

<b>Local Members Interest</b>
N/A

## **Cabinet - Wednesday 21 April 2021**

### **Update from Covid Member Led Local Outbreak Control Board**

#### **Introduction**

1. The number of cases of Covid in Staffordshire and across England has fallen, and the pressure on the NHS has largely abated. We have now taken the first two steps on HM Government's Roadmap from lockdown with schools returning, people allowed to meet outdoors in groups of up to six, shops opening, and outdoor hospitality resuming.
2. It is great to have some of our freedoms back. The important thing now is to keep them by keeping the virus under control. That means following the rules, maintaining good hygiene, wearing face coverings where required, keeping our distance from one another, getting tested twice a week, and isolating if we have symptoms. Residents and businesses have made an extraordinary effort over the last year and still have a vital role to play in keeping infections low and getting all of the restrictions lifted.

#### **Covid vaccination**

3. The Covid vaccination programme continues to make good progress and the vaccine is proving effective at limiting the number of cases and complications. The NHS has now vaccinated over 500,000 people in Staffordshire with a first dose, and 100,000 with a second dose. The vaccination programme is proceeding according to the priority order defined by the Joint Committee for Vaccination and Immunisation and has now reached people in their 40s.
4. There has been some concern about very rare side effects associated with the first dose of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine. For the vast majority of people the benefit of vaccination far outweighs any risk. People under 30 may wish to choose one of the other vaccines. Getting the whole population vaccinated is crucial to protect vulnerable people, maintain the freedoms we have won and get the rest of the restrictions lifted.

#### **Planning for 2021/22**

5. The Council is planning to maintain Covid defences for at least the next financial year. This includes testing, contact tracing and isolation of cases and close contacts, as well as managing outbreaks and supporting the most vulnerable. These arrangements are set out in our updated Covid Local Outbreak Management Plan.

#### **List of Background Documents/Appendices:**

[Staffordshire Covid Local Outbreak Management Plan](#)

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