

North Somerset Local Outbreak Management Plan (2021-22)



COVID response, recovery and renewal in North Somerset

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Overview

- The year since the outbreak of the COVID pandemic has been the most challenging in North Somerset in living memory impacting on health, wellbeing, learning, our economy and community life in many significant ways.
- In the early months of the pandemic, the collective efforts of people working and living in North Somerset were brought together in a new Local Outbreak Management Board and key aims and responsibilities outlined in a Local Outbreak Management Plan (LOMP) published in June 2020. <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-services/community-safety-crime/emergency-management/covid-19-north-somerset-together/covid-19-information-advice/our-local-outbreak-management-plan>
- The challenges posed by the pandemic have changed since that original plan and we are now in the welcome position of looking towards a measured and safe unlocking of restrictions to enable long-term recovery and renewal for our community.
- This is an appropriate time to refresh our LOMP and set out how we will rise to the challenges of 2021/22 making best use of learning, resources and relationships to secure lasting benefits for our local population.
- This new LOMP is deliberately written as a high-level document to give a useful overview of the breadth of activity that needs to be delivered. More detailed planning sits underneath this within established teams and working groups where there is the ability to carry out more detailed analysis of local needs and to respond to changing circumstances or national guidance as required.

Governance

- The delivery of the 2020/21 Local Outbreak Management Plan has been overseen by the Local Outbreak Engagement Board (LOEB) through a monthly meeting. This pattern will continue throughout 2021/22 to provide assurance that key actions are being delivered for response, recovery and renewal. A list of current LOEB members is shown in Appendix A to demonstrate the range of views and experience that is captured at the Board.
- Operational health protection issues will continue to be managed through the Health Protection Board which also meets monthly. A report from this group is shared with the LOEB to provide oversight and guidance.
- Oversight is also provided through regular updates to and input from the Council's Corporate Leadership Team, Executive, Health and Wellbeing Board and Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel.
- The health and social care aspects of response and recovery are also managed through the Healthier Together system response for Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire.
- Activity in North Somerset will continue to be linked through to regional governance, through Chief Executive, Public Health and other forums as needed. An overview of that regional architecture is shown in Appendix B.

Monitoring and evaluation

- We will continue to provide monthly updates to our Outbreak Engagement Board and seek input on future priorities and opportunities to make further impact. In 2020/21 this has been done through a standard review of key topic areas (see Appendix C).
- We will use a public Power BI dashboard to give an overview of key activities that have been delivered against the key action cards that make up the LOMP. The capabilities within this dashboard will be further developed over the coming weeks.
- There will be 'deep dive' reviews of areas of action (at each of the governance forums described in the previous slide) based on the need to actively manage risk, opportunities for improvement, using emerging learning or changed circumstances.
- The views and the lived experience of our residents, businesses and key settings (for example, schools, care homes and the voluntary and community sector) will continue to be sought, using different engagement channels including meetings, surveys and social media channels.

Managing changing circumstances

The Government has set out that there will be a minimum of five weeks between each step of the roadmap out of national lockdown – four weeks for the scientific data to reflect the changes in restrictions and to be analysed; followed by one week's advance notice of the restrictions that will be eased. The current tests are:

- The vaccine deployment programme continues successfully
- Evidence shows vaccines are sufficiently effective in reducing hospitalisations and deaths in those vaccinated
- Infection rates do not risk a surge in hospitalisations which would put unsustainable pressure on the NHS
- Our assessment of the risks is not fundamentally changed by new Variants of Concern

The objectives set out in our LOMP will be kept under review using the same criteria to ensure consistency and we will respond to changing guidance to adapt our plans.

Key responsibilities by action card

A more detailed action card has been created for each of the priority areas required under our refreshed LOMP. A standard set of questions has been used for easy reading. The combined delivery of these areas will help to keep our society COVID secure and delivery lasting recovery from the pandemic's ongoing impacts.

1) High risk settings, communities and locations	2) Vulnerable and underserved communities	3) Compliance and enforcement	4) Resourcing	5) Communications & engagement
6) Data integration and information sharing	7) Community testing	8) Contact tracing	9) Support for self-isolation	10) Outbreak management
11) Surveillance	12) Responding to Variants of Concern (VOC)	13) Action on enduring transmission	14) Enhanced Contact Tracing, in partnership with HPT	15) Ongoing role of Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions (NPIs)
16) Interface with vaccines roll out	17) Activities to enable 'living with COVID'			

Action Card 1: High risk settings, communities and locations



Why is action in this area important?

- Outbreaks have also been associated with higher risk locations like care settings. Although vaccination is having impact (like in care settings) we must continue to monitor and respond to clusters/outbreaks in community settings like in education or workplaces, including responding to infection prevention challenges and more vulnerable workers.
- Effective settings management can help to break the chain of transmission, particularly if proactive approaches stop infection being spread, especially asymptotically.

What has happened to date and what has been the key learning?

- Outbreak management support from the local public health team, working in partnership with the Public Health England (PHE) Health Protection Team, has been focused on quick and effective action to reduce risk of transmission in key settings like care homes, healthcare, schools, college and workplaces. Weekly local multi-agency meetings to look at key settings of risk – care homes, education and workplaces – have been effective in directing support where it is needed most and understanding how to meet local needs effectively.

What do we need to do in the future?

- Working with colleagues in PHE (which will become the new National Institute for Health Protection), we will ensure we can provide quick and effective health protection advice and interventions where required. We will also continue to provide proactive support through regular contact, sharing of guidance and resources and peer learning on how to prevent infection and manage risk effectively, particularly in those settings which we are at higher risk.

Who needs to be involved?

- Multi-agency working has proved to be the most effective method of organising support. We will continue with regular communication channels and partnership meetings, for example, the Health Protection Board providing strategic overview and regular sector specific Incident Management Team meetings as required. We will retain the helpful links that have already been established and stand-up additional capacity as required.

What resources will be used to help us achieve these goals?

- The local authority health protection team will maintain an overview of local needs and continue and adapt regular meetings and communication channels as required through its core team. National and regional resources and guidance will be shared as it becomes available. We will use our broad stakeholder network and their trusted communication channels to cascade resources into different sectors and receive feedback on how best to adapt our support, including working with our voluntary and community sector.

What does success look like?

- Reduced number of clusters and outbreaks in higher risk settings. Closing the gap in cases, health outcomes and vaccination rates between groups in our local population.

Action Card 2: Vulnerable and underserved communities



Why is action in this area important?

- COVID impacts have been felt disproportionately by some communities with factors like deprivation and ethnicity negatively impacting on the likelihood of being infected and experiencing poorer health outcomes.
- Emerging evidence around enduring transmission – areas where COVID rates may remain stubbornly higher – and concerns about easy access to vaccines and vaccine hesitancy also highlight differences in outcomes by population group that we must address. This includes longer-term action to help communities to become more resilient.

What has happened to date and what has been the key learning?

- The North Somerset Together programme has brought together a wide range of voluntary and community organisations, including reach through Town and Parish Councils. This vital network of local knowledge and support has proactively identified needs and found solutions to help keep people healthy and safe. This vital work is ongoing and includes those who are clinically extremely vulnerable who are supported through specific grants.
- As stated in Card 16, the Council and the voluntary and community sector have been working with BNSSG CCG to inform the development and delivery of the vaccination programme, including reach into groups that may be more hesitant or struggling to access their doses.

What do we need to do in the future?

- A programme of outreach work to reach all communities with vaccination is underway looking at barriers for groups such as homeless people, gypsy, romany and traveller groups and those living in areas of higher deprivation. This work must continue to close the inequalities gap across all age ranges during the full roll out of the programme.
- Similarly, resources will continue to be shared and feedback sought through North Somerset Together and other networks, for example local businesses, to help identify how best to understand and respond to needs.

Who needs to be involved?

- As well as action coordinated through the Council and local NHS organisations, the voluntary, community and business sector provide essential reach into the community.

What resources will be used to help us achieve these goals?

- Officer time, resources for the community, engagement activity and programmes to support outreach work will be used to close the gap in health and wellbeing outcomes.

What does success look like?

- Communities report that a range of valued and relevant resources (including practical support) have been actively promoted among groups that could benefit most. This is demonstrated by closing of the gap in outcomes for key vulnerable groups.

Action Card 3: Compliance and enforcement



Why is action in this area important?

- The principle of encouraging, educating and supporting self-compliance is important to ensure the Government's guidance and legislation is followed as we continue with efforts to see a reduction in the spread of the virus.
- Robust enforcement where there are continued non-compliances and flagrant breaches ensures that businesses and the public comply with the COVID measures and thus protecting communities.
- The provision in relation to enforcement ensures that local authorities and the police have powers to address COVID infringement matters.

What has happened to date and what has been the key learning?

- We have supported businesses by carrying out visits and producing literature and this has been key to ensuring compliance around the understanding the requirements of the COVID guidance and legislation
- We have used enforcement powers to close businesses where there are flagrant breaches of the COVID requirements and introduced improvement plans to return businesses to compliance.
- We have followed up every alleged breach of COVID regulations and we have worked collaboratively with partner agencies such as the police in ensuring high levels of compliance.
- We have a dedicated COVID marshal resource who are tasked based upon partnership intelligence and has been key to supporting the work of the police and our regulatory teams

What do we need to do in the future?

- We will continue to engage with business to ensure we adapt compliance and enforcement practices as easement from lockdown continues to ensure that our communities are protected.
- We will continue to robustly enforce against businesses operating outside of COVID guidance and regulation.
- We will continue to deploy COVID marshals using partnership intelligence in the belief that encouraging compliance supports the enforcement work of our partners and regulatory teams

Who needs to be involved?

- North Somerset Council has been working both across directorates and with the police around the compliance and enforcement agenda. We will continue this approach throughout 21/22 and use wider messaging through our communications channels to promote good practice.

What resources will be used to help us achieve these goals?

- Compliance and enforcement within the local authority is delivered within existing regulatory and re-deployed resource whilst the COVID marshal resource is funded by the allocated government grant North Somerset Council received for responding to COVID.

What does success look like?

- There is sustained and widespread compliance around COVID restrictions achieved through an effective multi-agency delivery model and there are clear mechanisms in place for sharing intelligence and escalating concerns across partner agencies and teams.

Action Card 4: Resourcing



Why is action in this area important?

- Responding to the pandemic has created significant challenges across all aspects of society. Support has been made available by central Government through a number of funding streams addressing need in areas like infection prevention control, testing and contact tracing, healthcare provision, care support, business and personal income. These interventions have supported our ability to meet changing needs and develop strategies to minimise risk to our population.
- Local action has been supported through grants, including the Local Outbreak Management Fund and Contain Outbreak Management Fund provided to the Council to build local capacity and capability across a wide range of disciplines and interventions. Approximately £3.3 million was provided under these two budget streams in 2020/21. This, plus anticipated additional investment in 2021/22 will be used to maintain and adapt essential infrastructure in areas like health protection support, managing public space and public education and local enforcement.

What has happened to date and what has been the key learning?

- As different interventions have been developed, for example, the introduction of community asymptomatic testing, we have had to set up new systems of response to support new national programmes. Our greatest challenge has been around growing the right capacity and capability, particularly in areas that require specialist knowledge and skills. Going forward we are investing in systems that can meet our key challenges and provide valued support to our community. This includes the ability to adapt to changing circumstances based on different scenarios on what course the pandemic may take and how national advice and support may change over time.

What do we need to do in the future?

- We will continue to regularly review activity across teams within the Council and consider how we can work most effectively with partners using our combined expertise, roles and resources. This includes responding to national changes in guidance and response e.g., creation of the new National Institute for Health Protection.

Who needs to be involved?

- This will be overseen by the Corporate Leadership Team and the Executive with plans shared and agreed with the Outbreak Engagement Board.

What resources will be used to help us achieve these goals?

- The Contain Outbreak Management Fund (which will continue into 2021/22) plus coordination with other resources being employed in our community through national, regional or local agencies. We will aim to coordinate all efforts to meet local needs effectively.

What does success look like?

- Investment in additional capacity helps to manage risk and impacts effectively, including supporting steps into recovery and longer-term resilience in our community.

Action Card 5: Communications & engagement



Why is action in this area important?

- It is essential to build trust and confidence with the public and partners so that our communities know, understand and can follow health protection guidelines
- Listening and understanding the needs of communities via engagement underpins effective interventions

What has happened to date and what has been the key learning?

- Ensured communities in North Somerset have access to the latest guidance for health protection and available support to reduce spread of infection. People-focused messages have worked best, focusing on positive behaviours. This has supported public health interventions, such as around case data, testing, and vaccinations, to create and target communications for identified audiences. Taking time to plan behavioural insight led activities helps prioritise and target resources.
- Co-ordination of a network of more than 40 partners to support the community-response to Covid and empower communities to support themselves. Members of the network want to work with the council to sustain community support and we have and will use the network to disseminate clear and concise information about key issues and actions.
- Working with public sector partners to deliver effective communications and engagement across our area and beyond our borders. Co-ordinating with other organisations has led to improved working relationships and stronger campaign delivery. This includes identifying and signposting community to relevant financial and practical support to remove barriers to following public health advice. Engagement used for community concerns.

What do we need to do in the future?

- Support public health objectives with carefully planned and targeted communications and engagement. Use the expertise of the North Somerset Together network to sustain strengths-based community support. Use public health expertise to identify target areas and vulnerable groups and build links to carry out effective engagement with targeted communities. Plan and deliver effective communications campaigns to ensure communities continue to be well-informed and can understand and follow advice and to support recovery.

Who needs to be involved?

- Relevant North Somerset Council teams, communications teams from LRF and health partners, North Somerset Together, community champions, and identified stakeholders

What resources will be used to help us achieve these goals?

- Full time Communications and Engagement Adviser supported by North Somerset Council's marketing and communications team and identified budgets from Covid funding

What does success look like?

- High compliance with positive public health behaviours. Effective community engagement activities supporting public health interventions translating to fulfilled objectives

Action Card 6: Data integration and information sharing



Why is action in this area important?

- Relevant data and analysis of that data to produce valuable intelligence to inform future action is a key part of our response. The range of data sources and their integration to support local action has matured during the course of the pandemic but efforts to develop that intelligence-led approach must continue across national, regional and local action.

What has happened to date and what has been the key learning?

- Over time, data and intelligence about where cases are occurring and who has been most affected has been developed using Power BI systems available through national sources and local systems. This has helped to develop a much clearer single story about what the key risks are and how they should be managed.
- Drawing in data from all supporting organisations is an ongoing challenge – like it is in many areas of other activity, for example, improvements in health, social care, education, community resilience etc. We will continue to develop systems to share data and intelligence to identify any outbreaks and respond to any challenges.

What do we need to do in the future?

- Continue to share data where we can and look for more ways to bring in understanding of needs at a more local level including the experience and opinions of those who are most affected by the ongoing impacts of the pandemic.

Who needs to be involved?

- The main statutory agencies will continue to find ways to piece together a full picture of impacts and actions required. For example, this will include the business intelligence and operational response teams in the local authority, our neighbouring local authorities, the NHS, the Police, Public Health England, the Department of Health and Social Care etc but this must include ways of understanding the impact in our community.

What resources will be used to help us achieve these goals?

- Additional support for business intelligence will continue to be invested in at the local authority to bring together the local overview but this works with ongoing links into other organisations and groups, supporting the quick and easy flow of relevant information.

What does success look like?

- Local action is driven by sound data and intelligence which prioritises workload appropriately and minimises impact of the virus on our local community.
- Residents can access national data sets via a North Somerset Power BI portal, updated daily, so they understand the picture in their area.
- The Outbreak Engagement Board is kept up to date with a weekly Power Bi dashboard

Action Card 7: Community Testing



Why is action in this area important?

- It is vital that every case of COVID-19 is detected to ensure those that have it get the advice and care they need and that they can take action to protect those around them.
- Self-isolation of cases and their contacts breaks chains of transmission and prevents spread in the community.
- NHS Test and Trace estimates that 1 in 3 cases of COVID-19 do not have symptoms so the national approach includes asymptomatic testing as well as diagnostic tests in those with symptoms.

What has happened to date and what has been the key learning?

- We have supported establishment of sites for testing of those with symptoms of COVID-19. At the beginning of the pandemic there were issues nationally with availability of tests for those with symptoms. This caused disruption to our efforts to prevent spread of COVID-19 and confusion and anxiety for those residents with symptoms.
- We set up dedicated new sites for testing people that do not have symptoms of COVID-19 under the Community Testing programme. Asymptomatic testing is now available to everyone that lives and works in North Somerset. It is currently targeted at specific groups as we are currently under lockdown restrictions.
- Asymptomatic testing is increasingly available in other locations such as workplaces and schools and also at home through collection or delivery of test kits.

What do we need to do in the future?

- We will continue to promote the simple message that those with symptoms need to isolate and get tested as this remains the cornerstone of our testing strategy. We will promote twice weekly asymptomatic testing to specific groups as lockdown restrictions are lifted through 2021/22 and then to the whole community when government advice allows.
- We will continue to monitor uptake of asymptomatic testing through different routes to ensure we optimise local testing capacity and that we address any accessibility issues in areas with low uptake.

Who needs to be involved?

- North Somerset Council has been working in partnership with South Gloucestershire Council and DHSC to deliver Community Testing. We will continue this approach through 2021/22 and continue work with wider partners to promote testing offers and ensure that residents understand how to access tests available to them.

What resources will be used to help us achieve these goals?

- Community Testing is delivered with a dedicated grant from DHSC. We will also draw on other grant funding to promote wider testing offers.

What does success look like?

- Everyone in the community knows about the importance of testing and is able to access it easily both when they have symptoms and when they don't.

Action Card 8: Contact tracing



Why is action in this area important?

- Contact tracing identifies close contacts of those who have COVID-19 and helps to ensure they self-isolate to prevent onward spread of the virus.
- Ensuring infected individuals and their close contacts self-isolate is one of the most important things we can do to break chains of transmission and limit spread of COVID-19.

What has happened to date and what has been the key learning?

- NHS Test and Trace is the national contact tracing service set up in response to COVID-19.
- North Somerset Council has set up a local service to work alongside NHS Test and Trace to help contact people with COVID-19 that the national service has not managed to reach. Our service has used local intelligence to help find people with COVID-19 and make sure they get the information they need to protect themselves and those around them.

What do we need to do in the future?

- We need to build on the service we have to break down barriers to successful contact tracing. This will mean adding dedicated contact tracing capability to our COVID-19 Response Team, extending calling hours and adding local processes for translation where English is not spoken by the case.
- We will adopt and adapt to the new national computer system for contact tracing when it becomes available to us.

Who needs to be involved?

- North Somerset Test and Trace will continue to work alongside NHS Test and Trace in day-to-day delivery of contact tracing.
- We are also part of regional and national contact tracing networks that share best practice for Local Tracing Partnerships.

What resources will be used to help us achieve these goals?

- North Somerset Test and Trace will draw on COVID-19 grant funding deliver the local contact tracing service.

What does success look like?

- Every person that tests positive for COVID-19 is given information on the duty to self-isolate and how to do it safely. Accurate information is collected on their close contacts and those contacts are then all successfully contacted and also given information on the duty to self-isolate and how to do it safely.
- Cases and their contacts trust the contact tracing system and that their data is held securely. Cases and their contacts successfully complete their mandatory self-isolation periods.

Action Card 9: Support for self-isolation



Why is action in this area important?

- It is vital that North Somerset residents on low income are provided with appropriate financial support to enable self-isolation, where they are not paid by their employers, to ensure the transmission of COVID-19 is contained and the chain of transmission is broken in the community.

What has happened to date and what has been the key learning?

- We have established and promoted an application and assessment process for the provision of the £500 grants for the main and discretionary schemes.
- The discretionary scheme provides payments to residents who are on a low income, will face financial hardship due to self-isolating and are not currently receiving one of the qualifying benefits from the main scheme.
- The discretionary scheme proved popular and as a result all available funding was allocated by the end Jan, which required North Somerset to close the scheme.
- Additional funding to support the discretionary scheme has been provided allowing the scheme to be reopened.

What do we need to do in the future?

- The scheme will be redesigned based on the revised guidance to address the changes related to Parent/Guardians.
- Monitor the expenditure against the discretionary scheme to ensure the grant is not overspent.

Who needs to be involved?

- The local solution is being delivered via our Revenues and Benefits outsourced service provider – Liberata.
- North Somerset Council has been working in partnership with South Gloucestershire, Bristol City and Bath and North East Somerset Councils to ensure a consistent approach is taken in the region and information is shared between authorities to prevent fraud.

What resources will be used to help us achieve these goals?

- Liberata will be used to provide a cost effective and shared knowledge solution for multiple local authorities.
- North Somerset Council will continue to coordinate with other local authorities from the West of England region and the local authorities' partners working with Liberata.

What does success look like?

- All eligible local residents are provided financial support to achieve the acknowledged benefits of self-isolation breaking the chain of transmission in the community.

Action Card 10: Outbreak management



Why is action in this area important?

- Responding to outbreaks quickly helps contain the spread of COVID-19 which in turn protects those at risk and limits pressure on the NHS.
- A coordinated and effective response to outbreaks is essential to limit the effect of COVID-19 on businesses and the economy.

What has happened to date and what has been the key learning?

- We have worked with the local Health Protection Team and other local partners to respond to outbreaks in local settings such as schools, care homes, hospitals and businesses.

What do we need to do in the future?

- The response to outbreaks of COVID-19 will need to be built into normal working arrangements in the same way as it is for other infectious diseases.

Who needs to be involved?

- Setting managers, North Somerset Council, PHE/NIHP and NHS Test and Trace all need to work in partnership to respond to outbreaks.
- Depending on the scale and complexity of outbreaks, other partners within the COVID-19 Health Protection Board or Local Resilience Forum may also need to be involved.

What resources will be used to help us achieve these goals?

- North Somerset Public Health Team has used COVID-19 grant funding to develop a dedicated COVID Response team to help manage local outbreaks in the next phase of the pandemic response.
- The COVID-19 Health Protection Board will develop standard operating procedures to formalise the local partnership response to outbreaks in different settings.
- Local teams will draw on regional and national multi-agency surge response resources to contain outbreaks of significant complexity.

What does success look like?

- Outbreaks of COVID-19 are recognised quickly and action is taken at the earliest opportunity to prevent further spread.
- Setting managers are familiar with the initial management of COVID-19 outbreaks and confident to take necessary action. Duplication is removed from the system and intelligence is shared effectively to limit the number of times setting managers have to provide the same information.
- Where necessary, additional interventions are provided in response to outbreaks with the support of public health professionals with an appropriate level of expertise for the situation.

Action Card 11: Surveillance



Why is action in this area important?

- Surveillance plays a critical role in preventing and responding to outbreaks of COVID-19. As well as providing an awareness of the disease that informs outbreak planning and response, over time it will also provide an understanding of the impacts of the disease on residents, families and their communities.

What has happened to date and what has been the key learning?

- Data shared by national partners such as PHE and the NHS has informed response to outbreaks of COVID-19 in North Somerset. These data sets have allowed analysis at different geographies and by demographic profiles.
- Data has been analysed to build a picture of the overall spread of COVID-19 in North Somerset and provided intelligence for local planning.
- Data has been used for future modelling to allow for planning across both North Somerset and the wider BNSSG area.

What do we need to do in the future?

- We will continue to utilise all the sources of surveillance available to us, working with our neighbour local authorities where needed to ensure surveillance across North Somerset and the West of England.
- We will continue to engage with national partners to make best use of sources of surveillance data when they become available.
- We will continue to engage with national partners to provide constructive feedback to help improve sources of surveillance data.

Who needs to be involved?

- Local partners will work with their business intelligence teams and data sharing leads to maximise the insights we are able to draw from the available surveillance data.

What resources will be used to help us achieve these goals?

- Datasets provided by national partners are the most robust source of surveillance data and are essential to our ongoing response to COVID-19 in North Somerset.

What does success look like?

- High quality and timely COVID-19 related intelligence constantly informs our planning and response to the immediate and long-term impacts of COVID-19.
- Local residents are aware how surveillance data is being used locally and trust public bodies to handle data safely, securely and in accordance with legal frameworks.

Action Card 12: Responding to Variants of Concern (VOC)



Why is action in this area important?

- All viruses mutate over time. Occasionally these mutations can alter the virus in a way that changes how it behaves. This could make existing control measures less effective or make the consequences of infection even more significant.
- Monitoring for new variants and responding quickly to them can limit the risk they pose.

What has happened to date and what has been the key learning?

- Public Health England has developed genome sequencing capability to monitor for changes in the genome of the virus over time. Most mutations are not a cause for concern, but they have a programme to identify new variants, alert local areas where they are present and support them to respond.

What do we need to do in the future?

- Be prepared to respond when variants of concern are identified in North Somerset.

Who needs to be involved?

- A local incident management team will be convened to investigate cases or clusters of VOCs identified in North Somerset.
- Planning for these events and response when they occur will be managed through the local governance arrangements described elsewhere in this document.

What resources will be used to help us achieve these goals?

- Response to local cases and clusters involving VOCs is likely to require regional or national surge support.
- Where necessary we will draw on COVID-19 grant funding to support the local response to VOCs.

What does success look like?

- When a VOC is identified locally there is a coordinated partnership response to react to any threat posed.
- Public health messages are well communicated to local residents providing them accurate information on the situation along with any actions required.

Action Card 13: Action on enduring transmission



Why is action in this area important?

- Learning from other parts of the country has demonstrated that some communities have struggled to reduce transmission of the virus to levels nearer or below the national average. Without additional action the risk is that people continue to experience a disproportionate impact of ongoing infection including risk of hospitalisation and death.

What has happened to date and what has been the key learning?

- So far although rates in North Somerset have risen above the national average at times, we have not seen an enduring pattern of higher infection. Current rates are similar to the South West average which is relatively low within England.
- Within North Somerset we have seen variation in rates within Medium Super Output Area (MSOA) but these patterns have changed over time.

What do we need to do in the future?

- We will continue to review case data daily, including breakdown by geography and other demographic factors. This information will be used to plan a response as required.
- One of the key learning emerging from national evidence is the link between enduring transmission and systemic challenges within those communities based on long-standing inequalities. Wider action to tackle inequalities is required to tackle these issues. Consultation is currently underway on a new Health and Wellbeing Strategy for North Somerset. The learning from this new strategy and action plan will include reflections on impacts of the pandemic and actions will be integrated with the LOMP.

Who needs to be involved?

- The health protection team will review patterns of infection and use the Health Protection Board and the Outbreak Engagement Board as points of escalation. Any patterns of concern would also be reviewed with input from Public Health England.

What resources will be used to help us achieve these goals?

- Health protection resources in the Council and PHE will continue to monitor and respond to patterns of infection. Additional support will be prioritised where required in areas where patterns of infection persist.

What does success look like?

- Low levels of transmission continue in North Somerset with no pattern on enduring transmission in any geographic area or population group.

Action Card 14: Enhanced Contact Tracing



Why is action in this area important?

- Enhanced contact tracing is a systematic approach to gathering and analysing contact tracing data and other information to rapidly detect and risk assess new local COVID-19 case clusters.
- Utilising the enhanced contact tracing intelligence will improve our management of COVID-19.

What has happened to date and what has been the key learning?

- We have expressed an interest in activating enhanced contact tracing in North Somerset through our local contact tracing network.
- The local authority public health team have begun planning how we will utilise this new source of intelligence.

What do we need to do in the future?

- When it becomes available, we will use this new intelligence source to investigate and take appropriate actions to prevent wider community transmission when new community clusters are identified.

Who needs to be involved?

- Enhanced contact tracing will be delivered in partnership with the local Health Protection Team from PHE.
- North Somerset Council's public health team will work with local partners as appropriate depending on where clusters are identified.

What resources will be used to help us achieve these goals?

- Intelligence to inform enhanced contact tracing will be provided by PHE/NIHP and the Joint Biosecurity Centre.
- Where necessary we will draw on COVID-19 grant funding to support enhanced contact tracing

What does success look like?

- Our recognition of, and response to, local COVID-19 clusters improves as a result of this programme.

Action Card 15: Ongoing role of Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions (NPIs)



Why is action in this area important?

- Non-pharmaceutical interventions have played a vital part in limiting the health impacts of COVID-19 and will remain part of the containment strategy in the future.
- Non-pharmaceutical interventions also have potentially negative impact on health as well as significant impacts on society and the economy.

What has happened to date and what has been the key learning?

- Basic interventions such as hand washing and surface cleansing are important for preventing spread of a whole range of infectious diseases. These remain as important as ever.
- New measures brought in for COVID such as self-isolation, mandatory face coverings, restrictions on social gatherings, travel bans and lockdown have helped to contain the pandemic.

What do we need to do in the future?

- National government will set the timescale for lifting of certain non-pharmaceutical interventions as we move out of the spring 2021 lockdown. Lifting of social restrictions will depend on certain tests being met and timescales are not fixed.
- Local partners need to continue to promote and do what we can to ensure compliance with national restrictions that are in place at any particular time.
- Adaptations to spaces open to the public can help individuals protect themselves from COVID-19 and promote compliance with the social restrictions in place.

Who needs to be involved?

- Every individual in society needs to do their part to help limit the spread of COVID-19 through non-pharmaceutical interventions.
- Community groups, businesses, public bodies and other organisations all have a responsibility to comply with non-pharmaceutical interventions that protect public health.

What resources will be used to help us achieve these goals?

- We can utilise national and local communications resources to amplify messages regarding non-pharmaceutical interventions.
- Financial support is available in some circumstances to support compliance with non-pharmaceutical interventions.
- Powers of enforcement have a role when there is evidence of non-compliance with mandatory restrictions.

What does success look like?

- Everyone sticks to the non-pharmaceutical interventions that are recommended at any point in time.

Action Card 16: Interface with vaccines roll out



Why is action in this area important?

- A successful vaccination programme will prevent the spread of COVID-19, prevent morbidity and mortality, protect health and social care staff and systems, and help us all return to a more normal life.
- As one of the most effective public health interventions, ensuring high uptake and coverage in eligible North Somerset populations is paramount. To enable this, we need to ensure that access to the vaccine is equitable and equal and that effective communications strategies are delivered to ensure individuals are aware of the safety, effectiveness and importance of the immunisation programme resulting in high uptake.

What has happened to date and what has been the key learning?

- The vaccination programme is coordinated by BNSSG CCG. Prioritisation for vaccination is based on JCVI cohort recommendations (1-9) with vaccine being offered sequentially to cohorts via several routes, including; GP/Primary Care Network sites, Weston General Hospital, Ashton Gate mass vaccination centre, pharmacies, and "mobile" clinics.
- North Somerset Council have been working with BNSSG CCG to inform the development and delivery of the vaccination programme, including; representation at the mobile vaccination coordination and delivery group, and its sub-groups. We have also engaged local representative stakeholders and organisations in the programme development. Flexible action has included the development of guidance, SOP's and communications resources and the setting up of events and "pop-up" clinics to increase access to vaccination.

What do we need to do in the future?

- Continue to represent the interests of the North Somerset population through our engagement with BNSSG CCG and partners on the design and delivery of the programme.
- Continue to support communication strategies that raise awareness and understanding in our populations, and address mis and dis information. Continue to support work to engage populations with lower vaccine uptake and provide local knowledge that can facilitate engagement. We will share and apply learning from the COVID-19 vaccine roll out for use in other programme areas, including existing immunisation programmes, for example, seasonal flu.

Who needs to be involved?

- North Somerset Council (NSC) has been working in partnership with organisations responsible for the strategic and operational delivery of the COVID-19 vaccine programme, including; BNSSG CCG, NHS England, PHE, GP Primary Care Networks and representative stakeholder organisations.

What resources will be used to help us achieve these goals?

- The COVID-19 (and other immunisation programmes) are funded through the NHS (NHSE/DHSC). NSC Staff time/capacity to support the programme roll out is separate to this.

What does success look like?

- North Somerset has high vaccine uptake and coverage across all eligible groups. Delivery of the programme is equitable and does not widen inequalities. Everyone is aware of their eligibility for immunisation, has access to information to make an informed choice, knows how to and can access vaccination.

Action Card 17: Activities to enable 'living with COVID'



Why is action in this area important?

- The impacts of the pandemic have been considerable and touched all aspects of our lives. A planned and safe return to key activities like work and education, social interaction and supporting our local economy are vital in protecting and improving our health and wellbeing and efforts to reduce inequalities.
- Guided by the national roadmap, we need to support different parts of our community to return to their 'business as usual' activities as soon as it is safe to do so and help them operate in a covid safe way.

What has happened to date and what has been the key learning?

- Our experience of working with local stakeholders, such as education, businesses and the voluntary and community sector has provided useful understanding of local needs and how best to meet them. The process of locking and unlocking across three peaks of the pandemic has also taught us about what to prioritise and how best to deliver support. Ongoing consultation and promoting opportunities to access the latest guidance have been important to increase confidence and compliance with the national strategy.

What do we need to do in the future?

- A range of operational groups are taking forward plans for different sectors of society, for example, supporting the hospitality industry to understand and comply with national guidance over the milestones of unlocking. This includes active dialogue with individuals and representative bodies from the different sectors to ensure actions are valued. The aim is to guide stakeholders through the guidance and promote good practice approaches.
- We are investing in community support officers that will support the unlocking of public space, for example our sea fronts and tourist areas. They will work alongside regulatory services and police education and enforcement approaches to encourage the right behaviours but with the ability to take enforcement action where required.
- We investing in activities to safely promote the return of shoppers and visitors to our high streets and other places of interest including covid secure patterns of behaviour.

Who needs to be involved?

- Operational groups have been set up across a range of teams, such as community safety, seafronts and events, regulatory services and our local police teams. There is also a strong communications and engagement workstream to promote messages to key settings and the public.

What resources will be used to help us achieve these goals?

- Additional capacity is being invested in our community presence, public events and communication and engagement work. This will be integrated with existing operations.

What does success look like?

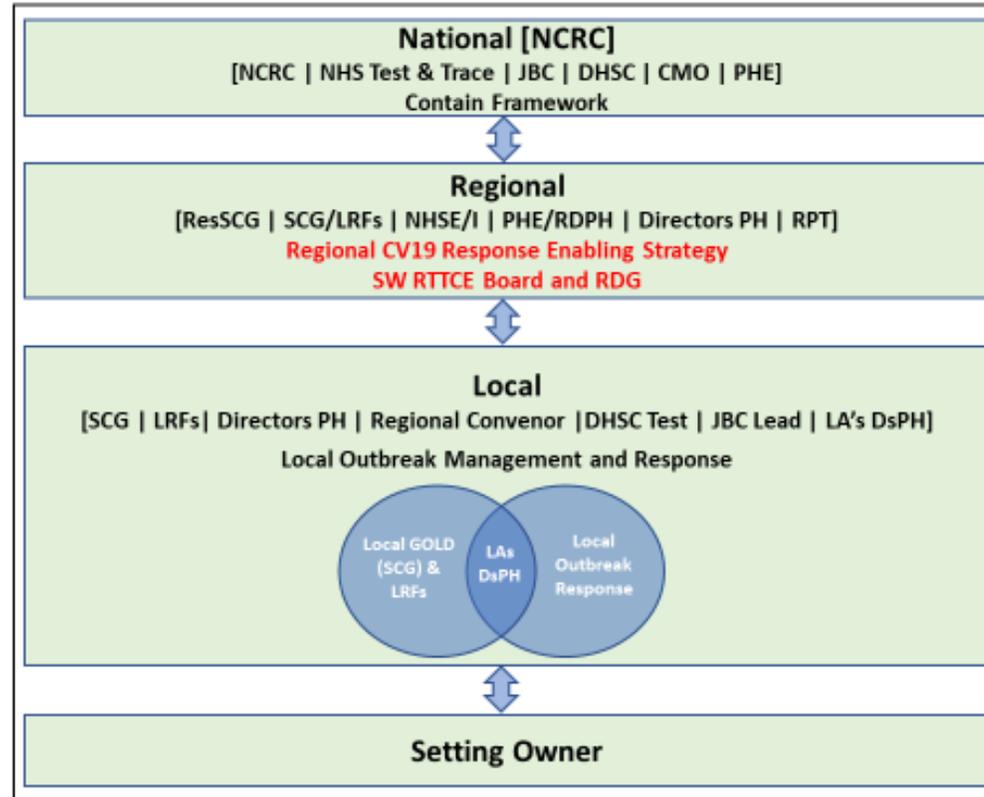
- Growing confidence in using public spaces and facilities in North Somerset whilst maintaining patterns of behaviour that support the national roadmap and ongoing infection prevention strategies.

Appendix A: North Somerset Outbreak Engagement Board members



Name	Organisation
Clir Davies (Chair NSP)	NSC Leader
Clir Bell (Chair HWB Board)	NSC Vice Leader
Clir Bridger	NSC Scrutiny
Jo Walker	NSC CEO
Matt Lenny	NSC DPH
Andrew Cross	NSC PH
Sue Mountstevens	Avon and Somerset PCC
Colin Bradbury	BNSSG CCG
Emma Diakou	NSC BIS
Jess Aston	Avon and Somerset Police
Georgie Bigg	Healthwatch
Angela Hicks	NSEA small business
Sally Carvill	Alzheimer's Association
Mary Lewis	Sirona Care and Health
Sue Stone	VANS
Pete Sloman	Weston College
Nicola O Driscoll	NSC BI
Astra Brayton	NSC Comms
Samantha Cross	NSC PH
Paul Lucock	VANS
Charlotte Cadwallader	NSC PH
Louise Swain	Alliance Homes
Julie Newman	Quartet Foundation
Sarah James	UHB&W
Simon Earles	Bristol Airport
Biju Abraham	W-s-M Ass of Malayalee's (WAM)
Anna Latham	Early Years
Jon Nunes	Backwell School
Louise Swain	Alliance Group CEO
Sam Notaro	Notaro Care Provider Care Home and Domiciliary Care
Vanessa Andrews	NSC Comms
Neil Liddington	Avon Fire & Rescue

Appendix B: National/ regional/local response architecture



Appendix C: Outbreak Engagement Board update themes

KEY WORKSTREAMS

Outbreak Management

Health protection response to local clusters or outbreaks of cases.

Break chain of transmission in higher risk locations by setting profile and/or potential to spread

Weekly Incident Management Team meetings to support locations

Testing

Case finding to ensure isolation and break chain of transmission.

Diagnosis to assist clinical management

Reduce risk to key groups with targeted testing.

PCR and Lateral Flow Testing at multiple sites

Contact tracing

Ensure isolation of diagnosed case and give practical advice and support

Define contacts to support further isolation/testing as required

Break chain of transmission

Local enhanced service launched in January

Insight, communication, and engagement

Identify and support key protective behaviours

Understand and address barriers to compliance

Regular updates for key stakeholders

Build community response capital

Enforcement

Use regulatory services powers to ensure business awareness and compliance

Investigate and address breaches

Work alongside Police powers when engagement not successful

Additional presence e.g. Marshalls fund.

Surveillance and intelligence

Monitor trends and address patterns of increased incidence

Model future patterns to prevent/reduce impact where possible

Monitor new variants

Vaccination

NHS England/CCG/Providers lead with wider support for community engagement and messaging. Enable vaccination sites as required.

Community response

North Somerset together; Town and Parish Councils and other local action groups. Vital reach and credibility with those who need support