

Exercise of emergency functions – Acceptance of the sum of £3,731,924 (Three Million Seven Hundred and Thirty One Thousand Nine Hundred and Twenty Four Pounds) from the Department for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (“the Funding Amount”) for the delivery of the Covid-19 hardship fund 2020-21 (“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. As part of its response to COVID-19, the Government announced in the Budget on 11 March that it would provide local authorities in England with £500m of new grant funding to support economically vulnerable people and households in their local area. The expectation is that the majority of the hardship fund will be used to provide council tax relief, alongside existing local council tax support schemes. This funding is distinct from the £5bn COVID-19 response fund to support public services.
4. The Government recognises that COVID-19 is likely to cause fluctuations in household incomes and recognises that, as a result, some individuals may struggle to meet council tax payments. Councils will already have established their local council tax support schemes for 2020-21. The Government therefore expects that billing authorities will primarily use their grant allocation to reduce the council tax liability of individuals in their area, using their discretionary powers under s13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. Councils may also want to use some funding to deliver increased financial assistance through other local support mechanisms, having considered local circumstances.
5. The Government has therefore issued guidance which sets out how the grant is to be provided, the underlining principles as well as the eligibility criteria. A copy of the guidance can be located on https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/874867/COVID-19_Council_Tax_Hardship_Fund_Guidance.pdf
6. The Government has made the Funding Amount available to the Council and this funding will upon receipt need to be added to the Council’s Revenue Budget.
7. In these current challenging times to individuals, the Council wishes to accept the Funding Amount as quickly as possible in order to provide the necessary relief support to individuals.
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 relief support to individuals in these challenging times.

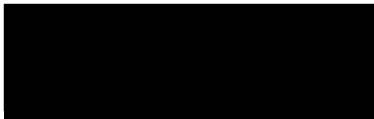
9. In light of the above I agree that this constitutes an emergency and I am making the decision that the City Council:

- accepts the Funding Amount up to the sum of £3,731,924 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government;
- that this Funding Amount be added to the Council's Revenue Budget; and
- delegated authority be given to Barry Strain (following consultation with the Director of Finance and Corporate Service) to manage the Scheme and ensure that any support provided by the Council to individuals are in accordance with the eligibility criteria set out in the guidance referenced above.

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

Chief Executive of Coventry City Council

Dated: 2 April 2020