

Public Document Pack

CABINET

23 NOVEMBER 2020

287. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The Managing Director declared no interests.

288. ADDITIONAL RESTRICTIONS GRANT SCHEME

The Assistant Director Financial Services and Revenues (Chief Finance Officer), submitted a report to agree a policy for the use and distribution of the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) funding (£1,853,220) received from government.

This discretionary grant scheme has been developed by the Council in response to an announcement made by the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy made on 31st October 2020 which sets out the basic circumstances whereby an additional restriction grant payment may be made by the Council to a business which has to close or are severely affected due to localised or widespread national restrictions being put in place to manage coronavirus and save lives.

Whilst the awarding of grants will largely be at the Council's discretion, the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has set down criteria which must be met by each business making an application.

Localised restrictions are legally binding restrictions imposed on specific Local Authority areas or multiple Local Authority areas, where the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care requires the closure of businesses in a local area under regulations made using powers in Part 2A of the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 in response to the threat posed by coronavirus and commonly as part of a wider set of measures.

National restrictions are nationally binding widespread restrictions imposed by Parliament under legislation. The current national restrictions are made under the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (No. 4) Regulations 2020.

Grants under this scheme will be available for the 2020/21 and 2021/22 financial years only.

The government advise that:

(a) No grant can be paid for any period where the localised or widespread national restrictions were in place prior to 14th October 2020.

(b) Where any area enters either a localised restriction (LCAL3) or where a national restriction applies, additional assistance may be given to businesses under the Council's Local Restrictions Support Grants (Closed) Scheme (as amended).

Under the emergency powers set out in Part 4 of the Council's Constitution the Managing Director made the decision in consultation with the following Councillors: Cllr Forward, Cllr Fitzgerald, Cllr Batsford, Cllr Chowney, Cllr Rogers and Cllr Lee.

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RESOLVED-

1. The Council's Managing Director in consultation with the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader, and the lead member for Financial Management and Estates approve the Hastings Additional Restrictions Grant Policy on behalf of the Council under Emergency Powers.
2. The Chief Finance Officer is authorised to make technical amendments and adjustments to the scheme in consultation with the lead member for Financial Management and Estates to ensure available funding is distributed, and that it meets the criteria set by the Council and remains in line with Central Government guidance.

Reasons for Recommendations:

1. The Council needs to agree an Additional Restriction Grant scheme as a matter of urgency to support businesses within the Borough.
2. Developing a scheme which has limited levels of funding that can not be exceeded, requires a degree of delegated authority to make technical amendments and adjustments to the scheme if grants are to be awarded quickly and to those which meet the eligibility criteria.

Minute Annex

Managing Director Decision Record

Part 4 of the Council's Constitutional Emergency Powers



Date: 23rd November 2020

Item: Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) Scheme Policy

Report by: Peter Grace, Assistant Director, Financial Services and Revenues (Chief Finance Officer)

Decision type: Cabinet

Recommendations:

1. The Council's Managing Director in consultation with the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader, and the lead member for Financial Management and Estates approve the Hastings Additional Restrictions Grant Policy on behalf of the Council under Emergency Powers.
2. The Chief Finance Officer is authorised to make technical amendments and adjustments to the scheme in consultation with the lead member for Financial Management and Estates to ensure available funding is distributed, and that it meets the criteria set by the Council and remains in line with Central Government guidance.

Reasons for Recommendations:

1. The Council needs to agree an Additional Restriction Grant scheme as a matter of urgency to support businesses within the Borough.
2. Developing a scheme which has limited levels of funding that can not be exceeded, requires a degree of delegated authority to make technical amendments and adjustments to the scheme if grants are to be awarded quickly and to those which meet the eligibility criteria.

Decision made in consultation with:



Cabinet	For	Against	Abstain
Councillor Forward	X		
Councillor Fitzgerald	X		
Councillor Chowney	X		
Councillor Barnett			
Councillor Batsford	X		
Councillor Evans			
Councillor O'Callaghan			
Councillor Rogers	X		
Opposition			
Councillor Lee	X		
Councillor Patmore			

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee gave approval for this decision to be made in accordance with rule 26.21 (Special Urgency) of the Council's Constitution.

Signed



Jane Hartnell
 Managing Director
 Hastings Borough Council