

COVID-19 testing – continued delegation of function to Cambridgeshire County Council

Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Public Health

May 2021

Deadline date: June 2021

Cabinet portfolio holder:	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Public Health Emmeline Watson, interim Director of Public Health
Responsible Director:	
Is this a Key Decision?	NO
Is this decision eligible for call-in?	YES
Does this Public report have any annex that contains exempt information?	NO
Is this a project and if so has it been registered on Verto?	NO

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet Member is recommended to approve the following.

1. Authorise the continued delegation of authority to Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) to act as lead local authority in covid-19 testing, including delivering community lateral flow testing and commissioning the COVID-19 Urgent and Surge Community Swabbing Service across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire and for delivery of the function of the service, which shall include the associated transfer of funding to CCC from 18 July 2021 until 31 March 2022, with the option to extend the delegation for a further period of 12 months until 31 March 2023 . CCC shall enter into contract with the supplier for the delivery of this service.

1. PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

- 1.1 This report is for the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Public Health to consider exercising delegated authority under paragraph 3.4.3 of Part 3 of the Constitution in accordance with the terms of their portfolio at paragraph (f).

2. TIMESCALES

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	N/A
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3. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

3.1 The Government launched the NHS Test and Trace Service on 28th May 2020. This national service is designed to control the virus and enable people to live a safer and more normal life. The overarching guiding principles are Test; Trace; Contain; Enable.

3.2 Local planning and response will be the key to allowing the national service to work effectively at large scale. Local outbreak management plans have also been developed, with covid-19 testing as a key cross-cutting area.

3.3 The local outbreak and community lateral flow testing services will need to ensure a swift response that is accessible to the local population. A key consideration will be the ability of the local testing system to be able to respond swiftly once a complex cluster or setting has been identified through the national NHS Test and Trace initiative or through any other national or local stakeholders; e.g. East of England PHE Centre

3.4 Aims and Objectives

3.5 The objective is to ensure that swift and effective local provision of community lateral flow testing, and swabbing in the event of an outbreak, is available to support the multiagency SARS-CoV-2 outbreak response in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and in line with national policy direction.

3.6 The initial delegation was authorised within CMDN JUL20/CMDN/10 for the initial period up until 31 October 2020, whereby CCC undertook an urgent and short term procurement in order to contract with the successful supplier for the provision of a COVID-19 Urgent and Surge Community Swabbing Service. A further delegation was authorised in October 2020 until 17 July 2021, whereby CCC undertook a light touch tender to contract with a supplier for ongoing provision of the service on behalf of CCC and PCC. During this time period, a national directive was given to local authorities to commence community lateral flow testing, which CCC operates on behalf of both PCC and CCC.

3.7 There is an ongoing need for both services. There is synergy in the Council's working together given that both services will be provided within the boundaries of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Authority areas and there are clear efficiencies in having one service provision across the two Local authority areas.

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 Consultation has been undertaken between Public Health, Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council.

5. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

- 5.1 The outbreak service will undertake swabbing, arrange for couriering and testing of swabs and communication of both positive and negative results as per agreed protocol in any community setting in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough where there is a need for outbreak or cluster testing.
- 5.2 Community settings may include schools, early years' settings, workplaces, homeless accommodation and households; this list is not exclusive. Both symptomatic and asymptomatic possible cases and contacts may need to be swabbed, depending on the situation. This service will swab both adults and children.
- 5.3 Community lateral flow testing will be responsive to both national policy and local need, offering asymptomatic testing to key priority groups as well as the general population.

6. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 To ensure that the local testing service provides a swift response that is accessible to the local population (defining how to prioritise and manage deployment) and the ability of the local testing system to be able to respond swiftly once a complex cluster or setting has been identified through the national NHS Test and Trace initiative or through any other national or local stakeholders; e.g. East of England PHE Centre.
- 6.2 The continued delegating of authority to CCC to act as lead local authority in commissioning the COVID-19 Urgent and Surge Community Swabbing Service across Peterborough and Cambridgeshire and for delivery of the function of the community lateral flow testing service is recommended on the basis of strategic and geographical practicalities.

7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 7.1 For CCC and PCC to commission the outbreak service and deliver the community lateral flow testing service separately, however given that the services will generally be provided within the boundaries of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Authority areas there are clear efficiencies in having one service across the two Local authority areas.

8. IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Financial Implications

Funding for the outbreak testing service will come from the COMF grant and agreed through the associated financial processes.

Funding for community lateral flow testing comes through a combination of a specific community LFT grant from DHSC and the COMF grant.

8.2 Legal Implications

- 8.2.1 Legal implications shall be considered and addressed within the Delegation and Partnering Agreement underpinning the transfer of commissioning authority to Cambridgeshire. The council shall delegate its commissioning responsibility and delivery of the function for the COVID-19 Urgent and Surge Community Swabbing Service and community lateral flow testing service to CCC and shall transfer funding to CCC accordingly. CCC shall therefore act as lead commissioner and enter into contractual arrangements on the council's behalf.
- 8.2.2 The Parties shall enter into a Delegation and Partnering Agreement in reliance on their powers and the exclusive rights given to local authorities to undertake administrative

arrangements of this nature in sections 101 and 113 of the Local Government Act 1972, and sections 19 and 20 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the regulations made under these Acts; together with the general power within section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the supporting provisions within section 111 Local Government Act 1972.

- 8.2.3 The Delegation and Partnering Agreement shall set out clear roles and responsibilities for both councils, including (but not limited to) liabilities, financial arrangements, information governance, data protection and performance management.

8.4 Equalities Implications

- 8.4.1 The local testing services will enable testing to be accessible to all individuals in the community.

8.5 Carbon Impact Assessment

- 8.5.1 Potential negative impact but this is unavoidable. Efforts will be made to ensure carbon impacts, such as staff travel, are kept to a minimum.

9. DECLARATIONS / CONFLICTS OF INTEREST & DISPENSATIONS GRANTED

- 9.1 None.

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 10.1 None.

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 None.