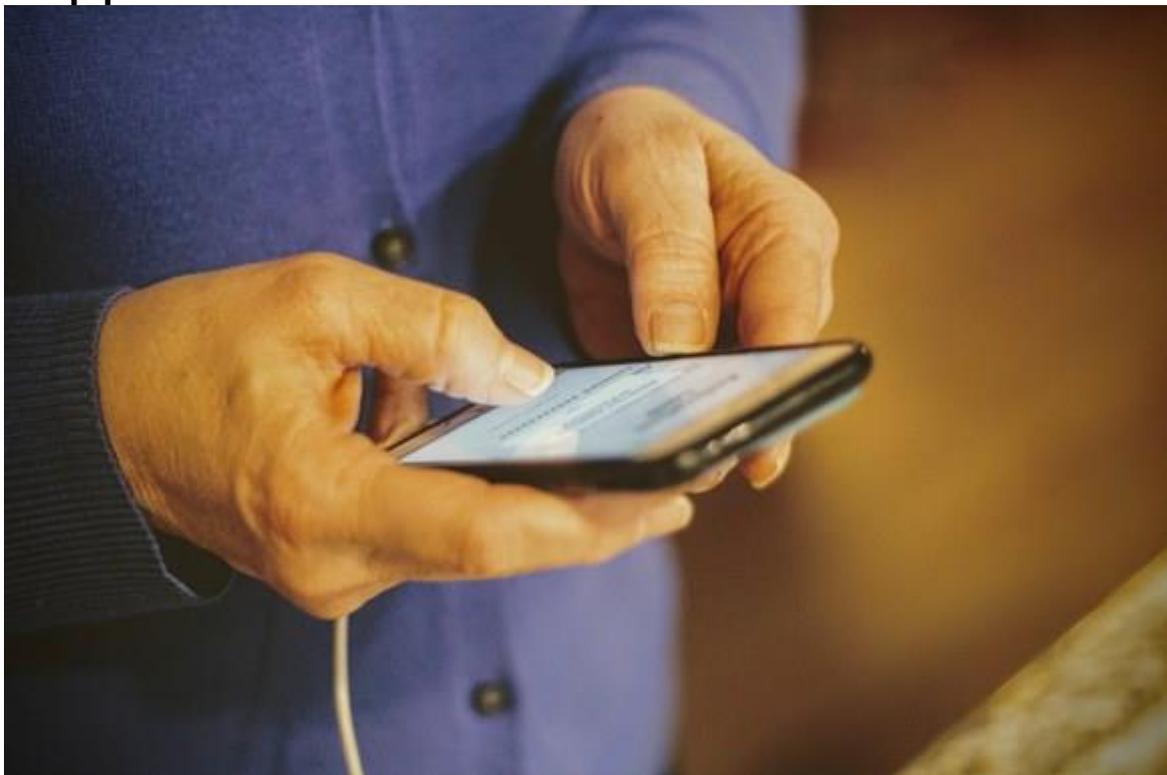




‘Council calling’ as thousands of vulnerable people about to be assessed for lockdown support



Cotswold District Council are this week starting the process of contacting people deemed to be ‘clinically extremely vulnerable’ (CEV) across the district to make sure their basic needs are being met during lockdown.

People are classed as CEV if they are at very high risk of severe illness from COVID-19 due primarily to specific health conditions and are therefore being advised to take extra precautions. Vulnerable people are encouraged to stay at home and only go out to exercise and only work if they can do so safely from home.

CDC is taking a proactive approach and contacting these 4166 vulnerable residents to make sure they have the support and access to essential supplies that they need during the lockdown.

Officers will begin by sending emails and text messages to vulnerable residents, asking them to confirm if they are okay or require support. For those without email or mobiles, there will be phone calls until contact is established. Officers will knock on people's doors to check that they are okay if they do not respond to other attempts to contact them and will be clearly identifiable as being from the Council.

Any residents that need help will then be given the appropriate support such as assistance in booking a priority online supermarket delivery, befriending support, or help in accessing specialist support such as mental health and welfare services.

Cllr Jenny Forde, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, explained the approach: "This is a big logistical task for us, but we are committed to being here for our residents throughout this pandemic and are not going to stop now. We want to protect and support the most vulnerable members of our communities and we will contact everyone on the list supplied to us by the government. We know that many people we speak to will be able to care for themselves or already have a strong network of friends, family or community support, but we also know there are people who don't.

"This second lockdown is tough for all of us - we know that many will be struggling, both in terms of feeling isolated and the stress of having to access services and vital supplies all over again. Not everyone finds it easy organising online food supplies for example or using the internet, so we want to offer practical support where we can.

Councillor Forde, added: "Of course, people need to be extremely vigilant about fraudsters contacting them, asking for money, or posing as a council or NHS workers, so we want to get the word out that we are doing this and if you are classed as 'Clinically Extremely Vulnerable,' then we will be in touch and all our staff will clearly identify themselves. It would be helpful if people receiving an email or text respond so that we know we do not need to continue to try to contact them."