

Report of the Director of Public Health to the meeting of Bradford West Area Committee to be held on 24th June 2021

Subject:

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UPDATE ON COVID-19 RELATED COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT WORK IN BRADFORD WEST AREA

Summary statement:

This report provides an update on COVID-19 communications and community engagement work delivered in the Bradford West Area and specifically that delivered by Community Action Bradford & District (CABAD), Racial Equality Network (REN) and Urban Reach Partnership CIC.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY:

COVID-19 has had a disproportionate impact on our most disadvantaged people, including large and persistently deprived communities, Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities, migrants and people in poverty and on low incomes. The Council, with system partners, provided an immediate response to COVID-19, communicating with residents to ensure they had the information to allow them to access the services they needed and following this, the information to support preventing the spread of COVID-19. This inclusive approach provides targeted communication and engagement with diverse communities, including BAME, Central and Eastern Communities and also those accessing Mosques, with the aim reducing any potential disproportionate impact.

The work delivered, and included in the report, contributes to delivery of the Councils' equality objectives through strong and active ongoing engagement with communities and delivery of services which are inclusive and designed to consider and remove barriers to

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access at the outset.

Overview & Scrutiny Area:
Health and Social Care

1. SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides additional information to that given at Bradford West Area Committee on 25.2.21, which detailed how the Council-led system-wide communications response to COVID-19 across the Bradford District was, and is being managed, explaining the leadership and co-ordination role of the System Communications Group.

1.2 The report provides specific update on COVID-19 communications and community engagement work delivered and/or planned in the Bradford West Area by 3 local organisations; Community Action Bradford & District (CABAD), Racial Equality Network (REN) and Urban Reach Partnership CIC.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Bradford Council, alongside system partners, have led communications since the onset of COVID-19 in February/March 2020. Immediate response was initiated to inform residents and ensure that people were able to access the services they needed and thereafter, to support behaviour change, prevent the spread of COVID-19 and protect through reaching and impacting on residents.

2.2 It was evident early in the pandemic that clear communications needed to reach deep into communities and that the usual channels used by the Council on their own would not be sufficient to meet this need. Major central government initiatives such as the Test and Trace Service Support Grant also required swift and effective communications response to increase residents understanding of COVID-19 and to maximise compliance.

2.3 The Council-led system-wide communications response to COVID-19 across the Bradford District has been and remains significant and a paper detailing the leadership and co-ordination role of the System Communications Group and communications activities delivered throughout the pandemic so far was presented to Bradford West Area Committee on 25th February 2021. From this it was resolved that 3 organisations delivering against the work would attend the Bradford West Area Committee to give a detailed presentation on their respective organisation's focus based community engagement work on COVID-19 in the Bradford West area. These organisations are Community Action Bradford & District (CABAD), Racial Equality Network (REN) and the Urban Reach Partnership CIC.

2.4 Provider engagement & issue of Contract

2.4.1 In June 2020, the Government announced local authority allocations for the Test and Trace Service Support Grant, for Bradford £3.8m. The funding was provided to enable local authorities to develop and implement tailored local COVID-19 outbreak plans through, for example, funding the recruitment of additional staff where required, contact tracing capacity for complex situations such as hard to engage groups, and developing communications to promote the system and encourage communities and individuals to follow government guidance.

- 2.4.2 In planning to deliver against the Test and Trace Service Support Grant, Public Health officers contacted Community Action Bradford & District (CABAD) and Race Equality Network (REN) to connect to the VCS network and ask them to present a proposal on how the VCS could support Council objectives in managing COVID-19 response through reach into communities.
- 2.4.3 Council for Mosques (CfM) had been engaged on previous campaigns particularly around EID (and referenced in the report previously presented) and had been successful in their reach. They were therefore also engaged with a view to looking at how we use religion and mosques to get messages out and engage with communities and individuals.
- 2.4.4 Procurement guidance was followed and the 3 organisations each submitted applications which included details of how they could deliver the work required and providing response to other due diligence questions/declaration.
- 2.4.5 Contracts were awarded as Exception to Competition. This process followed the Councils Contract Standing Orders and COVID-19 urgency guidelines issued by the Cabinet Office. No contract was awarded to CfM because they instead identified to the Council their Community Interest Company (CIC) Urban Reach Partnership as the contracting entity, which is newly set up by CfM to administer contracts for these purposes.
- 2.4.6 Provider Contracts and works began at different points due to time needed to prepare the 3 Service Specifications and to follow procurement process including due diligence. As is evident from the previous report (noted at 2.3), all have contributed to ongoing Council-led system-wide communications.

2.5 CABAD

- 2.5.1 CABAD was the first organisation to commence the contracted service, the Test and Trace Community Engagement and Awareness Raising service, which began on 1st July 2020.
- 2.5.2 The high level aims of the service are: to contribute to the effective roll out of COVID-19 case identification and contact tracing scheme (Test and Trace) and other public health measures to effectively contain the COVID-19 virus within the Bradford District; to support the implementation of COVID-19 Test and Trace in the Bradford District by ensuring effective engagement and awareness raising with diverse communities through mechanisms in the Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure ensuring messages are responsive to the needs of the population and in line with the Test and Trace messages.
- 2.5.3 The operating model has significant partnership working with other VCS organisation to ensure maximising effective messaging and support to the most hard to reach communities. This includes CABAD issuing small grants to community anchors and micro grants to others in support of achieving the aims identified.

2.5.4 As changes progressed with COVID-19 and specifically the rollout of the vaccination programme, the work of the organisation was enhanced also, to include improving vaccine uptake across all communities by:

2.5.4.1 Working in partnership with the NHS, local authority departments (and specifically public health teams), and voluntary, community and faith sectors to ensure that vaccination services can operate in their communities;

2.5.4.2 Removing barriers to access by providing meaningful engagement and action to support communities, including providing information in formats that connect with them, information sharing from relatable leaders who understand people's specific circumstances, seeking to understand fears and concerns, and then providing answers and evidence-based reasons to alleviate the fears.

2.5.5 As requested, a report prepared by CABAD is given at Appendix A. Soo Nevison, CEO CABAD, is in attendance to talk through the report which includes a breadth of detail on activity to date specific to Bradford West, lessons learnt and future plans.

2.6 Race Equality Network (REN) COVID-19 works, Bradford West Area

2.6.1 REN commenced the contracted service, Test and Trace Community Engagement and Awareness Raising Service for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) and Central and Eastern European (CEE) communities, on 1st August 2020.

2.6.2 The Contract held with REN sets the high level aims as: to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) and Central and Eastern European (CEE) communities living in the Bradford district and address health inequalities for BAME and CEE Communities as a result of COVID-19; to contribute to the effective roll out of COVID-19 Test and Trace scheme and other public health measures to effectively contain the COVID-19 virus within BAME and CEE Communities in the Bradford District.

2.6.3 The operating model includes providing funding to other anchor organisation to support delivering against the aims of the service. In addition, through the contracted funding REN also operate a grants process for Community Projects (small community organisations and groups) to deliver activity which aligns to the overall COVID-19, infection prevention control, messaging and engagement work.

2.6.4 As requested, a report prepared by REN is given at Appendix B. Humma Nizami, Project Manager and Yousuf Karolia, General Secretary are in attendance to talk through the report which includes detail on activity to date specific to Bradford West, lessons learnt and future plans.

2.7 Urban Reach Partnership CIC

2.7.1 The Urban Reach Partnership CIC contract for Test and Trace, Awareness Raising, Advisor and Testing Service supporting Bradford Mosques was

awarded to commence on 1st February 2021.

- 2.7.2 The aims of the service are: to support the delivery of COVID-19 control in Bradford District by ensuring effective engagement and awareness raising with Muslim communities, primarily through the local network of Mosques, ensuring messages are responsive to the needs of the population and in line with local and national COVID-19 control policy; o reduce the impact of COVID-19 on Muslim communities living in the Bradford district through direct and appropriate engagement, advice, information and support to individuals and communities attending local Mosques; to deliver a community testing service, by distributing home testing kits, either close to people's homes and in or near to local Mosques, specifically in areas where a strong reason to believe that prevalence may be higher than it is in the general population, and as directed by Public Health; to contribute to the effective roll out of the national and local COVID-19 contact tracing scheme (Test and Trace) and other public health measures to effectively contain the COVID-19 virus within the Bradford District.
- 2.7.3 Questions were raised at the meeting of Bradford West Area Committee on 25 February 2021 regarding the Urban Reach CIC contract with the Council. As a result, officers of the Council have reviewed the procurement process and due diligence as a result of which Urban Reach were appointed and have found no issues in the procurement of the contract and that due diligence was satisfied.
- 2.7.4 An implementation plan is now being progressed to deliver the service as required, however at this stage, due to a delay in commencement, Urban Reach CIC cannot report any delivery detail against the contract and are not in attendance. Public Health officers are working with Urban Reach CIC to agree a delivery plan which compliments the work of that delivered by the other organisations.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The work delivered and outlined by provider organisations support and contribute to delivery of the Councils equality objectives, particularly through strong and active ongoing engagement with communities and delivery of services which are inclusive and designed to consider and remove barriers to access at the outset.
- 3.2 It is anticipated that the work delivered will provide significant learning for the district going forward on community engagement, participation and involvement and this will contribute to building trust and improving involvement of communities in decisions that affect them.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

There are no financial issues arising from this report.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

- 5.1 No direct risk management and governance issues arise within the context of this report.
- 5.2 The System Communications Group provides coordination of communications and ensures a joined-up and consistent approach is taken by all partners. The Group reports weekly to Council CMT (Corporate Management Team), Outbreak Control Board and Strategic Co-ordination Group.
- 5.3 Formal contract management is undertaken by Public Health officers with the provider organisations.
- 5.4 There are no significant risks arising out of the implementation of the proposed recommendations.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

There are no legal issues arising.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

This work responds to the immediate and urgent issues facing people, communities and businesses across the District. Ensuring effective communications and engagement is vital in shaping positive behaviours and collective responses to the crisis, as well as supporting the NHS and other partners. The work is a key investment in creating the conditions, guided by robust science and involvement, across the District for communities and the economy in longer term wellbeing, resilience and economic progress.

7.2 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

There are no known greenhouse gas emission impacts evident within the context of this report.

7.3 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

There are no Community Safety issues arising from this report.

7.4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

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

7.5 TRADE UNION

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

7.6 WARD IMPLICATIONS

The work outlined in this report will impact all localities in the Bradford West Area, by supporting and increasing interventions related to the health and wellbeing of residents.

7.7 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS (for reports to Area Committees only)

There are no specific Area Committee Action Plan implications to report.

7.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

The report does not have any implications for Corporate Parenting duty.

7.9 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

There are no Privacy Impact Assessment issues arising from this report and recommendation.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None.

9. OPTIONS

Bradford West Area Committee is asked to consider the detail presented and raise any queries or provide feedback regarding the work outlined and/or make any recommendations for change/alternate activity.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Bradford West Area Committee notes the contents of the report and the important work that is taking place or planned by the 3 organisations represented, as part of the system response to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A - CABAD, Communications and Engagement Report

Appendix B - REN, Communications and Engagement Report

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Report of the Chief Executive to the meeting of Bradford West Area Committee to held on 25 February 2021 (Document "D"), available at:

[https://bradford.moderngov.co.uk/documents/g7437/Public%20reports%20pack%2025th-Feb-2021%2018.00%20Bradford%20West%20Area%20Committee.pdf?T=10.](https://bradford.moderngov.co.uk/documents/g7437/Public%20reports%20pack%2025th-Feb-2021%2018.00%20Bradford%20West%20Area%20Committee.pdf?T=10)