

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Council**

21<sup>st</sup> April 2021

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Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Geoff Denaro Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling Services
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Chris Forrester Head of Finance and Customer Services
Report Author	Name: Chris Forrester Job Title: Head of Finance and Customer Services Contact chris.forrester@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk email:
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	n/a
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	All
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 That Council is asked to RESOLVE –** That authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Resources to accept, administer and distribute any Government Funding, or Funding from bodies acting on behalf of Government, relating to or in response to the Covid 19 emergency and to make the necessary and corresponding adjustments to the MTFP following consultation with the relevant portfolio holder and where applicable Ward Councillor(s) and subject to meeting the conditions of grant funding.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Since the start of the Covid pandemic there have been a high number of grants awarded by central government to local authorities to distribute. These grants are often given with short notice periods and a requirement to start spending immediately based on the specific conditions of the grant. This is made more challenging as at the point in time the authority is made aware of them the government announces them to the public which leads to a high level of contact from the public,

pressuring council officers whilst they are trying to set schemes up to spend the monies.

- 2.2 The above Government response to the Covid Pandemic is likely to continue, with grants being announced with short timescales. These funding initiatives, distributed to local councils, aimed at stimulating local communities and economies being put in place need to be paid out and spent as quickly as possible. The most recent is the Welcome Back Fund (WBF), a new £56 million national fund to support a safe and successful reopening of high streets and seaside resorts (Bromsgrove District Council's allocation being circa £88,000).
- 2.3 This funding is provided to Councils with specific conditions of grant applied and is repayable if it is not defrayed within a timetable set by Government.
- 2.4 There are likely to be a number of other such Covid related (non business specific) grants (over and above business related grants such as the Local Restrictions Support Grant which are administered by the Council on behalf of central government in accordance with specific grant entitlement policies).
- 2.5 Due to the nature of the council approval cycle, it is often not possible to get reports through the reporting mechanisms in a timescale which allows compliance with grant conditions and can delay the speed at which monies are paid out in line with the grant conditions. This was made apparent by the number of urgent decisions required for the business grants schemes. With businesses and individuals seeing severe challenges arising from the impact of Covid any delay in funding can have severe repercussions and as such this delegated authority would allow the authority to respond in an agile and transparent manner for the benefit of Bromsgrove.
- 2.6 Where the funding is area specific or for the benefit of area based activity members are advised that officers will consult with the relevant ward councillors

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The proposal that authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Resources will be in line with good financial practice.
- 3.2 The delegation to accept administer and distribute any Government Funding or Funding from bodies acting on behalf of Government relating to or in response to the Covid 19 emergency and to make the

necessary and corresponding adjustments to the MTFP will be done following consultation with the relevant portfolio holder.

- 3.3 Any additional funding or expenditure will be spent in accordance with the conditions of grant and be reported retrospectively to Cabinet and Council either in a stand alone report should it be a particularly large, or complex grant scheme or in the quarterly finance monitoring report.

**4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Review and revision of the Constitution is governed by Article 15 of the Constitution.
- 4.2 Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) gives a general power to local authorities to discharge functions through officers. Local Authorities are required by the same Act to maintain a list of these, which is referred to as the Scheme of Delegation. This sets out those powers of the Council which can be carried out by officers of the Council.

**5. STRATEGIC PURPOSES - IMPLICATIONS**

**Relevant Strategic Purpose**

- 5.1 The Strategic purposes are included in the Council's corporate plan and guides the Council's approach to expenditure ensuring we focus on the issues and what are most important for the District and our communities. Grants will be paid out in line with grant conditions whilst ensuring that they align with the Council's strategic purposes as far as is possible.

**Climate Change Implications**

- 5.2 The green thread runs through the Council plan. Any grants which have implications on climate change will be addressed and reviewed when relevant by climate change officers to ensure the correct procedures have been followed to ensure any impacts on climate change are fully understood.

**6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

**Equalities and Diversity Implications**

6.1 No direct implications as a result of this report.

**Operational Implications**

6.2 Appropriate grant monitoring will be in place in line with the financial procedure rules and will be accounted for appropriately.

**7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

7.1 Grants are monitored in line with the financial procedure rules and grant conditions.

**8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

N/A

**9. REPORT SIGN OFF**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Name and Job Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
Portfolio Holder	Geoff Denaro	April 2021
Lead Director / Head of Service	James Howse, Executive Director of Resources	April 2021
Financial Services	James Howse, Executive Director of Resources	April 2021
Legal Services	Claire Felton	April 2021