

MINUTES OF MEETING Urgent Decisions HELD ON Monday, 21st December, 2020, 9.30am

PRESENT: Councillor: Kaushika Amin, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Families.

ALSO ATTENDING: Florence Guppy, Ayshe Simsek

61. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

62. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest put forward.

63. COVID WINTER GRANT SCHEME IN HARINGEY

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children and Families considered the report which set out that the Government, through the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) has established the COVID Winter Grant Scheme. The objective of the Scheme was to provide support to vulnerable households and families with children particularly affected by the pandemic throughout the winter period where alternative sources of assistance may be unavailable. Local authorities were responsible for administering the Scheme and funding has been allocated to each authority. The Council has been allocated £986,329.83.

It was noted that the Scheme would enable the Council to provide support to families with children, other vulnerable households and individuals from early December 2020 and covered the period until the end of March 2021. The report was seeking urgent Cabinet Member approval for the proposed arrangement for the delivery of the Scheme as set out in the policy document (attached) and which was within the conditions stipulated by DWP.

It was clarified that the Policy document at appendix 1, section 1.3, provided the ability to provide vulnerable families with vouchers for food and this was likely to be supermarket vouchers close to the resident's home.

With regards to families which are requiring to self-isolate, the policy, at appendix 1, paragraph 3.1, was updated to fully reflect that the grant funding was available for vulnerable households.

RESOLVED

1. To approve the funding allocation;
2. To approve the COVID Winter Grant Scheme Policy which sets out the Council's arrangement for administering the Scheme and is attached at Appendix 1.
3. 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.

4. To agree that this policy is subject to the availability of government funding and will terminate on 31st March 2021 unless terminated earlier or extended beyond this date by Cabinet / Cabinet Member decision.

Reasons for decision

The Government through the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) has provided funding to local authorities to 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 Winter Grant Scheme Policy sets out how the Council will target and deliver support to residents in the borough that are most in need and in accordance with the Scheme.

The Winter Covid Grant payment is expected to support households over the Christmas School holidays and for funding to be committed by 31st March 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 over Christmas.

Alternative options considered

The alternative option considered was not to develop a Winter Grant Payment Policy. This was discounted as it would not have made use of potential support to Haringey residents.

CHAIR:

Signed by Chair

Date