



DCN Hardship Fund Design Criteria and Operating Model – a template example

District Councils will play a pivotal role in our national response to the impact of the coronavirus, at the heart of support to our residents and to our businesses, while focusing on continuing our vital services.

The £500 million Hardship Fund was a real win for the DCN, and recognition by the Government of the central role we Districts will play in solving peoples' problems in the weeks and months ahead. By using it effectively we will put ourselves front of the Government's thinking for further investment and support.

Every District will be thinking about how to use the Hardship Fund to meet local needs. We want to help, and so have **provided an example template of how Hardship Fund could be designed and operated locally.**

We hope it is valuable, please do use it, adapt it and feedback on it.

And please also send on any further suggestions on other ways the DCN can help to dcn@local.gov.uk.

District Council response to Coronavirus

Communication and information close to communities to support local identification of need and community infrastructure

Five main focus areas

Working age who lose out because have virus or have to take time off (school closed etc). These will include self-employed, working etc.

Businesses which are struggling because of lack of cash/staff etc.

Older people who are struggling because of increased vulnerability (carers cant come, family cant pop round, food etc.

Community infrastructure building to identify at risk residents and support volunteering

Protecting existing services delivered by councils to protect and support residents

Immediate response

Current claimants – immediate process and payment

Non- benefits claimants – immediate process and payment

Provide support and advice on changes to sick pay, entitlements and protections

Business rates – process and payment relief

£3k business grant payment

Immediate cash payment for basic essentials (food, heat) Up to £200

Food delivery to door

Practical guidance and support to set up and run community-led provision

Identification of vulnerable residents (those living in TA, underlying illnesses etc.)

Coordination of advice and guidance to parish/town councils, residents

Medium term response

Enhanced debt and budgeting support

Business support for businesses at risk of closing

Coordinated engagement with companies (heat/gas) to alleviate pressures

Enhanced housing support and advice

Assistance for older, or at risk people whose health condition has deteriorated

Continued coordination for support communities to combat loneliness, isolation or increased mental health issues

Residents concern

I have caring responsibilities for someone with COVID-19 or in isolation

I have COVID-19

I have self-isolated

I have none of the above but am concerned about my situation

Categories of issue

I am self employed

I am employed and entitled to reduced or statutory sick pay

I am employed and currently entitled to no sick pay

I am employed (in any form) and also in receipt of benefits

I work in the zero hours economy

I am unemployed and in receipt of benefits

Benefits Payment

Hardship Fund

Increased Costs e.g. Working From Home, Childcare etc

Bridge between sickness and SSP commencing

Loss of income from not working

Loss of income from becoming unemployed

One off payment to offset unaffordable increased costs due to COVID-19 for an individual (not business) and /or maintain employment

Per day payment to continue to meet living costs

To support an individual or family for the duration of COVID-19 or Isolation period

Bridge gap between unemployment and Universal Credit

Gateway Benefits Tested

Immediate cash payment for basic essentials (food, heat)
Up to £200

Discretionary Housing Payment
From £500-£2k

Council Tax Assistance
Up to 85%

Discretionary Council Tax Relief

Universal Credit

Principles

- We are covering hardship only, not a differential in someone's income
- We are aiming to keep residents economic active wherever possible
- We will not means test but we will safeguard any investment of the public pound
- We will communicate with directly with residents of changes to benefits that will impact them

Community infrastructure to support at risk groups

Concern

Categories of issue

I am retired / high risk / not able to support myself

I have to self isolate

My carer support is unable to attend

I do not have immediate funds to pay for basic provision

Town / parish council involvement

We want to help support high risk groups

Community group wanting to support local residents

Community hubs for support and virtual engagement

Immediate support

Immediate cash payment for basic essentials (food, heat)
Up to £200

Support with food delivery, pre-set packages (can pay)

General advice to allay concerns

Council support for reduction in costs where possible

Enhanced debt and budgeting support

Immediate support

Practical guidance and support to set up and run community-led provision

Identification of vulnerable residents through assisted bin collection / benefit claimants

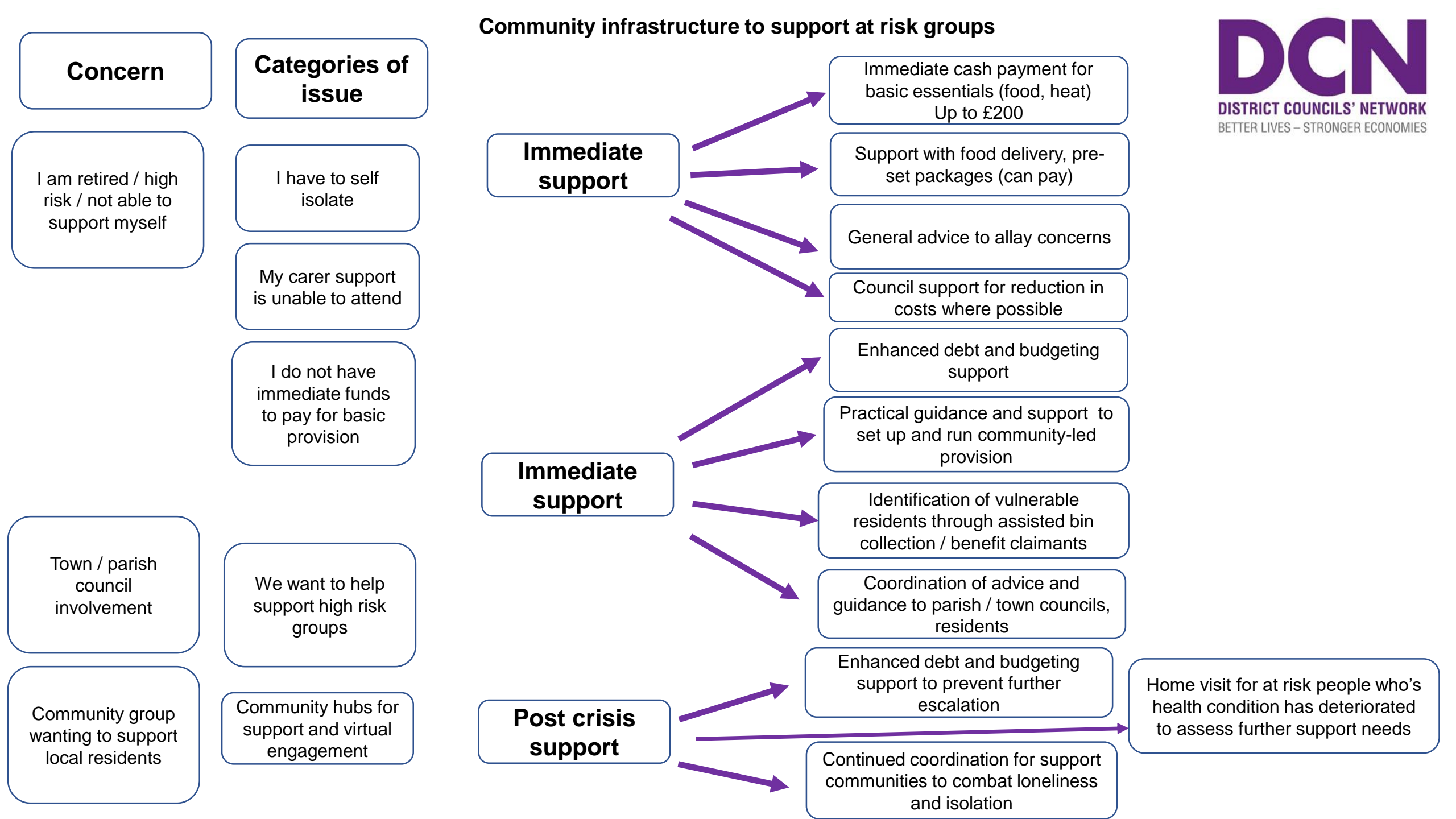
Coordination of advice and guidance to parish / town councils, residents

Post crisis support

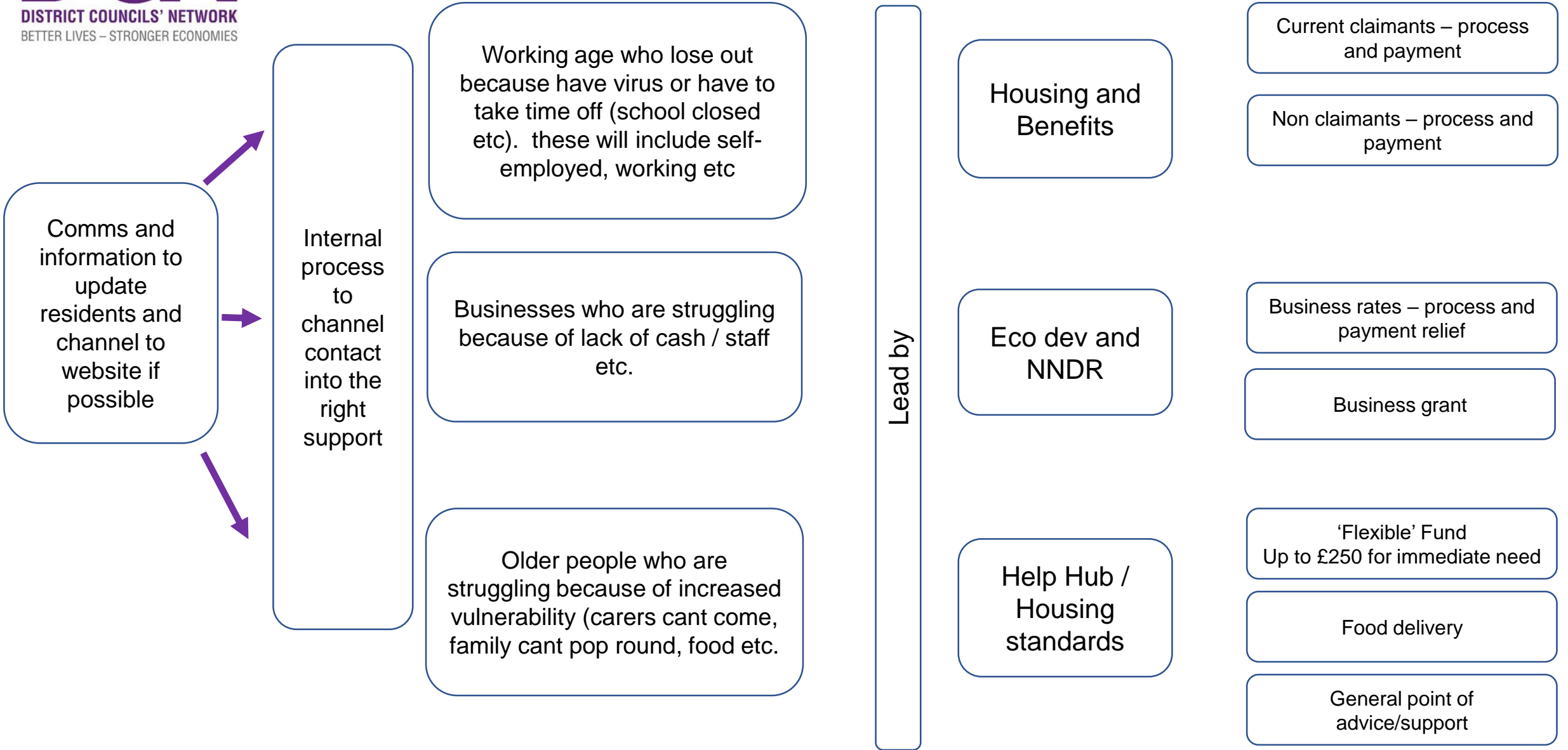
Enhanced debt and budgeting support to prevent further escalation

Continued coordination for support communities to combat loneliness and isolation

Home visit for at risk people who's health condition has deteriorated to assess further support needs



Coronavirus proposal – high level Process



Comms and information to update residents and channel to website if possible

Internal process to channel contact into the right support

Working age who lose out because have virus or have to take time off (school closed etc). these will include self-employed, working etc

Businesses who are struggling because of lack of cash / staff etc.

Older people who are struggling because of increased vulnerability (carers cant come, family cant pop round, food etc.)

Lead by

Housing and Benefits

Eco dev and NNDR

Help Hub / Housing standards

Current claimants – process and payment

Non claimants – process and payment

Business rates – process and payment relief

Business grant

‘Flexible’ Fund Up to £250 for immediate need

Food delivery

General point of advice/support