

Local Members Interest
N/A

Cabinet - Wednesday 18 November 2020

Update from COVID-19 Member Led Local Outbreak Control Board

Introduction

1. We are in the middle of a second national 'lockdown'. The Council continues its efforts to prevent and control the spread of Covid-19. We are also concerned to try and mitigate the impact of the 'lockdown' on vulnerable people, population well-being and businesses.
2. The number of cases of Covid-19 in Staffordshire increased quickly at the end of October and the NHS is feeling the pressure of the rising infections, compounded by staff shortages due to sickness and/or self-isolation. Other public services are also starting to feel the strain of staff absences.
3. The ongoing restrictions are also having a profound effect on physical and mental well-being and the economy. Obesity and poor diet are on the rise, with levels of exercise falling. Many residents are reporting deteriorating mental health. Universal Credit claimants have doubled since the start of the pandemic, and tens of thousands of jobs are 'furloughed'.

Opportunities and challenges

4. The Council continues to manage Incidents in a range of settings, including care providers, schools and workplaces. We have improved the availability of testing, with more NHS Test and Trace facilities available, complemented by a Community Testing team at a range of sites across the county. We are planning to roll out rapid testing. We are also expanding local contact tracing to complement the national system and maximise the number of cases and contacts isolated.
5. The County Council have been supporting the 40,000 Clinically Extremely Vulnerable people during the second 'lockdown'. We are also working with District and Borough Council colleagues to understand how HM Government grants to support local businesses will be distributed.
6. Some significant challenges remain. The virus will continue to circulate for the foreseeable future and we are pressing HM Government for a sustainable strategy that limits spread whilst allowing people their freedoms and maximising health and wealth in the long term. We would also like much greater local discretion over any restrictions that apply to ensure that they are tailored to Staffordshire and acceptable to our residents

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

[COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan](#)

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