

# RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO HEALTH & HOUSING COMMITTEE

INFORMATION

meeting date: THURSDAY, 2 SEPTEMBER 2021  
title: UPDATE ON COVID-19 PANDEMIC  
submitted by: CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
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## 1 PURPOSE

1.1 To inform Committee of the current status of the Covid-19 pandemic in the Ribble Valley.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities

- Community Objectives – None.
- Corporate Priorities – To help make people's lives safer and healthier.
- Other Considerations – None.

## 2 BACKGROUND

2.1 To update members on the current level of infection in the Ribble Valley.

## 3 ISSUES

3.1 Numbers of Covid-19 Cases in the Ribble Valley

Week Ending	Daily incidence per 100,000 (7-day Moving Average)	Confirmed Cases (last 7 days)
8/1/21	627	381
17/4/21	8	5
27/5/21	130	79
20/6/21	422	257
7/7/21	410	250
21/7/21	450	274
28/7/21	351	214
4/8/21	174	106
12/8/21	237	147
19/8/21	289	179

The table shows that the daily incidence and number of confirmed cases increased significantly throughout May and June.

The number of cases plateaued during the first three weeks of July and decreased at the start of August, although it is evident that the numbers have started to rise again.

Since the beginning of June, there have been twenty outbreaks in the Ribble Valley affecting thirteen schools, six workplaces and a residential care home. 55 pupils tested positive in one of the secondary schools, whilst 92 employees tested positive in a very large workplace outbreak in July.

The mortality rate in the Ribble Valley has continued to be lower than the national mortality rate and during the last 3 months, there have been 4 deaths of Ribble Valley residents (those residents who have died within 28 days of the first positive test result for Covid-19).

For the past couple of months, Lancashire County Council has produced a weekly Surveillance Report for each of the 12 District Councils. Their most recent report, dated 19 August, is attached at Appendix 1 and provides excellent ward level data for both case rates and vaccine uptake.

### 3.2 Testing for Covid-19

#### PCR Testing

Site Location	Number of Tests									
	7-13 January	15-21 April	14-20 June	21-27 June	28 June - 4 July	5-11 July	12-18 July	19-25 July	26 July - 1 August	2-8 August
Edisford Road Car Park	481	37	614	561	614	606	455	292	172	217
	Number of Tests (number of days on site)									
Longridge Civic Hall Car Park	-	4 (2)	56 (2)	44(2)	44 (2)	-	37 (2)	17 (2)	13 (1)	15 (1)

The number of tests reduced noticeably at the beginning of August. This can be attributed to a lower number of symptomatic cases and also because of a change in policy from Lancashire County Council, as asymptomatic residents were no longer being encouraged to take a PCR test.

The Council is currently negotiating an extension of the lease agreement with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), in order for them to continue to use Edisford Road Car Park as a Local Testing Site for a further six months.

#### Asymptomatic Testing

Lateral flow tests (LFT's) are used to identify positive cases in the community that show no symptoms (asymptomatic).

692 tests were undertaken at Ribble Valley's LFT Centre in June (portacabin located on our Council Offices' car park), whilst a further 450 tests were completed in July.

Ribble Valley's two pop-up lateral flow testing centres, at Longridge Civic Hall (Tuesday and Friday afternoon) and Whalley Village Hall (Tuesday), have been underused as testing stations, although they have been more popular as collection points for lateral flow home testing kits (residents can collect up to two boxes of seven kits for free).

All three testing centres are currently operated by Lancashire County Council employees and the portacabin is scheduled to remain on site until at least the end of October.

In my June report, I mentioned that all 12 Lancashire District Councils had been asked to plan for concentrated local surge testing due to the increased number of cases of the Indian/Delta variant of concern (VOC). There has been little evidence of any surge

testing in the Ribble Valley, other than during the second week of July when a Mobile Testing Unit (MTU) was deployed to a large industrial premise in Clitheroe, to help with the investigation of the aforementioned large outbreak affecting 92 employees (202 PCR tests were undertaken).

### 3.3 Local Contact Tracing

We have two full-time and one part-time members of staff employed in the combined role of Local Contact Tracer and Community Hub advisor after the successful recruitment of 1 full time post. There is also a team leader who is responsible for overseeing their work.

The team's main role is to contact those positive Covid-19 cases who have failed to either complete contact tracing details online or respond to telephone calls from the NHS Test and Trace system. They must capture all the contact tracing details that are required, ensure that all cases understand and are complying with the current guidelines, and identify the 'Close Contacts' of these cases. These details are completed on the NHS Test and Trace system for them to follow-up. From 16<sup>th</sup> August they will also be collecting enhanced information regarding vaccination status.

Table 1 (overleaf) helps to illustrate the team's excellent work during the period 31 May to 8 August 2021, when they received a total of 435 cases from the NHS Test and Trace System (in comparison to the 283 cases received from 11 December to 30 May). 5 of these cases were returned to Tier 2 NHS Test and Trace as they were not for our area.

Work on 100% of cases was commenced within 24 hours of receipt. 86.5% of cases were closed within 48 hours of receipt. 329 cases (76%) were successfully contacted. 61 cases (14.1%) were closed with no contact possible and this was due to many different reasons including incorrect details provided, the case not answering their phone, not at the address when door knocked and cases being in hospital. 40 cases (9.3%) were contacted but refused to cooperate.

On the 28 May 2021, Ribble Valley was classified as a 'Variant of Concern' area. From that date we were encouraged to enhance our contact tracing efforts by door knocking all cases that we were unable to contact via telephone. Throughout the reporting period the Team Leader identified 68 cases where door knocking might be beneficial in order to receive a response. 27.9% of the door knocks produced a response, whereby contact tracing was successfully completed (a response isn't always received on the door step and in these cases forms are posted through the letter box asking cases to contact the hub as a matter of urgency.)

In an effort to reduce delays in commencing contact tracing, Lancashire County Council have been conducting a weekend cover service since the middle of June. This has meant that any cases placed into the Ribble Valley queue on the NHS Test and Trace System over a weekend have had contact attempted by LCC contact tracing staff. This has, most weekends, had the effect of reducing the number of cases on a Monday morning.

The data in the table highlights the problems that our contact tracers have been encountering on a more frequent basis in recent weeks – a greater unwillingness to cooperate.

Local Contact Tracing will continue for the foreseeable future, with improvements being made to the system which will allow us to take on cases much earlier in the process.

It has been recognised that local authorities have an increased chance of successfully reaching the 'hard to reach' cases, with a much greater chance of success if delays in contact tracing are reduced.

Table 1

Dates	Cases received	Average days from test to receipt by RVBC	Unwilling to cooperate	Unable to contact (inc. deceased, in hospital, not at address given)	Incorrect/Insufficient contact details	Door knocked	Door knocks successful	All information successfully gathered and completed	All information successfully gathered and completed
	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	Number	%
31-6 June	28	3.25	1	0	0	0	0	27	96.4%
7-13 June	56	2.34	3	6	2	9	4	45	80.4%
14-20 June	47	2.43	1	5	0	0	0	41	87.2%
21-27 June	41	3.24	0	6	1	8	3	34	82.9%
28-4 July	35	2.49	0	0	0	1	1	35	100%
5-11 July	34	2.94	3	3	0	5	4	28	82.4%
12-18 July	40	3.08	7	4	0	9	4	29	72.5%
19-25 July	51	3.26	9	8	1	15	2	33	64.7%
26-1 Aug	25	3.36	5	4	2	7	1	14	56.0%
2-8 Aug	24	3.2	5	3	1	1	0	15	62.5%
9-15 Aug	49	3.49	6	15	0	13	0	28	57.1%
<b>Total number</b>	<b>430</b>		<b>40</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>329</b>	
<b>Total %</b>		<b>3.0</b>	<b>9.3%</b>	<b>12.5%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>15.7%</b>	<b>27.9%</b>		<b>76.2%</b>

### 3.4 Enforcement Action

Since the beginning of June, the Council have received 41 complaints about premises that are allegedly breaking the lockdown rules. 23 of these complaints were regarding hospitality venues (including food takeaways), the majority of which concerned people not wearing masks and staff not self-isolating.

Officers have visited a total of 110 business premises, mainly to offer advice and guidance and also to check compliance with the current regulations.

### 3.5 Vaccination

Number of people vaccinated with at least 1 Dose														
U18	18-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80+	TOTAL
513	3483	2315	2666	2848	3044	3676	4747	4984	4482	3732	3991	2995	3989	<b>47465</b>

Number of people vaccinated with 2 Doses														
U18	18-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80+	TOTAL
177	2259	1611	2075	2473	2820	3526	4645	4895	4432	3700	3960	2959	3849	43381

The weekly data published on 14 August recorded a total of 47465 Ribble Valley residents had been vaccinated with at least one dose, whilst 43381 residents had received two doses.

#### 4 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 That Committee note the work being undertaken by the Council in addressing the Covid-19 pandemic.

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