

Report of	Record of	Date
Director of Communities Introduced by (Executive Member (Resources))	Executive Member Decision	30/03/2023

Is this report confidential?	No
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Is this decision key?	Yes Savings or expenditure amounting to greater than £100,000
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Practical Support Payment Grant

Purpose of Report

1. To agree how the Practical Support Payment awarded to Chorley Council should be allocated to ensure it provides support to those adversely affected by isolation due to the CoVid-19 virus.

Recommendations

2. To allocate the grant amount of £226,174 as per the details within this report.
3. To use the specific criteria set out in the government guidance published to allocate and administer the grant.
4. To allow any adjustments to the proposed funding allocation to be agreed subsequently via delegated responsibility to the Executive Member of Resources.

Reasons for recommendations

5. The government has made funding available to both upper and lower tier authorities for residents who needed support to overcome barriers associated with self-isolation.
6. An allocation of £308,190 has been allocated to Chorley Council of which £82,016 has been allocated to providing support to individuals directly.
7. The fund is in addition to other funds which have been available to this cohort of residents such as the Self Isolation Support payment.
8. This report sets out how the funding should be allocated with the objectives of directing the funding towards those in most adversely affected.
9. This decision ensures the funding is allocated to support residents who are adversely affected by the impacts of isolation by March 2022.

Alternative options considered and rejected

10. To not allocate the grant funding would mean that residents needing the support would not benefit from improvements to their health and wellbeing.
11. To aim to deliver this funding in isolation of the voluntary sector and other partners would not maximise the support that residents are able to access from this sector or deliver on the

Councils objectives to work in partnership with communities.

Corporate Priorities

12. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all		A strong local economy	
Clean, safe and healthy homes and communities		An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	

Background

13. This guidance associated with this funding make clear that it is designed to be flexible and adaptable to the varying needs of individual local areas. It also recognises that Local authorities and VCS partners are best placed to understand the needs, demand, capacity and infrastructure in their local areas and that this funding to be can be used dynamically and creatively to support self-isolation through practical measures in the most appropriate way locally.
14. Funding can be used to deliver direct services or to fund delivery partners, including VCS organisations. Funding is also expected to be used both to respond to an immediate demand and to maintain a contingency support offer, even when demand is low.

Proposed approach

15. It is proposed to utilise the remainder of the fund to provide additional practical, social and emotional support and to deliver this through a method of collaboration with community focused groups and organisations, many of which operate in the VCFSE sector.
16. We have used feedback and information from individuals and organisations working directly with people who are affected to define the proposals on how to allocate the funding.
17. It is proposed to allocate the funding across the recommended categories as follows:

Criteria	Recipient / Funding award process	Value	Outcomes
Development of a modern and sustainable multi - agency community-based approach to family financial planning, linking with existing commissioned health and wellbeing, employment and digital schemes to maximise impact - 2 year programme	Citizens Advice	43,000	Residents are supported to develop different approaches to managing finances by being linked to new networks with greater sharing of skills and knowledge which develops confidence and improvements in health and wellbeing
Ongoing Food and Essential Support for families and individuals, includes cooking classes, supermarket voucher scheme, food banks and local market voucher schemes	Chorley Together – Food Sub-Group and Homestart	50,000	Residents assessed as being in priority need are given access to bespoke support, knowledge, and financial assistance to enable them to manage better through increases in

			cost of living and impacts of isolation.
Men's Isolation programme. Development of a men's socialisation network and hub.	Chorley FC in partnership with Chorley Sheds	35,000	70% increase in uptake of men's socialisation activities
Continuation and extension of resocialisation activities:			50% increase in new participants regularly attending socialisation activities or receiving support
Befriending/Talking Tables/After Loss Provision	Friends for You	5,000	
Eco Therapy Peer Support	Brinscall Hall	5,000	
Physical activity	Chorley Buddies	5,000	
Personal support (shopping, prescriptions)	Chorley Buddies	5,000	
Socialisation activities for adults with LD	Brothers Of Charity	5,000	
Socialisation for adults and carers living with Dementia	Genesis	5,000	
Help Through Crisis 3yr project 33% contribution to National Lottery fund bid Joint funded with SRBC	CAB	37,500	Emotional and practical support to residents facing significant barriers in relation to finances and other barriers preventing them from improving their prospects and wellbeing.
Practical Support for Families – Parenting Skills and Network building.	Homestart	15,674	Increase in skills and knowledge, measured through evaluation
Mental Health Support – bespoke sessions	Delivered via URC, St Lawrence, Living Waters	15,000	Increase in ability to self-manage mental health and increase in wellbeing measures
		226,174	

Grant agreements

18. Of the above list of delivery partners grant agreements are already in place for most partners, agreement will be amended to include this additional funding and agreements will be created for those who do not currently have one in place.
19. Projects will run over 12 to 18 months unless noted otherwise and will be detailed in the grant agreement following agreement with the funding recent.
20. Reporting requirement will be set out in the grant agreements and will follow similar reporting to other commissioned services which are quarterly reporting against targets as well as requirements set out under Monitoring.

Funding control

21. Funding is proposed to be allocated to delivery partners in the form of direct payments and supermarket voucher codes which are redeemable by the recipients at major local supermarkets.
22. Delivery partners will record funding issued in line with the management information template provided by Chorley Council.

Data control

23. Delivery partners will use their own in-house policies and procedures to control data and will be required to maintain the requirements as set out in grant agreement documentation regarding applicable policies.

Monitoring

24. Delivery partners will be expected to record data in line with the requirement of the grant agreement
25. Delivery partners will also record wider data to help gather insight on the root causes of the resident's difficulties.
26. We also aim to conduct follow up contact on a sample of the recipients to understand the impact of the funding.

Linking to other workstreams

This delivery proposal will, through support from the Council Communities team, link the support provided by the delivery partners to several other existing and emerging workstreams such as:

- All the projects being delivered through the Chorley Council Covid Community recovery plans
- Contain outbreak management funded projects and support
- Existing early intervention and support pathways within the Council and with external partners
- This will ensure support options are maximised in an efficient way and demonstrates the ambition to co-deliver community impact projects directly with community partners.

Climate change and air quality

27. The work noted in this report does not impact the climate change and sustainability targets of the Councils Green Agenda and all environmental considerations are in place.

Equality and diversity

28. The proposed approach creates wide opportunities for access and does not restrict any protected group from accessing the support available.

Risk

29. There are risks associated with this proposal, namely financial and reputational.
30. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance	X	Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal	X	Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area		Policy and Communications	

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

31. Current guidance states that the Practical Support Payment grant funding must be spent by 31st March 2022 however we are aware that an extension is being considered at a regional/national level, but this cannot be guaranteed.
32. In his Spring Statement on 23rd March 2022, the Chancellor announced further funding would be made available from April 2022 in this area, however allocations have not yet been released, nor information regarding conditions of spend and monitoring of this.
33. The Council will therefore try to ensure that all payments in respect of this are made before 31st March 2022; should it be the case that any payments fall after this date, then they will be covered by either the extension of the deadline for expenditure of the existing grant funding, or through the allocation of the newly announced funding.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

34. The proposed grant payments fall within the remit of the government scheme and members can be satisfied that they are properly made if they are content that grants will provide the desired outcomes.

Background documents

There are no background papers to this report

Appendices

There are no appendices

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Following careful consideration and assessment of the contents of this report, I approve the recommendation(s) contained in Paragraphs 2 - 4 of the report in accordance with my delegated power to make executive decisions.



Dated 30.3.2022

Councillor Peter Wilson
Executive Member (Resources)