



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:	26 August 2021
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 provided to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) on the 17th June 2021.

Actions Required:

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board is invited to consider the report and provide feedback on the update presented.

1. Background

This report will set out the current position in regard to Covid-19 and highlight any changes that have occurred since the report in June was produced.

On the 22nd February the prime minister set out the exit arrangements that would see the incremental easing of restrictions. Described as a national roadmap, these arrangements were set out in the document "Covid-19 Response, Spring 2021". A link to this document has been included in the background papers section of this report.

The final step in the roadmap was planned for the 21st June. However the prime minister's announcement on Monday 14th June confirmed that this final step of easing restrictions would be delayed until 19th July 2021. This equated to a four week extension with a review to be undertaken after two weeks. As reported a very limited number of restrictions were lifted from 21st June (as initially planned). This was because of increasing concern with regard to the impact of the Delta variant in some parts of the country at that time. The aim was to provide additional time for vaccination take-up levels to increase across the

country. On the 12th July the prime minister announced that step 4 would proceed on the revised date of the 19th July which would see most restrictions removed. The Government published the Covid-19 Response: Summer 2021 document that sets out the essential actions that everybody should take to protect themselves and others while prevalence is high, as we transition towards learning to live with Covid-19. The 'Covid-19 Response: Summer 2021' set out the shape of step 4 of the roadmap. A link to this document has been included in the background papers section of this report.

As part of moving to step 4, the prime minister outlined the following which is important to highlight for the purposes of this report:

- Moving to Step 4 would be a balance of risks and the public should continue to be cautious.
- The latest data and modelling at that time met the Government's "four tests" for easing Covid restrictions.
- Although the vaccination programme has substantially weakened the link between infection and serious illness or death, it is likely that cases will continue to rise.
- On this basis it is expected that hospitalisations and deaths will continue to rise over the coming weeks and months, but both are far lower than the previous wave. The current data does not suggest that unsustainable pressure will be put on the NHS but all data will be kept under constant review.
- That although the majority of legal restrictions would be removed people will be expected to protect themselves and others through informed choice.
- The wearing of face coverings in crowded and enclosed spaces (such as public transport) when mixing with people you don't normally meet is highly recommended.
- Whilst the Government will no longer instruct people to work from home, a return to the workplace should be gradual and businesses should follow the published guidance.
- Positive cases and contacts of positive cases identified by NHS Test and Trace will still be legally required to self-isolate, to help break chains of transmission up until the 16th August 2021.
- As of the 16th August there will be the introduction of an isolation exemption for contacts of positive cases for under-18s and for double vaccinated adults.
- School bubbles will end from the 19th July.
- Quarantine rules remain for all those travelling from a red list country, and for amber list countries unless double vaccinated.

The report will now set out the current data position for the county. This is prior to providing further information on the local recovery position.

2. Latest Data

The latest data (reported as of the 23rd August 2021) is presented in the tables below. To aid OSMB in monitoring the direction of travel a summary of this data in comparison to that presented to OSMB in June is provided as follows and should be viewed in consideration of the information provided above:

- Rate of Positive Cases per 100,000 Population was 26.5 per 100,000 (11th June 2021) in comparison to the 23rd August 2021, which was reported at 326.7 per 100,000.
- On the 13th June 2021, Lincolnshire Covid-19 cases reported in the last seven day period was 202, in comparison to the figure reported on the 23rd August 2021 which was 2487.
- Deaths reported in the last seven day period up to the 13th June 2021 for Lincolnshire as defined below was reported as 0, however in the last seven day period up to 23rd August 2021 it was reported as 7.
- Number of Covid-19 vaccines administered up to the 6th June 2021 for Lincolnshire was 861,263, as of the 19th August 2021 this was reported as 1,056,410.

In addition to data covering Lincolnshire, it was agreed that the report would provide data on cases in surrounding areas of the county. This is to provide a comparison.

Upper Tier Local Authority	Rate of positive cases per 100,000 (updated 22/08)
Derbyshire	318.6
Leicestershire	364.6
Lincolnshire	326.7
Norfolk	263.7
North East Lincolnshire	429.8
North Lincolnshire	379.7
Nottinghamshire	404.7
Peterborough	487.1

As highlighted above, it was anticipated nationally that as the restrictions were lifted Covid-19 case rates, hospitalisations and deaths would increase; however due to the success of the vaccination programme, hospitalisations were expected to rise more slowly than in previous waves. The Government has encouraged vigilance, people making informed decisions, and to act carefully and proportionately, to manage the risks to themselves and others.

The remaining coronavirus rules were lifted as planned in England on the 16th August for those double-vaccinated, children, and young people under the age of 18 (or those who can evidence they cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons). From this date those cohorts will no longer have to self-isolate if a close contact tests positive for Covid-19. Instead, they will be advised to take a PCR test. This will be mandatory for staff working in health and social care and they must evidence a negative test before returning to work.

The number of vaccinations provided in Lincolnshire has significantly increased since the report in June. In Lincolnshire 76.3% of those eligible have received both doses of the vaccine. The number of Covid-19 related deaths recorded in the last seven days is 7, compared to nil in June. Whilst the case rate is now similar to December 2020, Covid-19

related pressures within ULHT are not as high with fewer patients in hospitals and those that are, less likely to require critical care. However, hospitalisations have been rising in Lincolnshire. As of the 23rd August 2021 there are 46 inpatients in ULHT hospitals with a PCR confirmed case of Covid-19. This compares to 31 as of the 31st July 2021.

In the last seven days, 100% of cases in Lincolnshire that were genome sequenced were the Delta variant and there are no issues to report relating to known variants of concern.

Further breakdown of the latest data is below:

Tests (updated: 22nd August 2021)

	Total Tests Carried Out	Total Positive Tests	% Positive Tests	Positive Cases	Rate of Positive Cases per 100,000 Population
Lincolnshire	70,443	3,232	4.6	2,487	326.7
Boston	5,412	227	4.2	169	240.8
East Lindsey	12,265	661	5.4	510	359.8
Lincoln	9,375	509	5.4	407	409.9
North Kesteven	12,999	515	4.0	383	327.6
South Holland	7,500	283	3.8	212	223.1
South Kesteven	13,516	672	5.0	510	358.1
West Lindsey	9,376	365	3.9	296	309.4

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: 22nd August 2021)

	Cases in the Last 7 Days	Cases to Date
Lincolnshire	2,487	61,419
Boston	169	6,947
East Lindsey	510	10,258
Lincoln	407	10,711
North Kesteven	383	8,528
South Holland	212	7,096
South Kesteven	510	10,818
West Lindsey	296	7,601

Data on cases are sourced from Second Generation Surveillance System (SGSS). This is PHE's surveillance system for laboratory confirmed cases. Lab 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: 22nd August 2021)

Area	Total deaths	Total deaths in the last 7 days
Lincolnshire	1,655	7
Boston	178	0
East Lindsey	393	2
Lincoln	192	0
North Kesteven	225	0
South Holland	199	1
South Kesteven	275	3
West Lindsey	193	1

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 31st 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>.

Hospital data

* ULHT Corporate Ops as of 07:40 on 23/08/2021

** NHS England Covid-19 Situational Operational Dashboard as of 14:00 on 20/08/2021

Number of beds occupied by confirmed Covid-19 cases as of 8am*	Number of beds on mechanical ventilation*	Number of beds on oxygen**	Inpatients diagnosed with Covid-19 in past 24 hours**	New admissions with Covid-19 in past 24 hours**
46	6	21	6	1

Community/Asymptomatic Testing Programme (updated: 19th August 2021)

Total Tests	Vol. Positive	% Positive	Vol. Negative	% Negative	Vol. Void	% Void	Number of Community Collection Packs issued
38,633	402	1.0%	38,116	98.7%	115	0.3%	32,931

**Vaccinations in Lincolnshire – Period Covered 8th December 2020 – 15th August 2021
(Published: 19th August 2021)**

Total number of vaccines given in Lincolnshire up to 15th August was 1,056,410

Age Group	First Dose	Second Dose	% who have had at least one dose	% who have had both doses
Under 18	4,878	1,175		
18 - 24	45,652	16,563	76.5%	
25 - 29	32,707	18,391	77.6%	43.7%
30 - 34	35,505	26,425	83.0%	61.8%
35 – 39	35,958	30,642	85.0%	72.4%
40 – 44	36,519	33,994	92.5%	86.1%
45 – 49	42,526	40,586	86.6%	82.7%
50 – 54	51,441	49,892	94.0%	91.2%
55 – 59	54,785	53,474	98.8%	96.4%
60 – 64	49,575	48,383	100%*	97.9%
65 – 69	45,086	44,510	93.6%	92.4%
70 – 74	48,546	48,129	96.7%	95.9%
75 – 79	36,215	35,889	100%*	100%*
Over 80	44,731	44,233	96.2%	93.4%

The number of people who have been vaccinated for Covid-19 split by age group published by [NHSEI](#). All figures are presented by date of vaccination as recorded on the National Immunisation Management Service (NIMS) database. *100% signifies that the number who have received their first dose exceeds the latest official estimates of the population from the ONS for this group.

3. Update on the current LRF Covid-19 activity

There remains an ongoing level of activity underway; the areas to highlight in this report are below. This provides an overview of the work.

Mitigating the spread of the infection

On the 17th July the Government published the Covid-19 containment framework. A link to this document has been included in the background papers section of this report. These new regulations give local and national government additional powers to stop local transmission of the virus. The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (No.3) Regulations 2020 (“No.3 Regulations”) have been extended until the 27th September 2021 and give local authorities the power to issue a direction imposing restrictions, requirements, or prohibitions in relation to:

- Individual premises, except when they form part of essential infrastructure;
- Events;
- Public outdoor places.

As we have nationally moved away from stringent restrictions to everyone's day-to-day lives and towards advising people on how to protect themselves and others, the importance of targeted interventions to reduce risk has increased. In Lincolnshire, responding to increased cases in the community continues to be dealt with by the Partnership quickly and effectively. This has been evident recently with several interventions and associated communications required in the Lincoln area due to an increase in positive cases linked to the night-time economy. These interventions have supported a reduction in cases in this area.

Following a range of 37 trial events across the country over the last four months, government data has shown mass events can take place safely, but people are urged to remain cautious in crowds and get vaccinated. The data shows that positive case numbers associated with these trial events is largely in line with or below community infections rates.

The Covid-19 vaccination programme

The Covid-19 vaccination programme in Lincolnshire continues to progress well (please see the latest reported data position above). Following the confirmation nationally (as of the 13th August) persons 16 years of age and over are now being offered a first dose of the vaccine. The weekend of the 14th/15th August saw positive take-up levels for walk-in vaccine appointments within this cohort. As of the 20th August 2021, NHS Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) reported almost 600 from this cohort had been vaccinated. Walk in sessions are being offered at the Lincolnshire Showground in Lincoln and the Princess Royal Sports Arena in Boston, and from this week walk in sessions will also be available at Spalding, Skegness and Gainsborough. The vaccine is also being offered through the local vaccination services which are directly inviting people to appointments.

Media and communications

The media messages continue to reflect the national and local position including the key message of considering the risks of Covid-19 and remaining cautious. There has been a focus on paid campaigns to target vaccine hesitancy in specific cohorts, for example 18-30 year olds and within other cohorts where vaccination uptake is poor. In addition, a social media plan has been put together by LRF partners to try and target visitors coming to East Lindsey.

Covid-19 – Testing

The wider community testing programme is well established and continues to be encouraged locally and nationally. Since implementation of step 4 of the national roadmap, there was a concern that we would see a reduction in testing however, data suggests this is not the case in Lincolnshire. Home testing arrangements continue to be in place with distribution locations now widely accessible, and availability increased via an online ordering facility. There are also many local collection points including the use of pharmacists.

4. LRF Recovery planning

Following the agreement to transition from response to recovery at a local level as set out in our recovery timeline presented to the Lincolnshire Outbreak Engagement Board (LOEB) in May 2021, the Lincolnshire Resilience Forum (LRF) is now in the 'oversight and assurance' phase of our journey. Whilst nationally a four week delay to step 4 was announced by the prime minister, the Lincolnshire journey towards recovery has continued as planned and the overall position in the county remains cautiously positive. Meetings of the Recovery Strategic Co-ordination Group have taken place since the 8th July on a fortnightly basis, and this basis will continue until September. When it is safe and appropriate to do so a monthly battle rhythm will begin. This will be underpinned by the Recovery Leads Group meeting on a fortnightly basis; the current data is being monitored carefully as part of this process.

Local criteria used for transition from response to recovery is set out below:

1. The infection rates do not risk a surge in hospitalisations (which would put unsustainable pressure on the local NHS);
2. All LRF partners are operating at a level which does not necessitate a Strategic Co-ordinating Group to facilitate their activities;
3. Current data suggests that Lincolnshire's vaccination deployment programme will continue successfully;
4. National and local assessment of risks is not fundamentally changed by new variants of concern.

Recovery current progress and position

The recovery journey in most parts of the system is progressing well. The local partnership recovery roadmap that has been developed demonstrates that the expected position by the end of September for Quarter 2 is looking positive. However, the recovery process is fluid and intended to flex in line with unexpected changes that occur. Covid-19 remains within our communities and we continue to closely review our capacity and capability, monitor risks and progress, share data and intelligence, and move resources as required.

The collective focus remains on protecting the most vulnerable, driving vaccination take-up, Covid-19 testing, as well as contact tracing. NHS, Public Health, District Council, and Community and Voluntary Sector colleagues have been working together on targeted interventions to reduce transmission. This work has included:

- Increasing access to testing in targeted areas, utilising agile testing units as well as free shuttle bus services in both Lincoln and Boston;
- Public Health colleagues working closely with businesses to assist in the promotion of both the local testing and vaccine provision;
- Deployment of an outreach team to engage with specific cohorts, providing them with test kits and signposting to vaccine drop-in events/centres.

The Recovery Strategic Co-ordination Group (RSCG) has seen positive engagement from partners through its attendees. The desired outcome is a safe and effective exit plan for recovery as soon as it is safe to do so. The forward plan that has been mapped against the Lincolnshire Roadmap ensures consideration and action is steered toward potential triggers/challenges that may face the recovery journey in the coming weeks and months.

The journey will be focused on the progress made across the system with presentations planned from identified key partners. This will provide assurance that the direction of travel is a positive one, and that where there are delays or concerns corrective action is being implemented to mitigate any negative impact on the journey, and prevent where possible any consequential impact on other parts of the system.

There will be continual reflection on how the system is collectively progressing. The RSCG agenda for September will review the forward plan to ensure it is fit for purpose at that time. If there is confidence that exit could be earlier than December 2021 a revised meeting schedule/forward plan would be issued to account for this.

5. Exit Strategy

The LRF will continue to work across the partnership to support the delivery of the strategic priorities, and will prepare and plan to support an exit from the recovery phase when the assurances are in place. The LRF co-ordinates the activity and is satisfied our current reporting procedures and structures are fit for purpose. These will be reviewed periodically to ensure these remain in line with national policy and guidance.

6. Conclusion

Protecting the public's health and mitigating harm to our residents, families, and vulnerable people will continue to be our priority as we plan for our longer term recovery.

7. Consultation

a) Risks and Impact Analysis

A full risk register is maintained as part of the RSCG assurance process.

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

8. Background Papers

The following background papers as defined in the Local Government Act 1972 were relied upon in the writing of this report.

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Data on the levels of Vaccination in the UK	https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/details/vaccinations
Covid-19 response Spring 2021 (National roadmap)	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-spring-2021/covid-19-response-spring-2021-summary
Covid-19 response Summer 2021 (Step 4)	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-summer-2021-roadmap/covid-19-response-summer-2021
Covid-19 contain framework: a guide for local decision-makers	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/containing-and-managing-local-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreaks/covid-19-contain-framework-a-guide-for-local-decision-makers

This report was written by Michelle Andrews, who can be contacted on 07917 463431 or via email at michelle.andrews@lincolnshire.gov.uk.