

Nottingham City Council Executive Board

Minutes of the meeting held in the Ground Floor Committee Room, Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG on 19 October 2021 from 2:00pm to 2:10pm

Membership

Present

Councillor David Mellen (Chair)
Councillor Cheryl Barnard
Councillor Rosemary Healy
Councillor Neghat Khan
Councillor Sam Webster
Councillor Linda Woodings

Absent

Councillor Eunice Campbell-Clark
Councillor Rebecca Langton
Councillor Sally Longford
Councillor Adele Williams

Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:

Councillor Kevin Clarke
Councillor Andrew Rule

Mel Barrett	- Chief Executive
Beth Brown	- Head of Legal and Governance
Robert Dixon	- Head of Business Growth
Lucy Hubber	- Director of Public Health
Frank Jordan	- Corporate Director for Resident Services
Adrian Mann	- Governance Officer
Sajeeda Rose	- Corporate Director for Growth and City Development

Call-in

Unless stated otherwise, all decisions made by the Executive Board are subject to call-in. The last date for call-in is **Wednesday 27 October 2021**. Decisions cannot be implemented until the next working day following this date.

60 Apologies for Absence

Councillor Eunice Campbell-Clark	- unwell
Councillor Rebecca Langton	- personal reasons
Councillor Sally Longford	- on leave
Councillor Adele Williams	- on leave
Malcolm Townroe	- Director of Legal and Governance
Catherine Underwood	- Corporate Director for People

61 Declarations of Interests

None.

62 Minutes

The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2021 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.

63 Additional Restrictions Grant - Discretionary Grant Framework

The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Regeneration and Communications presented a report on the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) allocation to the Council, to support businesses impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic. The following points were discussed:

- (a) the report sets out a framework for the deployment of the £1.8 million ARG, which is funding provided by central Government that can be allocated by the Council to meet targeted local business needs. The ARG forms part of a much larger context of economic support funding and is not intended as a wage supplement, as this is provided by other schemes, and it will be used to assist businesses with the additional costs that they have incurred as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic and its knock-on impacts to the local economy;
- (b) consultation has been carried out with businesses on their support needs, with the key issues identified being: reduced custom in the retail and hospitality businesses; ongoing low footfall within the Victoria Centre Market; taxi drivers continuing to experience a reduction in business, but an increase in operating costs; high levels of vacancy of business within the city centre, particularly surrounding the Broadmarsh area; low rates of new business start-ups within the city; and businesses experiencing significant recruitment and skills problems;
- (c) a key aim for the ARG is to support new start-ups and develop employment skills, to ensure that the workforce can meet the needs of economic recovery. The Coronavirus pandemic has represented a challenging time for businesses, which have had to show strong resilience, and the Council is seeking to support their recovery process as much as possible. Support grants have been made available to community centres during the pandemic, and it will be possible to allocate funding from the ARG to community centres that deliver employment and skills training;
- (d) the Board thanked officers in the Economic Development team for their hard work in supporting the city's businesses and economy during the unprecedented time of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Resolved:

- (1) to accept the allocation of the £1,836,957 Additional Restrictions Grant from central Government to support businesses adversely affected by the Coronavirus pandemic;**
- (2) to approve the framework to inform the distribution of business grants through the Additional Restrictions Grant, as outlined in the report.**

- **Reasons for the decision**

The Council has been allocated £1,836,957 of ARG by central Government, to support businesses impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic. The ARG is specifically available for local authorities to provide additional support to impacted businesses

with local discretion. The proposals as set out in the report are intended to provide a framework for the distribution of the remaining ARG allocation, to enable the Council to continue to remove barriers to business survival and growth, safeguard jobs and support the local economy.

- **Other options considered**

To refuse the funding: this option was rejected as the funding will directly support businesses to recover from this difficult period and will positively impact upon the ability of the local economy to recover post Covid-19.

To add to the funding to create a larger fund: this option was rejected as there is no obvious source of extra grant funding available.

64 Exclusion of the Public

The Board resolved to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the remaining items in accordance with Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, under Schedule 12A, Part 1, Paragraph 3, on the basis that, having regard to all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining an exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

65 Exempt Minutes

The Committee confirmed the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 21 September 2021 as a correct record and they were signed by the Chair.