

Present: Mayor Ros Jones (RJ) (Chair), Deputy Mayor Councillor Glyn Jones (GJ), Councillor Nigel Ball (NB), Councillor Jane Cox (JC), Councillor Mark Houlbrook, Councillor Jane Nightingale (JN), Councillor Andy Pickering (AP) Dr. Rupert Suckling (RS), Damian Allen (DA), Fiona Campbell (FC).

Officers: Jon Gleek (JG), Carys Williams (CW), Rachel Wright (note taker).

Apologies:, Dolly Agoro (DAg), Paul O'Brien (Po'B), Chief Superintendent Melanie Palin, Jackie Pederson (JP).

	Action
<p>1. Welcome, apologies and introduction – Mayor Ros Jones</p> <p>Mayor Ros Jones welcomed all those present to the meeting.</p>	
<p>2. Exclusion of the public and press – Mayor Ros Jones</p> <p>The Board agreed that there were no items on the agenda that the public and press should be excluded from.</p>	
<p>3. Public Statements and Questions – Mayor Ros Jones</p> <p>Mayor Ros Jones noted no questions received from members of the public.</p>	
<p>4. Declarations of interest – Mayor Ros Jones</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest made.</p>	
<p>5. Minutes of the last meeting held on 17th August 2021 – Mayor Ros Jones</p> <p>Minutes of the Doncaster COVID-19 Oversight Board held on 21st August 2021, approved.</p>	
<p>6. COVID-19 National Overview – RS</p> <p>RS began by reminding the board they last met in August and at that time Doncaster saw a small increase in cases. Nationally throughout August the number of cases continued to increase. Case rates had fallen since then, however across the country there had been a small increase in hospital admissions and deaths.</p> <p>RS advised there had been changes in the rules for people who are close contacts of a positive case.</p> <p>RS informed Members that the Government published the Covid-19 Autumn/Winter guidance which included a Plan A and if needed a Plan B.</p> <p>5 key factors of Plan A were highlighted to Members as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaccines and any other anti-viral drugs. • Identifying and isolating positive cases - continuation of Test & Trace. • Support NHS and Social Care to manage demand on services. • Helping people to protect themselves – communication and advice. • International approach – vaccines for the rest of the world, manage changes at the border. <p>RS explained in the autumn/winter plan there was some indication of what the Plan B measures might be should there be a new variant or case rates increase rapidly. They include face covering, social distancing and vaccine passports in nightclubs</p> <p>The board also noted other announcements made recently were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaccines for all 12-15 year olds. • Booster doses for those that had their first vaccine more than 6 months ago. • Changes to travel guidance - removal of red amber and green list to a simplified approach, change in testing before and after travel, change in which countries are on which list. 	

There was an expectation that there would be a revision to the Covid Contain Framework, with no indication of regional restrictions. However RS explained the Director of Public Health together with other health professionals can make requests to close premises through magistrates if they have uncontrolled outbreaks.

A board member sought clarity of the implications to the Council due to the changes in restrictions, it was explained the setting that had seen the greatest change was education, as compared to last term there was no longer a requirement for bubbles, face coverings and social distancing.

RS went on to advise that all settings could be more open and in keeping with the lifting of restrictions, but a precautionary approach should be taken. The board noted that there had been outbreaks in settings/businesses that had moved very quickly back into normal working practices. RS explained that schools had also seen a number of children with Covid-19, and had written to schools to inform them that they could implement the use face coverings which was beyond Department for Education guidance.

Staff surveys showed people were nervous about returning to the building.

Nationally the advice was to expect a rise in cases during the winter, but that was not expected to lead to a lockdown.

RESOLVED;

- That the presentation be noted.

7. What the data is telling us – Jon Gleek (JG)

JG provided a strategic overview of what the data is telling us in the area, and began by showing a map of the areas of the UK with the highest number of cases, which were mainly in Scotland & Wales.

JG noted that Doncaster was 62nd in the national UK table of case rates, but 7th within the England table.

Members were presented with Doncaster's pandemic curve, which highlighted a slight uptick in cases around the time schools carried out asymptomatic testing ahead of their return.

JG also informed the board of the infection rates per 100,000 people and the positivity rates of those tested. These showed cases were decreasing but the gap between Doncaster and other areas is beginning to widen, as Doncaster's rates are dropping at a much slower pace.

JG presented data by age and showed cases in 0-19 year old rates had increased, and the lowest cases were shown to be in the oldest categories. Doncaster was 8th in England for over 60's which was high in comparison to other areas.

The board were presented with the amount of cases the incident management team dealt with, and JG explained the case mix changed, with the team dealing with more incidents within business settings and schools.

Members were updated with the latest hospital numbers, which increased through the summer. More recently numbers had become static and the board noted most of those in hospital were above 60, but most discharged.

Deaths related to Covid increased in August and was the highest for some time. It was also reported there were more excess deaths than usual.

JG reported the claimant rate for Universal Credit was falling but remained very high. Data showed 16-24 year olds were most affected.

For those clinically extremely vulnerable shielding would formally end which affect some Doncaster residents.

Members were shown the percentages of people that had received first and second doses of vaccine. A map of Doncaster showing the uptake across the borough showed inequalities within the borough, and the town centre had the lowest uptake.

A Member questioned why there were significant differences in case rates between towns in South Yorkshire, and would Sheffield see a shift in numbers when university students came back. JG advised that Barnsley and Rotherham were Doncaster's statistical neighbours and demographically similar. Sheffield was in different area and their numbers may change when students arrive. RS advised that in Doncaster testing was only detecting 30-40% of all cases in the amounts of people that test were dependent on our testing strategy and whilst cases were high we would not look to reduce testing capacity. There was a proposal to move away from free lateral flows, and there would be a need to look and consider our response to that.

RESOLVED;

- That the presentation be noted.

8. Covid Health Protection Board Risks – RS

RS highlighted a number of risks are low or medium, however it was noted that;

- Contact Tracing was Very High Risk – during August case rates were so high the Authority could not undertake all tracing therefore the national Test & Trace service picked some up. Next week we would increase the amount we could trace but not all. If our case rate continued to fall we may be able to take them all back.
- Management of Outbreaks in High Risk Settings was High Risk – with a number of schools had cases and outbreaks in both primary and secondary schools. XP had an outbreak which was starting to decrease and the department were working closely with them.

A Councillor questioned whether the transport to XP school was a factor and it was advised that it was a concern but in terms of the outbreak at XP the extra curriculum activities at the start of the year where large groups gather together may have been the cause.

In relation to a question it was explained to Members that private nursery setting have to notify the council of any cases. Some nurseries within the area have large numbers of children so it was not surprising these setting do have outbreaks.

RESOLVED:

- That the presentation be noted.

9. Minutes of the Covid Control Board meeting held on 1st September, 2021

RS explained that when the updated contain framework was received nationally we would update our local control plan.

RESOLVED:

- That the presentation be noted.