

Record of operational decision

Decision title:	Decision to approve the Adult Social Care infection control and testing fund (Round 5) to be paid from the council's allocation, including the discretionary element and Vaccines Allocation to care homes and the care and community sector across Herefordshire in accordance with the grant determination letter issued by the Secretary of State on 21 st October 2021																												
Date of decision:	9th November, 2021																												
Decision maker:	Director of Adults and Communities																												
Authority for delegated decision:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Executive Scheme of Delegation – Updated 29 September 2020 line SP07 																												
Ward:	Countywide																												
Consultation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Herefordshire care homes and community care providers are aware of the grant funding. Cabinet member for health and wellbeing 																												
Decision made:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To administer and pay infection control, testing funding and vaccine allocations including the discretionary element (£1,671,681.00) to Herefordshire Adult social care providers and community care providers who meet the grant criteria and terms and conditions. 																												
Reasons for decision:	<p>Due to the success of the extended Infection Control and Testing Fund in supporting care providers to reduce the transmission of COVID-19, this fund has been extended until 31 March 2022, with an extra £388 million of funding to support the care sector to put in place crucial measures over the winter period. This brings the total ring-fenced funding for infection prevention and control to almost £1.75 billion and support for testing to almost £523 million in care settings. The council's allocation is (£1,671,681.00.)</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="512 1335 1331 1827"> <tr> <td colspan="2">Infection Control Funding</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Care Homes allocation</td> <td>£561,618.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Community allocation</td> <td>£156,568.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Discretionary allocation</td> <td>£307,794.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>£1,025,980.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Rapid Testing Funding</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Care Homes allocation</td> <td>£399,057.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Discretionary allocation</td> <td>£143,035.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>£542,092.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Vaccines Allocation</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Care Homes</td> <td>39,495.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Community</td> <td>33,031.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Discretionary</td> <td>£31,083.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>£103,609.00</td> </tr> </table> <p>The purpose of this fund is to support adult social care providers (including those with whom the local authority does not have a contract) to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the rate of COVID-19 transmission within and between care settings through effective infection prevention and control practices and increase COVID-19 and flu vaccine uptake among staff Conduct testing of staff and visitors in care settings to identify and isolate positive cases, and in order to enable close contact visiting where possible. 	Infection Control Funding		Care Homes allocation	£561,618.00	Community allocation	£156,568.00	Discretionary allocation	£307,794.00		£1,025,980.00	Rapid Testing Funding		Care Homes allocation	£399,057.00	Discretionary allocation	£143,035.00		£542,092.00	Vaccines Allocation		Care Homes	39,495.00	Community	33,031.00	Discretionary	£31,083.00		£103,609.00
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This is a new round of the grant, with separate conditions to the original Infection Control Fund, the extension to the Infection Control Fund, the original Rapid Testing Fund and the Infection Control and Testing Fund.

It is intended exclusively for actions that support care homes and CQC-regulated community care providers to tackle the risk of COVID-19 infections and enable close-contact visiting, and is in addition to funding already received.

The council must use their discretionary allocation of the testing allocation of the grant to support the care sector to operationally deliver testing. Given the rollout of lateral flow testing for visitors to supported living and extra care settings, the council is expected to use a portion of this funding to support testing in extra care and supported living settings.

Providers must account for all payments paid out and keep appropriate records. If a provider does not use the entirety of the allocation of IPC or testing measures (as applicable), any remaining funds must be returned to the council. The council must ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to enable them, if necessary, to recover any such overpayments. None of the funding provided directly to providers is to be used for any purpose other than the specified IPC and testing measures. The grant must only be used to support care providers to tackle the risks of COVID-19 infections and enable close-contact visiting.

In order to ensure that the relevant infection prevention and control, and testing measures are put in place as quickly as possible, the council has to make the relevant payments to providers within twenty working days of receipt of the allocation.

As outlined in the grant determination letter, all expenditure financed by this grant should be incurred on or before 31st March, 2022. Any funds not used at this point will be recovered by the department and the council must have measures in place to allow this to happen efficiently.

The terms and conditions of the infection control grant specify that the council must report on the allocation of the grant to the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) on 14th January 2022, 28th February 2022 and 28th April 2022.

Infection control criteria:

Care home providers and community care providers (including domiciliary care, supported living) are to be paid 70% of the total grant allocation subject to providers accepting and adhering to the grant conditions. This funding must only be used for the specific COVID-19 infection prevention and control measures specified in Annex C of the guidance.

Local authorities must use 30% of the IPC funding to support the sector to put in place other COVID-19 infection prevention and control measures, but this can be allocated at their discretion.

Local authorities may use a small amount of this funding (capped at 1% of their total IPC allocation) for reasonable administrative costs associated with distributing and reporting on this funding.

Testing criteria:

In addition, care home providers will be paid 74% of the testing allocation. This funding must only be used for the specific testing measures specified in Annex C of the guidance.

Local authorities must use their discretionary allocation of the testing allocation of the grant to support the care sector to operationally deliver testing.

	<p>Vaccines Measures:</p> <p>Care home providers and community care providers (including domiciliary care, supported living) are to be paid 70% of the total grant allocation subject to providers accepting and adhering to the grant conditions. This funding must only be used for the specific COVID-19 infection prevention and control measures specified in Annex C of the guidance.</p> <p>Local authorities should use 30% of their vaccines allocation to support staff in other care settings, including non-registered settings, and to provide additional support to providers where required in order to undertake the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring that staff who need to attend work or another location for the purposes of being vaccinated for COVID-19 or flu are paid their usual wages to do so • Any costs associated with reaching a vaccination facility • Any reasonable administrative costs associated with organising COVID-19 or flu vaccinations where these were not being supported by other government funding streams.
<p>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</p>	<p>There is little risk to the council, this is external funding to support the care sector in addition to funding already received. The grant conditions are clear and council officers are working together to meet these requirements enabling accurate reporting for the deadline dates.</p> <p>Grant conditions are clear that the council must not make any payment to a provider unless they have completed the Capacity Tracker and committed to doing so once per week until 31st March, 2022. This is being monitored and checked by internal staff.</p> <p>Herefordshire Council will verify eligibility, process applications, make payments and manage the fund.</p>
<p>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</p>	<p>Not to accept the grant; this is not recommended as the grant has been nationally mandated by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) with very specific grant details to support further COVID-19 spread within care homes and the care sector.</p>
<p>Details of any declarations of interest made:</p>	<p>None</p>

Signed..... Date: 18.11.2021