

Hello everyone,

This is the last Weekly Briefing from the DCF team, but fear not, we're excited shortly to introduce you to the all-new **Fortnightly Briefing!** Strikingly similar to its predecessor, but, well, fortnightly. We'd love to learn what you find most useful about the briefings, so please do take a couple of minutes to complete our **extremely short [survey here.](#)**

What happened to the £750 Million?

Click on the **BOLD COLOURED** links to be redirected to useful resources - Right click on the links if you want to open it in a separate window.

Have you found yourself over the past few weeks wondering what became of the Government's £750m support package for charities announced by the Chancellor on 8 April, to 'ensure [charities] can continue their vital work during the coronavirus outbreak'? If so, you are not alone: NPC has responded to charities' enquiries by publishing a **report** attempting to trace where this money has gone, and how it was channelled. Here's a summary.

- **It wasn't easy to find out, and there is still more to learn.** The original point has all been parcelled out, but as it was distributed in a number of different ways, and has been divided into at least 17 different sub-funds, with several more under this, it isn't clear how much has actually reached the end user. The report gives a detailed breakdown of what is currently known. NPC plans to update its report as further information becomes available.
- **The money was distributed in a variety of ways.** Some of the money went into specific sectors, some to specific charities, and some allocated according to the size of the charity. Some was given directly to individual charities, while most was given to intermediary organisations to distribute (such as Homeless Link and the National Lottery). The rationale for these variations is unclear.
- **It took quite some time for some funds to open.** The National Lottery Covid fund for smaller charities, worth £200m, opened 43 days after the announcement of the bailout package.
- **It is difficult for observers to determine the logic for distribution.** Some of this data could suggest the intention was to shore up specific services provided by charities which were known to have experienced heavy spikes in demand as a result of the crisis such as hospices and the Citizens' Advice Bureau, rather than to bail out the sector per se. On the other hand, £14m for zoos and aquaria does not fit this logic. And we have no clear sense of why it was decided to allocate more for some causes than others: why a greater spend on domestic abuse than on health, for example? It's not to criticise these decisions, simply that it is hard to see why they were made.
- **This dispersed picture will make it hard to measure impact.** Whilst there is clearly important work being funded through these resources, it is going to be a very challenging job to assess whether this 'package' has had the desired effect. Not least because the desired effect is itself unclear.

It would be interesting to see how much of this money has made its way to Devon, but given the challenges of accounting outlined above, I'm not holding my breath.



Spotlight on ... Children and Families

The lockdown has had a huge impact on our routines and the way we live our everyday lives. The closure both of school and workplace has meant whole families living, working and learning from their own homes. For many, this has brought a much-needed opportunity to slow down and spend some more quality time with those they love, however the situation has also presented many challenges. Parents and carers have been expected to take on the role of teacher as well as dealing with work, financial and caring responsibilities. Young Minds have produced a [useful guide](#) for families who are experiencing this balancing act.

Experts are anticipating that this lengthy period spent outside of formal education will have an impact on children's development and may lead to increases in educational inequalities. Research organisations such as [The Nuffield Foundation](#) will be putting significant resources into measuring such outcomes.

Jo from **The Royal Naval Preschool Learning Organisation** Charity told us:

“As an organisation we recognise that the first five years of a child's life becomes the ‘blueprint’ for their future emotional responses, social interactions, safety, mental health and wellbeing. Developing emotional intelligence enables our children to build up resilience which will be valuable in all aspects of their lives both now and as they grow to adults. This enables young children to develop coping strategies for times of separation from loved ones and peers. The cycle of separation is familiar within our organisation and we build our policies around this enabling staff to have empathy and a greater understanding of how the child and parent or carer may be feeling and behaving when a loved one is working away. These skills have become especially important when providing support during the current pandemic.”

The tireless support and resource provided by such organisations will help to reduce any developmental losses that have occurred as a result of the pandemic. For those who have been unable to access such support, anticipating the possible developmental consequences will add to the pressure pot facing many families.

We have heard time and time again that the lockdown will have lasting effects on our mental health. This [briefing](#) by the Mental Health Foundation explains that those who experience financial hardship are much more likely to face mental health issues and it expects that low-income families will be the hardest hit as a result of the pandemic.

BOUNCE! Brighter futures, who provide mental health support to children and families in the Tiverton area, told us:

“As a team we have felt privileged to work with all the people that have come forward for support. Some are suffering with anxiety, others with depression, relationship difficulties or trauma. Perhaps unsurprisingly, loss has also played a significant role in our work. It has seemed that the crisis amplifies symptoms, leaving some people struggling to cope.”

Anticipating the consequences of the pandemic can make for worrying reading, however as we have seen across the board, charities and community organisations have been quick to respond and acts of neighbourly kindness are at an all-time high.

In Devon ...

Devon Family Resource, run by **Exeter Community Initiatives**, works holistically with children and families across Devon to help them meet any challenges they are facing and create the best possible outcomes around their health, well-being and happiness. During the Covid 19 outbreak, they have continued to maintain contact with families by phone, text, email or video chat, to offer, and coordinate support, and to help combat feelings of isolation, check on their welfare and to link them into any community support being offered in their area. Recently, they have opened up to some carefully managed, socially distant, face-to-face-meetings, where families are in immediate crisis. They have created an online [toolkit](#) for parents in lockdown and some [video resources](#) around home educating and managing challenging behaviour and they are also running a parent phone line from 10am-2pm, Monday to Friday, for any Devon-based parent who is struggling with conflict, or communication issues in the home.

The Royal Naval Preschool Learning Organisation Charity ([Jack and Jill's Child Care](#)) delivers childcare to the service community and the local neighbourhood's in and around the Plymouth area. They have invested in a secure online system to use during this academic year to record photos and observations sent by their staff to parents and carers along with messages of support, advice and guidance. In return parents and carers can add photos of their children, comments on how they are developing at home and how they are coping with the situation. This is particularly important for those who are key workers and may be separated from their own support networks. This system ensures that communication between the settings and families continues throughout the lockdown. The team have been [posting](#) weekly activities for parents and carers to do with their children along with games, crafts. In some cases, staff will read favourite stories accompanied by the Makaton signing used in their childcare settings so even the very youngest children can interact.

Barnardo's Plymouth is Providing [virtual support](#) for local Plymouth families via email and telephone. While their Children's Centres and groups aren't running, they are able to support families looking for available services, struggling with lockdown or looking for advice on parenting and child development.

[BOUNCE!](#) Brighter Futures is a small charity based in Tiverton working with educational staff to provide mental health support to children and families. When the crisis hit, they wanted to respond to the clear need for wider support and as a small organisation they have been able to adapt quickly. With funding from Devon Community Foundation, they have provided 100 additional therapy sessions to adults, young people, and children in the Tiverton area. This is in addition to continuing to work online with their existing children and families.

[Uplift](#), based in Tiverton, supply families with children's essentials such as nappies and wet wipes but they also supply clothes, toys and books. They have continued to deliver these items to families in Tiverton and surrounding areas with distancing in place where families have been unable to collect from them. Uplift have also created a [Facebook forum](#) for families to communicate and share ideas and activities.

[The Cullompton Family Centre](#) remains closed but they are offering online support and keeping in touch with families, which they feel is important at this strange time. As lockdown lifts and children return to school, they are anticipating a rise in anxiety amongst the families they support and will be there to offer advice and guidance during this transition.

Babcock Education's Social Emotional Mental Health Team have put together some [useful resources](#) to support children and families during this difficult time and have been posting helpful activities and resources on their [Facebook pages](#).

We are regularly updating our own [Coronavirus help and support pages](#) which includes further information, activities and services for children and families



DCF Funding Update

Transforming Plymouth Together - £9472

Plymouth

Delivery of food and activities to families on low incomes.

Plymouth Highbury Trust - £1560

Plymouth

Purchasing tablets and data to enable vulnerable women to access support and stay in contact with families

South Molton & District Volunteer Bureau - £400

South Molton & surrounding villages

Providing PPE to enable safe outpatients community transport service to resume

Link Academy Trust Schools - £2000

Newton Abbot, Totnes, and East Budleigh

Continuation funding for purchase of food hamper items to help prevent child hunger

Youth Arts & Health Trust - £6688

Devon

Provision of art therapy support and art activity packs to support children and young people struggling with anxiety throughout the lockdown

Exmouth and District Community Transport Group - £7600

Exmouth and surrounding area

Providing safe socially distanced community transport enable passengers over 70 and those who have been shielding to visit places

The Veterans Farm Able Foundation - £2610

Buckfastleigh, Ashburton, Newton Abbot, Totnes, mostly across rural Devon

Keeping in touch, phoning people regularly and providing counselling support as required to veterans with PTSD and/or poor mental health

Seadream Education CIC - £850

Plymouth

Sending science and activity packs to families



Coronavirus
Click for our help & support



Click to donate to the
Devon Coronavirus Response & Recovery Fund



Click to donate to the national appeal



#shouldertoshoulder #GiveLoveDevon

Call for Input : Physical Disability

Next time we'll have a focus on the impact of the crisis on need in this area, and on the organisations who work to support those affected. Please do be in touch with any stories, examples, reflections from your own experience, or with details of people and organisations we ought to talk to. Please email: insights@devoncf.com.