

Oxford City Council Decisions delegated to officers

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Agreement of the Oxford City Council Coronavirus Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) Scheme

Date decision taken: 27 April 2021

Published on: 27 April 2021

Is decision for call-in: Yes

If yes, call-in expires at 5pm on: 29 April 2021

(The decision comes into force on day it was taken; or, if it may be called in, on the expiry of call-in period/completion of the call-in process)

The issue is in a Forward Plan: No
Relates to issue:
To ensure timely and appropriate use of available Additional Restrictions Grant Funding in-line with the guidance and local economic need.

Decision made	The decision has been made to: a) Increase the budget to the full £5,394,374 allocation of ARG, subject to the Council receiving additional funding of £991,374 (current budget £4,403,000). b) Authorise spending over the £2.8m already committed up to a maximum of £5,394,374, subject to additional funding of £991,374 being received, or if not up to a maximum spend of £4,403,000. c) Note the projected allocation for schemes (below). d) Delegate decisions to increase and decrease specific scheme budgets, within the total ARG allocation, to the Director of Development, in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Partnerships.
Reasons for making this decision	The reason drop down box (Description Tab)
Key decision:	Yes Involves spending or saving a significant amount - for this Council 'significant' in budgetary terms is £500,000 or greater [Constitution 15.14]
Wards affected	
Decision taken by	

	Picks up from the ORIGINAL decision maker tab
How the decision was delegated and on what authority is it made	Urgent decision in accordance with paragraph 9.3 (b) of the Councils Constitution as follows: The Head of Paid Service is authorised to take any urgent action necessary to protect the Council’s interests and assets where time is of the essence and it is impracticable to secure authority to act where such authority would otherwise be required. The Head of Paid Service, in so acting, will be guided by budget and the policy framework, will consult the other Statutory Officers before acting and will report, in writing, as soon as practicable to the body which would otherwise have been required to give the necessary authority to act.
Cabinet/ Council meeting authorising this	Chief Executive 20 Jan 2021
Executive Lead/ Cabinet Member with responsibility	Picks up from the ORIGINAL decision maker
Other options considered (with reasons for rejection)	<p>The grant scheme must be delivered to serve the interests of local business severely affected by COVID restrictions in line with Government guidance. A full range of proposals were considered, and implementation of the recommended proposals was decided upon, based on the scheme guidance and local economic needs.</p> <p>Recent announcements have altered the picture in terms of timing of spend. On March 3rd, an additional £991,374 of ARG funding (on top of the £4,403,000) was announced with a significant shift in guidance (published 22nd March). This is aimed at ensuring ARG will be used to mirror the new ‘Restart Grants’ announced for eligible rate paying businesses in the budget.</p> <p>The additional funding will only be awarded to Local Authorities that have spent their existing funding (£4,403,000) by 30 June 2021 (as opposed to the 31st March 2022 as previously indicated).</p> <p>Therefore, in order to obtain the additional funds to support local businesses further, the grant and support schemes below will be delivered and funded flexibly according to business demand and the assessed impact on individual business applicants;</p> <p>Approved Scheme 1: ARG Short-term Fund - £2,810,000</p>

	<p>Approved Scheme 2: City Centre Restart Fund – £250,000</p> <p>Approved Scheme 3: Home-based / Mobile Businesses support - £300,000</p> <p>Approved Scheme 4: Restart ARG Grant (now mirroring national rate payer scheme) - £1,043,000</p> <p>Approved Scheme 5: Business Pivot Fund - £841,374</p> <p>Approved Scheme 6: Business support (where eligible) - £150,000.</p>
Is part of the decision exempt?	No
Documents attached (if any)	
Declared conflicts of interest by Cabinet member with responsibility, if any	<p>None</p> <p>Conflict of interest description for decisions. (other Tab in Decision)</p>
Also considered and approved by senior/ statutory officers	<p>Caroline Green, Chief Executive</p> <p>Decision taken in consultation with Cllr Susan Brown, Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Partnerships, Nigel Kennedy, Head of Financial Services and Susan Sale, Head of Law and Governance.</p> <p>The Chair of Scrutiny agreed to the taking of an urgent key decision which had not been notified on the Council's Forward Plan.</p>

Note: Information relating to a delegated officer decision does not have to be made public if it is exempt or confidential.