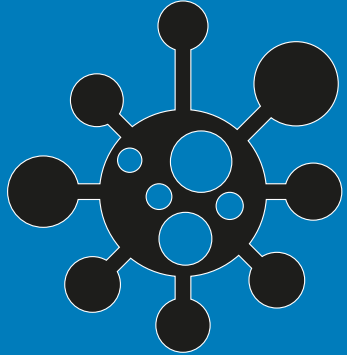


Public Health Sefton

COVID-19 Roadmap 2021



Section: 1

Strategic Phased Approach



Better Case Scenario

As COVID-19 restrictions ease, the council and its partners have a key role in supporting the return to normal life as far as possible across Sefton, while protecting against a rise in infection rates.

This will mean a shift to rebuilding the confidence of local people, businesses and communities, while developing a COVID-19-secure environment for all.

This will include how we

- handle data and intelligence;
- work with national, regional and local health protection teams to respond to outbreaks;
- prepare and respond to outbreaks in care homes, schools, workplaces and communities;
- support people needing to self-isolate;
- work with national and local test and trace programmes;
- support people to access appropriate and timely testing;
- promote vaccine uptake by having honest discussion and listening to those who may be hesitant about having the vaccine or who may have other needs or barriers to overcome in order to access vaccinations
- support our local and visitor economy to open with advice and support re infection prevention control, management of positive staff, outbreaks and safe return to work
- respond to incidents, e.g. management of emerging Variants of Interest (VOI) and Variants of Concern (VOC);
- address continuing COVID transmission and inequalities;
- reduce transmission across Sefton including through promotion of interventions such as 'rule of six' and mask-wearing;
- remain a reliable source of accurate and timely information for individuals and businesses;
- address stubborn pockets of infection
- maintain improvements in hospital capacity
- support the reopening of schools and lifting of restrictions in early May

Communication

- Highlight positive and safe forward-looking developments
- Ensure that people are aware of ongoing risk and the continued need for interventions in line with national guidelines
- Ongoing promotion of first and second stage vaccinations alongside health partners, as well as other health campaigns
- Recognise potential fears and anxieties of people with the easing of restrictions and promote available support, self-help and advice
- Promote safe tourism and a COVID-secure visitor economy in coastal areas and within towns including the Sefton Coastal Partnership Plan
- Continue to promote financial, emotional and practical support available to individuals and businesses

Education

- Support the reopening of schools and other educational settings
- Support the provision of teacher and pupil testing
- Focus on educational 'catch up' and supporting pupils at key transition points e.g. from Year 6 to Year 7 and onto further/higher education/training/employment
- Assessment for GCSE / A Level
- Support pupil and staff wellbeing and mental health

Care Sector

- Testing and support visiting
- Support staff levels/ recruitment
- Support/ promote vaccination
- Ongoing support and guidance offered through Care Home Cell model
- Providing a clear strategic picture on funding challenge
- Ongoing work to facilitate engagement with NHS capacity tracker and NHS mail
- Delivery of key strategies to aid recovery e.g. integrated care home strategy
- Reintroduction of quality visits to care homes

Economy

- Support COVID-secure reopening
- Accelerate opportunities for young people
- Help develop outdoor economy
- Plan for visitor boom

Health

- Provide support to health partners to increase vaccination uptake and utilise localised vaccination data
- Work to better integrate test and trace, and wider support offer
- Target support for communities and groups to reduce health inequalities
- Use and promote community testing, including targeted testing where required
- Support healthcare partners to improve wider health of population
- Recommence all health-based service delivery and work to clear/reduce waiting list of service users

Community

- Resilience grant funding to support mental and physical health and wellbeing initiatives into 2021 and beyond
- Community Champions funding for a Community Champions scheme which will support those most at risk from COVID-19
- Community adaption to change in restrictions
- work with communities to meet additional needs and support appropriately and effectively

Elections

- Ensure COVID-Secure elections on 6th May testing

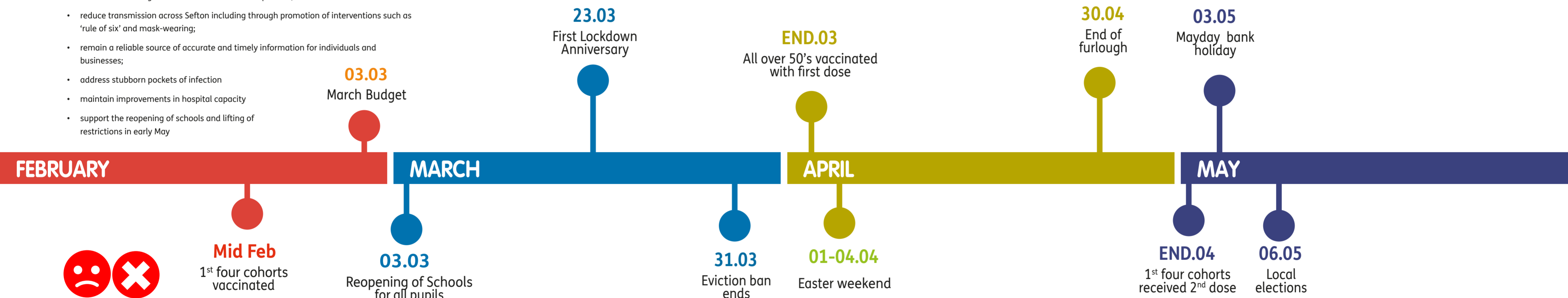
Enforcement

- Work alongside partners to support COVID-19 secure reopening and manage non-compliance with duties
- Provide community and youth engagement

Public Services

- Managing workforce fatigue
- Adaptation to new hybrid working model
- Embracing new partnership working
- Mutual support strategies

Phase 1: Spring/Summer 2021



Worse Case Scenario

In a 'worst case scenario,' we would be faced with additional challenges and barriers to recovery that could include:

- circulation of resistant variants across Sefton and our neighbouring local authorities;
- low vaccination uptake with inequalities across populations resulting in differing health impacts;
- variation in COVID-19 infection rates and compliance with non-pharmaceutical interventions including self-isolation across Sefton, leading to widening health inequalities contributing to enduring transmission, ongoing occurrence of serious COVID-19 disease, associated deaths, and wider social impacts;
- direct and indirect impacts on primary and secondary care capacity, including hospitals;
- restrictions on opening and reopening of education and business sectors;
- issues with non-compliance and the threat of civil unrest.

Communication

- Produce communications to support ongoing or increased restrictions including the continued need for interventions, including social distancing, testing and mask wearing
- Ensure local communications align with national guidance and targets
- Ongoing promotion of first and second stage vaccinations alongside health partners, as well as other health campaigns
- Use networks we have established to target communications in communities or areas with specific need
- Continue to promote financial, emotional and practical support in the event of increased or extended restrictions to individuals and businesses

Education

- Manage and support educational settings with delayed reopening
- Additional provision of blended learning
- Assessment for GCSE/A-Level
- Additional support required relating to pupil and staff wellbeing and mental health
- Support pupils at key transition points e.g. from Year 6 to Year 7 and onto further/higher education/training/employment

Care Sector

- Communications to reduce vaccine hesitancy
- Support for care homes for ongoing viability challenge
- Ongoing pressures on Infection Prevention Control capacity
- Support staffing levels
- Aid vaccination efforts
- Confirm visiting procedures
- Support management of PPE supply where supply chain issues develop leading to concerns around sustainability of supply
- Sector requires implementation of Business Continuity Escalations

Economy

- Provide ongoing business support including delivery of funded business grants programmes
- Implement town centre Re-Opening High Street Safely Plans
- Support safe re-opening
- Prepare for increase in visitor numbers as a result of hotel and guest house reopening
- Prepare for the opening of Southport Market as an indoor 'Food and Drink' destination
- Continue employment and training support for Sefton residents
- Plan for largescale events following results of 'Events Research Programme' ahead of step 4

Health

- Provide support to health partners to increase vaccination uptake
- Ongoing review of outbreak management plans including learning from outbreaks
- Work to better integrate test and trace, and wider support offer
- Provide responsive additional testing e.g. in response to variant presence
- Target interventions in areas of higher need e.g. areas with high rates of infection
- Support healthcare and other partners to improve wider health of population
- Respond to challenges in recommencing delivery of health-based services and interventions

Community

- Pandemic fatigue and community unrest
- COVID-19 inequalities becoming apparent e.g. self-isolation
- More individuals and families experiencing financial hardship, stress, mental distress, loneliness and isolation
- Work with communities experiencing enduring transmission to meet additional needs and support appropriately, effectively
- Closure of Voluntary, Community and Faith groups post pandemic which impacts early intervention and prevention
- National funding too competitive or not available to VCF sector resulting in closure of local organisations

- Volunteering capacity in community significantly reduced

Elections

- Deal with election postponement

Enforcement

- With new restrictions in place or continued restrictions, there will be a need to manage ongoing protests and support overall compliance with guidance
- Work alongside partners to reduce lockdown breaches and support individuals and businesses to follow restrictions
- Provide community and youth engagement

Public Services

- Adaptation to acute workforce fatigue, burnout, presenteeism
- support workforce with long-term health issues
- Address budget/ funding issues
- Mutual support strategies

Public Health

Enduring transmission with frequent outbreaks.

TESTING

- LA testing programmes in place to support national programmes:
 - Static SMART testing
 - Mobile testing offer
 - Pop up testing capacity established
 - Collection points at local pharmacies
 - Transport assisted testing
- Communicate to increase compliance with confirmatory PCR
- Priority testing streams for key workers and other priority groups
- Offer appropriate and proportion support to business taking part in the new national BEIS scheme.

Tracing

- Pilot adoption of Local 0 case allocation process, where all cases are picked up by the local teams
- Information on the use of PCR and LFD tests needs to be strengthened so that any necessary self-isolation rules are applied.
- Building links with the Sefton Contact Centre to more rapidly identify residents who require support to self-isolate
- Promoting self-isolation payment and support to residents and business
- Working closely with Cheshire and Mersey contact tracing hub
- Training and preparation for adoption of new Test & Trace System – ITS
- Contact Tracing Team Leaders attending Contact Tracing training course

Outbreak Identification and Rapid Response

- Cheshire and Mersey Case Management System in place for Outbreak Identification and Rapid Response.
- Adopt formal enhanced contact tracing under the Cheshire and Mersey integrated contact tracing system
- Refine formal processes for rapid response with internal and external partners

Vaccinations

- Build on early vaccination success
- Work with partners across health and care to increase uptake in groups with increased vaccine hesitancy
- Provide plans for the expansion of vaccination to those age 49 and under (Cohorts 10-12)
- Work with partners to better understand and address vaccine hesitancy and barriers to vaccination.
- Sefton has been involved in a Cheshire and Merseyside research project on hesitancy amongst ethnic minorities and the Let's Get Vaccinated campaign based on the resulting insight.
- Work closely with NHS England and Improvement to expand vaccine availability in local pharmacies. This will allow GP practices to further concentrate on delivering core primary care services to their patients.

Partners

Sefton has a strong infrastructure supporting community outreach and engagement activity. The Council has expanded and developed extra activities to increase capacity. This helps reduce the impact on local service providers straining under the demand of the pandemic. Partners such as the CCG, VCF and health and care agencies work together to ensure local residents can access support and interventions to aid pandemic recovery.

Statutory provision through Council support has made it easier for people and organisations to access emergency assistance. This is complemented by a range of community services.

Living Well Sefton is a well-established, commissioned public health and wellbeing programme. It works with wider partners such as community connectors, social prescribing and wellbeing mentors. These services have been adapted to support community recovery providing a 'listening ear', advice and signposting, as well as relevant interventions to people disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

These include:

- debt and financial advice;
- men's help support;
- befriending;
- confidence building;
- bereavement counselling;
- health and wellbeing advice.

To ensure all our communications are effective, coordinated and current, messaging will be agreed by all stakeholder partners in line with our stated commitment to Working Better Together.

The Health Information and Communication Group also supports this function. Its membership includes Sefton Council's Communications and Public Health teams, the NHS South Sefton and NHS Southport and Formby CCGs, community NHS trusts, hospital NHS trusts, Healthwatch, Sefton CVS, Living Well Sefton and other community partners. The group aims to produce unified, health-focused messaging with a focus on groups that may be less likely to engage with traditional and digital communications, whilst working to improve accessibility of communications.



Better Case Scenario

In phase 2, a 'better case' scenario will see a focus shift to rebuilding confidence while ensuring COVID-secure environments for staff, customers, visitors, passengers, etc. This 'best-case' scenario will see:

- a vaccination programme that is still on track;
- continued reductions in COVID-19 transmissions and/or maintained low infection rates;
- the safe reopening of the economy, including the visitor economy;
- the reopening of schools and other educational settings.

Phase 2: Summer/ Autumn 2021

Communication

- Continue highlighting positive and safe forward-looking developments
- Ensure that people are aware of any ongoing risk or required interventions
- Continue to use behavioural insight research to continue to connect with local people
- Ongoing health promotion with health partners including highlighting the benefit of vaccination and importance of any testing required
- Continue to promote financial, emotional and practical support, self-help and advice available to individuals and businesses
- Continue to promote safe tourism and a COVID-secure visitor economy in coastal areas and within towns including the Sefton Coastal Partnership Plan
- Ensure awareness of reestablishment of face-to-face democratic process

Education

- Continue management of and support to COVID-19 secure educational settings
- Maintain testing regime for staff and pupils
- Provide wellbeing and mental health support for post-summer education return
- Plan and provide of holiday learning including summer schools

Care Sector

- Managing COVID-Secure practises
- New visit regimes
- Workforce planning, recruitment and training
- Move to a more strategic approach to managing the care sector in line with the implementation of an integrated care partnerships
- Promote workforce health and wellbeing

Economy

- Sefton tourism increases and measures are in place to support visitor compliance with COVID-19 secure practice
- Managing COVID-19 secure businesses and public transport
- Planning for large events/festivals/gatherings and support for identified gatherings/events that can take place
- Return of more people to work premises
- Planning for potential redundancy support post-furlough
- Planning for longer-term recovery building on the Council's Economic Growth Programme and Sefton Economic Strategy
- Continued employment and training support for Sefton residents

Health

- Continue to drive/ support vaccination roll out
- Continuation of localising contact tracing
- 0-19 programme prioritising vulnerable families, face to face contact for all families and catch up programmes around screening and immunisations.
- Continued support for children and young people's emotional wellbeing including Kooth
- Promotion of children, young people and adult physical and mental health services

Community

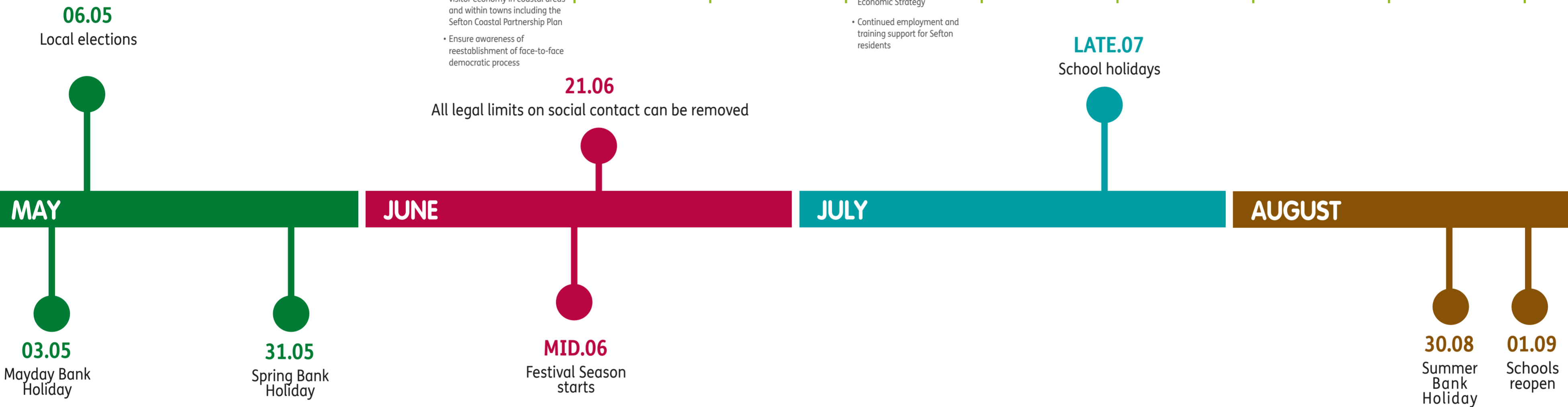
- Resilience grant funding achieved and used to support mental and physical health and wellbeing initiatives into 2021 and beyond
- Community Champions in post and supporting those most at risk from COVID-19
- Community adaption to change in restrictions

Enforcement

- Work alongside partners to support COVID-19 secure reopening and manage non-compliance with duties including those related to the visitor economy and the provision of large-scale events/festivals and gatherings
- Provide community and youth engagement
- Need for close working and support to business to meet COVID-Secure measures

Public Services

- Managing workforce fatigue
- Adaptation to new hybrid working model
- Embracing new partnership working
- Mutual support strategies



Worse Case Scenario

In a 'worst case scenario,' we would need to prepare for:

- a stall in the rates of vaccination rollout and uptake;
- wide circulations of new resistant variants of the virus;
- prevalence remaining above Summer 2020 levels, with stubborn infection hotspots;
- the pressure on the NHS continues;
- ongoing pressure on local and regional businesses results in a rise in unemployment;
- public compliance falls with the greater threat of civil unrest.

Communication

- Produce balanced communications promoting any required prevention and compliance
- Ensure local communications align with national guidance and targets
- Ongoing health promotion with health partners including vaccination and testing messaging
- Continue to promote financial, emotional and practical support
- Build upon networks established to continue to target communications to reduce health inequalities

Education

- Continue management of and support to COVID-19 secure educational settings
- Maintain testing regime for staff and pupils
- If given, follow national direction e.g. direction to break early for summer and delay return for some educational settings
- Increase delivery and planning of blended learning
- Support safe return of university students arriving at nearby universities or departing for university

Care Sector

- Managing COVID-Secure practises
- New visit regimes
- Workforce planning, recruitment and training
- Managing workforce fatigue
- Support vaccination catch-up for care sector staff
- Longer period of higher costs
- Concern over capacity and sustainability of the market
- Concerns over the impact on the hospital discharge process
- Ongoing communication on changes to guidance

Economy

- Providing support for business through more gradual reopening
- Cancellation of events and gatherings
- Support economic challenges including a significant increase in business failures and job loss through community responses
- Prepare for a possible return of restrictions in Autumn including potential visitor restrictions
- Continued employment and training support for Sefton residents

Health

- More resource required for localised contact tracing and self-isolation support provision
- Backlog of mental health support needs and increased loneliness/ social isolation
- Support surge responses to variants of concern
- Provide support to health partners to increase vaccination uptake
- Ongoing review of outbreak management plans including learning from outbreaks
- Provide responsive additional testing including the urgent need to respond to variants of concern
- Target interventions in areas of higher need e.g. areas with high rates of infection

- Support healthcare partners to improve wider health of population
- Streamline systems for early detection and containment of transmission

Community

- Debt, housing, and domestic abuse issues increases
- Pandemic fatigue and community unrest
- COVID-19 inequalities becoming apparent e.g. self-isolation
- Loneliness and isolation

Enforcement

- Align local enforcement messages with national guidance e.g. around potential reintroduction or continuation of travel restrictions
- With new restrictions in place or continued restrictions, there will be a need to manage lockdown breaches and illegal events
- Continued partnership working required to ensure compliance with COVID-19 secure practices
- New challenges to maintain positive community relations may present, requiring community engagement activity, including youth engagement

Public Services

- Adaptation to acute workforce fatigue
- Address budget/ funding issues
- Mutual support strategies

Phase: 2

Low case rates/ very occasional outbreaks

TESTING

- Deliver local testing in line with national direction
- Support self-testing for the population prior to large scale events or travelling
- Mobile testing remains for outbreaks
- SMART testing will remain to support those who can't self-test at home
- Continue to support settings which provide self-testing including businesses, social care, and educational settings

Tracing

- Adoption of new Test & Trace System – ITS
- Increased localised community contact tracing with support from community teams
- Outbreak Identification and Rapid Response
- Continue to utilise the CMS for outbreak identification.
- Trial use with wider members of the council including social care settings and educational settings

Vaccinations

- Primary care networks will use the learning and success of their GP led vaccination services to plan the delivery model for the forthcoming annual flu campaign.

Partners

- Partners will continue to work together seamlessly to:
- refer and connect with residents and support them to follow safer behaviours
- guide people towards available support and services
- make it easier for people to understand and comply with local guidelines.
- The recovery plan is designed to make smoother the process of supporting individuals undergoing self-isolation by supporting their practical needs. Additionally, work will continue in supporting the VCF sector to expand and build resilience, offering a broader understanding of the cultural diversity within vulnerable communities, increasing trust and engagement.



Better Case Scenario

In Phase 3, a 'better case scenario,' will see living with COVID become part of the overall health scene/winter pressures. We will need to consider recovery and longer-term thinking regarding changes in service delivery and addressing health inequalities.

With this scenario, it is likely that we will see:

- a complete and effective vaccination roll-out;
- potential vaccine boosters for clinically vulnerable individuals;
- reduced prevalence of infections and/or low infection incidence;
- a functioning NHS able to deal with responding to backlogs;
- beginnings of 'real economic and community recovery'.

Communication

- Continue highlighting positive and safe forward-looking developments, whilst continuing to promote 'safe winter practice' e.g. space/test/face/masks/hands
- Build upon use of behavioural insight research to continue to connect with local people
- Maintain co-produced health promotion communications with partners
- Continue to promote financial, emotional and practical support, self-help and advice available to individuals and businesses
- Continue to promote safe tourism and a COVID-secure visitor economy
- *Communication of business-as-usual activity and corporate initiatives across the Council

Education

- COVID-19 secure management of schools and colleges
- Provision of catch up programmes
- Support required for those transitioning from Year 6 to Year 7 in school settings
- Support for mental health and wellbeing

Care Sector

- Embedding a new normal
- Funding pressures
- Recruitment and training issues
- Ensuring high vaccine take-up
- Reflecting on relationship between hospital discharge processes and appropriate winter planning

Economy

- Implementation of longer-term recovery, building on the council's Growth programme and Sefton Economic Strategy
- Continued support for businesses including high street / town centre recovery measures
- Continued employment and training support for Sefton residents
- Support adoptions to working practices e.g. in the safe running of large-scale events/festivals/large gatherings

Health

- New Winter Plan
- Managing local surges and outbreaks
- Maintaining testing infrastructure for new variants
- Promote highest possible vaccine take up
- Catch up/ rebalancing of services

Community

- Address widening inequalities
- Increase in homelessness
- Demand for greater and more sustainable welfare and community support

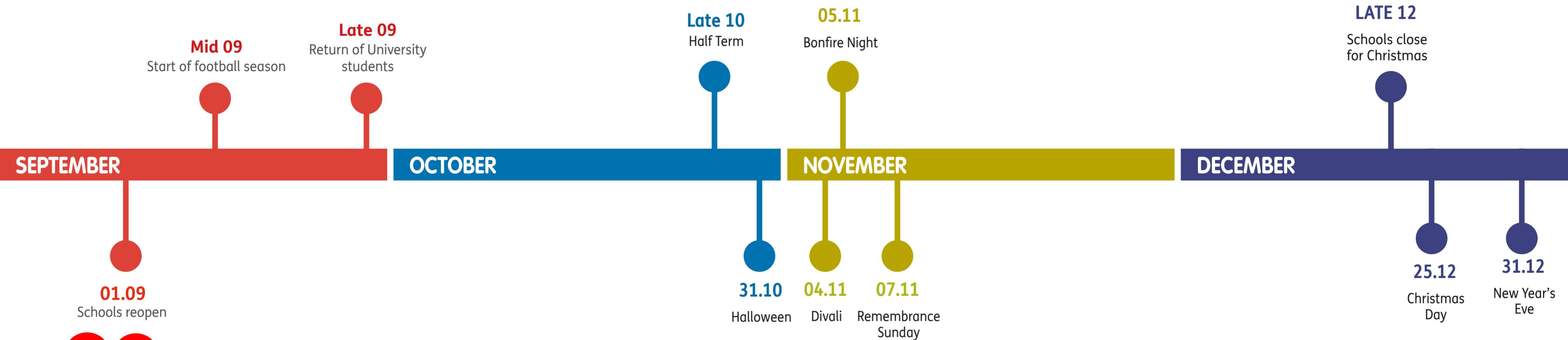
Enforcement

- Policing and enforcement activity may be required for larger events/festivals and gatherings
- Contingency planning for new restrictions should be considered

Public Services

- Embed, where appropriate, new ways of working e.g. safe office practices
- Reprioritise services due to medium-term funding shortfalls
- Plan for 'stored-up leave' and related absence surge risk
- Maximise good working relationships with partners

Phase 3: Autumn/ Winter 2021



Worse Case Scenario

With a 'worst case scenario,' we may face:

- coming out of lockdown too soon resulting in ongoing transmission maintained by a succession of new variants;
- prevalence of infections start increasing again
- falling vaccine take-up and/or major gaps in vaccination and/or transmission of variants of concern requiring widespread boosters;
- pressure to delay opening of educational settings for new, 2021/2022 school year;
- the re-introduction of local or national restrictions;
- high business attrition with unemployment rising steeply.
- Fall in public confidence in national, regional and local guidance results in greater threat of civil unrest.
-
- restrictions on opening and reopening of education and business sectors;
- issues with non-compliance and the threat of civil unrest.

Communication

- Align communications in the event of new or continued restrictions to ensure compliance with national guidance
- Continue to embed basic messages (space/test/face/masks/hands)
- Ongoing health promotion with health partners including COVID-19 and flu vaccination and testing messaging
- Promote any continued or new financial, emotional and practical support
- Continue to share messages and communicate via established networks
- Reflect on internal and partner communication - include in all communication sections

Education

- Delays in re-opening of some educational settings following national advice, requiring blended learning and catch up programmes
- Support required for those transitioning from Year 6 to Year 7 in school settings
- Support for mental health and wellbeing

Care Sector

- Acute funding pressures
- Growing home closure risks
- Workforce resilience
- Ensuring high vaccine take-up for both flu and any booster COVID vaccines
- Risk of capacity issue due to staff redeployment

Economy

- Implement longer-term recovery, building on the council's Growth programme and Sefton Economic Strategy
- Support economic challenges including a significant increase in business failures and high levels of unemployment through community responses
- Cancellation of large-scale events/festivals/large scale gatherings and return to restrictions
- Prolonged working from home
- Rethinking high street/town centres

Health

- New Winter Plan
- Managing local surges and outbreaks
- Extra support for self-isolation
- Maintaining testing infrastructure for new variants
- Promote highest possible vaccine take up
- NHS unable to resume 'normal' service
- Prepare for reintroduction of shielding

Community

- Even greater inequalities
- Increase in debt levels, food and poverty
- Rising homelessness
- Long term demand for welfare and community support
- Interaction with weather events
- Increased dependency on support services e.g. shopping support

Enforcement

- Continued enforcement of national restrictions alongside local communications to highlight the importance of public health interventions
- Ongoing need to manage lockdown breaches and illegal events
- Continued partnership working required to ensure compliance with COVID-19 secure practices
- Challenges to maintain positive community relations continue, requiring ongoing community engagement activity, including youth engagement

Public Services

- Embed, where appropriate, new ways of working e.g. safe office practices
- Reprioritise services due to medium-term funding shortfalls
- Respond and support workforce experiencing fatigue and resilience issues including sickness absence

Phase: 3

Escalating case rates in some communities / winter planning
/new variants

TESTING

- Support self-testing for the population prior to large scale events or travelling
- Mobile testing remains for outbreaks
- SMART testing will remain to support those who can't self-test at home
- Continue to support settings which provide self-Testing including businesses, social care, and educational settings
- Communications encouraging testing in the run up to flu season and in the run up to the Christmas period

Tracing

- Increased localised community contact tracing with support from community teams
- Prepare team for potential increase in cases as we move into the winter period
- Outbreak Identification and Rapid Response
- Outbreak Identification and Rapid Response to identify clusters of infection

Vaccinations

- Define plans for ongoing vaccination via booster dosing in line with national guidance
- Maximise seasonal flu vaccination messaging for winter 2021-22

Partners

- Partners will continue to work together to develop collective outcomes in the run up to winter 2021