



Briefing

RUTLAND COUNTY COUNCIL WEEKLY ROUNDUP – 14 January 2022

Good afternoon,

Rutland briefly became the centre of attention for world's media this week as the county laid claim to its second internationally significant historical discovery in as many months.

Not content with uncovering a huge Roman mosaic described by one expert as 'the most exciting discovery in last century', Rutland is now home to the biggest and most complete ichthyosaur skeleton ever found in the UK. If you've been following the news around the 'Rutland Sea Dragon' then you'll know just how exciting and significant this discovery is, and we are extremely proud that officers from RCC have been part of the partnership that's helped to identify, excavate and now preserve this unique piece of natural heritage.

Rutland County Council has been working closely with Anglian Water to secure grant funding that will help us to plan the future of these two amazing archaeological and palaeontological discoveries, and we hope to be able to share further details very soon. Our local MP, Alecia Kearns, also spoke passionately about the need to protect and preserve these discoveries in the Commons this week, talking about how they could further enrich Rutland's reputation as a truly unique place to live and visit.

Like many of you, I look forward to seeing how the story around these incredible relics of the ancient past will develop. In any event, the Council will play an active role in working to make sure they are made as accessible as possible to people here in Rutland for many more years to come.

Regards,
Mark

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1. COVID-19

a. Latest situation

As of 4.00pm on Thursday 13 January, 14,967,817 people have tested positive for coronavirus in the UK. Of those who have tested positive for coronavirus in the UK, 151,342 people have died across all settings within 28 days of a positive test.

As of 4.00pm on Thursday 13 January, 52,031,355 people in the UK have received their first dose vaccination and 47,804,588 have received their second dose vaccination. The national booster and third dose total is 36,079,875. These figures continue to be published on the government's daily dashboard:

coronavirus.data.gov.uk

Rutland recorded 526 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the period between 3 and 9 January, a decrease of 39 compared to the previous week. This equates to 1,300 cases per 100,000 people. The average area in England had 1,447.

As of 12 January, 89% of people in Rutland aged 12 and over had been given first doses of COVID vaccinations; 83% had received their second dose; 68% have had a booster or third dose.

A total of 79 coronavirus-related deaths were registered in Rutland up to 31 December.

b. Walk-in clinics for COVID boosters

COVID vaccinations (including the COVID Booster) are available at walk-in sites in Rutland on the following days:

- Saturday 15 January 2022 - Oakham Enterprise Park, 9.30am-6pm, 1st, 2nd or 3rd dose, and boosters
- Monday 17 January 2022 - Rutland Late Night Pharmacy, 10am-3pm, 1st, 2nd or 3rd dose, and boosters
- Tuesday 18 January 2022 - Rutland Late Night Pharmacy, 10am-4pm, 1st, 2nd or 3rd dose, and boosters
- Wednesday 19 January 2022 - Rutland Late Night Pharmacy, 10am-4pm, 1st, 2nd or 3rd dose, and boosters
- Thursday 20 January 2022 - Rutland Late Night Pharmacy, 10am-4pm, 1st, 2nd or 3rd dose, and boosters

Details of who is eligible to receive a COVID booster can be found online at:

www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-booster-vaccine

The latest information about COVID vaccination clinics across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland can be found online at: www.leicestercityccg.nhs.uk/my-health/coronavirus-advice/coronavirus-vaccine

c. Omicron support for businesses

[Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant](#) and [Additional Restrictions Grant \(revised\)](#) guidance was first published on Thursday 30 December 2021. Following on from previous information shared in this weekly briefing, RCC has now received its funding allocations. However, the funding allocation for the Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant is less than expected. As result, we are seeking clarification from Government.

The Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant has been designed for businesses that are liable for business rates pay rates and are in the hospitality/leisure sector as per the definition in the guidance. We envisage contacting these businesses directly from week commencing Monday 17 January and will be asking them to complete a declaration form. Following the successful completion of that form, RCC will be required to undertake pre-payment checks which may take up to 14 days. This is because one of the checks relies on a response from a third party. Forms that are incomplete or inaccurate will be rejected. Payments can be made after all checks have been completed,

If businesses have further questions, they should consult the guidance. RCC cannot respond directly to any enquiries at this stage of the process as all resource is focused on implementing the new grants scheme as quickly as possible.

The Council will also receive an Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) to support businesses who are not eligible for the Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant. The value of grant is c£91k. We are prioritising the Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant. As a result, it is unlikely that applications for the ARG grant will be invited before the end of January 2022. Further updates will be made on the 'COVID Information Hub' section of the RCC website in due course:

www.rutland.gov.uk/coronavirus.

d. Face-to-face public meetings

Since May 2021, public meetings have been required to take place in person in order to make formal decisions, unless sufficient delegations have been made. The latest advice for Parish Councils from the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) can be found here: www.nalc.gov.uk/coronavirus#preparing-for-the-return-to-face-to-face-meetings.

The Association of Democratic Services Officers and Lawyers in Local Government are among those continuing to lobby for the return of virtual meetings as an option for local councils and have recently launched a petition calling for the government to legislate for this.

Members of all levels may want to consider signing the Change.org petition [which can be found here](#).

e. Lateral Flow testing

A reminder that as of Monday 11 January in England, people who receive positive lateral flow device (LFD) test results for coronavirus (COVID-19) are required to self-isolate immediately and do not need to take a confirmatory PCR test.

This is a temporary measure while COVID-19 rates remain high across the UK. While levels of COVID-19 are high, the vast majority of people with positive LFD results can be confident that they have COVID-19.

Under this new approach, anyone who receives a positive LFD test result should report their result on GOV.UK and must self-isolate immediately but will not need to take a follow-up PCR test.

After reporting a positive LFD test result, people will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace so that their contacts can be traced and must continue to self-isolate.

There are a few exceptions to this revised approach.

- First, people who are eligible for the £500 Test and Trace Support Payment (TTSP) will still be asked to take a confirmatory PCR if they receive a positive LFD result, to enable them to access financial support
- Second, people participating in research or surveillance programmes may still be asked to take a follow-up PCR test, according to the research or surveillance protocol
- Finally, around one million people in England who are at particular risk of becoming seriously ill from COVID-19 have been identified by the NHS as being potentially eligible for new treatments. They will be receiving a PCR test kit at home by mid-January to use if they develop symptoms or if they get a positive LFD result, as they may be eligible for new treatments if they receive a positive PCR result. This group should use these priority PCR tests when they have symptoms as it will enable prioritised laboratory handling

Information about how to obtain Lateral Flow home testing kits can be found on the national GOV.UK website: www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests.

2. WIDER COUNCIL OPERATIONS

a. Final reminder: Health and Wellbeing Strategy consultation

People living in Rutland have until Sunday 16 January to read and comment on a new Health and Well-being Strategy for the county before public consultation draws to an end.

As part of new ways of working between the NHS and local councils across the country, local areas are looking at how they can best improve the health and wellbeing of their population. This has led to the creation of a new Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Rutland.

This strategy has been produced by Rutland's Health and Wellbeing Board, which is a committee of Rutland County Council that brings together lots of different organisations that are responsible for people's health and care, including local NHS services.

The Health and Wellbeing Board is now asking local people in Rutland to share their views on the new Health and Wellbeing Strategy, before its finalised.

The Health and Wellbeing Board have published a draft version of the new Health and Wellbeing Strategy online for everyone to read and comment on. You will find this at: www.rutland.gov.uk/healthandwellbeingstrategy.

b. OFSTED children's social care focused visit

Ofsted have announced that they will be conducting a children's social care focused visit next week on 19 and 20 January - inspectors will be on site on both of these days. The focus will be on children in care including Children with Disabilities, and inspectors will be looking at children's case files, talking to social workers and managers, and of course, children themselves.

The inspection team will be Rebecca Quested (lead HMI) and John Roughton (HMI). There is a link to their pen portraits: [Ofsted HMI pen portraits - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/people/rebecca-quested).

This is an important inspection activity for RCC and will give us the opportunity to show Ofsted the improvements we have made since the inspection of March 2020.

There will be no grading of children's services as a result but a narrative letter will be produced by Ofsted setting out strengths and any areas for improvement. This will be published on 23 February 2022.

c. Rutland Youth Council

Rutland Youth Council is seeking new members. The Youth Council is made up of young people across Rutland aged 11-10 years and up to 25 years for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. The Youth Council is a decision making and discussion group, championing the voice of young people regarding national and local issues. The Youth Council is also called upon to advise on issues affecting young people, carry out consultations with other young people, give presentations at conferences, meet with County Councillors, and get involved in planning local campaigns and much more.

Youth Council members are passionate about giving young people a voice in our community and raising awareness about issues that are important to them. Please share this information with any young people that you are working with and encourage them to find out more about becoming a youth councillor by emailing: rutlandyouthcouncil@gmail.com.

d. Access to severe weather alerts

The MetOffice has issued several yellow and amber weather alerts for the East Midlands area in recent weeks, warning of severe winter weather including ice, snow, fog and high winds.

RCC shares details of severe weather warnings whenever these are received. However, this information is also readily available through the national MetOffice website, where you can also register for instant updates and weather alerts via email or through the dedicated MetOffice app.

Further details can be found online, here: www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/warnings-and-advice/uk-warnings.

3. GOVERNANCE AND DECISION MAKING

a. This week

The following public meetings took place this week (w/c Monday 10 January).

- [Rutland Health and Wellbeing Board, Tuesday 11 January](#)
- [Planning and Licensing Committee, Tuesday 11 January](#)

b. Look ahead

The following meetings will take place next week (w/c Monday 17 January):

- [Cabinet, Tuesday 18 January](#)
- [Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education, Tuesday 18 January](#)

The latest version of the [RCC Forward Plan](#) can be viewed online.

c. Weekly planning list

RCC's weekly planning list for w/c 10 January can now be viewed online:

- [Weekly List \(rutland.gov.uk\)](#)

4. STAFF NEWS

a. Leavers

We said goodbye to the following colleague this week:

- Peter Elson, Waste Contracts Officer
- James Morten, Kickstart Climate Change Energizer
- Matteus Irso-Coombes, Business Support Administrator

5. RCC IN THE NEWS

a. Press releases

- [Director of Public Health urges residents to take care despite no new changes to COVID legislation](#)
- [Last chance to comment on Rutland's health priorities](#)

b. Coverage

- [Discovery of Rutland 'Sea Dragon' draws in near record TV audience for BBC show](#)
- [Rutland ichthyosaur: 10m-long 'sea dragon' skeleton is one of UK's 'greatest' dinosaur-era finds](#)
- [Rutland ichthyosaur fossil is largest found in UK](#)
- [COVID deaths recorded in South Kesteven and Rutland](#)

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