

Title of meeting:	Worcestershire County Council internal GOLD meet in respect of COVID 19
Meeting number:	49
Date:	Monday 19th October – 17:00

Key Messages

- The number of cases in the county continues to rise and as of today stands at 95 cases per 100,000. The England rate is 166 per 100,000.
- Bromsgrove is the district with the highest number of cases in Worcestershire. There are currently 159 cases per 100,000 in Bromsgrove. Redditch has 112 cases per 100,000. Wyre Forest 91; Wychavon 78; Worcester 69; Malvern Hills has 65 cases per 100,000.
- Backwards contact tracing continues. The higher figures in the 3 northern districts have found to be because of sustained community transmission.
- In the last 7 days there have been 573 cases recorded in Worcestershire.
- We currently have good testing capacity in Worcestershire. Supply is meeting demand in the county.
- Local test centres are planned for all districts. The first of these are to be opened by the middle of next month. Sites have been identified in Worcester, Redditch, Bromsgrove, Kidderminster and Evesham. The location of the site for the centre in Malvern is yet to be agreed. These centres are designed to be accessible on foot, (i.e. not a drive-through) but they are not drop-in centres. Further details are below.
- The Council's drive-through test site for essential front-line workers is open and relieving some pressure on the national testing system and has capacity.
- GPs, healthcare and social care workers, school staff and those working directly with children, police and fire crews are eligible to access this additional testing.
- There are 27 people in the county's hospitals with Covid-19 in Worcestershire. 2 people are in ITU.
- 12 care homes in Worcestershire have current outbreaks (more than 2 cases, linked in either time place or person). 7 homes are currently closed to new admissions due to Covid.
- Limited visits to care home residents can now be arranged in the county once more, following a review, providing strict safety measures are in place.
- 89.6% of pupils in Worcestershire are in school. This is above the national average.
- 58 schools and settings in the county currently have pupils and/or staff isolating due to closed bubbles or partial bubble. This equates to 2,285 pupils currently isolating from a school population of more than 84,000.
- There are 2 current situations in Worcestershire short breaks units and children's homes.
- A number of SEN transport services are currently closed due to staff isolating – we are in regular contact with Worcestershire Children First and operators over these issues
- The new Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme is available for eligible residents to apply for. District Councils are responsible for processing applications for the £500 payment from people
- Three Resource Centres for those with the most complex disabilities are open
- All libraries across the county are open

- All Household Recycling Centres are open

Local Testing Centres due to be piloted early next month:

Redditch Trescott Road Car Park:

University of **Worcester**, Arena Car Park:

Pershore Civic Centre Car Park:

Bromsgrove Stourbridge Road Car Park:

Kidderminster Harriers Stadium Close Car Park:

Malvern - site yet to be finalised

Key Service Areas:

Adult Services

- Nationally, concerns remain about infection rates in care homes. The situation in Worcestershire is currently stable.
- We have 12 care homes across the county with more than 2 confirmed cases.
- 7 homes are currently closed to new admissions.
- Two homes have temporarily ceased trading (residents moved to other homes owned by the same provider on the same site)
- There are 2 supported living / extra care locations where either staff or service users have tested positive. We have started to regularly test all staff and residents at these locations.
- One third of the county's 179 care/nursing homes in the county have had recorded outbreaks during the pandemic.
- Limited visits to care home residents can now be arranged in the county once more, providing strict safety measures are in place to protect vulnerable residents. Extra Care and Supported Living are also being advised that they can open to limited family visits.
- Screens and digital tablets are being used to enable families to keep in touch with residents virtually.
- Infection prevention training for care homes and domiciliary care providers continues to be rolled out
- National guidance is that PPE will be provided to us free of charge and the details of this are being worked through
- The Adult Social Care Winter Plan guidance has been issued and we will construct our local plan and digest and share with our partners and providers to ensure full compliance
- Three Resource Centres for those with the most complex disabilities are open. Those are the centres in Bromsgrove, Pershore and in Worcester. The opening of the Wyre Forest centre is delayed due to flooding in the building

Children's Services

- Every publicly funded school in the county is open.
- The average attendance currently stands at 89.6% of pupils in Worcestershire are in school. This remains above the national average.
- Over 92% of children looked after and 85% of pupils with social workers are in school
- 79% of pupils with Education Health Care Plans are in school. This is lower than the broader school population due to the significant health needs of a proportion of children
- There are 58 schools and colleges in Worcestershire that currently have closed bubbles/part bubbles where staff or pupils have been identified as contacts and are self-isolating. This equates to 2285 pupils currently isolating from a school population of more than 84,000.
- The delivery of PPE packs and face coverings to schools is continuing
- We are recommending to all schools that parents are asked to wear face coverings at the school gates.
- The use of face coverings on home to school transport is mandatory in Worcestershire for pupils over the age of 11.
- We are acutely aware of the challenge to the daily running of schools. Worcestershire Children First (WCF) staff are working closely with Council

colleagues to ensure that the information, contacts and support we provide is as supportive as possible to schools, settings and families.

- We continue to provide communications and advice to our schools about when pupils and staff should get tested. As with all county residents, the advice remains to only get tested if you are showing symptoms or if advised to do so by their GP or Local Authority or Public Health England.
- Each school has a number of tests they are able to deploy, and schools are able to order additional tests from DfE 21 days after initial delivery. The education planning group have reported test results arriving in a more timely manner.
- Worcestershire's Local Outbreak Response Team (LORT) is providing a valued and trusted advisory service to our schools community.
- We are concerned to see an increase in demand in social care at the Family Front Door. Similar increases in calls and referrals have been seen elsewhere in the country.

Community Services

- All Libraries across the county are open.
- Worcestershire Registration Services continue to run wedding ceremonies but with a reduced number of people attending to meet Government guidelines
- The Council's Here2Help service is operational and able to provide support for the most vulnerable residents in our communities.
- The H2H service is in a good position to be able to 'flex up' if needed over the coming weeks and months to support our residents

- The new Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme is available for eligible residents to apply for. District Councils are responsible for processing applications for the £500 payment from people

Economy & Infrastructure

- Traffic volumes have remained at an increased level since the start of the school term. This includes an increase in morning commuter traffic to match the trend of the mid-day peak resembling something more 'normal' compared to pre lockdown figs.
- Bus travel in the county has increased since the beginning of the new school term.
- There has been extensive work with public transport operators based on the latest DfT Guidance and to improve public confidence in bus services.
- All Household Recycling Centres are operational. Provision is being reviewed as we head into winter months.
- We are planning our response to any significant flood or weather events with the current Covid restrictions.

Workforce and Training

- County Hall and other Council buildings continue to be Covid Secure and site-specific protocols are in place.
- Staff continue to work from home where they can do so. Office working is permitted for essential frontline workers and for those who cannot work from home.
- There was a 70% response rate to the Staff Survey, which is the biggest in recent times. The survey gathered views on work experiences since lockdown and the future of greater flexible working opportunities.

Communications

- Clear communications are being shared with care home providers and with families regarding the changes to visitor restrictions to care home settings.
- We are working with schools to display messages targeting parents at school drop off and pick up times to remind them about social distancing.
- A bus advertising campaign will be running for the next 3 weeks on key routes across the county. Advice is also displayed in all town centres on street scene signage.
- Communications to explain the 3-tier system and what it means to be in tier 1 is being shared across all channels that are available to us.
- Advice is being provided ahead of upcoming events such as Halloween and Remembrance Sunday.
- Working with the District Councils information about the new Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme is being shared widely
- A young people's communication plan that targets 17–29 year olds is being delivered, recognising that there has been an increase in cases within this age group.
- Working as One Worcestershire and together with our district council partners communication resources are being dedicated to support the economic recovery, to point to business advice and guidance and to promote the expanded Job Support Scheme along with a raft of local initiatives.

Finance

- Financial spend due to the pandemic continues to be closely monitored

COVID-19 STATISTICS

Official statistics and information are available on the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-track-coronavirus-cases>

The methodology for reporting positive cases changed on 2 July 2020 to remove duplicates within and across pillars 1 and 2, to ensure that a person who tests positive is only counted once. Numbers of lab-confirmed positive cases throughout this website now include those identified by testing in all settings (pillars 1 and 2).

Pillar 1 and Pillar 2 are different kinds of data taken from coronavirus testing. Swab tests for Covid-19 are carried out in hospitals and surgeries as well as in the community all the time.

Each pillar comes with specific coverage goals and a set purpose from one or several organisations:

- Pillar 1 data comes solely from the tests carried out in Public Health England (PHE) lab and NHS hospital settings.
- Pillar 2 tests come from out in the community, such as care homes.

The publication of pillar two data will show a marked increase in the number of our confirmed cases in Worcestershire. This data has been available to Public Health and the Director of Public Health for some time and has been closely monitored throughout. In Worcestershire, our figures remain stable and comparatively low for the Midlands. “

WHERE CAN I GET FURTHER INFORMATION, HELP AND ADVICE?

Reminder that the Here2Help website www.worcestershire.gov.uk/here2help is the first point of contact if people want to offer assistance or gain support. The other option is the telephone contact number which is staffed 8am-6pm 6 days a week – 01905 768053.

Carers who support a family member or friend who require support should contact the Worcestershire Association of Carers on www.carersworcs.org.uk or call the Helpline 0300 012 4272.

<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/coronavirus>

NHS Website for information on Coronavirus

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-covid-19-surveillance-reports#history>

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