

# Record of decision taken under delegated powers by a council officer



Title:	<b>Disbursement of Infection Control Grant Funding round 4 and Rapid Testing Fund round 3</b>
Divisions Affected:	All divisions
'Key Decision:	Yes
Reason Key:	Affects two or more Divisions
Decision taken under delegation by virtue of:	<b>Cabinet decision 31 March 2020 Min ref: 41/20</b>

## Summary

On 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2021 the Department for Health & Social Care (DHSC) published details of the ADULT SOCIAL CARE INFECTION CONTROL FUND ROUND 4 and RAPID TESTING FUND ROUND 3 RING-FENCED GRANT 2021.

Surrey County Council (SCC) is receiving £4.3m of Infection Control Fund round 4 (ICF4) funding and £3.3m of Rapid Testing Fund round 3 (RTF3) funding. ICF4 is to support infection control and RTF3 is to support with the costs of rapid lateral flow and PCR testing across ASC care provision in Surrey. Both grants are for use in the period 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021 – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021. The funding cannot be used for costs before or after this timeframe.

There are two main differences in the latest set of ICF and RTF grants compared to previous iterations. Firstly, ICF4 can no longer be used by providers to compensate for costs of avoiding public transport and accommodation for staff given that national Covid restrictions have now been lifted. Secondly, the RTF3 grant is to be used by care providers towards the costs of PCR testing as well as lateral flow testing costs, whereas in previous iterations ICF grants were used for PCR testing costs.

ICF4 and RTF3 comes on the back of ICF round 1, ICF round 2, ICF round 3, RTF round 1, RTF round 2 and the ASC Workforce Capacity Fund which were paid to Surrey and will bring Surrey's total ASC Covid grants received from DHSC to £59.4m.

When other financial support that SCC has provided directly to ASC providers, this will bring the total financial support offered to the ASC sector in Surrey since the start of the pandemic to £70m.

ICF4 is split into three elements as follows:

1. £2.4m is ringfenced for care homes in Surrey (including residential drug and alcohol settings) and the grant conditions propose that funding is allocated to care homes based on the number of registered beds in each home. In order to receive funding care homes must complete the national capacity tracker at least weekly.
2. £0.6m is ringfenced for home based care, supported living and extra care community care providers. Funding can only be paid to providers who are registered in Surrey (those providers who provide care services for Surrey residents but are registered in neighbouring local authorities should receive funding from their host authority). The grant conditions propose that funding is allocated to community care providers based on the number of service users each provider supports. In order to receive funding providers must complete the national capacity tracker at least weekly.
3. £1.3m is for discretionary use within the terms of the grant conditions.

RTF3 is split into two elements as follows:

1. £2.5m is ringfenced for care homes in Surrey (including residential drug and alcohol settings) and the grant conditions propose that funding is allocated to care homes based on the number of registered beds in each home. In order to receive funding care homes must complete the national capacity tracker at least weekly.
2. £0.8m is for discretionary use within the terms of the grant conditions.

SCC is required to report how grant funding has been deployed to DHSC in September and October 2021. This includes confirmation of how grant funding paid to ASC providers has been spent across a range of ICF and RTF categories. ASC providers are required to report back how they have spent their grant funding allocations to ensure the grant has been spent in line with the conditions, and to enable SCC to complete the returns to DHSC. If ASC providers do not provide this information or they stop complying with other grant conditions (e.g. completion of national capacity tracker) then they will be required to repay the funding to SCC.

Surrey's total ICF4/RT3 funding is being paid to SCC in one instalment in July. DHSC has set local authorities a target of paying it on to eligible ASC providers within 20 working days.

The grant conditions enable local authorities to take alternative approaches to allocate the ringfenced care home and community care funding to providers as long as the alternative approaches:

- are consistent with the intention of the funding to provide an equitable level of funding among providers of community care, including those with which the local authority does not have existing contracts.
- have been consulted upon with the local provider sector.
- are notified to DHSC.

As with previous ASC Covid grants, SCC's ASC service has worked closely with the Surrey Care Association (SCA) to agree a proposed plan for how the ICF4 and RTF3 should be deployed. A key point of discussion has been how to distribute funding fairly to community care providers.

For ICF rounds 1, 2 and 3 funding to home care and extra care housing providers was allocated based on the number of Full Time Equivalent care workers they employed to support Surrey residents (including residents who fund their own care), and funding to supported living providers was allocated based on SCC's annual expenditure on ASC care packages commissioned with each provider.

ASC and the Surrey Care Association both agree that the per service user allocation method proposed by DHSC for community care is not a good methodology to use because:

- the available data on service users is flawed and getting more accurate data would likely significantly delay the time by which payments could be made to providers.
- allocating based on service users does not take account of differing acuity of care needs between residents. Two providers could support the same number of residents, but the cost of care provision for these residents could be very different due to their level of needs. The FTE care worker and SCC expenditure methods employed for rounds 1, 2 and 3 for home care / extra care housing and supported living are deemed to be much more equitable bases for allocation.

This delegated decision paper confirms how SCC will deploy the ICF4 and RTF3 funding that is paid by DHSC.

### **Decision made**

It was agreed that SCC would utilise the £4.3m of Infection Control Fund round 3 that is due to be received as follows:

- The £2.4m of funding ringfenced for care homes will be allocated to all care homes that comply with the grant conditions on a per registered bed basis.
- The £0.6m of funding ringfenced for community care providers will be allocated to all community care providers that comply with the grant conditions. Funding will be allocated to home care and extra care housing providers based on the number of FTE care workers they employ to support Surrey residents and to supported living providers based on SCC's annual expenditure on care packages commissioned with each provider as at the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.
- The £1.3m of discretionary funding will be allocated to community care providers in addition to the ringfenced amounts paid, as well as to day care and supported housing provides based on applications made for funding.

It was agreed that SCC would utilise the £3.3m of Rapid Testing Fund round 3 that is due to be received as follows:

- The £2.5m of funding ringfenced for care homes will be allocated to all care homes that comply with the grant conditions on a per registered bed basis.
- The £0.8m of discretionary funding will be paid to community care, day care and

supported housing providers who confirm they are conducting rapid lateral flow testing and/or PCR testing and apply for funding. Funding will be allocated to home care and extra care housing providers based on the number of FTE care workers they employ to support Surrey residents and to supported living providers based on SCC's annual expenditure on care packages commissioned with each provider as at the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021. Any funds remaining based on responses from community care, day care and supported housing providers will be added to the ringfenced funding for care homes.

All providers have been asked to complete an online form to SCC to confirm they wish to apply for ICF4 and RTF3 funding and that they will comply with the grant conditions. Funding will only be paid to those providers who complete this online form. SCC will track compliance in terms of completion of the capacity tracker, with particular attention paid to completion of the fields in relating to levels of Covid vaccination take up amongst care staff and care home residents. SCC will closely monitor reporting of expenditure by providers and recover funds from any providers who do not comply with grant conditions along with any funds not spent by providers by 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021. SCC will then either repay this funding to DHSC or as has been the case with previous grant cycles seek permission from DHSC to pay unspent monies to providers who have declared higher levels of eligible expenditure than their standard grant allocations.

Reasons for Decision:

To support COVID-19 infection control in ASC services across Surrey and ensure SCC is compliant with DHSC's grant conditions.

Decision taken by:	Sinead Mooney – Cabinet Member for Adults Leigh Whitehouse – Executive Director for Resources and Section 151 Officer Simon White – Executive Director for Adult Social Care
Decision taken on:	20 July 2021
To be implemented on:	ICF4 and RTF3 funding will be paid by early August 2021 to those providers who complete the online form SCC has created for providers to request funding and confirm they will comply with the grant conditions.

**Alternative options considered**

SCC must spend the Infection Control Fund grant in line with the grant conditions and all funding must be fully spent by 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

There are only two areas where SCC could have taken an alternative decision.

Firstly, the methodology for allocating funding to community care providers.

Secondly, how the discretionary funding is spent.

In both cases, the decisions reflected in this paper are considered the most

appropriate to support ASC providers in Surrey based on market intelligence and through conversations with the Surrey Care Association.

### Summary of any financial implications

There are no direct financial implications to SCC as all the money paid out to care providers will be funded out of the ICF4/RTF3 grant funding SCC receives from DHSC.

Payment of this funding to care providers is intended to help sustain and improve infection control and testing in ASC care settings across Surrey. This will provide crucial support to vulnerable residents and at the same time should lead to indirect financial benefits for SCC.


### Declarations of conflicts of interest

None

### Consultation/Process Followed

Decision taken in consultation with the Surrey Care Association, other local partners, the Executive Director for Adult Social Care, the Executive Director for Resources and the Cabinet Member for Adults.

### Background Documents

Cabinet report 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2020 setting out the council's response to Covid-19.	 SCC Response to COVID-19
Link to Infection Control Fund round 4 / Rapid Testing Fund round 3 guidance	<a href="#">Adult social care extension to Infection Control and Testing Fund 2021 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>