

# RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO HEALTH & HOUSING COMMITTEE

INFORMATION

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meeting date: THURSDAY, 28 OCTOBER 2021  
title: GENERAL REPORT  
submitted by: CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
principal author: MATTHEW RIDING – PART TIME HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

## 1 PURPOSE

1.1 To inform Committee of the relevant issues which have arisen since the last meeting.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities

- Council Ambitions - The following reports generally relate to the Council's ambitions to make people's lives healthier and safer.

## 2 HANSON CEMENT LIAISON MEETING

2.1 A liaison meeting was held on 23 September 2021. A copy of the minutes is attached as Appendix A to this report.

## 3 AIR QUALITY- ANNUAL STATUS REPORT 2020

3.1 The mandatory annual air quality report has recently been completed and will be submitted to DEFRA for consideration and validation. A copy of the report is attached as Appendix B to this report.

3.2 The results from the 2020 monitoring programme and review of the government data have identified no areas of likely exceedances of the national objective values for any of the pollutants of concern inside or outside of the declared Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). The monitoring programme has identified a dramatic reduction in nitrogen dioxide levels at all sites in the first half of the year, although an increase in nitrogen dioxide levels was observed at all sites throughout the second half of the year.

3.3 As a priority over the next few months, the Council will continue to work with partner organisations, in particular the County Public Health team and other local authorities in the development of a county wide guidance document for planning, to ensure all developments adequately address air quality impacts. The Council will also continue to expand its air quality monitoring programme by providing additional monitoring sites for nitrogen dioxide in Longridge and Whalley. This is because there has been a significant increase in vehicular movement in both settlements due to the large number of new homes that have recently been built.

3.4 Looking ahead, it is anticipated that any proposed substantial infrastructure schemes undertaken within the borough may have a temporary adverse impact on the air quality, due to the potential increase in the movement of heavy goods vehicles.

## 4 COVID-19 UPDATE

4.1 During our last meeting, I reported that the number of cases in the Ribble Valley had started to rise again. This pattern continued throughout September and the number of confirmed positive cases peaked on 25 September 2021, when a total of 365 confirmed

cases were reported for the previous 7 days (589 daily incidence per 100,000). A study of these cases showed that a high percentage were school children. One school reported an outbreak affecting over 50 (??) children and therefore Lancashire County Council (LCC) deployed 2 Mobile Testing Units (MTU's) to this site, to help facilitate rapid testing and the early identification of positive cases.

- 4.2 The number of PCR tests undertaken at Edisford Local Testing Site (LTS) increased significantly during the first three weeks of September, due to the rising number of symptomatic cases. A record 1102 tests were recorded at Edisford LTS during the week commencing 20 September 2021, although the number of tests reduced noticeably at the beginning of October which coincided with the declining number of symptomatic cases after 25 September 2021.
- 4.3 A meeting was held at Edisford LTS, on 21 September 2021, with representatives of the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), LCC and RVBC to discuss the possibility of reducing the footprint of the testing site. The meeting was requested by the Council's Head of Engineering Services in order to try and regain 30 parking spaces, thereby helping to alleviate some of the traffic problems experienced on Edisford Road. I am pleased to report that the meeting had a positive outcome and that the footprint of the site will be reduced in the next few weeks. The Council is currently negotiating an extension of the lease agreement with the DHSC, in order for them to continue to use Edisford Road Car Park as a Local Testing Site for a further six months.
- 4.4 The weekly vaccination data, published on 10 October 2021, recorded that a total of 48,605 Ribble Valley residents had been vaccinated with at least one dose, whilst 45,236 residents had received two doses.
- 4.5 The Council's Local Contact Tracing team has had another busy two months. 455 cases were received from the NHS Test and Trace System during the period 9 August to 1 October 2021. 288 cases (63.3%) were successfully contacted, whilst 40 cases (9%) were contacted but refused to cooperate.

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