

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Cabinet

**DATE:** 12 April 2021

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(For all enquiries)

**Ward** All

**Lead members:** Councillor James Swindlehurst, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Strategy; Councillor Natasa Pantelic, Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing

### **PART I** **KEY DECISION**

#### **SBC LOCAL OUTBREAK MANAGEMENT PLAN**

##### **1. Purpose of Report**

1.1 To set out the Council's plans for the management of local outbreaks of COVID-19.

##### **2. Recommendation**

The Cabinet is requested to resolve:

- (a) That the Council's Local Outbreak Management Plan as at Appendix A be endorsed as it is with the caveat that more information is awaited including feedback from PHE and DHSC; and
- (b) That delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive to maintain and amend the plan following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing and the East Berkshire Director for Public Health.

##### **3. The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy 2020-24**

Coronavirus has the potential to impact on the delivery of all of the Wellbeing Board's priorities:

- 1. Starting Well
- 2. Integration
- 3. Strong, Healthy and Attractive Neighbourhoods (Building Community Asset Resilience)
- 4. Workplace Health

However the response to the crisis has demonstrated the strength of community and partnership working.

#### 4. **Five Year Plan 2020-24 Outcomes**

Coronavirus has the potential to impact on the delivery of all of the Five Year Plan's priority outcomes:

Outcome 1 Slough children will grow up to be happy, healthy and successful

Outcome 2 Our people will be healthier and manage their own care needs

Outcome 3 Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay

Outcome 4 Our residents will live in good quality homes

Outcome 5 Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide opportunities for our residents

#### 5. **Other Implications**

- (a) **Financial** – The Government is providing local authorities with additional funding to tackle the increased service demands they face in addressing the COVID-19 Pandemic. SBC's share of the £3.2bn of national funding provided for local government's response to COVID-19 is £7.636m There are no foreseen financial implications arising from this report, as it is expected that the work will be contained within existing budgets. If additional costs do arise they will be charged to the COVID-19 account code on Agresso and the council would seek full reimbursement from central government as the council is acting according to the government's demands. As the pandemic response is largely led by the National Government, expenditure on local COVID response is often directed nationally.
- (b) **Risk Management** – There are no identified risks to the proposed actions. A COVID-19 risk register has been prepared and forms part of the previous report on COVID-19 response planning.
- (c) **Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications** - The actions that may be necessary to implement a local lockdown have the potential to engage the right to liberty and security, the right to respect for private and family life and the right to freedom of assembly and association in Articles 5, 8 and 11 respectively of the European Convention on Human Rights and also the right to protection of property in Article 1 of the First Protocol to this convention, all of which are given effect to in domestic law by the Human Rights Act 1998. All of these rights, however, are subject to exceptions for the prevention of the spreading of infectious diseases, for the protection of public health and for the control of the use of property in the general interest. It is not considered, therefore, that there is likely to be any scope for any serious challenges under the Human Rights Act to the actions necessary to implement the proposed local outbreak management plan, save possibly from a perspective of proportionality of those actions and the source of the powers for those actions.

The pandemic response is at present largely led by the National Government with limited delegation to local authorities and powers. Current legislation with regard to COVID 19 is:

- [Coronavirus Act 2020 \(c. 7\)](#)
  - [Public Health \(Control of Disease\) Act 1984 \(c. 22\)](#)
- From 29th March 2021 the health protection restrictions in England are as set out in the following regulations:
- [The Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(Steps\) \(England\) Regulations 2021 \(S.I. 2021/364\)](#)

In so far as the local outbreak management plan requires co-operative working with other local authorities powers are available under Sections 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 to local authorities to delegate functions inter se.

- (d) **Equalities Impact Assessment** - There is no requirement to complete an Equalities Impact Assessment in relation to this report, although it should be noted that the Plan itself attends to a number of high risk settings including Care Homes, Faith settings and Homeless communities. In addition, there is the BAME Programme (section 5.3) with workstreams addressing:
- a. Engagement and communication with communities
  - b. Reducing and preventing harm from COVID-19
  - c. Clinical management of those experiencing symptoms
  - d. Gathering intelligence to tailor and target interventions

There is also a section on addressing COVID vaccine hesitancy in the population. We are also commissioning a COVID Community Impact Assessment for Slough which will provide data on the effect COVID has had on inequalities in the Borough. As stated above, the pandemic response is largely led by the National Government, so there is often little scope for local deviation from guidance.

## 6. **Supporting information**

- 6.1 We are now seeing the second wave of COVID-19 cases decline across the country with national lockdown restrictions being gradually lifted. The next phase of the pandemic in England is predicted to be a much more variegated pattern with focussed outbreaks requiring local controls to keep cases and harm from COVID-19 to a minimum, with concern regarding possible new variants and low uptake of COVID vaccine.
- 6.2 The Government has announced allocations of the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) to each LA- Slough receiving £769,057.71.
- 6.3 The model proposed for outbreak or incident<sup>1</sup> response locally is detailed in the LA's Local Outbreak Management Plan (LOMP) – see Appendix A. LAs have a duty to prepare a LOMP, stating arrangements to deliver this local control of cases and wider outbreaks of COVID-19, covering the aspects of the National Contain Framework<sup>2</sup>.
- 6.4 The fundamental duties and roles of organisations and teams involved in outbreak control have not changed. The LOMP sets out the roles of the LA: to support the

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<sup>1</sup> An outbreak is one or more cases of Covid-19, an incident has a broader meaning, encompassing events or situations which warrant investigation to determine if action is needed to manage the risk.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/containing-and-managing-local-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreaks/covid-19-contain-framework-a-guide-for-local-decision-makers>

PHE Health Protection Team's (HPT) lead for outbreak response and to ensure their recommendations function locally. This includes prevention of COVID-19 in the first place as well as preventing the spread of infection plus maximising uptake of the COVID vaccine and testing.

- 6.5 In the event of an outbreak, the Thames Valley HPT are responsible for co-ordinating outbreak management and will work closely with the Public Health team at Slough Borough Council and the Slough Outbreak Cell to facilitate a timely and proportionate outbreak response.
- 6.6 The local response will vary according to the setting of any outbreak and the populations involved. Support will be needed from individual services and the community hubs. SBC's LOMP details an Incident Management Team (IMT) to be stood up to co-ordinate contact tracing and its associate components across Slough. Its members will act as a link to their respective service areas for contact tracing and expertise.
- 6.7 The LOMP also identifies high risk settings across the borough and the actions and measures that we will need to take to prevent and control local outbreaks.
- 6.8 The pandemic is likely to continue until the vaccine roll out has reached enough of the population and concerns around variant strains have eased. The timescale is currently forecast at around 18 months with particular demands for outbreak control during the winter months when the situation will be complicated by other circulating respiratory illness. The LOMP aims to set out a structure for response which is sustainable in the longer term.
- 6.9 An additional request Nationally has been a piece of reflection (attached here as a Powerpoint) of aspects of the Slough response which have shown good practice, areas that continue to be a risk or issue or have become opportunities.
- 6.10 This current version of the LOMP is currently being reviewed by PHE and the Regional COVID Response Team from DHSC, this an updated version will be circulated before the actual Cabinet meeting to reflect any amendments required.

## 7. **Comments of other committees**

- 7.1 This report has not been considered by any other committees. Cabinet and Scrutiny will work together to provide oversight of our outbreak management planning.

## 8. **Conclusion**

- 8.1 Slough Borough Council has responded swiftly to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19.
- 8.2 This report sets out our plans for the prevention, control and management of local outbreaks of COVID-19 as we move into the next phase of the pandemic.

9. **Appendices attached**

A – SBC Local Outbreak Management Plan

B- SBC Reflections on COVID Pandemic Response

10. **Background papers**

None.