

PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE TO COVID-19

*To:* Health Committee

*Meeting Date:* 15<sup>th</sup> October 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 into a 'new normal'.
- 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 epidemiological information and guidance as it is issued.
- 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

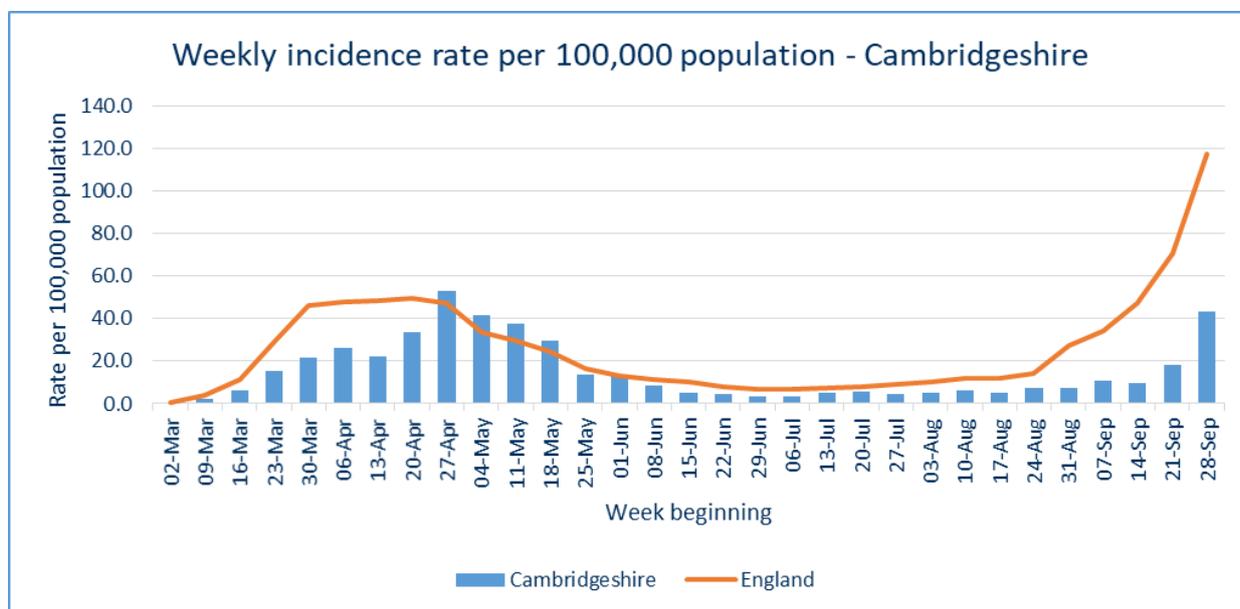
Many cases of Covid-19 are not tested for or diagnosed, particularly where the person infected does not have symptoms. The rates of testing and diagnosis have also changed significantly during the course of the pandemic - so the numbers and rates of confirmed cases do not provide a full picture of Covid-19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

In the latest reporting week 28<sup>th</sup> Sept to 4<sup>th</sup> Oct (data extracted 7<sup>th</sup> October), 282 new lab-confirmed Covid-19 cases with addresses in Cambridgeshire were detected. Within Cambridgeshire County, the rates per 100,000 population were highest in South Cambridgeshire and then Huntingdonshire and Fenland. However some of the cases coded to Cambridgeshire are likely to be students involved in outbreaks in universities elsewhere.

Nationally rates of Covid-19 are increasing rapidly, and this is also seen in Cambridgeshire. Even after adjusting for the likely impact of students at external universities, the rate of Covid-19 cases across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough approximately doubled between the week ending 27<sup>th</sup> September and the week ending 4<sup>th</sup> October.

## Incidence rate of Covid-19 cases per 100,000 residents (unadjusted)

Area	Most recent weekly data (Mon-Sun)			
	Weekly incidence rate from 21 to 27 Sep	Weekly incidence rate from 28 Sep to 04 Oct	Difference in weekly incidence rate from previous week	
Cambridge	23.2	39.3	16.0	↑
East Cambridgeshire	6.7	26.7	20.0	↑
Fenland	9.8	46.1	36.3	↑
Huntingdonshire	22.5	46.1	23.6	↑
South Cambridgeshire	20.7	50.3	29.5	↑
Cambridgeshire	18.1	43.1	25.1	↑
Peterborough	35.1	56.4	21.3	↑
England	70.8	117.4	46.6	↑



## 2.2 Deaths

Sadly, there were 413 Covid-19 related deaths in Cambridgeshire in the period from March to 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2020. Covid-19 related death rates and all-cause death rates in Cambridgeshire county were lower (better) than the national average during the five months from March to July, and death rates in all Cambridgeshire districts were lower than or similar to the national average during these five months. There were no Covid-19 related deaths of Cambridgeshire residents in reporting week 40 (ending 2<sup>nd</sup> October, deaths registered up to 10<sup>th</sup> October).

Covid-19 deaths occurring up to 2 October 2020, registered up to 10 October 2020

Area name	Place of death						Total
	Home	Hospital	Care home	Hospice	Other communal establishment	Elsewhere	
Cambridge	3	35	43	1	0	0	82
East Cambridgeshire	3	31	16	1	0	0	51
Fenland	3	61	17	1	0	0	82
Huntingdonshire	9	90	36	0	0	1	136
South Cambridgeshire	2	38	22	0	0	0	62
Cambridgeshire	20	255	134	3	0	1	413
Peterborough	5	77	30	1	0	1	114
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough	25	332	164	4	0	2	527

2.3 Further information on both numbers of cases and deaths in Cambridgeshire and in District/City Council areas is available on [https://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/coronavirus\\_cambridgeshire/cambridgeshire-and-peterborough-public-health-covid-19-reports/](https://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/coronavirus_cambridgeshire/cambridgeshire-and-peterborough-public-health-covid-19-reports/) and updated on a weekly basis.

### 3 PUBLIC HEALTH RESPONSE

3.1 There has been ongoing focus 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>

3.2 The public health led Surveillance Group meets daily 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
- Education 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.

3.3 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.

- 3.4 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.
- 3.5 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 most recent meeting on October 5<sup>th</sup>. A video of the meeting is available on [Recording of Local Outbreak Engagement Board](#) . This Board meets in public and provides political leadership and communication with local residents for outbreak prevention, early identification and control.
- 3.6 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.

#### Local Resilience Forum

- 3.7 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. <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/asset-library/PCC-CCC-3126a-Local-outbreak-control-plan-V6.pdf>

#### Areas of focus over the past month

- 3.8 Outbreak Plans for Anglia Ruskin University and Cambridge City University have been reviewed by public health team and signed off by the Director of Public Health, before submission nationally. There is ongoing close communication and joint work with both Universities - involving CCC/PCC public health and communications teams, Cambridge City Council, and Public Health England. Further detail on our work with the Universities is included as Appendix A.
- 3.9 There has been a significant workload for both the Education Directorate and the Public Health Directorate working together, to provide advice and support for schools, when they have one or more cases of Covid-19 amongst staff or pupils. A new Department for Education helpline has also been introduced

- A head-teachers briefing and Q&A session, with updates from the Director of Education and Director of Public Health, was attended by over 250 participants and received positive feedback
- 3.10 There has been ongoing focus on Care Homes and Domiciliary Care. Public health staff work closely with the Adult Social Care Directorate and with NHS colleagues to ensure that the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Care Home Support Plan continues to be implemented effectively, with ongoing infection control support and training for Care Homes where required.
  - 3.11 Ongoing joint work with District/City Council Environmental Health Teams on prevention and outbreak management with both workplaces and vulnerable/ socially excluded groups.
  - 3.12 District/City Council level Safety Advisory Groups review forthcoming events - and public health specialist advice is sought for higher risk events. Further communication is planned to ensure that event organisers are made aware of good practice in organising Covid-19 safe events, and of the need for larger events to be considered by the District Safety Advisory Group. A protocol for implementation of Contain Framework powers to issue directions relating to events, premises and public spaces has been developed.
  - 3.13 The Health Protection Board and wider Council directorates are actively planning for a potential surge of cases during the winter months - considering the impact of a combination of Covid-19 and other winter viruses such as influenza. Ensuring effective flu vaccination for vulnerable groups is a high priority - as this should reduce demand for both Covid-19 testing and hospital capacity.
  - 3.14 Public health staff work closely with the Communications Team on a range of campaigns and information, both for the general public and more targeted groups. There is a current focus on a hard-hitting 'Cancel Covid' campaign for the 18-30 age group, and on promoting understanding of the need to self-isolate, the requirements around this, and the local support available.

#### National issues

- 3.15 The national system of three Covid-19 tiers for local areas, with different levels of intervention at each tier was announced on Monday of this week and debated in parliament on Tuesday. Cambridgeshire is currently at the 'Medium' tier.

#### 4 ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 4.1 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.

#### 5. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 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.

<b>Source Documents</b>	<b>Location</b>
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local outbreak control plan	<a href="https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/coronavirus/coronavirus-covid-19-test-and-trace#local-outbreak-control-plan-7-0">https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/coronavirus/coronavirus-covid-19-test-and-trace#local-outbreak-control-plan-7-0</a>