

# Southend Health & Wellbeing Board

Agenda  
Item No.

Report of the Director of Public Health

To  
Health & Wellbeing Board

on  
8<sup>th</sup> June 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 pandemic and to advise the Board on the wider remit of the two sub-committees. Their revised Terms of Reference are included with this report.

We are also advising the Board that we are currently refreshing our Local Outbreak Management Plan which will go before the Health Protection Board on the 27<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

#### Background

In February 2022, the Government announced that the restrictions introduced to help manage the pandemic, under the Coronavirus Act (2020), will cease to be active. The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) have been working closely with the Association of Directors of Public Health to ensure that we can continue to manage the challenges posed by COVID-19 in a more measured way as well as ensuring we have a robust health protection governance system across Southend.

Collectively, we will continue to play an important ongoing role in the management of local outbreaks and in continuing to bring the infection rates down. It is a core element of our shared ambition to ensure that we can continue to live safely with COVID-19. Other areas of concern for health protection is now our renewed focus, including the emerging challenge pose by the Monkeypox cases across the country.

Local authorities and their local system partners are an integral part of the response to health protection, working closely with regional UKHSA health protection teams (HPTs).

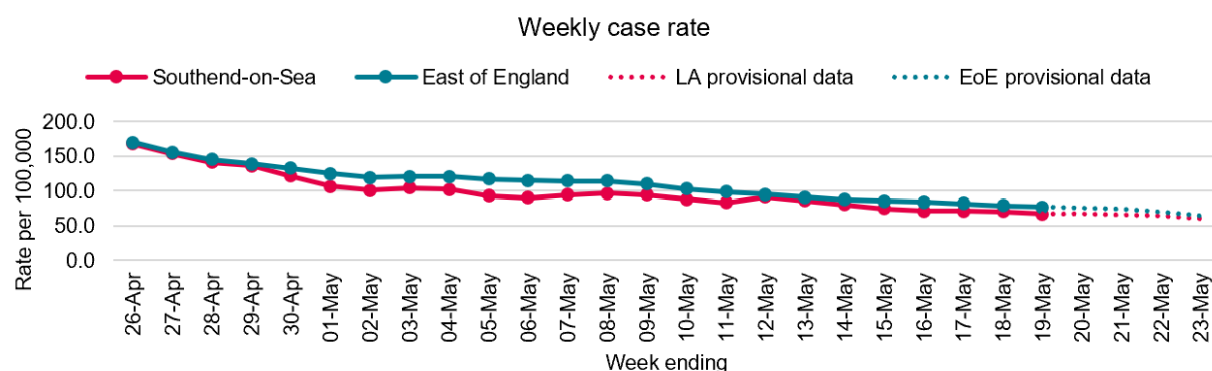
## Local Outbreak Management Plan (LOMP)

Local planning and response are enshrined in the Southend LOMP (attached) which has been revised and will be adopted by the Health Protection Board on the 27<sup>th</sup> May 2022. This document will remain active, whilst we await the final publication of the national agreement between UKHSA and Local Authorities, on how we will collective work across health protection matters. The document has been refreshed as required to ensure a safe transition to more local determination and will ensure we remain vigilant in dealing with any potential newly identified 'Variant of Concern', in dealing with any significant surge in infection rates and in sustaining our resilience in dealing with other health protection risks.

## Local Boards & Pandemic Management

**The Health Protection Board (HPB)** is now meeting monthly and will continue to receive the local Health Protection Surveillance Report and necessary actions. With the ending of the Coronavirus legislation, we have now stood down Essex Police form the Board, with the agreement that we can bring them back into the fold, as and when required. The Terms of Reference have been revised.

The infection rate has gradually decreased. Our overall rate was 76/100,000 (24<sup>th</sup> May), and we are expecting a continued gradual decrease in infection. 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.

A skeleton Health Protection Operations team has been redeployed to support the delivery of the vaccine hesitancy plan, which has been successful in bringing our vaccination rates up in the four wards with lowest uptake. Further opportunities will be explored.

The dedicated COVID Helpline will be discontinued at the end of May 2022 and will be integrated into our contact centre daily business.

**The Health Protection 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. The Board's remit has moved to cover the wider remit of health protection matters, with the Terms of Reference revised . In line with the decision to stand-down Essex Police's representation at the HPB, the same principle to recall their support onto this Board will apply.

The Board will continue to support the NHS in addressing local hesitancy with the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

### **Recommendation**

1. For the HWB Board to note the proposed changes to the operations of the pandemic team and that the refreshed Southend's Local Outbreak Management Plan will be adopted by the Local Health Protection Board on the 27<sup>th</sup> May 2022.
2. For the HWB Board to note the amendments to the Terms of Reference for both the Health Protection Board and the Health Protection Oversight and Engagement Board, as they continue to provide the relevant governance and assurance framework for all Health Protection matters, as sub-Committees of the Health and Wellbeing Board.