

LOCAL OUTBREAK ENGAGEMENT BOARD (PUBLIC)

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 15 MARCH 2021

Present: Dominic Boeck, Graham Bridgman, Shairoz Claridge, Lynne Doherty, Steve Masters, Meradin Peachey, Alan Macro, Matt Pearce, Andy Sharp, Katie Summers, Andy Cole, James Townsend and Howard Woollaston

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Councillor Martha Vickers

PART I

103 Minutes of the previous meeting dated 01 March 2021

The minutes of the previous meeting dated 01 March 2021 were approved as a true and correct record.

104 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

105 Vaccination hesitancy

Katie Summers, NHS Berkshire West CCG, provided an update on the hesitancy to vaccination in West Berkshire. She highlighted a number of key points:

- 41, 679 residents in West Berkshire had received their first jab
- 1,420 their second
- 68,704 had not yet received a jab
- 39% of the 18+ population in West Berkshire had now been vaccinated
- She noted that the position of West Berkshire broadly reflected the % in the BOB ICS
- 97.1% of over 80's had been vaccinated in West Berkshire
- 70-79 age group- 96.2% had been vaccinated
- 60-69- 75.2 had been vaccinated
- 50-59- 28.6 had been vaccinated
- There was a lower vaccination take-up in black African, black Caribbean and Chinese ethnicities compared to white British individuals
- The CCG was working with partners to engage with communities to understand and co-design vaccination take-ups- through measures such as fact finding
- Those most at risk (with diabetes, obese, underlying health conditions)- she noted that take-up in these groups was at a good level
- Dr Kim Kennedy had played a large role in vaccinating those who were homeless in West Berkshire
- Vaccination in the most disadvantaged wards within West Berkshire were showing some slightly lower numbers in the 60-69 age group
- Vaccine Inequalities Groups- wide range of local health professionals and groups on the board-Katie Summers stated that feedback from the group would be shared with the Council
- Work was on-going on a survey to send out to residents on how the vaccination process could be improved

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- She noted that communications with groups with a high level of vaccine hesitancy was on-going and doctors from different ethnic groups would be used to help engage
- The idea of pop-up clinics was being discussed where vaccine centres could be deployed in faith group settings, as a way to help individuals who struggled to get to vaccine centres

Councillor Lynne Doherty thanked Katie Summers for the detailed data that would allow greater insight into the various groups who were hesitant over the vaccine.

Councillor Alan Macro noted that it was important to have pop-up clinics close to public transport.

Meradin Peachey stated that there would be a lot more vaccine available in the coming weeks, which would hopefully solve the issue of people being offered appointments far away. She also noted that centres such as the Madejski would see a lot more appointments become available in the coming weeks.

Councillor Masters asked if those aged 50-59 were now being vaccinated.

Katie Summers noted that it was now those aged 55+ being vaccinated.

106 Care homes update

Sara Ross, Service Manager Adults Safeguarding, provided an update on care homes and their visitation guidance. She noted that:

- The new visiting policy was now live and visitors were now carrying out Lateral Flow Tests (LFTs)
- There were very strict booking times, as a way of managing the number of people in the building
- She noted that no LFTs had come back positive
- Each resident has a single named visitor, which had caused some friction as many residents have more than one child or relative
- These visitors are allowed physical contact with their loved ones and that the power of physical contact had proved to be a real boost to morale
- Visitors get PPE every time they come in
- On the whole, visitation had been a real positive for residents, loved ones and staff
- There had been no positive cases in homes in recent weeks

107 Covid-19 situational 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 15 March 2021. 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.

Restrictions:

- The whole of Berkshire remained in a national lockdown
- Further information could be found via:
<https://www.berkshirepublichealth.co.uk/covid-19-dashboard>

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Situational awareness (data correct for the week 15th March 2021):

- He noted that over the last week, case rates of Covid-19 had continued to decrease in all Berkshire local authorities.
- So far there had been **6181** cases of Covid-19 in West Berkshire since the start of the pandemic and 47 of these had been in the last week.
- The rate per 100,000 had decreased and stood at **29.7**. The positivity rate had dropped to **1.5%**.

Deaths:

- In West Berkshire there had been **235** COVID-19 related deaths during the whole pandemic. 128 of these were in hospital and 90 were in a care home. In the last week reported (20th – 26th February), there were **4** COVID-19 related deaths recorded.
- Since March 2020, West Berkshire's all-cause mortality rate had been 18% higher than the previous 5 year average, which equated to 223 additional deaths.

Measures to prevent Covid-19

- Following simple steps could make a significant difference in reducing the transmission of COVID-19 and help protect you and your friends, colleagues and family from the virus:
- Follow Government Guidance
- HANDS FACE SPACE
- This emphasises important elements of the guidance we want everybody to remember - wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds, use a face covering in shops and enclosed public spaces and try to keep 2 metres apart from those not in your household.
- Testing and Self Isolating: If you have symptoms, Isolate and book and test

Local information and communications:

- **New Vaccination Webpage:**
- To help drive awareness and provide support to local residents of Berkshire, we have created a new vaccine section on our website which features a wealth of information and engaging visuals which you can visit here:
- <https://www.berkshirerpublichealth.co.uk/vaccinations>
- **The new page is split into three key sections:**
- 1. What you need to know about the vaccines
- 2. Questions and answers
- 3. Range of video stories from people sharing valuable advice about the vaccination programme and the importance of getting vaccinated.

Councillor Masters asked if there was any data on those suffering with long-covid.

Matt Pearce noted that he did not have any data to hand but could look into it ahead of the next meeting.

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Shairoz Claridge noted that some work was beginning into looking into understanding the effects of long-covid and the number of people affected across BOB.

108 Communications update

Mandip Bilkhu provide an update on the work of the communications team in response to Covid-19. She noted that:

- Councillor Doherty and Matt Pearce had held a Q&A on Facebook answering residents questions
- Work had been done around spreading the message of the availability of LFTs for businesses
- A campaign had begun to encourage residents to 'Shop local for Easter bank holiday' as non-essential retail opens up
- Free school meal vouchers for eligible children over the Easter holidays and the information around that had been sent out
- Mental health information and service availability had been shared via social media
- Work of the covid-19 marshals had been sent out and shared via social media platforms

109 Future agenda items

Matt Pearce suggested that an update on the Local Outbreak Control Plan would be useful.

(The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 6.55 pm)