



Joint Strategic Committee  
8 June 2021  
Agenda Item 5

## ADUR & WORTHING COUNCILS

Key Decision [Yes/No]

Ward(s) Affected: All

### Covid Funding and use of the Chief Executive's Urgency Powers

#### Report by the Director for Communities

#### Executive Summary

##### 1. Purpose

- 1.1 Adur and Worthing Councils have applied for and subsequently been awarded a very significant grant allocation from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF). This is a ring-fenced fund focusing on delivering extensive and much needed public health outcomes for Adur and Worthing Residents in relation to Covid-19. In addition the councils applied for Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) and has been awarded further funds that are ring fenced for delivery of rough sleeper services, support and accommodation with an allocation to support any surges in accommodation demand.
- 1.2 Reflecting the necessity for responsive and fast moving public service responses during the pandemic the funding awarded has to be fully spent by 31st March 2022. To ensure that the Council can meet this challenging timescale, the Chief Executive has been called upon to use his powers to make an urgent decision and this report advises Members of the Executive of the executive decisions made, and asks for their endorsement of the decision.

## **2. Recommendations**

2.1 The Joint Strategic Committee is recommended to note the content of the report and endorse the decisions made by the Chief Executive.

### **3. Context**

- 3.1 COVID-19 has created an ongoing global public health emergency and its economic and social impacts have caused considerable and immediate harm to individuals, communities and businesses across Adur and Worthing. The impacts of the pandemic on the local economy and our communities may last for some time.
- 3.2 The Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) is a funding framework established by national Government to support and direct how national, regional and local partners can work with each other, the public, businesses, institutions (including schools, hospitals, care homes and homelessness settings) and local communities to prevent, manage and contain outbreaks of COVID-19. Successful prevention and management of local outbreaks is a core element of this framework which seeks to break the chains of COVID-19 transmission, to enable people to return to, and maintain, a more normal way of life, living safely and well with the ongoing pandemic.
- 3.3 As part of the Framework, funding was allocated to Upper Tier Authorities, with the expectation that an element of funds would in turn be allocated to Lower Tier authorities. Adur and Worthing Councils were invited to apply to this fund and were successfully awarded significant amounts of grant funding from the framework.
- 3.4 The Councils' response to the pandemic has been delivered through our Platforms for Our Places programme and the associated 'And Then' commitments. Our overall approach, characterised by adaptivity and resilience, has proven invaluable in working with our communities and businesses during this time. Our bid to the COMF was developed within this successful approach and council officers identified a number of prospective projects, amounting to around £680,000 for both Adur and Worthing. Each one of these was considered to contribute to our build back strategy, focusing on a number of core themes and objectives described below.
- 3.5 Project proposals were developed within a very short timescale and a total of £628,944 was ultimately awarded through West Sussex County Council. This award was then followed up by two further COMF awards directly from central Government for 2021/22 of:
- £141,829 direct award for Worthing
  - £82,947 direct award for Adur

- 3.6 For Adur and Worthing the total COMF funding therefore amounts to a very significant investment into our communities of £853,720. Through this funding investment from the Government our work with communities, in responding to the pandemic, will be greatly improved and accelerated.
- 3.7 Reflecting the necessity for responsive and fast moving public service responses during the pandemic the timescales to spend this funding is by the end of March 2022 with a requirement to report monthly on the use of funding.
- 3.8 In August of 2018 the government issued its Rough Sleeping Strategy and invited bids for its Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) funding. Due to the demand placed on homelessness services during the pandemic previous grant allocations were rolled over to Quarter 1 of 2021/2022 with the full 2021/2022 award being recently announced. The award is against agreed and specific interventions as well as for year round surge accommodation, including winter provision.
- 3.9 The total award for Worthing is significant at £620,212 whilst Adur, not normally an RSI recipient, received £25,000, reflecting its low rough sleeper numbers and that all RSI funded interventions benefit Adur residents who experience rough sleeping.

#### **4. Issues for consideration**

- 4.1 Officers formed a small working group for COMF, led by the CFO and the Head of Wellbeing, Housing Needs Manager, Communities and Wellbeing Manager and other consulting officers from different teams.
- 4.2 The core themes of the successful bid were built around our Platforms and 'And Then' community recovery approach, focusing on improving health outcomes, breaking the chain of transmission and undertaking prevention and early intervention with communities that are vulnerable to Covid-19. Some of this funding is being used to support and strengthen some of our key services and projects to support our Covid work. Other funding is being used to shape key projects with our community groups. All of this funding is of course aimed at breaking the chains of COVID-19 transmission, or enabling people to return to, and maintain, a more normal way of life, or living safely and well with the ongoing pandemic. The key themes include:
- Supporting and enabling financial capability for our communities;
  - Supporting and enabling people back into work and our Good Work agenda;

- Prevention and early intervention work with vulnerable groups; including mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Enabling healthy and accessible food - community kitchen;
- Enabling and co-ordinating work for the Emergency Food Partnership;
- Engaging and supporting vulnerable young people in our communities and places;
- Supporting wellbeing in green spaces
- Tackling homelessness;
- Ensuring Covid-safe practices in our communities;
- Working with minoritised communities

4.3 This work is in line with our ambitions to develop a more enabling approach through asset based community development, our plans with this funding are focused on key areas of work where we can also work alongside and co-produce with local groups and communities. Whilst this is short-term funding for Covid, the aims and ambitions are around building our capacity and partnerships for the longer term.

4.4 [Appendix 1](#) provides summaries of the proposed projects, which are focused on one or more of these themes, including an approximate funding allocation and tentative outcomes. It is important to note that officers are working at different stages on these projects, with some more fully formed than others and more work is needed to develop these. Therefore funding allocations might need to change and be varied between projects. Some example projects include supporting the work of the Emergency Food Partnership and the development of a community kitchen or pop up community kitchen spaces. The funds will also support youth outreach, Covid champions with minoritised groups and a system called Telljo that will work as part of our early intervention and prevention work to assist people at risk of financial hardship and homelessness. The funding will also support an Emergency Assistance Programme enabling residents to access financial support, for example if they are experiencing fuel poverty. Funding will resource a womens worker to support those experiencing Domestic Abuse which has increased during the pandemic, as well as training for staff to support behaviour change in the perpetrators of abuse that they work with.

4.5 The work being funded through COMF is aligned with other projects and programmes to ensure strong synergy, including for example the financial capability work being aligned with our Proactive Project (which will be brought to the Joint Strategic Committee in July) and domestic abuse is connected to our work on women's safety, following the Motion to Council.

4.6 The RSI bid involves a co-design process with our Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) advisors and partners and is subject to approval by our advisor prior to submission to the funding award panel.

4.7 The core themes of the bid are based on our Housing Strategy and its objectives to reduce rough sleeping in Adur and Worthing. The focus of the bid therefore includes partnership working to identify those at risk of homelessness and preventing rough sleeping in the first instance. The work also includes supporting existing rough sleepers into appropriate accommodation and providing access to specialist support services that are able to help people with complex needs. The RSI also funds training to support the embedding of a psychologically informed approach to the work across the partnership.

4.8 [Appendix 2](#) provides a list of the proposed interventions and the associated funding allocations for the period July 2021 - March 2022.

#### **4.9 Proposed governance approach:**

- 4.9.1 Under the conditions of the COMF grant, the funding should be spent by the end of March 2022. The funding awarded is ring-fenced to COVID-19 public health purposes that either work to break the chain of transmission or protect the most vulnerable.
- 4.9.2 The conditions of the RSI award are it be ring fenced for rough sleepers and for it to be spent by March 2023 on specific interventions listed. Any variations in spending require agreement of MHCLG. Monthly reporting to MHCLG is required together with monthly meetings with MHCLG advisors.
- 4.9.3 Given that it was the pre-election period when officers were notified of the grant and given the relative urgency to move forward with this work in order to benefit our communities, it was proposed that the Chief Executive agrees to use paragraph 2.1.2 of the Officer Scheme of Delegations, which provides the Chief Executive with the authority to "take urgent action on behalf of the Councils."
- 4.9.4 Consequently the Chief Executive was asked to approve the programme of projects and approve the budget virement.

## **5. Engagement and Communication**

- 5.1 Prior to the exercise of the urgency powers, the Leaders and Executive Members were consulted about the programme of projects.

## **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1 The programmes of work are fully funded by the COMF and RSI funding received.
- 6.2 Under the Council's contract orders, a budget must exist for the costs associated with a contract for the Council to be able to let that contract. To enable the swift commissioning of the programmes of work, the Chief Executive exercised his urgency powers to create the budget associated with the COMF and RSI funding.

## **7. Legal Implications**

- 7.1 Paragraph 2.1.2 of the Officer Scheme of Delegations provides the Chief Executive with the authority to 'take urgent action on behalf of the Councils'.
- 7.2 Urgent means a "matter of pressing importance requiring swift action given the gravity of the situation, to prevent damage (or further damage) to life, limb, infrastructure or the financial integrity of the Councils".
- 7.3 In taking such urgent action the Chief Executive is obliged to consult with the relevant Leaders.
- 7.4 A report on the use of the urgency powers referred to in this Report is to be taken to the first available JSC meeting and in so far as applicable any decisions/actions taken shall only take effect on a temporary basis until a Committee decision has been made.
- 7.5 In spending the funds the Council is to comply with the Contract Standing Orders and/or Public Procurement Regulations 2015 and exercise any exemptions in accordance with those obligations.

7.6 s1 of the Localism Act 2011 empowers the Council to do anything an individual can do apart from that which is specifically prohibited by pre-existing legislation

7.7 Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 1999 (LGA 1999) contains a general duty on a best value authority to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

7.8 s1 Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997 confers power on the Council to enter into a contract for the provision of making available assets or services for the purposes of, or in connection with, the discharge of the function by the Council.

### **Background Papers**

- [Covid 19 Contain Framework](#)

### **Officer Contact Details:-**

Tina Favier

Head of Wellbeing

07850900266

[Tina.Favier@adur-worthing.gov.uk](mailto:Tina.Favier@adur-worthing.gov.uk)

Amanda Eremie

Housing Needs Manager

07717808508

[amanda.eremie@adur-worthing.gov.uk](mailto:amanda.eremie@adur-worthing.gov.uk)

## **Sustainability & Risk Assessment**

### **1. Economic**

- This programme will support the physical and mental wellbeing of our communities and this in turn will have a positive impact on the local economy.

### **2. Social**

#### **2.1 Social Value**

- There is a growing understanding of the health and social impacts of poverty and homelessness, at their extreme, the impacts can be significant and long lasting for individuals and families. Adur and Worthing Councils seek to minimise these impacts through our work to identify and support individuals and communities at risk of being negatively impacted by the pandemic.
- Preventing, managing and containing Covid 19 outbreaks will have a positive impact on our communities and the projects included in this programme will contribute to this. These projects will work towards minimising the negative impact of the pandemic on individuals and communities.

#### **2.2 Equality Issues**

- The pandemic has shone an even brighter spotlight on inequalities in our communities which is why it is important that we support our communities in prevention, management and contain Covid outbreaks.
- An Equalities Impact Assessment has been developed to ensure that the funding is used in a fair and transparent way and does not negatively discriminate against any group set down in the Equality Act 2010.

#### **2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)**

- The proposed interventions will allow for more flexibility in working with those who may have a history of complex behaviors and/or ASB.

#### **2.4 Human Rights Issues**

- The Councils are committed to supporting our most vulnerable communities and those in most need. The proposed spending under COMF and RSI supports these aims by delivering services to the most vulnerable in our community.

### **3. Environmental**

- Issue considered, no specific matters to report

### **4. Governance**

- The COMF programme will deliver a number of the activities and interventions identified in '[And Then](#)'

**Appendix 1:**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Target Group(s) / Issue</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>	<b>Health outcomes</b>	<b>Funding Required (£)</b>
Financial capability	People not coping with debt/money	To provide Money Advice Trust Vulnerability training for front line staff and key mutual aid group partners, providing techniques to identify, understand and support vulnerable customers. Online training courses on 1) vulnerability 2) mental health 3) working in a crisis and personal resilience	Improve outcomes for residents because we can better understand and identify how specific challenges and circumstances impact their ability to manage finances. Improved outcomes for staff/partners via ability to set boundaries, understand own triggers and look after own wellbeing	£9,000.00
Good Work	People at risk of losing work as a result of Covid	To fund a short-term post to provide capacity and focus for a programme of Good Work for those at risk of losing work during Covid. Post to be directed as part of Good Work, using data to focus on key groups at risk (young people, those over 50, minoritised groups, disabled groups) to enable and help people into Good Work. This will provide a real focus for interventions and enable us to develop a clear strategy ensuring strong customer journeys and support/help	Access for people into work. Improved health and wellbeing outcomes for those finding work.	£52,088.00
Healthy and accessible food	Food poverty / insecurity	To secure and co-produce a community kitchen/pop up community kitchens, working with a community food group. Funding will secure premises and the work needed to develop this in the short term start-up space, to provide a shared space for groups to source, cook and share healthy, local and sustainable food for communities struggling with Covid. This space / spaces will also enable groups to cook their own food and learn new skills, share learning and connect with each other including key vulnerable groups	Improved access to local and healthy food. Improved skills and learning. Improved connectedness for communities	£95,000.00
Prevention and early intervention	Food poverty / insecurity	To co-produce projects focusing on the drivers for food insecurity, focusing on early intervention and prevention. Work will be done with groups to design a creative approach to addressing these underlying issues to enable people to cope, manage and thrive and to provide better data around food	Reduced food insecurity. Improve health and wellbeing outcomes. Improved understanding of food insecurity locally	£80,000.00

		insecurity.		
Food partnership	Food poverty / insecurity	12 month contribution for administrative support for the Food Partnership for Community Works	Improved access to food and improved health and wellbeing	£13,000.00
Food Partnership	Vulnerable adults	To provide supplies/containers to enable distribution of food to rough sleepers and vulnerable people in temporary accommodation with limited /no cooking facilities	improved health and wellbeing as food can continue to be provided to vulnerable homeless and rough sleepers	£1,000.00
Youth outreach	11-18 year olds	To provide outreach support, emotional support and signposting into services also mentoring to help young people adjust to returning to school/college	Provide access to safe adults who can signpost into services and activities, reduce behavioural issues at school, young people as a route into the family	£28,000.00
Prevention and early intervention	Mental health and emotional wellbeing	Resources to work with communities to ensure people are building back their coping strategies and that effective signposting and support is available to those who need it.	Improved health and wellbeing, greater social connection	£30,000.00
Single Homelessness and Families at risk of homelessness	Single Homeless and Families at risk of homelessness	Provide a programme of activities for homeless	Improved health and wellbeing outcomes and social connections	£10,000.00
Financial capability	People who have to self isolate in financial hardship	Provide funds to administer applications of hardship to ensure those who are most vulnerable around finances follow the direction to self isolate.	Applications up to date. People who are in need of financial assistance receive payment.	£4,000.00
Finance	All households at risk of vulnerability or currently experiencing crisis.	Additional Money Mentor capacity to provide support to vulnerable families identified through LIFT	Reduce financial hardship	£21,000.00

Prevention and early intervention	Vulnerable people	To fund an additional Going Local Social Prescriber to support vulnerable people affected by Covid to signpost them to local services for support	Improved health outcomes	£20,416
Single Homelessness	Vulnerable Adults	To provide specialist support to Dual Diagnosis clients (Mental Health and Substance Misuse) - extension of pilot that ends in March	Support those with Dual Diagnosis: rough sleeping / in TA / in supported housing to prevent repeat rough sleeping/rough sleeping for the 1st time; improve health/wellbeing long term housing options through 1:1 MH support, harm minimisation support, support to access and engage with health/MH/Substance misuse support; housing: support to access/sustain/move on	£51,000.00
Vulnerable families at risk of homelessness	Vulnerable Adults with Children	To provide a temporary Housing / Finance and Move On Advisor OR overtime on existing roles to carry out targeted work for families in financial hardship - both homeless and threatened with homelessness: for those in TA re-assess circs and 'plug into support', point of contact to food banks to enable early intervention	Reduce financial hardship for households homeless or threatened with homelessness, prevention of homelessness through supporting households accessing foodbank support, support households into employment training to reduce long term impacts of financial hardship	£35,000.00
COVID Volunteers	Minoritised groups	To extend and develop the work of the Covid Volunteers and ensure effective reach and inclusion of minoritised groups, to provide good insights and provide a network of community messengers around covid and its impacts	Key groups feel engaged, involved and informed about Covid	£24,000.00
Development work with minoritised groups	Minoritised groups	Working with the Covid Volunteers (above), undertake a community development approach to work through the Covid issues identified by minoritised communities.	Minoritised groups feel more involved and connected. Greater health and wellbeing outcomes	£45,000.00

Vulnerable families at risk of or homelessness	Vulnerable households	Provide emergency payments for goods/services for households in crisis (single people and families in any housing) e.g. move in packs for people moving into settled tenancies from temporary or supported accommodation, emergency one off payments e.g. for replacement of white goods / furniture or pay utility bills/unexpected travel.	provide emergency assistance at the point of need, improve health/wellbeing/tenancy sustainment and reduce risks of homelessness	£100,000.00
Vulnerable families at risk of homelessness	Vulnerable households	Homeless prevention pot for personalised prevention packages: Homelessness continues to increase before the Eviction ban is lifted(01.06.21) and furlough ends, increase DHP pot (Revs and Bens), & financial support for those ineligible for DHP whom there is no statutory support, increase bad debt provision as arrears increasing and prevents move on	increase homeless prevention through bespoke arrangements to rescue tenancies ; improve move on options for those n TA	£125,000.00
Single Homelessness	Vulnerable Adults	Prevent homelessness: Domestic Abuse is increasing (1/3 of our male rough sleeper population are perps of DA): training for staff to coach behaviour change; 1-1 coaching for serious offenders, a female specialist worker to support the victims, reflective practice for staff	reduce repeat homelessness as a result of DA, improve outcomes and wellbeing for victims, train staff to improve our management of DA cases	£40,000.00
Covid safe practices	Businesses and communities	Additional capacity for work of the PH&R Team to be able to undertake key functions over the period around Covid safe measures	Enhanced health and safety	£10,100.00
Covid safe practices	Safety in the night time economy	To provide marshalls Fri & Sat in Worthing- ensure social distancing, safe dispersal from the town centre, reduction in violence,	Increased safety particularly for women, reduced violence amongst intoxicated people, increased safety for taxi drivers	£23,840.00
Vulnerable families at risk of or homelessness	Vulnerable households	Telljo: digital tool to identify and connect with vulnerable households	homeless prevention, improved health and wellbeing, access to employment (biggest protective factor against homelessness)	£36,200.00
		Total funding		£853,644.00
		<b>Total proposed spend</b>		£853,720.00

	Difference		£76.00
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## Appendix 2

### Adur RSI 4 (9 months: July – March)

Intervention	Cost
Flexible year round surge accommodation and move on support	£25,000

### Worthing RSI 4 (9 months: July – March)

Intervention	Cost
1 FTE Rough Sleeper Co-ordinator	£36,095
2.2 FTE Support Coordinator	£60,119
0.8 Complex Needs Manager	£29,138
1 FTE Mental Health Worker	£28,210
1.2 FTE Advice and Assessment	£32,187
Personalisation	£10,500
2 FTE Lettings Support Workers	£52,346
3 FTE Outreach Workers	£73,602
1 FTE Employment and Skills Worker	£27,810
PRS Grant	£9,500
Psychologically Informed Training	£3,200
Staging Post Beds x5	£10,000
Reflective Practice	£3,600
Flexible year round surge accommodation	£70,000
Move On Costs	£30,000
1 FTE Hospital Coordinator	£28,510
Total	£504,817