



## URGENT DELEGATED DECISION

Date: 9 June 2021

**Request to the Head of Paid Service to exercise delegated authority as per Responsibility of Functions in Part IV, page 28 of the Constitution.**

**“to determine any matter within the referred or delegated powers and duties of a committee / sub committee / board / working group which is so urgent that a decision must be made before the next meeting of that committee / sub-committee / board / working group is due to be held.”**

Limits on delegation: -

- Before making a decision using this delegated power, the Head of Paid Service shall consult with and take cognisance of the views of the Chairman (or in his absence the VC) of the relevant Committee / Sub-Committee etc; and
- Any decision taken by the Head of Paid Service under this delegated power shall be reported to Members within five working days of the decision taken.
- During the COVID-19 Pandemic we have also committed to consult with the Leader of the Opposition on such decisions

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**Usual Decision Maker: -**

This decision would have been taken by Prosperous Communities Committee / Corporate Policy and Resources Committee.

This decision needs to be made and implementation commence, before these Committees are due to meet.

The decision is in response to continued economic support for those businesses which continue to be affected by on-going restrictions and sit outside of mandatory Government support.

Call-in does not apply.

### **Background**

The background to this decision is as detailed in the report titled **“Additional Restrictions Grant Proposal – Animal Boarding”** which is appended to this decision.

## **Reason for Urgency and Rationale for use of urgent Delegated Decision**

The decision is in response to continued economic support for those businesses which continue to be affected by on-going restrictions and sit outside of mandatory Government support.

Due to the Government's deadline of the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021 all of the current ARG allocation must be spent in order to draw down the next allocation.

WLDC had been awarded a further ARG allocation of £653,754 (subject to spending the current allocation by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021). To date £300k remained of the total ARG allocation.

Animal Boarding Businesses had been excluded from all mandatory Government Covid business grants (with the exception of March 2020). This sector had previously been supported via the Council's Open and Impacted Business Grant until 31<sup>st</sup> March, again making use of the ARG allocation.

The work of Business Grants team had identified that this sector continued to be severely impacted due to Covid travel restrictions. Whilst they were permitted to remain open, their service need had been significantly reduced.

A further urgent decision was required to seek to establish further business support for this specific sector, with grants being awarded on a level equivalent to those awarded under the non-essential retail businesses scheme (Restart Grant Strand 2).

Award levels were demonstrated in section 2 of the appended report. It was anticipated that 25 business would be eligible for the award at a cost of £184k. A number of Local Authorities across Lincolnshire were already supporting this sector in a similar way.

The full rationale for the decision, is contained within the report which is appended.

## **Financial Detail and Implications**

**FIN/DD/4/22/JA**

Full financial details and implications are contained within the appended report.

## **Notes of Consultation Relevant to the Decision**

Members were supportive of the additional funding proposals and welcomed how ARG funding was being applied to ensure that those business "missed" by Mandatory support or offered less mandatory support by the Government were effected to as less a degree as possible.

Members sought assurance that the 25 business identified where all "eligible business". Officers confirmed that all had been through checks as part of the Open and Impacted

Scheme with the majority being on the Business Rating system. Grants would be based on the Business Rate Value.

It was suggested that some sectors were still not being caught by the “Open and Impacted Scheme” with one particular case being cited.

As a rough gauge, Officers advised a business needed to demonstrate a 30% loss to be eligible and undertook to look at the individual case outside of the consultation meeting.

Members sought and received assurance that Officers were as confident as they could be that the remaining fund, would cover any further business or sectors severely impacted and subsequently identified.

Much analysis had been undertaken, to identify any emerging clusters and ultimately the Authority was required to spend the remaining £150k, if it was to receive the second payment of £653,754 in June.

It was confirmed that, through this work, a number of businesses not on the rates system had been identified. The whole process had helped provide a much clearer picture of the District and its business and this was to be welcomed.

Finally, in response to questions it was confirmed that support to the mobile business sector continued to be investigated. However, the sector did pose a number of challenges, which were outlined to the Committee. It was also noted that this sector would have been entitled to the self-employed grant scheme offered by Central Government.

## **Decision**

- 1) The use of the Additional Restrictions Grant to award a payment equivalent to the Restart Grant (ARG) currently in place, specifically to Animal Boarding Businesses, be approved;
- 2) Further delegated Authority be granted to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader to make further Non material amendments to the proposal if required.
- 3) Members to receive progress reports on the delivery of the fund through the weekly newsletter.



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Ian Knowles  
Head of Paid Service

As the Chairman of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee I have been fully consulted on this matter



.....  
Anne Welburn  
Chairman of Corporate Policy and Resources

As the Chairman of the Prosperous Communities Committee and Leader of the Council I have been fully consulted on this matter



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Owen Bierley  
Leader of the Council / Chairman of the Prosperous Communities Committee

As the Leader of the Opposition I have been fully consulted on this matter



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Trevor Young  
Leader of the Opposition.

Date all Members were notified of the decision: 15 June 2021



**Head of Paid Service  
Delegated Decision**

**08/06/21**

**Subject: Additional Restrictions Grant Proposal – Animal Boarding**

Report by:

Sally Grindrod-Smith

Contact Officer:

Wendy Osgodby  
Senior Economic Growth Officer  
Wendy.osgodby@west-lindsey.gov.uk

Purpose / Summary:

To seek approval to award a payment equivalent to the Restart Grant (ARG) we currently have in place to Animal Boarding Businesses

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

- 1) Approve the use of the Additional Restrictions Grant to award a payment equivalent to the Restart Grant (ARG) we currently have in place to Animal Boarding Businesses.
- 2) Approve that non material amendments to this proposal can be signed off by Chief Executive in consultation with leader.
- 3) That members receive progress reports on the delivery of the fund through the weekly newsletter.

## IMPLICATIONS

**Legal:** Local authorities are responsible for the delivery of grants to eligible businesses. Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides all local authorities with the views to make these payments.

**(N.B.) Where there are legal implications the report MUST be seen by the MO**

### **Financial : DD/4/22/JA**

To be funded from Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) to 25 applicants who have previously applied and deemed eligible for payment through the Open and Impacted Scheme but have received no further funding since but continue to be adversely affected by the pandemic. Breakdown of payments to be awarded as follows (Payment brackets detailed in 2.2):

4 x £2,960 = £11,840

20 x £8,000 = £160,000

1 x £12,000 = £12,000

Total = £183,840

To date West Lindsey District Council has received Additional Restrictions Grant funding of £2,763,155 with £300,000 currently uncommitted as of June 2021. The balance of the ARG remaining at year-end 2020/21 is held in the Unapplied Grants Earmarked Reserve and will be drawn down to offset the payments allocated, once approved.

A further £653,754 is expected 30/06/2021 on condition of previous allocation having been spent.

**Staffing : (N.B.) Where there are staffing implications the report MUST have a HR Ref To be included**

**Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :**

**Data Protection Implications:** The management of sensitive data through this process has been considered through the application process. Data will not be used for purposes other than the delivery of this grant and the application form addresses our data protection policy.

**Climate Related Risks and Opportunities:**

**Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations: None**

**Health Implications:**

**Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report :**

Restart Guidance for Local Authorities March 2021

Business Support Package for January 2021 Lockdown

Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed) Guidance for Local Authorities (November 2020)

Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed) Addendum

Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed) Addendum FAQ's

Additional Restrictions Grant FAQ's

Guidance documents can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-restrictions-support-grants-lrsg-and-additional-restrictions-grant-arg-guidance-for-local-authorities>

**Risk Assessment :**

There is a risk that fraudulent claims are submitted.

Mitigations are in place through due diligence of claims processing, submission of relevant documentation, processing all company and charities through the Governments Spotlight system and post payment assurance of bank account details.

This is a risk that the wrong grant and or amounts are issued. This is mitigated by a two stage determination process and a two stage process and authorisation procedure.

**Call in and Urgency:**

**Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?**

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

**Key Decision:**

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

## 1. Introduction

1.1 Animal Boarding Businesses have been excluded from all mandatory government Covid business grants. We previously supported this sector via our Open and Impacted Business Grant until 31<sup>st</sup> March, utilising our ARG allocation.

## 2. Proposal

2.1 As this sector continues to be severely impacted due to Covid travel restrictions, we propose to award businesses in this sector a grant equivalent to that awarded to our non-essential retail businesses (Restart Grant Strand 2).

2.2 The eligible business rate payer appearing on the local rating list with a rateable value over £15,000 and less than £51,000, or business with annual lease, rent or mortgage costs over £15,000 and less than £51,000 on the commencement date of the national restrictions, will receive £12,000

The eligible business rate payer appearing on the local rating list with a rateable value of exactly £15,000 or under, or business with annual lease, rent or mortgage costs between £4,001 and £15,000 on the date of the commencement of the national restrictions will receive £8000.

Business with annual lease, rent or mortgage costs between £500- £4000 will receive a payment of £2960.

Business with annual lease, rent or mortgage costs below £500 do not qualify.

2.3 Eligible Businesses which have previously applied and have been awarded Open and Impacted Business Grants, will be notified, and asked to self-declare that there have been no changes in their circumstances since they submitted their application. In addition businesses will be subject to NFI and Business Rates checks.

2.4 As previously reported WLDC has been awarded a further ARG allocation of £653,754 (subject to spending our current allocation by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021). To date we currently have £300k remaining of our total ARG allocation (plus the further allocation of £653,754). The below schemes have been approved and are in delivery.

Business Revival Grant Scheme - £700k – (to date we have spent £245k)  
Visitor Economy Digital Campaign - £100k  
Market Traders Grant - £50k

Due to governments deadline of the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021 all of the current ARG allocation must be spent in order to drawn down the next allocation. Therefore schemes will be funded from either allocation as appropriate.

2.5 We have approx. £350k unallocated, the cost of delivering this scheme would be approx. £184k. We believe we have approx. 25 eligible businesses who would benefit from this scheme (subject to checks).

2.6 The approach to utilisation of the unallocated Additional Restrictions Grant (approx. £150k to be spent by March 2022) will continue to be the subject of further decision papers.

### **3. Recommendations**

3.1 Approve the use of the Additional Restrictions Grant to award a payment equivalent to the Restart Grant (ARG) we currently have in place to Animal Boarding Businesses.

3.2 Approve that non material amendments to this proposal can be signed off by Chief Executive in consultation with leader.

3.3 That members receive progress reports on the delivery of the fund through the weekly newsletter.