

Exercise of emergency functions – Acceptance of the sum of £540,908 (Five Hundred Thousand Nine Hundred and Eight Pounds) from the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government (“the Funding Amount”) for the delivery of the ERDF Specialist Grants Fund (“the Scheme”)

1. Part 2M of the constitution of the City Council provides for the Scheme of Functions delegated to Employees including to the Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service.
2. Paragraph 3.8 of Part 2M of the Constitution enables the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader to make decisions required in an emergency.
3. In response to the Coronavirus, Covid – 19, the Government has announced there would be additional funding for small businesses to access specialist professional advice such as HR, accountants, legal, financial, IT and digital, and to purchase minor equipment to adapt or adopt new technology in order to continue to deliver business activity or diversify
4. The Government has also issued guidance for the scheme which is available at:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/906229/GH_Funding_Information_and_Allocations_FINAL_UPDATED_030820.pdf
5. Businesses will access the funding by contacting the Coventry and Warwickshire Growth Hub. In line with the existing governance arrangements for the Growth Hub, Coventry City Council will act as accountable body for this funding. The Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government will make additional funding available to the Council through a variation to the existing European Regional Development (ERDF) Business Support contract. The Council will then process applications for the grants prepared by the Growth Hub and make payments to businesses once eligibility checks have been satisfied.
6. The Government will make the Funding Amount available to the Council immediately and this funding will upon receipt need to be added to the Council’s Revenue Budget.
7. In these current challenging times to individuals and businesses, the Council wishes to accept the Funding Amount as quickly as possible in order to make the grants available immediately to local businesses.

8. On the basis set out above, I am satisfied that the decision being taken pursuant to this emergency provision is critical to the Council's ability to provide the much-needed support to the local economy in these challenging times.

9. In light of the above I agree that this constitutes an emergency and I am making the decision that the City Council:
 - accepts the Funding Amount up to the sum of £540,908 from the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government
 - that this Funding Amount be added to the Council's Revenue Budget; and
 - delegated authority be given to the Head of Economic Development (following consultation with the Director of Finance and Corporate Services) to finalise the terms and conditions of the funding agreements, manage the Scheme up to the value of the Funding Amount and enter into the necessary funding agreements to ensure deliverability of the Scheme whilst also ensuring that eligibility criteria are adhered to.

I have consulted with the Leader of the City Council to confirm his agreement to this course of action.

A report will be taken to Council at the next appropriate meeting that will include information about this emergency decision.

Signed:

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of the Chief Executive of Coventry City Council.

Chief Executive of Coventry City Council

Dated: 14 August 2020