



Health and Wellbeing Board

Report title: Local COVID-19 Outbreak Engagement Board update

Date: 3rd December 2020

Key decision: No

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: All

Contributors: Dr Catherine Mbema, Director of Public Health, London Borough of Lewisham

Outline and recommendations

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Lewisham Health and Wellbeing Board in its role as the Local Outbreak Engagement Board.

The Health and Wellbeing Board are recommended to:

- Note the contents of the report

Timeline of engagement and decision-making

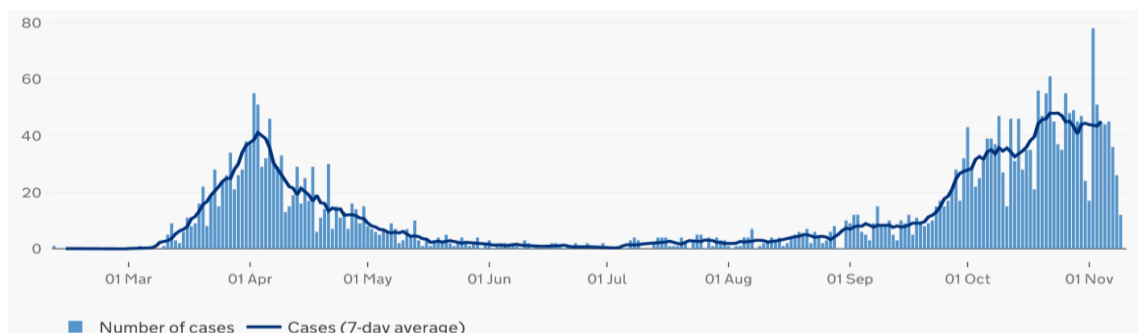
1. Recommendations

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the Lewisham Health and Wellbeing Board in its role as the Local Outbreak Engagement Board.
- 1.2. The Health and Wellbeing Board are recommended to note the contents of the report.

2. Background

- 2.1. As of 6th November 2020, there have been a total of 3,261 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Lewisham. The rate of COVID-19 cases/100,000 population was 99.4/100,000 in the seven days between 31st October and 6th November 2020. This represents a significant increase in seven day case rate since the September meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board, with the rate of COVID-19 cases/100,000 population being 15.2/100,000 in the seven day period between 28th August and 3rd September 2020 (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Daily number of new lab confirmed cases in Lewisham until 6th November 2020



Source: <https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/cases>

- 2.2. The Lewisham COVID-19 Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan sets out the

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arrangements, processes and actions that will effectively prevent and manage outbreaks of COVID-19 to ensure that Lewisham residents and communities are protected from the impact of COVID-19. This plan has been updated to reflect the introduction of national tiers of restriction and the introduction of locally enhanced contact tracing in Lewisham. The updated plan can be seen in the Background papers for this report.

- 2.3. At the September 2020 meeting of the Lewisham Health and Wellbeing Board, it was agreed that the Board will act as the Local Outbreak Engagement Board as part of the governance of the COVID-19 Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan.
- 2.4. In this role, the Board has committed to ensure that residents are provided with timely communications regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. The development of the Lewisham COVID-19 Community Champion initiative has been a key tool in achieving this within the wider borough COVID-19 communications and engagement plan. Some Lewisham COVID-19 Community Champions will be in attendance at the meeting to share their experiences.

3. Lewisham COVID-19 Community Champions

- 3.1. The Lewisham COVID-19 Community Champions programme is a new initiative led by the Lewisham Public Health team designed to provide clear, trustworthy information about the COVID-19 pandemic to Lewisham residents.
- 3.2. Similar initiatives have been adopted in other London boroughs including Newham, Bromley, Bexley, and Birmingham City Council. The model used in Lewisham has been to focus particularly on COVID-19 information and other related health issues. The initiative aims to empower leaders with relevant information to disseminate and ensure that messaging is delivered via trusted community voices.
- 3.3. Over 100 volunteers have been recruited to become Lewisham COVID-19 Champions and come from a range of backgrounds including voluntary community sector groups, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) community groups, staff groups, health providers, business owners, local councillors and faith leaders. As part of volunteering, Lewisham COVID-19 Community Champions have agreed to be part of a mailing list hosted by the Council and to attend optional fortnightly webinars hosted by Lewisham Public Health.
- 3.4. The COVID-19 Community Champions receive the most up to date information around COVID-19, guidance and health information. The webinars also provide a forum for Champions to share ideas on they disseminate the information with community members they are in contact with. Champions also feedback questions from community members and assist in guiding future topics. Training opportunities, such as Talk Cancer delivered by Cancer Research UK are also available for community members to access.

4. Financial implications

- 4.1. Lewisham Council has received an allocation from central government of £2,267,070 to support implementation of the Lewisham COVID-19 Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan.

5. Legal implications

- 5.1. The legal context for managing outbreaks of communicable disease which present a risk to the health of the public requiring urgent investigation and management sits:
 - With Public Health England under the Health and Social Care Act 2012

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- With Directors of Public Health under the Health and Social Care Act 2012
 - With Chief Environmental Health Officers under the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984
 - With NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups to collaborate with Directors of Public Health and Public Health England to take local action (e.g. testing and treating) to assist the management of outbreaks under the Health and Social Care Act 2012
 - With other responders' specific responsibilities to respond to major incidents as part of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004
 - In the context of COVID-19 there is also the Coronavirus Act 2020 which received royal assent on 25th March 2020.
- 5.2. The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) introduced a public sector equality duty (the equality duty or the duty). It covers the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 5.3. The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) introduced a public sector equality duty (the equality duty or the duty). It covers the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 5.4. In summary, the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
 - advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 5.5. It is not an absolute requirement to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other prohibited conduct, or to promote equality of opportunity or foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. It is a duty to have due regard to the need to achieve the goals listed at above.
- 5.6. The weight to be attached to the duty will be dependent on the nature of the decision and the circumstances in which it is made. This is a matter for the Mayor, bearing in mind the issues of relevance and proportionality. The Mayor must understand the impact or likely impact of the decision on those with protected characteristics who are potentially affected by the decision. The extent of the duty will necessarily vary from case to case and due regard is such regard as is appropriate in all the circumstances.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has issued Technical Guidance on the Public Sector Equality Duty and statutory guidance entitled "Equality Act 2010 Services, Public Functions & Associations Statutory Code of Practice". The Council must have regard to the statutory code in so far as it relates to the duty and attention is drawn to Chapter 11 which deals particularly with the equality duty. The Technical Guidance also covers what public authorities should do to meet the duty. This includes steps that are legally required, as well as recommended actions. The guidance does not have statutory force but nonetheless regard should be had to it, as failure to do so without compelling reason would be of evidential value. The statutory code and the technical guidance can be found at: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice->

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[and-guidance/equality-act-codes-practice](#)

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/equality-act-technical-guidance>

5.7. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has previously issued five guides for public authorities in England giving advice on the equality duty:

- [The essential guide to the public sector equality duty](#)
- [Meeting the equality duty in policy and decision-making](#)
- [Engagement and the equality duty: A guide for public authorities](#)
- [Objectives and the equality duty. A guide for public authorities](#)
- [Equality Information and the Equality Duty: A Guide for Public Authorities](#)

The essential guide provides an overview of the equality duty requirements including the general equality duty, the specific duties and who they apply to. It covers what public authorities should do to meet the duty including steps that are legally required, as well as recommended actions. The other four documents provide more detailed guidance on key areas and advice on good practice. Further information and resources are available at:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-equality-duty-guidance#h1>

5.8. The essential guide provides an overview of the equality duty requirements including the general equality duty, the specific duties and who they apply to. It covers what public authorities should do to meet the duty including steps that are legally required, as well as recommended actions. The other four documents provide more detailed guidance on key areas and advice on good practice. Further information and resources are available at:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-equality-duty-guidance#h1>

6. Equalities implications

6.1. COVID-19 has had a disproportionate impact on specific groups including older adults, and those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups. Health and Wellbeing Board Members' attention should be drawn to the following reports regarding these inequalities:

- Disparities in the risks and outcomes of COVID-19, PHE, 2020 (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/892085/disparities_review.pdf)
- Beyond the data: understanding the impact of COVID-19 on BAME groups, PHE, 2020 (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/892376/COVID_stakeholder_engagement_synthesis_beyond_the_data.pdf)

7. Climate change and environmental implications

7.1. There are no significant climate change and environmental implications of this report.

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8. Crime and disorder implications

8.1. There are no significant crime and disorder implications of this report.

9. Health and wellbeing implications

9.1. This updated Lewisham COVID-19 Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan will provide a framework for action to prevent and mitigate against the negative impact of COVID-19 on the health and wellbeing of Lewisham residents.

10. Background papers

10.1. Lewisham COVID-19 Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan v2

11. Report author and contact

11.1. Dr Catherine Mbema

11.2. Catherine.mbema@lewisham.gov.uk

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