

Council**Thursday, 14 January 2021, Online - 10.00 am****Minutes****Present:**

Mr G R Brookes (Chairman), Mr A A J Adams, Mr R C Adams, Ms P Agar, Mr A T Amos, Mr T Baker-Price, Mr R W Banks, Mrs J A Brunner, Mr B Clayton, Mr K D Daisley, Mr P Denham, Ms R L Dent, Mr N Desmond, Mrs E A Eyre, Mr S E Geraghty, Mr P Grove, Mr I D Hardiman, Mr A I Hardman, Mr P B Harrison, Mr M J Hart, Mrs A T Hingley, Mrs L C Hodgson, Dr A J Hopkins, Dr C Hotham, Mr M E Jenkins, Mr A D Kent, Mr R C Lunn, Mr P M McDonald, Mr S J Mackay, Mr L C R Mallett, Ms K J May, Mr P Middlebrough, Mr A P Miller, Mr R J Morris, Mr J A D O'Donnell, Mrs F M Oborski, Ms T L Onslow, Dr K A Pollock, Mrs J A Potter, Prof J W Raine, Mrs M A Rayner, Mr A C Roberts, Mr C Rogers, Mr J H Smith, Mr A Stafford, Ms C M Stalker, Mr C B Taylor, Mrs E B Tucker, Mr P A Tuthill, Mr R M Udall, Mrs R Vale, Ms S A Webb and Mr T A L Wells

Available papers

The members had before them

- A. The Agenda papers (previously circulated);
- B. 4 questions submitted to the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance (previously circulated); and
- C. The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2020 (previously circulated).

2238 Apologies and Declaration of Interests (Agenda item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Mr R M Bennett, Mr A Fry and Mr R P Tomlinson.

Declarations of interest were received in relation to Agenda item 10 – Notice of Motion 3 - as members or retired members of trade unions from Mr L C R Mallett, Ms P Agar, Mr R M Udall, Mr R C Lunn, Mr J H Smith, Mrs R Vale, Mrs J A Brunner, Mrs F M Oborski, Mr K D Daisley, Mr B Clayton, Dr C Hotham, Dr K A Pollock, Mrs M A Rayner, Mr R J Morris, Mr P Denham, Mr A I Hardman, Mr P M McDonald, Prof J W Raine and Mr A P Miller.

2239 Public

Dr J Birks asked a question about Active Travel.

**Participation
(Agenda item 2)**

Ms R Wormington asked a question about environmental sustainability and the climate and ecological emergency.

Mr A Lyon asked questions about zero carbon transport.

Mr A Spencer asked a question about net zero carbon emissions.

Ms C Screen asked a question about greenhouse gas emissions.

Mr P Oliver asked a question about thermal efficiency of the Energy from Waste plant at Hartlebury.

Mr D Whiting made a comment about climate change and flooding.

Ms L Winterbourn asked a question about divestment from fossil fuels.

Ms P McCarthy asked questions about the net Zero Carbon Plan

The Chairman thanked all the public participants for their contribution and said they would receive a written response from the relevant Cabinet Member.

**2240 Minutes
(Agenda item 3)**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**2241 Chairman's
Announcements
(Agenda item 4)**

Noted.

A Minute's silence was held in memory of Ms P A Hill who had sadly passed away.

**2242 Reports of
Cabinet -
Summary of
Decisions
Taken (Agenda
item 5)**

The Leader of the Council reported the following topics and questions were answered on them:

- Land Acquisition
- Revenue Budget Monitoring – Month 6 (30 September) 2020/21
- Wheels to Work
- Fair Funding for Schools 2021-22 – National and Local Funding Arrangements for Schools.

**2243 Annual Report
of the Leader of
the Council**

The Leader of the Council presented his report.

The Leader then answered a broad range of questions from members.

	<p>(Agenda item 6)</p> <p>The Chairman thanked the Leader for his report.</p> <p>The report was noted.</p>
<p>2244 Annual Report of the Chief Executive (Agenda item 7)</p>	<p>The Chief Executive presented his report to Council which covered various topics.</p> <p>The Chief Executive answered a broad range of questions from members.</p> <p>The Chief Executive expressed particular thanks to the Local Outbreak Response Team for their work during the pandemic and to staff involved in Financial Control for the improvements in the financial management of the Council.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked the Chief Executive for his report.</p>
<p>2245 Report of the Cabinet Member with Responsibility - Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care (Agenda item 8)</p>	<p>The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care presented his report to Council which covered various topics.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care answered a broad range of questions from members.</p> <p>Members offered their congratulations to Mr Hardman who had recently become a grandfather for the first time.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care for his report.</p>
<p>2246 Annual Report of the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board (Agenda item 9)</p>	<p>The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board (OSPB) introduced the report. He indicated that the Covid 19 pandemic had delayed and then dominated the scrutiny programme and as a result, a backlog of work had been created. He thanked the Leader and the Chief Executive for their support in reporting to scrutiny in respect of Covid 19. He thanked the outgoing Chairman of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel, Mrs F M Oborski for her work and welcomed the incoming Chairman Mr T A L Wells. He thanked the Vice-Chairman of the OSPB, Mrs E A Eyre and the members of the Board and Scrutiny Panels as well as officers for their contribution to the scrutiny process over the year.</p> <p>The Vice-Chairman of the Board added her thanks to the Chairman for his contribution since becoming Chairman.</p> <p>The Chairman of the Board undertook to look into the</p>

2247 Notices of Motion - Notice of Motion 1 - Kinship Carers (Agenda item 10)

possibility of arranging for Professor Dawn Brooker from the University of Worcester, who is a leading expert on Dementia, to present to the OSPB.

The report was noted.

The Council had before it a Notice of Motion set out in the agenda papers standing in the names of Mr R C Lunn, Ms C M Stalker, Ms P Agar, Ms P A Hill, Mr P Denham, Mr P M McDonald, and Mr L C R Mallett.

The motion was moved by Mr R M Udall and seconded by Mrs C M Stalker who both spoke in favour of it, and Council agreed to deal with it on the day.

The following amendment was moved by Mr A R Roberts and accepted as an alteration by the mover and seconder of the motion which therefore became the substantive motion:

“Council recognises the important contribution from kinship carers in the county within the scope of ‘Friends Family and Connected Persons’. However, some kinship carers especially grandparents and older siblings can face unexpected hardship, stress and anxiety. Council asks the Cabinet Member responsible to see that the findings of the review of provision that has been undertaken, which considers what further support and assistance could be provided to help and support kinship carers in Worcestershire, is brought before the Cabinet.”

In the ensuing debate, the following points were raised:

- Complaints had been received from kinship carers about a lack of assistance and difficulties in their views being heard. Kinship carers often had to support family members at short notice which was stressful and impacted on their mental and financial well-being. Emotional and financial hardship was the reality for many kinship carers. It was important to express the council’s thanks for their efforts but also investigate how they could be better supported by the system. A review of the kinship care system should be undertaken which also sought the views of kinship carers and their representative bodies
- Kinship care provided the vitally needed element of stability which improved the well-being and educational development of children who otherwise would enter social care. In the long term, kinship care helped to reduce

homelessness, crime, anti-social behaviour and improved health, as well as providing substantial cost savings to the state. Many kinship carers had been asked to provide support by the Council but did not feel supported in their role

- The Cabinet Member for Children and Families responded on behalf of the Conservative Group. He explained that the role kinship carers related to family members who took on the care of children who were not looked after and had been assessed by the Foster Carers Panel, acting on behalf of the Council. The kinship carer role did not relate to any informal arrangements between family members. A draft review of kinship care had been drafted and circulated for pre-Cabinet consultation. The intention was to present the review to the meeting of Cabinet in June as part of the Placement Proficiency report. The initial findings of the review indicated that kinship carers did have the appropriate level of training to undertake their role. Following approval by the Foster Carers Panel, kinship carers were provided with the same level of support including financial support as an unrelated foster carer. The Council was currently seeking to better promote the kinship offer, providing guidance on the relevant pathway to kinship carers whether as special guardians or through child arrangements order or by private family arrangement. This would enable the Council to identify the most appropriate type of support for the kinship carer. 20% of foster carers were kinship carers
- It was important to keep children with their family wherever possible however there were families where family relatives were considered inappropriate carers. All applications to become kinship carers should therefore be assessed by the Foster Carers Panel. The system should prevent kinship carers from falling into poverty
- There was a danger that family members would be disadvantaged by their unwillingness to receive financial support from the Council because of their sense of moral duty. The Council therefore needed to promote kinship carer support as widely as possible emphasising the basis for and availability of financial support and the ease access to it
- This motion opened up the opportunity for scrutiny to examine the kinship carer processes and procedures and establish best practice.

On being put to the vote, the substantive motion was agreed.

RESOLVED: “Council recognises the important contribution from kinship carers in the county within the scope of ‘Friends Family and Connected Persons’. However, some kinship carers especially grandparents and older siblings can face unexpected hardship, stress and anxiety. Council asks the Cabinet Member responsible to see that the findings of the review of provision that has been undertaken, which considers what further support and assistance could be provided to help and support kinship carers in Worcestershire, is brought before the Cabinet.”

2248 Notices of Motion - Notice of Motion 2 - Library Service (Agenda item 10)

The Council had before it a Notice of Motion set out in the agenda papers standing in the names of Mr R C Lunn, Ms C M Stalker, and Ms P Agar.

The motion was moved by Mr R C Lunn and seconded by Mr L C R Mallett who both spoke in favour of it, and Council agreed to deal with it on the day.

In the ensuing debate, the following points were raised:

- The motion provided an opportunity for the Council to express its gratitude for the work undertaken by library staff to keep the service functioning during the pandemic and to reimagine how the service could operate post pandemic. Libraries had always been and must remain a safe place for children and adults to visit which was why there should always be a member on staff available on the premises. The library service should retain its core statutory functions but also recognise the importance of enhancing its community service function as a public leisure hub. This approach would help to keep smaller libraries in the county in operation. In the future, libraries could act as virtual hubs for home-working. Consideration might need to be given to undertaking a review of opening hours post pandemic, perhaps extending to opening hours to the weekend
- Libraries made a huge economic contribution to communities in the county. Libraries helped children and young people with their education and personal development. Libraries facilitated adult education and improved skills which led to greater employability. They benefited users socially, mentally and increased digital inclusion

- The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Communities commented on behalf of the Conservative Group that libraries were thriving community facilities with a wide-range of service provision. A 24 hour digital service had been made available to all residents on line. It was hoped to reintroduce the mobile library service soon. She acknowledged the support provided by parish council and district council colleagues, particularly for libraries in St John's, Warndon and Bromsgrove. A key function of the service was adult learning whether in person or on line. The Hive acted as a business and property centre and it was intended to roll out this service to all libraries. Libraries had remained open during the pandemic and provided particular support through IT and digital services. She thanked all the library staff for their work, particularly through the 'Here to Help' initiative
- The library service should remain publicly owned, staffed by qualified librarians with strong links to the community. The move to self-service libraries should be resisted
- It was appropriate that library premises were shared with commercial operators and to review opening times
- Libraries provided a lifeline for people living alone
- Research had demonstrated that in the long-term, library provision delivered a high rate of economic return on the initial investment
- A new asset-based approach to library provision that aimed to prevent social isolation, improve health and equality and reduce the demands on the social care system was being rolled out in Bromsgrove. It would be used as an enabler to improve peoples' skills and develop a community offer
- The support provided by 'pop up' libraries to local residents during the pandemic was commended
- Libraries were now more energy-efficient with improved lighting and heating.
- Library staff were well-educated with a wide range of skills to help support the local community. The important work of library volunteers should also be acknowledged
- The Council's library service offer extended beyond its statutory duty with a hybrid approach to service provision
- The Council should look to attract people to the library service who would not normally consider

using or were unaware of its functions.

RESOLVED “This Council supports a publicly owned and accountable library service. We support them becoming ever more a centre of community and encourage their use as a local learning and public leisure facility,

Furthermore, Council records its thanks and appreciation to all Worcestershire Library employees and volunteers.”

2249 Notices of Motion - Notice of Motion 3 - Trade Unions (Agenda item 10)

This Motion was withdrawn by the mover and seconder.

2250 Notices of Motion - Notice of Motion 4 - Local 20mph Speed Limits (Agenda item 10)

The Council had before it a Notice of Motion set out in the agenda papers standing in the names of Mr M E Jenkins, Dr C Hotham, Dr J W Raine, Mrs M A Rayner and Mr T A L Wells.

The motion was moved by Mr M E Jenkins and seconded by Prof J W Raine who both spoke in favour of it, and Council agreed to deal with it on the day.

The following amendment was moved by Mr A T Amos and seconded by Mr P Middlebrough:

“Requests for more 20mph speed limits, particularly in residential areas and near schools, are often made to councillors. This motion requests that a task group or member advisory group be set up to review how 20mph areas are currently considered and look at the feasibility of creating a process that would allow a 20mph area to be created within a councillor’s division.”

In the ensuing debate, the following points were raised:

- A recent trial of 20mph speed limits in Rubery had not shown a reduction in recorded accidents, however it had failed to acknowledge the wider benefits of lowering speeds, increasing walking and cycling, decreased pollution levels as well as the support of national and local health services. The current policy was outdated and did not reflect the increased adoption of such measures

across the country. A Department for Transport report in 2018 showed that medium speed limits reduced in areas with 20mph speed limit as faster drivers tended to reduce their speed more. There was a great deal of public support for 20mph speed limits. Lower speed limits made streets safer, more inclusive and attractive for everyone. The motion sought to make the introduction of 20mph speed limits a local issue. The Residents Parking Scheme could be used as a template for its introduction. Many schemes could be introduced at minimal cost requiring little engineering work. The motion would allow councillors to contribute from their Divisional and/or Highways Fund

- The current 20mph speed limit policy needed to be reviewed to provide greater responsiveness to local resident's concerns
- The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways commented on behalf of the Conservative Group that the current policy was working successfully. It had been reviewed on two occasions via the Council's scrutiny function and had been based on the outcome of a pilot study in Rubery. The Policy allowed 20mph limits outside schools, in accident cluster sites and on new developments. The Police did not and would not enforce these zones and therefore they needed to be self-enforcing. As a result, additional engineering measures were necessary which were prohibitively expensive in terms of technology and officer time. Any review should include an examination of the criteria to determine the introduction of 20mph speed limits, the funding source for the work, and the extent of the consultation process in the local area, bearing in mind the impact on adjoining streets. The availability of staff resources to facilitate such work also needed to be borne in mind
- There was a danger that the introduction of 20mph limits could lead to motorists finding alternative routes and therefore creating problems elsewhere
- There was a danger that 20mph speed limits gave a false sense of security and became hazardous as people believed that they were being observed by motorists whereas the reality was that due to lack of enforcement by the Police, they were not. The existing policy did need to be reviewed to see if resources could be targeted and ensuring that 20mph speed limits were observed and enforced

- It was pointless introducing 20mph speed limits and additional signage if the Police did not enforce them
- As part of this review, it was important to understand the views of the public.

On being put to the vote, the amendment was carried and put as the substantive motion which was agreed.

RESOLVED: “Requests for more 20mph speed limits, particularly in residential areas and near schools, are often made to councillors. This motion requests that a task group or member advisory group be set up to review how 20mph areas are currently considered and look at the feasibility of creating a process that would allow a 20mph area to be created within a councillor’s division.”

**2251 Question Time
(Agenda item
11)**

Four questions had been received by the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance and had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The answers to all the questions are attached in the Appendix.

**2252 Reports of
Committees -
Audit and
Governance
Committee
(Agenda item
12(a))**

The Chairman of the Committee introduced the report and thanked his Vice-Chairman and members of the Committee for their commitment and dedication in addressing a number of challenging issues over the last four years.

It was queried how Council debt had been allowed to become outstanding to such an extent, who the debtors were and what the Council was doing to retrieve the outstanding debt. The Chairman of the Committee responded that the Committee had become aware of this issue and requested a breakdown of the outstanding debt in terms of length of time outstanding, quantity and number of debtors. In response to the Committee’s concerns, the Strategic Management Team had introduced procedures to tackle long term debt and two senior management posts within the debt recovery team had been created together with additional legal support to tackle the issue of debt recovery. He hoped to see major changes within the next 6 months.

The Council received the report of the Audit and Governance Committee containing a summary of the decisions taken.

**2253 Reports of
Committees -**

The Chairman of the Committee introduced the report and commented that a working group had been established to review the Fund’s position in relation to

**Pensions
Committee
(Agenda item
12(b))**

climate risk and Environment, Social and Governance issues. He anticipated that the findings of this working group would be reported back to the Pensions Committee at its meeting in March 2021.

The Council received the report of the Pensions Committee containing a summary of the decisions taken.

**2254 Reports of
Committees -
Planning and
Regulatory
Committee
(Agenda item
12(c))**

The Chairman of the Committee introduced the report.

A concern was expressed about the safety and suitability of temporary mobile classrooms. It was queried how many times a temporary classroom would be considered for renewal by the Committee before it was considered that such temporary accommodation should be replaced by permanent accommodation. The Chairman of the Planning and Regulatory Committee responded that the Committee had expressed concerns about the suitability of some older temporary classrooms, particularly from a health and safety perspective and had sent a message requesting that officers find permanent solutions wherever possible. However, each planning application needed to be considered on its merits.

In response to a query, the Chairman of the Planning and Regulatory Committee confirmed that the conditions associated with the planning permission granted on the site of the Metal and Ores Industrial Estate, Hanbury Road, Stoke Prior would be regularly monitored.

The Council received the report of the Planning and Regulatory Committee containing a summary of the decisions taken.

The meeting was adjourned from 12.25pm to 1.30 pm and ended at 3.35pm.

Chairman

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COUNCIL 14 JANUARY 2021 - AGENDA ITEM 11 – QUESTION TIME

Questions and written responses provided below.

QUESTION 1 – Mr P Tuthill asked Tony Miller:

“It has now been confirmed that the overall thermal efficiency of converting waste to electricity is approximately 30%. At the time of writing work is being done to determine the split of the other 70%- such flue gas, residues and particularly the lower grade heat from the cooling fans [the equivalent of cooling towers on a large power station].

I am aware there have been discussions with a nearby brick maker- clearly there cannot be district heating given the location- but some power stations supply local greenhouses. Could the Cabinet Member with Responsibility confirm what progress has been made and what is planned for this site to further contribute to WCC energy saving?”

Answer

Thank you for your question regarding EnviRecover the County Councils Energy Recovery Facility at Hartlebury.

You will no doubt be pleased to hear that due to the increased availability of the facility in 2020 it produced 10% more electricity than was originally modelled.

In addition to the electricity produced as you rightly say the Council and operator have explored the possibility of steam from the facility being utilised by the local brickworks. There have also been discussions with a number of other companies about utilising the steam, but unfortunately to date no agreement has been reached. Both the Council and operator are keen to find a use for the heat and are working together to try and deliver this; this requires a local user and investment.

Finally, I pointed out to members two years ago that this facility would not be static, it would evolve with technology and that is still the case. We are evolving with technology and that is why the facility has had modifications, has been improved and has efficiencies. It is worth pointing out that the Council and operator are in the early stages of discussing the possible use of battery storage and carbon capture technology at the facility.

Supplementary question

Was there a target date to draw these measures together? The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Environment responded that it was an ongoing task for the operator of the plant and Council officers to find a solution for the future use of steam and heat from this facility.

QUESTION 2 – Mr R C Lunn asked John Smith:

“Can the Cabinet Member with Responsibility inform Council as to how many Covid vaccination sites there are currently in Worcestershire, and how many will be added across the County?”

Answer

Thank you, Councillor Lunn, for your question.

The Covid-19 vaccination delivery programme is being led by the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). Public Health at Worcestershire County Council are working very closely with the CCG on this. There are currently 16 vaccination sites planned for the county. I am pleased to say that 13 of these sites are now already live and vaccinating residents. This is a rolling programme and we expect more sites to go live in the coming weeks.

The sites that are live are:

Kidderminster Medical Centre, Kidderminster
Hume Street Medical Centre, Kidderminster
BHI Parkside, Bromsgrove
Stourport Health Centre, Stourport
Winyates Health Centre, Redditch
New Road Surgery, Bromsgrove
Ombersley Medical Centre, Ombersley
Alexandra Hospital, Redditch
Droitwich Health Centre, Droitwich Spa
Malvern Health Centre, Malvern
Turnpike House Medical Centre, Worcester
Upton Surgery, Upton upon Severn
Riverside Surgery, Evesham

The Covid-19 vaccine programme will be the largest programme of its kind delivered. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the dedicated staff who are working to deliver this in Worcestershire.

I will arrange for the list of Covid-19 vaccination centres to be circulated to all councillors.

QUESTION 3 – Mr R M Udall asked Lucy Hodgson:

"Will the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Countryside Centres and Country Parks confirm what action she has taken to raise awareness and improve education about the risks of Lyme Disease in the county. Lyme Disease can have serious long-term effects on individuals and is present in the county. Would she consider working with the charity Lyme Disease UK to ensure information is available to the public and notices are placed at Countryside Centre's and Country Parks to advise residents of the dangers, risks and precautions they could take to minimise the risks?"

Answer

Richard thank you for this question.

It is a subject very close to my heart and the impact that it can have on a whole family. Around 20 years ago my niece caught the disease whilst walking in a Park where there were deer. She was bitten by a tick and came down with a mystery disease which for a number of years was thought to be ME. After much lobbying from my sister my niece was finally offered a test which identified she did have Lyme Disease but there was no real treatment and, in the end she was treated at a private hospital where they were able to treat the disease with strong antibiotics over a number of months. The disease is from the same family as Syphilis and can leave people bedridden. In the case of my niece, she had to be home educated and was in a very lonely place as there was little understanding of the disease.

So, what is Lyme Disease?

Lyme disease is a tick-borne bacterial infection that can be transmitted to humans when they are bitten by an infected tick. Lyme disease most commonly presents as a spreading rash around the bite area. In the UK, about a third of cases do not notice a rash and may present with fever, headache, or neurological symptoms.

Lyme disease is endemic in many parts of the United Kingdom, particularly in woodland or heathland areas but disease carrying ticks can also be found in cities and gardens. The ticks often come from Deer.

The key time to focus on activity will be spring onwards when the weather gets better, and people tend to wear shorts and short sleeves and sit on the ground for picnicking.

The national trust did an awareness campaign advertising the harm that can be caused by ticks and how to recognise what a tick looks like, how it can be removed and what are the symptoms to look out for.

The countryside service has agreed to display a public health England poster on all their sites in the spring and will also work with public health England comms team to help promote the posters.

A few years ago, Lyme Disease Action worked with St Johns Ambulance and the Duke of Edinburgh awards to produce appropriate information as to what you should look for. One of the outcomes was to encourage risk assessments to include the risks of catching the disease whilst doing certain outdoor activities. I would like to see that all schools are made aware of this work.

You mention working Lyme Disease UK and there is also the Caudwell Lymeco charity who are looking at ways of highlighting the disease across the county. I have asked officers to contact both to see how we can work together.

To conclude this answer, I would like to say that my niece Elizabeth did make a recovery. She lost over 10 years of her life growing up because of this disease and the impact affected the whole family. I am glad to say she is now a mother of 2 living with her husband in the Alps in France and is a successful accountant.

Supplementary question

In response to a request, the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Communities undertook to meet with Mr R M Udall and local representatives of Lyme Disease UK to discuss the issue and consider any suggestions to improve education and alert residents to the risks associated with Lyme Disease.

QUESTION 4 – Mr R C Lunn asked John Smith:

"Based on the most recent data, can the Cabinet Member with Responsibility inform Council as to what is the ratio of people being contacted by national Test and Trace compared to our local Public Health teams?"

Answer

Thank you, Councillor Lunn, for this question.

From 28th May 2020 to 30th December 2020, the national Test & Trace Service statistics show that 86% of Worcestershire residents who entered the system were contacted. This is slightly above the national average of 85%. The remaining 14% of people who national Test and Trace Service were unable to reach are known as 'lost to follow up'.

In Worcestershire, any lost to follow up cases are referred to our Local Contact Tracing Team. The Local Contact Tracing Team then attempt to contact these individuals. In addition to this, the Local Outbreak Response Team (LORT) also directly contact trace cases reported to them through outbreak reporting. Since October 2,500 people with COVID-19 have been contacted through the LORT, helping to gain insight into outbreaks and ensuring that people are adhering to self-isolation guidance. The LORT also carry out backward contact tracing which is a strategy used to identify where a person may have contracted Covid-19 to identify any common points of infection.

Given the current surge in Covid-19 infections within the county these local teams are under considerable pressure and are prioritising adult social care staff and staff from other high-risk settings.