

Allerdale Borough Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee– 17 July 2020

Approach to scrutiny of responses to the pandemic

The Reason for the Decision	This report sets out the issues and possible approaches the Committee can consider in scrutinising the Council's role and response to the Covid-19 pandemic and its effects on local communities.
Summary of options considered	Outlined in the body of the report.
Recommendations	1. That the Committee considers the report and agrees how it wishes to approach this topic area in terms of scope and methodology.
Financial / Resource Implications	There may be resource implications for staff time depending on the chosen approach.
Legal / Governance Implications	There are no direct implications.
Community Safety Implications	There are no direct implications.
Health and Safety and Risk Management Implications	There are no direct implications.
Equality Duty considered / Impact Assessment completed	This report is not considered to have any particular implications at this point.
Wards Affected	All
The contribution this decision would make to the Council's priorities	The role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee contributes to all Council Strategy priorities.
Is this a Key Decision	No
Lead Scrutiny Member	Councillor Iain Greaney
Lead Officer	Ian Hinde Policy Officer (Scrutiny and Partnerships) 01900 702544 ian.hinde@allerdale.gov.uk

Report Implications (Please delete where applicable).

Community Safety	N	Employment (external to the Council)	N
Financial	N	Employment (internal)	N
Legal	N	Partnership	N
Social Inclusion	N	Asset Management	N
Equality Duty	N	Health and Safety	N

Background papers:

Outbreak Control Plan Part 1 – Strategy, Management and Oversight

<https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/elibrary/Content/Internet/535/17941/17942/44012124112.pdf>

Outbreak Control Plan Part 2 – Operational Response

<https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/elibrary/Content/Internet/535/17941/17942/44012124238.pdf>

Situation report 30 June 2020

<https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/elibrary/Content/Internet/535/17941/17942/17945/44012124419.pdf?timestamp=440139227>

1.0 Background to the report

- 1.1 At its previous meeting the Committee agreed to combine three potential items for its work programme into a single item. These were:
 - consideration of the Council's role in the ongoing public health situation and the ongoing role for councils in test and trace activities;
 - consideration of the Council's role in recovery - how is the Council able to support businesses and communities?;
 - consideration of the ongoing implications for the organisation both financially and operationally, including consideration of alternative working practices adopted during the pandemic and their effectiveness.
- 1.2 The Committee now needs to identify if there are any specific issues or areas of interest to pursue. These could focus on the immediate response to the crisis and any lessons to be learned, or on preparedness for the future either in the predicted second wave of the current situation.
- 1.3 The Committee will need to consider this area of work in the context of its overall programme. Should the Committee wish to include this work in committee meetings, it may be necessary to consider additional meetings throughout the year.

2.0 The task

- 2.1 The Committee now needs to decide how to approach this overall topic and whether there are any specific aspects it wishes to explore in greater detail.
- 2.2 The attached report at Appendix 1, Allerdale Borough Council Covid-19 Recovery Strategy, sets out four themes for the work now being undertaken. This approach could be adopted as a structure for the work the Committee wishes to undertake because it covers the previously identified aspects listed in 1.1 above.
- 2.3 The finance report at Appendix 2 and the briefing note on test and trace, Appendix 3, provide the Committee with a fuller description of these issues. The papers linked in Background Papers at the beginning of the report give the public health response which is currently being consulted on until the end of the month (31 July).
- 2.4 Having read the background papers and appendices the Committee need to consider how they wish to focus their work on these topics with a view to adding the most value.
- 2.5 Members are reminded that they are already due to follow the progress of the development of a new Economic Growth Strategy and a Resilient Communities Strategy and these may already provide enough opportunity to assist with policy development around supporting businesses and communities through recovery.

3.0 Possible methodologies

- 3.1 The Committee could elect to address the topics during committee meetings. While there is some capacity in the current work programme to enable this, the opportunities to do so are currently later in the year, unless additional meetings were to be arranged.
- 3.2 The Committee could set up one or more task and finish groups to explore specific aspects. These groups can comprise committee members alone, other council members, and community representatives or relevant persons with expertise, or any combination from these groups with a member of the Committee chairing the group.
- 3.3 Alternatively the Committee could choose to adopt a rapporteur arrangement where one or two Councillors receive a briefing from the named lead officer for each of the four themes as above then discuss the issues with the officer on behalf of the committee and report back their findings to the committee.

4.0 Recommendation

- 4.1 It is recommended that:

1. That the Committee considers the report and agrees how it wishes to approach this topic area in terms of scope and methodology.

Ian Hinde
Policy Officer (Scrutiny and Partnerships)