

Emergency Committee

Friday 31 July 2020 at 11:00 at Sandwell Council House, Oldbury

Present: Councillor M Crompton (Chair);
Councillors Ali, Hadley, Millard and Shaeen.

Officers: David Stevens (Chief Executive); Stuart Lackenby (Director – Adult Social Care), Lisa McNally (Director – Public Health), Elaine Newsome (Service Manager – Democracy), Sue Stanhope (Interim Director – HR), Suky Suthi-Nagra (Democratic Services Manager) and Surjit Tour (Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer).

52/20 Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were submitted.

53/20 Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared at the meeting.

54/20 Additional Item of Business

There were no additional items of business to consider.

55/20 Emergency Plan

The Committee was informed that the number of people contracting Covid-19 in Sandwell had significantly increased with a total of 90 confirmed cases from 21 to 27 July 2020; an increase of 500% on weekly cases on the same dates in June.



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Nationally, Sandwell had the 8th highest rate of cases in England with cases rapidly rising in Smethwick and West Bromwich.

It was envisaged that Sandwell would be added to the Government's watchlist as an area of concern which would entail detailing local plans for managing the outbreak to the national government's Contain Team.

Consideration was now given to the 'Sandwell Covid-19 – staying safe in Sandwell Document' which set out a range of actions the Council, partners and the public may be taking in order to help avoid a major outbreak.

As part of the Council's measures, it was proposed that:-

- an Incident Management Team would be set up consisting of senior council officers, the Police and colleagues from health to work on managing resources and to direct tactical plans to deal with the outbreak aiming to reduce new cases, minimise and manage outbreaks, reduce the impact on the most vulnerable and working collaboratively to manage escalation levels including local lockdown;
- a media campaign would commence designed to take necessary measures to avoid a local lockdown of Sandwell by asking all Sandwell residents to do three things:-
 - If you are shielding, continue to do so;
 - Do not have non-essential visitors in your home;
 - If you have symptoms, self-isolate at home and book a test.

The Chair reiterated that it was the responsibility of all of us to do all that we can to limit the spread of the virus. The Council would target all available resources to address this situation but every member of the community had a part to play and must follow Government guidance to limit risk of exposure and spread of the virus.

Agreed:-

- (1) that the framework set out in the Sandwell COVID-19 Stay Safe In Sandwell document be endorsed;

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(2) that a media campaign be endorsed designed to take measures to avoid government instructing us to undertake a local lock down of Sandwell appealing to our local residents to do three things:

- If you are shielding, continue to do so
- Don't have non-essential visitors in your home
- If you have symptoms, self-isolate at home and book a test.

Meeting ended at 11.29

This meeting was webcast live and is available to view
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K3GtrZb_huY&feature=youtu.be