

## Area Council Update – COVID 19 Briefing

### Public Health

#### BARNSELEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

We hope members will find this helpful as part of a regular update on the Council's Public Health response to the pandemic.

The information provided covers a wide range of work undertaken across the Council. Members will also appreciate the pace of change during the pandemic, so we will aim to provide as up to date information as possible.

Any specific questions on areas of work will be taken back to the appropriate lead for further detail, if appropriate.

### 1. Purpose of Report

To provide a summary of actions/progress to members in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### 2. Key Themes

#### Headlines as at 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021

- Moved into National Lockdown as of 05/01/2021
- The steady persistent rise in new positive cases across the borough since mid-December 2020 is now reducing as a result of lockdown measures, but at a very slow rate and so we must remain vigilant.
- Working age adults have the highest case rates, particularly 50-59yr olds. This is a shift back as it has been 20-39yr olds in last few weeks.
- Most neighbourhoods have similar cases rates that are either relatively stable or declining  
NB: Cudworth was noted to have highest rate in South Yorkshire in media last week, taken from the PHE dashboard. High rates were mainly driven by a large care home outbreak, rates are now consistently falling but remain on the higher side for Barnsley.

#### Public Health Messages

- Reinforcing government guidance;
  - HANDS - Wash hands regularly.
  - FACE - Wear face coverings in enclosed spaces,
  - SPACE - Stay at least 2 metres apart or 1 metre with a face covering.
  - Let Fresh Air in – during winter months

#### Intelligence

#### COVID Situation Report (Sit-Rep)

- Twice weekly 'situation report' meetings are held to review line listing data and map any reoccurring issues in specific areas. Number of cases is very slowly decreasing, but is still higher than early December.
- New cases are distributed across the whole borough and areas with the highest number of cases tends to vary on a weekly basis.
- Any local community intelligence on these areas is fed into this group and would be useful.

#### Covid Marshals/Community Observations

- 16 marshals appointed to advise and support the public/local businesses to follow guidelines, manage queues and promote social distancing in crowded areas. Whilst no formal enforcement powers, they regularly link to the Police/Regulatory Services who do have those formal enforcement powers.

Main themes from current community observations:

- Footfall and traffic across the borough has reduced during lockdown however not to the levels observed in April 2020. Parks and open spaces have been noted to be busier than expected.
- Concerns regarding lack of social distancing inside retail settings such as supermarkets. SNS, Covid Marshals and NEOs are supporting Regulatory Services in undertaking supermarket visits.

Main themes from previous community observations:

- Lack of face coverings, signs, poor social distancing in commercial premises.
- Recurrent observations of gatherings of youths in outdoor public areas with variable response to Marshals advice.
- Some issues with lack of social distancing at grassroots football games which has been actioned via Sheffield and Hallamshire County Football Association.

#### Neighbourhood Engagement Officers

Each NEO is assigned to their respective areas but with flexibility to move if needed. Line managed by Area Council Managers and their Public Health link is Kaye Mann. They can do what is needed in that area to support residents and business to adhere to guidance, very much a supportive role not enforcement. All 6 NEOs are now in post:

- Leyla Brooke – North
- Craig Aubrey - Dearne
- Kay Tinkler – South
- Laura Dixon – Central
- Louise Hunt – North East
- Rana Al Kubesi – Penistone

#### Community Insights – Additional Funded Work

- Magpie 'Behavioural Insights' campaign underway to understand and increase COVID compliance in Barnsley.
- Workshops will start mid-January 2021 for a number of targeted groups: (see Appendix 1) – to date 172 people have signed up
- Specific workshop planned for elected members on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2021.
- Also hoping to access funding for additional support to BAME/Disabilities groups who have been disproportionately affected by COVID 19.

### Outbreak Management – Local communities

- We commission a number of services to support 'Vulnerable Communities' e.g. Homeless/Rough Sleepers, Gypsy/Travellers, Substance Misuse, Domestic Abuse, HMOs, Asylum Seekers/Refugees – PH in communities have identified settings specialists to disseminate information and support with outbreak monitoring, relating to these groups.
- There is a weekly outbreak management group which also covers outbreaks in these community settings as well as Schools, Care Homes, Workplace/Commercial settings, Healthcare etc.

### **COVID Support Service**

- Team now in place making outbound welfare calls to all positive cases in Barnsley and offering support during self-isolation. The team also undertake Test and Trace calls for uncontactable residents who have missed 10 phone calls from the National NHS Test and Trace programme.
- Positive response and feedback from the service – welfare calls are appreciated by residents.
- COVID-19 Support Service are undertaking house visits for residents with a positive result where the service has been unable to make phone contact. These visits have gone well, and South Yorkshire Police have also worked efficiently with the team on two occasions.
- The team is also supporting the Community Testing Centre at the Metrodome. Individuals with a negative result will be contacted and advised to follow national guidance and book another test in the future. Those with a positive result will be advised to get a PCR test and to start self-isolating, identify their contacts, and share this with the NHS Test and Trace system.

### **Testing**

#### Symptomatic Testing

- Testing provided at; County Way lower Courthouse car park, Dorothy Hyman Sports Centre car park, and Wombwell Summer Lane car park for symptomatic residents.
- There is capacity at the sites, so please encourage anyone with symptoms to get a test.
- Mobile Testing Unit (MTU) site available -
  - **18-24 Jan 2021**, the MTU will operate at **23 Shrewsbury Road, Cinema Car Park, Penistone, S36 6DY** from 9am to 3pm. This is a 'Drive to' AND 'Walk in' service.
  - **From 24 Jan – TBC**  
The MTU is site decided on a weekly basis, and considers which areas have the greatest need.

#### Asymptomatic/Mass Community Testing

- Lateral Flow Testing pilot, initially for BMBC asymptomatic frontline and critical worker staff at the Metrodome, has now been rolled out wider to any critical

worker living or working across the borough. Currently 4 positive cases have been identified in asymptomatic individuals.

### School Testing

- Primary and Secondary schools have closed following the government announcement January 5<sup>th</sup>, with exceptions for vulnerable children and the children of some key workers.
- The Government had announced that testing will be available for all secondary school and college pupils from January 4<sup>th</sup>, although this has been affected by national lockdown restrictions. Testing in primary schools for teachers is also imminent.

### **Vaccinations**

- First safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine now available to priority groups identified by the Joint Committee of Vaccination and Immunisation.
- Residents will be contacted by the NHS when it is their turn to have the vaccine, either via phone or a letter from GP or the national booking system.
- People urged not to call their GP or NHS services about when they will get the vaccine, as services are inundated at the moment and will not be able to respond.
- A number of care homes in Barnsley have now received the vaccinations as well as a large number of the over 80s population.
- Work to prioritise critical key workers for vaccination is also underway
- Vaccinations being delivered at Priory Campus and two other sites as part of the initial vaccination programme and are supported by some of our Community responder volunteers.

### Recommendations

Members to note the information in the report and consider the following;

- Continue to encourage local communities to get tested, especially if they have symptoms
- Extend and encourage local connections with NEOs/COVID Marshals to feedback any community-based intelligence especially in relation to increased levels of cases in particular areas
- Make any further comments on this report and its format/content

### Officer Contact:

### Date:

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19/01/2021

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19/01/2021



## **Barnsley, let's fight this virus together!**

We've heard you make an impact in your community and would like you to help us reach as many Barnsley people as possible.

In January we want to hold some workshops with one aim: **How do we make sure Barnsley comes through COVID-19 stronger, united and ready to thrive?**

These workshops need to represent everyone living in Barnsley so as well as signing up to the workshop yourself [here](#), we'd like you to spread the word.

The attached PDF explains all. Feel free to send this PDF and information on to the people of Barnsley so together we can make sure no voice in Barnsley is left unheard.

**In Barnsley, we stick together, and we help each other out. In Barnsley, we don't just talk about things, we do them. Thank you for being part of the solution.**

If you'd like to share this on your social media channels, attached are some images and you can use the suggested text below:

- 1) How do we make sure Barnsley comes through COVID-19, stronger, united and ready to thrive? Sign up to a workshop and tell us how: <http://bit.ly/C19barnsley>.
- 2) You're all invited, have your say on how Barnsley makes it through COVID-19. Join the workshops here: <http://bit.ly/C19barnsley>.