
Motion to Council - Defibrillators

Committee considering report:	Executive
Date of Committee:	23 March 2023
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Graham Bridgman
Report Author:	Gordon Oliver
Forward Plan Ref:	EX4329

1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 At Council on the 8th July 2021, the following motion was submitted:

This Council notes:

- *That existing telephone boxes are being offered to the council for free or as little as £1.*
- *That telephone boxes make ideal environments to place public access defibrillators due to their existing power and the shelter they offer.*
- *That defibrillators are known to save lives.*
- *That those minutes and seconds are critical to a positive outcome where defibrillators are used.*

This Council, therefore resolves to:

- (1) *take a default position where it would adopt any telephone boxes being offered throughout West Berkshire for use as an Open Access Defibrillator location.*
- (2) *install an Open Access Defibrillator in each adopted box should another defibrillator not be present within 100 metres.*
- (3) *make residents local to that defibrillator aware of its presence*
- (4) *provide a “how to use a defibrillator” guide to all residents within 400 metres of the device.*
- (5) *ensure the location of the device is added to the emergency services register of defibrillators.*
- (6) *undertake the minimal servicing required to keep the devices active or devolve this to the local parish or town council.*

Costs are maximum £1500 per defibrillator including purchase and installation.

1.2 The Chairman requested that the item be referred to the Health and Wellbeing Board for consideration with a report to Executive, as the matter fell within their remit, with the outcome of that reported to Council.

2 Recommendations

For the Executive to agree that:

- Community proposals for the installation of new defibrillator sites will continue to be supported through the Members' bids programme, and that these will be assessed in terms of:
 - Proximity to other sites, with proposals rejected if they are within 100m of an existing open access defibrillator;
 - Confirmation that: new open access defibrillators will be registered on the national database, and that provision is made for on-going maintenance checks, and replacement of the unit when life-expired; and
 - Provision is made by the applicant for community training on how to use the device.
- The Council should **not** take a default position of adopting all phone boxes for use as open access defibrillator locations for the reasons outlined in the report.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	There are no financial implications associated with this report, since the recommendations can be delivered within existing budgets and resources.
Human Resource:	There are no HR implications associated with this report, since the recommendations can be delivered within existing resources.
Legal:	There are no legal implications associated with this report.
Risk Management:	There are no risks or issues arising from this report.

Motion to Council - Defibrillators

Property:	There are no property issues arising from this report.			
Policy:	The recommendations support the priorities of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		
Environmental Impact:		X		
Health Impact:	X			Providing support for additional public defibrillators in local communities may help to improve health outcomes for people experiencing cardiac arrest.
ICT Impact:		X		
Digital Services Impact:		X		

Motion to Council - Defibrillators

Council Strategy Priorities:	X			The recommendations will support the Council Strategy priority of helping to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents.
Core Business:		X		
Data Impact:		X		
Consultation and Engagement:	The following have been consulted on this report: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Councillor Graham Bridgman (Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing)• Steve Welch (Service Director – Communities & Wellbeing)• Dr Zakyeya Atcha (Interim Public Health Consultant)• April Peberdy (Programme Manager, Public Health)			

4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 This report sets out the response to the motion tabled by Councillor Abbs at the 8 July 2021 Council meeting, which called on West Berkshire Council to: adopt redundant telephone boxes and install defibrillators, make residents aware of their locations, provide guidance on how to use them to nearby residents, ensure that they are added to the national database used by emergency services, and undertake ongoing maintenance.
- 4.2 The matter was referred to Health and Wellbeing Board for consideration, and it was requested that the response be reported back to Executive, with the outcome subsequently reported to Council.

5 Supporting Information

Introduction

- 5.1 Councillor Adrian Abbs tabled a motion at the 8 July 2021 Council meeting, which called on West Berkshire Council to: adopt redundant telephone boxes and install defibrillators, make residents aware of their locations, provide guidance on how to use them to nearby residents, ensure that they are added to the national database used by emergency services, and undertake ongoing maintenance.
- 5.2 The then Chairman informed the Council that under Procedural Rule 4.9.8 the motion, would not be debated, and instead be referred to the Health and Wellbeing Board for

Motion to Council - Defibrillators

consideration with a report to Executive, as the matter fell within their remit. The outcome of that would be reported to Council.

Background

- 5.3 The Health and Wellbeing Board initially considered a report in response to the motion on 30 September 2021.
- 5.4 BT had confirmed that at that time 34 telephone boxes had been adopted and repurposed in West Berkshire, with just two live phone boxes remaining in High Street, Hungerford and Newbury Street, Lambourn. Further research was proposed to identify phone boxes that may be suitable to house a defibrillator, whether adopted or not.
- 5.5 The report summarised guidance on provision of defibrillators within the community, and covered aspects such as: suitable locations, power supply, security, maintenance checks, and registration of devices.
- 5.6 The Board considered evidence about the effectiveness of defibrillators. When used correctly with good CPR, they can improve survival chances by up to 75%. However, they were most cost effective in busy locations where it was more likely that there would be an incidence of coronary arrest, and that people would be around to help with resuscitation.
- 5.7 It was noted that there was conflicting data on the locations of defibrillators, but The Circuit was accepted as the definitive national database, with locations shown on the Save a Life App.
- 5.8 The report identified sources of funding available for defibrillators, including British Heart Foundation and the National Lottery Community Fund
- 5.9 Following consideration of this initial report, the Health and Wellbeing Board agreed the following actions:
 - Ask all town/parish councils to confirm the locations of telephone kiosks within their areas and whether they were in use or defunct; and, if defunct, whether they had been adopted, by whom and for what purpose.
 - Ask all town/parish councils to also identify publicly accessible defibrillators within their local area and to check they were registered on The Circuit.
 - A cost-benefit analysis be undertaken to assess whether additional defibrillators should be provided and where they would be most effectively deployed.
 - Following that analysis, to approach town/parish councils and local communities to identify suitable sites (including phone boxes), and to ask those respondents if they would be willing to take responsibility for the installation and ongoing maintenance of any new defibrillators
 - An investigation be completed into all available funding streams for new defibrillators.

Motion to Council - Defibrillators

- Initial publicity be carried out to ensure residents are aware of existing defibrillator locations and how to locate them in the event of encountering someone experiencing cardiac arrest.
- Consideration be given to funding a programme of First Aid training in schools and colleges and the wider community, to include the use of defibrillators.

5.10 A second report was taken to the Health and Wellbeing Board on 19 May 2022, which presented the findings of the additional research.

5.11 Responses were received from 37 out of 63 town/parish councils. Most already had at least one defibrillator in their area. Of these, only one was not registered on The Circuit. Only three Parish Councils reported that they did not have any defibrillators – Catmore, Tidmarsh & Sulham, and Wokefield. However, these had no significant centres of population, and none of them had indicated that they wished to install a defibrillator in their local area.

5.12 Of those who responded, 19 Parish Councils had at least one phone box in their area, while 14 had none (four did not provide any data). Only three phone boxes were reported as still working. Of the redundant phone boxes, five had already been used to accommodate defibrillators. Only one was reported as not in use for any purpose.

5.13 Several Parish Councils already had a defibrillator at a nearby location (e.g. village hall), so there was no need to utilise a phone box for this purpose. Challenges with providing power to phone boxes were highlighted – this is needed for the heater that maintains the required temperature of at least 4°C throughout the winter period.

5.14 Parish Councils that were actively looking to provide additional defibrillators included: Inkpen, Pangbourne and Shaw-cum-Donnington. However, only Inkpen Parish Council indicated that they were looking to utilise a redundant phone box for this purpose.

5.15 In addition to consulting the Parish Councils, officers identified geographical gaps in the provision of defibrillators using the map in the Save a Life app. Communities identified as not having a defibrillator included:

- Upper Lambourn
- West Woodhay
- Hamstead Marshall
- Marsh Benham
- Enborne
- Lower Basildon.

5.16 The report presented further information on the effectiveness of community defibrillators. This suggested that widespread provision at sites with lower incidence of

Motion to Council - Defibrillators

cardiac arrest would be unlikely to be cost-effective, and may represent poorer value for money than alternative healthcare interventions.

5.17 The report concluded with a list of potential funding source for defibrillators.

5.18 Health and Wellbeing Board agreed the following actions:

- To remind West Berkshire Council's elected Members that they are able to use their Members' bids to part-fund community defibrillators.
- To signpost town and parish councils to existing sources of funding for public access defibrillators.
- To remind town and parish councils of the need to undertake regular maintenance checks of defibrillators and suggest that they nominate a 'guardian' for each unit.
- To encourage South Central Ambulance Service to identify any units that are approaching the end of their useful service life.
- To consider funding a programme of First Aid training in schools and colleges and the wider community, to include the use of defibrillators. (If the Council was to support first aid training, then funding would need to be identified.)
- To encourage residents to download the Save a Life app as part of a publicity campaign to support British Heart Week (7-15 June 2022).

5.19 Subsequent to this meeting, it was confirmed that First Aid training was already carried out in schools as part of the RSHE curriculum, and that this included how to administer CPR, as well as the purpose of defibrillators and when they would be needed. The remainder of the above actions have all been implemented.

5.20 There have been four Member Bids for defibrillators in the last two funding rounds in June 2021 and June 2022. Approved bids were as follows:

June 2021

- Councillor Clive Hooker – Defibrillator for Farnborough Parish Meeting
- Councillor Ross Mackinnon – Defibrillator for Bradfield Parish Council

June 2022

- Councillor Graham Pask – Defibrillator for Bucklebury Memorial Hall
- Councillor Lynne Doherty – Defibrillator for Speen Parish Council

5.21 Proposals are assessed on the basis of the following:

- Whether the town/parish council has previously indicated that they wished to deliver additional defibrillators in their area

Motion to Council - Defibrillators

- The proximity of other defibrillators (bids for new units within 100m of an existing one are not supported)
- Provision for on-going checks and maintenance, replacement after use, and registration on the national database
- Provision of training on how to use the defibrillator

Proposals

5.22 As described above, a variety of measures have already been implemented, and these respond to the points raised within the motion.

5.23 However, it is **not** proposed that the Council should take a default position of adopting all phone boxes for use as a defibrillator location for the reasons outlined in the report.

5.24 It is proposed that:

- Support for community proposals for the installation of new defibrillator sites continue to be provided through the Members' bids programme, and that these are assessed in terms of:
 - Proximity to other sites, with proposals rejected if they are within 100m of an existing open access defibrillator;
 - Confirmation that: new open access defibrillators will be registered on the national database, and that provision is made for on-going maintenance checks, and replacement of the unit when life-expired; and
 - Provision is made by the applicant for community training on how to use the device.

5.25 No further measures are proposed at this stage.

6 Other options considered

6.1 The following options have been considered and rejected:

- (1) For West Berkshire Council to fund the purchase and installation of defibrillators in all redundant phone boxes in West Berkshire – this is not considered appropriate, since the locations may be in close proximity to existing sites or may not be in optimal locations. Also, there are very few redundant phone boxes available and there would be issues with ongoing maintenance checks and funding for power supplies that would need to be resolved for each site. Furthermore, unless local 'guardians' could be found to undertake regular maintenance checks, the Council would have to resource this activity.
- (2) For West Berkshire Council to offer grant funding for additional AEDs in under-served communities – this is not considered necessary, since match-funding is already offered through the Members' bids and external funding sources are also available.

7 Conclusion

7.1 Although the measures that have been implemented to date are slightly different to those proposed in the original motion to Council, it is considered that they respond to the concerns identified in the motion in an appropriate manner that takes account of the needs of local communities, as well as the practical challenges associated with providing and maintaining public defibrillators in suitable locations.

8 Appendices

8.1 None

Background Papers:

[Response to the Council Motion relating to the use of phone boxes for defibrillators, Health and Wellbeing Board, 19 May 2022](#)

[Response to the Council Motion relating to the use of phone boxes for defibrillators, Health and Wellbeing Board, 30 September 2022](#)

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position	<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee or associated Task Groups within preceding six months	<input type="checkbox"/>
Item is Urgent Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Report is to note only	<input type="checkbox"/>

Wards affected: All wards

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