

# Cabinet

Date: **7 September 2020**

Time: **10:00am**

Venue: **Teams Meeting**

## Draft Supplementary Agenda

- 5 To receive any items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency.**

**Please note this decision is not subject to the call-in procedure.**

**(Page A2)**

**Banham Poultry Covid 19 Outbreak**  
Report by the Head of Paid Service

**Tom McCabe**  
**Head of Paid Service**  
County Hall  
Martineau Lane  
Norwich  
NR1 2DH

Date Supplementary Agenda published: 4 September 2020



**If you need this document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.**

# Cabinet

Item No: 5

<b>Decision making report title:</b>	<b>Banham Poultry Covid 19 Outbreak</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>7 Sept 2020</b>
<b>Responsible Cabinet Member:</b>	<b>Cllr Andrew Proctor, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Strategy &amp; Governance</b>
<b>Responsible Director:</b>	<b>Tom McCabe, Head of Paid Service</b>
<b>Is this a key decision?</b>	<b>No</b>

## **Introduction from Cabinet Member**

Over the last two weeks Public Health Norfolk and our partners in district councils, New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, the voluntary sector along with regional and national government agencies have been working to contain a Coronavirus outbreak at Banham Poultry in Attleborough. This paper seeks to update Members about the measures we have taken to:

- contain the outbreak and to protect the public
- ensure the welfare of those Banham Poultry workers affected by the outbreak
- help the company manage its voluntary partial closure
- work with other similar food production companies to take further steps to ensure a Covid secure work environment

This has been very much a partnership response, and tribute should be paid to the quick mobilisation of resources across the public sector to deal with this outbreak effectively. Everyone is playing their part in managing this outbreak and reducing the risk of spread into the community and other businesses. Work carried out earlier this year in establishing a Local Outbreak Control Plan – one of the pilot areas to do so - has stood the County in good stead and procedures set out then have worked effectively throughout this outbreak.

Overall the rates of Covid-19 infection in Norfolk remains low, and there is no evidence to suggest that this outbreak has spread beyond Banham Poultry staff and their households, although the situation continues to be monitored. However, the outbreak is a timely reminder that Covid-19 is still very much with us, and we must all play our part in keeping Norfolk safe.

## **Recommendations**

- 1. To acknowledge the work that has been carried out by NCC and partners in containing this Coronavirus outbreak**
- 2. Support the move to Norfolk CC becoming a locally supported contact tracing area to support and protect Norfolk residents, recognising that full costs are still to be confirmed and that they are likely to create a cost pressure.**
- 3. Members continue to support and promote Protect Yourself, Protect Others Protect Norfolk public health messages to keep residents safe.**

## **1. Background and Purpose**

- 1.1. To provide Cabinet with a summary of the recent COVID-19 outbreak at Banham Poultry and the measures that Norfolk Council and partners have taken to contain the spread.
- 1.2. The report details work that Norfolk County Council and partners have undertaken to support affected Banham Poultry staff; efforts to support the company; and support given to the wider food production sector. The contents of the report are based on data and circumstances that are changing frequently and therefore some areas may become superseded by new information on an ongoing basis.

## **2. Context**

- 2.1. On Friday 21<sup>st</sup> August, Norfolk County Council's Public Health Team became aware of an issue that day when a member of Banham Poultry's staff was admitted to the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital and subsequently tested positive for Covid-19. Banham Poultry asked staff who had helped the staff member who had fallen ill, and had therefore been in close contact with him, to get tested and to self-isolate. This resulted in the first 7 positive tests on Monday 24 August and triggered further testing of 376 workers in the cutting room at the plant. At this time Norfolk County Council notified the Government's Covid-19 Joint Biosecurity Centre and staff from both the Department of Health and Public Health England have been attending local meetings to advise on containment of the virus.
- 2.2. By Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> August a total of 75 positive cases had been identified in staff from the cutting room out of 347 tested. Banham Poultry voluntarily agreed to close the cutting room temporarily for a deep clean and to ask all staff who had been working there to self-isolate. The numbers of those found to be infected rose to 80 out of 376 workers by 28<sup>th</sup> August, an infection rate of 22% in this part of the factory.
- 2.3. Following completion of testing of people in the cutting room, further precautionary tests were then extended to other staff who work at the factory, including anyone who worked there from the beginning of August. Testing began on 28<sup>th</sup> of August. By 1<sup>st</sup> September the number of positive tests had risen to 104 out of 769 results returned with the majority of staff asked to self-isolate.
- 2.4. Norfolk's Public Health team is working with national NHS Test and Trace to contact trace all contacts of all staff who are self-isolating. To increase contact tracing capacity, we have brought in Essex and Southend Contact Tracing Service. The proposal is to have trained Norfolk contact tracers in place as we take on the responsibility for local contact tracing to better support and protect Norfolk's residents.

The ongoing risk of transmission on site is assessed as low. The risk assessment concluded that staff at the front-end of the slaughterhouse can maintain a social distance and operate within Covid guidelines. This has advantages to Animal Welfare. The situation continues to be monitored daily at the multi-agency Incident Management Team (IMT) meeting.

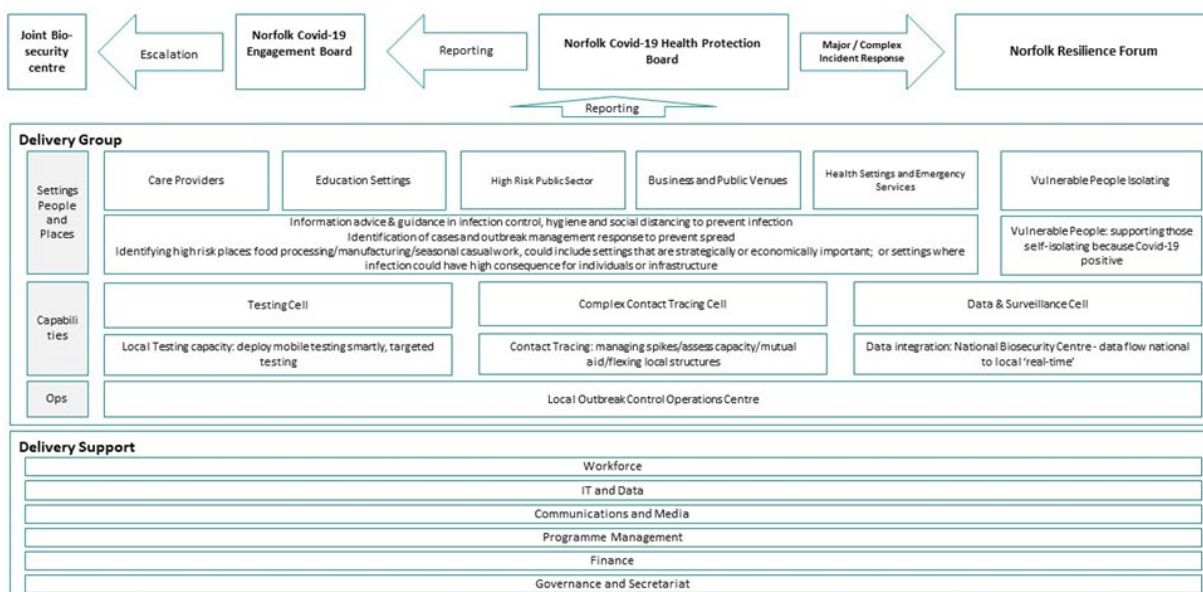
- 2.5. Throughout the outbreak a partnership approach has been taken. Norfolk County Council has worked closely with Breckland District Council, Great Yarmouth Borough Council, Norwich City Council, the Health and Safety Executive, Public Health England, the Department for Health and Banham Poultry management to ensure the best handling of the outbreak.

- 2.6. Prior to the outbreak Covid-19 infection rates in Norfolk were low compared both with the East of England and nationally and remain so.
- 2.7. Mobile testing units have been specifically deployed in Great Yarmouth, Norwich, Thetford and Attleborough to encourage wider community testing.
- 2.8. The risk to the wider population of Norfolk has been assessed as low and there is no evidence that the outbreak has spread further than Banham Poultry. The risk of the virus being passed on via food or food packaging is assessed as small. Members of the public are advised to continue to play their part by washing their hands thoroughly and regularly and to observe social distancing guidance.

### 3. Governance arrangements

- 3.1. As part of our management response, Norfolk County Council and partners has stood up its Local Outbreak Control Plan structure – a command and co-ordination structure to ensure clear roles and responsibilities and lines of organisation for efficient and effective outbreak control.
- 3.2. These arrangements bring together all relevant local partners in one place to enable Norfolk's approach and response to be jointly planned, co-ordinated and any risks managed. A co-ordinated approach is key to making the best use of resources and delivering the best possible response for Norfolk.
- 3.3. The Norfolk Local Outbreak Control Plan is set out in the diagram below. Since this structure has been implemented some groups are meeting daily and some weekly, as required.

LOCP Structure



- 3.4. The delivery groups are mainly led and staffed by Norfolk's local authorities, drawing heavily on Public Health resources. However, the reporting structures take a multi-agency approach and the following organisations are represented in both the Health Protection Board and the Covid-19 Engagement Board:

- Norfolk County Council
- Seven District Councils
- Norfolk Constabulary
- Norfolk and Waveney CCG
- Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital
- Norfolk Community Health and Care NHS Trust
- New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership
- Norfolk Resilience Forum
- Public Health England

The Health Protection Board, chaired by Dr Louise Smith Director of Public Health, has Met a number of time to review the situation. In addition, the Engagement Board, chaired by Councillor Andrew Proctor, Leader of NCC, most recently met on 3 September 2020.

- 3.5. An Incident Management Team, including input from Banham Poultry has been established. The outbreak is drawing resources from a Communities Cell, Animal Welfare Cell and Business Cell as well as delivery support from both Norfolk County Council's communications team and communications teams within district councils.
- 3.6. Norfolk Resilience Forum remains on standby to provide further assistance to the Health Protection Board if required, but currently there has been no requirement to escalate.
- 3.7. Throughout the response the Director of Public Health has been in daily communication with Department Health and Social Care and the Joint Biosecurity Centre and been briefing the Leader r as chair of the Engagement Board.

## **4. Partnership Response**

- 4.1. Approximately 800 staff and their households have been asked to isolate as a result of this outbreak. The majority of these live in Great Yarmouth, Norwich, Attleborough and Thetford. The Communities Cell, co-chaired by Ceri Sumner Director CES and Jamie Sutterby Director SNDC and BDC, has led the response of the Vulnerability Hub, set up at the start of the Pandemic to ensure the welfare of high-risk groups and those shielding and isolating, This is reaching out via voluntary organisations and district councils to ensure people are supported and enabled to isolate. This support potentially includes provision of food parcels, childcare and accommodation to enable isolation and safe transport.
- 4.2. New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership has supported Public Health Norfolk colleagues in the development of a business tool kit which provides businesses and their owners with information and resources on ensuring their workplaces are Covid secure and the steps to take in the event of an outbreak. This was launched earlier in the summer and has been well received by businesses.

- 4.3. Following the outbreak at Banham Poultry the LEP and public health colleagues organised a meeting with the eight largest poultry processing businesses in Norfolk and Suffolk to update those businesses on the Banham Poultry outbreak. The companies were also provided with information and advice on their own workplaces and steps staff should be taking in the workplace but also outside the workplace environment. The situation will continue to be reviewed along with any subsequent advice on the need for increased testing for screening of employees in this sector.
- 4.4. The LEP has also been working with Banham Poultry and other partners including the government on options for financial support for the company following the partial closure of the site.

## **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1. There are no further financial implications save those already identified in the Council's wider response to the pandemic which are documented elsewhere.

## **6. Resource Implications**

- 6.1. **Staff:** There are no direct staff implications arising from this report.
- 6.2. **Property:** There are no direct property implications arising from this report.
- 6.3. **IT:** There are no direct IT implications arising from this report

## **7. Other Implications**

- 7.1. **Legal Implications:** None identified
- 7.2. **Human Rights implications:** None identified
- 7.3. **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (this must be included):** COVID-19 has impacted on every individual and family across Norfolk, particularly on people with protected characteristics. New evidence is emerging daily about the nature and extent of this impact. In view of this, the Cabinet is maintaining a dynamic equality impact assessment, which is available at:

[https://norfolkcc.cmis.uk.com/norfolkcc/Committees/tabid/62/ctl/ViewCMIS\\_CommitteeDetails/mid/381/id/169/Default.aspx](https://norfolkcc.cmis.uk.com/norfolkcc/Committees/tabid/62/ctl/ViewCMIS_CommitteeDetails/mid/381/id/169/Default.aspx)

This impact assessment is being used by Cabinet to inform decision-making during the COVID-19 crisis. It is being continually updated to inform business continuity planning. Mitigating actions are being developed wherever necessary and these are summarised in the assessment. Cabinet is asking all elected members to review the dynamic impact assessment and keep Norfolk County Council informed of any new impacts that emerge for people with protected characteristics in their division, so that the assessment can be updated accordingly.

- 7.4. **Health and Safety implications** (where appropriate): None save those identified in the report
- 7.5. **Sustainability implications** (where appropriate): None identified
- 7.6. **Any other implications:** None identified

8. **Risk Implications/Assessment:** All risks associated with Covid-19 are documented in the Norfolk County Council Corporate Risk Register.

### **Officer Contact**

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper, please get in touch with:

**Officer name:** Dr Louise Smith                      **Tel No.:** 01603 638 407

**Email address:** Louise.smith@norfolk.gov.uk



If you need this report in large print, audio, braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

## Appendix 1 – District data positive COVID-19 cases:

The report below provides a daily update on the COVID-19 epidemiological picture in the East of England PHE Centre. The rating of COVID-19 in local authorities used in this report has been developed for use in the East of England. It is not the same rating and does not correspond directly with the Red Amber Green ratings used in national COVID-19 reports. Instead, in this report, a series of metrics are reviewed for each unitary authority/lower tier local authority in the East of England to highlight where further investigation may be required. Metrics include the number of cases in the last 7 days, the incidence rate, the positivity rate, the exceedance rating and the number of new outbreaks. Local authorities are categorised into:

- Areas of lower COVID-19 activity (colour coded green)
- Areas of intermediate COVID-19 activity (amber)
- Areas of higher COVID-19 activity (red)

- **Overview of cases by district areas across Norfolk (updated 01.09.2020) – based on cases in the last 7 days Breckland, Great Yarmouth and Norwich are red** as they have high case numbers. South Norfolk is amber as they have intermediate number of cases. **In contrast Broadland, King's Lynn and West Norfolk and North Norfolk are currently green** as they have low case numbers

	Cases		Field Service Rating	Rationale	Field Service Actions		
	7 days prior	last 7 days			Completed	Date completed	Outstanding
Breckland	21	29	Higher COVID-19 activity	RED exceedance, high case numbers in last 7 days			Ongoing support
Broadland	3	4	Lower COVID-19 activity	GREEN exceedance and low case numbers	Case based review	10/08/2020	
Great Yarmouth	15	22	Higher COVID-19 activity	GREEN exceedance, high case numbers in last 7 days	Case based review	06/08/2020	Ongoing support
King's Lynn and West Norfolk	5	4	Lower COVID-19 activity	RED exceedance but small case numbers			Ongoing support
North Norfolk	0	1	Lower COVID-19 activity	GREEN exceedance and low case numbers			
Norwich	8	18	Higher COVID-19 activity	RED exceedance, high case numbers in last 7 days			Ongoing support
South Norfolk	6	12	Intermediate COVID-19 activity	RED exceedance, intermediate cases in past 7 days			Ongoing support

(see detailed breakdown below).

**Source:** East of England Daily Field Epidemiology Service Report. This data is provided by Public Health England for monitoring and supporting the management of Covid-19 infections and is confidential.