

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Slough Outbreak Engagement Board

DATE: 5th August 2020

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WARD(S) All

PART I **FOR INFORMATION**

SLOUGH COVID-19 STATUS UPDATE, AND COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

1. Purpose of Report

To inform the public on the status of Covid19 in Slough, our response, and our communications approach.

2. Recommendation

The Slough Outbreak Engagement Board is requested to note the status of Slough in relation to the Covid19 outbreak, the response that Slough Borough Council and its partners have put in place, and our approach to communicating and engaging with the public and business.

3. The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy 2020-24

Coronavirus has the potential to impact on the delivery of all of the Slough Wellbeing Board's priorities:

1. Starting Well
2. Integration
3. Strong, Healthy and Attractive Neighbourhoods (Building Community Asset Resilience)
4. Workplace Health

The response to the crisis has demonstrated the strength of community and partnership working.

4. Five Year Plan 2020-24 Outcomes

Coronavirus has the potential to impact on the delivery of all of the Five Year Plan's priority outcomes:

Outcome 1 Slough children will grow up to be happy, healthy and successful
Outcome 2 Our people will be healthier and manage their own care needs
Outcome 3 Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay
Outcome 4 Our residents will live in good quality homes
Outcome 5 Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide opportunities for our residents

5. **Other Implications**

- (a) **Financial** – There are no foreseen financial implications arising from this report.
- (b) **Risk Management** – There are no identified risks in relation to this report.
- (c) **Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications** – There are no Human Rights Act or Other Legal Implications arising from this report.
- (d) **Equalities Impact Assessment** - There is no requirement to complete an Equalities Impact Assessment in relation to this report.

6. **Supporting information**

Context

- 6.1 We are now seeing the first examples of COVID-19 cases increasing in some areas following what had been a uniform decline across all parts of the country. National lockdown restrictions had been gradually lifted, with many businesses re-opening and families able to see each other again.
- 6.2 The announcement by the Government on 31st July, that additional local measures are being put in place in some communities, and that new planned measures for the further easing of lockdown will be paused, reinforces the rationale for establishing this Engagement Board. The next phase of the pandemic in England remains uncertain and effective public engagement throughout will be a crucial pillar of Slough's response.
- 6.3 Communication with residents is key aspect of any response. The Outbreak Engagement Board was established through approval by the Slough Wellbeing Board. The Board will be held in public every month and more often if needed, led by local councillors accountable to the public. It is committed to:
 - keep our website up to date with the latest guidance
 - use social media to spread the word
 - work with services, businesses and organisations to make sure information is clear and accurate
 - make information available in accessible formats and languages other than English where appropriate and use community engagement as well as traditional broadcast techniques
- 6.4 The role of the Board is as follows:

- Lead engagement with the public regarding Covid risks and prevention
- Endorse the Local Outbreak Plan and the accompanying communications plan.
- Provide ongoing oversight of the Plan's implementation.
- Provide political ownership of the local response.
- Proactively lead the communications and engagement in the event of a local incident .
- Coordinate, where appropriate, with neighbouring authorities in the event of cross/near border local outbreaks.

Covid 19 status report in Slough

- 6.5 The council has a number of existing powers and some new specific COVID 19 related powers to respond swiftly and in line with the national 'Contain Framework' to control local COVID19 risks and support the Slough Local Outbreak Management Plan (LOMP). The emphasis is very much upon an Engage/Educate/Prevent approach. The model proposed for outbreak or incident¹ response locally is detailed in the LA's LOMP as endorsed by the Cabinet on 30th June 2020.
- 6.6 The fundamental duties and roles of organisations and teams involved in outbreak control have not changed. The LOMP sets out the roles of the LA: to support the PHE Health Protection Team's (HPT) lead for outbreak response and to ensure their recommendations function locally. This includes prevention of COVID-19 in the first place as well as preventing the spread of infection.
- 6.7 In the event of an outbreak, the Thames Valley HPT are responsible for co-ordinating outbreak management and will work closely with the Public Health team at Slough Borough Council and the Slough Outbreak Cell to facilitate a timely and proportionate outbreak response.
- 6.8 The local response will vary according to the setting of any outbreak and the populations involved. Support will be needed from individual services and the community hubs. SBC's LOMP establishes an Outbreak Management Cell to be stood up to co-ordinate contact tracing and its associate components across Slough. Its members will act as a link to their respective service areas for contact tracing and expertise.
- 6.9 Information about the pandemic and it's impact on the health of people who live and work in Slough is monitored daily and weekly by the Local Outbreak Management Cell (The Cell). The Cell manages the Local Outbreak Management Plan (LOMP). The daily Cell is attended by members of Slough Borough Council with the weekly Cell attended by partners including One Slough, the Clinical Commissioning Group, and the Children's Service Trust.
- 6.10 The Cell receives a set of information on a daily and weekly basis against a structured agenda, which includes:

¹ An outbreak is one or more cases of Covid-19, an incident has a broader meaning, encompassing events or situations which warrant investigation to determine if action is needed to manage the risk.

- Urgent updates
- Public health data
- Testing rates
- Environmental health action
- Communications and engagement

6.11 The public health and testing data received on a daily basis includes:

- Number of people known to be infected by Covid 19, and the rate per 100,000 members of the population
- Number of deaths known to be caused by Covid 19, and the rate per 100,000 members of the population
- Calls to 111 and 999 and online assessments, which are triaged as being relating to Covid 19
- Outbreaks known to have taken place in care homes
- Test and Trace data
 - Pillar 1 tests (in health settings)
 - Pillar 2 tests (in drive-in or walk-in centres)
 - Contacts made after a person tests positive for Covid 19
- Trends over time
- Contextual information from members of the Cell, including representatives from public health, communications, testing, and regulatory services

6.12 The latest public data reviewed by the Cell in advance of these papers being drafted was generated for the meeting held on 3rd August 2020 and covered the period up until 26th July. Data for the previous five days at any point in time is known to be incomplete and it is updated retrospectively to ensure trend data is accurate.

6.13 A summary of the data received at the meeting held on 3rd August 2020 is as follows (a more detailed summary is provided in Appendix A to this report):

- The number of people getting infected by Covid 19 (0.3 per 100,000 members of the population on 25th July 2020) has been on a downward trend throughout July
- The number of deaths as a result of Covid 19 (1.3 per 100,000 members of the population on 10th July 2020) has also been on a downward trend
- The number of triages through 111 calls (5 people on 23rd July 2020), 999 calls (2 people), or online assessments (15 people) are also currently at a low level
- Testing numbers at the Montem centre have been steadily increasing to over 4000 tests taken per day during week commencing 27th July

Communications and Engagement Approach

6.14 Slough Borough Council are using all available channels to communicate and engage with people who live and work in Slough in order to help everyone stay safe. This has included utilising all communications channels to reach staff, partner agencies, residents, and businesses.

6.15 The Slough Local Outbreak Management Cell receives a daily communications update, and it ensures messages are being sent out and heard consistently across channels. This includes Environmental Health and other regulatory officers who have

been running an on-going programme of advice, information, and spot-checks in local businesses.

- 6.16 The EH Duty Desk operates the CV19Notifications@slough.gov.uk from 09.00 to 17.00 7 days a week and there is an emergency contact number with the SBC Control Room 24/7. The CV19 e-mail system is the first point of contact for the council for information coming from Public Health England and also for businesses and residents to contact with concerns about COVID 19 risks in the town
- 6.17 The SBC Safer Public Spaces Task Group co-ordinates council and partner agency response to support social distancing, including targeted operations on areas of the borough that have been identified as potential high risk areas.
- 6.18 The council does have new powers under The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Amendment) (No.3) Regulations 2020 came into force at 12.01 a.m. on Saturday 18 July 2020. These No. 3 Regs give local authorities powers in prescribed circumstances, to give directions (to close or restrict) for individual premises, events and public outdoor places, to curb the incidence and spread of the pandemic. Further information on targeted engagement work is provided in Appendix B to this report.
- 6.19 Our communications approach has utilised all available channels, including print and online media, radio interviews, advertising and social media. Highlights include:
- Release of a video filmed with young people to raise awareness of the Montem testing site
 - Liz Brutus, Service Lead Public Health, appeared on Asian Star radio
 - Running 30 second advertising slots on Asian Star radio
 - Posting across social media channels including Facebook and Twitter
- 6.20 Communications have been driven under the #OneSlough initiative with consistent messaging being given through partner agencies. The weekly Cell meeting includes representatives from SloughCVS, health partners, and the Children's Services Trust.
- 6.21 Messaging targeted at businesses has been tailored and disseminated, which has included:
- Health and safety leaflet for businesses
 - Over 1,000 floor stickers identifying a safe social distance
 - Instruction leaflets handed out at Montem
 - One Slough magazine going to all households (this magazine is included as Appendix C to this report)
- 6.22 National messaging, coordinated by Public Health England, is reviewed daily or as frequently as it is produced, and it is integrated into our tailored local response. For example, sector-specific Action Cards have been released by PHE, which we are reviewing currently and will use to complement our local communications and engagement approach. A more detailed communications approach update is provided in Appendix B to this report.

7. **Comments of other committees**

- 7.1 This report has not been considered by any other committees.

8. **Conclusion**

- 8.1 Slough Borough Council, and its partners are responding swiftly to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19, adopting a proactive management approach through the Local Outbreak Management Cell and a collaborative engagement approach through daily work with partners and through this Engagement Board.
- 8.2 This report sets out the status of Covid 19 in Slough and our communications approach.

9. **Appendices attached**

- A – Covid 19 status update in Slough
- B – Communications and Engagement approach (national and local messaging)
- C – One Slough magazine sent to all households

10. **Background papers**

Slough Outbreak Engagement Board Terms of Reference, which were approved at the Slough Wellbeing Board on 15th July.