



TOURISM, COMMUNITIES, CULTURE & LEISURE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 3 March 2021

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| REPORT TITLE: | COVID - 19 UPDATE |
| REPORT OF: | DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES |

REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides the Committee with an update on surveillance data and key areas of development in relation to Wirral's COVID-19 response and delivery of the Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan.

This matter affects all wards within the Borough; it is not a key decision.

This report is for information purposes only and whilst the content provided will be relevant to all wards within the Borough, no decisions are required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee are recommended to note the contents of the report and associated presentation and support the ongoing work associated with COVID-19 response.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 This report supports a presentation to give Members of the Committee an overview of how the Neighbourhoods Directorate are working to Keep Wirral well and help protect residents from the impact of COVID-19. It provides an update on services within the Neighbourhoods directorate relevant to the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The report is for information and as such, no other options have been considered.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 On 22 May 2020, the government asked all Councils to develop local COVID-19 Outbreak plans. Wirral published its Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan in June 2020, setting out:
- how Wirral will prevent transmission of COVID-19 within the community
 - how Wirral will ensure we have an effective and coordinated local approach to managing COVID-19 outbreaks across different settings within the Borough
 - how Wirral will ensure vulnerable people are protected
 - how Wirral will link with national and regional systems to ensure we get maximum benefit for the population of Wirral.
- 3.2 In December 2020, Wirral Council published an update to this plan highlighting the progress that has been made to date along with a dynamic strategy for how we will continue to protect our communities from the impacts of COVID-19, as well as the wider effects on the health, wellbeing and livelihoods of Wirral residents. The updated plan can be found on the Wirral Council website:
- 3.3 Currently Wirral Council are again facing a challenging picture in relation to COVID-19 both nationally and locally. We undertake daily and weekly surveillance to understand the local picture – Up to date information on COVID-19 in Wirral is available here: COVID19 statistics for Wirral | www.wirral.gov.uk
- 3.4 Due to Coronavirus cases rising rapidly across the country and growing pressure on the NHS the Prime Minister announced on the 4 January, that the country would be put back into a national lockdown. Details of Current National Guidance is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-guidance>
- 3.5 As part of the committee work programme members requested an update on the service areas within the Neighbourhoods directorate and how they are responding to the ongoing situation. Details of Neighbourhoods Directorate response are highlighted within the presentation and focus on areas affecting Leisure, Tourism, Culture and Communities Committee, whilst there has been a significant impact due

to closure of many of these services areas associated with Leisure, Libraries, Museums, the Council has responded by increasing its digital and online offers for residents, including online fitness classes, digital reading materials and cultural streaming events.

- 3.6 Through our humanitarian work, the Council has worked in partnership with over 50 Wirral 3rd sector and community organisations to help residents in need, establishing the Emergency Food Hub. We have delivered over 20,000 food hampers to feed circa 50,000 people. We have supported hundreds experiencing economic hardship as a result of Covid - with emergency fuels cards, debt support, central heating repairs and clothing – many things which were historically supported through Local welfare Assistance.
- 3.7 The chart below outlines the timeline and breadth of activity that falls within the Humanitarian Cell’s remit in terms of the emergency response to food and welfare support.

| Date | Work stream |
|------------------|--|
| 30 March 2020 | Emergency Food Hub commenced |
| 15 May 2020 | Financial assessment for food and utilities (transferred from Local Welfare Assistance scheme) |
| 21 July 2020 | DEFRA Emergency Assistance Grant delivery commenced |
| 31 July 2020 | Emergency Food Hub ceased |
| 9 September 2020 | Financial Support for Welfare Needs Scheme commenced (temporarily replacing the Local Welfare Assistance scheme) |
| 12 October 2020 | DHSC Test & Trace Support Payments commenced |
| 1 December 2020 | DWP COVID Winter Grant Scheme delivery commenced |
| 11 January 2021 | Emergency Food Hub re-commenced |

- 3.8 Covid has presented challenges to everyone in society but increasingly there is clear evidence that it significantly affects those individuals and families who are socially and economically challenged.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 This report is for information purposes and there are no direct financial implications arising from it. There may be financial implications for the Neighbourhoods directorate as a result of the pandemic but these are reported on in quarterly finance reporting.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This report is for information to Members and as a result there are no legal implications.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

- 6.1 This report is for information to Members and as a result there are no resource implications

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 It should be noted that data relating to the operational management of the COVID-19 response is frequently changing and as a result, some of the information contained within the committee update is likely to become outdated quickly.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 No direct public consultation or engagement has been undertaken in relation to this report. However, community engagement is a key priority in ensuring an effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.

9.2 Equality considerations were a key component of the actions noted in 3.1 of this report, however there are no further direct equality implications arising.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no direct environment and climate implications arising from this report.

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APPENDICES

There are no appendices - presentation to be given at committee.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Wirral Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan December 2020

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

| Council Meeting | Date |
|--|-------------------------|
| Tourism Communities Culture and Leisure Committee | 26 November 2021 |
| | 23 November 2021 |
| | 21 January 2021 |

