

Committee: Community and Health Committee	Date: 20.10.20
Covid 19 Brentwood Response	Wards Affected: All
Report of: Environmental Health and Licensing Manager	Public
Report Author/s: Name: Gavin Dennett Telephone: 01277 312500 E-mail: gavin.dennett@brentwood.gov.uk	For Information

Summary

This report is to update Community and Health Committee on the responses made by Brentwood to the Covid-19 pandemic

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

R1. Note the contents of the report

Main Report

Introduction and Background

Whilst Covid-19 is now thought to have arisen in China sometime in 2019, its effects did not become apparent in the UK until early 2020. This gave rise to a national lockdown from March 2020 which gradually eased from July 2020. The overall response has been led nationally by the government and Public Health England. Local responses have been made by local authorities including Brentwood.

Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

1. Coronavirus's are carried through the air and can spread if the distance between infected individuals and others is not maintained. It is not currently possible to rapidly diagnose and isolate individuals efficiently enough to rely on this alone to control the spread of infection. Brentwood have made arrangements to facilitate social distancing both in its buildings with the introduction of one way systems and in the town centre by rearranging the street layout to provide extra space for pedestrians seeking to use the shops and facilities.

2. Covid-19 can also be contracted through contact with infected surfaces. Brentwood have encouraged hand washing and the use of antiseptic gels in its own premises and promoted hand hygiene across the Brentwood area.

3. Brentwood have responded to requests from residents and the Public Health Team at Essex County Council to monitor events which could promote the spread of Covid-19 where there is a risk of the breakdown of social distancing measures. Officer statements from Brentwood officers together with evidence gathered by Public Health at Essex will allow for the application of the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restriction) Regulations via a notice from the Director of Public Health for Essex

4. One way to combat the spread of infection is to identify and isolate infected individuals from those who have not been infected and could be more vulnerable. There is a national test and trace system in place and the government operate the initial stage of this process directly. Where telephone contact tracing is unsuccessful and local intervention is necessary, Brentwood have signed an MOU with Essex to undertake contact tracing locally. Brentwood received £50k from Essex to fund this work and it has been used to employ a part time additional staff member. This is required as there is extra work for Environmental Health both to fulfil contact tracing duties and to contribute to the enforcement of other Covid-19 related measures, in particular the measures relating to the compliance with the Health Protection regulations in commercial premises. In order to promote compliance our officers have been contacting, and where necessary, visiting premises to provide advice and guidance on the regulations and the application of the rules to reduce the spread of Covid.

Reasons for Recommendation

To inform members of the latest situation with regards Track and Trace and the Council's present involvement.

Consultation

None

References to Corporate Plan

There are no direct references to the Corporate Plan

Implications

Financial Implications

Name/Title: Jacqueline Van Mellaerts, Director of Corporate Resources

Tel/Email: 01277 312500/jacqueline.vanmellaerts@brentwood.gov.uk

There are no direct financial implications resulting from the recommendations of this report

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Amanda Julian, Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer

Tel & Email: 01277 312705/amanda.julian@brentwood.gov.uk

The work described in this report contributes to efforts in Brentwood to fulfil the Councils obligations to protect public health embodied in various legislation.

Economic Implications

Name/Title: Phil Drane, Director of Strategic Planning

Tel/Email: 01277 312610/philip.drane@brentwood.gov.uk

There are no direct economic implications from the recommendations in this report.

Other Implications (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

Background Papers

None

Appendices to this report

None