

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**10 September 2020**

**Report of the Director of Public Health**

**COVID-19 Funding allocation to District and Borough Councils to support the Derbyshire response to COVID-19**

**1. Purpose of the report:**

To seek Cabinet approval for funding to support district and borough environmental health teams to cover backfill as required in relation to COVID-19 response.

**2. Information and analysis:**

**Background and Context**

Environmental Health in District and Borough Councils

Environmental Health (EH) departments and the Health and Safety Executive have joint enforcement responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HSW Act) dependant on the main activity of the premises concerned. Local authorities enforce the HSW Act in a significant number of service lead sectors such as offices, retail, warehouse, leisure, catering premises and residential homes. A full list can be found at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/foi/internalops/og/og-00073-appendix1.htm>

Where actions to control an outbreak in a workplace setting enforced by the HSE are more appropriate under health and safety legislation, Environmental Health will liaise with the HSE to determine the most appropriate authority to investigate.

EH departments have a key strategic role in relation to the local COVID-19 Outbreak Management Plan, this includes;

- Supporting high risk settings and communities in outbreak response where appropriate.

- Provide elected members and senior officers with leadership and expertise in relation to risk, outbreaks and preparedness not sure what this means
- Determine the most appropriate legislative powers to use based on the circumstances/ location of the outbreak.

### **Current Situation:**

EH departments have both specialist expertise and skills and well as important legislative powers in relation to COVID response, their support is critical in implementing the outbreak plan and are a valuable resource in implementation. Funding of £0.05m per annum to each district and borough council in Derbyshire is a significant investment to cover back fill with environmental health officers to provide adequate resources to respond to COVID related incidents and outbreaks utilising the COVID outbreak plan.

EH departments are under significant pressure due to statutory enforcement duties and supporting the easement of restrictions for businesses. Additional capacity to support COVID response will therefore require investment from Derbyshire County Council to deliver the following local operational aspects:

- Provide specialist advice to the Incident/Outbreak Control Team, or around individual outbreaks with regard to environmental health hazards;
- Carry out investigation and provide support to complex cases
- Liaise and report findings of any investigation to Directors of Public Health, Public Health England, Food Standards Agency and Health and Safety Executive
- Provide support and advice to commercial and domestic settings involved in outbreak responses;
- Provide local surge capacity if required for complex situations
- Exercise appropriate powers under health protection and/or health and safety legislation to prevent or limit the spread of infection;
- Inspect premises if required.
- Investigation of complaints and enquiries relating to COVID-19, ensuring that all relevant legislation and guidance is being complied with.
- Taking appropriate action under the relevant statutory provisions to ensure the department's objectives are met
- Update the Public Health Test and Trace Team with any soft intelligence.
- Complete outbreak reports and maintain contact with workplaces to follow up on relevant actions.

### **3. Financial considerations:**

The total funding allocation to support the 8 district and borough councils in Derbyshire with £50,000 per annum for the financial years 2020/21 and 2021/22 is £0.8m.

- Amber Valley Borough Council- £0.1m
- Bolsover District Council- £0.1m
- Chesterfield Borough Council- £0.1m
- Derbyshire Dales District Council- £0.1m
- Erewash Borough Council- £0.1m
- High Peak Borough Council- £0.1m
- North East Derbyshire District Council- £0.1m
- South Derbyshire District Council- £0.1m

It is proposed that this funding allocation will be taken from the additional support grant from central government to support Public Health Authorities to develop tailored outbreak control plans. The allocation for Derbyshire County Council as the recognised Public Health Authority is £3.85 million.

### **4. Legal considerations:**

Not applicable

### **5. Other considerations:**

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered; equality, human resources, environment, health, property and transport have all been considered in preparing this paper.

### **6. Background papers:**

Cabinet report 30 July 2020: COVID19 Outbreak Management Plan and Track and Trace Communications Strategy.

### **7. Key Decision:**

Not applicable

**8. Call-in:**

Is it required that call-in be waived for any decision on this report? - No

**9. Officer's Recommendations:**

That Cabinet approve the funding allocation of £50,000m per annum for the financial years 2020/21 and 2021/22 to each district and borough council's environmental health teams to support Derbyshire's response to COVID-19, including the implementation of the Derbyshire Local Outbreak Management Plan.

**Dean Wallace**  
**Director of Public Health**