

Nottingham City Council

Outbreak Control Engagement Board

Minutes of the meeting held remotely via Zoom with public parts of the meeting livestreamed on the Council's YouTube Channel - <https://www.youtube.com/user/NottCityCouncil> on 12 May 2021 from 11.30 am - 12.45 pm

Membership

Present

David Johns
Councillor Rebecca Langton
Councillor Sally Longford (Chair)
Amanda Sullivan
Hugh White

Absent

Mel Barrett
Ruby Bhattal
Steven Cooper
Andrew Errington
Clive Foster
Councillor Neghat Khan
Vanessa MacGregor
Dr Hugh Porter
Sara Storey

Mathew Healy (substitute for Steven Cooper)
Steve Thorne (substitute for Ruby Bhattal)

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Jason Carter	- University of Nottingham
Paul Dales	- Chief Environmental Health Officer, Nottingham City Council
Clare Routledge	- Public Health, Nottingham City Council
Nigel Wright	- Nottingham Trent University
Jane Garrard	- Senior Governance Officer, Nottingham City Council

230 Apologies for absence

Ruby Bhattal – Steve Thorne attended as a substitute
Steven Cooper – Mat Healy attended as a substitute
Councillor Neghat Khan
Sara Storey
Councillor Adele Williams

231 Declarations of Interests for agenda items 3 - 7

None

232 Public Minutes

The Board approved the minutes of the public section of the meeting held on 16 April 2021.

233 Nottingham's Outbreak Management Plan update

David Johns, Interim Director of Public Health Nottingham City Council, gave an update on Nottingham's Outbreak Control Plan, highlighting the following information:

- a) There were 102 cases in the last seven days, which is a rate of 32.1 per 100,000 population.
- b) The current rate is a slight increase compared to the previous seven days, which had a rate of 28.2 per 100,000 population, and is slightly higher than the England average of 21.5 per 100,000 population.
- c) The rate amongst those aged over 60 years is really positive. There were four cases in the previous seven days which is a rate of 7.7 per 100,000 population.
- d) It is anticipated that there will be a slight rise in cases over the next few days, but this is a rise compared to a previously low rate. Since April there have been consistently low rates in the City, but current fluctuations will be monitored closely.
- e) There is a similar distribution of cases across age groups for all cases and in those cases during April and May 2021, except for a lower proportion of cases amongst over 60s during April and May 2021.
- f) There has recently been information in local media about the identification of a variant of concern in Nottingham. A variant first identified in India was classified as a variant of concern last week and some cases have been identified in Nottingham. The variant appears to be transmitted more easily but does not result on greater severity of illness or appear to circumvent vaccine immunity.
- g) Plans for responding to variants of concern were discussed at the last Board meeting and the City was in a good position to stand up testing arrangements quickly. The City was notified of cases at the end of last week and, following a significant effort by partners, testing commenced on 10 May.
- h) Targeted testing is taking place in targeted parts of the City to quickly identify cases and minimise onwards transmission. So far over 600 people have been tested, which is a great response.
- i) Those individuals who have not been invited to be tested are still encouraged to support efforts to minimise transmission by following the 'Hands, Face, Space' guidance, participate in asymptomatic testing and get vaccinated when invited to do so.
- j) Regular meetings are held with Public Health England about sequenced cases. It is anticipated that results will be come through today or tomorrow giving an early indication on the number of positive cases, and plans will be adjusted accordingly.
- k) Further easing of restrictions is due to take place in 17 May, in line with Step 3 of the Government's Roadmap. Citizens are encouraged to still be cautious by, for example, participating in asymptomatic testing.

The Board commented that it was good that plans were in place to enable targeted testing to be put in place quickly in response to identification of cases of a variant of concern in the City.

234 Universities' student return arrangements

Nigel Wright, Nottingham Trent University, and Jason Carter, University of Nottingham, gave an update on arrangements for the return of students to university. They highlighted the following information:

- a) From 17 May 2021 universities can resume some in-person teaching. However, this will be limited because, by this stage of the academic year, most teaching has been completed and students are prepared for assessment. This year arrangements have been put in place for assessments to take place online.
- b) Quite a few students have already returned to the City so it is not anticipated that there will be a further significant number returning this weekend. Testing has been, and continues to be offered to all students returning to university and generally there is a good compliance rate. Testing will continue throughout the term.
- c) There is regular communication with students about complying with Government guidelines, getting tested regularly and engaging with the vaccination programme when eligible. Communication is also taking place about engaging with local businesses now that retail and hospitality sectors are opening up.
- d) In line with Step 3 of the Government's Roadmap, plans are in place to reopen more facilities on campus in accordance with Regulations and students will be encouraged to make use of these facilities.
- e) The University of Nottingham's student halls pilot started last week. Progress will be reviewed next week to decide if it will continue for the rest of the term. If it is successful then it is hoped to continue it next academic year as it potentially has benefits for the student experience and in controlling outbreaks. Although it has different accommodation arrangements, Nottingham Trent University is watching the pilot to identify any lessons that it can learn. The Department for Education is also interested in the findings as they could be applied to other universities across the country.

In response to questions from the Nottinghamshire Police representative, it was confirmed that the two universities will continue to communicate with their students about compliance with Regulations, for example in relation to hosting and attending large gatherings and parties. The universities will not be holding large end of year events but are providing guidance about ad hoc events that may be arranged by others. In many cases it would be preferable for students to celebrate at hospitality premises because they should have Covid-19 safe arrangements in place.

235 Local Covid-19 Vaccination Plan update

An update on the local Covid-19 Vaccination Plan was provided under agenda item 7 (Board Member update from the NHS).

236 Board Member updates

Mat Healy, Nottinghamshire Police, gave an update on the work of the Police in the City since the last Board meeting. He highlighted the following information:

- a) 107 fixed penalty notices have been issued across the Force since the last meeting, 75 of which were issued in the City. The majority of these related to people attending large gatherings.
- b) Restrictions on hospitality and the night-time economy have been relaxed in accordance with the Government's Roadmap. Outdoor hospitality has opened up and a number of premises that would not normally operate outdoor space now have pavement licences. There is currently a 3000 person capacity for outdoor hospitality in the City.
- c) Since the relaxation of restrictions there have generally been good levels of compliance with no significant issues. The Police are working with Community Protection colleagues on any licensing infringements that do occur.
- d) The next stage in easing of restrictions will take place on 17 May, including reopening of indoor hospitality. This will mean an increase to the outdoor capacity of 3,500 and an indoor capacity of 6,000 people. Some premises will also be able to operate later than the current time. Licensing Teams have been in touch with venues in preparation for the changes.
- e) In response to the easing of restrictions, Nottinghamshire Police is reinstating full night-time resourcing on Friday and Saturday evenings. In the City Centre there will also be an 'early intervention' shift to 'meet and greet' people and gauge numbers out that evening. Additional neighbourhood officers will also be in place for the first week to support Duty Teams.
- f) Planning is taking place with partners for the further easing of restrictions on 21 June 2021.

In response to questions, it was clarified that if members of the public observe what appear to be breaches in Regulations they can report this via the 101 telephone number or online. If Parks staff observe signs of gatherings in parks and open spaces then they are asked to contact the Community Protection Team as soon as possible because it is easier to deal with potential issues at an early stage.

Paul Dales, Chief Environmental Health Officer Nottingham City Council, gave an update on the work of the Environmental Health Team since the last Board meeting. He highlighted the following information:

- g) Preparations have been taking place with partners to work with the business community on the next stage in the easing of restrictions on 17 May. This has included attending meetings of PubWatch and with members of the Business Improvement District.

- h) Engagement of businesses started with those already open to discuss the changes in restrictions, followed by engaging with those not currently open. Intelligence, such as cross-referencing data on which businesses have downloaded QR codes is being used to inform the programme of engagement.
- i) As it has been throughout the pandemic, the Team's focus is on informing and protecting through engagement and encouragement, but enforcement is used when necessary.
- j) Generally, businesses are working hard to prepare for the next stage of reopening.
- k) The Team is liaising with event organisers, including in relation to Temporary Event Notices and development of Event Management Plans to make sure that they are aware of the Covid measures required.
- l) The Team is also working with sports grounds, such as Notts County Football Club, on the return of spectators to sporting events. The Safety Advisory Group is reviewing plans, which need to meet specific requirements for sports grounds in addition to the standard Covid requirements. Generally, such organisations are being very co-operative.

During subsequent discussion the following points were made:

- m) Businesses have learnt a lot over the last year and there is now better availability of equipment such as personal protective equipment. There are also greater links with Business Support Officers in terms of business support and access to business grants. Therefore, lots of businesses are relatively well-prepared but some are still requiring more of a 'nudge' approach.
- n) Business premises should display a QR code and have other mechanisms to record contact details if a customer cannot scan the QR code.
- o) If members of the public observe what they believe to be breaches of Covid Regulations then they can report this on the Council's website and it will be looked into.

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 and reconvened at 12:15pm.

Amanda Sullivan, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group, gave an update from an NHS perspective, highlighting the following information:

- p) The position is generally positive. The number of hospital beds occupied by patients with Covid-19 continues to decline, although there are still some patients who are seriously ill with the virus. There were 28 admissions relating to Covid-19 in the seven days to 2 May, which compares to 21 in the previous seven days. On 4 May 51 beds were occupied by Covid positive patients compared to 66 on 27 April. Of those 51 beds, 18% were mechanically ventilated. In the week between 29 April and 5 May, there was 1 death in hospital compared to 3 the previous week.

- q) Increasing numbers of people are accessing the Emergency Department. It is important that people use the most appropriate service to access care and should call NHS 111 first. This service now has more capabilities, developed during the pandemic, for clinical assessment and can also book appointments for people.
- r) The roll out of the vaccination programme locally continues to be successful. People aged over 40 years are being encouraged to book a vaccination appointment, and outreach and engagement work with specific communities is taking place to support this.
- s) Current vaccination rates in the City are:
 - a. 80+ = 90% (79.8% second dose)
 - b. 75-79 = 98.3% (87.8% second dose)
 - c. 70-74 = 95.3% (83.6% second dose)
 - d. 65-69 = 88.8% (33.4% second dose)
 - e. 60-64 = 92.2% (15.8% second dose)
 - f. 55-59 = 90.3% (15.3% second dose)
 - g. 50-54 = 84.2% (13.6% second dose)
 - h. 45-49 = 69.4% (12.3% second dose)
 - i. Under 45s = 20% (6.3% second dose)
- t) The vaccination booking process has been streamlined and appointments at both national and local centres can be booked in the same way.
- u) The focus of the vaccination programme is now on delivering second doses of the vaccine. The rates for second doses amongst older age groups is really good, but there is still more to do. Everyone is strongly encouraged to get their second dose as this offers the best level of protection.

During subsequent discussion the following points were raised:

- v) There are clear links between the people hospitalised for reasons related to Covid-19 and those who have not been vaccinated. People who have been vaccinated have a significantly reduced risk of needing to go to hospital. It is important that the effectiveness of the vaccination is well communicated.
- w) The Vaccination Bus continues to operate. It is moving into different locations and will also revisit some areas that it has already been to. The location of the bus is driven by data.

237 Exclusion of the public to move into the confidential section of the meeting

The Board agreed to exclude the public to move into the confidential section of the meeting.

238 Declarations of Interests for agenda items 10 - 14

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See Confidential Minutes

239 Confidential Minutes

See Confidential Minutes

240 Situational round up

See Confidential Minutes

241 Universities' student return arrangements

See Confidential Minutes

242 Lessons learnt from local surge testing practice exercise

See Confidential Minutes

243 Local Covid-19 Vaccination Plan update

See Confidential Minutes