

Date of issue: Wednesday, 7th April, 2021

MEETING:	SLOUGH OUTBREAK ENGAGEMENT BOARD
	COUNCILLORS: Pantelic (Health & Wellbeing)(Chair) Swindlehurst (Leader of the Council) (Vice Chair) Akram (Governance & Customer Services) Anderson (Sustainable Transport & Environmental Services), Bains (Inclusive Growth & Skills) Carter (Children & Schools) Mann (Planning & Regulation) Nazir (Housing & Community Safety)
	COUNCIL OFFICERS: Joe Carter (Director of Transformation) Stephen Gibson (Executive Director of Place) Kate Pratt (Communications Manager) Alan Sinclair (Executive Director of Adults & Communities) Richard West (Executive Director Customer & Community) Neil Wilcox (Director of Finance & Resources) Josie Wragg (Chief Executive of the Council) Suzanne Foley (Public Health Representative) Eleni Ioannides (Interim Executive Director for Children/SCF Chief Executive)
	PARTNER AGENCIES: Tracey Faraday-Drake (ICS Place Lead) Ramesh Kukar (Voluntary and Community Sector Representative) Vacancy (Slough Healthwatch Representative) Superintendent Gavin Wong (Thames Valley Police Representative)
DATE AND TIME:	THURSDAY, 15TH APRIL, 2021 AT 5.00 PM
VENUE:	VIRTUAL MEETING
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER: (for all enquiries)	NICHOLAS PONTONE 07749 709 868

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are requested to attend the above Meeting at the time and date indicated to deal with the business set out in the following agenda.



JOSIE WRAGG
Chief Executive

AGENDA

PART I



**AGENDA
ITEM**

REPORT TITLE

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Press and Public

This meeting will be held remotely 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. Part I of this meeting will be live streamed as required by the regulations. The press and public can access the meeting from the following link (by selecting the meeting you wish to view):

<http://democracy.slough.gov.uk/mgCalendarMonthView.aspx?GL=1&bcr=1>

Please note that the meeting may be recorded. By participating in the meeting by audio and/or video you are giving consent to being recorded and acknowledge that the recording will be in the public domain.

The press and public will not be able to view any matters considered during Part II of the agenda.

Slough Outbreak Engagement Board – Meeting held on Tuesday, 9th March, 2021.

Present:- Councillors Pantelic (Chair), Swindlehurst (Vice-Chair), Anderson, Bains, Carter, Mann and Nazir.

SBC Officers: Neil Wilcox (Executive Director, Corporate Services), Joe Carter (Director of Transformation), Alan Sinclair (Executive Director People (Adults)), Suzanne Foley (Public Health Representative), Kate Pratt (Communications Manager),

Partner Agencies: Tracey Faraday-Drake (ICS Place Lead), Ramesh Kukar (Slough CVS) and Supt Wong (Thames Valley Police)

Apologies for Absence:- Councillor Akram, Josie Wragg, Richard West, Stephen Gibson and Eleni Ioannides

PART 1

58. Declarations of Interest

None were declared.

59. Minutes of the Last Meeting Held on 9th February 2021

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 9th February 2021 be agreed as a correct record.

60. Public Questions

No questions from the public had been received.

61. Communications Update

The Communications Manager gave an update on the key communications activities and messages since the last meeting.

The latest edition of the Covid magazine had been produced and would be delivered to every household in Slough over the next ten days. It included a range of articles, including those suggested by the Board at the last meeting, such as information on how to access to mental health services, an update on testing and promotion of vaccine take-up. The weekly e-newsletter continued to be sent out to circa 32,000 residents and contained the latest information and key messages. The Board welcomed the recent communications to recognise the contribution of care providers locally.

Communications planning was underway for the easing of restrictions as part of the Government's 'Roadmap'. The Board discussed the key messages which included encouraging people to continue to be patient and to follow the guidance when it changed, not before. Members highlighted the importance

of communicating clear messages on 'vaccine complacency' to make it clear that vaccination did not offer complete protection and that people who had been vaccinated could still contract and pass on Covid.

A question was asked about the work being done with schools as they fully re-opened, particularly in terms of the messaging around the regular testing available for secondary school pupils. It was responded that schools themselves were the most effective communication channel for sending key messages to their pupils and parents. Information and support was available to them through the schools public health officer. The tests would soon be conducted in the home rather than at school and the important message was to take up the tests and, crucially, to act on the results. The Board asked that any widespread issues with securing parental consent to testing in schools be reported to the board if necessary. No major problems had been reported initially and the situation would be closely monitored.

The Board welcomed the proactive communications activity that had been undertaken and emphasised the importance of preparing for the next phase as restrictions were lifted over the coming months.

Resolved – That the communications update be noted.

62. Local Covid-19 Status Report

The Service Lead, Public Health gave a presentation that summarised Slough's current Covid-19 status.

The following points were noted:

- Covid-19 cases were now falling more rapidly to a weekly rate of 89 per 100,000 population. This was a significant fall on the 348 reported at the previous meeting, although Slough's rate was still the highest in the South East.
- Cases had plateaued in February but were now falling more quickly in line with the national trends.
- The percentage of tests that were positive was 4.5%, which compared to 14.5% a month ago.
- 11 Covid-19 deaths were reported in Slough in the week ending 26th February.
- No new outbreaks had been reported in the past week. The potential of outbreaks in schools following their full return on 8th March would be closely monitored.
- A total of 14,000 lateral flow tests had now been carried out as part of the community testing programme. Approximately 2% were positive.
- The new testing programme had been introduced on 22nd February which targeted testing at key workers. The Government had announced that the testing programmes would continue until at least June. Sites were being reviewed.

- The Government required local authorities to review their Local Outbreak Management Plans and an update would be provided at the next meeting.
- Vaccine uptake locally remained very high with 82% of over 65 age group already receiving at least one dose.
- In relation to monitoring variants it was noted that Public Health England would inform a local area if variants of concern had been detected as part of their monitoring and surveillance. Assurance was provided that a plan was in place to react locally if required.

The Board discussed various matters including the importance of ventilation in reducing Covid risk in indoor settings, including in schools. The process for school testing and particularly the rules around isolating 'bubbles' on a positive test were summarised. There had been some confusion nationally about the use of confirmatory PCR tests following a positive lateral flow test and it was agreed that it was important the process was properly understood locally. It was recognised that pupils travelled into Slough schools from a wide area and it was suggested the Covid rates in neighbouring boroughs be monitored. The most effective way of minimising the Covid risk of such mixing was to follow the guidance, utilise the testing in schools and ensure school settings were fully risk assessed and as Covid secure as possible.

A question was asked about the vaccine take up amongst ethnic minority populations. This had been a major focus in Slough through the BAME Project to maximise take up and seek to overcome vaccine hesitancy. It would be a constant challenge throughout the vaccination programme and good data would be needed to pinpoint communities with low take up. Members commented that positive progress was being made as a result of the work to encourage vaccine take up and the work that GPs in particular had done was considered to be effective. The vaccination programme would be scaling up for the remainder of March with extended hours at vaccination centres to reflect the fact that more working age people were becoming eligible for vaccination. A suggestion was made to ensure information was given to people at the point of vaccination on the fact it would take some time to build some immunity, that vaccines would still not offer full protection and they would still need to follow the guidance in place.

The Board recognised the huge team effort that had contributed to the success of the vaccination programme to date, however, it was emphasised that there was no room for complacency. At the conclusion of the discussion the update was noted.

Resolved – That the local Covid-19 status report be noted.

63. National and Local Key Messages

The key messages as discussed throughout the meeting were summarised as being that significant progress had been made in reducing infections and increasing vaccinations, but caution was still needed. People should continue to follow the rules as they changed, but not before. The opportunities for

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testing should be encouraged and people should take up their vaccination appointments when offered.

Resolved – The key messages were noted.

64. Members Attendance Record

Resolved – That the Attendance Record be noted.

65. Date of Next Meeting - 15th April 2021, 5pm

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 15th April 2021 at 5pm.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 5.00 pm and closed at 5.45 pm)

SLOUGH OUTBREAK ENGAGEMENT BOARD - ATTENDANCE RECORD 2020-21

MEMBER	05/08/20	16/09/20	07/10/20	10/11/20	08/12/20	12/01/21	09/02/21	09/03/21
Councillor Pantelic (Chair)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Councillor Swindlehurst (Vice-Chair)	Ap	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Councillor Akram	P	Ab	Ap	Ap	P	Ap	P	Ap
Councillor Anderson	P	Ab	P	P	P	P	P	P
Councillor Bains	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Councillor Carter	P	P	P	P	P	P	Ap	P
Councillor Mann	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Councillor Nazir	P	P	Ap	P	P	P	P	P
Joe Carter - Director of Transformation	P	P	P	Ap	Ap	P	Ap	P
*Eleni Ioannides - Interim Executive Director for Children/SCST Chief Executive				P	P	Ap	Ap	Ap
Stephen Gibson - Executive Director of Place	P	P	Ap	P	Ab	Ap	Ap	Ap
Kate Pratt - Communications Manager	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Alan Sinclair - Executive Director of People (Adults)	P	P	P	P	P	P	Ap	P
Richard West - Executive Director of Customer & Community	P	P	P	P	P	Ap	P	Ap
Neil Wilcox - Executive Director of Corporate Operations	Ap	Ap	P	P	P	Ap	Ap	P
Josie Wragg - Chief Executive of the Council	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	Ap
*Suzanne Foley – Public Health Representative		Ab	P	P	P	P	P	P

Tracey Faraday-Drake (ICS Place Lead)	P	P	P	Ap	P	P	P	P
Ramesh Kukar - Voluntary and Community Sector Representative)	P	Substitute	P	P	Ap	P	Substitute	P
Superintendent Gavin Wong – (Thames Valley Police)	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P

P = Present Ap = Apologies given Ab = Absent, no apologies given

*Dr Liz Brutus left the Board on 6th August 2020

*Suzanne Foley joined the Board on 8th September 2020

*Cate Duffy no longer a Board Member from 30th October 2020

*Eleni Ioannides joined the Board on 10th November 2020