
Council

9 July 2024

Name of Cabinet Member:

N/A

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Chief Executive

Ward(s) affected:

City wide

Title:

Acceptance of Grant Funding - Household Support Fund

Is this a key decision?

N/A

Executive Summary:

This report informs Council of a decision undertaken by the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer) in accordance with the Financial Procedure Rules as set out in the Constitution and following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources and the Leader of the Council to accept and allocate a grant of £3,224,222.30 from the Department for Work and Pensions (“DWP”) pursuant to the grant scheme known as the Household Support Fund (HSF). Due to the timescales involved, this decision is reported to Council retrospectively.

List of Appendices included:

None

Background papers:

Other useful documents - None

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council? - Yes – 9 July 2024

Report title: Acceptance of Grant Finding - Household Support Fund

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 The Household Support Fund (HSF) is a funding stream provided to Local Authorities (LAs) by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to provide local crisis support to vulnerable households in most need with the cost of essentials. The HSF grant scheme was live from 1st April 2024 however the grant award documentation and scheme guidance was not published until 26th March 2024.
- 1.2 Paragraph 2.3.2 of Part 3F of the Constitution sets out the approval levels required for acceptance of a grant prior to signature of a grant agreement. Grants over £2,500,000 require approval by Council, if time permits. Where there is no time to go gain approval from Council, joint approval in writing by the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer) following consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member and Leader is required. The decision must then be reported to Council retrospectively,
- 1.3 The value of the grant awarded to Coventry was £3.2 M, and therefore acceptance of the grant would normally require approval of Full Council. However the next ordinary meeting of Council following the Annual General Meeting was not expected before June 24. Waiting until this time would mean losing a significant period of the delivery timescale, during which the Council would not be offering crisis support through this fund - for example to people who are struggling to afford their energy bills, cook/store chilled food or have appropriate bedding.
- 1.4 Therefore on 29 April, 2024 , the Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer) Officer, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources and the Leader, approved the acceptance and allocation of a grant of £3,224,222.30 from the Department Work and Pensions (“DWP”) pursuant to the grant scheme known as the Household Support Fund (HSF) in accordance with the Constitution.
- 1.5 The decisions taken in full are:
 - Accept a grant in the sum of £3,224,222.30 and use the grant in line with the grant determination issued.
 - Approve delivery of the Household Support Fund scheme as outlined in the recommended delivery plan.
 - Delegate authority to the Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer), following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources and the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, to take such ancillary or incidental actions required to bring into effect the recommendations set out in this note.
- 1.6. In accordance with the Constitution, this matter is now reported to Council.

1.7 Appropriate, further reports on matters arising from this decision will be considered by the relevant Council body as necessary.

2 Options considered

2.1 The Chief Executive and the Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer), following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing, the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources and the Leader, agreed that the decision to accept the grant could not wait until the next Council meeting and was critical to the Council's ability to deliver the Household Support Fund scheme.

3 Results of consultation undertaken

3.1 In accordance with the Constitution, the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources and the Leader were consulted and they confirmed the course of action.

4 Timetable for implementing this decision

In light of the urgent nature of the matter detailed in paragraph 1.5 above, the decisions were implemented immediately.

5 Comments from Chief Operating Officer (Section 151 Officer) and the Chief Legal Officer

Financial implications

Where decisions made involve the receipt of grants and making of expenditure, this has been identified in the decision summary. The City Council maintains detailed records and forecasts of the financial impacts. Alongside regular financial management activity, the financial implications are included within the Council's financial monitoring reports.

Legal implications

Paragraph 2.3.2 (d) of Part 3F of the Constitution provides for approval of grant agreements by the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer) following consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member and Leader relating to grant receipt and expenditure over the value of over £2,500,000 if time does not permit consideration by Council.

Report author(s):

Name and job title:

Laura Waller – Digital & Inclusion Lead
Christopher Whiteley – Finance Manager

Tel and email contact:

Laura.waller@coventry.gov.uk – 024 7697 6496

Christopher.whiteley@coventry.gov.uk – 024 7683 2191

Enquiries should be directed to the above

Contributor/approver name	Title	Service Area	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
Contributors:				
Adrian West	Head of Governance	Law and Governance	17/06/24	26/06/24
Suzanne Bennett	Governance services Co-ordinator	Law and Governance	17/6/24	24/06/24
Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)				
Finance: Ewan Dewar	Head of Finance	Finance	17/6/24	27/6/24
Legal: Julie Newman	Chief Legal Officer	Law and Governance	27/6/24	27/6/24
Chief Executive: Julie Nugent	Chief Executive		27/6/24	27/6/24
Members: Councillor G Duggins	Leader of the Council		27/6/24	27/6/
Councillor D Welsh	Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing		27/6/24	27/6/24
Approved by the Leader on behalf of Councillor R Brown	Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources		27/6/24	27/6/24

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