



ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet

27 January 2021

Report Title:	COVID-19 Grant Funding
Cabinet Portfolio	Finance and Governance
Cabinet Member	Councillor Martin Bond
Exempt Report	No
Reason for Exemption	N/A
Key Decision	No
Public Notice issued	N/A
Wards Affected	All
Report of	Cath Fogarty Executive Director, Corporate Services cathfogarty@sthelens.gov.uk 01744 673201
Contact Officer	Asad Mushtaq Director of Finance asadmushtaq@sthelens.gov.uk

Borough priorities	Ensure children and young people have a positive start in life	
	Promote good health, independence and care across our communities	
	Create safe and strong communities for our residents	
	Support a strong, diverse and well-connected local economy	
	Create a green, thriving and vibrant place to be proud of	
	Be a modern, efficient and effective Council	x

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report provides a summary of the specific COVID-19 related funding streams made available to the Council during 2020-2021 and seeks approval of delegation in relation to decisions around the application of future COVID-19 related funding streams.

2. Recommendations for Decision

Cabinet is recommended to:

- i) **Note the various funding streams and activity as detailed in the report;**
- ii) **Where necessary, provide retrospective approval to the application of specific funding streams;**
- iii) **Where timescales and/or deadlines determine, approve delegation to the Chief Executive and Executive Director of Corporate Services in relation to decisions associated with the application of any future COVID-19 related funding streams.**

3. Purpose of this Report

- 3.1 This report provides a summary of the specific COVID-19 related funding streams made available to the Council during 2020-2021 for direct application and/or in providing support to its residents and businesses.
- 3.2 The report also seeks formal delegation to the Chief Executive and Executive Director of Corporate Services in relation to decisions around the application of any future COVID-19 related funding streams.

4. Background / Reasons for the recommendations

- 4.1 COVID-19 has been the most challenging emergency that the Council has ever faced and, alongside its partners and communities, there has been a vital need for the Council to react at speed for a number of reasons, including:
- to limit the spread of the virus
 - to protect the health of our residents
 - to ensure that the most vulnerable persons remain safe and properly cared for
 - to ensure business continuity
 - to support business survival
 - to continue to provide the series of vital support services to/for individuals and businesses.
- 4.2 The outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic brought with it both additional expenditure pressures and significant losses of income across a range of council services, which were either required to close or have experienced vastly reduced levels of activity. The Financial Monitoring Report considered by Cabinet on 6 January 2021 provided further detail in relation to these pressures, alongside the funding that has been made available from Government Emergency Funding and its Sales, Fees and Charges Compensation Scheme.
- 4.3 This report concentrates on the other specific funding that has been made available to the Council or routed via the Liverpool City Region (LCR) during 2020-2021. The funding is largely ringfenced for spend in accordance with grant conditions and directed at specific programmes of work.
- 4.4 The schedules included at Appendix A provide a brief overview of the funding streams received or notified to date. Each funding source has been included in one of the following categories:
- Test & Trace / Outbreak Management / Infection Control activity
 - Support direct to individuals
 - Support direct to businesses
 - Other funding streams (non-schools)
 - Other funding streams (schools)
- 4.5 A significant number (and more so, value) of these funding sources are subject to strict conditions that determine the precise nature of expenditure/usage of funding, with the Council having no discretion, and acting as agent in administering the scheme on behalf of Government.
- 4.6 Specific approval has also been provided in relation to other funding sources (e.g. Test and Trace funding, Discretionary Grants Fund, Hospitality & Leisure Sector Support Grant, Test and Trace Discretionary Isolation Payments). Retrospective approval is sought in relation to the application of the residual specific funding streams.
- 4.7 At this stage, it can be reasonably expected that Government policy and requirements will result in further allocations of certain funding streams to local authorities (e.g. support for businesses forced to close under local/national restrictions and funding for local authorities to deliver testing, containment and enforcement) until such time as the virus is under greater control.
- 4.8 Actions on the part of the Council will largely need to be taken at significant pace or on a reactive basis, and where timescales and/or deadlines determine, it is requested that approval of delegation to the Chief Executive and Executive Director of Corporate Services is provided in relation to decisions associated with the application of any future COVID-19 related funding streams.

4.9 For clarity, the expansion of the Retail, Hospitality & Leisure business rate relief scheme is not included in the appended schedules.

5. Community Impact Assessment

The Community Impact Assessment identified no specific key implications.

5.1 None

6. Consideration of Alternatives

6.1 None

7. Conclusions

7.1 None

1. Implications

8.1 Legal Implications

8.1.1 The purpose of this report is to highlight the funding streams made available to provide support to local authorities in response to the pandemic and has no direct legal or other implications unless noted.

8.2 Community Impact Assessment (CIA) Implications

8.2.1 Social Value

8.2.1.1 None

8.2.2 Sustainability and Environment

8.2.2.1 None

8.2.3 Health and Wellbeing

8.2.3.1 Various funding streams are targeted at preserving the general or specific health and wellbeing of residents during the crisis.

8.2.4 Equality and Human Rights

8.2.4.1 The Council's administration of the grant funding streams does not discriminate against any particular group(s) of people.

8.3 Customers and Resident

8.3.1 Various funding streams are targeted at supporting specific groups of residents and/or businesses during the crisis based on criteria and conditions prescribed.

8.4 Asset and Property

8.4.1 None

8.5 Staffing and Human Resource

8.5.1 It has been necessary for individual staffing arrangements to be put in place for the administration and delivery of activities arising from the various funding streams.

8.6 Risks

8.6.1 None directly arising from this report. Risks relating to each funding stream require individual assessment by lead Officers.

8.7 Finance

8.7.1 See Section 4.

8.8 Policy Framework Implications

8.8.1 None

9. Background papers

None

10. Appendices

Appendix A: COVID-19 funding streams 2020-2021