

Allerdale Borough Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 28 August 2020

**Appointment of a Pandemic Response Task and Finish Group**

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**The Reason for the Decision**

The report seeks agreement from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to establish a Task and Finish Group to carry out scrutiny .

**Summary of options considered**

1. The Committee could establish a Task and Finish Group to carry out scrutiny of the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on this Council's services and operations. This is the recommended option.
2. Addressing the above work in the main Committee. It is considered that the topic requires a level of detail and time commitment not possible to achieve in a Committee Meeting.

**Recommendations**

1. That a Task and Finish Group is established by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
2. That the Committee appoint a Chairperson (a current Member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee) who will be responsible for managing the Task and Finish Group and reporting its findings to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
3. That the Committee agrees the membership of the Task and Finish Group and delegate that at the scoping stage the Task and Finish Group will identify any additional members to be co-opted;
4. That the Committee agrees the Task and Finish Group's initial Terms of Reference as proposed at 3.1;
5. That the Task and Finish Group follows the agreed Terms of Reference and keeps the Overview and Scrutiny Committee updated;
6. That the Task and Finish Group reports its findings, conclusions and recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

<b>Financial / Resource Implications</b>	The Task and Finish Group will require Member and Officer resources.
<b>Legal / Governance Implications</b>	The Task and Finish Group will report its work, findings and any recommendations it makes to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for approval.
<b>Community Safety Implications</b>	There are no direct implications.
<b>Health and Safety and Risk Management Implications</b>	There are no direct implications.
<b>Equality Duty considered / Impact Assessment completed</b>	This will be considered at scoping stage.
<b>Wards Affected</b>	All
<b>The contribution this decision would make to the Council's priorities</b>	The Task and Finish Group will contribute to all Council Strategy priorities and in particular to the Creating A Sustainable Business theme.
<b>Is this a Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	All Portfolio Holders
<b>Lead Scrutiny Member</b>	Councillor Iain Greaney and Councillor Michael Heaslip (Co-Chairs)
<b>Lead Officer</b>	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

**1.0 Background**

1.1 When the pandemic took hold in the UK resulting with the Government in March ordering people to stay at home where possible, the majority of Council

officers began working from home and the usual delivery of services was temporarily disrupted with many services now being delivered through alternative arrangements, including committee meetings such as the meeting today.

- 1.2 Learning from experience and the responses to other recent catastrophic events, the authorities in the area were quickly able to instigate meetings of the resilience fora created to operate in such circumstances.
- 1.3 Other scrutiny bodies will be looking at these overall responses. This proposed group is intended to look at this Council's operations, including delivery of services, overall operational situation, health and safety of staff including home working conditions and access to office bases, and plans to resume or reshape services and facilities for the future.
- 1.4 The 'test and trace' aspect could constitute a distinct element of the process which will take a broader look at the overall scheme as well as the Council's role in solutions both current and future.

## **2.0 Task and Finish Group Membership**

- 2.1 The following Members have indicated they are interested in participating to focus particularly on the test and trace scheme:

- Councillor Michael Heaslip
- Councillor Carni McCarron-Holmes
- Councillor Paul Scott

From the wider membership the following Councillors are volunteering to join this Group:

- Councillor Elaine Lynch

- 2.2 The Committee is asked to agree the Task and Finish Group Membership and appoint a Chair.
- 2.3 The Committee is asked to delegate to the Task and Finish Group co-option of any additional Members at the scoping stage.

## **3.0 Terms of Reference**

- 3.1 The Committee is responsible for setting Terms of Reference for the Task and Finish Group. Terms of Reference are used to guide and focus the Task and Finish Group and support the delivery of priorities. The following Terms of Reference are proposed:

- Consider and scrutinise the effects of the pandemic on Council services and operations including how the Council responded and how services have been adapted
- Consider and scrutinise the ‘test and trace’ scheme and its local implementation
- Question any under-performance or significant variances caused by the pandemic response and highlight any valuable lessons learned or specific concerns in case of a similar situation
- Note all completed work and highlight / commend strong performance
- Identify any short, medium or long term actions arising which could improve operational performance and corporate resilience to future waves of Covid-19 (or any other pandemic/emergency scenario)
- Make recommendations for any improvements

3.2 Members are asked to consider the proposed Terms of Reference and whether any further should be added before agreeing them.

#### **4.0 Recommendations**

It is recommended that:

1. That a Task and Finish Group is established by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
2. That the Committee appoint a Chairperson (a current Member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee) who will be responsible for managing the Task and Finish Group and reporting its findings to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
3. That the Committee agrees the membership of the Task and Finish Group and delegate that at the scoping stage the Task and Finish Group will identify any additional members to be co-opted;
4. That the Committee agrees the Task and Finish Group’s initial Terms of Reference as proposed at 3.1;
5. That the Task and Finish Group follows the agreed Terms of Reference and keeps the Overview and Scrutiny Committee updated;
6. That the Task and Finish Group reports its findings, conclusions and recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**Ian Hinde**  
**Policy Officer (Scrutiny and Partnerships)**