

Nottinghamshire County COVID-19 Outbreak Control Engagement Board Notes and actions

Meeting date: Monday 08 March 2021 (3.00pm)

Location: This meeting was held remotely via Microsoft Teams.

Members:

Councillor Kay Cutts MBE	Leader of Nottinghamshire County Council
Councillor Reg Adair	Deputy Leader of Nottinghamshire County Council
Councillor Tony Harper	Chairman of the Adult Social Care & Public Health Committee
Councillor John Knight	Chairman of the COVID-19 Resilience, Recovery & Renewal Committee
Councillor Kevin Rostance	Chairman of the Health & Wellbeing Board
Anthony May	Chief Executive of Nottinghamshire County Council
Jonathan Gribbin	Director of Public Health at Nottinghamshire County Council
Councillor Simon Greaves	Leader of Bassetlaw District Council
Mayor Andy Abrahams	Executive Mayor of Mansfield District Council
Steven Cooper	Assistant Chief Constable of Nottinghamshire Police
Idris Griffiths	Chief Officer of NHS Bassetlaw Clinical Commissioning Group
Luke Barrett	Group Manager: Communications & Marketing, Nottinghamshire County Council

Other participants:

Elizabeth Winter	Public Health and Commissioning Manager, Nottinghamshire County Council
James Silverward	Leaders Office, Nottinghamshire County Council
Sarah Carter	Executive Incident Director COVID-19 and Executive SRO, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Testing Cell
Roz Howie	Programme Director for COVID-19 Response, City and County

Item 1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Councillor Kay Cutts welcomed members to the tenth meeting of the Nottinghamshire County COVID-19 Outbreak Control Engagement Board.

Dr Andy Haynes has now retired as Executive Lead for the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care System (ICS). Councillor Kay Cutts confirmed a letter would be written to Dr Andy Haynes thanking him for his input to the Engagement Board. A successor for Dr Andy Haynes' position on the Engagement Board is to be identified ahead of the next meeting.

Item 2. Notes and actions of the previous meeting

No.	Point / action	Action owner	By when
1.	The notes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record.		

Item 3. COVID-19 in Nottinghamshire: situation overview

Jonathan Gribbin provided a summary of the latest situation in Nottinghamshire. During the discussion the following points and actions were raised:

No.	Point / action	Action owner	By when
2.	The 7-day incident rate shows there has been a clear decrease in case numbers in Nottinghamshire. The all age rate for the County is 100 per 100,000, while the rates for East Midlands and England are 101 and 70 per 100,000 respectively. All age rates across the districts range from 131 per 100,000 in Ashfield to 87 per 100,000 in Rushcliffe. The national alert level remains at 4 (i.e. the COVID-19 epidemic is still in general circulation and transmission remains high).		
3.	In response to a query from Councillor Simon Greaves regarding large scale workplaces, Jonathan Gribbin confirmed that outbreaks of varying size have continued to be seen in industrial workplace settings (but these are fewer than previously). Outbreaks are also continuing to be seen in care homes and appropriate action is taken to respond as these occur. Local authority Public Health also continues to support the management of an outbreak at a prison setting, alongside multi-agency partners.		

Item 4. Updated COVID-19 contain framework

Jonathan Gribbin provided an overview of the anticipated update of the national [COVID-19 Contain framework](#) and refresh of the Local Outbreak Management Plan (LOMP) for Nottinghamshire. During the discussion the following points and actions were raised:

No.	Point / action	Action owner	By when
4.	Jonathan Gribbin informed the Engagement Board that the updated national COVID-19 Contain framework had not yet been published. The updated framework is expected to be published week commencing 15 March 2021.		

5.	<p>In May 2020 local authorities were informed they would be required to publish a local outbreak control plan to compliment the national response to COVID-19. The plan that was produced was assured by NHS Test and Trace and built on existing partnership arrangements, centring on seven themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care homes and schools • High risk places, locations and communities • Local testing capacity • Contact tracing in complex settings • Data integration • Vulnerable people • Local boards 		
6.	<p>Local authorities have been asked by government to refresh their local outbreak management plans (LOMPs), considering changes in local roles, responsibilities and resources and incorporating lessons learnt over the last 9 months. Key arrangements for the next phase of the response that will be considered include enduring transmission, identifying and controlling variants of concern and supressing the ongoing dominant variant. The refreshed LOMP will identify areas of existing strength, as well as areas where further work is planned.</p>		
7.	<p>Dependent on the impact of the vaccination programme on transmission/severity of disease, it is anticipated that further COVID-19 resurgences will occur in the next 12 months. Therefore, there is a need to ensure arrangements to live safely and confidently with COVID-19 are considered, bearing in mind the need for a response capacity and that many supporting partners will need to return to business as usual arrangements.</p>		
8.	<p>Councillor Kay Cutts highlighted the importance that future arrangements for living with COVID-19 are balanced and suitable for the working population, while Councillor Simon Greaves highlighted the role of asymptomatic testing in learning to live with COVID-19. Mayor Andy Abrahams raised the importance of embedding behaviours and lessons that have been learnt to date.</p>		

Item 5. COVID-19 vaccine rollout

Sarah Carter and Idris Griffiths provided an update on the COVID-19 vaccine rollout in Nottinghamshire. During the discussion the following points and actions were raised:

No.	Point / action	Action owner	By when
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9.	Sarah Carter provided an update regarding the rollout of vaccinations across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. As a result of reduced vaccine supply, local vaccination sites are in a temporary hibernation state (Mansfield vaccination centre and the hospital hubs remain open). It is anticipated the vaccine supply will increase significantly from next week and appointment availability will be reopened accordingly. Further communications will be shared with residents regarding timescales for reopening of sites.		
10.	Vaccinations continue to be delivered through targeted GP-led clinics in communities of lower uptake during this period and anyone that is eligible who has not yet received their vaccination is encouraged to come forward. Cohort 7 communications will be released this week and cohort 8 the following week.		
11.	Idris Griffiths provided an update regarding the rollout of the vaccination programme in Bassetlaw. Vaccinations continue to be delivered through Primary Care Networks (PCNs) and residents with a learning disability have been advised to come forward for a vaccination.		
12.	Councillor Simon Greaves queried if there had been any issues identified regarding residents not attending national site appointments after being offered appointments at local sites. Sarah Carter confirmed that communications have been shared regarding residents being able to wait for a local appointment offer if they wish to, after receiving a national letter (and to confirm the difference between these two appointment pathways). Each vaccination site has a reserve list for short notice cancellations and appointment attendance rates are high.		
13.	Councillor Reg Adair queried if there had been any issues regarding delivery of second vaccinations and both Idris Griffiths and Sarah Carter confirmed that there were no concerns regarding second dose delivery.		

Item 6. Asymptomatic testing

Roz Howie provided an update on the rollout of asymptomatic testing in Nottinghamshire. During the discussion the following points and actions were raised:

No.	Point / action	Action owner	By when
14.	Currently there are a total of 8 community testing sites in Nottinghamshire County and residents that cannot work from home continue to be proactively encouraged to access asymptomatic testing. On site testing in vulnerable settings and a number of other settings has commenced. Future options for asymptomatic testing sites (ATS) are currently being explored (including mobile options).		

15.	The number of lateral flow device (LFD) tests undertaken at community testing sites has risen as each new testing site has been introduced (with a total of 17, 415 tests undertaken in the County up to 07 March 2021). However, there has been a decrease in the number of people attending community sites each week, which appears to be reflective of the region. The positivity rate for the community testing sites continues to be approximately 1%. Over 50% of those attending the sites have attended more than once, which is particularly positive.		
16.	Roz Howie also provided an overview of how LFD testing will be used to support the reopening of schools and the routes through which eligible individuals (those that have sustained contact with school children) will be able to access home tests. Initially, eligible residents will be able to access tests either through collection from Regional Testing Sites (RTS)/Local Testing Sites (LTS) within dedicated time windows, or through ordering tests online. Further delivery channels are anticipated to be available later in March.		
17.	Councillor Kay Cutts queried if provision had been made available for childminders to access asymptomatic testing. Roz Howie confirmed the issue of childminders and nannies being able to access home tests has been raised nationally and offers have been made to adjust opening hours of community testing sites to support access for the Early Years sector. Councillor Simon Greaves supported the flexibility of opening hours and emphasised the need to ensure that residents were offered testing in a way that did not feel intrusive to ensure high take up (in particular highlighting the need for businesses to engage with testing).		
18.	Jonathan Gribbin raised the need to identify alternative arrangements for selected community testing sites to ensure sustainability as restrictions ease. This will include expanding the community testing network further. The board were supportive of this approach.		

Item 7. Operation Eagle

Roz Howie and Jonathan Gribbin provided an overview of the [national programme](#) to contain variants of concern and local work being undertaken to allow a timely response to be stood up if required. During the discussion the following points and actions were raised:

No.	Point / action	Action owner	By when
19.	Work is currently underway through the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) to produce a multi-agency plan to be used in the event of COVID-19 variants of concern being identified in Nottinghamshire. Action required would include the mobilisation of surge testing capacity to undertake intensive PCR testing in a small defined locality over a 2-week period. The plan also covers communications, finance, contact tracing, enforcement and governance structures.		

Item 8. Arrangements for future meetings

The next meeting will take place on Monday 19 April 2021. It was agreed the meeting due to take place on Monday 24 May 2021 would need to be rearranged. Members agreed additional meetings can be held if required.