

County Councillor report December 2020

COVID 19 update

Covid-19 Epidemiology

| | Average weekly cases per 100,000 population | Rate of change |
|-----------------|--|----------------|
| England | 580 | +53% |
| East of England | 770 | +46% |
| Cambridgeshire | 471 | +112% |
| Cambridge | 513 | +93% |
| East Cambs | 444 | +102% |
| Fenland | 406 | +123% |
| Hunts | 501 | +142% |
| South Cambs | 462 | +99% |
| Peterborough | 470 | +28% |

The above figures are expected to increase every day.

Many teams in the County Council have remained active over the Christmas and New Year period due to workloads directly or indirectly associated with Covid-19 and its impact.

The County Council Public Health team and partners have continued to deliver the outbreak control centre, the Covid-19 single point of contact, and surveillance and outbreak management functions throughout the period.

The outbreak management has been high, due to the general rise in the spread of the virus in the past weeks, which is associated with higher levels of outbreaks in different settings such as care homes, schools (in December) and workplaces. County Council Public Health work closely with other Local authority services on outbreak management.

Public Health specialists are attending the Covid-19 'Gold' meetings which are held weekly in each District/City Council and providing locally tailored data and advice on prevention and rapid response to senior District/City Council officers.

County Council Public Health are reviewing the latest available evidence on the new Covid variant – both the epidemiology and additional interventions to control the virus - and incorporating this information into their advice to Council teams and external colleagues.

Working with the communications team on materials for the general public and targeted groups remains a high priority.

Hyper-local DPH led rapid testing (lateral flow tests) is being piloted in Peterborough and we are working with military colleagues to bid to DHSC for a larger community rapid testing programme.

Vaccination of vulnerable people, both to improve their personal outcomes and to reduce pressure on the NHS from Covid admissions, is a key priority for the whole system over the coming weeks. This is led by the NHS/CCG.

Covid-19 Vaccination Programme.

The Covid-19 Vaccination Programme is now well underway in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and will continue throughout the current national lockdown. This is an update of the programme as it stands on 6 January 2021.

Vaccination sites

All staff and external colleagues are working incredibly hard to open up additional vaccination sites over the coming days and weeks to expand the number of vaccination sites and vaccination appointments are available across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

The following sites are live and delivering vaccinations to those aged over 80, care home workers and frontline NHS staff:

- Peterborough City Hospital
- Addenbrooke's Hospital
- Ely South and Ely North Primary Care Networks – with practices in Ely, Soham, Haddenham, Burwell and Littleport
- Wisbech PCN – covering the following practices: Clarkson Surgery, North Brink Practice, Parsons Drive Surgery and Trinity Surgery
- South Peterborough – covering the following practices: Oundle Medical Practice, New Queen Street & Stanground Surgeries, and Yaxley
- Lakeside St Neots – covering the following practices: Cedar House Practice, Dumbelton Medical Practice, St Neots Health Centre and Eaton Socon Health Centre.

A number of other locations across the County are due to open next week. Medical staff will also be starting to vaccinate the top priority JCVI group - Care Home residents and staff - in their own Care Homes as of this week.

Vaccination appointments

Medical staff have already booked in and vaccinated thousands of people aged over 80, care home workers and frontline NHS staff across the area but know that there are many more people still to contact and book in as more slots become available.

If people are registered with a local GP, they will be contacted via email, text, phone or letter when it is their turn to book an appointment.

This may vary slightly between different areas in our region due to how the vaccines are made available and distributed from the central distribution system, local residents who fall into the priority groups (as determined by the JCVI) will be contacted by their nearest vaccine centre as soon as the vaccine is available for them. Local people should not contact the NHS to seek a vaccine, unless invited to do so. They will contact them when there are appointments available. This is to help ensure that call handlers at vaccination sites across the area can utilise maximum capacity to book appointments for those currently eligible for the vaccination.

Delivery of second dose

National guidance from the UK's Chief Medical Officers now recommends that the second dose for both PfizerBioNTech and OxfordAstraZeneca vaccines can be delivered up to 12 weeks after the first vaccination.

The new medical advice states that the second dose of the vaccine remains effective when given up to 12 weeks after the first dose and should be given towards the end of this 12 week period.

Two doses of the vaccine are still needed to get the best protection from the virus, but significant protection is provided at 22 days after the first dose. The new guidance will therefore help ensure that as many vulnerable people as possible benefit from the protection offered by the first dose of the vaccine as soon as possible. There are no safety concerns in the new guidance, and it will not impact on how effective the vaccination is in protecting people from Covid-19 once the course is complete.

Based on this new advice, medical staff are in the process of contacting people who originally had their second dose vaccination appointment booked in earlier than is now required. This means they will be working hard to change a large number of appointments. If an appointment is going to be changed, they will contact the patient directly. If a patient does not hear from them, then their appointment will continue as planned. Given the numbers of people they need to contact and the time it will take, they ask that local people do not contact

the hospitals or GP practices as they are extremely busy and their call may prevent one that is more critical from getting through.

Maintain Hands, Face, Space

It is important, even after people have received their first vaccination, to follow the current hands, face, space and ventilate guidance to reduce the spread of Covid-19.

Further information about the vaccination programme can be found at

<https://www.cambridgeshireandpeterboroughccg.nhs.uk/news-and-events/latestnews/covid-19-national-vaccination-programme/>

Clinically extremely vulnerable urged to shield and seek support

Residents across Cambridgeshire who have been identified by the NHS as clinically extremely vulnerable are being urged to shield once again. Letters have been sent to all clinically vulnerable people from the Department for Health and Social Care informing them how to stay safe. People will also receive a follow-up letter from Cambridgeshire County Council with information on the support available in the local area.

You can read the full guidance on shielding on the government website, visit

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

Help and support continues to be available to anyone who is self-isolating through the network of support hubs run by the County, district and city councils.

People can use the hubs to get help to access food and medicine and support with tasks such as dog walking and home maintenance. Wellbeing support is also available in the form of welfare calls and providing reassurance. The hubs can also offer advice on financial and employment concerns and with signposting to local specialist support services.

In addition to the help offered by the support hubs, people who are shielding can register with the National Registration Support Service to secure priority supermarket delivery slots. Registration will also enable community pharmacist to deliver any medicines direct to people's homes. If you have previously registered or have already secured priority supermarket delivery slots, you don't need to re-register. But if you haven't already done so, you can register online today. To access the registration service, go to

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-shielding-support>

Contact details for the local support hubs are as follows:

- If you live in the Cambridge City area: <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/coronavirus-ask-for-help> or 01223 457000
- If you live in the East Cambridgeshire District Council area: <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/content/coronavirus-community-support> or 01353 665555
- If you live in the Fenland District Council area: www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/coronavirus or 0345 045 5219
- If you live in the Huntingdonshire District Council area: <https://www.wearehuntingdonshire.org/> or 01480 388388
- If you live in the Peterborough City Council area: www.peterborough.gov.uk/coronavirus or 01733 747474
- If you live in the South Cambridgeshire District Council area: www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/coronavirus or 0345 045 5219

If you are not sure which is your local hub, contact the County Council's countywide coordination hub via www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/coronavirus or call 0345 045 5219.

The national NHS Volunteer Responders service is also still available, and support can be accessed via <https://nhsvolunteerresponders.org.uk/services>, or by calling 0808 196 3646 (8am to 8pm, 7 days a week).

County Council services to continue during lockdown

With the new lockdown under way, the majority of services at Cambridgeshire County Council will continue to operate as usual. However, in compliance with national safety guidelines some of our services will have restrictions in place and these are detailed below.

- Coroners - The Coroners service for Cambridgeshire is continuing to operate as normal. Inquests are continuing to be held remotely (via Skype) and in person. It is recommended that people attend inquests remotely where possible.
- Household Recycling Centre – All nine HRCs in Cambridgeshire will remain open as usual during lockdown with safety measures in place, however customers are advised to avoid unnecessary visits.
- Libraries – All libraries in Cambridgeshire are open, with safety measures in place but operating a restricted service. Customers can use the Select and Collect service to choose and pick up titles, as well as using computers by appointment, with bookings limited to those using public services only.
- Registration Services - Following the lockdown announcement, marriage and civil partnership ceremonies can only take place in exceptional circumstances (such as one party with a terminal illness meaning very short life expectancy). The County Council's registrations teams are in the process of contacting all couples with a ceremony booked in January and February to discuss options.

In Cambridgeshire, the county's registration service is open for certain pre-booked appointments only:

- Deaths that took place in Cambridgeshire (these are conducted by telephone)
- Births that took place in Cambridgeshire
- Notices of marriage or civil partnership (ceremony must be booked first – these can be booked for late Spring onwards)
- Citizenship ceremonies

Copy certificates, for events previously registered, can be ordered online.

Residents can continue to register births, but there may be a longer wait than usual for an appointment. Death registrations take place over the telephone, you can book an appointment by calling the office or online.

For notice of marriage/civil partnership appointments – customers with booked appointments during lockdown can still attend. The team is contacting, in ceremony date order, those couples who need to give their notice of intention.

Citizenship Ceremonies - Small group citizenship ceremonies are being held. To book a place call 01733 864646.

Certificates - Orders can only be taken for certificates from recently registered births and deaths. The priority service is suspended.

Peter Hudson
County Councillor
Longstanton, Northstowe, Oakington, Westwick, and Over