

PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE TO COVID-19

To: Health Committee

Meeting Date: 6th August 2020

From: Director of Public Health

Electoral division(s): All

Forward Plan ref: Not applicable **Key decision:** No

Outcome: To update the Health Committee on the Council's public health response to COVID-19, which impacts on outcomes for individuals and communities.

Recommendation: Health Committee is asked to:

- a) note the progress made to date in responding to the impact of the Coronavirus.
- b) Note the public health service response

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. A series of reports have been provided to Committees on the Council's ongoing response to the coronavirus pandemic, our work with partners and communities to protect the most vulnerable and our developing work to help Cambridgeshire to recover from this unprecedented emergency.
- 1.2. Officers and teams across the Council continue to work closely with our communities, partners and providers to develop appropriate operational responses to new guidance as it is issued. Further details can be found in service committee COVID-19 update reports: [Council Meetings](#)
- 1.3. The Council Senior Leadership Team continues to co-ordinate our response, with a Covid-19 Gold Group, which includes both the Chief Executive and Director of Public Health, meeting three times per week. The Local Resilience Forum (LRF), a partnership of local agencies, continues to hold a Strategic Co-ordinating Group to co-ordinate the multi-agency response.
- 1.4. The Council's Recovery Framework was endorsed by this Committee on 14th May and a Recovery Board has been established. The Senior Management Team member chairing this board is the Director for Business Improvement and Development, Amanda Askham and all Executive Directors, Service Directors and Corporate Heads of Service are members of the recovery group.
- 1.5. The Local Resilience forum has also stood up a Recovery Coordinating Group to co-ordinate multi-agency actions. This group is jointly chaired by Huntingdon District Council Managing Director, Jo Lancaster and South Cambridgeshire District Council Chief Executive, Liz Watts. This has a number of sub-groups - the Council's Public Health Directorate leads the 'Public Health and Prevention' Recovery sub-group, and provides specialist advice and input to other sub-groups. .

2. LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH CONTEXT

2.1 Confirmed cases

Many cases of Covid-19 are not tested for or diagnosed, particularly where the person infected does not have symptoms. The rates of testing and diagnosis have also changed significantly during the course of the pandemic - so the numbers and rates of confirmed cases do not provide a full picture of Covid-19 epidemiology over time.

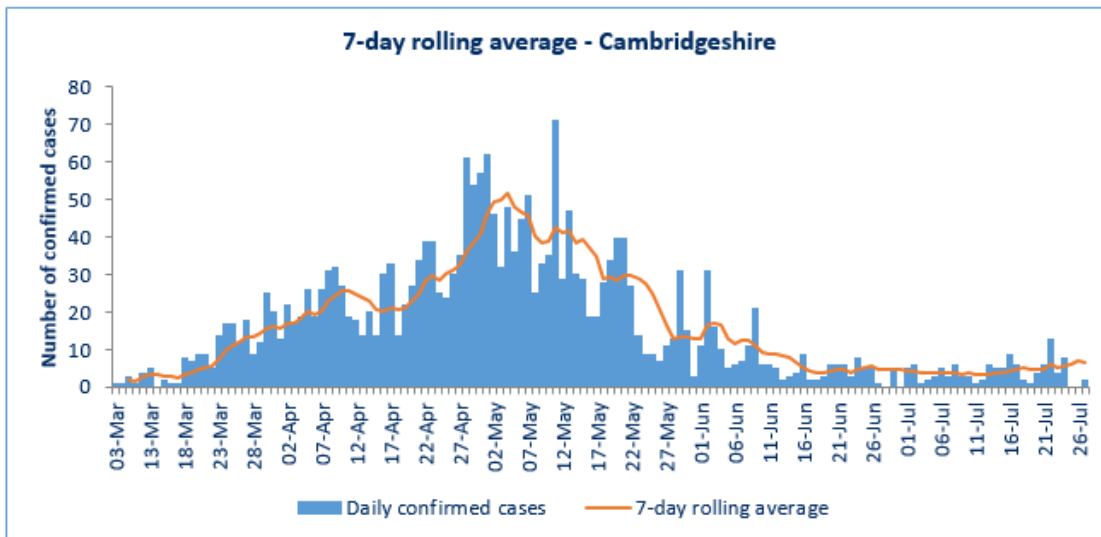
In the latest reporting week 20-26 July, 74 new lab-confirmed Covid-19 cases were detected in Cambridgeshire (35) and Peterborough (39).

The cumulative rate of Covid-19 cases per 100,000 population in Huntingdonshire (507.5) and Peterborough (713.3) remain statistically significantly higher than the national rate (464.0).

Huntingdonshire's cumulative rate reflects a higher historical level of cases - more recently Covid-19 case rates in Huntingdonshire have been similar to the national average.
Incidence rate of Covid-19 cases per 100,000 residents

Area	Most recent weekly data (Mon-Sun)			
	Weekly incidence rate from 13 July to 19 July	Weekly incidence rate from 20 July to 26 July	Difference in weekly incidence rate from previous week	
Cambridge	2.4	8.7	6.4	↑
East Cambridgeshire	2.2	0.0	-2.2	↓
Fenland	6.9	7.9	1.0	↑
Huntingdonshire	5.6	6.2	0.6	↑
South Cambridgeshire	7.6	3.2	-4.4	↓
Cambridgeshire	5.2	5.4	0.2	↑
Peterborough	19.9	19.4	-0.5	↓
England	7.3	7.7	0.5	↑

The 7 day rolling average of confirmed cases for Cambridgeshire shows an overall declining trend since the peak in Covid-19 cases in April/May.



Since mid-June the the seven day rolling average has remained stable, with a slight upturn in the most recent week.

2.2 Deaths

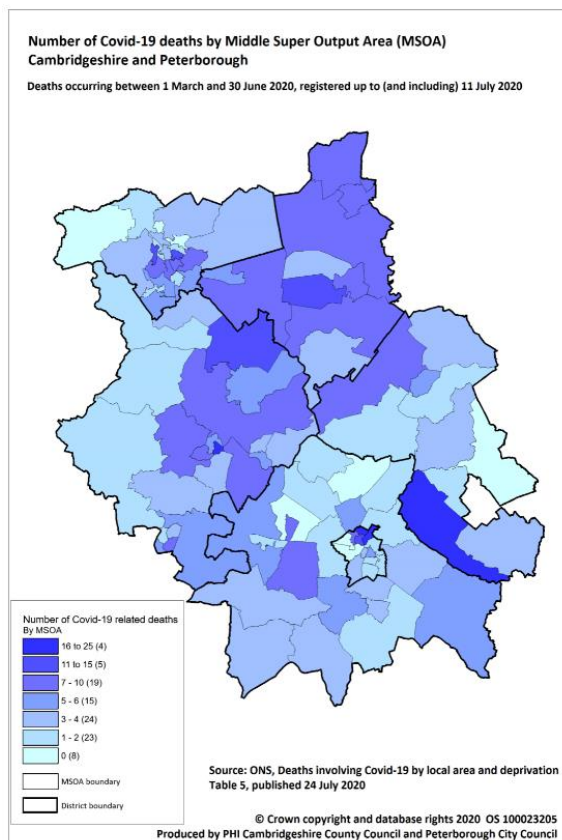
Sadly, there were 399 Covid-19 related deaths in Cambridgeshire in the period from March to June 2020. Both Covid-19 related death rates and all-cause death rates in Cambridgeshire and its districts were better than or similar to the national average during these four months. There were no Covid-19 related deaths in Cambridgeshire the reporting week 29 (ending 17th July 2020)

COVID-19 RELATED DEATHS

Area	4 month - March to June											
	Persons				Males				Females			
	Deaths	DASR	Lower CI	Upper CI	Deaths	DASR	Lower CI	Upper CI	Deaths	DASR	Lower CI	Upper CI
Cambridge	82	81.9	64.9	102.0	39	98.7	70.0	135.0	43	68.3	48.7	92.8
East Cambridgeshire	50	52.9	39.2	69.7	32	77.9	52.8	110.5	18	33.5*	19.6	53.2
Fenland	79	65.7	51.9	82.0	43	84.1	60.6	113.7	36	52.7	36.5	73.5
Huntingdonshire	127	70.6	58.3	82.9	69	91.1	70.4	115.9	58	56.2	42.6	72.8
South Cambridgeshire	61	37.0	28.3	47.5	31	43.7	29.6	62.2	30	31.8	21.3	45.5
Cambridgeshire	399	60.5	54.5	66.4	214	77.0	66.6	87.5	185	48.1	41.1	55.1
Peterborough	99	61.8	50.2	75.3	51	74.2	54.8	98.0	48	52.2	38.4	69.4
East of England	4,966	75.8	73.7	77.9	2,829	102.4	98.6	106.2	2,137	55.9	53.5	58.3
England	48,040	88.7	87.9	89.5	26,488	115.9	114.5	117.4	21,552	68.0	67.1	69.0

ALL-CAUSE DEATHS

Area	4 month - March to June											
	Persons				Males				Females			
	Deaths	DASR	Lower CI	Upper CI	Deaths	DASR	Lower CI	Upper CI	Deaths	DASR	Lower CI	Upper CI
Cambridge	315	324.5	288.0	361.0	147	369.7	309.6	429.8	168	299.3	252.3	346.4
East Cambridgeshire	306	323.7	287.3	360.0	158	404.4	339.7	469.1	148	265.9	222.5	309.3
Fenland	454	375.3	340.6	410.0	224	436.4	378.5	494.4	230	327.1	284.0	370.2
Huntingdonshire	590	327.9	301.4	354.4	301	388.1	343.2	433.0	289	280.2	247.7	312.6
South Cambridgeshire	447	269.5	244.5	294.6	231	330.6	287.5	373.7	216	224.7	194.4	255.0
Cambridgeshire	2,112	320.7	307.0	334.4	1,061	382.6	359.2	405.9	1,051	275.1	258.3	292.0
Peterborough	582	366.6	336.6	396.6	303	453.9	401.7	506.1	279	304.1	268.0	340.1
East of England	23,629	361.4	356.8	366.0	11,803	428.5	420.6	436.3	11,826	309.1	303.5	314.8
England	207,706	384.4	382.7	386.0	104,005	454.2	451.4	457.0	103,701	328.9	326.9	330.9



A map of numbers Covid-19 related deaths by geographical Medium Super Output Area (MSOA) shows generally higher numbers in Fenland and north east Huntingdonshire. This information should be regarded with caution, as there has been no adjustment for the age of the local population. We know that Fenland has a higher than average proportion of older people, and the risk of poor outcome from Covid-19 infection is much higher with increasing age. Where there is a very high rate in one MSOA, this is likely to be related to premises such as care homes located within that MSOA, rather than the overall rates of Covid-19 infection in the community.

3 PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES RESPONSE

The Covid-19 Contain Framework

- 3.1 Guidance for local authorities and local decision-makers on containing and managing COVID-19 outbreaks at a local level - was published on Friday 17th July as the 'Covid-19 Contain Framework'. This document sets out how NHS Test and Trace and the Joint Biosecurity Centre (JBC) will work with local authorities, Public Health England (PHE) and the public to contain and manage local COVID-19 outbreaks.
- 3.2 Upper tier local authorities, such as Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council, are leading local outbreak planning, within a national framework, and with the support of NHS Test and Trace, PHE and other government departments. In 2 tier areas, county councils are working closely with district councils who have responsibility for environmental health.
- 3.3 Wherever possible, actions to address outbreaks of COVID-19 will be undertaken in partnership with local communities, on the basis of informed engagement and consent. Upper Tier Local Authorities will have powers to close individual premises, public outdoor places and prevent specific events. This means that Upper Tier Local Authorities will no longer have to make representations to a magistrate in order to close a premises. Premises which form part of essential infrastructure will not be in scope of these powers. These new powers will allow Local Authorities to act more rapidly to contain outbreaks linked to a specific setting.

The powers to close down whole sectors of business in a local area, or to restrict the general movement of people in the area, will remain with Ministers at national level.

- 3.4 There will be ongoing national monitoring of the epidemiology and trends in Covid-19, and where there are higher or rising levels of Covid-19 cases in a local authority area, national government command structures will designate local authorities into one of three categories:
 - area(s) of concern – a watch list of areas with the highest prevalence, where the local area is taking targeted actions to reduce prevalence – for example additional testing in care homes and increased community engagement with high risk groups
 - area(s) of enhanced support – for areas at medium/high risk of intervention where there is a more detailed plan, agreed with the national team and with additional resources being provided to support the local team (eg epidemiological expertise, additional mobile testing capacity)
 - area(s) of intervention – where there is divergence from the measures in place in the rest of England because of the significance of the spread, with a detailed action plan in place, and local resources augmented with a national support

Peterborough is currently an 'Area of Concern' due to the weekly prevalence of Covid-19 cases being in the top twenty local authorities nationally.

- 3.5 More information about the Contain Framework is available on:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/containing-and-managing-local-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreaks>

Implementing the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Outbreak Control Plan

- 3.6 Public health focus over the past month has been on implementation of the Local Outbreak Control Plan (LOCP), including joint work with the regional Public Health England Health Protection Team to directly manage local clusters and outbreaks.
<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/coronavirus/coronavirus-covid-19-test-and-trace#local-outbreak-control-plan-7-0>
- 3.7 The public health led Surveillance Group meets daily at 9am to review the latest data from Public Health England, NHS Test and Trace, the local NHS and other relevant sources for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. This information is summarised and passed on to the Outbreak Management Team which works closely with the Public Health England Health Protection Team to oversee the management of local clusters and outbreak of Covid-19, through the work of multi-agency 'cells'. These cells are:
- Care Home Cell
 - Schools and Early Years Cell
 - Workplace Cell
 - Vulnerable Populations Cell
 - NHS Healthcare arrangements.

The membership of each Cell includes the agencies relevant to prevent and control outbreaks in that area of work. For example the Care Home Cell includes CCG, Adult Social Care, Public Health and NHS Community Service representatives; while the Workplace Cell has strong input from District/City Council Environmental Health Officers, who can visit affected businesses and provide advice and monitoring of their infection control and other outbreak control measures.

- 3.8 The overall implementation of the LOCP is overseen by the multi-agency Health Protection Board which meets weekly and is chaired by the Director of Public Health. This Board includes membership from Public Health England and has a strong focus on the local epidemiology of and trends for Covid-19, as well as current plans and actions to prevent and control outbreaks - in order to provide strategic leadership and planning for the future.
- 3.9 The Health Protection Board is supported by the LOCP Programme Delivery Group, chaired by the Chief Operating Officer of South Cambridgeshire District Council. This oversees delivery and monitoring of the LOCP action plan and milestones, with a focus on building the capacity and infrastructure required to manage a potential future surge in Covid-19 cases and outbreaks. This includes identifying and mitigating risks to delivery of the LOCP. The Programme Delivery Group meets weekly, and has multi-agency representation from the range of organisations involved in delivering the LOCP.
- 3.10 The Member-led Local Outbreak Engagement Board, jointly Chaired by Cllr Roger Hickford from Cambridgeshire County Council and Cllr John Holdich from Peterborough City Council, had its first meeting on Friday 10th July and will meet again on Friday 7th August. The membership largely reflects the Core Joint Sub-Committee of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Health and Wellbeing Boards, but also includes the Chair of the Health Committee, Cllr Peter Hudson, and a District Member representative. This Board meets in public and will provide political leadership and engagement with local residents for outbreak prevention, early identification and control.

- 3.11 The Finance Sub-Group of the Health Protection Board reviews business cases for allocation of the Test and Trace Grant from national government which is approximately £2.5M for Cambridgeshire. It has now met twice and approved funding for:
- Additional Communications staff and campaigns
 - Increasing the Environmental Health workforce and associated resource requirements in District and City Councils.
 - Additional public health staffing for the Outbreak Management Team
 - Increased local testing capacity
 - Additional training capacity
 - Additional staffing for infection control and contact tracing.
 - A hardship fund to be administered through community hubs, where vulnerable residents need specific support to self-isolate.
- 3.12 District Councils make a key contribution to the LOCP, through their Environmental Health function and through their local preventive and rapid response work in the event of a community outbreak in their area. This includes practical support for more vulnerable people asked to isolate at short notice. The Director of Public Health has met with each of the District/City Council chief executives in Cambridgeshire to discuss their local plans.
- 3.13 The publication of the national Contain Framework as outlined in paras 3.1-3.5, which includes the allocation of new powers to upper tier Local Authorities, creates the need to review and revise the LOCP and associated documents on local roles, responsibilities and governance. This work is being led by Sue Grace, the Director of Customer and Digital Services.

Local Resilience Forum

- 3.14. The Local Resilience Forum Strategic Co-ordination Group, co-chaired by Gillian Beasley and by Jan Thomas, the CCG Accountable Officer, plays an important role in supporting Covid-19 outbreak prevention and management through bringing together the resources of the wider public sector in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, when the resources needed go beyond the scope of the Health Protection Board. A document describing the roles and responsibilities of a range of organisations involved in delivering the LOCP has been agreed through the LRF Strategic Co-ordination Group and published alongside our LOCP. This document is included in the review outlined under para 3.12 so will be subject to some further amendment.
- <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/PCC-CCC-3126a-Local-outbreak-control-plan-V6.pdf>
- 3.15 The LRF Training and Exercise sub-group delivered a 'virtual' multi-agency emergency planning tabletop exercise, to test our Local Outbreak Control Plan and the rapid response to a community outbreak. This took place on Monday 20th June, and was well attended across the organisations involved. The outcomes of the exercise will be reviewed and incorporated into delivery of the LOCP.

Asymptomatic Screening

- 3.16 The Public Health team worked with the regional NHS Test and Trace service to organise testing for all workers at the AMFRESH and AMFLOWERS packing factory in Huntingdonshire. This was following twenty-six cases of Covid-19 being identified over a

three week period, out of a workforce of approximately 850 staff. A regional mobile testing unit provided the screening between 24th and 28th July. The business was very collaborative and put a number of measures in place to support the successful asymptomatic testing for their workforce.

Ongoing work

3.17 Other ongoing work includes:

- Provision of public health advice and guidance to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Resilience Forum (LRF) multi-agency COVID-19 Strategic Co-ordination Group (SCG): This is done through the Director of Public health being a member of the SCG, and through a multi-agency Public Health Advice Cell (PHAC) which includes membership from the CCG and Public Health England as well as local authority public health.
- Continuing to implement the findings of the stocktake of vulnerable/socially excluded population groups reporting to the LRF Community Reference Group and the LRF Vulnerable People's Recover Sub-Group. This work will be used to support planning for outbreaks of Covid-19 among vulnerable populations, as part of the C&P Local Outbreak Control Plan.
- Public health analysts are involved in ongoing work with the LRF Intelligence Cell on modelling and surveillance, as well as contributing directly to the LOCP Surveillance Cell. They are producing regular Covid-19 overview reports based on publically available data e.g. from the Office of National Statistics (ONS), Public Health England (PHE) and the Care Quality Commission (CQC).
- Working with CCG, CPFT, Voluntary sector and Communications Team on ongoing delivery of a multi-agency COVID-19 mental health plan.
- Provision of public health advice and guidance to CCC/PCC People and Communities Management Team and Service Directors on various issues, e.g. PPE and wider Public Health England (PHE) guidance to the social care sector. A public health specialist is working closely with Adult Social Care and the NHS on implementation of new Care Homes national guidance, including prioritisation of testing for residents. Advice is also provided for Children's Services and Education Services.
- Writing to all local care homes to confirm that the new national guidance for care home visiting could be implemented in Cambridgeshire, clarifying the local principles and requirements for care home visiting policies, and how these would be monitored by the Adult Social Care commissioning team.
- Provision of public health advice and answering of queries for Council staff through the AskDrLiz e-mail helpline
- Ongoing work with providers of contracted public health programmes to monitor contracts and support with management of COVID-19 related issues and to manage/finalise procurements which were in process when COVID-19 incident started.
- Maintaining regional links with the East of England Public Health England Team and joint Public Health England/NHS England regional incident management. Acting as a conduit for escalation of public health queries and issues to regional PHE team

3.18 Recovery work

The LRF Recovery Group Public Health and Prevention sub-group will function as a sub-group of both the LRF and the STP's Recovery work, ensuring a fully joined up approach.

- Public health specialist advice to the LRF Recovery Sub-Group
- Involvement in arrangements for NHS recovery, which will be led by the NHS Sustainable Transformation Partnership (STP).
- Public health specialist advice to the LRF Economic Recovery Sub-Group
- Public Health specialist advice to public transport restoration group
- Public health input to CCC/PCC recovery planning

5 ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 5.1 The current Coronavirus pandemic will have both an immediate and a longer term effect on all of the Council's priorities. The impacts will be monitored and managed through our risk logs and recovery plans and will feed into the annual review of Council strategy.

6. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Following the Government's recovery plans for the UK, it is important to balance the requirements for people to get back to school and work, for communities and services to rebuild and for businesses to reopen, with the ongoing monitoring and control of risks from Covid-19. The work outlined above describes how this is being taken forward in Cambridgeshire.

Source Documents	Location
Service highlight reports for all Directorates sent to Members weekly.	Highlight Reports