

Appendix 6

People

Since October 2020 the Health & Safety Team have continued to support all core council businesses and education/early years establishments to manage the impact of Covid-19, alongside contributing to the vaccination management of Social Care & Health staff.

In addition, the team have developed vaccination and lateral flow testing management arrangements, agreeing this with the Trade Unions implementing in February 2021.

The team have been managing local outbreak control throughout the county for education and early years establishments, along with supporting the council's own workforce with local outbreak control management. During this time there have been 1036 settings who have experienced Covid-19 impacts at least once and many of the schools several times during the last 12 months. Several of the SCC residential care homes, children residential, frontline C&F and H&C teams and workplaces have had to manage Covid -19 cases and outbreaks.

The team continues to manage local outbreak through the current 3rd wave.

A paper has been drafted, presented and agreed with SLT focused on 'Lifting Lockdown' and the readiness of our buildings to support this. SLT have agreed to retain current Covid building arrangements until the end of September and retaining physical changes like current ventilation standards and touchdown centres till the end of 2021, with a view to reviewing this position early December.

A webinar is planned for early July with premises managers to make sure that they're ready to meet the future increasing demand and occupancy numbers against desks that are available (there will be an expected 50/60% reduction).

A special edition of 'The Knot' was shared with staff on 15th June which included FAQ's around the lifting of lockdown, this will be reinforced with ongoing communication messages through various staff communication channels. Current messages are that SCC has been a SMART working organisation since 2017 and will continue to be so into the future – working locations are based on business need and through agreement with line managers.

Special attention will be focused on triangulating and reporting occupancy rates with data taken from the desk booking system, card access system and the number of people connecting remotely.

In addition, Head of Property is working on an approach to working differently within the physical premises of SP1, particularly focused on using the physical space in a different way to support a SMART way of working and repurposing office space. This is a longer-term piece of work and there will not be physical changes in place for the lifting of lockdown in July.

Other actions implemented to support:

- Ongoing provision of PPE to meet increasing demand and to respond to changing PPE guidelines
- Inspection on Covid secure buildings, following up on any areas of concern or complaints raised.
- Supporting surge testing in Leek, Newcastle and Tamworth (achieving over 90% staff tested and over 70% of all pupils being tested in test areas) having a direct impact on 'breaking' the curve in Leek and Newcastle, actually reducing the impact amongst the 11-17 age group.
- Regular Head Teacher briefings and Governor webinars have been held to communicate key messages and ensure that there is a forum for concerns to be raised and answered.
- Held regular trade Union briefing sessions to keep TU colleagues aware of current impacts and how Covid-19 is being managed and to complete any required consultation.
- Updated HSW guidance in line with national guidance changes and to promote effective best practice standards
- Reviewed ventilation management with strategic property to ensure compliance with HSE guidance. Also completed webinar with school to ensure effective ventilation without compromising fire safety.
- Followed up on HSE Inspections to resolve any comments raised – Only minor issues raised by HSE as they were satisfied with our COVID Secure arrangements.
- Developed Lifting Lockdown implementation plan to support organisation during transition from 19th July Freedom Day through to winter to ensure we keep most of our Covid management arrangements to support colleagues to return to office safely and manage staff anxieties. Communication plan to support this also developed.
- Regular wellbeing webinars held to support employees working at home which have been well attended.
- Mental Health training moved to online options to maintain effective access to training.
- Maintained all wellbeing offer and support to our people to support mental and physical health.
- Completed flu vaccination programme to support vaccination

HSW service review all guidance changes daily and then revise guidance and messaging as needed.

Next steps

- HSW & Communications have session to review all messages to our people on 13th July once 19th July is confirmed.
- A paper has been drafted, presented and agreed with SLT focused on 'Lifting Lockdown' and the readiness of our buildings to support this. SLT have agreed to retain current Covid building arrangements until the 1st October, this decision will be supported with the communication of key messages and retaining physical Covid secure workplace arrangements. Current ventilation

standards will be maintained until the end of 2021, with a view to reviewing this position early December.

- A webinar is planned for 9th July with premises managers to make sure that they're ready to meet the future increasing demand and occupancy numbers against desks that are available (most premises have just under 50% capacity).
- Increase HSW refresher training for Fire Marshals, Evacuation Chair use etc has also been planned for.
- Revising vaccination management arrangements to deal with introduction of compulsory vaccinations in adult social care, care homes and staff that regularly attend these settings.
- Revise councils Wellbeing Strategy Sept 2021 onwards to include Financial Wellbeing offering and other wellbeing tailored to meet the changing needs of our people and to help new ways of working.

HSW will remain responsible for Covid Response activities in schools and SCC workplaces moving forwards as well as supporting HPB LOC for Education and Early years