

DRAFT

Note: These Minutes will remain DRAFT until approved at the next meeting of the Committee

LOCAL OUTBREAK ENGAGEMENT BOARD (PUBLIC)

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 4 JANUARY 2021

Present: Dominic Boeck, Graham Bridgman, Nick Carter, Lynne Doherty, Steve Masters, Peachey, Matt Pearce, Andy Sharp, Martha Vickers and Howard Woollaston

Also Present: Mandip Bilkhu (Communications and Marketing Officer), Debbie Simmons (Nurse Director- Berkshire West CCG) and James Townsend (Policy Officer- Executive Support)

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Shairoz Claridge

PART I

67 Minutes of the previous meeting dated 21 December 2020

The minutes of the previous meeting dated 21 December 2020 were approved as a true and correct record subject to the following amendments:

- **Item 1- Covid-19 situational report and incidents**

‘Meradin Peachey Pearce’ be changed to Meradin Peachey

68 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

69 Vaccination update

Debbie Simmons, Nurse Director of West Berkshire CCG, provided an update on the rollout of the vaccines. She noted that:

- Vaccine programmes were changing frequently given the new national guidance
- The ‘hospital hub’ went live on 14 December in Wokingham Hospital to originally vaccinate those in category 1 (social and health care staff)
- The hub now had the capability to vaccinate double the amount of people it could at the start of the programme
- The hub was running 6 days per week
- local authority front line staff could now also access a vaccine, such as care home staff
- she noted that the up-take had been slow to start with but was now starting to gather pace
- Primary Care Networks (PCN’s) vaccination programme across Berkshire West would be live by the middle of January
- Newbury Racecourse would be a major vaccination site, primarily giving doses to those aged 80 and over
- PCN’s were all due to be delivered the Oxford/ AstraZeneca vaccine in the w/c 4 January
- PCN’s would travel to a number of care homes to vaccinate residents and staff

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- She noted that there was a focus to vaccinate staff within GP surgeries

Councillor Masters asked if those who were socially isolated and over 80 would be visited for their vaccine. He also asked if there was a plan to vaccinate teachers.

Debbie Simmons noted that this would be the case and would be delivered through GP's and district nurses. On teachers, she noted that this may be the case in time, but at the moment this was unclear.

Councillor Bridgman asked if PCN's had sufficient clinical fridge space for the AstraZeneca vaccine. He also asked if the centralised sites such as hospitals and the Racecourse were primarily for the Pfizer vaccine or whether both would be used at this site.

Debbie Simmons noted that the initial cohort to each PCN of 400 vaccines of the AstraZeneca was to use this in care homes and house-bound patients. She noted that she had not heard any issues with fridge space from PCN's. On the Racecourse, she noted that for the foreseeable future, GP's would largely have AstraZeneca vaccine and centralised hubs would hold most of the Pfizer vaccine.

Councillor Doherty asked for clarification on how residents would hear about a vaccine appointment. She also asked if there were any indications of when those under 75 would receive a vaccine.

Debbie Simmons noted that residents would be contacted via phone or text and their GP surgery would contact them as soon as possible. She noted that there was no concrete timescale for when those aged under 75 would start to receive the vaccine.

Councillor Vickers asked if there was any flexibility in the prioritisation categories and whether key workers such as teachers or shop assistants may be moved up.

Debbie Simmons noted that the national guidance, following the clinical advisors, was to vaccinate those who were most likely to die of Covid-19.

Matt Pearce further stated that it was important to note that as of yet, it was unclear whether the vaccine slowed transmission rates, but more that it protected those who had it from serious illness.

70 **Covid-19 situational and incidents report**

Matt Pearce provided an update on the Covid-19 situation in West Berkshire. He stated that all data presented was correct as of the 30th of December 2020. He also noted that the slides being presented were now in line with the rest of Berkshire and would be published on the Berkshire Public Health website.

Changes to restrictions:

- The whole of Berkshire remained in Tier 4
- The local alert levels would be reviewed every 2 weeks

Situational awareness (data correct for the week 23 December to 30 December):

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- He noted that the positivity rates per 100,000 had increased across all Berkshire authorities compared to the previous week and now stood at 377.4 per 100,000 in West Berkshire, which was the lowest rate in Berkshire.
- The positivity rate was 16.2% in West Berkshire
- Cases per 100,000 for the 60+ age group stood at 223.8
- West Berkshire had now had 3,574 cases of Covid-19
- The number of new confirmed cases in West Berkshire over the previous 7 days was 598
- He noted that the new variant of Covid-19 was playing a big part in the recent rise of cases

Epidemiology of cases:

- There had been 30,818 confirmed cases of Covid-19 in Berkshire. 85% of these had occurred since the beginning of October.
- Berkshire's weekly rate had started to increase since mid-November, in line with the national picture

Deaths

- There had been 155 COVID-19 related deaths in West Berkshire during the pandemic.
- 3 deaths were recorded for the last week (12th December to 18 December).
- Since March 2020, West Berkshire's all-cause mortality rate has been 20% higher than the previous 5 year average, which equates to 187 additional deaths.

Hospital activity

- The information on this page shows the latest data for the Royal Berkshire Foundation Trust
- On 30 December, 179 patients were in hospital with COVID-19 in the Royal Berkshire Hospital. 18 of these were on mechanical ventilation. The hospital admission rate was beginning to increase.

Outbreaks:

- An outbreak is defined by PHE as two or more cases with highly probable or confirmed epidemiological links. For care home settings one case counts as an outbreak.
- Over the previous 14 days, PHE had informed of 58 non-residential outbreaks in Berkshire
- Number of new outbreaks in West Berkshire by setting (14 to 27 December):

Setting	Exposures/Cluster/Outbreaks
Schools (inc early years, primary, secondary and HE)	3
Care Homes	3
Workplaces	2

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NHS/Health	0
Other	2

Measures to prevent Covid-19

- The most effective method of stopping transmission of Covid-19 is to wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds, to use a face mask in shops and enclosed public spaces and to keep 2 metres apart from others.

Councillor Doherty asked if the percentage increase per week had slowed slightly since December.

Matt Pearce noted that there had been a slight slowing, but that testing over the Christmas period had been patchy so it was too soon to say.

Meradin Peachey noted that the rise over the previous two weeks was still significant, just not as vast as the first two weeks of December.

Councillor Masters asked if the higher number of deaths in West Berkshire compared to Slough was down to anything in particular.

Matt Pearce noted that he would have to look further into this, but that his early view would be that West Berkshire may have an older population than Slough and more care homes.

Councillor Bridgman stated that positivity rate was a reflection of pillar 1 and 2 tests and asked if lateral flow tests would be included in these numbers.

Matt Pearce noted that his understanding that lateral flow positive tests should be included in the numbers.

Meradin Peachey noted that lateral flow tests were not being included in the data yet, they were being recorded and if they tested positive they should then go and receive a PCR test and if that test is positive, that would be included. She also noted that lateral flow tests did pick up the new Covid-19 variant.

Matt Pearce noted the Berkshire public health website now included the number of positive lateral flow tests.

71 Communications update

Mandip Bilkhu provided an update on the work of the communications team in relation to Covid-19:

- The Tier system and what it meant had been shared via numerous streams, both online and via post
- A video with a local GP had been shared online around Covid-19
- The Tier 4 poster with relevant information had been translated into 4 languages

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- A statement had been released on the position of primary schools in West Berkshire
- Information on what to do if contacted by the test and trace service had been released
- The communications team remained on hand to provide additional information to the national guidance as it was released

72 **Future agenda items**

Councillor Doherty asked if there could be a further update on the roll-out of the vaccination in two weeks' time.

Jo Reeves noted that she would seek to find a suitable person to provide an update.

73 **Any other Business**

Councillor Masters asked for further information on the press release on schools.

Councillor Boeck noted that there was a mixed picture for schools across West Berkshire and the Council would continue to support head teachers. He stated that all schools would continue to remain open for children of key workers.

(The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 6.59 pm)