



Statement from the Leader of the Council, Councillor Karen Buckley

Issued by: Chief Executive's Office on behalf of the Leader of the Council

Date Issued: 16 October 2020

COVID 19 RESPONSE

This statement provides details of arrangements across Lancashire to implement the measures, regulations and guidance introduced to manage the COVID 19 pandemic.

1. After the easing of COVID 19 lockdown measures during the summer months the rates of infection started to rise particularly in the North of the country. This has led to a series of initiatives aimed at supressing the infection rates including local and national regulations or guidance.
2. Lancashire has experienced different rates of infection with several East Lancashire authorities having some of the highest infection rates per 100,000 population in the country (see Appendix 1). The highest infection rates have been through contact between different households and within large households however, there are differences between the causes of infection as well with the main causes in Fylde being healthcare, eating out and retail settings (see Appendix 2). The infection rates in Fylde and on the Fylde, coast have always tracked lower than most other districts in Lancashire with Fylde and Wyre having the lowest rates per 100,000 at the time of publishing this report.
3. The Lancashire Resilience Forum (LRF) was activated in March 2020 and has been operational throughout the pandemic over a series of different themed meetings held every week, and sometimes more frequently, covering a range of pandemic related matters including; community hubs; test and trace; vaccine centres; food supplies; policy development; communications; enforcement; legislation; human resources; education; care home settings; military support and much more. The LRF has representatives from all partner agencies including the local authorities, police, health, military and central government agencies, with a structured reporting mechanism that connects local feedback and data to central government on a weekly basis. The purpose of the LRF is to co-ordinate partner resources and activities across Lancashire in times of emergency or crisis to ensure the best protection for the people of Lancashire.
4. Through the LRF there is regular ongoing discussions with senior officers, political leaders and MPs at various meetings including the Local Outbreak Engagement Board, set up specifically to address issues required to manage an infection outbreak including track and trace, isolation, quarantine, testing stations and vaccine centres, with the overriding LRF objective of maximising the use of resource across the county.
5. Over the last few weeks, it has been necessary to hold additional meetings to discuss the infection rates across Lancashire and the actions proposed by central government and measures that are required in Lancashire to mitigate the impact. After a series of local lockdown measures were approved by government at the request of Lancashire county and unitary authorities in late September, and then the national government's 'rule of six' for the whole country, it was clear

that the infection rates were not slowing down. The latest proposal made in regulation by central government has been to introduce a three tier or alert system and for areas to be allocated a level based on infection rates and hospital capacity amongst other metrics.

6. The government opened discussions with Lancashire on Friday October 9th ahead of the announcement on Monday October 12th about the three-tier national system along with the regulations, measures and any financial support for each tier. Whilst the decision had been made to place Lancashire in tier 2 'high alert' the discussions even at this stage were about Lancashire moving to tier 3 or 'very high' alert which includes a basic range of measures, restrictions and closures. The discussions held ahead of the announcement with Lancashire upper tier authorities focused on the certainty that at least some parts of Lancashire should, or will soon be, in tier 3 based on infection rates, hospital capacity and the public health forecast. Lancashire was invited to outline what measures, if any, above the basic ones already included in tier 3 would help manage the infection rates best and what resources, financial and other i.e. manpower, would be required to mitigate the impact of any measures that would result in closures or restrictions on the local economy. The view from central government was that the Lancashire representatives know Lancashire best and therefore should inform any restrictions and resources that would be included in a tier 3 for the whole or part of Lancashire, if one was to be applied.
7. A significant number of meetings have been held between officers from all the agencies to examine data, forecasts and research that would inform any ask made if all or part of Lancashire was to be in tier 3. Further meetings were held to brief lead members and to obtain feedback, then more meetings have been held with MPs to negotiate then finally, further discussions with the Prime Minister's office. The agenda was very fast moving and required immediate feedback and views.
8. The focus of discussions amongst Lancashire leaders and officers has been whether any negotiation to move to tier 3, in the same manner as the Liverpool City Region, would be for the whole of Lancashire or only the areas with the highest rates of infection. The Fylde coast authorities of Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre have consistently had lower rates of infection than most other areas of Lancashire and the economic profile with a coastal tourism economy, as well as the social profile is different to the Lancashire hinterland. However, infection rates have been increasing across all areas over the last few weeks and the need to balance health, economy and social impact is very difficult. In addition, the Government made it clear that a pan-Lancashire approach would provide clarity and avoid tier 2 areas being attractive to additional visitors which would increase the risk of social contact and thereby spread infection. NHS hospitals operate mutually across the county and therefore admissions are managed pan-Lancashire so as East Lancashire hospitals fill capacity is sought elsewhere.
9. Lancashire's discussions with the Government concluded on Friday 16 October 2020 with an agreement to move to Tier 3 Very High restrictions with effect from midnight on that date. Pubs and bars (wet led) close from 0001 on Saturday 17 October and residents will only be allowed to socialise with people they live with or those in their social bubble in any indoor setting or private garden or at most outdoor hospitality venues and ticketed events. From 0001 Monday 19 October the following venues will also close:
 - Licensed clubs
 - Adult gaming centres
 - Bingo halls
 - Casinos
 - Bookmakers and betting shops
 - Children's soft play areas

10. Car boot sales will also be prohibited, and universities will be expected to move to distance learning where possible.
11. The decision to move to Tier 3 is accompanied by the national financial support measure of two thirds furlough for employees and a grant every four weeks up to £3000 for any business premise required to close, plus further support for Lancashire to help minimise the impact on businesses and residents. New local arrangements and funding will also be introduced for test and trace to give Lancashire more control of the contact tracing process and military support for advice and planning made available from Monday October 19th.
12. Decisions on what tier Fylde is included in are not made by this council, they are made through government regulation and implemented by the upper tier County Council. Both central government and the County Council have engaged and consulted with the districts to canvass views, share data, obtain the local position etc. ultimately the decision to request regulations is made by the upper tier authority and the regulations are passed by central government for example, the local measures implemented across Lancashire in late September 2020 just prior to the national 'rule of six'. The Leader, Chief Executive and senior officers have attended the meetings on behalf of Fylde to provide the local context based on feedback from operational engagement, and communication networks as well as data on local infection rates, causes of infection, outbreaks and capacity which is circulated on a daily basis from the NHS, LRF and Public Health England.
13. Fylde's Community Hub has been revived, although it was always operating at a reduced capacity since the easing of lockdown measures in July and August. The public is being made more aware that it is still available for support and advice with the connections to the various charity and volunteer networks still in place to ensure maximum support for the most vulnerable. Preparations are also in place to support shielding arrangements if they need to be restarted. The council has recruited additional resource and redeployed existing employees to support COVID 19 advice, monitoring intelligence gathering and enforcement with six COVID marshals plus administration operating seven days a week covering operational hours up to 10pm across the Borough.
14. In July and August, the virus was receding with infection rates reducing and fatalities lower than many other causes of death. In response resources at Fylde began to shift back to the 'day job' alongside return to work and safer workplace measures. However, the shift during September and October has meant that resources need to be redeployed back to COVID 19 support around engagement, shielding, enforcement, compliance and testing facilities. Any non-essential services will be stopped where possible, or just kept ticking over, and capacity will also be sought from other services where they can be pared back. The financial impact on the council is regularly reported to the Finance & Democracy committee reflecting loss of income, additional COVID 19 expenditure and any grant support provided.
15. Various communication methods are in place to keep all stakeholders informed on a regular basis despite a lot of initiatives, ideas and discussion over a short period of time. It is important that members are aware Fylde is represented through the LRF and that any decisions made through the County Council have been informed by feedback on the local position in Fylde.

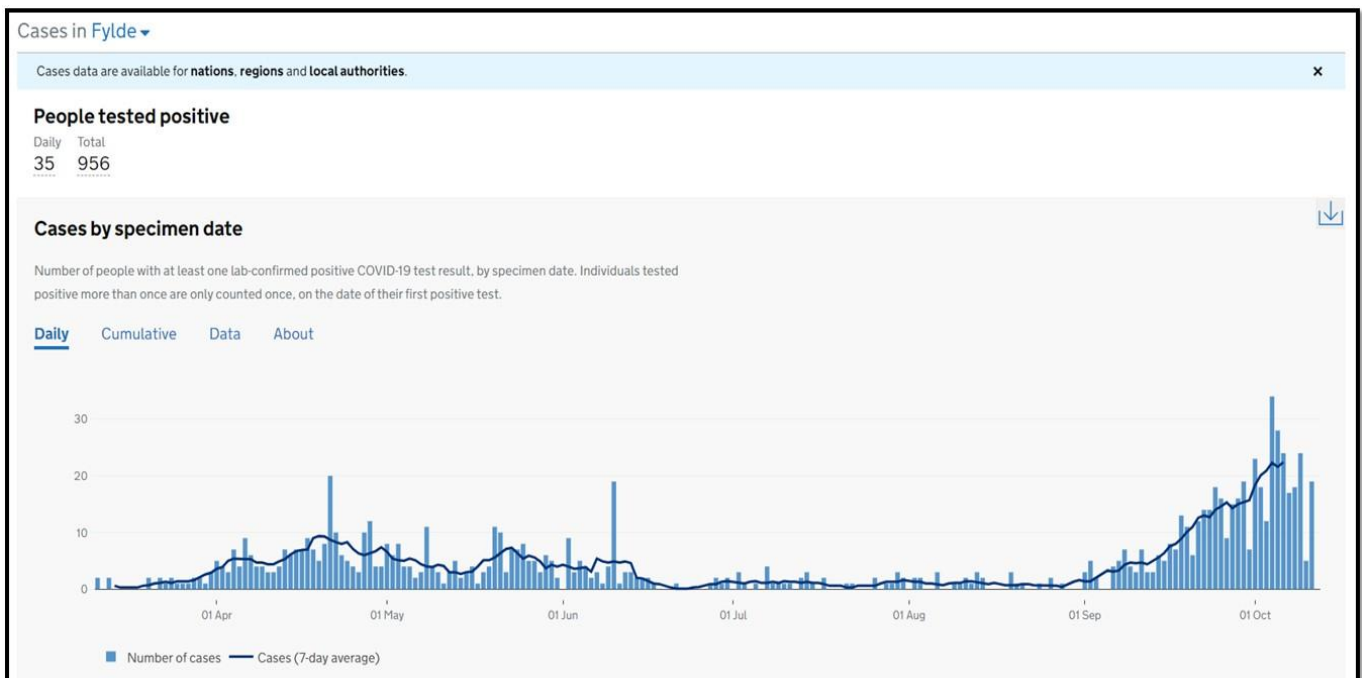
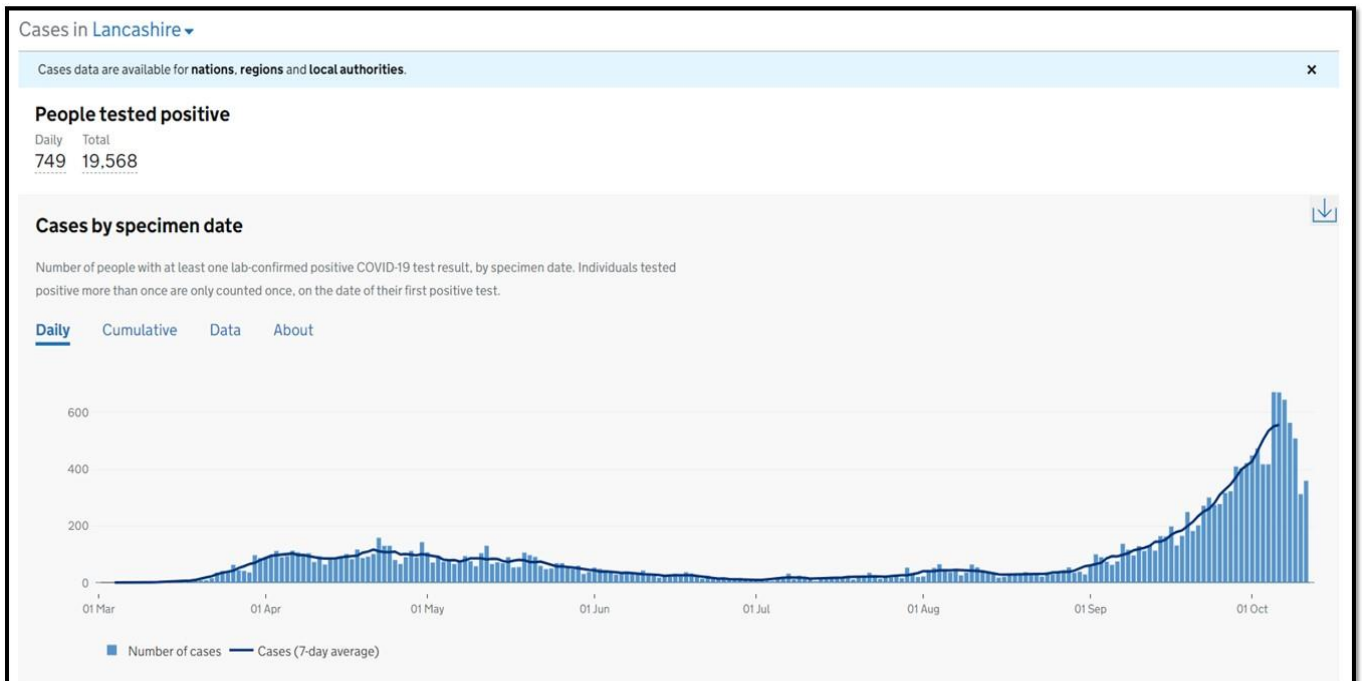
Attached to the statement

Appendix 1: Lancashire & Fylde Infection Rate Graph

Appendix 2: Causes of COVID 19 Infection in Lancashire & Fylde

Appendix 3: Very High Alert Tier 3 COVID 19 National Regulations

Appendix 1: Lancashire & Fylde Infection Rate Graph



Appendix 2: Causes of COVID 19 Infection in Lancashire & Fylde

Causes of Infection – Lancashire

Common Exposure Category	Count	9
shopping	425	
attending_childcare_educational_setting	333	
eating_out	254	
healthcare	147	
entertainment_and_day_trips	99	
retail_sector	97	
teaching_and_education	94	
other	83	
exercising	81	
other_occupational_sector	80	
manufacturing_or_construction	78	
hospitality	66	
visiting_a_health_or_social_care_setting_for_non_covid_19_reasons	46	
holiday	40	
shared	35	
food_production	32	
social_care	28	
warehouse_or_distribution	23	
sport_events	19	
arts_entertainment_or_recreation	16	
financial_services	16	
visiting_friends_or_relatives	15	
emergency_services	14	
personal_care	13	
information_and_communication	12	
transport	12	
civil_service_or_government	9	
prison	9	
worship_and_prayer	8	
close_contact_services	7	
living_alone_or_with_family	7	
work_travel_or_activity_outside_workplace	6	
community_and_charity_activities	3	
critical_national_infrastructure	3	
private_events_and_celebrations	3	
public_events_and_mass_gathering	2	
supported_living	1	
Grand Total	2216	

Causes of Infection – Fylde

Row Labels	Count of Individual ID	
healthcare	14	19%
eating_out	10	13%
shopping	9	12%
other	6	8%
attending_childcare_educational_setting	5	7%
entertainment_and_day_trips	5	7%
shared	5	7%
other_occupational_sector	4	5%
exercising	3	4%
hospitality	3	4%
visiting_a_health_or_social_care_setting_for_non_covid_19	3	4%
information_and_communication	2	3%
teaching_and_education	2	3%
arts_entertainment_or_recreation	1	1%
financial_services	1	1%
manufacturing_or_construction	1	1%
retail_sector	1	1%
	75	100%

Appendix 3: Very High Alert Tier 3 COVID 19 National Regulations

VERY HIGH


HM Government



HIGH

MEDIUM

LOCAL COVID ALERT LEVEL

VERY HIGH

Social Contact  1 household / bubble in most locations, indoors and outdoors. Rule of six applies in some outdoor settings like parks, public gardens and sports courts.	Weddings and Funerals  Up to 15 guests for weddings and up to 30 guests for funerals. 15 for wakes and related ceremonies. Wedding receptions not permitted.	Overnight Stays  Those in area advised against overnight stays in other parts of UK. People outside area advised against overnight stays in area.	Working from home guidance  Work from home where possible.
Shopping and Retail  Open.	Leisure and gyms  Any closures or additional restrictions subject to consultation.	Hospitality  Pubs and bars must close except where they operate as a restaurant, meaning they can only serve alcohol with a substantial meal. Further closures subject to consultation.	Entertainment and tourist attractions  Any closures / additional restrictions subject to consultation. Nightclubs and adult entertainment remain closed.
Education  Schools, FE colleges open. Universities must reflect wider restrictions with option to move to greater online provision.	Healthcare Services  Open.	Residential Care  Closed to external visitors other than in exceptional circumstances.	Travel and Transport  May continue to travel to open venues, but reduce number of journeys where possible. Avoid travel where possible in or out of the affected area with exceptions including work and school.
Sporting Activity  Organised sport / licensed physical activity allowed in outdoor settings. Indoor organised sport must follow social contact rules (other than youth or disabled sport).	Worship  Open, subject to social contact rules.	Childcare  Registered and wraparound childcare. Supervised activities permitted in private homes. Children's groups permitted. Childcare bubbles for under 14s.	Youth Clubs and Activities  Permitted.

There are three simple actions we must all do to keep on protecting each other:



Wash hands
keep washing your hands regularly



Cover face
wear a face covering in enclosed spaces



Make space
stay at least 2 metres apart - or 1 metre with a face covering or other precautions