

# Policy Committee

08 July 2024



**Reading**

Borough Council

Working better with you

<b>Title</b>	Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grant (SSMTRG)
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To make a decision
<b>Report status</b>	Public report
<b>Report author</b>	Sally Andersen, Senior Commissioner Drugs and Alcohol
<b>Lead Councillor</b>	Ruth McEwan, Lead Councillor for Education & Public Health
<b>Corporate priority</b>	Thriving Communities
<b>Recommendations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. That the Council accepts the SSMTRG Grant of £770,942 in 2024/25, to enhance the delivery of the drug and alcohol treatment and recovery system in Reading.</li><li>2. To seek delegated authority to spend the funding and award contracts necessary following due regard to Contract Procurement Regulations to implement the services, to the Executive Director – Community &amp; Adult Social Care Services in consultation with Lead Councillor for Education &amp; Public Health, and the Director of Finance and the Assistant Director of Legal &amp; Democratic Services.</li></ol>

## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The Government released a 10-year drug strategy “Harm to Hope” 2021, following an independent review by Dame Carol Black, whereby recommendations were made about what drug treatment, prevention, recovery, commissioning, and accountability mechanisms should look like.
- 1.2. A new Supplemental Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grant (SSMTRG) was issued to Local Authorities in 2022/23. The monies are to rebuild treatment and recovery systems, rebuild the workforce, ensure better integration of services, improve accommodation alongside treatment, improve employment opportunities, increase referrals and pathways for those in the criminal justice system and those leaving prison.
- 1.3. Reading has received the SSMTRG grant over the past two years in 2022/23 and 2023/24 and has supported some key enhancements and improvements in drug and alcohol service provision such as an increased workforce and training offer, additional commissioning support, additional treatment places and rehab placements and an increase in availability and access to naloxone. See Table 1:

Table 1:

Reading SSMTRG Allocation 2022-2025	£
2022 - 2023	413,221
2023 – 2024	469,761

2024 -2025	770,942
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- 1.4. The Council was notified in February 2024 that it will be awarded a grant of £770,942 for 2024-25.
- 1.5. This report is to authorise the acceptance and use of the 2024/25 “Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery Grant” (SSMTRG).
- 1.6. Due to the deadline required to accept the SSMTRG grant which was a couple of weeks prior to the date of the 11<sup>th</sup> of March 2024 Policy committee meeting, the Director of Public Health has accepted the 24/25 grant and Committee approval is being sought retrospectively.

## 2. Policy Context

- 2.1. The National Drug Strategy 2021 sets out a national and local focus on three strategic priorities:
  - Breaking drug supply chains
  - Delivering a world-class treatment and recovery system
  - Achieving a generational shift in demand for drugs
- 2.2. The SSMTRG is a three-year supplemental grant, confirmed annually by the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID), to enable local authorities to meet the priorities and objectives of the National Drugs Strategy 2021.
- 2.3. This SSMTRG funding is in addition to the £1,748,900 spend on drug and alcohol treatment allocated from the Public Health Grant.
- 2.4. The National Drug Strategy required local authorities to establish a multi-agency partnership board. Berkshire have a Combating Drugs Partnership, led by Ingrid Slade, Wokingham Director of Public Health which brings together all the relevant partners and organisations who are to key to collaborate and work together to achieve the implementation of all three of the Strategy’s priorities.

## 3. The Proposal

- 3.1. The National Drug Strategy is accompanied by additional funding provided through Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) across three years between April 2022 and March 2025. The additional funding is for local areas to plan, and commission approved interventions which support the Drug Strategy priorities.
- 3.2. OHID set a menu of interventions for the spend. Reading was required to submit a plan for the 2024/25 grant which was authorised by OHID in February 2024.
- 3.3. There is an expectation that the SSMTRG investment will focus more on increasing the number of treatment places for people using drugs and/or alcohol and will deliver an increased service level to meet resident demand within the scope of the current drug and alcohol treatment specification design.
- 3.4. Reading is to receive £770,942 in 2024/25. This will be allocated to:

Intervention	Proposal	Cost
Improved system coordination and commissioning	Partnership capacity – CDP strategic lead	77,485
	Collaboration capacity – Inpatient detox commissioning support	

	Commissioning support within Public Health Team	
Enhanced harm reduction provision	South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) project - south collaboration of distribution of naloxone via SCAS  Drug testing Pilot (LDIS) - Hampshire collaboration	3,660
Increased treatment capacity	Additional treatment places for Opiate users  Additional treatment places for alcohol  Increase Young people treatment capacity.  Long-acting opioid substitution (Buprenorphine)	136,950
Increased integration and improved care pathways between the criminal justice settings, and drug treatment	Increase workforce capacity to undertake criminal justice assessments, improve working arrangements and pathways	120,382
Enhancing treatment quality	Increase clinical workforce to deliver pharmacological intervention and improve quality of service.  Additional pharmacological costs for additional Opiate treatment placements	172,045
Residential rehabilitation and inpatient detoxification	4 rehab places	59,620
Better and more integrated responses to physical and mental health issues	Additional workforce for physical and mental health screening and assessment	45,224
Enhanced recovery support	Recovery support and recovery communities' projects	147,576
Expanding the competency and size of the workforce system co-ordination and commissioning	Staff development and training, including clinical supervision	8,000

3.5. The funding aims to achieve the following outcomes:

- reduced likelihood of drug and alcohol related deaths
- increase in number of people into drug and alcohol treatment.

- a reduction in drug and alcohol related reoffending amongst prolific offenders within local areas
- increase in the numbers of drug and alcohol users, especially offenders, engaging in treatment as well as increases in those achieving and sustaining recovery.
- reduced costs for local health services and police forces due to lower health and crime harms, and lower costs to the criminal justice system (as fewer people are dealt with by the courts).

3.6. Reading is required to report quarterly spend and performance to OHID.

3.7. The value of the SSMTRG in 24/25 is such that the Constitution requires formal approval by Committee. Due to the timing of the announcement of the funding and the deadline for acceptance, the Director of Public Health authorised the 24/25 plans and accepted the grant to avoid losing the opportunity. The Council has accepted this grant for the past two years, each year has been under £500k and therefore within Officer delegation.

#### **4. Contribution to Strategic Aims**

4.1. The use of drugs and/or alcohol is known to have a negative impact on individuals health and their health outcomes. The SSMTRG grant plan is aimed to build, create and develop a stronger treatment system, to enable people to live healthier lifestyles and improve our community's health and wellbeing.

4.2. The Council's new Corporate Plan has established three themes for the years 2022/25. These themes are:

- Healthy Environment
- Thriving Communities
- Inclusive Economy

4.3. The SSMTRGrant reflects and works towards the Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021 -2030 by:

[Priority 1](#): Reduce the differences in health between different groups of people, focus on improving the health of those who use drugs and/ or alcohol

[Priority 2](#): Support individuals at high risk of bad health outcomes to live healthy lives, identification, advice and treatment capacity.

[Priority 3](#): Help families and children in early years and increase the treatment capacity for young people.

[Priority 5](#): Promote good mental health and wellbeing for all adults, better and more integrated response to physical and mental health issues.

4.4. The SSMTRG will provide an opportunity so that an additional 169 people can access treatment in a timely manner as well as tackling the wider determinants of health i.e., crime, employment, housing and homelessness.

#### **5. Environmental and Climate Implications**

5.1. There are no environmental or climate implications arising from the proposed decision. Treatment services and the buildings they are delivered from are already in place. The additional monies do not foresee any impact on CO2 emissions or impact on climate change.

#### **6. Community Engagement**

6.1. A comprehensive Berkshire West needs assessment was carried out in Autumn 2022 to inform the development of the Berkshire Combating Drugs Partnership Action Plan, and for future commissioning and planning of services. To summarise, there are approx. 6000 adults across Berkshire West who have problematic drug or alcohol use -

Rates per population higher than the England average were in Reading, particularly around opiate use. There were 21 deaths across Berkshire West registered during 2021 that were related to drug misuse. Deaths are highest in Reading Local Authority with an age standardised rate of 8 per 100,000 population compared to a rate of 3 per 100,000 in West Berkshire and Wokingham. The link to the Berkshire West needs assessment can be found here [Berkshire-West-Drug-and-Alcohol-needs-assessment-2022-v0.4.pdf \(berkshireobservatory.co.uk\)](#)

- 6.2. The Berkshire Combating Drugs Partnership which oversees the implementation and monitoring of planned activities; have been engaged in and contributed to planning the funding allocations. Berkshire has a total 24/25 SSMTRG grant allocation of £1,859,565.

## **7. Equality Implications**

- 7.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
  - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 7.2. An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is not relevant to the decision to accept the grant monies.
- 7.3. The SSMTRG is accessible for those who use drugs and/or alcohol in Reading. The grant activities will work to address the health inequalities of the most vulnerable members of Reading's communities. The monies will enhance access to treatment, and it will be monitored to ensure protected groups are not disadvantaged or excluded.

## **8. Other Relevant Considerations**

- 8.1. Procurement - The SSMTRG grant is to enhance existing treatment services. Change Grow Live are in contract until 2026 to deliver the drug and alcohol treatment service.
- 8.2. The Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPR) 28.1 state that contracts can only be varied where permitted by the Regulations (Public Contract regulations 2015 (PCR)) and in accordance with the existing contract terms & within permitted variation limits as stated by the Regulations.
- 8.3. Modifications where, irrespective of value, the nature of the contract does not substantially change are permitted under PCR Regulation 72.1 (e) (and respectively under CPR 28).
- 8.4. Reg 72 of the PCRs also state contracts may be modified without a new procurement procedure, with regulation 72 (c) stating: where all of the following conditions are fulfilled:
- (ii) the modification does not alter the overall nature of the contract.
  - (iii) any increase in price does not exceed 50% of the value of the original contract or framework agreement.
- 8.5. Through discussions with Procurement Team, it has been agreed that this grant being provided to deliver improvements of existing services, having no material change to the contract, additional funding is below 50% of the overall contract value, and is within existing contract terms; is compliant with the PCR 2015 regulations above, and that of Reading's CPRs.

## **9. Legal Implications**

- 9.1. The SSMTRG will be issued as a section 31 grant.
- 9.2. If the Grant Funding route includes variation of an existing current contract that variation must be assessed to ensure compliance with both the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (reg72) and the Councils Contract Procedure Rules.
- 9.3. If the Grant Funding route includes procurement of a new contract an assessment under the Subsidy Control Act must be undertaken.
- 9.4. The Council will ensure compliance with the terms of the MOU signed as a part of receiving the Grant funding.
- 9.5. Legal Team will assist with the variation in contract to the treatment provider.

## **10. Financial Implications**

- 10.1. The 2024/25 SSMTRG grant is confirmed as £770,942.
- 10.2. The grant conditions require the grant to be spent in year and any amounts underspent may be subject to clawback.

## **11. Timetable for Implementation**

- 11.1. The SSMTRG grant must be spent by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 and any monies unspent must be returned to the National Grants Team.
- 11.2. The Public Health Team must return quarterly finance and performance data to enable monitoring of spend.

## **12. Background Papers**

- 12.1. There are none.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications arising from the proposals set out in this report are set out below:-

### 1. Revenue Implications

SSMTRG Grant allocation are highlighted in the table below.

	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000
Employee costs	366,766	528,375	-
Other running costs	102,995	242,567	-
Capital financings costs			
<b>Expenditure</b>	469,761	770,942	
Income from: Fees and charges			
Grant funding (specify)	469,761	770,942	TBC
Other income			
<b>Total Income</b>	469,761	770,942	TBC
Net Cost(+)/saving (-)	-	-	-

### 2. Value for Money (VFM)

Alcohol treatment reflects a return on investment of £3 for every £1 invested, which increases to £26 over 10 years.

Drug treatment reflects a return on investment of £4 for every £1 invested, which increases to £21 over 10 years.

[Alcohol and drug prevention, treatment and recovery: why invest? - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/alcohol-and-drug-prevention-treatment-and-recovery-why-invest)

### 3. Risk Assessment.

Any unspent grant monies must be returned to the National Grants Team.