

# Report of the Director of Place to the meeting of Shipley Area Committee to be held on 27 January 2021

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**Subject: An update on COVID-19 in Bradford District**

## **Summary statement:**

This report provides an update on COVID-19 in Bradford District. It describes the district response between March 2020 and January 2021. The latest data on cases, admissions and deaths will be reported verbally at the meeting.

The report sets out how the Bradford District COVID-19 response is being managed, explaining the leadership role of the COVID-19 Management Group and the working groups that feed it.

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**Portfolio:**

**Public Health**

**Overview & Scrutiny Area:**

**Health and Care**

## 1. SUMMARY

This report provides an update on COVID-19 in Bradford District. It describes the district response between March 2020 and January 2021. The latest data on cases, admissions and deaths will be reported verbally at the meeting.

The report sets out how the Bradford District COVID-19 response is being managed, explaining the leadership role of the COVID-19 Management Group and the working groups that feed it.

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council originally developed Terms of Reference for the Covid Emergency Response on the 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020. This was based around an Emergency Management approach of Gold, Silver and Bronze commands, with Bronze commands established for five thematic areas of work. Since then, the district (as per nationally), has gone through a partial period of recovery but is now experiencing a second wave.
- 2.2 Between March and September, the COVID-19 response was coordinated through the Test and Trace Steering Group chaired by Public Health. This group met weekly and had representatives from environmental health, education, care homes, primary care, local contact tracing, testing, outbreak control, VCFS partners, Bevan House, education and engagement and programme management reporting in. The group was responsible for delivering a work programme and produced regular highlight reports to the Outbreak Control Board.
- 2.3 The Test & Trace Steering Group put the framework in place for the district response, producing an outbreak management plan, a testing strategy and delivering essential advice and guidance to public and partners, supported by detailed public health intelligence briefings. The Group also commissioned a number of community anchor organisations to deliver engagement and education and to support with testing, outbreak management and support to isolate if required. In addition a group of Covid Young Ambassadors was established to provide 'voice and influence' for the districts young people. Feedback from these organisations also helps to build a picture of concerns and issues that inform local responses.
- 2.4 Mobilising the district's response was challenging and undertaken at speed, although also highly effective and it laid the solid foundations upon which a more sustained and longer term response has now been built.
- 2.5 **The COVID-19 Management Group and working groups**  
To formalise the Council's response and reporting arrangements for the COVID-19 second wave from October 2020 onwards a new structure was established to ensure that:
  - Local response was built on existing solutions wherever possible
  - All activity associated with Covid-19 within the Council and was co-ordinated through a clear governance and reporting structure, and that decisions could be taken at the appropriate level.

- Actions and tasks requested through all levels of the governance structure could be undertaken and acted upon in a timely manner.
- Issues and decisions are evaluated at an appropriate level, with issues escalated upwards when needed

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

#### 3.1 The COVID-19 Management Group

Building on the existing strengths in the Neighbourhood Service, the COVID-19 management group meets weekly and is chaired by Ian Day, Assistant Director Neighbourhood & Customer Services and Sarah Muckle, Director of Public Health. The group is fed by a number of working groups, operating under a programme management methodology. The management group produces weekly health intelligence reports which guides the work of all other working groups and also a weekly highlight report made from reports on set key performance indicators from each working group. These reports are shared with the Health Protection Assurance Group and the Outbreak Control Board, which provide a mechanism for the escalation and resolution of any emerging issues or higher level decisions.

- 3.2 The working groups comprise: Data and Intelligence; Engagement; Enforcement; Outbreak Control; Education Settings; Vulnerable Adults; Testing; Contact Tracing; Finance & Resources, Communications and more recently 'Vaccination'

##### 3.2.1 Data and Intelligence

A weekly intelligence report is produced to support the work of the group. This report includes intelligence on cases, Bradford District's national ranking in terms of cases, our positivity rate (% of tests which are positive), age groups affected, ethnicity affected, priority wards, data on contact tracing, outbreaks, NHS activity and deaths and insight from local and national reports. The report also includes recommendations for priority areas of focus.

##### 3.2.2 Engagement

The Bradford COVID-19 Hub sits within the Neighbourhood Service and is located at St Margaret McMillan Towers in the centre of Bradford, from where staff are deployed across the district.

The Hub, through a number of Covid Support Workers operates seven days a week and delivers a range of engagement activities with communities and businesses and also manages home testing and 'rapid' testing sites at St Georges Hall and Airedale Shopping Centre in Keighley. Staff from the Hub are sharing information, resources, skills, languages and experience from across diverse sectors seeking to collectively target engagement with residents in neighbourhoods, parks, open spaces, commercial centres and business corridors where there are challenges with social distancing and compliance.

**Community engagement and support is crucial.** It is imperative that Bradford residents support efforts to avoid infection from COVID-19 and avoid transmission if infected. This requires communities to understand how COVID-19 is spread, and the consequences of the infection as well as trust in the impact of communal efforts to control COVID-19.

### 3.2.3 Enforcement

District enforcement is undertaken through a combination of Council (Licensing & Environmental Health), Police and West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service resources. A range of activity has been delivered to support the Four Es model of engage, educate, encourage and then enforcement.

Due to the changing nature of legislation the enforcement role is often challenging. Expectations from the public around what is possible to enforce often don't match with the powers available to the Council or Police. A regular tasking meeting takes place which also reports to a West Yorkshire Tactical Coordination Group on Enforcement.

### 3.2.4 Testing working group

The purpose of the Testing Working Group is to implement the Bradford District Testing Strategy. The strategy has four aims:

- Controlling and preventing transmission of the virus by identifying cases, tracing their contacts and supporting cases and contacts to isolate – to break the chain of transmission and prevent and protect the spread of the disease amongst the population
- Surveillance to understand the spread of coronavirus and to target future testing
- Protecting NHS services by delivering testing to support the safety of staff and patients
- Protecting vulnerable groups to reduce the risk of infection in groups, communities or settings where there are greater risks.

The working group brings together colleagues from public health, the COVID-19 response hub, the CCG and adult social care. The working group plans, directs and oversees local testing through: home testing, rapid (lateral flow testing), Mobile Testing Units, locally run testing at Marley Fields for key workers, testing for residential care staff via the national portal and testing at the City Centre Local Testing Site, Bradford University Regional Testing Site and Victoria Hall Local Testing Site.

### 3.2.5 Local contact tracing working group

The Council has built up a local contact tracing team operating within the Council's Customer Services team. All engaged on this work have received specialist training provided by Public Health England. Co-ordinated with the national NHS Test and Trace service, the local team receive details daily of individuals testing positive for COVID-19 in the BMDC area, that the national team have been unable to reach, following these up by text, phone call and home visit.

### 3.2.6 Outbreak control working group

Response to outbreaks is overseen by the Outbreak Control working group. The definition of an outbreak in a COVID-19 scenario is where two or more people with confirmed COVID-19 (positive test) are linked by a common setting.

The working group includes representatives from Public Health, Environmental Health, Infection Prevention and Control, as well as Voluntary and Community Services. The team work closely with the Public Health England Health Protection Team (Yorkshire and Humber) to provide robust outbreak and complex case management. The team also work proactively to prevent the spread of COVID-19

through engagement and site visits to ensure COVID-19 risk assessments are in place, implemented and adhered to.

### **3.2.7 Education settings working group**

Public Health works closely with schools and the education sector to provide timely public health advice on preventing and managing COVID-19 cases in school.

There is a dedicated national Department of Education (DfE) support line for new cases. Schools are asked to report all new cases to the DfE, but also the Local Authority so that the severity of any COVID-19 clusters can be assessed and support offered

### **3.2.8 Vulnerable adults working group**

The Vulnerable Adults working group ensures there is appropriate support for vulnerable adults across Bradford District. The council's Department of Health and Wellbeing has developed a COVID-19 Support Team. This team provides a dedicated care liaison support role for independent care providers in the response to COVID-19. The team supports local providers of residential/nursing care and community based services to vulnerable people providing advice, guidance and support in their response to COVID-19. This includes advice on infection, prevention and control; latest guidance; routine repeat asymptomatic testing of staff and residents and links to support to manage outbreaks. The team works in partnership with providers to promote the wellbeing and safety of service users and staff within the sector.

### **3.2.9 Finance and Resources**

Oversight of finances and resources is managed by the finance and resources working group. This group leads on the coordination of recruitment and monitors expenditure of Covid related activity, ensuring that costs are managed and budgetary provision is made available for necessary costs.

### **3.2.10 Communications**

The Communications approach for Bradford has been delivered through a partnership which includes the Council, the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS). VCS partners include CABAD, the Council for Mosques and the Racial Equality Network who work with a network of 21 community based anchor organisations. Regular meetings take place to coordinate activity. This model allows for agile and targeted communications that build on deep understanding of communities, operating as part of a wider joined up communications effort.

### **3.2.11 Vaccination**

More recently and sitting within the governance of district Health partners, a highly complex set of arrangements has been put in place to organise the delivery of vaccines to eligible district residents. The vaccine is currently being administered through three hospital sites, ten primary care networks (GP surgeries) and a community pharmacist location in the centre of Bradford. A larger community vaccination site is under development at Jacob's Well, due to become operational in February. All vaccination sites are appointment based.

### **3.3 The current situation: epidemiology**

Due to the fast changing nature of infection rates, details on the current position will be provided verbally at the meeting.

## **4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL**

Government support includes specific funds which are targeted at containment of Covid outbreaks, test and trace, surge enforcement and the clinically extremely vulnerable and it has been confirmed that as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review statement in November, the chancellor announced the continuation of emergency grants into next year. The Council will also receive separate funding for the work it is doing on lateral flow testing. Furthermore, where the LA is supporting the NHS on the vaccination programme, all additional costs will be recovered

## **5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

Risks are managed within the governance of the district response and there are no direct risk management and governance issues within the context of this report.

## **6. LEGAL APPRAISAL**

There are no legal issues apparent

## **7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

### **7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

Data suggests that the correlation between dying from COVID-19 and deprivation is strong. 40% of people who died were residents who lived in the most deprived areas of Bradford District (quintile 1) compared to 7% in the least deprived areas (quintile 5). Whilst everyone is affected by measures to control COVID-19, some groups in Bradford are experiencing disproportionate health, social and economic impacts. COVID-19 has both amplified the existing inequalities in society, and created new risks and impacts for people who may not previously have considered themselves to be vulnerable. There have been three main ways Bradford Council has led the response to COVID-19 with the aim of reducing exacerbation of health inequalities. Firstly, through working with communities, secondly through targeting prevention and control activities and finally through targeted research with partners.

### **7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no sustainability implications within the context of this report.

### **7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS**

There are no greenhouse gas emissions within the context of this report.

### **7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

Enforcement of any breaches of Covid 19 restrictions are undertaken through a combination of the Council's Licensing Team, Environmental Health Officers and

Bradford Police Division.

## **7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT**

There are no human rights implications apparent within the context of this report.

## **7.6 TRADE UNION**

There are no trade union implications apparent within the context of the report.

## **7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS**

Infection rates vary by ward and local response is adapted accordingly. These can and do change over time and deployment plans are reviewed weekly. Where the Hub deploys staff to a particular ward, local ward councillors are informed and invited to participate in any engagement work.

## **7.8 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

There are no Area Committee Action Plan implications apparent.

## **7.9 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING**

There are no corporate parenting implications apparent.

## **7.10 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT**

There are no issues apparent.

## **8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS**

None.

## **9. OPTIONS**

ShIPLEY Area Committee is asked to consider the district response to the Covid 19 pandemic and the latest data on infection rates locally. The Area Committee may determine to make any recommendations for change.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

That ShIPLEY Area Committee notes the contents of the report and the work that is taking place across the district to respond to the Covid 19 pandemic.

## **11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

- Bradford District Outbreak Control Plan (June 2020)  
<https://www.bradford.gov.uk/media/5921/bradforddistrictcovid-19outbreakplan.pdf>
- C-SAG [bradfordresearch.nhs.uk/c-sag/](http://bradfordresearch.nhs.uk/c-sag/)
- Cases – coronavirus cases in the uk: <https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/cases>
- Deaths - Death registrations and occurrences by local authority and health board:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/causeofdeath/datasets/deathregistrationsandoccurrencesbylocalauthorityandhealthboard>

- National restrictions [https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-national-restrictions-from-5-november?utm\\_source=4ec0c5c2-dae1-4d85-81b0-bdd531c4bc31&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-national-restrictions-from-5-november?utm_source=4ec0c5c2-dae1-4d85-81b0-bdd531c4bc31&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)