

From: Dan Watkins, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health
Dr Anjan Ghosh, Director of Public Health

To: Health Reform and Public Health Cabinet Committee - 19 November 2024

Subject: Stop Smoking Services and Support Grant – Update

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of Report: N/A

Future Pathway of Report: N/A

Electoral Division: All

Is the decision eligible for call-in? Not applicable

Summary: On 4 October 2023, the government published *Stopping the start: our new plan to create a smokefree generation*¹. This included a programme of funding to support current smokers to quit smoking, with Kent County Council (receiving £1.9 million additional funding for 2024/2025 for local stop smoking services and support.

The additional funding is a great opportunity for the council to increase and enhance the stop smoking service offer for Kent residents and therefore improve outcomes (measured through numbers of people setting a quit date). The funding will be used to build demand and capacity in stop smoking services and increase targeting.

The purpose of this paper is to update the committee on the progress of spending the Grant to date and share the plan for future work. It follows Key Decision papers previously presented at the Health Reform and Public Health Cabinet Committee in January 2024 (24/00001) and May 2024 (24/00028).

A variety of projects have been enacted utilising the Grant funding to increase awareness and demand, enhance existing service offers and increase choice and capacity with newly commissioned service offers, to increase the number of Kent residents giving up smoking

To date, good progress has been against the plan presented previously and it is anticipated the council will be on track to achieve its yearly target of 6,252 quit dates set once the newly commissioned services start delivery later in the year.

¹ [Stopping the start: our new plan to create a smokefree generation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/stopping-the-start-our-new-plan-to-create-a-smokefree-generation)

Recommendation(s):The Health Reform and Public Health Cabinet Committee is asked to **NOTE** the information contained within this update report, and to **COMMENT** on the Grant and the future plans.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 On 4 October 2023, the government published Stopping the start: our new plan to create a smokefree generation. This included a programme of funding to support current smokers to quit smoking, with £70 million additional funding per year for local stop smoking services and support. Kent County Council (KCC) was allocated £1.9 million from this funding for 2024/2025.
- 1.2 This new ring-fenced funding is in addition to the Public Health Grant and is being provided through a new Section 31 Grant on top of the current Public Health Grant allocations. The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) will provide the grant and the additional funding will be used to complement and enhance existing stop smoking services in Kent.
- 1.3 It is a condition of this Grant that funding levels for stop smoking services from the core Public Health Grant are maintained at the levels established in 2022/2023.
- 1.4 Key Decision papers were previously presented at the Health Reform Public Health Cabinet Committee in January 2024 (24/00001) and May 2024 (24/00028).

2. Stop Smoking Services and Support Grant Background

- 2.1 On 5 June 2024, the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health agreed to approve the commissioning of Stop Smoking Services to deliver against the Support Grant and project requirements, and approve the framework arrangements set out in the report for ongoing management of the Stop Smoking Services and Support Grant 2024/2025 to 2028/2029.
- 2.2 The Key Decision also delegated authority to the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, to take relevant actions, including but not limited to, awarding, finalising the terms of and entering into the relevant contracts or other legal agreements, as necessary, to implement the decision.
- 2.3 Under this framework all expenditure of Local Stop Smoking Services and Support Grant funding must be in line with budget forecasting and adhere to DHSC Local Stop Smoking Services and Support Grant terms and conditions. Proposals for spend must meet the following criteria:
 - a. Will support the council in enhancing commissioned stop smoking services and support. This should not replace other/existing programmes which support smokers to quit, for example the tobacco dependency programme delivered within the NHS Long Term Plan

- b. Will support the council to build capacity to deliver expanded local Stop Smoking Services and support
 - c. Will build demand for local Stop Smoking Services and support
 - d. Will support the council to deliver increases in the number of people setting a quit date and 4 week quit outcomes.
- 2.3 Following agreement in June, Public Health and Integrated Commissioning have been progressing plans against this framework, with further plans being developed and finalised, in order to spend Kent's full £1.9 million allocation by April 2025 and meet DHSC targets on the number of additional set quit dates achieved.
- 2.4 Future years funding allocations could be impacted by spending review settlements and any underspend potentially leading to a future deduction in subsequent years grant allocations.
- 3. Enhancing Commissioned Stop Smoking Services**
- 3.1 Building Capacity within existing Kent Stop Smoking Services – Due to an increase in referrals into Kent's Stop Smoking Services (delivered by Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust (KCHFT)) in 2023/2024, and anticipated continued increases in 2024/25 onwards, some of the funding is being utilised to boost capacity within existing services to meet this increased demand.
- 3.2 KCHFT is utilising this funding to recruit an additional five stop smoking advisors who will predominantly support people being referred from health settings. The funding will also support the additional Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) costs associated with supporting a greater number of people to quit smoking.
- 3.3 New referral pathways have also been established with the NHS Lung Health Check Programme and in Acute Hospital settings which are expected to further add to the increases in referrals from 2024/2025 onwards.
- 3.4 KCHFT advertised the positions in August 2024 and all five posts were filled through this process. It is estimated that these stop smoking advisors will begin delivery in mid-late Quarter 3 2024/2025 and will predominately support referrals from health settings.
- 3.4 **Additional money for new and returning Pharmacotherapy treatments** – In October 2021, Varenicline was removed from production by Pfizer due to an impurity found within the medicine. Up to this point, Varenicline was used within the council's local Stop Smoking Services and national Stop Smoking Services as a way of supporting people to quit smoking by reducing cravings. Following its removal, KCC only supplied NRT to support people to quit smoking.

- 3.5 In early 2024, it was announced that Varenicline would return to the UK in 2024 and in order to use this again within treatment services, KCC is working with the Local Pharmaceutical Committee and KCHFT to ensure the correct processes are in place in order to supply this again.
- 3.6 Alongside Varenicline, another smoking cessation pharmacotherapy, Cytisine, was given approval for use in the UK in early 2024 by the Medicines and Health Care Products Regulatory Agency. Cytisine is plant-based and therefore is able to be taken by vegans which Varenicline is not. This allows vegans to also access pharmacological support as part of their treatment plan.
- 3.7 Grant money is being allocated to fund access to both pharmacotherapies in 2024/2025. It is believed the availability of these other pharmacotherapies, alongside offering NRT, will increase the number of Kent residents quitting smoking successfully and help to facilitate client choice.

4. Support the Council to Build Capacity

- 4.1 **Public Health/Integrated Commissioning Staffing** – In order to deliver and achieve the funding outcomes at pace, additional fixed-term staffing resources have been recruited to in both the Public Health and Integrated Commissioning Teams. These roles will focus on delivering and monitoring the programmes and ensuring there is capacity within both teams to sufficiently meet the Grant aims.
- 4.2 Funding has also been used to fund substantive staff time spent on the Grant, in order to ensure KCC is still able to meet other responsibilities away from the Grant. As the newly appointed staff become more embedded within KCC it is envisaged that substantive staff time on the Grant will reduce.

5. Build Demand for local Stop Smoking Services

- 5.1 **Communications** – Money is being invested into the communications budget in order to further promote existing KCC Stop Smoking Services and newly commissioned services and increase demand from Kent residents.
- 5.2 KCC is investing in regionally produced branding “It’s Well Worth it” which will link smokefree messages with those of other local authorities. These will be modified to reflect the offer in Kent and signpost people to KCC’s Quit smoking website ².
- 5.3 KCC’s Quit Smoking website will be updated as part of this work to reflect newly commissioned services and the benefits of quitting smoking. These updates will take place in Quarters 3 and 4 of 2024/2025.
- 5.4 KCC will also be increasing the visibility of its advertising of the services through this funding. Increased advertising on Spotify, Digital adverts, Social

² <https://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health/one-you-kent/quit-smoking>

Media advertising and YouTube adverts should give the services a greater digital reach. Physical adverts will also be erected at several Kent Football clubs to target individuals in attendance at matches.

5.5 **Smokefree Spaces projects** - Following on from the success of the smokefree play spaces and smokefree school gates projects in 2015 and 2017, KCC is allocating a budget from the Grant to incentivise District, Borough and City Councils to deliver smokefree public spaces.

5.6 The aim of this initiative is to reduce second-hand smoke exposure to members of the public and reduce the take up of smoking by de-normalising smoking in public. Councils can achieve this by delivering campaigns, erecting smokefree signage and implementing policy in public spaces such as the grounds of hospitals, parks and green areas, child-friendly play areas, and the immediate vicinity of public buildings and schools. These spaces will also promote commissioned stop smoking services in order to increase referrals.

5.8 **GP Text Messaging** – KCC is working alongside the Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board (ICB) and Local Primary Care Networks (PCNs) to fund an awareness raising text message campaign which will involve GPs messaging patients that smoke, details of how to self-refer to one of KCC's Stop Smoking Services.

5.9 The funding will also be used to encourage GPs to hand out marketing materials and display information within surgeries on local stop smoking services and how to make a referral.

6. **Increase the number of people setting a quit date and four week quit outcomes.**

6.1 **Place Based Smoking Service** - Utilising information from the Kent Tobacco Needs Assessment³, funding is being allocated to commission a Stop Smoking Service which focuses delivery towards engagement with people from priority groups. This service will be based within communities and will look to motivate entrenched smokers to quit smoking.

6.2 The Service will work with a range of groups across Kent with a specific focus on supporting:

- Routine and Manual Workers
- Long term Sick and Unemployed
- Social Housing tenants
- People in the community with mental health needs who are receptive to stop smoking support
- Ethnic minority groups
- LGBTQ+ community

³ https://www.kpho.org.uk/data/assets/word_doc/0018/164034/Tobacco-Control-Needs-Assessment-2022.docx

- People experiencing homelessness
- People supported by the Criminal Justice System
- Smokers in substance misuse treatment services

6.3 This service will also include a dedicated provision/advisor(s) for young people who smoke (aged 12-25), delivering flexibly in locations where young people frequent. Support will be tailored to young people, ensuring that interventions are age appropriate.

6.4 It is envisaged that this service will go live during Quarter 3 of 2024/2025.

6.4 **Alternative Support pilot** – Some of the funding has been allocated to fund a pilot of an alternative method of supporting individuals to quit smoking. This service will explore supporting smokers to quit smoking without using NRT or pharmacotherapy as part of the quit journey.

6.5 A competitive procurement process was undertaken in Quarter 2 of 2024/2025 and Allen Carr EasyWay has been awarded the contract. Allen Carr focuses on changing a smoker's mindset towards smoking through a one day seminar (and the offer of smaller follow up sessions if required). The programme has proven successful in other Local Authority areas and across the world, and this will be a good opportunity for Kent to pilot this approach across the county.

6.6 Alongside Allen Carr, an evaluation of the approach will be undertaken, to assess the effectiveness and value for money achieved, to help inform future commissioning decisions.

7. Ideas in development

7.1 A Voluntary Community Sector (VCS) Grant process is being developed to encourage VCS organisations to promote KCC's smoking offer, signposting individuals to KCC's support offer and lead on potential harm reduction initiatives (e.g. Cut down to quit) with priority groups. This opportunity will be advertised via the KCC website, Community Grants and Funding page.

7.2 Public Health and the Integrated Commissioning team are also exploring other opportunities that the Grant funding could be utilised for in 2024/25. Conversations are being held with various KCC departments e.g. Adult Social Care, Growth, Economy and Transport to see if they are able to utilise the relationships they have with a variety of groups of people to support the aims of the Stop Smoking Services and Support Grant.

7.3 Projects funded through this stream are likely to focus on increasing the knowledge of Kent's smoking offer and training staff around smoking harm reduction strategies.

7.4 These initiatives will contribute to a raised awareness of Kent's smoking offer and a greater number of people accessing commissioned Stop Smoking services.

8. Reporting Requirement and Demonstrating Success

- 8.1 As part of the Grant Agreement, KCC is required to supply data and financial information to the DHSC quarterly. Kent's target is to achieve an additional 26,937 set quit dates over the next five years. In the first year (2024/2025) KCC is aiming for an additional 1,347 set quit dates, and 6,252 set quit dates in total, when combined with set quit dates from the core stop smoking service.
- 8.2 KCC has submitted its first return detailing the number of people supported in setting a quit date for Quarter 1 2024/2025. Kent has achieved 1,427 set quit dates in Quarter 1, which is 22% of its annual target.
- 8.3 Public Health and Integrated Commissioning are confident of reaching the first year's target once the additional Smoking Grant commissioned services begin in Quarters 2 and 3, adding to the set quit dates obtained from the core Stop Smoking Service.

9. Finance

- 9.1 Of Kent's £1.9m grant fund for 2024/2025, KCC has so far allocated £1,357,145, leaving an underspend of £587,677 which will go towards ideas currently in development (as set out earlier in the report)
- 9.2 There have been challenges around spending the total allocated amount with:
- Key decision to spend the funding was not possible until May 2024, delaying the start of commissioning activities
 - Procurement and Commissioning activity takes time to implement, leading to services not starting until Quarter 2 of 2024/2025
 - Delays with procuring the Place Based Service, linked to new Provider Selection Regime procurement legislation, leading to delays of two months
 - Projects that were due to be funded by the project securing alternative funding sources
 - Government reiterating that money could not be rolled over to other years to fund projects which begin in 2024/2025.
 - Difficulties in recruiting staff for short time frames within existing services when future funding is not necessarily guaranteed and contract end dates are soon.
- 9.3 Public Health are continuing to explore ways to spend this year's allocation whilst meeting the criteria of the Grant funding. It is anticipated the full grant allocation will be allocated for 2024/2025.

10. Conclusions

- 10.1 The Stop Smoking Services and Support Grant presents a great opportunity to further reduce the number of smokers in Kent and improve the health of the Kent population.
- 10.2 The programme has made good progress and work will continue to ensure DHSC targets are met. Working closely with colleagues, in Commercial and Procurement Public Health and Integrated Commissioning are working hard to spend Kent's allocation on projects which will increase awareness and demand, enhance service offers and increase choice and capacity with new service offers, to increase the number of Kent residents giving up smoking.
- 10.3 The next steps will be to continue to utilise the funding, in line with the Stop Smoking Service Framework, to fund services and initiatives which increase awareness and demand for Kent's Stop Smoking offer and lead to a greater number of people setting a quit date.

11. Recommendation(s): The Health Reform and Public Health Cabinet Committee is asked to **NOTE** the information contained within this update report, and to **COMMENT** on the programme.

12. Background Documents

Stop Smoking Services and Support Grant (Section 31 Grant)
[Decision - 24/00001 - Stop Smoking Services and Support Grant \(Section 31 Grant\) \(kent.gov.uk\)](#)

Spending the Stop Smoking Services and Support Grant
[Decision - 24/00028 - Spending the Stop Smoking Services and Support Grant \(kent.gov.uk\)](#)

13. Report Authors

Chris Beale
Interim Senior Commissioner
christopher.beale@kent.gov.uk

Vicky Tovey
Assistant Director of Public Health
victoria.tovey@kent.gov.uk

Relevant Public Health Consultant

Rutuja Kulkarni-Johnston
Consultant in Public Health
Rutuja.Kulkarni-Johnston@kent.gov.uk

Relevant Director

Dr Anjan Ghosh
Director of Public Health
anjan.ghosh@kent.gov.uk