

Wolverhampton COVID-19 Outbreak Control Plan

June 2020

wolverhampton.gov.uk

CITY OF
WOLVERHAMPTON
COUNCIL

Cover image: Showell Road, key worker testing

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Foreword

COVID-19 has impacted on the lives of everyone in our city. The collective effort, expertise and commitment of partners from across the system has helped to limit the impact of COVID-19 in Wolverhampton so far.

Together, we have worked tirelessly to ensure that our health and care system can continue to manage the unprecedented demands that COVID-19 has placed upon us. We have also made sure that our most vulnerable residents are supported to stay safe within their local community.

But there is still a lot to do. As lock down measures are eased, and we move into the next phase of living with COVID-19, our overriding priority remains to save lives.

Our well-established, locally-led multiagency system is critical to achieving this but we all must play our part. Preventing the spread of COVID-19 is everyone's responsibility and we must remain alert.

We are continuing to refine our approach as we learn more about how this new disease is moving across the city, the country and across the world.

Our COVID-19 Outbreak Control Plan builds on the good practice we have delivered so far and sets out how we will continue to work together, what our priorities are, and how we will measure our progress in tackling the spread of infection and controlling outbreaks. Our ultimate aim is to control the virus and enable people in our city to live a safer and more normal life.



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Clinical
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Introduction

Every Local Authority is required to produce a Local Outbreak Control Plan specific to COVID-19. Our plan is our local commitment to preparedness and our response to the challenges associated with living with COVID-19.

The aim of the Wolverhampton Outbreak Control Plan is to:

- Reduce the spread of COVID-19 infection and save lives
- Help as many people as possible return to normal life, in a way that is safe, protects our health and care systems and supports our economy to recover.

This means that we:

- Prevent the spread of COVID-19 wherever possible
- Improve engagement with local residents to encourage participation in prevention efforts and to build trust and confidence in our outbreak response
- Identify outbreaks and complex cases early and respond to them quickly to prevent further transmission
- Build on existing partnerships and expand our networks of stakeholders to assure our system capacity and capability
- Reduce health inequalities linked to and amplified by COVID-19.

The Outbreak Control Plan builds on existing health protection activity that has been ongoing throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and formalises measures to protect and promote the health of our city in this context.

The government has made £300m available to support Local Authorities in England to develop and action their plans to reduce the spread of the virus in their area. Wolverhampton has been allocated £1.9m to support the delivery of our plan.

Outbreaks of infectious diseases which present a risk to the health of the public and require urgent investigation and management are included in the following legal framework:

- Health and Social Care Act 2012 (via Directors of Public Health, Public Health England and NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups)
- Public Health (Control of Disease Act) 1984 (via Chief Environmental Health Officers)
- Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (via other responders' specific responsibilities to respond to major incidents).

In the context of COVID-19, there is also the Coronavirus Act 2020.

This legal framework gives Local Authorities – through Public Health and Environmental Health functions – the primary responsibility for the delivery and management of public health action to control outbreaks of infectious disease.

COVID-19 in Wolverhampton

SITUATION

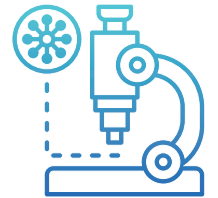


Wolverhampton is an urban area of relative deprivation with significant engineering and manufacturing industries and high population density.

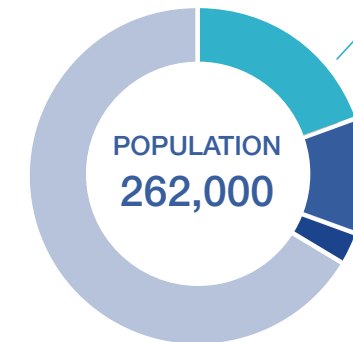
STRATEGY



**LOCKDOWN
+
TESTING**



Identified those at highest risk and supported them to stay at home:



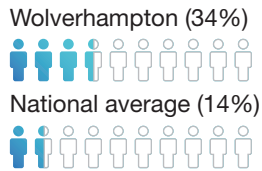
50,000
at risk

28,500
vulnerable

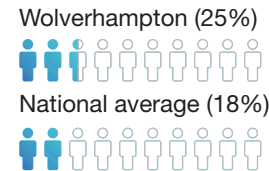
8,000
shielded



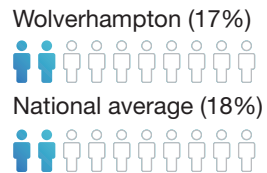
BAME POPULATION



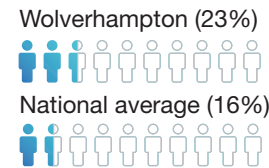
LONG-TERM ILLNESS



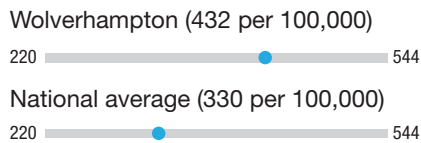
PEOPLE AGED 65+



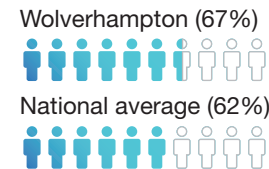
SMOKING



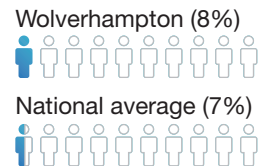
UNDER 75 ALL-CAUSE MORTALITY RATE



OVERWEIGHT



DIABETES



COLLABORATIVE ACTIONS

We contacted those at highest risk and worked with key partners across the city:



80,000

higher risk people written to offering support



12,300

contacts on **Stay Safe Be Kind** emergency line



177

homeless, or at risk of becoming **homeless** supported with a room and roof



800,000+

items of **PPE** sourced and delivered by council to local care



1,000,000+

meals delivered in **48,303** food parcels



3,000

children supported in **city schools**



800+ from key worker families



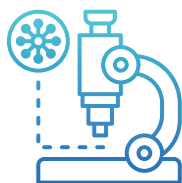
25,358

Meals on Wheels deliveries made



£1.3m

made available by council to support **local care providers**



We enabled a **localised push on testing:**



Showell Road
Key worker testing



Mobile testing unit
Community testing



Care homes
Staff and resident testing



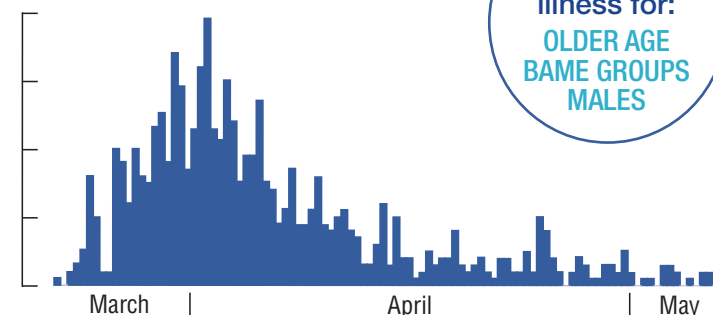
6,000+

NHS and Social Care key workers tested

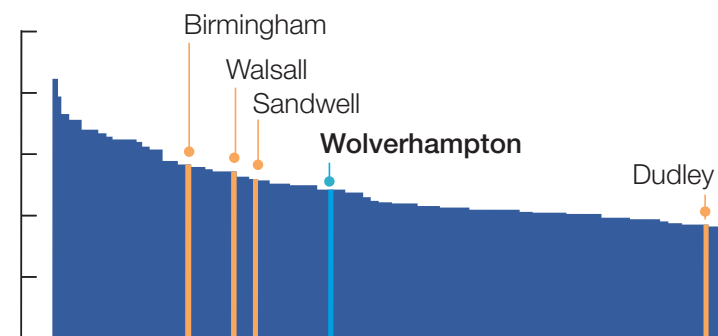
IMPACT

The first wave has been halted by national and local action:

Greater risk of serious illness for:
OLDER AGE
BAME GROUPS
MALES



The peak in daily hospital admissions occurred in April, figures have declined since then.



Urban areas have higher mortality rates, however, Wolverhampton has a lower rate than nearby urban areas

We all play our part

You can help by:

Making sure you know the latest advice on preventing the spread. This means feeling confident about what the basic steps are – washing your hands often, social distancing, limiting contact and wearing your face covering where you can't maintain distance. You can find more information on our [Stay Safe, Be Kind website](#). If you are part of a business, voluntary or community group, make the most of our resources that help you to keep yourself, your employees, and members of the public safe. Signpost others to these resources too and share them on social media where you can.

Be familiar with what to do when you or someone you know has symptoms. Share our basic advice on what to do about self-isolating, getting tested or being a close contact with others where you can. If you or someone you know might need extra help while they are self-isolating, use our Stay Safe Be Kind website to find a list of local support offers.

If you are worried that you cannot get the help you need, you can contact us at: staysafebekind@wolverhampton.gov.uk

We will be working closely with Public Health England to manage any outbreaks that may occur. If you are in a higher risk or more complex setting, we will be supporting you directly. For everyone else, please continue to stay alert and look out for each other as we all work together to keep our city safe.



We will help by:

Making sure that our residents, communities, and local organisations have the information and tools they need to stay safe whilst living with COVID-19. It is vital that we have regular two-way dialogue to make sure that our plan is as effective as possible.

We will support our city to:

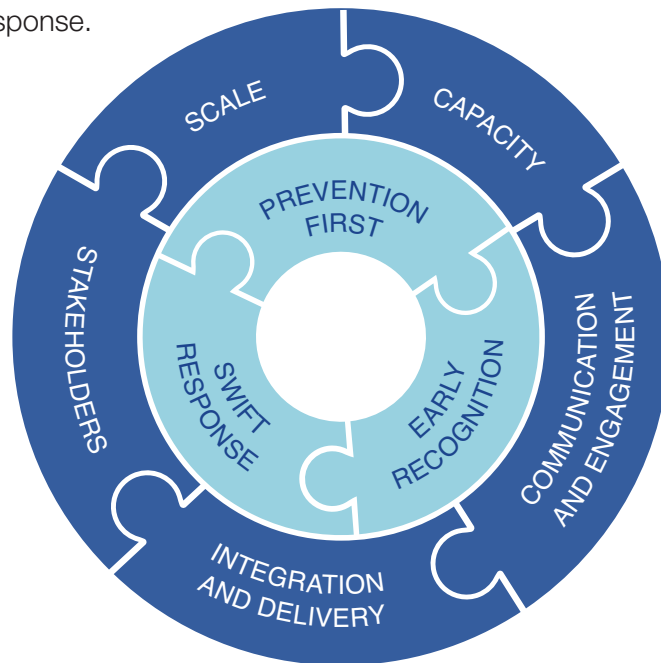
- Understand the level of risk faced by an individual
- Understand the risk posed by an environment or place
- Know what to do if someone becomes unwell with COVID-19 symptoms
- Access resources to support places to operate safely
- Tell us what's working well and where there is room for improvement.

Our Approach

Our local approach has and will continue to be led by and delivered with our well-established, multiagency partnerships. It is an approach that will need to be maintained for the long term and refined as we continue to understand more about this new disease.

Together we have adopted an approach that is proactive, supportive and reactive. It is underpinned by the following three principles which are key to any outbreak management strategy:

- Prevention first
- Early recognition
- Swift response.



This Outbreak Control Plan also brings in additional principles tailored to the current COVID-19 pandemic, these principles provide the foundation that our COVID-19 approach is built upon:

Scale – we will build on our traditional health protection and emergency response arrangements to ensure that we can respond to outbreaks quickly, potentially managing multiple outbreaks at the same time.

Capacity – we will utilise the specialist skills, capability and expertise available to us from across the partnership and ensure that this is appropriately resourced. This may include additional capacity and mutual aid between partners and neighbouring local authorities where necessary.

Stakeholders – we will provide clarity for our partners and stakeholders so that individual and collective responsibilities for the delivery of the plan are clear. This includes understanding their response in the event of an outbreak.

Integration and delivery – we will ensure our local multiagency system is connected within the regional and national infrastructure, with more localised arrangements in place across the Black Country. Where possible outbreak management responses will be consistent across the city whilst being flexible enough to adapt to specific circumstances / settings.

Communication and Engagement – we will engage with communities and stakeholders to build confidence in the proactive and reactive nature of our plan. This will include ongoing opportunities for feedback, learning and continued improvement.

Our Plan

Our plan provides a framework for the response to COVID-19 incidents and outbreaks that occur in the city. It is structured around seven themes defined by Local Government Association (LGA) and Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC):

Theme 1: Care Homes and Educational Settings

Preventing and managing outbreaks in care homes and educational settings e.g. early years settings, schools (including special schools), colleges and universities, taking a proactive approach wherever possible.

Theme 2: High Risks Workplaces, Locations and Communities

Preventing and managing outbreaks in other high-risk locations, workplaces and communities. This also means helping to keep as many services and businesses as possible operating in a way that is safe and supports the recovery of our local economy.

Theme 3: Mobile Testing Units and Local Testing Approaches

Using local and national testing capacity to best meet current and potential demand for contact tracing and outbreak management. We will tailor our offer to meet the needs of vulnerable populations.

Theme 4: Contact Tracing in Complex Settings

Providing contact tracing and outbreak management expertise to complex settings, working across agencies to connect scientific expertise with local resources.

Theme 5: Data Integration

Ensuring access to the right local data to enable the other six themes and prevent outbreaks.

Theme 6: Vulnerable People

Supporting vulnerable people to stay safe and get help to self-isolate. This also means ensuring services meet the needs of diverse local communities

Theme 7: Local Governance

Taking local actions to contain outbreaks and communicate effectively and in a timely, accessible manner with the general public.

These themes are not operating in isolation. They all interconnect with each other and will continue to evolve over time.

Theme 1: Care Homes and Educational Settings

Care Homes are particularly susceptible to outbreaks as they accommodate some of our most clinically vulnerable groups.

School outbreaks remain relatively rare, but we know that children can acquire COVID-19 and may play, although potentially less than adults, a role in the spread of the disease. Children can also find it more difficult to maintain social distancing and good hygiene, especially younger children.

What we have done so far in care homes:

Working in partnership across health and social care, we have implemented a range of effective support measures to prevent and manage outbreaks in care homes. This has included:

- Establishing a strategic group made up of key partners across health and social care to engage and reassure care providers
- Establishing an electronic system to capture key data from each care home daily, to help respond to emerging incidents and support needs
- Streamlined access to PPE
- Incident management through working with health protection agencies
- Economic support through central government grant funding
- Support for mental wellbeing of care sector staff
- Weekly check in with every care home via named Clinical Lead with Multidisciplinary Team support where needed
- Interpreting national guidance and supporting homes to implement recommendations.

What we have done so far in schools:

- Developed a system of proactive case finding and surveillance
- Supported the reopening of schools in line with government and public health guidance, ensuring they are equipped with key resources related to reducing risk in the classroom
- Provided dedicated support to special schools via engagement seminars with Headteachers
- Introduced a risk assessment tool to help protect staff.

Our plan is to:

- Expand current infection prevention support to high risk settings so incidents receive timely response and support, this includes places such as schools, universities and domiciliary care settings
- Commission Occupational Health support for care staff
- Implement a Standard Operating Procedure for recording and information sharing with Public Health England
- Provide financial support for increased infection prevention measures such as regular cleaning regimes in schools.

Theme 2:

High Risk Workplaces, Locations and Communities

High risk workplaces, locations and communities require additional support to stay safe or take the necessary action if someone develops symptoms of COVID-19. This may be for several reasons including:

- It is difficult to maintain social distancing
- Settings have been contacted by Environmental Health or Public Health and informed that they are high risk
- Employees are required to work within cold or refrigerated sections
- The building where more than one household live has shared facilities or lifts
- Groups of people are coming together for worship
- Groups of clinically or socially vulnerable people are present.

High risk communities may include people who sleep rough. Engaging with key partners who work closely with these communities is vital in addressing the health inequalities they face. This also means working closely with City of Wovlerhampton Council Housing Team to ensure an appropriate place to self-isolate should it be needed.

What we have done so far:

- Ongoing dialogue with Wolverhampton's faith settings and community groups has allowed real time support for communities to stay safe and well
- Health protection guidance and advice has been shared with local organisations and businesses so they can operate safely

- The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust launched a COVID-19 Care Assistant App, an online symptom checker which highlights possible next steps. The COVID-19 Care Assistant gives a care plan, based on the latest guidance. It also offers residents to have a video consultation with a clinician via the website
- Provided extensive support to an emergency accommodation setting to help keep residents and staff safe. This has included daily assessments of staff and residents' health and wellbeing, cleaning, hygiene and social distancing.

Our plan is to:

- Identify, proactively engage and prioritise ongoing support for high risk settings based on risk and vulnerability
- Provide infection prevention guidance and tools which include environment and individual risk assessments
- Ensure rapid access to testing should a person from a high-risk setting become symptomatic
- Support settings to take fast action in the event of an outbreak
- Source high quality, high volume COVID-19 resources that settings can access directly
- Continue collaboration with Environmental Health to support places to be compliant with legislation. Enforcement will be a last resort where a location may cause a public health risk
- Continue to support The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust in promoting the COVID-19 Care Assistant App.

Theme 3:

Mobile Testing Units and Local Testing Approaches

Testing is a vital part of managing the risk of COVID-19.

Alongside the [NHS Test and Trace Service](#), our local testing offer plays a vital role in identifying COVID-19 and preventing spread to others.

There are two types of test currently available for COVID-19; an antigen test for those with symptoms, and an antibody test to see if someone has had the infection in the past. In this section we are referring to antigen testing unless otherwise stated.

What we have done so far:

- In partnership with Wolverhampton Clinical Commissioning Group and The Royal Wolverhampton Trust, enabled the rapid set up of our local testing offer. This was established on 10 March and was one of the first drive thru testing sites in the country. Local testing has allowed for quicker turnaround of results, adding targeted testing capacity
- Implemented screening for all care home residents and staff in partnership with Wolverhampton CCG and Adult Social Care
- Established local testing pathways for Local Authority key workers, schools, foster carers and commissioned providers
- Worked with the Local Resilience Forum and regional partners to develop a rotational testing offer across the city for mobile testing units
- Worked with multiagency partners to adapt to changes in guidance to ensure testing options meet local need. This will be an ongoing commitment.

Our plan is to:

- Work closely with regional colleagues through the COVID-19 Combined Testing Group to establish a local Mobile Testing Unit and team
- Establish a permanent national mobile testing site in the city with the Local Resilience Forum and regional partners, that removes barriers for local people who cannot 'drive thru' at other regional centres
- Introduce a centralised booking system to prioritise testing capacity for symptomatic testing of key workers, complex and high-risk settings or communities
- Introduce reactive mobile testing units that can respond to potential outbreaks
- Expand local swabbing teams in partnership with The Royal Wolverhampton Trust to add flexibility and capacity to the local testing offer
- Utilise local testing units and swabbing teams for outbreak response when mass testing is required
- Continue to work with City of Wolverhampton Council Communications Team to create and share universal and targeted messages on why, when and how to get a test
- Roll out antibody testing in partnership with local NHS partners as part of wider surveillance.

Theme 4: Contact Tracing in Complex Settings

Contact tracing plays a key role in preventing the spread of infection. Contact tracing is the process for:

- Identifying people who are positive for COVID-19
- Tracing anyone they have been in close contact with during their infectious period
- Isolating those contacts to prevent the onward spread of infection in the community.

Contact tracing of most people who have tested positive for COVID-19 is being undertaken by the NHS Test and Trace service. When one or more people test positive for COVID-19 in a complex setting where outbreak potential is high, our local Public Health England Health Protection team undertake a setting risk assessment and work closely with us to manage any risks.

Where necessary, larger scale arrangements for testing and infection control are brought together via the dedicated multiagency Incident Management Team. Joint leadership between Local Authority Public Health teams and Public Health England is well established, and bridges scientific expertise and local resources to achieve a robust and timely incident response.

Complex settings include care homes, educational settings, high risk workplaces, hostels/ homeless accommodation, faith settings and hospitals.

What we have done so far:

- Built on existing partnerships and arrangements that successfully manage outbreaks of flu and norovirus in high risk settings, working closely with Public Health England who lead on the risk assessment and joint oversight for incidents
- Established the weekly COVID-19 Outbreak Response Group, providing key responders an equal voice and opportunity to discuss all matters relating to incident responses, and to iteratively improve our local arrangements
- Established a Health Protection Stand-by Duty Team, allowing us flexibility and surge capacity for any larger incidents.

Our plan is to:

- Work in partnership with the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership and COVID-19 Combined Testing Group to develop a joint system that complements the NHS Test and Trace Service and uses local intelligence to identify and trace local contacts
- Develop the framework which sets out principles, describes decision making responsibilities, and outlines practical actions to be taken in the event of an outbreak
- Boost existing expert Infection Control arrangements and capacity that can be mobilised to support incident response
- Develop and refine assumptions to estimate future and potential demands and define options to scale up capacity to respond to worst case scenarios; this includes mutual aid from other areas
- Test our plans using simulated exercises based on likely scenarios.

Incidents and Outbreak Management in Complex Settings

Public Health England, as part of the NHS Test and Trace Service, will notify the Local Authority of COVID-19 positive cases. All incidents & outbreaks will be logged on a centralised database along with a record of any decisions and actions.

Local active case findings will also help identify incident or outbreaks at the earliest point possible, enabling a rapid response and reducing the spread of COVID-19. This will be done through local intelligence gathering and place-based monitoring.

For high-risk complex settings, Public Health England will lead on the incident response with support from the Local Authority Public Health team. The COVID-19 Outbreak Response Group will have oversight of all incident and outbreak management. This group will be co-chaired by Public Health England and Local Authority Public Health and will draw on representation and support from relevant local partners and specialist advice as required.

Public Health England will complete an initial risk assessment and agree actions to minimise the spread of infection and mitigate wider consequences of the outbreak. Potential actions include: infection prevention and control measures, closure of settings, addressing quality and safeguarding concerns, testing, contact tracing, support for self-isolation and enforcement.







Testing will be offered for contacts identified within the setting. It will be organised through local arrangements and can be carried out at scale if required.

The COVID-19 Outbreak Response Group will review incident and outbreaks weekly, or sooner if significant events occur. They will assess infection prevention control measures and compliance.

They will also review the number of confirmed cases and any new possible cases. The outbreak will continue to be monitored until the outbreak closure definition is met i.e. no new cases in the last 14 days. At this point, the incident can be closed.

Capacity and Resourcing

A team of Public Health Specialists have been identified to form a Health Protection Stand-by duty rota. This will ensure protected resource to react to an incident or outbreak at any time. The rota can be flexed in capacity to meet the demand of local outbreaks:

Demand			
Rota Period (days)	15	10	5
Duty Staff per day			

The number and complexity of incidents and outbreaks will be the driver for demand on capacity. As demand increases the resources will be increased to maintain a quick response time.

Should a mass outbreak occur extra resource will be utilised from the wider Public Health Team to support.

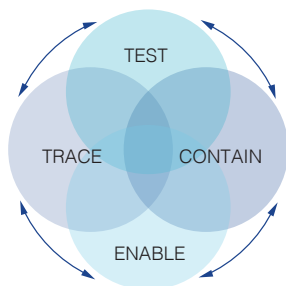
Environmental Health will also mirror an on-call standby by rota to provide additional support with incidents and outbreaks that fall within their remit.

Theme 5: Data Integration

By combining multiple and new data feeds, the national Joint Biosecurity Centre will be responsible for providing a single authoritative information picture to local, regional and national decision makers to help them respond rapidly to any outbreak.

It builds on the UK's existing Public Health infrastructure and surveillance network, drawing on expertise from across government, industry and academia.

There will be a continuous data capture and feedback loop at each stage of the 'test, trace, contain, enable' process which flows through the Joint Biosecurity Centre to recommend actions.



Test - Rapid testing, at scale, to control the virus and identify its spread

Trace - Integrated tracing to identify, alert and support those who need to self isolate

Contain - Using data to target approaches to flare ups, at a local and national level

Enable - Improving knowledge of the virus to inform decisions on social and economic restrictions

We await further national information on the logistical arrangements for this service. Local Analysts and Epidemiologists are ready to interpret additional local data when this becomes available. Data will always be processed and held in a way that protects the privacy of our residents.

What we have done so far:

- Early in the pandemic, conducted local level epidemic modelling to allow local leaders to plan for the first wave and build additional capacity in their services

- Established access to the RWT New Cross Hospital COVID-19 dashboard, which gives a live picture of Emergency Department attendances, patients admitted with a positive test, Intensive Care capacity, and in-hospital deaths related to COVID-19
- Combined multiple data feeds from Public Health England, Office for National Statistics and NHS Digital into a local monitoring repository, which can be accessed by Public Health experts responsible for outbreak response. This provides information on cases and contacts reported to the NHS Test and Trace service, cases diagnosed by local NHS providers (Pillar 1 testing), tests and results from private testing laboratories (Pillar 2 testing), deaths registered in the community and hospital, data from the rest of the Black Country, and the trend in the estimated rate of reproduction – or R value
- Used both regional and local data intelligence to drive local decision making.

Our plan is to:

- Establish daily dashboard to routinely monitor and identify any emerging issues or potential outbreaks
- Establish data flows to local authority from the Joint Biosecurity Centre to inform local outbreak planning
- Regular sharing of intelligence with system partners via the COVID-19 Strategic Coordinating Group to allow response teams and surge capacity to be mobilised when necessary
- Analyse all information available to us to understand the different impacts COVID-19 is having in our communities, and to highlight health inequalities that can be tackled.

Theme 6: Vulnerable People

We have been and will continue to support vulnerable local people to get help to self-isolate and stay safe at home.

This includes people who are vulnerable or self-isolating due to higher risks associated with underlying health conditions, age, ethnicity or other risk factors. It also includes people who are required to self-isolate following notification from the NHS Test and Trace Service.

Support for these groups can include:

- Support to shop whilst shielding or self-isolating to ensure residents can remain at home
- Provision of emergency food parcels where residents have financial challenges
- Signposting to specialist services to assist residents with debt management, benefit advice, health and wellbeing support, social care needs.

What we have done so far:

- Established a [dedicated phone line](#) to support people who are shielding or non-shielding clinically vulnerable due to a health or medical condition and those experiencing financial difficulties
- Co-ordinated joint work across the system of health and social care with mental health services to ensure robust access to advice, guidance and support
- Trained staff to provide support to this group to allow them to self-isolate and access services to meet their individual needs, which includes volunteer support, assistance with debt and benefit advice, support for mental health or loneliness

- Embedded robust monitoring to understand and address local need and requirements of residents. This has allowed for focussed support and communications in identified localities and with specific communities where risk is considered higher or where need is greater.

Our plan is to:

- Establish flexible staffing capacity to support and assist the track and trace service (dependent on local demand)
- Use local data and intelligence to target specific locations and communities who have a greater need for support and assistance (this may include areas identified more as deprived and disadvantaged groups who are more at risk) using a place-based approach
- Continue a [dedicated phone line](#) to receive referrals for shopping, food or specialist services as required, supporting residents to self-isolate, shield and support themselves to remain safe and well
- Continue to work with community and voluntary sector partners to assist in to coordinate the offer and support residents
- Ensure that communications and information is available in a [variety of languages](#), and [suitable for those with disabilities](#) to access
- Work with community partners, health and social care providers, and mental health services to promote community resilience and ensure residents have the right advice and support when needed.

Theme 7: Local Boards

Sound and effective governance arrangements at executive, strategic and operational levels are critical in delivering our outbreak management response for the city.

Local flexibility within our governance structures is key to ensuring our response remains relevant and continues to be refined as we move into the next phase of living with COVID-19.

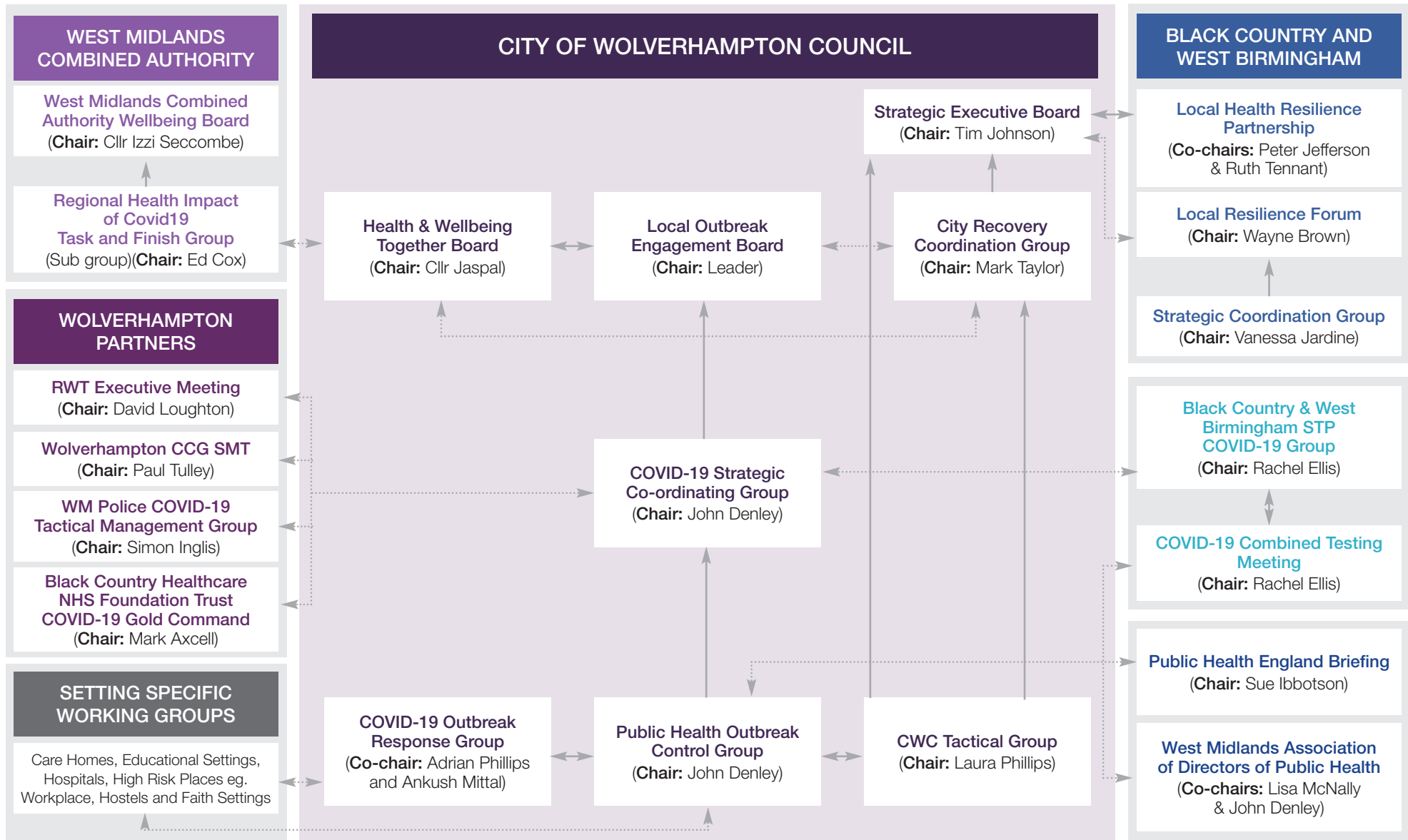
What we have we done so far:

- Built on already established city-wide multi-agency partnerships to strengthen system leadership during the initial response phase to COVID-19 enabling swift and effective decision making
- Established new multi-agency working groups as appropriate to ensure clear lines of communication and accountability for key decision making
- Held a virtual meeting of the Health & Wellbeing Together Executive to review data on COVID-19 and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups in Wolverhampton
- Provided strategic oversight and direction to public facing communications, including a special issue of the Health and Wellbeing Together Chair's bulletin
- Provide updates on the current situation throughout the pandemic to Senior Executive Board, the Leader and Elected Members.

Our plan is to:

- Review existing governance structures to ensure clear roles and responsibilities to ensure roles and responsibilities are clear to support and drive the Local Outbreak Control Plan
- Establish a new Local Outbreak Engagement Board to provide political ownership, public-facing engagement and communication for outbreak response, as a sub-board of Health & Wellbeing Together (Wolverhampton's Health and Wellbeing Board)
- Agree a partnership framework that provides accountability and oversight of Local Outbreak Control Plan across the system.

Our Local Governance Structure



Communicating our plan

Clear messages on what to do to stay safe and well, and where to get support, aim to reach everyone no matter where they live, work and travel.

Everyone in our city will be able to:

1. Help prevent the spread of the virus.
2. Be supported and know what to do when they have symptoms.
3. Be included in our local pathways to identify and contain an outbreak.

For our plans to be successful, local people, communities, partners, businesses and organisations must recognise and trust our approach. This means our communications plan is not just about sharing key messages. It is also about listening and engagement.

Our plan is to:

- Ensure strategic communications and engagement is overseen by the Local Outbreak Engagement Board. Local communications will be led by City of Wolverhampton Council Communications Team in conjunction with NHS Communications Teams and other partners as appropriate.
- Saturate the city with key prevention messages through our proactive strand e.g. social distancing, hand hygiene, use of face coverings etc. We will make use of static and mobile communication space e.g. bus stops, bin lorries, bill boards etc as well as our Stay Safe Be Kind website and all traditional comms channels. City-wide community engagement will support this phase and will involve key stakeholders including Councillors.



- Provide advice – aiming to ensure everyone who becomes unwell with symptoms of COVID-19 knows what to do. This is our supportive strand and includes how and when to get tested. It also reinforces the importance of self-isolation to prevent the spread and how to get help to stay safe.
- Focus on outbreak management through our reactive strand. Communications will be tailored to ensure that everyone knows what to do in the event of an outbreak. This also includes a suite of targeted resources to support high risk places and locations.

- The mode and frequency of communication will be dependent on risk. Where necessary communication and engagement will be targeted to reach different groups and settings as effectively as possible.
- In the event of an outbreak, the Director of Public Health will lead communications in conjunction with Public Health England. We

will utilise our local governance structures to ensure that any information that needs to be communicated will be done so in a responsible and effective way.

- Our wider community engagement work will also complement our local Recovery and Relight campaigns as we build a new future for the city together.

	Prevention Messages	Support Messages	Reactive Messages
Universal	Key messages on how to stay safe and prevent the spread saturate the city’s physical and digital spaces	Key messages on what to do when symptomatic, local testing offers as part of Test and Trace, and use of the app.	Proactive engagement strategy with communities along 7 themes of the Local Outbreak Control Plan and public awareness of how outbreaks are managed
Settings	Digital toolkit with downloadable resources on preventing the spread, including risk assessments for premises and staff	Clear support offer for what to do when have a potential case, including surveillance or priority testing in high risk settings	Use networks with settings to share messages on outbreak response and address concerns
Communities	Accessible messages to key communities and settings (eg. in other languages) by working with partners and trusted connectors	Targeted work with key community partners and groups to develop bespoke messaging and testing pathways (eg. for other languages and digitally excluded)	Build on relationships with key communities and groups to develop and share messages on outbreak response and address concerns

Challenges in delivering our plan

The long-term nature, breadth and complexity of our plan presents challenges for its implementation. There are a number of overarching challenges which relate to the principles set out in [Our Approach](#):

Scale

The number and complexity of incidents or outbreaks are hard to predict. We will make use of smart surveillance to pick up on potential patterns of outbreaks as quickly as possible.

Capacity

Local Public Health teams are small and have a large remit to both prevent and respond to outbreaks as well as supporting the city with its wider health and wellbeing needs related to recovery. To be as effective as we can, we will continue to work in partnership and build public health capacity across our stakeholders and communities.

Returning to a new normal is inevitable, however we are still learning about and adapting to living with COVID-19. The next six to 12 months is likely to bring new complexities as a potential second wave and winter pressures combine. To minimise the impact, capacity will be bolstered across the system, with particular attention given to infection prevention and control measures and continuing active case finding to identify possible incidents early. Remaining vigilant is key.

Stakeholders

The pace of change can lead to confusion over roles and responsibilities. Ongoing communication is always required. We will ensure that our governance structures remain strong and collaborative reflecting the wide range of partners involved in this plan to allow us to keep stakeholders and communities up to date.

Integration and delivery

The interface between national, regional and local are complex and is likely to change and evolve as this phase of the pandemic progresses. A combination of having robust standing operating procedures between organisations such as us and Public Health England, and regular dialogue right through from national partners to local communities will allow us to deliver most effectively against the ambitions of this plan.

Communication and Engagement

As lock down eases we know there will be a series of changes to the Public Health advice our residents will be expected to understand and follow. We will have to work closely and continuously with a wide network of partners to shape and deliver this advice in a way that is accessible for our diverse communities.

Conclusion

Protecting the public from infectious disease outbreaks is one of the most important functions of Public Health. But with COVID-19, everyone has a vital role to play.

So far we have limited the impact of COVID-19 at a city level. As lockdown eases, and we begin to adjust to a new kind of normal, we must continue to do all that we can to prevent the spread of the disease. This includes continuing to develop and refine a very local response that meets the needs of our city.

As we move into the next phase of living with COVID-19 and traditional winter pressures emerge, a new combination of challenges present themselves. As partners, we all have invaluable contributions to make to identify new cases quickly and to control outbreaks when they occur.

We are confident that together, we are well equipped to manage and overcome the ongoing threat that COVID-19 poses and support the social and economic recovery of our city.



Supporting Documents

The Wolverhampton Outbreak Control Plan is underpinned by a suite of supporting technical and operational documents including:

- Wolverhampton Outbreak Control Action Plan
- Incident Management Protocol
- Wolverhampton Outbreak Control Communications Plan
- Local Boards Terms of Reference

By their very nature, this suite of documents is subject to regular change as systems and processes change, as new guidance or evidence is published, or as learning drives improvement going forward.

These documents are available upon request. If you would like a copy, please email: publichealth@wolverhampton.gov.uk

You can get this information in large print, braille,
audio or in another language by calling 01902 551155

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