

# **MINUTES OF MEETING URGENT DECISIONS HELD ON MONDAY, 6TH APRIL, 2020, 4PM**

**PRESENT:**

**Councillor: Joseph Ejiofor – Leader of the Council**

**ALSO ATTENDING: Jon Warlow, Ayshe Simsek**

## **23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

## **24. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

There were no declaration of interests.

## **25. COVID-19 FINANCIAL INTERVENTION AND MEASURES**

The Leader considered the attached report which set out the Council's proposed financial interventions and measures identified at this date in order to respond to the Covid-19 crisis in the most expedient way.

In considering the report, the Leader noted the potential for government to change its position on the funding of free schools during the Easter period . However, until a firm position was reached, it was prudent to be cautious and continue to include this support which the report set out.

A small anomaly at table 2, in relation to the incorrect referencing of the borough, concerning small business grant, was noticed and agreed that this be rectified. This did not change the information contained in the report nor the recommendations.

Having considered the report and appendices, the Leader:

### **RESOLVED**

1. To note the interim reporting here on the financial implications to date of the Covid-19 crisis.
2. To note the receipt of £8.094m Covid-19 Government emergency response grant.

3. To approve that this grant funding be used to establish an Emergency Response Contingency in the Council's General Fund budget, and that authorisation process for its application be as proposed in para 6.3.2.
4. To note that the financial impact of the crisis on the Council's net expenditure, as described in para 6.3.4, is expected to be considerably higher than this initial Government emergency grant funding.
5. To note, in light of the emergency situation, and the statement of assurance from Rt. Honourable Robert Jenrick (Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government), that the Council has, and will continue to, incur the additional emergency related essential expenditures required to fulfil its role.
6. To note that the additional emergency response costs will be reported to, monitored by and reported on by the Director of Finance and Lead Member for Finance and Strategic Regeneration.
7. To note that, notwithstanding the additional grant and the Secretary of State's statement regarding further government grant, Covid-19 must be expected to have a significant net financial impact on the Council in the short, medium and long term and that the Council will need to address these implications.
8. To approve the approach to both in year income collection and debt management as set out in sections 6.5 – 6.9 which balances the requirement for amounts due to be paid with an appropriate approach to collection during the period severely impacted by the Covid-19 virus.
9. To approve the proposed changes to the existing Policy for the Award of Discretionary Reductions in Council Tax Liability under Section 13A(1)(c) Local Government Finance Act 1992, as described in paras 6.9.15 – 6.9.23 and in Appendix 1.
10. To approve the establishment of a new Covid-19 response Capital Contingency (General Fund) budget via:
  11. a virement of £1m from the approved capital programme contingency
  12. £4m from various existing capital budgets under existing delegated powers (paras 6.11.3 – 6.22.4)
13. To note the risk that some or any use of the Covid-19 Capital Contingency budget may not be recoverable via government grants.
14. To approve that the Council provides an estimated £260k of additional financial support to Haringey schools to meet the costs of their providing free school vouchers, over and above that met by the specific government grant funding, for the period from their closure to the end of the Easter holidays as set out in para 6.13.14.

15. To approve that any costs associated with recommendation 2.12, not reimbursed, to be met from the Emergency Response Contingency funding or, if not available, from other General Fund Council resources.
16. To approve the expenditure of £681k, as outlined in paras 6.13.16 – 6.13.25, in relation to the provision of additional capacity for Mortality Planning and that the Council's share of the cost of the Coronial district's additional capacity be met from the Emergency Response Contingency.
17. To approve an allocation of £100k from the Emergency Response Contingency for provision of community support and food aid as outlined in para 6.13.26.
18. To approve the proposed temporary changes to the Council's procurement and supplier remuneration/support arrangements, which are considered to be in accordance with government Covid-19 related Procurement Policy Notes (PPN) 01 and 02 as set out in section 6.4.
19. To approve a Rent Holiday, estimated as less than £100k, for those Voluntary and Community sector organisations for which the Council is the landlord, as recommended in para 6.13.32.
20. To approve the delay to the implementation of the new model of home care support that had been agreed at the March 2020 Cabinet as set out in para 6.13.26.
21. To approve the offer of an honorarium type direct bonus payment to every frontline home support worker, as set out in para 6.13.27, for the period of 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020.
22. To approve the award of a contract for the hire and operation of a temporary body storage facility to Number 8 Events Ltd for an initial period of 3 months with a value of £680,000 (including Council managed contingency), with an option to extend up to 12 months in accordance with Contract Standing Orders 9.07.1 d) and 9.01.2 g) and Procurement Policy Note (PPN) 01\_20 allowing the use of Public Contract Regulation 32 in respect of Covid-19 related matters.

### **Reason for Decision**

The coronavirus (COVID-19) is having a significant adverse effect on the economy and public finances, reducing demand and supply in the short and medium term, presenting individuals, businesses and organisations with unprecedented challenges. The medium to long-term impact is unknown and will be dependent on factors including the extent of lasting damage to the economy's supply capacity.

COVID-19 affects everything local authorities do – as community leaders, public health authorities, education authorities, employers, partners and service deliverers. The Leader, Cabinet and its officers are on a daily basis responding to the crisis. The Council has in place a number of key officer groups that meet frequently (some daily) to evaluate and respond to the latest COVID-19 developments. The proposals within this report address their implications.

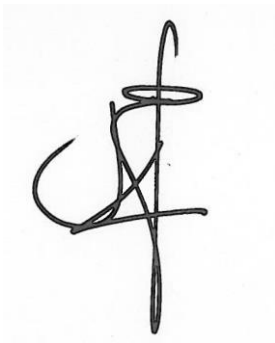
## **Alternative Options Considered**

This is a National Emergency and the Council must ensure that it is in the best possible place to continue to provide services, particularly in relation to support to the vulnerable, address public health issues, and act as an agent for the Government to ensure that funding and support gets to individuals and businesses in the most expedient fashion.

The proposals contained in this report are considered to be those most expedient to achieve this based on the information we have currently.

All proposals will be kept under review and updated as and when required.

CHAIR: Cllr Joseph Ejiofor - Leader of the Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Ejiofor', written on a light-colored background.

Date .....6 April 2020.....