

## County Council – 26 May 2023

### Item 16 - Notice of Motion on Defibrillators from Cllr Greenway

#### Briefing Note

##### Overview

##### What is a defibrillator?

As defined by the British Heart Foundation (BHF): "A defibrillator is a device that gives a high energy electric shock to the heart of someone who is in cardiac arrest. This high energy shock is called defibrillation and it's an essential part in trying to save the life of someone who's in cardiac arrest. A defibrillator may also be called a defib, an AED (Automated External Defibrillator) or a PAD (Public Access Defibrillator)."

The BHF advises that "To help someone who is in cardiac arrest survive, a defibrillator needs to be found as quickly as possible. For every minute it takes for the defibrillator to reach someone and deliver a shock, their chances of survival lower."

##### Where are defibrillators located?

Defibrillators, known as Public Access Defibrillators (PADs), are usually located in public spaces, such as community centres, train stations, shopping centres, and airports, as anyone can use them.

##### National Defibrillator Network – The Circuit

- The BHF run a National Defibrillator Network – [The Circuit](#), which provides NHS ambulance services with information regarding defibrillators across the UK, so they can be accessed quickly after a cardiac arrest, to help save lives. Utilising this network, a 999 operator may be able to signpost to the nearest defibrillator, if needed in an emergency.
- The BHF encourages 'Defib Guardians' to register their defibrillators on The Circuit. They also provide a '[defibfinder](#)' to locate defibrillators, but the website is not intended for use in an emergency situation.
- The BHF provides guidance on how to use a defibrillator and offers free online cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training - [RevivR](#)

##### **National Context**

In recent years, there have been several Parliamentary Bills on defibrillators but none has completed its passage. All are focused on increasing access and availability in the community. There is currently no legal requirement for local authorities to fund or provide defibrillators.

##### Roll-out of defibrillators in schools in England

- On 22 July 2022, the Department for Education (DfE) announced that state-funded schools across England would receive defibrillators under plans to ensure there is a device in every school by the end of academic year 2022/23. The plans aim to ensure all state-funded schools have at least one device on site and more devices delivered to larger schools.

- They highlight the [latest research](#) showing accessing a defibrillator within three to five minutes of a cardiac arrest increases the chance of survival by over 40%.
- On 20 January 2023, the DfE announced that deliveries of defibrillators to all state schools in England without a life-saving device, had begun. New guidance to schools provides advice on how to make their defibrillator available to the community and encourages them to sign up to The Circuit.

### Government Funding

- On 29 December 2022, the Government announced a new £1m fund to increase the number of Automated External Defibrillators (AED) in communities most in need, by an estimated 1,000, as part of their commitment to supporting the treatment and prevention of cardiovascular disease and improving access to emergency treatment across England.
- Funded by the Department of Health and Social Care (non-recurrent funding), organisations will be invited to bid to place AEDs in areas most in need. Successful bidders will be asked to match fund.

Reference: [Number of defibrillators to be increased with new funding](#)

### British Heart Foundation (BHF) Part-Funding

The BHF ran a defibrillator part-funding programme this year, providing funding towards Public Access Defibrillators and helping to promote free online [RevivR CPR life-saving training](#) to communities. Due to demand, they are unable to accept further applications this year and hope to have a similar programme available early in the summer next year.

### **Local Context - West Sussex**

#### Community Resilience Programme – What If?

Through the County Council's [‘What If?’ programme](#), parishes and community groups are invited to consider obtaining a defibrillator. However, there is currently no additional government funding to support communities in purchasing them.

#### Defibrillators within County Council facilities

Defibrillators maintained by the County Council's Facilities Management team and inspected weekly, are located at:

- County Hall, Chichester
- Bridge House, Worthing
- County Hall North, Horsham
- Crawley Library offices
- Durban House, Bognor Regis

The defibrillator located at County Hall North, Horsham, is registered with 'The Circuit.' The other devices are not registered with this national defibrillator network, due to being held at receptions and not accessible out of hours.

### **Alison Challenger**

Director of Public Health