



Open Report on behalf of Andy Gutherson, Executive Director - Place and Senior Responsible Officer for Covid-19 Recovery

Report to:	Overview and Scrutiny Management Board
Date:	17 December 2020
Subject:	Covid-19 Update

Summary:

This report provides an overview of the work by the Local Resilience Forum (LRF), partners and Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) to manage Lincolnshire's response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

This report will provide an update and overview of the situation since the most recent report presented on the 26 November 2020.

Actions Required:

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) is invited to consider the report and provide feedback on the points raised.

1. Background

At the Board meeting in November the report set out the progress and activity of the Lincolnshire's Local Resilience Forum (LRF), highlighting the challenges we face and the threat, risk and harm we must mitigate.

As highlighted in the November report, recovery and response will overlap depending on the 'R' value. This will be monitored and reviewed regularly which will inform the on-going work of the LRF.

During October and November, there has been a significant resurgence of the disease nationally and this has been reflected locally with a significant increase of infection within the communities in Lincolnshire.

Following this trend a further period of lockdown in the UK was implemented from 5 November to 2 December. As these restrictions came to an end, the UK Government lifted and replaced these with the Covid-19 Winter Plan.

The Covid-19 Winter Plan seeks to ensure that the current national restrictions can be safely lifted on 2 December. On 2 December, across all of England, regardless of tier:

- The stay at home requirement will end, with domestic and international travel being permitted again subject to guidance in each tier.
- Shops, personal care, gyms and the wider leisure sector will reopen.
- Collective worship, weddings and outdoor sports can resume, subject to social distancing.
- People will no longer be limited to seeing only one other person in outdoor public spaces - the rule of 6 will now apply as it did in the previous set of tiers.

This approach targets the toughest measures only in areas where the virus is most prevalent and which are seeing sharper increases in the rate of infection, while maintaining a geographical scale that is pragmatic and reflects the interconnectedness of our local areas.

The previous tier system had an impact on viral transmission, but SAGE advised that stronger measures would be needed in some areas to prevent the epidemic from growing. Some elements of the tier design reflect this:

- In tier 1, the Government will reinforce the importance of working from home wherever possible.
- In tier 2, pubs and bars must close unless they are serving substantial meals (like a full breakfast, main lunchtime or evening meal), along with accompanying drinks.
- In tier 3, all hospitality will close except for delivery, takeaway and drive through; hotels and other accommodation providers must close (except for specific exemptions, including people staying for work purposes or where they cannot return home); and indoor entertainment venues must also close.

Areas were allocated to tiers based on the Joint Biosecurity Centre's (JBC) analysis of the following:

- Indicator 1: Case detection rates in all age groups.
- Indicator 2: Case detection rates in the over 60s.
- Indicator 3: The rate at which cases are rising or falling.
- Indicator 4: Positivity rate (the number of positive cases detected as a percentage of tests taken).

- Indicator 5: Pressure on the NHS, including current and projected occupancy.

On 26 November, Lincolnshire was informed that they would be placed in Tier 3 (the highest restrictions) from 2 December 2020; this follows the end of the second period of national lockdown. These arrangements will be reviewed on 16 December 2020 and every two weeks until further notice.

As part of the Covid-19 Winter Plan arrangements for a period of 5 days from 23 December to 27 December 2020, you may choose to form a Christmas bubble.

The rules on forming and using a Christmas bubble will be the law. You must follow them to minimise the spread of infection. Everyone is allowed to form a Christmas bubble. There is further guidance for specific groups.

There are three main rules:

1. You can only be in one Christmas bubble.
2. You cannot change your Christmas bubble.
3. Your Christmas bubble should not include people from more than three households.

It is important that you keep your Christmas bubble as small as possible.

You must not form a Christmas bubble if you are self-isolating. There is guidance available on self-isolation and Christmas bubbles. A Christmas bubble will be able to spend time together in private homes, including second homes and caravans, to attend places of worship, or meet in a public outdoor place.

If you do form a Christmas bubble, you should not meet socially with friends and family you do not live with in your home or garden unless they are part of your Christmas bubble. In all other settings, people should follow local restrictions in the tier in which they are meeting. If you do not form a Christmas bubble, you should continue to follow the guidance for the tier you are in.

From 28 December, you must follow the guidance for the tier in your area. Christmas bubbles will no longer apply.

Celebrating New Year's Eve

You must follow the rules on where you can go and who you can meet, including on New Year's Eve. Your Christmas bubble will no longer apply. Hospitality venues are all required to close by 23:00 at the latest. Check the rules for your tier.

Mitigating the spread of the infection

The public health measures introduced to mitigate the transmission of Covid-19 include social distancing, Test & Trace and the wearing of PPE including face

masks which continue to minimise the spread of infection and risk to life within Lincolnshire. As before, the key to response and recovery continues to be a concerted effort from all partners and the public to maintain the 'R' value below 1.

These measures will be underpinned by law. Police and other authorities will have powers to give fines and break up gatherings.

These measures and the Tier system are aimed at reducing the growth rate of the virus, which will:

- prevent the NHS from being overwhelmed
- ensure schools, colleges and universities can stay open
- ensure that as many people as possible can continue to work

These key messages must still be encouraged to protect our communities from the spread of the infection particularly as we enter in to the Christmas period when there is a greater risk of an increase in the "R" rate and with this has potentially significant consequences for January 2021. It is therefore more important than ever to promote the key message of Hands - Face - Space.

- **Hands** – wash your hands regularly and for 20 seconds
- **Face** – wear a face covering in indoor settings where social distancing may be difficult, and where you will come into contact with people you do not normally meet
- **Space** – stay two metres apart from people you do not live with where possible, or one metre with extra precautions in place (such as wearing face coverings or increasing ventilation indoors)

2. Latest Data

As of 11 December 2020 the latest data for Lincolnshire can be found in the table below.

Public Health England has updated the way it records the location of people who test positive or negative for Covid-19. It now prioritises addresses given at the point of testing rather than the details registered on a patient's NHS Summary Care Record. This better reflects the distribution of cases and testing but it may give differences in previously reported numbers of cases and rates in some areas. This has been retrospectively applied to tests carried out from 1 September 2020 and data reports will be updated to reflect this change from 16 November. Timings of reports may be affected in the transition.

Tests (Updated: 11 December 2020)

	Total tests Carried Out	Total Positive Tests	% Positive Tests	Positive Cases	Rate of Positive Cases per 100,000 population
Lincolnshire	24,080	2,119	8.80%	1,805	327.1
Boston	2,413	311	12.9%	279	397.6
East Lindsey	3,900	270	6.9%	224	158.1
Lincoln	4,749	540	11.4%	439	442.1
North Kesteven	3,555	272	7.7%	240	205.3
South Holland	2,535	171	6.7%	143	150.5
South Kesteven	4,114	287	7.0%	244	171.3
West Lindsey	2,814	268	9.5%	236	246.7

The data in the table above is a rolling 7-day summary of Pillar 1 and Pillar 2 Tests.

Data has been extracted from Public Health England (PHE) daily line lists, which provide data on laboratory confirmed cases and tests captured through their Second Generation Surveillance System (SGSS). The rates shown are crude rates per 100,000 resident population.

Cases (updated: 11 December 2020)

	Total Cases on 11 December 2020	Cases for the last 7 days
Lincolnshire	20,200	1,805
Boston	2,603	279
East Lindsey	3,984	224
Lincoln	3,819	439
North Kesteven	2,640	240
South Holland	2,092	143
South Kesteven	2,911	244
West Lindsey	2,208	236

Data on cases are sourced from Second Generation Surveillance System (SGSS). This is PHE's surveillance system for laboratory confirmed cases. Laboratory confirmed positive cases of Covid-19 confirmed in the last 24 hours are reported daily by NHS and PHE diagnostic laboratories. This is the most accurate and up to date version of data and as such it will not align with the data that is published nationally ([link to tracker](#)) due to delays in reporting.

Deaths (Updated: 13 December 2020 at 16:00)

Total number of deaths since the start of the pandemic of people who have had a positive test result for Covid-19 and died within 28 days of the first positive test. The actual cause of death may not be Covid-19 in all cases. People who died from Covid-19 but had not tested positive are not included and people who died from Covid-19 more than 28 days after their first positive test are not included. Data on Covid-19 associated deaths in England are produced by Public Health England from multiple sources linked to confirmed case data. Deaths newly reported each

day cover the 24 hours up to 5pm on the previous day. As of 31 August 2020, the methodology for counting Covid-19 deaths was amended and, as such, the total number of Covid-19 related deaths was reduced. Data is available to Local Authorities and the general public here: <https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/deaths>

Area	Total deaths	Total deaths in the last 7 days
Lincolnshire	776	75
Boston	105	10
East Lindsey	232	22
Lincoln	72	10
North Kesteven	100	10
South Holland	97	5
South Kesteven	98	9
West Lindsey	72	10

3. LRF Activity

As highlighted in November's report, Lincolnshire remains in the response phase of this emergency, with the Strategic Coordination Group (SCG) meeting weekly and the Tactical Coordination Group (TCG) meeting twice weekly with the associated reporting structure in place.

The LRF continues to identify the threat, risk and harm presented by the infection. With this improved understanding of the risk, a response plan has been approved by the SCG to inform how we support Covid-19 secure measures locally. This plan will be monitored and owned by the SCG, working closely with partners, government and voluntary/community groups to ensure the needs of communities are supported.

The LRF is working hard in identifying problems and vulnerabilities in our community, which may require priority attention and feeding them back to the relevant response cells, in addition to disseminating credible information and advice back to the community, supporting community cohesion and providing public reassurance.

Response Cells

As part of the collective response the LRF is to provide assurance over how frontline services are provided in a way that continues to save and protect life. An overview of the cells and their primary focus was provided within the report in November. The cells for reference are listed below. However due to the pace of the pandemic it was agreed to provide information within the report by exception where the issue were "live" and relevant to OSMB and the response.

- Multi-Agency Information Cell
- System Coordination Centre
- Health and Social Care Cell

- Vaccination Cell / Vaccination Roll Out
- Communities and Volunteer Coordination Cell
- Mortality Planning Cell
- Engagement, Education and Compliance Cell
- Business and Economy Cell
- Warn and Inform Cell

The Covid-19 vaccination programme

Our Lincolnshire hospital hub is at Lincoln County Hospital (LCH).

LCH hospital hub is one of the first 50 locations in the country to start vaccinating priority groups. The order in which people will receive the vaccine has been decided by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) and they have advised that age is the single greatest risk of mortality from Covid-19.

The priority groups are:

- Over 80 year olds
- All care home staff
- NHS staff who are at the highest risk of serious illness from Covid

Lincolnshire started to vaccinate people from these groups from week commencing 8 December. In the first week in Lincolnshire, the focus was on:

- Those in the over 80 age group who are inpatients and outpatients (at Lincoln County Hospital) and will therefore already be at the hospital and who we can safely vaccinate in the first instance. The LCH team is contacting those eligible to offer appointments.
- Care home staff from across the county. We are working closely with colleagues at Lincolnshire County Council, with the support of Lincolnshire Care Association, to offer appointments.
- NHS staff from United Lincolnshire Hospital Trust (ULHT), Lincolnshire Partnership Foundation NHS Trust (LPFT), and Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS Trust (LCHS) across Lincolnshire who are most at risk will also be prioritised and offered the vaccine. Most at risk is determined according to a number of factors, such as work location, age, ethnicity etc. Individual risk assessments were undertaken in the summer for all staff.

People being offered the vaccine will be invited to attend our LCH hospital hub through agreed mechanisms. There is no action required by people in the priority groups.

In the coming days and weeks, more information regarding additional delivery models in the county will be able to be confirmed.

Brexit

The risks associated with Brexit continue to be monitored in order for necessary actions to be taken in the event of a Deal or No Deal Brexit. This situation remains fluid given the on-going state of negotiations between the Government and the EU negotiators.

4. Exit Strategy

Before England went into its second lockdown, nearly a fifth of the population was living in tier three areas - those under the toughest coronavirus restrictions. Following the end of national lockdown a significant part of the country remains in Tier 3.

The UK government is committed to ensuring the right levels of intervention in the right places to manage outbreaks, and to help the UK get through the winter months until the vaccine is available for everyone. The government has announced an easing of the Tiered restrictions for a five day period over the Christmas period to allow some mixing within households. There is concern the impact this will have on the reproduction rate in the new year and the challenges this will bring.

That said, the LRF is working hard to ensure that Lincolnshire continues on contingency planning. Partners are currently working on where those risks fit and what mitigation we can influence or put in place to help reduce the impact of our Threat, Risk and Harm. It is important that the LRF coordinates the response and we are satisfied our current reporting procedures and structures are fit for purpose.

5. Conclusion

It will be a fine balance to continue to respond to the risks to health of Covid-19 and protect our communities, whilst responding to a wide range of challenges from across the county. A lot of uncertainty remains about the lifting of public health measures, and subsequent restrictions in the medium term. Protecting the public's health, and mitigating harm to our residents, families and vulnerable people will continue to be our priority.

The Council and its strategic partners have developed the appropriate governance arrangements to lead Lincolnshire's recovery from the impact of Covid-19, whilst ensuring arrangements can be flexed to respond to any future spikes in infection rates.

6. Consultation

a) Risks and Impact Analysis

A full risk register is maintained as part of the SCG.

An Impact Analysis is in place and is a live document which will be reviewed throughout the period of the response. This has been developed from the detailed impact assessment and action plan that has been agreed by the LRF.

7. Background Papers

Background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
The health, economic and social effects of COVID-19 and the tiered approach	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-health-economic-and-social-effects-of-covid-19-and-the-tiered-approach
Guidance for the Christmas period	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-for-the-christmas-period

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