

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2019/2020 - REPORT NO.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

PORTFOLIO / OPERATIONAL DECISION OF

Leader, Cllr Nesil Caliskan

Agenda - Part:1	KD Num: KD: 5131
Subject:	
Set up of a Covid 19 Fund from Reserves	

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. This short report proposes that £3m of council reserves be drawn down to create a fund specifically in response to the Covid 19 outbreak.
- 1.2. Although the Government announced a package of £12bn for Covid 19 financial relief, there are currently no details of how this will be allocated to local authorities. In the interim period, it is proposed that the potential impact on the community and council spending is recognised by allocating £3m from our existing reserves.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. For the Executive Director of Resources (Acting) to:
 - Allocate £3m from reserves specifically allocated to support the Council's Coronavirus response.
 - Of this fund £100k be earmarked immediately for the voluntary sector to support the mobilisation of volunteers and provided crisis financial support.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. On 11th March 2020, the Government announced £12 billion (one-off) will be provided to alleviate the crisis resulting from Covid 19. This included:
- Additional resources for the NHS. The Chancellor has given an open-ended commitment to the NHS to fund whatever is required (£5bn has been earmarked).
 - Financial support for people not able to work. Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) has already been brought forward from the fourth to the first day of sickness. Separate support for temporary workers, who are not eligible for SSP, through the benefits system.
 - Support for businesses. The cost of SSP as a result of the coronavirus will be refunded by Government.
 - Some of the support will come via local government. A £500m “hardship” fund will be allocated to local authorities (the allocations and criteria have yet to be announced).
 - Further reductions in business rates, costing about £2.5bn (Council’s will be fully compensated); partly designed to help businesses through the coronavirus outbreak; they also reflect a longer-term trend of reducing the burden of business rates on smaller businesses.
- 3.2. The Council expects to incur additional costs over and above our existing agreed budgets both to ensure that our services continue to support the most vulnerable, and to support the community, residents and businesses.
- 3.3. In advance of receiving any government funding, Enfield is committing £3m from reserves so that the Council is well placed to be responsive to the emerging issues. These will be additional costs incurred as a result of ensuring that core services remain operational as well as supporting the voluntary sector, the community, residents and businesses.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1. It is proposed to allocate £3m from reserves to a Covid 19 Fund which will both support Council increased costs and also support the community, residents and businesses.
- 4.2. The allocation from this fund will be prioritised through the Council’s emergency planning governance arrangements.

- 4.3. In the first instance, an allocation of £100k will be committed to supporting the voluntary sector to mobilise. The priorities for this funding will be determined through the Enfield Community Resilience Board.
- 4.4. There will be pressure across all Council Services and these pressures are already emerging in a number of areas.
- 4.5. In Adult Social Care additional beds have already been purchased to enable discharge from hospital. This has been supplemented by the purchase of additional aids and adaptations and Protective Personal Equipment (PPE) is also on order. There have already been increased numbers of hospital discharges and requests for residential beds. Further, the Council is continuing to pay providers where they are having to close where their staff are needing to go into isolation, and this is resulting in double care costs.
- 4.6. There are also already mounting pressures Children's services and the need to secure provision for futures increases in demand. Additional agency social workers are being engaged and block bookings being made for accommodation such as Travel Lodge rooms, flats and houses. There will also be pressure on family support for disabled children where it is not possible for them to attend school due to closures.
- 4.7. There is a net growth in temporary accommodation. The Council is experiencing additional costs for rough sleepers' self isolation units and additional staff capacity to keep essential services going e.g. cleaning on communal areas on estates.
- 4.8. There are likely to be staffing challenges for the waste service where there is a relatively high proportion of older people in the workforce. The team are looking to mitigate this by redeploying from less critical services but there's still likely to be a need to bring in additional resource. The Council's burial services is very likely to experience greater demand, especially in respect of registration, storage as well as the actual burials
- 4.9. Finally, the Council will experience financial challenges in many of its traded services. This is already presenting itself in catering and music. Also areas of risk will include events and also income streams such as parking.
- 4.10. Arrangements are in place to approve and monitor the additional expenditure, this includes clear accounting to ensure costs can be readily recovered in the event of Government support. Work is in place to bring together an initial forecast of the potential total additional cost and this will naturally be reviewed on a weekly if not daily basis.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Do nothing

- 5.1 This option has been disregarded as LBE it is imperative to allocate resources to recognise these costs.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1. In order to ensure that appropriate resources are made available for both business continuity purposes and also to support the mobilisation of the community sector.

7. COMMENTS OF OTHER DEPARTMENTS

7.1. Financial Implications

- 7.1.1 This funding will be allocated from the existing Council reserves in advance of any funding received by central government. The full likely impact is not known but the position is being closely monitored and there will be regular updates provided.

7.2. Legal Implications

- 7.2.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

7.3. Property Implications

- 7.3.1 Not applicable

7.4. Procurement Implications

- 7.4.1. Any procurement will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPR's) and the Public Contracts Regulations (2015), unless, for business reasons the decision is required in accordance with the urgency provision as required.

8. KEY RISKS

- 8.1 Not applicable

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Not applicable

10. PERFORMANCE AND DATA IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Not applicable

11. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Not applicable

12. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

12.1 Not applicable

13. PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

13.1 Not applicable