

**Notes of a meeting of the Covid Response Working Group  
held on Microsoft Teams**

**Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021 – 6pm**

Present

Cllr Andy Foulsham (Chair)  
Cllr Gabby Barody (Vice-Chair)  
Cllr Charlie Birks  
Cllr Cheryl Briggs  
Cllr Alex Greenaway  
Cllr Lorraine Oates

In attendance

Louise Brown            Communications, Marketing and Events Officer (CME Officer)  
Nigel Warner            Town Clerk

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllr Samantha Bowring (Chair F and GP/ Leader) and Cllr Eric de la Harpe. **Noted.**

**2. Declarations of Interest**

None.

**3. Notes**

The Committee received and considered the notes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

It was **RESOLVED** that the notes of the meeting of the Covid Response Working Group held on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**4. Matters Arising**

Cllr Gabby Barody asked if it was possible to sign minutes electronically while meetings were being conducted online. The Town Clerk confirmed he would look into it and find out if this was possible.

**5. Update from District Council**

Cllr Andy Foulsham updated members on the Vale of White Horse District Council; confirming that he had received confirmation from Cllr Helen Pighills that the free school meals vouchers would cover February half term and the Easter holidays. Cllr Foulsham confirmed it was definitely a voucher scheme

and not food boxes which members were concerned would not have been adequate enough.

Cllr Andy Foulsham also updated members on the lateral flow testing centre that had been set up in Wantage; confirming this was currently dedicated entirely to the Emergency Services. He confirmed there was no news on new centres at the moment (Beyond the three already established in Wantage, Oxford and Banbury) but that he would update the committee as and when new information became available.

Cllr Charlie Birks raised concerns that Emergency Services workers were having to travel and be tested regularly and questioned why they could not be testing themselves at home. Members agreed this was a concern, but Cllr Gabby Barody felt that in time this would be rolled out.

## **6. Update from County Council**

Cllr Gabby Barody provided an update from the County Council; confirming she had spoken to Cllr Emily Smith who had echoed what Cllr Foulsham confirmed above, that no details on new centres were available, but that this information would be fed down as soon as it was available.

Cllr Barody confirmed that when the centres were up and running then Vale officers would be seconded to the centres, this might impact the services run by the Vale, but Cllr Barody would update the Committee when she knew more.

Cllr Barody confirmed that Dalton Barracks is going to be used, 2 days a week, as a symptomatic testing site which would provide residents with a much more local testing centre.

Cllr Barody also reminded members that we should be directing residents and organisations to the funding information on the Vale of White Horse District Councils website.

## **7. Digital Poverty**

Cllr Andy Foulsham updated the committee on the latest steps confirming that all the application letters from Schools were now with Christs Hospital.

Christs Hospitals Governors were considering the requests and would be looking to release funding as soon as possible.

Cllr Foulsham would email the Communications, Marketing and Events officer with the details of the supplier so this could be passed to the Schools.

Cllr Foulsham would continue to update the committee with the progress of this initiative.

## **8. Update from Abingdon Coronavirus Response group**

Cllr Alex Greenaway provided members with an update on the Abingdon Coronavirus Response group; confirming that requests were still very manageable, and he did not foresee this changing.

Cllr Charlie Birks asked if there was any news on Abimeds and members confirmed they were still available for vulnerable residents, but pharmacies were better set up now, so the demand was lower.

## **9. AOB**

Cllr Gabby Barody confirmed she had checked the Market Place gates and found them locked so the issue appeared to be resolved.

Cllr Gabby Barody also asked if there was an update on the public bins in Abingdon being too full, the Town Clerk confirmed that he had spoken with the Outside Services Manager who was monitoring the bins carefully and the works team were carrying out 2 visits to the Market place bins every day.

Cllr Barody also confirmed the Costa Coffee initiative mentioned at last weeks meeting was now being advertised on the Town Council website.

Members decided to move to fortnightly meetings and review on 1<sup>st</sup> March to see if this was adequate.

## **10. Next meeting**

Monday 15th February – 6pm

The meeting rose at 6.45 pm.