

Chancellor sets out extra £750 million coronavirus funding for frontline charities

- £750 million pot for frontline charities across the UK – including hospices and those supporting domestic abuse victims
- £360 million direct from government departments and £370 million for smaller charities, including through a grant to the National Lottery Community Fund
- government will match donations to the National Emergencies Trust as part of the BBC's Big Night In fundraiser later this month – pledging a minimum of £20 million

Charities across the UK will receive a £750 million package of support to ensure they can continue their vital work during the coronavirus outbreak, Chancellor Rishi Sunak announced today (Wednesday 8 April).

Tens of thousands of charities providing vital services will benefit from direct cash grants to ensure they can meet increased demand as a result of the virus as well as continuing their day-to-day activities supporting those in need.

As part of a UK-wide package of support, £360 million will be directly allocated by government departments to charities providing key services and supporting vulnerable people during the crisis.

As well as this, £370 million for small and medium-sized charities, including through a grant to the National Lottery Community Fund for those in England, will support those organisations at the heart of local communities which are making a big difference during the outbreak, including those delivering food, essential medicines and providing financial advice.

The Chancellor also announced the Government will match fund whatever the public decides to donate to the BBC's Big Night In charity appeal on 23 April, starting with a contribution of at least £20 million to the National Emergencies Trust appeal.

Today's announcement builds on previous announcements by the Chancellor to support charities and businesses, including deferring their VAT bills, paying no business rates for their shops next year, and furloughing staff where possible with the Government paying 80% of their wages.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak said:

Our charities are playing a crucial role in the national fight against coronavirus, supporting those who are most in need.

It's right we do everything we can to help the sector during this

difficult time, which is why we have announced this unprecedented £750 million package of extra funding.

This will ensure our key charities can continue to deliver the services that millions of people up and down the country rely on.

Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said:

Our brilliant charities are already playing a crucial role in our national effort to fight coronavirus – backed up by an army of volunteers. We're determined to support them and match the generosity being shown by the British people. This package will make sure those on the front line are able to reach people who need help most, support communities and take pressure off our NHS.

Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Matt Hancock said:

The entire charity sector has stepped up as part of our national effort to tackle coronavirus – from helping our NHS heroes to ensuring the most vulnerable among us are cared for properly.

Hospices have suffered a huge challenge to their funding due to the outbreak of coronavirus but at the same time continued to play a vital role in delivering compassionate, quality end-of-life care for many people. I am delighted that this cash boost will provide further financial stability and support them to increase capacity of NHS Services and provide stability as we manage our response to coronavirus.

It's vitally important we all continue to support our fantastic and hardworking hospices and their staff during this unprecedented time, and the whole country is grateful for the incredible work they do.

Charities providing vital services and helping vulnerable people through the current crisis will benefit from the £360 million allocated by government departments. These will include:

- hospices to help increase capacity and give stability to the sector
- St Johns Ambulance to support the NHS
- victims charities, including domestic abuse, to help with potential increase in demand for charities providing these services
- vulnerable children charities, so they can continue delivering services on behalf of local authorities
- Citizens Advice to increase the number of staff providing advice during this difficult time

Departments will now work at pace to identify priority recipients, with the

aim for charities to receive money in the coming weeks. The application system for the National Lottery Community Fund grant pot is expected to be operational within a similar period of time.

Where charitable services are devolved the UK Government has applied the Barnett formula in the normal way. We expect the devolved administrations to receive £60 million through the charities pot, and further significant Barnett allocations, dependent on the final proposals funded, through the direct grant pot. We encourage the devolved administrations to use this funding to support charities.

Notes

Reaction from charity sector:

Charlotte Moore, Director of BBC Content said:

“The Big Night In promises to be a fantastic evening of entertainment and we welcome this support. We want to help as many people as possible through this crisis. These funds will be shared by the huge number of smaller charities and projects who are making a vital difference to so many communities up and down the country.”

Tracey Bleakley, CEO from national charity Hospice UK, said:

Hospice UK is delighted that the Government is providing up to £200 million of funding per quarter to hospices to help support the NHS and respond to the COVID-19 emergency.

Hospices are on the frontline of providing care and support to almost a quarter of a million vulnerable people every year at the end of their lives. This unprecedented funding recognises the vital role that hospices play in supporting the NHS in its fight against COVID-19, and means hospices across the country can keep providing beds, specialist clinical care and staffing to relieve pressure on the NHS at this critical moment.

Hospices depend on the generosity of their local communities to care for people and families affected by terminal illness. This incredible government support is very welcome but it's still important that people continue to support their local hospice.

Hospice UK is working with the NHS to disburse this much-needed funding as soon as possible so we can continue to protect the most vulnerable people in our country during this national emergency.

John Herriman, Chief Executive of the National Emergencies Trust, said:

“This is very welcome money that builds on the success of the NET Coronavirus appeal to date and which will give thousands and thousands of people real and much needed help. By working collaboratively with many local grassroots

charities and local community foundations we have been able to deliver support quickly, fairly and efficiently to those who need it most. We have seen many, many stories of people who have already received wonderful support, from food deliveries to helping those in isolation. This additional funding means we can do so much more, and we will work in partnership with the sector to ensure support continues to get to where it's needed most."

Dawn Austwick OBE, Chief Executive, National Lottery Community Fund, said:

"I've been inspired by how charities and voluntary groups have stepped up to support people and communities through this crisis. So this support from Government is welcome, we look forward to working alongside Government and others to ensure these new funds have the biggest possible impact in communities."

Ruth Davison, Chief Executive of Comic Relief, said:

"The incredible support for the Big Night In means we will be able to provide vital funding to smaller charities across the UK who are working around the clock to help keep people fed, safe and supported throughout the pandemic."

Sir John Low, Chief Executive of the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), said:

The Charities Aid Foundation knows only too well that charities on the front line are facing incredible demands for their services just as income is squeezed. This set of measures from the Treasury will offer important and welcome support for civil society at this very difficult time for us all.

Recognising the humbling generosity of the British public right now is so vital as we rally together in the face of such a national challenge.

Charities at the front line and all those working to support our society need help to perform their vital function bringing people together at this time of enormous challenge. They will need this type of support now and into the future as we come out of this crisis.

Businessman fined for breaches of environmental permit

Businessman Philip Eardley, sole director of A Morrey Distribution Limited (AMD), faces a bill of £84,000 for failing to comply with an enforcement notice requiring him to submit a Fire Prevention Plan for a former permitted

site at Garner Street, Stoke-on-Trent.

The 69-year-old of The Holborn, Madeley, near Crewe, was yesterday fined £1,000 for failing to comply with an enforcement notice and ordered to pay £50,000 in prosecution costs. In addition, Philip Eardley must pay a confiscation order of £33,000. That sum is to be paid as compensation to the Environment Agency and will go towards making the site safe. A default prison sentence of 12 to 18 months could be triggered if he does not pay.

Philip Eardley had pleaded guilty to 4 offences in June 2017. A Morrey Distribution Limited also entered guilty pleas to 4 similar charges of breaching permit conditions, contrary to the Environmental Permitting (England & Wales) Regulations 2010 between November 2014 and April 2016. The sentencing hearing took place remotely at Stoke-on-Trent Crown Court using Skype conferencing facilities due to current Covid-19 restrictions.

There was no separate penalty for offences committed by the company due to its financial status.

Proceedings were brought by the Environment Agency and the court heard that AMDL had been granted an environmental permit to store Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) on a temporary basis at the Garner Street site. During 11 inspections between 2014 and 2016 Environment Agency officers noted that bales of RDF were being stockpiled over the limits allowed by the permit. In total, approximately 18,000 tonnes of waste was deposited and stored in 3 different buildings across the site. Some of the RDF bales were degrading and leaching a black liquid and giving off a foul odour. Concerns were raised by the Environment Agency. However, Philip Eardley failed to carry out any action to reduce the risk of fire at the site, even after a suspension notice was issued. The environmental permit was later revoked.

The RDF bales presented an ongoing risk of self-combustion, with potentially very serious consequences given the site's proximity to the A500 D-road and the west coast main railway line.

In passing sentence His Honour Judge Glenn noted that breaches had occurred very shortly after the environmental permit had been issued by the Environment Agency. He stated that Philip Eardley had been 'utterly stupid' to have entered into an arrangement with a third party to accept the bales without a proper written agreement between the parties. Credit was given for early guilty pleas entered in 2017 by AMDL and Philip Eardley. HHJ Glenn acknowledged that all parties had genuinely attempted to find a solution that would enable the site to be cleared of all waste and that this had delayed the conclusion of criminal proceedings.

Speaking after the case, Adam Lines from the Environment Agency said:

Eardley showed no consideration for the environment and the local community by operating a large scale waste site – beyond the level of the permit – at the former Twyford's site. There was a very serious risk of fire at this facility which would have had grave

implications for the surrounding areas. His actions undermined legitimate businesses and that of the wider local economy.

The Environment Agency takes waste crime very seriously and we will use all powers available to us to pursue those who flout the regulations. We gave Mr Eardley every opportunity to comply with those regulations but he ultimately took no action. Our safeguarding responsibilities gave us little choice but to suspend operations at the site and pursue a prosecution.

The Environment Agency is now facilitating the sale of the site so that it can be cleared.

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- If you go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home

Do not meet others, even friends or family.

You can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms.

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1. 16 April 2020

Added links to guidance for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

2. 8 April 2020

First published.

Parole Board statement on prisoner early release scheme

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