

**Title of meeting:** Health and Wellbeing Board

**Date of meeting:** 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2022

**Subject:** Local outbreak management arrangements

**Report by:** Helen Atkinson, Director of Public Health, Portsmouth City Council

**Wards affected:** All

**Key decision:** No

**Full Council decision:** No

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**1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1 To recommend to the Board sustainable arrangements for local outbreak management.

**2. Recommendations**

**2.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to:**

- stand down the Local Outbreak Engagement Board and note thanks to all members for their important and valuable work in steering and assuring the local pandemic response.
- build on the relationships and learning developed in the Health Protection Board to retain the forum in a slightly different format to provide a wider health protection function for the city, with revised Terms of Reference to return to the September Health and Wellbeing Board.

**3. Background**

- 3.1 At the Health and Wellbeing Board on June 17th 2020, it was reported that Nationally Government had announced the requirement for Local Outbreak Control Plans (Covid-19) to be developed to reduce local spread of infection and for the establishment of a Member-led Covid-19 Engagement Board for each upper tier Local Authority.
- 3.2 Government guidance required that local plans should be centred on 7 themes:

- Planning for local outbreaks in care homes and schools (e.g. defining monitoring arrangements, identifying potential scenarios and planning the required response).
- Identifying and planning how to manage other high-risk places, locations and communities of interest including sheltered housing, dormitories for migrant workers, transport access points (e.g., ports, airports), detained settings, rough sleepers etc. (e.g. defining preventative measures and outbreak management strategies).
- Identifying methods for local testing to ensure a swift response that is accessible to the entire population. This could include delivering tests to isolated individuals, establishing local pop-up sites or hosting mobile testing units at high-risk locations (e.g. defining how to prioritise and manage deployment).
- Assessing local and regional contact tracing and infection control capability in complex settings (e.g., Tier 1b) 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).
- Integrating national and local data and scenario planning through the Joint Biosecurity Centre Playbook (e.g., data management planning including data security, data requirements including NHS linkages).
- Supporting vulnerable local people to get help to self-isolate (e.g. encouraging neighbours to offer support, identifying relevant community groups, planning how to co-ordinate and deploy) and ensuring services meet the needs of diverse communities.
- 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.

3.3 Terms of reference for a Local Outbreak Engagement Board (LOEB) were agreed at the Health and Wellbeing Board on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2020, and this was established as a sub-committee of the Health and Wellbeing Board. The Health and Wellbeing Board has received regular summaries of the work of the LOEB since it was established.

3.4 Over the two years of the pandemic, the Local Outbreak Engagement Board has carried out a huge amount of work, including:

- Regularly receiving a summary of the latest intelligence and data relating to Covid-19 in the local community.
- Receiving reports relating to Test and Trace payments to support those at risk of hardship through losing income because of a requirement to self-isolate.
- Considering progress in developing a local contact tracing service.

- Considering issues in relation to the vaccination programme locally.
- Considering matters relating to testing
- Regularly reviewing and agreeing the Local Outbreak Management Plan to ensure that the city arrangements were robust.

#### **4. Refreshed arrangements for local outbreak management**

- 4.1 In recent months, and following several waves of infection that have had a significant impact on society, the Government have felt able to reduce restrictions and are adopting an approach centred on living safely with Covid and other respiratory illnesses. Regimes for testing, contact tracing, self-isolating and enforcement have been reduced. Alongside this, the vaccination offer continues and plans are underway for further programmes.
- 4.2 On this basis, it is sensible to consider the local arrangements in place, and it is recommended to stand down the Local Outbreak Engagement Board. This is in line with steps that have been taken in other local authority areas. The Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to formally note thanks to all members of the Local Outbreak Engagement Board for their important and valuable work in steering and assuring the local pandemic response.
- 4.3 The Local Outbreak Management Plan has been revised to reflect the most recent guidance and position in relation to implementation. This is attached as Appendix A, and the Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to approve the document. It should be noted that DHSC have indicated the intention to produce a contingency framework later in the year, and the plan will be further updated on receipt of this to reflect the approach set out.
- 4.4 It should also be noted that as well as the Local Outbreak Engagement Board, the city stood up a Health Protection Board, with wide representation, who looked at issues in detail and operated as a forum for exchanging knowledge and information, and for providing cross-agency advice, challenge and support. The Board met weekly for most of the pandemic, moved to a fortnightly pattern earlier in 2022 and have recently moved to meeting every four weeks. In all, there have been 70 meetings of the Health Protection Board so far.
- 4.5 This Board has been invaluable as a mechanism for sharing information and working through issues jointly, and it is recommended that as the covid situation stabilises, we build on the relationships and learning developed in the Board, and retain the forum in a slightly different format to provide a wider health protection function for the city. For example, there will continue to be outbreaks of infectious diseases that need to be managed, and ongoing risks to health. It will also meet the requirement for each upper tier LA to have a local health protection board as part of the transfer of public health to local government in 2013. Sharing information and approaches across organisations on a regular basis will put the

city in a stronger position in future. It is recommended that the membership is refreshed to reflect this changed role and that the Board meets quarterly. If an urgent situation arises, the Board will be convened on an extraordinary basis. The Board will make reports to the Health and Wellbeing Board as necessary, and will continue to review the Local Outbreak Management Plan.

- 4.6 A proposed revised Terms of Reference for the Health Protection Board, reflecting this changed role, will return to the Health Protection Board in September for approval.

## **5. Reasons for recommendations**

- 5.1 Arrangements were put in place to address the extraordinary circumstances of the pandemic, and respond to government requirements for oversight of the response. As the situation stabilises, it is sensible to review local arrangements for outbreak management and health protection and ensure these are effective and sustainable.

## **6. Integrated impact assessment**

- 6.1 There is no change to policy recommended in the report. Detailed impact assessments will be undertaken on particular policies and initiatives as they emerge from the work of the Health Protection Board.

## **7. Legal implications**

- 7.1 The basis and legality for the proposed amendments is set out in the body of the report.

## **8. Director of Finance's comments**

- 8.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations contained within this report.

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Signed by: Helen Atkinson, Director of Public Health, Portsmouth City Council  
**Appendices:**

Appendix A - Local Outbreak Management Plan

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

<b>Title of document</b>	<b>Location</b>

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by ..... on .....

.....  
Signed by: Helen Atkinson, Director of Public Health, Portsmouth City Council