

## Surrey Local Outbreak Engagement Board

### 1. Reference Information

---

Paper tracking information	
<b>Title:</b>	COVID-19 Communications Plan Update
<b>Authors:</b>	Andrea Newman, Strategic Director – Communications, Public Affairs & Engagement (SCC) <a href="mailto:andrea.newman@surreycc.gov.uk">andrea.newman@surreycc.gov.uk</a>  Abi Pope, Senior Communications Manager - COVID-19 Communications Lead (SCC) <a href="mailto:abi.pope@surreycc.gov.uk">abi.pope@surreycc.gov.uk</a>
<b>Sponsors:</b>	Sinead Mooney - LOEB Chairman (SCC) Joanna Killian - Chief Executive of Surrey County Council Ruth Hutchinson - Director of Public Health (SCC)
<b>Paper date:</b>	17 February 2022
<b>Related papers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surrey Local Outbreak Management Plan</li> <li>• NHS Test and Trace Communications Plan for Surrey</li> </ul>

### 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 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

---

#### Communicating Covid Rates

The Council's Communications team has continued to take a multi-channel approach to alerting residents to very high Covid-19 rates in Surrey and the emergence of the Omicron variant in early December. A return to the 'chevron alerts' has been used to

signal increased urgency as the rates have risen to unprecedented levels. Covid data has informed targeted social media, warning residents in the districts and boroughs with the first cases of Omicron, or those with the fastest rising rates, accompanied by public health advice and enhanced vaccination messaging. This has been supported by innovative channels, including digital highways signage, local GP video messages, alerts in the RingGo parking app, as well as traditional media. Publication of the data dashboard has been ongoing and has seen high engagement as rates have risen, providing residents with simple, empirical evidence and a national comparison.

## **Plan A/Plan B guidance changes**

A localised campaign has been explaining the array of changes to guidance and highlighting key dates as the nation has moved from Plan A to Plan B and back again. A series of explainer assets “What do I need to know about... Omicron/travel guidance/changes to isolation rules/getting a Covid pass” etc have been used to give simple, clear advice and point people to the most helpful resources and information.

As we move away from tougher restrictions communications continue to remind residents that “Covid hasn’t gone away” and a suite of ‘back to basics’ graphics is being rolled out to keep up awareness of key public health prevention measures.

## **Vaccine Programme Support**

The Communications team has continued to support central government and NHS vaccination messaging in a localised, targeted way. This has included:

- Data-driven targeted communications to communities or geographical areas with significantly lower vaccination rates;
- Pre-Christmas booster push to ensure the best protection over the festive period;
- Information for pregnant women on vaccine safety and benefits;
- 12-15 vaccines – children and parents;
- 18+ booster eligibility;
- 16 and 17 year old booster eligibility;
- The evergreen offer to anyone not yet vaccinated;
- A new holiday campaign – reminding people that if they keep up with their vaccinations they can look forward to simpler, easier travel in 2022.

## **Testing changes/challenges**

As testing guidance has changed, the communications team has been providing simple explainers and graphics to help residents understand:

- New self-isolation rules (day 6 and 7 ‘test to release’);
- Reminders of the differences between LFD and PCR testing and when to take them;
- The temporary removal of confirmatory PCR with positive LFDs;
- LFD shortages throughout December and how best to access testing in Surrey.

A new leaflet has been designed and produced for staff at the Asymptomatic Testing Units to hand out, explaining the differences between LFDs and PCRs, the continuing importance of the Test and Trace system and the benefits of vaccination.

This page is intentionally left blank