**LCC Coronavirus, Covid-19 - Update 2A**

**COVID-19 CASES**

The latest data can be viewed [here](https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/node/307556), national data and data for Leicestershire.

**Comments from the Director of Public Health** (Friday, 13th November)

Following a productive meeting with the Department for Health and Social Care after Leicestershire was excluded from a list published earlier this week by the Department, lateral flow test kits will be supplied to Leicestershire.  The County Council will be able to hold a stock of kits and order additional kits, as needed, up to a maximum of 80,000 per week.  The lateral flow kits are designed for use in asymptomatic testing.  We are working up a plan to deploy them.  Likely uses include mass testing in defined areas (eg. those wards associated with the highest rate of cases), to support care home visiting policies or in outbreak situations such as a workplace requiring whole workforce testing.

Since Tuesday the local rate of cases has increased markedly, standing at above 320/100,000 population today.  This is significantly above the national average and has increased more quickly than increases in the national rate.  Rates across the County in the 17-21’s are significantly higher than the national average.  These increases may be a result of a ‘last hurrah’ before lockdown, although this does not explain why Leicestershire has been disproportionately affected.

**Impact on Schools** (previous week’s figures shown in brackets)

* Since the beginning of term there have been 650 (524) cases across 186 (170) schools affecting 426 (354) children and 224 (170) staff.
* Attendance across all schools was 85.5% (87.4%), including Covid-related absence.
* The ability of some schools to remain open due to staff illness or isolation and physical restrictions affecting the provision of Covid-secure capacity is an increasing concern.
* 616 early years settings were open at the start of the week with 8,644 children attending.  It is predominantly childminders who have had to remain closed.
* There have been Covid-related cases in early years settings affecting 52 children and 69 staff.

**Care Homes**

* 114 (66%) care homes in the County have reported an outbreak of Covid-19.  22 (13%) homes have ongoing situations, an increase of 30% on last week.  Testing results show 1.2% of residents tested positive, double the previous week, and 0.5% of staff tested positive.
* There are 3 care homes where there is a significant outbreak affecting larger numbers of both staff and residents – outbreaks are being contained and specialist teams are providing advice.
* Currently there are no designated care homes for people who are Covid-positive on discharge from hospital in the County but residents can access one care home in the City.
* A new care home visitor policy will be published shortly to take account of Government guidance.
* Day services risk assessments are being undertaken to determine what services can be safely provided.  60% of people have returned to services, and 19% of people do not wish to do so.  Recent outbreaks have unfortunately resulted in closure of some services.

**FREE SCHOOL MEALS AND OTHER FUNDING SUPPORT**

Confirmation has been received that the Government will provide funding that can be used for free school meals to the end of the financial year.  The Department for Work and Pensions states in respect of eligibility:

            “County Councils and Unitary Authorities will determine eligibility in their area and target their support within the scope of the conditions set out below:

* at least 80% of the total funding will be ring-fenced to support families with children, with up to 20% of the total funding to other types of households, including individuals.
* at least 80% of the total funding will be ring-fenced to provide support with food, energy and water bills (including sewerage), with up to 20% on other items.”

The County Council’s allocation is £1,462,000.

**ENFORCEMENT**

The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (No 4) Regulations 2020 came into force on 5th November.  The Secretary of State has enabled all local authorities in England to enforce Part 4 of the Regulations which deals with closure of and restrictions on businesses.  The enforcement tools available to local authorities include prohibition notices, fixed penalty notices and when appropriate criminal proceedings may be instituted for serious breaches of the Regulations.  The Police continue to lead on enforcement for breaches of the requirements placed on individuals and gatherings and both upper and lower tier local authorities continue to lead in relation to the obligations placed on businesses.  However, it is recognised that there are inextricably linked incidents crossing all the regulatory requirements.  In response, the Local Resilience Forum has established a Covid Compliance Enforcement Cell.  A memorandum of understanding is in place to enable all agencies to share information to deliver a more collaborative, intelligence led enforcement response, with all partners adopting 'the 4 Es': Engage. Explain. Encourage. Enforce.

Due to non-compliances prior to the current lockdown, the County Council had placed a number of hospitality premises under restrictions to ensure adequate social distancing protocols were maintained, with one premises remaining closed to the public.  These directions are now revoked.  However, as we approach the automatic lifting of restrictions, Trading Standards officers will be engaging with these and other businesses to ensure appropriate measures are in place, in readiness for a reopening of businesses across the County when the lockdown is lifted.

The Trading Standards Service is seeking to improve the quality of the data obtained from the district councils.  The easing of the restrictions should coincide with the busiest trading period of the year as we approach the festive period.  The Trading Standards Service will seek to deploy its enforcement resources, based on the evidence captured within the data, to ensure there is a focus on bringing the higher risk premises into compliance.

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Please remember to keep up to date, including for the latest information on changes to services:

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[**https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19**](https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19)

[**https://resources.leicestershire.gov.uk/adult-social-care-and-health/working-with-you-during-coronavirus**](https://resources.leicestershire.gov.uk/adult-social-care-and-health/working-with-you-during-coronavirus)

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