

# **BRIEFING NOTE FOR WORCESTERSHIRE COUNCILLORS**

<b>Title of meeting:</b>	<b>Worcestershire County Council internal GOLD meeting in respect of COVID 19</b>
<b>Meeting number:</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June – 17:00</b>

## **Key Messages**

- 9 of the 11 Household Recycling Centres in Worcestershire are now open. As expected, these are extremely busy and therefore additional traffic management measures have been put in place.
- Encouraging start to the re-opening of schools, with over 70% of Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 classes open. That said, fewer than 50% of eligible pupils attended and due to staffing and space constraints, some smaller schools have re-opened on a part time basis.
- The level of infections in Care Homes in Worcestershire appears to be stabilising and in line with levels across the West Midlands. All staff and residents in Care Homes with positive cases of COVID-19 have been. We are looking to ramp up the level of testing so that all Care Home settings are tested over the coming weeks.
- Plans under way to facilitate the phased re-opening of Libraries next month. Risk assessments being undertaken to ensure social distancing rules can be observed.
- Pressure continues to ease on the Acute Trust with the number of active cases and new admissions still falling. Despite the increase in testing, new cases in Worcestershire are still running at around 3 per day compared to 50 per day during the peak, with active cases at a quarter of the number during the peak.
- The County Council continues to coordinate employer referral testing at Worcester Warriors. Pop-up testing facilities are operating in the county on a rotating basis.
- No significant issues with PPE. Discussions continuing regarding the long-term strategy and potential local manufacturing.
- Plans to support businesses as we begin to enter the economic recovery phase are being developed jointly by the County Council, the District Councils and partners. Government grants continue to be distributed to ensure businesses benefit from the additional funds.
- There is a risk that our councils will lose significant income from business rates and council tax collections that will need to be clawed back in 2021/22 unless we get support from Government.
- Test and Trace has now been launched. (See flow chart on page 4)

## **Key Service Areas**

### **Adult Services**

- In addition to Libraries, exploring opportunities to re-open Museums and Registration Services.
- Worcestershire County Council Care Home Support plan has been published and is available at:  
[www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/download/1437/worcestershire\\_s\\_covid-19\\_care\\_home\\_support\\_plan](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/download/1437/worcestershire_s_covid-19_care_home_support_plan)

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- Recovery planning underway, especially in relation to day service provision for adults with learning disabilities.
- COVID-19 restrictions have enabled a review to commence on how service provision could be delivered differently in future.
- Introducing an enhanced testing regime for all staff and residents in Care Homes.
- Over 2900 individuals and organisations have come forward to volunteer to help others in their community through the Here2Help initiative <http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/here2help>.

### **Children's Services**

- Risk assessments are now taking place to ensure Children can return to school safely at Secondary Schools in readiness for Years 10 and 12 pupils returning later this month. Governing Bodies and Trust Boards will need to approve the plans.
- There remains a level of parental anxiety surrounding the phased re-opening of schools, which accounts for the lower turnout than expected.
- To ensure social distancing measures are in place, it is estimated that there will be a significant reduction in pupil capacity, although this will obviously vary by school.
- Attendance at school is still to be voluntary and online learning will continue to be available pupils not in schools.
- Home to School transport being provided to those entitled to subsidised transport. Whilst too early to say, it is likely that transport expenditure will increase

### **Community Services**

- The Here2Help Contact Centre is scaling back its opening times to reflect the reduction in calls for assistance. From 1 June the opening hours will be 8am-6pm Monday to Saturday.
- Contact being made with the additional Shielded Cohort group.

### **Economy & Infrastructure**

- Highways surface dressing and maintenance returning to "Business as Usual". Construction work on the county's major infrastructure projects are restarting.
- In accordance with recent guidance from Transport Minister Baroness Vere, contractors are required to comply with the Highway Sector's recently issued Site Operating Procedures which require personnel with symptoms to stay at home and sets out clear hygiene and travel procedures for those attending site.

### **Workforce and Training**

- Working from home will be the norm for the foreseeable future. We remain committed to ensuring staff are supported and that any action we take is mindful of wider considerations such as future transmission risk, social distancing measures, school closures, childcare needs and transport/travel concerns.

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- Self-assessment of home workspaces is now under way and all requests for additional equipment will be delivered by 12 June.

## **Communications**

- To celebrate National Volunteer Week, we are recognising the vital role volunteers have played in the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- Following on from the successful newspaper “wrap around” we are looking at a further edition to be published later this week.

## **Finance**

- Confidence is growing that the level of grant funding provided will cover most of the additional expenditure in the first two quarter, but concerns remain that the allocation is insufficient to meet lost income, especially Council Tax and Business Rates where there is a projected shortfall.

## **COVID-19 STATISTICS**

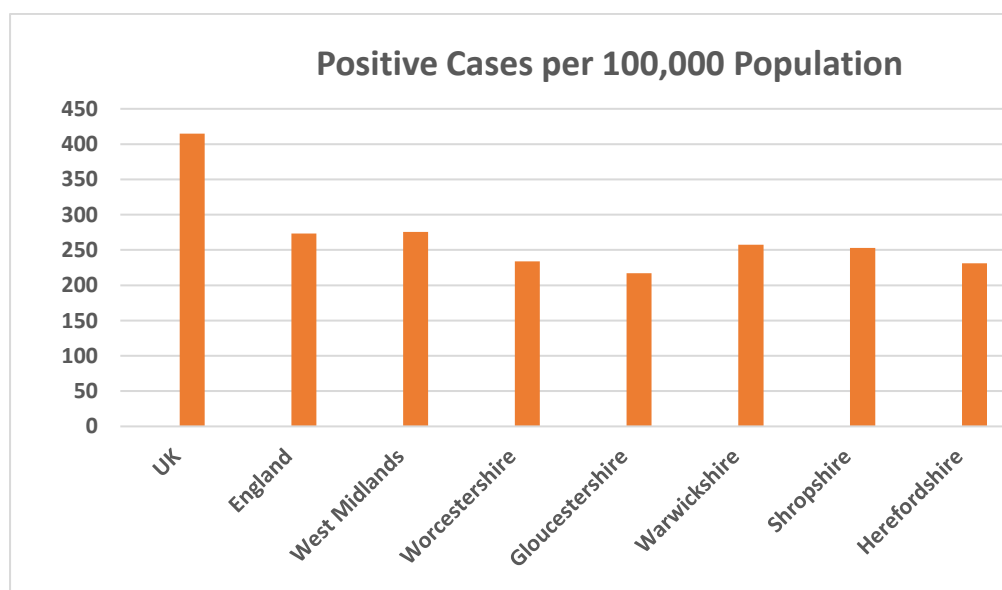
Official statistics and information are available on the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-track-coronavirus-cases>

Some key statistics being:

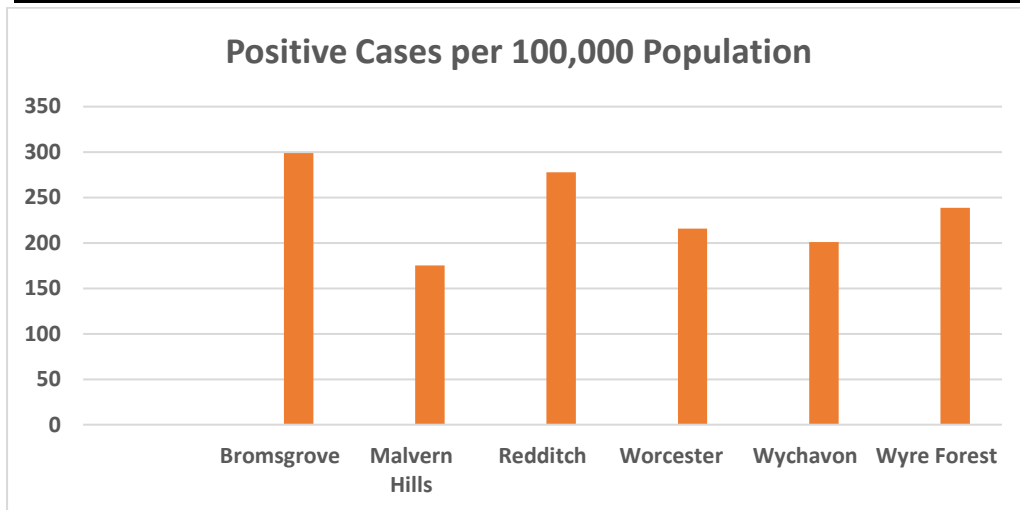
<b>Number Testing Positive in Worcestershire</b>	<b>1385</b>
<b>Number Testing Positive in UK</b>	<b>277985</b>

<b>UK</b>	<b>2/6</b>
Number of Tests carried out on the day	135643
Daily Increase in Cases	1613
<b>Cumulative Deaths</b>	<b>39369</b>



*NB The UK total includes tests carried out by commercial partners which are not included in the regional figures*

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## WHERE CAN I GET FURTHER INFORMATION, HELP AND ADVICE?

Reminder that the Here2Help website [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/here2help](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/here2help) is the first point of contact if people want to offer assistance or gain support. The other option is the telephone contact number which is staffed 8am-6pm 6 days a week – 01905 768053.

Carers who support a family member or friend who require support should contact the Worcestershire Association of Carers on [www.carersworcs.org.uk](http://www.carersworcs.org.uk) or call the Helpline 0300 012 4272.

<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/coronavirus>

NHS Website for information on Coronavirus  
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

