

Subject:	COVID-19 – Infection Control Funding – 2 nd Instalment
Date:	10 August 2020

1.0 Background

The Infection Control Grant allocation to Stockport is £3,109,586 on the basis there is 2,392 registered care home beds in the Borough. Funding is being received by the Council in two instalments. The first instalment of £1.555m was received by the Council on the 27th May. The element for care home provision was predominantly paid directly to Care Home providers on the 29th May.

The 2nd instalment of £1.555m was received by the Council on the 28th July.

It is expected that each care home should receive an amount per CQC registered bed. The amounts per bed represent 75% of the funding totalling £2,332,190.

The remaining 25% of £777,396 is discretionary and aligns to the wider grant conditions. The Council has aligned the 25% to support broader infection control commitments within homecare, day care and supporting living alongside funding for Public Health to support the care sector with wider Infection Control measures.

Conditions of the grant are that expenditure incurred can only be between the period 13th May 2020 – 23rd September 2020.

2.0 Care Home 1st instalment assessments

Alongside payment of the 1st instalment to care homes was a request for care homes to submit a completed template to Adult Social Care commissioners, which aligned to Annex E of the national submission (see appendix 1 below).

This request was to ensure care home providers were utilising the grant aligned to the grant conditions, which were shared with providers and forms the basis of consideration for paying the 2nd instalment.

These returns were also used to support a national submission (Annex E of the Infection Control grant), which was submitted on the 26th June and was used as a basis to review payment of the 2nd instalment to the Council.

3.0 Care Home 2nd instalment considerations

The current proposal is that care home providers will not receive their 2nd instalment if they have not:

- Updated the NHS capacity tracker (at least weekly)
- Returned a completed template

The 2nd instalment will also be withheld where Providers:

- Indicate that they will not spend the 2nd instalment
- Are no longer providing care home services

Further to this on the 9th July the Council signed up to the Unison pledge to protect care workers wages who have been adversely affected by the impact of COVID-19, this could either be due to isolating, shielding or being unable to work following a positive test.

The template in Appendix 1 (aligned to the grant annex template) asks providers to confirm that they are paying staff full wages following a positive test. It should be highlighted that there is a clear distinction between asking providers to pay staff full wages following a positive test and the more detailed grant guidance which also includes staff with suspected symptoms of COVID-19, awaiting a test and those who are isolating in line with government guidance.

Paying staff full wages following a positive test has been included within the analysis to understand which providers are using the grant monies to protect staff pay in this scenario. This provides further due diligence partially aligned to the Unison pledge. Any zero returns have been reviewed to understand whether:

- No care staff within a provider have had a positive test.
- Some care home providers are not ensuring staff pay is protected, following a positive test.

Alongside the template submissions is a legal agreement which the Council will be asking care home providers to sign in advance of the 2nd instalment being paid. This agreement emphasises the need for care home providers to give due regards to staff who are isolating in line with government guidance receiving their normal wages while doing so. This includes staff with suspected symptoms of Covid 19 awaiting a test, or any staff member for a period following a positive test.

The legal agreement also takes consideration of the issue with regards to state aid.

4.0 **Care Home Provider Analysis**

The table below provides analysis of the Care Home Providers / Vendors, highlighting where the criteria set out in section 3 has not been adhered to. All providers currently operating have confirmed that they will protect staff pay in the event of a positive test and are complying with the requirements to update the Capacity Tracker and submit the template request.

Ref	Description	Number of Vendors
1	Not updated capacity tracker weekly	0
2	Not submitted completed template request	1*
3	Indicated Provider will not spend 2 nd instalment	0
4	Provider no longer delivering care home provision	1*
5	Protecting staff pay following a positive test	0

*One care home is now closed and the number relates to this

5.0 **Proposals**

Where providers are not within the categories in the table above and have returned their Infection Control Grant legal agreement, then the proposal is that these providers are paid their 2nd instalment.

Where a provider falls within the criteria Ref 1 - Ref 4 above then the 2nd instalment would be withheld, and further discussions held with the provider.

While it should not be a prerequisite to withhold payment of the 2nd instalment for Ref 5; should a provider not be in agreement with maintaining normal wages following a positive test, then further engagement would be required between ASC commissioners and the provider(s) to understand the reasons for this and what further support the provider would require to implement this request.

6.0 **Timeline**

A timeline of the process is set out below:

- 29th July - report taken to Adults SMT
- 31st July – full report taken to CLT for consideration
- 3rd August - legal agreements issued to care home providers
- 5th August – Payments made to Care Home providers who have returned their legal agreement and meet the criteria as set out in Section 5 of this report.

Further batch payments will be made to providers after the 5th August as legal agreements are returned.

Appendix 1:

Infection Control money element	Monies spent in these areas (from 13th May 2020)	Detail and evidence of spending
Measures to isolate residents within their own care homes		
Actions to restrict staff movement within care homes		
Paying staff full wages while isolating following a positive test		
Other (within the scope of the guidance given; please indicate below)		
Please list other infection control measures your allocation of the Infection Control Fund has been used for.		