

**EXECUTIVE DECISION RECORD**

**REF No 326.21**

<b>A1</b> Service Area	Revenues, Benefits & Customer Contacts
<b>A2</b> Title	Test and Trace Support Payments Discretionary Scheme review
<b>A3</b> Decision Taken By	Deputy Leader/ Chief Officer
<b>A4</b> Chief Officer	Please print name: Sal Khan Please sign name: <a href="#">Approval by email 120721</a>
<b>A5</b> Leader / Deputy Leader	Please print name: Cllr R Faulkner Please sign name: <a href="#">Approval by email 130721</a>
<b>A6</b> Date of Decision	13 <sup>th</sup> July 2021

**Confidentiality**

<b>A7</b> Is this Decision confidential by containing exempt information as described in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972?	No
<b>A7.1</b> If yes, please state relevant paragraph from Schedule 12A LGA 1972.	Paragraph N/A

**Scrutiny**

**A8** Which Scrutiny Committee should this decision be submitted to? (*Please tick as appropriate*) ✓

Scrutiny (Audit & Value for Money Council Services) Committee

Scrutiny (Community Regeneration, Environment and Health and Well Being) Committee ✓

**B1** What is the Decision?

To approve the recommendation in paragraph B2.

**B2** What are the reasons for the Decision?

The Government (Govt) introduced the Test and Trace Support Payments scheme with effect from 28 September 2020.

There are two schemes: the Standard 'Main' Scheme and a Discretionary Scheme. The Government has issued guidance stating the criteria for each scheme, and have allowed LAs to add other criteria to their Discretionary Scheme.

Govt has allocated funding to each Local Authority (LA) and the Council's current allocations are shown in paragraph B5. Govt is committed to funding all approved applications.

Govt recently extended the scheme which will now close on 30/09/2021 (from 30/06/2021). The Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) has asked LAs to review the criteria of their Discretionary schemes where less than 60% of the allocated funding has been spent. The Council has spent 46% of its allocated Discretionary funding, so the Council's scheme criteria has been reviewed to see what changes could be made to increase the number of successful applications which will support local residents told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace.

The Council's scheme is as follows:

*a £500 discretionary payment to individuals who:*

- 1. have been told to stay at home and self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, either because they have tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive;*
- 2. are employed or self-employed; and*
- 3. are unable to work from home and will lose income as a result.*
- 4. who are not currently receiving Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit, income-based Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit and/or Pension Credit; and*
- 5. who are on low incomes and will face financial hardship as a result of not being able to work while they are self-isolating.*

*The Council has agreed that under its Discretionary Scheme, people on low incomes are defined as:*

- a) Applicants who have a maximum weekly gross earnings level of £300 per applicant per week.*

	<p><i>b) Applicants who have capital not exceeding £6,000.</i></p> <p><i>People in the same household can each make an individual application to receive the payment, if they each meet the eligibility criteria.</i></p> <p><i>Applications from students will normally be refused, however the Council will accept applications from students who have an underlying entitlement to the in-work benefits identified in the Standard 'Main' Scheme.</i></p> <p><i>Applications from furloughed workers will be refused.</i></p> <p>Analysis of applications refused to date shows that the main criteria element for refusing applications is that the applicant's gross pay exceeds the limit set in the Council's scheme. The amount set in the Council's scheme is £300 per week gross, so any applicant whose gross weekly income is above that figure will have their application refused.</p> <p>Information received from Richard Harling, Staffordshire County Council, states that DHSC is recommending Councils extend eligibility within their schemes to those who match all criteria and who earn less than £26,000 per year (£500 per week). It is therefore proposed that the Council's scheme be amended by increasing the maximum weekly gross pay from £300 per week to £500 per week, effective as soon as possible. All other criteria in the Council's scheme is to remain unchanged.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> That the Council increases the maximum gross weekly income level within its Discretionary Scheme from £300 per week to £500 per week.</p>
<p><b>B3</b> What are the contributions to Corporate Priorities?</p>	<p>As this scheme is discretionary and the Council is required to support applicants within the scope of the scheme, it contributes to the priority 'Community Regeneration, Environment, Health and Well Being'.</p>
<p><b>B4</b> What are the Human Rights considerations?</p>	<p>There are no Human Rights issues arising from this decision.</p>

## Financial Implications

<b>B5</b> What are the financial implications?	The main financial issues arising from this decision are as follows:  Govt has allocated funding for these payments.
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Revenue			
	Main scheme	Discretionary scheme	Total
Available funding	£322,000	£242,500	£564,500
Max. no. successful applications	644	485	1129
<b>Funding spent so far</b>	<b>£279,500</b>	<b>£111,000</b>	<b>£390,500</b>
<b>Successful applications so far</b>	<b>559</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>781</b>
Unspent funding	£42,500	£131,500	£174,000
No. of applications unspent funding will support	85	263	348

The finance section has been approved by the following member of the Financial Management Unit:	Please print name: Lisa Turner  Please sign name: <a href="#">Approval by email 130721</a>
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## Policy Framework

<b>B6</b> Is the Decision wholly in accordance with the Council's policy framework?	Yes
<b>B6.1</b> If No, does it fall within the urgency provisions (Part 3 of the Constitution)?	NA
<b>B6.2</b> Has it got the appropriate approvals under those provisions?	NA
<b>B7</b> Is the Decision wholly in accordance with the Council's budget?	Yes
<b>B7.1</b> If No, does it fall within the urgency provisions (Part 3 of the Constitution)?	NA
<b>B7.2</b> Has it got the appropriate approvals under those provisions?	NA

## Equalities Implications

<b>B8</b> What are the Equalities implications:
<b>B8.1</b> Positive (Opportunities/Benefits): The Council is able to support more East Staffordshire residents who have a low income and who are unable to work due to being instructed to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace.
<b>B8.2</b> Negative (Threats): We do not know who has been told to self-isolate until they make an application.
<b>B8.3</b> The subject of this decision is not a policy, strategy, function or service that is new or being revised. An equality impact assessment is not required.
<b>B8.4</b> [The equality impact assessment identified the following actions to be carried out:] NA

## Risk Assessment

<b>B9</b> What are the Risk Assessment implications:
<b>B9.1</b> Positive (Opportunities/Benefits): The impact to the Council is low as the scheme is fully funded by the Government.
<b>B9.2</b> Negative (Threats): NA
<b>B9.3</b> The risks do not need to be entered in the Risk Register. Any financial implications to mitigate against these risks are considered above.

## Legal Considerations

<b>B10</b> What are the Legal Considerations:
<b>B10.1</b> There are no significant legal issues arising from this decision.
This section has been approved by the following member of the Legal Team Please print name: Angela Wakefield
Please sign name: <a href="#">Approval by email 110721</a>

## Sustainability Implications

<b>B11</b> What are the Sustainability implications:
<b>B11.1</b> The proposal would not result in an overall positive effect in terms of sustainability (including climate change and change adaptation measures).
<b>B11.2</b> Positive (Opportunities/Benefits): NA
<b>B11.3</b> Negative (Threats): NA

## Health & Safety Implications

<b>B12</b> What are the Health & Safety implications:
<b>B12.1</b> A Risk Assessment has not been carried out and entered into Safety Media for all significant hazards and risks because there are no significant hazards or risks arising from this decision
<b>B12.2</b> Any financial implications to mitigate against these hazards and risks are considered above.
<b>B12.3</b> [Control measures and an action plan have been identified for any significant hazards and risks identified in the risk assessment. The positive/negative impacts are set out below] NA
<b>B12.3.1</b> Positive (Benefits) NA
<b>B12.3.2</b> Negative (Threats) NA

## Key Decision

**B13** Is this a Key Decision?      No

**Note: A Key Executive Decision is one where:**

- 1. REVENUE – Any contract or proposal with an annual payment or saving of more than £100,000**
- 2. CAPITAL – Any capital project with a value in excess of £150,000**
- 3. A decision which significantly affects communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards.**

<b>B13.1 If this is a Key Decision, is this an urgent decision such that a delay caused by use of the Call-in Procedure would <u>seriously</u> prejudice the public interest?</b>	NA
<b>B13.2 If yes, has the Mayor or in his/her absence the Deputy Mayor or in his/her absence the Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Committee agreed that the decision will be exempt from Call-in?</b>	NA

**NOTE: If this decision is subject to the Call-in Procedure it will come into force, and may then be implemented, on the expiry of 3 working days after publication – unless 10 Members of the Council call in the decision.**

Please send the original signed document to [andrea.davies@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk](mailto:andrea.davies@eaststaffsbc.gov.uk)