

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

Monday 1st March 2021 – 6pm

Present

Cllr Andy Foulsham (Chair)
Cllr Gabby Barody (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Cheryl Briggs
Cllr Eric de la Harpe
Cllr Alex Greenaway
Cllr Lorraine Oates

In attendance

Louise Brown Communications, Marketing and Events Officer (CME Officer)
Susan Whipp Deputy Town Clerk/RFO

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Samantha Bowring (Chair F and GP/ Leader) and Cllr Charlie Birks (Mayor).

2. Declarations of Interest

None.

3. Notes

The Committee received and considered the notes of the meeting held on 15th February 2021.

It was **RESOLVED** that the notes of the meeting of the Covid Response Working Group held on 15th February 2021 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. Matters Arising

Cllr Andy Foulsham provided the committee with an update from District Cllr Emily Smith about the communication that had been received from the National Association of Local Councils concerning Virtual meetings not being allowed to continue beyond 7th May 2021.

Cllr Emily Smith had confirmed that this was being challenged and whilst an official update was still pending, Cllr Foulsham felt this cut off was likely to be extended or removed. Cllr Foulsham agreed to await further news and update the committee on this topic at future meetings.

5. Update from Vale of White Horse District Council

Cllr Foulsham provided an update from the Vale of White Horse District Council; confirming that they had officers carrying out door to door visits to people who had not responded to a COVID-19 Vaccine letter. This had not been widely publicised before hand to discourage scammers, but now this was in operation it was likely to be publicised more, and the Town Council should share any publicity received from the Vale of White Horse District Council.

Cllr Barody provided an update to the committee on the latest hospital admissions and encouraged everyone to remain vigilant. Whilst the COVID-19 cases and number of deaths had decreased, it is taking longer for the Hospital occupancy number to come down. Cllr Barody felt it would be 1-2 months before this number significantly decreased and reminded everyone that the Town Council should be encouraging all residents to comply with the guidelines still in place and remain vigilant.

6. Update from County Council

Cllr Gabby Barody provided the committee with an update from Oxfordshire County Council; County Cllr Emily Smith had confirmed that the free school lunches initiative was continuing throughout the Easter Holidays using the same voucher method as before and that this meant the Town Council did not need to put anything further in place.

Cllr Barody also made members aware that there is a difference between the two vaccinations being offered that meant some people would be required to stay for observation for 15 minutes after the vaccination, whereas others would not.

Members commented on an unfortunate situation where there had been confusing and mixed messaging regarding unpaid carers qualifying for the vaccine. Cllr Barody said that the message not to call your GP should depend on the reason for the call and encouraged residents who felt they qualified to contact their local GP if they had not already heard from them.

7. Update from Abingdon Coronavirus Response group

Cllr Alex Greenaway updated the committee on the Coronavirus Community Response Group confirming that, since the release of the roadmap information from Government, requests were very low and that as we progressed through the various stages the level of support provided was expected to be very small and easily manageable.

8. AOB

The Communications, Marketing and Events Officer updated the committee on the Digital Poverty initiative, confirming that this was now complete with the schools having received funds and submitting orders. The schools had been asked for photos of the new laptops for publicity purposes.

Cllr Barody asked what was likely to happen to the laptops once the pupils were back in the classroom full time and Cllr Foulsham confirmed that, after correspondence with Christ's Hospital, it was agreed that if the need was there the laptops could remain in possession of the student for the duration of their time at the school, being returned on their departure to be redistributed by the school to another student in need.

9. Next meeting

The date of the next meeting was noted as Monday 15th March 2021 – 6pm

The meeting rose at 6.25 pm