

Report to: East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board

Date of meeting: 13 July 2021

By: Director of Public Health

Title: East Sussex Outbreak Control Plan

Purpose: To seek Health and Wellbeing Board approval of the refreshed East Sussex Outbreak Control Plan

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is recommended to:

- 1) approve the revised East Sussex Outbreak Control Plan (appendix 1); and**
 - 2) receive an update at its 30 September 2021 meeting.**
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1 Background

1.1 COVID-19 (a coronavirus) was declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organisation in March 2020 after sustained global transmission.

1.2 East Sussex County Council (ESCC) published the first version of the East Sussex COVID-19 Outbreak Control Plan (OCP) at the end of June 2021, as required by the Government, to prevent cases of the virus where possible in East Sussex and to respond to any local outbreaks. The OCP continues to be an iterative document, with continuing updates as more learning / guidance is produced, as well as structured whole reviews every 3 months.

1.3 At its meeting of 2 March 2021, the Board agreed to receive an update on development of the OCP.

2 Supporting information

2.1 The OCP has been updated in collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders including the NHS and Borough and District Councils. The updates reflect:

- changes to guidance and legislation around the powers given to upper and local tier authorities to prevent transmission of the disease;
- changes to structure of the public health protection system, in such the creation of the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) in April 2021;
- national lessons learned, particularly from areas subjected to further lockdown and those where softer measures have been introduced;
- surveillance reporting and the use of and publication of data to ensure transparency for both stakeholders and the public;
- developments in testing and tracing;
- a refresh of the latest epidemiology;
- sector led improvement (peer review); and

- vaccine uptake promotion.

2.2 Surveillance and interpretation of data is key to determining the action required to contain any increases in transmission. A [weekly surveillance](#) report provides an accessible overview of cases in East Sussex. This is distributed to key stakeholders and published to the website alongside the OCP.

2.3 Planning to prevent and respond to cases of Covid-19 in our communities requires a whole system and multi-agency approach, including the NHS Test and Trace programme. From November 2020 East Sussex County Council has been supporting contact tracing where an individual has tested positive, but the NHS Test and Trace system has not been successful in making contact with them. This locally supported contact tracing aims to improve the proportion of people successfully followed up. From February 2021 this is being further supported by the Districts and Boroughs through door knocking where people are not able to be traced.

2.4 The local escalation framework was superseded by local COVID alert levels published by Government in October 2020 together with the different actions and interventions required at each level. The Government's [Roadmap](#) published, February 2021, saw the gradual easing of restrictions in four steps governed by four key tests. The final step has been delayed from 21 June to at least 19 July. It is not yet known if an escalation framework will continue to be used in the future. For more information see the national guidance: [what you can and cannot do](#).

2.5 Budget plans for the £2.5m allocated to East Sussex to support the development of its response have been developed, including an allocation to Districts and Borough Environmental Health Teams, and ESCC Trading Standards, Emergency Planning, Communications and Public Health functions.

2.6. The OCP was reviewed by Public Health England (PHE) and the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and either met or fully met all 12 essential criteria. The review resulted in the Sector Led Improvement or peer review with neighbouring authorities (Surrey County Council and Buckinghamshire Council).

2.7 The OCP outlines plans to boost vaccine uptake with an East Sussex wide oversight group, a series of place-based cells focusing on areas of low uptake and working groups for at risk groups. Actions have included focused communications, mobile/roaming vaccination services, analysis of poor uptake.

2.8 A multi-agency exercise was carried out on 16 June to test the OCP with our key stakeholders. One area of learning was to ensure a review of the Escalation Framework so that it is a user friendly tool that easily links to key sections of the OCP.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board, as the local accountable body, is recommended to approve the latest version of the OCP.

3.2 Members of the Health and Wellbeing Board will be updated as further guidance is received from Government and the East Sussex Outbreak Control Plan is developed. It is also proposed that a report providing an update on the Plan is made to the next meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board in 30 September 2021.

DARRELL GALE

Director of Public Health

Contact Officer: Ade Fowler, Consultant in Public Health

Tel. No. 07738 288408

Email: ade.fowler@eastsussex.gov.uk

Background Documents:

None