

Nottingham City Council Delegated Decision



Reference Number:	4104
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Department:	Strategy and Resources
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Subject:	Additional Funding for Advice Services - COVID-19
Total Value:	£30,000 (Type: Revenue)
Decision Being Taken:	To approve funding of £30,000 to increase the total value of contracts for advice services commissioned to assist citizens facing financial difficulty (as detailed in Appendix 1) in 2020/21 on a non-recurrent basis. The funding for individual contracts will be increased by an amount below £25,000 with total funding apportioned across contacts to best meet the needs of citizens.

Reasons for the Decision(s) The Council commissions a number of services to help people living in the City who are at risk of financial difficulty and hardship. These services help people by providing advice and assistance in relation to benefits, managing and prioritising debts, access to employment, foodbanks and other means of resolving or lessening the impact of financial difficulty.

The full impact of the pandemic on citizens who are vulnerable to financial difficulty is still unfolding, although a significant increase in the number of people living in the city affected by financial difficulty is expected over the coming year and beyond.

The approval of this decision will allow for an increase in funding to enable advice services to provide additional support to people facing financial difficulty during the 20/21 year. This use of funds is recommended on the basis that access to advice help people to resolve hardship and avoid crises that can result in increased demand for reactive and statutory services required of the Council (e.g. in attending to its homelessness duties).

Contracts for these services will be adjusted to capture the requirement for providers to demonstrate how funds have been used to increase assistance to citizens affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Briefing notes documents: Appendix 1 - Contracts for Advice Services.docx

Other Options Considered: Not to increase funding for advice services. This option is not recommended on the basis that the inability of advice services to respond to an increase in demand is likely to result in more people facing avoidable hardship. This option also risks an avoidable increase in demand for statutory services required of the Council with the potential for a more significant budget impact.

Background Papers:

Unpublished background papers: Conference report.pdf

Published Works: Nottingham Financial Resilience Partnership Conference Report: "Tackling the Impact on People's Financial Wellbeing in Nottingham of COVID-19", (September 2020).

Affected Wards: Citywide

Colleague / Councillor Interests:

Consultations:	Date: 06/08/2020
	Other: The Leader of the Council
	Decision to allocate £30k to bolster funding of advice services in 20/21 supported.
	Those not consulted are not directly affected by the decision.
Crime and Disorder Implications:	The approval of this decision is expected to help more citizens avoid hardship and financial difficulty. This is expected to make a beneficial contribution to the reduction of crime and disorder within the City.
Equality:	EIA not required. Reasons: An existing EIA has been completed to accompany the original decision to establish contracts for advice services.
Regard for NHS Constitution:	Local authorities have a statutory duty to have regard to the NHS Constitution when exercising their public health functions under the NHS Act 2006. In making this decision relating to public health functions, we have properly considered the NHS Constitution where applicable and have taken into account how it can be applied in order to commission services to improve the health of the local community.
Decision Type:	Officer
Executive Decision?	Yes
Scheme of Delegation Reference Number or Other Source of Delegation:	1
Subject to Call In:	No The call-in procedure does not apply to the decision because the value of the decision is below the call in threshold.
Advice Sought:	Legal, Finance, Procurement
Legal Advice:	There are no significant legal issues arising from this decision. Given the type of contracts and value of the additional funding to be given to those contracts there are no procurement legislation implications. The proposal is also compliant within the Council's constitutional requirements. Accordingly the proposal can be supported from a legal perspective. Advice provided by Naomi Vass (Senior Solicitor) on 12/01/2021.

Finance Advice:

This decision seeks approval to award an additional £0.030m in 2020/21 to existing commissioned advice services contracts to assist citizens facing financial difficulty as a result of the covid-19 pandemic. Details of the contracts are detailed in Appendix 1 within this decision. The additional £0.030m funding is on a non-recurrent basis.

Budget for the full £0.030m has been identified and it will be funded in full from existing Councillor Ward budgets contained within C&O. No financial pressure will occur as a result of this decision. The full cost of £0.030m has been captured as part of period forecasting.

The approval of this decision should be viewed within the financial constraints the Council is currently under and should be only approved if deemed essential. The organisation should weigh up the benefits of approving this additional spend against the option of releasing it as an additional underspend to aid the overall NCC financial position.

The additional funding for individual contracts will not exceed £25,000 each. The total funding amount (£0.030m) will be apportioned across the contacts to best meet the needs of citizens.

Advice provided by Philip Gretton (Finance Analyst) on 11/01/2021.

Procurement Advice:

This decision seeks to award an additional total of £30,000 one off funding in the year 2020/21 to the existing contracts providing advice services for citizens in financial difficulty, as outlined in Appendix 1. The proposed additional funding will enable an increase in financial advice assistance to be provided to citizens experiencing financial pressures in 2020/21 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The additional funding proposed is considered a small amendment to the existing contracts in accordance with Regulation 72(1)(f) of the Public Contracts Regulations and the values are below the thresholds of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules, therefore the decision is supported from a procurement perspective. Advice provided by Jo Pettifor (Procurement Team Manager) on 18/11/2020.

Signatures:

Hugh White (Corporate Director for COVID Response & Recovery)

SIGNED and Dated: 02/02/2021