



City of Westminster



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

Westminster Health & Wellbeing Board

RBKC Health & Wellbeing Board

Date:	9 th July 2020
Classification:	General Release
Title:	Coronavirus (COVID-19) update
Report of:	Houda Al-Sharifi, Interim Director of Public Health
Wards Involved:	All
Financial Summary:	Not Applicable
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COVID-19 Update

1. Background

- 1.1 COVID-19 is a new strain of coronavirus, symptoms include fever and a cough that may progress to a severe pneumonia causing shortness of breath and breathing difficulties. The virus was declared a Pandemic by the World Health Organisation (WHO) on 11th March 2020.
- 1.2 As of the 11th June 2020 there have been 291,409 lab-confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the United Kingdom. 156,018 cases were in England and 27,240 of these were in London. 502 were in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) and 662 in the City of Westminster¹ (WCC). In the same period, sadly there have been 173 Covid-19 deaths registered in RBKC, 58 of whom were residents and 262 deaths registered in WCC, 110 of whom were residents².

2. Local authority roles and responsibilities

- 2.1 The Local Authority has a significant role in supporting the UK Government's Covid-19 pandemic response including outbreak management through to responding to Covid based inequalities and shaping recovery strategy. The local authority is using local knowledge and coordination to aid the identification of new cases, deliver outbreak control plans and support long term recovery.
- 2.2 Since the pandemic was identified, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC) and City of Westminster (WCC) has delivered incident management, support for shielding and other vulnerable residents, and used data to enhance the local understanding of, and mitigate against, the impact of the virus on our residents, visitors

¹ GOV.uk. Coronavirus (COVID-19) in the UK. Updated on 6 June 2020. <https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/>

² Information for residents who died outside of their borough of residence is not included in these figures.

and local health and care services. The next phase involves a major role in contact tracing for local authority.

3. Test and Trace Programme

- 3.1 On Thursday 28th May 2020, the government launched the Test and Trace (T&T) programme, a central component of the recovery strategy, and began contact tracing all confirmed cases.
- 3.2 The service is designed to suppress and control the rate of reproduction of Covid-19 by reducing the spread of the infection. This will allow greater easing of the lockdown measures that have been in place since it was introduced on 23rd March 2020 in a way that is safe and will protect lives.
- 3.3 The core of the system relies on self-reporting by the public. When they experience symptoms, all individuals are required to self-isolate for seven days and advised to ask for a test either through the NHS Test and Trace webform or by calling a new NHS 119 phone number.
- 3.4 The NHS Test and Trace Service will then trace recent close contacts of anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19. This could include household members, people with whom they have been in direct contact, or within 2 metres for more than 15 minutes. People identified as having been in close contact with someone who has a positive test must stay at home for 14 days, even if they do not have symptoms. If a close contact then develops symptoms, they will need to stay at home for an additional 7 days and seek a test.
- 3.5 When launched, the NHS COVID-19 App is designed to supplement the core elements of the Test and Trace service by increasing its speed and reach, especially for those who have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive but are not known to them, for example on public transport. The app is expected to follow once the Test and Trace system is embedded, a date for the app's release has not yet been confirmed.
- 3.6 It is anticipated that a majority of people will be able to self-isolate for the maximum two-week period without any support. Each local authority will be notified of any individual identified as requiring support to self-isolate. [Appendix A](#) provides links to more information about the NHS Test and Trace service.
- 3.7 Six pillars of actions for local authorities have been identified for London and a Localised Action Plan agreed. The outline of the plan and progress update is summarised in [Figure One](#).

4 Local Authority Test and Trace Service Support Grant 2020/21

- 4.1 The purpose of this ring-fenced grant is to provide support to local authorities in England towards expenditure incurred or to be incurred in the mitigation and management of local COVID-19 outbreaks.
- 4.2 The 2020/21 Public Health Grant allocations have been used as the basis for proportionality distributing the funding. The allocations will be paid in one instalment in June 2020 and are:
RBKC £1,932,848
WCC £2,890,797
- 4.3 The Chief Executive & Chief Internal Auditor are required to certify the conditions of the grant have been complied the spend is with in conditions of the grant in line with the normal Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government reporting processes.
- 4.4 Failure to comply with any of the conditions the Minister of State may:
 - a) reduce, suspend or withhold grant; or
 - b) by notification in writing to the authority, require the repayment of the whole or any part of the grant.

4.5 The following table provides a summary of the indicative spend, based on an initial assessment.

	RBKC	WCC	%
Grant	£ 1,932,848	£ 2,890,797	
Total Expenditure	£ 1,932,848	£ 2,890,797	
Community and Collaborative Programmes	£ 773,139	£ 1,156,319	40%
Staffing	£ 811,796	£ 1,214,136	42%
Operational/technology	£ 154,628	£ 231,264	8%
Contingency	£ 193,285	£ 289,078	10%

Figure One – Agreed London Pillars for Action to Support the Test and Trace Programme

Pillars for Action / Summary of Requirement	RAG	June 2020 Update	Next Steps
<p>1) Core requirements Delivering the core requirement of the test, track and trace programme; establishing a data hub, identifying local leads, looking at high risk settings to prevent or manage outbreaks.</p>	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local tracing Lead identified. ▪ Outbreak Control Oversight Group agreed. ▪ Tried and tested Standard Operation Procedures agreed to manage outbreaks in high risk settings. ▪ Data hub established. ▪ Schools supported to re-open with required safety arrangements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Initial meeting of the Outbreak Control Oversight Group. ▪ Enhance local tools and processed to incorporate the new NHS Interactive Dashboard and the publication of the Joint Biocentre Playbook; utilising new analytical capabilities and advise around response to spikes in infection rates. ▪ Agree PPE and Tracing for the LA's workplaces.
<p>2) Vulnerable groups Identifying and understanding vulnerable groups.</p>	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vulnerable groups have been identified utilising shielding information, council databases and self-identification. ▪ Westminster Connects and the RBKC Hub are reviewing arrangements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a Community Clusters Standard Operating Procedure to support new cases identified through the track and trace.
<p>3) Community and economic impact Understanding the community and economic impact.</p>	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Testing and Trace dashboard developed to share regular information. ▪ Business Continuity plans have been reviewed as part of pandemic response. ▪ Situation Reporting (SitRep) rolled out across the organisation and linking into national regional bodies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business continuity plans to be prompted to local businesses. ▪ Wider community engagement workstream to be scoped.
<p>4) Local partnership response Supporting a local partnership response centre on engaged, shared intelligence and joint plans.</p>	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Outbreak Control Oversight Group will ensure a whole-area approach is taken to supporting increased risks and the expansion of self-isolation as part of Track and Trace. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Multi-agency representation on Outbreak Control Group. ▪ Development of joint-action plans between the local authority, CCG and police partners.
<p>5) Connecting and engaging Communities Connecting and engaging communities; supporting adherence, understanding barriers and delivering effective communications.</p>	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communication forms part of the Outbreak Management Plan. ▪ Distribution of government Test and Trace resources across the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, and the City of Westminster. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community engagement sessions to commence on the Test and Trace Programme. ▪ Implement the full integrated communications and community engagement plan using posters, information packs, digital to amplify the public health messaging of using test and trace.
<p>6) London regional resilience Working across London to build resilience and prevent variation.</p>	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with the London sub-group for the Good Practice Network. ▪ Weekly meetings between London Directors of Public Health and with the North West London region. 	

5. Outbreak Management and Preventative Measures

- 5.1 The Director of Public Health is asked by the Department for Health and Social Care to develop Local Outbreak Control Plans centred around the following 7 themes:
- i) Planning for local outbreaks in care homes and schools
 - ii) Identifying and planning how to manage other high-risk places, locations and communities of interest.
 - iii) Identifying methods for local testing to ensure a swift response that is accessible to the entire population.
 - iv) Assessing local and regional contact tracing and infection control capability in complex settings and the need for mutual aid (e.g. identifying specific local complex communities of interest and settings, developing assumptions to estimate demand, developing options to scale capacity if needed).
 - v) Integrating national and local data and scenario planning through the Joint Biosecurity Centre Playbook.
 - vi) Supporting vulnerable local people to get help to self-isolate and ensuring services meet the needs of diverse communities.
 - vii) Establishing governance structures led by existing Covid-19 Health Protection Boards and supported by existing Gold command forums and a new member-led Board to communicate with the general public.
- 5.2 Public Health has been leading work with colleagues across Emergency Planning, Environmental Health, Communications and others in the development of the Outbreak Control Plans for RBKC and WCC, including drafting the governance structures and the Standard Operating Procedures for outbreaks in care homes, schools and nurseries, housing (including hostels and rough sleepers), and workplaces. RBKC and WCC have developed sovereign Outbreak Control plans although consideration has been made to align them as far as is possible. The final Outbreak Control plans are included under [Appendix B](#).
- 5.3 A Bi-Borough COVID-19 Health Protection Board has been convened which provides strategic leadership and oversight to the development and delivery of the plans and a Local Bi-Borough Data Hub has been established to manage and analyse the data flowing into the local authorities and to inform the local response.
- 5.4 A Joint Agreement is in place between the Public Health England London Coronavirus Response Centre (LCRC) and London local authorities for supporting the management of COVID-19 incidents and outbreaks, including those in complex settings.
- 5.5 This joint agreement provides a framework for joint working between the LCRC and the public health structures in London local authorities for managing COVID-19 outbreaks, complex settings and community clusters.
- 5.6 Emergency Planning, Adult Social Care, Environmental Health, Housing, Communications, Education and Schools and wider Council partners are working with the Public Health Department to support schools, workplaces, hostels, care homes and other essential locations establish preventative measures and respond to incidents as they arise as we exit lockdown.

6. Good Practice Network

- 6.1 The Good Practice Network, comprising 11 representative councils, was established to develop and share best practice. The network has been tasked with collating feedback on the Test and Trace programme, to share findings, challenges, and ideas by using the reach local authorities have to engage with their communities.
- 6.2 The London group, led by Camden, is focusing on identifying issues and developing solutions for:
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities;
 - Other diverse communities;

- Transport hubs.

6.3 RBKC and WCC are actively involved in the network; contributing to thematic workshops, the development of a pan-London communication plan and working with our voluntary services, community champions and faith leaders to inform the issues and solutions.

7 Planning for Recovery

7.1 In addition to supporting the immediate objective to safely exit lockdown, the Public Health department is assessing the wider and potential long term direct and indirect health impact of the pandemic.

7.2 Work includes the development of a recovery focused workstream. By monitoring changes in access to NHS services, uptake of health prevention and promotion intervention, behaviours and lifestyles choices, we will be able to tailor our local services to respond to needs as they emerge.

7.3 National findings have shown COVID-19 has had a disproportionate impact on some communities and in particular Black and Minority Ethnic groups. Local analysis has been urgently undertaken to understand need and support building cross-Council(s) recommendations for those most impacted, including more tailored precision for utilising the suite of wider resources Public Health England provide.

7.4 COVID-19 has impacted everyone's daily lives and disproportionately impacted on mental health including increasing feelings of frustration, loneliness and anxiety. During the Pandemic, RBKC and WCC has been consistently promoting the NHS Every Mind Matters Campaign.

7.5 The shared challenges which have arisen whilst responding to COVID-19 have provided the opportunity to strengthen local partnerships and work to build a system focused on a collective ambition to improve health and wellbeing and tackle inequality. The use of community volunteers has been integral to our local response and we will build on and strengthened these major assets further.

Appendix A – Published Overview and Guidelines of the Test and Trace Service

More information about the NHS Test and Trace service is available on the government's website:

- [COVID-19: guidance for households with possible coronavirus infection](#)
- [Guidance for contacts of people with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection who do not live with the person](#)
- [NHS test and trace: how it works](#)
- [NHS test and trace: workplace guidance](#)
- [Press release - Government launches NHS Test and Trace service](#)
- [Video – SofS and Dido Harding launch Test and Trace](#)

Appendix 2 – Outbreak Control Plans

[RBKC Outbreak Control Plan](#)

[WCC Outbreak Control Plan](#)