

Record of decision taken under delegated powers by a council officer



Title:	Deployment Surrey County Council's Contain Outbreak Management Fund allocations
Divisions Affected:	All
Key Decision:	Yes
Reason Key:	Over £1m / Affects two or more Divisions
Decision taken under delegation by virtue of:	Cabinet decision 31 March 2020 Min ref: 41/20 Cabinet decision 23 June meeting 2020 Min ref 92/ 20

Overview

The Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) is the primary source of funding to support local authorities to deliver their outbreak management plans and implement measures to tackle enduring transmission.

Surrey's COMF is managed by Surrey County Council's (SCC) Public Health service.

SCC received £28.1m of funding in 2020/21 and a further £5.2m in 2021/22 bringing the total funding received to £33.3m.

A previous delegated decision paper was approved on 27th November 2020 to agree an outline plan for the use of SCC's initial funding allocations up to that point and a framework for spending future grant allocations in line with the grant conditions.

In 2020/21 funding for two tier areas was paid to upper tier authorities. The previous delegated decision paper agreed a funding split between SCC and Surrey's 11 District and Borough Councils and an outline plan for spending SCC's allocation. Based on the approved use of funding in the previous delegated decision paper, it was agreed that £10.3m of the £28.1m funding received in 2020/21 would be passported to District & Borough Councils based on the provision of a clear spending plan against the grant conditions by each D&B. The remaining £17.8m would be used to support activities undertaken by SCC to manage and mitigate against the impacts of the virus.

In 2021/22 funding has been paid separately to upper and lower tier authorities, so SCC's £5.1m funding allocation is solely for SCC use.

As at the end of November 2021, £8.6m of the £10.3m agreed to be passported to D&Bs had been paid across with information still awaited from some D&Bs to enable the remaining £1.7m of funding to be paid.

By the end of November 2021, SCC had spent £10.4m of the £23m available, with £12.6m allocated expenditure still to be spent. This included £5m of COMF monies that SCC's Cabinet agreed in the Council's M7 budget monitoring report should be

allocated to fund eligible Covid costs incurred in other directorates.

This paper provides a summary of the total use of SCC's COMF funding received in 2020/21 and 2021/22 including actual expenditure to date and planned expenditure in the remainder of the current financial year.

The Department for Health & Social Care (DHSC) gave permission for funds received in 2020/21 but not spent by 31st March 2021 to be carried over for use in the 2021/22 financial year. DHSC has recently approved a further carry forward of any unspent funds as at 31st March 2022 into 2022/23, although this has not yet been formally published.

Areas to fund

There have been different suggested categories that DHSC have highlighted in previous guidance but the current COMF grant categories that SCC is required to report to DHSC against are:

- a. Testing
- b. Tracing.
- c. Vaccination deployment
- d. Support for those in self-isolation (non-financial support).
- e. Support for vulnerable groups and targeted community interventions
- f. Prevention, management of local outbreaks and data intelligence, surveillance and communications
- g. Compliance and Enforcement: Environmental Health Officers (including overtime)
- h. Compliance and Enforcement: Covid-19 Secure Marshalls or equivalents (including overtime)
- i. Compliance and Enforcement: other activities and staff
- j. Clinically Extremely Vulnerable
- k. Other areas.

Actual to date expenditure and future planned use of the funding

The appendix to this paper sets out the planned use of SCC's COMF funding and actual expenditure across each activity/area up to 30th November 2021.

There are currently £3.2m of contingencies held to mainly manage potential increased expenditure on containment activities over the coming winter.

Requirement for continuation of some COVID management schemes in 2022/23

Although with the rollout of vaccines, boosters and improved nationwide management of the virus the country had been starting to recover from the worst impacts of the pandemic, for this recovery to continue and be secured some of the Covid management schemes currently funded by COMF in 2021/22 will need to continue into 2022/23. Work is continuing to clarify the level of expenditure required for this continued activity, but the latest high-level estimate is c. £4m but this figure could increase to c £6m should key areas such as testing and tracing need to continue throughout the whole of 2022/23.

Recommendations

It is recommended that delegated decision makers approve the following in relation to the deployment of SCC's COMF funding:

1. Funding is utilised as per the plan set out in the appendix to this paper.
2. SCC's Public Health service continue to receive and approve any necessary funding applications for any unspent funds and agree changes to schemes already approved.

3. If the contingencies currently being held against potential increased requirements over the winter of 2021/22 are not required or there is an underspend against any approved schemes, then this funding is carried forward and ringfenced to fund continued required COVID management activity in 2022/23 as DHSC has confirmed this is allowable. SCC's Public Health service
4. Some of the planned expenditure against COMF in 2021/22 would otherwise be funded from the core PH grant. As part of the ongoing monitoring of expenditure against the core PH grant, if there is an underspend against a core PH budget scheme then move appropriate expenditure from COMF to the core PH budget enabling more COMF to be carried forward to support COVID management activity in 2022/23.

Decision made

Decision made:

It was AGREED that:
 SCC will spend its Contain Outbreak Management Fund grant as per the recommendations set out above.

Reasons for Decision:

To ensure the Contain Outbreak Management fund is successfully implemented in line with grant conditions.

Decision taken by:	Leigh Whitehouse - Executive Director for Resources and Section 151 Officer Sinead Mooney – Cabinet Member for Adults & Health Ruth Hutchinson – Director of Public Health
Decision taken on:	3 rd February 2022
To be implemented on:	Over the remainder of financial year 2021/22 and into 2022/23.

Alternative options considered

The alternative is to not accept the funding allocation which would reduce the ability of local authorities within Surrey to deal with the pandemic.

No alternative options have been considered, as we have a duty to implement this programme in line with the restricted grant received for this purpose.

The key objective is to control the COVID-19 rate of reproduction (R), reduce the spread of infection and save lives. This also requires spending on COVID-19 recovery and helping disadvantaged groups. This will help return life to as normal as possible, for as many as people as possible, in a way that is safe, protects our health and care systems and releases our economy.

Summary of any financial implications

The planned expenditure set out in the appendix is fully funded by COMF grant funding received by SCC from DHSC. The expenditure has been and will continue to be monitored through regular standard financial reporting in place which will monitor the projected year end forecast on an ongoing basis, and this will be reported to Cabinet.

There are no additional direct financial implications to SCC as all the money paid out will be funded from the COMF grant received.

Declarations of conflicts of interest



None

Consultation/Process Followed

Consultation has been undertaken to determine the most effective deployment of COMF grant funding.

This consultation has included SCC's Cabinet, Corporate Leadership Team, Districts and Boroughs, local health and other key strategic partners, SCC resident groups and services across SCC including Corporate Finance.

Background Documents

Cabinet report 31 st March 2020 setting out the council's response to Covid-19.	 Printed minutes 31032020 1400 Cabii
Previous COMF delegated decision paper	 Delegated Officer decision paper - CO

Appendix – Summary of actual and planned use of SCC's COMF allocations

Table 1: COMF expenditure by activity/area of expenditure

Activity / area of expenditure	Budget allocation £m	Actual expenditure as at 30 th November 2021 £m	Remaining to be spent £m	COMF grant category
Passported to Districts & Boroughs	10.3	8.6	1.7	Various
SCC approved schemes				
Testing & Tracing (additional to Test & Trace grant)	1.6	0.2	1.4	Testing and Tracing
ASC recovery	1.4	0.0	1.4	Support for vulnerable groups and targeted community interventions
Support to educational settings	2.4	2.3	0.1	Support for vulnerable groups and targeted community interventions
Poverty & Surrey Crisis Fund	1.3	0.7	0.6	Support for vulnerable groups and targeted community interventions
Environmental Health	1.4	0.6	0.8	Compliance and enforcement
Homelessness & vulnerable adults	1.1	0.2	0.9	Support for vulnerable groups and targeted community interventions
Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity	1.0	0.0	1.0	Support for vulnerable groups and targeted community interventions
Communities & HWBB	1.2	0.0	1.2	Support for vulnerable groups and targeted community interventions
Other schemes	3.4	1.4	2.0	Various
Allocated to other directorates	5.0	5.0	0.0	Various
Total SCC approved schemes	19.8	10.4	9.4	
Contingencies				
Surge testing / winter /other contingencies	3.2	0.0	3.2	Testing/other
Total contingencies	3.2	0.0	3.2	
Total COMF paid to SCC	33.3	19.0	14.3	

N.B. Expenditure may need to be reallocated between grants to ensure all Covid-19 and Public Health grants are utilised to their maximum benefit whilst meeting their specific grant conditions.

Table 2: COMF expenditure by current COMF grant reporting category

COMF reporting category	Budget allocation £m	Actual expenditure as at 30 th November 2021 £m	Remaining to be spent £m
Testing	1.1	0.2	0.9
Tracing	0.5	0.0	0.5
Vaccination deployment	0.2	0.0	0.2
Support for those in self-isolation (non-financial support)	0.0	0.0	0.0
Support for vulnerable groups and targeted community interventions	10.5	4.2	6.3
Prevention, management of local outbreaks and data intelligence, surveillance and communications	0.3	0.0	0.3
Compliance and Enforcement: Environmental Health Officers (including overtime)	1.4	0.6	0.8
Compliance and Enforcement: Covid-19 Secure Marshalls or equivalents (including overtime)	0.0	0.0	0.0
Compliance and Enforcement: other activities and staff	0.7	0.4	0.3
Clinically Extremely Vulnerable	0.1	0.0	0.1
Other areas including passported to D&BS; £5m allocated to departments	15.3	13.6	1.7
Contingencies for surge testing/winter/other	3.2	0.0	3.2
Total COMF paid to SCC	33.3	19.0	14.3

N.B. Expenditure can cover multiple categories; passported D&B expenditure is included in Other areas but covers multiple categories.