

Covid-19 Member Engagement Board

Monday, 29 June 2020

Minutes

Attendance

Committee Members

Council Representatives

Councillor Les Caborn (Chair)
Shade Agboola
Councillor Jo Barker
Councillor Sally Bragg
Councillor Judy Falp
Councillor Marian Humphreys

NHS Representatives

Adrian Stokes (CCGs)

Healthwatch Warwickshire

Chris Bain

Other Attendees

Councillor Margaret Bell (WCC)
John Cole, Nadia Inglis, Nigel Minns, Catherine Shuttleworth, Paul Spencer, Jayne Surman and
Duncan Vernon (WCC Officers)
Fran Collingham (LGA associate)
Steve Maxey (North Warwickshire Borough Council)
Brent Davis and Simone Hines (Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council)
David Buckland and Robert Weeks (Stratford District Council)

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence had been received from officers of Warwick District Council.

2. Notes of the Meeting held on 16 June

The notes of the private meeting held on 16 June were approved.

3. Final Outbreak and Implementation Plan - Shade Agboola

Shade Agboola, WCC Director of Public Health (DPH) presented the final Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire (CSW) Covid-19 Outbreak Control Plan. She thanked everyone for their feedback on the draft plan, which had been incorporated into the document circulated. The plan was considered

to be robust and she outlined its key aims. This was supplemented by plans for each of the three areas involved in the beacon. Reference was made to the Warwickshire plan and the detailed implementation plan. Questions and comments were invited, with responses provided as indicated:

- There was concern about the impact from the reopening of public houses, especially larger premises. It was understood that registers would be kept of those visiting each premises and was questioned how this would align with the contact tracing process. Shade Agboola responded that it would require trust in the public who had symptoms to notify agencies and to give full information on the people they had been in contact with. Cases would be escalated to the local level for detailed research. Community engagement and effective communications were key aspects.
- In Stratford-upon-Avon, a dispersal order had to be issued in response to a large public gathering. It was understood many people had arrived by train. Policing aspects were raised. If people attended events and subsequently developed symptoms, they would need to make contact with the tracing services. It may prove difficult to trace everyone attending large gatherings and would be reliant on trust. Related points were notices in public spaces including trains and the requirement to wear face masks on public transport.
- Capacity and resilience aspects were raised. There was joint work across local authorities to map available resources. To date existing capacity had been sufficient, but it may prove necessary to use some of the government funding to increase capacity. There had been offers of help from retired health professionals and volunteers. The DPH was meeting with a group next week to see how they could assist with local contact tracing.
- The need for effective and timely communication arrangements when outbreaks occurred. Information would be shared with council leaders and chief executive officers when outbreaks occurred. A notification template had been produced to assist with this, which would be discussed later in the meeting.
- Ensuring GPs were kept informed. The DPH was conscious of the demands on primary care and the potential for them to become overwhelmed, so the current approach sought to alleviate pressure on them. It was understood that national arrangements were being put in place to ensure GPs were notified of cases. Dr Agboola had given an undertaking to progress how GPs could be involved locally.
- Healthwatch was working nationally to develop consistent messages. Its network could assist in engaging with hard to reach groups and there was an offer to work with Public Health, which was appreciated.

The Board accepted the Outbreak Control Plan, thanking Nadia Inglis and colleagues for the work undertaken in preparing it.

4. Communications Plan - Fran Collingham

Fran Collingham, an LGA associate was assisting the Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire (CSW) beacon area with communications and engagement. She gave a presentation which covered the following areas:

- The outbreak control plan. The CSW beacon plan had an additional priority on community engagement, to build trust and participation.
- Background – outlining the national, sub-regional and local aspects.
- Strategic approach, identifying WCC as the communications lead; the types of communications planned and ensuring successful engagement.

- Pro-active communications. Slides outlined the national stay alert campaign and the sub-regional approach, working across the CSW area, including the launch of the Outbreak Control Plan. Jayne Surman of WCC spoke to a slide on the local communications approach.
- Reactive communications, including national media protocols and ensuring timely information was shared with partners / stakeholders.
- Issues and risks, recognising the pace of change, the need for long-term resilience in communications teams and keeping people informed in a timely manner, especially at the neighbourhood / community level.

Questions and comments were invited, with responses provided as indicated:

- Steve Maxey sought further details on the communications links with district and borough councils for the wider geographical area. Weekly scheduled updates were supplemented when required. It was planned for heads of communications of all councils to meet on a fortnightly basis.
- Councillor Marian Humphreys asked for background reading from earlier communications releases, which would be provided by Jayne Surman.
- Councillor Julie Jackson stated the importance of sharing information, acknowledging the improvements made.
- Healthwatch offered to provide content for the microsite, which Fran Collingham acknowledged. Parish and town councils were other potential contributors.

5. Funding - Duncan Vernon

Duncan Vernon gave a presentation which covered the following areas:

Background -

- The allocation of £2.1 million towards expenditure for mitigation and management of outbreaks of COVID-19.

Approach -

- Reasonable worst-case planning assumptions in terms of:
 - The current number of cases and outbreaks continued.
 - A vaccine or treatment would not be available over the next year.
 - The population remained largely susceptible to Covid.
 - Some groups and settings would remain at higher risk.
 - The high risk of a 'super spreader' event with large numbers of cases.
 - Other public health issues still caused significant harm.
- Gaps
 - Staffing capacity gaps
 - Commissioned services gaps

Picking up a question from earlier in the meeting, Duncan Vernon outlined how the police had been involved in several strands of the work to date, particularly concerning homelessness and regulatory functions.

6. Current Incidents/Outbreaks - Shade Agboola (verbal)

Shade Agboola provided a verbal update. There had been three workplace incidents reported in the areas of Stratford, Rugby and North Warwickshire, all of which were now closed. There had been two workplace outbreaks, both involving the police and there had been one school outbreak. Whilst there had been other school incidents, these had proved to be negative. Currently, there was a potential outbreak at a nursery, which was being investigated.

Nadia Inglis displayed the high-level test and trace notification protocol and associated flowchart. This draft document would be circulated for comments from the Board. Daily intelligence updates and weekly summaries would be provided. In addition, more detailed, timely reports would be circulated as incidents were identified. Nadia Inglis outlined the proposed distribution arrangements for elected members and senior officers of this confidential information. Shade Agboola added that a simpler template would be provided too.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that the position on Covid-19 cases at George Eliot Hospital (GEH) was much improved. The Chair had a telephone meeting with GEH Chief Executive Glen Burley the following day. Nadia Inglis added that there was daily contact with GEH at the operational level.

7. Any other business including next steps

The Chair reported that a mentor for the beacon area, Clive Wright had put forward the CSW Outbreak Control Plan as an example of good practice. It may feature in national television coverage, to showcase good work from the eleven beacon areas.

He added that the presentations from this meeting would be circulated. The Chair confirmed the role of this group was to monitor and be assured on behalf of the public. There was also a communications role and to cascade appropriate information. Regular updates would be provided. Shade Agboola explained that the frequency of meetings and agenda size would vary, dependent on demands, but the Board's role would be ongoing for at least the next year.

8. Date of next meeting - 15 July at 2pm

It was agreed that the next meeting would take place on 15th July.

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Councillor Les Caborn, Chair

The meeting closed at 10.10am