

## **HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **Leader Decision**

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**Decision By: Cllr Wilson, Leader**

### **TEST AND TRACE SUPPORT PAYMENTS**

**Key Decision: No**

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#### **1.0 Purpose of Report**

1.1 The report is to approve the proposal with respect to the administration of the Test and Trace support payments.

#### **2.0 Decision**

2.1 Approve that the administration of the Test and Trace support payments is carried out by East Hampshire District Council.

#### **3.0 Issue**

3.1 From 28 September 2020, eligible individuals are entitled to a Test and Trace Support payment or Discretionary Test and Trace support payment of £500. This is a scheme to support people on low incomes who are unable to work from home if they are told to self isolate by NHS Test and Trace and will subsequently lose income as a result.

3.2 The Government provided funding to Havant Borough Council (the Council) as follows:

- Test and Trace Support Payment (programme costs) - £56,000
- Test and Trace Support Payment discretionary payment - £33,713.15
- Test and Trace Support Payment Admin Grants - £28,332

3.3 These payments are designed to help ensure people who have tested positive for Covid-19 and their close contacts self-isolate for the required period to stop the onward spread of the virus. They are designed to encourage individuals who are eligible for this payment to get tested if they have symptoms. This is important to help stop the spread of Covid and avoid further economic and societal restrictions.

3.4 The administration of the track and trace support payments would naturally be completed within Revenue and Benefits, a service currently outsourced to Capita. The administration of this type of scheme is currently not within the contract and therefore would be subject to negotiation and agreement with

Capita about delivery of the scheme. There are concerns with respect to the ability of Capita to deliver a scheme in a timely and efficient way as evidenced by the issues as part of the administration of the business grants.

- 3.5 Due to resourcing there is not the capacity or skills within existing Havant staff to complete this work, however through our relationship with East Hampshire District Council and their in house Revenue & Benefits team they have the skills to complete the processing of applications on our behalf. It is anticipated that the scheme will result in relatively small numbers claiming, however it is important that claims are handled in a timely and efficient manner by appropriately skilled staff.
- 3.6 The Council has proposed arrangements in place with East Hampshire District Council to process, verify applications and make payments. An application form is currently live on the Havant Borough Council website to accept applications.
- 3.7 The full policy and process for checking is detailed at Appendix A.

#### **4.0 Implications**

##### *Financial Implications*

- 4.1 The cost of the processing of applications will be met through the administration grant that has been received from central Government, this will be paid to East Hampshire District Council.

##### *Legal*

- 4.2 Subject to approval an agreement will need to be drawn up by Legal in order for East Hampshire to complete the work on behalf of Havant.

##### *Data*

- 4.3 The DPO has been consulted and confirmed that there are appropriate data protection processes in place in terms of handling the data with respect to applicants for the grant. Data will only be accessed by appropriate staff members, used to dealing with this type of personal data and who understand the significance of this data. A data sharing agreement is already in place between the Council and NHS and data will only be processed within the secure benefits system.

##### *Risks*

- 4.4 The application is now live for applicants and while uptake is not expected to be significant, at this stage, a process is required in order to verify applicants and make appropriate payments. Utilising the expertise of East Hampshire will allow for a greater control on the process as there is a risk that Capita will not be able to process applicants in a timely manner or that they have the necessary skills and expertise to undertake such work.

**5.0 Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 – ‘confidential’ or Exempt’ Information Indicator:**

5.1 This delegated decision contains neither confidential nor exempt information

**6.0 Is this an Urgent Decision?**

*Yes – a process needs to be in place in order to administer the scheme which is currently live.*

**17 Consultation with Local Member/Portfolio Holder/Cabinet Lead (as appropriate):**

Ward Member Informed: N/A

Portfolio Holder Informed: N/A

Chairman of Governance, Audit & Finance Board – 23.11.20

**Agreed** Cllr Michael Wilson (Leader)

**Date** 23.11.20

Appendices: *Track and Trace Scheme Administration Policy*

Agreed and signed off by:

Legal Services: Daniel Toohey, Interim Monitoring Officer (12 November 2020)

Director: Lydia Morrison, Director of Corporate Services (s151) (19 October 2020)

Cabinet Lead: Cllr Inkster

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