

Councillor Peter Black
Chair
Scrutiny Programme Committee

Please ask for: Councillor Rob Stewart
Direct Line: 01792 63 6366
E-Mail: cllr.rob.stewart@swansea.gov.uk
Our Ref: RS/CM
Your Ref:
Date: 16 October 2020

BY EMAIL

Dear Councillor Black

I refer to your letter dated the 28th September 2020 and would respond as follows.

Test, Trace & Protect (TTP) – in light of a rising number of cases, provide us with an update on the situation regarding local testing capacity and the effectiveness of the TTP Service, and confirm whether the TTP service is notified about those returning to the area from abroad and having to self-isolate.

Student Accommodation Developments - to confirm the level of take up of new city centre student accommodation.

Following discussions at the Scrutiny Programme Committee, student accommodation developers and agents have been contacted to find out occupancy rates in the City Centre. Enquiries have indicated an average occupancy of 72.3% at present. Responses tend to indicate that the student accommodation providers see a demand for up market / studio accommodation rather than basic shared cluster units, with a demand mainly from the overseas market. However, they are also finding an increasing number of UK students are now opting for purpose built student accommodation rather than HMOs.

Effectiveness of TTP service

The Current tracing teams operate 9am – 7pm, 7 days a week and is currently achieving the majority of contacts within 24 hours and all contacts where information is provided within 48 hours.

The workforce is moving towards a fully externally recruited workforce with additional support coming from our own trained staff during any peak in numbers.

Testing Capacity

Testing capacity is determined from UK Government in partnership with Welsh Government.

Margam and Liberty testing stations are increasing in the numbers that are processed.

3 Mobile testing units have been established and are now operational in,

1. **Penyrheol LC**

Thursday mornings and Sunday mornings
(9.45am to 12.45pm)

2. **Penclawdd Community Centre** (until 15th October)

Thursday afternoons and Sunday afternoons (2:15pm to 5:15pm)
Moving to **Swansea Airport at Fairwood**, (from Sunday the 18th of October)

3. **Townhill Community Centre**

Monday mornings and Friday mornings
(9.30am to 12.30pm)

In addition the Grand Theatre is being set up as an additional testing station and should be live by the 9th October.

A 6 point strategy has been developed to ensure that the capacity and demand are prioritised and managed:

Priorities for testing WG:

Welsh Government has announced a series of priorities for testing (Ministerial Statement 29 September 2020).

Priority one: to support NHS clinical care and focus on hospital patients, including all admissions.

Priority two: to protect those in care homes. We will continue to test staff, with or without symptoms, fortnightly or, where local prevalence is significant, weekly. We will also test all new admissions and, in the event of an outbreak with a home, all residents and staff will be tested.

Priority three: testing of NHS staff, including GPs and pharmacists where possible. We will continue to test NHS staff with symptoms but will move to test asymptomatic staff in outbreaks and in areas of higher prevalence.

Priority four: targeted testing to support management of outbreaks and surveillance studies. This will help to manage outbreaks in high-risk environments such as closed residential settings or higher-risk workplaces, where the risks of the virus spreading and chances of finding more positive cases is high. Surveillance testing refers to the population-wide Office for National Statistics study, essential trials for new potential vaccines, and studies of particular at-risk populations.

Priority five: testing for symptomatic staff working in education or childcare settings where it is needed to keep the settings open. This is about ensuring that education staff can get priority access when they have symptoms. Those who test negative can return to work, ensuring our education and childcare settings can remain open.

Priority six: testing all symptomatic individuals irrespective of local prevalence. Eligibility is restricted to individuals with key symptoms (a high temperature, a new continuous cough and a loss of taste or smell).

The constraint to testing is the access to laboratory space, Public Health Wales and Local health Board is working on improving the capacity of laboratory time.

Returning from abroad

Anyone returning from Abroad who is self-isolating is not notified to the TTP team, but to Public Health Wales, only if a positive test has been received would they get added to the system.

I trust this responds to the questions raised in your letter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Rob Stewart', written in a cursive style.

**Y CYNGHORYDD/COUNCILLOR ROB STEWART
ARWEINYDD/LEADER**