

# Agenda Item 3

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD - COMMUNITY SUB-GROUP

14 DECEMBER 2021

(17:00 – 18:38)

PRESENT Councillors:

Barry Causer (Public Health Lead for COVID Resilience), Kate Symons (Deputy Director for Transforming Primary Care Merton and Wandsworth), Julia Groom (Consultant in Public Health), Mohammad Hassan-Ally (Vaccination Equity Service Manager), Clarissa Larsen (Health and Wellbeing Board Partnership Manager), Hetty Crist (Communications Manager)

ALSO PRESENT Amy Dumitrescu (Democratic Services Manager)  
Bola Roberts (Democratic Services Officer)

## 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Dr Mohan Sekeram.

## 2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

## 3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2021 were agreed as an accurate record

## 4 COVID-19 IN MERTON UPDATE (Agenda Item 4)

### **Situation Assessment Report**

The Director of Public Health presented the latest situation assessment report.

The slides from this presentation are attached to these minutes.

It was reported that infection rates were on the increase and rising steadily amongst younger people. Hospitalisations were steady and possibly lagging behind infection rates. The Omicron variant was accounting for an increasing percentage of cases, particularly in London. Members were asked to support the vaccination booster programme and the continuing 'evergreen' offer of vaccination.

In response to questions from members on the reported shortage of lateral flow tests, the Director of Public Health gave assurance that what had been reported was a

temporary online issue and that lateral flow testing kits are in stock and could be collected from a variety of points, including Merton libraries and pharmacists.

The Wilson and other vaccination sites are fully operational and teams were in place and mobilised. A huge number of people were being vaccinated in an operation that was continuing over the Christmas holiday. The Wilson was open seven days a week and Merton was fortunate in the way that PCNs and primary care colleagues had rapidly configured the service, slightly ahead of some other boroughs.

The Chair thanked all for their efforts especially over festive period.

### **Post COVID Syndrome**

The Public Health Lead for COVID Resilience reported that the steering group met regularly and was working through the data to understand the prevalence of Post Covid Syndrome (PCS), the needs of people experiencing it and then identify what can be put in place to address those needs and raise awareness. The intention was to report to the next HWBB Community Subgroup on PCS with a focus on equity.

The Locality Executive Director Merton and Wandsworth added that the service is seeing more referrals than anticipated with widening take up, with further funding and review planned.

### **5 HEALTH ON THE HIGH STREET (Agenda Item 5)**

The Public Health Lead for COVID Resilience outlined progress on the pilot having consulted with partners and the community. The pilot is planned to include:

- Seven fixed fully resourced sites in Merton community libraries delivering services and prevention support.
- Pop up sites that enable flexible services and settings.
- Connect primary care networks to link into local and wider NHS services, developments and diagnostics hubs.
- Recruitment of a project manager to lead the Health on the High Street programme.
- Evaluate working with RB Kingston, who have a similar approach to Health on the High Street.
- Work towards a National Institution of Health Research bid to evaluate the programme.

Members spoke about health literacy and the opportunity to promote this via libraries. Services should be based on the needs of local communities. A range of potential services were discussed including blood pressure monitoring, height and weight management, support for substance misuse and signposting to wider services. The idea is for specialists to come to local people, rather than the other way round.

The importance of coordinating with the voluntary sector and existing service provision was stressed and the Public Health Lead for COVID Resilience reported

that he was working closely with partners building on relationships that have been strengthened over the recent months through the response to COVID. The project manager, once in place will further develop outreach and engagement work.

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