Cheshire East Council

Working for a brighter future together

Health and Adults Social Care and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 8th October 2020

Report Title: Cheshire East Covid-19 Local Outbreak Plan

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Jill Rhodes, Public Health and Corporate Services

Senior Officer: Executive Director of People, Director of Childrens Services & Director

1. Report Summary

1.1. A programme of work is currently being undertaken by the Council to develop and deliver a localised approach to Covid-19 Test Trace Contain Enable (TTCE) in Cheshire East. The local role within the national and regional Test and Trace system aims to support local vulnerable people and complex places.

1.2. All Local Authorities were required by the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) to produce a Covid-19 Local Outbreak Plan to provide local guidance and information about how the TTCE will be delivered locally.

1.3. The primary objectives of the TTCE programme identified by the DHSC as part of 'Local Outbreak Control Plans' will be to control the COVID-19 rate of reproduction (R), reduce the spread of infection and save lives, and in doing so help to return life to as normal as possible, for as many people as possible, in a way that is safe, protects our health and care systems and releases our economy.

2. Recommendations

2.1. The review and scrutiny of the Council's Covid-19 Local Outbreak Plan and the Cheshire East TTCE programme.

3. **Reasons for Recommendations**

   3.1. The TTCE approach set out within the report has been developed in line with national guidance from the DHSC on how Local Outbreak Plans should be organised with seven key workstreams (Themes) that form part of the Plan, underpinned by local governance, engagement and communications. Local Outbreak Plans should also be developed to meet local strengths and needs, our communities, and existing structures and systems.

   3.2. Local Outbreak Plans form a key part of the national and local Covid-19 Recovery Plans, to prevent and contain the spread of Covid-19, as well as responding to and recovering from localised outbreaks within complex settings for example within Care Homes, Schools, or local businesses or workplaces e.g. within the hospitality industry or the local rural economy.

   3.3. Work on the Local Outbreak Plan continues at scale and pace within Cheshire East, across Cheshire and with strategic partners across Cheshire and Merseyside and the Council will need to maintain oversight of our local role within the wider system and approach.

4. **Other Options Considered**

   4.1. The development of a Local Outbreak Plan is mandated by the DHSC, therefore not developing a Local Outbreak Plan and localised TTCE programme is not an option.

5. **Background**

   5.1. The Cheshire East TTCE programme is aligned to the national Test and Trace service and is part of the Cheshire and Merseyside Test and Trace Hub. Therefore, the Council has worked collaboratively on our local approach with Public Health England, The Cheshire and Merseyside Public Health Collaborative (Champs), the Cheshire Resilience forum and Cheshire West and Chester Council as a national 'Beacon Site' for TTCE.

   5.2. All Local Authorities were required to publish Local Outbreak Plans by June 2020. The Cheshire East Plan is available on the Councils website: https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/covid-19/cec-covid-outbreak-doc-4-digital-lres-final.pdf (see appendix 1).

   5.3. The Cheshire East TTCE programme is made up of seven key workstreams as detailed within the national guidance from the DHSC and work is ongoing on the workstreams to ensure that we respond rapidly to local issues in a way that prevents and manages outbreaks and supports and protects our residents. The seven workstreams include:

- o **Theme 1 - Care homes and schools.** Planning for local outbreaks in care homes and schools (e.g. defining monitoring arrangements, potential scenarios and planning the required response).
- o **Theme 2 - High risk places, locations and communities**. Identifying and planning how to manage other high-risk places, locations and communities of interest including sheltered housing, dormitories for migrant workers, transport access points (e.g., ports, airports), detained settings, rough sleepers, key essential businesses, essential infrastructure (e.g. defining preventative measures and outbreak management strategies).
- o **Theme 3 - Local testing capacity.** Identifying methods for local testing to ensure a swift response that is accessible to the entire population This could include delivering tests to isolated individuals, establishing local pop-up sites or hosting mobile testing units at high-risk locations (e.g. defining how to prioritise and manage deployment).
- o **Theme 4 - Contact tracing in complex settings.** Assessing local and regional contact tracing and infection control capability in complex settings (e.g., Level 1b) and the need for mutual aid (e.g. identifying specific local complex communities of interest and settings, developing assumptions to estimate demand, developing options to scale capacity if needed).
- o **Theme 5 - Data integration.** Integrating national and local data and scenario planning through the Joint Biosecurity Centre Playbook (e.g., data management planning, including data security, NHS data linkages).
- o **Theme 6 - Vulnerable people.** Supporting vulnerable local people to get help to self-isolate (e.g. encouraging neighbours to offer support, identifying relevant community groups, planning how to co-ordinate and deploy) and ensuring services meet the needs of diverse communities.
- o **Theme 7 – Local Boards and Legal Framework.** Establishing governance structures led by existing Covid-19 Health Protection Boards in conjunction with local NHS and supported by existing Gold command forums and a new member-led Board to communicate with the general public.

5.4. Workstream 7 has focussed on the development of the governance structures for TTCE, in line with existing local structures, as well as the development of new governance Boards, including the Health Protection Board and the Local Outbreak Engagement Board (see Appendix 2).

5.5. The role of the 'Covid-19 Health Protection Board' is to make recommendations on actions relating to Outbreak Management within Cheshire East with specific duties to protect the population of Cheshire East in relation to COVID-19. The Health Protection Board will decide if additional action is required over and above normal outbreak management and will provide recommendations to the Cabinet as well as assurance to Cheshire East Health and Wellbeing Board.

5.6. The role of the 'Local Outbreak Engagement Board' is to provide political oversight of the delivery of the Local Outbreak Management Plan. This includes the provision of appropriate support and challenge to the actions that arise in responding to outbreaks, and to engage with local communities to secure their support. Effective communication with the public and key stakeholders is a core role of the Local Authority as mandated nationally. Effective communication is key to the success of local outbreak prevention and management. The Local Outbreak Engagement Board will provide recommendations to Cabinet and assurance to Cheshire East Health and Wellbeing Board.

5.7. The national issues with regards to testing capacity is impacting on the access to testing at a local level within all LA areas. However, the Council continues to develop options for access to testing at a local level, including the development of Mobile Testing Units (MTUs) and Local Testing Sites (LTS). The Council is planning to pilot new sites for MTUs for example to improve access to those most at risk, deprived, vulnerable areas and communities. The first LTS will also be available in Crewe by the end of September and the Council have submitted further expressions of intertest for the development of two additional LTSs in Congleton and Macclesfield.

5.8. The Local Outbreak Plan aims to support the prevention, investigation, management and containment of community outbreaks of COVID-19 in complex settings and communities within Cheshire East not already covered by existing outbreak control processes. Initial priority groups identified through local insight and national data include:

Complex settings	High risk communities	High risk places and locations
• Hotels currently housing homeless residents • Hotels housing refugees and asylum seekers • Homeless hostels • Learning disability supported living • Extra Care housing • Mental Health residential settings • Secure residential facilities • Youth housing • Probation centres • Primary Care (GP Surgeries, dental, optometry, pharmacies)	• Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities • Domestic abuse victims • Gypsy and Traveler • Homeless • Migrant workers • Refugees and asylum seekers • Student population • Sex workers • Substance users	• Early years / childcare settings (not covered by guidance for schools) • Public / shared transport • Workplaces (e.g. construction sites, food businesses, including restaurants, pubs, meat processing and packing plants, hairdressers and beauticians) • Other well-defined settings and gatherings such as places of worship / private social events • Houses of Multiple Occupation

6. Implications of the Recommendations

6.1. Legal Implications

6.1.1. Governance structures are now in place for the TTCE programme and the Local Outbreak Plan in Cheshire East (see appendix 2). This includes the decision making and enforcement powers for Covid-19 related lock downs in Cheshire East, and the delegation of Director of Public Health powers to the Environmental Health and Regulatory Services team to ensure a swift response in the event of the need to close a premises due to COVID-19.

6.2. Finance Implications

6.2.1. Cheshire East Council have received a grant of £1,533,331 which is ringfenced for the development and delivery of Local Outbreaks Plans and TTCE locally. The funding will support the additional capacity and workforce required to deliver test and trace activities across Cheshire East, as well as locally targeted communications and engagement.

6.3. Policy Implications

6.3.1. The Council's Local Outbreak Plan is based on national guidance from the DHSC and is aligned to local and national Covid-19 Recovery Plans.

6.4. Equality Implications

6.4.1. The development of TTCE within LAs is focused on complex places and vulnerable groups most at risk (see section 5.7.). The TTCE programme is therefore building on the existing developments to support our most vulnerable residents and communities already developed during the Covid-19 response and recovery planning such as the People helping People programme, and the Cheshire East Social Action Partnership.

6.4.2. The Local Outbreak Plan is supported by an Equality Impact Assessment (see appendix 3).

6.5. Human Resources Implications

6.5.1. The Council has undertaken recruitment processes to ensure that the capacity and workforce is in place to deliver the Local Outbreak Plan and the TTCE programme in Cheshire East. Internal secondments have been undertaken where possible, for example some Library staff who have previously supported the Council's 'Shielding' developments have been seconded to Call Handlings roles building on the skills and experiences developed during the response phase of Covid-19. The Council has utilised the ring-fenced grant to build capacity for Contract

Tracing, Environmental Health, Public Health Analyst, Public Health Protection, Communications, and Programme Management.

6.6. Risk Management Implications

6.6.1. A Cheshire East Programme Board has been established for the development and delivery of the Local Outbreak Plan and the TTCE Programme, which includes a risk log which manages the risks identified within the Health Protection Board and the Local Engagement Board.

6.7. Rural Communities Implications

6.7.1. The TTCE programme aims to prevent and contain the spread of Covid-19 across all communities including rural communities, and therefore to protect residents who live and work in rural and farming based jobs, business and the rural economy locally.

6.8. Implications for Children & Young People/Cared for Children

6.8.1. Covid-19 outbreaks within complex settings are managed at a local level by the Council. Schools are classified as a complex setting and are therefore supported at a local level via the Cheshire East TTCE Hub. The Cheshire East TTCE Hub provides information and guidance to local schools in response to localised outbreaks within our schools.

6.9. Public Health Implications

6.9.1. The TTCE Programme and the Local Outbreak Plan is based on existing evidence based Public Health Infection Prevention and Control practices.

6.9.2. The Director of Public Health is the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for the Test and Trace Programme and is the statutory Officer responsible for the Cheshire East Local Outbreak Plan.

6.10. Climate Change Implications

6.10.1. The Council is currently reviewing policy developments for Social Value in response to Covid-19 recovery planning. This includes local Social, Economic and Environmental impacts.

7. Ward Members Affected

7.1. All Wards in Cheshire East are affected by the TTCE Programme and the Local Outbreak Plan.

8. Consultation & Engagement

8.1. A core function of the Local Outbreak Plan is the development of a Local Engagement Board and the development of a local Communications Strategy. The aim of the Board and the Strategy is to ensure that local residents receive localised information, communications, and engagement activities, for example targeting Communications to local vulnerable groups, or those most at risk locally, or communicating the details of localised lockdowns if needed.

9. Access to Information

9.1. Cheshire East Local Outbreak Plan

9.2. Local, Regional and National Governance

9.3. Equality Impact Assessment

9.4. Cheshire East TTCE Communications Strategy

10. Contact Information

10.1. Any questions relating to this report should be directed to the following officer:

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Version Control

Date	Version	Author	Meeting report presented to	Consultees		Summary of amendments made
				Name of officers consulted	Date consulted	
21st Sept 20		Shelley Brough				
				Matt Tyrer		DPH – SRO
				Yvonne Frost		Finance
				Deborah Nickson		Legal