

Surrey Local Outbreak Engagement Board

1. Reference Information

Paper tracking information	
Title:	COVID-19 Communications Plan Update
Authors:	Andrea Newman, Director - Communications & Engagement (SCC) andrea.newman@surreycc.gov.uk Abi Pope, Senior Communications Manager - COVID-19 Communications Lead (SCC) abi.pope@surreycc.gov.uk
Sponsors:	Sinead Mooney - LOEB Chairman (SCC) Joanna Killian - Chief Executive of Surrey County Council Ruth Hutchinson - Director of Public Health (SCC)
Paper date:	17 June 2021
Related papers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surrey Local Outbreak Control Plan • NHS Test and Trace Communications Plan for Surrey

2. Executive summary

A communications and engagement strategy has been developed to support the Surrey Local Outbreak Control Plan. The Communications Plan has evolved as more has been learnt about our public health response to the virus and this report provides the latest update on communications activity.

3. Recommendations

The Board is asked to note the activity outlined in the report.

4. Reason for Recommendations

The recommendations reflect the functions of the LOEB as set out in the Terms of Reference.

5. Detail

Roadmap Communications Plan

The Roadmap campaign continues to explain the changing guidelines and remind people to continue with safe behaviours as we cautiously ease restrictions. The tone has moved away from strict lockdown messaging back to the idea of a social contract – *‘Working Together To Get There’*. The campaign focuses on looking forward to the things we have missed and what we need to do to get there. This is

supported by behavioural insights from the Cabinet Office as the best way to motivate people to stick to the guidelines as we reach the final, uncertain, stages of the roadmap.

The campaign encompasses both online and offline tactics to ensure maximum engagement with residents. It includes vaccination and testing messages to remind people these are the best ways to protect themselves and others.

Outdoor assets have been installed in popular countryside spots to remind people to continue safe practices, such as social distancing, and litter prevention.

The communications team is liaising with the Cabinet Office and the Department of Health and social care in the run up to Monday's announcement on the next stage of the roadmap and will be ready to respond. We continue to chair the Multi-Agency Information Group to coordinate communications plans and messaging across the system as the situation develops.

Rising Rates/Variants of Concern (VOCs)

Working closely with PHE and District and Borough Communications teams we have been alerting residents to the rising infection rates in Surrey across all channels and through local media. Increased testing and vaccination messaging has been targeted at the affected age groups (principally secondary school age pupils) in Reigate and Banstead and Epsom and Ewell, and the Data dashboard will be reinstated to three times a week to ensure residents are fully aware of the developing situation.

Vaccine Confidence

We continue to work with community groups to understand vaccine hesitancy and dispel vaccine myths. This includes using community voices such as faith leaders to communicate and counteract these misunderstandings using their preferred communications channels such as WhatsApp, to ensure effective and fast dispersal of information.

The compelling #Ididitfor Covid Vaccine campaign is underway, which encourages residents to post their reasons for getting vaccinated on social media with the hashtag #Ididitfor.

As the younger cohorts become eligible we are using new channels which allow us to engage with the 'harder-to-reach' young audience.

Youth Engagement Plan

To address the challenges that all Local Authorities face with reaching young people through their own channels, the communications team has been working with a specialist youth marketing agency (Livity) to develop an engaging way of getting some of the crucial public health messages to a young audience. Following focus groups and insights gathered from young people in Surrey it was established that peer-to-peer communications is one of the best ways to engage with this group. In

partnership with Livity, we launched a new Instagram channel, Soon.Surrey, in early April.

Highlights so far include a young Surrey resident filming her experience of getting vaccinated, a live chat between two 'long Covid' sufferers, and a live concert by a young musician to celebrate being able to meet up with friends safely outdoors. Engagement continues to rise on this developing platform.

In addition, the communications team continues to explore better ways to reach young people and is currently getting very good engagement with geo-targeted Snapchat posts on each stage of the roadmap, as well as messaging on the importance of regular testing and vaccinations. New assets being developed using text style acronyms (FOMO BOC – fear of missing out because of Covid) will remind young people of the importance of sticking to the rules so they don't miss out on fun times with friends.

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