

# **Record of decisions**

## **Leader using urgency powers**

### **Thursday, 21 October**

#### **COVID-19 Local Support Grant Scheme**

##### **Background:**

This report provided details of proposals to use the Household Support Fund (HSG) allocation for Medway Council to support families with children, other vulnerable households and individuals from 6 October 2021 to 31 March 2022.

The report explained that this Programme was funded by the Department for Work and Pensions and was ring-fenced. The expectation was that it should primarily be used to support households in the most need with food, energy and water bills. It could also be used to support households with essential costs related to those items and with wider essential costs. In exceptional cases of genuine emergency, it could additionally be used to support housing costs where existing housing support schemes did not meet this exceptional need.

The report noted that the urgency provisions were set out in the Constitution (paragraph 2.2 of Part 3 (Responsibility for Cabinet functions) of Chapter 3 (Responsibility for Functions) of the Constitution).

The Chairman of the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that the taking of these decisions was urgent and could not be reasonably deferred until the next Cabinet meeting on 16 November 2021, in accordance with Section 11 (Cases of special urgency) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 and Rule 17 (Special Urgency) of the Access to Information Rules (Part 2 of Chapter 4 in the Constitution) as it was imperative that the Council took urgent action to support individuals and families in Medway in line with the Government's announcement to implement the Household Support Grant.

Additionally, and in line with rule 15.11 of Chapter 4, Part 5 of the Constitution, call-in could be waived where any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the Public's interests. The Chairman of the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that the decisions

proposed were reasonable in all the circumstances and to them being treated as a matter of urgency and to waive call-in.

**Decision:**

***Decision number:***

***Decision:***

**120/2021**      **The Leader, using urgency powers, agreed the proposals set out in section 3 of this report as the Council’s approach to delivering the Household Support Grant and agreed to delegate authority to the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Business Management, to finalise and implement these proposals.**

**121/2021**      **The Leader, using urgency powers, agreed to delegate authority to the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Business Management, to make minor amendments to the proposals to enable them to continue to support vulnerable households in Medway, including amending any discretionary eligibility criteria where discussions remain ongoing and where further Government advice is provided.**

**122/2021**      **The Leader agreed that decisions 120/2021 and 121/2021 are considered urgent and therefore should not be subject to call in.**

**Reasons:**

Given the severity of hardship anticipated this winter and the lack of cost to the local taxpayer it is appropriate for the Council to introduce these measures to support our most vulnerable residents.

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**Leader of the Council**

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**Date**

**Jon Pitt, Democratic Services Officer**

Telephone: 01634 332715  
Email: democratic.services@medway.gov.uk