



**PART I DECISION NOTICE**  
**Key Executive Decision taken by an Officer**

**KEY DECISION**

**Title: Amendment to Treasury Management Policy**

**Person Taking Decision: Strategic Director (CFO)**

**Decision has been Included on Forward Plan?:**

No. Therefore 28 days' notice has not been given.

**Decision is Urgent i.e. permission to waive the call-in rules is sought:**

Yes

**If 'Yes' the reason for urgency is:**

To allow the third tranche of Area Restrictions Grant (ARG) scheme to be approved so that all the first two tranches of ARG funding (£2.5M) can be spent by the end of June 2021. This is much earlier than the initial timeline set by the government of 31 March 2022 and brought forward to June 2021 to unlock further funding of £596K.

If the Council spends its full allocation by 30 June 2021 it will receive £596K of further funding to distribute. The ARG3 scheme has been devised to 'level up' funding for those businesses impacted by COVID and which have received lower levels of funding.

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**Decision:** That the amendments to the scheme will enable the remaining funds from the initial allocation to be spent by the deadline, and in so doing attract the further funding into the community. A new ARG scheme will then be devised for this additional allocation.

**Reasons for the Decision:** The Government, whilst initially stating that ARG funds could be spent during the period ending 31 March 22, have revised this to provide an incentive to achieve additional funding. Those L/A's which spend all current ARG funds by 30 June 2021 can attract a further allocation of funds which can be spent through to 31 March 22. The additional funds available to SBC are £596,973.

**Other Options considered:** Spend in line with the existing timelines but this would mean £596K less grant income to be distributed in Stevenage, in addition with loosening of Lockdown measures in the Country the money would be given to businesses now and so aid their cash flow and maximum chance of survival.

**Declaration of Interest:** None

**Authorisation**

Having considered the attached report and with regard to all relevant considerations and the views of those consulted (see below), I authorise the above decision.

**Signed:** N/A

**Name:**

**Position:**  
**Strategic Director**

**Date:**

**Strategic Director (CFO) – to approve the financial Implications:**

**Signed:**

SIGNATURE REDACTED

**Name:** Clare Fletcher

**Date:** 26/5/2021

**Borough Solicitor – to approve the legal Implications**

**Signed:** N/A

**Member Consultation:**

I have been consulted on this issue and support the decision

**Signed:**

SIGNATURE REDACTED

**Name:** Sharon Taylor

**Position:** Leader of the Council

**Date:** 26-5-21

<b>Signed:</b> SIGNATURE REDACTED	<b>Name:</b> Councillor Joan Lloyd
<b>Position:</b> Resources Portfolio holder	<b>Date:</b> 26-5-21

<b>Chair of Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee</b> In accordance with the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Rules, I hereby agree that the above decision is urgent and that the Call-in rule be waived.  In accordance with the Council's Access to Information Procedure Rule 15, I agree that the decision be taken as a matter of Special Urgency, as it cannot be reasonably deferred and therefore agree that the Key Decision can be taken in Part II even though details were not published at least 28 days in advance of the date of the decision.	
<b>Signed:</b> SIGNATURE REDACTED	<b>Name:</b> Councillor Lin Martin-Haugh  <b>Date:</b> 26/05/21

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**To be completed by Constitutional Services –**

**Date of Decision:**

**Date of Circulated to Members of the Council:**

**Call-in Deadline:**

**Date of Implementation:**

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## KEY DECISION

- 1.1 In accordance with the Government's response to Covid – 19 supports for Business, the local authority was required to determine a scheme to allocate the funding made available under the discretionary grant fund. Government refer to this round of discretionary grants as **Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG)**. This report proposes amendments for tranche 3 of the scheme.
- 1.2 Delegated authority was granted to the Strategic Director (S151), after consultation with the Resources Portfolio Holder to make technical adjustments or to revise the scheme if all the available funds are not allocated under the proposed scheme criteria.
- 1.3 The Government, whilst initially stating that ARG funds could be spent during the period ending 31 March 22, have revised this to provide an incentive to achieve additional funding. Those L/A's which spend all current ARG funds by 30 June 2021 can attract a further allocation of funds which can be spent through to 31 March 22. The additional funds available to SBC are £596,973.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the amendments to the scheme will enable the remaining funds from the initial allocation to be spent by the deadline, and in so doing attract the further funding into the community. A new ARG scheme will then be devised for this additional allocation.

## 3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Time is limited to allocate the remaining funds from the initial allocations, so a 'Top up' scheme for existing recipients will reduce the administrative process as all claim details will already be in place.
- 3.2 It is recognised that pubs and restaurants which have no outside space were delayed in reopening and accordingly have lost business. These businesses will receive a restart grant, but it is proposed to grant £10k per business as a top up.
- 3.3 The same applies to WET Led pubs (limited or no food offering) which received a £1000 LRSG grant at Christmas. It is proposed to provide these with a £10k top up. Pubs falling into both of these categories will receive only one grant.
- 3.4 There is sufficient to propose funding to award a minimum of £3k for each previous recipient of an ARG, which will support a large number and variety of businesses. It is proposed however to exclude Taxi drivers and home workers, who received funding in both previous tranches.
- 3.5 It is proposed to use any remaining funds to soften the gap in the restart grants when comparing non-essential retail and 'all other' categories. The table below shows the disparity between the two groups.

	Non -essential retail	Hospitality, leisure, personal care, accommodation, Gyms & Sport etc
<b>Restart Grants</b>		
RV £15,000 or under	£ 2,667.00	£ 8,000.00
RV above £15,000 and less than £51,000	£ 4,000.00	£ 12,000.00
RV over £51,000	£ 6,000.00	£ 18,000.00

#### **4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS**

4.2 The table below shows the proposed new scheme for tranche 3.

<b>Decision</b>	<b>Reason/comment</b>	<b>Award Amount</b>
All businesses must be trading and not exceed state aid/subsidy levels.		
Pubs/restaurants without outdoor space	Est, 12 businesses	£10k
Wet Led pubs (not also in the above category)	Est, 12 Businesses	£10k
Previous recipients of ARG (Excluding Taxi drivers)	Est, 200 Businesses	£3k
Top up of non-essential retail recipients of re start grants.	Est 110 Businesses	Based on funds available after the above distribution. Estimate minimum £5k for lowest RV group

4.6. The goal is to try and support as many businesses as possible with the money received from government while keeping the individual grant amounts high enough that they will provide meaningful support to those businesses.

#### **4 IMPLICATIONS**

##### **5.1 Financial Implications**

5.1.1 The scheme is funded by the government.

5.1.2 The scheme is designed to use all, but not exceed the funding

##### **5.4 Legal Implications**

4.10 The scheme is discretionary but guidance on core qualifying criteria has been specified by the Government as detailed in the report.

##### **4.11 Risk Implications**

5.5.1 Having determined the scheme as above, and acknowledged that not all businesses can be supported, some businesses may receive less funding than

expected based on the level of the funding pot available.

- 5.5.2 Whilst the scheme cannot be appealed against as it is discretionary, a judicial review can be requested if the process agreed is not applied correctly.

## **6. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

*<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-restrictions-support-grants-lrsg-and-additional-restrictions-grant-arg-guidance-for-local-authorities>*