

## Cherwell District Containing Outbreak Management Fund Guidance Notes

Please note that all funding requests must be submitted electronically to [parishes@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:parishes@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

February 2021

### Summary

Cherwell has received (via OCC) a share of the government's Containing Outbreak Management Fund ('COMF') to contain and mitigate the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. We recognise that Town and Parish councils have an important role to play, so we have set aside a fund for parishes to undertake and facilitate local action.

This is part of our commitment to supporting local communities across the District through the Covid-19 response and recovery.

### Our Approach

The purpose of the fund is to support Parish authorities to take or facilitate local action in their communities. It is specifically aimed at reducing the spread of Covid-19 or mitigating the effects of the pandemic on vulnerable communities and individuals

Each parish has a maximum allocation based on size of electorate (averaging just over £3 per elector). A sum of up to this amount can be requested using the COMF Funding Request Form which accompanies these guidance notes.

### Background

Terms of the government funding to upper tier authorities states that COMF must be used for public health purposes to tackle Covid-19. Twelve examples are given of the types of activities that COMF funding could be used to support:

1. *Targeted testing for hard-to-reach groups out of scope of other testing programmes.*
2. *Additional contact tracing.*
3. *Targeted interventions for specific sections of the local community and workplaces.*
4. *Support for engagement and analysis of regional areas to assess and learn from local initiatives.*
5. *Targeted support for school/university outbreaks.*
6. *Extension/introduction of specialist support (e.g. behavioural science, bespoke comms).*
7. *Harnessing capacity within local sectors (e.g. voluntary, academic, commercial).*

8. *Providing initial support, as needed, to vulnerable people classed as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable who are following tier 3 guidance.*
9. *Community-based support for those disproportionately impacted (such as the BAME population).*
10. *Enhanced communication and marketing (e.g. towards hard-to-reach groups and other localised messaging).*
11. *Delivery of essentials for those in self-isolation.*
12. *Additional resource for compliance with, and enforcement of, restrictions and guidance*

Actions under 1 – 6 have been separately undertaken or supported by the County and District Councils. Creation of this Parish COMF fund is one of CDC's actions under example 7 'Harnessing capacity within local sectors'.

We anticipate that parish authorities will use their COMF funding to undertake and support local actions under examples 8-12.

#### **What can COMF Funding be used for?**

The government guidance can be interpreted fairly broadly to suit the circumstances of your locality and the needs of your population. However, there must always be a clear link to preventing the spread of disease and mitigating the effects of the pandemic.

You should particularly consider the needs of people who may be 'hard to reach'.

Funding can be passed on from you to legitimate local groups and organisations to undertake relevant action (e.g. 'Good Neighbour' schemes, Village hall committees, Playing field management committees).

#### **Examples:**

- Targeted communication about local support and assistance
  - Production and distribution of localised 'Enhanced Communication and Marketing' (leaflets, websites, signage) to inform residents of the services available to them and encourage compliance with the coronavirus restrictions and guidelines.
- Support for vulnerable and self-isolating residents, including befriending schemes and 'Good Neighbour' schemes.
- Village Halls, parks, allotments & cemeteries - measures to encourage and assist compliance with restrictions and guidance.
  - Signage-COVID information
  - Enable safe social distancing
  - Social distancing markings
  - Additional hygiene measures

Funding can only be requested for planned or proposed action. It cannot be used to retrospectively fund action that has already taken place.

Funding can only be requested for specific expenditure, not for building up reserves against possible future expenditure or for general support of local organisations.

## Constraints on Parish Expenditure

Unless they have adopted the 'General Power of Competence' parishes must relate their spending to specific powers and duties set out in regulations and legislation.

For expenditure that is for the public good, but outside any of the specific powers and duties, parishes may rely on s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972. An annual 'per elector' limit restricts 's.137 expenditure' to £8.32 per elector in 2020/21 and £8.42 per elector in 2021/22.

To assist with the funding request, the table annexed to these guidance notes sets out some of the powers and duties which may be most relevant to COMF activities.

## Completing and submitting your request

Please use the accompanying form to set out your proposals. In order to facilitate timely action, the costs cited may be estimates if you do not yet have firm quotes or prices.

We need to receive your funding request by **26 March 2021**.

Before submitting, please ensure you have signed the request form. For this scheme electronic or typed signatures will be accepted.

The completed request form should be submitted to [parishes@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:parishes@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

We will check your funding request to make sure your proposals align with COMF guidelines. We will contact you if we require further information. We will notify you of the outcome by email within 10 days of receipt of the funding request.

## Monitoring

Recipients of this funding need to be prepared for a review of their project, which may include:

- Receipts recording how the money was spent
- Reports on the activity funded
- Feedback from individuals impacted
- Any other record of the activity funded (e.g. promotional flyers and posters)

Any setbacks to the implementation of the projects should be reported to [parishes@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:parishes@cherwell-dc.gov.uk). Delivery of the projects will be monitored as per the description in the project proposal.

Any unspent grant funding will be recovered by the Council.

## Contact us

Email: [parishes@cherwell-dc.gov.uk](mailto:parishes@cherwell-dc.gov.uk)

Lydia Avann, Healthy Communities Partner on 01295 221861  
or in Lydia's absence:  
Kevin Larner, Healthy Communities Manager on 01295 221706