

MINUTES OF MEETING Urgent Decisions HELD ON Friday, 12th March, 2021, 14:30

PRESENT: Councillor Kaushika Amin, Cabinet Member for Children & Families

70. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

71. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

72. COVID WINTER GRANT SCHEME IN HARINGEY

**Clerk's note – In accordance with Part 4, Section H, and Paragraph 18 of the Council Constitution, the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee has agreed that this decision should be treated as matter of urgency and that the call-in procedure shall not apply due to the fact that any delay in decision making will impact on the Council's ability to utilise available funding to support families with children, other vulnerable households and individuals in Haringey*.*

The Cabinet Member for Children and Families considered a report which sought authorisation for the proposed arrangement for the delivery of additional DWP Winter Grant funding (COVID) of £342,895, as set out in the Council policy document attached to the report at page seven of the agenda pack and which was within the conditions stipulated by DWP.

RESOLVED

That the Cabinet Member:

- I. Approved the additional funding allocation from the Government;
- II. approved the COVID Additional Winter Grant Scheme Policy which sets out the Council's arrangement for administering the additional funding and is attached at Appendix 1;
- III. agreed to delegate authority to the Assistant Director Commissioning, in consultation with the Director of Children Services and the Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Families, to amend this policy to give effect to changes in legislation, statutory or non-statutory guidance, or directives or instructions of a similar character issued by Government;
- IV. agreed that this policy was subject to the availability of government funding and would terminate on 16th April 2021, unless terminated earlier or extended beyond this date by Cabinet or Cabinet Member decision.

Reasons for decision

The Government through the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) has provided funding to local authorities to provide and administer the COVID Winter Grant Scheme. It is acknowledged that local authorities have the local ties and knowledge and are best placed to allocate funding according to local need.

The scheme provides for local authorities to determine eligibility in their area and target support to those most in need but within the scope of conditions set by DWP. The proposed decision on the COVID Additional Winter Grant Scheme Policy set out how the Council would target and deliver support to residents in addition to the support agreed in the original Winter Grant policy (December 2020). This spend is targeted to those that are most in need and in accordance with the scheme.

The Winter Covid Grant payments are expected to support households over the grant period and for funding to be spent by 16th April 2021. Therefore, there is a need for an urgent decision to be taken on the recommendation in order to ensure that payments are made to support vulnerable people within the allotted time.

Alternative options considered

The alternative option considered was not to develop an Additional Winter Grant Scheme Policy. This was discounted as it would not have made use of potential support to Haringey residents and would have necessitated a return of the funds to central government.

CHAIR:

Signed by Chair

Date