

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

At a remote meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board held on Thursday, 9 July 2020 at 10.00 a.m..

PRESENT

Councillor R.R. Dodd
(Chair, in the Chair)

BOARD MEMBERS

Brown, S.
Daley, W.
Dungworth, S.
Homer, C.R.
Jones, V.
Lothian, J.
Mead, P.

McEvoy-Carr, C.
Morgan, E.
Morris, V. (Substitute Member)
O'Neil, S. (Substitute Member)
Thompson, D.
Warrington, J. (Substitute Member)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Bennett, Mrs L.M.
Bridges, Ann
Lally, Dalji

Senior Democratic Services Officer
Head of Communications
Chief Executive

40. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from C. Briggs, Councillor P.A. Jackson, J. Mackey, R. Firth, P. Travers and C. Wardlaw.

41. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board held on Tuesday, 13 February 2020 as circulated, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

42. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

42.1 Draft Northumberland COVID-19 Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan

Ch.'s Initials.....

Members received a report presenting the Council's draft COVID-19 Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan and detailing the role of the Board and the County Emergency Committee in decision making, assurance and oversight.

Councillor V. Jones introduced the report and thanked the Director of Public Health and her team for the work they had done during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Liz Morgan, Director of Public Health, made the following points:-

- The peak in Northumberland had occurred in mid April with 40 cases per day. The figure was currently less than one.
- During the peak week, there were 45 deaths where COVID-19 was stated on the death certificate.
- During the second week of June the same number of deaths had occurred as had since that week.
- The death rate from COVID-19 in Northumberland had reduced significantly to only one/two per week, although this was still a tragedy for the families involved.
- Test and Trace had been introduced to support the easing of lockdown and Local Authorities were required to produce a local plan outlining its approach to reducing transmission, and suppressing and managing any local outbreaks. The focus was very much on prevention.
- The plan prioritised the following areas and wraparound teams were in place to identify relevant issues and where there may be gaps:-
 - Care Homes and residential settings
 - Educational settings - early years, schools, colleges
 - High risk/consequence individuals and communities
 - High risk/consequence settings
 - Workplaces and businesses
- Members' comments on the plan were welcomed

The following comments and responses were made:-

- One of the biggest areas of work was communications and engagement, particularly in relation to workplaces and businesses. There were already good contacts in place in schools and care homes.
- Confidence was needed that any clusters occurring within a workplace setting would be identified and reported quickly.
- Communications needed to be very targeted and cover a number of settings.
- The need to ensure that residents with learning disabilities and mental health issues was noted and stressed.
- The leadership of Northumberland's schools had understood the advice re. COVID-19, learned from it and cascaded it down through the school. There was much that could be learned from them. Businesses were also doing the right thing by introducing distancing, appropriate signage and hand gel. Everyone was still learning on a daily basis.
- Although this was a local control plan, there was also a regional group which would consider any potential cross border issues.
- Schools were fundamental in managing the mental health of school children. The closure of this pathway could have a wider impact on young people.

- With regard to whether it was achievable to receive test results within 24 hours, members were informed that more testing was being carried out locally and so more quickly. Although testing was improving there was still a long way to go. Care homes were most at risk and all testing for outbreaks in care homes was done at local laboratories.

Ann Bridges, Head of Communications, gave a short presentation outlining the importance of communication and engagement with the public along with the role of the proposed Communications and Engagement Sub-Group. (Presentation attached to the signed minutes).

The following comments were made:-

- Many complaints from the public related to young people and the lack of social distancing. Schools and appropriate social media platforms should be used to get the message across of the need to act sensibly and respectfully.
- Targeting information was vital and it was important not just to focus on young people.
- Different types of messages would be needed for different groups and the potential consequences of not following social distancing rules stressed.
- It may be useful to have a representative from the voluntary sector as a member of the sub-group.
- Getting information to people with sensory impairment must be considered.
- It was acknowledged that many people had difficulty using digital communication, and traditional communication methods must be considered.
- There were to be two mobile testing units in Northumberland but more data was required to ascertain the best place to site them.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the draft local COVID-19 Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan be agreed.
- (2) the role of the Health & Wellbeing Board's role as the body responsible for the delivery of the plan as reflected in the proposed delegation be noted.
- (3) authority to amend the plan in the light of emerging evidence, changing guidance and operational pressures be delegated to the Director of Public Health, Chief Executive of the Council and the Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board.
- (4) The membership of the Communications and Engagement Sub-group be agreed as follows:-

Councillor V. Jones (Chair)
 Director of Public Health
 Head of Communications, Northumberland County Council
 Head of Communications, Northumbria Healthcare NHS Trust
 Health & Wellbeing Board Members

- Councillor W Daley
- Councillor R.R. Dodd

- Councillor S. Dungworth
 - Councillor C.R. Homer
 - Councillor P.A. Jackson
- Healthwatch (Derry Nugent)
Voluntary Sector Representative
Other representatives to be considered including from the business community

43. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held remotely on Thursday, 13 August 2020, at 10.00 a.m.

CHAIRMAN

DATE
