

MARCH 2021

# Preston Local 0: A case study



## **Local Context**

Preston has had higher than average Covid19 infection rates for a considerable period of time, having become an Area of Intervention 7 August 2020. As of 21 March 2021, the infection rates in Preston were more than double the England national figure.

To address this the Lancashire County Council Director of Public Health worked with colleagues from both Lancashire County and Preston City Council to develop an enduring transmission Covid19 action plan that is monitored by the weekly Preston Covid19 task force, chaired by the Preston City Council Chief Executive. This task force includes members of the Public Health team, a range of City Council officers and representatives of other key partner organisations including Lancashire Constabulary and NHS.

## **Local 0 - track and trace**

Preston went live with Local 0 Monday 15 March 2021, and within the first week (15 March – 21 March) processed 85 cases, with 52 home visits and 76 cases which were fully engaged and met all track and trace requirements.

Preston currently has a 93.75% rate for “cases reached” through the combination of the local contact tracing team and online engagement.

In support of Local 0 and as part of the Covid19 action plan, Preston has established a procedure which prioritises home visits in the five highest transmission wards as an immediate step, alongside contact tracing. This has proven very successful, with high resident engagement and has enabled Preston City Council to offer additional urgent support to ensure the success of self-isolation requirements through the provision of a food parcel, prescription collection support and collection of other essential items.

Preston has also raised the income threshold for discretionary self-isolation payments from £300 to £500 income per week and savings threshold from £6,000 to £20,000 to better support residents to self-isolate.

Additionally, Preston has developed a local referral system with Lancashire Constabulary enabling referrals for Police visits where there is concern over adherence to self-isolation requirements.

## **Other actions taken: testing, community focus, communications**

As part of the Covid19 action plan, various other work streams have been implemented to support the reduction of infection rates in the city. This includes extensive work with community and faith groups, identifying and establishing pop-up testing sites across the city as well as hosting a city-centre symptom free test site for essential workers, and comprehensive Environmental Health and Regulatory work undertaken at pace for business compliance and enforcement.

This has been underpinned by a collaborative communications approach, which in addition to the long-term covid19 campaign includes a focus on testing and self-isolation through the use of digital billboards, targeted social media ads, targeted leaflet drops and provision of free parking for testing, 300 posters for local bus companies to display within their vehicles, vinyl bin stickers in targeted wards and the provision of printed takeaway lids in 5 popular takeaways.

### **Anecdotal stories:**

#### **Track & Trace**

1.

A home track & trace visit was made to a family in one of the five highest transmission wards in Preston, where 6 out of 9 family members who live in the home had tested positive for Covid19.

The father works in a school, which is the suspected contact point and mother works for the NHS. While there were no concerns about income, the family had a number of urgent practical concerns including the immediate need of sanitary items for their 3 daughters, and limited supply of food for 2 dogs.

The officer provided the family with a Preston City Council food parcel, with the addition of bread, milk, and sanitary items (which the officer collected herself). The family was left with a letter detailing additional support available and advice for assisted shopping options (including Deliveroo and Amazon Prime).

2.

A track and trace call was made to a gentleman in a shared house. Due to his lack of symptoms, the gentleman indicated that he did not believe his positive result and was going to visit another test site for an additional test.

He was informed that he must stay at home and advised to order a home test if necessary.

The housemates were disregarding their self-isolation requirement and were all at their workplaces at the time of the visit. The matter was referred to Lancashire Constabulary, as per the local arrangement.

#### **Local Support**

1.

A woman contacted Preston City Council via the Vulnerable Support Line (Preston Together). She identified herself as in poor health and living alone, with no access to the internet having run out of data on her phone.

The woman needed to see a doctor but had been advised that she could not be seen without a negative COVID test. The officer ordered a home test for her online, and the following day collected it from the woman's home, and posted it on her behalf, using the priority service.