

## OFFICER DECISION RECORD

### Receipt and spend of grant for business support

<b>Officer:</b>  Pat Graham, Chief Executive	<b>Service:</b>  Revenues and Benefits
<b>Delegated Power Being Exercised/Subject of Decision:</b>  (a) The receiving and distributing of a section 31 grant for £444,277 under the Additional Restrictions Grant scheme ('ARG'). The budget is set to increase by that sum; and  (b) The decision to distribute the above grants to all qualifying businesses in accordance with the attached policy document.  Decisions (a) and (b) permitted by paragraph 4 of the Budget and Policy Framework Rules contained within chapter 7 of the Constitution which allows the Chief Executive or the Executive to make a decision not in accordance with approved budget where it is not practical to convene a quorate meeting of Council and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agrees that the matter is urgent.	
<b>Background information:</b>  <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. In response to the restrictions imposed on 5 November 2020, the government announced that there would be support for businesses unable to access other grant funding. This grant fund is referred to as the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) scheme.</li><li>2. Copeland was awarded £1,363,660 under tranche 1, which coincided with the second national lockdown between 5 November 2020 and 2 December 2020. This was topped up during the third national lockdown in January 2021 by £605,673. The third tranche of funding will be paid in July 2021 - Copeland will receive £444,277.</li><li>3. Councils are unable to access the third tranche of funding until the first two allocations have been distributed to businesses. Councils have been given until 30 July 2021 to use the first two allocations.</li><li>4. Copeland has distributed £1,969,333 and has submitted a request to Government for the final payment of £444,277.</li></ol>	

5. A small amount of the final payment will be used to ensure bespoke advice is available for Copeland's businesses. The remainder will be used to pay direct discretionary grants to those that meet the conditions set out in the refreshed ARG policy document attached.
6. The following businesses will be supported under this scheme:
  - i. Businesses with fixed property costs that are specifically excluded from the business rates system, or are not the direct ratepayer and are therefore not eligible for the Restart Grant, including B&Bs registered for council tax or small businesses in shared spaces with fixed costs who provide in-person services, including hair and beauty businesses;
  - ii. Freelance and mobile businesses, including caterers, event organisers, personal care and wedding related businesses;
  - iii. Transport and travel businesses, including travel agents, coach and group travel operators, couriers and taxi drivers;
  - iv. Wholesalers or supply chain companies supplying the non-essential retail, leisure and hospitality sectors, including breweries;
  - v. Sector specific businesses that are impacted following the decision to delay stage 4 of the government roadmap, including those businesses that have received a Restart Grant, such as theatres and nightclubs;
  - vi. Any other business not covered above with fixed costs, which is able to demonstrate that they have been severely impacted by the phased lifting of restrictions and/or postponement of reopening linked to the government roadmap only. Or, where they have been mandated to isolate by a test and trace service, due to testing positive or coming into contact with someone who has tested positive, and they must close the business completely. Businesses will be asked for further evidence if applying under this section.
7. Copeland will launch the new scheme from 12 July 2021.
8. On 4 March 2021 new subsidy allowances were established for the COVID-19 business grant schemes. This scheme is covered by three subsidy allowances:
  - Small Amounts of Financial Assistance Allowance
  - COVID-19 Business Grant Allowance
  - COVID-19 Business Grant Special Allowance
9. Copeland Borough Council will maintain a record of grant expenditure under this scheme.

**Decision on urgency:**

This matter cannot wait until the 27th July 2021 (Executive) and 28<sup>th</sup> July (Council). Most people are affected by Covid-19 one way or another and many are suffering financial strain as a result of it. Any support to be offered needs to be provided quickly. The Guidance issued to local authorities is available via this link -

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/984335/additional-restrictions-grant-la-guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/984335/additional-restrictions-grant-la-guidance.pdf)

The decision is of two parts – to amend the budget to record receipt of the grants and to distribute the grant in accordance with Government guidance.

In view of the above I agree that the decision is urgent.

Authorised by email dated 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021 from Councillor John Kane, Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

-----Original Message-----

From: Cllr John Kane <John.Kane@copeland.gov.uk>

Sent: 01 July 2021 07:56

To: Clinton Boyce <Clinton.Boyce@copeland.gov.uk>

Subject: Re: Urgent - COVID Business Grant Support - Approval to Distribute Grants to Businesses - ARG

Clinton,

No problem please proceed.

John

**Others consulted:**

(1) Section 151 Officer: authorised by email dated 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021 from Steven Brown, section 151 officer:

**From:** Steven Brown <Steven.Brown@copeland.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 01 July 2021 09:49

**To:** Clinton Boyce <Clinton.Boyce@copeland.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Urgent - COVID Business Grant Support - Approval to Distribute Grants to Businesses - ARG

Yeah ok to this too thanks

(2) Monitoring Officer: authorised by email dated 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021 from Sarah Pemberton, Director of Corporate Resources and Commercial Strategy:

**From:** Sarah Pemberton <Sarah.Pemberton@copeland.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 30 June 2021 13:53

**To:** Clinton Boyce <Clinton.Boyce@copeland.gov.uk>; Steven Brown <Steven.Brown@copeland.gov.uk>; Cllr John Kane <John.Kane@copeland.gov.uk>; Mike Starkie <Mike.Starkie@copeland.gov.uk>

**Cc:** Janet Sinnott <Janet.Sinnott@copeland.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Urgent - COVID Business Grant Support - Approval to Distribute Grants to Businesses - ARG

Clint

Happy to proceed as detailed – agreed.

(3) Solicitor: Agreed, 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

**Mayor's approval:**

I agree with the amendment to the Council's budget to receive the grant of £444,277 for the ARG scheme and to the distribution of that grant as advised by Government.

Authorised by email dated 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021 from Mike Starkie, Elected Mayor:

**From:** Mike Starkie <Mike.Starkie@copeland.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 30 June 2021 11:56

**To:** Clinton Boyce <Clinton.Boyce@copeland.gov.uk>

**Cc:** Steven Brown <Steven.Brown@copeland.gov.uk>; Sarah Pemberton <Sarah.Pemberton@copeland.gov.uk>; Cllr John Kane <John.Kane@copeland.gov.uk>; Janet Sinnott <Janet.Sinnott@copeland.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Urgent - COVID Business Grant Support - Approval to Distribute Grants to Businesses - ARG

Thanks Clinton

Happy to proceed as detailed

Mike

**Decision to be taken:**

To receive a section 31 grant for £444,277 (with the consequential increase to the Council's budget) and to distribute it as advised by Government and in accordance with the attached policy document.

**Reasons for the decision (specify all reasons for taking the decisions including where necessary reference to Council policy):**

It is necessary to deliver the Government's response to Covid-19 in relation to business support.

**Alternative options considered (if appropriate)**

None.

**Whether any conflict of interest arose whether of the decision maker or any consultee in the decision and if any was declared whether the head of paid service granted a dispensation:**

None.

**Background/Reports/Information considered and attached (legal, personnel, financial implications, etc.)**

COVID-19 Business Support Grant Funding Schemes– Local Authority Guidance – Additional Restrictions Grant Scheme (updated 16 June 2021 version).

**Approval**

I agree, and make the decision as set out above, to receive a section 31 grant for the total amount of £444,277 (with the consequential increase to the Council's budget) and to distribute as advised by Government and in accordance with the attached policy document.

Authorised by email dated 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021 from Pat Graham, Chief Executive:

**From:** Clinton Boyce <[Clinton.Boyce@copeland.gov.uk](mailto:Clinton.Boyce@copeland.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 01 July 2021 10:35

**To:** Pat Graham <[Pat.Graham@copeland.gov.uk](mailto:Pat.Graham@copeland.gov.uk)>

**Cc:** Janet Sinnott <[Janet.Sinnott@copeland.gov.uk](mailto:Janet.Sinnott@copeland.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** Covid-19 business grant support

Pat

Please see attached. All self-explanatory. Are you happy to authorise as an urgent action. If yes, the decision, as taken, will be reported to the next Council meeting.

Thanks.

Clint.

**From:** Pat Graham <Pat.Graham@copeland.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 01 July 2021 10:49

**To:** Clinton Boyce <Clinton.Boyce@copeland.gov.uk>

**Cc:** Janet Sinnott <Janet.Sinnott@copeland.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Covid-19 business grant support

yes

Pat Graham  
Chief Executive