

Nottingham City Council

Outbreak Control Engagement Board

Minutes of the meeting held remotely via Zoom on 19 October 2020 from 2.02 pm - 3.35 pm

Membership

Present

Ruby Bhattal
Councillor Eunice Campbell-Clark (Vice Chair)
Alison Challenger
Clive Foster
Andy Haynes
Councillor Neghat Khan
Councillor Rebecca Langton
Kate Meynell
Amanda Sullivan
Hugh White

Absent

Mel Barrett
Nigel Cooke
Andrew Errington
Councillor Sally Longford
Vanessa MacGregor
Dr Hugh Porter
Catherine Underwood

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Nancy Barnard	- Governance and Electoral Services Manager
Pavan Bandhu	- GP Registrar in Public Health
Jane Bethea	- Consultant in Public Health
Marie Cann-Livingstone	- Public Health Specialist
Sarah Carter	- Nottinghamshire and Nottingham CCG
Mandy Clarkson	- Consultant in Public Health
Carolyn Kus	- Director for Adults
Catrin Styles	- Principal Environmental Health Officer

97 Apologies for absence

Councillor Sally Longford
Amanda Sullivan
Catherine Underwood – Carolyn Kus attended as a substitute
Paul Dales – Catrin Styles attended as a substitute

98 Declarations of interests for agenda items 3-8

None

99 Public Minutes

The Board approved the minutes of the public section of the meeting held on 6 October 2020 as an accurate record.

100 Nottingham's Outbreak Control Plan update

Alison Challenger, Director of Public Health, Nottingham City Council, gave a presentation updating on the Outbreak Control Plan. She highlighted the following information:

- (a) The last two to three weeks have seen rates in Nottingham City rise rapidly from around the average for England to the highest level in the country. The rise was seen across all age groups but most notably amongst younger adults. An increase was also seen in the County, particularly in those areas adjoining the city.
- (b) The rate has started to decline in the last five days amongst younger adults but is rising slowly amongst older adults leading to a concern about likely demand on the NHS.
- (c) The city was placed into tier two (High Risk) of the Government's new alert levels and new restrictions including no mixing between households inside and restrictions on the numbers allowed at weddings and funerals were introduced last Wednesday. The Council had put communications out encouraging people to adopt these measures in advance of them being formally introduced and this is believed to have had an impact. Individuals are also being encouraged to avoid busy places and to plan their use of public transport to avoid peak periods.
- (d) Although the rates are coming down there is a long way to go.

During the subsequent discussion the following points were raised:

- (e) Figures have come down in the areas with large numbers of students in particular but are increasing amongst older people across the city.
- (f) It is difficult to anticipate how long it will take for the recently introduced measures to have an impact but the full impact has not been seen yet. The numbers are still high and people need to keep following the rules.

101 Update from Environmental Health and Nottinghamshire Police

Catrin Styles, Principal Environmental Health Officer, Nottingham City Council, provided an update on the work being undertaken by the team. She highlighted the following information:

- (a) The number of reports made under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) has risen in the last month with five business reporting incidents and a further six reporting via a different route. All cases have been investigated.
- (b) 201 service requests were received and 169 interventions were made including 6 fixed penalty notices.
- (c) Work has been undertaken to interpret and implement the new regulations and visits will start being made under those regulations from tomorrow.

Kate Meynell, Nottinghamshire Police, then provided an update on the work being undertaken by the Police in the city. She covered the following information:

- (d) Calls reporting parties or gatherings have been responded to. Approximately half of these parties were reported as being amongst students. A number of fixed penalty notices were issued. There are increasing fines for repeat offenders but these have not yet had to be used.
- (e) The majority of licensed premises are abiding by the regulations regarding closing times and are closing promptly. Some licensed premises are being revisited but the majority are operating responsibly.

- (f) Work has been undertaken with Nottingham Express Transit (NET) to ensure passengers are wearing face coverings and leaving sufficient space to allow for social distancing but demand has reduced on the trams compared with the first weekend of early closing.

102 Secondary Care - Update on current position and plans

Andy Haynes, Managing Director, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire ICS, gave an update on the position in Secondary Care. He provided the following information:

- (a) There has been an increase in pressure on beds across Nottingham University Hospitals (NUH) and the Trust has initiated its surge plan to help manage the situation. Services remain open to non covid patients and it is important that those needing medical attention seek it and that confirmed appointments are attended.
- (b) The majority of Covid patients being admitted are aged over 60. Low admissions are being seen from carehomes but these need to be monitored carefully due to the vulnerability of their residents.
- (c) The seasonal 'flu plan has got off to a good start with a strong uptake of the vaccine amongst over 65s.
- (d) Work is underway in preparation for the roll out of a Covid vaccine once it becomes available.

During the subsequent discussion the following points were raised:

- (e) Messages regarding winter pressures will be similar to previous years but are more urgent due to the additional impact of Covid. These messages include using alternative services to the Emergency Department if appropriate and encouraging vaccination.
- (f) How severe this 'flu season may be is difficult to predict due to fluctuations in the strain. The vaccination programme is being targeted at those most at risk but will be extended to others later in the season.
- (g) Take up of the 'flu vaccine is monitored by area and the information is being collated so that messaging can be targeted. There has been strong take up amongst older people but less so amongst younger children.

103 Testing update

Mandy Clarkson, Consultant in Public Health, Nottingham City Council, gave a presentation on testing. She covered the following information:

- (a) Testing is carried out to confirm diagnosis, to understand the epidemic and how it is spreading and to inform public health actions such as self isolation and contact tracing.
- (b) Testing falls into three categories:
 - Proactive testing of asymptomatic people – this is largely focused on high risk groups such as care homes
 - Reactive testing of symptomatic people – the majority of cases are found amongst this group.
 - Surveillance testing – this includes virus and antibody testing and is conducted for research purposes amongst a representative sample of the general population.

- (c) Questions have been asked about whether the increase in cases is real or if it is a result of the increase in the number of tests being carried out. The data demonstrates that the rise is real.

During the subsequent discussion the following points were raised:

- (d) Additional provision has been made available for homecare staff to ensure they can access tests if necessary.
- (e) Additional testing capacity has been made available in Nottingham due to the rise in cases. Three local testing sites have been established across the universities and three additional sites will be coming online shortly. In addition there is a new local testing site being set up at the Forest to replace the mobile site which is currently there. Focused inreach work is being carried out to establish which groups might have difficulty accessing testing and additional swab tests are available to support that work.
- (f) Walk up sites are available to those who don't have access to vehicles but the preference is to book into these in advance. The booking website asks if those booking have access to a vehicle.
- (g) Supermarkets were initially used for mobile testing sites but people being tested were found to be using the supermarkets after their tests creating a risk to the wider population.
- (h) All councillors were contacted about potential sites in their areas and about access to testing amongst their communities and useful feedback came back.

104 Contact tracing update

Jane Bethea, Consultant in Public Health, Nottingham City Council, gave an update on contact tracing. She covered the following information:

- (a) Contact tracing is an important part of the response to Covid and the Council now has capacity to support the national test and trace service, focusing on contacting those the national service has been unable to contact. The city service went live on 15 October.
- (b) The national service provides information about those they have been unable to trace. The local service then make three further phonecalls. If these are unsuccessful a personal visit is made to the individual's home and, if they are not in, a card is left asking them to call.
- (c) The universities have each funded additional contact tracers to focus on the student population.
- (d) Furloughed Council staff have been deployed to the service.
- (e) Modelling the level of staff required is underway but at the moment the service is confident it has sufficient staff for the task.

105 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.

106 Declaration of interests for agenda items 11-13

See Confidential Minutes

107 Confidential minutes

See Confidential Minutes

108 Situational round up

See Confidential Minutes

109 Local Covid alert levels

See Confidential Minutes