

## RECORD OF DECISION MADE UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

### \*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

Any interest to declare/ or conflict and any dispensation granted *[if applicable]* None

**SERVICE DIRECTORATE:** *Resources*

#### 1. DECISION TAKEN

*To approve the criteria for awarding grants to Community Organisations who are providing support to residents in relation to Covid-19. The criteria are set out in Appendix A.*

#### 2. DECISION TAKER

*Ian Couper, Service Director: Resources*

#### 3. DATE DECISION TAKEN:

*15<sup>th</sup> May 2020*

#### 4. REASON FOR DECISION

To provide criteria for awarding grants to ensure that it is focused on those services that the Council are seen as most important and to ensure a spread across the District.

#### 5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The Council has a role in supporting its residents and communities, so not providing any grants or funding was discounted.

Awarding grants solely through Area Committees was discounted as that may not provide consistency or geographical spread.

#### 6. CONSULTATION (INCLUDING THE EFFECT ON STAKEHOLDERS, PARTNERS AND THE PUBLIC)

*The Executive Member for Finance and IT has been consulted, as any spend from the Special Reserve is agreed in consultation with him.*

*The Executive Member and Deputy Executive Member for Community Engagement have also been consulted.*

*All other Members of the Cabinet have also been given the opportunity to comment.*

#### 7. FORWARD PLAN

7.1 This decision is not a key Executive decision and has therefore not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

#### 8. BACKGROUND/ RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 The Special Reserve was set up a number of years ago. Following an urgent delegated decision by the Chief Executive on 3 April 2020 the uses of the Reserve have been extended to include “support the response to and reduce the impact of major incidents”. This allows it to be used for discretionary spend in response to

Covid-19. The reserve can be used for other purposes (including “pump priming for initiatives for shared services, changes in working practice, major contract renewals, unexpected contract variation, and other financial pressures) and could be released to support General Fund expenditure. Therefore, it is not the intention that this Reserve should be used solely to provide these grants, or indeed just for discretionary spend in relation to Covid-19. The referenced delegated decision also “noted that any discretionary spend in respect of Covid-19 will be approved by the Service Director: Resources as Budget Manager, in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and IT”.

- 8.2 The Council has received a few applications through Area Committees for funding for local groups supporting the provision and delivery of food and other essentials. As it is now clear that the impact of Covid-19, and specifically the impact of lockdown, will be with us for quite some time, it was felt necessary to consider how the Council could get the best outcomes out of the limited funding that it can provide. The criteria that are set out in more detail in Appendix A are therefore focused on:
- Concentrating the support on the provision of food and essentials, mental health support and domestic violence support.
  - Using larger grants through ‘Memorandum of Understanding’ arrangements to ensure broad coverage and enable the monitoring of activities, outputs and outcomes.
  - Using smaller grants through an application process to supplement this with support that addresses more local and/or more specific needs.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1. As detailed in paragraph 8.1, the Service Director: Resources has been given authority to approve spend from the Special Reserve i.e. to act as Budget Manager. This will be done in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and IT. This therefore provides authority to set specific criteria on spend (in accordance with the general principles agreed) and spend up to the available budget.

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1. These criteria set the parameters for the Council incurring revenue expenditure that is in accordance with the delegated decision made by the Chief Executive on 3 April 2020. The amount of spend that will be incurred is currently unknown but will be monitored to ensure that it remains within the available Special Reserve funding. The intention is that spend will be significantly less than the total available, to retain funding for other purposes.
- 10.2. There are no capital expenditure implications.

## **11. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 The intention of awarding funding is to try and reduce the risk of negative outcomes arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. The criteria will clarify how funding will be awarded and therefore reduce the risk that funding does not maximise the achievement of positive outcomes. There is a financial risk that the demand will exceed the available funding. This will be managed through regular reviews, and also identifying other support that community groups can access.

## **12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

12.2 The use of this fund seeks to directly support those most vulnerable during this pandemic. Whilst it is acknowledged that Covid-19 greatly affects the whole of the population, the most vulnerable bear the brunt of the impact.

**13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 The Social Value Act and “go local” policy do not apply to this decision.

**14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

14.1 The process of awarding the larger grants (e.g. identification of organisations, discussions with those groups and completing Memoranda of Understanding) will create additional work for the Community Engagement Team. The management of the smaller grants will also create additional work. The intention of these criteria is to manage this additional work as much as possible, whilst still achieving the desired positive outcomes.

**15. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Chief Executive Delegated Decision of 3 April 2020.

**16. APPENDICES**

Covid-19 Special Reserve Community Grant Protocol

**NOTIFICATION DATE**

15.5.2020

**Signature of Executive Member Consulted .....Non-executive decision.....**

**Date .....**



**Signature of Decision Taker .....**

**This is a non-executive decision.**

**Call-in does not apply to NON-EXECUTIVE DECISIONS**