

Notice of a public meeting of

City of York Outbreak Management Advisory Board

To: Councillors Aspden (Chair), Runciman (Vice-Chair) and Myers
Ian Floyd - Chief Operating Officer, CYC
Sharon Stoltz - Statutory Director of Health for the City of York, CYC
Amanda Hatton - Corporate Director of People, CYC
Siân Balsom - Manager, Healthwatch York
Marc Bichtemann - Managing Director, First York
Lucy Brown - Director of Communications, York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
James Farrar - Local Enterprise Partnership
Professor Charlie Jeffery - Vice Chancellor and President, University of York
Phil Mettam - Track and Trace Lead for Humber, Coast and Vale, NHS Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group
Julia Mulligan - North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
Dr Simon Padfield - Consultant in Health Protection, Public Health England
Mike Padgham - Chair, Independent Care Group
Steph Porter - Acting Director of Primary Care and Population Health, NHS Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group
Alison Semmence - Chief Executive, York CVS
Dr Sally Tyrer - General Practitioner, North Yorkshire Local Medical Committee
Lisa Winward – Chief Constable, North Yorkshire Police

Date: Wednesday, 17 March 2021

Time: 5.30 pm

Venue: Remote Meetings

AGENDA

- 1. Declarations of Interest**
- 2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 February 2021** (Pages 1 - 16)
- 3. Update from the PHE Behavioural Insights Team**
- 4. Communications and Engagement Update** (Pages 17 - 40)
- 5. Current situation in York** (Pages 41 - 42)
- 6. Update on the Covid-19 Vaccination** (Pages 43 - 44)
- 7. Lateral Flow Testing Strategy for York** (Pages 45 - 48)
- 8. Verbal Update: Refresh of the Outbreak Control plan**
- 9. Update from Sub-Group: Universities and Higher Education Establishments** (Pages 49 - 50)
- 10. Items for the Next Agenda**
- 11. Dates of Future Meetings**
- 12. Any Other Business**

For more information about any of the following please contact Democratic Services at democractic.services@york.gov.uk :

- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports and
- For receiving reports in other formats

This information can be provided in your own language.

我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim (Polish)
własnym języku.

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

☎ (01904) 551550

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City of York Council

Committee Minutes

Meeting	City of York Outbreak Management Advisory Board
Date	10 February 2021
Present	<p>Councillors Aspden (Chair), Runciman (Vice-Chair) and D Myers</p> <p>Ian Floyd - Chief Operating Officer, CYC</p> <p>Sharon Stoltz - Director of Public Health, CYC</p> <p>Amanda Hatton - Corporate Director of People, CYC</p> <p>Siân Balsom – Manager, Healthwatch York</p> <p>Marc Bichtemann - Managing Director, First York</p> <p>Lucy Brown - Director of Communications, York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust</p> <p>Professor Charlie Jeffery - Vice Chancellor and President, University of York</p> <p>Julia Mulligan - North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner</p> <p>Mike Padgham - Independent Care Group</p> <p>Lisa Winward - Chief Constable, North Yorkshire Police</p>
Apologies	<p>James Farrar - Local Enterprise Partnership</p> <p>Phil Mettam - Track and Trace Lead for Humber, Coast and Vale - NHS Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group</p> <p>Alison Semmence - Chief Executive, York CVS</p>
In Attendance	<p>Simon Brereton – Head of Economic Growth, CYC</p> <p>Claire Foale - Head of Communications, Customer Services and Digital, CYC</p> <p>Fiona Phillips – Assistant Director of Public Health, CYC</p>

99. Declarations of Interest

Board Members had no interests to declare.

100. Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 January 2021

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes. The Board signed off the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting held on 13 January 2021. The Chair confirmed that all actions on the action log had been completed.

101. Current Situation in York

Fiona Phillips, Assistant Director of Public Health at City of York Council, gave a brief update on the rate of local cases. Fiona reported that the validated rate stood at 144.3 per 100,000 people which meant York had dropped below the regional and national averages.

Fiona explained that the weekly peaks seen in the data after the Christmas holidays had been attributed to the 10 day incubation period. Even though peaks in the data had continued to be seen on the weekends, it was still following a downward trajectory. The number of daily cases reported from York had reduced to 40.

Fiona informed the group that the rates hadn't fallen to the level of the previous year due to the new variant of the virus. Fiona reported that from 1-7 February, data showed that 85% of cases in York were the new variant. Data from the rest of the country also showed that the new strain was the most dominant virus. She suggested communications should be focused on the 30-59 age groups as the highest rates of transmission were being seen in these cohorts.

The Board noted the update and presentation.

102. Update on the Covid-19 Vaccination

Stephanie Porter, Director of Primary Care at the NHS Vale of York CCG gave an update on the vaccination regime that has been delivered in York. Stephanie reported that cohorts 1-2 had almost been completed. She expected to hit the deadline, as the vaccination clinics were fully booked for the coming week. The plan was expected to continue accordingly to the next cohort. Stephanie reported that they were returning to care homes where the vaccination programme had been paused due to outbreaks.

Stephanie reported that 300,000-350,000 residents had been vaccinated in the Humber Coast and Vale footprint. She informed the group that the Askham Bar site was run by the national booking

system which sat alongside York's local service. It was quite likely that residents would get an invite from the national service and by their local GPs due to York having both locally and nationally run sites. Stephanie informed the group that residents in cohorts 1-4 would start to be contacted soon.

Fiona Phillips asked whether there were any plans being developed for people who did not have physical access to the sites. Stephanie assured the Board that satellite sites operated in areas on the perimeter of York's boundaries in communities like Clifton and Stamford Bridge. She also reported that there was a free transport service that went to the Askham Bar site. Sian asked whether there would be sustainable transport systems established for the sites.

Action 018: Stephanie Porter agreed to ensure that sustainable transport options be included in the communications around the vaccination sites.

The Board noted the update.

103. Presentation: Test and Trace

Fiona Phillips gave a presentation on the test and trace service. Lateral flow testing had continued to be delivered from 14 December 2020. Fiona updated the group on the frequency of which the testing sites had been operating to. She added that from 22 January 2021, the complementary PCR test would no longer be offered to an individual who tested positive with a lateral flow test. The individual would instead be asked to isolate from the point they took the test.

Businesses had been encouraged to send their staff for testing at the stadium site. Fiona also reported that both the Acorn Rugby Club and Ethel Ward playing field mobile testing unit (MTU) would both be extended. The MTU at the Ethel Ward playing field was initially only planned for a week but would continue its presence on two days per week. Rates across the city would continue to be monitored to ensure everyone had the correct provision.

Fiona explained that surge testing was done to understand whether the new variant had spread to other parts of the country. Our local team would continue to work with the national team to offer testing in certain areas of the city. A public awareness campaign around surge testing was also being developed to be ready for when it needed to be circulated.

Fiona informed the group that York had expressed an interest in doing all contact tracing locally. The contact tracing would also be enhanced as the service would ask for more detail around where the case had been prior to testing positive. They would then follow up with other people who attended the venue. As York was following up with 90% of all cases received, it seemed appropriate to extend the service. Fiona informed the group of the plans to work with the police in terms of home visits. Other means to follow up on cases were also being explored.

Councillor Runciman agreed that York should provide an enhanced contact tracing service as the data showed how well we had done locally. Cases were being contacted more quickly on a more local level. Cllr Runciman stated that a submission of interest to the government would be appropriate.

Lisa Winward, Chief Constable of North Yorkshire Police, stated that when colleagues had attended the addresses of cases to ensure they were self-isolating, they found that the vast majority were following the guidance. As most people did not answer cold calls, Lisa asked whether any more communications would be developed to inform people of the local contact tracing number.

Sharon Stoltz, Director of Public Health for the City of York, stated that she had wanted to provide an enhanced contact tracing service for some time now and had been lobbying for York to be one of the chosen pilots. Additional funding would be provided if we were chosen to do this locally. The Board agreed with Sharon's suggestion.

Action 019: Sharon/Fiona agreed to write a letter on behalf of the Board to ask for York to be one of the chosen enhanced contact tracing pilots.

The Board noted the update.

104. Presentation: Impact of the Lockdown on the Economy

Simon Brereton gave a presentation on the impact of lockdown on the economy. Simon expected the economy to take two or more years to recover. He reported that footfall had reduced to below a third from the position during lockdown one. This had had an effect on the income into the city as York was 40% down from a normal December. Most businesses had highlighted that Spring was going to be difficult.

The Board discussed mental health and the stresses on both employers and employees. The government loans were due soon and a lot of businesses were not sure how they would pay them back as they were well into their reserve funds. Simon expressed concern around this as most businesses were expected to re-open in May. Plans had started to be developed for the re-opening, but it was difficult without the confirmation of dates. Simon reported that he was working with the Tourist Advisory Board on how to keep York in people's minds when the economy reopened.

Councillor Runciman expressed interest that businesses had mental health at the top of their concerns for both employees and employers. The Chair asked for a specific agenda item around mental health. Carol agreed that mental health should be at the top of the list of priorities, as the Health and Wellbeing Board had identified it as their main priority too. Mental health problems were reported from all across the community with a varied demographic.

The Board were interested in adding an agenda item around mental health and wanted to look at polling data and experience to create a joined up approach. Sharon Stoltz agreed to discuss this with the Independent Chair of the Mental Health Partnership and with Phil Mettam to look at how best to work in collaboration.

Action 020: To update the Board on the way forward for a collaborative approach to mental health.

The Board noted the presentation.

[Note: the presentation slides are attached as an annex to these minutes].

105. Communications and Engagement Update

Claire Foale, Head of Communications at City of York Council, gave a presentation on the continued messages and engagement carried out by the Council. The four key messages; hands, space, face and testing had been reinforced at every opportunity.

In total 24 press releases had been issued this month and some had been focused around how the council managed to communicate a covid-safe flood response. Claire informed the group that residents had also been engaged through the newsletter, which increased its audience by 44% last month.

Claire also informed the Board of the My Covid Story case studies that had been used to share different people's covid experiences. The case studies would continue to be shared throughout the pandemic. The next case study to be developed would be around the St Leonards Hospice and another would focus on mask usage.

Claire reported on working with behavioural insight specialists to help with plans to get people back into the city. This would be shared with various other agencies to ensure the city's response as a whole was acceptable.

Action 021: Claire agreed to bring back the proposal from the behavioural insight specialists to a future meeting.

The Board noted the update.

106. Update from Sub-Group: Universities and Higher Education Establishments

Professor Charlie Jeffery, the Vice Chancellor and President of the University of York informed the group that lockdown was having its desired effect with both universities only reporting 25 active cases. Charlie noted that the lateral flow testing provision was a significant part of their tool kit in controlling their cases. The Department of Education support was due to end in March but this was expected to be extended. More would be understood once the road map had been released by the national government on 22 February 2021.

Charlie reported that there was a possibility that in-person teaching could restart beyond the small amount of courses that were running now. However he expected that there would not be much change until after Easter. The main return of students was planned for after the Easter holidays. Charlie added that remote teaching would continue for most students in both schools and colleges.

Charlie reported that the student hardship funding had to be increased due to part-time work not being available. The national government had gradually offered more support but it was not yet enough. Students had also been provided with mental health support and had been connected with the NHS provision where necessary.

Action 022: Tracy Wallis agreed to discuss students' mental health support with Tim Madgwick, the Independent Chair of the Mental Health Partnership.

The Board noted the update.

107. Verbal Update: Outbreak Management Peer Challenge 2021

Sharon Stoltz updated the Board on the process of peer challenges of local authority's outbreak control plans. York's review had been confirmed to be taking place virtually on 2 and 3 March. Feedback would be provided later, on 9 March. The peer review would be led by Sarah Norman who was the Chief Executive of Barnsley Council and the regional lead for outbreak management. Sharon informed the group that the council had been asked to focus on two areas. The areas been identified were care homes and universities. As York had provided a good covid response, especially in care homes and universities, there was a lot of learning to be shared with other areas.

Action 023: Tracy Wallis agreed to invite Board members to the feedback session.

108. Items for Next Agenda

The Chair confirmed that there were three standing items for all future agendas:

- Current Situation in York
- Communications and engagement
- Updates from Sub-Group/ Task and Finish Groups.

An agenda item around behavioural insight specialists was proposed for a future meeting. Everyone agreed with this addition to the agenda.

109. Dates of Future Meetings

The agreed dates of future meetings were as follows:

- 17 March 2021
- 7 April 2021
- 19 May 2021

The Board discussed changing the scheduling pattern but all agreed that they should continue on a monthly basis.

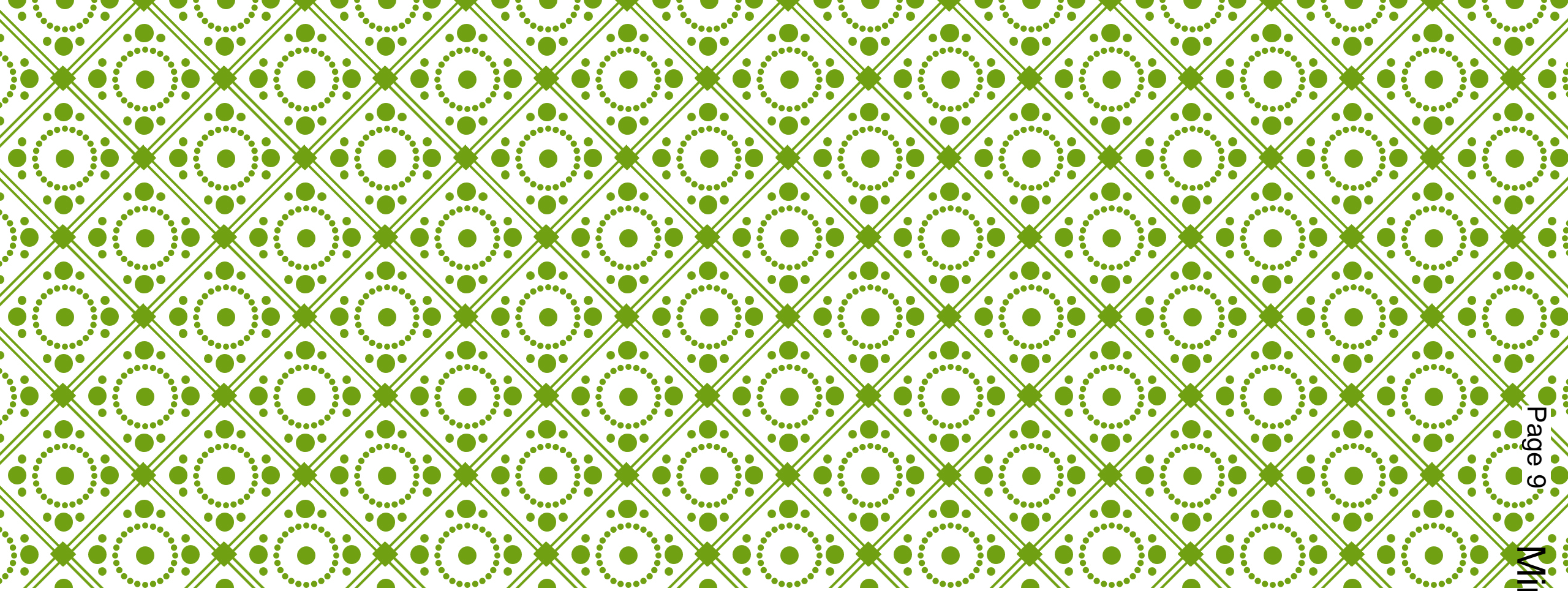
110. Any Other Business

The Board had no other business to discuss.

Cllr K Aspden, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.10 pm].

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CURRENT LOCKDOWN ECONOMIC IMPACTS

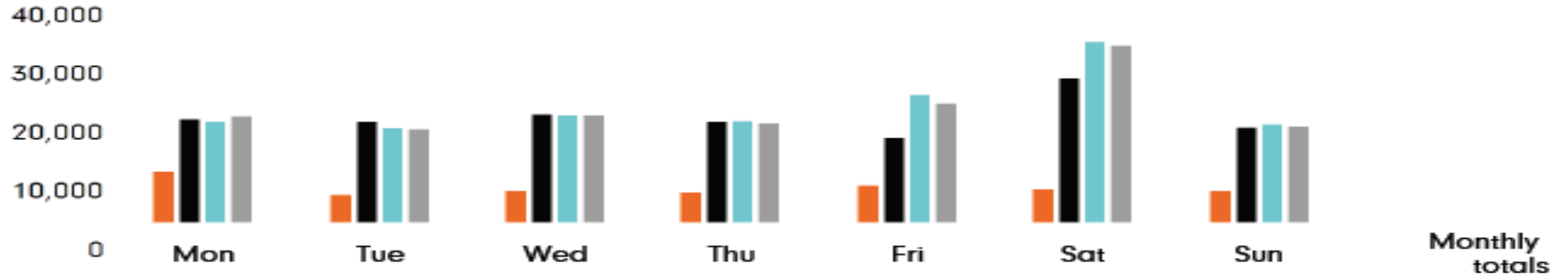
Emerging data and intelligence

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE CURRENT LOCKDOWN

- City centre footfall and spend
- Furloughing and employment
- The claimant count
- Business health (from national statistics)
- Key emerging issues from the business community

Footfall by day

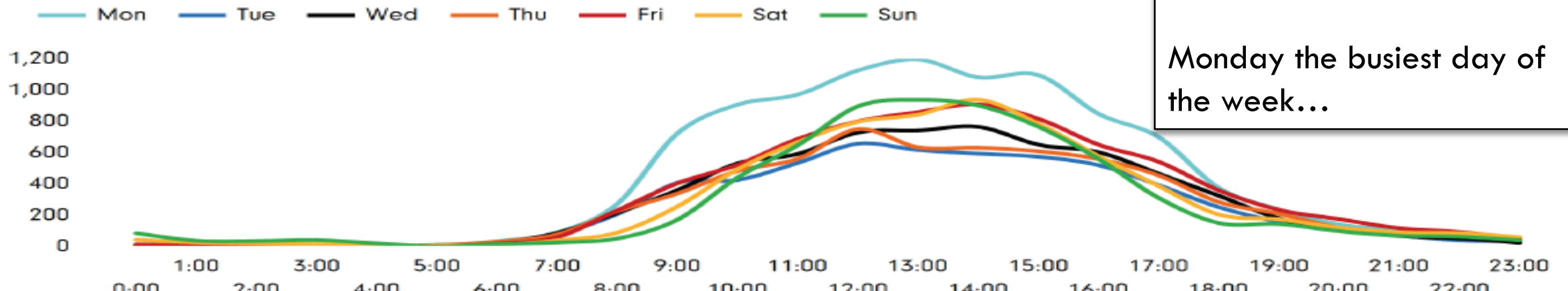
The figures shown below are calculated using weekly averages.



■ This Month	10,113	5,829	6,615	6,264	7,620	6,811	6,582	49,834
■ Previous Month	19,735	19,343	20,637	19,335	16,355	27,268	18,209	140,882
■ Previous Year	19,368	18,175	20,523	19,445	24,216	34,047	18,801	154,575
■ 2 Years Ago	20,344	17,898	20,549	19,069	22,714	33,400	18,498	152,472
Month on month %	-48.8 %	-69.9 %	-67.9 %	-67.6 %	-53.4 %	-75.0 %	-63.9 %	
Year on year %	-47.8 %	-67.9 %	-67.8 %	-67.8 %	-68.5 %	-80.0 %	-65.0 %	

Footfall by hour

The figures shown below are calculated using a weekly average



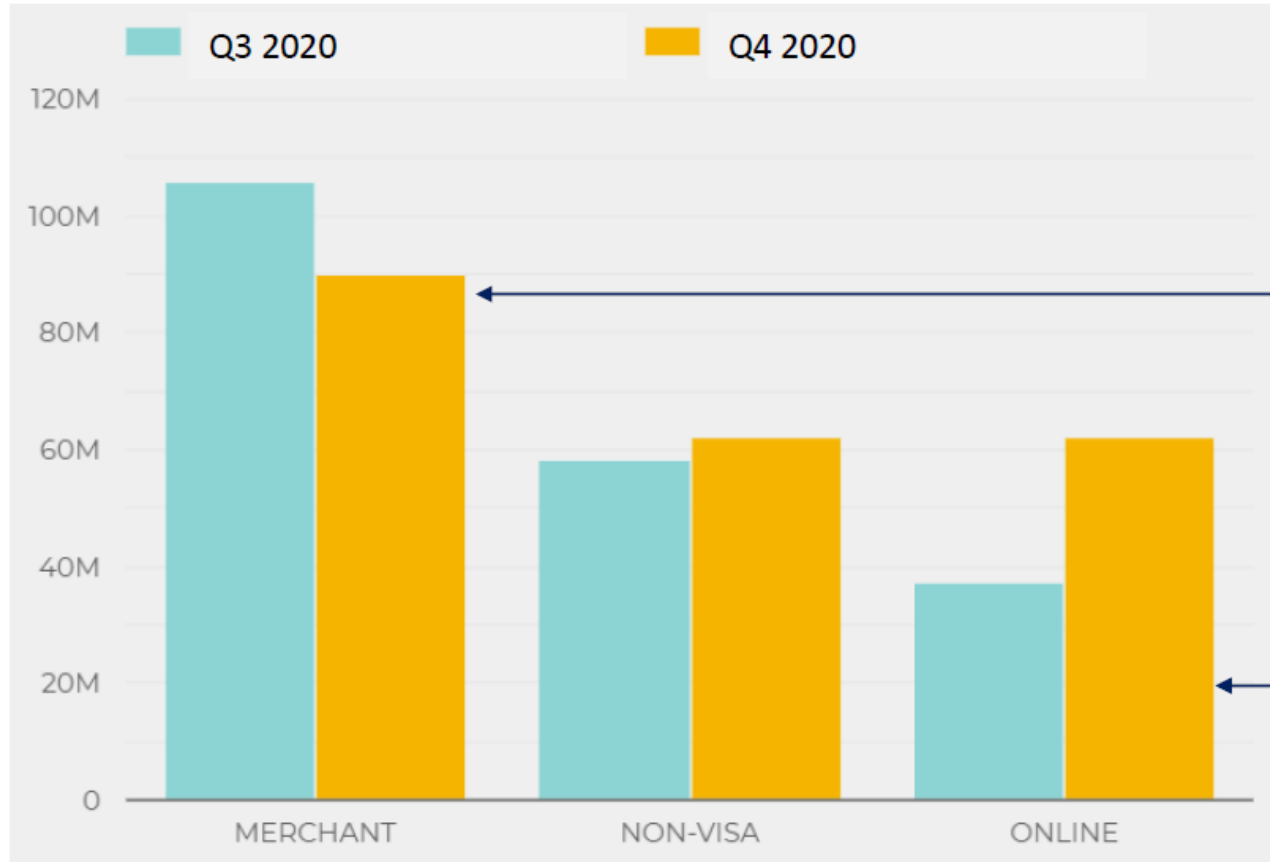
Footfall below 1/3 of Jan 2020 – similar to first lockdown

Monday the busiest day of the week...

Spend

Spend in 'bricks and mortar' substantially down compared to a 'normal' Christmas

Graph: 2020 Q3 vs Q4 spend for Visa merchant, non Visa & Visa online



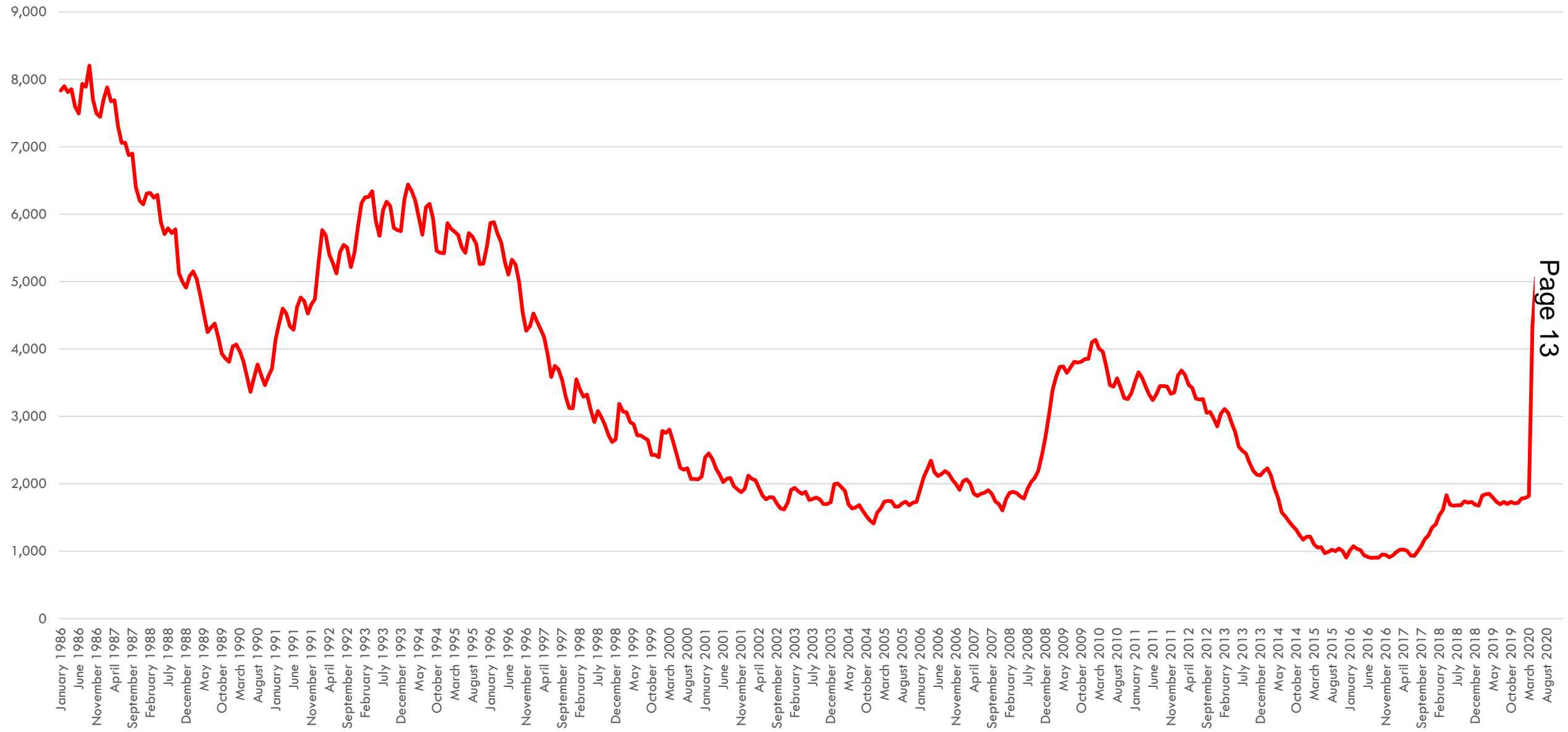
December spend 39% down on 2019 – retailers didn't recover their losses from earlier in the year. Spring will be difficult.

- ❑ Visa merchant for Q4 £89.9m, 15% down on Q3
- ❑ Visa merchant for Q4 2019 was £146m, suggesting city centre businesses witnessed a -39% drop in spend compared to normal Christmas trading period
- ❑ Those living in York City centre increased their online spending in Q4 to £62m a 40.3% rise from Q3.
- ❑ Online spend across the quarters; Q1 =£9m, Q2 = £31m, Q3 = £37m, Q4 = £62m. Online spend in Q4 590% up on Q1 2020

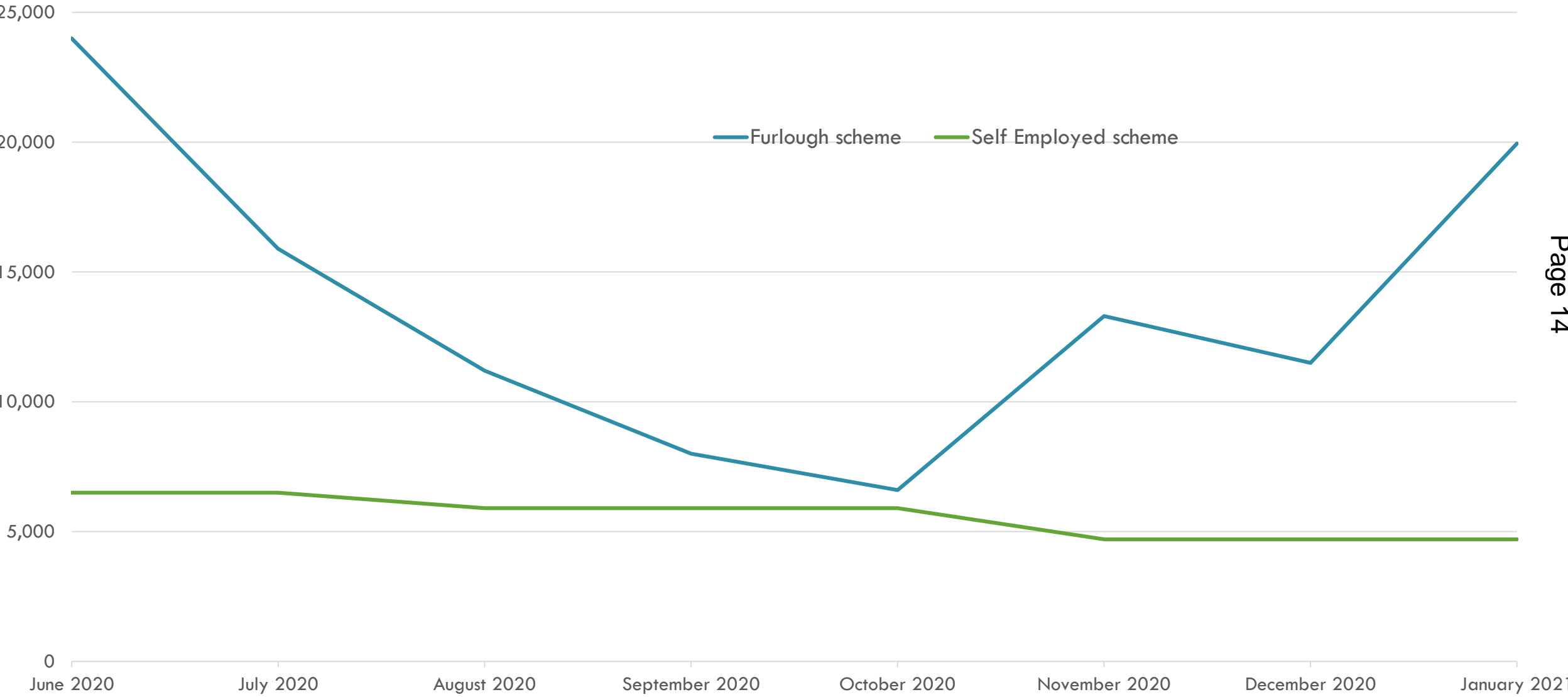
Notes:

- ❑ York city centre, defined as YO1 postcode (circa 1km radius from the centre).
- ❑ Note that UK entered full lockdown during November 2020, with only non-essential retail allowed to open in the city centre.
- ❑ Merchant data = Visa spend in store / Non Visa = other card providers / online = internet spend for people living in YO1 postcode

More people in York are claiming unemployment benefits than at any time for 25 years



25,000 York residents receiving income and wage subsidies



BUSINESS HEALTH (NATIONAL PICTURE)

- Overall, 71% of businesses are currently trading
- In hospitality just 34% are trading (lowest since lockdown 1)
- 17% of employees are furloughed - level last seen in July 2020
- 15% of businesses don't expect to survive the next 3 months
- 34% of the workforce are working remotely

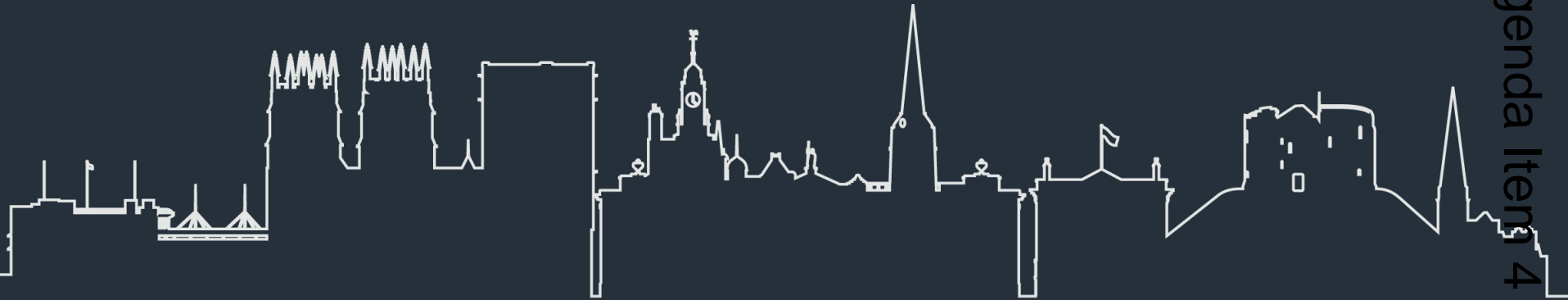
KEY EMERGING ISSUES FROM THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

- Mental health – business owners under significant stress, as are employees
- Financial risk – lost income, loans due, businesses are under great pressure
- Likely impacts on employment flow from financial pressures (risk to those furloughed)
- Working patterns (homeworking and hours) likely to continue and become normal practice

YORK OUTBREAK CONTROL

Communications update

17 March 2021



Key messages

Stopping the spread of the virus is in all our hands:



Wash them regularly



Wear a face covering



If you have symptoms stay home and get tested



Socially distance - 2m is best

The three phases of outbreak management communications

Phase 1

- Prevent - Provide updates about the current situation to prevent outbreaks

Phase 2

- Respond – Share information in responses to an alert following increased cases and/or change in restrictions

Phase 3

- Manage the outbreak

A phased approach

Phase		Approach (including aims)	Timing
Phase 1	Regular updates of current situation to try and prevent outbreaks	<p>Keep residents, businesses and partners informed</p> <p>Ensure consistent messaging and build advocacy through the Let's be York campaign.</p> <p>Show how keeping city safe for different audiences, eg. visitors – Visit York/Feel at Home in York</p> <p>Share case data regularly so people understand current situation</p> <p>Continue partnership approach including working together on discrete issues</p> <p>Develop specific messaging for target audiences</p> <p>Maximise reach and understanding of what to do.</p> <p>Embed public health messages in recovery work and communications</p>	<p>15 June 2020: Reopening</p> <p>21 June 2021: open in full</p>
Phase 2	Alert following spike in cases and/or change in restrictions	<p>Public health warning following increase in cases</p> <p>Reiterate public health messaging in clear way</p> <p>Offer guidance and practical support.</p> <p>Share message widely</p> <p>Share video content from public health professionals to explain latest advice in an engaging way</p> <p>Address inaccuracies/provide context</p>	<p>2 December 2020: Tier 2</p> <p>30 December 2020: Tier 3</p> <p>12 April 2021: step 2</p> <p>17 May 2021: step 3</p>
Phase 3	Manage outbreak	<p>Initiate the covid-19 incident comms plan (see annex A)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a regular drumbeat of accurate / up-to-date information as directed by cobra and relevant phase • Signpost support • Promote unity and community cooperation • Target information 	<p>23 March 2020: Lockdown</p> <p>2 November 2020: Lockdown</p> <p>5 January 2021: Lockdown</p> <p>8 March 2021: step 1a</p> <p>29 March 2021: step 1b</p>

Communications roadmap



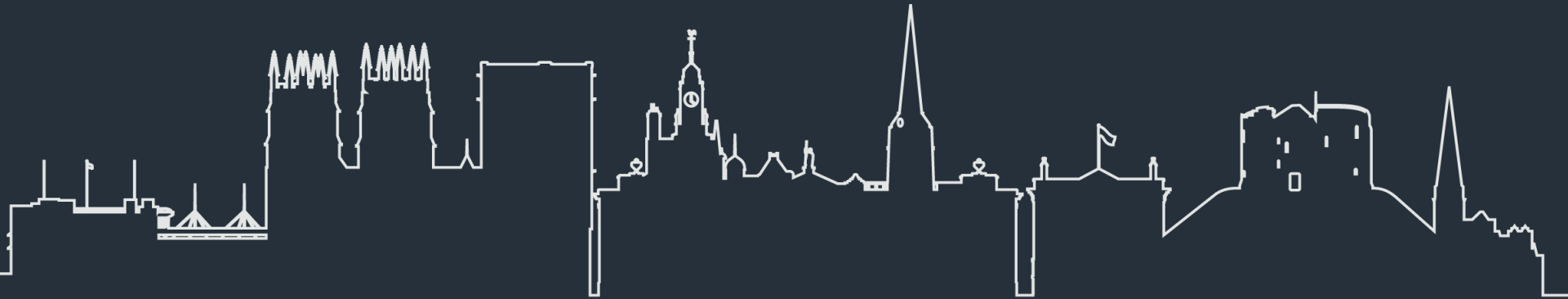
	2020											2021				
Regular rhythm	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
Restriction communications	lockdown			Tier I				T2	Lockdown	T3	Lockdown		S1	S2	S3	S4
Regular updates / e-newsletters	daily			1-2 a week												
Direct publications, <i>Our City</i>	monthly				quarterly				monthly		quarterly					
Facebook live – ask the leaders					monthly		weekly	fortnightly								
Let's be York (Safe reopen)					Business pack, signage, social, web, PR						Signage, social, web, PR (insight trials)					
Let's be York (keep open)					Outside, social											
Let's be York (Xmas/keep going)																
We've got it covered					Social, PR, web											
18-34 yo residents									Social							
Safe return to school					direct, social, web						8					
Emotional health #FeelRealYork									PR, facebook, social, outside, partner packs							
Testing strategy									Direct, web, social, signage							
Vaccinations, inc. mythbusting									Direct, social							
Complacency: My Covid Story									Web, social, direct, PR							
A year on									31		23					

ROADMAP STEPS as published 22/02/2021

	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3	Step 4
	8 March	29 March	No earlier than 12 April		No earlier than 17 May	No earlier than 21 June
		As schools break for Easter Holidays	5 weeks after step 1		5 weeks after step 2	5 weeks after step 3
Education	Schools and colleges open for all students	Practical Higher Education Courses				
Business / activities	Wraparound care, including sport, for all children.	Organised outdoor sport (children and adults) Outdoor sport and leisure facilities All outdoor children's activities Outdoor parent & child group (up to 15 aged 5+)	All Retail Libraries & Community Centres Indoor leisure inc. gyms (individual use only) All children's activities Indoor parent & child groups (up to 15 aged 5+)	Personal care Most outdoor attractions Self-contained accommodation Outdoor hospitality	Indoor hospitality Organised indoor sport (adult) Remaining accommodation Indoor entertainment and attractions Remaining outdoor accommodation	Remaining businesses, including Nightclubs.
Social contact	OUTSIDE Exercise and recreation with +1 INSIDE Household only	Rule of 6 or 2 Households Household only	Rule of 6 or 2 Households Household only	Maximum 30 people Rule of 6 or 2 Households (subject to review)	No legal limit No legal limit	
Travel	DOMESTIC Stay at Home INT'L No international holidays	Minimise travel No international holidays	Domestic overnight stays (household only) No international holidays	Domestic overnight stays Subject to review		
Larger events	LIFE EVENTS OTHER EVENTS	Funerals: 30 Weddings and wakes: 6	Funerals: 30 Weddings, wakes, receptions: 15 Event pilots Small organised outdoor events	Most significant life events: 30 Indoor events 1000 or 50% Outdoor events 4000 or 50% Large seated outdoor venues 10,000 or 25%	No legal limit (subject to review) Larger events (subject to review)	

Phase I

Regular update of current situation to try and prevent outbreaks



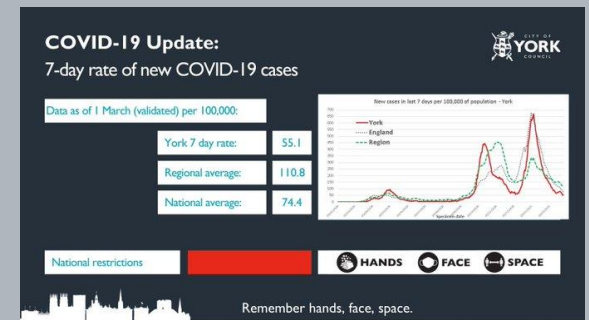
Share accurate and timely messaging

16 x press releases

- 08 March 2021 Invitation to a media briefing - Tuesday 9 March at 4:30pm
- 08 March 2021 Support marshalls contribute to falling infection rates
- 05 March 2021 York businesses to receive £7.5m in grants next week
- 05 March 2021 Council thanks residents as the city prepares for the return
- 03 March 2021 Council vows to keep up fast payments of COVID business support
- 03 March 2021 Hazel Court HWRC hours to be extended – for essential visits
- 01 March 2021 Live Q&As local government restructure, recovery and schools' return
- 23 February 2021 Executive Member lobbies for benefit uplift to continue
- 22 February 2021 Residents reminded not to be complacent
- 19 February 2021 Residents reminded not to be complacent as case rates continue to fall
- 16 February 2021 Live Q&A to discuss residents' emotional wellbeing and vaccine question
- 16 February 2021 Covid-19 vaccines given in older peoples' accommodation
- 12 February 2021 York families urged to 'stay safe' this half term
- 09 February 2021 Council's Executive reviews steps taken to support the city recover
- 05 February 2021 Let's keep going in the fight against covid-19
- 05 February 2021 York businesses encouraged to 'build the future' through apprenticeships



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Build confidence in the steps taken and what people need to do

The council works closely with partners and uses different channels to reach as many people as possible.

Our regular communications (increasing registrations throughout the month by%):

- 2x weekly email updates to members and partners (128 recipients)
- 2x weekly resident e-newsletter (2269 recipients **+9%**)
- Weekly business e-newsletter (1524 recipients **+2%**)
- Weekly families e-newsletter (1093 recipients **+1%**)
- Regular press releases and media interviews
- Social media campaigns / weekly public health video
- *Our City* – quarterly resident magazine – **96,000** households

Update on impact to council services



NEW Hazel Court HWRC
opening times

Essential journeys only

	Monday - Saturday	Sunday
From 8 March - September	8:30am - 7pm	8:30am - 4pm

Note: Last entry is 15 minutes before closing time. We may refuse entry if you arrive late.

† Indeed! You can use Harewood Whin to dispose of your waste too. Find out more at: www.yorkwaste.co.uk/commercial-waste/



OurCity
Spring 2021

Support for residents page 4

Supporting young people page 5

Help make your property flood resilient page 10

York Vaccination Centre page 8

CITY OF YORK COUNCIL

our.city@york.gov.uk
www.york.gov.uk

Step and potential dates	What this means (summary). For full details go to the roadmap	Actions (beyond the regular rhythm)	Challenges	Key messages
Step 1 – 8 March Could be announced 1 March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools and colleges open for all students Some practical HE courses return Funerals (30) and wakes and weddings (6) Exercise outside with one other person No indoor mixing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facebook Live Information to parents Media briefing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Testing Parental anxiety Complacency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay at home Hands, Face, Space Get tested Let's keep going
Step 1b – No sooner than 29 March Announced by 22 March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rule of six or two households outdoors Outdoor sport and leisure facilities reopen Organised outdoor sports return Outdoor parent and child groups (15) Minimise travel, no holidays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open space/parks signage Map/graphic about local with York in the centre? Community groups/sports briefing (what can do) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is local? Return of sport Parent and child groups Rule of 6 Staff health and safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay local Hands, Face, Space
Step 2 – No sooner than 12 April Announced by 5 April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Still no indoor mixing, rule of 6 outside Reopening of retail, leisure and outdoor hospitality Domestic overnight stays (household only) Indoor parent and child groups (15) Funerals (30), Weddings and wakes (15) By end of April all phase 1 vaccinated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facebook live Media briefing Information for businesses City centre and district signage Don't be a tosser (mask in bins) Partner briefing Direct comms to residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lots reopening Team capacity as this is around Easter break Domestic tourism Business support and café licences Unis face to face learning increases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hands, Face, Space
Step 3 – No sooner than 17 May Announced by 10 May Our City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indoor entertainment and attractions (including pubs) 30 people outdoors, rule of 6/two households indoors (under review) Life events, inc weddings (30) Outdoor entertainment performances Return of crowds (indoor is 1,000 or 50% capacity, outdoor 4,000 or 50%) International travel (subject to review) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facebook live Media briefing Stadium signage Live well York update? Pub signage Registrar / Crem signage Animation about fresh air What you can do outside Partner briefing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Live spectator sports Indoor mixing Tourism Up to 30 outside Pubs open to indoor trade Furlough support for affected staff Complacency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hands, Face, Space and air Meet outdoors if you can
GOVERNMENT REVIEW ON THE FUTURE OF HANDS, FACE, SPACE AND HOW WE GET FULLY BACK TO NORMAL				
Step 4 – No sooner than 21 June Announced by 14 June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No legal limits on contact and life events Larger events Nightclubs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open letter to residents? COVID safe celebration pack 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What prevention measures are still in? Staying open! 	

Sharing the roadmap

E-newsletters



City of York Council
@CityoYork

From Monday 8 March, rules around social contact will change. From 8 March you can exercise or meet outdoors with your household or one other person. Please remember to maintain social distancing (2m) with people not in your household. [gov.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)

Shared national messaging

Website

Coronavirus and council services

To help control the spread of coronavirus national lockdown rules apply in England - you must stay at home; get the latest COVID-19 information relevant to our area...

Information on coronavirus

Home > Information on COVID-12 > Information on coronavirus

OUR COVID-19 UPDATES

Read our latest news and statements about coronavirus to keep up to date with our response and recovery...

SEE OUR LATEST NEWS

National lockdown: stay at home

National lockdown rules currently apply in England; you must stay at home to help protect the NHS and save lives; only leave your home if necessary, and stay 2 metres apart from anyone not in your household or bubble: [find out what you can and cannot do, from GOV.UK](#).

Government roadmap

On Monday 22 February, the Government announced their 'roadmap' out of COVID-19 restrictions. As we continue to update our services through each stage of the easing restrictions, you should:

- see details of the full Government announcement are available on [GOV.UK](#)
- remember that COVID-19 remains part of our lives and carry on with [hands, face, space](#) to keep yourself and others safe

Your next resident update has arrived!

To continue to help you and your community stay up to date with the latest information, we've put together some useful guidance on key government messages, updates on York services and direct links to support.

Please visit our coronavirus webpages: <https://www.york.gov.uk/coronavirus>.

For more news from us, visit: <https://www.york.gov.uk/news>

1. Let's keep going

We know that lockdown has been very difficult for many of us, but we all need to keep going. Staying at home is having results on the spread of the virus, and we want to thank you all for your efforts.

The vast majority of people are staying at home and as a result, the number of COVID-19 cases is falling. However, infection levels remain high and the impact of the second wave is still being seen in hospital every day. It is critical to keep going and to help us bring down infections even further and

Hello,

Your latest Business email update has arrived!

Stay up to date with the latest government guidance for businesses under the current National Lockdown restrictions and help York stop the spread of COVID-19.

To find out more visit: <https://www.york.gov.uk/COVIDBusiness>

1. Council vows to continue fast payments for business support

Following this week's budget announcement, City of York Council has reassured York businesses that it will put in place the rates holidays and pay grants as quickly as possible.

Support announced this week includes:

- A new 'Restart Grant' will replace the local restrictions grants from April 2021;
- Non-Essential Retail (set to open first) will receive grants of up to £6,000 per premises.
- Hospitality and Leisure (including the personal care sector and gyms) will receive grants of up to £18k per premises.
- The 100% Business Rates holiday will continue for qualifying businesses until the end of June 2021. A discount of two-thirds will then continue for the remainder of the year, up to a value of £2,000,000 for closed businesses, with a lower cap for those who have been able to stay open.

in many of us will be looking essential that we all still remember
place back regular symptom-free
filter if you cannot access soap
support bubble
all keep doing what we're doing.

Page 27

Working together to improve and make a difference

Build engagement through conversation



- Held 2 x Facebook lives
Views – 4529
Shares – 12
Reactions – 11
Comments - 129
- Radio call-ins



St Leonard's
Hospice

Caring for Local People



Who or what will you remember from this year of lockdown?

Include your lockdown memory in
our historic time capsule to mark the
one year anniversary of lockdown.



A time to remember

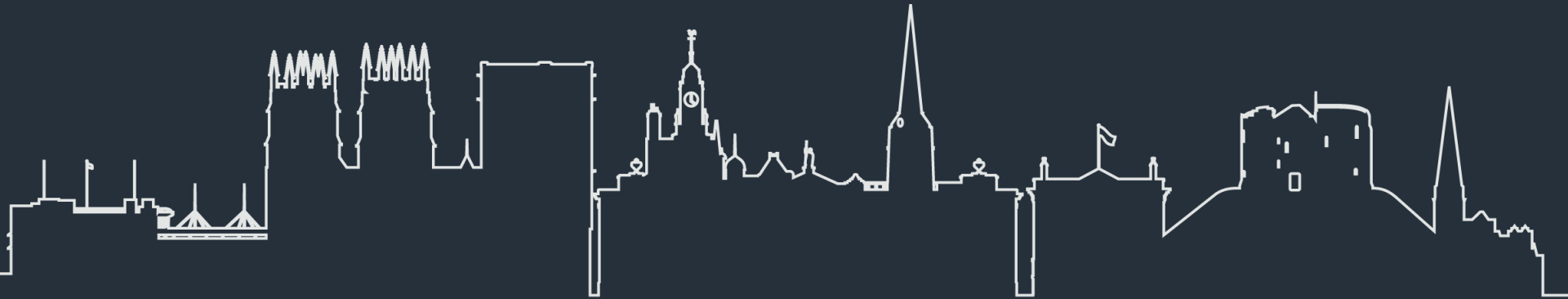
Find out more at:

stleonardshospice.org.uk/OneYearOn

23 March 2021

Phase 3

Manage outbreak



Build confidence in the steps taken and what people need to do

Reminding residents what they can do (safe behaviours) to help stop the spread of the virus and keep homes and families in York safe

Communications objectives:

Think: know that whilst in lockdown there are things they can do and support available

Feel: supported and engaged with Covid safety measures, feeling more control over own safety

Do: stay home and follow hands, space, face to help keep everyone safe

York Press

Homestead Park shuts on advice of council Covid marshalls ...

A YORK park had to close today on the advice of the city's Covid marshalls - sparking a fierce debate over the merits of the decision.
2 weeks ago



Provide news and updates

Shared national messaging



Keep your distance outdoors!



Are you heading to York's parks or open spaces for your exercise?

Please don't gather: keep two metres distance and help stop

Take away your takeaway!



Take away your food and drink from where you bought it - don't gather near outlets.

Whether it's a snack while you're shopping for essentials at Shambles Market, or a hot drink after your daily exercise, please enjoy it away from other people. Thank you.

www.york.gov.uk/coronavirus

Social media key messages based on observed behaviours

Build confidence in the steps taken and what people need to do – 8 March

Parent letter

- PR, facebook live, web update
- My Covid Story: Amy
- Letter to parents via schools
- Social media reassuring parents and reminding them of steps to take (e.g. at school pick up and drop offs)
- Direct information about symptom free testing options
- Thank you for support!



Join us to hear from our panel, which includes: - Cllr Darryl...

16
2.3K views - 4 days ago



Best start in life

Children and young people should now attend school unless they are ill or self-isolating.



Office of the Director of Public Health
Public Health
West Offices
Station Rise
York YO1 6GA

Date: 4 March 2021
Email: enquires.publichealth@york.gov.uk

Dear parent/carer,

Subject: 8 March Return to Education

We wanted to get in touch with you as children and young people across the city prepare to return to school/college on **Monday 8 March**.

Your child's school/college will have been in touch with you about the arrangements they have put in place with regards to testing and also measures to stop the virus from spreading.

Throughout the pandemic there have been very few cases which have been linked to the virus spreading in schools. We hope to keep it that way and are supporting education settings who have put in place lots of measures to stop the spread of the virus.

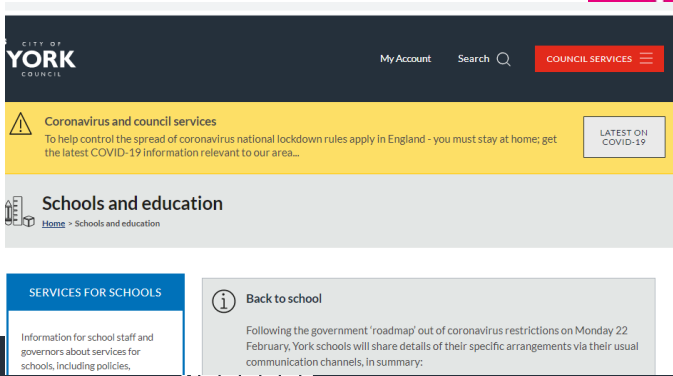
Testing is another form of defence against the virus. 1 in 3 cases of coronavirus have no symptoms so picking up cases early can make a huge difference and reduce the number of cases in the city. Schools/colleges will have shared the arrangements for testing secondary school age pupils with you.

We'd like to add a couple of points:

- Please do not get tested if you have tested positive for Coronavirus in the past 90 days. This is because it is highly likely that the test will show a positive result because you may still be shedding the virus, though you will not be infectious after the initial 10 day isolation period.
- If your child receives a negative test it means they can go to school/college. It is possible to become infected in the hours or days after taking a rapid test - so please remember to continue to follow government guidance on social distancing, good hand hygiene, and practice 'Hands, Face, Space'
- Testing for primary school-age children who do not have covid symptoms is not recommended at present. However, families and support bubbles of all school age children can access regular symptom free testing if they wish to. This can be through a workplace programme via their employer, at one of our three symptom-free testing sites (see www.york.gov.uk/CoronavirusTesting for more)

Office of the Director of Public Health

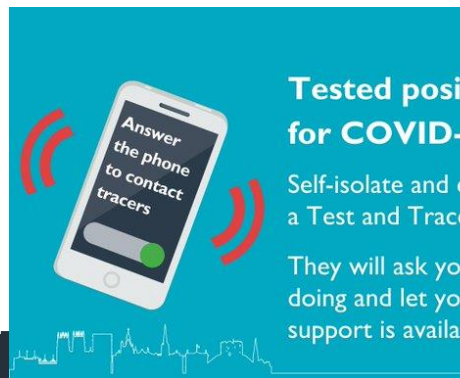
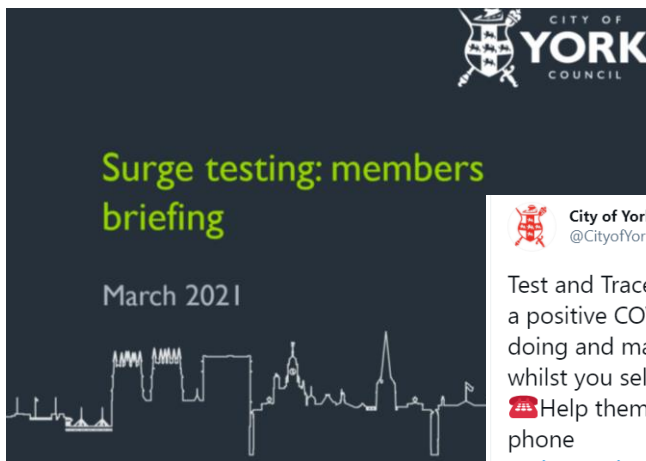
www.york.gov.uk



Working together to improve and make a difference

Build confidence in the steps taken and what people need to do

Testing



Media coverage

Direct communications to residents and responded to community facebook groups

Promoted booking a symptom-free test to key groups

Surge testing briefing for ward members

Signpost to web page for more information

Build confidence in the steps taken and what people need to do

Our City

Vaccinations

- Shared partner communications,
- Our City
- Social
- Press
- National comms
- Promoted next groups

City of York Council
Published by Megan Rule · 26 February at 19:37 ·



NHS Vale of York CCG
26 February at 18:30 ·

COVID-19 VACCINATION UPDATE

Monday 1 March sees the introduction of delivering the vaccine to people over the age of 60. This group will be invited national... See more



York vaccination centre

York residents have been receiving their vaccination at the Askham Bar site, which has now been extended to include the NHS vaccination centre for people within a 45-minute drive.

The centre is supported by local volunteers, working alongside healthcare workers and operational staff. It is managed by Nimbuscare, a group of 11 local GP Practices.

People will be invited to book in for their vaccination by the NHS or by their local GP Practice. The priority groups for vaccination are determined by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI).

York people have an important part to play to help us deliver the vaccine effectively to those who need it most.

Our City | Spring 2021

- Please don't contact the NHS to seek a vaccine, we will contact you
- When we do contact you, please book your appointment
- Please come at your appointment time and try not to come early
- Have your booking reference handy and wear your mask.
- Continue to follow all the guidance - hand hygiene and social distancing in particular - to control the virus and save lives.

To find out more about what to expect when coming to the York Vaccination Centre.

www.nimbuscare.co.uk

Symptom free testing

1 in 3 people with covid won't show any symptoms, but can still pass on the virus. If you're still visiting your workplace, are a carer or an eligible student or staff you could get regular free testing. Find out if you're eligible and book a test at: york.gov.uk/SymptomFreeCOVIDTest



NEWS

6th March

'We'll still get care home Covid cases despite vaccine' warns health chief

By Mike Laycock
Chief reporter

Build confidence in the steps taken and what people need to do

#FeelRealYork: emotional health campaign



Partner communications

City of York Council Retweeted

Tees, Esk & Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust @TEWV

Are you a York student? 🎓 Did you know? Students at @york_college, @UniOfYork and @YorkStJohn can get talking therapies support.

Find out more 📺 [youtube.com/watch?v=50kh2g...](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=50kh2g...) #York #FeelRealYork @CityofYork

Support for students in York
We understand that the experience of students in the city may not be quite what they expected this year due to COVID-19...
📺 youtube.com

Toolkit to reach student networks

Working with partners in the city-wide emotional health network, our latest toolkit is targeted at students in the city.

Please find below sample copy for you to use in your communications with them, plus a number of social media posts with links and images to further resources. Please use the #FeelRealYork hashtag to help our evaluation.

Thank you for your support.

Some 25,000 students study at York, with many experiencing academic, social and financial instability. Much of this has been exacerbated or shaped by the coronavirus pandemic and disruption to mental health care is adding to the story.

University Mental Health Day on 4 March aims to create a point of change around raising awareness of student mental health and how students' wellbeing is supported. Partners across the city are working together to encourage more openness, to help make talking honestly and openly about our mental health or difficult emotions more usual.

The campaign, called #FeelRealYork, aims to signpost available support whether for ourselves or others to help benefit or maintain our mental fitness. #FeelRealYork shares hints for emotional fitness and we will be encouraging students and residents to share their own top tips for improving wellbeing as together the city responds to the impact of the pandemic. We will share more information during the year, including how you can let us know your own top tips.

A single page is available which includes campaign tailored resources for [Esk and TEWV](#), [College](#)

Partners TEWV, the University of York, city education and North Council.

Following college of students fitness. Together: emotional fitness.

#UniMentalHealthDay
Content for newsletters/intranets

#FeelRealYork

Some 25,000 students study in York, with many experiencing academic, social and financial instability. Much of this has been exacerbated or shaped by the coronavirus pandemic and disruption to mental health care is adding to the story.

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Accelerating Recovery:

Supporting businesses

We know you're facing an unprecedented set of challenges, so we're working with partners to offer unprecedented levels of support.

The council has distributed over £140k of grants and rates relief so far and the support given beyond cash grants. Whatever challenge you're facing from cashflow problems, emotional health issues or adapting to changing markets. To see what help is available: www.york.gov.uk/businesssupport

Taking care of your mental fitness - #FeelRealYork
As a business owner in 2021 you're busy caring about your own family, your colleagues and your supply chain. The best way to take care of them is to take care of you. #FeelRealYork is here to show you that it's not too late to be ok. You can get hints and tips for emotional fitness, and access support for you and your colleagues from a range of experts. www.york.gov.uk/FeelRealYork

Supporting skills growth in the city

A new City Skills and Employment Board has been created by City of York Council and our partners to make sure the right training and skills opportunities are available over the next few years to help and support the city's recovery, and help residents improve their employment options.

Get support today
Help is already available for anyone wanting to improve their employment opportunities. With a wide range of free courses, from brushing up on your maths or digital skills to finding out more about starting your own business, and information about the training and support options locally, including apprenticeships. www.york.gov.uk/LetsBeYorkSkills

"Looking forward to going back to uni?"

"Yes of course."

"Are you really?"

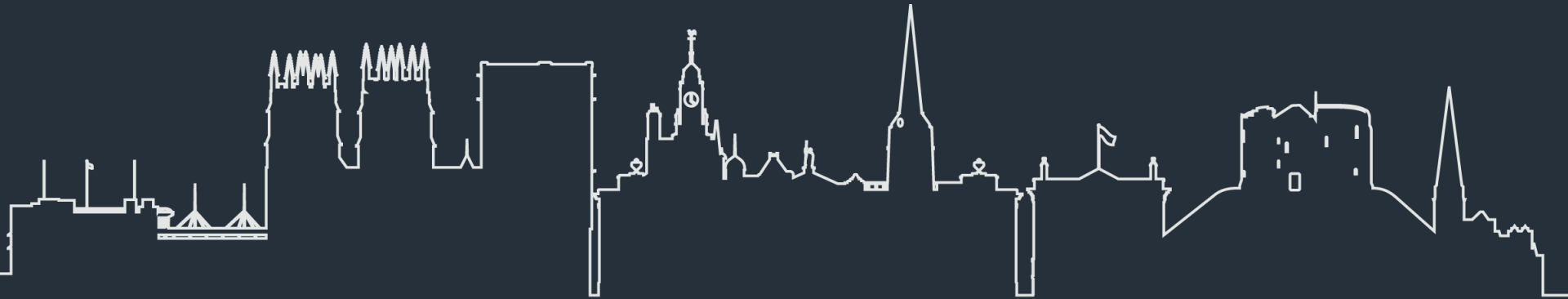
"Actually, I'm worried about being stuck in my room if there's another lockdown."

HOW ARE YOU REALLY FEELING?

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Working together to improve and make a difference

Public Health England Behavioural Science and Insights Unit Supporting reopening the city



Objectives

- Working with Public Health England (PHE) Behavioural Science and Insights Unit to mitigate the risk of increased community transmission as a result of increased visitors to the city centre (resident or non-resident)
 - Run a behaviour insight-led trial for 3 months up to wider opening on 21 June 2021, collating and sharing insight from target groups and refreshing signage/interventions based on PHE recommendations
 - Focus on promoting covid safe behaviours before and during visits
 - Take a city wide approach by building confidence amongst business premises owners and owners non-council operated outside space

Plan

The work will be in stages timed around key reopening dates:

- 25 March – zoom discussion with businesses
- Prior to 29 March – review the existing signage and propose changes. Signage will be revised and installed for 29 March and then 12 April.
- Prior to 17 May – focus groups with businesses with outside space to understand their experiences about how people behave in the outside spaces and the impact the signage had/didn't have AND interview residents/visitors to the city about their experiences together with a city-wide survey for residents. This insight will inform a second refinement of signage / interventions.
- Prior to 21 June – refined signage / interventions will be installed across the city
- During the summer, we will poll businesses about how visitors are behaving in open spaces in light of the refined signage and whether the insight has made a difference.

Summary of behavioural trial

Install and adapt signage and interventions

Insight gather

Test , learn, adapt

Install final signage

The key measures for the city centre are summarised in the following table:

Stage One	Stage two	Stage three	Stage four
8 March	12 April	17 May	21 June
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet one person outdoors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seated pub beer gardens open with rule of 6 No need for a substantial meal or curfew All shops reopen Self-catering UK holidays for households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pubs reopen Rule of 6 indoors Groups of 30 outdoors Outdoor and indoor entertainment (with limits) Hotels and B&Bs reopen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All restrictions end
<p>29 March</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rule of 6 people outdoors Stay at home rule ends but encouraged to stay local 			

Businesses with outside space are invited to:

- Attend a zoom session with PHE to answer questions and hear more about how insight has helped other businesses keep consumers and staff safe
- Thursday 25 March
- (25 attendees already registered)
- Attend one of six focus groups facilitated by PHE to share experiences and expertise
- Dates to be confirmed (March/April)

Business Intelligence Hub

Covid-19 in York: Public Health Data - One Page Summary (as at 15.3.21)

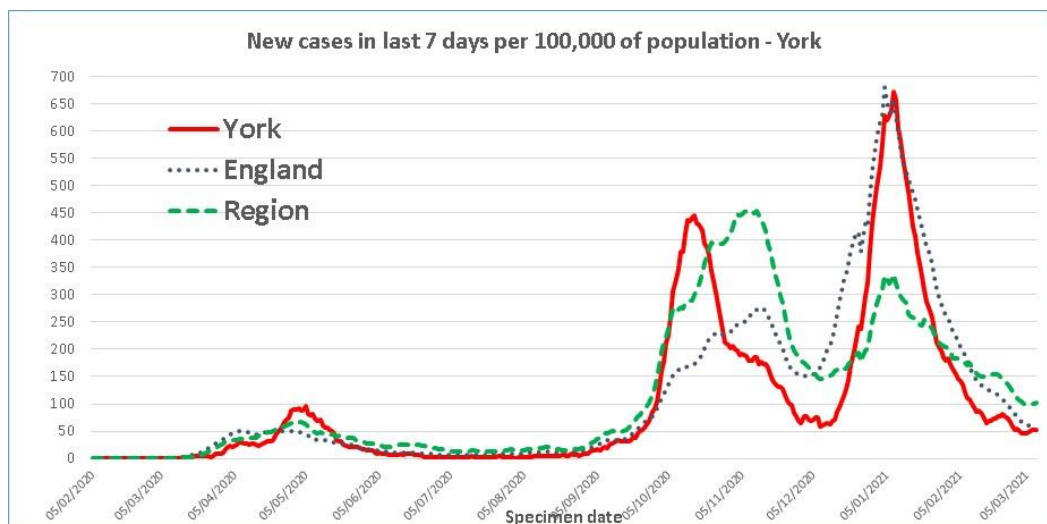
Key Impacts

- As at 14.3.21 York has had **12,052** cases since the start of the pandemic, a rate of **5,722** per 100,000 of population. The cumulative rate in York is **below** the national (6,623) and regional (6,672) averages.
- The latest official “validated” rate of new Covid cases per 100,000 of population for the period 3.3.21 to 9.3.21 was **52.7**. The national and regional averages at this date were 58.7 and 101.8 respectively (using data published on Gov.uk on 14.3.21).
- As at 11.3.21, the latest **7 day** positivity rate in York (Pillar 2 PCR tests only) was **1.72%**. The national and regional averages are 2.7% and 4.9% respectively.
- Since the start of the pandemic, **374** Covid-19 deaths were recorded as having occurred for CYC residents (218 in hospital, 128 in care homes, 20 at home and 8 in a hospice). The number of deaths per 100,000 of population in York is 177.6 which is lower than the national average of 220.0

Impact by age and gender

- 54.2%** of those testing positive in York are female. The average age of the people who died was **82.3**, with an age range of 44-104. The age profile of those dying in York is older than the national average (80.3% of those who died in York were aged 75+ compared with 73.5% nationally). 171 of the 360 were male (**47.5%**), less than the national average (54.3%).

Trends



- The 7 day rate of cases per 100,000 in York has fallen from the peak of 671 on the 8th January to the current rate of 52.7.

NHS Test and Trace

- Since 28.5.20 a total of 11,192 confirmed CYC Covid cases have been uploaded into the NHS Test and Trace system and 10,095 of the cases have been completed (**90.2%**). 25,024 ‘contacts’ have been identified and 19,704 of these have been completed (**75.7%**).

Vaccinations

- As at 14.3.21 **74,887** CYC residents had received the first dose and **3,550** had received both doses.

A weekly release of Covid-19 data is published on [York Open Data](#).

Produced by City of York Council Business Intelligence Hub

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15 March 2021

Outbreak Management Advisory Committee

Covid-19 vaccination programme update

The vaccination programme continues to work well in North Yorkshire and York. We are working towards the national targets set by government including an offer of a first vaccination to everyone over 50 by 15th April and a first vaccination offer to every adult by 31st July.

While moving down the age groups, local GP-led vaccination services are focusing initially on the clinically vulnerable in their area, including those with long-term conditions. People in these cohorts will be invited for a vaccination either by the national vaccination centre or their GP. This means some younger people with underlying health conditions may be offered a local appointment before some in the older age groups – this does not mean anyone has been missed, invitations will come.

We continue to encourage all residents eligible for a vaccine to come forward.

COVID vaccination programme numbers

In the week ending the 7th March an additional 1,783,136 people were reported to have received an NHS vaccination for COVID-19 in England. This took the total number of people vaccinated with at least one dose as of the 7th March to 18,962,627. Of those vaccinated, 796,574 people have received a 2nd dose, taking the total number of vaccinations given to 19,759,201.

During the same time frame we will have vaccinated over 350,000 people in North Yorkshire and York.

Patients should already have second dose appointments or will be contacted by their GPs to arrange a time to receive their second dose. It's important that people attend for their second dose when the time comes to get the maximum protection offered by the vaccine.

Care home vaccinations

Our practices are now working with our care homes to plan the remaining 2nd dose clinics and we anticipate most sites being planned before Easter, unless there was a delay in receiving 1st doses originally.

Stephanie Porter

Interim Director for Primary Care and Population Health

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Lateral flow testing strategy for York

Background

Lateral flow tests (LFTs) are a rapid way of assessing an individual's covid status. They can be used on asymptomatic individuals, and provide results without the need for laboratory processing. They are not as accurate as PCR tests. The preliminary report from the Joint PHE Porton Down and University of Oxford SARS-CoV-2 test development and validation group shows a specificity of 99.68% and an overall sensitivity of 76.8%. However at higher viral loads (Ct <25.5) the test detects over 90% of infections. This means that the chances of a false positive (giving a positive test result when the individual is in fact negative) are low, but there is a higher chance of a false negative (giving a negative result when in fact the person is positive). This is why even after a negative test result it is important for everyone to follow public health risk reduction measures.

There are a number of programmes currently operating that enable people to access lateral flow tests.

Workplace

There are a number of workplace-based schemes. Initially LFTs were rolled out for health and social care staff. More recently programmes for teachers and businesses with over 50 staff could set up workplace programmes. The businesses programme has recently been extended to cover organisations of any size.

Community Testing Sites

Local Authorities were able to apply to operate community testing facilities. York applied and opened its first community testing facility on 14th December 2020 at York St John University. We have since opened further sites at the University of York and at the Leisure Complex at the Stadium. Our current offer of testing is for anyone that has to leave home for work, and anyone that is providing care to a vulnerable person.

Students

University students have had access to lateral flow tests since they were tested prior to traveling home for the Christmas break. Students that are still on campus can access the community testing sites, which are run in partnership between the local authority and the universities. Pupils at secondary schools and colleges were offered supervised testing prior to return to school from 1st March. This was done in partnership with the schools and colleges across York, with some pupils being tested in the school/college environment, and some coming to our community venues to be tested. From 15th March, secondary school and college pupils will be given tests to undertake regular testing at home. Testing is not recommended for primary school pupils.

Community Collect for school bubbles

With the return of all pupils to school and college, from 8th March the Government introduced Community Collect for school bubbles. This means that anyone with a child at school can access lateral flow tests for the rest of the family (adults) via community collect. In York, this means collection of test kits in the afternoon from the Poppleton Bar drive through site, or the Wentworth Way walk-in site. There is also an option for people to have kits posted to them if they are unable to travel to the collection point.

Future for lateral flow testing in York

It is clear that the Government's ambition is for there to be easy access by a large proportion of the population to lateral flow tests, as one tool in helping us to come out of lockdown. As such, a number of further testing programmes are likely to come on stream soon.

Pharmacy collect

This is where lateral flow test kits can be picked up from a local pharmacy. There are no further details on the eligibility for this programme yet, and local pharmacies are currently not aware of this.

Community collect

Whilst this is currently only for families of school pupils, this is likely to be expanded to wider groups. Local authorities can apply to establish their own community collect venues. These can be the same as existing community testing venues or new venues.

Students

We are still waiting for clarity on national expectations about testing for university students in the future.

Options for lateral flow testing model in York

Any testing model in York should be accessible to all, but particularly to those communities where covid rates are higher or where the consequences of contracting covid are greater. For example in more deprived communities or in BAME communities. Any testing that is carried out should be of high quality to reduce the likelihood of false results. Testing should be seen as one tool in the easing of lockdown.

Option 1

Continue with our current approach to testing. This means we continue to offer testing through our three community sites, and let the other initiatives through workplaces and community collect roll out.

Analysis

With the other access routes to testing coming online, we are likely to see a reduction in demand for testing at our community sites. Therefore, to continue providing these as we currently do may not be the best use of resources. There is some concern that greater access to home testing may lead to a decline in testing quality. This approach does not provide a tailored response to the needs of our population.

Option 2

Move to a model of community collect ensuring that all communities are covered.

Analysis

This option would not provide an offer for those people that do not want to do their own home testing. It would also mean that we do not have a facility available if we needed to do testing of specific groups, for example students. Shifting people to the home testing model could compromise quality of testing.

Option 3

A dual approach whereby our test centres can offer tests for those that want it, as well as provide community collect for people choosing this route. The test centres can also offer a demonstration of testing, or the ability to answer questions from people wishing to do home testing but requiring more guidance.

Analysis

This is our preferred option. It allows access to both options of testing, and looks to provide support and guidance for people wishing to do home testing in order to ensure quality of testing is maintained. This model can be flexed so that if we are required to undertake testing of a particular population group we still have the facility and trained staff to be able to do this.

If this option is supported by the Board, we will look to provide other venues where this model can be taken forward, most notably in the South West of the City. We will also seek to work with Community Pharmacy North Yorkshire in terms of the roll out of the pharmacy collect model.

Fiona Phillips

Assistant Director of Public Health

15th March 2021

Universities and Colleges Sub Group - Update for the Outbreak Management Advisory Board

Summary

This paper provides an overview for the Outbreak Management Advisory Board from the Universities and Colleges Sub Group. This paper focuses on how Colleges have responded to the return to face to face tuition from 8 March; our participation and feedback in the peer review process; and how the sector has continued to support city-wide testing initiatives.

Detail

1. Return to study for Colleges

Colleges have adopted a phased return of students largely in order to facilitate the on-site testing process. FE Residential students at Askham Bryan College returned on Sunday 7th and day students from Monday 8th March. At York College the phased return of students commenced on 8th March running over a two week period.

While supplies for testing have been challenging, both Colleges received supplies of on-site testing kits in time for testing to start ahead of the return of students, along with a supply of home test kits for staff, the majority of whom had been onto site to go through the on-site testing process in the week prior to Monday 8th.

Colleges are due to receive home test kits for students this week, with a view to rolling those out to FE students from next week. At Askham Bryan, HE students are due to return from 14th March, which helpfully coincides with the beginning of their third Trimester. As Askham Bryan are, for testing purposes, designated as an FE College with HE students (as opposed to an HEI with FE students), the College are part of the 'Schools Mass Testing Programme' and as such, whilst the guidance is as yet silent on continued testing (including home testing) for HEIs beyond 31st March, the DfE expectation is that Askham Bryan will test all of our students (FE, HE, Adults), both initially on-site and supervised and then via home test kits.

Generally, students and staff are required to report the results of the home tests via the NHS App or online and, in addition, to the college directly. Both Colleges are collecting results on a 'by exception' basis, i.e. individuals will only be required to report positive results (so we can undertake any necessary Test and Trace activity) or inconclusive results (to enable us to identify potential patterns with batch numbers of kits or individual capacity to conduct the tests effectively). To date the number of positive test results has been very low.

In addition to on-site testing, a number of students local to York have also taken advantage of the community testing and Colleges are grateful to those responsible for the provision for that offer. Generally students from both Colleges travel in from a large geographical area and not all students had access to a community test site locally, so to have the burden of testing for us relieved even in a small way for those who could access York sites is much appreciated. The large geographical area that students are drawn from also presents logistical challenges should any of them test positive and have traveled in on coaches / need to travel some distance home to isolate.

The setting up and running of testing continues to impact on college resources. We are fortunate that we have had enough volunteers to manage our site here in York but this has consumed a considerable amount of management and staff time, and physical space on campus.

2. Peer Review

The initial peer review feedback undertaken by the Local Government Association and Regional Public Health leaders reported finding a range of positive good practice in our citywide outbreak response. The partnership approach, early engagement, and creation of the Universities and colleges sub-group of OMAB was positively highlighted, as was the collaborative approach between colleges, universities, and local authority Public Health, particularly in connection to the joint approach to testing within the city. Effective communication that used a range of methods and which promoted a city-wide response to Covid-19 inclusive of students as residents of the city and which allowed ability to focus on the positive contributions that students make to our city and the Covid-19 response was also recognised as important.

Areas for consideration were provided through the peer review process, and those of particular interest to the University sub-group include: developing plans to support organisational resilience; continuing to focus on addressing inequalities that affect particular groups of people within the city; and considering how to embed the benefits from closer partnership working into the local system more routinely. More general feedback included a recommendation to clarify the role of public health within the city and to consider how we can use public health intelligence more effectively.

3. Testing for York schools

Finally, the community LFD testing sites across the city, including those run in conjunction with the Universities have played a key role in supporting the mass testing of school pupils ahead of their return to school with several thousand tests being conducted in the run up to the wider opening of schools.