

Press Release on behalf of all Somerset Local Authorities

**6 April, 2020**

## **Somerset Coronavirus Support Helpline launched**

A single phone number is now available for anyone in Somerset who needs Coronavirus-related support from their councils.

The Somerset Coronavirus Support Helpline number, 0300 790 6275, is now live and will make it easier for people access any local authority help they may need, including emotional support, in the current crisis.

It links together the district and county council contact centres and will be operating seven days a week, 8am to 6pm, making it the one number you need to remember for Coronavirus-related enquiries. The district and county councils usual phone numbers will be running as normal alongside the new number for non-Coronavirus related issues.

The new number won't cover medical advice, for which people will need to continue to use the 111 NHS online service and only ring 111 if they cannot get help online.

Anyone who can't find help within their own local networks and volunteers, can use the new number to get help and advice around:

- Personal care and support including food and delivery of prescriptions
- Support for the homeless
- Emotional support if you're feeling worried or anxious
- Transport to medical appointments
- Waste collection and disposal
- Financial support

Callers will be asked to describe the support they require and will be connected with others for resolution.

The 0300 790 6275 number is being staffed by the five councils in Somerset and will be available seven days per week 8am – 6pm.

Meanwhile, the five councils in Somerset are getting in touch with people on their database that may be vulnerable to see if they need assistance with anything like supplies of food, help with transport and other support.

If people are interested in volunteering for example helping people out with shopping or picking up prescriptions they can go to <https://www.corona-helpers.co.uk/> to register.

**Ends**

For further info please contact the communications teams from any of Somerset's local authorities – the County Council, four district councils and the Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group.