. Others noted those who lacked support, had been bereaved and those who are homeless.

13: What other types of support have you been providing during this period? (sign posting, social connections etc); Please give details

other supports

There were 46 responses to this part of the question with respondents providing details of the many different types of other support that was provided. The most common response related to signposting. Keeping in touch with people was also another area identified by 52.1% of respondents, through either talking on the phone (through initiatives such as the Good Morning Scheme) or face-to face visits.

Other supports	Number	%
Signposting	27	58.7%
Buddy / call service / helpline	14	30.4%
Counselling inc support for domestic abuse	5	10.9%
Mental health / mindfulness	5	10.9%
Community garden / gardening therapy	3	6.5%
Activities for children / childcare	7	15.2%
Providing / delivering other provisions e.g. nappies, medicines	18	39.1%
Visits / social connections	10	21.7%
Vouchers / Fuel / Electric	5	10.9%
Transportation	1	2.2%
Online classes / demonstrations	2	4.3%
Pet walking / litter lifting	1	2.2%
Making / distributing PPE	4	8.7%
Bingo / quizzes	2	4.3%
None / N/A	3	6.5%
Base	46	

May not sum due to multiple response types

14: When do you plan to end or scale back your current food provision project and why?

End time

There were 46 responses to this part of the question. 30.4% of respondents stated that their current project would be ending in June or July with many of these mentioning the end of the Council food scheme. Almost a quarter will be carrying on with food support as this was already part of their function.

End time	Number	%
June	11	23.9%
June / July	1	2.2%
July	2	4.3%
Next week	1	2.2%
Scaling back	5	10.9%
End of lockdown	2	4.3%
Already ended	4	8.7%
When need has ended or supplies / money run out	6	13.0%
Ongoing / continue as before coronavirus	11	23.9%
Unsure / don't know	1	2.2%
N/A	2	4.3%
Base	46	

15: After your project has ended, will you continue to provide a level of food support to those in critical need?

(b)   If no, are you planning to refer these people to another service?

There were 46 responses to this part of the question.

	Number	%
Yes	25	54.3%
No	21	45.7%
Base	46	

If yes, please specifiy which service will you make the referral to

There were 31 responses to this part of the question. While some respondents did not specify to whom the referral would be made, 29.0% stated food banks.

Referrals	Number	%
Food bank	9	29.0%
Existing services	5	16.1%
Source additional funding	1	3.2%
Community groups / organisations	4	12.9%
New project	1	3.2%
Provide referrals	5	16.1%
Unsure / don't know	1	3.2%
No / N/A	5	16.1%
Base	31	

16: What have you learnt through this process?

a.   What worked well?

There were 44 responses to this part of the question. More than half of responses referred to partnership working and collaborating working well during this time, with responses referring to both existing and new relationships between various groups and organisations.

Worked well	Number	%
Partnership working / collaborating	24	54.5%
Social media	2	4.5%
Public support / donations	7	15.9%
Project worked well	7	15.9%
Identifying / getting food to those in need	16	36.4%
Funding	6	13.6%
Volunteers	9	20.5%
Food boxes	6	13.6%
Contact / visits	6	13.6%
Base	44	

May not sum due to multiple response types

b.   What has not worked well?

There were 39 responses to this part of the question. Almost a quarter of respondents answered nothing or not applicable. While in the previous question collaboration had been identified as part of what had worked well, for 17.9% of respondents to this question the lack of collaboration or coordination was an issue. Furthermore while duplication was also an issue, there were respondents who noted that some people and/or areas had not received the help that they should.

Not worked well	Number	%
Duplication	6	15.4%
No requests to deliver / inconsistent supplies	3	7.7%
Lack of collaboration / coordination	7	17.9%
Need better ways to identify those in need	6	15.4%
Some people / areas not helped	4	10.3%
Unable to contact people / don't know about help	3	7.7%
Processes	5	12.8%
Pressure on volunteers	2	5.1%
Unsure / don't know	1	2.6%
Nothing / N/A	9	23.1%
Base	39	

May not sum due to multiple response types

c.   What changes would you make if this process is required in the future?

There were 41 responses to this part of the question. Many of the responses referred to:

- Having a coordinated approach
- Better advertising of support available
- Using same criteria for support
- Improve processes

17: What has been your experience (if any) in working with Council and other statutory agencies during this crisis?

working with council

There were 46 responses to this part of the question with the majority (58.7%) of respondents providing a positive experience of working with council. There were also a number of responses (8.7%) where both positive and negative points were highlighted.

Working with council	Number	%
Positive	27	58.7%
Minimal interaction	4	8.7%
Negative	4	8.7%
Combination	4	8.7%
N/A	7	15.2%
Base	46	

Positive responses included:

- Council being able to answer questions / queries
- Easy to access
- Provided great support

Negative responses included:

- Initially slow to react
- Timeliness of funding
- Issues with grant application process

18: Would you be interested in working with other organisations in the future to provide a co-ordinated approach to meeting critical food needs in your community?

working together

There were 46 responses to this part of the question with 93.5% answering yes to working with other organisations in the future.

Working together	Number	%
Yes	43	93.5%
No	3	6.5%
Base	46	

19: Do you have any ideas about how we could do this and which organisations should be involved?

ideas on involving others

There were 41 responses to this part of the question. There were a wide variety of ideas on how to involve other organisations and which organisations should be involved. These organisations included:

- Churches
- Schools and youth organisations
- Wellness centre
- Community groups
- Supermarkets / wholesalers
- Salvation Army and St. Vincent de Paul

20: What do you believe are main issues that our communities will face in the next 6 months?

main issues

There were 47 responses to this part of the question. Respondents provided a range of issues that they believe the community will face in the next 6 months. The most common issue referenced was that of businesses closing down and unemployment. Many commented that this situation will get worse as the government furlough scheme comes to an end. Two-thirds of respondents also cited anxiety, depression and mental health problems as a main issue.

Main issues	Number	%
Anxiety / Depression / Mental Health	31	66.0%
Isolation / Loneliness / Lockdown	16	34.0%
Financial issues / poverty	29	61.7%
Businesses closing / unemployment	35	74.5%
Second wave	8	17.0%
Homeschooling / childcare	8	17.0%
Domestic abuse / relationship issues	5	10.6%
Crime / addiction	4	8.5%
Inequalities	2	4.3%
Volunteers	2	4.3%
Increased need for community / voluntary sector	3	6.4%
Social distancing	5	10.6%
Base	47	

May not sum due to multiple response types

21: To what extent do you believe the need for food support will increase over the next 6 months?

need for food in 6 months

There were 46 responses to this part of the question. Over half (54.3%) of respondents believe there will be a greater need for food support in the next 6 months.

Need for food in 6 months	Number	%
Greater need	25	54.3%
Same / ongoing	5	10.9%
Less need	3	6.5%
Don't know	11	23.9%
Not needed	2	4.3%
Base	46	

Many of those who believe that there will be a greater need made reference to unemployment and loss of income, including delays in obtaining benefits as the reason for this and the issues a second wave of the virus could have. Those who believe there will be less need mentioned that as lockdown lifts more family help and support should become available to the elderly and vulnerable.

22: Any other comments or suggestions.

further comments

There were 19 responses to this part of the question. These included:

- Highlighting the lack of experience in social and emergency planning
- The need to provide professional counselling
- Organisations require more flexibility
- Change to contents of food boxes
- More funding for mental health programmes and training
- Need to fill the gaps that allow the need for foodbank and address benefit delays
- Need for a draft support plan

23: Would you like to know more or become involved with other like-minded community groups through the Community & Voluntary Sector Panel operating within Armagh City Craigavon and Banbridge Borough Council area. If so, please supply a contact name and details:-

Name

There were 35 responses to this part of the question.

Email

There were 35 responses to this part of the question.

Contact Number

There were 33 responses to this part of the question.