

Southend Health & Wellbeing Board

Agenda
Item No.

Report of the Director of Public Health

To
Health & Wellbeing Board

on
8th March 2021

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Director of Public Health

For information only		For discussion	X	Approval required	
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Coronavirus Pandemic Management Updates from the Health Protection Board and the Oversight and Engagement Board

Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

Purpose

This is to provide an update on the COVID-19 Local Outbreak Control Plan implementation of the national Test, Trace, Contain and Enable (TTCE) programme.

Background

The TTCE programme is a central part of UK government's COVID-19 recovery strategy. The primary objectives are to control the COVID-19 rate of reproduction (R), reduce the spread of infection and save lives, and in doing so help return life to as normal as possible, for as many people as possible, in a way that is safe, protects our health and care systems and releases our economy.

Local Outbreak Control Plan (LOCP)

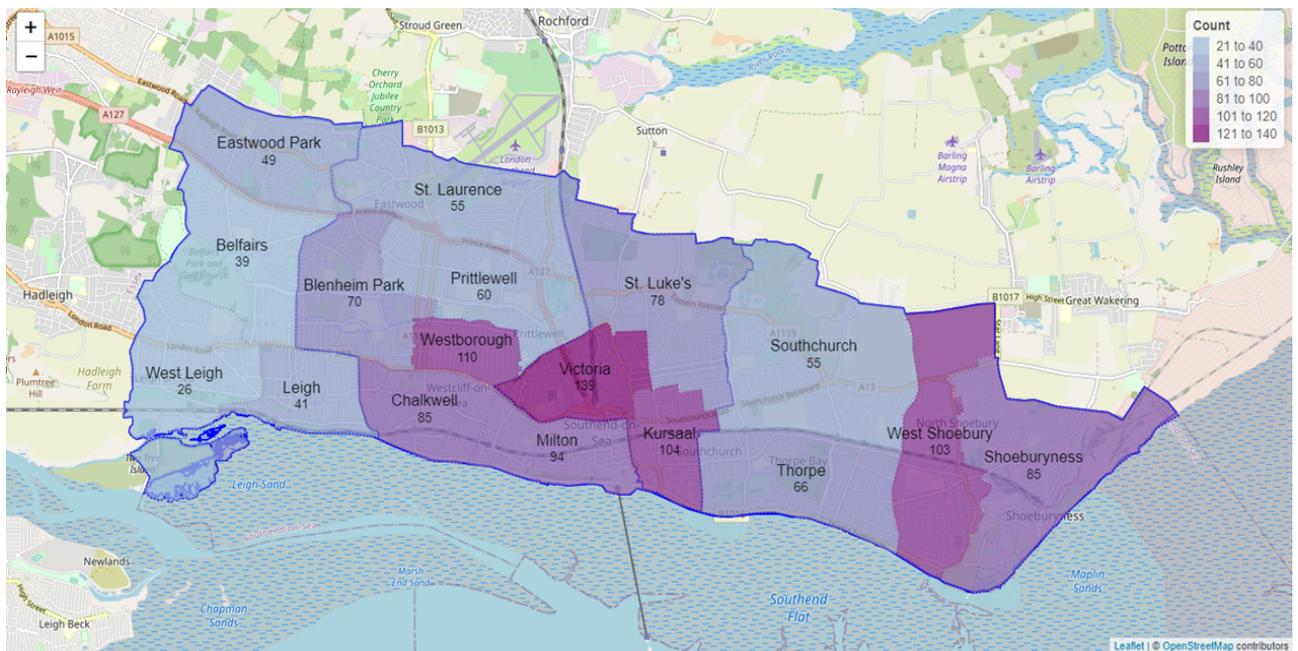
Local planning and response is essential. Response includes a local containment strategy, the implementation of which is expected to be achieved within the existing legal framework and by appealing to the public's sense of civic duty and working with local community leaders.

The [eighth version](#) of the Southend LOCP was updated on the 25th September with new guidance and will remain a dynamic document. The national Contain Framework is being reviewed and a revised version will be published in the week commencing the 8th March 2021. We are currently reviewing our plan with a view to finalising this by the end of March 2021, with better emphasis on what works (from lessons learnt), enhanced contact tracing, more community testing and alignment with the vaccination programme.

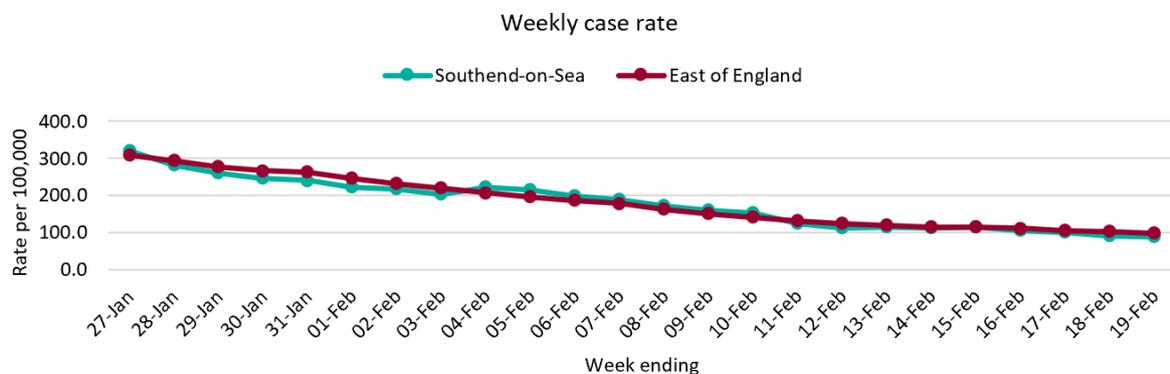
Local Boards & Pandemic Management

The Health Protection Board (HPB) continues to meet weekly and receives the local Surveillance Report monitoring of our testing capabilities, infection rate, mortality rate, positivity rate, level of contact tracing, progress with vaccination and any report and case reviews of local outbreaks and the impact on health and social care. We also review our joint approach with Essex Police on compliance and enforcement.

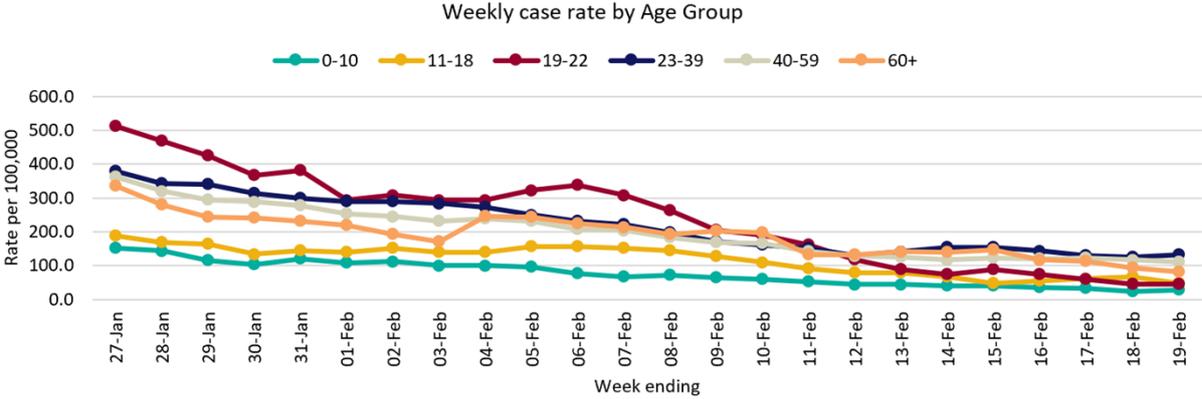
We have had over 12,290 positive tests recorded across Southend since the start of the pandemic (correct at 25th Feb 2021). Over the past 30 days, we have seen 1,260 positive cases as highlighted in the map below – this was down from 6,290 cases in the previous 30 days. Local ward analysis of data for the past 14 days shows a fairly even decline in rates across the wards.



The incidence rate during this lockdown has declined rapidly in the past 4 weeks. Our overall rate was 88/100,000 (24th February 2021), and we are now seeing a gradual reduction in incidence at par with the rest of the East of England.



We are seeing some differences in virus transmission in age groups. The 23-39 and 40-59 age groups have remained above 100/100,000 and we continue to explore new ways to engage and communicate the risk of virus transmission with them.

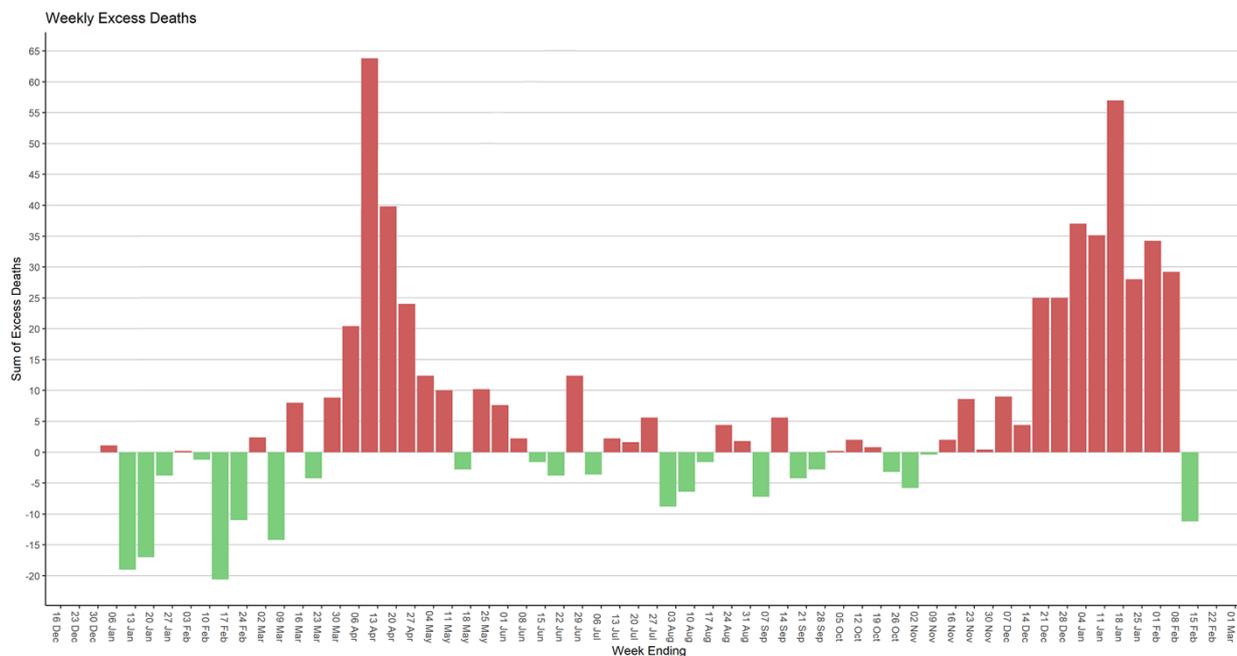


The HPB will be reviewing our proposed strategy to introduce the use of community testing – Lateral Flow Devices (LFDs) – across a number of settings during March 2021. We already operate three LFD asymptomatic and four PCR symptomatic testing sites. Additional facilities have been set up in collaboration with schools to support the return to school planned for the week beginning 8th March 2021. Community home testing is being proposed nationally, although no national testing strategy has been agreed yet.

The vaccination programme is running across seven sites in Southend: 5 are led by GP practices, one at the hospital site and a larger centre at the Cliffs Pavilion Theatre. A total of 50,600 vaccines (approx. 36% of the adults population) have been administered as at 24th February 2021. We are closely working with our NHS partners to identify and engage local sub-groups (e.g. BAME, Deprivation level, Care Home staff, Faith groups, etc) to help reduce vaccination hesitancy locally.

With regards to the local mortality rate, we have been reviewing the excess mortality from COVID and as we have seen even more deaths during the current wave. A number of outbreak management teams were initiated to manage the response to care home outbreaks and to ensure all infection prevention and control measures were being followed effectively.

The HPB is currently undertaking a further deep-dive to better understand what more can be done to learn from these, for example association with underlying health conditions/ palliative care pathways, care home outbreaks or other vulnerability such as people with learning disabilities.



The Outbreak Control Oversight and Engagement Board continues to lead on a number of communication and engagement activities, including refreshing our messaging to the public and local businesses. We continue to hold regular webinars with schools and we are actively engaged with a multi-media social marketing campaign in promoting our key messages of maintaining social distancing, hand hygiene and using face covering in the appropriate settings. We have been holding regular community engagement events to provide reassurance, respond to local concerns and gain more insight to support our local response. Further messaging is planned as we mark the start of the national Roadmap to exit this lockdown.

The Board is actively supporting with promoting the community LFD testing programme and supporting the local NHS in addressing any hesitancy with the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

All our actions and local interventions are reviewed and shared with the Regional Test and Trace Support and Assurance Team.

Recommendation

1. For the HWB Board to note progress and ongoing implementation of the Local Outbreak Control Plan by the Local Health Protection Board and the Outbreak Control Oversight and Engagement Board.
2. For the HWB Board to note that the Local Outbreak Control Plan will be reviewed and published as the Local Outbreak Management Plan, in line with the national refresh of the Contain Framework in support of the Roadmap to exit Lockdown by the 31st March 2021.