

AT A MEETING of the Hampshire Local Outbreak Engagement Board of  
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the Castle, Winchester on Tuesday,  
6th October, 2020

Chairman:

\* Councillor Keith Mans

\* Councillor Liz Fairhurst

\* Councillor Judith Grajewski

\* Councillor Patricia Stallard

Councillor Keith House

### **Invited Attendees**

Also present at the invitation of the Chairman:

Councillor Keith House  
Councillor Ken Rhatigan  
Judy Gillow  
Laura Taylor

### **25. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies received.

### **26. 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 Non-Pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 2 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.

### **27. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

### **28. DEPUTATIONS**

There were no deputations received.

The Chairman invited Councillor Jackie Porter to speak and she inquired about the role of the Director of Public Health on Safety Advisory groups. Councillor Porter asked if directives could be taken across the county to prevent duplicate

work and inconsistent decision making from local authorities. The questions would be answered by the Director of Public Health in the context of upcoming items in the meeting.

## 29. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman wished to acknowledge that over the last 48 hours, the actual numbers of those testing positive had gone up due to the significant number of tests not accounted for and the national correction has led to higher numbers in Hampshire. Upcoming public activities will be considered under national guidelines with a degree of consistency across the county and the region, though challenging with moving targets, rapid national changes, and area-specific lockdowns.

## 30. **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.

The infection rates remain below that of the Southeast and England. There has been an increase in cases week by week, which is being monitored carefully to take required actions. Efforts are focused on managing and mitigating the increase in cases and moving forwards, in line with national guidance.

In response to questions, Members heard:

Proximity to London have impacted increased infection rates, as well as the ethnic diversity impact on disease, with continued preventative efforts and work in these areas.

There has been a slight increase in excess deaths from expected numbers at this time of year, possibly as a result of deaths brought earlier. There has not yet been an impact of flu on deaths. Deaths as a measure of infection is useful but requires longer term review and the consideration that those seriously ill are tested in the hospital setting rather than community testing of milder infections, as well as limits on testing capacity.

Local context remains critical and with spikes or rises in infection rate, communication must be adjusted and revise accordingly. The general rise and community spread have been due to exposure to asymptomatic people, cases in education settings or among individuals and households. The data is reviewed and mapped daily and while more younger people are impacted, the age is beginning to rise.

If incidents of influenza are suppressed due to social distancing and handwashing, we should see a reduction in influenza cases. Seasonal consideration of excess deaths is complex and will need longer term analysis. Prevention work and campaigns continue for both illnesses, which are often difficult to tell apart. Prevention will allow NHS to manage the level of respiratory

illnesses in hospitals. Thresholds remain unchanged for hospital admissions and the public messaging remains encouraging for those who need to access hospital services to get better.

The number of cases amongst Hampshire schools are on the rise but have generally been single cases with bubbles or partial bubbles affected, rather than outbreaks, with one exception including more than 1 case. The number of confirmed cases broken down by adults and children will be circulated after the meeting.

Public Health continues to work with Safety Advisory Groups (SAGs) in addressing Covid safety at events. While the process is complicated, it advises on cleaning regime, number of people, entry and exit, queues, social distancing etc. though not all events are licensed and thus will not go through a SAG. There is collaboration between the 11 SAGs, districts, and unitary colleagues, as well as environmental health colleagues, to ensure that clear, consistent local advice is provided, within the national guidance as well as that of guilds and sports associations.

### **31. ACTIONS OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

The Director of Public Health confirmed that under delegated powers the first legal direction was given on Friday 25 September as noted during the LOEB Briefing.

A statement was issued saying it was preferred that funfairs do not take place, but in the event that they do it could not be on Council owned land and it would be imperative to follow and monitor safety. There would need to be case by case risk assessments for any public events and also consider the implications for other areas of the retail sector.

Safety Advisory Groups are tried, tested, and well respected in their multi-agency collaboration, with the support of the Public Health England (PHE) team and engaged and efforts between county and district. They are carefully trying to balance safe operation, within a complex set of decision-making structures under an ever-changing set of guidance, to protect community from infection.

Communication and guidance are now being considered by the Health Protection Board for upcoming key events on the calendar (Bonfire Night, Remembrance Day, etc.) under the national guidelines and will be reported back to this Board.

### **32. COMMUNICATION ENGAGEMENT UPDATE**

The Executive Member of Public Health provided an update on communications and engagement highlighting the two strands of work is being undertaken by the Council. The first manages current events on the ground in real time and second, provides information and guidance on staying safe. The Health Protection Board, Local Engagement Outbreak Board, data analysis, and national guidance all feed into the messaging alongside local branding.

Joint up communications are used by the Local Resilience Forum, Hampshire Fire and Police. These include press releases, social media, organic activity, and paid for targeted messaging for young people aged 18-24, BAME, and those in high risk settings. Newsletters to care homes and domiciliary care workers, weekly email updates to parish councils, and webinars to provide support for keeping schools safely open have continued. This monthly report had been shared with MPs and will continue to be circulated to them each month.

The Chairman noted that the Local Outbreak Engagement Board will continue to be briefed as required in addition to formal meetings. The next formal meeting of the Board is due to take place on 2 November.

*The meeting concluded at 3:19pm.*

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Chairman,