

Sandwell COVID19 Plan

As a Local Authority we are taking a proactive response towards dealing with and mitigating the impact of the Covid19 pandemic. As always, our priority is to act in the best interests of the borough and protect the health and wellbeing of our residents.

Health & Social Care

We will work with partners in both health and social care to ensure that our residents, particularly those that are vulnerable, continue to receive the support they require.

1. We are keeping vulnerable people supported and well by maintaining the consistent delivery of social care
2. We are working with our care and support provider market to ensure they remain operational and can continue to deliver services
3. In partnership with health, we are working to support and maintain the flow of people out of hospital
4. We are implementing arrangements to make sure that disruption to services does not reduce our ability to support vulnerable Children effectively.

Citizens & Communities

The health and wellbeing of our citizens is our key priority and we recognise that during this time they will need additional support. To achieve this we will draw on the strength of our strong and resilient communities.

1. We will implement a range of initiatives which aim to keep people safe and able to access essential supplies, recognising that this need will be increased when vulnerable and isolated individuals are social distancing or self-isolating.
2. Working with our voluntary and community sector partners we will seek to mobilise communities to support each other
3. Providing additional support to our residents who suffer from deprivation and debt problems
4. We will work with partners to promote and support community cohesion, along with recognising cultural sensitivities of our communities

Infrastructure & Supplies

We will respond to pressure that is put on supply chains and our residents access to vital goods they require to remain well. This will include ensuring services that are vital to the borough's infrastructure continue to operate effectively.

1. We are working to ensure that our internal services and external partners have access to the appropriate Personal Protective Equipment they require to continue providing services
2. We have established a support team which will support our most vulnerable and isolated residents continue to have access to food and key supplies through periods of isolation and distancing.
3. Our enforcement services will work to ensure that local and national guidance to promote public safety in premises across the borough is implemented appropriately.
4. Our non-critical services will be redirected towards assisting with transport and logistical arrangements required to continue supporting our vulnerable residents.

Businesses & Economic Impact

We know that the pandemic will create financial pressures for businesses and individuals alike, and in response we will provide support where possible to minimise the impact of this and pressure that it creates.

1. We continue to provide support and advice to local businesses on any concerns they may have, or guidance that has been issued in light of the pandemic
2. We are continually working to understand the financial impact of the disruption caused by the impact of the pandemic on both the council and our residents so that we can identify potential steps to mitigate the impact.
3. Where possible we will support both business and individuals to access any appropriate central government support that has been introduced as a response to the pandemic

Organisational Impact

The disruption caused by the virus will have a significant impact on our organisation as it will with many others. We will work to minimise the impact of this disruption and ensure that our critical services continue to be delivered without interruption.

1. We are prioritising the delivery of critical services, and planning our response to potential reductions in staffing availability
2. We are supporting our workforce to follow guidance from Public Health so that they are able to stay safe, this includes working from home where possible and self-isolating and social distancing where required
3. We are communicating with our Trade Union colleagues on a daily basis to address issues as they arise
4. As far as possible we are attempting to maintain the delivery of business as usual
5. We are rationalising the use of council buildings to ensure we can maintain the additional cleansing requirements to keep them open.

Daily monitoring:

- Staffing levels across the whole organisation
- Viability of critical services
- Patterns and trends in queries being received by the incident room
- Engagement and feedback with regional and national networks for all directorates
- Financial pressures and cash flows

Key Partners:

- Health
- Independent Sector Providers
- Community Organisations
- Emergency Services
- Neighbouring Authorities
- Regional & National networks
- Council suppliers
- Central Government
- Local industry
- Residents

Media & Communications:

- We are issuing daily communications to our staff group, providing updates on the situation and advice where required. We have created an incident room to respond to all key internal issues and a Hub to support our residents
- We are utilising all available channels of communication to share key messages with public, this includes social media and creating new access lines to speak to key services directly. the Communication with the public
- We are in constant communication with partners where possible to get an overview of demands and provide support