

## **Media Release**

**March 29<sup>th</sup> 2020**

### **Leitrim Community Response Forum established to assist citizens during Covid 19**

#### **Dedicated community support helpline to be available from Monday**

At the instigation of Minister Murphy a Covid-19 Community Response Forum will be put in place for each City/County and co-ordinated by the Local Authority in each case.

A dedicated community support helpline will be established in Leitrim 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 Leitrim COVID-19 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 etc. 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 Leitrim COVID-19 Community Response Forum are:

- Leitrim County Council
- Health Service Executive
- An Garda Síochána
- Leitrim Development Company
- Leitrim GAA
- An Post
- Leitrim PPN
- Citizens Information
- Alone
- Local Link Donegal Sligo Leitrim
- IFA
- Leitrim Age Friendly Alliance
- Leitrim Civil Defence
- Leitrim Volunteer Centre
- Leitrim International Community Group
- Order of Malta
- 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. Leitrim COVID-19 Community Response Forum will ensure that the wide variety of groups working across the county to assist those in need, will do so in an organised, collaborative and targeted way. Leitrim 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 Leitrim County Council, Lar Power, explains *“There are a number of agencies and community groups currently doing excellent work in delivering care to older and vulnerable people in our communities across County Leitrim. These groups are currently operating independently of each other and Leitrim COVID-19 Community Response Forum’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 County during the COVID-19 pandemic. This public health crisis has changed life for so many, and we are there to help with that change. Leitrim County Council staff whose day-jobs have changed due to this crisis, will also be a resource in the management and operation of this community support programme along with our partner agencies/groups. Set to come into effect from Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March, Leitrim County Council is providing a dedicated contact number - **071 9650473** - with the lines open from 9AM to 5PM seven days a week. Our support staff can also be contacted by email at [covidsupport@leitrimcoco.ie](mailto:covidsupport@leitrimcoco.ie)”.*

Contact details of this new service will be promoted on [www.leitrimcoco.ie](http://www.leitrimcoco.ie), Leitrim County Council social media channels on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram through the local press and media and through parish newsletters. An information leaflet including the new phone number and other information will be distributed around the county, particularly to vulnerable households, over the coming days.

ENDS