

## REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2527

### Title: London Community Champion Coordinator programme

#### Executive summary:

This decision form seeks retrospective approval for funding of £12,000 for the London Borough of Newham (LB Newham) to support the London COVID-19 Community Champion Coordinator programme.

Supported by NHS England (NHSE) and Public Health England (PHE), the community champions will work across London to support COVID-19 vaccine uptake in their local areas. They will help communities to make informed choices about the vaccines and protect those who are at most risk from serious illness or death from COVID-19 by achieving high vaccine uptake among priority groups.

This funding will extend the network support from July to September 2021 through provision of additional sessions.

Due to the urgent nature of the work, which needed to start immediately, the Assistant Director of Health, Education and Youth and the Executive Director of Communities and Skills approved this funding, in consultation with the Mayoral Health Advisor, on 1 July 2021.

#### Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Health, Education and Youth approves:

Expenditure of £12,000 from the Health Team Budget (Health Inequalities Strategy workstream) to LB Newham to extend the London Community Champion Coordinator programme for a further three months, from July to September 2021.

#### AUTHORISING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/HEAD OF UNIT

I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

It has my approval.

**Name:** Jazz Bhogal

**Position:** Assistant Director for Health Education and Youth

**Signature:**



**Date:**

19 July 2021

## **PART I – NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE**

### **Decision required – supporting report**

#### **1. Introduction and background**

- 1.1 Widespread vaccination is required to reduce serious illness and mortality from COVID-19 and is part of the overall package of measures to enable the easing of public health restrictions. However, rates of vaccine uptake have been lower in London than in other regions in England, with people in poorer areas less likely to have had the vaccine. One way of increasing vaccination rates is to develop our understanding of the barriers, facilitators and uptake of the vaccine in different population groups in London through locally led, ongoing engagement.
- 1.2 The London Community Champion Coordinators programme began in LB Newham, in order to convey accurate, timely information to all parts of the Newham community and to help shape a local COVID-19 response to meet local needs. More than 450 COVID-19 health champions of all ages are now working with each other, their communities, LB Newham and its partners.
- 1.3 The programme has influenced how the council has supported residents during the COVID-19 crisis in areas such as: the rollout of the NHS Test and Trace app; getting COVID-19 tests while symptomatic; and supporting multi-generational families if someone tests positive for the virus. The council can also create communications in direct response to feedback, including concerns around scams and, more, recently myths being shared about the COVID-19 vaccine. The champions regularly report that the information is making a huge difference to their communities.
- 1.4 The programme is now being rolled out across London in a second phase supported by NHSE and PHE. The potential value from this programme's vaccine push is:
  - getting key messages out through champion coordinators
  - amplifying and scaling good practice
  - informing regional-level policy so that it is as effective as possible.
- 1.5 A London Vaccine Champions programme advisory group has been established to:
  - provide, and advise on, the design and delivery of the programme from the perspective of the constituent partners
  - capture and disseminate lessons for the system that arise from the programme, looking to integrate these into issues beyond COVID-19 where relevant
  - ensure the programme remains visible to senior leaders in each of the system players.
- 1.6 The advisory group includes representatives from Public Health England (London), NHS England, the GLA and London Councils.
- 1.7 Due to the urgent nature of the work the Assistant Director of Health, Education and Youth and the Executive Director of Communities and Skills approved this funding, in consultation with the Mayoral Health Advisor, on 1 July 2021.

#### **2. Objectives and expected outcomes**

- 2.1 The aim of this work is for the community champion coordinators across London to support an increase in vaccine uptake, particularly in the harder-to-reach groups.

- 2.2 This funding will enable the lead strategic coordinator to deliver three fortnightly sessions lasting 1.5 hours each, as well as continued support and coordination of the borough champion projects. Potential topics could include:
- working with link workers on social prescribing
  - supporting uptake in the Black community
  - community outreach models
  - working with the community and voluntary sector
  - evolving the vaccine message
  - booster vaccines
  - evaluation of programmes.
- 2.3 The funding of £12,000 will cover:
- seven fortnightly events
  - system feedback
  - mid-term and final events
  - programme management.
- 2.4 It is vitally important that every effort is made to increase vaccination rates before 19 July, when COVID restrictions are due to be lifted. The government wants to vaccinate all over-18s with a first dose, and two-thirds of adults with a second dose, by 19 July 2021.
- 2.5 Funding will be provided in the form of a grant to LB Newham and administered in accordance with the GLA Contracts and Funding Code.

### **3. Equality comments**

- 3.1 Existing health inequalities have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic; without equitable uptake of vaccination, these health inequalities will not be reduced and could increase. However, there are concerns that some groups are not being vaccinated at the same rate as others within the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation's priority cohorts. There are a number of different population groups who may be less likely to be vaccinated, and towards whom strategies to increase uptake can be targeted. These are:
- demographic groups (for example, age, ethnicity, disability, occupation, etc)
  - inclusion health groups (for example, people experiencing homelessness; vulnerable migrants; Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities; sex workers, people in contact with the criminal justice system; those recently released from prison; victims of modern slavery).

### **4. Other considerations**

*Key risks and issues*

- 4.1 The key risk is that if *the* London Community Champion Coordinators programme is not funded to do this additional work, a key opportunity to increase rates in groups that might be hesitant about vaccination will be lost.

*Links to Mayoral strategies and priorities*

- 4.2 The Mayor is actively supporting the work to promote the COVID-19 vaccination programme in London. He meets regularly with the government's Minister for COVID Vaccine Deployment, Nadhim Zahawi, with NHS England and with his statutory health adviser to review plans and data, and discuss progress, on the vaccine rollout. The Mayor has contributed to high levels of media coverage of London's vaccination programme, and the Deputy Mayor for Communities and Social Justice represents the Mayor on the Vaccine Equity Group. Information on how to get the vaccine is included on the London.gov website; a landing page is being produced that will advise Londoners on where to get the vaccine, and what to do if they are not registered with a GP.
- 4.3 This work will provide a tangible contribution to the vaccine 'push'.
- 4.4 There are no conflicts to declare.

## **5. Financial comments**

- 5.1 Retrospective approval is sought for expenditure of £12,000 in grant funding to the London Borough of Newham (LB Newham) to support the London COVID-19 Community Champion Coordinator programme.
- 5.2 The full cost will be funded from the 2021-22 Health Team's Programme budget (specifically the Health Inequalities Strategy workstream budget) under the 'Public Health and Health & Care Partnerships' recovery foundation.

## **6. Planned delivery approach and next steps**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Delivery start and end date	July to Sept 2021

## **Appendices and supporting papers:**

None.

### Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) and will be made available on the GLA website within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary. **Note:** This form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

### Part 1 – Deferral

**Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO**

If YES, for what reason:

Until what date: (a date is required if deferring)

### Part 2 – Sensitive information

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under the FoIA should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

**Is there a part 2 form – NO**

### ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to  
confirm the  
following (✓)

#### Drafting officer:

Alison Pearce has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

#### Corporate Investment Board

This decision was agreed by the Corporate Investment Board on 19 July 2021.

### ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL SERVICES:

I confirm that financial and legal implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this report.

**Signature**



**Date**

19 July 2021