


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	Waiver of part of Risk Based Verification Policy in relation to the processing of High Risk Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Claims
DECISION TAKEN	<p>Emergency action to support the most vulnerable groups within the Arun District during the Covid 19 pandemic. The decision is to waive part of the Risk Based Verification Policy procedure where any claim that is deemed high risk requires sight of original documents to process the application and to allow the use of digital documentation in order that claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit can be expedited and financial support offered as soon as practicable.</p> <p>The position will be reviewed at 30 June 2020.</p>
REASON FOR THE DECISION	<p>It has been necessary to waive the current requirements contained in the Risk Based Verification Policy, which requires sight of original documents to process the application. Whilst it is recognised that amendment of the policy requires Member approval, to delay this decision to obtain this would seriously impact the processing of these benefit claims. The Revenues and Benefits Team are not in a position to verify original documents so need to be able to reduce the evidence requirement of a high risk claim to that of a medium risk claim.</p> <p>The calculation of housing benefit derives from the Social Security Administration Act 1992 (consolidating Act) as amended and the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992 (consolidating Act) as amended. The housing benefit regulations are routinely updated and amended.</p> <p>The s151 Officer has been consulted and is in agreement with the change in evidence requirement from paper to digital. Local Government Finance Act 1988 s114 Proper Administration of Financial Affairs.</p> <p>I have exercised my delegated authority at Part 4, Section 1, paragraph 1.9 of the Officer Scheme of Delegation to take this emergency decision to protect life, health and safety, the economic, social or environmental well-being of the District and to preserve property belonging to the Council or others. The Cabinet Member for Residential Services, Councillor Pauline Gregory has supported this emergency action.</p>

This record to be maintained for six years or such period as statute requires with the relevant subject file

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ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED OR REJECTED	To not waive the Policy and seek Member approval which would impact significantly on the Council's ability to respond to the needs of this vulnerable group.
ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARED BY ANY MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL <i>Only needed if the decision is under an express authorisation</i>	None
NAME OF THE DECISION TAKER	Satnam Kaur, Group Head of Residential Services
SIGNATURE	
I agree to this emergency action	Councillor Pauline Gregory, Cabinet Member for Residential Services
SIGNATURE	

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