

REPORT TO CABINET

Open		Would any decisions proposed :			
Any especially affected Wards None	Discretionary	Be entirely within Cabinet's powers to decide		NO	
		Need to be recommendations to Council		YES	
		Is it a Key Decision		NO	
Lead Members: E-mail: Cllr Stuart Dark, Council Leader Cllr.stuart.dark@west-norfolk.gov.uk Cllr Sam Sandell, People and Communities Cllr.sam.sandell@west-norfolk.gov.uk		Other Cabinet Members consulted:			
Lead Officer: Jo Stanton, Revenues and Benefits Manager E-mail: joanne.stanton@west-norfolk.gov.uk Direct Dial: 6349		Other Officers consulted: Michelle Drewery, s151 Officer and Assistant Director, Resources			
Financial Implications NO	Policy/ Personnel Implications NO	Statutory Implications NO	Equal Impact Assessment YES If YES: Pre-screening	Risk Management Implications NO	Environmental Consideration s NO

Date of meeting: 8 February 2023

MINOR UPDATES TO DELEGATED AUTHORITIES FOR REVENUES AND BENEFITS OFFICER DECISIONS

Summary

A number of delegated authorities for Revenues and Benefits Officer decisions have been agreed by Cabinet and Council. This report makes minor changes to two of these to bring them up to date and in line with other delegated authorities.

Recommendation

Cabinet agrees that the updated wording for the two delegated authorities for Officer decisions as shown at 2.1.4 and 2.2.4 is supported and recommended to Council for approval.

Reason for Decision

To ensure decisions can continue to be made in a timely manner

1. Background

- 1.1. A number of delegated authorities for Officer decisions are in place for the Revenues and Benefits team. Two of these need updating, one due to the ending of Covid initiatives and one to bring it into line with other delegated authorities for the team.

2. Proposed Changes

2.1. Revenues and Benefits Covid-19 Support Schemes

2.1.1. Delegated authority was agreed in 2020 due to the introduction of various Covid-19 support schemes by central government which needed to be administered by the Revenues and Benefits team. It recognised the need for these schemes to be implemented quickly, and the fact that detailed guidance on operation of these schemes was often produced by central government.

2.1.2. The delegated authority currently reads:

Authority be 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*

2.1.3. The Covid-19 schemes have now ended, but central government has since introduced a number of Cost Of Living financial support schemes for Revenues and Benefits to administer, such as the £150 Energy Rebate and alternative Energy Bills Support Scheme.

2.1.4. It is likely this process of central government passing financial support schemes to local authorities to process and administer will continue. To be able to respond to these as quickly as possible the wording for the delegated authority is proposed as:

Authority be delegated to the Revenues and Benefits Manager, in consultation with the s151 Officer and Council Leader, to agree the criteria for government support schemes and discounts where they:

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

2.2. Non-Domestic Rates Discretionary Relief Schemes

2.2.1. Central government regularly introduces new Non-Domestic Rates (business rates) reliefs schemes. Rather than amend the primary legislation, they ask local authorities to introduce the reliefs under their discretionary powers, and central government covers the full cost.

2.2.2. As the discounts are introduced under discretionary powers, full Council approval is normally needed. Authority has therefore been delegated to Officers, however the wording for this is out of line with other similar delegations.

2.2.3. The delegated authority currently reads:

Delegated authority is given to the council's s151 officer, in consultation with the Leader of the council, to agree any non-domestic rate relief schemes where the eligibility criteria are specified by central

government, and the cost is met in full by central government through a grant.

2.2.4. The proposal is to amend this to:

Delegated authority is given to the Revenues and Benefits Manager, in consultation with the s151 officer and Council Leader, to agree any non-domestic rate relief schemes where the eligibility criteria are specified by central government, and the cost is met in full by central government through a grant.

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. Not required

9. 9 Risk Management Implications

9.1. None

10. 10 Declarations of Interest / Dispensations Granted

10.1. None

11. 11 Background Papers

11.1. None

Appendix A: Pre-Screening Equality Impact Assessment



Name of function	Revenues and Benefits Delegated Authority for Officer Decisions				
Is this a new or existing policy/ service/function?	Existing				
Brief summary/description of the main aims of Policy being screened. Please state if this policy/service is rigidly constrained by statutory obligations	Delegation of Authority for Officers to make certain decisions				
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)			√		
Question	Answer	Comments			
2. Is the proposed policy/service likely to affect relations between certain equality communities or to damage relations between the equality communities and the Council, for example because it is seen as favouring a particular community or denying opportunities to another?	No				
3. Could this policy/service be perceived as impacting on communities differently?	No				
4. Is the policy/service specifically designed to tackle evidence of disadvantage or potential discrimination?	No				
<p>5. Are any impacts identified above minor and if so, can these be eliminated or reduced by minor actions? If yes, please agree actions with a member of the Corporate Equalities Working Group and list agreed actions in the comments section</p>	N/A	Actions:			
		Actions agreed by EWG member:			
Assessment completed by:	Joanne Stanton				
Job title	Revenues and Benefits Manager				
Date	6 January 2023				

