

## Record of individual Cabinet member decision

Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

<b>Decision made by</b>	Councillor David Rouane, Leader of the Council
<b>Key decision?</b>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Call-in will be requested to be waived by Scrutiny Committee chairman due to the immediate need for the funds for the covid response.</p> <p>Acceptance of the receipt will not commit the council to any other additional unbudgeted expenditure over and above the £619,218 (South) received.</p>
<b>Date of decision</b> (same as date form signed)	17 December 2021
<b>Name and job title of officer requesting the decision</b>	<p>Simon Hewings Head of Finance and Section 151 officer</p> <p>Adrianna Partridge Deputy Chief Executive – Transformation and Operations</p>
<b>Officer contact details</b>	<p><a href="mailto:Simon.hewings@southandvale.gov.uk">Simon.hewings@southandvale.gov.uk</a></p> <p><a href="mailto:Adrianna.partridge@Southandvale.gov.uk">Adrianna.partridge@Southandvale.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>Decision</b>	<p>To approve arrangements for the allocation of Contain Outbreak Management Funds (COMF).</p> <p>COMF has been allocated to councils by the Department of Health and Social Care to provide financial support for work by local authorities to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) help reduce the spread of coronavirus and</li> <li>b) contain the spread of the virus</li> </ol> <p>The funding Guidance (Appendix B) states that while the funding is ringfenced and should be used to break the chain of transmissions and protect the most vulnerable in our society, the exact allocation of the funds is left to the discretion of local authorities.</p> <p>While the governance of the fund will sit in the collaborative body of the Oxfordshire Treasurer's Association (OTA) who will ensure due diligence in the disbursement and use of the fund at an Oxfordshire level, this ICMD seeks approval for the local arrangements proposed for the spend and</p>

	<p>management of the funds by South Oxfordshire District Council.</p> <p>This ICMD specifically requests approval for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to accept funds from Oxfordshire County Council (Funding agreement to follow)</li> <li>• to delegate authority to finalise the terms of and enter into the funding agreement with Oxfordshire County Council to the Head of Finance and s151 officer</li> <li>• to agree to the proposed allocation of spend (Appendix A) within South Oxfordshire</li> <li>• to delegate authority to review and amend the allocation of this spend and any future COMF allocation to the Head of Finance &amp; Section 151 officer in consultation with the Deputy Chief Executive – Transformation and Operations.</li> <li>• to delegate the authority to agree, review and amend any policies pertaining to this and future COMF allocation to the Deputy Chief Executive – Transformation and Operations jointly with the Head of Finance &amp; S151 officer</li> </ul>
<p><b>Reasons for decision</b></p>	<p>Oxfordshire County Council has been allocated three tranches of Contain Outbreak Management Funding (COMF) from the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) to implement measures to support proactive containment and intervention to reduce Covid-19 outbreaks and the spread of infection.</p> <p>South Oxfordshire District Council received an allocation of £587,000 from the first tranche of these funds which was accepted and the spend agreed by ICMD 2021 03 11 ICMD COMF (South).</p> <p>South Oxfordshire received a second allocation of funds for £133,360 directly from DHSC, the allocation of which was agreed by decision note 2021 07 20 Delegated Authority Officer Decision 8 July 2021.</p> <p>This ICMD pertains to a third allocation of funding for South Oxfordshire from Oxfordshire County Council.</p> <p>The Oxfordshire councils previously agreed to administer elements of COMF funding received by the county council. Distribution at a local level enables funding to be prioritised at both a county and more localised district and City level towards initiatives relevant to their areas that directly link to the parameters set out in The Guidance (Appendix B).</p>

This allocation is the result of a bid put forward to the county council by South Oxfordshire for further COMF resource to provide continued, ongoing support for residents and local initiatives around prevention, containment and response in accordance with the aforementioned Guidance.

Guidance from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) (Appendix B) states that the funds should be used for both prevention and containment purposes to meet current needs and additional spend or commitments incurred as a direct result of the outbreak of Covid-19.

Examples given in the Guidance of how funds could be spent include:

- Targeted testing for hard-to-reach groups out of scope of other testing programmes.
- Additional contact tracing.
- Enhanced communication and marketing (e.g. localised messaging).
- Delivery of essentials for those in self-isolation.
- Targeted interventions for specific sections of the local community and workplaces.
- Harnessing capacity within local sectors (e.g. voluntary, academic, commercial).
- Additional resource for compliance with, and enforcement of, restrictions and guidance
- Providing initial support, as needed, to vulnerable people classed as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable.

Following consultation with the relevant Heads of Service and Service Managers, the council has identified the following workstreams and initiatives as necessary for the ongoing prevention, containment and response work in the district. Accordingly, South Oxfordshire has, along with the other district and city councils submitted a bid to the county council. This bid is detailed in appendix A but in summary covers the following:

- A 12-month extension of the community hub to provide ongoing support for COVID response including supporting residents to self-isolate and supporting vulnerable residents through the pandemic
- Additional policy officer resource focussing on COVID data and policy analysis, health mapping and wellbeing strategy development
- Additional cleaning and facilities management resource to ensure office compliance and the ongoing provision of vital services
- Environmental health resource to ensure compliance

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended communication resource for covid related response and recovery work</li> <li>• The provision of economic support in a covid secure manner, this includes officers and enhanced support initiatives, events and resources for the business sector</li> <li>• Top up discretionary housing payments to ensure that residents do not become homeless and more vulnerable to exposure to the virus</li> <li>• Enhancement of physical fitness schemes for disadvantaged sections of the community to improve physical fitness therefore reducing susceptibility to the virus</li> <li>• Projects around healthy communities and prevention, encouraging outdoor activity.</li> </ul> <p>The funding has been approved by the Joint Community District Hubs, OTA and Chief Executives.</p> <p>The allocation of spend is to be agreed at district level but is both consistent with the guidance and in line with approaches taken by other councils.</p> <p>Given the urgent nature of the need to provide support, and given the time constraints of this fund, there is insufficient time to follow regular governance arrangements therefore finalising terms and entering into the funding agreement, agreeing the grant allocation and agreeing the delegations to the Deputy Chief Executive (Transformation &amp; Operations) and Head of Finance &amp; Section 151 officer are being undertaken by an ICMD approved by council leaders.</p>
<p><b>Alternative options rejected</b></p>	<p>To not accept the funding from Central government which risks not only reputational damage, but also the opportunity to target additional resources to areas of concern in the district.</p> <p>The council's ability to focus its resources and respond quickly to changes in demand and focus as the country and districts continue to respond to the virus and initiate recovery is of paramount importance.</p> <p>Accepting these funds will facilitate this process and ensure that residents and businesses have the support that they need for another 12 months.</p>
<p><b>Legal implications</b></p>	<p>The Guidance provided by DHSC outlines the parameters within which we should work and The Funding Agreement (to follow) with the county council will detail the council's obligations, parameters, monitoring and reporting requirements and payment of funds . It is anticipated this</p>

	<p>will be in the form received for the previous rounds of COMF funding</p> <p>This is work required of local authorities by central government.</p> <p>The majority of the work detailed in Appendix A is an extension of what has become business as usual work to support communities through the COVID pandemic.</p>			
<b>Financial implications</b>	<p>The Guidance from DHSC lay out the parameters for spend of this fund. Within these parameters the local authorities have the discretion as to the best way to allocate and distribute the funds to the most vulnerable residents.</p> <p>The funds will be paid to Oxfordshire County Council by DHSC according to the terms of the funding agreement which will follow.</p> <p>Expenditure will be monitored to ensure that it does not exceed the funding provided.</p> <p>The grant determination letters state that funds should be spent in the financial year 2021/22. However, in common with other councils, officers expect the effects of the pandemic and the ensuing need to provide support and services to extend beyond this financial year end into next financial year and have planned spend accordingly. There is the potential risk that funding not spent this financial year could be recalled by central government however, given the current situation, officers believe this risk to be low.</p> <p>This has been discussed at Joint Community Hub, the OTA and Oxfordshire Chief Executives and the risk deemed tolerable.</p>			
<b>Other implications</b>	None			
<b>Background papers considered</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Appendix A – Funding Allocation</li> <li>2) Appendix B – The Guidance</li> </ol>			
<b>Declarations/conflict of interest? Declaration of other councillor/officer consulted by the Cabinet member?</b>	None			
<b>List Consultees</b>		<b>Name</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Date</b>
	Senior Management Team	Sent to SMT on 15 December 2021	Individual Responses below – no objections	15/12/21

		Suzanne Malcolm	Happy to support	15/12/21
		Andrew Down	Decision itself is appropriate Other comments – actioned	15/12/21
		Liz Hayden	Comments actioned	16 Dec 2021
		Adriana Partridge	Approved	10/12/21
	Legal	Pat Connell	Approved subject to amendments (incorporated) Funding agreement will need to be sealed	16/12/21
	Finance	Simon Hewings	Financial oversight provided by Simon Hewings	16/12/21
	Community Wellbeing	Jayne Bolton	Support to the proposals contained in the report and appendices.	10/12/21
	Cabinet Member for Community Services & Deputy Leader	Maggie Filipova-Rivers		
<b>Confidential decision?</b> If so, under which exempt category?	No			
<b>Call-in waived by Scrutiny Committee chairman?</b>	Urgency notice attached. Scrutiny call-in has been waived – confirmed by email Ian White 17 Dec 2021			
<b>Has this been discussed by Cabinet members?</b>				
<b>Cabinet portfolio holder's signature</b> To confirm the decision as set out in this notice.	David Rouane agreed by email 17 December 2021			

**ONCE SIGNED, THIS FORM MUST BE HANDED TO DEMOCRATIC SERVICES IMMEDIATELY.**

For Democratic Services office use only		
Form received	Date: 17 December 2021	Time: 18:54
Date published to all councillors	Date: 20 December 2021	
Call-in deadline	Call-in has been waived by the Scrutiny Committee Chair.	

## Guidance notes

1. This form must be completed by the lead officer who becomes the contact officer. The lead officer is responsible for ensuring that the necessary internal consultees have signed it off, including the chief executive. The lead officer must then seek the Cabinet portfolio holder's agreement and signature.
2. Once satisfied with the decision, the Cabinet portfolio holder must hand-sign and date the form and return it to the lead officer who should send it to Democratic Services immediately to allow the call-in period to commence.  
Tel. 01235 422520 or extension 2520.  
Email: [democratic.services@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@southandvale.gov.uk)
3. Democratic Services will then publish the decision to the website (unless it is confidential) and send it to all councillors to commence the call-in period (five clear working days) if it is a 'key' decision (see the definition of a 'key' decision below). A key decision cannot be implemented until the call-in period expires. The call-in procedure can be found in the council's constitution, part 4, under the Scrutiny Committee procedure rules.
4. Before implementing a key decision, the lead officer is responsible for checking with Democratic Services that the decision has not been called in.
5. If a key decision has been called in, Democratic Services will notify the lead officer and decision-maker. This call-in puts the decision on hold.
6. Democratic Services will liaise with the Scrutiny Committee chairman over the date of the call-in debate. The Cabinet portfolio holder will be requested to attend the Scrutiny Committee meeting to answer the committee's questions.
7. The Scrutiny Committee may:
  - refer the decision back to the Cabinet portfolio holder for reconsideration or
  - refer the matter to Council with an alternative set of proposals (where the final decision rests with full Council) or
  - accept the Cabinet portfolio holder's decision, in which case it can be implemented immediately.

## Key decisions: assessing whether a decision should be classified as 'key'

The South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils' Constitutions now have the same definition of a key decision:

**A key decision is a decision of the Cabinet, an individual Cabinet member, or an officer acting under delegated powers, which is likely:**

- (a) to incur expenditure, make savings or to receive income of more than £75,000;**

- (b) to award a revenue or capital grant of over £25,000; or**
- (c) to agree an action that, in the view of the chief executive or relevant head of service, would be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising more than one ward in the area of the council.**

Key decisions are subject to the scrutiny call-in procedure; non-key decisions are not and can be implemented immediately.

In assessing whether a decision should be classified as 'key', you should consider:

- (a) Will the expenditure, savings or income total more than £75,000 across all financial years?
- (b) Will the grant award to one person or organisation be more than £25,000 across all financial years?
- (c) Does the decision impact on more than one district council ward? And if so, is the impact significant? If residents or property affected by the decision is in one ward but is close to the border of an adjacent ward, it may have a significant impact on that second ward, e.g. through additional traffic, noise, light pollution, odour. Examples of significant impacts on two or more wards are:
  - Decisions to spend Didcot Garden Town funds (significant impact on more than one ward)
  - Changes to the household waste collection policy (affects all households in the district)
  - Reviewing a housing strategy (could have a significant impact on residents in many wards)
  - Adopting a supplementary planning document for a redevelopment site (could significantly affect more than one ward) or a new design guide (affects all wards)
  - Decisions to build new or improve existing leisure facilities (used by residents of more than one ward)

**The overriding principle is that before 'key' decisions are made, they must be published in the Cabinet Work Programme for 28 calendar days. Classifying a decision as non-key when it should be a key decision could expose the decision to challenge and delay its implementation.**