



5 Minutes of the Meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board held on 12th March,2020.  
(Attached)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Health and Well Being Board held on 12th March, 2020, be approved as a true record.

6 Direct Impacts of Covid-19

Members received a presentation from the Director of Public Health, Dr Rupert Suckling, which gave an overview regarding the current situation in terms of Covid-19, and the impact it has had on the communities in Doncaster and the actions being taken to address it.

The past twelve months in Doncaster had been without doubt tumultuous, starting with the floods in November, followed then by the emergence of the Covid1-19 Pandemic in the New Year. Following the World Health Organisation's announcement of the virus at the end of 2019 when it first emerged in Wuhan, China, it was not until February 2020, that it became a much greater concern in the UK, with cases quickly escalating in number, leading to the National Lockdown of the country on 23 March 2020. A Pandemic Plan had been quickly activated to react to the virus, and following the lockdown, people across Doncaster began new ways of working, with all services being offered and accessed very differently to enable people to stay home and stay safe.

The Fight Back Fund was introduced, which looked to provide grants to these struggling across the Borough and new structures were quickly put into place across the Authority with the Civil Contingency Plan activated in order to allow the majority of all decision making to be made by the Chief Executive.

In September 2020, the Covid-19 Engagement Board as established that looked to engage with different partners working to support all communities across the Borough as well as engaging with the public to ensure they were kept abreast of activity.

The Board noted that the lockdown had appeared to have had an effect with numbers falling since the peak in April, when at its height, there were 100 people in Acute Care and 7 people in ICU. There had been careful monitoring of activity in care homes and prisons and whilst in April there had been 20 care homes all with cases in, now this was considerably calmer. In fact, Dr suckling reported, that even since lockdown restrictions had eased numbers of cases across the borough had continued to fall and as of the meetings date, there had been a month with no deaths in Doncaster, of which so far there had been 278.

The outlook in Doncaster was at the current point was positive, and whilst it as anticipated it would get worse throughout the winter when various respiratory illnesses traditionally struck, it was hopeful that it would remain under control.

Many additional concerns had arisen because of Covid-19 and the associated lockdown with the following highlighted as concerns: -

- Concerns surrounding mental health as a result of stress and isolation
- The cancellation of a large amount of hospital appointments, screenings and appointments
- Direct impacts of the virus on various groups as a result of issues such as gender, race and deprivation

However, despite concerns there had also been positive points to draw from the last 6 months and which would be pushed further moving forward: -

- GPs doing video and telephone calls, providing greater accessibility
- More services provided to the home where needed

- Doncaster had managed the pandemic in the Borough well, and whilst it had not disappeared, it was being well managed
- Good relationships had been formed across all partner agencies to work well together
- The community effort was huge, with many vulnerable and isolated individuals receiving great support and help from their local communities

Members of the Board noted the presentation and were invited to make any comments. There was consensus across the Board that in these unprecedented times, it was testament to the key workers, Elected Members, and members of the public across all communities of the Borough how far the town had come in such a short space of time and had responded well to the challenge.

Testing, it was noted, continued to be one of the biggest challenges faced, but there was capacity, with sites at Doncaster Airport and Dearne Valley and it was hoped that this would improve further as time went on with the introduction of new faster testing.

Members acknowledged the challenges ahead as they moved into the Winter and with schools going back, there could be additional problems with mental health as a result of the social isolation that had been experienced over the past 6 months and it was expected that the demand on mental health services would be one of the greatest moving forward.

RESOLVED that the Board note the presentation by the Director of Public Health.

## 7 Partner Responses and Plans to COVID-19

The Chair reported prior to the meeting, Members of the Board had been asked to consider items of importance for discussion and information that they would bring to the meeting in terms of where they were currently with their key priorities and action points. This would raise awareness of all the work being done by all the different partner agencies and highlight any areas for further discussion.

Members were invited one by one, to outline to the rest of the Board, what issues were pertinent in their areas at the current time and what challenges had arisen as a result of Covid-19. The following points were raised:-

- Backlog of services in medical settings as well as Council services with many procedures delayed or cancelled and services suspended which were now moving towards a greater sense of normality;
- All services within the hospital as of now, were now back up and running although some had been modified greatly with fewer patients seen as a result of reduced capacities, extra cleaning and the need for PPE.
- The changes to ways of working had been very positive with so much more processes being done digitally
- All services commented that they were preparing for what could be a very tough winter ahead and it was important that the workforce was resilient and well rested and prepared;
- It was important that staff were well supported throughout the pandemic, in terms of mental, emotional and physical well-being and it was more important than ever that they were supported moving forward;
- Questions and discussions were ongoing as to how to support more vulnerable staff;
- Flexible working would be a much bigger part of the working world moving forward and it was good to see people had adapted and embraced new ways of working;
- Mental Health issues, continued across all agencies, to be a huge area of concern and supporting that moving forward would be a huge challenge;

- In terms of the third sector, concern was voiced for BAME community and the support needed there, and it was very difficult at times to provide the support that many of the community and voluntary groups needed in terms of staffing and rising costs in a very uncertain time when more support was needed than ever;
- All partners across the emergency services were working well and providing support across the board where needed to ensure the processes and procedures were as seamless as possible;
- In terms of children and families, it was noted that this had increased demand, with a lot of referrals received throughout, but the Trust was working closely with schools and were reacting well to all situations that were presented in terms of different ways of working;
- With regard to ST Leger Homes, Members heard that to a large degree it had continued to be 'Business as Usual' with maintenance and repairs continuing, and additionally had provided a lot of support to the community hub in the early days of the pandemic.
- One key point that was particularly positive to note, was that with regard to the Homeless in Doncaster and Members were informed that St Leger Homes had worked to ensure that they had managed to offer a bed to every rough sleeper at the start of lockdown;

All partners reported positives as well as ongoing challenges, and it had been a steep learning curve for all, with the end by no means in sight but it was positive to see how all services had pulled together for the good of the Borough. Elected Members thanked other board members for their efforts throughout the pandemic, and there was the consensus amongst them that during these unprecedented times, people had worked exceptionally hard, going above and beyond, pulling together to work through this. A foundation was now in place to deal with this moving forward and it was hoped that this would be beneficial in the continued efforts against Covid-19.

Members also commented that they had been overwhelmed by the support of the public during this time, with time volunteered, donations made and support given and thanks was given for the heartfelt response by everyone.

RESOLVED that the comments made be noted.

## 8 Indirect Impacts of COVID-19 and Wider Recovery Planning/Borough Strategy

Allan Wiltshire, Head of Policy and Performance gave a presentation to the Board with regard to the impacts of Covid-19 and how any emerging themes or points would affect the Borough Strategy that was currently being drafted.

The first point touched on during the presentation, referred to the indirect impacts of covid-19, and how this would effect the communities in the Borough long term. One of these for example was poverty with many inequalities widening further than previously. There were some positives however, with the environmental benefit of less traffic on the road as a result of so many people working digitally. Some of these impacts may seem small but when looked at alongside others would start to have effect.

Moving forward, Officers reported it was now important to look towards the future and the wider recovery for the Borough. This looked at how the Council would respond to the crisis and what could they build on that had already started. Looking at the Mayor's 10 Point Plan as a starting point, there was a lot of work already established that would be utilised moving forward. Taking plans from the wider region and sub region, there would be different areas of focus to ensure that resources were in place where needed and the vulnerable were well

supported. It was a huge project moving forward and many streams of work that needed building.

In terms of the Delivery, it was important to address all the impacts of Covid-19, ensure that the Council was responding to any issues, and bring all aspects into one place. It was important that the focus was agile and able to react quickly in order to deliver the results needed in order to deliver the plan.

Officers also touched on the Emerging Borough Strategy which would also look to tie in aspects of the impact of Covid-19 and how it was shaping the Doncaster Growing Together Plan. Members noted that it was important to produce a sustainable plan that created achievable goals. A lot of good work was being done to create the foundation for long term work, and a number of themes for the plan were starting to emerge with the following points highlighted as key priorities:-

- Cleaner and Greener communities
- Connected places
- Safe communities
- Healthy and caring
- Inclusive lifelong learning

The Board felt the plans for the Strategy were very comprehensive, and felt it was important that the financial impact of Covid-19 was strongly emphasised, as it would take a long time to recover from this. Members added that the economic strain would affect all organisations and partnerships and it was important that they were realistic moving forward as to what could be achieved.

A discussion continued with a number of points raised that officers noted for moving forward, with the following noted:-

- The input of third sector groups and their representation and the importance of widening this on the Board moving forward;
- Ward Member Budgets and how area focus could be more greatly supported;
- How funding mechanisms may change moving forward;
- Where the DGTP and Borough Strategy would sit alongside the Health and Well-Being Plan

Members acknowledged there was a lot of work to do moving forward, and a number of discussions would continue outside the remit of the Health and Well Being Board.

RESOLVED that the presentation be noted.

## 9 Items for Future Meetings

Further to the presentations received, and the issues that had presented themselves the Committee had a brief discussion with regard to items for consideration at future meetings.

RESOLVED that the following items be considered at future meetings of the Health and Well Being Board:-

- Digital Inclusion
- The Voluntary Sector
- Dance On

10 Date of Next Meeting

RESOLVED that the next meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board be held on Thursday, 12 November, via Microsoft Teams at 9.00 am.

CHAIR: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_