

# Southend Health & Wellbeing Board

Agenda  
Item No.

Report of the Director of Public Health

To  
Health & Wellbeing Board

on  
8<sup>th</sup> December 2022

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Director of Public Health

For information only	X	For discussion		Approval required	
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## Health Protection Update

### Updates from the Health Protection Board and the Oversight and Engagement Board

#### Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

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#### Purpose

This is to provide an update on-going management of the COVID-19 and wider Health Protection response.

#### Background

We are now learning to live with Covid whilst continuously reviewing the evolution this virus and its impact on our communities. Collectively, we continue to play an important role in the ongoing management of local outbreaks.

Other areas of concern for health protection are now our renewed focus, including any emerging new challenge posed across the country. We have also been working to drive up the uptake of MMR, DTP (diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis) Flu and Covid booster vaccines.

#### Local Boards Activities

**The Health Protection Board (HPB)** is now meeting monthly and continues to receive the local Health Protection Surveillance Report and necessary actions – last meeting 28<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

The infection rate has gradually decreased. Our overall rate was 31/100,000 (12<sup>th</sup> November – EoEng = 37/100,000), and is now the lowest this calendar year. It is unclear if we will experience a gradual increase in infection, due to the increase mixing with the World Cup football. This national reporting will remain the best gauge for the level of infection in our communities, although fewer people are testing currently.

The Council and UKHSA continue to work closely with care homes which are the higher risk settings for transmissions and consequential impact on health and wellbeing. As at the 29<sup>th</sup> November, we had only one care home in an outbreak. Only one care home has yet to receive the full coverage of flu and covid vaccination – as were still in the outbreak ‘quarantined’ period.

We have advised all restaurants and food serving businesses to minimise the risk of onward transmission, during this busy period with the World Cup and seasonal festivities.

Our all-age Covid booster vaccination rate (25.5%) has been lower than last year’s (50%), so far this year. We are running an additional 8 pop-up clinics across Southend for both Flu and Covid vaccines, between the 15<sup>th</sup> November and the 17<sup>th</sup> December. The uptake has been relatively low, although a total of 72 Covid boosters and 32 Flu jabs were administered:

<b>Day</b>	<b>Venue</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Tuesday 15 <sup>th</sup> November	Havens Hub 138-140 Hamlet Court Road, WOS SS0 7LW	23 boosters 1 first dose 1 second dose 9 adult flu
Wednesday 16 <sup>th</sup> November	Belle Vue Baptist Church Belle Vue Avenue SOS SS1 2QZ	11 boosters 6 adult flu
Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> November	Westcliff Library 649 London Road, WOS SS0 9PD	24 booster 1 first dose 1 second dose 11 adult flu
Wednesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> November	Ferndale Baptist Church North Avenue SOS SS2 5HU	14 boosters 6 flu

The last report to HPB (28<sup>th</sup> November) reported a reduction in Covid admission to hospital. An increase in paediatric admissions, linked to respiratory illnesses, has been reported and this is also a national issue. We have initiated a campaign to increase our uptake of flu vaccines amongst those aged 2-3 years.

We will continue to manage a small Health Protection team and have trained a team of reservist who can be redeployed at short notice, without impacting on key public services.

We continue to provide smallpox vaccination as required and the latest evidence suggests that doing this at an earlier stage (pre-exposure vaccine), is more effective. We will be transferring this service from the current sexual health service provider (Brook Southend) to a local pharmacy, to allow Brook Southend to recover any backlog in our sexual health services, which resulted in this emergency response.

With regards to the national coverage of the Diphtheria outbreak in the detention centre in Kent (Manston Centre), we have introduced a local enhanced surveillance to ensure that we can track any transfer of refugees/migrants from this centre or linked to the centre into Southend or within our vicinity. All the people transferred to our area will immediately receive a health screening assessment to minimise health risk.

Other health protection risks are minimal and being managed effectively by UKHSA currently.

**The Health Protection Oversight and Engagement Board** provides leadership on our communication and engagement activities, including refreshing our messaging to the public and local businesses. The Board's remit has moved to cover the wider remit of health protection matters – last meeting was held on the 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

The Board will continue to support the NHS in addressing local hesitancy with the COVID-19 vaccination programme and we are now in the planning phase for the next Covid and flu vaccine boosters.

### **For Noting**

1. For the HWB Board to note on the on-going operations and steer of these two sub-committees.