

**DATE: 30<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2020**

<b>DECISION REQUEST / PROPOSAL</b>	Test and Trace Funding: Proposal for spend
<b>DECISION PROPOSED BY</b>	Elspeth Anwar
<b>SERVICE AREA AFFECTED</b>	All
<b>IDENTIFIED CRITICAL SERVICE Y/N</b>	Yes

## **1. DECISION SUMMARY-**

### **DETERMINATION OF HOW THE RINGFENCED NATIONAL TEST AND TRACE FUNDING HAS BEEN ALLOCATED**

**This decision will support the priority to:-**

1. Preserve life
2. Protect the vulnerable people in our communities
4. Support local businesses and the economy

## **2. INFORMATION AND INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY**

- This paper outlines how we propose to utilise Tier 3 (Very High) funding to build upon progress to date and further enhance local capacity to deliver interventions to break the chains of COVID-19 transmission.
- In June 2020 Wirral Council was allocated £2,733,018 of grant funding via the Test and Trace Support Service Grant. The purpose of the grant is to provide support to local authorities in England towards expenditure lawfully incurred or to be incurred in relation to the mitigation against and management of local outbreaks of COVID-19.
- Test and Trace funding received in July has been utilised to implement the Wirral COVID-19 Outbreak prevention and Control Plan<sup>1</sup> to:
  - Develop the Wirral COVID-19 Hub: The purpose of the COVID-19 Hub is to prevent, control and manage COVID-19 outbreaks in Wirral.
  - Increase communication and community engagement activity

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<sup>1</sup> [Wirral COVID-19 Outbreak Management Plan](#)

- Increase capacity of specialist staff (intelligence, infection prevention control, environmental health)
- Contribute towards the development of the Cheshire and Merseyside (C&M) COVID-19 hub – to manage complex cases on behalf of all C&M authorities
- In October 2020 additional grant funding of £2,701,000 for Test and Trace activity was received by the Wirral Council when the Liverpool City Region was placed under the Tier 3 ‘very high’ COVID-19 alert level restrictions.
- Tier 3 funding will allow us to develop the Wirral COVID-19 hub further and develop capacity to focus upon the development of a local *Find, Test, Trace, Isolate, and Support* model to the transmission of COVID-19 across the borough.
- We have refreshed the Wirral Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan to ensure we continue to reduce transmission and minimise the impact of COVID-19 on Wirral residents, communities and businesses. The refreshed plan highlights the progress made to date and outlines the next steps in our continuing local response to the pandemic. The Tier 3 funding will be utilised to support the delivery of the refreshed Outbreak Prevention and Control Plan.

### **Funding Proposals**

- We are proposing to utilise Tier 3 Test and Trace funding to further develop the COVID-19 hub to:
  - Coordinate the local response to controlling and managing COVID-19 outbreaks in Wirral and ensure that this response is communicated and understood
  - Work with Public Health England and other stakeholders to manage complex situations relating to COVID-19 outbreaks in the community
  - Work with key health and care partners to support the prevention, control and management of outbreaks in health and care settings
  - Work with partners to effectively deliver prevention activities and engage with residents and businesses to minimise the risk of COVID-19
  - Work with partners to safeguard and support vulnerable groups at risk of COVID-19
  - Support education settings to minimise COVID-19 transmission and manage cases and outbreaks
  - Undertake locally supported contact tracing
- Locally we are working to ensure that people with COVID-19 are identified, tested, their contacts traced, and all appropriate persons are given isolation advice and provided with support to isolate where appropriate. Each component of this model is essential to limit the transmission of COVID-19.

- Unfortunately, national research suggests that currently less than one-quarter of those who test positive for COVID-19 may actually comply with isolation guidance. That is why as well as further resources for testing and to further develop local contact tracing activity we are proposing a strong emphasis on community engagement activity – to increase awareness, trust, and use of the system.
- We also want to ensure we are enabling and supporting our communities to remain resilient by supporting Community Voluntary Sector groups and our local advice and support service to ensure people are able to self-isolate as required and to support peoples mental health and wellbeing.
- Section 6 of the report outlines how the funding has and will be utilised. We have carried forward any underspend from July 2020 funding (Tranche 1) to ensure we maximise Test and Trace funding. To build upon local work to date we will utilise the grant funding to:
  - Further develop capacity within the hub to enhanced support for high risk groups and settings
  - Support COVID-19 testing: Further develop our local testing strategy and pilot asymptomatic testing approaches
  - Developing local contact tracing capacity to enable us to reach more COVID-19 residents and their contacts more quickly and limit the spread of disease
  - Increase Community engagement activity – to ensure widespread awareness, trust, and use of the system. This will include further development of community Champions programme, Behavioural insights and evaluation work
  - In order to support the above activity, we will utilise funding to increase the number of Public Health engagement staff (1 community connector per ward via Involve Northwest) to target and support those most in need
  - Support for Ask Us Wirral to provide people with timely advice related to debt, benefits, housing, consumer, employment
  - Make Community Funding available for community organisations to further community engagement activity
  - Provide Targeted support for educational settings to reduce COVID-19 transmission within these settings

### **3. RISK ASSESSMENT / H&S AND STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTING DECISION**

No full risk assessment has been undertaken.

The purpose of the grant is to provide support to local authorities in England towards expenditure lawfully incurred or to be incurred in relation to the mitigation against and management of local outbreaks of COVID-19. Risks with not utilising the funding for this purpose include:

- increased community transmission of COVID-19,
- more complex and uncontrolled outbreaks,

- increased pressure on our local health and care system,
- economic impacts upon local businesses
- poorer outcomes for our most vulnerable local residents.

#### **4. WHAT POWERS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED**

- COVID-19 contain framework: a guide for local decision-makers
- COVID-19 Winter Plan

#### **5. IDENTIFICATION OF CONTINGENCIES OR OTHER OPTIONS**

- The purpose of the grant is to provide support to local authorities in England towards expenditure lawfully incurred or to be incurred in relation to the mitigation against and management of local outbreaks of COVID-19.
- Wirral COVID-19 Outbreak Cell members have provided their views for how they believe the funding allocation would be best targeted. We have reviewed and co-ordinated our approach to ensure Test and Trace funding proposals dovetail and enhance funding received for adult social care infection prevention control, enforcement activity and supporting community resilience.
- Our funding proposal aims to ensure we have a sustainable and flexible local approach for the next 12-18 month period.
- The local COVID-19 response continues to present new challenges and the need to operate at pace. In particular new testing technologies are currently being piloted prior to being upscaled if prove to beneficial – we recognise this plan therefore requires to be flexible and adapt as further details emerge as we go forward.

#### **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (TO DATE / PROJECTED)**

##### **6.1 Overview of Test and Trace funding**

- The table below provides an overview of Test and Trace funding spend form July 2020 (Tranche 1) and proposed usage of Tier 3 Test and Trace funding (Tranche 2). They are presented together below as Tranche 2 funding builds upon progress to date being utilised to fill identified gaps and refocus activity given learning and developments since July.

	WTE	Tranche 1 £	Tranche 2 £
<b>Local Outbreak Hub</b>			
Senior Managers & Team Leaders	4.00	361,196	
Environmental Health & Health protection Prevention & Control Officers	3.00	141,165	68,380
Business Support, Project Officer & Loggist	8.00	254,274	218,284
Infection Prevention & Control Team	8.60	262,687	50,119
Equipment & Translation	8.40	600,546	
Surveillance	2.00	14,221	150,000
		61,756	45,000
<b>Contact Tracing</b>			
Team Leader	2.00		112,237
Contact Tracers & Response Workers	15.00		462,132
Local Contact Tracing		700	
<b>Testing &amp; Vaccinations</b>			
Lead & Co-ordinator	2.00	113,967	57,433
COVID-19 Testing			686,067
<b>Community Engagement</b>			
Community Connectors - Involve NorthWest	22.00		596,000
Community Funding			150,000
Behavioural Insight			100,000
Ask Us Wirral			200,000
Support for Educational Settings			200,000
<b>Communications</b>			
Comms Team	2.00	145,303	
Communications - Non-Pay		100,000	100,000
<b>Cheshire and Merseyside Hub</b>			
		182,551	
<b>Total</b>	<b>77.00</b>	<b>2,238,366</b>	<b>3,195,652</b>
Grant		2,733,018	2,701,000
<b>Residual</b>		<b>494,652</b>	<b>- 494,652</b>

Name of Finance Officer involved in decision: Chandra Dodgson and Angie Byrne

## 7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The allocations agreed follow the conditions determined within the Local Authority Test and Trace Service Support Grant Determination (2020/21) [No 31/5075].

<b>DECISION PRESENTED TO TCG ON</b>	<b>Date 03.12.20</b>
<b>DECISION OF TCG CHAIR</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>