

Local authorities across England receive funding to support new Test and Trace service

- Government confirms the allocations of £300 million for local authorities across England to support test and trace services
- Funding will help local communities develop and action plans to reduce the spread of coronavirus in their area
- Work will build on the continued efforts of communities to respond to the pandemic locally

Local authorities are central to the new NHS Test and Trace service, and each upper tier local authority has now been awarded funding to develop tailored outbreak control plans, working with the service, their local NHS and other stakeholders.

Work on local outbreak control plans has already begun, focusing on identifying and containing potential outbreaks in communal areas such as workplaces, housing complexes, care homes and schools. Local authorities will also need to ensure testing capacity is deployed effectively to high-risk locations.

Funding has been allocated to councils based on need, with additional funding provided for communities with lower incomes and higher demand for local healthcare settings.

Minister for Patient Safety, Suicide Prevention and Mental Health, Nadine Dorries, said:

Local authorities play a vital role in the effort to contain COVID-19 in their communities. The funding awarded today will help each local area work hand in hand with Public Health England and contact tracers to focus on the containment of local outbreaks, to control the transmission of this virus.

The public response to the rollout of NHS Test and Trace has been fantastic, and we continue to rely on everyone to play their part and follow the latest guidelines. If you have symptoms of the virus, please book a test immediately and if you are contacted by the tracing service, it is vital that you follow their advice.

Minister for Regional Growth and Local Government, Simon Clarke, said:

Councils are playing a hugely important role in our national efforts to respond to the virus, and this includes test and trace services.

This £300 million of funding is on top of the unprecedented £3.2 billion package of support we have provided to councils to ensure they have what they need to tackle the virus and respond to the immediate pressures they have told us they are facing.

Work is being led by local authority leaders and local directors of public health in charge of planning, and will build on existing efforts to respond to coronavirus locally. They are working in close partnership with local hospitals, GP practices, businesses, religious groups, schools and charities.

Data on the spread of the virus will be shared with local authorities through the Joint Biosecurity Centre to inform local outbreak planning, so teams understand how the virus is moving. Local communities, organisations and individuals are now being encouraged to follow government guidance and assist those self-isolating in their area who need help. This will include encouraging neighbours to offer support, alongside identifying and working with relevant community groups.

National Test and Trace Adviser and Chief Executive of Leeds City Council, Tom Riordan, said:

Communities and local authorities must be at the heart of NHS Test and Trace. Their work to respond to the virus has already been exemplary, and demonstrates exactly how we have all come together to respond to the virus.

The funding allocated today will support the joint endeavour between NHS Test and Trace, local government, and local partners to stop the spread of the virus. It will help to reduce the risk of widespread outbreaks in our schools, businesses, hospitals and communities.

A new National Local Government Advisory Board has been established to work with NHS Test and Trace. This will include sharing best practice between communities across the country.

Work to share lessons learned is being led by a group of 11 local authorities from the breadth of the UK, representing rural and urban areas, who have volunteered to help localise planning.

The Department of Health and Social Care has allocated funding to upper tier local authorities in England, working with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on the allocation formula. The funding is ring-fenced for this specific purpose. £300 million will immediately be allocated to local authorities in England.

This would mean an additional £57 million provided via the Barnett formula for the 3 devolved administrations (£29 million for the Scottish Government, £18 million for the Welsh Government and £10 million for the Northern Ireland Executive).

Funding has been allocated to councils based on need, determined by the formula that is used to allocate the Public Health Grant.

[Funding allocations in England](#)

Revenge arsonist who murdered eight in a house fire is jailed for longer

A man who killed eight people of the same family in an act of revenge over his sister's relationship has had his sentence increased after intervention by the Solicitor General, the Rt Hon Michael Ellis QC MP.

Thirty seven year old Shahid Mohammed has finally faced justice, 17 years after fleeing to Pakistan and then being extradited for killing eight members of the same family in a revenge arson attack.

In 2002, Mohammed, who was 19 years old, set out with a group of friends to target the victim's family home equipped with four petrol bombs. Mohammed was in dispute with the victim over the relationship between the offender's sister and a man who was friends with the victim.

As the family of 11 including five children slept inside, the group threw the petrol bombs into the property then poured petrol through the letterbox and ignited it. The fire quickly engulfed the stairs to the first floor, trapping the family. Seven members of the family including the five children, all under the age of 13, burned to death. The family's grandmother, who jumped from a window to escape, later died from her injuries.

When on bail following the initial investigation, Mohammed fled to Pakistan and only returned to the UK on an extradition order 17 years after the attack.

On 7 August 2019, Mohammed was sentenced at Leeds Crown Court to life imprisonment with a minimum of 23 years' for conspiracy to commit arson and eight counts of murder.

Today, the sentence has been increased to life imprisonment with a minimum of 27 years' by the Court of Appeal, after it was referred as unduly lenient by the Solicitor General, the Rt Hon Michael Ellis QC MP.

After the hearing the Solicitor General, the Rt Hon Michael Ellis QC MP, said:

Eight innocent lives were lost, including five small children under 13 in an utterly odious and wicked attack perpetuated because of a personal dispute. The offender then extended the pain and suffering

of the victims' relatives by fleeing the jurisdiction and avoiding justice for many years. It is vital that Mohammed's sentence reflects this.

Adapting MINUSMA while working toward lasting peace in Mali

Merci beaucoup Monsieur President, thank you Minister le Drian and to the French Security Council Presidency for the opportunity to discuss the important issue of the situation in Mali. I am delighted that we have been joined by His Excellency Foreign Minister Dramé of Mali today. And let me also extend our thanks to their Excellencies, Secretary-General Guterres and African Union High Representative for the Sahel and Mali, Mr Buyoya, for reinforcing the importance of co-ordinated international response. We further welcome the commitment of the African Union to Mali and the region, including the commitment to deploy African Union forces. And let me assure all colleagues that the United Kingdom remains committed to working with all of you through the United Nations and through the new Sahel Coalition, as well as bilaterally to support progress in Mali.

As the Security Council meets this month to look at MINUSMA's progress and indeed to renew its mandate, we, like others, wish to join those recognising the immense sacrifices made by UN peacekeepers working for peace in Mali. In seven years, more than 200 personnel have lost their lives serving in MINUSMA. Now, the scourge of Covid-19 presents an added challenge to those who serve on the front line in this Mission. I wish to join with others and the Secretary-General in paying tribute to all our incredible peacekeepers who have lost their lives, including recently the two in Mali who tragically have died due to this global pandemic.

The work of peacekeepers saves lives. As we have heard today, MINUSMA continues to make an absolutely direct impact on the ground through its work to support the Malian Government and signatory parties in implementing the 2015 Algiers Peace Agreement. The recent legislative elections, coupled with the partial deployment of the reconstituted army to the North and the inclusive national political dialogue – including, most importantly, women's participation – are indeed strong signs of progress.

I therefore welcome the Secretary-General's recent report. And as we move forward, we should continue to support MINUSMA and call on the Government of Mali to spare absolutely no effort in fully implementing all requirements of the peace agreement. In this as we reflect on the 20th anniversary year of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, it is absolutely incumbent on each and every one of us to be absolutely committed that women play a full, integrated, effective and meaningful role at every single stage of this

important process.

To succeed, revised goals for the North, as set out in the mandate, must be both ambitious and indeed achievable. New benchmarks must help to restore state authority and tackle impunity in the Centre. Recent reports and allegations of human rights violations must rally MINUSMA to protect civilians and encourage accountability – a point well made by Minister Heiko Mass.

We will significantly increase our contribution this year through the deployment of 250 UK troops in a long-range mechanised infantry Reconnaissance Task Patrol Group. It is my hope, it is our belief that this three-year commitment will multiply our success; it will enhance the security and safety of all peacekeepers and embed peacekeeping reform.

Lastly, the United Kingdom commit to support improved mission performance through our bilateral support and training offer to Troop Contributing Countries.

Mr President, to conclude, though MINUSMA's mandate – yes it is complex and the scale of the challenge makes this the UN's most expensive peacekeeping operation – but we must recognise positively that we are making progress. As we review that progress and agree the way ahead together, we must remind ourselves that MINUSMA is not itself a permanent solution, but a route to a means to an end, to a more sustainable and long-standing solution.

The United Kingdom fully supports efforts to adapt and improve the Mission as we seek to bring lasting peace and stability to Mali. Therefore, despite the volatility in the environment that we have seen through the continued presence of armed groups affiliated to Al-Qaeda and Islamic State, the UK will continue to support the Mission Adaptation Plan to deliver more agile, responsive and adaptable force to meet these challenges. The UK is proud to play our part. At a system-wide level, we will continue to fund implementation of the Peacekeeping Intelligence Policy, which supports the non-clandestine collection of intelligence. This informs a 'whole of mission' approach to planning, which improves both the safety of mission personnel and the protection of civilians. So let me assure all Member States that we will continue to fund the Comprehensive Performance Assessment System that informs decision makers as part of an integrated policy performance framework. And we remain committed, as with others, to play our part in Mali through the UN.

Thank you.

[Achieving justice for victims in](#)

Darfur

Merci Madame la Presidente,

Madame President, I would like to thank the Prosecutor for her 31st report on the situation in Darfur pursuant to Security Council resolution 15/93 (2005). The work of the Prosecutor and her team is an important part of efforts towards accountability for those who suffered appalling crimes in Darfur. The International Criminal Court also has an important role to play in global efforts to end impunity for the most serious crimes of international concern, and the United Kingdom fully supports its efforts to hold perpetrators to account and achieve justice for victims in Darfur.

Sudan is at an historic moment, one year on from the removal of a brutal regime. Along with the people of Sudan we look forwards – towards a transition to a democratic and peaceful Sudan. Part of that future, as recognised within the constitutional document agreed following the 2019 revolution, is the pursuit of accountability and transitional justice. This must be delivered as soon as possible for the victims of Darfur, who are long owed justice for crimes committed against them.

Madame President, as the Prosecutor details in her report, there has been progress in Darfur over the last several years and we welcome that. But issues of concern remain. This reporting period has included incidents of violence, the most serious in El Geneina, which have resulted in death, injury, and further displacement of many civilians. Concern over sexual and gender-based violence and violence towards returnees continues. And we must not forget that over two million people are still internally displaced. This Council agreed last week to a new mission to support Sudan's transition and peace process and, with that, attention must remain on the protection of civilians. The United Kingdom is pleased that accountability for Darfur and justice for victims, remains a central issue in the ongoing peace talks between the Government of Sudan and armed groups in Juba.

Madame President, I would like to thank the Prosecutor and her team for their continued dedication and work on this situation during this reporting period. The United Kingdom welcomes the progress that has been made by the Office of the Prosecutor to further and strengthen their investigations, despite a difficult operating environment, including the impact of COVID-19. We welcome reports yesterday that one of the indicted individuals, Ali Kushayb, is in the custody of the ICC. The United Kingdom commends the authorities in the Central African Republic, France, Chad, and the Netherlands and the leaders of MINUSCA for the role that they played in getting him into custody in The Hague.

As the Prosecutor highlights, a positive development emerged in February of this year, when the Government of Sudan stated its intention to try those indicted by the ICC for the crimes for which they have been charged. United Kingdom Ministers welcomed this announcement, which signifies an important step in Sudan's progress towards fulfilling the goals of the revolution and

achieving a peace settlement in Darfur. However, we do not yet understand how the Government of Sudan will cooperate with the ICC. We urge them to productively engage, and swiftly, with the Court and the Prosecutor. The willingness demonstrated in February is to be commended, and we sincerely hope that, as a signal of that willingness, the Prosecutor will be permitted to visit Sudan and Darfur as soon as COVID-19 implications allow. A way forward needs to be agreed, along with greater clarity on how the individuals concerned will be tried and the nature of the justice that the Government in Khartoum has committed to delivering. The United Kingdom stands ready to assist, where helpful, as part of our wider commitment to support the people of Sudan.

Madame President, we again thank the Prosecutor and her team for their continued commitment to pursuing these investigations and achieving justice for victims in Darfur.

[Diversity and inclusion at UKAEA: our ongoing journey](#)

Like many organisations, the death of George Floyd and the Black Lives Matter protests have caused UKAEA to take stock of our approach to diversity and inclusion, and race in particular.

We have spent the last two weeks listening to our staff and talking about the situation and our response to it.

Many of our people have rightly expressed their anger and frustration at the racial injustices that still blight our society – brought to the surface by recent events.

We cannot change the world from UKAEA, but we can make sure we are inclusive and supportive and create an environment in which everyone can thrive. In so doing, we can achieve greater diversity among our employees.

UKAEA needs talented people from every background and race, and we must ensure our own prejudice and behaviour does not stop people excelling.

Science and engineering have been too inaccessible for black people for too long, and we need to do much more to change this. As a plasma physicist, I can count on my fingers the number of black plasma physicists I know in the world. This is utterly absurd, but demonstrates how deeply discrimination pervades our society.

We are on a journey to improve. We are using the [Athena SWAN](#) equality accreditation scheme as a standard for bringing about the changes we need to make as an organisation, and have achieved the Bronze award. We now have a

full-time Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Partner, Marcia Ore, and are working on our Being Inclusive strategy, which will cover race.

I fully recognise we have a long way to go, but we are committed to the journey.

Professor Ian Chapman CEO, UK Atomic Energy Authority