

To: **Executive**
30 June 2020

Bracknell Forest Outbreak Management Plan
Strategic Director of Public Health

1 Purpose of Report

1. Describes the Covid-19 local Outbreak Control Plan and Summary.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Bracknell Forest Local Outbreak Control Plan be endorsed.

3 Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 Requirement for formal sign-off by Local Authority.

4 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 None

5 Supporting Information

5 Context

- 5.1 The initial UK Covid-19 epidemic was largely seeded across the country at the same time, with all parts of the country experiencing the rise and subsequent fall in cases concurrently. Our early response was centrally driven with local support. Now, as numbers of cases are reducing and counter measures (social distancing, working at home, shielding etc) are slowly being lifted. Many of our population remain susceptible to Covid-19 and the risk of future outbreaks is high. It is anticipated that the ongoing pattern of Covid-19 will be more varied requiring strengthened local responses to control spread.
- 5.2 Each LA is required to develop a local Outbreak Control Plan describing how it will respond to a rise in cases locally and specifically in higher risk settings, where spread may be more likely and/or control may be more challenging. The plans have been accompanied by a £300m test and trace grant for local government.
- 5.3 The role of the LA is an extension of its current duties and roles around outbreak management. Public Health England's local Health Protection Teams carry the duty to control infectious diseases and the LA through the Director of Public Health is responsible overall for the health of its population. The LA provides support to the HPT in implementing measures to control infectious disease locally, for example in liaison with schools about outbreaks of measles or diarrhoea. In the time of Covid, this will be required more intensely.

- 5.4 The LA role in outbreak management sits as part of a national framework for COVID control. With a package of national programmes including NHS Test & Trace, increased testing capacity and access and provision of more detailed data and insights from the Joint Biosecurity Centre.

6 NHS Test and Trace

- 6.1 NHS Test & Trace is a new national service to identify cases of Covid-19 and prevent onward transmission using thorough contact tracing and quarantine measures. In the long term, it is expected that will be supported by the NHSX Covid-19 app which will support people to identify when they are symptomatic, order tests, and send alerts to other app users who have had close contact.
- 6.2 NHS Test and Trace has 3 levels, the LA will support at level 1b.
- **Level 3:** national call handling centre providing phone-based contact tracing
 - **Level 2:** contact tracing specialists providing phone-based contact tracing
 - **Level1b:** localised delivery providing contact tracing, consequence management and support for complex situations.
 - **Level 1a:** A national co-ordinating function to lead on policy, data science, and quality assurance of the service.

7 The Local Outbreak Plan

- 7.1 In June 2020 national government announced the requirement for local government to build on existing health protection plans to put in place measures to identify and contain outbreaks and protect the public's health, through the development of Local Outbreak Plans.
- 7.2 Local Outbreak Plans for COVID-19 are a combination of health protection expertise and capabilities (the public health sub-disciplines of epidemiology and surveillance, infection suppression and control techniques, contact tracing and evaluation) and the multi-agency capabilities of bodies in supporting these efforts through the deployment of the necessary resources to deliver these health protection functions at scale, where needed.
- 7.3 Local Directors of Public Health are responsible for defining the measures and producing the plans, working through Covid-19 Health Protection Boards. They will be supported by and work in collaboration with Gold command emergency planning forums and a public facing Outbreak Engagement Board led by council members to communicate openly with the public.
- 7.4 All upper tier local authorities are required to develop local outbreak control plans by 30 June 2020, ahead of further phases of the national infection control framework.
- 7.5 Bracknell Forest's plan is informed by the LGA Guiding Principles for Effective Local Outbreak Management ¹ the themes for Local Outbreak Control Plans as described by DHSC and learning from the 11 early implementation sites across the country.
- 7.6 Berkshire has unique arrangements for Whilst Bracknell Forest Council has developed its own plan, working with departments across the council to identify high risk settings and scenario planning, components of the plan have been developed collaboratively across LAs in Berkshire to ensure a coherent approach. Local NHS
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partners are also reviewing their plans and have also worked closely with us to ensure that our plans are effective.

7.7 The plan centres around 7 themes identified nationally as follows:

- **Care homes and schools**
Planning for local outbreaks in care homes and schools (e.g. defining monitoring arrangements, potential scenarios and planning the required response)
- **High risk places, locations and communities**
Identifying and planning how to manage high risk places, locations and communities of interest (e.g. defining preventative measures and outbreak management strategies)
- **Local testing capacity**
Identifying methods for local testing to ensure a swift response that is accessible to the entire population (e.g. defining how to prioritise and manage deployment, examples may include NHS, pop-up etc).
- **Contact tracing in complex settings**
Assessing local and regional contact tracing capability in complex settings (e.g. identifying specific local complex communities, developing assumptions to estimate demand and options to scale capacity)
- **Data integration**
Integrating national and local data and scenario planning through the Joint Biosecurity Centre Playbook (e.g. data management, including data security, NHS data linkages)
- **Vulnerable people**
Supporting vulnerable local people to get help to self-isolate (e.g. facilitating NHS and local support, identifying relevant community groups etc) and ensuring services meet the needs of diverse communities
- **Local Boards**
Establishing governance structures led by existing Covid-19 Health Protection Boards in conjunction with local NHS and supported by existing Gold command forums and a new member-led Board to communicate with the general public.

7.8 Locally, 2 themes have been added, keeping our workforce safe and communications and engagement. Ensuring that residents are a part of the local decision making has been a primary role in the plan development and is key to strong outbreak control.

Key objectives of the plan are to:

- detail roles and responsibilities in COVID-19 outbreaks and incidents with a view to minimising spread of infection
- ensure coordinated communications to the public, partners and press
- ensure that the response can be escalated if required

Important elements of the Local Authority role are to:

- Conduct surveillance for early signs of hotspots and outbreaks, using Joint Biosecurity Centre, testing and other data streams alongside local knowledge and soft intelligence
- Allocate mobile testing capacity
- Provide support for residents to use T&T and to follow through on advice to isolate or take other measures to keep safe
- Contextualise the PHE Health Protection Team response for particular localities or communities.
- Support risk assessment for infection prevention and control including PPE
- Keep members and residents fully informed

- Support PHE HPT, adding capacity, standing up outbreak control teams, supporting contact tracing, enacting local control measures
- Enforcement when needed
- Develop the plan with NHS and other partners with common processes, shared mobilisation and mutual aid but localised risk assessments & scenario plans.

8 Governance

- 8.1 There is an important governance and oversight role for the Council,
- To form Multi agency Health Protection Boards to oversee the development and delivery of the Outbreak Control Plans. Two multiagency Health Protection Boards are now in place in Berkshire, one for the 3 LAs in the East of the County and one for the 3 LAs in the West.
 - To form a Public facing Engagement Board, to engage with residents on outbreak control plans and measures.
- 8.2 This Local plan builds on existing plans and functions, including the:
- Thames Valley Outbreak Plan
 - Statutory functions of the Director of Public Health
 - A new National Outbreak Control Framework
 - Berkshire Public Health Team Emergency Response Plan (overarching plan)
 - Berkshire Public Health Protection Communication Plan
 - Berkshire Public Health Team Pandemic Influenza Response Plan
 - Thames Valley Influenza Pandemic Framework
 - Thames Valley LRF Scientific and Advice Cell (STAC) Plan
 - Public Health England Centre Thames Valley Health Protection Team Joint Outbreak / Incident Control Plan
- 8.3 Covid-19 advice and support are also being provided by the Berkshire shared PH team, as follows:
1. LAs are sharing public health expertise to ensure capacity for Covid-19 response 7 days a week. Public health expertise is located across LAs in environmental health and public health teams and in commissioned services such as sexual health.
 2. Two cells are being formed to centralise the technical support on Covid-19 to LAs across Berkshire. This resource will assist LA Chief Executives and Officers to take decisions on directing resource, enacting countermeasures or enforcement based on knowledge and evidence. The cells will be staffed with a mixture of new posts and rostered officers from the LAs. This should reduce duplication and enable some capacity to be directed towards reinstating public health services and recovery.
 3. The Cells will also keep LAs up to date with national guidance, advise on risk assessments for PPE, and interpret PHE advice for local implementation. They will be key points of contact for PHE.
 4. The Public Health Shared Team will continue local surveillance of Covid-19 data, producing intelligence and dashboards to guide the cells.

5. In the event of an outbreak locally, the cells will be able to coordinate the local outbreak response, in liaison with PHE's Thames Valley Health Protection Team and in partnership with CCG and ICS incident control centres.

9 Sign off and Publication of Plan

- 9.1 Although a comprehensive plan has been developed with partners, this remains an iterative process and will be developed further as more information becomes available on increasing testing capacity and the deployment of mobile testing units; high risk settings scenarios are developed further, and local Health Protection and Outbreak Engagement Cell become established.
- 9.2 A short summary of the Outbreak Control Plan (see Appendix 1) will be published by the 1 July 2020 after formal sign off by the Chief Executive, Strategic Director Public Health and Public Health England.

10 Consultation and Other Considerations

Legal Advice

- 10.1 Nothing to add to the report.

Financial Advice

- 10.2 Within existing resources to produce the plan but overall costs arising from outbreaks may result in additional costs beyond the funding provided.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 10.3 Not applicable.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 11.4 Not applicable.

Background Papers

Bracknell Forest local (draft) Outbreak Control Plan

Contact for further information

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