

- Present:** Councillor Jane Loffhagen (*in the Chair*)
- Councillors:** Naomi Tweddle, Bill Bilton, Alan Briggs, Sue Burke, Liz Bushell, Jackie Kirk, Helena Mair, Lucinda Preston and Hilton Spratt
- Apologies for Absence:** Councillor Christopher Reid, Simon Walters and Angela Andrews

19. Confirmation of Minutes - 16 November 2020

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2020 be confirmed.

20. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

21. Scrutiny Review - Impact on Businesses and Employment during the Covid-19 Pandemic

Jane Loffhagen, Chair of the Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee opened the meeting and provided the committee with a brief introduction of the topic for review which was the impact on businesses during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Chair explained that the purpose of the review was to understand the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and how it had affected businesses, whilst also identifying support already being provided and whether there were any gaps of which the City of Lincoln Council could provide further support. Not only would the review look at businesses, it would also look at how the pandemic had affected individuals from the perspective of jobs and employment.

She introduced Derek Ward, Director of Public Health at the Lincolnshire County Council who had been invited to provide a background on how the city of Lincoln was coping with Covid-19 since Lincoln had been put into Tier 3.

22. Derek Ward - Director of Public Health (Lincolnshire County Council) (Verbal Report)

Derek Ward, Director of Public Health briefly explained the current situation in the City with regards to Covid-19 including the current testing regime, he explained the following:

- The rates peaked in mid-November in Lincolnshire and lockdown had helped bring the peak down. It was starting to flatten out throughout the County but this needed to continue in order for it to keep reducing.
- It was mainly outbreaks in care homes, county hospital and the prison that were causing the rates to rocket.
- Over the past month it was identified that students weren't the reason for the increase of cases in Lincoln and they had been doing a great job in getting

tested. The University were also carrying out asymptomatic tests on students before they returned home.

- There were 3 core ways to help lower the spread of the virus:
 - Vaccines
 - Improving the testing system
 - Test and Trace

Derek welcomed any questions or comments from the committee.

Question: Since the vaccine had been rolled out, how many Lincoln residents have had the virus?

Response: The vaccine programme was controlled by the NHS so only they could provide the statistics. The vaccine in general was going well, the Pfizer vaccine which was the current vaccine in circulation had to be frozen at -70C before being used. It would also shortly be rolled out in care homes but officers were waiting for further information on that.

Question: Was the hospital coping with the amount of cases they were receiving?

Response: The hospital had struggled. A test had to be taken on entry and a few days after an individual had been admitted. The hospital didn't discharge people from the hospital to a care home and there were discharge for patients whilst they were waiting for test results. A third of people with the virus had showed no symptoms, so that was the main issue that needed to be tackled.

Question: Were the staff at Care Homes trained to deal with outbreaks?

Response: Staff had been on prevention training for the past couple of years originally to deal with flu outbreaks. They were fully kitted in PPE and had access to testing, staff were tested every week and residents were tested every 28 days but soon that would become a regular occurrence.

Question: In relation to the government making changes to the Test and Trace, how would it help?

Response: Not all the details about this had been received yet so unfortunately an update couldn't be given.

Question: What was the lateral flow test?

Response: There were 3 types of test, two that would tell you if you tested positive and one antibody test. The PCR test which was the one carried out at Lincolnshire Showground and at the University takes 24-72 hours to show a result. The Lateral Flow test was similar to a pregnancy test, if the test was positive, two lines would show and it would take approximately 20-25 minutes to get a result. This test in particular wasn't very successful in giving real positives and could pick up 3 of every 4 but it could miss one and has to be carried out by somebody who was trained. In order to minimise the risk, the test could be carried out over a number of days to find a pattern however people who were told they got a negative result that were asked to have another test didn't want to. There was plenty of supply in order to be able to carry out multiple tests on the same person.

Question: Which test was the best test to give an accurate reading?

Response: The PCR was the gold standard test and gave a more accurate reading than the lateral test. The lateral test was good at giving a negative result but not good at giving positive results.

Question: With regards to new testing units in schools, what support would be provided?

Response: A webinar took place on 15th December with the national government but more information would be received shortly.

How was the virus spreading in the city of Lincoln?

Response: Care homes were testing people regularly and dealing with outbreaks fantastically however a lot of the time outbreaks were investigated after they had happened rather than before. The number of cases was decreasing however there were still outbreaks. Asymptomatic transmission was the main reason for the spread of the virus, so the same message has been strongly advised to everyone that they should:

- Wash their hands
- Wear a face covering
- Keep a 2m distance
- If you felt any kind of symptoms, no matter how mild, self-isolate and get a test.

Question: Were people in deprived areas who were self-isolating able to access Vitamin D supplements during the winter months?

Response: the guidelines did state that vitamin D should be taken by everyone.

The Chair thanked Derek for attending the meeting and expressed her appreciation for the work that was being undertaken throughout the pandemic by himself, his staff as well the joint partnership working with the City of Lincoln Council.

23. Supporting Business - Conclusions and Next Steps (Verbal Report)

After liaising with Justin Brown, Assistant Director for Growth at the Lincolnshire County Council, he agreed to attend the meeting in January to provide an update on how Covid-19 has affected growth and economy.

24. Supporting Individuals - Next Steps (Verbal Report)

The committee were given the opportunity to suggest anyone that they felt would be able to provide effective information for evidence gathering in the next stage of the review, these were:

- Lynsey Collinson and Kate Edgar (Development Plus) – February 2021
- Graham Metcalfe (DWP) – February 2021

25. Work Programme 2020/21

N/A