

Report of:	<i>Director of Finance – Ian Wright Executive Member for Finance & Governance – Councillor Chris Hobson</i>
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Submitted to:	<i>Individual Executive Meeting - 12 October 2020</i>
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Subject:	<i>Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme.</i>
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Summary

Proposed decision(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Executive Member for Finance & Governance approves the Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme, in response to the announcement by Central Government on 20 September 2020. • That delegated authority to approve modification required to this policy be given to the Section 151 Officer.

Report for:	Key decision:	Confidential:	Is the report urgent?¹
<i>Decision</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>

Contribution to delivery of the 2020-23 Strategic Plan		
People	Place	Business
<i>It is important to ensure that residents adhere to self-isolation rules. Providing financial support to those in need where isolation will result in a loss/reduction in income will help achieve the outcomes set out by Central Government.</i>	<i>NA</i>	

Ward(s) affected
<i>All wards are potentially affected by the Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme.</i>

What is the purpose of this report?

1. This report seeks approval for the Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme.

Why does this report require a Member decision?

2. The introduction of a discretionary policy, which will support the Central Government standard scheme, requires Member approval.

Report Background

3. Central Government announced that from 28 September 2020, there will be a new legal duty on all who test positive for Covid 19 or are identified by NHS Test and Trace as a close contact requiring them to self-isolate. Failure to comply will be an offence carrying a fine of at least £1000.00 and up to £10000.00 for multiple breaches.
4. For some who are struggling financially to self-isolate for financial reasons, the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) have made funds available to alleviate the financial pressure that comes with self-isolation.
5. The council will receive a fixed amount of funding from Central Government for the 4 months which the discretionary scheme is intended to last. Government has confirmed that no additional monies will be given to the council, in view of this and to ensure the discretionary payments are available throughout the period to 31 January 2021, the Council reserves the right to change the Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme at any time to ensure funds go to those who face the most financial hardship. The scheme will run from 28 September 2020 until 31 January 2021 and will be subject to review.
6. Local Authorities have been requested to have a full scheme in place and that this is operational by 12 October 2020.
7. An application process will result in applicants being notified of the outcome, with payment being made within 3 days of a qualifying application. A single payment of £500.00 will be made to successful applicants. However, a claim can also be made for each subsequent period of isolation, provided they do not overlap.
8. The main qualifying criteria are set out in the Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme attached to this report (Appendix B - the final version will be made available as soon as possible).

What decision(s) are being asked for?

9. That the Executive Member for Finance & Governance approves the Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme, in response to the announcement by Central Government on 20 September 2020.
10. That delegated authority be given to the Section 151 Officer to approve modification required to the Scheme.

Why is this being recommended?

11. It is the government's objective that self-isolation work more effectively, and to this end local authorities are expected to operate a scheme for making payments to those who might otherwise be unable to afford to self-isolate. There are likely to be residents in Middlesbrough who are in the position that this scheme is aimed to help, and so it will help improve control of the virus in the town if those who need to self-isolate can.

Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended

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

Impact(s) of recommended decision(s)

Legal

13. There are no legal implications regarding this report.

Financial

14. The cost of the scheme has been provided for by funding made available from Central Government.

Policy Framework

15. N/A

Equality and Diversity

16. N/A

Risk

17. There is no financial risk to the Council all discretionary payments will be funded by support provided by Central Government.

Actions to be taken to implement the decision(s)

18. That the Executive for Finance and Governance agrees the Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme.

Appendices



20200925 [Version
0.2 ISSUED] Test and

Appendix A –



Middlesbrough Test
& Trace Discretionary

Appendix B –

Background papers

There are no background papers.

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