

Adult, Wellbeing and Health

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

02 October 2020

COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan



Report of Amanda Healy, Director of Public Health, Durham County Council

Electoral division affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of this report is for the Adult, Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to receive the updated COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan (Appendix 2) and a progress update of the work.

Executive summary

- 2 The Government requires all Local Authorities to produce a COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan.
- 3 In County Durham there are established health protection assurance arrangements with key partners working closely on infectious diseases, environmental hazards and emergency preparedness and response. This work reports annually to the Health and Wellbeing Board and has stood us in good stead to establish rapid partnership arrangements, including with the Public Health England (PHE) North East Health Protection Team, for developing the COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan and preparing for complex cases of COVID-19 and outbreaks.
- 4 The overarching focus is to protect the health of local residents from COVID-19 and reduce any onward transmission from COVID-19.
- 5 We have also built on the extensive cross Council and partnership planning and response to COVID-19.
- 6 County Durham is now part of the LA7 group of Local Authorities which sought intervention from Government to ensure action to slow the

spread of COVID-19. The new restrictions were introduced on 18th September

Recommendation

- 6 Adult, Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to receive updated COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan

Background

- 7 An increase in confirmed cases of COVID-19 are anticipated with the relaxing of lockdown measures. This requires a different approach to controlling transmission of the virus. The Trace and Test Service has been introduced to ensure that anyone who develops symptoms can be tested, and action taken to prevent spread of the virus by promoting isolation of individuals who test positive, and those who have been in direct contact with them.
- 8 Each local authority is expected to have its own local outbreak management arrangements, the COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan, to support the national test, track and trace programme. The role of the local authority is to provide an oversight of COVID-19 outbreaks including those in complex settings such as schools, care homes and workplaces, as well as provide direct support to cases and contacts who have been asked to self-isolate through the community hubs. This is built on established and longstanding relationships with PHE North East Health Protection Team.

Role of the Local Health Protection Assurance Board

- 9 The key purpose of the Local Health Protection Assurance Board (HPAB) is to lead, co-ordinate and manage work to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- 10 The HPAB are meeting on a weekly basis.
- 11 Update on the work of the HPAB:
 - Progressed the implementation of the LOCP since its launch in July
 - Each setting has developed their local outbreak control teams (OCT), standard operating procedures (SOP) with Public Health England (PHE) for outbreaks (this includes additional groups that are relevant to County Durham, for example, Durham University)
 - Developed a COVID-19 Communication Toolkit

- Agreed local processes for schools informing local authority of suspected cases
 - Produced community engagement strategy and action plan
 - Developed a response to the contain framework and local escalation
 - Actively responding to cases clusters and outbreaks of COVID-19
 - Engaged nationally to ensure accurate up to date data and intelligence is received locally
- 12 Currently there remains no vaccine or cure for COVID-19. Community transmission of the virus continues across the UK. Testing among the public has been extended, in order to identify if an individual with symptoms is infected. Those testing positive are expected to self-isolate, along with any individuals they have been in direct contact with. This process is part of the Test and Trace Service.
- 13 The reason for testing for infectious diseases is to determine whether someone is infected with that disease. This can help in both the control of transmission of the infection and help the management of suspected cases and situations.

The Plan

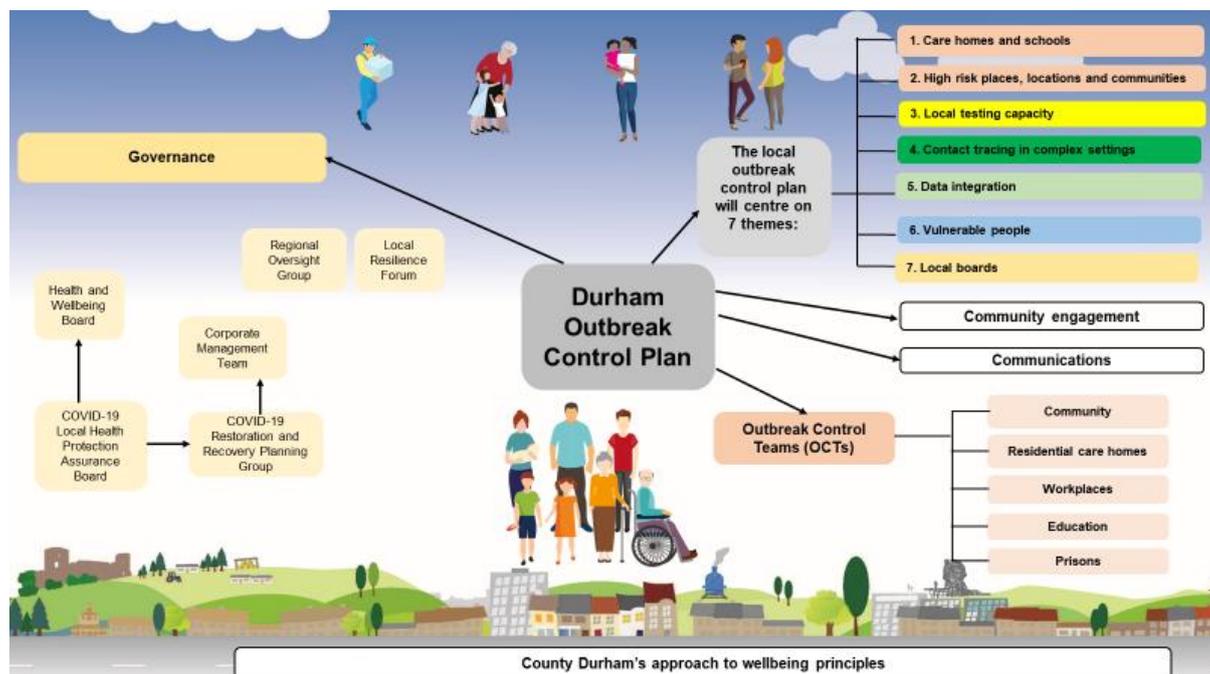
- 14 The COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan provides a framework for leading, co-ordinating and managing work to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- 15 The COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan has the following key objectives:
- Protect the health of our local communities through:
 - Provision of clear prevention messages in relation to COVID-19;
 - Rapid detection of COVID-19 outbreaks;
 - Controlling onward transmission;
 - Provide support to those who need to self-isolate, building on our population health management approach to the pandemic;
 - Develop and apply intelligence, including the knowledge and insight providing by our local communities.
- 16 Seven themes have been identified, which are addressed throughout this current plan:
- Care homes and schools

- High risk places, locations and communities
- Local testing capacity
- Contact tracing in complex settings
- Data integration
- Vulnerable people
- Local boards

17 In addition, Durham University are an identified setting and partner in the plan.

18 The government has outlined that a public-facing Board should be set up led by council Members to communicate openly with the public. It has been agreed that the Health and Wellbeing Board will fulfil this function and have oversight of engagement with local residents and partners. The latest plan was presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board on 11th September.

19 The chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board has now written to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on three occasions to raise concerns about testing and also the abolition of Public Health England.



20 On 22 May 2020, the Government announced £300m additional funding for local authorities to support them to develop and action their plans to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus in their area as part of the launch of the wider NHS Test and Trace Service. Durham County Council is due to receive £4.498m. This funding will enable the local authority with partners to develop and implement tailored local COVID-

19 outbreak plans through, for example, funding the recruitment of additional staff where required.

- 21 A dedicated local outbreak control team (including out of hours arrangements) over the coming year has been agreed which will consist of the following area of expertise: Public Health; community protection; communications; intelligence; Civil Contingencies Unit; Human Resources. The funding will cover capacity, contingency, community engagement and support to any local outbreaks.

Main Implications

- 22 Ability to respond rapidly to any outbreak situation

Author

Amanda Healy

Tel: 03000 264323

Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

Health Protection: Legal and Policy Context¹

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
- 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 Groups² 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.

Finance

Funding being provided by government.

Staffing

Staff time to implement the plan.

Risk

Unknown due to the nature of COVID-19.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Community Hub has been developed to support vulnerable individuals.

Accommodation

No impact.

Crime and Disorder

No impact.

Human Rights

No impact.

¹ ADPH, FPH, PHE, LGA et al (2020) Public Health Leadership, Multi-Agency Capability: *Guiding Principles for Effective Management of COVID-19 at a Local Level*. <https://www.adph.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Guiding-Principles-for-Making-Outbreak-Management-Work-Final.pdf>

Consultation

Full consultation not possible due to impact of COVID-19.

Procurement

No impact but should inform council commissioning plans in relation to services that impact on the health of the population.

Disability Issues

No impact.

Appendix 2: COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan

Attached as a separate plan