

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
FINANCE, INNOVATION and PROPERTY ADVISORY BOARD

16 September 2020

Joint Report of Chief Executive and the Director of Finance & Transformation

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 LOCAL EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GRANT

A report providing a brief description of the new Grant and making recommendations on its use.

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 In July 2020 the Government announced further grants to be paid to upper tier councils to provide local support during the pandemic to assist vulnerable households.

1.1.2 In essence, local authorities are advised to:

- Use the funding to meet immediate need and help those who are struggling to afford food and essentials due to COVID-19
- Use the funding for existing schemes and other support which deliver the same outcomes and where the need is greatest
- Work together with other local authorities to provide support and ensure the funding meets its objectives.
- Use discretion on how to identify and support those most in need

1.1.3 Government anticipates that most of the funding will be put to use within 12 weeks. Light touch reporting is expected to monitor the use and effectiveness of grants.

1.1.4 Full guidance can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-local-authority-emergency-assistance-grant-for-food-and-essential-supplies/coronavirus-covid-19-local-authority-emergency-assistance-grant-for-food-and-essential-supplies>

1.2 Kent approach

1.2.1 Members will be aware of the work that our Community Hub achieved for vulnerable households and how this has now drawn to a close with the ending of shielding measures. During this time, many Covid focussed services have evolved

across the Borough from voluntary groups and charities, providing indispensable community support and assistance.

- 1.2.2 A cross County agreement led to individual allocations of the Emergency Assistance Grant to districts from Kent County Council. The table below shows the itemised distribution.

Kent Community Foundation	£200,000.00
Kent County Council	£734,582.96
Ashford	£59,297.47
Canterbury	£69,486.15
Dartford	£51,507.03
Dover	£60,685.07
Gravesham	£52,852.08
Maidstone	£71,829.00
Sevenoaks	£41,099.28
Folkestone and Hythe	£61,520.83
Swale	£88,686.26
Thanet	£92,618.03
Tonbridge and Malling	£47,355.61
Tunbridge Wells	£37,646.14
District Total	£734,582.96
Total	£1,669,165.92

- 1.2.3 The Kent County Council share will be used to provide financial resource to the Kent Support and Assistance Service.
- 1.2.4 Districts have the discretion and responsibility as to how they put their allocated grants to best use within the loose overall framework set out in the guidance. Our approach has been to invite bids from those groups working in the community to sustain or supplement their services. An email message was also sent to Members and parishes to gain reach.
- 1.2.5 Following a two week window of applications, 12 requests were received. They are listed at **ANNEX 1**. All but one of the requests meet the criteria for an award, with the exception being a bid made by Snodland Town Council on behalf of a pre-school group using their premises. The request was for £5,000 to replenish financial reserves used to pay staff who were unable to be paid through the furlough scheme. Although sympathetic to the situation, unfortunately we do not believe it fits the guidance.
- 1.2.6 Members will see that the total of the proposed awards is £43,607, leaving a balance of £3,748.61. We propose the remainder to be held in reserve for direct use by the Council to provide assistance as may be required, along the lines of the services we have been providing through our Community Hub.

1.3 Legal Implications

1.3.1 Funds to be awarded in line with Government guidance

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.4.1 Assessments of bids have been made with best value in mind. Assessment and distribution of funds has a minor financial impact.

1.5 Risk Assessment

1.5.1 Bids have been assessed against criteria from Government guidance. Funds will need to be returned to Kent County Council if not put to use.

1.6 Policy Considerations

1.6.1 Community

1.7 Equality Impact Assessment

1.7.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users

1.8 Recommendation

1.8.1 Members are asked to **RECOMMEND** to Cabinet that:

- 1) Awards of the Council's Local Emergency Assistance Grant are made in accordance with the approved bids listed in **Annex 1**; and
- 2) The balance of £3,748.61 be held on reserve for use as necessary within the parameters of the scheme under direction of the Chief Executive or Director of Finance and Transformation.

The Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Transformation confirm that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and policy Framework.

Background papers:

Nil

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