HULL AND GOOLE PORT HEALTH AUTHORITY

22nd March 2021

(Council Chamber, the Guildhall, Kingston upon Hull)

PRESENT: -

Councillors Brady (Chair), Vickers (Deputy Chair), Briggs, Chambers, Chaytor, Fareham, Handley and Pantelakis.

IN ATTENDANCE: -

Laurence Dettman (Chief Port Health Inspector), Sally Johnson (Deputy Chief Port Health Inspector), Annemarie Hamil (Chief Administrative Officer), Alison Gill (Senior Finance Officer, Hull City Council) and Louise Hawkins (Democratic Services Officer, Hull City Council).

APOLOGIES: -

Councillor Coultish.

| Minute **No.** | Business |
| --- | --- |
| 1762 | **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**  No declarations of interest were made in respect of the items that follow below. |
| 1763 | **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9TH DECEMBER 2020.**  **Agreed** - That, the minutes of the meeting of this Authority, held on 9th December 2020, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and correctly recorded and be signed by the Chair. |
| 1764 | **BUDGET MONITORING**  The Senior Finance Officer submitted a report which informed members of the Authority’s spending to the end of January 2021 compared to the approved budget and highlighted any anticipated variations to budget for the full year.  The members were informed that –   1. The figures within the report included the new staffing structure and any external funding which had been secured. 2. The appointments to new roles within the staff structure had not yet all been made, and 3. The Authority was in an unusual position as it had not received funding from Central Government previously. The additional funding gave the appearance that the Authority had a significant amount of unused money however it would be spent on the preparation for the new EU transition duties. Any unused funding could be rolled over into the next financial year and the financial position would look more realistic within the next report to the Board.   Members noted the exceptional circumstances and that the current position was very fluid.  **Agreed –** that the report be noted. |
| 1765 | **AGREEMENT FOR THE PROVISION OF SUPPORT SERVICES**  **FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2021 TO 31 MARCH 2024**  The Treasurer submitted a report provided members with the Agreement for the provision of support services to Hull and Goole Port Health Authority by Kingston upon Hull City Council for three financial years from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2024.  **Agreed -** that the Service Level Agreement for the provision of support services be approved. |
| 1766 | **RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY – REVIEW OF RISK ANALYSIS**  The Chief Port Health Inspector submitted a report which informed the Board of the outcome of a review of the Authority’s Risk Management  Strategy and Risk Analysis carried out by the Chief Port Health Inspector.  The Members were informed that-   1. The Authority’s prepared plans in response to the coronavirus pandemic had worked well and the move to staff working from home had been a smooth transition, and 2. The risks to the Authority had changed because of the pandemic and EU transition, and the risk register had been updated to reflect those changes.   **Agreed -** that the revised Risk Management Strategy and Risk Analysis be approved. |
| 1767 | **PROPOSAL TO EXTEND TEMPORARY VARIATION FOR APPROVAL OF ADDITIONAL HOURS PAYMENTS**  The Chief Port Health Inspector submitted a report which proposed that the Board approved a further temporary extension for additional hours payments.  The Members were informed that it had been agreed at the previous meeting that any extension to additional hours payments would need to be submitted to the Board for approval. The delays to the EU transition had required an extension. It was confirmed that the additional payments made to date had been minimal and that the cost of the payments was covered by the additional funding that had been received from Central Government.  **Agreed -** that the Board agree to extend the temporary arrangement with a review before the next meeting. |
| 1768 | **EU TRANSITION & UK BORDER READINESS UPDATE**  The Chief Port Health Inspector submitted a report which provided an update on developments, continuing challenges and progress made since the last meeting.  The Members were informed that –   1. The new Hull Border Control Post for imported food would be ready by the original 1 July 2021 deadline. However, the site in Killingholme (and certain other UK ports) would not be completed on time. As a result, there had been significant serious concerns raised locally and nationally in relation to the building works and other associated issues. UK ports and Port Health Authorities had been vociferous in ensuring the Government was aware of the UK border readiness deficiencies. 2. A delay of six months for the checks on EU products imported into the UK had now been agreed. 100% documentary checks on consignments of animal origin will now commence on 1 October 2021 and full documentary, identity and physical checks will be in force from 1 January 2022. The additional time would provide the Authorities with an opportunity for further strategic recruitment and staff training, particularly in relation to essential new IT systems still being developed. 3. A new Deputy Chief Port Health Inspector had been appointed; a part time Administrative Officer had been made full time, and a Technical Officer had been re-designated as a Trainee Port Health Inspector/Port Health Support Officer pending final qualification. 4. The Authority had embarked on a national advertising campaign for Port Health Inspectors and the Chief Port Health Inspector had been pleased with the response. It was confirmed that an additional three qualified Port Health Inspectors had been recruited and they would commence work in April and May 2021. The Authority would also need to recruit Official Veterinarians and appoint several additional Port Health Support Officers. 5. The staff were still predominantly working from home, however as the Covid-19 restrictions were being lifted they were now coming into the office more regularly in conformance with the Authority’s own Safe Return to Work Policy and Procedures and site visits were once again being scheduled.   The Members discussed the following matters –   1. Whether the development of a Freeport in the region would have an impact on Port Health Authorities. The Chief Port Health Inspector explained that Freeports would be an opportunity for economic growth and any potential impact on the Authority was not yet known. 2. That the Board was pleased to see the recruitment that had taken place and supported the ongoing strategy, and 3. That there were concerns that drivers did not currently have to have a Lateral Flow Test when they re-entered the country and whether the Chief Port Health Inspector had any further information on the position. The Chief Port Health Inspector explained that the current guidance from Government was being followed, however, there had been examples of the guidance being changed depending on risk, and 4. That it would be beneficial for the Members to meet with the expanding port health team. The Chief Port Health Inspector explained that he hoped that a future meeting of the Board could be held at one of the new Border Control Posts which provide an opportunity for the Board to meet all members of the team and see the extensive new facilities.   **Agreed –** that the report be noted. |
| 1769 | **QUARTERLY UPDATE NOVEMBER 2020 TO JANUARY 2021**  The Chief Port Health Inspector submitted a report which detailed the quarterly summary of the Authority’s work in respect of inspections, notifications, and investigations undertaken during the period November 2020 to January 2021.  The Members were informed that there had been a rise in the number of Covid-19 cases and outbreaks on board vessels arriving in our ports compared with the same period the previous year. This has presented many challenges to the Authority’s officers with each incident having some unique circumstances, often involving significant out-of-hours officer time. The Chief Port Health Inspector highlighted and praised the professionalism and dedication of the team.  A member of Board queried what had happened to individuals who tested positive whilst on board a vessel. The Chief Port Health Inspector explained that all cases on board ships were notified to Public Health England and partner agencies. If crew members were asymptomatic or well enough, isolation took place on board each vessel under port health supervision or in dedicated hotel facilities.  **Agreed –** that the report be noted. |