

**SCHEME FOR SEAFORD VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY TEAM
FOOD SHOPPING FOR VULNERABLE HOUSEBOUND IN SEAFORD**

1. Presenting problem

- a) Volunteers serve housebound vulnerable, often elderly, clients during the Covid-19 lockdown who cannot meet their shopping needs by their own support networks. Some are unable to order online, or arrange for home deliveries via new emerging arrangements made by local businesses.
- b) Once volunteers have established that none of the emerging arrangements work for their client, they need to have the means for buying shopping and getting reimbursement without exposing themselves to risk by using their own personal resources.
- c) SVET is a young organisation with few procedures for handling and keeping track of transactions, for fundraising, and the accounts to handle the sort of cashflows envisaged during the next 6-month period, and so an existing entity is required for this purpose, and one that has the confidence of the public, volunteer resources and public accountability.
- d) Food stores have various arrangements for coping with the Covid-19 situation, but none can accept pre-payment by telephone, and many that have home delivery are currently revising their procedures to cope with the extraordinary situation, but which are unlikely to enable telephone pre-payment because of the risk of fraud.
- e) It is unacceptable for clients to hand over cards or bank details to volunteers as that opens both parties to unacceptable risk.

2. Proposal

- a) That as The Co-op, Morrisons and Sainsbury all offer gift cards (details below) that these are used to pay for goods, and the client refunds the cost of those goods at the time of delivery by means of a cheque on production of the proof of purchase. Cash reimbursement should be avoided if at all possible. All stores can give a balance statement at the end of each gift card transaction and this should be asked for by the volunteer. We should ensure that we have sufficient cards for the small team (see c below) and cover the 4 main shops named above to cover for any supply chain problems that one or more of the branches may be experiencing at any one time.
- b) That before the volunteer embarks on the commission the SVET staffing HQ will have established that there is no alternative means of obtaining the supplies, and agreeing the means by which the client will reimburse the volunteer, recommending payment by cheque. The client will be informed at this stage of the account details for the purposes of payment (see d below).
- c) That a small team of volunteers be set up for this particular service, and be given gift cards appropriate to the store, and they are accountable for obtaining the goods for each client, for obtaining the till receipt for the goods, as well as the gift card balance statement, and that before delivering the goods to the client, call into the SVET office to scan the till receipt, and then deliver the goods to the client and obtain reimbursement in full. If the volunteer is shopping for a number of clients in one 'hit' then separate till receipts are required to ensure full accountability to the client for what they ultimately, are paying for.
- d) That a new ring-fenced account be set up by Seaford Parish Church PCC Treasurer for the purpose of receiving all payments from clients, and for re-charging the Sainsbury's gift cards, or purchasing gift cards from the other stores which appear to have a fixed initial value. The account will also receive donations from organisations such as the Diocese, private individual and other local charities in the form of seed funding purposes, and to cover any defaults in client payments. Any balances remaining on the account at the end of this emergency will be redistributed pro-rata to the donors where refunding is specifically requested. This refund aspect needs to be stated right at the outset of the scheme before donations commence, to save controversy at the end. Any

remaining balance after reimbursement will be only held by Seaford Parish as a seed fund for future similar emergencies, with the agreement of the initiating members of SVET. The management of the account will be carried out by the Seaford Parish PCC Treasurer and volunteers working with him, and accounts will be published at appropriate intervals and reported to SVET.

- e) Sainsbury's require their gift card to be topped up in store, and so when their cards are getting low on credit, someone with authority at Seaford Parish PCC will need to take steps to arrange how the top-up will be administered. The other 2 stores will need to provide replacement cards as their type cannot be replenished, and so arrangements for paying the £250 per card will also need to be made.
- f) It is not clear what call will be made on this facility, but because it is likely to be required for 6 months, we need to be sparing in its use, as national food store chains refine their methods to meet this prolonged period also.

3. Participating stores

Store	Address	Value of gift card	Hours
Co-op	123 Princess Drive BN25 2TZ	£250	7am-10pm
Co-op	1, Shepway Parade, Broad St, BN25 1LZ	£250	6:30am-11pm
Morrisons	Dane Road, Seaford	£250	8am-8pm
Sainsbury's	The Drove, Newhaven BN9 0AG	£750 top-up	8am-8pm

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