

Part A

Report to: **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **Thursday, 4 February 2021**

Report author: **Senior Democratic Services Officer**

Title: **Responding to the impacts of Covid 19 on Watford's BAME communities and street name policy review task group**

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report provides Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the final report and recommendations of the Responding to the impacts of Covid 19 on Watford's Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities and street name policy review task group. The full report is attached as Appendix 1.
- 1.2 Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to review the report prior to it being forwarded to Cabinet.

2.0 Risks

- 2.1 No direct risks to the council have been identified as a result of the task group's recommendations.

3.0 Recommendations

- 3.1 that the final report and recommendations of the Responding to the impacts of Covid 19 on Watford's BAME communities and street name policy review task group be agreed and forwarded to Cabinet.

Further information:

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Report approved by:

4.0 Detailed proposal

- 4.1 At its meeting on 23 July 2020, Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed a scrutiny proposal to form a task group to consider the impacts of Covid 19 on Watford's

BAME communities. The proposal also included a focus on the council's approach to naming its streets.

- 4.2 The following councillors were appointed to the task group:

Councillor Favour Ezeifedi	Chair, Councillor for Holywell Ward
Councillor Dawn Allen-Williamson	Councillor for Callowland Ward
Councillor Peter Jeffree	Councillor for Park Ward
Councillor Asif Khan	Councillor for Leggatts Ward
Councillor Jennifer Pattinson	Councillor for Meriden Ward

- 4.3 An initial meeting in November 2020 agreed the terms of reference and scope of its work, including the key witnesses to approach. Task group members determined to focus initially on how to respond to the particular impact of Covid 19 on BAME residents before reviewing the council's street naming policy.

- 4.4 To provide context to the impact of Covid 19, the task group heard from the Director of Public Health at Hertfordshire County Council and the Head of Community Protection at Watford Borough Council. In addition, two witness session were held, first with representatives of the local community and voluntary sector and second with individuals from Watford's BAME communities. The views of all members were also invited.

- 4.5 Addressing the borough's approach to street naming, the task group reviewed the policy documentation already in place and determined how this could be updated and formalised.

5.0 **Implications**

5.1 **Financial**

- 5.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that there are no financial implications arising from the contents of this report.

5.2 **Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)**

- 5.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that the report makes specific recommendations for new policies to be adopted by the council that would need to be agreed by cabinet.

5.3 **Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection**

- 5.3.1 The report makes specific recommendations to the council regarding its corporate equalities responsibilities, including that it should develop a corporate equalities policy.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Responding to the impacts of Covid 19 on Watford’s BAME communities and street name policy review.

Background papers

There are no specific background papers for this report. All background information used during the task group’s work is referenced in the final report.