

	<b><u>Agenda Item: 9</u></b>
<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Local Covid Outbreak Engagement Board</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>26 November 2020</b>
<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>TEST AND TRACE IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE</b>
<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Birmingham City Council</b>
<b>Presenting Officer</b>	<b>Dr Justin Varney, Director of Public Health</b>

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

<b>2. Recommendation</b>
2.1 The Board is asked to note for discussion at the meeting

<b>3. Report Body</b>
<p>3.1. The paper summarises the progress since the previous Board with implementing the local test and trace programme, including the communication and engagement plan.</p> <p>3.2. Governance The Test and Trace Cell is a tactical level Cell under the Council's emergency plan structures. The Test and Trace team is part of the Public Health Division. There are twice daily Health Protection Response update meetings, daily Communications &amp; Engagement update meetings, and thrice weekly Data &amp; Governance update meetings.</p> <p>3.3. Structure All posts in the Test &amp; Trace team have been appointed to through a mix of recruitment processes. The posts are for 6 months in the first instance with potential to extend to 12 months and the number of posts may be extended as national requirements evolve.</p> <p>With the Test &amp; Trace team established, the Public Health Division is better placed to resume more 'business as usual' functions. All Public Health staff will rotate through the fixed term structure to maintain capability as</p>

potential surge capacity and preparedness to increase the response function by another 30 WTE.

Six matrix roles have been agreed with Environmental Health in addition to 2 matrix roles within the wider PH structure. Two matrix roles have been agreed with Facilities to support test site coordination.

#### 3.4. Testing in Birmingham

Birmingham now has nine operational walk-through sites and two drive through sites. These include two sites focused on areas of high student resident populations.

A further walk-through site at Orphanage Road, Erdington is due to go live in the week commencing 23<sup>rd</sup> November. This addition to the north of the city will increase the number of operational walk-through sites to ten, and give Birmingham the highest ratio of testing sites per population.

New asymptomatic testing is being planned and rolled out. Details of this fast-moving development will be provided in a separate presentation.

#### 3.5. Local Enhanced Case Tracing

The Council has been working with NHS Test and Trace to enhance the proportion and timeliness of cases reached. This went live on in late September with an initial burden placed to the Council that was significantly higher than projected by NHS Test and Trace and we worked with them to review the model, stabilise volumes, and optimise but not overwhelm the public health capacity.

Data quality issues persisted which compromised the impact of the service. In early November, the service was paused with the intention to restart when able to mitigate for the data quality limitations. Work is ongoing with NHS Test and Trace to this effect.

#### 3.6. Local Enhanced Contact Tracing

The Council has worked with NHS Test and Trace to improve the proportion and timeliness of residents notified of the need to isolate. Delivered by the Customer Contact centre and supported by the Public Health Test & Trace team, this went live the first week of November.

From the outset, it was beset with data quality issues on a scale sufficient to pose a significant reputational risk to the Council. Within days, and in agreement with NHS Test and Trace, the service was paused. Work is ongoing with NHS Test and Trace to understand how these data quality issues can be worked around.

#### 3.7. Communication and Engagement update

The focus has been on communicating the restrictions of the tier system and, more recently, the national lockdown restrictions, reinforcing the messaging about symptoms and getting tested. We have had a wide reach and more shares (engagement) on the wellbeing and support available to people that may be isolating, the priority post box service, mental health support, and demystifying the COVID-19 NHS app.

3.8. We are continuing to drive engagement on the Healthybrum and BCC channels to communicate key information and updates to help people, their friends and their family, protect themselves and stay safe during the pandemic.

3.9. Information to help the local communities celebrate key events such as bonfire night, Halloween and Diwali was created and shared. The 'No Bull' campaign continues to be rolled out in the city with updated graphics for the new lockdown measures. Messaging is still viewable on city centre digital screens at 22 locations and on highways signs and city dressing and frequent social media posts.

3.10. Communication & Engagement highlights

- Following the feedback from the BeHeard survey and from our partners, we have introduced new content such as 'debunking the myths of Covid'.
- We continue to work with our community providers to make sure the information is accessible and available in a number of languages to reach the diverse communities across the city.
- Messaging on Healthybrum has been refreshed to increase traffic, engagement and followers resulting in 4.6k impressions and an 84.8% increase in our followers on Instagram.
- The BCC Covid social media is reaching 3.3 million with the engagement rate at 2.1% and 76.1k impression.
- We hosted a Facebook Live Q&A with Birmingham Live at which Dr Justin Varney spoke about new lockdown restrictions and the future regarding a potential vaccine.
- Successfully secured significant media engagement through radio including weekly live Q&A with BBC WM & intermittent sessions with digital broadcasters and community focused stations. Additionally, we have provided comments to media outlets such as BBC and Birmingham Live on the future of asymptomatic (lateral flow) testing in Birmingham.
- YouTube and social media content is regularly created in multiple languages, such as Urdu, Arabic, French, Spanish, Cantonese, Polish, Romanian and more.
- We are continuing the push for residents to join the Covid-19 Champions network, and currently have 428 champions who help ensure factual information is shared within our communities. The network was featured on BBC WM's Make a Difference Heroes Awards highlighting how communities are coming together to help each other during the pandemic.

- The Weekly coronavirus update is shared with 116,000 subscribers and has an open rate of 28%.

#### 4. Risk Analysis

Identified Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Actions to Manage Risk
Message fatigue associated with reduced precautions, reduced testing and reduced compliance with tracing and isolation.	Medium	High	Active refresh of messaging content and conduits. Proactive engagement with community and business partners to enhance engagement.
Volume and complexity of situations requiring investigation, advice and support may exceed the available combined public health system capacity	Medium	High	Working across the public health system to reset priorities and realign scarce resources for optimum impact.  To upskill partner agencies/services and look to new models of working to continue to protect the vulnerable, maintain business continuity of statutory services, and protect the economy.

#### Appendices

None

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

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