

AT A MEETING of the Hampshire Local Outbreak Engagement Board of
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held remotely on Tuesday, 15th December,
2020

Chairman:

* Councillor Keith Mans

* Councillor Liz Fairhurst

* Councillor Patricia Stallard

* Councillor Judith Grajewski

Invited Attendees

Also present at the invitation of the Chairman:

Councillor Keith House
Councillor Ken Rhatigan
Judy Gillow
Laura Taylor

49. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies received.

50. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3, Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore, Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Personal interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

There were no declarations of interest.

51. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

52. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations received.

53. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman noted that while there has been an increase in cases across the Southeast and it can vary, it is advisable that per government recommendations, intergenerational mixing of households and bubbles are not necessary, and must be managed carefully, especially indoors. Increased mask wearing is also being encouraged both inside and outdoors.

54. OUTBREAK CONTROL POSITION REPORT

The Director of Public Health shared the weekly update with the Board outlining the current position in term of managing the outbreak in Hampshire including data on current infection numbers, the position for care homes and death rates across the county and updates to the published presentation.

There has been a changing position and rise in cases over the weekend across the Southeast, though Hampshire remains in a good position. Early part of December was lower but going up again though there are some unvalidated numbers. Hampshire is currently at 89.7 and gone up slightly. The region is a picture of concern with the highest rates with increases in Kent, Surrey, Buckingham, Oxford, while Hampshire and Isle of Wight is in a more favourable position, but rates are still rising.

A similar picture for 60+ residents is emerging and the case rate change rising in all districts, though some are considerably higher and a concerning position across the county. With regards to hospital pressures and in-patient diagnoses, there is a steady increasing trend with Portsmouth Hospital Trust is admitting the highest admissions. Pressures on the NHS are a key concern in determining tiers. Deaths are rising but the numbers lag behind infection rates and are currently under the 5-year rate.

Indicators for determining tier that are considered nationally were reviewed and local sight of them is helpful to be mindful of the current position. There is a ripple impact from surrounding areas and Christmas period relaxation of rules will see rising rates.

In response to questions, Members heard:

Direction of travel is very clear and silver lining may be that rates are not increasing in Hampshire quite as quickly as other areas and can be managed so hospitals are not overwhelmed.

Rates rising is disturbing and in terms of local compliance appears good and Hampshire messaging is important for the relaxation period and central action taken. Well received messaging is critical and focused messaging for ahead of concern Gosport, Havant, and Rushmore, but across all of Hampshire as well. Insight work to ensure we are meeting population needs has been a priority for working with the Communications team. Work continues to prepare for the Tier that is announced on 16 December.

District councils continue to prioritize and maintain community spread of infection and have received government funding and deployed staff to support busy public areas and encourage visitors, residents, and retail businesses to comply and working alongside police colleagues.

District and unitary leadership meetings are continuing to ensure consistency in messaging across the area. Remaining in the same tier will help manage the spread and infection across the county.

Substantial rises are often commuter belts into London and is it possible to discourage travel into London, with positive lifestyle messaging across LRF. This messaging is emphasized and discouraging unnecessary travel in general. Intercommuting for work or social and family connections does have an effect on spread. Trends and connections are reviewed, and specific messaging targeted for those areas, in collaboration with unitaries and NHS hospital trusts. Work travel will need to continue so the messaging will need to be in line with current guidelines.

The Hampshire Local Outbreak Engagement Board noted the current data and implications.

55. ACTIONS OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH

No new actions were reported on this occasion with a continuation of actions previously highlighted.

56. COMMUNICATION ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

The Executive Member for Public Health updated the Board on communications and engagement noting that the published report covered approximately 2 weeks since the last meeting. Public and stakeholder engagement continues around Tier 2, Test and Trace, and financial impact of the pandemic. The dedicated website continues to be active and visited. Districts have been encouraged to reach out to BAME residents and an invitation to a working group. Childcare bubble advice continues to be shared. Responsive and targeted messaging continues to all communities and especially those at risk or difficult to reach. Key campaigning around Christmas bubbles and local shopping continues, alongside Tier guidance, Yule rules, and Hands, Space, Face, and any new Tier announcements will be ready to run.

Current figures are encouraging but many schools, children and young people, and staff affected, but liaison between County Council and schools has been really strong and working well with good results. Members agreed and commended teachers and staff on their efforts with positive attendance figures above national average, with support from Public Health and the Communications teams for their fantastic work.

With regards to vaccination and communication, NHS information and local vaccination centre details will be part of the messaging. An NHS update at the next meeting would be helpful for the Board to ensure partners are supporting critical communication and following the NHS leadership on vaccination

programmes. Ongoing vaccination will be vital over the next few months and more information is expected from NHS colleagues. The County Council is eager to help support vaccination messaging. Recruitment of volunteers for adequate staff for administering or supporting vaccination is not as visible as expected but could be targeted or promoted differently with a number of different roles. Working with community leaders to spread the message with Covid ambassadors will be key in communities to take up the vaccines.

The next formal meeting of the Board will be on 20 January 2021 and additional briefings or meetings arranged as needed.

The meeting ended at 10:44am

Chairman,