

CABINET MEMBER UPDATE		
Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care and Health) 5 January 2021		
Councillor	Portfolio	Period of Report
Ian Moncur	Health and Wellbeing	Oct - Nov 2020

Staff Flu Immunisation Programme 2020/2021

I received an update report regarding Sefton Council's Staff Flu Immunisation Programme for 2020-2021 which outlined changes made to this year's programme in response to the global pandemic.

The risk of flu and Covid-19 co-circulating this winter poses significant risk to the health and wellbeing of the Council's workforce, their families, those who access services and the ability to deliver services in Sefton.

Covid-19 has posed challenges to the design and delivery of the 2020-2021 staff flu immunisation programme as a result of remote working, social distancing and increase in demand. Therefore, the Public Health Team have redesigned the delivery model for the 2020-2021 programme to be ran as a voucher scheme which went live on 8 October 2020. Staff members are able to request a voucher which is redeemable at any of the 11 participating community pharmacies across the borough. Provision has also been made for those members of staff who do not have access to a computer.

Staff groups included in this year's programme include:

- All Sefton Council workforce (including temporary and agency staff)
- Family Wellbeing Centres
- Councillors
- Staff working at Special Schools
- Participating schools (schools have been offered the opportunity to register to participate in this year's programme at a subsidised rate)
- CCGs (on a recharge basis).

The Public Health Team will continue to monitor uptake from the council's service areas and wider participating staff groups.

Community Infection Prevention & Control Service

I gave approval to increase the funding for the Community Infection Prevention and Control Service. This Service provides preventive and responsive infection prevention and control support and advice to complex and/or vulnerable community settings in Sefton, such as care homes. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic there has been an immediate need to increase the scale and scope of this service, with the aim of

increasing skills and knowledge in community settings to prevent transmission of infectious diseases.

COVID-19 Update

Merseyside, including Sefton, entered Tier 3 restrictions on 14th October. **Tier 3 interventions** aimed at reducing social mixing and social contact, were:

- Pubs and bars not serving substantial meals to close
- Other food and drink venues to close at 10pm (takeaway service can continue)
- No social mixing anywhere, except in open outdoors (maximum 6 people)
- Advice to work from home if possible, during winter months
- Avoid non-essential travel in and out of Tier 3 areas
- Limit travel generally and avoid public transport where possible
- Weddings limited to 15 people, funeral service to 30, wake 15
- Care home visits restricted

In addition to the core Tier 3 interventions above, additional measures introduced in Merseyside were:

- 'Take extra care' message to previously shielded/clinically extremely vulnerable group
- Indoor gyms, dance and indoor sports venues required to close
- Betting shops, casinos, and adult gaming premises required to close

On the 5th November England entered a 4-week period of **national restrictions**, which is due to conclude on 2 December. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-national-restrictions-from-5-november>. The suite of measures that have been introduced are less restrictive than the first national 'lockdown'. Key aspects are:

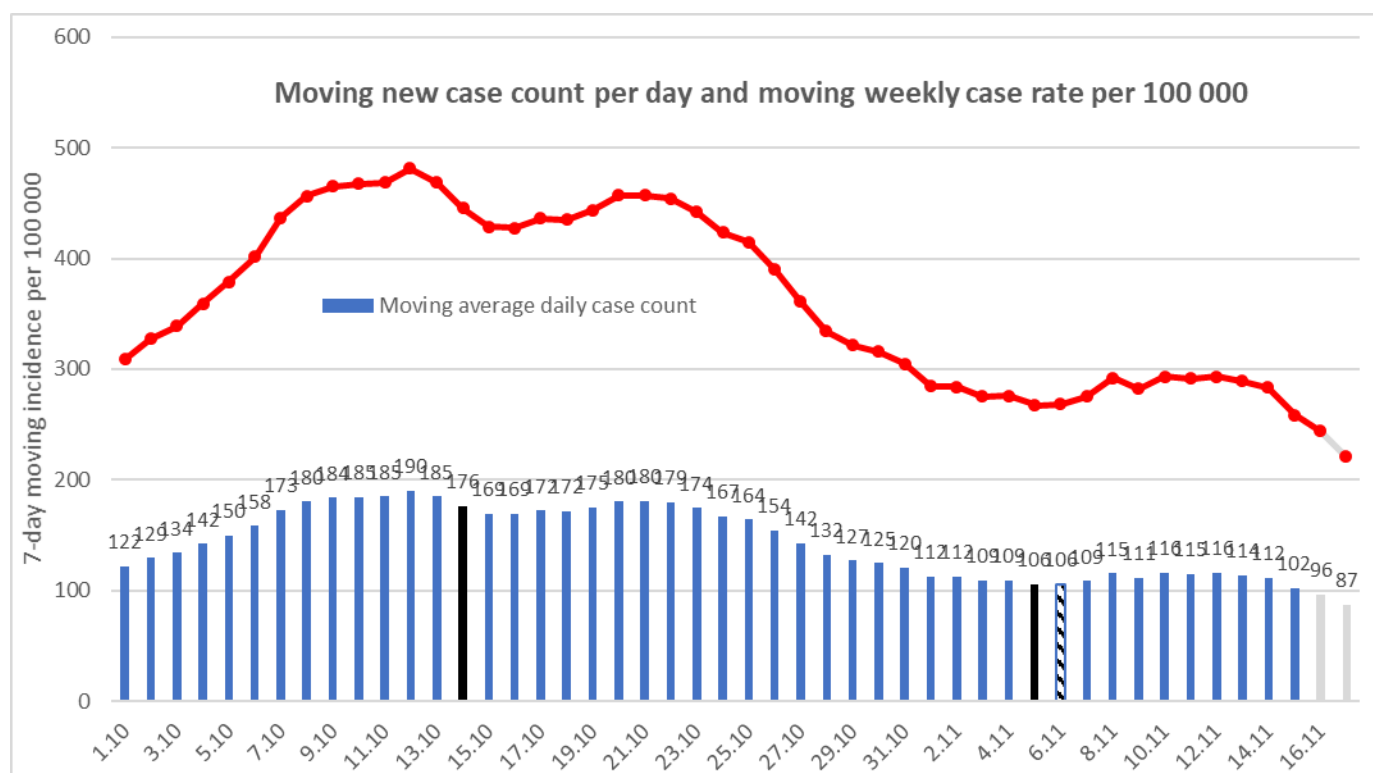
- Schools, colleges and universities remain open. University students advised not to return to family home
- One person (plus children under 5 if applicable) can meet up with one other person from outside their household or bubble
- Outdoor exercise is unlimited
- No direction to shield for clinically extremely vulnerable (advice to minimise social contact and not to attend work even when work from home is not an option)
- Work from home where possible, otherwise ensure COVID-19 secure practices
- Non-essential retail and personal care services required to close
- Indoor and outdoor sports and leisure facilities required to close to general public
- Accommodation limited to specific non-leisure purposes, food and drink venues can only operate takeaway or delivery services, and most close at 10pm
- Weddings not permitted ('deathbed weddings permitted with up to six people present)

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- Travel is restricted to essential, legally permitted purposes
- Overnights stays are for legally permitted reason only

I have received updates on the epidemiology of Covid.

The epidemic curve below puts the Tier 3 and national restrictions (black bars) in epidemiological context. Another important development, which influences how the impact of these measures appears in Sefton's case rates is the introduction of mass asymptomatic serial testing and piloting of lateral flow testing in Liverpool, including Sefton residents who work in Liverpool (striped bar, 6th November).



The moving 7-day incidence rate of new cases per 100 000 population reached a peak of 480.8 per 100 000 on 12th October. The preceding levelling off and initial drop in incident rate around this date may have been influenced by transient, reduced demand for testing. The impact of tier 3 restrictions is visible as a steady fall in rates beginning around 21st October.

There are signs of levelling off in the run up to national restrictions on the 5th November. In the period from 6th to 17th November 25% of Sefton's new cases of SARS-COV-2 infection were linked to Liverpool mass testing and lateral flow testing programmes, and this is reflected as a slight increase in cases, followed by signs of a renewed downward trend. The incident rate on the 17th Nov has fallen to 220.0 per 100 000, which is similar to rates at the end of September (a fortnight after Merseyside had been declared an Area of Intervention and some limits on social contacts had been introduced).

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Deaths associated with SARS-CoV-2 began to increase from mid-September and the rate of increase went up in the second half of October. Since mid-September 18% of all deaths (114 out of 637) in Sefton record a mention of SARS-CoV-2 on the death certificate. In 8 out of 9 weeks from the start of September to the end of October deaths have been in excess of the average for the previous five years. From mid-October, almost all of the excess in deaths is attributable to COVID-associated mortality. 87% (99 out of 114) of deaths associated with SARS-CoV-2 occurred in hospital, which is consistent with previous data. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/datasets/weekly-deaths-local-authority/editions/time-series/versions/5>

The death rate (for deaths within 28 days of positive Coronavirus test) may have peaked at the start of November (moving 7-day average of 5.3 per 100 000). This rate is slightly below the peak death rate in Sefton in early April of 6.3 per 100 000. The average number of daily deaths has remained at 3 to 4 since the beginning of November, which reflects high incidence rates in all age groups during October. Continuation of weekly new case rates close to or above 200/100 000 across all age groups, including older people, indicates that the death rate will remain elevated, falling gradually for further weeks to come. <https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/details/deaths?areaType=ltla&areaName=Sefton>

Testing

National strategy anticipates a return to regional tiers of Covid restrictions at the end of the current England wide restrictions on the 2 December. The Government has identified mass asymptomatic testing as a key intervention to reduce rates of Covid infection. Liverpool are currently piloting the use of Lateral Flow Tests which can be analysed at the testing site and provide results within 30 minutes. The full results of the pilot are still to be published. However, the evaluation will consider the efficacy of the tests, acceptability of repeat testing and the impact that testing has on reducing rates of Covid.

The first 10,000 kits, PPE and digital devices to support testing have been ordered and are scheduled for delivery at the end of November.

Contact Tracing

Sefton Council locally supported test and trace system went live on 23rd November 2020. Where NHS Test and Trace contact tracers are unable to contact a person for 24 hours, they will pass the case to the local authority to follow up by phone. The local contact tracers will receive a list of people to contact every day and is granted access to the national system, in which to input the required information. If the local contact tracing team does not make telephone contact, they will leave a message with a local number to call so the service can obtain details of 'contacts' to update the national test and trace system. Other participating local authorities have identified the benefit of making contact via a local contact number and ensuring that there is a provision for members of the public to return telephone calls.

Kooth

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Kooth is a free online mental wellbeing support service that is available to all children and young people aged 11-18 in Sefton. It provides moderated forums, self-care tools, 1 to 1 online counselling and a magazine of support.

It has been available in Sefton since July 2019 and has over 1500 users. The service was evaluated over the summer and the findings shared with the Children's Integrated Commissioning Group (CICG). The evaluation showed that the service is well used, well regarded and its popularity is growing.

Following discussions with the three funding partners (Public Health, Children's Services and the Clinical Commissioning Groups) it was recommended that Kooth be re-procured on a new three-year contract. The age range will be widened to provide support to 10-25 year olds and more capacity bought as the number of users increases. The request has been approved and following completion of the required call-in period legal paperwork will be completed to ensure the service begins in January 2021.

Leisure Centre's

An update was presented on the progress of the reopening of Sefton Council's Leisure Facilities following lockdown. The following usage figures were provided, showing an increase in participation from August to September:

August	September	Difference
15717	26133	+ 10416
8336 (Gym)	14358 (Gym)	+ 6022
5212 (Swim)	6009 (Swim)	+ 797
2169 (Classes)	5766 (Classes)	+ 3597

The Leisure Centres had also began trialling open gym sessions, along with bookable slots to give members additional flexibility. All open sessions were still track and trace compliant as members are recorded through the leisure management system.

A new class time table was also launched on 5th October, increasing the number of COVID compliant classes by 67 from 189 to 256.

The new 'Test & Trace' (QR Codes) had been introduced to all Centres and have been on display since 24th September 2020.

Direct Debit payments for gym members restarted on 1st October 2020. Direct Debit for Aquatics (swimming lesson) members restarted on 24th September 2020.

A November update was presented on the progress of the reopening of Sefton Council's Leisure Facilities following lockdown. The following usage figures were provided for October 2020:

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Total usage = 16727

Gym = 8304

Swim = 4013

Classes = 4410