

Notice of KEY Executive Decision (Special Urgency)

Subject Heading:	Contain Outbreak Management Fund – Phase 2
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Damian White, Leader of the Council
SLT Lead:	Mark Ansell, Director of Public Health
Report Author and contact details:	Jane West, Chief Operating Officer 01708 431994 jane.west@havering.gov.uk
Policy context:	This report is in response to the Covid-19 pandemic
Financial summary:	This report sets out how the Council plans to use funding of an estimated £1.6m allocated to it by the Department of Health and Social Care and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government from 2 December 2020 to 31 January 2021.
Reason decision is Key	(a) Expenditure or saving (including anticipated income) of £500,000 or more (b) Significant effect on two or more Wards
Date notice given of intended decision:	This is a decision pursuant to para 11 of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, made under “special urgency” with the consent of the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

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Relevant OSC:	Overview and Scrutiny Board
Is it an urgent decision?	Yes
Is this decision exempt from being called-in?	A decision on this report under the “Special Urgency” provision is required to allow the Council to plan and undertake effective strategies for working and service delivery during the current Covid-19 outbreak.

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Communities making Havering	[X]
Places making Havering	[X]
Opportunities making Havering	[X]
Connections making Havering	[X]

Part A – Report seeking decision

DETAIL OF THE DECISION REQUESTED AND RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. In response to the Covid pandemic, the Department of Health and Social Care has previously committed to providing a number of grants to reflect the new responsibilities asked of local government:-
 - The first was the Local Authority Covid-19 Test and Trace Service Support Grant of £1,022,848 which was allocated in June 2020
 - The second is the Contain Outbreak Management Fund which was originally allocated at £3 per head of population in October 2020 when Havering was in Tier 2 but was increased to £8 per head to reflect the last national lockdown from 4th November to 2nd December. The Council is expecting to receive a total of £2,076,416 due to the national lockdown.
 - Grants of £137,000 and £125,000 have been received in relation to support to the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable and for the introduction of Covid Marshals respectively.
2. A report setting out the plans to allocate the total of this funding of £3,361,264 was approved in early December 2020.
3. The Council has subsequently been awarded sums of:-
 - £2 per head of population per month as a Tier 2 authority from 2 December to 15 December
 - £4 per head of population per month from 16 December when it entered Tier 3
 - £14 per test to undertake lateral flow tests across a range of target groups.
4. This funding reflects the need for expenditure to contain the second wave of the Covid-19 Pandemic.
5. This report seeks approval for initial allocations of expenditure against this funding. For the purposes of this report, it is assumed that funding of £1.6 million will be made available for the period 2 December 2020 to 31 January 2021. This is likely to be the minimum funding receivable as it assumes for half the period Havering will be in Tier 2 and half the period in Tier 3.
6. The funding of £14 per Covid test is to be made available by the Department for Health and Social Care. The North East London boroughs have entered into a contract with an events company through a GLA/TfL procurement framework to manage the testing. The full details of this contract will be presented in a later report.
7. This funding is very welcome as the Council currently has one of the highest rates of Covid infections in the south east. The following table sets out the

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situation in the borough as of 11 December 2020 and compares it to other London Boroughs.

Area	Individuals tested per day per 100,000 population (7 day moving average)*	Percentage individuals testing positive weekly*	Weekly incidence per 100,000 population **	Weekly incidence in persons aged 60 and over per 100,000 population ***	Weekly incidence in persons aged 17-21 per 100,000 population ***
Havering	479	16.3	583	301	522
Barking and Dagenham	414	14.8	491	281	388
Basilton	N/A	N/A	689	N/A	N/A
Brentwood	N/A	N/A	447	N/A	N/A
Epping Forest	N/A	N/A	499	N/A	N/A
Redbridge	414	14.8	468	256	470
Southend on sea	N/A	N/A	347	N/A	N/A
Thurrock	N/A	N/A	497	N/A	N/A
London	404	9.3	292	153	311
England	444	6.2	192	122	194
Swale	583	17.2	711	359	650
Medway	774	12.9	690	548	539

8. The latest weekly incidence rates (07/12/2020 to 13/12/2020) show Havering (735/100,000) is higher than London (356/100,000) and England (217/100,000). Of concern, compared to neighbouring areas Havering had the highest rate among persons aged 60 and over (301/100,000) in the week ending 11/12/2020. Given these circumstances, it has been vital for the Council to devise a response to this Public Health emergency.
9. The previous activities approved within the Contain Outbreak Management Fund – Phase 1 included:-
 - Additional Public Health capacity
 - Public Protection Outbreak Control Plan
 - Communications and engagement
 - The provision of Covid Marshals, beyond just those funded by government
 - Support to the government's Test and Trace system
 - Local Test and Trace activity
 - Support to Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) residents
 - Provision of Council support to the care sector
 - Support to the voluntary sector in the borough

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- Programme management support including a pilot for asymptomatic mass testing.

10. The s151 Officer has added, under delegated powers, an additional £40k to the support to the care sector budget to extend the staffing resource to the end of September. This is being funded by the Contain Outbreak Management Fund – Phase 1.
11. The new expenditure proposals include extensions to some of the projects already in place plus new projects. Details are set out below and in Appendix A.

Extensions to existing projects

12. Communications and Engagement

We have reviewed our planned Covid-19 communications strategy (#DoingMyBit) and given the rising number of cases in the borough recommend expanding the activity further as follows.

	Cost £
2x FTE Communications Officers for 6 weeks	18,000
3x Ad vans mobilised 7 days per week for 6 weeks	75,000
Leaflet and distribution to every household	20,000
Boost to digital paid-for targeted advertising	20,000
VMS solar-powered signage – 2 for 6 weeks	5,000
Total	138,000

13. Additional Covid Marshals

The Council already has in place double the number of Covid Marshals covered by the government grant but given the geographical scale, number of town centres in the borough, including the major retail centre at Romford, and the large number of parks in the borough the current provision is proving insufficient.

The Council currently has a contract in place for Covid Marshals that can be ramped up or ramped down. It is recommended that up to an additional 40 Covid Marshals are deployed every day between now and New Year's Eve and at weekends until the end of January at a cost of approximately £190k.

It is anticipated that this level of support could be reduced from the end of January but this will need to be reviewed in mid-January.

Funding of £15k is also proposed for the incidental costs such as branded face masks, hand sanitiser and printing.

14. Programme Management Support

The rising number of Covid-19 cases in the borough is putting yet more pressure on the Council's project management and business analysis resources. It is recommended that a further two project managers and two business analysts are funded to the end of January 2021 at a cost of £50k.

A new pressure that is emerging is in relation to the HR team which needs to constantly review the allocation of staff across the Council as services are switched off and switched on and sickness needs to be covered in priority areas. It is proposed that an additional HR resource is appointed to cover a peak in work in January at an approximate cost of £6k.

New projects

15. Support for the establishment of asymptomatic Lateral Flow Testing in locations across the borough.

The model for asymptomatic Lateral Flow Testing is that an events company will be procured through the GLA, via a TfL contract, to run the sites. As set out earlier in the report, it is anticipated that the cost of the contract will be offset by the funding provided by the DHSC on a £14 per test basis.

In addition, two project managers would be required locally to work with the events company to develop and mobilise the facilities. It is anticipated that project management support would cost £24k until the end of January. A further £100k has been set aside for incidental costs eg premises costs and clinical waste.

16. Pilot to offer testing to the self-employed

The Public Health hypothesis is that many people in Havering are self-employed and are unwilling to self-isolate where they have been in contact with someone with Covid but they themselves are asymptomatic, due to the impact on their income. Funding is required for project management support for a pilot to offer the self-employed to register with the Council for regular tests with the protection that they will receive £500 per week, pro-rata for the necessary period of isolation required, from the Council's Additional Restrictions Business Grant scheme if they test positive.

The presumption is that the cost of the tests will be met through the events company provision but in addition there is a requirement for a project manager to lead the pilot at an approximate cost of £12k until the end of January.

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17. Contingency for Lateral Flow Testing

The funding and expenditure arrangements in relation to the Lateral Flow Testing are still unclear but due to the pandemic emergency the activity has already begun. The funding and financial monitoring arrangements are being worked up by North East London Finance Directors. It is proposed that £1 million of the Contain Outbreak Management Fund is retained as a contingency until the level of financial risk has been assessed and arrangements are fully in place to manage these.

18. Mutual Aid

Given the scale of the challenge facing the Council, a Mutual Aid request has been submitted to London Resilience asking for further funding from central government, more legal freedoms to manage the pandemic locally and for redeployment of staff from other London Boroughs. The ask in the Mutual Aid request exceeds that of this report as this report assumes that all costs need to be contained within the Tier 2/Tier 3 funding and the £14 per test funding. Any Mutual Aid received can be deducted from the commitments against the Contain Outbreak Management Fund – Phase 2. However, given that the whole of London has moved into Tier 3, it is highly unlikely that any mutual support will be provided by other London Boroughs.

Recommendations

1. The allocation of resources detailed in this report are agreed.
2. Authority delegated to the Director of Public Health and Chief Operating Officer in consultation with the Leader of the Council to allocate the funds currently identified as unallocated in Appendix A.

AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH DECISION IS MADE

Part 3 of the Constitution – Responsibility for Functions. 2.1: Functions of the Cabinet.

STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR THE DECISION

This decision is required under “Special Urgency” to allow the Council to plan and undertake effective strategies for working and service delivery during the current Covid 19 outbreak. A decision on this report under the “Special Urgency” provision is required to allow the Council to plan and undertake effective strategies for working and service delivery during the current Covid 19 outbreak.

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OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

The Council has options in relation to the level of support that it provides in each of the services charged to the Contain Outbreak Management Fund – Phase 2 but has no option but to provide the types of support expected of it by central government.

PRE-DECISION CONSULTATION

None

NAME AND JOB TITLE OF STAFF MEMBER ADVISING THE DECISION-MAKER

Name: Jane West

Designation: Chief Operating Officer

Signature:

Date:

Part B - Assessment of implications and risks

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

This financial support provided to local authorities is designed to fund the types of activities detailed in this report.

Pursuant to Part 3 of the Constitution – paragraph 2.1, Cabinet retains the responsibility for the allocation and control of financial resources, to determine the priorities in the use of these resources.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The total grant funding available to the Council for its own activity is anticipated as at least £1.6 million for the period 2 December 2020 to 31 January 2021. This excludes the funding from the DHSC of £14 per test which will mainly fund the events company undertaking Lateral Flow Testing.

The expenditure of the grant will need to be managed within the grant regulations for the funding. The areas that will be covered from the funding are outlined in paragraphs 12-16.

The monitoring and management of this grant spend and other COVID19 related expenditure is undertaken as part of the wider council budget monitoring process.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS (AND ACCOMMODATION IMPLICATIONS WHERE RELEVANT)

Given the Coronavirus outbreak, the paramount consideration of the Council is the health and wellbeing of Members and officers. All additional posts proposed for creation in this report will be formally created through the Council's Establishment Control Process. All employees directly affected by the proposals contained in this report will be managed in accordance with the Council's published HR and specific Covid-19 related policies and guidance.

EQUALITIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to:

- (i) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (ii) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
- (iii) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex/gender, and sexual orientation.

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants. Equality and Health considerations will be paramount in all these spending decisions in the spending of these grants.

The population of Havering has the highest proportion of older people, compared to all London Boroughs. Whilst the majority of fatalities and greatest vulnerabilities are within this group, the Council needs to be cognisant of this in, all it's designed approaches.

Havering also has one of the fastest growing non-white ethnic communities, against national indicators, which also needs to be considered, when evaluating potential adverse impacts on different community groups.

Any barriers to accessing health services, in particular digitally excluded groups and groups which experience spoken or written language barriers must be considered, to enable fair and inclusive service provision.

There will be a need to consider these factors, as part of dynamic risk assessments against the design of the delivery solutions and community engagement.

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HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The coronavirus pandemic represents an unprecedented threat to the health of people worldwide. Within the UK, councils are working to support the approach devised by national government, consistent with the best available evidence, to protect the wider community, but particularly those who are most vulnerable to severe disease and the worst outcomes including death and prolonged if not permanent disability. The paper sets out how the additional funding provided by central government to support these efforts will be deployed. The spending plan is consistent with the Council's existing outbreak control plan.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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Part C – Record of decision

I have made this executive decision in accordance with authority delegated to me by the Leader of the Council and in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

Decision

Proposal agreed

Delete as applicable

Proposal NOT agreed because

Details of decision maker

Signed

Name:

Cabinet Portfolio held:

CMT Member title:

Head of Service title

Other manager title:

Date:

Lodging this notice

The signed decision notice must be delivered to the proper officer, Debra Marlow, Principal Committee Officer in Democratic Services, in the Town Hall.

For use by Committee Administration

This notice was lodged with me on _____

Signed _____

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Appendix A

Activities to be funded from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund – Phase 2 for the period 2 December 2020 to 31 January 2021

Extensions to previous Contain Outbreak Management Fund – Phase 1 Projects		
		£m
Communications	Two additional staff, three ad vans, further leaflets, digital advertising and solar powered signage	0.138
Covid Marshals	Up to an additional 40 Covid Marshals between now and New Year's Eve and at weekends during January plus incidental costs of £15k.	0.205
Project Management	An additional two project managers, two business analysts and an HR resource	0.056
New projects		
		£m
Lateral Flow Testing roll Out	Two project managers and incidental costs	0.124
Self-employed testing pilot	One project manager	0.012
Lateral Flow Testing contingency		1.000
Unallocated to date		0.065
Total		1.600