



Notice of a public meeting of

Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee

- To:** Councillors Crawshaw (Chair), Fenton (Vice-Chair), S Barnes, Hunter, Hollyer, Mason, Musson, Pearson, and Rowley
- Date:** Monday, 5 October 2020
- Time:** 2.00 pm
- Venue:** Remote Meeting

AGENDA

1. **Declarations of Interest**

At this point, Members are asked to declare:

- any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests
- any prejudicial interests or
- any disclosable pecuniary interests

which they may have in respect of business on this agenda.

2. **Minutes** (Pages 1 - 8)

To approve and sign the Minutes of the meetings held on 7 September 2020 at 2:00pm and 16 September 2020.

3. Public Participation

At this point in the meeting members of the public who have registered to speak can do so. Members of the public may speak on agenda items or on matters within the remit of the committee.

Please note that our registration deadlines have changed to 2 working days before the meeting, in order to facilitate the management of public participation at remote meetings. The deadline for registering at this meeting is **5:00pm 1 October 2020**.

To register to speak please visit www.york.gov.uk/AttendCouncilMeetings to fill out an online registration form. If you have any questions about the registration form or the meeting please contact the Democracy Officer for the meeting whose details can be found at the foot of the agenda.

Webcasting of Remote Public Meetings

Please note that, subject to available resources, this remote public meeting will be webcast including any registered public speakers who have given their permission. The remote public meeting can be viewed live and on demand at www.york.gov.uk/webcasts.

During coronavirus, we've made some changes to how we're running council meetings. See our coronavirus updates (www.york.gov.uk/COVIDDemocracy) for more information on meetings and decisions.

4. Health Update

The Committee is to receive an update from Public Health on COVID-19 in York.

5. Schools Update (Pages 9 - 12)

This report provides members of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee with an update on the full opening of schools from 7th September 2020.

6. Update on Return of Universities (Pages 13 - 26)

This report considers the challenges and work being undertaken regarding the return to Universities in York for students in response to COVID-19.

7. Urgent Business

Any other business which the Chair considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

Democracy Officer:

Name: Robert Flintoft
Telephone: (01904) 555704
E-mail: robert.flintoft@york.gov.uk

For more information about any of the following please contact the Democratic Services Officer responsible for servicing this meeting:

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

Contact details are set out above.

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 własnym języku. (Polish)

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	Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee
Date	7 September 2020
Present	Councillors Crawshaw (Chair), Fenton (Vice-Chair), S Barnes, Hollyer, Rowley, Musson, Daubeney and Orrell
Apologies	Councillors Pearson, Mason and Kilbane

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests, not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or discloseable pecuniary interests they may have in respect of business on the agenda. None were declared.

21. MINUTES

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held at 2:00pm on 10 August 2020 be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chair at a later date.

At this point in the meeting the Chair explained that, as a result of Cllr D Taylor becoming an Independent Member of the Council, proportionality on Committees had had to be recalculated. Further to that exercise, Cllr Mason had now replaced Cllr D Taylor on the Committee. Expressing his disappointment that there was now no Green Party representative on the Committee, he thanked Cllr D Taylor for his input into the Committee and former role as Chair of Children and Education Scrutiny Committee.

22. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

23. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Committee received a finance and performance update from the Head of Corporate Finance and Commercial

Procurement. In response to Members questions during the presentation she explained that:

- In relation to the SEND and Mental Health Services, the Council had agreements in place with the CCG.
- Regarding the safeguarding around the delivery of Adult Health and Social Care, senior managers had been focussed on the delivery of front line services and would be looking at back office. As part of mitigation and managing financial challenges, managers would be looking at savings. The detail on the position regarding savings would be outlined in the report to Executive on 1 October.
- Due to the pooling and safety net mechanism for business rates the Council was no less exposed to the drop in business rate income. The process for the pooling of business rates was explained.
- Debt recovery is paused during COVID-19 and in order to get the right help to the right people, the Council had started work on softer debt recovery to identify people who may be struggling to pay their bills.
- In terms of business rents to the Council, all had been offered a payment holiday and had been all had been written to and had started to pay or agree a payment schedule. It was noted that a number of businesses had not taken grants or payment holidays and of those that had, some small businesses had repaid their grants.

Head of Corporate Finance and Commercial Procurement was thanked for her update.

Resolved: That the update be noted.

Reason: To ensure that the Committee be updated on finance and performance.

24. DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S UPDATE

The Director of Public Health gave an update on the COVID-19 position noting the following points:

- There had been 991 cases in York to date. The rate in the city was slowly increasing and remained under the national and Yorkshire and Humber averages.
- There had been an increase in the number of people being tested and positive cases were lower than the national and regional averages at this point in time.

- In care homes some residents had tested positive again and it was thought that this was because the tests were picking up small levels of virus and it was not necessarily infectious.
- The age of cases was changing with more cases in children and young people (an increase of 13% in 10 – 19 year olds and 20% in 20-29 year olds) and this was not unique to York.
- The arrival of college/university students was a key focus and work was being done with colleges and universities on this, including looking at a walk in test centre and working with students.

In answer to Member questions, the Director of Public Health clarified that:

- In order to look at trends in rates of COVID-19 in different age brackets, the numbers were small and the trend needed to be tracked.
- A huge amount of work has been done by schools in preparation for the September return and schools in York were as prepared as they could be to fully open.
- A Standard Operating Procedure for schools had been developed and all procedures had been signed off.
- Closing a school would be a last resort and children had been grouped in 'bubbles'. The process by which the bubbles would operate was explained.
- There had been no excess deaths in the last 13 weeks and there were 43 fewer deaths over that period than in the last 3 years. There were excess deaths through April with a peak in May and this had gradually decreased.
- To determine the impact of COVID-19 numbers on mortality, the data would need to be looked at retrospectively.
- The process for looking after care home residents who had tested positive for a second time was explained.
- There was no walk in test centre because the Pillar 2 test centres were under contracts with central government. The number of cases in York was low compared to other areas which were a priority, however the priority may change due to the number of students arriving in the city.
- Regarding the arrival of students, those that were asymptomatic would not be tested. If there was an outbreak a mobile testing facility could be requested.
- There had been discussions with the universities about preparation with students as they arrived.

The Director of Public Health was thanked for her update.

Resolved: That the update be noted.

Reason: To ensure that Members were aware of the current situation in York relating to Covid-19.

An adjournment took place at 3:07pm until 3:15pm.

25. THE NON-COVID HEALTH IMPACTS OF CORONAVIRUS

The Executive Director of Primary Care and Population Health (NHS Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group) had been invited to the meeting to give a presentation on the impact of COVID-19 in North Yorkshire and York detailing the specific concerns regarding the four waves of COVID-19. Details of the presentation had been circulated to Members of the Committee shortly before the meeting. For each of the four waves, Dr Lee explained who was the most vulnerable, what the impacts were and possible mitigations, and what partners and the public had said about these.

Following the presentation, there was a verbal update on delayed diagnosis following hospital's conversion to COVID-19 care in March and April. The following points were noted:

- There were co dependencies between services and the hospital was working with the independent sector to support the NHS, for example cancer services had been deployed to the independent sector.
- Delayed diagnosis was particularly of relevance to cancer services – in March there had been a 75% reduction in two week referrals and by June this was restored to 90% of pre COVID-19 levels and had since increased to 96%.
- There had been 75% reduction in admissions March to June and this had now restored to 90% and routine surgery had now back to 68% of pre COVID-19 levels.

The Executive Director of Primary Care and Population Health was thanked for his update and in answer to questions explained:

- The mental health service support in place during COVID-19. There had been a 15% rise in the demand for support which had offset admissions. Referral routes had been stable throughout and COVID-19 secure support had been delivered via telephone and online consultations.

- Regarding GP appointments, all GP practices were mandated to triage patients and there had been a fundamental shift in the delivery of primary care.
- Social prescribers had worked closely with the voluntary sector and some support was not a medicalised intervention.
- The hospital had clinically risk assessed backlogs and prioritised from this.
- The proportion waiting longer than a year or more had gone up and was estimated to be circa 7000 at the end of the year.
- The health protection team in Yorkshire and the Humber would deal with outbreaks over the next six months.
- The eligibility for flu vaccination had been expanded to the over 50s and vaccinations had begun in September. The setting up of a mass flu vaccination site was being examined.
- The consumption of illicit drugs was down and the issue of alcohol consumption was on the agenda for the York health and care collaborative. The Health and Wellbeing Board had identified alcohol, smoking and obesity as areas of concern.

The Director of Public Health and Executive Director of Primary Care and Population Health were thanked for their updates and contributions.

Resolved:

- i. That the update be noted.
- ii. That the impact of the opening of Schools and Universities be examined at a future meeting.
- iii. That access to GP appointments be referred to the Health and Adult Social Care Policy and Scrutiny Committee for further consideration.

Reason: To ensure that Members were aware of the current situation in York relating to Covid-19.

Councillor J Crawshaw, Chair

[The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 4.05 pm].

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Meeting	Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee
Date	16 September 2020
Present	Councillors Crawshaw (Chair), Fenton (Vice-Chair), S Barnes, Hunter, Hollyer, Kilbane (Substitute for Musson), Pearson, and Mason
Apologies	Councillors Musson, and Rowley

1. **Declarations of Interest**

At this point, Members were asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, prejudicial interest or any disclosable pecuniary interests which they may have in respect of business on the agenda. None were declared.

2. **Public Participation**

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

3. **Recent and Proposed Changes to Planning and Licensing - Including the Business and Planning Act 2020**

The Executive Member for Economy and Strategic Planning introduced the report regarding the government consultations and Changes to the Current Planning System and Planning for the Future. Members of the Committee thanked the Executive Member for engaging the Committee in the Council's response to the consultations.

Officers gave a presentation and answered questions from the Committee on the Changes to the Current Planning System and Planning for the Future consultations and outlined the council's current responses to the consultations.

The Committee considered and broadly supported the councils responses to the consultations and made the following recommendations for officers and the Executive Member to consider including in the council's official response:

- i. Request detail as to what government proposals would be put in place to prevent developers splitting sites, to take advantage of the proposed temporary lifting of the threshold for sites that contribute to affordable housing;
- ii. Recommend that government support sites above a site size still having to contribute a commuted sum, even if these sites would not meet the proposed threshold for affordable housing contributions;
- iii. Request detail on how the government seek to solve the issue of land banking;
- iv. Request detail on how any changes in the Planning for the Future consultation will impact on examination of Local Plan's, such as the York Local Plan, including for transitional arrangements;
- v. Request detail from government as to how any changes proposed would support sustainable design.
- vi. Request clarification and detail to ensure robust public engagement through plan-making and decision-making process with pro-active consultation and involvement of communities;
- vii. To include a response to Planning for the Future regarding proposals for 'Stewardship and enhancement of the natural and historic environment' where no questions have been asked by the Government;
- viii. Include sufficient detail to articulate local level impacts as a result of proposals.

Reason: To ensure that the views of scrutiny Members are represented in the council's final responses to the two consultations.

Councillor J Crawshaw, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.58 pm].



**Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny
Management Committee**

25 September 2020

Report of the Director of Children, Education and Communities

Schools Update

Background

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide members of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee with an update on the full opening of schools from 7th September 2020.
2. The effective partnership working between schools and City of York Council continues to be a strong feature of the response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The York Schools and Academies Board is continuing to meet weekly, both as a full board and in primary and secondary phase specific sub groups. A third sub-group is made up of the city's specialist settings, Hob Moor Oaks, Applefields and the Danesgate Community. The sub –groups provide a weekly report from their meetings to the York Schools and Academies Board. The Council's education team continues to hold weekly meetings for maintained school heads. These meetings provide a forum for collective problem solving and peer support. There continues to be a commitment to working collaboratively across the city's maintained schools and multi-academy trusts.
3. Schools continue to be well supported by the City's public health team who have been providing very responsive advice and guidance to headteachers which continues to be very highly valued.
4. Overall attendance has remained above national averages since the start of term. As of 25th September 2020 attendance in York's state funded schools was 88% with the national average being 86.2%. The attendance of children with an education, health and care plan across all phases was 85.3% with the national average

being 79.9%. The attendance of children with a social worker across all phases was 82.1% against the national average of 79.5%.

5. School transport arrangements have been working well since the start of term.

Primary Schools

6. All primary schools in the city opened at the start of the autumn term. Three schools with nurseries have had a phased return in their reception classes. There has been the need to close class bubbles at two primary schools since the start of term as a result of confirmed cases of Covid-19.
7. On-going challenges highlighted by primary headteachers are:
 - Staff and pupil absences related to access to and the speed of testing.
 - The additional costs associated with the pandemic, for example supply costs to cover for staff absences, additional costs of cleaning and personal protection equipment.
 - The on-going disruption to the school day created by the preventative measures e.g. frequent handwashing and cleaning, which impacts on learning time.
 - Staff tiredness due to managing the new arrangements.
8. On the whole school leaders remain very positive about the return to school and have reported that children are pleased to be back.

Secondary Schools

9. All secondary schools in the city opened at the start of the autumn term. One secondary school has had to close year group bubbles since the start of term.
10. Secondary schools have adopted the Director of Public Health's recommendation to promote the wearing of face coverings in communal areas.
11. Secondary heads are continuing to meet weekly and have developed a joint agreement about the way open evenings are being conducted this term. They are also sharing ideas and resources to support remote learning.

12. On-going challenges highlighted by secondary headteachers include those highlighted by primary heads and in addition:

- Exam invigilation – many exam invigilators are retired people and are therefore in a vulnerable group.
- Work experience.
- Providing opportunities for pupils to still feel part of the whole school community when they are having to be kept in discreet year group bubbles.

Further Education Colleges

13. Both York College and Askham Bryan College have adopted a phased return, with a mix of onsite and remote learning taking place. This varies according the specific demands of each of the courses of study.

Recommendation

14. The Committee is asked to discuss and note the content of the report.

Author:

Maxine Squire

Assistant Director, Education and Skills

Tel: 01904 553007

Maxine.squire@york.gov.uk

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Amanda Hatton

Director of Children, Education and Communities

Report Approved



Date 25/09/20

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

tick

For further information please contact the author of the report



**Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny
Management Committee****25 September 2020**

Report of the Director of Public Health

Update on Return of Universities**Introduction / Background:**

1. The York Covid-19 Outbreak Control Plan identifies Universities as a high-risk location. Through the internal COPR governance structure CYC, the CYC Public Health Department are leading on implementing the plan.
2. A Universities and Colleges Covid-19 Sub Group has been established to report into the Outbreak Management Board; and alongside this, a University & College Preparedness Group are working through the operational preparedness plans.

Summary of Activity

3. Public Health support for Universities and Colleges has been provided through a named lead to work collaboratively to assess and support institutional readiness. This approach is described within a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) which has been approved at the Outbreak Management Board.
4. Existing networks to support student health within the FE and HE institutions have been built on to progress this work. Regular weekly contact is held as a group network of the Operational Leads for the institutions' preparedness plans, as well as direct support from the Public Health, single point of contact.
5. Each institution has shared its risk assessments and the Public Health team are working closely to support the development of these and to achieve a consistent approach to messages. A

weekly Universities and Colleges Covid-19 Sub Group meets to focus on the strategic response required to support preparedness.

Areas of focus discussed with each institution is summarised below:

Estates and Facilities

6. Risk assessments for each institutions have been developed and reviewed with public health input into these through regular communication and promotion of key public health messages and guidance updates.
7. Face covering policies within each institution have been developed and finalised to require these to be worn on campus space.
8. Facility management arrangements have been reviewed and adapted to meet social distancing requirements.
9. Systems and processes are in place to record student cohort details where this occurs during teaching time and to enable contact tracing to take place. Good information flows exist with daily sharing of soft intelligence and information about students and staff known to be self-isolating and those who are known to have a confirmed case.
10. Desktop emergency planning exercises have been run at both the Universities and Colleges Covid-19 Sub Group and the University & College Preparedness Group is being considered to provide a means to test effectiveness of the plans being in place.
11. This has been supported by 2 regional webinars run by Yorkshire & Humber Health Protection Team to support university preparedness.

Staffing

12. Institutions are operating a phased staffing return and are supporting their staff groups with role and personal specific risk assessments, provision of PPE, and development of information sharing processes to help identify where a student may be self-isolating.

Communication

13. CYC have been supporting institutions with development of communications messages. A significant focus has been put into communicating key messages within each institution to clarify expectations of behaviour and requirements.
14. Institutions have developed comms plans that support messages around institution policies, Covid-19 guidance, access to testing, healthcare, pastoral support, and welfare arrangements if a student needs to self-isolate
15. Courses have adapted teaching regimes to move to a blended approach with the bulk of learning being offered as online, although classroom based learning will still exist.
16. Students – Each institution is developing its messages to students and has adapted its on-boarding processes to respond to Covid-19. Where international students are attending, support to help quarantine is being provided. Initial attendance days for halls students at university for beginning of this semester has been phased. The range of welcome week activities coordinated by student union, graduate student association and societies has been adapted significantly to focus on socially distant and 'rule of 6' compliance along with virtual events.
17. A focus on ensuring that the student body are supported to adhere to social distancing is being prioritised, there are concerns about how this can be maintained, and 'policed' and how well students will comply. This has potential impacts for the reputation of each institution as well as how students are perceived by local residents – in addition to the potential risks this carries for an outbreak.
18. Engagement with local community is an important aspect of institutional consideration as a matter of course and in addition to targeted campaigns, regular and ongoing discussion with local residents through forums such as the Good Neighbours Group that UoY facilitate have been ongoing.
19. First Bus services in York specifically for students have been adapted in consultation with local residents, student unions and CYC. A specific and dedicated University bus will operate on UoY

campus. Due to the limited capacity on buses with social distance requirements in place, there is a focus on messages to students to walk, or cycle if they don't need to take the bus in order to support those who rely on local bus services to have priority.

20. The importance of process and communication as well as welfare provision to support good practice of self-isolation and social distancing is a focus for the operational leads.

Housing

21. Student accommodation risk assessments have been developed. Relationships with independent student accommodation providers are being developed to ensure that there has been public health input.

Standard Operating Procedure

22. An SOP has been developed and reviewed in collaboration with the institutions.
23. York College have decided that the SOP for Schools and Colleges is more relevant to them as an institution and their student profile. Askham-Bryan College feel that elements of both the Schools and Colleges SOP and the Universities and Colleges SOP apply to them.

Testing and Tracing

24. A number of concerns about testing capacity and potential barriers to access testing within the student body population were identified and responded to.
25. Local solutions have been developed to support access to a supply of swab kits provided directly from the Director of Public Health local capacity, as well as work to support the build of a local walk-in test centre that will be for use of all York residents who are unable to access a drive-in appointment and the location of this is going to be within an area of the city that has high levels of need for a walk-in option due to accessibility considerations. This will benefit students and increase access to testing capacity.

26. The current local arrangements for testing follow the national testing programme¹ where:

- pillar 1: swab testing in Public Health England (PHE) labs and NHS hospitals for those with a clinical need, and health and care workers
- pillar 2: swab testing for the wider population, as set out in government guidance

27. Any resident living in York who develops symptoms of Covid-19 can access testing through either attending the Pillar 2 testing site in Poppleton (or other nearby local options), or if unable to attend, can request delivery of a home-test kit for postal return to obtain Covid-19 results. Students are a particular group who can be considered for a provision of a local swab where specific criteria are met. This local resource is a city wide resource and is open and available to strengthen the testing capacity where there are particular needs or a need for a local testing programme as part of any outbreak prevention approach. Students can qualify for this if they can't access a test and live in high density on campus residences, or have other specific needs that mean they are unable to access a test through any of the above means (as well as the walk-in option when it is built).

28. The above describes the Pillar 2 testing routes. Pillar 1 testing is available for those with a clinical need and health and care workers who meet the inclusion criteria. Tests are processed locally at York Teaching Hospital Foundation Trust (YTHFT).

29. Pillar 1 testing is currently locally available through York Teaching Hospital Foundation Trust (YTHFT). There is one option to develop and enhance local Pillar 1 testing access for the local student population:

30. Provision of additional testing capacity within local Pillar 1 system YTHFT have advised that they could make 25-50 swab kits available for distribution to the local FE and HE student population.

Non Testing Related Prevention Measures

31. The success of a prevention focussed response to a potential outbreak is not reliant solely on the timeliness of test results,

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-testing-data-methodology/covid-19-testing-data-methodology-note>

although this has been evidenced to provide good early contact tracing opportunities which is a very effective means of reducing the risk / severity of a disease outbreak.

32. The application and enforcement of social distancing requirements, hand washing, respiratory hygiene, and use of face coverings, along with other mitigations are all factors in how effective a prevention focussed approach will be.
33. A focus on developing good communication with the student and staff bodies about personal and institutional prevention measures; and cohort identification of students who are potentially at risk of being a close or proximity contact is something that each local institution is working to develop. This will be required to be effective no matter which testing route is taken.
 - Where this works well, in that institutions are notified early of a student choosing to self-isolate or that a positive test has been confirmed, there can be support pathways put in place to enable early access to suitable testing, compliance with self-isolation, and potential requests for those identified within cohorts to also self-isolate.
 - The current Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) to define how a positive covid-19 case is responded to, identifies a process to follow which may result in a student cohort being notified that they are advised to self-isolate. The current SOP does not require this consideration when there is an unconfirmed case of Covid-19 or a student or staff member chooses to self-isolate because they have symptoms.
34. A focus on ensuring that those who do develop symptoms are supported to self-isolate for the full amount of time required will also play a part in helping to reduce onward transmission.
 - This could be an effective mitigation where testing may be difficult to access for some of the reasons described above.

Information and Data

35. New government guidance removes any remaining blocks to sharing information between institutions and the local authority. The information governance processes that each institution works to will be reviewed in line with Covid-19 requirements to ensure

that information is timely and relevant to help identify and respond to potential clusters or outbreaks.

36. The information sharing processes in place between the institutions and local authority have been refined as learning from individual cases is known. 'Soft intelligence' of numbers of students who are self-isolating is shared daily by each institution to ensure that as a local authority system, this information provides insight into the local picture to build on the regular and robust data that the local Public Health Department receive about testing and epidemiology.

Single Point of Contact & Escalation

37. Each institution has identified a SPOC and this information has been shared along with HPT SPOC, and LA SPOC for York and surrounding areas should there be a cross-boundary need.

Outbreak Planning Response

38. Each institution has been asked to identify possible sites to house an on-site testing unit should the need to respond to an outbreak occur. This is part of the IMT response preparation co-ordinated through the emergency planning department

Transport

39. Both colleges in particular see a proportion of students attend using public transport from out of area locations on dedicated transport services. Risk assessments for transport still need to be reviewed by the Public Health SPOC.
40. First Bus services in York specifically for students have been adapted in consultation with local residents, student unions and CYC. A specific and dedicated University bus will operate on UoY campus. Due to the limited capacity on buses with social distance requirements in place, there is a focus on messages to students to walk, or cycle if they don't need to take the bus in order to support those who rely on local bus services to have priority.

Next Steps

41. The University Preparedness group will continue to meet regularly as required for the duration of the pandemic in order to track institutional responses and develop learning.

Implications

- **Financial**

There is a potential risk to financial stability of institutions if a localised outbreak is experienced that would require institutions to close for public protection purposes

- **Human Resources (HR)**

None for City of York Council

- **Equalities**

The student population is acknowledged to be connected to a high risk setting and has a range of equality needs within its broad categorisation of students. As a general group, the age profile of students puts them at less risk of severe symptoms and impact from covid-19

- **Legal**

There are no Legal implication of this report

- **Crime and Disorder**

There are no Crime and Disorder implication of this report

- **Information Technology (IT)**

There are no IT implication of this report

- **Property**

There are no Property implication of this report

Recommendations

42. The Committee is asked to discuss and note the report and associated issues in the context of the council's COVID-19 outbreak control plan for part of the theme around high risk places that included university settings.

Contact Details

Author:

Nick Sinclair

Public Health Specialist
Practitioner Advanced

Tel: 01904 554353

nick.sinclair@york.gov.uk

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Sharon Stoltz

Director of Public Health

Report Approved Date 25/09/20

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All *tick*

For further information please contact the author of the report

Annex:

Submission on challenges Universities are facing in relation to COVID

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Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee

Submission on challenges Universities are facing in relation to COVID

At the weekend many of our students returned to York for the start of term, joining students from York St John University, and Askham Bryan and York Colleges who have returned earlier in the month. This term will be unlike any other. In this short note I have set out some of our approaches to the key challenges at the University of York. While the detail may vary, the essence of what is set out below applies also at York St John and the two Colleges.

Teaching and Learning: We have adapted all teaching and learning spaces to accommodate 1m+ social distancing, with a number of additional control measures in place covering seating arrangements, ventilation and - importantly - face coverings, which we require to be used in all indoor spaces including, teaching and learning, corridors and other shared study spaces. We are also running numerous communication campaigns emphasising awareness of symptoms, and key ways to avoid contracting Covid including good hand hygiene. We have installed hand sanitiser stations near all teaching spaces and provided cleaning wipes for surfaces within teaching spaces. And we have increased the frequency of our overall cleaning regimes.

On-line learning: To support face to face teaching in small groups, we have moved all large lectures on-line, freeing up lecture theatres to be used for socially distanced seminar groups, ensuring students can access a good mix of face to face and on-line based teaching. We are also making extensive use of on-line assessment methods.

Encouraging Positive Behaviours: We have developed a [Community Charter](#) - building on the [Together York](#) initiative - outlining what our community can expect from the University, and what the University expects from its staff and students. Our communications campaign - 'Stay Smart, Supportive and Safe' - shares new



Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee

information so students and staff feel well informed, and builds collective responsibility. We have also developed an on-line module for all students to share health and safety guidance and encourage responsible behaviours. The vast majority of students are following Covid guidelines closely and doing all they can to protect others. But we are also making clear the consequences of behaviour on campus or in the community that does not follow Covid guidelines, including a range of disciplinary measures at our disposal, as well as making students aware of legal penalties they could be subject to.

Adapting the Estate: We have made a number of adaptations to our estate to support social distancing and introduced signage to remind everyone on campus of the key covid control measures (Hands - Face - Space). Working with our Students' Unions, we have also developed an innovative set of outside venues to support student activities taking place in a covid-secure manner.

Supporting Isolation: Ensuring that everyone self isolates as soon as they experience covid symptoms is critically important so we have also put in place measures to support students (and their households) in our accommodation who need to self-isolate, including facilitating food deliveries and undertaking regular welfare checks. We are also working closely with private accommodation providers, including helping link them into the City Council's outbreak management plans.

Test and Trace: In addition to ensuring students have access to testing, we have put in place extensive measures - working closely with the City Council and regional Public Health teams - to support contact tracing, including capturing attendance at venues and events as well as using our timetabling and accommodation data. The support the Council has provided for the establishment of a walk-in testing centre in the city has been particularly important.



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Scenario Planning: We are running regular planning exercises - both with the Council and internally - for a range of scenarios including response to clusters of Covid cases and the escalating of restrictions by stages through to full lockdown so as effectively to prepare, interrogate and refine our institutional response.

Continuous Review: Finally, it is important to note that we are constantly keeping all of the above under regular review and adapting our plans as advice and guidance evolves. For example, we are currently refreshing our plans for any escalation of restrictions and aligning these with the Tiers 1-4 in the most recent DfE guidelines. We are also broadening the scope of our policy on face coverings in response to both SAGE and advice from local experts in aerosols resulting in a revised policy that explicitly requires the wearing of face coverings in all indoor situations except in single person offices.

With all these measures we have tried to strike a balance and as we consider that balance it is important to reflect for a moment on what our students are thinking. Both new and returning students have faced huge disruptions in the last six months and are eager to get back to studying and embark on the next phase in their lives.

We owe it to them, after all those disruptions, to harness that enthusiasm through the face to face teaching we can offer with all the safety measures we have in place, and through all the careful thought we've put into designing online teaching. And we want to harness it also by supporting students to follow safe behaviours outside the classroom.

Above all, though, we want to be clear with and through our students that we all share in a collective responsibility. Covid brings risks. We will manage those risks best if we all understand that every individual's risk is minimised the more everyone else follows the rules.

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