

NOTICE OF MOTION**GREEN GROUP****COVID-19: NATIONAL ACTION FOR LOCAL IMPACT****Test and trace**

This council calls on the Chief Executive, in liaison with the Director of Public Health, to write to the Secretary of State for Health calling for:

- urgent action to address the failings in the national test and trace system and its subsequent impacts on our city, [1] by providing necessary funding and resources to support the expertise and local knowledge of public health teams, and to develop stronger partnerships that can deliver contact tracing at a local level where needed;
- a robust system of engagement with councils on any restrictions, to ensure local leaders and communities are able to shape and respond to any local lockdown measures; [2]

Impact of lockdown

This Notice of Motion also requests that the Chief Executive also writes to relevant government ministers to request:

- that the impacts of lockdown [3] on quality of life and mental health are the subject of a public report, with findings acknowledged and communicated, helping those affected to understand how lockdown affects both mental and physical health, with due consideration given to the additional support and resources public services will require to continue to manage long-term effects;
- in view of the impact on livelihoods, loss of furlough and rising redundancies, to use the forthcoming spending review to outline a genuine 'Green New Deal,'[4] to help create long-term, well paid jobs and skills to combat both the economic impact of Covid-19 and climate crisis across the UK and in our city

Proposed by: Cllr Rainey

Seconded by: Cllr Mac Cafferty

[1] Figures show national contact tracing reached only 64.3% of cases in the week ending 23 September while local teams reached 97.6% of the cases they handled. Private labs given responsibility for processing test swabs were unable to meet demand, leading Government to 'prioritise,' causing a huge backlog and delay in data with local residents given no test option close to home. Further, a data error led to 16,000 cases of Covid-19 going unrecorded and untraced.

[2] The Association of Directors of Public Health has urged Government to urgently collaborate with local areas to improve the effectiveness of the test and trace system. Promises by Test and Trace boss Dido Harding to redeploy 12,000 contact tracers to local areas have also failed to materialise. Council leaders have spoken of little notice given or collaboration over imposed lockdown:
<https://bit.ly/36Oa9tl>

[3] Lockdown impacts include Increase of 50% of calls to domestic abuse helplines, Increase in isolation and associated mental health problems such as depression and anxiety, increased pressure on care-givers, increased reliance on screen based activities and social media, anxiety about job and financial security, and there are concerns regarding an increase in suicide rates:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7177120/>

[4] <https://www.greennewdealuk.org/>

