

Local Outbreak Engagement Board

19 January 2021

Lateral Flow Testing Programme Update

1. Purpose

This report is the performance report of the Local Outbreak Management Plan.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That, subject to any comments Board Members may wish to make, the performance report of the Lateral Flow Testing programme in Walsall be noted.

3. Report detail

3.1 Background

Testing of asymptomatic individuals within the community can help suppress COVID-19, therefore enabling Walsall Council to ensure it protects vulnerable residents.

Lateral Flow Tests (LFTs) are rapid turnaround tests that can process COVID-19 samples on site without the need for laboratory equipment. The testing kits are self-administered and detect the presence of COVID-19 from a nasal and throat swab sample. These tests will support identifying infectious individuals that are asymptomatic.

This will support:

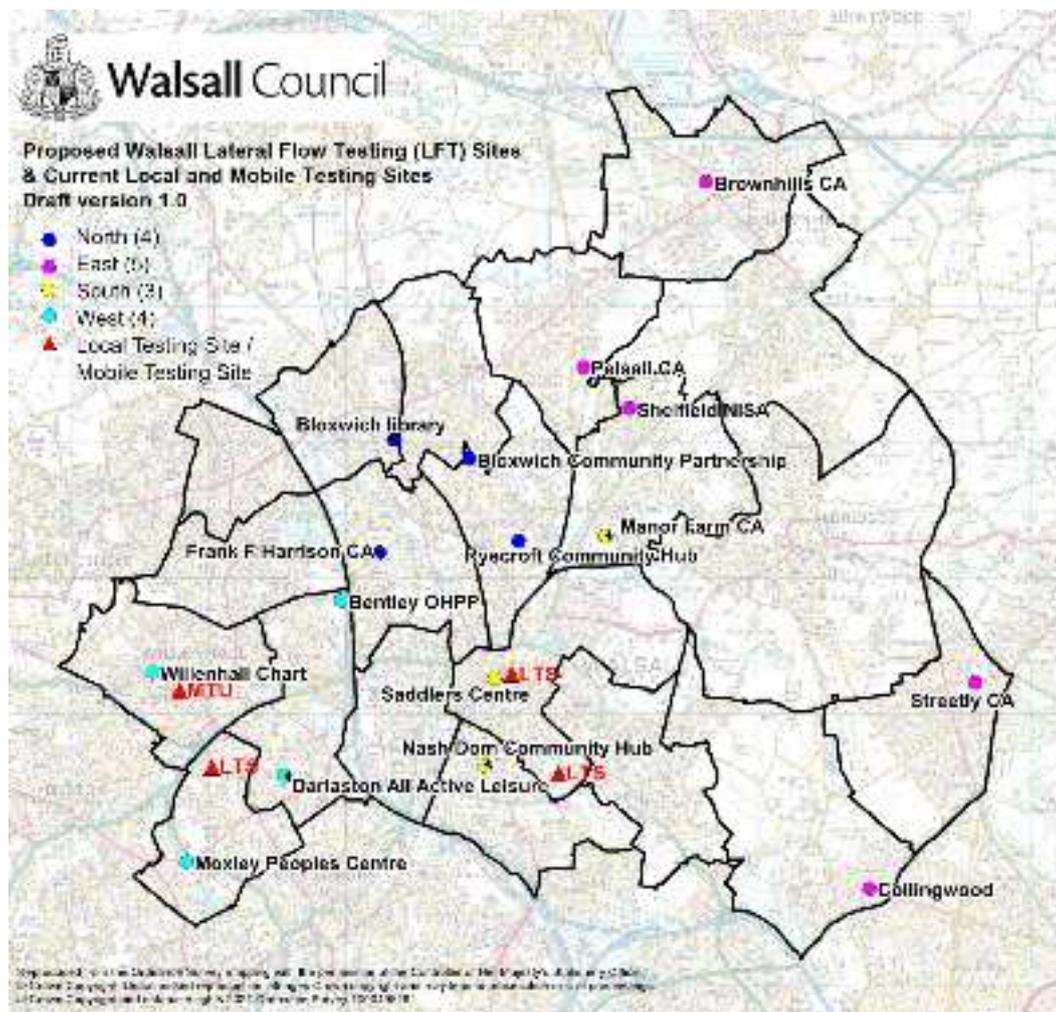
1. Reducing cases and transmission of COVID-19 within the key worker groups identified below
2. Reducing cases and community transmission of COVID-19 across Walsall Borough
3. Reducing cases and transmission within key identified cohorts of the population
4. Surveillance - finding out the incidence and prevalence of COVID-19 in the population, and changes to these over time; this may help give early warning to a potential outbreak situation (2 or more cases)

Approach to community asymptomatic testing

We will take a phased approach in the planning and mobilisation of community asymptomatic testing. This will involve developing an infrastructure across the Borough to provide capacity for testing. This will include using existing buildings and estates as testing sites.

These sites will include:

- Council run LFT sites (including Bloxwich library; Education Development Centre, Depot and Goscote)
- Wolverhampton University site (currently a pilot site for training and administering tests)
- LFT sites provided and run by Community Associations on a locality footprint
- Pharmacy sites
- Mobile testing sites



Phase 1

The Council, Wolverhampton University and Community Association sites will be prioritised in the first phase to ensure the sites are up and running and testing key workers from Walsall Borough. These sites are being selected based on a locality-focussed footprint to ensure there is good accessibility and equity across the Borough. There will also be flexibility in the system to respond to demand and capacity.

The priority key worker groups identified include:

- Adult social care staff working in domiciliary care and day centres
- Children social care staff; care workers, day centre workers open for children of key workers or vulnerable children, care staff in children's residential settings
- Walsall Council community protection teams
- Other council staff including; highways, waste management staff, cleaning and catering staff in schools and care settings
- Community and voluntary sector staff in public facing roles e.g. volunteers at foodbanks
- Police & Fire and rescue staff
- Staff in childcare / nursery settings
- Primary school & independent school staff
- Funeral director staff
- High footfall businesses (e.g. supermarkets)

Phase 2

Phase two will involve wider community testing and expanding testing sites to include pharmacies and mobile testing sites, supporting a whole population approach with the ability to target specific community groups. This wider testing of the community will facilitate a reduction in case rates and transmission, as well as provide intelligence to act early in potential outbreak situations.

To support the approach outlined above, to date we have developed a range of resources and guidance for the public and providers of the tests and testing sites.

Next steps and timelines

- A project group is currently meeting three times weekly to support the mobilisation and implementation of the LFT sites.
- A service specification including a standard operating procedure for the sites is in development and due for completion in the next week.
- Community associations are being engaged with to determine interest in providing the tests and gauge where the sites should be geographically located

- Engagement with council teams, including adults and children's social care, to ensure that processes are in place for council key workers to be tested.

Background papers

None

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