

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 13 January 2022	Meeting Name: Health and Wellbeing Board
Report title:		Update on Southwark Council's Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan, Winter 2021/22	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Sangeeta Leahy, Director of Public Health	

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. To receive and note the updated Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan that outlines the actions being taken to prevent, identify and control the novel coronavirus pandemic in Southwark.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. Southwark Council published its Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan (OPCP) in June 2020. In that document, the governance of Southwark's OPCR was established as being firstly Outbreak Prevention and Control Executive (OPCE) and ultimately both the Health and Wellbeing Board and Cabinet.
3. This third version of the OPCR sets out our strategic and operational response to the pandemic and the future for the people of Southwark, recognising the successes of the national vaccination campaign, changes to national policy and the reorganisation of both national and regional Public Health structures.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

4. As the pandemic and the national response has evolved, so too has our approach to prevention and management in Southwark. Until the emergence of the new variant 'Omicron', the successful national vaccination programme had slowed the spread and mitigated the impact of the coronavirus. Increasingly, attention has been drawn to the impacts of the pandemic on health and social care services, alongside the accumulating burden of economic and mental health difficulties that our local people and communities face.
5. The Cabinet Office released the *COVID-19 Response - Autumn and Winter Plan 2021* on 14 September 2021. This policy paper set out a number of objectives relating to non-pharmaceutical measures, test-trace-isolate,

supporting NHS and social care, health literacy and global action. The plan also set out a “Plan A” but reserved the right to institute elements of its more assertive “Plan B” should the need arise. Plan B was instituted by central government on 8 December 2021. Accordingly, Southwark will continue to consider how, as a local system leader, we can contribute to the nationally-set policy objectives while protecting and improving the health of our local residents and communities.

6. A revised *Contain Framework for local decision-makers* was published on 7 October 2021. It sets out how national, regional and local partners should continue to work with each other, the public, businesses, and other partners in their communities to prevent, manage and contain outbreaks of coronavirus. The framework describes:
 - the roles and responsibilities of local authorities and local system partners, and the support local authorities can expect from regional and national teams, as well as the decision-making and incident response structures
 - the core components of the COVID-19 response across the spectrum of outbreak prevention and management, including to variants
 - the requirements of local authorities on the continued COVID-19 response, as well as how this should be factored into local outbreak management plans (in Southwark, the OPCP).
7. Since late summer 2020, central government has implemented a range of changes to the national arrangements for specialist Public Health advice and support. The formal changes were instituted in October 2021, with the abolition of Public Health England and the introduction of the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and the Office of Health Improvement Disparities (OHID). Strategic health protection responsibilities will rest with UKHSA. Accordingly, the next several months are critical in re-developing relationships and re-understanding organisational responsibilities.
8. While part of the local health protection response for COVID-19 has been the responsibility of local government through the pandemic, there remains uncertainty as to how such continued responsibilities and financial settlement will be agreed between national and local organisations from April 2022.
9. In the interim, the OPCE will continue to ensure that Southwark delivers high quality local health protection response through the acute response team, Test and Trace Southwark (our local tracing partnership), surveillance and enforcement activities. Work continues to support NHS, social care and voluntary sector partners. Planning is also underway for how we can eventually exit the acute phase of the pandemic and recover services.

Policy framework implications

10. See paragraphs (5) and (6).

Community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts

Community impact statement

11. The OPCP involves close collaboration with a range of VCS partners and explicitly recognises the differential impacts of the pandemic on different groups.

Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement

12. Evidence has demonstrated the wide-ranging adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on inequalities. The Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan supports our commitment to reduce inequalities by monitoring, identifying and mitigating emerging issues across the policy spectrum.

Health impact statement

13. The COVID-19 pandemic has had hugely significant negative health impacts for almost all residents and communities. The Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan seeks to mitigate impacts arising from the pandemic.

Climate change implications

14. There are no major new climate implications of this report.

Resource implications

15. There are no new major resource implications of this report.

Legal implications

16. There are no new material legal implications of this report.

Financial implications

17. There are no additional financial implications of this report above and beyond the funding provided to local government from central government through the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF).

Consultation

18. Not applicable.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Director of Law and Governance

19. Not sought.

Strategic Director of Finance and Governance

20. Not sought.

Other officers

21. Not applicable.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Southwark's Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan (OPCP). Southwark Council: London. July 2020, updated in March 2021.	Public Health Division, Southwark Council	Sangeeta Leahy, Director of Public Health nina.scott@southwark.gov.uk
https://www.southwark.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/public-health/southwark-outbreak-prevention-and-control-plan-opcp		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Southwark's Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan (OPCP). Southwark Council: London. December 2021.

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Sangeeta Leahy	
Report Author	Richard Pinder	
Version	0.2	
Dated	28 December 2021	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Law and Governance	No	-
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	-
Cabinet Member	No	-
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team / Scrutiny Team	4 January 2022	