North Yorkshire County Council – COVID-19 Outbreak Control Plan

Executive Summary

We have now entered another phase of our response to the coronavirus pandemic in the UK. We will need to identify local outbreaks of Covid-19 quickly and take effective action to rapidly control them. This plan outlines how we will respond, with our partners, to prevent outbreaks and limit the spread and impact of any that occur. It ensures there are clear protocols in place to respond and outlines how we will focus on preventing infection in the first place through ongoing engagement with our communities and providing information and guidance to reduce risk of spreading the infection. As part of the NHS national Test and Trace programme the outcome will be that we can support the county, its residents, businesses, work force and visitors to return to normal life safely. Covid-19 is the latest in a series of public health threats and this plan builds on long established principles of outbreak management that have served to protect the public from other hazards like this in the past. It demonstrates our commitment to leading the fight to control coronavirus in North Yorkshire.

Dr. Lincoln Sargeant, Director of Public Health for North Yorkshire

This plan sets out North Yorkshire's response to the next phase of Covid-19 as part of the national NHS Test and Trace programme in England. It is a dynamic plan and will be developed and refined in line with national policy and local circumstances. It takes a Public Health-led approach and, in particular, sets out the work that will be undertaken by Public Health specialists. The reality of implementing it will extend to a broad range of people and agencies contributing to the health of our communities: environmental health and trading standards officers, NHS and local government professionals with experience of contact tracing, nurses and doctors, care workers, teachers, voluntary organisations and many others.

The Test and Trace service is one strand of all overall approach for management of Covid-19 outbreaks. Whilst the core contact tracing elements will be managed by the regional and local teams of NHS Test and Trace, there is a significant role for us, as a local authority and our partners to support the overall programme. Responses at a local level within North Yorkshire will be led by our Director of Public Health, Dr. Lincoln Sargeant.

Public health (Upper Tier) local authorities are required to produce a COVID-19 Outbreak Control Plan by the end of June 2020, based on 7 connected themes[1]:

1. **Planning for local outbreaks in care homes and schools** (e.g. defining monitoring arrangements, identifying potential scenarios and planning the required response).

2**. 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.,

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[1] Department of Health & Social Care – Local Outbreak Control Plans

ports, airports), detained settings, rough sleepers etc. (e.g. defining preventative measures and outbreak management strategies).

3. **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).

4. **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).

5. **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).

6. **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.

7. **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.

We have established an Outbreak Management Advisory Board, which is a member led group and includes representatives from partner agencies; the business sector; education, care sector and voluntary and community sector, and has political ownership for public facing engagement and communication for the outbreak response.

Health protection is a key aspect of public health's role and outbreak management has always formed a significant part of this. As a local authority we have worked with partners for many years to prevent, detect and manage outbreaks of disease. As such, there are already a number of plans in place which set out how the system responds to outbreaks, and this Outbreak Control Plan draws and builds upon these existing arrangements and experience.

We now know there are stark inequalities in the risks and outcomes of COVID-19 and our outbreak management plan will reflect and seek to address this in order to be effective in preventing and managing outbreaks of COVID-19. We have identified and wherever possible are working to mitigate or reduce the impact of COVID-19 on these population groups within our communities.

In partnership with business, borough and district councils, the NHS, Police and Fire services, the care sector, voluntary and community organisations and many more, we will mobilise the plan to managing outbreaks effectively and ensure;

- A proactive approach to preventing outbreaks by identifying and supporting high risk settings and groups;
- Early identification of outbreaks by responding to alerts to suspected cases based on symptoms and case finding through whole setting testing where feasible;
- Comprehensive outbreak management including instituting quarantine of setting based on suspicion and reviewing with test results;
- Supporting people and settings to remain isolated by providing practical support and guidance on infection control;

- Ensuring appropriate and proportionate governance to implement public health measures with community engagement as relevant.

North Yorkshire has collectively pulled together and worked over an extended time period to limit the spread of the virus. The support within our communities has been overwhelming. As we move into the next phase of managing the virus we will continue to build on the existing relationships across the sector and to support communities and the economy to return to business as usual safely.