



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Name and date of Committee	Council – Wednesday 28 July 2021
Report Number	Agenda Item No. 16
Subject	Emergency/Urgency Delegations Decisions
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Michele Mead, Leader of the Council Email: michele.mead@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Elizabeth Griffiths – Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer Tel: 01993 861188 Email: elizabeth.griffiths@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To note decisions taken under the emergency and urgency delegation arrangements approved by Council on 13 May 2020.
Appendices	None
Recommendation	That the report be noted.
Corporate priorities	N/A
Key Decision	N/A
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	None

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. At its meeting on 13 May 2020, the Council approved Emergency and Urgency delegations to the Chief Executive to enable decisions to be taken which were either an emergency, or where there was urgency such that the matter could not reasonably await the next meeting of whichever body would otherwise take that decision.
- 1.2. The report on the matter included the statement that: “*Any decision under the above provisions shall be recorded and published, and reported to Council, Cabinet or the appropriate Committee or Sub-Committee, such report to include the reasons that the powers needed to be used*”.

2. ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS GRANTS (DISCRETIONARY)

- 2.1. On 3 October 2020, the Government announced the introduction of additional support for local authorities under the National and Local Covid Alert Level 3 Restrictions. The purpose of this support was to enable Local Authorities to support its local economy and businesses that had been adversely impacted by the recent national restrictions and would be impacted by any future restrictions.
- 2.2. The Council approved its local Additional Restrictions Grant scheme in November 2020 and approved its discretionary scheme in April 2021.
- 2.3. In its change of policy in April 2021 the Council amended its eligibility criteria to include mobile self-employed persons in receipt of the self-employed income support scheme (SEISS), such as hairdressers and taxi drivers who have identifiable fixed costs whether related to property, vehicle or business.
- 2.4. The SEISS and JRS was created to support people with their loss of income through pay and therefore to support them with their cost of living. Subsequently, on further reflection of the Council's initial Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) Policy approved in November 2020 and its more recent ARG Policy, approved in April 2021 it was concluded that it had a negative impact on those businesses where the person(s) had also been in receipt of either the SEISS or JRS as the council had not supported these businesses with any business related costs.
- 2.5. It was therefore proposed that amendments were made to both policies to include within the eligibility criteria that those persons in receipt of either the SEISS or JRS and have identifiable business related costs are able to claim the ARG. It was also proposed that the changes were made retrospectively and any grant applications declined due to the applicant being in receipt of either the SEISS or JRS with identifiable business costs are awarded a grant payment. The policies were amended accordingly.

3. REASONS FOR USE OF URGENCY POWERS

- 3.1. The use of urgency powers was necessitated by the timeframe and the need to use monies provided by no later than 30 June 2021.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. This report has no financial implications. The costs associated with the schemes were funded by government.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. This report has no financial implications.

6. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS

- 6.1. Not applicable.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1. None