

West Berkshire

Local Outbreak Engagement Board

Terms of Reference

Background

- 1 Following the initial wave of COVID-19, cases are declining across the country and national lockdown restrictions are gradually lifting. 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.
- 2 Each Upper Tier local authority has been required to develop and maintain a Local Outbreak Control Plan (LOCP). Signed off by the Director of Public Health for Berkshire, the Chief Executive of West Berkshire Council (WBC) and Public Health England, West Berkshire's LOCP clarifies how WBC will work with the national Test and Trace service, so that the whole local system is geared up to contain the virus.
- 3 The role of the West Berkshire Local Outbreak Engagement Board (LOEB) will be fulfilled by a sub-group of the West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB).

Purpose

- 4 The Board will encapsulate the following responsibilities:
 - Lead engagement with the public regarding COVID-19 risks and prevention;
 - Endorse the LOCP and the accompanying Communications Plan;
 - Provide ongoing oversight of the Plan's implementation;
 - Provide political ownership of the local response;
 - Proactively lead the communications and engagement in the event of a local incident¹;
 - Coordinate, where appropriate, with neighbouring authorities in the event of cross/near border local outbreaks.
- 5 The Board will act in an advisory capacity only and will report through the WBC Gold emergency command structure. It will be a time limited sub-group of the HWB, will provide regular updates to the wider HWB, and will have a working relationship with the local Health Protection Board, responsible for delivery of the LOCP.

Membership

- 6 The membership of the Board will comprise the following members of the HWB (or their substitutes on the HWB if they are unable to attend):
 - WBC Leader;
 - WBC Executive Member for Adult Social Care;
 - WBC Executive Member for Children, Education and Young People;
 - WBC Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing, Culture and Leisure;
 - WBC Opposition Member of the HWB;
 - WBC Minority Group Member of the HWB;
 - WBC Chief Executive;

¹ 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.

- WBC Executive Director – People;
- WBC Service Director – Communities and Wellbeing;
- Director of Public Health Berkshire West;
- Deputy Accountable Officer or Operations Director, Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group.

(Supported by the Principal Policy Officer (Democratic Services and Scrutiny), WBC and a Council Communications Team representative)

- 7 In the event of a local incident, the Board may invite one or more of the following to attend meetings to provide advice and support as required:
 - The relevant WBC Ward Councillors who will be the public face of engagement and communication with their local communities.
 - The relevant WBC service lead depending on the nature of the outbreak, for example:
 - Care homes – Service Director of Adult Social Care;
 - Schools – Head of Education Services;
 - Businesses – Economic Development Manager, Local Enterprise Partnership representative and Environmental Health Officers.

Meeting Frequency

- 8 Meetings of the Board will be held as often as required in order to manage and respond to local outbreaks of COVID-19.
- 9 The Board may be stood down if agreed by the majority of the Board members at a meeting to include either the Director of Public Health Berkshire West or the WBC Service Director – Communities and Wellbeing, or both if both present.
- 10 If the Board has been stood down it may be stood back up again by the Chairman or the Director of Public Health Berkshire West or the WBC Service Director – Communities and Wellbeing.
- 11 The regularity of meetings, or a decision to stand down or stand up the Board, will be guided by the following triggers:
 - 11.1 Significant Outbreak;
 - 11.2 A rise in community cases, in particular if above regional and/or national averages;
 - 11.3 Major Change in National Policy with local implications (including lockdown);
 - 11.4 If a Major Incident is activated across the Thames Valley.

Quorum

- 12 The quorum for a meeting of the Board shall be at least half of the board members and will require the Director of Public Health Berkshire West, or the WBC Service Director – Communities and Wellbeing, to be present.

Confidentiality

- 13 All information provided to members of the Board outside a public meeting shall be treated as confidential. Any such information to be made public must first be approved by WBC's Service Director – Communities and Wellbeing.