

# DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
RESOURCE DIRECTORATE	COUNCIL	19 OCTOBER 2020	10
<b>FULLY FUNDED BUDGET INCREASE – SUPPORTING VULNERABLE PEOPLE (COVID-19)</b>			

## PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

## SUMMARY

To approve the addition of a fully funded increase of £74,154.55 to the 2020/21 budget to enable a grant scheme to be rolled out with immediate effect to support local vulnerable residents as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Council are recommended to:

1. Approve a fully funded revenue budget increase in the sum of £74,155 for 2020/21 in respect of the scheme of support to vulnerable people during the covid pandemic as set out in the report; and
2. Delegate authority to the Director of Resources to approve the award of grants under the scheme in accordance with the principles set out within this report in respect to awards for both food and essential supplies.

## SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

None previously taken on this matter

## CORPORATE PRIORITIES

Spending your money in the most efficient way to achieve excellent services ( <b>Value for Money</b> )	✓
Delivering the services that customers expect of an excellent council ( <b>Clean and Green</b> )	✓
Working with all partners ( <b>Vibrant Economy</b> )	✓
To make sure Fylde continues to be one of the most desirable places to live ( <b>A Great Place to Live</b> )	✓
Promoting Fylde as a great destination to visit ( <b>A Great Place to Visit</b> )	✓

## REPORT

### 1.0 Introduction

The Local Authority Emergency Assistance Grant for Food and Essential Supplies was awarded to Lancashire County Council by DEFRA. The grant is to be used to support people across Lancashire who are struggling to afford food and essentials due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Lancashire County Council has allocated £74,154.55 to Fylde Council as a part of this grant provision to support local people up until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. This amount has been provided based on population weighted by a proxy of need through the Index of Multiple Deprivation.

The intended focus of the fund is the direct provision of food and essential supplies through the provision of cash or vouchers. There needs to be the ability to get assistance to our residents through the best means possible using our existing networks and partnerships.

### 2.0 Fylde Community Hub

During the pandemic, the Fylde Community Hub has strengthened established partnership working to support the community. Many of these organisations supporting the work of the Community Hub come under the umbrella of the Council for Voluntary Services and they have all worked alongside the Hub. As well as being supported by key workers from the council, the Community Hub has also benefited from the support of over 100 volunteers, and this combined effort has enabled us to support the wider community's needs.

The Community Hub was the focal point in supporting many individuals across the Fylde who were shielding due to age and medical conditions. Some of these individuals are still choosing to shield and are still being supported by the Community Hub. Many charities have also assisted in supporting both the volunteer networks and those shielding.

There therefore exists an existing network with whom to work with going forward through earlier work on establishing the Fylde Community Hub.

### 3.0 Promotion of Emergency Assistance Fund

The guiding principles of the funding are that the Council should:

- *Use discretion on how to identify and support those most in need*
- *Use the funding to meet the immediate need and help those who are struggling to afford food and essentials due to COVID-19*
- *Use the funding for existing schemes and other support which deliver the same outcomes and where the need is greatest*
- *Work together with other local authorities to provide support and ensure the funding meets its objectives*

In terms of the food aspect of the grant, the council has an established relationship with the Food Banks within the Fylde who provide high-quality food parcels to those in need. A dialogue with the Food Banks has resulted in them confirming their ability to continue to meet demand for food and its willingness to receive more referrals. If demand for food peaks, the Emergency Assistance Fund will be used to offer financial support to the Food Banks to ensure their supply of food is maintained.

Turning to the essential supplies aspect of the grant, DEFRA did not prescribe how authorities should use the spend as it has been left to the discretion of local authorities, on the basis that they understand their local communities the best. The key point is to avoid duplicating other forms of support where possible. For this reason, it is thought that by working with the existing successful partnership established through the Community Hub, not only in terms of food provision in partnership with the Food Banks, but also in terms of essential services will ensure the right support is offered through the most appropriate means.

### 4.0 Referral process

#### 4.1 Food referrals

Food support will be provided through the Food Banks within the Fylde area. Food Banks have confirmed their ability to continue to meet demand for food and their willingness to receive more referrals. If demand for food

peaks, the Emergency Assistance Fund will be used to offer financial support to the Food Banks to ensure their supply of food is maintained.

#### 4.2 Essential supplies

Existing organisations within the community already work with individuals in need of support through a variety of initiatives. They have also been supporting many people who have been struggling with the impact of the pandemic.

In order to ensure that there is a fair and transparent process for awarding support to people, ensuring funding finds its way to those in the greatest need of support, the essential supplies element of the grant will be administered through the Council for Voluntary Services (CVS), in a partnership formed between both Fylde and Wyre Councils. This also meets another aim of the funding in working together with other councils to ensure that the funding meets its objectives. Successful partnerships between other councils have also been established, or are in the process of being established, in the East of the County with other Councils for Voluntary Services.

The CVS will operate a round of grants, on a rolling basis, to community and voluntary organisations in order that they can provide direct support to vulnerable people. The fund will be expended on supporting individuals and families in the Fylde and Wyre areas within the relevant district boundaries. A Panel of CVS trustees will assess applications for support on a weekly basis ensuring that the funding is kept moving and directed to those who require support in a timely fashion. Reports will be provided to the council outlining what has been funded and this information can be shared with the Environment, Health and Housing Committee together with other updates with respect to the response to COVID 19.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	The report requests approval to a fully funded revenue budget increase in the sum of £74,155 for 2020/21 in respect of the scheme of support to vulnerable people during the covid pandemic as set out in the report; and requests that authority be delegated to the Director of Resources to approve the award of grants under the scheme.
Legal	Legal agreement to be entered into with LCC
Community Safety	None
Human Rights and Equalities	None
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	None
Health & Safety and Risk Management	None

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Tracy Manning	<a href="mailto:Tracy.manning@fylde.gov.uk">Tracy.manning@fylde.gov.uk</a> tel: 01253 658521	6 October 2020

BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
None		None