



# Team Devon Local Outbreak Engagement Board

## Decision and Action log

### TEAM DEVON (LOCAL OUTBREAK ENGAGEMENT BOARD)

**Date Thursday, 11 March 2021**

#### **Present**

Councillor John Hart, Councillor Andrew Leadbetter, Councillor Roger Croad, Tony Gravett, Dr Paul Johnson, Councillor James McInnes, Professor Janice Kay CBE, Dame Suzi Leather, Cara Stobart, Sue Wilkinson, Diana Crump, Sean Mackney, Rhys Roberts, Dan Evans, Hannah Reynolds and Councillor David Worden

No.	Decision/Action/Message	Who Will Communicate / action?	When?
20.	<b>Notes of the Previous Board Meeting</b> The notes of the previous Board meeting on 11 February 2021 were endorsed.		

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21.	<p><b>Urgent Items from the Health Protection Board</b>            The Director of Public Health advised that there were no urgent items for escalation from the Health Protection Board.</p>		
22.	<p><b>Report / Presentation from the Health Protection Board</b>            The Board received a Report from the Health Protection Board on current issues, data and matters for information.</p> <p>Matters included in the Report were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nationally case numbers had been decreasing (5,296 daily - drop of 20% over the past week), as were the number of deaths and people in hospital, and testing remained very high.</li> <li>- Local Picture: Devon had 180 cases in the past week, (22.4 per 100,000 population with the National average at 61.0). There had been 5 deaths recorded in the last week (0.6 per 100,000 compared to 1.9 nationally).</li> <li>- Trends – age profile: there had been an increase in the 80+ category due to a recent outbreak in a care home.</li> <li>- Across the County – there were some higher case numbers in East Devon due to care home outbreaks.</li> </ul> <p>Further data and information could be found at:</p> <p><a href="#">Coronavirus dashboard and data in Devon - Coronavirus (COVID-19)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Daily summary   Coronavirus in the UK (data.gov.uk)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Interactive Map   Coronavirus in the UK (data.gov.uk)</a></p>		

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	<p>Vaccinations – the uptake rates were very good in Devon across all age groups. Not far off half million first doses being given, with 95% of over 65s vaccinated. In under 65s, ¼ had already been vaccinated (carers, frontline health workers, chronic illnesses). Devon was able to deliver 50,000 first doses per week and second doses were also underway.</p> <p>Learning disability groups – those individuals with a severe learning disability would also receive their vaccination at this stage. There had been some difficulty in determining the severity of individual’s learning disability from GP records, therefore anyone with a learning disability would be vaccinated.</p> <p>Work was continuing to access hard to reach communities by creating COVID-19 Ambassadors and creating films and campaigns around learning disability accessing the vaccine to address any anxieties.</p>		
23.	<p><b>Local and National Updates - Roadmap</b></p> <p>The Board was updated on the Local Outbreak Management Plan (LOMP) being refreshed and resubmitted, to take account of the National Road Map. It was important to highlight that the dates identified within the Government’s Road Map were ‘No Earlier than dates’ rather than written in stone as reopening dates for businesses. There had to be 5 weeks between each step to look at the impact of the relaxation of restrictions, to assess data and case numbers.</p> <p>In Devon, partners were looking at the next 6 – 24 months, understanding that we would not be living in a covid free society for the foreseeable future. The LOMP identified key areas such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Good surveillance and intelligence, which was essential to manage local outbreaks and any changes to variants of the virus.</li> </ul>		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Good test, trace and isolation plans – increased local testing capability, and improved self-isolation plans.</li> <li>- Ensuring businesses, schools, homes etc maintained covid safe requirements for the future e.g. hands, face, space.</li> <li>- Working in partnership to maintain low levels of cases and manage any local outbreaks.</li> </ul> <p>The low rates were positive, however the number of cases had not been decreasing as quickly in the past few weeks and were still above levels seen last summer. It was noted that the number of positive cases included both PCR and Lateral Flow tests being used by businesses, schools and at home.</p>		
24.	<p><b>Vaccinations and Health Inequality</b></p> <p>The Board received a presentation on the mass vaccination inequalities cell (appended to these minutes), which included the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Addressing inequalities in uptake across the whole of Devon;</li> <li>- Communications &amp; engagement – insight to inform actions including delivery models;</li> <li>- Focus on socially vulnerable groups;</li> <li>- Regional and national approach to inequalities including a National vaccine delivery plan and SW strategy to increase uptake and equity of access;</li> <li>- Lower uptake was evident in more deprived areas;</li> <li>- In Devon, there was support for those who did not attend/respond to invite; a Vaccine ambassador programme; a Learning Disability, Neurodiversity and Mental Illness Working Group; Homeless &amp; Gypsy, Roma and Traveller working groups; work with care provision cell to support carers, housebound, frontline staff offer and insight work on vaccine hesitancy in staff &amp; promoting uptake; and,</li> </ul>		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understanding perceptions of the COVID-19 vaccination through online surveys and focus groups in November and December 2020 – the CCG had sought views of more than 1,800 local people to gain insight and understanding of local perceptions and the likely uptake of the COVID-19 vaccination.</li> </ul> <p>Discussion Points with Board Members included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How the learning and understanding gained from completing this work could be shared with others. Officers had fed back into regional and national groups, including the STP Inequalities group, the Fire Service and other regional groups. They were also looking at how DCC and partners could continue this work in all aspects of future work, looking at how inequalities were addressed and how hard to reach groups could be accessed;</li> <li>- Regional workshop – the LGA had contacted DCC to show case this excellent work. The National Vaccination Programme steering Group – work in South West on equalities was sighted as exemplar to the rest of the country and is being used as best practice; and,</li> <li>- The response to the Vaccination Ambassador programme had been very good and engagement was positive.</li> </ul>		
25.	<p><b>Impact of the Budget - Tourism and Hospitality</b>  Head of Economy and Enterprise presented on the Devon Tourism and Hospitality Impacts / Prospects for 2021 (appended to these minutes), which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Annual economic decline in 2020/21 would be deeper than originally expected, up to around 13-14%, compared to a projection of 8% decline made in April 2020;</li> <li>- The picture for individual sectors remained mixed. Manufacturing and</li> </ul>		

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	<p>Construction seemed to be operating well, with purchasing indexes positive. Accommodation, Hospitality and parts of Retail sector continued to be badly affected;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The third lockdown would mean that recovery would not now properly begin until the second calendar quarter of 2021, with the local economy not reaching its previous size until Jan-Mar 2023 at the earliest;</li> <li>- Unemployment was currently stabilised at around 5%;</li> <li>- Furlough was protecting Devon at present, with claimant count likely to have been at least double without the support. Hospitality, accommodation and wider service sector had between a third and a half of workforce on scheme. Furlough was now extended to Sept 2021 – with a phasing out approach from July to Sept</li> <li>- There had been a surge of bookings on the back of the PM Announcements on Road Map;</li> <li>- VAT – the temporary hospitality sector rate of 5% had been extended to Sept 2021 – and a 12.5% reduced rate until March 2022;</li> <li>- There was £5bn of ‘restart’ grants funding to help businesses re-start trading safely, including up to £18,000 for hospitality /accommodation/leisure. Up to £6,000 for non-essential retail per premises depending on rateable value; and,</li> <li>- Made in Devon scheme – this was a celebration and promotion of local products, goods and services with a marketing campaign and linked to the Buy With Confidence scheme.</li> </ul>		
26.	<p><b>Police Planning and Enforcement</b></p> <p>The Board received an update on police activity including plans around the easing of lockdown. There were strong operational plans in place to deal with key dates and holidays, such as Bank Holiday and Easter. Looking ahead to summer months, the Police were anticipating a very busy summer for Devon.</p>		

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	<p>The Police would continue to engage in communications across the County for those living in Devon as well as visiting on holiday. They were working closely with partners on the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) and tactical coordination group. The public were still being urged to be cautious despite lockdown easing. There would be an increase police presence on roads especially during holiday season, as well as partnership work around Domestic Violence and mental health response vehicles and potentially Street Wardens if funding allowed.</p>		
27.	<p><b>Schools, Testing and a Safe Return</b>  The Board received an update from the Head of Education, which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All schools were able to reopen on 8 March to all pupils in primary school and a staggered return to secondary schools;</li> <li>- Lateral flow testing was in place at all secondary schools;</li> <li>- The consent rate from parents was between 90-95% for pupils to undertake lateral flow tests which was very positive;</li> <li>- An 80% response rate from schools showed 84% of pupils of all children returned to school. Of those who were eligible to attend (all primary and certain year groups of secondary), 93% of pupils returned;</li> <li>- In Primary schools, 98% of pupils returned (highest attendance rate ever recorded, even before COVID);</li> <li>- Secondary school pupils, there was 53% attendance (with more year groups due to return over the coming weeks); and,</li> <li>- A lot of pupils were happy to be back at school, and there was support in place for those more anxious to return.</li> </ul> <p>The Board wished to record the amazing work of all schools and staff to step up and implement the lateral flow testing procedures for pupils at secondary schools.</p>		

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28.	<p><b>Public Questions / Other Questions for the Board</b>  The Board discussed the recent outbreak in an East Devon Care Home, despite vaccinations given and were advised that individuals could still catch the virus even if vaccinated, and work was ongoing around outbreak control.</p>		
29.	<p><b>Key Messages to be Communicated</b>  The Board and Head of Communications and Media considered the key messages coming from the meeting.</p> <p>These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case numbers continued to fall in all age groups and Devon continued to have one of the lowest rates in the country;</li> <li>• Numbers were now the same as late September last year;</li> <li>• There was low and falling numbers of patients in local hospitals and fewer deaths;</li> <li>• The Vaccination programme was going well and generally proving highly successful with the number of new cases and severity of illness much reduced;</li> <li>• Covid was still in the community however, with continued sporadic outbreaks related to workplaces, care homes and other settings – caution was needed;</li> <li>• Schools had now re-opened for all pupils and the impact would be closely monitored;</li> <li>• Regular testing, using the rapid lateral flow tests, of secondary school pupils, college students and all teachers;</li> <li>• Community (asymptomatic) testing continued to be rolled out across the county for other key workers who could not work from home and parents of school-aged children to access regularly; and,</li> </ul>		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch of the NHS home delivery rapid lateral flow test which could be ordered online.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key Public health messages</b></p> <p>No vaccination could be 100% effective and people needed to continue to follow the guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay at home as much as possible;</li> <li>• If you really need to go out, stay local and wherever possible and avoid contact with others; and,</li> <li>• Follow the rules around hands, face and space.</li> </ul> <p><b>Hospitals and health service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hospital admissions continued to reduce and were now very low;</li> <li>• The Nightingale hospital was on standby but set to close for Covid patients by April in line with national plans; and,</li> <li>• 111 First service was being promoted to help manage non-urgent cases and ensure people get access to care at the right time in the right place.</li> </ul> <p><b>Mass vaccination</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vaccinations were on track and going well to have all JVEI groups 1-9 vaccinated by end March;</li> <li>• Over 490,000 people in Devon had now received the first dose of the vaccine;</li> <li>• All vaccination centres were moving through the JCVI priority groups as quickly and safely as possible in priority order;</li> <li>• Around 95% of over-65s in Devon had been vaccinated;</li> </ul>		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 80% of health and social care staff had received the vaccine; and,</li> <li>• There was a campaign to reach out to underrepresented groups including BAME communities and people in rural areas.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key public messages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being vaccinated reduced your risk of becoming seriously ill from COVID. But you could still catch it and pass it on so everyone must continue to adhere to restrictions and public health guidance;</li> <li>• People needed to book an appointment before turning up at a vaccine centre and let them know if they could not attend to reduce wastage;</li> <li>• The over 65s, clinically extremely vulnerable and unpaid carers could now book an appointment. This could be done online and you didn't need to have received a letter or have your NHS number. You could also call 119 between 7am – 11pm (seven days a week). The online system allowed people to choose a suitable time slot and location.</li> <li>• Otherwise, the NHS would get in touch with you when it was your turn;</li> <li>• You would not be offered a choice of which vaccination you receive – both approved vaccines were rigorously tested, safe and effective; and,</li> <li>• Individuals should not call their local hospital or GP practice about getting the vaccine – the NHS would contact them directly when it's their turn.</li> </ul> <p><b>Care Homes and vulnerable people</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant outbreaks in care homes continued to fall and the severity of illness and deaths were much reduced;</li> <li>• Nearly all (93%) of care home residents (93%) and 83% of staff had received the first dose vaccination and were now moving onto to second doses;</li> <li>• Nominated family members could now visit their relatives in care homes;</li> </ul>		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There remained a small number of significant outbreaks of concern which were being monitored closely;</li> <li>• The Vaccination programme continued to reach out to housebound and other vulnerable groups; and,</li> <li>• The campaign to boost uptake by health and social care staff was ongoing.</li> </ul> <p><b>Schools and education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All schools in Devon were now open to all pupils, with secondary schools returning on a staggered basis;</li> <li>• Early indication was that attendance was high (98% in primary schools);</li> <li>• Secondary schools were conducting rapid lateral flow testing of pupils;</li> <li>• There was a high consent rate for testing (90-95%); and,</li> <li>• Children and parents were being actively encouraged to take up the offer of rapid testing including home testing.</li> </ul> <p><b>Local Rapid Testing and Contact Tracing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A community rapid testing programme for key workers who couldn't work from home, parents of pupils and those supporting vulnerable people continued to be rolled out across the county;</li> <li>• These tests were to help stop the spread of infection by identifying asymptomatic people and getting them to isolate and/or seek an NHS PCR test;</li> <li>• Several sites across the county were now operational plus a number of mobile units;</li> <li>• This testing was picking up positive cases; and,</li> <li>• A local contact tracing service continued to pick up people missed by the national Test and Trace programme.</li> </ul>		

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	<p><b>Key public message on rapid Lateral Flow Testing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These were tests to find cases and NOT a test to release. A lateral flow test was useful for picking up asymptomatic positive cases so that people could isolate and not spread to others. A negative test did not give people a green light and they must continue to adhere to national restrictions and public health guidance at all times</li> </ul> <p><b>Policing and enforcement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There had been a slight increase in reporting of non-compliance;</li> <li>• Planning was ongoing to help manage the safest possible opening up from lockdown, increased recreation and travel/tourism post Easter – including Covid-safe compliance, traffic issues, anti-social behaviour, etc; and,</li> <li>• Working on co-ordinated public messaging campaigns and engagement through the LRF.</li> </ul> <p><b>Business and economy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There had been a huge impact on tourism/hospitality sector which was a large part of Devon’s economy;</li> <li>• £1.8bn cumulative loss to Devon tourism and leisure economy over the past 12 months;</li> <li>• Working together with the sector on active support programmes;</li> <li>• Significant visitor bookings had been reported for this year; and,</li> <li>• Some friction with host communities was anticipated.</li> </ul>		

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30.	<b>Date of Next Meeting</b> Members noted the date of the next meeting as 15 April 2021 @ 11.00am		