

Covid Response Advisory Working Group

Monday 6 December 2021

Notes of meeting

Present:

Cllr Andy Foulsham Chair
Cllr Cheryl Briggs Mayor (*ex officio*)

In attendance:
Andy Crick Committee Clerk (clerk to the meeting)

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Cllr Gabby Barody, Cllr Lorraine Oates.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

None

3. **Notes**

The notes of the Covid Response Advisory Working Group meeting held on [8 November 2021](#) were agreed.

4. **Updates from District and County Councils**

Update on numbers across Oxfordshire - Information provided by Cllr Nathan Ley, Abingdon North Division

In the seven days up to 26 November, there has been a total of 3,745 confirmed new COVID-19 cases in Oxfordshire. This is an **increase** from 3,374 new cases in the previous week and is equivalent to a weekly rate of 537.4 per 100,000 residents. Cases in the over 60s have decreased from 268 to 254, which is equivalent to a weekly rate of 150.6 per 100,000 residents.

Figures in the Vale of White Horse District were:

- 7 days to 19/11/21: 459 cases per 100,000 population
- 7 days to 26/11/21: 508 per 100,000.

The ratio for the Vale of White Horse District is slightly under the average for Oxfordshire but numbers are still increasing. The figures provided are for the period before the new 'Omicron' variant was identified so there is further cause for concern.

The vaccination programme is being ramped up. The Oxfordshire Commissioning Group has reported changes to the vaccine programme:

- the gap between the second dose and boosters has been halved from 6 to 3 months;
- the vaccine will now be offered to everyone aged 18 and over;
- a fourth dose will be offered to those people who are clinically vulnerable and who have been shielding;
- a second dose is being considered for children aged between 12 and 18, no sooner than 12 weeks after their first dose.

People will be contacted by GPs or they can book online.

New materials to encourage vaccination have been provided by Oxfordshire County Council and will be forwarded on to the Community Services and Events Officer to consider for publication via social media channels.

5. **Updates from County Council**

Please see the update above.

6. **Covid bounce back projects**

Grants

No grant requests received for this meeting.

Additional seating within the Town Centre

Additional seating has been installed in Roysse Court and in Hillview play area.

Engagement with businesses

The Christmas Extravaganza has been postponed for this year and queries have been received by the Town Council but this event is the responsibility of the Chamber of Commerce.

The Christmas tree in the Market Place is very good and the works team were thanked for their efforts on getting this sorted.

Ideas to engage with business are always welcome.

7. **Terms of reference**

The working group was requested by the Finance, Governance and Asset Management Advisory Committee on 21 September 2021 (FG6) to review its terms of reference. The role of the working group has changed considerably since it was established on 4 November 2020 (C69): the original terms of reference for the working group were: 'to make any urgent decisions relating to the Covid-19 emergency which the Town Clerk decides need to be determined before the next scheduled committee meeting which would normally cover the matter.'

At the Town Council meeting on 28 April 2021 (C144), it was noted that 'the Covid Response Group has agreed to become a Covid Bounceback Committee to oversee and scrutinise the work of the Town Council in supporting the community over coming months.'

The Working Group is still considered relevant for reporting on the current pandemic situation and to be prepared to review any matters which arise in future. It was suggested that it may be useful to consider whether the working group should be wound up in time for the annual meeting of the Town Council which is scheduled to take place on 18 May 2022.

Cllr Foulsham would email the Chair of the Finance, Governance and Asset Management Committee to update her on plans for future meetings.

8. **Date of next meeting**

The date of the next meeting was noted: Tuesday 8 February 2022

The meeting closed at 6.21pm