

Nottingham City Council Delegated Decision



Nottingham
City Council

Reference Number:	4647
Author:	Sarah Southwell
Department:	Finance and Resources
Contact:	Paul Millward (Job Title: Head of Resilience, Email: paul.millward@nottinghamcity.gov.uk, Phone: 0115 8762980)
Subject:	Residual cost share of body storage facility
Total Value:	£166,000 (Type: Revenue)
Decision Being Taken:	To approve the final payment to Nottinghamshire County Council for the residual cost of the body storage facilities provided in line with the Government's Reasonable Worst Case Scenario for excess deaths during the Covid pandemic.
Reasons for the Decision(s)	<p>In October 2020, Exec Board approved an interim payment of £1.139M towards the agreed cost share with Nottinghamshire County Council for the provision of body storage facilities in Mansfield and Nottingham, arising from the Government's request to Local Authorities to ensure sufficient body storage facilities were available to cope with potential excess deaths, in line with the Government's Reasonable Worst Case Scenario for the first and second wave of Covid-19.</p> <p>The Blenheim body storage facility was operational until May 2021, incurring costs additional to those estimated in October 2020. The City Council's overall spend will be £1.305M, which is £0.166M above the original Exec Board approval of £1.139M in October 2020. Therefore, a further approval is needed before we can pay the County Council the outstanding balance (£0.084M). The split between County and City had been previously agreed at 62.4%:37.6% respectively.</p>

Other Options Considered: The Government required local authorities to safeguard dignity in death throughout the death management system during Covid-19. The Government's Reasonable Worst Case Scenario for expected excess deaths far exceeded the existing hospital mortuary capacity. As neither City or County Council had any excess deaths storage provision, it was necessary to provide new facilities at Crown Farm (Mansfield) and subsequently Blenheim (City).
Government explicitly gave councils money to maintain the dignity of the death management process during COCID-19, and ensuring sufficient body storage capacity was seen as an integral part of that process. To have created two separate body storage facilities for City and County areas would have cost more and created more work for our partners in the NHS and the Funeral sector. Government encouraged cooperation between organisations at a LRF level, and so a joint City/County body storage facility was agreed.

Background Papers: None

Published Works: COVID -19 Excess Deaths - Cost share of Body Storage facilities - Executive Board October 2020

Affected Wards: Citywide

Colleague / Councillor Interests: N/A

Consultations: Those not consulted are not directly affected by the decision.

Crime and Disorder Implications: N/A

Equality: EIA not required. Reasons: The decision relates to additional costs, not the provision of the facility.

Decision Type: Portfolio Holder

Subject to Call In: Yes

Call In Expiry date: 17/06/2022

Advice Sought:

Legal, Finance

Legal Advice:

The proposals in this report raise no significant legal issues. This report supplements the earlier decision taken by Executive Board in October 2020 in furtherance of the Governments direction with respect to ensuring sufficient capacity in body storage facilities during the pandemic.

It is understood that the money has been given to the Council solely for this purpose and the additional transfer of money to the County reflects actual costs incurred in accordance with the previously agreed split under the joint arrangement. Advice provided by Dionne Claire Screamon (Solicitor) on 25/05/2022.

Finance Advice:

This decision builds on previous Executive Board approval from October 2020 for the cost body storage facilities in Mansfield and Nottingham during the covid pandemic. The final costs from both Nottingham City Council and Nottinghamshire County Council have been confirmed and there is a residual balance of £0.166m for Nottingham City to pay. Financial evidence from both organisations have been ratified to confirm the figure. The split is based on the original approved percentage as outlined in the previous decision.

The full £0.166m was accounted for in the financial year it was occurred (21/22) so it is fully funded and contained within the 21/22 outturn figures in Finance & Resources. No further costs are expected in relation to this item, should any materialise further approval and funding will need to be sought.

Advice provided by Philip Gretton (Finance Analyst) on 01/06/2022.

Signatures

Adele Williams (Portfolio Holder for Finance)

SIGNED and Dated: 10/06/2022

Clive Heaphy as Chief Finance Officer (Chief Finance Officer)

SIGNED and Dated: 09/06/2022