

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO HEALTH & HOUSING COMMITTEE

meeting date: THURSDAY, 18 MARCH 2021 VIA ZOOM
 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 Following the Chief Executive's presentation to Health and Housing Committee on 14 January 2021, it was considered important to provide a regular update to members on the current level of infection in the Ribble Valley, and also to highlight a couple of initiatives that have recently been introduced by the Council.

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
15/1/21	506	306
22/1/21	353	213
29/1/21	279	148
5/2/21	192	130
13/2/21	151	92
19/2/21	140	85

The daily incidence and number of confirmed cases have reduced by over 75% during the six-week period, 8 January to 19 February 2021. Since the beginning of January, there have been four significant outbreaks in Ribble Valley Care Settings (Nursing/Residential Homes) affecting 66 residents and 49 staff. Two large workplaces have also been affected.

The mortality rate in the Ribble Valley has been lower than the national mortality rate, although there have been 58 deaths of Ribble Valley residents throughout the first two months of this year (those residents who have died within 28 days of the first positive test result for Covid-19).

3.2 Testing for Covid-19

Symptomatic Testing

Site Location	Number of Tests (% site capacity)						
	7-13 Jan	14-20 Jan	21-27 Jan	28 Jan-3 Feb	4-10 Feb	11-17 Feb	18- 24 Feb
Edisford Road Car Park	481 (24%)	413 (20%)	322 (16%)	283 (14%)	172 (9%)	183 (9%)	148 (7%)
	Number of Tests (number of days on site)						
Ribchester Car Park	92 (3)	68 (2)	-	-	34 (1)	-	16 (1)
Longridge Civic Hall Car Park	-	-	124 (3)	126 (4)	50 (2)	58 (3)	29 (2)
Weekly % individuals test positive	17.3	15.0	13.1	11.2	8.8	6.9%	6.9%
Home testing kits registered	244	207	171	155	169	127	135
Care Home testing kits registered	659	597	439	414	468	441	495

Since November 2020, a Local Testing Site (LTS) has been located at Edisford Road Car Park, Clitheroe, for testing those residents with Covid-19 symptoms. A couple of Mobile Testing Units have also been provided during the past two months, at Ribchester Car Park (7 days) and Longridge Civic Hall Car Park (14 days).

One of the main advantages of a Mobile Testing Unit is that a person can remain in their vehicle whilst being tested. Also, these sites can be easily set up and dismantled within a short period of time.

The number of tests has declined considerably from the beginning of January. This is illustrated at Edisford LTS where the number of individuals tested has reduced by 70% over a five-week period and the site is currently only operating at 9% capacity.

The reduced number of people presenting with symptoms coupled with a reduction in the weekly percentage of individuals testing positive, is an indication of a significant decline in the number of Covid-19 cases in the Ribble Valley.

Whilst this information is good news, Lancashire County Council's Director of Public Health, Dr Sakthi Karunanithi, has advised that testing facilities must not be abandoned especially given the threat posed by mutant strains (variants) of Covid-19. Therefore, the lease agreement with the MHCLG is to be extended 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 those positive cases in the community that show no symptoms (asymptomatic). These tests are extremely useful as results are provided within half an hour of testing.

A Lateral Flow Testing station was established in the Council Chamber at the beginning of February. It is operated by trained staff from the Council's Leisure Services Team and it is currently used to test staff twice weekly. Sixty of our largest employers have been offered the opportunity to use the testing facility and leaflets have been delivered to all small businesses within the Clitheroe area.

During the first three weeks, 341 staff tests were undertaken and 96 tests were completed on external employees.

3.3 Local Contact Tracing

Dates	Number of cases received	Average days from test to receipt by RVBC	% of cases received where contact tracing has commenced within 24 hours of receipt	Returned to Tier 2 NT&T
				Number
11-17 Dec	20	4.95	100%	
18-24 Dec	13	4.15	100%	
1-7 Jan	15	4.93	100%	
8-14 Jan	60	4.78	100%	
15-21 Jan	26	N/A	N/A	19
22-28 Jan	18	3.50	100%	
29 Jan-4 Feb	25	4.32	100%	
5-11 Feb	23	4	100%	
12-18 Feb	24	4.08	100%	
19-25 Feb	13	3.38	100%	

Three members of staff are currently employed in the combined role of Local Contact Tracer and Community Hub advisor. A team leader is responsible for overseeing their work.

Their main role is to contact those positive Covid-19 cases who have failed to respond to telephone calls from the National Test and Trace system. They must ensure that all cases are self-isolating and identify the 'Close Contacts' of these cases. These details are then passed back to the National system for them to follow-up.

The table helps to illustrate their excellent work during the period 11 December 2020 to 25 February 2021, when they received a total of 237 cases from the National Test and Trace System. 45% of cases received were successfully contacted. 44% of cases were closed with no contact possible and this was due to many different reasons including incorrect details provided, the case not answering their phone and cases being in hospital.

Nineteen cases were returned to Tier 2 National Test and Trace during the week 15-21 January 2021 due to our Local Contact Tracers being unavailable.

It is proposed that over the next few weeks, Local Contact Tracing will be improved by a number of measures including receiving information earlier from the national system. Data will also be provided in an improved format which will make it possible for outbreak management to be undertaken effectively.

This 'Enhanced Contact Tracing' will enable the investigation to focus on where the positive case has been over the previous few days, which may help to identify when and where the person became infected (especially as this information will be cross referenced with other positive cases).

3.4 Enforcement Action

Since the beginning of January, the Council have received 57 complaints about premises that are allegedly breaking the lockdown rules and four informal notices have been issued.

24 of these complaints were regarding hospitality venues (including food takeaways) and 17 complaints were for Leisure/Gyms.

Officers have visited a total of 60 premises, some of which were to give advice.

3.5 Vaccination

The weekly data published on 25 February 2021 recorded that a total of 19,770 Ribble Valley residents had been vaccinated between 8 December 2020 and 21 February 2021 (see Table)

Number of people vaccinated with at least 1 dose				
Under 70	70-74	75-79	80+	TOTAL
9021	3886	2962	3901	19770

4 **CONCLUSION**

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

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