

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL Scrutiny Report Template	
Committee:	Corporate Scrutiny Committee
Date:	23 April, 2021
Subject:	Council's Response to Covid-19- Wellbeing of Council staff and communities and monitoring the effectiveness of the Track and Trace strategy (TTP)
Purpose of Report:	Scrutinise the Council's response to Covid-19 through protecting the wellbeing of staff and communities and the effectiveness of the Track and Trace strategy (TTP) on the Island.
Scrutiny Chair:	Cllr Aled Morris Jones
Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr Llinos Medi Huws, Council Leader
Head of Service:	Annwen Morgan, Chief Executive
Report Author: Tel: Email:	Annwen Morgan, Chief Executive 01248 752102 Annwenmorgan@ynysmon.gov.uk
Local Members:	All local members

1 - Recommendation/s

The Corporate Scrutiny Committee is requested to:
Note the Council's response to the pandemic and specifically the response in protecting the wellbeing of staff and communities and the effectiveness of the Track and Trace strategy (TTP) on the Island.

2 – Link to Council Plan / Other Corporate Priorities

This report outlines the Council's response to date to the worldwide pandemic under the auspices of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, which is a key priority for the Council. The Council has defined roles and responsibilities under the Act in preparing and responding to an emergency at a local level.

3 – Guiding Principles for Scrutiny Members

To assist Members when scrutinising the topic:-

3.1 Impact the matter has on individuals and communities [**focus on customer/citizen**]

3.2 A look at the efficiency & effectiveness of any proposed change – both financially and in terms of quality [**focus on value**]

3.3 A look at any risks [focus on risk]**3.4 Scrutiny taking a performance monitoring or quality assurance role [focus on performance & quality]****3.5 Looking at plans and proposals from a perspective of:**

- Long term
- Prevention
- Integration
- Collaboration
- Involvement

[focus on wellbeing]**4 - Key Scrutiny Questions**

1. To what extent have clear and adequate steps been taken to protect the health and wellbeing of Council staff during the pandemic?
2. What appropriate and timely activities have been provided to support community wellbeing and vulnerable individuals during the pandemic?
3. To what extent has the Council worked effectively in collaboration, taking full advantage of opportunities, resources and capacity to protect the wellbeing of everyone?
4. How has the Council played a full role and worked effectively in collaboration to implement the national Track, Trace and Protect system on the Island?
5. In which way could the Council have done more or have done things differently during the pandemic (from the perspective of wellbeing and TTP) if at all?

5 – Background / Context**BACKGROUND / CONTEXT**

- 1.1. Covid-19 is an infectious disease which has and is affecting over 200 countries worldwide¹, including the United Kingdom since January 2020 and continues to be extremely challenging for the whole world. It is therefore true to state that the pandemic is having a far-reaching impact. The current period (**managing the emergency response to the Pandemic, Recovery Period and gradually returning to the new Norm**) are extremely challenging periods for the Council and every other public organisation throughout Wales as we continue to face the challenges of the Covid-19 emergency. This has meant that the Council has changed its way of working as a result of the global health emergency.

2.0 Council Preparations in Response to Covid-19

Corporate and Business Continuity Management plans were invoked following national guidance and due to the impact of COVID-19 which included the following interventions:

- i. Emergency Management Response Team established which continues meeting weekly whilst managing business as usual and preparing and managing unlocking and recovery

- ii. Local Prevention and Surveillance Group meeting weekly which includes key partners in order to provide an inter-agency response.
- iii. Weekly Situation Reports prepared summarising key decisions, issues and risks
- iv. Frequent communication internally with Members and staff and externally via the Council website and social media to assist in protecting the health, safety and the wellbeing of everyone.
- v. Formal COVID-19 risk register reviewed and updated weekly
- vi. Reflect, learn and identify good practices for the future.

3.0 Local situation and context

3.1 During the pandemic, the Council has dealt with numerous challenges relating to clusters and increasing cases, but has succeeded to respond appropriately to this in a timely manner through a multi-agency response. A recent example is the response to the significant increase in cases in the Holyhead area.

3.1.1 Robust actions were taken by the Council in a timely manner which included:

- Establishing an Incident Management Team (IMT)
- Re-emphasising regulations and behaviours locally
- Reviewing pupil cases and school position
- Mass community testing being deployed:
 - More than 800 people attended the MTU in Holyhead
 - 1,800 PCR tests returned following door to door visits
 - Asymptomatic Testing Centre – 290 tests thus far
 - 3,600 rapid LFD testing kits for secondary school pupils
- Proactive enforcement
- Communication and information sharing

3.1.2 As a result of the multi-agency response and intervention, the situation was successfully managed swiftly, avoiding further community spread to other Anglesey communities.

3.2 Current Covid-19 Statistics on the Island

Following a challenging period of dealing with a high number of cases on a daily basis on Anglesey, and with one of the highest incidence and positivity rates in Wales, the situation on Anglesey is now stabilising. Anglesey's data for 18.04.21 can be seen below:

- **4 new cases, cumulative 2,294. Incidence Rate now 8.6 (down by 22.8)**

Status of Covid-19 Cases on Anglesey (18.04.21)

Last 7 days	Previous 7 days
6 new cases (down 73%)	22 new cases
8.6 per 100,000/ 7 days	31.4 per 100,000/ 7 days
Decrease of 22.8 per 100,000/ 7 days	
543 tests (down by 16%)	646 tests
Positivity rate- 1.1% (decrease of 2.3%)	3.4% positivity rate

3.3 Despite the recent improvement and reduction in number of cases, the Emergency Team and the Senior Management Team continue to monitor the situation on a daily basis, taking into account the impact of the recent relaxation of restrictions and the fact that all of Anglesey's students have now returned to formal face to face education. It will be possible to report verbally on the most recent data in the Committee on 23 April.

4.0 RATIONALE FOR SCRUTINISING THE TOPIC

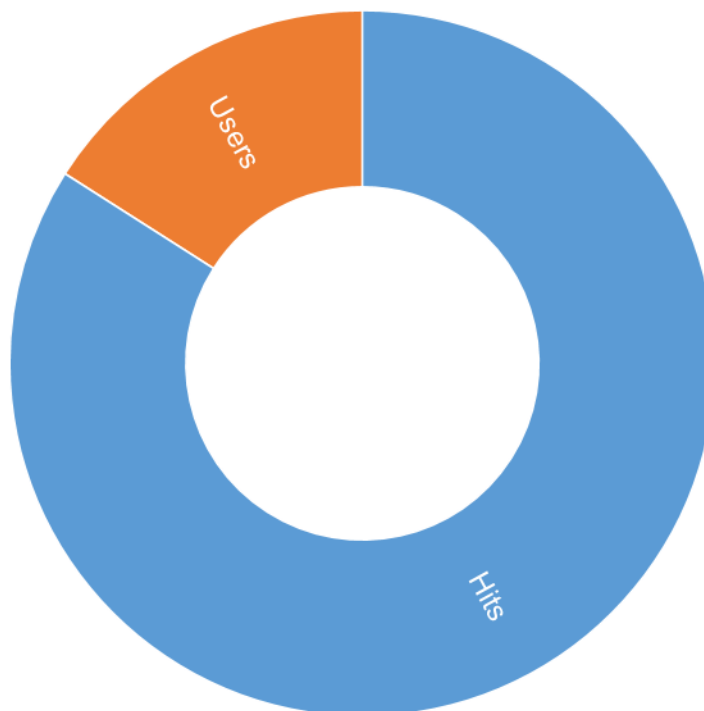
The case for scrutinising the Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic is compelling:

- i. During an emergency period, governance and accountability are of key importance and that Elected Members and the citizens of Ynys Môn have the assurance that decisions made are appropriate, timely and transparent
- ii. The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny's good practice model refers to the need for Councils' scrutiny committees to scrutinise an overview of the organisation's response to Covid-19
- iii. Locally, the remit of both committees facilitates the process of setting the boundaries for the topic
- iv. The Corporate Scrutiny Committee requested at its meeting on 14 September, 2020 to follow-up on two specific aspects of the Council's response to Covid-19 namely: Wellbeing of Council staff and communities and monitoring the effectiveness of the Track and Trace system (TTP).

5.0 Staff Health & Well-being

- a. Staff health and well-being has been a key priority during the on-going pandemic, with several initiatives implemented during 2020-21.
- b. At the commencement of the initial lockdown period in March 2020, a Working from Home Well-being page was quickly established sharing information and resources around the on-going threat of Coronavirus, as well as health and well-being in general.
- c. During this period, the page had a total of 14,163 hits, across a total of 2,691 users. This highlights that the page was very well received as it clearly indicates that users were returning to the resource throughout the year.

Table 1



d. During March 2021, the page was revamped into a Health & Well-being Category and now houses 7 individual pages around specific Health & Well-being areas, and has registered 134 users across the 7 pages in the last month of 2020-21. The resource has been referred to regularly in the Chief Executive's weekly message.

e. A total of 21 sessions were arranged corporately around Health & Well-being areas such as financial well-being, hate crime, substance misuse, mental health and also an insightful question and answer session with Dr Dyfrig Ap-Dafydd on the COVID-19 Vaccinations. A total of 223 members of staff attended across all sessions. These are broken down in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Course	Sessions Held	Numbers attended
Mid-Career Financial Planning Seminar	1	6
Fraud Prevention Training	1	30
Pre Retirement	2	6
Foundation of Financial Well-being	1	10
Financial Well-being - Protection	1	11
Financial Wellness	1	7
Hate Crime Awareness Session	3	16
Substance Misuse Awareness	2	11
Boosting Your Mental Health and Wellbeing	1	20
Emailogic - Email Etiquette and Wellbeing	2	44
Mental Health Awareness for Staff	3	23
Mental Wellbeing at Work for Managers	2	18
Dr Dyfrig - COVID-19 Vaccine Q&A	1	21

f. In addition, the Social Care provision arranged a total of 7 Health & Well-being related sessions, with a total attendance of 62. These were primarily around Mental Health and Anxiety. See Table 3 for breakdown.

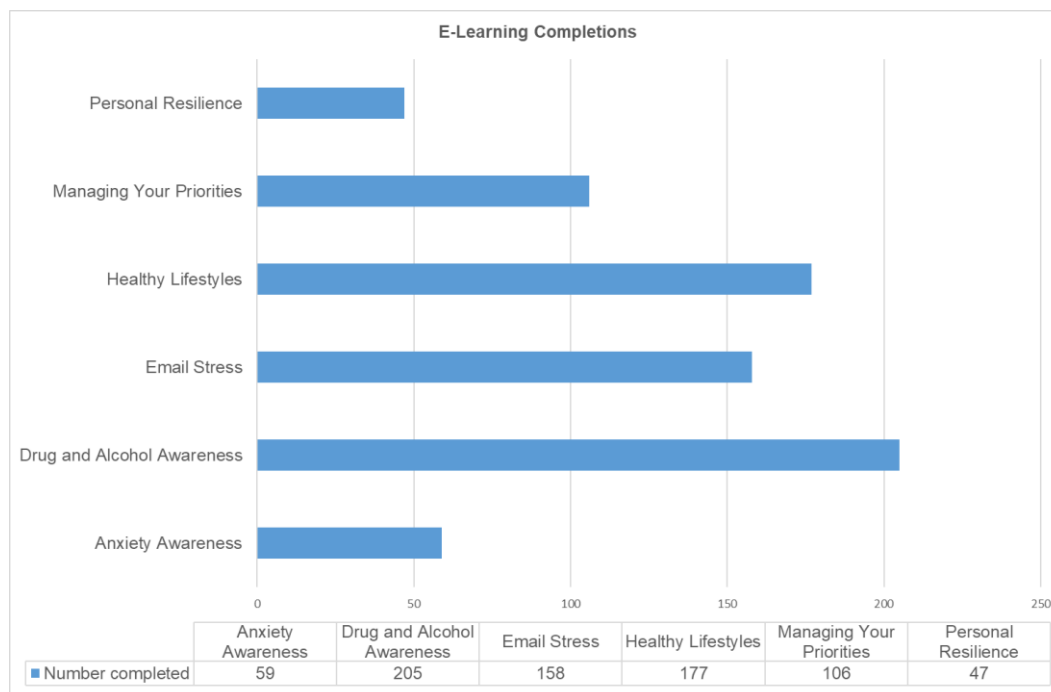
Table 3

Course	Sessions Held	Numbers attended
Mental Health First Aid	2	12
i-act Mental Health Awareness - Managers	1	11
i-act Mental Health Awareness - Staff	1	2
Anxiety Awareness for Managers	1	13
Anxiety Awareness	2	24

g. E-Learning again proved invaluable during this period, with existing modules being utilised, as well as the more recent launch of the Anxiety Awareness and Personal Resilience modules towards the end of February 2021, with completions being naturally lower due to their later launch in comparison to the other modules.

h. In total there were 752 completions across 6 modules during 2020-21. Completions are broken down per module in Table 4 below.

Table 4



6.0 Community Wellbeing and Support for Vulnerable Individuals

- a. Developed a community guidance document on Covid-19 and other important information, see link below. The link also contains contact details of community coordinators and distribution companies.
- b. The Council established a bespoke 9-option emergency telephone line, available 7 days a week. Information, Advice and Assistance in our communities is available through our Single Point of Access in the community facilitated by Medrwn Môn together with support from Local Asset Co-ordinators (community agents who refer individuals to community assets and services - a key element of the Medrwn Môn social prescribing service).
- c. The Council's in-house welfare rights team, O'Toole Centre, has handled 2,200 enquiries since the restrictions. This includes referrals to food banks, benefits advice and guidance and referrals to other specialist agencies, both internally and externally.
- d. Social Workers, Team Around the Family, Flying Start and Youth Workers kept in contact with vulnerable children and their families, delivering Free School Meals, distributing free masks to children and young people, providing activity bags (over 600 in total) and offering advice and guidance to parents who were struggling throughout this period.
- e. *"There has been effective collaboration between internal local authority departments, outside agencies and specialist services since the outset of the pandemic. Staff from Children's Services, Youth Services and the Education Psychology Service have worked closely with education staff (including school staff) to support vulnerable learners and improve pupils' learning and wellbeing."*

Review of local authorities work in supporting their learning communities in schools – January 2021 - Estyn

- f. Housing Services have made over 2,000 phone calls to our Pensioners and Sheltered Housing tenants, often putting them in touch with other services specific to any of their needs at the time.
- g. Contact Môn and Adult Services telephoned all residents on the shielding list, just under 4,000 people.
- h. 37 local volunteer teams (Area Teams) deployed 860 volunteers during the first wave of Covid-19. It is important to add that good turns continue to be done despite the relaxation of restrictions; however we have a cohort of residents on Anglesey who have lost confidence in going out and going shopping.
- i. Menter Môn created an interactive map of the details of each Voluntary Co-ordinator and the map was widely shared. To date, this interactive map has attracted 45,579 views. This includes a Canadian woman who was trying to establish local support for her elderly mother on Anglesey.
 - a. <https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=1PP3U6cU6ay2N5oOzWcRVt0aE2uPs2UmN&ll=53.293487875745875%2C-4.377189449999945&z=11>
- j. Area Teams are now involved in the Island's training scheme for Volunteers county wide, which was originally piloted in Mechell and Twrcelyn. Volunteers will be offered training in GDPR, Safeguarding in cases of Domestic Abuse. This training is delivered by the HR team at IACC by means of e-learning. The training can be used to support and enhance volunteers' knowledge and skills in key areas such

as safeguarding. It can also support long-term unemployed volunteers to gain new knowledge and skills to improve their career prospects. It is estimated that up to 600 volunteers will be trained through the IACC's e-learning training system.

- k. Over 2,000 food packages were prepared and delivered by food banks.
- l. 3,000 Neges packs were delivered to vulnerable Anglesey residents.
- m. Menter Môn's Ciando Project: a project to provide temporary accommodation for key workers in Gwynedd and Anglesey to reduce the risk of them infecting their families during the virus. 47 workers were accommodated and a total of 144 properties were registered. Worked in partnership with accommodation company Dioni. An evaluation of the project is currently being undertaken.
- n. Menter Môn's Agri Bank : 11 people have registered, and one smallholding in Holyhead has been able to take advantage of the sheep shearing scheme because the farmer is ill.
- o. Menter Môn's Selog Scheme: 12 resource packs including worksheets and solutions, 37 video clips to support the activities, a Facebook site created to share the product with parents - 620 followers, and 926 followers on Twitter. The work has been streamed nationally through the Hub, and there is evidence of its use beyond Anglesey.
- p. Five innovative individual wellbeing projects aimed at different groups were delivered, led by Housing Services in collaboration with various partners. Through Medrwn Môn's efforts, funding was sourced from various grant streams including the National Lottery. The groups included children with disabilities, adults with learning disabilities and those supported by the Magnox-funded North Anglesey Housing / Children Support Grant / children on the Child Protection Register and looked after children / council housing tenants . Gardening or indoor resources wellbeing packages were offered to support well-being. Over 1,000 residents received well-being packages and positive results were reported. Individual reports for each project are available through Housing Services. Deliveries for these projects were arranged through a multi-agency scheme between Clwyd Alyn and SKY.
- q. The Council developed the Our Team newsletter which was shared with all our partners, Elected Members and all town and community councils across the Island. This was to ensure that recipients of this newsletter were updated twice a week on progress and developments throughout the first wave. This newsletter has now been changed to a monthly one, but if there is a third wave we can review the frequency of the newsletter's publication. 16 Our Team newsletters were issued throughout the period.
- r. Contact was made with grant funding bodies and businesses to seek financial support to run the local food banks. This has been very effective, and approximately £100,000 was raised for Anglesey Food Banks which can provide up to 50 tonnes of emergency supplies. Based on peak levels, our food banks have sufficient funds and stock for up to 18 months.
- s. The Council has ensured that free school meal payments have been made since April, 2020, during periods when the schools were closed and during school holidays. Additionally, payments have been made to eligible parents if a pupil had to self-isolate (during full school closure, or when individual classes/years have had to self-isolate). During Easter 2021, 1,029 families received payments of £19.50 for 1,816 of children, with a total of £35,412 being paid weekly.
- t. Isle of Anglesey Council assisted over 2000 businesses on the Island to secure financial support as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Circa £40m grants distributed to Anglesey businesses.

- u. On a multi-agency basis and led by the Steering Group, the Council is leading on a short, medium and longer term well-being plan to safeguard the well-being of our residents. Numerous activities took place over the Easter 2021 period, including the provision of 250 afternoon teas for over 50s who have been on their own during this emergency period.
- v. 15 volunteers conveying Anglesey residents to vaccination appointments
- w. 210 individuals with mental health needs have been supported.
- x. Welsh Government grant funding for volunteers has enabled us to support community hubs that have lost income during this period due to Covid-19 guidelines. £450 has been shared between 39 community hubs to meet costs (*important that these hubs can re-open when Covid-19 guidelines allow them to do so because of their importance to the well-being of our residents*)
- y. Well-being plan providing resources and support for many age groups across the Island including virtual yoga through a private provider, funding towards technology for community hubs
- z. A Digital scheme through Medrwn Môn, Adult Services and Gwynedd and Môn Age Well to maximise the digital skills of Anglesey people. This scheme is funded by ICF and will hire a Samsung tablet for 60 people for a period of three months. Volunteer digital champions and Council officers have set up the scheme to support individuals to maximise their digital skills so that they can attend virtual hubs and manage their food shopping or finances on-line.
- aa. Effective collaboration among partners has built on a firm foundation, creating further opportunities for the recovery period and beyond (e.g preventative work, the recovery of communities, responding to climate change, and anti-poverty work etc).
- bb. Statutory work has continued with the Council's Social Services (Adults and Children and Families Services), in order to keep Anglesey's residents safe. Below is the total number of assessments undertaken by both services during the past 12 months. The demand for assessments has varied, and services will monitor this moving forward:

Type of assessment	Completed 19/20	Completed 20/21	% Difference
Adults – What's Important Part 1 (Initial Assessment)	1, 224	803	□ 41.54%
Adults– Specialist Social Services Assessment (Further Assessment)	944	724	□ 26.38%
Adults – Occupational Therapy Assessment Report	502	167	□ 100.15%
Adults – Safeguarding Enquiries Report	227	281	□ 21.26%
Children – What's Important Part 2	647	945	□ 46.06%
Children – Specialist Social Services Assessment (Further Assessment)	743	272	□ 63.39%

7.0 TTP Strategy on Anglesey

7.1 It is important to note that TTP systems are different in Wales and England, and that a regional model is operational across the 6 counties of North Wales. The system is funded by Welsh Government until 30 September, 2021. There are approximately 80 staff

working for the local TTP team on Anglesey, including Business Managers, Tracers and Advisers. Some staff have been seconded from their core jobs (until September 2021), and others have been newly recruited.

7.2 There are currently two different types of tests offered namely, PCR (symptomatic testing) and LFD test (asymptomatic testing), but there is a system in place if a LFD test is positive with the individual required to go for a PCR test. It can take up to 72 hours to receive test results, and any contacts are monitored for 10 days through phone calls or texts in order to ascertain whether they develop symptoms. All case files throughout Wales are kept on the CRM system, and a Contact Tracer makes contact with a positive case asking them to self-isolate for 10 days, and to collate the necessary information in order to ensure that any contacts follow the correct procedure. A target of contacting 80% of positive cases and contacts within 24 hours was set, and the local team on Anglesey continuously exceed this target as can be seen below:

Key Statistics (01.06.20 – 19.04.21)

Positive cases:

- 2294 cases (3.3% of the population)
- 1906 of these cases were eligible for follow-up
- Team have succeeded to make contact with 99% of these within 48 hours, which exceeds the target.

Contacts:

- 5886 contacts (8.4% of the population)
- 5709 of these contacts were eligible for follow-up
- Team have succeeded to make contact with 95% of these within 48 hours, which exceeds the target.
- A total of 12% of Anglesey's population have isolated during this period.

7.3 By now, the UK or Kent variant is the dominant variant across North Wales, with household transmission prevalent within households. Cross-household transmission is increasing here on Anglesey, with a clear pattern of cases in areas along the A55. Since the beginning of the pandemic, Holyhead has seen the highest incident rate, closely followed by Llangefni and then Llanfairpwll

7.4 Looking Forward

The team are planning for a possible 3rd wave, are considering what the arrangements will be after September 2021, and awaiting national confirmation and guidance to this end. Arrangements are in hand to ensure that mutual aid is available to the other counties in North Wales in case of a significant increase in cases in order to ensure an effective regional response to the emergency, and make the best use of the regional model for the benefit of North Wales' inhabitants.

6 – Equality Impact Assessment [including impacts on the Welsh Language]

N/A

7 – Financial Implications

8 – Appendices:

9 - Background papers (please contact the author of the Report for any further information):