

# Overview and Scrutiny Select Committee

**Tuesday 21 July 2020 at 6.00pm**

**This meeting will be held remotely via MS Teams with audio access to the public for the items via registered dial-in only**

## Members of the Committee

Councillors J Furey (Chairman), T Gracey (Vice-Chairman), A Alderson, M Brierley, J Broadhead, S Dennett, R Edis, L Gillham and S Mackay.

In accordance with Standing Order 29.1, any Member of the Council may obtain remote access via MS Teams to the meeting of this Committee, but may speak only with the permission of the Chairman of the Committee, if they are not a member of this Committee.

## AGENDA

### Notes:

- 1) Any report on the Agenda involving confidential information (as defined by section 100A(3) of the Local Government Act 1972) must be discussed in private. Any report involving exempt information (as defined by section 100I of the Local Government Act 1972), whether it appears in Part 1 or Part 2 below, may be discussed in private but only if the Overview and Scrutiny Select Committee so resolves.
- 2) The relevant 'background papers' are listed after each report in Part 1. Enquiries about any of the Agenda reports and background papers should be directed in the first instance to **Mr J Gurmin, Democratic Services Section, Law and Government Business Centre, Runnymede Civic Centre, Station Road, Addlestone (Tel: Direct Line: 01932 425624). (Email: [john.gurmin@runnymede.gov.uk](mailto:john.gurmin@runnymede.gov.uk))**.
- 3) Agendas and Minutes are available on a subscription basis. For details, please ring Mr B A Fleckney on 01932 425620. Agendas and Minutes for all the Council's Committees may also be viewed on [www.runnymede.gov.uk](http://www.runnymede.gov.uk).

'see overleaf'

4) If you wish to hear the debate for the items on this Agenda by audio via MS Teams you must register by 10.00 am on the day of the meeting with the Democratic Services Team by emailing your name and contact number to be used to dial-in to [democratic.services@runnymede.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@runnymede.gov.uk)

5) **Audio-Recording of Meeting**

As this meeting will be held remotely via MS Teams, you may only record the audio of this meeting. The Council will not be recording any remote meetings.

## **LIST OF MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION**

### **PART I**

#### **Matters in respect of which reports have been made available for public inspection**

	<b><u>Page</u></b>
1. NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP	4
2. MINUTES	4
3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	4
4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	4
5. CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE REVIEW	4
6. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC	26

#### **Matters involving Exempt or Confidential Information in respect of which reports have not been made available for public inspection.**

a) Exempt Information

(No reports to be considered under this heading)

b) Confidential Information

(No reports to be considered under this heading)

1. **NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

2. **MINUTES**

To confirm the Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 2 July 2020 attached at Appendix 'A' (to follow) and on 14 July 2020 attached at Appendix 'B' (to follow). As this meeting is being held remotely, the Chairman will ask Members of the Committee if they approve these two sets of Minutes which will then be signed when this is physically possible.

**(To resolve)**

**Background papers**

None

3. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

4. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

If Members have an interest in an item, please record the interest on the form circulated with this Agenda and e-mail it to the Legal Representative or Democratic Services Officer by 5.00 p.m. on the day of the meeting. **Members are advised to contact the Council's Legal section prior to the meeting if they wish to seek advice on a potential interest.**

Members are reminded that a non-pecuniary interest includes their appointment by the Council as the Council's representative to an outside body and that this should be declared. Membership of an outside body in their private capacity as a director, trustee, committee member or in another position of influence thereon **should be regarded as a disclosable pecuniary interest, as should an appointment to an outside body by the Council as a trustee.**

Members who have previously declared interests which are recorded in the Minutes to be considered at this meeting need not repeat the declaration when obtaining remote access to the meeting. Members need take no further action unless the item in which they have an interest becomes the subject of debate, in which event the Member must withdraw from the meeting if the interest is a disclosable pecuniary interest or if the interest could reasonably be regarded as so significant as to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest.

5. **CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE REVIEW (CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE – SARAH WALSH)**

**Synopsis of report:**

**At its meeting on 2 July 2020, the Committee agreed Terms of Reference to set the framework for it to review the Council's response to the coronavirus pandemic in a series of three meetings. This report relates to those matters which the Committee agreed should be considered at its third meeting.**

**Recommendations:**

- 1. The Committee considers whether it wishes to amend or make any additional recommendations in the Debrief Report for the Corporate Management Committee following the evidence heard at this meeting on any of the following elements of the Council's response:**

- a) **The essential services chosen and how they were managed differently.**
- b) **HR – related policies to manage staff during the pandemic.**
- c) **Agile working effectiveness.**
- d) **Internal governance and monitoring.**
- e) **Member liaison associated with the Council’s Covid-19 response.**

**2. The Committee considers whether there are any other matters that it wishes to include in the Debrief Report for the Corporate Management Committee.**

**1. Context of report**

- 1.1 COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. It spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
- 1.2 Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness and there is no specific curative treatment for coronavirus infection at present.
- 1.3 It is hard to establish precise death rates from COVID-19 given the lack of definitive data on infection rate but estimates range between less than 1% to well over 3%. It is also becoming apparent that rates vary according many different factors such as age and possibly black and minority ethnic (BAME) background.
- 1.4 On the 16 March the Prime Minister requested people avoid pubs, bars, restaurants and clubs, effectively establishing the concept of social distancing in the UK. On 23 March, the Prime Minister announced a series of further measures to restrict the spread of the coronavirus, which in effect put the UK on its current “lockdown”. People were required to stay at home unless travelling to and from work, where the work could not be done from home; for shopping for essentials, for medical needs, or for one form of exercise a day. The Government directed all non-essential shops to close, and closed schools apart from the children of key workers and those who are most vulnerable including disabled and those with Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs).
- 1.5 In addition to the general lockdown, a smaller subset of the population with serious underlying health conditions were advised to ‘shield’ themselves for a period of 12 weeks. Individuals who are shielding are advised to stay at home at all times and avoid any face-to-face contact. The Government identified a group of around 1.5 million people who this applies to and wrote to all. In addition, it encouraged any person who believed they had a serious health condition but who had not received a letter to contact their GP to discuss any concerns they had.
- 1.6 On 19 March, the Surrey Local Resilience Forum declared a Major Incident.
- 1.7 These measures required an urgent response from the Council to put in place provisions which support residents and businesses. This included measures directly prescribed by central Government, such as the Business Support Grant, as well as discretionary measures like the proactive calls to vulnerable residents and the support provided to Runnymede Foodbank and volunteer groups.
- 1.8 The highest number of new cases using a three day average occurred in mid-April and on 30 April, Prime Minister Boris Johnson declared that [the UK was “past the peak”](#) of the coronavirus outbreak.

1.9 Following the peak there have been a series of lockdown easing measures as the country tries to safely recover. These have included lifting restrictions on: the number of times people are allowed to exercise in a day, the distance people can travel to exercise, the activities people can take part in to exercise/recreate, the allowance of one person to meet a person from another household outdoors, and a phasing of 'non-essential' business sectors returning to work.

## 2. **Report**

2.1 As of 8 June 2020, it is reported there have been 40,597 COVID-related deaths in the UK.

2.2 At its meeting on 2 July 2020, the Committee noted that given the significant impact the Coronavirus pandemic had had on the local communities and Council operations and finances, Officers and Members considered that it would be appropriate for the Council's response to the pandemic to be reviewed.

2.3 The Committee agreed that it would be appropriate for it to undertake this review and agreed to hold three meetings in order to complete the review.

2.4 The first of these three meetings took place on 2 July 2020 when the Committee agreed its Terms of Reference and received a draft Coronavirus Response Debrief Report attached at Appendix 'C' which provided an overview of the response and lessons learnt.

2.5 This meeting is the third of three meetings that the Committee agreed should be held to review the Council's response. The full Terms of Reference for the review can be found at Appendix 'D'. At its second meeting on 14 July 2020, the Committee will review the Council's internal welfare support operations and the external welfare support in partnership with Foodbank and Voluntary Support North Surrey.

2.6 At this third meeting the Terms of Reference state that the Committee will review:

- The essential services chosen and how they were managed differently.
- HR-related policies to manage staff during the pandemic.
- Agile working effectiveness.
- Internal governance and monitoring.
- Wrap up of any other matters

2.7 In addition, at its meeting on 2 July 2020, the Committee agreed to review Member liaison associated with the Council's Covid-19 response at this third meeting.

2.8 In order to undertake the elements of the review for this meeting, the Committee agreed that Councillor Prescott, the Leader of the Council should be a witness and that the following Council Officers should be witnesses – Paul Turrell, Fiona Skene, Linda Norman and Sarah Walsh.

2.9 Final response statistics are set out at Appendix 'E' (to follow).

## 3. **Policy framework implications**

3.1 The Council's pandemic response activities primarily support the Corporate Theme of Supporting Local People.

## 4. **Resource implications**

4.1 The financial impact of the pandemic for the Council is being reviewed on an ongoing basis by Corporate Management Committee in separate reports.

**(To resolve)**

**Background papers**

None stated

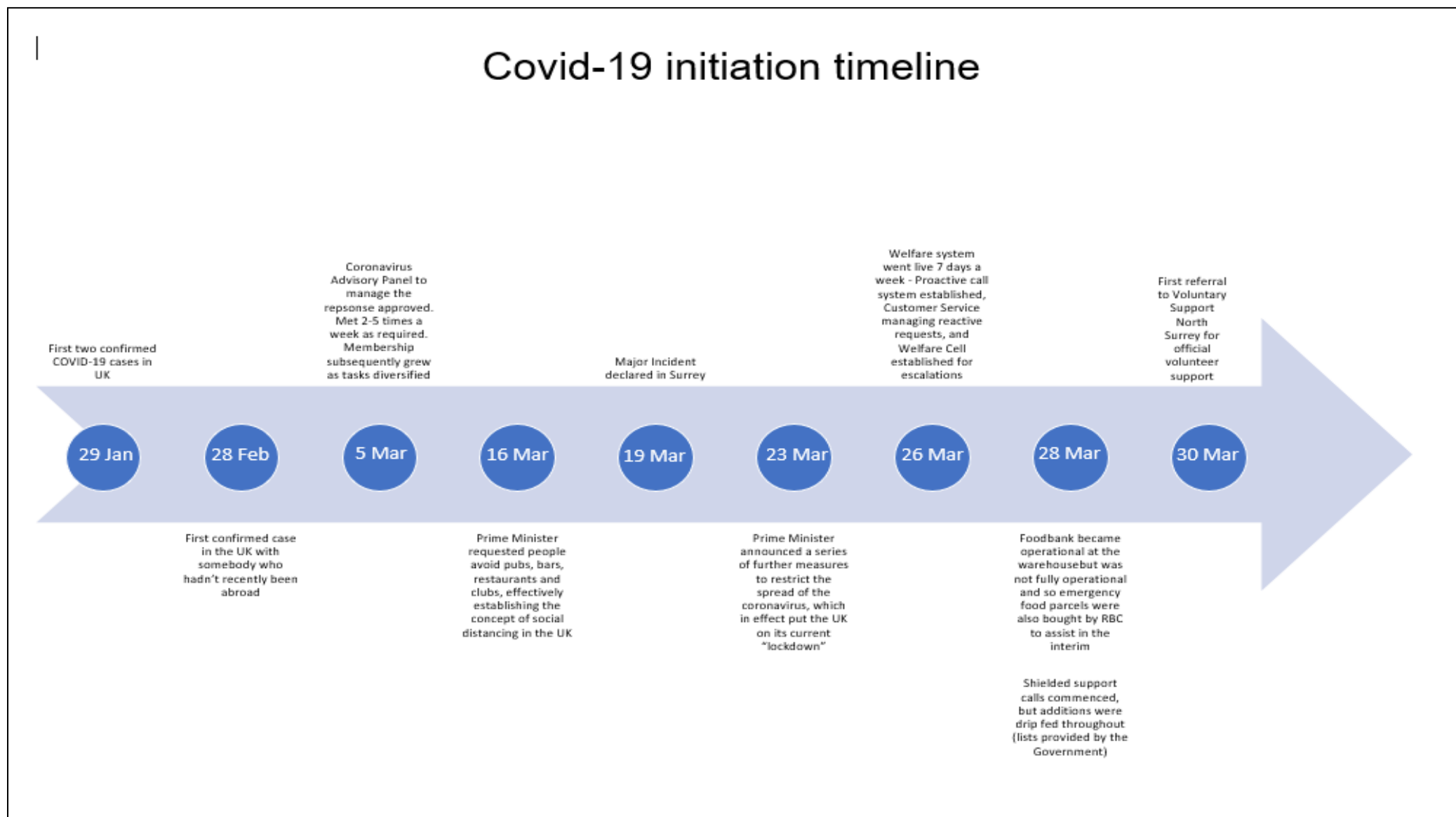
# **DRAFT Coronavirus Response Debrief Report**

*(This report will be updated if required following the Overview & Scrutiny Select Committee review)*



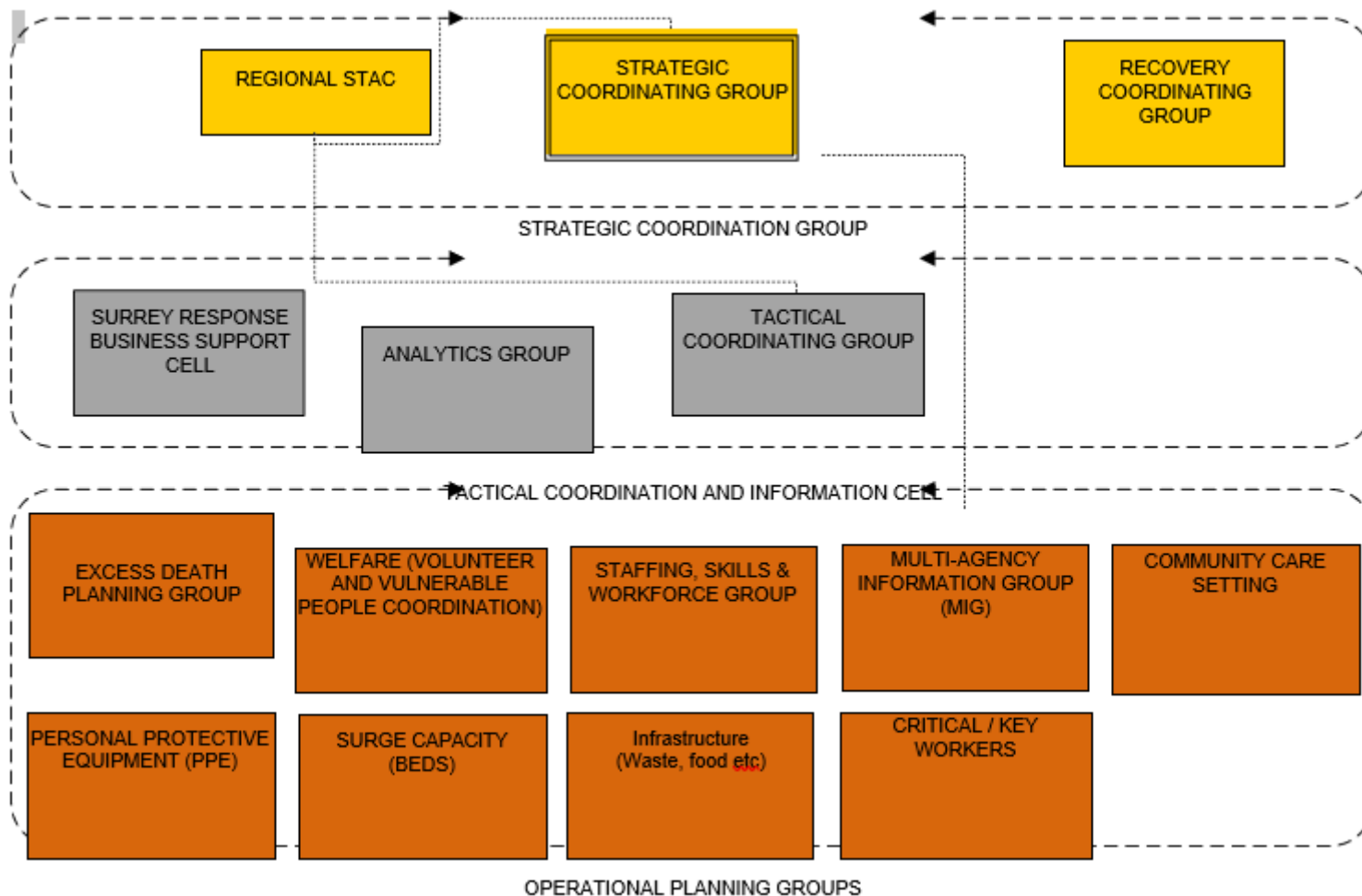
## Introduction

From the end of January 2020, the UK has needed to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic which has impacted the world. The key dates associated with mobilising a response for Runnymede are shown below.

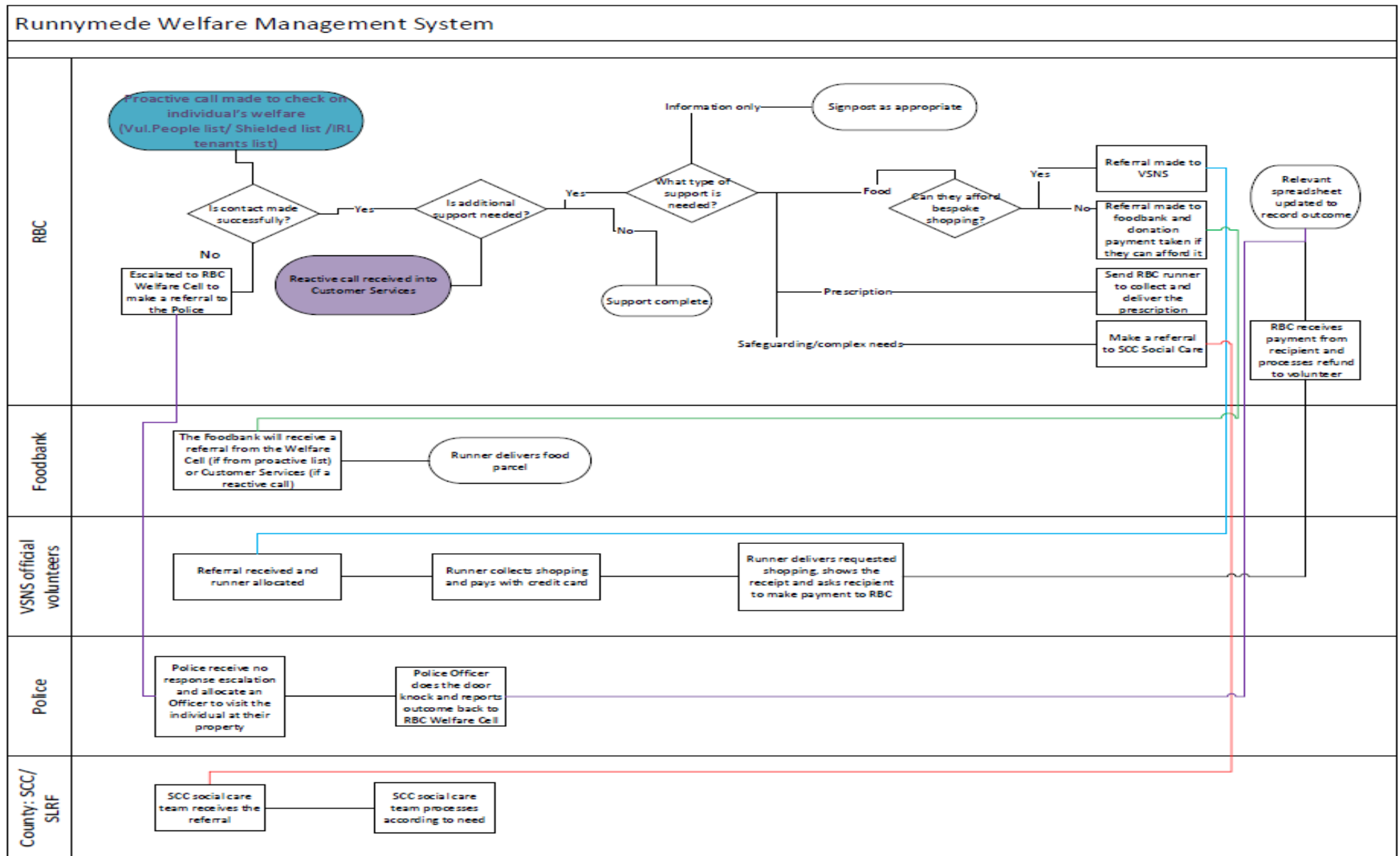


Staff at all levels have been involved in the response, both at a local level and through Surrey Local Resilience Forum (SLRF) structures, with many people being redeployed to undertake new duties. Applied Resilience, as the Council's contractor for emergency planning and business continuity has also worked alongside the management team and staff throughout the response, as well as representing the council at a wide range of groups within the SLRF structure.

The structure set up by the SLRF in order to assist partners effectively collaborating with each other is shown below.



At a more local level, the response to support the welfare of Runnymede residents has been organised across a number of partners as shown in the process flow diagram below.



## **Maintaining essential services**

As well as delivering the COVID response, a list of essential services were identified which needed to be delivered throughout. These services were:

- 1) Urgent housing repairs
- 2) Dangerous structure incidents
- 3) Refuse/waste collections
- 4) Revenues and benefits including business grants and relief
- 5) Safer Runnymede
- 6) Urgent environmental health matters
- 7) Skeleton support of finance, HR, and customer services

## **Assessing the effectiveness of the response and identifying lessons learnt**

To assess the effectiveness of the response to the pandemic, three questionnaires were created for staff, councillors and community volunteers. In order to encourage people to be as honest as possible, participants were advised their responses would be anonymised. The questionnaires were completed either electronically or face to face. 109 people responded. A follow up review session was subsequently arranged with the Senior Leadership Team, Deputy Leader, and Leader in order to agree the recommendations which would be proposed to councillors in this report. The remaining section of the report therefore summarises the feedback received and the subsequent recommendations being made.

## Areas of good practice identified and subsequent recommendations

Item	Summary of the good practice identified	Recommendation	Owner	Reference number
<b>Staff and management</b>				
Strong leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support in the office and visibility of many senior staff to support those in the office was appreciated.</li> <li>• The specifically created Advisory Panel, which was an extension of a traditional IMT, allowed for clarity, communication and assurance across the organisation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where possible and safe to do so, maintain the senior management presence. However it is important to ensure that staff at all levels are able to take time to recuperate during a response.</li> </ul>	SLT	1.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to keep just a core group of staff in the office to help control infection for any future incidents.</li> </ul>	SLT	2.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to consider a scalable group, as well as the core IMT to sit on the panel for any future pandemics rather than it simply just being the usual IMT.</li> </ul>	CLT	3.
Excellent support from staff across the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organic response with staff generally willing to redeploy to support the response.</li> <li>• Teams mobilised quickly, particularly to set up the new welfare cell to provide outbound calls and support to the known vulnerable and the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the most appropriate way to recognise and thank staff during and after a response. Will need to ensure that any emails are also available in print and at all RBC sites. Cllr Prescott keen to lead the recognition project. Consider a cumulative roll of honour.</li> </ul>	SLT	4.

	<p>shielded residents, sustaining 7-day support for over 8 weeks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff managing BAU did as well as those on the response to keep critical services running. Important to embed the learning from this response into business continuity procedures for the future.</li> <li>• Staff managed significant increases in pressure in some areas such as the depot to respond to increased household waste after CRC closures.</li> <li>• Staff stayed calm and positive.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review business continuity plans to incorporate learning from COVID-19 response and prepare for test and trace impact with potential for widespread isolation.</li> </ul>	SLT+AR	5.
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**Reaching the community: welfare response**

<p>Community volunteers made a significant and extremely positive impact in supporting vulnerable and shielded people in the community. Able to provide widespread reassurance in the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foodbank a real success and very positive feedback to the Cllrs, who organised this resource, from both staff and community volunteers.</li> <li>• Neighbourhood Support Groups provided support on multiple levels including medication, shopping deliveries and phone buddying.</li> <li>• Harness the goodwill within the local community and the cross-party support of elected members within a formalised network.</li> <li>• Volunteers generally keen to be part of a supervised network of volunteers with more support from the council. Ensure that those wanting to can work within a framework and those who want to operate independently are able to call on the council for advice if needed.</li> <li>• Need a volunteer system that SCC approve so that this does not cause problems in a response.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to develop the community resilience framework and harness the community interest. Key areas include, training (particularly the phone support), insurance, DBS checks, GDPR guidance (cannot share shielded data), communications package, boundaries, health and safety and emotional/mental health support for volunteers, managing expectations, support to young people, referral process to Adult Social Care if issues are identified, identification, supervision, consider the required number of volunteers. However, keep red tape and politicisation to a minimum.</li> </ul>	AR+DW+SW+PLR+FS+LP	6.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to keep the shielded individuals identifiable from the rest of the welfare call groups due to different reporting requirements to central government.</li> </ul>	DW+SW	7.

**Technology**

<p>Technology allowed staff to work effectively remotely.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Video conferencing and sharing spreadsheets worked well on MS Teams.</li> <li>• 200 staff set up to work from home.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agile working project completion date to be brought forward to possibly April 2021.</li> </ul>	<p>CLT+LN</p>	<p>8.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent support from Digital Services while working from home.</li> <li>• Agile working programme has been brought forward.</li> <li>• Chat facility for welfare cell via MS Teams worked well.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that AR is included in the agile working plans to capture the business continuity impacts.</li> </ul>	<p>LN+SW+AR</p>	<p>9.</p>

**Health & Safety/PPE**

<p>No outbreaks in any RBC premises</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teams e.g. housing took early steps to limit contamination risk.</li> <li>• Enhanced cleaning worked well while in BAU.</li> <li>• Staff very aware of the cleaning requirements within the welfare cell and adhered to them e.g. wiping down their unit at the end of the shift.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate early actions and enhanced cleaning into pandemic flu planning to limit contamination.</li> </ul>	<p>AR+All</p>	<p>10.</p>
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**Communications**

Outbreak comms effective internally and externally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New areas of the website and social media updated and Runnymede Talk contained relevant articles to keep the public up to date.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain open channels with the community to provide reassurance and updates on ongoing work and positive stories.</li> </ul>	PLR+AR+SW	11.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Letter delivered to all homes in the borough was well received generally.</li> <li>There was ongoing communication with staff with updates to guidance and policy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate staff comms template into the pandemic flu plan.</li> </ul>	PLR+AR+SW	12.

## Learning points identified and subsequent recommendations

Item	Comments	Recommendation	Owner	Reference number
<b>Staffing and management</b>				
No central minutes of the panel meetings as no administrative support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some decisions left open to interpretation and understood differently by other panel members therefore implementation was a challenge.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designate a team of minute takers who can be available for key EP meetings whether IMT or a version of a panel, consider an ILO/committee services.</li> </ul>	AR+SW	13.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider decision logging training for the above team.</li> </ul>	AR+SW	14.
Key staff in position for the entirety of the response and due to the nature of their roles, needed to work under extreme pressure over significantly extended periods (evening and weekends).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns that some roles do not have clear deputies and fatigue is a real danger.</li> <li>Equally staff sickness/ isolation in a health pandemic can have serious impacts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review key roles for a pandemic response, 'single points of failure' and designate deputies (including for Chief Exec) who if not already involved in the response, could be brought into the learning/ second wave planning.</li> </ul>	SLT	15.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider enforced rest periods for senior staff.</li> </ul>	SLT	16.
Unclear understanding of the redeployment process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some staff at an early stage of the crisis were deployed without their line manager being made aware/ happy about their redeployment – this had an impact on BAU.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embed awareness of the emergency deployment process.</li> <li>Involve HR in original selection of staff for redeployment rather</li> </ul>	FS+SW	17.

	When HR were subsequently involved in redeployment after the initial stage managers were consulted about the redeployment of any of their staff.	than just use them administratively.		
Inflexibility among some staff to take on different roles or come into the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A minority of staff, including some managers, were reluctant to come into the office. In some cases this was due to underlying conditions, but not all.</li> <li>• Some staff initially reluctant to take on different roles.</li> <li>• Some staff chose to self-isolate very quickly.</li> <li>• Pragmatism is key to enforcing role flexibility (particularly in pandemic response) and will need to be managed on a case by case basis. In practice HR often used staff who did not want to come in to help on the on-site welfare cell to help with making calls to the vulnerable which most were willing to do.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that there is a sufficient core group of staff to respond to emergencies. Combine database re staffing availability, limitations and ICT resources with the out of hours availability list.</li> </ul>	FS	18.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where it is not already in staff job descriptions, consider amending to include specific reference to supporting an emergency and suitable deployments and flexibility around working hours and place of work in an emergency.</li> </ul>	FS	19.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed emergency response principles e.g. acceptance that some roles develop during the incident therefore manuals/ training are not always available.</li> </ul>	AR+SW+FS	20.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage staff to make known any underlying medical conditions to HR so we can better understand who can be redeployed and/or come into the office from the beginning in a similar situation.</li> </ul>	FS	21.
<b>Reaching the community: welfare response</b>				
Many dynamic layers of welfare response which required close monitoring.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinating the approach and mapping the roles and responsibilities ahead of time would ease pressure on welfare staff.</li> <li>Support structures needed for staff managing difficult calls.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a scalable welfare response plan.</li> </ul>	AR+SW+DW+FS	22.
Having multiple streams of data on the vulnerable people in the Borough is a challenge for coordinating support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cleansing data took a considerable amount of time and slowed down the start of welfare calls.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate review needed of vulnerable people data and how it is cleansed to keep it up to date.</li> </ul>	DW+SW	23.
<b>Technology</b>				
Document management challenges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns that documents and updated versions were held in multiple locations.</li> <li>Need to have a response procedure document than informally updating procedures via a chat function.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review options for data management systems in an emergency to have a central repository for all documentation, with version control. Any updates to be saved in a new rather than just on chat.</li> </ul>	AR+SW+LN	24.

Challenges with staff ICT levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excel and MS Teams familiarity was a challenge for some but this was understandable given it had only very recently been introduced.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider ICT training sessions for staff in areas such as MS Teams and Excel.</li> </ul>	LN	25.
Concern raised about internet line provision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One internet line into the building.</li> </ul>	Build connectivity resilience and keep AR informed for business continuity planning.	LN+AR	26.
<b>Health &amp; Safety/ PPE</b>				
Challenges with PPE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited stock available with conflicting guidance on what was required.</li> <li>Community groups reported not having PPE and feeling that they were at risk.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have an understanding of what PPE could be needed in a pandemic and include in pandemic flu plan.</li> <li>Reinforce communications around PPE.</li> </ul>	Corporate Heads/Health & safety /Purchasing	27.
Challenges enforcing COVID-19 guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff and volunteers were aware of the guidance but in haste to get the job done (often a statutory or welfare provision to vulnerable) and in limited space, there was a challenge with adhering to social distancing.</li> <li>Better cleaning needed for all council buildings, not just the Civic Offices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider measures to support social distancing and sanitation further in all buildings from the outset.</li> </ul>	Commercial Services/Health & safety	28.

### Communications

Residents should be given warning and lead in time if support offerings are being scaled back or stopped.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns that the council could lose the goodwill and hard-earned trust from vulnerable people by withdrawing support abruptly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gradually scale back support offering with longer lead time where possible rather than taking a 'big bang approach' as seen with the proactive calls.</li> </ul>	Panel reps	29.
Formal recognition for volunteers not yet provided.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volunteers risk feeling undervalued when they haven't been recognised by the council formally.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider the most appropriate way to recognise and thank volunteers during and after a response.</li> </ul>	CLT+SW	30.
<b>Future planning</b>				
Need to be agile to respond to the next emergency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National and local risk register as a starting point for possible emergencies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop horizon scanning capacity to track future risks.</li> </ul>	<b>AR+PT</b>	31.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the council works with the SLRF to drive learning implementation and continuous improvement</li> </ul>	<b>AR+SW+PT</b>	32.
Staff are keen to have further training and planning for such responses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Important to embed the learning from this response into emergency planning procedures for the future.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review pandemic flu plan and incorporate learning from debrief and further early action points e.g. preparing housing stock if needed, preparing cemeteries.</li> </ul>	<b>AR+SLT</b>	33.

## Recommendations to Surrey Local Resilience Forum (SLRF)

Recommendation number	Recommendation
i.	Keep the SCG meeting time consistent from the onset to assist organisations arranging other meetings around them.
ii.	Keep the SCG teleconference number consistent throughout.
iii.	Review the user-friendliness of Resilience Direct (as it is not very user friendly).
iv.	All multi-agency partner meetings in a pandemic should be remote.
v.	Provide greater transparency in how people are selected to sit on subgroups.
vi.	PPE specification information to be shared by PHE at the earliest opportunity to assist procurement teams.
vii.	Duplicates across Cat A, B and C to be removed earlier through use of VPRS at earlier stage
viii.	Earlier formation of the TCG structure would support coordination.
ix.	Improve process for welfare visits – include ‘sorry we missed you’ cards from early on rather than triggering multiple PCSO visits unnecessarily as some people prefer to call back than answer unknown number calls.
x.	Large numbers of password protected emails limited access in an incident due to time constraints.
xi.	A consistent understanding of output expectations e.g. completion of cohort 1 calls by x date.
xii.	That SLRF lobby MHCLG to provide more support resource to lead and advise on issues such as PPE, shielding data problems.

## Conclusion

As with any incident there are always lessons learnt, both positive and negative, and this report summarises how a similar response can be more effective for the future through implementing the recommendations.

Key areas identified as good practice were: the strong leadership; the effectiveness of the Advisory Panel with a wider IMT membership; the willingness of many staff, councillors, and volunteers to go the extra mile; the speed that the local welfare response was mobilised both internally at RBC as well as the extended Foodbank arrangement and the official volunteer network; 200 staff quickly set up to work from home remotely, assisted by the effectiveness of MS Teams; and public communications were generally well received.

Key recommendations to assist the effectiveness of a future pandemic response are: ensure there are minute takers available for panel meetings in the future; where resources allow, identify deputies for key roles to assist rest periods; greater support required from the outset for staff managing welfare calls; consideration to be given on how we can best keep vulnerable people data cleansed to speed up any future response; be more disciplined with version control of guidance and processes in the welfare cell; create a welfare response plan and update relevant emergency plans incorporating the lessons learnt for the future.

On balance, the general feedback has been that the response by all partners was very effective. Many new processes needed to be set up with very limited time. This was achieved through many people going the extra mile across staff, councillors, volunteers and wider partners.



## TERMS OF REFERENCE: CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE REVIEW

### Purpose of the review:

Given the significant impact the Coronavirus pandemic has had on the communities of Runnymede and the Council's operations and finances, Officers and Members feel it would be appropriate for the response to be reviewed.

### Objectives of the review

#### Meeting 1

- 1) The Overview and Scrutiny Select Committee will review the Coronavirus Response Debrief Report and have the opportunity to advise Officers which elements they would like to understand in further detail for the subsequent meetings.

Witnesses: Paul Turrell, Sarah Walsh, and Nick Moon (Applied Resilience)

#### Meeting 2

- 2) The Overview and Scrutiny Select Committee will review:
  - The speed at which the Welfare Cell was set up.
  - The operational links of the cell with calls to vulnerable people, shielded list (proactive support) as well as Customer Services (reactive request support)
  - The range of matters dealt with.
  - How the support requests were managed.
  - The effectiveness of the partnership working with the Foodbank.
  - The effectiveness of the partnership working with the official volunteers.
  - Testimonies from recipients.

Witnesses: Darren Williams, Linda Norman, Peter Burke, Sarah Walsh, Cllr Theresa Burton Cllr Nigel King, Mr Spencer Doran - an official volunteer, *plus testimonies from recipients*

#### Meeting 3

- 3) The Overview and Scrutiny Select Committee will review:
  - The essential services chosen and how they were managed differently.
  - HR-related policies to manage staff during the pandemic.
  - Agile working effectiveness.
  - Internal governance and monitoring.
  - Wrap up of any other matters

Witnesses: Cllr Prescott – Leader of the Council, Paul Turrell, Fiona Skene, Linda Norman, Sarah Walsh

6. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that –**

**the press and public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the following report (s) under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the report (s) in question would be likely to involve disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in appropriate paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Act.**

**(To resolve)**

**PART II**

**Matters involving Exempt or Confidential Information in respect of which reports have not been made available for public inspection**

a) Exempt Information

(No reports to be considered under this heading)

b) Confidential Information

(No reports to be considered under this heading).