

To: Cabinet – 16 March 2022
Date: Council – 21 March 2022
Report of: Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive)
Title of Report: Decision taken under Part 9.3(b) of the Constitution

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	Cabinet is asked to note the decisions taken by the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) using the urgency powers delegated in Part 9.3(b) of the Constitution.
Recommendation:	Cabinet is recommended to:
1.	Note the decisions taken as set out in the report and recommend to Council to note the decision.

Appendices
None

Introduction and background

1. This report updates Cabinet and Council on a decision taken by the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) using the urgency powers delegated in Part 9.3(b) of the Council's Constitution.
2. Where urgency powers are used the Constitution requires the Head of Paid Service to report, in writing, as soon as practicable to the body which would otherwise have been required to give the necessary authority to act.

9.3 Role of Head of Paid Service

...

(b) 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.

Decisions taken using urgency powers

3. The following decision has been taken using urgency powers for which Cabinet and Council would otherwise have been required to give the necessary authority to act. Cabinet is responsible for recommending budget allocations to Council and Council is responsible for agreeing the budget. Cabinet is asked to note the decision and to recommend to Council to note the decision.
4. This report does not include decisions taken using urgency or emergency powers that have previously been reported to Cabinet.

ITEM 1	Agreement of the Oxford City Council Coronavirus Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) Scheme Top-Up
Decision:	To ensure timely and appropriate use of further Additional Restrictions Grant Funding in-line with the guidance and local economic need, the decision has been made to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Increase the ARG budget available by <u>£208,367</u> (total allocation £5,602,741). b) Approve use of the top-up funds for delivery of the 'Omicron Additional Restrictions Grant' (see options considered). Any remaining funds from previous schemes will be also be allocated to this funds in-line with officer and leader delegations agreed on 26 April 2021.
Date decision made:	27 January 2022
Decision taker	Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) in consultation with the Corporate Management Team and the Leader.
Was the decision taken under emergency or urgency rules?	<p>Constitution 9.3(b):</p> <p><i>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.</i></p> <p><i>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.</i></p>
Is this a Key Decision?	No
Alternative options considered:	The grant scheme must be delivered to serve the interests of local business severely affected by COVID restrictions in line with Government guidance. A range of proposals were

	<p>considered, and implementation of the recommended proposals was decided upon, based on the scheme guidance and local economic needs.</p> <p><u>Option Agreed:</u> Further discretionary Additional Restrictions Grants (ARGs) will be made available for businesses operating in the Oxford City Council area that have been severely impacted by the Omicron variant of COVID-19 and have NOT been able to apply for the main Omicron Hospitality, Leisure & Accommodation Grants.</p> <p>These will be one-off grants of up to £5,000, available to all businesses, including those outside the business rates system, in the hospitality, accommodation, leisure, personal care, travel and tourism sectors, including group travel, travel agents and tour operators, coach operators, wedding industries, events industries, wholesalers, English language schools, breweries, freelance and mobile businesses (including caterers, events, hair, beauty and wedding related businesses), gyms, where NOT covered by the main Omicron Hospitality, Leisure & Accommodation grants.</p> <p>Grants will be allocated to businesses dependent on their fixed costs, losses and number of employees, though they should not be used to support wages. We have a limited amount of funding, so may close the scheme early if demand exceeds funds. We will make all payments by 31 March 2022.</p>
Wards significantly affected	None

Financial issues

- The financial issues arising from the decisions are set out in the published decisions notices and any supporting documents. There are no other financial issues arising directly from this report.

Legal issues

- The urgency and emergency powers of the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive) are set out in Part 9.3 of the Constitution.

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Background Papers: None

