

Surrey Local Outbreak Engagement Board

1. Reference Information

Paper tracking information	
Title:	COVID-19 Communications Plan Update
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Related papers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surrey COVID-19 Local Outbreak Management 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 Management 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

For Board members to take note of the activity outlined below.

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

New assets and messaging were developed for stage 4, the final stage of the roadmap. These served to counteract the “freedom day” narrative and reminded people that Covid has not gone away.

This part of the campaign has focused on three main behaviours:

1. **Be cautious** – reminding people to test, vaccinate and isolate.
2. **Be considerate** – use symptom-free tests regularly and wear a mask in crowded spaces.
3. **Think about the risks** – use the app, wash your hands, Covid-safe behaviours.

The campaign encompasses both online and offline tactics to ensure maximum engagement with residents.

The communications team has worked closely with the Cabinet Office and the Department of Health and Social Care to ensure amplification of national messages, alongside localised assets, including the most recent changes to isolation requirements on the 16 August - for those who are fully vaccinated, or under the age of 18.

A suite of assets, Q&A and messages have been shared with the Multi-agency Information Group (MIG) and the Community Covid-19 Champions network to ensure consistency across the system.

Communicating Covid Rates

Working closely with Public Health England (PHE) and District and Borough Council Communications teams we have been alerting residents to the rising infection rates in Surrey across all channels and through local media. Outdoors banners were installed across Districts and Boroughs and although we are seeing some fluctuations at present, given the overall trend these will remain in place until there is a statistically significant drop in Covid infection rates. Increased testing and vaccination messaging and assets have been developed and targeted at the affected age groups (18-24 year olds, and 11-16 year olds) across relevant platforms - including Snapchat, Instagram and youth radio stations. The data dashboard continues to be shared three times a week to ensure residents are fully aware of the continuing situation.

The communications team also worked closely with Reigate and Banstead Borough Council to support their successful surge testing operation.

Vaccine Confidence

We continue to work with community groups to understand vaccine hesitancy and dispel vaccine myths. This includes using community voices to counteract these misunderstandings using their preferred communications channels such as WhatsApp, to ensure effective and fast dispersal of information. Translated assets and videos of community voices have been targeted to disproportionately impacted groups, and under-represented groups on social media.

As the younger cohorts become eligible we are undertaking behavioural insights work to understand barriers and motivations for young people, and parents of the 12-

17 age group. We are working closely with NHS colleagues to support and amplify their vaccinations communications plan into the next phase.

Winter Campaign

A cross-system winter communications group has been set up in anticipation of increased winter pressures on Surrey's services. The group will plan communications for Covid boosters, flu, RSV, the vaccination roll-out for CEV 12 – 17 year olds, as well as other winter wellness and preparedness campaigns.

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