

**MINUTES OF THE COVID-19 RECOVERY WORKING GROUP
HELD ON**

17 December 2020

6.30 - 7.15 pm

PRESENT

Committee Members

Councillor Eugenie Harvey (Chair)
Councillor Joel Charles
Councillor Tony Edwards
Councillor Mark Ingall
Councillor Andrew Johnson
Councillor Nancy Watson

Officers

Andrew Bramidge, Head of Environment and Planning
Simon Freeman, Head of Finance and Deputy to the Chief Executive
Jane Greer, Head of Community Wellbeing
Simon Hill, Head of Governance
Brian Keane, Chief Executive
Andrew Murray, Head of Housing
Adam Rees, Governance Support Officer

51. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Simon Carter and Tony Durcan.

52. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None.

53. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting on 19 November 2020 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

54. **MATTERS ARISING**

None.

55. **UPDATE ON COUNCIL POSITION FOLLOWING MOVE TO TIER 3**

The Working Group received an update following Harlow's placement into Tier 3. It was explained that the infection rate had risen to 301.2 per 100,000 and this had increased rapidly following a period of stable

infection rates. In particular the infection rate among over 60's had been growing at a faster rate than the rest of the population.

Brian Keane, Chief Executive, said that discussions were ongoing with the County Council and the Department for Health about additional testing facilities in Harlow.

The other issue was compliance and communications were vital in addressing this. A screen had been installed in Broadwalk and the Council had a number of Covid Ambassadors and Wardens. The Council had also sent out a leaflet and continued to operate the Community Hub.

Andrew Bramidge, Head of Environment and Planning, said that the Council had been asked to assist with contact tracing of people in Harlow.

The Working Group asked that the recovery plans were reviewed at the next meeting of the Working Group.

The Working Group also expressed concern about the lack of figures being provided by the Hospital Trust and it was agreed that Brian Keane would speak to Princess Alexandra Hospital about this.

Councillor Johnson questioned the Council's progress of distributed LRSG grants funding as the Council had not placed the application for these grants on its website. In response, Simon Freeman, Head of Finance and Property and Deputy to the Chief Executive, said that the Council was working with its systems supplier to roll out a simpler applications process. It was expected that this would allow the Council to deal with applications more quickly.

Councillor Charles asked how the Council could communicate some of the positive messages around the vaccination process. Brian Keane said the Council had been in contact with the CCG who should lead the communications effort. There needed to be a positive message that was balanced so it did not allow people to become relaxed about the risks of the virus.

56. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be moved from 7 January to a date to be fixed later in January.

57. **MATTERS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

None.