

Notice of Non-key Executive Decision

Subject Heading:	Request to the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) for an additional Mobile Testing Unit to be placed at Gallows Corner Tesco's
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Jason Frost
SLT Lead:	Andrew Blake-Herbert Chief Executive Officer
Report Author and contact details:	Jack Davies, Public Health Specialist Jack.Davies@havering.gov.uk
Policy context:	<p>There is a need to increase symptomatic testing capacity in light of the Omicron Variant and a winter surge of infections. An important measure in controlling outbreaks of infection (Outbreak Control Plan).</p> <p>This will be the third MTU deployed into the borough on top of 4 permanent testing sites.</p>
Financial summary:	<p>The costs of setting up and running the site are covered by the national testing programme.</p> <p>The site location costs are covered by the Tesco Superstore</p> <p>The cost to the council is for signage and toilets, cost will vary depending on length of deployment but expected to cost no more than £5,000.</p>
Relevant OSC:	Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Is this decision exempt from being called-in?	Yes, it is a non-key decision taken by a member of staff

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

Communities making Havering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Places making Havering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Opportunities making Havering	<input type="checkbox"/>
Connections making Havering	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part A – Report seeking decision

DETAIL OF THE DECISION REQUESTED AND RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. To agree to request an additional Mobile Testing Unit (MTU) from the Department for Health and Social Care to be located in the car park of the Gallows Corner Tesco's.

AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH DECISION IS MADE

Council Constitution, Part3, Section 3.2, Powers of the Chief Executive.
(c) To carry out the functions of the Council for civil aid and emergency planning and to take any action, including incurring expenditure, in connection with an emergency or a disaster in the borough.

STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR THE DECISION

1. Background

The UK is currently experiencing a fourth wave of infection going into the Christmas months with expert modelling suggesting cases rates will rise exponentially. This wave is being driven by a more transmissible strain of coronavirus named Omicron.

The public are asked to take a PCR test when symptomatic to identify whether the individuals is infected with coronavirus. To encourage high uptake of symptomatic testing it is important that residents have as easy access to testing as possible with minimal geographical or financial barriers.

As highlighted in previous decision papers¹², the Council have worked to ensure there is ample symptomatic testing infrastructure within the borough to provide for residents. Since January 2021, the borough has 4 permanent local testing sites (LTS) and 1 MTU strategically placed around the borough.

On 17th December, a previous ED was drawn up with cabinet briefed about deploying a 2nd MTU in Rainham Tescos car park on Viking Way. This current ED will enable Havering to have a third MTU in the borough to help manage symptomatic testing demand.

¹ Increasing Local COVID-19 Testing Capacity: Romford Town Hall Car Park, available [here](#)

² Increasing Community Testing, available [here](#)

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Figure 1.
Utilisation
numbers
incidence.

Week Ending	LTS Testing Utilisation	# of Cases	Incidence
05-Nov	24%	815	314
12-Nov	24%	751	289
19-Nov	30%	936	361
26-Nov	33%	1074	414
03-Dec	45%	1324	510
10-Dec	55%	1604	618
17-Dec	107%	3733	1432

**Having LTS
with case
and**

Source: Havering Public Health December 2021

2. Rationale

The new wave of infection has now reached incidence rates which are above what has been seen before and it anticipated to increase further, thus increasing the demand for symptomatic testing in the borough. During the winter 2021 wave of infection, infrastructure in the borough regularly reached 100% utilisation for daily testing.

It is now recommended that further testing infrastructure is sought to manage anticipated demand in the area. The recommended action is to request an additional MTU from the Department for Health and Social Care.

Considering the geographical placement of infrastructure and cases rates across the borough it is recommended this MTU is placed in the North East of the borough.

3. Placement of MTU

The recommendation is to place the MTU in the Tesco Superstores Car Park based on Gallows Corner, Romford. This Tesco superstore have agreed to accommodate the MTU in the car park until the end of January 22 and longer if necessary.

This builds on the current relationship the Council has with Tesco's whereby the same store allows our Covid Response teams to distribute home testing kits from the front of the store as part of our pop up initiative.

4. Operational Detail

The costs of setting up and running the site are covered by the national testing programme.

The site location costs are covered by the Tesco Superstore with the store enabling a specific location to be reserved for the MTU. The MTU operates in a manner to leave nothing behind at the end of each day, therefore, the space will need to be reserved.

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The Council is required to provide toilet facilities specifically for the MTU teams, this cost is £720 per month. The Council will also deploy signage to ensure residents are aware of the location, this cost is estimated to be £1000 as a one off cost. The toilet facilities will remain on site overnight and will be secured within Heras fencing.

The deployment for the MTU is in line with need but as a minimum is expected to be two months, the council has put a side costs of up to £5000 to fund the deployment. These funds will be covered through the COMF budget.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Do not request additional facilities – this is not recommended as it is assessed that additional facilities are required to meet projected increased demand.

PRE-DECISION CONSULTATION

The Leader of the Council has been kept informed of the requirements from the Secretary of State and the local governance structure as well as our plans to utilise these sites.

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

Name: Jack Davies

Designation: Public Health Specialist

Signature: *J Davies*

Date: 23rd December 2021

Part B - Assessment of implications and risks

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The Council has power to establish the additional testing facility in discharge of its duties under various statutes including the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

The land upon which the testing and toilet facilities will be placed is owned by Tesco, which consents to its use. A licence arrangement should be entered into in respect of the car park area used.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The majority of costs of setting up and running the Test site will be covered by the DHSC.

The council will cover costings such as signage and toilets at a one off and monthly payment respectively with an estimated cost of £5000 for its full deployment time. These one off costs will be covered by the contingency allocation within the COMF budget.

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

There are no HR implications

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, 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.

Making testing available in Gallows Corner, will seek to redress the disadvantage that residents in these neighbourhoods may experience in accessing testing for Covid-19. The purpose of the testing sites is to ensure everyone in Havering has the opportunity for localised testing.

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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

~~Proposal NOT agreed because~~

Details of decision maker

Signed



Name: Andrew Blake-Herbert

Head of Service title: Chief Executive Officer

Date: 23rd December 2021

Lodging this notice

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

For use by Committee Administration

This notice was lodged with me on _____

Signed _____