

REPORT TO CABINET

| | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| Open | | Would any decisions proposed : | | | |
| Any especially affected Wards None | Discretionary | Be entirely within Cabinet's powers to decide | | YES | |
| | | Need to be recommendations to Council | | NO | |
| | | Is it a Key Decision | | NO | |
| Lead Member: E-mail: Cllr Brian Long cllr.brian.long@west-norfolk.gov.uk | | | Other Cabinet Members consulted: All Cabinet Members | | |
| | | | Other Members consulted: NA | | |
| Lead Officer: Jo Stanton, Revenues and Benefits Manager E-mail: joanne.stanton@west-norfolk.gov.uk Direct Dial: 01553 616349 | | | Other Officers consulted: Michelle Drewery, s151 Officer and Assistant Director, Resources | | |
| Financial Implications NO | Policy/ Personnel Implications NO | Statutory Implications NO | Equal Impact Assessment NO If YES: Pre- screening | Risk Management Implications NO | Environmental Considerations NO |

Date of meeting: 17 November 2020

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY TO DECIDE CRITERIA FOR DISCRETIONARY COVID-19 SCHEMES

Summary

Since March 2020 the government has announced a number of grant schemes and discounts to support businesses and residents during the Covid-19 pandemic. These are usually based on a set of mandatory criteria specified by government, but often include a discretionary element where certain criteria can be decided locally. This report recommends delegating authority to decide these discretionary criteria to the Revenues and Benefits Manager, in consultation with the s151 Officer and Council Leader.

Recommendation

Authority is delegated to the Revenues and Benefits Manager, in consultation with the s151 Officer and Council Leader, to decide the discretionary criteria for government Covid-19 support schemes and discounts where they:

- **Are part of a central government Covid-19 support initiative,**
- **Are funded by central government, and**
- **Will be administered by the Revenues and Benefits section**

Reason for Decision

To ensure decisions on discretionary criteria for Covid-19 support schemes can be made in a fair and timely manner so grants and discounts can be awarded quickly to residents and businesses in financial need.

1. Background

- 1.1. Since March 2020 the government has announced a number of grant schemes and discounts to support businesses and residents during the Covid-19 pandemic. These include the Expanded Retail Discount, Business Grants, Council Tax Support Hardship Fund and the Test & Trace Support Payment.
- 1.2. These schemes are normally based on a set of mandatory criteria specified by government, but often include a discretionary element where certain criteria can be decided locally. The discretionary element is included to allow local authorities to assist people who may have fallen through the cracks of the mandatory scheme, or to allow any unique local circumstances to be included.
- 1.3. Funding is provided by central government for both the mandatory and discretionary elements of these schemes and discounts. The funding is ringfenced and is often a generous amount for the mandatory schemes. However funding for discretionary schemes is usually much smaller fixed amount, limiting the scope of any discretionary criteria.

2. Options Considered

- 2.1. Due to the nature of these schemes the emphasis is always on making payments to those in need as quickly as possible. Delays paying grants and awarding discounts cause financial hardship for businesses and residents in immediate financial need.
- 2.2. Delegating authority to decide these discretionary criteria to the Revenues and Benefits Manager, in consultation with the s151 Officer and Council Leader, means the criteria can be decided in a fair and timely manner, and help given to residents and businesses as quickly as possible.

3. Policy Implications

- 3.1. None

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1. None

5. Personnel Implications

- 5.1. None

6. Environmental Considerations

- 6.1. None

7. Statutory Considerations

- 7.1. None

8. Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

8.1. Pre-screening only

9. Risk Management Implications

9.1. None

10. Declarations of Interest / Dispensations Granted

10.1. None

11. Background Papers

11.1. None

Pre-Screening Equality Impact Assessment

Borough Council of
King's Lynn & West Norfolk



| | | | | | |
|--|---|----------|----------|---------|--------|
| Name of policy/service/function | Delegation of Authority for Discretionary Covid-19 Schemes | | | | |
| Is this a new or existing policy/service/function? | New | | | | |
| <p>Brief summary/description of the main aims of the policy/service/function being screened.</p> <p>Please state if this policy/service is rigidly constrained by statutory obligations</p> | Delegation of authority to decide the criteria for discretionary Covid-19 grant schemes | | | | |
| Question | Answer | | | | |
| <p>1. Is there any reason to believe that the policy/service/function could have a specific impact on people from one or more of the following groups according to their different protected characteristic, for example, because they have particular needs, experiences, issues or priorities or in terms of ability to access the service?</p> <p>Please tick the relevant box for each group.</p> <p>NB. Equality neutral means no negative impact on any group.</p> | | Positive | Negative | Neutral | Unsure |
| | Age | | | ✓ | |
| | Disability | | | ✓ | |
| | Gender | | | ✓ | |
| | Gender Re-assignment | | | ✓ | |
| | Marriage/civil partnership | | | ✓ | |
| | Pregnancy & maternity | | | ✓ | |
| | Race | | | ✓ | |
| | Religion or belief | | | ✓ | |
| | Sexual orientation | | | ✓ | |
| | Other (eg low income) | | | ✓ | |

