



Author/Lead Officer of Report: Keith Leyland: Covid Response Hub Service Manager

Tel: 07880784436

Report of: Greg Fell, Director of Public Health
Eugene Walker, Executive Director, Resources

Report to: Cabinet

Date of Decision: 16th December

Subject: COVID-19 COMF Grant Approval

Is this a Key Decision? If Yes, reason Key Decision:-	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
- Expenditure and/or savings over £500,000		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
- Affects 2 or more Wards		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Which Cabinet Member Portfolio does this relate to? Cabinet Member for Children and Families and Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Governance and Deputy Leader				
Which Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee does this relate to? Healthier Communities and Adult Social Care Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee				
Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? TBC				
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Purpose of Report:

- a) To inform Cabinet of additional funding received from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) towards expenditure incurred in relation to the mitigation and management of local outbreaks of COVID-19 for public health purposes to break the chain of transmission and protecting the most vulnerable from catching the virus.
- b) To approve the acceptance of the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) and to seek authorisation for the Executive Director Resources, in consultation with the Director of Public Health, to expend the DHSC funding.
- c) To approve the acceptance of future COMF Funding being received January to March 2021.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Cabinet:-

- a) Note that in October, November and December, Sheffield City Council (SCC) was allocated a number of grants known as the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) totalling over £8million, from DHSC towards expenditure incurred in relation to the mitigation against and management of local outbreaks of COVID-19.
- b) Note that £8.020m of COMF grant has already been received.
- c) Approve the acceptance of the £8.020 COMF Grant.
- d) Approve acceptance of up to £7.020m of COMF grant funding being received (Jan – Mar 2021)
- e) Approve the expenditure of the COMF grant (up to £15.040m)
- f) Delegate the authority to finalise future allocations of COMF grant to Executive Director of Resources, in consultation with the Director of Public Health.
- g) To delegate authority to the Executive Director Resources, in consultation with the Director of Public Health, to make the final decisions regarding the use of this fund, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Public Health.

Lead Officer to complete:-	
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.
	Finance: Mark Wassell
	Legal: Tim Hoskin
	Equalities: Adele Robinson
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>	
2	EMT member who approved submission:
	Greg Fell, Director of Public Health Eugene Walker, Executive Director Resources
3	Cabinet Member consulted:
	Councillor Terry Fox, Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Governance and Deputy Leader
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Decision Maker by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.
	Lead Officer Name: Keith Leyland
	Job Title: Covid Response Hub Service Manager
Date: 8 th December 2020	

1. Introduction

On September the 23rd the Cabinet approved the report entitled “COVID-19 Test, Track & Isolate Programme Funding”. This report described the funding available at that time and the Investment Plan of how that funding was intended to be used.

<http://democracy.sheffield.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=123&MId=7548&Ver=4>

Since the Cabinet Report in September was approved, further funding has been announced, and provided to SCC with conditions for its use. This fund known as the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) is provided from DHSC towards expenditure incurred in relation to the mitigation against and

management of local outbreaks of COVID-19 for public health purposes to break the chain of transmission and protecting the most vulnerable from catching the virus.

To date the Council has received £8.020m of the COMF grant. It also expects to receive up to £7.020m of COMF grant in Jan – Mar 2021 taking the total amount of the COMF grant up to £15.040m.

2. **Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF)**

Key features (not exclusive) of the now 3 x allocations of Contain Outbreak Management Fund (total: £8.020m) are summarised below (detailed spending plans to be developed).

2.1 **COMF Grant for National Lockdown (up to £4.68m)**

Based on the funder's initial guidance the estimated funding per Covid Alert Level using Sheffield's current population levels (585,000) are summarised below:

<u>Table 1: Estimated Funding per Covid Alert Level</u>	<u>£m</u>
Medium (£1 per head)	0.585
High (£3 per head)	1.755
<i>Very High (£8 per head) Actual SCC allocation:</i>	4.680

The actual allocation that SCC received for the national lockdown was £4.68m

2.2 **Additional COMF Grant Post National Lockdown**

Post national lock down the Contain Outbreak Management Fund has been extended to provide monthly payments to Local Authorities facing higher restrictions until the end of the financial year. Authorities under the highest level of restrictions will receive £4 per head of population per month from the end of national restrictions. This will be reviewed in January 21 with further details to follow, but it is anticipated that SCC will need to approve further COMF allocations if /when they are announced in the new year.

Sheffield's actual tier 3 funding post national lock down is summarised below.

Table 2: Additional COMF Grant Post National Lockdown	£m
Up to £4 per head (Tier 3 post December 2nd)	2.34
Additional Top Up Funding (one off?)	1.00
Total COMF Grant (post national lockdown)	3.34

2.3 **Potential COMF Allocations Jan to March 2021 (up to £7.2m).**

Future COMF allocations will be reviewed by the government in January 2021 with further details to follow, but it is anticipated that SCC will need / receive further allocations depending on what monthly tier SCC falls into between January and March 2021.

Depending on the monthly tier that SCC is allocated to then the maximum COMF grant that SCC can potentially expect to receive (Jan-Mar) is up to £7.020m and this is the figure that SCC would provisionally need to approve in addition to the already allocated £8.020m (total £15.040m)

3. **Risk Analysis and Implications of the Decisions**

3.1 **Equality of Opportunity Implications**

The overall proposal is supportive of the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty, established through the Equality Act 2010, which requires the Council, in the exercise of its functions to have due regard to the need to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

It will be particularly effective in reducing discrimination against and victimisation of people who are experiencing more than one disadvantage.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (S149 of the Equality Act 2010) requires us to pay due regard when making decisions. An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and highlights the impacts of COVID-19 on people with a protected characteristic and how the Councils Covid Response will have a positive impact in mitigating the impacts of health inequality, poverty and multiple levels of deprivation.

4 **Financial and Commercial Implications**

Grant Terms and Conditions

Key features (not exclusive) of the COMF grant allocations are summarised below:

- Comply with funder's monitoring requirements / templates.
- From 12/10/20, Local Authorities are eligible for grant from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund to support proactive containment/intervention measures:
- Grant of up to £1 per head of population given to LAs in Local COVID Alert Level - Medium. Paid when Public Health activities are agreed with the Regional Convenor.
- Where Local Authorities move to Local COVID Alert Level - High /Very High grant will automatically be increased to £3 per person and £8 per person respectively.
- National Lockdown Funding is one-off, incremental, not additional and repeated movements between Local Alert Levels will not enable reoccurring grant support.

Financial support for LA's at Local COVID Alert Level Medium and High is to fund the following activities:

- a. Targeted testing for hard-to-reach groups out of scope of other testing programmes.
- b. Additional contact tracing.
- c. Enhanced communication/marketing e.g. towards hard-to-reach groups and other localised messaging.
- d. Delivery of essentials for those in self-isolation.
- e. Targeted interventions for specific sections of population and workplaces.
- f. Harnessing capacity within local sectors (voluntary, academic, commercial).
- g. Extension/introduction of specialist support (behavioural science, bespoke comms).
- h. Additional resource for compliance with, and enforcement of, restrictions and guidance

Local COVID Alert Level - Very High has a broader scope, to support local economies/public health and includes activities such as (not exclusive):

- i. Measures to support the continued functioning of commercial areas and their compliance with public health guidance.
- j. Funding Military Aid to the Civil Authorities (marginal costs only).
- k. Targeted support for school/university outbreaks.
- l. Community-based support for those disproportionately impacted such as the BAME population.

- m. Support for engagement/analysis of regional areas to assess and learn from local initiatives.
- n. Providing initial support to vulnerable people classed as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable who are following tier 3 guidance.
- o. Support for rough sleepers.

The above criteria will evolve over time, with updated guidance to follow.

5 Commercial Implications.

There are no direct commercial implications arising from this report. Any procurement activity associated with the grant award will be reported separately.

All public sector procurement is governed by and must be compliant with both European Legislation and UK National Law. In addition, all procurement in SCC must comply with its own Procurement Policy, and internal regulations known as 'Contracts Standing Orders' (CSOs).

Contracts Standing Orders requirements will apply in full to the procurement of services, goods or works utilising grants. All grant monies must be treated in the same way as any other Council monies and any requirement to purchase/acquire services, goods or works must go via a competitive process.

The Grant Manager will need to read, understand and comply with all the grant terms and conditions and ensure that there are no unfunded, ongoing costs after the grant has ended.

6 Legal Implications

The Contain Outbreak Management Fund is a Department of Health and Social Care fund set up to support Local Authorities during the Covid-19 pandemic.

There is currently a lack of formality in the DHSC documentation of the grant. However, it is likely to be made under section 31 Local Government Act 2003, and it is expressed to be ring-fenced to public health purposes, specifically to breaking the chain of transmission and protecting the most vulnerable from catching the virus. Whilst the specific public health activities that can be funded are at the Council's discretion, a list of activities that this funding could be used for has been provided by DHSC.

The grant is payable on the basis of amounts per head of population, in relation to periods during which the authority is in lockdown or at the different Covid Alert Levels, under the previous Health Protection regulations or under the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (All Tiers) (England) Regulations 2020, going forward.

The Council will have discretion as to spending of the grant, in the exercise of its general public health functions (including those under the Health and Social Care Act 2012), and also in the exercise of the special, Covid-19

related powers (including those under the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (All Tiers) (England) Regulations 2020). To the extent necessary, the Council can also rely on its powers under the Localism Act 2011.

The primary condition on funding is agreement that authorities provide information to Contain (NHS Test and Trace) on how the funds are spent. The expenditure of the grant by the Council will be subject to public procurement and state aid law, and the Council's constitution.

7 Alternative Options Considered

This report describes what officers believe to be the best way of preventing, mitigating and controlling the virus in Sheffield. However, this will be kept under review and the approach described may need to change

7 Reasons for Recommendations

The recommendations described in this report will enable Sheffield City Council to expend funds incurred in relation to the mitigation and management of local outbreaks of COVID-19 for public health purposes to break the chain of transmission and protect the most vulnerable from catching the virus.