



**ADULTS AND HEALTH SCRUTINY
REVIEW BOARD
19 April 2022**

ITEM 8

Report sponsor: Dr Robyn Dewis, Director of Public Health
Report author: Dr Robyn Dewis, Director of Public Health

Covid-19 Update

Purpose

- 1.1 To provide an update to the Board on the current progress of the pandemic, including the changes to national guidance.
- 1.2 To summarise the key actions that all individuals are encouraged to take to reduce risk.
- 1.3 To indicate the possible future progress of the pandemic.

Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 To note the update report

Reason(s)

- 3.1 To update the Board on the current situation and potential future expectations.

Supporting information

- 4.1 On the 1st April 2022 the national approach to COVID-19 was updated and access to universal testing was removed. This means that we are now unable to accurately report the numbers or demographics of cases for the City.
- 4.2 Testing is now focussed predominantly on those for whom a positive test will alter the medical management of their condition and staff who work in Health and Social Care settings. This is set by national policy and is not subject to local interpretation. Our local PCR testing sites at Morleston and Sussex Circus, run by the Department of Health and Social Care, have now been closed and are in the process of being decommissioned.
- 4.3 The national COVID-19 prevalence survey conducted by the Office for National Statistics is continuing, and the latest result estimates that 1:13 people in England would have tested positive for Coronavirus at the end of March. National data indicates that the majority of these cases are Omicron BA.2.

- 4.4 The management of Coronavirus has now moved to national public health guidance, similar to other infectious diseases. This guidance helps us all to understand how to live safely with COVID-19 and focuses on the following areas:
- Ensuring that we take up any offer of vaccination when available
 - Letting fresh air in when we meet, or meeting outdoors where possible
 - Washing our hands regularly
 - Cover our coughs and sneezes, following the previous Catch it, Bin it, Kill it campaigns
 - Stay at home if you have symptoms until you no longer have a high temperature or no longer feel unwell
 - Wear a face covering if you can when you are in close contact with someone at high risk, or you are in a crowded or enclosed space and COVID-19 or other viruses are known to be circulating

The vaccination programme has been extended to offer a further booster to those over the age of 75 years, those who remain vulnerable despite vaccination due to medical conditions and care home residents; first doses are now also available for 5–11-year-olds.

- 4.5 Hospital admissions nationally, and locally, with COVID-19 have been increasing over recent weeks. When levels in the community are so high it is inevitable that some of these positive cases will be incidental findings on admission for another reason. However, there are still around 40-50% of these admissions which are primarily for the treatment of COVID-19 symptoms. Fortunately, the requirement for intensive care treatment remains low but there has remained between 1 and 4 deaths each week for the month of March.
- 4.6 We are currently still in the pandemic phase of coronavirus. We anticipate that, over the next year or so, we will move to a more predictable endemic phase. However, we do anticipate we will see at least one further variant of COVID-19 in that time period. We do not know whether that variant will cause more or less severe disease for those infected, but vaccines may be less effective.

Public/stakeholder engagement

5.1 N/A

Other options

6.1 N/A

Financial and value for money issues

7.1 N/A

Legal implications

8.1 N/A

Climate implications

9.1 N/A

Other significant implications

10.1 N/A

This report has been approved by the following people:

Role	Name	Date of sign-off
Legal Finance Service Director(s) Report sponsor Other(s)		

Background papers: List of appendices:
