

# KENT AND MEDWAY JOINT HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

28 JULY 2020

## COVID-19 LOCAL OUTBREAK CONTROL PLAN BRIEFING

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### Summary

This report provides an overview of the response and recovery strategy to protect Kent and Medway's populations from COVID-19 impacts. It describes actions that Kent County Council (KCC) and Medway Council (MC), in partnership with key stakeholders, have taken to develop the COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan (LOCP).

The report also sets out the governance arrangements and framework, through which KCC and MC will collaborate to deliver their statutory functions to protect their populations and reduce the spread of COVID-19.

### 1. Budget and policy framework

- 1.1. As part of the Department of Health and Social Care's COVID-19 response and recovery strategy, Upper Tier and Unitary Local Authorities in England were mandated to develop a COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan to reduce the viruses' spread.
- 1.2. With provision of £300M in national government funding to support the Plan's delivery, the COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan will follow national outbreak management standards and put in place local measures to prevent, identify, and contain COVID-19 outbreaks. This plan was published online on 30 June 2020 (Appendix 1).

### 2. Background

- 2.1. Building on KCC and MC's existing health protection systems, a Kent and Medway COVID-19 Health Protection Committee (HPC) was established on 1

June 2020 to provide strategic oversight for both the development and delivery of the COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan.

- 2.2. The HPC is led by KCC and MC's Directors of Public Health and consists of key partners from Public Health England's local health protection teams, NHS England & NHS Improvement to ensure an integrated response. Officer representatives from Kent's District Councils will also be fully involved given their environmental health responsibilities. Full membership details can be found in the HPC Terms of Reference set out in Appendix 2.
- 2.3. The HPC meets weekly and serves to ensure effective system wide collaboration. Reports will be provided to key stakeholders in line with paragraphs 2.4.8 and 3.1 of the report. It is, however, recognised that both councils will maintain their own specific governance and oversight arrangements for their organisation's pandemic response.
- 2.4. In accordance with guidance from the Department of Health and Social Care and local adaptation, the Kent and Medway COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan is centred around 8 core themes:

**2.4.1. Care Homes and Schools**

Planning for local outbreaks in care homes and schools including defining monitoring arrangements, potential scenarios and required response planning. Additional local guidance documents, tools and action plans have already been developed locally such as the COVID-19 health and safety checklist for school headteachers.

**2.4.2. High risk places, locations, and communities**

Identifying and planning how to manage high risk places, locations and communities of interest by defining preventative measures, outbreak management strategies and community engagement plans.

**2.4.3. Local testing capacity**

Several different testing services will be established to ensure that testing is accessible to the entire population. These include:

Regional Testing Sites (RTS)

These are a network of drive-through sites in the region. Currently there is a Regional Test Site in Ashford. Further work is ongoing to put in place an additional RTS in Manston.

Satellite Testing Sites

These are placed at sites that have a particularly urgent or significant need (i.e. hospitals, remote locations). There are currently satellite sites on the Hoo Peninsula and at Medway Maritime Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

Mobile Testing Sites

These travel regionally and service areas of Kent and Medway not covered by regional or satellite test sites. Currently, mobile units can be deployed to locations in Maidstone, Swale, Canterbury, Ashford,

Dover, Folkestone and Medway. Work is ongoing to establish a site in Margate (pending the outcome of the establishment of an RTS at Manston).

#### Testing in Hospitals & Care Homes

Hospitals and Care homes are eligible for immediate, prioritised testing the event that a member of staff, patient or resident shows symptoms or has been notified to be in contact with someone who has the virus. They're also eligible for antibody testing as part of the government's surveillance strategy to allow for a better understanding of post-infection immunity as well as the UK population virus's prevalence.

#### Further Test Sites

The Department of Health and Social are in the process of developing localised testing innovations. These microsites could be placed in communities and enable people to walk or cycle to them.

#### **2.4.4. Contact Tracing in Complex Settings**

Assessing local and regional contact tracing and infection control capability in complex settings and the need for mutual aid (e.g. identifying specific local complex communities of interest and settings, developing assumptions to estimate demand & options to scale capacity if needed).

#### **2.4.5. Data Integration and Monitoring**

Receiving and acting on data and intelligence, including epidemiology and Early Warning indicators, provided from sources including the Public Health England Epidemiology Cell, NHS Test and Trace, the National Joint Biosecurity Centre and other local data sources.

#### **2.4.6. Supporting and protecting vulnerable groups**

Consideration of specific requirements to address the challenges faced by "Shielders" as well as other residents and groups who may need additional support due to self-isolation requirements and other challenges arising from the current situation.

#### **2.4.7. Communications Strategy**

Whilst not part of the national requirement, public communication is essential, primarily as it's the local authority responsibility to "warn and inform" but it also makes up a key standard in managing outbreaks effectively. There is a need to ensure individuals and specific communities are aware of the risks associated with increased COVID-19 mortality and morbidity and how they can protect themselves and others.

#### **2.4.8. Formation of Local Boards**

In addition to the HPC, additional local working groups and boards should be established to facilitate command and control and the delivery of the overall objectives.

### Strategic Co-ordinating Group

There is already a multi-agency Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG) in place in Medway and Kent with the SCG part of the Kent Resilience Forum (KRF). The HPC will report through the SCG to co-ordinate and partner with the wider system to support delivery of the COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan.

### Local Outbreak Engagement Board (LOEB)

The aim of the Outbreak Engagement Board is to provide political ownership and wider public engagement and communication of the outbreak response.

## 3. Advice and analysis

- 3.1. Building on Section 2.4.8, in the event of an outbreak the HPC will work with the KRF who will deliver the COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan by working through pre-existing structures that are in place with local stakeholders and organisations. The HPC will provide regular updates to the LOEB on the COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan and outbreaks within the region. See Appendix 3 to the report for a summary of the governance structure.

## 4. Risk management

- 4.1. There are several known risks which include; (1) compliance & effects of social distancing measures, (2) 2<sup>nd</sup> wave occurring, (3) further excess deaths (if 2<sup>nd</sup> wave occurs during flu season) & (4) additional pressure on Kent & Medway's health and social care systems. The HPC will consider & aim to mitigate all these risks via the delivery of the COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan.

## 5. Consultation

- 5.1. The COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan has been developed in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders including Kent's District Councils, Kent Resilience Forum, Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS England and Improvement, General Practitioners, NHS Trusts, Public Health England (Kent and Medway Health Protection Team, Contact Tracing Cell), Kent Police, British Transport Police and the Kent Fire and Rescue Services. Public and patient input will be solicited via Health Watch and other local organisations.

## 6. Climate change implications

- 6.1. Not applicable

## 7. Financial implications

- 7.1. As described in paragraph 1.2 of the report, financial resources have been allocated to Medway Council and Kent County Council through the Local Authority test and trace service support grant, allocations for which have used the 2020/21 Public Health Grant allocations as a basis for distributing the

funding. Medway Council received £1,592,918 and Kent County Council received £6,311,401. This non-recurrent funding covers an 18-month period and will be earmarked for health protection and recovery activities outlined in the COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan.

## 8. Legal implications

- 8.1. Kent County Council and Medway Council, under the leadership of the Directors of Public Health, have a statutory duty to protect the population's health by responding to and managing communicable disease outbreaks which requires urgent investigation and presents a public health risk.
- 8.2. The legal context for the Councils' response to COVID-19 sits within the following Acts:
  - The Coronavirus Act 2020
  - Health and Social Care Act 2012
  - Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984
- 8.3. The Kent and Medway Joint Health and Wellbeing Board has been established as an advisory joint sub-committee of the Kent Health and Wellbeing Board and the Medway Health and Wellbeing Board under Section 198(c) of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 for a time limited period of four years from 1st April 2020.
- 8.4. The Joint Board seeks to encourage persons who arrange for the provision of any health or social care services in the area to work in an integrated manner and ensure collective leadership to improve health and well-being outcomes across both local authority areas.
- 8.5. The Joint Board is advisory and may make recommendations to the respective Kent and Medway Health and Wellbeing Boards.
- 8.6. The duties of Health and Wellbeing Boards, established by s.195 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and set out in the existing Terms of Reference for Medway's Board include the following:
  - To encourage persons who arrange for the provision of any health or social care services in the area to work in an integrated manner for the purpose of advancing the health and wellbeing of the people in Medway.
  - To encourage persons who arrange for the provision of any health related services (i.e. services that may have an effect on the health of individuals but are not health or social care services) in Medway to work closely with the Board.
  - To encourage persons who arrange for the provision of any health or social care services in Medway and those who arrange for the provision of any health-related services in its area to work closely together.
  - To involve users and the public in the work of the Board, as appropriate.

8.7 As such, the Kent and Medway Joint Health and Wellbeing Board is able to take on the function of the Local Outbreak Engagement Board (LOEB) referred to in paragraph 2.4.8, provided the role of the LOEB remains advisory.

8.8 The terms of reference of Medway's and Kent's Health and Wellbeing Boards are set out in Appendices 4 and 5 of the report respectively.

## 9. Recommendations

9.1. Members are recommended to

- a) Agree, in principle, that this Board should fulfil the role of the Local Outbreak Engagement Board (i.e. to provide political ownership and public-facing engagement and communication for outbreak response) subject to formal agreement of both the Medway and Kent Health and Wellbeing Boards.
- b) recommend to both Councils' Health and Wellbeing Boards that they formally delegate the function of the LOEB to this Board and agree the terms of reference of the LOEB to be fulfilled by this Board.

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### Appendices

Appendix 1 - COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan

Appendix 2 - Health Protection Committee Terms of Reference

Appendix 3 - Governance Structure

Appendix 4 – Medway Health and Wellbeing Board Terms of Reference

Appendix 5 – Kent Health and Wellbeing Board Terms of Reference

### Background papers

Local Outbreak Control Plans (Department of Health and Social Care, 22 May 2020)