

Notice of a public meeting of

City of York Outbreak Management Advisory Board

To: Councillors Aspden (Chair), Runciman (Vice-Chair) and D Myers

Ian Floyd - Chief Operating Officer, CYC
Sharon Stoltz- Statutory Director of Public Health, CYC
Amanda Hatton - Corporate Director of People, CYC
Sian Balsom - Manager of Healthwatch York
Marc Bichtemann (First York) - Transport Representative
Lucy Brown - Director of Communications, York Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
James Farrar (York, N Yorkshire & E Riding LEP) - Business Representative
Prof. Charlie Jeffery (UoY) - Further / Higher Education
Phil Mettam - NHS Track & Trace Lead
Julia Mulligan - Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner
Dr Simon Padfield - Consultant in Health Protection, Public Health England
Mike Padgham - Chair, Independent Health Group
Alison Semmence - Chief Executive, York CVS
Dr Sally Tyrer - General Practitioner, N Yorkshire Local Medical Committee
Lisa Winward – Chief Constable, N Yorkshire Police

Date: Wednesday, 18 November 2020

Time: 5.30 pm

Venue: Remote Meeting

AGENDA

- 1. Declarations of Interest**
- 2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 October 2020, and actions arising** (Pages 1 - 10)

3. **Current Situation in York** (Pages 11 - 12)
4. **Communications and Engagement** (Pages 13 - 34)
(including update from campaign task and finish groups)
5. **Update from Sub-Group: Universities and Higher Education Establishments** (Pages 35 - 36)
6. **Verbal Update on Contact Tracing**
7. **Covid-19 Testing Proposals** *(presentation to be made at the meeting)*
8. **Covid-19 Mass Vaccination** *(presentation to be made at the meeting)*
9. **CVS and Healthwatch York Report: 'What We Did During the Covid-19 Lockdown March-June 2020'** (Pages 37 - 62)
10. **Agenda Items for the next Meeting**
Item for December meeting:
 - Economic Analysis of Covid Impacts – James Farrar/Simon Brereton
11. **Dates of Future Meetings**
12. **Any Other Business**

For more information about any of the following please contact Democratic Services at democratic.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	21 October 2020
Present	<p>Councillors Aspden (Chair), Runciman and Myers</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>Ian Floyd - Interim Head of Paid Service, City of York Council</p> <p>James Farrar – Local Enterprise Partnership</p> <p>Professor Charlie Jeffery - Vice Chancellor and President, University of York</p> <p>Dr Andrew Lee – Executive Director Primary Care and Population Health, NHS Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group</p> <p>Phil Mettam – Track and Trace Lead for Humber, Coast and Vale, NHS Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group</p> <p>Julia Mulligan – North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner</p> <p>Dr Simon Padfield – Consultant in Health Protection, Public Health England</p> <p>Alison Semmence – Chief Executive, York CVS</p> <p>Sharon Stoltz – Director of Public Health for the City of York</p> <p>Maxine Squire – Assistant Director of Education, City of York Council (Substitute for Amanda Hatton)</p> <p>Dr Sally Tyrer – General Practitioner, North Yorkshire Local Medical Committee</p> <p>Lisa Winward – Chief Constable, North Yorkshire Police</p>
Apologies	<p>Amanda Hatton – Corporate Director, Children, Education and Communities, City of York Council</p> <p>Mike Padgham – Independent Care Group</p>

In Attendance Claire Foale - Head of Communications,
Customer Services and Digital, City of York
Council
Fiona Phillips – Assistant Director of Public
Health, City of York Council

53. Declarations of Interest

The Board had no interests to declare.

54. Minutes of the Meeting held on 30 September 2020, and actions arising

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes. The Board agreed the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting held on 21 October 2020.

The Board noted the updates in the action log.

55. Current Situation in York

Fiona Phillips, Assistant Director of Public Health, City of York Council, presented an overview of the local available data. The positivity rate of York had increased to 18% which was significantly higher than the national rates. This was an indicator that was closely monitored daily. A high positivity rate showed that community transmission was high and usually called for more testing to be considered by the local authority. As stipulated by the World Health Organisation (WHO) at the start of the pandemic, a healthy positivity rate was below 5%.

The areas that had been the most affected with the highest rates were Fulford, Heslington and the University of York. The paper also outlined the age profile from both before and after the restrictions were relaxed in July. In the first two weeks of the lockdown the spread of positive cases had been mostly within the 20-60 age group, making up three quarters of all cases, with the rest being in the 10-19 cohort. Now however the 10-19 age group made up 40% of all positive cases in York. Data gathered from the National Track and Trace service showed that 70% of positive cases had been successfully contacted by the system, which was good. This would

hopefully increase with the recent implementation of the localised contact tracing system.

Councillor Aspden asked whether there had been any learning shared with other local authorities who had moved into Tier 3, in case it happened in York. Sharon Stoltz, Director of Public Health for the City of York, assured the Board that she met with the Chief Medical Officer and Directors of Public Health from other areas across England regularly and they had found that a whole host of different measures could have an impact. If we managed to keep the positivity rate in older people stable and address the community transmission rate to protect the NHS and care homes, she would expect that York would stay in Tier 2.

As seen in the presented data, the majority of cases were aged under 30. Alison Semmence, Chief Executive of York CVS, asked how long the time lag was before the older cohort became infected. Sharon Stoltz assured the Board that this wasn't inevitable and that trends were monitored over a 7/14 day period.

Julia Mulligan, North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, asked whether there had been any insights learnt from the behaviours of different age groups. She stated that the 60+ age group were well aware of the risks and therefore were being cautious. Sharon reported that people of all ages had been found to break the guidance.

Marc Bichtemann, Managing Director of First York, asked whether people weren't following the rules because they didn't understand them, rather than actively not following them. Siân Balsom, Manager at Healthwatch York, thought it could be attributed to people suffering from quarantine fatigue; especially since people had been following the rules and cases had still continued to rise. The Board discussed how some positive messaging could be developed to ensure people followed the guidance.

The Board noted the update.

56. Communications and Engagement - Presentation

Claire Foale, Head of Communications at City of York Council, gave a presentation on the continued messages and engagement that the Council carried out. Facebook Live Q&A sessions had continued to be used to engage with the local community. The last Q&A held was on 14 October and had been focused on the return of students to the

city. A daily tweet had also been introduced last week which showed the daily cases. This was also shared with Jorvik Radio, who had a daily thirty minute segment around covid. Local media had been very helpful in supporting the council in disseminating local messages. There had been a shift over to more positive messaging recently, to be more supportive and encourage the public to adhere to the guidance more.

The Board noted the presentation.

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

Charlie Jeffery, Vice Chancellor and President of the University of York, gave an update from the Universities and Higher Education Establishments Sub-Group. He stated that we continued to see a significant amount of cases but these were starting to decline. A clear pattern of the cases had been identified after working closely with the City of York Council's Public Health Team.

The Sub-Group had had a good experience in requesting and receiving tests in a timely manner. The walk-in testing site was in full operation and had been a very helpful resource to draw upon. Charlie informed the Board that a large number of students were currently self-isolating but this had decreased significantly over the last week. Charlie noted the great work the Student Societies had been doing to build the morale of students. Due to the regular contact, access to online resources and the recreational activities that had been created, students were showing quite a high level of compliance.

There were different challenges that faced universities and colleges as they both had big accommodation buildings and a large amount of commuters who travelled. This made these settings much more prone to outbreaks and would require whole site asymptomatic testing to stop widespread transmission. This had already been carried out on two student accommodation buildings with relative success.

Charlie informed the Board of the close collaborative work with the City of York Council, Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), York Hospital and colleagues in Hull to see whether any joint working could help increase testing capacity. Charlie had found that the working relationships in York were much stronger than those of his education colleagues elsewhere in the country. Siân Balsom asked whether there had been any lessons learnt from other universities as

they were expected to be the first hit by the second wave. The University of York had the fortune of having a later start date to that of other parts of the country, which Charlie explained had given them a degree of foresight that had informed their preparatory work. Charlie added that they were currently working out the logistics of students going home for the holidays as well as their eventual return in January 2021.

The Board noted the update from the Sub-Group.

58. Theme 4 in the Outbreak Control Plan: Contact Tracing in Complex Settings - Presentation

Fiona Phillips updated the Board on the work that had been progressed regarding contact tracing in complex settings. If it was a complex scenario, the Public Health England (PHE) Public Protection Team would pick it up and would potentially work with the local Public Health Team if any local work needed to be carried out. Three visits to premises with concerning outbreaks in York had been carried out by a representative from both the Public Protection Team and the Public Health Team.

A lot of work had been completed with schools to trace the contacts of cases. However, Fiona noted that the head teachers within the schools and the respective role in universities had done a lot of work on this, almost becoming experts themselves.

The first preparatory meeting with PHE had taken place on 1 October and in just three weeks the local contact tracing system had been fully set up. Existing staff members from the Health Trainer Team had been used in the interim while Health Promotion Officers were being recruited and trained. After they were fully trained, the Health Trainers would only be used in a surge capacity if they were needed. Fiona stated that this was important as the service needed to be reactive and able to be scaled up when appropriate.

Currently, the National Track and Trace Service attempted to contact cases/contacts for 48 hours and if this hadn't been achieved it would be passed over to us. Our local system would then try to contact the person for a 24 hour period. If contact could not be made, a visit to their home address would be organised to offer support in person.

Councillor Myers asked about the consistency of funding regarding the local test and trace system. Sharon stated that all local authorities received a share of the one-off grant of £300m that was

allocated to local authorities' Public Health Teams. York's share of that was £173,000, which had been used to support the communications work as well as to boost the capacity of both the Public Protection Team and Business Intelligence Team. Money from the existing Public Health grant had also been used to supplement the funding. Through being prudent, the funds were expected to allow the service to run up until December 2021. If the pandemic continued further funding would have to be requested. The Chair added that a letter had been sent to the Health Secretary which called for additional funding and support for the test and trace system as well as for a second walk-in testing site. Ian Floyd, Interim Head of Paid Service at City of York Council, stated that we shouldn't forget that other funding was still being received with all other local authorities suffering from the same financial pressures. However it clearly made sense that the return of investment in covid will be massive for businesses and residents.

The Board noted the report and expressed their thanks to the Public Health Team for establishing the local contact tracing system.

59. National Social Distancing Framework - Verbal Update

The Board discussed the new three-tiered covid alert system and how being moved into Tier 2 affected York. Sharon Stoltz asked the Board if any further work could be identified to mitigate some of the potential impacts of moving higher up in the Tiers. Sharon asked for feedback to be sent to herself and Claire Foale.

The Board noted the verbal update.

60. Risk Log

Sharon Stoltz thought it would be useful for the Board to have sight of the risk log that the Outbreak Management Group (OMG) used. The OMG brought representatives from all teams across the council to work on the Outbreak Control Plan. Sharon explained the different themes and named the Public Health Practitioner who led on each of them.

Theme 1 had been separated into Schools and Care Homes. Care Homes were managing to control the spread of infection well with the risk level RAG rated at Green. Leigh Bell was the Practitioner who led on Care Homes. Schools was led by Anita Dobson with support from Maxine Squire. Schools had been coping well throughout the pandemic with no whole school closures having to take place. Head

Teachers and their staff had done a great job with disseminating public health messages to their students and families as well as carrying out a lot of their own contact tracing before even being asked. The only concern, Fiona stated, was that should there be a massive influx of cases in schools, it could create a staff capacity issue if most had to self-isolate. If guidance was followed however, it would dramatically reduce the risk of this happening. This explained why the risk was currently RAG rated as Amber.

Theme 2: High Risk Settings and Vulnerable Populations had been split into Workplaces, Universities and other vulnerable populations. Universities was led by Nick Sinclair and Peter Roderick. This theme had been rated amber due to the amount of staff capacity required to support it. Workplaces was led by Natalie McPhillips with support from the Public Protection Team and their Environmental Health Officers. It was a very resource intensive work as we needed to react quickly to any clusters or outbreaks that were identified. There had been no difficulties reported accessing businesses and they had been very compliant with the suggestions made at each site visit. Working relationships with businesses had become a lot better throughout the pandemic but there was still some work to be progressed to help them understand the necessity to self-isolate if required to do so. Workplaces had been RAG rated as Amber.

Themes 3 & 4 covered the local contact tracing and testing arrangements. Philippa Press led on this. Another application was currently being prepared for the second walk-in test site at the other side of the city, which was still being identified. Consultations with Deloitte and PHE had already started. Fiona reported that access to testing had been improved but there were still issues around the timeliness of the results coming through to us. This was a national issue that the government was aware of and was also why the risk level had been RAG rated as Amber.

Theme 5 was around data. This theme had fostered a lot of cross agency work from across the CCG, CYC and the Hospital. Data sharing agreements had been developed to be able to look at the biggest, most complete current picture of York. As discussed earlier this was monitored daily with trends being reviewed on a weekly basis. This theme was led by Peter Roderick with the support of Ian Cunningham and the Business Intelligence Team.

Theme 6 was around the support for vulnerable people. This theme's risk level had been RAG rated as Green as the covid support hubs

had been very stable, but further volunteers were needed to support this. Fiona noted the great help York CVS had given to support this.

Theme 7: Governance had been RAG rated as Green since the Outbreak Management Group met regularly and received good support from the Public Health Team and elsewhere in the council.

The Board noted the risk log as presented by Sharon Stoltz.

61. Agenda Items for the Next Meeting

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

A request had already been received from York CVS around the work they had progressed regarding covid and this would be added to the November agenda. James Farrar had also suggested an agenda item on the economy and the furlough scheme to understand whether there were any knock-on effects for the future. It was agreed that this be brought to the December meeting.

62. Dates of Future Meetings

The agreed dates of future meetings were as follows:

- 18 November 2020
- 9 December 2020
- 13 January 2021
- 10 February 2021
- 17 March 2021
- 7 April 2021
- 19 May 2021

63. Any Other Business

The Board had no other business to discuss.

Cllr K Aspden, Chair

[The meeting started at 17:30 and finished at 19:05].

Outbreak Management Advisory Board Action Log

Action Number	Meeting Date	Work Stream	Action	Action Owner	Notes	Status
006	13.07.2020	Communications	Lead on progressing information packs for school governors	Claire Foale	<p>Communications will provide an update on this as part of their agenda item on 19.08.2020</p> <p>Update as of 07.09.2020: Have spoken to schools and they have suggested that this is picked up once schools re-open</p> <p>11.11.2020: We are working with education colleagues to identify how best engage school governors</p>	In progress
016	30.09.2020	10pm closing time for pubs and restaurants	Following a recent incident in the town centre shortly after the 10pm closing time the Chair agreed to speak with the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner about what can be put in place to avoid similar incidents occurring	Cllr Keith Aspden		In progress

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Business Intelligence Hub

Covid-19 in York: Public Health Data - One Page Summary (as at 16.11.20)

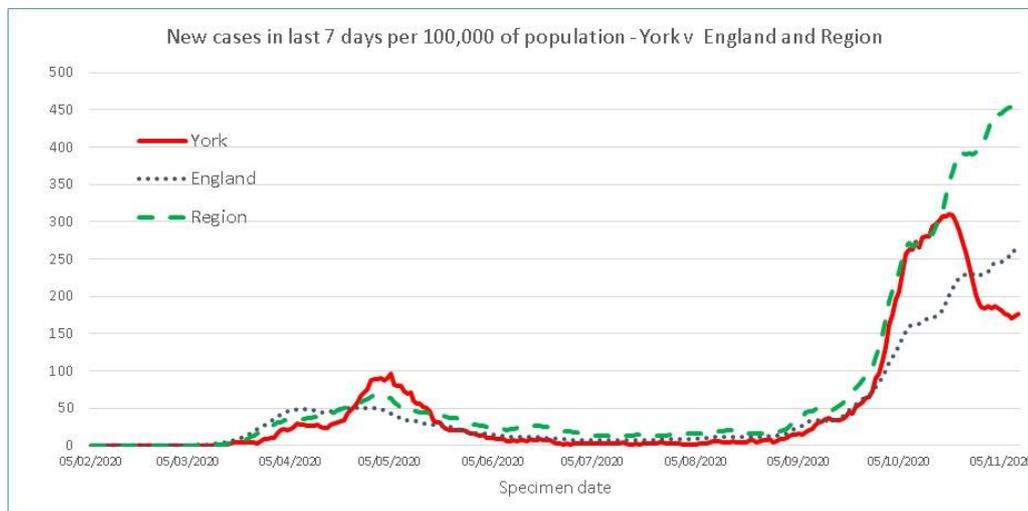
Key Impacts

- As at 15.11.20 York has had **4,505** cases, a rate of **2,138.9** per 100,000 of population. The rate in York is above the national average (2,087.5) but below the regional average (3,309.5).
- The latest “validated” rate of new Covid cases per 100,000 of population for the period 4.11.20 to 10.11.20 was **176.1**. The national and regional averages at this date were 264.4 and 446.8 respectively. York currently has the lowest 7 day rate in the Yorkshire and Humber region.
- As at 12.11.20, the latest 7 day positivity rate in York (Pillar 2 only) was **10.25%**. The national and regional averages are 11% and 15.7% respectively.
- There have been **178** deaths of CYC residents, 78 of which were in care homes. There have been 6 deaths of CYC residents reported by ONS in the last 4 weeks. The overall death rate in York is **below** the England average but a higher % of deaths of York residents have occurred in care homes.

Impact by age and gender

- **47%** of those testing positive in York have been aged under 30. **56%** of those testing positive in York are female. **52.3%** of those who died were male, a slightly lower proportion than the national average (55.3%). The average age of the people who died was **82.4**, with an age range of 53-104.

Trends



- The 7 day rate of cases per 100,000 in York peaked at 309.5 on 20.10.20. The rate in York has fallen since then, whilst national and regional rates have continued to rise.

NHS Test and Trace

- Since 28.5.20 a total of **3,977** CYC Covid cases have been uploaded into the NHS Test and Trace system and **3,412** of the cases have been completed (85.8%). **11,695** ‘contacts’ have been identified and **6,890** of these have been completed (58.9%). Between 22.10.20 and 6.11.20, **225** ‘actionable’ positive COVID-19 CYC cases were referred to the local contact tracing service. 224 of the referrals (99.6%) have been actioned and 1 referral (0.4%) is still ‘in progress’. Of the referrals actioned, 171 (**76.3%**) were successful and 53 (23.7%) were uncontactable.

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

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YORK OUTBREAK CONTROL

Communications update

18 November 2020



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

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>	Current work in progress
Phase 2	Alert following spike in cases	<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>	
Phase 3	Manage outbreak (more details in subsequent slides)	<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 	

Communications roadmap



	2020										2021		
	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M
Restriction communications	Lockdown			Tier 1			T2	T4	?				
Regular updates / e-newsletters	daily			1-2 a week									
Direct publications, <i>Our City</i>	monthly			quarterly									
Facebook live – ask the leaders						monthly		weekly					
Let's be York (safe reopen)				Business packs, signage, social, web, PR									
Let's be York (keep open)						Outside, social							
We've got it covered						Social, PR, web							
18-34 yo residents							social						
Safe return to school						direct, social, web							
Emotional health – it's ok to talk								PR, facebook, social, outside					
Self-isolation – keep going													
Getting to T1 – what we can do													
Testing strategy													
Don't be complacent													

Phase I

Regular update of current situation to try and prevent outbreaks



Share accurate and timely messaging



NEWS

Home | Coronavirus | US Election | UK | World | Business | Politics | Tech | Science | Health | Family & Education | England | Local News | Regions | York & North Yorkshire

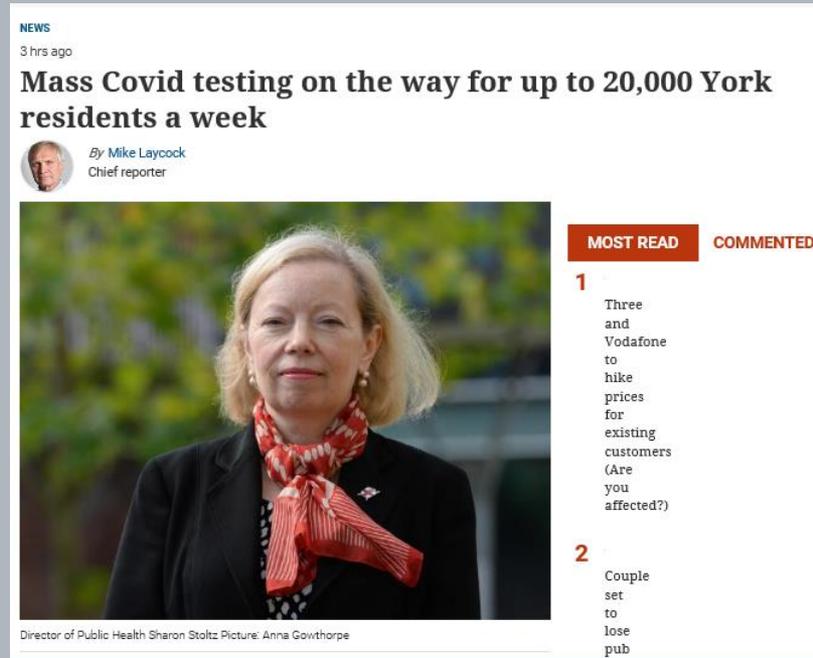
York 'aspiration' to move to tier one after lockdown

7 days ago



The city entered tier two restrictions on 18 October

York's director of public health has said her "aspiration" is for the city to be placed in the lowest tier of restrictions once national lockdown restrictions



NEWS

3 hrs ago

Mass Covid testing on the way for up to 20,000 York residents a week

By Mike Laycock
Chief reporter



Director of Public Health Sharon Stoltz. Picture: Anna Gowthorpe

MOST READ **COMMENTED**

- Three and Vodafone to hike prices for existing customers (Are you affected?)
- Couple set to lose pub



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

The council is working closely with partners and using a variety of channels to reach as many people as possible.

Continued our regular communications and updates:

- 2x weekly email updates to members and partners
- 2x weekly resident e-newsletter
- Weekly business e-newsletter
- Weekly families e-newsletter
- Regular press releases and media interviews
- Social media campaigns / weekly public health video

Build engagement through conversation

3 November: Ask the Leaders Q&A
National lockdown

#AskThe Leaders Live Q&A

National lockdown restrictions and our continued response to Coronavirus.

Tuesday 3 November, 5:00pm - 6:00pm

Comment during the live stream or email us at: YourQuestions@york.gov.uk

13 November: Ask the Leaders Q&A – business week

#AskThe Leaders Live Q&A

National lockdown restrictions and our continued response to Coronavirus.

Friday 13 November, 1:00pm - 2:00pm

Comment during the live stream or email us at: YourQuestions@york.gov.uk

11 November: Ask the Leaders Q&A
Emotional health and education

#AskThe Leaders Live Q&A

Wednesday 11 November, 5:30 - 6:30pm

Join us for the latest public health update, education updates and information on emotional health.

Comment during the livestreams or email us at: YourQuestions@york.gov.uk

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Comment 1: I would just like to praise this proactive public engagement session. More councils need to follow suit, well done. (7 likes)

Comment 2: Thank you for answering my question - and for your recommendations (1 like)

Comment 3: I have been following the YCC guide lines page . Those guidelines are actually very clear and detailed . Well done council (2 likes)

Comment 4: Thank you for your response (1 like)

Response (3/11 and 11/11)

Views – 44,079

Comments – 607

Reach – 131,293

Phase 2

Alert following increase in cases



Tier 4 communications

1. Share accurate and timely information
2. Further engage residents by using the tier process as a catalyst for increased communications:

- Resident, partner and members update
- Internal communications
- Social statement and social comms to clarify rules
- Update website
- Briefing via live facebook Q&A on 3 November
- Shared Covid help contact details

"This year has been exceptionally difficult for many, and we are hugely grateful to residents and businesses across the city who continue to help to slow the spread of the virus and protect our city. Since York moved into Tier 2, we have started to see a decline in the rate of Coronavirus cases and this is thanks to our collective effort. So, it's disappointing that other parts of the country are continuing to experience challenges and that York could face further restrictions as a result of this.

"If the Government do decide to impose a second national lockdown, significant financial support must follow for our local businesses and residents, who are continuing to face unprecedented financial difficulties as a result of the pandemic.

"Despite the challenges of this year, York has demonstrated what it does best – pulling together and supporting local businesses and each other - keeping our friends and family safe. I know whatever happens in the coming days and weeks, we will continue in this spirit."



Cllr Keith Aspden
Leader of City of York Council

www.york.gov.uk/Coronavirus

Disposing of household waste



To help us all stay safe, only visit our sites when necessary, and at quiet times where possible.



Check our opening hours at www.york.gov.uk/Waste



Coronavirus and council services

To control the spread of coronavirus national restrictions are in place between Thursday 5 November and Wednesday 2 December; get the latest COVID-19 information, relevant to our area...

LATEST ON COVID-19



We are here to help ahead of national lockdown

[Home](#) > [Latest news](#) > We are here to help ahead of national lockdown

Share it



Published Tuesday, 3 November 2020

City of York Council has reassured residents and businesses that following the announcement of a national lockdown, it will support residents, business and communities as much as possible.

Tweet



We will support York through the national restrictions and continue to provide services and support residents, communities and businesses in the weeks and months ahead. york.gov.uk/news/article/3...

National Lockdown Services still open for families <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Schools and education facilities - will stay open• Play areas and parks - will stay open• School crossing patrols - continue as normal• Children's play areas - will stay open• Libraries - offering click and collect services	National Lockdown Accessing council services <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welfare Benefit, Adult Financial Care Assessments, Court of Protection Visits - continue as normal• Blue badge services - continue as normal• Resident parking permits - continue as normal• Visitor parking permits - continue as normal (now click and post)
National Lockdown Accessing council support <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Customer centre - available by appointment• Housing maintenance - continue as normal• Public meetings continue virtually• Legal services - continue as normal• Council tax and business rates - continue as normal	National Lockdown Accessing council facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Household waste and recycling centres - will stay open (no need to book a space)• Car parks - open as usual• Public toilets - open as usual

5:55 PM · Nov 4, 2020 · Hootsuite Inc.

3 Retweets 1 Quote Tweet 3 Likes

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: remember and understand that whilst in lockdown there are still things we can safely enjoy

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

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

Introduced :You can Still

Continued :We've got it Covered



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You can still...
Pop into York, Tang Hall or Acomb library to use the public computers or to collect items you've ordered online.

Keep up to date with government guidelines. Visit www.gov.uk/coronavirus

YORK COUNCIL

HANDS
FACE
SPACE

CORONAVIRUS
PROTECT YOURSELF & OTHERS

You can still...
Shop with your favourite local retailers. Check out their social media feeds or websites to find out what services they're offering during lockdown.

Shop with your favourite local retailers. Check out their social media feeds or websites to find out what services they're offering during lockdown. Visit www.gov.uk/coronavirus

YORK COUNCIL

HANDS
FACE
SPACE

CORONAVIRUS
PROTECT YOURSELF & OTHERS

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

Reminding parents that schools and early years settings are safely operating during Tier 4

Communications objectives:

Think – parents, carers (and children and young people), understand how the national lockdown applies to them and what they can and can't do in order to comply with it

Feel – parents and carers feel confident to send their children to school and childcare settings, understanding that schools and settings are implementing the national guidance relating to covid, have taken local steps and will meet their children's education/pastoral needs .

Do – children and young people continue to access schools and settings as normal, using the virtual learning facility only if they are self isolating or have covid 19.

www.york.gov.uk/LBYParentStudentSupport



Let's be York
Explore Inspire Learn

Best start in life

Children and young people should still attend school during lockdown, unless they are ill or self-isolating.

We're working with schools to provide them with the best possible education.



Let's be York
Explore Inspire Learn

Hands Face Space

Help us keep York schools open. Remind your child to:

- 🧼 Wash their hands
- 😷 Remember their face covering (if secondary)
- ➡️ Keep a two-metre space where possible

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

Encouraging residents to engage in local test and trace and make easier to understand what to do

Communications products:

Digital – social, web, animation

Media – press release/impact

Partner packs

Additional content – FAQs, flowchart



DRAFT CONTENT - Publish Date TBC

Council thanks city one week on from new national restrictions coming in

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Local contact tracing makes an immediate impact

[Home](#) > [Latest news](#) > Local contact tracing makes an immediate impact

Required to self-isolate by the Test and Track scheme?

If so, you may be eligible for a one-off payment to support you through the 14-day quarantine.

Find out more and apply at www.york.gov.uk/selfisolate

Published Thursday, 29 October 2020

York's local contact tracing programme has been running for one week now and data is already showing it has had an immediate impact.

Local contact tracing

Since launching last week we have reached 83.7% of contacts passed to us by the national service.

We reached 100% of contacts given to us yesterday (28 October).

Thank you to everyone engaging with the service. It really does make a difference.

www.york.gov.uk/Coronavirus

Planning outbreak communications

- Testing strategy including mass testing
- Leaving lockdown (the next tier)
- Self isolation
- Mass vaccinations
- Our Big Conversation – temperature check in *Our City*

York's Emotional Wellbeing Communications plan

Supporting the Outbreak Control Plan



Communications objectives

1. Support people to maintain or improve their emotional health
2. Normalise not feeling ok by sharing resident's own scenario
3. Build resilience by sharing self-help solutions
4. Build confidence in peer support by sharing signposting and support
5. Amplifying trusted sources of support through partners ie voluntary/community sector, NHS/TEWV, businesses.
6. Deliver a partner-led campaign that actively **encourages audience participation** (sharing scenarios or sharing self-help ideas)
7. Partners - CYC's public health, adult social care and commissioning teams, North Yorkshire Police, CCG, TEWV, LEP, CVS, YUSU, Universities, Healthwatch, Askham Bryan College, First Group.
8. Identify sponsors and supporters who can help promote the messaging through disruptive and participatory activities

Emotional wellbeing communications plan

Objectives

Think – that it's ok to not feel ok, are aware of a wide range of support to help them and how they can help themselves

Feel – there are people who are in the same situation, who can help that there is support and resources which is accessible and right for them to maintain or improve their emotional health and wellbeing and either feel inspired or supported to reach out, or have confidence that they can support others and are comfortable signposting support

Do – share their own experiences of covid related emotional health issues, share self-help suggestions and are comfortable providing peer support

Strategy

Normalise that it's ok not to be ok, that others are feeling like you are and that you can reach out by sharing real experiences of how covid/pandemic has significantly affected emotional health in very different ways

Build confidence in peer support sharing signposting and advice online, face to face, within the community and through informal, personal connections, keeping an organisation-agnostic approach and making it easier for peers / influencers to signpost support.

Build resilience by sharing self-help solutions – show the different easy and accessible ideas for self care and prevention, including peer support by drawing attention to the huge range of support.

Amplify and target messaging through trusted networks via partners' channels to reach widely and effectively, especially to those experiencing social isolation by working with community groups and business groups to reach as many people as possible and adapting communications for target groups (eg. a parent scenario for schools audiences)

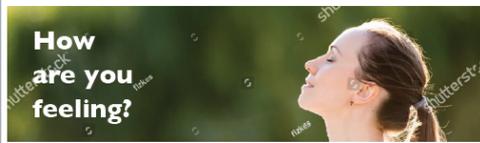
PRIORITIES/HIGHLIGHTS

- Establish task and finish group with partners, including the voluntary and community sectors, health partners and business sector to ensure consistent messaging and advice across the city.
- Identify the breadth of support available
- Use all available channels to reach our communities including employers, employees, students, parents, older residents
- Launch to the business community
- Launch to residents with PR and throughout November
- Develop calendar to share different scenarios at different times of the year, eg. Christmas, school holidays, tier changes.
- Engage in facebook live
- Continue to inform public and encourage reaching out
- Share scenarios normalising that it's OK not to feel OK or ideas for self-help
- Share lived experiences

Feel real York

New campaign helps York talk

We know that lockdown is tough for many reasons. To help you find ways to talk about you feel and find help, especially during lockdown, we're sharing tips and ideas and inspiration from people and partners across the city. We want everyone to know that it's ok not to be ok, and that if that's how you're feeling, there is help and support that's right for you. Share your ideas at #FeelRealYork and visit: LiveWellYork.co.uk



Coronavirus can make us feel anxious, stressed, worried, sad, bored, lonely or frustrated. Everyone feels different and that's OK. For most of us, these difficult feelings will pass. There are simple things we can do to help take care of our emotional health and wellbeing. Doing so will help us think clearly, help look after ourselves and those we care about.

1. Stay connected with people

Maintaining healthy relationships with people we trust is important for our emotional wellbeing. If you can, visit or meet up with friends – old and new – and family while following the latest government guidance. Or, stay in touch by phone, video calls or social media.

2. Talk about your worries

It's normal to feel worried, scared or helpless about the current situation. It's OK to share your concerns with others you trust – and doing so may help them too. If you can't speak to someone, there are plenty of helplines you can try.

3. Support and help others

Helping someone else can benefit you as well as them. So try to understand others' concerns, worries or how they're behaving. How could you help those around you? Who could you meet up with, or call.

4. Feel prepared

You will feel more in control and less concerned if you work through what the current government guidelines mean for you: how will you be affected and what do you need to do. It might help to talk with your employer about support, sick pay and benefits rights.

5. Look after your body

Our physical health has a big impact on how we feel and it can be easy to fall into unhealthy patterns that end up making you feel worse. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, drink plenty of water and exercise regularly. Avoid smoking or drugs, and try not to drink too much alcohol. Going for a walk or run, bike ride or 10-minute workout can help lift your mood and clear your mind.

6. Stick to the facts

Find a source you can trust – such as GOV.UK or the NHS website – and fact-check information you get. You might want to limit the time you spend following news of the pandemic and turning off -news alerts on your phone. You could set yourself a time to read updates or limit yourself to a couple of checks a day.

7. Stay on top of difficult feelings

Concern about the coronavirus outbreak is normal. However, some people may experience intense anxiety that can affect their daily life. Try to focus on what you can control, like your behaviour, who you speak to, and where and how often you get information. It's fine to acknowledge that some things are outside of your control, so try some ideas to help manage your anxiety or listen to an audio guide.

8. Do things you enjoy

Focusing on what you love to do, relaxing or connecting with others can help with anxious thoughts and feelings. What can you do following social distancing guidelines or can you adapt them, or try something new?

9. Focus on the present

Focusing on the present, rather than worrying about the future, can help with difficult emotions and improve our wellbeing. Relaxation and mindfulness techniques can help some people deal with feelings of anxiety.

10. Look after your sleep

Good-quality sleep makes a big difference to how we feel mentally and physically. Try to keep up regular sleeping patterns, avoid caffeine or screens before bed, and create a restful environment.

yorkcvs
Volunteering your time during lockdown and beyond
 York's newly established Volunteer Centre, managed by York CVS, is here to support individuals looking to help charities and charitable organisations within the city. Volunteer Centre Co-ordinators, Bev Frain and Drew Richardson can support you to find the right volunteering role for you, based on your areas of interest and how you would like to get involved. Talking about the centre, Drew said: "People giving just a little of their time can make such a big difference within our local communities. There are always groups in need of some extra help, especially at the moment, so please do get in touch if you would like to find out how you can help". To view the latest volunteering opportunities please visit: yorkcvs.org.uk/volunteers or you can contact the Volunteer Centre by emailing: volunteering@yorkcvs.org.uk

Further support and advice
 More help and support is available at nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters If you're a parent or care for a child or young person, try youngminds.org.uk/blog/talking-to-your-child-about-coronavirus For a self-assessment, audio guides and other tools try nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression If someone you know is struggling with their mental health, please visit: nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/helping-others

November 2020

City of York Council was live.
 Published by Chris Day · 16 hrs ·

6,913 People Reached
 967 Engagements
 Boost Post
 12
 61 Comments 7 Shares

Facebook Live Q&As running throughout November

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Our City – distributed December

HOW ARE YOU REALLY FEELING?
 #FEELREALYORK
www.time-to-change.org.uk

HOW ARE YOU REALLY FEELING?
 #FEELREALYORK
www.time-to-change.org.uk

Campaign and partner posters / social graphics

Call on us...
 In a mental health emergency.
 Contact your local TEWW crisis service on **FREEPHONE. 0800 0516171**
 Advice on what to do in a mental health emergency is available on our website www.teww.nhs.uk/crisisadvice

NHS
 Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust

We're listening...
 When it's all starting to get on top of you.

to psychological therapies (IAPT). In York and Selby offers a variety of problems with low mood and anxiety. Self refer online or phone: **56840**

Launch plan

	Normalise not feeling ok	Build confidence in peer support	Build resilience through sharing self-help	Amplify and target messaging through trusted networks
w/c 9 Nov		11/11 Hold resident <u>facebook live</u> – emotional health and returning to school		Share <u>business pack</u> with business partners
w/c 16 Nov	Launch <u>social media tool</u> with own scenarios Provide <u>posters</u> for businesses to display and <u>coasters</u> in hospitality Partner <u>press release</u>			Share <u>parents pack</u> with schools Share <u>children and young people pack</u> with key partners
w/c 23 Nov		Hold resident <u>facebook live</u> about emotional health conversations		Share <u>health pack</u> for health partners
w/c 30 Nov	Create <u>video</u> of people sharing their own scenarios (voxpox style or via texting ...)			
December	<i>Our City</i> – include insert of emotional health support <i>Display posters</i> <i>Display supermarket adverts</i>	<i>Provide <u>coasters</u> to hospitality partners</i>		

Campaign plan

Task and finish
group refreshing
communications
calendar

		Build confidence in peer support	Build resilience through sharing self-help	Amplify and target messaging through trusted networks
		2 x facebook live sessions		Share partner packs to normalise with different scenarios
December	PR about Christmas emotional health and self isolation	<p>Is there any peer support we can link Christmas concerns into?</p> <p>Our City – emotional support</p>	Top tips for surviving Christmas and links	
January 2021	PR about January blues emotional health	2 x facebook live	Launch self-help tool	Share partner packs to start conversation about self-help
February		Can we partner with a high street brand to promote safe “have a cuppa with someone outside”		Provide new partner content for schools 1/2 term
March		Facebook live for university students and older pupils for Easter break		
April			Can we... to help people help	

Regularly report
about the impact
of the campaign

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Universities and Colleges Sub Group - Report to Outbreak Management Advisory Board

Overview

Since the last update cases of Covid at all our institutions have fallen substantially. Both Universities are reporting only single digit numbers of new cases per day and amongst the entire HE and FE student population we have less than 100 active cases.

Our Test and Trace teams continue to discuss cases daily with the City Council public health team, and our shared analysis across all four institutions and the City Council remains that all but a very few cases are derived from household to household transmission. We continue to have no evidence of transmission in learning and teaching settings.

End of Term

Attention across the university sector is now focusing on preparations for the end of term. For students who wish to travel home for the holiday period the Government has announced a 'student travel window' from the 3rd to the 9th of December during which we will work to manage departures in a safe way, in particular through a booking system for students who will be picked up by family members.

Alongside students who are permanently resident in the York area, we also usually have over a thousand students staying with us - on campus or other University owned accommodation in the City - over the Christmas holiday period and we are putting in place detailed plans to ensure these students are supported throughout this period.

We should also note that guidance on end of term arrangements for the FE sector, including residential FE students is still pending from government.

Mass Testing

The Government has also announced plans for mass testing students as term ends. At the time of writing we are still confirming exact entails with the Department of Education and Department of Health and Social Care but we hope to be able to offer this for students at both Universities and the over 18 year old residential students at Askham Bryan College.

The scheme is voluntary, but we hope to see a good uptake by our students and hope the results will allow students to make informed decisions about when and how they choose to go home or travel elsewhere for the Christmas holidays. As we move into the spring term we also hope that large scale testing, combined with an effective local test and trace system will be an

important way of managing the risk of virus transmission and allowing us to re-introduce more in-person activity on our campuses.

Support for Students

Reflecting on the first term of this academic year, the Universities and Colleges Sub Group also wanted to highlight the challenges faced by our student population - a cohort of young people who have been materially disadvantaged in a number of ways that will have profound impacts on their wellbeing. Despite the support we - and our Students' Unions - have put in place for students they have still been deeply affected by lost employment and earning opportunities, and through the continuing effect of the disruption to their education during the first lockdown.

Universities, colleges and students have responded as positively as we possibly could have throughout this year. But we know from our student welfare team and our Students' Unions that the financial pressure on students is increasing as the pandemic evolves, not least in the current lockdown period.

As such, we would welcome any action the Outbreak Management Advisory Board might take to support our call for greater financial support for students - specifically, we have asked the Government to provide additional hardship funding to help universities support students who have lost casual jobs or are otherwise facing financial hardship. We do not want to risk students being unable to support themselves and being forced to leave higher education. And we have asked the Government to help us manage future infection rates by providing self-isolation payments, like those available to others on low incomes, to any students who are either diagnosed with Covid-19 or are required as household members to self-isolate.

**WHAT WE DID DURING
THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN
MARCH – JUNE 2020**

SEPTEMBER 2020

yorkcvs

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Introduction

On 30 January 2020 the COVID-19 outbreak was declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. In March, the UK government imposed a lockdown. All "non-essential" travel and contact with people outside one's home (including family and partners) was banned, shutting almost all schools, business, facilities, places of worship. People were told to keep apart in public. Those with symptoms, and their households, were told to self-isolate, while the most vulnerable (people in their 70s and people with certain illnesses) were told to shield themselves.

This report summarises the themes that emerged from the many conversations we had with local people we supported during this lock down.

Please note: all names have been changed to preserve anonymity.

Who's 'We'?

This report has been compiled to provide a snapshot of the work carried out by York CVS during three months, March to June 2020, at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic.

'We' refers to all York CVS staff working in collaboration throughout the period described. In normal times, those staff undertake a wide range of roles for York CVS across social prescribing projects Ways to Wellbeing and NHS Link Workers, Healthwatch York, Dementia Action Alliance and Safe Places. See appendix 1 for more information.

What did we do during Covid-19?

Local GP practices added an option to their phone menus, for people in need of non-medical support. On selecting this phone option, callers were put through to York CVS staff (predominantly the Social Prescribing team) to answer calls. We could then provide social, emotional and wellbeing support, and organise practical help.

In addition, GP practices provided us with lists of vulnerable people of potential concern, for us to ring and offer support including a weekly welfare call. These lists included people with dementia (or who were in the process of receiving a dementia diagnosis) and they were supported by the York Dementia Action Alliance (YDAA).

Staff and volunteers (supported and co-ordinated by the York CVS staff team) made weekly welfare calls to vulnerable people, to make sure they had food, medicines and any other essential help.

In May, the Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group (VoYCCG) asked York CVS to run a Covid-19 Monitoring Hub. This was set up to make sure that individuals who were symptomatic for Covid-19 were contacted regularly. It was recognised that on days 7 to 10 the symptoms of Covid-19 could worsen, and VoYCCG wanted to make sure people had access to the medical support they needed.

Healthwatch York encouraged local York residents to share their Covid-19 experiences via an item in a City of York Council (CYC) leaflet that went to every household.

They also urged local employers to help protect their most vulnerable staff with an article in the York press - <https://www.yorkpress.co.uk/news/18362063.coronavirus-vulnerable-put-risk-employers/>

York CVS also published weekly updates for the Voluntary Sector within York, to help keep other organisations up to date with York's response to the pandemic. Sharing information and knowledge was key.

What we heard – in summary

This report covers the period from 23 March to 30 June 2020, so the statistics reflect this time period. This data does not include the support we gave through the COVID-19 Monitoring Hub.

During this time frame:

1759 people were supported through the GP Hot Line.

Out of the people supported, **92%** needed social support. Only **8%** needed a GP/Nurse appointment.

1,005 people referred for social support

393 people continue to receive support from the Link worker team or welfare calls

876 Welfare calls were made, by the staff/volunteer welfare call team

The number of calls does not reflect the complex nature of many of the calls, and the high level of ongoing support and contact that some people needed.

Many of the calls that we received were questions about access to prescriptions and food, especially for shielding individuals who couldn't go out themselves, and for individuals who were struggling financially and were struggling to afford the necessities. York CVS staff took action to resolve peoples' problems and reduce anxiety.

Themes

Although every call was unique, clear themes emerged. Here, we explore those themes, with personal stories to illustrate them where possible.

Food and medicines

The Issue:

A large chunk of the calls that came through the hotline were about problems with accessing food and medicines. This also came up many times during the weekly welfare calls.

The reasons for people not being able to access food and medicines varied widely. Many of the callers were anxious about not having food and medicines.

Residents who were shielding weren't able to go into shops and chemists, or to GP practices and pharmacies to collect prescriptions. This meant a large number of people ran out of medicine, were afraid of running out of medicine and could not renew their prescriptions.

Digital exclusion was a significant barrier for many. Not being online or digitally confident meant that they were excluded from doing online food shops, online repeat prescription ordering and accessing online support groups (such as local Facebook support groups offering help).

We also spoke with many who were struggling financially. Some had been struggling before the lock down, and relied heavily on Food Banks and places like 'Pay as you feel cafes', that weren't open in their usual ways. Others had suffered financially due to Covid-19 which created serious problems and major anxiety for people and their families about accessing food and necessities.

How we worked to resolve this issue:

These issues were particularly challenging to deal with in the first few weeks of the pandemic and over bank holidays. Demand was high and there was widespread panic. Adequate help simply wasn't available at this point. As a result, York CVS staff delivered food and medicines to people who were really struggling, and had no other sources of help.

We worked collaboratively with Move the Masses, a charity that worked to deliver prescriptions to shielding people, or those who were self-isolating throughout the lock down. We sent many referrals through to Move the Masses, for their volunteers to deliver medicines, which was a very reliable service.

Once the CYC Food Hubs were established, we worked with them to get emergency food parcels to people and their families who were shielding, struggling to get to shops or who didn't have enough money for food.

Using the local food hubs meant that we could get food to people in need. We were able to depend on them in a way that was not possible with the Government food hubs.

Personal stories:



Michael was very unwell with Covid-19 symptoms and was unable to get food for his family due to feeling unwell and having to self-isolate. We provided support to the family and arranged for them to receive a food parcel. Michael told us that without our support he would have struggled to feed his family. He was very thankful.



Margaret is an older woman living alone. She registered with the Government scheme for food parcels and was hoping to get a priority slot for their online shop, but heard nothing back. She was already tearful and feeling anxious about Covid-19. We provided the number for Morrison's doorstep delivery in the interim while sorting them a food parcel. We then called back the following week for a chat and to make sure Margaret was doing ok.



Jacob's prescription was ready to be collected from his nominated pharmacy, but he was shielding. Jacob rang us as he was worried about how he would be able to collect it. We sent a referral to Move the Masses (MTM) and arranged for a volunteer to deliver the medication. Jacob was really happy with the help from both York CVS and the volunteers from MTM.

Access to routine care

Many of the calls we received highlighted the impact on individuals when routine care stops.

Dental Care

We received calls about the impact of lack of dental care due to dentists being closed. When people rang in need of urgent dental care, we signposted to NHS 111. Many people we spoke to found this process frustrating, confusing and not always resulting in appropriate care.



My COVID story is that from day 1 of the lockdown I have needed a tooth to be extracted, but all the dentist will do is give me more and more antibiotics. It aches and makes eating very difficult. All my food needs to be soft so that I don't need to chew anything. It gives me earache and the glands hurt. I'm not getting any information about when, if ever, I might be able to have the tooth extracted. I'm in my 70's.

Further into lockdown, emergency dental hubs opened in York, but people found it very hard to access this service due to capacity and a lack of information about how to access. When people did manage to access the care from the hubs, they found them very efficient and helpful.



I contacted NHS 111 as I developed severe toothache and accessed care from a dental hub. I was quickly (less than 24 hours) diagnosed with an infection and antibiotics prescribed. I was very happy with the service provided.

Toenail cutting

The closure of podiatry and nail cutting services in lockdown caused many issues for people who use these services. We received many calls from people who were in pain, struggling to walk and had balance problems. Their risk of falling increased. People were also anxious about when their next appointment would take place and were worried about other health conditions caused or worsened by their toe nails not being cut.

How we worked to resolve this issue:

We had a lot of communication with White Cross Podiatry Service (NHS) who were keeping in touch with their regular patients, checking in to see how they were managing. They were offering self-care packs, posting out equipment to patients and explaining how to use them over the phone. They were also offering emergency face to face appointments for patients who had broken skin, in-growing toenails or were in severe pain.

Some private podiatry services were offering face to face appointments for a fee. For people that called us who weren't struggling financially and were willing to pay for care, we signposted to these services.

Blood tests

We heard multiple examples of people getting confusing or incorrect information about blood tests. For example, getting sent to the wrong locations, not having the correct paperwork for the tests or not being in accessible locations (such as being suitable for people with mobility issues, and people with autism).

When people were given the correct information, the majority of people we spoke to found that Nuffield Hospital worked well as a location for blood tests.

Shielding and self-isolating

At the start of lockdown we heard from many people concerned about shielding, the most common worries being:

- needing to shield, but hadn't receiving a shielding letter
- receiving a shielding letter, but feeling they had no need to shield
- having to shield but then were not receiving any help with managing foods and medicines
- worries about what to do if one person in the household had to shield and the others didn't

We gave people classed as vulnerable and needing to shield the appropriate Government advice. We also arranged for people to speak to their GP's for medical advice when they had other concerns and confusions as to whether or not someone should be shielding. We also arranged for shielding letters to be sent to people who should have received one but hadn't.

Mental health and wellbeing

A large proportion of our calls were from people struggling to cope with poor mental health, often linked to being lonely and isolated in lockdown.

Many people were finding it very hard to manage high levels of anxiety. For example, people worried about catching the virus, and how life would be after lockdown. Many of these people had no previous experience of mental ill health before Covid-19.

We also heard from people with previous experience of mental health support, whose mental health was significantly deteriorating. They described the support networks and coping strategies they normally rely on being knocked due to services closing because of the pandemic.

We also had feedback from the Covid-19 Monitoring Hub highlighting an increasing number of people experiencing mental ill-health related to their experiences of contracting Covid-19.

How we supported people struggling with poor mental health

We offered weekly welfare calls to people who were struggling (most often this meant they were feeling lonely, anxious, depressed) and who would benefit from someone checking in on them.

We are particularly proud of our work here. Set up in rapid time shortly before lockdown started, our welfare call work was hugely successful in terms of uptake and efficacy.

- **223** people were referred to the welfare call volunteers
- **876** welfare calls made

We were able to keep an eye on those who seemed to be deteriorating (mentally and physically), or were otherwise giving cause for concern - offering extra support when needed, and also giving lots of practical support.

We signposted people to other organisations and charities; shared self-care tips, information on mindfulness and how to look after your wellbeing when stuck at home.

One Social Prescriber also set up a mindfulness group after lockdown began. The aim was to help people who were feeling lonely or anxious, and those interested in meditation. The group, called 'Breathing Space' is a weekly volunteer-led online mindfulness group. Members have a catch up, then are led through a meditation practice, followed by a further opportunity to talk and reflect. It has given the group members a safe space to chat and socialise, as well as an introduction to mindfulness and meditation. Several members of the group are hoping they might be able to meet up face to face one day soon.



Pat was a very isolated woman who was referred to us by her GP. Living alone with her cat, she spoke to nobody other than her York CVS welfare caller. As well as the support she got from the simple human contact of our weekly calls, we were also able to discuss practical ways to manage her mental health at home, introducing her to new coping techniques and resources. We searched online for community-based alternatives and she has now started watching the National Theatre at Home plays online each week. Crucially, this also enables her to chat with others who are online.

We also explored ways to stay physically active at home, and how to manage anxiety with online yoga. A referral to York Mind's adapted 1-1 emotional wellbeing support over the phone means she's getting more practical tips to manage her anxiety and mood.

Her anxiety caused her to be very worried about what would happen if she or her cat became unwell. Through our weekly calls, she was much reassured to discover that Move the Masses could deliver her prescriptions, and that she could order food delivery online.

She now has a whole suite of coping strategies to use, and a new online social community. Her anxiety has lessened because she knows help is out there if she needs it, and she knows how to get that help.

Dementia

We spoke to many people with dementia and to their families and carers, both via our hotline number and through the lists of vulnerable patients that GPs gave us. The loneliness and social isolation felt by many people with dementia has become even more apparent. There is also an understandable unease about returning to 'normal' life as lockdown restrictions slowly lift.

Concerns about loss of confidence, confusion about what 'rules' remain in place, and worries about loss of skills mean that many are even more fearful of the future.

Many people with dementia have seen a decline in their cognitive and physical health following lockdown. The loss of routine, and regular social interaction, has had a catastrophic effect on many, and those in relationships have experienced additional stresses from spending long periods of time together in the confines of their home without respite.

It is likely that York will follow national trends, in seeing a disproportionate amount of deaths of people living with dementia during COVID-19 -

https://www.alzheimersresearchuk.org/fifth_deaths_covid_dementia/



Fred rang the GP hotline out of concern for Ellie, who was struggling with memory loss and confusion about lockdown rules to a worrying degree.

We found out that Ellie had been in the process of getting a dementia diagnosis, but due to the pandemic her appointments with the Memory Clinic had been cancelled.

We offered support to both Fred and Ellie. We made weekly welfare calls to them both, posted out information about dementia services in York, and arranged for weekly food parcels to be sent to Fred, who cooked meals for Ellie. We also organised a face to face GP appointment for Ellie, to rule out any medical issues potentially exacerbating her symptoms (such as a urinary tract infection).

Fred expressed deep thanks for our help, describing how reassured he felt now that he had somewhere to turn if needed.

Learning Difficulties

We took calls from a number of people with learning difficulties, both living alone and in supported accommodation. Many were shielding and lots felt very confused about the changes to their normal routines, sudden lack of support, activities and places to go.

We arranged food deliveries for many, made regular welfare calls and helped arrange practical support. We also sent craft packs to those who were struggling to occupy their days, and set up a letter-writing scheme using Healthwatch York's freepost address.

Carers

Many carers highlighted how the pandemic had cut them off from their usual sources of help and support. These could be formal, such as social care services and schools, or informal, through friends, family and peer networks.

We also heard multiple reports of people's mental health or behaviour deteriorating due to the impact of lockdown, increasing the challenges for the carers supporting them.

We spoke to many carers, sharing information and offering welfare call support where appropriate. We directed many to York Carers Centre, who were offering support online, over the phone and via Zoom.



Louisa is a parent of two: James, a teenager with autism and learning disabilities, and his sister Erin who has developmental issues. Louisa told us that the family normally feel well supported with informal support from family, the local community and James' school. For James, routine is very important, as is time outdoors. In lockdown, all of this stopped.

The direct impact of this was an escalation of challenging behaviours, especially when only able to leave the house once a day.

Both children became very anxious about leaving the house, and there was a lot of verbal abuse. Erin struggled a lot with the change in routine and James' worsening behaviours.

Louisa has mental health issues which are normally well managed with support from family and friends. However, once all this was removed she struggled to cope. She felt the children's schools provided little support at first, in terms of contact, school work or support. She felt they were just left to get on with it.

Eventually the family was referred to the school welfare worker who was very supportive and helped facilitate discussions to get James back into school part time.

Work and Money

During the first few weeks of lockdown, we heard from a large number of people worried about work. This included people (including key workers) who were unable or afraid to go to work for fear of putting a vulnerable loved-one at risk. We also heard from people who were self-employed, stressed and anxious about shielding, isolating, work and income. Some callers only needed information about how to access sick notes or get confirmation that they should be shielding.

The Government introduced Isolation Notes - a form of sick note for people with Covid-19 symptoms and who were isolating. GP's didn't need to sign off Isolation Notes, thus reducing pressure on surgeries struggling with the high number of people calling. We were able to complete Isolation Notes for people who were unable to access them online.

It became apparent that some employers were failing to fully understand their employees' circumstances, and the impact of shielding. This was resulting in workers having to decide between protecting their health (or the health of their families), or having an income.

Financial difficulties were a predominant issue throughout the pandemic. The food parcels were vital in helping people and families who were struggling (especially those who relied on free school meals).

One of the most frequent interventions we carried out was helping those struggling to afford or get hold of food. We referred a significant number of people to York Food Bank, local Pay as You Feel (PAYF) Cafes such as Planet Food, local mutual aid initiatives such as The Supper Collective, plus CYC food hubs.



Betty phoned us seeking financial help. She explained that she was retired and on a half pension, and had no food. Betty depended on her local weekly PAYF café and was struggling without it. We helped Betty speak to Citizens Advice York, who secured her more financial support. We signed Betty up for regular food parcels, and gave her information about Morison's Doorstop Delivery service, who could help her with any other necessities. We rang Betty weekly and she was very thankful for this support.

Technology

We supported a huge number of people to set up online prescription ordering, and provided information about how to register for online food delivery.

There was also much confusion about (and help needed to use) the NHS app for ordering prescriptions, choosing a nominated pharmacy, and making GP appointments.

We also sent lots of information by post (for example details of food delivery services). We did this as we didn't want digital exclusion to impact people's knowledge and to affect those needing to access services.

Technology came up as an issue for children and families in lockdown, especially those who were home schooling, as so much of this was expected to be done online. This put huge pressure on those families who couldn't afford the equipment or Wi-Fi, or had multiple children all needing to do school work.

Transport

We dealt with many calls from people unable to find transport to and from appointments. There seemed to be an assumption amongst health and care providers that everyone can travel easily.

People were unable to access transport for many reasons, such as shielding, not being able to access public transport, facing financial barriers and not being able to mix households.

We worked closely with Dial-A-Ride, who provided an excellent, reliable service. We could refer and arrange transport for people who needed to get to appointments. They used their mini-bus which meant that social distancing measures could apply for those that were shielding, and it meant that people who were struggling financially didn't have to worry about affording a taxi.



Peter had learning difficulties, was confused by the lockdown and needed transport for an urgent GP appointment. We worked with the surgery to change the time of the appointment so that Dial-a-Ride could do the pick-up and safely get Peter to and from his appointment. Peter was really happy with this service and felt reassured.

Complex situations which included many of the themes above

We heard from many people whose situation involved several of the themes above. There were particular challenges in living through the pandemic for people whose situations involved:

- Homelessness or rough sleeping
- Insecure and inadequate housing conditions
- Domestic violence and abusive households
- Being a single parent and juggling working from home and childcare
- Regular drug or alcohol misuse
- Safeguarding issues
- The sudden lack of care for those with Learning Difficulties
- Pre-existing health conditions
- Previous regular access to respite care

There was also a lack of guidance for agencies trying to support individuals. For example, it is dangerous for someone who drinks every day to stop drinking suddenly without support, but there was little information available about what support could be offered to someone who is reliant on alcohol.

We signposted people to the relevant services, in addition to providing telephone and practical support.

Reflection



Alison Semmence

Chief Executive, York CVS

The speed at which lockdown happened meant we had to respond extremely quickly to ensure people who needed support were not let down. Faced with a whole range of challenges the team were not phased – they went the extra mile to ensure people got what they needed. It hasn't been easy but they have done a fantastic job!



Christine Marmion-Lennon

Social Prescribing Manager, Ways to Wellbeing

It is hard to summarise our response to Covid-19. From ensuring the delivery of food and prescriptions at the height of the Pandemic, delivering cards made by young people in the youth justice system to reduce feelings of isolation, to supporting those with the most complex and enduring health conditions to access the support they needed and everything in between. All done as a collaboration between the social prescribing team, Primary Care, Healthwatch York and fantastic local volunteers. By working together we were able to co-ordinate a joined up response to provide care and support to those who needed it most.



Sian Balsom

Healthwatch York Manager

Everyone pulled together to make sure no-one was left alone and in need, whether on the front line or behind the scenes. I could not be prouder of my team and my colleagues both in and outside York CVS.

Conclusion

York is a city where the relative affluence of the majority of its population masks the challenges faced by those with less. For us, supporting people during lockdown brought the ongoing issues faced by people with less advantage into sharp focus.

We are proud of many elements of our response to the pandemic:

- The speed of our response in the early stages
- How well staff worked together, adapting to rapidly changing circumstances with flexibility, initiative and drive
- The large number of people we supported across the city
- Our ability to swiftly identify gaps in provision and those in most need
- Our volunteers; the support they provided and the way we were able to support them
- Of how we were able to work in collaboration with the VCSE sector, pull together and put people in York at the heart of our response
- Our recognition of the risk of harm to people when intense support suddenly stops, and the measures we put in place to make sure nobody was left without support (for example, continued support from Social Prescribing Link Workers)

Next steps

We have learned a great deal from this experience and have had a rolling conversation to explore how the VCSE sector, City of York Council and other partners can work even better together, in the event of a second wave.

To this end, York CVS organised and hosted an online planning meeting on 23rd September 2020. This event brought together 50 people from the local VCSE sector, NHS Responders, City of York Council, North Yorkshire Police and York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust to discuss planning for a possible second wave and lockdown due to COVID-19. During the meeting we explored gaps in provision experienced during the first lockdown, and discussed what support organisations can offer if we go into a second lockdown, the sustainability or transition arrangements

as we revert to 'business as usual' and messaging for volunteers in order to manage expectations.

The main concern was about welfare/emotional wellbeing as we are already hearing from people who are feeling isolated, anxious and mental ill-health is increasing. Other issues were around access to accurate information about who was providing help and support. Another key concern is that the most disadvantaged and vulnerable people are being missed – we need to do more to creatively reach people who cannot use computers, phones, etc.

York CVS has committed to issue a simple survey to collate information about the local offer in the event of a second wave. This information will be available on our website and will be circulated widely.

We will organise an event with the NHS Responders to develop the relationship and understand what they can offer to York.

We will organise a session specifically focussing on the welfare response.

We will organise a session focussing on Christmas.

In addition we commit to:

- continuing to listen to people's experiences
- highlighting the problems they face
- working with our partners to meet the needs of our community.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Glossary of abbreviations

CAY	Citizens Advice York
CYC	City of York Council
MTM	Move the Masses
VoYCCG	NHS Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group
VCSE sector	Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector

Appendix 2 – Organisation that are within York CVS and worked together throughout the pandemic



HWY provide information about local health and social care services. They also listen to your views and experiences about these services to make sure voices are heard and taken into account. They want to know what is working well and what is not working well. HWY can also signpost you to independent complaints advocacy if you need support to complain about a service.



Ways to Wellbeing is made up of a team of Social Prescribers. Social Prescribing aims to improve wellbeing by connecting people to activities, services and support networks in their community. We support individuals to identify what is important to them and work together to achieve the individual's goals.



Primary Care Link Workers are based in GP Surgeries across York. Often individuals access their GP for what is primarily a social issue; such as loneliness, isolation or financial problems. Social Prescribing provides an alternative to a medical intervention. The Primary Care Link Workers are well placed to address the root cause of these difficulties and work together improve an individual's health and wellbeing.



York Dementia Action Alliance is a group of around 60 businesses and organisations for the public, private and voluntary sector who are committed to making York a better place to live, work and visit for people affected by dementia. YDAA is coming to an end in September 2020.



Safe Places are located in buildings in York, like libraries, shops, cafes and museums that are open to the public and are accessible. They have agreed to provide a safe and supportive place if someone who is vulnerable needs to ask for help while out and about.

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