

# COVID-19 LOCAL OUTBREAK CONTROL PLAN

<b>Relevant Board Member(s)</b>	Councillor Jane Palmer, Chairman, Health and Wellbeing Board
<b>Organisation</b>	London Borough of Hillingdon
<b>Report author</b>	Dan Kennedy, Hillingdon Council
<b>Papers with report</b>	None

## 1. HEADLINE INFORMATION

<b>Summary</b>	This report updates the Health and Wellbeing Board on Hillingdon's Local Outbreak Control Plan. This plan sets out how the Council and partners are working with residents, businesses, schools and a wide range of other organisations to prevent and contain the spread of the Covid-19 virus.
<b>Contribution to plans and strategies</b>	The Covid-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan contributes to Hillingdon's Health and Wellbeing Strategy by helping to protect the health of residents.
<b>Financial Cost</b>	There are no direct financial costs arising from the recommendations set out within this report.
<b>Ward(s) affected</b>	All

## 2. RECOMMENDATION

**That the Health and Wellbeing Board notes the work to date and underway by the Council and Board Members to prevent and control the spread of the Covid-19 virus.**

## 3. INFORMATION

### Supporting Information

1. In line with much of London and many other areas of the country, Covid-19 infection rates in Hillingdon and London have increased since September. As at 12<sup>th</sup> November 2020 Hillingdon's infection rate was 168 per 100,000 people compared to a London Average of 150 per 100,000 people. Hillingdon is eighth highest in London, which is mainly derived from community based transmissions of the virus.
2. As part of the national effort to reduce the spread of the Covid-19 virus, every local authority was required to prepare a Local Outbreak Control Plan (LOCP) which sets out how the local authority and partners are working together to help reduce the likelihood of further outbreaks of Covid-19, particularly for some of the most vulnerable residents, such as those

living in care homes. It is structured around 7 prescribed core themes and where relevant also includes the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders. The plan presents preventative action as well as what the approach will be in the event of an outbreak. Hillingdon's plan was published on 30 June 2020, on time.

## Settings

3. Particular attention is being given to higher risk settings such as care homes, schools and accommodation for homeless individuals to ensure that infection controls are in place and are robustly adhered to. Standard Operating Protocols are in place to set out what to do when there is an outbreak. In most cases, deep cleaning of the premises, rapid testing for the presence of the virus and self-isolation are effective measures to control the spread of the virus.
4. Care Homes continued to have 'wrap around' support to enable them to continue to provide safe services to the residents of Hillingdon, prevent the spread of infection and ensure that safe visiting takes place.
5. The multi-agency support is as follows:
  - Grant funding for the management of staffing resources - specifically non transfer of staff between homes/establishments, stopping the use of public transport for staff to get to work & pay for replacement staff when others are isolating.
  - Nominated Quality Assurance Support from the Council - daily contact to support with adequate staffing resources, PPE and testing regimes and outcomes.
  - Daily ward rounds [virtually] by the named Care Home Matron, to help manage health issues and in particular, Covid symptoms and the health of Covid Positive residents.
  - Infection, Prevention & Control standards monitoring - site visit by QA officer, action plans in place to ensure compliance with the standards.
  - Onsite and virtual training by CNWL on infection control, effective swab testing, the donning and doffing of PPE.
  - Support with contact tracing of staff/residents who have tested positive to establish sources.
  - Support with creating and implementing protocols around visiting in care homes.
  - Daily and weekly guidance updates and a QA officer available for advice on implementation 7 days per week.
6. In line with latest guidance, the Council and CCG will manage the discharge of patients who have tested positive for Covid-19 from hospital to designated beds for isolation. All patients that are to be discharged from hospital to a care setting will be tested and their Covid status known. For those residents who are tested negative, they will be discharged to 'step down' facilities or to their original care home placement to enable a further period of isolation at home to continue.
7. The latest visiting guidance for Care Homes aims to ensure that residents may safely have visits from family and friends and the Council will work with providers to ensure that residents rights are upheld. This will mean innovative and creative ways of working and some grant funding is available to care homes through the IPC grant to do this.
8. All schools in Hillingdon have completed risk assessments and put in place arrangements which restrict the movement of pupils and staff in the school building, implemented

increased cleaning regimes and where appropriate introduced staggered start and finish times to minimise the likelihood of groups of individuals gathering on the school site. Schools have and continue to be reminded of infection control practices.

9. Housing providers in the Borough have been contacted and provided with nationally published information to share with tenants living in shared housing. This sets out what they can do to keep safe and to help prevent the spread of the virus. Landlords of shared accommodation and their tenants have been written to by the Council setting out practical advice and guidance to prevent the spread of the infection. For vulnerable residents testing has been undertaken and is available.

### Community Locations

10. Officers across the Licensing, Food Health & Safety and ASBET Teams have been carrying out compliance checks on all public facing businesses in the Borough to ensure that businesses are doing all they can to reduce the likelihood of Covid-19 transmission.
11. The checks have included the following, which are under the Councils jurisdiction to enforce (prior to the second lockdown):
  - Display and use of the NHS QR Code system for track & trace
  - Closure of hospitality premises by 22.00 hours
  - Tables spaced adequately within hospitality premises
  - Use of table service only within hospitality premises
  - Limiting groups of 6 outdoors and to one household indoors
  - The use of face coverings for staff and customers in applicable premises
12. Any breaches of the above can result in Fixed Penalty Notices of up to £10,000 and officers have been working on a stepped approach to educate, warn and fine as a last resort. Since the regulations came into force in mid-September, officers have conducted over 620 visits during working hours and during evenings and weekends.
13. To date, only 6 FPN's have been issued for 4 premises which demonstrates that the level of compliance after a warning is extremely high. The 6 FPN's mentioned have been issued for breaches of the 10pm curfew.
14. The second lockdown commenced from 5 November 2020 and officers are carry out visits and compliance checks on those premises who are not permitted to trade. Premises who are permitted to trade will be checked for compliance with Covid-secure requirements.
15. The new business closures include:
  - all non-essential retail, including, but not limited to clothing and electronics stores, vehicle showrooms, travel agents, betting shops, auction houses, tailors, car washes, tobacco and vape shops.
  - indoor and outdoor leisure facilities such as bowling alleys, leisure centres and gyms, sports facilities including swimming pools, golf courses and driving ranges, dance studios, stables and riding centres, soft play facilities, climbing walls and climbing centres, archery and shooting ranges, water and theme parks,
  - entertainment venues such as theatres, concert halls, cinemas, museums and galleries, casinos, adult gaming centres and arcades, bingo halls, bowling alleys, concert halls, zoos and other animal attractions, botanical gardens;

- personal care facilities such as hair, beauty and nail salons, tattoo parlours, spas, massage parlours, body and skin piercing services, non-medical acupuncture, and tanning salons.
16. Food shops, supermarkets, garden centres and certain other retailers providing essential goods and services can remain open. Essential retail should follow Covid-secure guidelines to protect customers, visitors and workers.
  17. Work is continuing with the universities and colleges in the Borough as well as transport operators to ensure that high standards of hygiene and compliance with social distancing and the use of face coverings is in place, along with good communications to residents and commuters about their responsibilities. The Public Health Team and partners from health services meet virtually on a regular with university Covid-19 leads to ensure the latest guidance is being applied.
  18. To ensure that compliance with NHS guidelines remains high in the Borough, the Environmental Health Team are undertaking regular unannounced monitoring and compliance checks during the working week, evenings and weekends.
  19. Overall, the proactive preparatory work in these sectors has helped businesses to prepare for operating under Covid-19 secure arrangements and has ensured that a high standard of best practice is operated across the Borough. During monitoring and compliance visits, the overall standard has been extremely good and businesses have felt supported by the Council at a time where they have been extremely vulnerable.

### Testing

20. A key element of the national strategy to reduce the spread of the Covid-19 virus is to establish a robust testing strategy, targeting specific occupations, such as care staff. Working jointly with the Clinical Commissioning Group, the Council has put in place regular testing arrangements for care settings. In terms of the broader approach to testing, in Hillingdon this has involved:
  - Mobile testing units visiting on a regular basis;
  - Access to home testing kits, available to all residents;
  - Pop-up testing sites as required;
  - Local testing sites (walk through).
21. The Council and partners have recently commissioned a further walk-in local testing centre at Brunel University to complement the regional testing at Heathrow and our mobile testing unit in Hayes. The most recent data indicates that Hillingdon is conducting a higher proportion of testing that our neighbouring boroughs in West London (second highest testing rate per population in London).

### Contact Tracing

22. The Council has successfully applied to PHE / NHS Test & Trace Service to introduce a localised enhanced service which will apply local resources to contact tracing the circa 30% of contacts not currently reached through the national process.
23. The Council will combine the ability to search our records for alternative contact details with utilising 'outreach' workers to visit residents' homes, if required, to enhance the

effectiveness of the service. The new local service in Hillingdon went live on 11 November, managed by the Council.

### Monitoring / Surveillance

24. Covid-19 infection rates are closely monitored by the Council on a daily basis (seven days a week) so that any patterns in infection rates are swiftly identified and responded to in order to limit the spread of the virus. Monitoring includes the following:
- The rate of infection for Hillingdon per 100,000 population (the standard measure used by Public Health England which allows for comparison across local authorities);
  - The number of new infections registered for Hillingdon in the last 24hrs;
  - Cumulative demographic information on gender, age and ethnicity;
  - Number of tests completed and the positive infection rate;
  - Incidences of infection broken down at ward level; and
  - Comparative information from geographic neighbours (West London and Home Counties).
25. In addition, officers of the Council are working closely with colleagues in the Clinical Commissioning Group and health partners to exchange information to help track changes in infection rates. Analysis and interrogation of Covid-19 related data continues to evolve and develop as the understanding of patterns of infection becomes more sophisticated and the data available to the Council improves.

### Supporting Vulnerable Residents

26. The Council is putting its residents first during the Covid-19 pandemic and continues to coordinate support, working with partners for vulnerable residents who need to self-isolate. This helps to keep residents safe by helping to prevent the spread of the virus.
27. Hillingdon's approach to protecting and supporting residents is centred on:
- Practising social distancing and hand and respiratory hygiene and wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in line with government guidance;
  - NHS testing for the presence of coronavirus if residents display symptoms;
  - Supporting the tracing system if residents have tested positive and have been in close contact with others; and
  - Supporting self-isolation for those who have tested positive or have been in close contact with those who have tested positive for the presence of the virus.
28. During the pandemic, the Council has maintained a Covid-19 Community Hub throughout the pandemic within the Council's Contact Centre to respond to Covid-19 enquiries. The service has recently been scaled up again in response to rising demand. We have a dedicated contact centre which responds to resident queries. The Council is supporting local foodbanks to provide food parcels where required and signposting residents to Hillingdon 4 All and other charities to provide support.
29. The Council has held discussions with H4All regarding their activities and capacity to meet the anticipated increase in demand for their services and they are prepared with access to additional volunteer resources if required. Regular update meetings have been scheduled.
30. Residents on low income can claim the £500 financial support payment when self-isolating

through the Hub. Schools and other businesses enquiries have been routed into the contact centre.

31. The Hub is fully scalable to increased demands and relevant data is monitored to ensure correct resources are allocated. The Council maintains the ability to reactivate its own food distribution service if the local food bank capacity is exceeded.
32. The NHS regularly provide the Council with an updated list of new residents who are clinically extremely vulnerable to Covid-19 and either the Community Hub or Social Work teams contact everybody on this list to understand if they have any requirements for additional support, such as access to food deliveries, medicines and other. Letters to over 17,000 residents on the NHS 'shielding' list have been sent giving details of our Community Hub services.
33. The Council (and partners) is ready to scale up its Community Hub to meet increases in demand for services, such as food provision, not only to residents who are clinically extremely vulnerable, but also to those who may be self-isolating or require help because of the pandemic.

#### Governance / Local Boards

34. Within the Council, action has been coordinated and delivered by an officer working group, led by the Deputy Chief Executive and Corporate Director, Residents Services. Regular updates are provided to Elected Members and the Corporate Management Team of the Council.
35. To oversee and govern the arrangements for preventing and controlling any local outbreak of Covid-19, a prescribed 'Covid-19 Health Protection Board' has been established. Membership of the Board includes representation from the Council, the Clinical Commissioning Group, health providers, the voluntary sector, the police and Hillingdon Healthwatch. The Board meets monthly and exchanges updates and agrees shared actions. On a daily basis, health and care partners meet to share updates and co-ordinate services in response to the spread of the virus.

#### Communications and Engagement

36. The Council, together with partners has and continues to be proactive in delivering health protection messages to residents using a range of communication channels.
37. The Council's Corporate Communications team continues to deliver a range of materials across all of the Council's communications channels to support coronavirus communications.
38. Since the start of the pandemic, the team has publicised key guidance to residents and businesses, ensuring that they are aware of:
  - Important health, testing and any restriction/lockdown messages
  - The impact on Council events and services
  - The Council support available, i.e., community hub
  - Various government campaigns
  - The easing of restrictions and subsequent recovery of Council services

39. Coronavirus messaging has been widely communicated using all available Council channels, including the Council's website (including the specially created coronavirus subsection), social media platforms, media relations, regular e-newsletters (the frequency of these has been increased), Hillingdon People, JC Decaux boards, lamp post banners, posters and signage, and internal communications.
40. The team produced communications plans and localised assets for raising awareness of coronavirus, local outbreaks, the tier alert levels and the second national lockdown.
41. A campaign to support the Borough's high streets was also developed and included press releases, posters (including JC Decaux), lamp post banners, social media and the creation of a new online business directory.
42. The team is also working with a range of services to support their messaging, ensure consistency and amplify/target messages to their audiences. This has included services working with schools and universities, businesses, and community and faith groups.
43. Corporate Communications has also linked up with a variety of communications colleagues from neighbouring, pan-London and outer London local authorities, PHE and partner agencies to share best practice and resources, and in the case of partners amplify messages via each other's channels.

#### Targeted Actions

44. Whilst there is a degree of confidence that the action taken to date has helped to limit the spread of the Covid-19 virus in the Borough, there is no room for complacency. It is recognised, therefore, that there will be a need for a range of ongoing proactive actions to keep Covid-19 infection rates as low as possible. This includes continuing to deliver a communications and engagement campaign, restating national infection control messages, quality assuring and inspecting care services, the hospitality sector and retail organisations to support them to ensure compliance with Covid-19 guidelines; supporting the expansion of Covid-19 testing and vaccination arrangements; and providing support to residents who need assistance to keep safe and well.

#### **Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial costs arising from the recommendations set out within this report.

### **4. EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES**

#### **What will be the effect of the recommendation?**

Preventing and controlling the spread of the Covid-19 virus will help to keep Hillingdon's residents safe.

#### **Consultation Carried Out or Required**

The development of Hillingdon's Covid-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan has involved joint working with a range of partner organisations, including the Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS

provider organisations and the Police, amongst others. The plan will continue to be kept under review and will be updated, in line with the latest NHS guidance and advice.

### **Policy Overview Committee comments**

None at this stage.

## **5. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Hillingdon Council Corporate Finance comments**

Corporate Finance has reviewed the report and concur with the Financial Implications set out above, noting that there are no direct financial implications arising from the report recommendations.

### **Hillingdon Council Legal comments**

The Borough Solicitor confirms that the Council's Local Outbreak Control Plan complies with the requirements of the Coronavirus Act 2020 and associated legislation. In addition, detailed legal advice on individual cases is provided whenever necessary to enable the Council to minimise the spread of Covid-19.

### **Relevant Service Groups**

The development of the Covid-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan has involved all Council Directorates.

## **6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Nil.