

Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board

Report Title	Gloucestershire Local Outbreak Management Plan
Item for decision or information?	Information
Sponsor	Sarah Scott
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Organisation	Gloucestershire County Council
Key Issues:	
<p>Local authorities are working with government to support test and trace services in their local communities, taking a place-based approach to containing the spread of the infection. Each upper tier local authority, led by the Director of Public Health (DPH) has been given funding to develop tailored outbreak management plans, working with District Councils, the local NHS and other stakeholders.</p> <p>The COVID-19 Local Outbreak Management Plan (LOMP) provides the local road map for the system to rapidly prevent, detect and manage outbreaks of COVID-19. It provides a strategic and governance framework for accessing and mobilising local resources to implement effective health protection control measures across Gloucestershire.</p> <p>The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has advised that local outbreak management plans are centred around 7 themes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning for local outbreaks in care homes and schools; 2. Identifying and planning how to manage other high-risk places, locations and communities of interest e.g. supported housing, rough sleepers, etc.; 3. Identifying methods for local testing to ensure a swift response that is accessible to the entire population; 4. Assessing local and regional contact tracing and infection control capability in complex settings and the need for mutual aid with other Local Authorities; 5. Integrating national and local data and scenario planning through the Joint Biosecurity Centre; 6. Supporting vulnerable local people to get help to self-isolate (e.g. encouraging neighbours to offer support, supporting with food and medication) and ensuring services meet the needs of diverse communities; and 7. Establishing governance structures led by existing Health Protection Boards and supported by existing Local Resilience Forum (LRF) structures and a new member-led Board to communicate with the 	

general public

The LOMP aims is to keep COVID-19 under control in Gloucestershire by focusing on four areas:

Prevention:

In Gloucestershire, for our county to safely recover from the effects of COVID-19 and to reduce the risk of the need for a return to stricter lockdown measures, we need to ensure that our citizens are supported and encouraged to “stay safe and stay alert” to minimise the spread of the disease through continuing good hygiene practices including regular hand washing, social distancing and regular disinfecting of surfaces touched by others.

Containing COVID-19:

The key to managing COVID-19 moving forward in the UK is to contain its spread whenever possible. This relies on our citizens being aware of the symptoms of COVID-19 and knowing what to do and where to get tested. Once we know who has tested positive, we need to ensure that anyone they have been in contact with is identified (through “contact tracing”) and given advice to self-isolate too, in case they have caught the virus and so will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection that people could pass on to others in the community.

Responding to Outbreaks:

Individual cases of COVID-19 will usually be managed and supported via the NHS Test and Trace system with little involvement from either Public Health England (PHE) or the Local Authority. Provided people self-isolate promptly and complete their contact tracing information, and contacts also go on to self-isolate, then we should be able to contain the spread of COVID-19. Outbreaks and individual cases associated with high risk settings will be managed and supported by PHE and the Gloucestershire system as appropriate.

Monitoring & Data Sharing:

This element of the LOMP will ensure that the best available evidence and data will be used to support and inform decisions about prevention, containment and response.

Governance structure needed to implement the LOMP

The national guidance for the development of LOMP’s is very clear. There should be an executive level COVID-19 Health Protection Board chaired by the DPH. And a COVID-19 Outbreak Engagement Board to oversee the LOMP. Gloucestershire already has a Health Protection Assurance Board that supports the Director of Public Health in their statutory role around health protection. This will be re-purposed to become the COVID-19 Health Protection Board (HPB) by altering the terms of reference and making some changes to the membership. This board will lead the implementation of the plan. The delivery of the LOMP would become the main response activity for COVID-19 (see four main functions above) and includes allocation of testing resource. In implementing the plan, it will be necessary to draw upon some of the LRF’s SCG’s cells (Testing and PPE, Logistics, Intelligence, Warning and Informing and Community Resilience).

The delivery of this plan will in effect be the multi-agency response to COVID-19. Therefore, it has been agreed that from July the COVID-19 Health Protection Board will assume the primary responsibility for overseeing the multi-agency response to COVID-19 from the SCG. It will meet weekly to begin with and will work closely with PHE to manage the consequences of local cases and outbreaks, whilst also seeking to horizon scan using the intelligence from the new Joint Biosecurity Centre to prevent future occurrences. The SCG will then meet less frequently (once a month) but will exist in the background so that it could be stood back up in the event of a second wave of such magnitude that the HPB needed further support. It has also been agreed by the SCG that the SCG Chair will pass from the DPH to the Police.

The other new governance structure that is being created is a COVID-19 Outbreak Engagement Board. This is to be chaired by the Leader of the Council. Essentially the COVID-19 Outbreak Engagement Board will be cross party and include district council representation. This will be chaired by Cllr Mark Hawthorne, with Cllr Tim Harman as Vice Chair. There will be three further cross party GCC members and all six districts will be invited to nominate an elected member representative. The board will not be decision making or perform a scrutiny function but instead play an advisory role in the further development and delivery of the Local Outbreak Management Plan and ensure local communities are kept informed of the work to prevent and mitigate cases of COVID-19.

Recommendations to Board:

To note the contents of Local Outbreak Management Plan and ensure your organisation is engaged as appropriate.

Financial/Resource Implications:

Gloucestershire County Council has received £2.2m as part of the Covid-19 Test and Trace Service Support Grant. The purpose of the grant is to provide support to local authorities towards expenditure lawfully incurred or to be incurred in relation to the mitigation against and management of local outbreaks of COVID-19.