

Health and Wellbeing Board (Local Outbreak Engagement Board)

Sub-Committee

4 February 2021 at 4.00 p.m.

Virtual meeting via Microsoft Teams

Held in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020; and conducted according to the Council's Standing Orders for Remote Meetings and those set out in the Council's Constitution

Present Councillor S. Craddock (Chair)
Dr. A. Rischie, Clinical Commissioning Group (Vice-Chair)
Manjit Dehal, One Walsall
Mr. D. Fradgley, Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust
Mr. S. Gunther, Director of Public Health
Councillor I. Robertson

In Attendance Councillor M. Bird, Leader of the Council
Dr. U. Viswanathan, Consultant in Public Health
Mr J. Elsegood, Interim Director of Communications
Ms. E. Thomas, Public Health Intelligence Manager

Welcome

At this point, the Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the Local Outbreak Engagement Board and explained the rules of procedure and legal context in which the meeting was being held. He also directed members of the public viewing the meeting to the papers which could be found on the Council's Committee Management Information system (CMIS) webpage.

52/21 Apologies and substitutions

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Chief Superintendent Parsons.

53/21 Minutes

Resolved (via roll call)

That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2021, copies having been sent to each member of the Sub-Committee, be approved and signed as a correct record.

54/21 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

55/21 Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985

There were no items to consider in private session.

56/21 Questions from the Public

The Chair highlighted the opportunity for members of the public to ask questions to the Board.

57/21 Covid-19 Variant – Surge Testing

The Board were updated on the latest situation with regard to surge testing.

The Director of Public Health reported that a single case of a Covid-19 variant first discovered in South Africa had been identified in Walsall. This case could not be linked to international travel therefore surge testing was taking place to establish the extent of community transmission, if any. He explained that it was the intention to test 10,000 symptom free residents, pre-dominantly in the WS2 area. This would be completed by door-to-door testing and two mobile units. These services would be available seven days a week. Engagement with schools and businesses was taking place. He highlighted that essential workers should continue to attend work and that affected residents were not subject to any additional restrictions as the country was in national lockdown. He thanked volunteers and partners, in particular the Fire Service, for their assistance with the surge-testing programme.

The Leader highlighted how the tests in the surge programme were prioritised for results and any requirement for sequencing. Therefore it was important that affected residents visited surge testing centres. Any positive results were sequenced to establish the variant.

It was reported that all primary care and NHS services were open to assist residents.

The Chair highlighted the information available on the Council website including a map that highlighted the affected area. The website also contained a postcode checker where resident could establish if they were in the affected area or not. He added that it had not been established if the new variant caused more severe disease.

Following a question it was confirmed that translated materials were available for those residents who required it. This was being shared by One Walsall and Community Associations. Engagement was also taking place with faith groups across the borough.

Dr. Rischie provided an update on the vaccination programme. He reported that by the weekend 85% of currently eligible groups would have been vaccinated. He highlighted a clinic that was being operated in a mosque to provide access to different communities. He warned residents of the potential for fraudulent contact and noted that invitations for vaccine would come in

either a NHS letter or direct contact from GPs. Mr. Fradgely reported on capacity in the borough noting that there was sufficient capacity for all local residents with further sites planned as and when vaccine supply increased.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

The meeting terminated at 4.50 pm

Chair:

Date: