



URGENT DELEGATED DECISION

Date: 24 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.

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 changing Governance guidance, announcements relating to the delay in lifting final restrictions and continued economic support for those businesses affected.

Call-in does not apply.

Background

The background to this decision is as detailed in the report titled “**Additional Restrictions Grant Proposal – Impact Grant June/ July 2021** ” which is appended to this decision.

Reason for Urgency and Rationale for use of urgent Delegated Decision

In light of the current COVID 19 situation, and following the announcement by the Government on Monday 14th June 2021 outlining the delay in the lifting of the restrictions, businesses in the hospitality sector will continue to be affected.

The majority of businesses within the hospitality sector will continue to have some level of impact due to the ongoing restrictions, however it is acknowledged public houses, event venues, event companies and theatres will have to considerably alter their working practises to accommodate the continued Covid restrictions.

Due to the rules regarding social distancing, table service and limits on attendance numbers, public houses, events venues, event companies and theatres remain severely affected, unable to operate to at pre Covid levels and experiencing substantial loss of income.

A further urgent decision is required to seek to establish a further business support grant to businesses in this sector, by way of a one off impact grant (equivalent to 50% of the 4 week closure grant utilising monies remaining in the AGR Fund).

The full rationale for the decision, the criteria to be applied, the level of payments to be made, and the number of businesses impacted are contained within the report which is appended.

Financial Detail and Implications

Financial : DD/6/22/JA

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

To-date West Lindsey District Council has received Additional Restrictions Grant funding of £2,763,155 with a further allocation of £653,754 due imminently. Of the total ARG allocation £150,000 is currently uncommitted as of June 2021, of which £69,602 is proposed to be paid to businesses outlined in the report.

Notes of Consultation Relevant to the Decision

In presenting the report it was stressed to Members that whilst Government guidance relating to the spending of AGR had been amended, including an extension of the deadline for round one to 31 July, the guidance now encouraged authorities to support the sectors impacted by the delay in lifting restrictions, but did not mandate them to do so.

It was also emphasised that this was a one-off payment, and the proposal was proportionate to previous payments received by the sector. All identified businesses had already received grant support through other funding schemes and as such, the application process for affected businesses would be a simple one requiring self-declaration, meaning payments could be made swiftly by the Authority.

It was acknowledged that there may be other businesses impacted by the delay in the lifting of restrictions. As a number of uncertainties remained, the approach to spending AGR remained unchanged, identifying clusters of businesses where deliverable, trackable and proportionate schemes could be developed to achieve the greatest impact.

Members welcomed the proposals, the approach to the spending of ARG and the simplicity of the proposed scheme. Ensuring funding was received promptly by those being most severely impacted was to remain a priority.

It was confirmed that should this proposal be approved, approximately £80k would remain unallocated and the Authority had until March 2022 to fully allocate all funding. It was also confirmed the Authority's own Arts Centre would not be eligible to apply for this grant.

All Members present indicated their support for the Scheme as proposed.

Decision

- 1) the use of the Additional Restrictions Grant to award a one-off Impact Grant to public houses, events venues, event companies and theatres 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; and
- 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



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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: 29 June 2021



**Head of Paid Service
Delegated Decision**

24/06/21

Subject: Additional Restrictions Grant Proposal – Impact Grant June/ July 2021

Report by:

Sally Grindrod-Smith
Assistant Director Planning and Regeneration

Contact Officer:

Wendy Osgodby
Senior Economic Growth Officer
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Purpose / Summary:

To seek approval to award an Impact Grant to public houses and events venues as a result of the delay to stage four of the Government's re-opening roadmap.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1) Approve the use of the Additional Restrictions Grant to award a one off Impact Grant to public houses, events venues, event companies and theatres.
- 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/6/22/JA

To be funded from Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) to 88 eligible businesses which have previously applied and been awarded grant payments and are deemed to have been adversely impacted from the recent delay of lifting restrictions. Breakdown of payments by sector and award value as follows (Payment brackets detailed in 2.2):

Number of eligible businesses

	Pubs	Events	Theatres	Total
£250	1	2	0	3
£667	47	7	2	56
£1,000	21	3	0	24
£1,500	3	2	0	5
Total	72	14	2	88

Total value of grants to be paid

	Pubs	Events	Theatres	Total
£250	£250	£500	£0	£750
£667	£31,349	£4,669	£1,334	£37,352
£1,000	£21,000	£3,000	£0	£24,000
£1,500	£4,500	£3,000	£0	£7,500
Total	£57,099	£11,169	£1,334	£69,602

To date West Lindsey District Council has received Additional Restrictions Grant funding of £2,763,155 with a further allocation of £653,754 due imminently. Of the total ARG allocation £150,000 is currently uncommitted as of June 2021, of which £69,602 is proposed to be paid to businesses outlined in this report. 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.

Staffing : (N.B.) Where there are staffing implications the report MUST have a HR Ref **New Burdens funding has been utilised to fund a Finance and Monitoring Officer to support the delivery of business grants and the ongoing monitoring. This funding comes to an end in August and we are working to understand any opportunities to extend this role to support the continued monitoring requirements.**

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 2 stage determination process and a 2 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 Following the announcement by the Government on Monday 14th June 2021 outlining the delay in the lifting of the restrictions businesses in the hospitality sector will continue to be affected.

1.2 The majority of businesses within the hospitality sector will continue to have some level of impact due to the ongoing restrictions, however it is acknowledged public houses, event venues, event companies and theatres will have to considerably alter their working practices to accommodate the continued Covid restrictions.

1.3 Due to the rules regarding social distancing, table service and limits on attendance numbers, public houses, events venues, event companies * and theatres remain severely affected. They are unable to operate to the levels pre Covid and are experiencing substantial loss of income.

* An events company for the purpose of this grant scheme is defined as below:
A business whose sole activity is 100% event related (excluding, retail and wholesale businesses).

2. Proposal

2.1 As this sector continues to be severely impacted due to Covid restrictions, we propose to award businesses in this sector a one off impact grant (equivalent to 50% of the 4 week closure grant).

2.2 The eligible business rate payer appearing on the local rating list with a rateable value of exactly £51,000 or over, or business with annual lease, rent or mortgage costs of exactly £51,000 or over on the 21st June 2021 will receive £1,500

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 21st June 2021, will receive £1,000

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 21st June 2021 will receive £667.

Business with annual lease, rent or mortgage costs between £500- £4000 will receive a payment of £250.

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 previous grant payments, 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 – deadline now extended to 31st July 2021). To date we currently have £150k unallocated 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 £400k)
Visitor Economy Digital Campaign - £100k
Market Traders Grant - £50k
Animal Boarding Grant - £184k

Due to governments deadline of the 31st July 2021 all of the current ARG allocation must be spent in order to draw down the next allocation. Therefore schemes will be funded from either allocation as appropriate.

2.5 We have approx. £150k unallocated, the cost of delivering this scheme would be approx. £70k. We believe we have approx. 88 eligible businesses who would benefit from this scheme (subject to checks).

2.6 It is unclear at the time of writing this report when restrictions may be lifted or if further funding will be awarded from government. Therefore this proposal has been developed to react to the current situation as it stands.

2.7 The approach to utilisation of the unallocated Additional Restrictions Grant (approx. £80k 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 one off Impact Grant to public houses, events venues, event companies and theatres.

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.