

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC CRISIS MANAGEMENT TEAM
HELD ON 9th APRIL, 2020**

PRESENT: D. Langton, D. Walker, N. Watson, H. Culshaw, C. Finn, V. Green, J. McDonnell, J. Watson, M. Mason, A. Goode, S. Agnew, A. Simm and P. Kirby

(Apologies for absence were received from P. Mousdale and J. Whittaker).

197. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Management Team meeting held on 2nd April, 2020 were submitted.

AGREED

That subject to the deletion of J. Whittaker being in attendance, the Minutes be approved.

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198. CURRENT POSITION WITH SERVICE PROVISION

Again services continued to be provided and no real issues had been identified at this time. Homeworking was continuing where possible and there was still a skeleton team of staff in the Town Hall who were dealing with issues as they arose.

Plans were in place to ensure there was sufficient staff within Bereavement Services to respond to the expected increase in funerals.

The Waste Collection Service was operating as was expected with additional support from staff from Pendle Leisure Services along with a member of staff from the County Council.

Staff had reported that, in some cases, where phones had been diverted to private mobile phones there was a cost implication. It was suggested that this be investigated with a view to reimbursement.

Calls and emails to the Community Support Hub had increased and staff was continuing to respond well and deal with the enquiries.

A team of 15 staff had been ringing people on the NHS shielding list and the County Council's vulnerable list asking a number of questions based on their needs and what support they had/did not have. They were then directed to the Community Voluntary Service or other organisations for assistance. It was acknowledged that this team had done an amazing job as some of the conversations could be lengthy when people just wanted to talk but there had been a lot of positivity as well.

It was reported that there was additional space at No. 1 for an additional team of 6 to assist with this the above project when needed. The IT functionality and phones were to be set up as soon as possible.

Changes were currently being made to various aspects within the Benefits Service such as Working Tax Credits and Local Housing Allowances. A request was made for the volume of caseloads to be reported to the Chief Executive on a daily basis to monitor the situation more closely.

Virtual meetings and remote working was mentioned. The next round of Council meetings was scheduled for mid-May and work was ongoing to see what was needed to provide virtual meetings. There was a piece of work needed to look at how Councillors would participate and the IT functionality required.

AGREED

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| (1) | That the current situation with service provision be noted and staff be thanked for their contributions to date. | All Strategic Crisis MT |
| (2) | That investigations be carried out with regards to increased costs regarding diversion of phones to private mobile numbers with a view to these costs being reimbursed. | Jane McDonnell |
| (3) | That IT functionality and telephony be installed for the additional bank of 6 desks at No. 1 Market Street to assist with the calls to vulnerable people. | Shane Agnew |
| (4) | That with regards to the Benefits Service volumes of caseloads in relation to Working Tax Credits and Local Housing Allowances be reported to the Chief Executive on a daily basis to assist with monitoring the situation. | Angela Simm |
| (5) | That work continues to enable virtual meetings to take place, including establishing the IT functionality required by Councillors. | Philip Mousdale/
Jane Watson/
Shane Agnew |

199. LRF UPDATES

The Lancashire Resilience Forum's (LRF) daily bulletin was circulated prior to the meeting.

Stress testing of business continuity plans was continuing and the Team were asked to send any updates to Philip Mousdale who was sending the response to the LRF.

A single point of contact was required for ICT on the Cyber Resilience Working Group.

AGREED

- (1) That the LRF Daily Bulletin be noted.
- (2) That Shane Agnew be nominated as the Council's representative as the single point of contact for ICT on the Cyber Resilience Working Group.

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Shane Agnew

200. IT UPDATE

Work was still ongoing with individuals who were experiencing difficulties with IT functionality etc.

IT expressed concern that some remote PC's/laptops had stopped connectivity through the Council's portal and that they might be incapable of doing what the Council wanted them to do. If this was an issue with a critical role then it was agreed that a Council laptop be provided.

There was still a small number of staff who it was proving difficult to contact. The relevant Service Manager(s) would be contacted to assist if this continued to be a problem.

There was a discussion around video conferencing tools/software and in particular Zoom. The advice given was that some of these had become targets for hackers and therefore exposed weaknesses in their security. Advice would be included in the next guidance note to staff.

It was reported that Microsoft Office Teams had been installed on 12 devices. The Calendar functionality was not yet up and running but was currently being tested. It was also reported that some devices did not possess a camera/microphone. Webcams would need to be sourced to overcome this problem.

AGREED

- (1) That meetings of this Team be conducted through Microsoft Office Teams as soon as possible and every effort is made to ensure the devices used by members of this Team were compatible for this function. This was also to include the meetings calendar functionality.
- (2) That advice on video conferencing tools/software be included in the next guidance note to staff.

**Shane Agnew/
Marie Mason**

**Shane Agnew/
Jane McDonnell**

201. COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN TEAMS

It was reported that a closed Pendle staff Facebook page had been set up and individual service area WhatsApp groups had also been set up.

This would provide platforms to keep staff in the loop with important dates and messages.

202. EASTER HOLIDAY ARRANGEMENTS

It was reported that the Community Support Hub would continue to operate as agreed over Easter as would the Waste Services.

It was also an opportunity for staff to take a break where they could.

203. FINANCIAL IMPACT OF COVID-19

It was reported that a high level assessment of possible financial effects of the current pandemic across all service areas had been produced. This was based on a quarter of the year being affected.

Members of the Team were asked to provide any comments/information to Vince Green before the close of play on 14th April. The information would then be submitted to Government the following day.

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204. KEY MESSAGES TO STAFF

Guidance Note number 6 was circulated prior to the meeting and would be sent out to all staff later in the day.

Jane McDonnell

Information regarding video conferencing tools/software was also to be included.