

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD

COVID-19 OUTBREAK PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT UPDATE

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the Health and Wellbeing Board with a progress report against the six key themes from the Local Outbreak Prevention and Management Plan.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 North Lincolnshire's Local Outbreak Management Plan (LOMP) was updated in March 2020. The plan is based on six key themes which are essential to prevent outbreaks and reduce case numbers.
- 2.2 The Implementation and effectiveness of LOMP is assessed through the Health Protection and Outbreak Management (HPOM) group which meets on a weekly basis. This report provides the Health and Wellbeing Board members with a summary of progress against each of the key themes.
- 2.3 PHE surveillance shows that a new COVID variant, known as Delta, has now become the dominant variant in England. Research is currently ongoing regarding the potential impact of Delta. A recent Public Health England (PHE) reportⁱ identified that positive Delta cases increase the risk of hospitalisation, although no further information was provided in terms of length of hospital admission or actual impact on health. Evidence suggests that vaccines are highly effective against delta after 2 dosesⁱⁱ.
- 2.4 Proactive surveillance is being undertaken in North Lincolnshire to identify priority cases which may have an increased likelihood of causing outbreaks. This ensures rapid enhanced contact tracing can take place to help contain the virus and reduce the risk of ongoing transmission.
- 2.5 The government's original target date for removing all legal limits on social contact was June 21. However, this has now been delayed because of the concerns over the Delta variant and to provide more time to vaccinate people before the remaining rules can be lifted.
- 2.6 Whilst the covid rates for North Lincolnshire are comparatively low, we need to be mindful that rates in other areas of the UK have been rising (some significantly) which may impact on our rates on the future.

3.0 PROGRESS ON LOMP THEMES

3.1 Care Homes

The Care Home Oversight Group meets regularly to review local data and intelligence, coordinates support to care homes around infection control and outbreak management, and leads on implementing the COVID-19 Care Home Support Plan.

Over recent weeks, the number of staff and residents in care homes testing positive for COVID have been very low (reaching zero at some points). Outbreaks have been managed promptly and effectively. Vaccinations in care homes continues to be a high priority. Currently 96% of care home residents and 83% staff have received their first dose of the vaccine and second vaccinations received by 92% of residents and 78.7% staff.

3.2 Education settings

Weekly meetings are in place to oversee the outbreak prevention and management in educational settings.

Number of staff and pupils testing positive is currently very low. However, where outbreaks (two or more linked cases) have occurred, these have been managed effectively through incident management teams (IMTs).

Epidemiology has been used to offer targeted support to selected schools that have recently affected by outbreaks, including offering 'walk-in' vaccinations for priority staff.

3.3 High-risk workplaces, communities and locations

The council and partners continue to work effectively with workplaces. Bulletins are sent to workplaces on a regular basis to keep them updated on COVID advice. Recently a COVID webinar for workplaces was run by the council to provide an interactive session to talk about epidemiology and prevention strategies.

Where workplace outbreaks are identified, and there is a risk of onward transmission, the council works with the host organisation to reduce the likelihood of additional cases.

The mobile testing unit has successfully been deployed in workplaces and has enabled a number of asymptomatic positive people to be identified and to self-isolate, thus effectively breaking the chain of transmission.

3.4 Local test and Trace

Workplace testing was made available to organisations in North Lincolnshire from St John's Market and the Brigg Venue. However, as

availability of home testing, community collect testing and on-site workplace testing etc has become mainstreamed, demand for this service has declined. These facilities have now been suspended, so resources can be used more effectively elsewhere.

Greeson Hall will now be used for target / assisted testing for the Froddingham / Crosby community and will go live during June. In addition, flexible arrangements for targeted testing in other North Lincolnshire localities will be made available should, swift deployment of testing be required.

The council continues to work effectively with PHE around contract tracing. The council is employing enhanced contract methodology for priority cases.

Surveillance information around possible and confirmed variance of concern (VOC) is shared with the contract tracing team and PHE at the earliest opportunity to ensure prompt action is taken.

3.5 COVID Vaccination programme

The COVID Programme continues to be rolled out and is now available from 18+ years age groups.

Whilst vaccination take-up has been very high for a large proportion of the eligible population, we have noticed lower uptakes in some areas of North Lincolnshire. The latest inequalities data continues to show that we have two ward areas that have the lowest vaccine uptake and we are continuing to work collaboratively across the system to support initiatives to increase confidence, convenience and reduce complacency. This includes a re-focus and / or continuation on;

- Increased communication.
- Increased focus on promoting the Baths Hall (positive walk-in sessions at the Baths Hall were held on 13th June with around 250 individuals seen who had not pre-booked).
- Use of Clinical Champions and Trusted Leaders to promote positive messages.
- Change in messaging to highlight that 1 in 5 people in the 40-50 age group are not yet vaccinated.
- Pop up sessions with walk in opportunities to commence over 4 weeks at Greeson Hall.
- 'Pop up' sessions within businesses to continue
- Making vaccines available for priority groups in areas where there have been evidence of variants of concern.

3.6 IPA

The IPA group is working effectively to support communities. This includes:

- Supporting with key messaging and facilitating vaccine take up in priority communities.
- Helping increase vaccine take-up through promoting walk-in sessions for priority groups at the Baths Hall.

- Helping develop community communications to reinforce key messages and encourage vaccine take up.
- Working with Community Champions regarding Target messages and weekly communications.
- Continuing dialogue with residents and community groups to raise alerts re access to vaccinations and social distancing.

4.0 Next Steps / Priorities

As demonstrated by significant decrease in COVID cases, the Local Outbreak Management Plan (LOMP) is proving effective. The key priority over the next few months will be:

- Continue using behavioral insights and innovative communication to increase testing and vaccine take up.
- Continue with effective surveillance to identify issues of concern, especially VOCs, so prompt action can be taken.
- Continue to work collaboratively partners, workplaces and schools to further reduce the rates.
- To ensure that work is prioritised to deal with any confirmed or suspected new VOC, thus ensuring maximum opportunity to contain the virus.
- Continue to develop the contact tracing model to ensure that priority cases are followed up at the earliest opportunity.
- Ensuring infection rates do not risk a surge in hospitalisations which would put unsustainable pressure on local hospitals.

5.0 OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 5.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to consider this report and note the work undertaken by the Health Protection and Outbreak Management Group.

6.0 ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 6.1 Successful prevention and management of local outbreaks is vital to break the chains of covid transmission, along with rollout testing and vaccinations to enable people to return to and maintain a more normal way of life.

7.0 FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (e.g. LEGAL, HR, PROPERTY, IT, COMMUNICATIONS etc.)

- 7.1 Financial implications associated with the council's covid response and recovery continue to be monitored.

8.0 OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS (e.g. CRIME AND DISORDER, EQUALITIES, COUNCIL PLAN, ENVIRONMENTAL, RISK etc.)

- 8.1 Implications and risks associated with Covid are being monitored constantly and

mitigations being implemented as necessary.

9.0 OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

9.1 A council-wide approach to assessing the impact of Covid- has been adopted.

10 OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

10.1 Ongoing consultation and co-production with a range of partners and key stakeholders is integral to our local response.

11 RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 That the Health and Wellbeing Board notes the Outbreak Prevention and Management progress as outlined in the report.

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ⁱ [SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern and variants under investigation \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

ⁱⁱ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/vaccines-highly-effective-against-b-1-617-2-variant-after-2-doses>