

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES

25 March 2021

Report of the Director of Public Health

UPDATE ON COVID-19 COMMUNITY TESTING PROGRAMME (Health and Communities)

1. Purpose of the Report:

This report provides the Cabinet Member for Health and Communities with an update on the progress of the Community Testing Programme for COVID-19 which commenced in Derbyshire on 21 December 2021.

The Cabinet Member is asked to:

- Note the change in approach due to new Government guidance.
- Agree that Director of Public Health and the Director of Legal Services can negotiate terms of and enter into all documentation required to roll out the programme throughout Derbyshire.

2. Information and Analysis:

A decision was taken by Corporate Management Team utilising an Urgent Officer Decision on 18 December 2020 to introduce targeted community testing to identify asymptomatic COVID-19 cases in a phased approach across Derbyshire. The proposal submitted for Derbyshire complements the existing symptomatic testing programme, and the whole home testing programme within care homes. Delivering a community testing programme supports the Council's overall goal to reduce the spread of the virus, protect the most vulnerable and drive down the infection rate across the county area of Derbyshire (excluding Derby City).

The aim was to use asymptomatic testing as a case finding tool to reduce case rates within an area. The programme of activity commenced in Swadlincote just before Christmas, with further sites opening on the town just after the Christmas break before additional testing venues opened in Heanor, South Normanton and Shirebrook. A business specific testing site which has not been publicly promoted also opened at Cotes Park Industrial Estate in Amber Valley

It was agreed within the Officer Decision Record that the Cabinet Member for Health and Communities, alongside any appropriate partnership meetings would be kept updated on the progress and learning from the programme.

2.1 Programme Update:

The community testing in December focusing activity on defined geographies and populations where there was a higher case rate. The Government guidance at the time was for sites to operate for six weeks before activity transferred to another location.

Shortly after the January lockdown announcement, the Government re-focused the community testing programme and asked local authorities participating or planning to engage with the programme to have a focus on individuals who could not work from home throughout the lockdown period. Local authorities who were already operating a community testing programme were asked to submit a revised proposal which Derbyshire has done. Derbyshire has realigned communications activity, messaging and planning to focus on promoting attendance at testing centres by those who are unable to work from home.

A summary of the number of tests completed to date are summarised in Appendix 1.

2.2 Community testing sites:

Currently, Derbyshire is operating community testing centres at the following locations. There is now one testing centre operational in each district and borough area providing a good spread of testing centre locations that people who live or work locally are able to access 7am-7pm 7 days a week.

Area	Location	Venue currently being utilised
Amber Valley	Heanor	Wilmot Street Community Centre
Bolsover	Bolsover	Hillstown Community Centre, Bolsover
Chesterfield	Chesterfield town centre	Queens Park Leisure Centre
Derbyshire Dales	Matlock	County Hall
Erewash	Long Eaton	West Park Leisure Centre
High Peak	Buxton	Pavilion Gardens
North East Derbyshire	Clay Cross	Clay Cross Social Club
South Derbyshire	Swadlincote	Midway Community Centre

The Cabinet Member is asked to note that urgent decisions were taken by the Director of Public Health and Director of Legal Services to secure temporary

leases at the following venues for using of the building. This is in line with the scheme of delegation:

- William Greig VI Leisure Centre, Heanor (which was operational from 14 January to 24 February 2021)
- Shirebrook Village Hall (which was operational from 18 January to 28 February 2021)
- Queens Park Leisure Centre, Chesterfield
- Pavillion Gardens, Buxton
- West Park Leisure Centre, Long Eaton
- Hillstown Community Centre, Bolsover

Clay Cross Social Club and Midway Community Centre have been secured utilising existing DCC framework agreements. The testing site in New Mills is a Derbyshire County Council owned building.

2.3 Mobile and targeted testing:

In addition to the community hubs we are also seeking to establish mobile testing sites that provides targeted activity in more isolated communities, or at workplaces experiencing an outbreak. A testing centre has also opened at New Mills in response to a higher number of cases in the local community. We have also had a dedicated business only testing centre located at Cotes Park in Amber Valley since the start of the new year.

2.4 Training programme for businesses with fewer than 50 employees:

Government has agreed a scheme for businesses with 50 or more employees to sign up to take part in a testing programme. Local authorities have been asked to support small businesses to access community testing or workplace testing. Derbyshire is developing a training programme to support the delivery of this aspect of the programme and delivery will be prioritised to businesses/occupations where there is a higher risk of COVID-19.

2.5 Evaluation:

The community testing programme will be formally evaluated by Nottingham University and the Public Health team to look at the impact of the testing programme on communities in Derbyshire and ensure that any lessons learnt are identified as the programme develops.

3. Social Value Considerations:

Community testing provides opportunities for people to attend work safely, if other COVID-19 secure workplace guidance and social distancing requirements are maintained. Encouraging the workforce and community to get regularly tested will help support the economic recovery from COVID-19. The testing

programme has required the council to recruit additional staff on a temporary basis and this has created employment opportunities for individuals who have been unable to secure employment or have been unable to work as normal due to COVID-19 restrictions.

4. Finance Considerations:

The community testing programme is supported by funding of £14 per head for each test completed. The £14 will be a combination of in-kind support and cash allocated to the Council by the Government. There is a potential financial risk to the Council if testing uptake targets are not achieved. However, this is mitigated by additional Contain Outbreak Management funding the Council has received, a proportion of which has been earmarked to provide further financial support if community testing produces unexpected financial risk. Further funding will be available to the Council up to the end of the financial year in line with any ongoing restrictions. These payments will continue up until 31 March 2021 and the funding can be rolled over into the next financial year.

Funding will be spent in accordance with the grant conditions outlined by Government.

5. Legal Considerations:

An Officer Decision Record was approved by Corporate Management Team on 16 December 2020 regarding the roll out and commencement of the programme.

It is requested that the Director of Public Health has delegated approval in conjunction with the Director of Legal Services, to negotiate terms of and enter all leases required to roll out the programme throughout Derbyshire.

6. Human Resource considerations:

Derbyshire County Council has undertaken an extensive recruitment process to appoint a workforce that is supporting the delivery of community testing. This is supported by use of agency staff.

7. Equality considerations:

An EIA has been completed for phase 1 of the testing programme and will be refreshed to reflect the revised approach for phase 2.

8. Other Considerations:

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: prevention of crime and disorder, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

7. Background Papers:

- [Cabinet Report - Urgent Officer Decision – Implementation of Community Testing in Derbyshire \(11 March 2021\)](#)
- [Community testing: explained from gov.uk](#)
- [Community testing a guide for local areas](#)

8. Key Decision:

Yes

9. Call-in:

Is it required that call-in be waived for any decision on this report?

No

10. Officer's Recommendation:

The Cabinet Member is asked to:

- Note the change in approach due to new Government guidance.
- Agree that Director of Public Health and the Director of Legal Services can negotiate terms of and enter into all documentation required to roll out the programme throughout Derbyshire.

Dean Wallace
Director of Public Health

Appendix 1: Community testing

District	Site	Total number of tests	Positive tests	% of positive tests
Amber Valley	William Gregg	8,973	107	1.2%
Amber Valley	Wilmot Street	1,098	12	1.1%
Bolsover	Shirebrook Village Hall	2,832	45	1.6%
Bolsover	Post Mill Centre	7,831	92	1.2%
Bolsover	Hillstown Community Centre	205	Suppressed*	Suppressed*
Chesterfield	Queens Park Sports Centre	3,100	34	1.1%
Derbyshire Dales	County Hall	603	0	0%
Erewash	West Park	838	8	1.0%
High Peak	Pavilion Gardens	1,996	21	1.1%
North East Derbyshire	Clay Cross Social Centre	2,023	7	0.3%
South Derbyshire	Gresley Old Hall	4,712	73	1.5%
South Derbyshire	Grove Hall	7,445	111	1.5%
South Derbyshire	Midway	7,328	76	1.0%

Source: PHE SGSS Line list- test data 21/12/2020-05/03/2021. *Suppressed due to low numbers