

INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE DECISION MAKING MEETING  
**EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE**

RECORD OF DECISION

An Individual Executive Decision Making meeting was held on 2 December 2020.

**PRESENT:** Councillors C Hobson (Chair)

**OFFICIALS:** S Blood, C Breheny, D Ingoldsby, C Lunn , J Savage and C Walker.

20/4 **LOCAL RESTRICTIONS SUPPORT GRANT (LRSG) TIER 2 (OPEN)**

The Director of Finance submitted a report that sought approval for the LRSG (Open) Discretionary Payments Scheme as part of the overall Local Restrictions Support Grant Funds. The introduction of a discretionary policy (that uses a framework provided by Central Government recommended guidelines) required Member approval.

The report outlined that the LRSG (Open) scheme applied where local restrictions either under LCAL2 (High) or LCAL3 (Very High) are put in place after 1st August 2020. The scheme applied to 20/21 financial year only.

Central Government has provided local authorities with guidance outlining the type of business that they consider to be a priority in terms of allocating grant payments. The scheme was aimed at hospitality, hotel, bed and breakfast and leisure businesses.

The grant support amount awarded for the business was based on businesses occupying hereditaments in the local rating list (see policy paper paragraph 4.1 for full details).

For those without a local rating list entry, awards would be based on annual rental value (see policy paper paragraph 4.2 for full details). Eligible businesses would need to demonstrate that they have been severely impacted by the Covid restrictions whilst they continued trading, through fixed property-related costs and a significant fall in income. This will need to be evidenced through a variety of measures including company accounts, bank statements and/or lease information.

Businesses must be established and trading on the day prior to the introduction of LCAL 2 or LCAL type 3 restrictions. The Local Authority would be funded to continue to provide support to severely impacted businesses under this scheme if restrictions continue under Local Covid Alert Level 2 or 3 after National Lockdown ends on the 2 December.

The local authority was able to exercise local knowledge and existing database records to estimate a number cases that might be eligible. From information gathered it is anticipated that c. 300 businesses could fall within the priority group that has available grant funding of £325,584.

An online application process would be made available on the Council website to invite applications from eligible businesses. The grant will be promoted as appropriate through a range of appropriate platforms including the Council's social media channels, website, press and business networks.

**OPTIONS**

**Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended**

Central Government are providing funding to all Councils with an expectation that this funding will be distributed in line with government guidance and on that basis no other options have been considered.

**ORDERED**

1. **That the LRSG (Open) Discretionary Payments Scheme in response to the announcement by Central Government on 22 October 2020 be approved. The scheme is designed to support businesses that were not legally required to close and have been severely impacted by the Covid Alert LCAL 2 or 3 localised restrictions imposed on Middlesbrough.**
2. **That the Section 151 Officer be given delegated authority to approve any future modifications to the scheme/policy be approved.**

**REASON**

**The decisions were supported by the following reason:**

**Central Government was providing funding and guidance with an expectation that Local Authorities will provide financial support to local businesses.**

20/5

**REVISED INTERIM CORPORATE PROCUREMENT STRATEGY 2020 - 2023**

The Director of Finance submitted a report that sought the revised interim Corporate Procurement Strategy 2020 – 2023.

The report was being presented in line with the Councils policy framework.

The report outlined that the current Corporate Procurement Strategy ends in 2020 and due to the uncertainty about the impact from both Brexit (potential 'no deal') and COVID 19 it was felt that a refresh would be more appropriate than a full re-design.

It was intended that the full re-design be completed during 2021/22 with a brand new Corporate Procurement Strategy becoming live in 2023.

The re-design would not only mean the strategy will look different but the content will also be strengthened including areas such as social value, sustainability and digital advancements.

This would also allow sufficient time to understand the true impact of COVID and an opportunities that may arise from Brexit, as well as being able to undertake robust consultation with suppliers and the commercial market.

**Option-Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended**

Not applicable

**ORDERED**

**That the revised interim Corporate Procurement Strategy 2020 – 2023 be approved.**

**REASON.**

**The decision was supported by the following reason:**

**The strategy must be approved so it can be formally published by the Council.**

20/6

**WINTER GRANT PAYMENT & FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND ADVICE COVID 19 FUNDING**

The Director of Finance submitted a report that sought approval for both the Winter Grant Payment (Families with Children) and the Financial Assistance and Advice Support (Other

Composite Households & Adults).

The report outlined that both the Winter Grant Fund and the Financial Assistance and Advice Support Payment provides for some element of discretion in regards to the groups that will qualify for support and as such this requires Members approval.

The report stated that funding had been provided by the DWP of £659,634.51. As outlined in the guidance Local Authorities are permitted to make provision from the funds to provide for the administration of the Winter Grant Payments. £50k will be allocated to the administration of this scheme with the remainder of £609,634.51 being set aside to distribute in line with the guidance as outlined below.

- At least 80% of the total funding is ring-fenced to support families with children, with up to 20% of the total funding to other types of households, including individuals.
- At least 80% of the total funding is ring-fenced to provide support for food, energy and water bills with up to 20% on other items.
- AND
- LAs can retain some of the funding to support the administration of such funds.
- Should LAs chose to do so, they can spend on their allocation providing support to Families.
- The scheme is not intended to replace Free School Meals, however it is intended to provide support to families over the Christmas period, February half term and Easter Holidays.

This Winter Grant Fund will run alongside the Financial Assistance and Advice Support Payment and as such the Winter Grant Fund will be used to support Households with Children with the Financial Assistance & Advice Support Payment used to support 'other' household composites and will also extend to other adults.

Funding of £500,000.00 has been allocated to cover the cost of the Financial Assistance and Advice Support payment of which £100,000.00 being set aside to cover the cost of administration.

Both schemes will require a combined 6 FTE to deliver both the Grant and the Payment. Both schemes are fund limited and whilst the intention of both the grant and payment is to run until the end of March 2021, should all funds be committed prior to the 31 March 2021, the grant and payment will cease.

The report provided further information of the grants, further details were outlined in the report.

### **Options**

#### **Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended**

Central Government are providing funding to all Councils with an expectation that this funding will be distributed in line with government guidance and on that basis no other options have been considered.

### **ORDERED**

- **That the allocation of the Winter Fund Payment in response to the announcement by Central Government on 8 November 2020 be approved. The funding is provided for by the DWP to provide direct assistance to vulnerable households with children.**
- **That additional funding of £500k for the provision of Financial Assistance and Advice Support Payment from Covid 19 grant fund be approved to be allocated to provide direct support to 'other' types of household composites and will also extend to individuals who are at risk of poverty.**
- **That the Section 151 Officer be given delegated authority to approve any future**

**modifications required to the allocation of both the Winter Fund Payment and the Financial Assistance and Advice Support Payment.**

**REASON**

**The decisions were supported by the following reason:**

**Local Authorities will provide financial support to local businesses.**

Item 2: The decision will come into force after five working days following the day the decision was published unless the decision becomes subject to the call in procedures. Item 1 and 3 The decisions will come into force with immediate effect and are not subject to scrutiny call-in procedures.