

# BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## REPORT TO CABINET

15 SEPTEMBER 2020

### REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

#### COVID-19 PREVENTION AND RESPONSE PLAN FOR THE CWM TAF MORGANNWG REGION

#### 1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet endorsement of the COVID-19 Prevention and Response Plan for the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Region.

#### 2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives / other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:-**

1. **Supporting a successful sustainable economy** – taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
2. **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
3. **Smarter use of resources** – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being objectives.

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 In a joint letter from the Welsh Government Chief Medical Officer, NHS Wales Chief Executive and Director, Local Government on 27 July 2020, Local Health Boards were asked to lead the development of Local Covid-19 Prevention and Response Plans in partnership with Local Authority Chief Executives.
- 3.2 The Public Health Protection Response Plan developed by Public Health Wales (PHW) on behalf of Welsh Government proposed three key elements:
  1. Preventing the spread of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) through contact tracing and case management.
  2. Sampling and testing different people in Wales.

### 3. Population surveillance.

Subsequent letters and guidance from Welsh Government and Public Health Wales, set out that effective implementation of an integrated national and local system should be based on six principles as follows:

- The primary responsibility is to make the public safe.
- Build on public health expertise and use a systems approach.
- Be open with data and insight so everyone can protect themselves and others.
- Build consensus between decision-makers to secure trust, confidence and consent.
- Follow well-established communicable disease control and emergency management principles.
- Consider equality, economic, social and health-related impacts of decisions.

3.3 Local Authorities have a central role in the management of the Covid-19 response in Wales. This has been demonstrated in the provision of social care and support to the most vulnerable residents; the childcare hubs delivering support to essential key workers and supporting vulnerable children; the maintenance of essential services and the critical role that local authorities have in the Test Trace Protect (TTP) programme and response to incidents or outbreaks.

## 4. Current situation/proposal

4.1 The response in Cwm Taf Morgannwg has been co-ordinated at a regional level with the Councils and University Health Board (UHB) working closely together with robust governance arrangements to ensure consistent and proper decision making. The Regional Strategic Oversight Group (RSOG), chaired by the UHB's Executive Director for Public Health, oversees the work of six work streams:

- Surveillance;
- Sampling & Testing;
- Contact Tracing & Case Management;
- Risk Communications and Community Engagement;
- Protect, and;
- Covid-19 mass vaccination.

This approach ensures that every element of the public health response to COVID-19 across the region is managed in a coherent way through a single governance arrangement that reports directly to the Chief Executives of the UHB and Local Authorities.

4.2 The Cwm Taf COVID-19 Prevention and Response Plan attached as **Appendix 1** provides a robust approach to how the region has responded effectively to the threat from COVID-19 and sets out clearly how it will continue to do so. The Plan also describes in detail the roles, key objectives and measures for each work stream, how quality and safety is managed, workforce and risk. An action plan and detailed supporting documentation is also included in the appendices.

4.3 The Plan sets out the arrangements in place to prevent the spread of infection amongst the most vulnerable; the measures that will be taken to mitigate and control the impact of the infection through proactive management of high risk settings and robust enforcement where necessary; the arrangements in place to monitor the

infection in communities through surveillance; what action will be taken to escalate any problems that may require a decision around local actions or restrictions and how the arrangements set out in the Communicable Disease Outbreak Plan for Wales will be implemented in the event of an outbreak of COVID-19 in particular circumstances such as educational and healthcare settings.

- 4.4 Any incident or outbreak in a setting or community will require specific consideration of the particular circumstances. For example, if a positive case was identified in an educational setting, either through the Test Trace Protect programme or by direct notification, the setting will need to follow the usual and well established self-isolation, social distancing and hygiene measures. If a cluster of cases (2 or more cases identified within a 14 day period in the same setting) or potential incident (2 or more confirmed cases who are direct close contacts, proximity contacts or in the same group in the setting within 14 days) is identified, the Public Health Wales advice on the investigation and management of clusters and incidents of COVID-19 in educational and childcare settings will be followed. This advice sets out the recommended actions in response to confirmed cases in educational settings and a process whereby the educational setting will be supported through Test Trace Protect to risk assess and manage the cluster or incident to prevent further transmission. If the cluster has the potential to develop into an incident then an Incident Management Team (IMT) will be established to consider any additional measures, such as class closures or further testing.
- 4.5 In rare circumstances, an incident will be so complex it will require management under the comprehensive formal structures of an Outbreak Control Team (OCT). When and how an outbreak should be declared is outlined in the Communicable Disease Outbreak Plan for Wales 2020. This provides a tried and tested approach for the investigation and control of infectious disease.
- 4.6 It is anticipated that many clusters and incidents can be managed through the Test Trace Protect programme without necessarily the need for closures of premises or wider lockdown restrictions. Similarly, clusters of infection identified in the County Borough, within family groups for example, may be effectively managed through the Test Trace Protect programme without the necessity for wide spread lockdown restrictions. In the event of a more significant outbreak of infection, robust arrangements are in place for investigation, management and control.
- 4.7 The Authority has a critical role in implementing and enforcing any decisions to introduce enhanced COVID-19 measures or local lockdown arrangements should they be required. These decisions will be based on the available surveillance and intelligence provided by the UHB and Public Health Wales. The Plan also sets out an overview of the key surveillance indicators and reporting schedule (**Appendix 5**). It also outlines the investigative actions that are prompted by an increase in the number of cases, either at Cwm Taf Morgannwg or individual local authority level. Data is monitored at a local super output area level which gives an indication of infection rates within individual communities. This will enable any increases in rates of infections to be identified early and local appropriate action to be implemented.
- 4.8 **Appendix 4** of the Plan sets out considerations for local enhanced measures where increases in cases require additional measures to control transmission of the infection. This sets out a phased approach to responding to local increases in the incidence of infection, the triggers that would lead to escalation and the measures

that may be considered for different premises and settings. This may include enhanced testing, for example at a care home or school or in the case of non-compliance with physical distancing requirements, enforcement measures at business premises to impose safe working practices.

- 4.9 Should the Authority need to impose local restrictions or the closure of public services, the decision will be made in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation of Functions. The Council has enforcement powers, such as those under the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (No.2) (Wales) Regulations 2020 in respect of premises improvement notices or premises closure notices and the Part 2A Order under the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 which provides flexible powers to control risks to health from infection. Welsh Ministers also have powers under the Coronavirus Act 2020 to ensure local actions are proportionate and protect public health. Some powers are reserved to Welsh Ministers and the steps to determining use of those powers are set out in the National COVID 19 Prevention and Response Plan published by Welsh Government.
- 4.10 There will be regular reviews of the Plan via the Regional Strategic Oversight Group. This will help ensure effectiveness of implementation or the need for change. The plan will also be reviewed in response to any emerging regional issues. Any significant changes will be signed off by the Regional Strategic Oversight Group, with sight of the plan as required, also by individual partners such as the Health Board and Local Authorities.

## **5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**

- 5.1 None.

## **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

- 6.1 Where service changes or specific restrictions are introduced in response to COVID-19, these will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.

## **7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications**

- 7.1 It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of wellbeing goals/objectives as a result of this report.

## **8. Financial implications**

- 8.1 There are no immediate financial implications from the endorsement of the plan.

## **9. Recommendation**

- 9.1 It is recommended that Cabinet note the report and appendices and endorse the COVID-19 Prevention and Response Plan for the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Region.

Mark Shephard  
Chief Executive  
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**Contact officer:** Mark Shephard

**Telephone:** 01656 643136

**Email:** [mark.shephard@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:mark.shephard@bridgend.gov.uk)

**Postal address:** Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend CF31 4WB.

**Background documents:** None