

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: EXECUTIVE, RESOURCES AND CONTRACTS POLICY
DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: 03 February 2021

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: SCRUTINY OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Contact Officer: Ade Adetosoye OBE, Chief Executive
Tel: 020 8313 4197 E-mail: ade.adetosoye@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Ade Adetosoye OBE, Chief Executive

Ward: All Wards

1. Reason for report

This report provides a written update to inform the scrutiny of the Chief Executive at Executive, Resources and Contracts PDS Committee.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

Members are requested to note the report.

3. COMMENTARY

Introduction

3.1 Since my previous scrutiny session in September 2020, I can provide the following updates:

- COVID-19 update
- Census 2021 planning
- Digital Strategy and Digital Roadmap
- Transformation Programme 2019 - 23
- Supporting our workforce during COVID-19
- Strategic priorities for 2021/22

3.2 COVID-19 Response

3.3 Community testing

3.4 A lateral flow testing (LFT) rapid testing programme has been established by the Council to reduce the spread of COVID-19 across the borough through testing of asymptomatic staff working in the community who may be COVID-19 positive but show no symptoms. The programme will also protect our frontline services and limit transmission where any staff are working face-to-face with the public. We also anticipate the targeted testing programme will help contain COVID-19 infections, while also protecting those vulnerable residents most at risk from COVID-19.

3.5 Our testing site at Bromley Civic Centre began operation on 4 January and our second site at Kenwood Adult Education Centre opened on 11 January. The LFT testing programme is due to be extended to 31 March. The testing sites have capacity to carry out 3,500 tests a week, and the demand is currently high.

3.6 Staff working in the community are being advised to get tested twice a week, leaving a three-day gap between each test to ensure effectiveness. All tests are booked online via the website.

3.7 Contact tracing

3.8 Following a successful two-week local pilot, LBB launched a local Contact Tracing programme on 4 November 2020. Local Contact Tracing aims to contact those COVID positive patients that the national Test and Trace team have failed to reach. LBB attempts to contact each patient twice via telephone and then a third call is attempted if there is no email address available for the patient. Alternatively, they will receive an email on the third contact attempt.

3.9 The email invites patients to complete details of their close contacts online via an LBB form (which is then transferred to the national Test and Trace database), and enables us to tell residents of the available support either through the volunteering and assistance programme or through self-isolation support payments (for those on low income). LBB is receiving very positive feedback from patients and, as a result of calls, has directed some to our support networks to obtain access to food via online shopping, volunteers and self-isolation support payments.

3.10 Local Contact Tracing has been working well in Bromley. 1400 patients have been passed to the team and the local contact success rate is currently 40%, taking our overall borough success rate to 89% overall, which shows good effectiveness compared to other local authorities. As at 12 January, 50 members of staff have been trained on the PHE and local contact tracing systems, with 37 being mobilised to make calls across three call handling teams. Support nurses already mobilised in the Public Health team as part of the COVID response

have also been undertaking Contact Tracing training and are ready to mobilise in an emergency if needed. They remain on standby.

3.11 The number of cases to call rose dramatically over the Christmas period, given the rise in positive COVID-19 cases in London and the South East. Resourcing is currently sufficient on the programme and a recent team restructure will ensure that all staff are able to maintain a suitable work-life balance. Performance Indicators will be reviewed on a weekly basis and if the number of calls become unmanageable locally, cases will be prioritised in terms of vulnerability with some cases being passed back up to the national team if necessary.

3.12 Vaccination

3.13 The rollout of the vaccination programme in Bromley is led by the NHS and the oversight and strategic leadership for its delivery sits with the South East London (SEL) CCG.

3.14 The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has advised on the priority groups for COVID-19 immunisation. There are eleven priority cohorts with specific targets for vaccination:

By mid-February:

1. Older people's care homes residents and staff
2. People aged 80 years and over, and healthcare and social care workers
3. People aged 75 years and over
4. People aged 70 years and over

By spring:

5. People aged 65 years and over
6. Adults under 65 at high risk due to medical conditions
7. Adults under 65 at moderate risk due to medical conditions
8. People aged 60 years and over
9. People aged 55 years and over
10. People aged 50 years and over

By autumn:

11. Key workers and the rest of the population

3.15 Bromley residents are receiving the vaccine via five different programmes:

1. At hospital sites, delivered by NHS Trusts
2. In general practice, delivered by Primary Care Networks (PCNs)
3. At mass vaccination centres
4. At community pharmacies
5. Through 'roving' services to vaccinate housebound people and those who cannot travel to one of the other delivery sites

3.16 There are four main vaccination programmes underway in Bromley:

1. **Care homes** - the vaccination of all residents in care homes is ongoing and is delivered by Bromley care practices
2. **Domiciliary care providers and other settings** - the South East London (SEL) CCG is overseeing vaccination for domiciliary care providers and settings, which is well under way.
3. **Residents aged 80+** - the Primary Care Networks are making good progress to deliver vaccinations to this age group by mid-February.
4. **Frontline social care staff** - priority frontline social care staff have been identified to receive the vaccine through the Princess Royal University Hospital (PRUH)

3.17 The Integrated Commissioning Service is making arrangements for frontline health and care workers in local provider organisations to be vaccinated in partnership with the NHS. Staff eligible for the vaccination through this arrangement will be frontline care workers directly working with people clinically vulnerable to COVID-19 and who need care and support irrespective of where they work (for example in hospital, people's own homes, day centres, homelessness services or supported housing); or who are employed by for example independent sector or third sector. Unpaid volunteers who work in these organisations and who meet the criteria may be included too. Local providers are being contacted and asked to refer in their staff that both meet the criteria and consent to having the vaccination. The appointments for these staff will be organised by SEL CCG.

3.18 Overview of Council response to the COVID-19 crisis

3.19 At the end of 2020, the senior leadership team and I took some time to reflect on the key organisational achievements across all COVID-19 response programmes, which include:

- Providing support for 13,787 residents during the pandemic who were identified as 'clinically extremely vulnerable'.
- Registering 4,495 residents as volunteers and matching 1,151 of them with residents to assist with day-to-day tasks, including shopping, collecting prescriptions and dog-walking
- Distributed a number of grants including the COVID-19 Grant, Infection Control Grant and Emergency Assistance Grant.
- Developing a local Test and Trace team to support the national NHS scheme.
- Modelling hospital discharge pathways to manage pressure on adult social care capacity, which has been shared nationally as a beacon of good practice.
- Procuring and delivering over one million items of PPE.
- Providing testing to all providers of residential and nursing care, domiciliary care and testing for residents.
- Introducing new discharge arrangements with Bromley Healthcare and the CCG by setting up a Single Point of Access (SPA) system to ensure swift and timely hospital discharges and keep hospital beds free
- Displaying COVID-19 social distancing signage in parks, green spaces and local high streets
- Supporting businesses to remain open by ensuring COVID-19 compliance.
- Accommodating 92 people who were identified as sleeping rough or at risk of rough sleeping during the government's 'Everyone In' initiative.
- Enabling multi-agency teams to be put around every school in the borough through the Council's 'Trailblazer' status to ensure that a full range of mental health and wellbeing services is accessible to children and young people.
- Continuing to offer support to children and families throughout the COVID-19 pandemic through our Children and Family Centres. All six centres achieved Healthy Early Years London Silver Awards, which achievements in child health, wellbeing and development in early years settings.
- Distributing 700 DfE laptops to vulnerable children and young people to provide access to online learning
- Public Health nurses at the Council have worked closely in a multi-disciplinary approach across departments and across organisations to provide a clinical infection prevention and control response to support the implementation of the Outbreak Control Plan. They are involved in a range of activities supporting different populations with some targeted work to vulnerable and disadvantaged groups who may be more at risk of transmission of COVID-19.

3.20 Census 2021 planning

- 3.21 The Council is currently working with Office of National Statistics (ONS) on supporting the 2021 Census in Bromley, which will take place on Sunday 21 March 2021. This Census is 'digital first', meaning 90% of households will be sent digital access codes and instructions for completing the census online. The remaining 10% of households will receive a paper questionnaire, which can also be requested by residents receiving the access code. ONS is providing a wide range of support services to help residents complete the census.
- 3.22 It is essential that we do everything we can to promote the census and encourage completion since the results have far-reaching consequences for our services and our local funding, such as for planning, housing, education and public health activities.
- 3.23 Some national and local activities have already begun to promote the census, with updates coming to the Bromley website and communications going out in various local newsletters and as press releases. Members are also being briefed on census activities and being encouraged to promote census completion to their constituents and on social media through #census2021.
- 3.24 ONS will launch their main publicity campaign in mid-February, which includes sending a postcard to Bromley residents informing them that the census is coming. Households will then receive their access codes or paper questionnaires from 3 March and a reminder letter in April for non-responders. In May, ONS will also run a field campaign in low response areas to increase completion. At the last census, Bromley achieved a high response rate of 95% and we are aiming to achieve a similar figure this year.

3.25 Digital Strategy and Digital Roadmap

- 3.26 The Council is in the process of drafting a Digital Strategy, which will be delivered by a Working Group of colleagues from IT services and across the Council. This work will build on our virtual Digital Conference delivered in partnership with BT in November 2020. As part of the development of this strategy, the Working Group has consulted other local authorities and with Gartner, an advisory company that works with local authorities on digitalisation programmes. As part of the development of this strategy, we will also engage partners including the NHS/CCG, police, fire brigade, local businesses, and our voluntary and community sector partners.
- 3.27 One of the key deliverables of the Digital Strategy is a Digital Roadmap, which will outline the strategic vision and direction of the Council in adopting a digital approach to service delivery, including large-scale projects.
- 3.28 Each service will develop and deliver their own local Digital Transformation Plans for review by the Digital Working Group identifying quick wins and where any savings might be achieved through the introduction of technology and digital transformation, as well as any potential longer-term spend-to-save transformation proposals with a supporting business plan in place.

3.29 Transformation Programme 2019 - 2023

- 3.30 As we enter the third year of the four year transformation programme, the Transformation Board, chaired by the Chief Executive, has continued to meet regularly to scrutinise the development of transformation proposals across the six workstreams in order to help reduce the Council's emerging budget gap over the next four years:

1. Housing Planning and Regeneration
2. Children's Services and Education
3. Adult Social Care

4. Environment and Public Protection
5. Professional Services
6. Workplace Modernisation

3.31 We have also progressed a number of key transformation proposals to ensure we can deliver services within a sustainable financial envelope. Transformation savings identified for this year have been reflected in the draft 2021/22 budget: we anticipate this will deliver circa £3.6m in 2021/22 and £6m in 2022/23. The Transformation Board will continue to reflect on future savings and income generating opportunities, while also ensuring that we continue to deliver on existing proposals alongside our mitigation savings and reducing long-term growth.

3.32 **Supporting our workforce during COVID-19**

3.33 Since the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, we have prioritised the wellbeing of our staff and work hard to ensure that our workforce is well supported during this difficult time. Since March 2020, 159 new starters have joined the Council and 113 colleagues have left, including staff who have retired.

3.34 Since March 2020, we have closely monitored our attendance and sickness levels. As at 20 January, there are currently 18 employees recorded as absent due to Covid-19. Since the beginning of the pandemic, there have been 790.64 working days lost to COVID-19 which equates to 0.6 working days per FTE and 11% of the total sickness in the year period. As at 20 January, there are 7 employees recorded as currently self-isolating.

3.35 Following on from the Covid-19 staff survey in May 2020, a follow-up survey will be rolled out during January and February to determine how staff are feeling about their longer-term experiences of remote working or office working if they cannot work from home; the impact of COVID-19 support work on staff wellbeing; our longer-term return to work approach; and the impact of our equality and inclusion work.

3.36 **Council achievements in 2020**

3.37 As a Council we have also achieved a number of key successes despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic including:

- Delivering the Council's first digital conference, identify opportunities for a digital-first approach to service delivery in the future
- Completing the Windows 10 Transformation project and rolling out laptops to all staff
- Holding our first Green Recovery Board meeting to tackle longer term environmental challenges for the local area
- Holding our first staff wellbeing survey in May and establishing a Staff Survey Working Group to take forward key recommendations from the findings.
- Reopening the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) in July 2020 and receiving planning permission for development on three sites: Burnt Ash Lane, Bushell Way and Anerley Road.
- Publishing our Regeneration Strategy for 2020 to 2030,
- Adopted a five-year Air Quality Action Plan for the borough.
- Progressing key transformation proposals to ensure we can deliver services within a sustainable financial envelope
- Launching our adult social care Making Practice Personal framework, articulating our system-wide approach to working with adults in need of care, advice and support across the borough
- Our nomination for the national Council Pension Fund award
- Our positive discussions with Ofsted during our Annual Conversations to review practice across children's social care and education services

- Delivering our new Public Protection Enforcement Policy, outlining our enforcement processes relating to licensing, trading standards, public nuisance.

3.38 Strategic priorities for 2021/22

1. Delivery of Transforming Bromley Programme proposals for 2022/23 budget setting
2. Building a Better Bromley Corporate Plan
3. Implementing our Regeneration Strategy
4. Operational Property Review
5. Digital Strategy and Digital Roadmap
6. Long-term budget management and financial strategy
7. Maintaining organisational resilience, including succession planning and effective emergency planning
8. Meeting our statutory and regulatory requirements