

MINUTES OF MEETING

URGENT DECISION HELD ON TUESDAY 25 MAY 2021, 10am

PRESENT:

Councillors: Kaushika Amin

79. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

80. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

81. COVID LOCAL SUPPORT GRANT: PREVIOUSLY THE COVID WINTER GRANT SCHEME IN HARINGEY

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Families considered the report which outlined the extension of the COVID Winter Grant Scheme (renamed the 'Covid Local Support Grant'). The objective of the Scheme(s) was to provide support to vulnerable households and families with children particularly affected by the pandemic where alternative sources of assistance may be unavailable. Local authorities are responsible for administering the Scheme and funding has been allocated to each authority. The Council was initially allocated £986,329.83. The spend for this was decided by Cabinet Member Decision in December 2020. The Council was subsequently awarded a further £342,895. This funding is referred to as the 'Additional Winter Grant.' The spend for this was decided by Cabinet Member Decision in March 2021. A third allocation has been made of £232,078.00. This is now referred to as the 'Covid Local Support Grant' and/or 'Winter Grant 3: April 2021.'

The funding will enable the Council to provide support to families with children, other vulnerable households and individuals from 17th April 2021 and covers the period until 17th June 2021. The 'Covid Local Support Grant' will allow the Council to extend and expand its support to households in food or fuel poverty from the original two Winter Grant allocations.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member

- i. Approves the additional funding allocation from the Government
- ii. Approves the Covid Local Support Grant/ Winter Grant 3: April 2021 Scheme Policy which sets out the Council's arrangement for administering the additional funding and is attached at Appendix 1

- iii. Delegates 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. Agrees that this policy is subject to the availability of government funding and will terminate on 17th June 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 Local Support 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 Local Support Grant Scheme Policy sets out how the Council will target and deliver support to residents in addition to the support agreed in the original and additional Winter Grant policies (December 2020 and March 2021). This spend is targeted to those that are most in need and in accordance with the Scheme.

The Covid Local Support Grant payments are expected to support households over the grant period and for funding to be spent between 17th April 2021 and 17th June 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 a Covid Local Support Grant 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: Councillor Kaushika Ami

Signed by Chair

Date