


ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL
DECISION TAKEN UNDER OFFICER SCHEME OF DELEGATION

To be completed for decisions taken in accordance with Part 4, Officer Scheme of Delegation, Section 1, paragraph 5.2.

DATE DECISION TAKEN	7 April 2020
SUBJECT	Distribution of the £945k COVID-19 Hardship Fund 2020-21 s31 grant to claimants of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTS)
DECISION TAKEN	<p>The Council has received £945k from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) from the COVID-19 Hardship Fund 2020-21 for distribution to working age claimants of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme (LCTS). The minimum requirement on the Council is to reduce the Council Tax for each claimant by at least £150 (or the actual annual shortfall between the Council Tax charge and the LCTS if lower).</p> <p>There is concern that there will be a large increase in the number of applicants for LCTS in the coming weeks. The Council is therefore making the minimum £150 reduction in the bills of those receiving LCTS (unless the actual shortfall is lower) and holding back the rest to fund the new LCTS applicants.</p> <p>The Hardship Scheme is being used to reduce the council tax liability under section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. The amount of council tax reduction awarded has to be funded by the billing authority with a direct payment from the general fund into the collection fund. Thus, the full cost of the council tax reduction is fully funded, and will not create a deficit in the collection fund</p> <p>The amount of council tax reduction for working age claimants is in line with my delegated authority to incur expenditure in connection with the peacetime emergency of the Covid 19 pandemic.</p>
REASON FOR THE DECISION	Section 138(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 confirms that: "Where an emergency or disaster involving destruction or danger to life or property occurs or is imminent or there is reasonable ground for apprehending such an emergency or disaster, and a principle council are of the opinion that it is likely to affect the whole or part of their area or all or some of its inhabitants, the council may (a) incur such expenditure as they consider necessary in taking action themselves (either alone or jointly with any other person or body and either in their area or elsewhere in or outside the UK) which is calculated to avert, alleviate or eradicate in their area or among its inhabitants the effects or potential effects of the event;"

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	<p>I have exercised my delegated authority at Part 4, Section 2, paragraph 3.9 of the Officer Scheme of Delegation which confirms that I can incur this expenditure for meeting the purposes of the Local Government Act 1972, S.138 when it is in connection with peacetime emergencies and disasters.</p> <p>As my authority confirms, this action will be reported to the first subsequent meeting of Cabinet.</p>
<p>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED OR REJECTED</p>	<p>The minimum requirement on the Council is to reduce the Council Tax for each claimant by at least £150 (or the actual annual shortfall between the Council Tax charge and the LCTS if lower).</p> <p>A reduction greater than £150 per claimant was considered but this option was rejected because this could leave a potential shortfall in funding as a significant increase in claimants is anticipated in the coming weeks.</p>
<p>ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARED BY ANY MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL <i>Only needed if the decision is under an express authorisation</i></p>	<p>None</p>
<p>NAME OF THE DECISION TAKER</p>	<p>Philippa Dart, Director of Services</p>
<p>SIGNATURE</p>	

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