

Cherwell District Council

Executive

7 March 2022

Notification of Decisions taken by Chief Executive under Urgency Powers

Report of Assistant Director – Growth and Economy and Assistant Director of Finance

This report is public. Appendix 2 to the report is exempt from publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of Local Government Act 1972

Purpose of report

To inform the Executive of two decisions taken under urgency powers by the Chief Executive regarding (i) the approval of the adoption of the Additional Restrictions Grant policy 2022; and (ii) the defrayal of residual Additional Restrictions Grant funding to OxLEP.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To note the urgent decision taken by the Chief Executive to approve the adoption of the Council's Additional Restrictions Grant policy 2022 (Appendix 1).
- 1.2 To note the urgent decision taken by the Chief Executive regarding the transfer of residual Additional Restrictions Grant funds to OxLEP (Exempt Appendix 2).

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The Constitution states that the Chief Executive may take an urgent decision in relation to an Executive function (in consultation with the Leader of the Council) if it is in the best interests of the Council and/or residents.
- 2.2 The two decisions taken under urgency powers by the Chief Executive regarding the defrayal of the Council's Additional Restrictions Grant funds relate to HM Government's stipulation that funding from all its Additional Restrictions Grant schemes has to be disbursed by the Council by 31 March 2022.

3.0 Report Details

Additional Restrictions Grant Policy 2022

- 3.1 After administering the first and second rounds of the Government's Additional Restrictions Grant schemes, the Council had funds of £640,000 remaining in September 2021. The Council had developed plans to defray this residual funding to OxLEP to deliver a grant scheme (the Cherwell Business Adaptation Fund) on behalf of the Council.
- 3.2 The Council was, however, subsequently allocated a further £300,000 in a third round of Additional Restrictions Grant funding to support businesses severely impacted by the Omicron variant.
- 3.3 The deadline for disbursing the Government's third round of Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) funding (for which updated guidance was issued on 30 December 2021), is 31 March 2022. A new Additional Restrictions Grant policy therefore had to be determined and approved under urgency provisions in order to administer a new discretionary grant scheme for businesses within the timescale specified by Government. The urgent decision notice is attached at Appendix 1.

Defrayal of Additional Restrictions Grant Funding

- 3.4 The urgent decision notice is attached at exempt Appendix 2.
- 3.5 In light of the Government allocating Additional Restrictions Grant funding to Cherwell District Council, it was necessary for a decision to be taken under urgent action to ensure that the necessary arrangements were in place to administer the Additional Restrictions Grant scheme and subsequent defrayal of Additional Restrictions Grant Funding.
- 3.6 In accordance with the Constitution, this report is being submitted to the Executive advising of the urgent action taken.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 In line with the Constitution, this report is informing Executive of two decisions which were taken by the Chief Executive under urgency powers.

5.0 Consultation

- 5.1 None in relation to this report.
- 5.2 Executive was consulted and endorsed the proposed decisions to be taken under urgent action.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: Not to note the report. This is not recommended as the urgent action has been taken and it is a constitutional requirement for it to be reported to Executive.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report as it is reporting urgent decisions already taken.

Comments checked by:

Michael Furness, Assistant Director of Finance
01295 221845 michael.furness@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Legal Implications

- 7.2 The noting of the urgent decisions taken ensures compliance with the Council's constitution.

Comments checked by:

Sukdave Ghuman, Head of Legal Services Mobile: 07551 680591
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Risk Implications

- 7.3 The noting of the urgent decisions taken ensures compliance with the Council's constitution.

Comments checked by:

Houdesh Luchman, Performance Team: Insight Analyst Mobile: 07436
701288
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Equalities and Inclusion Implications

- 7.4 There are no equality and diversity implications arising directly from this report because it is reporting on urgent decisions already taken.

Comments checked by:

Emily Schofield, Acting Head of Strategy
07881 311707 emily.schofield@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Sustainability Implications

7.5 There are no sustainability implications arising directly from this report because it is reporting on urgent decisions already taken.

Comments checked by:

Sandra Fischer-Martins, Climate Action Mobilisation Manager

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8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision

Financial Threshold Met: No

Community Impact Threshold Met: No

Wards Affected

All

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

The reporting of urgent decisions is pursuant to a Constitutional requirement.

Lead Councillor

Councillor Tony Ilott – Lead Member for Finance and Governance

Document Information

Appendix number and title

- Appendix One – Additional Restrictions Grant Policy 2022
- Appendix Two – EXEMPT urgent decision notice

Background papers

None

Report Author and contact details

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