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Meeting	City of York Outbreak Management Advisory Board
Date	24 November 2021
Present	Councillors Aspden (Chair), Runciman (Vice-Chair) and Kilbane Sharon Stoltz - Director of Public Health, CYC Simon Dennis - Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer, Office of the North Yorkshire Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner James Farrar - Local Enterprise Partnership Ian Humphreys - Managing Director, First Manchester and York John Pattinson - Independent Care Group (substitute for Mike Padgham) Stephanie Porter - Director of Primary Care, NHS Vale of York CCG Alison Semmence - Chief Executive, York CVS Ian Wiggins – University of York (Substitute for Charlie Jeffery) Lisa Winward – Chief Constable, North Yorkshire Police
Apologies	Ian Floyd - Chief Operating Officer, CYC Anne Coyle – Interim Director of Children's Services, CYC Siân Balsom – Manager - Healthwatch York Lucy Brown - Director of Communications, York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust Prof. 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 Dr Simon Padfield - Consultant in Health Protection, Public Health England Mike Padgham - Independent Care Group Dr Sally Tyrer – General Practitioner, North Yorkshire Local Medical Committee

In Attendance                      Eddie Coates-Madden – Senior  
Communications Manager, CYC  
Fiona Phillips – Assistant Director of Public  
Health, CYC  
Professor Mike Holmes – Partner, Haxby  
Group (York/Hull/Scarborough)

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#### **42.   Declarations of Interest**

The Board had no interests to declare.

#### **43.   Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 September 2021**

The Board discussed an action arising from the last meeting, around gaining clarity on the covid advice for school aged children. This was confirmed to have been completed and could now be closed.

The Board then discussed a further action arising from the last meeting, which was around the presentation of the behavioural insight report at a future meeting. The action had arisen after the vaccine uptake was found to be lower in the 18-29 cohort. Fiona Phillips, Assistant Director of Public Health reported that she had reviewed the University of York's data and found that the general population of university age had a 30% lower vaccine uptake compared to the university population. This was attributed to the work the university had carried out to prompt students and provide drop-in vaccination clinics.

The Board signed off the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup>September 2021.

#### **44.   Presentation: Current Situation in York**

Fiona Phillips provided a presentation on the current Covid-19 situation in York. Fiona reported that the validated rate, as at the date of the meeting, was 445.9. This was higher than both the regional and national averages, which amounted to around 1,000 cases per week. The hospital seemed to be managing with increased admissions but there were still 45 people with covid in general beds and another two in the intensive care unit. Fiona reported that the half-term period has seen a drop in cases, but cases had since started to rise again. The demographics with the highest rates were in the 5-9, 10-14 and

40-45 cohorts and all had been attributed to the levels of household transmission. The data showed that infection rates had moved down into the lower ages, with primary school rates overtaking secondary school rates. Fiona added that it was too early to see if the vaccination programme had had an impact on the 10-15 cohort.

Fiona reported that accessibility to testing had increased through increased home testing. The council run test sites continued to operate and provide assisted tests. The test sites' footfall had decreased but this was being offset by home testing. Outreach work had also been planned for the coming months to deliver tests and provide information in the community.

Fiona reported that 90% of all positive cases had been successfully contacted and traced with the local team. Fewer than 5% of cases required home visits because the engagement rate had increased by using a recognisable local number.

The Chair asked for more details on how contact tracing services were being wound down on a national level. Fiona explained that the national contact tracing service had been streamlined, with contacts of cases no longer receiving calls but texts/emails instead. The national service had also cut its call handlers from 9,000 to 5,500. Fiona reported that she was yet to receive any information around additional funds for the contacting tracing service to run into 2022. Sharon Stoltz, Director of Public Health noted the risk of uncertainties of funding beyond December but, since the staff and contracts currently in place could be jeopardised, funding had been allotted from the covid containment grant to allow the service to run until March 2022.

The Board noted the update.

#### **45. Vaccination and Winter Planning Programmes**

Stephanie Porter, Director of Primary Care for the NHS Vale of York CCG, provided a presentation around vaccinations and the Winter Planning Programmes. Stephanie reported that she was working with local pharmacies to help deliver the vaccination programme. As new cohorts continued to become eligible for vaccination the total vaccination rates dropped slightly.

Stephanie said that a vaccination rate of 75% of first and second doses for those who are eligible had been achieved. York care homes, which serviced the most vulnerable cohort, had achieved a vaccination rate of 97% for first and second dose and 84% have both doses with their booster as well. 90% of care home staff had also received their first and second doses of the vaccine.

Stephanie reported that she was continuing to work with residents in wards with low vaccine uptake to address any inequalities. She was also undertaking a data quality review to ensure data was correct in GP records. The national system could sometimes have interface issues with other systems.

Professor Mike Holmes, Partner at Haxby Medical Group, informed the Board that the Askham Bar site had delivered over 45,000 booster vaccinations. Around 9,000 vaccinations had been delivered each week with the aim to eventually achieve half a million. Professor Holmes reported that extra clinics were being run at the university, with a particular focus on international students. As the younger cohorts were now also included in the vaccination programme, the Childhood Immunisation and Vaccination Team were working with Nimbuscare to deliver vaccinations to school aged children. Over 9,000 had been delivered so far. It was aimed to finish the school vaccination programme by the end of November.

Sharon Stoltz asked for more information to help residents understand the difference between the third dose of the vaccine and the booster dose. Queries around how to book the vaccine had also been received from residents, as they were unsure whether they would be contacted by their GP or would have to use the national booking system. Professor Mike Holmes explained how the three dose accelerated course was used to ensure anti-body levels, as the immune system was suppressed in some of the clinically vulnerable. He reported that the booster vaccine was used because the body's immunity response would wane after around six months. Professor Holmes also reported that residents could access testing through booking on either the national or local service.

The Chair suggested that Vaccinations and Winter Planning be a standing item for this meeting going forward. This would enable the Board to keep up to date with the waiting times, capacity of venues and availability of vaccines.

**Action:** Mike Holmes, Stephanie Porter and Anita Dobson to provide a joint report as a part of the standing item; Vaccinations and Winter Planning.

#### **46. Update on the Economy and Building Back Fairer**

James Farrar, Local Enterprise Partnership representative, reported that he was working closely with the York Council to support the community and develop a plan for growth across York and North Yorkshire. James informed the Board that the economy looked to be bouncing back from being reduced by around 8.5% due to covid.

The recent increase in unemployment was expected to be offset by the high number of vacancies currently available. Furlough could affect unemployment rates as well, since the scheme was coming to an end soon. Most of the store vacancies had followed the closure of many of the national chains. James noted that a period of restructuring would need to take place to rectify this. The reduced footfall in the city centre had been attributed to a lot of people continuing to work from home.

Sharon Stoltz asked whether the significant increase of residents experiencing mental health issues and accessing services had been addressed. James Farrar reported that a mental health toolkit had been launched to help businesses to protect and support their workforce.

A number of the programmes from the EU funding scheme would instead have to be funded through the shared prosperity fund. Although, it was yet to be decided which programmes would remain in place. James reported that some of the historic programmes had been tweaked to ensure they continued to work through the pandemic and beyond. Sharon Stoltz suggested that a piece of work be commissioned which focused on mental health and work. A report on this could then come back to the Board. James was happy to take the lead on this and work with Sharon to link it back across to the actions arising from the mental health summit held in March 2020.

**Action:** James Farrar to bring a report back to the Board around Mental Health and work.

The Board noted the update.

#### **47. Communications Update**

Eddie Coates-Madden, Senior Communications Manager at City of York Council, gave a presentation on the key messages and four phases of the Outbreak Communications Plan. Eddie reported that local media attention had decreased recently but the council continue to provide press releases, with 30 out of the recent 80 being covid related.

Email updates, newsletters and social media campaigns had continued throughout the pandemic. The recent Facebook Live Q&A Session had been on financial wellbeing, due to the recent rise in unemployment and the furlough scheme coming to an end. The national and York Council assets had been used and shared with residents to help them distinguish between the common cold and covid.

The Board noted the update.

#### **48. Update from Sub-Group: Universities and Higher Education Establishments**

Ian Wiggins from the University of York reported that the case rates had remained low amongst the student population on the University of York Campus. He attributed this to the testing and vaccination programme, along with students adhering to mask usage when appropriate. There had been no evidence of transmission in the teaching and learning environment but a number of staff cases had been found, these being mostly due to household transmission from school aged children.

Ian reported that around 75% of students engaged with testing at least once a week. Not many reported their negative LFT results but this was also seen nationally. The University of York's covid response was so effective that the Department of Education had asked them to share their learning with other higher education institutions. All students (especially those from countries with lower covid responses) would be encouraged to engage with testing before and after their arrival.

The Board noted the update.

#### **49. Items for Next Agenda**

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

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

The Board agreed to add the following to the Forward Plan:

- Terms of Reference Review
- Vaccine Inequalities
- Mental Health Report

#### **50. Dates of Future Meetings**

The agreed dates of future meetings were as follows:

- 26 January 2022
- 23 March 2022
- 25 May 2022

#### **51. Any Other Business**

The Board had no other business to discuss.

Cllr K Aspden, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.31 pm and finished at 7.01 pm].