

	<u>Agenda Item: X</u>
Report to:	Local Covid Outbreak Engagement Board
Date:	27 October 2020
TITLE:	BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL TEST AND TRACE IMPLEMENTATION & ENGAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE
Organisation	Birmingham City Council
Presenting Officer	Dr Justin Varney Director of Public Health

Report Type:	For discussion
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1. Purpose:
To inform the Board on progress with implementation of the local Test and Trace plan within Birmingham

2. Recommendation
The Board is asked to note for discussion at the meeting.

3. Report Body
<p>The paper summarises the progress since the last meeting implementing the local test and trace programme elements, including the communication and engagement plan.</p> <p>The key points to highlight from the report are:</p> <p>Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Test and Trace Cell is a tactical level Cell under the Council's emergency plan structures. • The Test and Trace Cell and the outbreak setting groups meet weekly or more frequently as required. • The Health Protection Forum has been meeting on a fortnightly basis. • There is a twice weekly multi-agency City Incident Management Team meeting. • There is a daily Health Protection Test & Trace Cell update meeting. <p>Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 27 roles have been appointed to through the internal recruitment and agency recruitment processes. The remaining roles are

being recruited to again through agency at pace.

- Recruitment for remaining circa 31WTE roles within the temporary Test and Trace Structure is via internal secondment, external recruitment and agency recruitment. The posts are being appointed for 6 months with potential extension to 12 months and the number of roles may be extended as national requirements become clearer.
- Once the fixed term structure is established the Public Health Division will re-establish more business as usual functions but all staff will rotate through the fixed term structure as surge capacity and this allows potential surge increase for the response function by another 30 WTE.
- 6 matrix roles have been agreed with Environmental Health in addition to 2 matrix roles within the wider PH structure. 2 matrix roles have been agreed with Facilities to support test site coordination.

Testing in Birmingham

- Birmingham now has seven operational walk-through sites and two operational drive through sites. As part of the agreement with the Department of Health and Social Care we are identifying a further three sites. We have also requested two further sites focused on areas of high student resident populations and a further two drive through mobile testing units.
- The Drop and Collect pilot has been halted and options for ways forward are being considered.

Data Access

- There has been significant improvement in the data access for the Council.
- There remain some significant gaps, especially around the intelligence on the demographic of testing uptake which limits the ability of local teams to understand poor uptake and target a response.
- Data is also often limited in its completeness, particularly regarding workplace and there seems to be limited information from the national contact tracing service on social gatherings which may be underpinning spread locally.
- The Council continues to work with Public Health England and the NHS Test and Trace Service to strengthen the approach.
- Public Health England continue to look closely at issues across the West Midlands area, meeting with the Directors of Public Health on a daily basis to discuss cross-border issues.

Local Enhanced Case Tracing

- As part of the enhanced support the Council has been working with NHS Test and Trace to improve the number and proportion of cases reached. This went live on the 24th September.

- The burden placed on the Council was significantly higher than projected by NHS Test and Trace and we are working with them to review the model and stabilise volumes and optimise but not overwhelm the public health capacity.

Local Enhanced Contact Tracing

- The Council has been working with NHS Test and Trace to improve the number and proportion of residents notified of the need to isolate and request their compliance. This will be delivered by the Customer Contact centre, supported by the Public Health Test & Trace team. Training is underway and with an aim to go live in w/c 19th October.

Cross Cutting Communication

- Significant media engagement through radio including weekly live Q&A with BBC WM and intermittent sessions with digital broadcasters and community focused stations e.g. Hope Radio.
- Ongoing media engagement with key local media partners as well as reactive response to media queries.
- Comments given to national media outlets such as ITV, ITV, Sky News, The Guardian and BBC on Birmingham's plans of a localised Test and Trace system, Drop and Collect and Covid-19 Community Champions
- Social media engagement through @HealthyBum and BCC twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube accounts.
- Community radio ads have been broadcast in community languages to highlight local restrictions and importance of getting a test. Some of the stats include: Ambur Radio: 200,000 listeners (294 spots), Switch Radio: 22,000 – 28,000 listeners p/week (420 spots), Raaj FM: 40,000 listeners (210 spots), New Style Radio: no listener figures available (336 spots), Big City Radio: no listener figures available (246 spots), Unity Radio: 90,000 listeners (420 spots).
- Strategic approach to scheduling social media comms. From September onwards, a timetable has been created which is updated fortnightly. This is a guideline for smarter scheduling with publishing assistant Hootsuite, advising the best times to publish specific messages for relevant engagement. For example, guidance around car-sharing, hospitality and social gatherings are scheduled more frequently between Friday 4.45pm to Sunday 6.00pm. On weekday mornings between 6.45am– 9.30am, there is an increased focus on face-coverings, test & trace and handwashing to keep members of the public updated on staying safe for their daily commutes and whilst at work. As a result, between 01 September – 15 October, there has been increased traffic and engagement across all social media platforms from the previous month. Twitter (primary focus for targeted messages): Engagement is up by 32.4%, traffic is up by 217%, followers are up by 1.7% (102). Facebook engagement has increased by 136% and traffic increased by 147%. For YouTube, views are up by 10% at 1.1K and impressions up by 73% at 9k. Instagram:

Engagement is up by 6.46% - posts have increased but recent updates to Instagram's algorithm and features have impacted reach on these posts.

- YouTube and social media content have been created in multiple languages to ensure we reach our diverse demographic, such as Urdu, Arabic, French, Spanish, Cantonese, Polish, Romanian and more.
- Web content continues to be created and updated as necessary. New accessibility criteria came into force on 23/09/20. All future web content must comply.
- 'No Bull' campaign launched in the city featuring digital advertising, targeted online ads and collaborations with media such as IChooseBirmingham.
- Weekly hour-long Q&A with BCC Staff by Director of Public Health, similar targeted Q&A and awareness sessions have been held through the BHealthy Seminars.
- Update COVID-19 items at Cabinet and Health and Wellbeing Board and to each of the Health and Wellbeing Forums.
- NHS Test and Trace App launched on 24th Sept – messaging has been pushed out through all communication channels.
- Community Update meeting 15/10/20
- Staff weekly updates

Communities of Place

- Ward Forum engagement. Offer made for Public Health to attend ward forums to provide Covid-19 update and do short Q&A. These are in general recorded and shared through local networks. Ward Forums attended since last update: Tyseley & Haymills, Quinton, Newtown and Bromford & Hodgehill.
- Neighbourhood Networks engagement. Weekly NNS volunteer newsletters with key COVID-19 messaging have been disseminated to community partners. To date, six editions have been sent out.
- Setting Specific engagement
 - Schools – monthly engagement sessions with primary school headteachers and specific meetings with special school headteachers attended by a Public Health Consultant. Additional specific session for Birmingham Diocesan Multi Academy Trust
 - Care Homes – engagement through BCC cascade briefings and direct engagement based on risk and testing uptake. Webinars for care home staff (with Public Health England). Webinars for children's residential care (with Public Health England and Birmingham Children's Trust).

Communities of Identity

- Community Partners.
 - 10 community partner organisations have been commissioned to work with specific communities of identity. Approaches are tailored to different communities and have included direct contact through Whatsapp and text engagement (Roma communities/ Refugee &

Migrant Centre), translated bespoke resources (Chinese community/Chinese community centre), community workshops with key workers (Migrants and Asylum seekers/Citizens UK), targeted focus group discussions (LGBT Centre). Video messages in community languages have been produced by providers (Pakistani and Kashmiri/Citizens UK, British Sign Language/ Birmingham Institute for Deaf People, Polish and Eastern European/Polish Expats Association) Survey on impact of COVID-19 (LGBT/LGBT Birmingham). Additional funding agreed to extend current contracts with community partner organisations to share relevant messages awareness and understanding of COVID-19, access to testing, knowledge of how to respond if they test positive or told they are a contact of a case, knowledge of how to reduce risk factors associated with increased risk of severe illness or death from COVID-19. Discussions are underway with current providers.

- Weekly COVID-19 Interfaith meeting with faith leaders
- Fortnightly COVID-19 Virtual briefing sessions for Mosques
- Phase 2 Community Support tenders for Communities of Language, Children and Young People, Health messages, Faith based communities and Older People without access to technology have been scored and moderated.
- A partnership with the Asian Business Chamber of Commerce to highlight COVID-19 messages to members and the business community in Birmingham is underway with joined up social media messages
- A Q&A for Birmingham businesses to take place on Tues 20th Oct, hosted by Justin. As of 16/10 there are 47 registrations.
- BHealthy Webinar Series launched on the 2nd Sept. There are 16 webinars covering behaviour change, keeping covid safe, long term conditions, unhealthy habits and healthy habits. Webinars have been promoted throughout various networks. To date, 327 participants have joined the sessions which are recorded and available to watch on our YouTube channel.
- Community Volunteers.
 - Launched COVID-19 Community Champion Network W/C 21st Sept. As of 15/10/20, 326 people have signed up to the network, including local MPs and Councillors. The network is a two-way opportunity to get important and trusted information into the heart of communities, but also to understand the challenges and concerns that need to be addressed. Covid 19 Community Champions have met twice via zoom, most recently 15th Oct where 65 champions joined to hear the Director explain the latest local Covid Alert Systems. On each occasion champions have been able to ask questions directly to Justin and it has been a really positive forum with brilliant questions. Session are recorded and circulated to all champions that could not attend.
 - Resources have been created to support the scheme and Champions are receiving weekly emails, text messages and zoom webinars.

Champions are also receiving weekly Birmingham COVID-19 Data Dashboards, which are being produced by the data team and Dr Justin Varney.

- Champions sign-up information and the code of conduct are now available in multiple languages.
- Children and young people
 - Continued collaborative working with young people influencers and key organisations.
 - University Leaders meetings weekly
- Vulnerable Adults
 - Engagement with Substance Misuse, Homeless service providers and West Midlands Police to plan Q&A sessions.
 - Specific discussion session with women's organisations, primarily domestic violence service providers.
 - Bloomberg bid submitted to provide masks and hand sanitiser to homeless/rough sleepers through support organisations and vulnerable citizens using food banks.
 - Agreement made with BeatFreeks to support Community Champions campaign.
- Disabled Communities
 - Sign language bi-lingual Q&A session undertaken and now building on this to include 360 degree questioning so that Test & Trace is able to learn more about the deaf community whilst participants learn more about COVID-19 messages.
 - Cllr Hamilton to take part in Q&A with Birmingham Institute for the Deaf to understand more about deaf community's challenges with COVID-19.
- LGBT+ Communities
 - Working collaboratively with Birmingham LGBT Centre to create health and wellbeing surveys for the specific community and support their work supporting LGBT+ citizens.
- Ethnographic research
 - As part of the research that will contribute to both effective comms and engagement, and the next DPH Annual Report, Birmingham Public Health has commissioned 8 ethnographic studies of Birmingham residents identifying as one or more of the following: Older adult, Working Adult, Unemployed Adult, Teenager, White British, White non-British, African-Caribbean, South Asian, Chinese, LGBT person, Disability, Muslim, Sikh, Christian faiths.
 - Currently the activity has been focused on photo and video diaries alongside guided self-reporting by the persons engaged.
 - Initial emerging findings from the ethnographic research in Birmingham are as follows:
 - People are reporting that they no longer feel this is temporary / that they can see an end point. This is the "new normal"; there is no going back.

- The restrictions are frustrating but the need for them is understood / accepted.
- People are reporting a fragmented experience in terms of place, time and interpretation of measures.
- They have observed others comply much better with guidance in "formal" settings (such as job centres and credit plus centres) than they do in socialised settings.
- The variance in interpretation of measures by others (especially family / friends) is causing friction.
- The group are on the whole more sympathetic to LA than National Government but there is limited understanding of the difference in roles (for example testing is attributed to the LA and is one of the few areas of negativity).
- Pessimism and introspection are becoming more prevalent as personal resilience reserves dwindle.
- That the measures act as an exacerbating factor to existing issues (financial, relationship and health) rather than a catalyst to create new ones.
- The use of digital communication is bittersweet, it can act as a reminder of what has been lost.
- The "crisis of the everyday" is a common touchpoint, it's the accumulation of little day-to-day issues that take their toll.
- The support offered is focused on mitigation rather than how to thrive in current circumstances.
- There is a new level of importance of the home (both positive and negative being enhanced).
- Networks can create connection but also exacerbate isolation in some instances.
- Dependents can create a sense of purpose but also anxiety.
- Coping strategies that may have worked around hobbies need substitution / variety.

Communities of Interest

- Business sector
 - Greater Birmingham Chamber of Commerce Breakfast Briefing
 - Engagement through Business Improvement Districts.
 - Birmingham and COVID-19: Business in Birmingham Prepared for COVID-19 Webinar delivered with the support of Greater Birmingham Chamber of Commerce.
- Voluntary and Community Sector
 - Engagement with Neighbourhood Networks listed elsewhere, but area for development.
- Statutory Providers
 - Engagement through collaborative training sessions around infection control and risk management.

Elected Members & Key Stakeholders

- Elected members. Briefing informing Members of COVID19 Community Champions Network launch.
- Statutory Boards - Health protection Board and Health and Wellbeing Boards have had briefings and additional briefings at Cabinet.
- Local Members of Parliament briefed through weekly briefing, stepped up from monthly briefing.

Outbreak Response Communication

- Reactive communication support provided to support PHE coms around local outbreaks in a range of settings, primarily workplaces, schools and care homes.
- Test and Trace communication and engagement Lead has been recruited and will be in position very shortly.

Key actions being taken next:

- Complete recruitment of fixed term test and trace core team.
- Scoping of further mobile testing sites and potential for further walk-through testing facilities to increase access to citizens without cars.
- Mobilise additional capacity to support contact tracing through the Contact Centre
- Pilot of targeted online paid advertising and expanded community radio and advertising partnership.
- Further tender for targeted community partnerships to strengthen reach and depth
- Establishing dedicated test and trace communication and engagement team.
- Beatfrecks have been commissioned in a social media engagement project on community champions and Covid topical issues such as test and trace and compliance
- Resource packs for COVID-19 community Champion network to be translated into various languages
- Targeted city-wide Q&A forums to be arranged
- Publication of the Phase 2 Community Tenders successful organisations. Announcement to be made of the first Lot of organisations to be announced week commencing 19/10/20.
- Awaiting response on submission of Bloomberg bid to provide masks and hand sanitiser to homeless / Rough Sleepers through support organisations and to vulnerable citizens through food banks.
- Phase 2 Community Providers contracts to be prepared and work started.
- Phase 1 Community Providers have submitted their 3-month reviews, and these are to be consolidated into a summary report.
- To finalise the ethnographic studies and implement the findings.

6. Risk Analysis			
Identified Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Actions to Manage Risk
Unable to complete appointments to the Test and Trace core team	Low	High	Widened recruitment search via agency appointment.
Low uptake of testing and low engagement with test and trace	Medium	High	Additional community partner organisations commissioned to enhance engagement with communities. Increased translated resource dissemination.

The following people have been involved in the preparation of this board paper:

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