

Individual Member Decision Record



This form records an individual Member decision and is published in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 and the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014.

Decision Maker:	Councillor Mark Crane, Leader of the Council
Lead Officers:	Karen Iveson, Chief Finance Officer, (SDC) / June Rothwell, Head of Operational Services
Title of Decision:	Discretionary Housing Payments Funding
Ward(s) Affected:	All
Type of Decision:	<input type="checkbox"/> Key decision <input type="checkbox"/> Non key decision discharging (or connected to the discharge of) an Executive function <input type="checkbox"/> Specific delegation from Council or Committee <input type="checkbox"/> Grant of permission / licence <input type="checkbox"/> Affecting the rights of an individual <input type="checkbox"/> Awarding a contract or incurring expenditure which materially affects the financial position of the Council <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Decision under urgency
Details of decision:	<p>The Discretionary Hardship Payments (DHPs) fund is a scheme to help benefit claimants who require additional financial assistance to meet their housing costs.</p> <p>The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) allocate a ring fence fund for each financial year and any underspend must be returned to them. The DWP funding allocation has been sufficient to meet demand with little underspend.</p> <p>This is the first year the DWP has given Local Authorities only part of their budget. Based on estimates the funding is overall being reduced for the year. The DHP fund is being carefully</p>

	<p>managed but if awards cannot be made this would leave people facing increased financial hardship.</p> <p>We are therefore requesting a top up is made to the fund from the COVID 19 CTS Hardship Fund. Local Authorities are allowed to use any unspent money in this fund to help the community as they see fit. Any underspend in the DHP fund from this top up would be returned to the COVID 19 CTS Hardship Fund.</p> <p>The DHP fund is being carefully managed, however there is insufficient funding to meet the increased demand for Discretionary Housing Payments as a result of the on-going impacts of the Covid pandemic. Unspent CTS Hardship Funds can be used at the authority's discretion.</p> <p>The current allocation is committed and if additional funding is not allocated, we would be rejecting new applications leaving people in increased financial hardship, hence this matter is urgent, and the decision cannot await a full meeting of the Executive due to the need to put in place arrangements as part of the Covid-19 response.</p> <p>RESOLVED: The Leader agreed that an amount of £30,000 be allocated from the COVID-19 CTS Hardship Fund.</p>
Reason for decision:	
Alternative options considered and rejected:	Not applicable
Member Interests: <i>(Name of any Member who has declared a conflict of interest in relation to the decision and details of any dispensation granted by the Head of Paid Service if appropriate)</i>	None declared.
Legal, Financial or other implications:	A local authority can use their own funds to top up the Government contribution by an additional 150%. The funding is being moved from the COVID 19 CTS Hardship Fund and was

	<p>allowable for any support purpose. The full additional amount is to be met by the Covid 19 CTS Hardship Fund.</p> <p>As the decision is made under urgency powers it is not subject to call-in. The Chief Executive confirms that the decision proposed is reasonable in all the circumstances and is to be treated as urgent.</p>
Background papers:	None.
Contact details for further information:	Karen Iveson, Chief Finance Officer (SDC) June Rothwell, Head of Operational Services
Signed:	<p><i>Signature redacted</i></p> <p>Leader of the Council, Cllr Mark Crane</p>
Date of Decision:	12 October 2021