



# City of Westminster

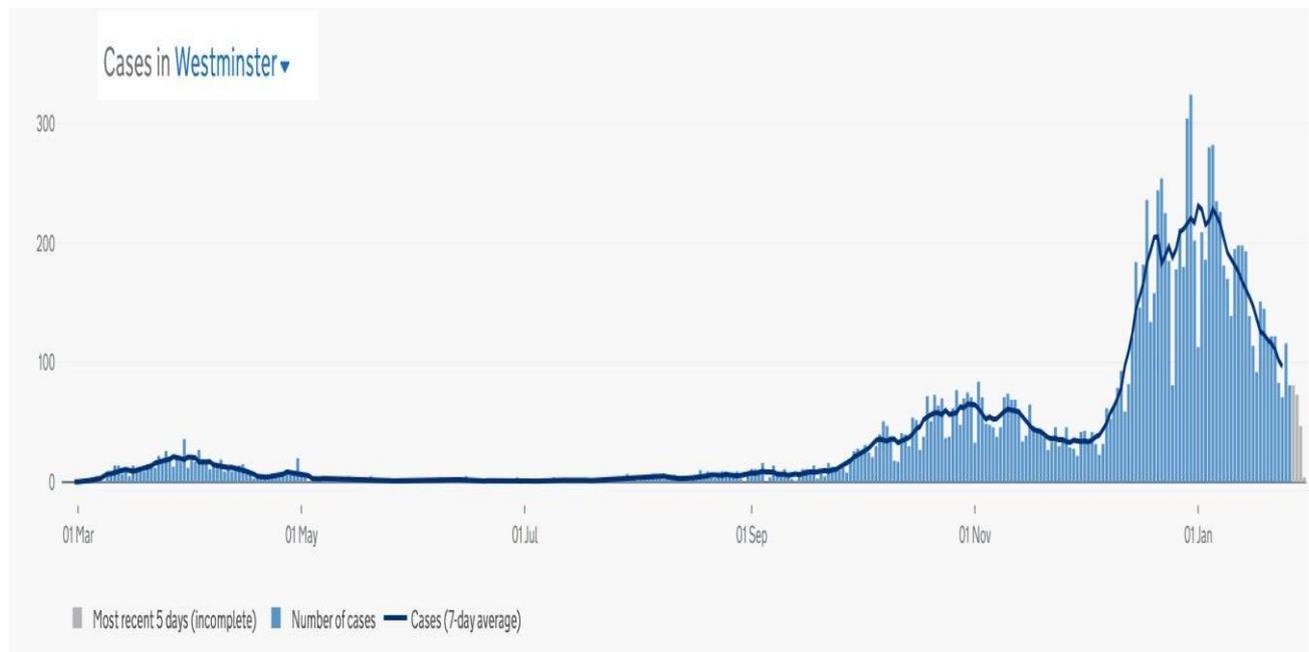
## Adult Social Care and Public Health

<b>Title:</b>	Cabinet Member Update for Policy and Scrutiny
<b>Division:</b>	Adult Social Care and Public Health
<b>Briefing Date:</b>	February 2021
<b>Purpose:</b>	The update will form part of the Cabinet Member Report
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### COVID-19 Update – Adult Social Care & Health

#### 1.0 Cases / Epidemiology

- 1.1 After a period of very sharp growth in rates from the second week in December driven by the new UK Variant (which constituted more than 90% of cases in both boroughs), the case rates of Covid-19 have been falling steadily since early-mid January. This is consistent with what has been observed at a London level from a very high peak, and following wider restrictions introduced in early January 2021.
- 1.2 Geographical variation is, and continues to be, a key feature of the London epidemic picture even as rates drop, the rate of decline is not even borough to borough. Indeed, significant variations can be noted within boroughs with noticeably higher case rates emerging in areas of deprivation during December and January.
- 1.3 Although rates in Westminster have been consistently amongst the lowest rates in London over the past two months, the highest London borough rates of infection are currently in other North West London boroughs with Ealing's rate of 705.4 cases per 100,000 (as of 27<sup>th</sup> January) as the highest.
- 1.4 Summary Information:
  - The rate of infection is currently reducing. Total number of Covid-19 cases (as of the 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021) is 12,386. Based on cases from the last week, WCC has the sixth lowest rate of infection in London at 331.4 per 100,000 population (which is down by 29% from the previous week).
  - Since the start of the pandemic, 255 residents have died with Covid-19 included on the death certificate; 251 of these were within 28 days of a positive test.



## 2.0 Outbreak Management / Local Testing Strategy

- 2.1 In December, rapid Lateral Flow Tests (LFT) were made available at greater scale supporting targeted local asymptomatic testing. The roll out of local testing sites, and roll out of targeted asymptomatic testing, has supported an increase in local testing rates. There is currently available capacity at all these sites.
- 2.2 Local testing sites, using PCR laboratory tests for those with symptoms, are at Lydford Hall, Greenside Community Hall and Grosvenor Hall with mobile testing facilities at Hyde Park. Asymptomatic testing is available at Moberly Sports Centre, Little Venice Sports Centre and Westminster Cathedral.
- 2.3 We are continuing to strongly promote community testing for those with symptoms. For those who are asymptomatic, the focus has been on testing key workers and others who must leave home during lockdown. We have good access to testing with community sites reporting spare capacity on most days. Latest data shows testing rates (i.e. those being tested) are lower than the London average, as would be expected with lower community infection rates considerably lower than the London average. Testing has also been targeted at settings with vulnerable residents, including homeless and supported care.

## 3.0 Supporting the CCG with the Rollout of Vaccinations

- 3.1 The roll out of Covid-19 vaccinations commenced in late December. The vaccination programme is being led by colleagues in the NHS with support from the Local Authority including Public Health, communications, community engagement and tactical colleagues with logistics.
- 3.2 Due to the availability and prioritisation supporting the rollout of the vaccination, communications are being managed at North West London level.

- 3.3 No published data is available on vaccinations at a Local Authority level. Regionally, 890,877 first doses and 59,155 second doses of the vaccination have been delivered in London (daily update up to the 30th January 2021). In the North West London Health and Care Partnership CCG area, which covers our local authority, 158,032 doses have been administered (data up to the 24th January 2021).

#### **4.0 Testing and Vaccinations in Care Homes**

- 4.1 We have had a reliable testing regime in place for all care homes across the Bi-Borough since August 2020, in line with national guidance. This regime uses PCR tests and Lateral Flow test, which are accessed via the national portal. Staff are tested weekly and residents are tested every four weeks. In homes where there is a positive test result, all staff undertake a Lateral Flow test every day for seven days before starting their shift.
- 4.2 If there is an incident or outbreak, the local Outbreak Management Team for care homes meets. They draw-in additional support from partners including from the local NHS Frailty Team, Central London Community Healthcare, local GPs linked to each home, the Clinical Commissioning Group, Public Health England and further testing and re-testing is undertaken, as needed.
- 4.3 Testing in Extra Care and Supported Accommodation settings is accessed through the national portal and these settings now benefit from being included in the mass roll out of testing. Staff in these settings are able to access testing at our local walk-in sites before their shifts and staff are working to access those tests directly within the schemes via the national distribution routes to make this easier.
- 4.4 Vaccinations in care homes are being led by colleagues in the NHS, with support from commissioners in the local authority. Residents in all care homes have been offered the vaccine via an initial round of visits from NHS teams. As with all Boroughs, this did not result in all residents being vaccinated as some were not able to due to recent infections, for example. Second and third visits are being undertaken to ensure all residents have the opportunity to access the vaccine, and this will be followed up for second doses.
- 4.5 A number of care home staff were also vaccinated during the first round of visits; however, numbers were lower overall for staff than residents, with resident being prioritised. In addition, shift working meant not all staff were able to be on site when the vaccinations took place. Also there has been some vaccine hesitancy and, as with residents, relatively high numbers of staff who needed to wait 28 days from a recent positive test result. Actions are being taken now to increase the uptake of vaccinations amongst care home staff. This includes assistance with booking slots at local hospital sites and transport to access the venues, as well as education sessions delivered by Public Health.

#### **5.0 Local Contact Tracing**

- 5.1 Both boroughs run a local contact tracing scheme. This is supplementary to the national scheme which passes details of those who test positive but have not been contactable within 24 hours to the local authority for intervention. Local teams are phoning or visiting persons at home to encourage self-isolation of cases and of their contacts and offer support for those self-isolating, where this is required. NHS and local teams are now regularly achieving 80% of necessary contacts.

## **6.0 Communications and Resident Engagement**

- 6.1 Public Health and Communications colleagues continue to work closely in delivering the council's Covid-19 communications, ensuring residents, businesses and stakeholders are aware of how to stay safe with advice on how to prevent the spread of the virus available across our diverse communities. Recent focus has been on promoting the stay at home message, symptomatic and asymptomatic testing, and encouraging residents to feel confident in taking up the vaccine when they are offered it.
- 6.2 We are aware of anti-vaccination messaging around the Covid-19 vaccine circulating within our communities. Anti-vaccination messages and videos are predominantly circulating on WhatsApp. Public Health, Communications and Community Engagement colleagues are working hard to source and produce localised content with trusted sources sharing factual information about the vaccine and what it means to them to receive the vaccines. A national NHS campaign is expected in February which we will support and amplify locally.

## **7.0 Recovery Planning**

- 7.1 National and regional research to date, including that published by Public Health England, has confirmed that Covid-19 has disproportionately impacted certain people and communities. Local data also suggests that a higher proportion of deaths from Covid-19 are among people from a BAME background compared to non Covid-19 deaths.
- 7.2 Local data also shows residents from a BAME background are more likely to be at risk due to higher prevalence of diabetes, hypertension and obesity.
- 7.3 In response:
- Covid-19 testing has been targeted in areas where infection rates are likely to be the highest.
  - A broad, comprehensive and tailored communications plan has ensured uptake of Covid-19 testing mirrors the local population. Methods include producing translated information, targeting messages to different demographics, and holding engagement events in key locations such as in and around Church Street.
  - Health Champions and 5 existing community champion projects are listening to communities, supporting them to follow advice and feeding back insights regarding barriers faced to shape local communications.
  - Local CCGs report GPs are undertaking work to review patients with underlying conditions.
  - BAME residents and staff eligible for flu vaccine are a core focus and extensive work is underway to support families who may refuse the flu nasal spray for their children, due to the porcine component in the spray, to receive a suitable alternative vaccine.
  - Development of Annual Director of Public Health report on health inequalities, with a particular focus on impacts on BAME groups, with options appraisal for use of the Public Health funds to address health inequalities exposed and/or exacerbated by Covid-19.

## **8.0 City for All 2021 Update: Adult Social Care and Public Health**

- 8.1 We are supporting the CfA Plan as it moves into the next phase. Adult Social Care and Public Health are supporting a range of projects across the strategy. Three of the key projects Adult Social Care and Public Health will be focussed on in the coming year are:

- Addressing the Impacts of Covid-19 on Residents.
  - This priority will address identified disparities by creating and developing healthy and sustainable places and communities, which will enable all residents to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives. This work is currently being scoped. The spotlight will be both on health inequalities and a recovery plan.
  
- Providing Services That Enhance Emotional Wellbeing and Support Mental Health.
  - This priority is focussed on ensuring services are coordinated to respond to the residents mental health and wellbeing during and post-pandemic. This commitment is in the scoping phase and will require a corporate approach and agreement on focus and priorities. A task and finish group has been set up which also aims to identify gaps in the services and develop a business case for sustainable service development.
  
- Supporting People Living with Dementia.
  - A Dementia Plan was developed last year and includes Covid-19 specific information. It has been through the Governance process and is now at the communications and implementation phase. There are a number of initiatives underway such as the council facilitating Dementia Friends sessions and bespoke dementia training to the whole community. During Covid-19, internal council training was made available to the wider community.
  - Development of a rota is underway to centralise Dementia Friends sessions across the Bi borough, to facilitate natural networking and better ways of working together with a consistent approach.