

London Borough of Islington

**Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee - 10 June 2021**

Non-confidential minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Performance Scrutiny Committee held at on 10 June 2021 at 7.30 pm.

**Present:**      **Councillors:**      Debono (Chair), Gallagher (Vice-Chair), Bell-Bradford, Chapman, Chowdhury, Clarke, Gantly, Heather, Ibrahim, Jeapes, O'Sullivan, Russell, Ismail and Wayne

**Also Present:**      **Councillors:**

**Councillor Theresa Debono in the Chair**

**288      COVID ADVICE (Item A1)**

Noted

**289      APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Item A2)**

Councillor Nathan and Gantly for lateness

**290      DECLARATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (Item A3)**

None

**291      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Item A4)**

None

**292      MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Item A5)**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 20 April 2021 be confirmed and the Chair be authorised to sign them

**293      CHAIR'S REPORT (Item A6)**

The Chair welcomed those present to the first meeting in person of the Committee since March 2020, and also welcomed new Members to the Committee

**294      PUBLIC QUESTIONS (Item A7)**

The Chair stated that any Public questions should be notified to the Chair or the Clerk following the meeting due to restrictions on members of the Public being able to attend due to COVID

**295      MEMBERSHIP, TERMS OF REFERENCE (Item A8)**

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted

296

**COVID 19 UPDATE - VERBAL (Item C1)**

Jonathan O'Sullivan, Director of Public Health and Councillor Sue Lukes, Executive Member for Community Safety were present and made a verbal update to Members, during which the following main points were made-

- There had been 113 infections in the last 7 days in the borough and this represented a doubling of infections. This was largely amongst young adults between 20/30 years of age
- Noted that vaccinations had been extended in the past week to 25-29 year olds, and that there had been few infections of the older age group of 50's and over
- There had been no new deaths reported in the borough in the past week, and hospital admissions had not increased in the past few weeks
- There had been 260 deaths of residents since the start of the pandemic
- Noted that over 4000 vaccinations had been administered on 1 June and that more vaccine is being made available. In addition pop up clinics were being set up and this is hoped will increase vaccination rates
- There had been good compliance by shops/businesses in relation to COVID compliance
- The Council had five months supply of PPE available and the rate of vaccinations for care staff had increased
- In relation to a question as to cases of long COVID, it was stated that most cases of long COVID lasted between 5-12 weeks. It was estimated that approx. 1500 residents had symptoms beyond this timescale. However it was stated that a long term COVID clinic had been set up in the borough and this clinic would also undertake research into long COVID
- Noted that prisoners at Pentonville Prison had been offered vaccinations
- Noted the Indian Delta variant was thought to be between 40%-50% more transmissible. Directors/Chief Officers were monitoring staff vaccination rates

The Chair thanked Jonathan O'Sullivan and Councillor Lukes for attending

297

**CONTINGENT WORKFORCE (Item C2)**

Julie Foy, Director of HR was present and outlined the report for Members. During consideration of the report the following main points were made –

- Noted that agency workers had provided a valuable resource to the Council during COVID 19
- L.B.Islington agency staff numbers were 11.2%, whereas the London average is 13%
- Members welcomed the reduction in agency staff, however expressed concern that the figures for consultants earning over £450 per day were still too high and needed to be reduced. It was noted that there had been a reduction however there were difficulties in recruitment in certain areas such as IT. There were initiatives in place to reduce numbers in future, but this is a difficult area to recruit
- A Member expressed the view that managers needed to manage the employment of agency staff to ensure reductions increase in future
- In response to a question it was stated that agency staff, interims, consultants are recruited from a number of different sources, such as agencies, consultancy firms and Executive search

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted and that future reports include the following –

(a) Details of numbers of agency staff/consultants/interims by department

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- (b) Number of consultants employed on £450 per day, with a breakdown of how many of these are employed in IT
- (c) Measures in place to further reduce agency staff

The Chair thanked Julie Foy for her presentation

**298 CONSIDERATION OF SCRUTINY TOPIC 2021/22 - VERBAL (Item C3)**

Members considered the selection of scrutiny topics for 2021/22 following which it was –

RESOLVED

- (a) That a scrutiny review into Employment, Business and Economy/Financial Effects on Council – COVID 19 be approved as the main scrutiny topic for 2021/22
- (b) That a scrutiny review on Performance Management and Development, incorporating BAME, be approved as a mini scrutiny commencing later in the municipal year 2021/22
- (c) That the work programme be amended to reflect the above decisions and the COVID 19 update report be considered at every other meeting and not at every meeting

**299 MONITORING REPORT, WORK PROGRAMME (Item )**

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted and the work programme be amended as referred to above

The meeting ended at Time Not Specified

**CHAIR**