



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

**Meeting date:** Monday 07 June 2021 (3.00pm)

**Location:** This meeting was held remotely via Microsoft Teams.

### Members:

Councillor Ben Bradley	Leader of Nottinghamshire County Council
Councillor Boyd Elliott	Chairman of the Adult Social Care & Public Health Committee
Anthony May	Chief Executive of Nottinghamshire County Council
Jonathan Gribbin	Director of Public Health at Nottinghamshire County Council
Amanda Sullivan	Interim Executive Lead Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Integrated Care System
Idris Griffiths	Chief Officer of NHS Bassetlaw Clinical Commissioning Group
Luke Barrett	Group Manager: Communications & Marketing, Nottinghamshire County Council

### Other participants:

Councillor Craig Whitby	Deputy Mayor of Mansfield District Council
Elizabeth Winter	Public Health and Commissioning Manager
Sarah Carter	Executive Director: Incident Management/Emergency Preparedness, Resilience and Response, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire CCG
Roz Howie	Programme Director for Covid Response and Testing SRO (Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County)

### Item 1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Councillor Ben Bradley welcomed members to the twelfth meeting of the Nottinghamshire County COVID-19 Outbreak Control Engagement Board.

Apologies were received from Assistant Chief Constable Steven Cooper, Councillor Simon Greaves, Mayor Andy Abrahams (Deputy Mayor Craig Whitby deputising), Councillor John Doddy and Councillor Bruce Laughton.

Following a change in Nottinghamshire County Council's Committee structure and the standing down of the COVID-19 Resilience, Recovery and Renewal Committee, attendance from the Chair of this committee will no longer be required.

### Item 2. Notes and actions of the previous meeting

No.	Point / action	Action owner	By when
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1.	The notes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record.		
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### **Item 3. Introduction to the Nottinghamshire COVID-19 Outbreak Response**

Jonathan Gribbin provided an introduction to the Nottinghamshire COVID-19 Outbreak Response for the benefit of new Engagement Board membership, following the Nottinghamshire County Council elections on 06 May 2021.

No.	Point / action	Action owner	By when
2.	In May 2020, local authorities were notified that they would be responsible for the management of local outbreaks and were to produce a Local Outbreak Management Plan to complement the national response to COVID-19. The Nottinghamshire Plan was published in June 2020 and was shaped by guidance outlined within the national Contain Framework.		
3.	The Nottinghamshire COVID-19 Outbreak Control Engagement Board was established in June 2020, as an informal, non-decision-making partnership to support local outbreak control arrangements and provide political oversight of activity concerning the local COVID-19 outbreak response.		
4.	Working within the response structure of the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Local Resilience Forum, Nottinghamshire County Council and Nottingham City Council continue to work together with key partners on local outbreak control arrangements.		
5.	The <a href="#">Nottinghamshire Local Outbreak Management Plan</a> was refreshed in March 2021, in recognition of the Government's roadmap for easing of national restrictions and the updated national <a href="#">Contain Framework</a> . This was to ensure that the plan reflected arrangements required for the next phase of the pandemic and incorporated learning across partners from the previous 9 months. The plan centres on a number of themes (including higher risk settings, vulnerable and underserved communities, compliance and enforcement, governance, resourcing, communication and engagement and data and information sharing) and reflects core end to end response functions.		
6.	Underlying the plan is the evidence that, even with widespread uptake of effective vaccines, it is likely that COVID-19 will continue to circulate for the next couple of years. Therefore, arrangements must be made which enable, people, employers, education and civic society to manage risk, highlighting a need for sustainable arrangements in the form of a COVID-19 response resource in to 2023. A proposal is due to be considered by ASCPH committee later this month (14 June 2021) regarding this and will be covered in more detail in item 8.		

### **Item 4. 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
7.	The 7-day incidence rate for Nottinghamshire currently stands at 17.7 per 100,000. However, looking ahead to the window of incomplete data, an increase in cases is indicated, in line with what neighbouring areas have already seen. There is also an expectation that a further rise in cases may be seen in the 0-17 age bracket, given that children and young people are more likely to be testing more frequently upon their return to school, following half term. Amongst the over 60's, rates have remained low.		
8.	Sarah Carter highlighted that hospitals have seen an increase in non-COVID-19 related activity and that work is currently underway to increase the amount of elective activity in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Compared to January 2021, the number of COVID-19 inpatients is significantly reduced. Idris Griffiths highlighted that urgent outpatient referrals have increased in Bassetlaw (which are not directly related to COVID-19 but could be indirectly). However, the district is in a good position compared with other periods of the pandemic.		

#### **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
9.	Sarah Carter provided an update on the continued rollout of COVID-19 vaccinations across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. 588,000 first dose vaccinations have been delivered to the GP registered population as of Wednesday 02 June, although a slightly slower vaccine uptake has been seen in the 40-49 age group. 970,000 vaccinations have been delivered across all vaccination sites and vaccinations are now open to all those that are aged 30 and over.		
10.	Primary Care Networks (PCNs) have been active in bringing forward second doses and second vaccination doses have now been offered to all care homes. The vaccination bus continues to target areas where there is lower uptake and this has been circulating round the county in recent weeks. There is also an intention to target areas of low uptake areas through door knocking, to engage with residents and encourage them to access vaccinations.		

11.	Idris Griffiths provided an update on the continued rollout of COVID-19 vaccinations across Bassetlaw. In the district nearly 100,000 first doses have been delivered and a similar uptake has been seen to the rest of the County, with a slower uptake in the 40-49 age group. There is also a vaccination bus in Bassetlaw, which is largely used to raise awareness and book appointments (rather than delivering vaccinations directly) and is being utilised to target lower uptake.		
12.	Councillor Ben Bradley provided positive feedback regarding the effectiveness of the vaccination rollout and asked which age group will be included within the next cohort. Sarah Carter confirmed that there is an intention to move to offering the vaccination to under 30's later in the week, but it is yet to be confirmed whether this will continue to take place in two-year increments. Planning is taking place with partners, such as universities, on how best to engage over 18s. There is also an intention to roll out walk in appointments to younger age groups, as flexibility will be crucial.		

### **Item 6. Variants of Concern**

Jonathan Gribbin provided an overview of variants of SARS-CoV-2 that are currently being monitored and the local arrangements in place to respond to Variants of Concern (VOCs) as they arise.

No.	Point / action	Action owner	By when
13.	Currently in Nottingham City and conurbation areas, cases are predominantly the Delta variant and this is spreading to other areas across the county. Early evidence suggests that the Delta variant is associated with a higher level of hospitalisations, as well as being more transmissible.		
14.	Although vaccinations remain effective against the Delta variant (particularly after an individual has received their second dose), it is essential that if people become symptomatic they isolate immediately and access a PCR test. Individuals are also encouraged to access twice weekly LFD testing that is available to all and is another crucial tool in controlling the Delta variant (as well as any other variant).		
15.	Definitive diagnosis on the type of variant of SARS-CoV-2 that an individual is infected with relies on sequencing and this is a relatively lengthy process, with the time delay infringing on control measures being implemented. However, PCR tests can provide an early indicator on whether an individual could have the Delta variant and this early signal is being utilised by the local authority to undertake additional follow up with household contacts of these cases.		
16.	Public Health England (PHE) have been undertaking enhanced surveillance with cases identified as the Delta variant, but this is being stood down, as it is now having limited impact.		

17.	Councillor Craig Whitby queried whether vaccinations were impacting the transmission rates between people that have been vaccinated and Jonathan Gribbin confirmed that there is early evidence that vaccinations are helping to support reducing transmission, as well as being particularly effective at reducing hospital admission. Therefore, this is an additional reason why individuals should be encouraged to take up the vaccine offer as soon as they are eligible.		
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### **Item 7. Asymptomatic testing in the community**

Roz Howie provided an overview of community testing to date, including an update on the deployment of Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests in community settings and a summary of the future direction of the asymptomatic testing programme from June 2021 onwards:

No.	Point / action	Action owner	By when
18.	Over time, 10 fixed asymptomatic community testing sites have been set up across the county to undertake twice weekly testing. However, other streams for individuals to access testing have become available over this time period, with individuals now able to access home LFD test kits through a variety of pathways, which has led to a reduction in footfall at the fixed sites.		
19.	A number of sites have since been replaced with mobile options due to lack of footfall or the need for repurposed venues to reopen for business as usual activities, in line with the national roadmap. In addition, asymptomatic testing has been launched in 14 vulnerable settings within Nottinghamshire and the vaccination bus has also been used to provide test kits to harder to reach communities.		
20.	From 20 January to 26 May 2021, 52,415 tests have been undertaken in the county through community testing sites and 13,766 boxes of LFD test kits have been distributed to residents. The LFD positivity rate has currently reduced to 0.5%. Evaluation indicates that the intended groups (including those that are economically and socially deprived, that have low testing rates and high prevalence and those that cannot work from home) have been successfully targeted.		
21.	The local authority has recently been informed that asymptomatic testing will continue to be supported by Government for a further 9 months and that the strategy going forward will need to focus on underrepresented groups and groups that have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19.		

22.	The intention is to continue to provide supervised mobile testing to communities and a local needs assessment has been undertaken to identify underrepresented and disproportionately affected groups. The local authority continues to feedback to Government regarding the need for a national testing strategy that encompasses asymptomatic and symptomatic testing.		
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### **Item 8. Sustaining delivery of the Local Outbreak Management Plan**

Jonathan Gribbin provided an overview of the proposed service arrangements required to sustain the delivery of the Local Outbreak Management Plan over the next 24 months:

No.	Point / action	Action owner	By when
23.	As previously highlighted, there is a need for arrangements to be in place to sustain the delivery of the Local Outbreak Management Plan for Nottinghamshire in to March 2023. It is proposed that a dedicated COVID-19 Response Service is established, which can be in place for 24 months (if required) to deliver the functions set out in the <a href="#">Local Outbreak Management Plan</a> . The service will be resourced to do this at a relatively low rate of COVID-19 incidence and the proposal is due to be considered by <a href="#">Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee</a> (ASCPH) on 14 June 2021.		
24.	Subject to ASCPH Committee approval, the day-to-day operations of the service will be overseen by a Covid 19 Programme Director (acting across Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County) and will continue to link in closely with Local Resilience Forum (LRF) partners, an arrangement that has provided the strength and resilience that has been achieved to date.		
25.	If there is a need to stand up a surge response, the intention would be to look to resource this from within the Public Health team (and potentially other teams if required). However, it is the intention that colleagues within the Public Health team that are currently deployed to the COVID-19 response will be enabled to return to agendas that ASCPH Committee previously agreed to temporarily suspend.		
26.	Subject to Committee approval, the service will be funded through the Contain Outbreak Management Fund. However, if the Contain Outbreak Management Fund cannot be used past March 2022, funding past this point may need to be underwritten using Public Health Grant reserves.		

### **Item 9. Arrangements for future meetings**

The next meeting will take place on **Monday 26 July 2021**. Members agreed that following the July 2021 meeting, frequency could reduce to quarterly going forward, as this would provide sufficient oversight of the ongoing COVID-19 response. Members agreed this was with the understanding that meeting frequency could be stepped up once again if required as a result of concerns arising within the County.