



Oversight and Governance

Chief Executive's Department

Plymouth City Council

Ballard House

Plymouth PL1 3BJ

T 01752 305155

www.plymouth.gov.uk/democracy

Published 13/10/20

Delegated Decisions

Delegated Executive/Officer Decisions

Delegated Executive and Officer decisions are published every Wednesday, unless urgent, and are available at the following link - <https://tinyurl.com/ms6umor>

Cabinet decisions subject to call-in are published at the following link - <http://tinyurl.com/yddrql6>

Please note – **urgent decisions and non-key Council Officer decisions cannot be called in**. Copies of the decisions together with background reports are available for viewing as follows:

- on the Council's Intranet Site at <https://modgov/mgDelegatedDecisions.aspx>
- on the Council's website at <https://tinyurl.com/jhnax4e>

The urgent decision detailed below may be implemented immediately and is not subject to Call-in.

Delegated Decisions

I. Councillor Chris Penberthy - Cabinet Member for Housing and Co-operative Development:

I.a COVID -19 Test and Trace Discretionary Support Payments **(Pages 1 - 6)**

EXECUTIVE DECISION

made by a Cabinet Member




REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY BY AN INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER

Executive Decision Reference Number – HCD02 20/21

Decision				
1	Title of decision: COVID-19 Test and Trace Discretionary Support Payments			
2	Decision maker (Cabinet member name and portfolio title): Councillor Chris Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing and Co-operative Development)			
3	Report author and contact details: Emma Rose (Strategic Development Manager) 01752 312571 emma.rose@plymouth.gov.uk			
4	Decision to be taken: Agree a framework for decision making on receipt of applications for test and trace discretionary support payments			
5	Reasons for decision: To apply the latest guidance issued 9 October 2020 relating to the government allocation of test and trace support payment funds to Plymouth City Council. This discretionary fund is designed to support employed and self-employed customers required to self-isolate by the national Covid-19 test and trace service, who are unable to work from home and suffer a drop in earnings which would compromise their ability to self-isolate. The national scheme covers eligible customers in receipt of a means tested benefit and the discretionary fund covers eligible customers not in receipt of a means tested benefit.			
6	Alternative options considered and rejected: Plymouth City Council administers the discretionary fund and must have a policy to cover how it will be administered. There is no option to do nothing			
7	Financial implications: Central government funding is provided for the discretionary fund and, once exhausted, there will be no more discretionary support. Separate central government funding has been provided for the implementation and administration of the national and discretionary schemes.			
8	Is the decision a Key Decision? (please contact Democratic Support for further advice)	Yes	No	Per the Constitution, a key decision is one which: in the case of capital projects and contract awards, results in a new

				commitment to spend and/or save in excess of £3million in total
				in the case of revenue projects when the decision involves entering into new commitments and/or making new savings in excess of £1 million
		X		is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the local authority.
	If yes, date of publication of the notice in the <u>Forward Plan of Key Decisions</u>	n/a		
9	Please specify how this decision is linked to the Council's corporate plan/Plymouth Plan and/or the policy framework and/or the revenue/capital budget:	This is an urgent decision in an emergency situation which will support the legal requirements to self-isolate when advised to do so by the Test and Trace service		
10	Please specify any direct environmental implications of the decision (carbon impact)	No direct implications.		
Urgent decisions				
11	Is the decision urgent and to be implemented immediately in the interests of the Council or the public?	Yes	x	(If yes, please contact Democratic Support (democraticsupport@plymouth.gov.uk) for advice)
		No		(If no, go to section 13a)
12a	Reason for urgency: To implement emergency guidance as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic to support some of our most vulnerable residents			
12b	Scrutiny Chair Signature:	Councillor Mary Aspinall approved by email.	Date	13/10/2020
	Scrutiny Committee name:	Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
	Print Name:	Councillor Mary Aspinall		
Consultation				
13a	Are any other Cabinet members' portfolios affected by the decision?	Yes		
		No	x	(If no go to section 14)

I3b	Which other Cabinet member's portfolio is affected by the decision?			
I3c	Date Cabinet member consulted			
I4	Has any Cabinet member declared a conflict of interest in relation to the decision?	Yes		If yes, please discuss with the Monitoring Officer
		No	x	
I5	Which Corporate Management Team member has been consulted?	Name	Andy Ralphs and Ruth Harrell	
		Job title	Strategic Director of Customer and Corporate Services Director of Public Health	
		Date consulted	6 October 2020	
Sign-off				
I6	Sign off codes from the relevant departments consulted:	Democratic Support (mandatory)	DS48 20/21	
		Finance (mandatory)	djn.20.21.117	
		Legal (mandatory)	lt/35424/121020	
		Human Resources (if applicable)		
		Corporate property (if applicable)		
		Procurement (if applicable)		
Appendices				
I7	Ref.	Title of appendix		
	A	Briefing report (Test and Trace Discretionary Support Payments)		
Confidential/exempt information				
I8a	Do you need to include any confidential/exempt information?	Yes		If yes, prepare a second, confidential ('Part II') briefing report and indicate why it is

		No	x	not for publication by virtue of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box in 18b below. (Keep as much information as possible in the briefing report that will be in the public domain)				
		Exemption Paragraph Number						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18b	Confidential/exempt briefing report title:							
Background Papers								
19	Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are <u>unpublished</u> works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based. If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.							
Title of background paper(s)		Exemption Paragraph Number						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Cabinet Member Signature								
20	I agree the decision and confirm that it is not contrary to the Council's policy and budget framework, Corporate Plan or Budget. In taking this decision I have given due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not. For further details please see the EIA attached.							
Signature				Date of decision	13/10/2020			
Print Name	Councillor Chris Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing and Co-operative Development)							

Test & Trace Discretionary Support Payments

12 October 2020



BACKGROUND

As part of its response to COVID-19, the Government announced that from 28 September 2020 it will be a legal duty to self-isolate when advised to do so. It is acknowledged that some working people will be unable to work from home during self-isolation and may not receive full pay. This drop in income may result in self-isolation being very challenging and increase the risk that an individual goes in to the community and spreads COVID-19.

From 28 September 2020, individuals will be entitled to a Test and Trace Support Payment of £500 if they are eligible. This payment is designed to support people on low incomes, if they will lose income as a result of self-isolating, and to encourage them to get tested if they have symptoms. This is important to help stop the transmission of COVID-19 and avoid further economic and societal restrictions. The scheme run until January 2021.

Eligible payments made via the national scheme are reimbursed in full to the local authority. A separate fund has been allocated to Local Authorities for the local, discretionary scheme. Plymouth has been allocated £77,368.83, which would support 154 eligible applicants. At this stage, the Government has no plans to provide further funding once this fund is exhausted.

TEST & TRACE NATIONAL SCHEME

The Test and Trace Support scheme was designed that has two strands:

1. National Scheme

Eligibility Criteria:

- 1.1. Have been told to stay at home and self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, either because they have tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive
- 1.2. Are employed or self-employed
- 1.3. Are unable to work from home and will lose income as a result
- 1.4. Are currently receiving Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit, income-based Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit and/or Pension Credit.

TEST & TRACE DISCRETIONARY SCHEME

2. Discretionary Scheme

Eligibility Criteria:

- 2.1. Have been told to stay at home and self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, either because they have tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive
- 2.2. Are employed or self-employed
- 2.3. Are unable to work from home and will lose income as a result
- 2.4. Any local eligibility criteria

It is the final element (2.4) that each local authority can define. It is important to note that this scheme is designed to enable employed/self-employed individuals to self-isolate who otherwise would be unable to, due to financial hardship. There are many circumstances where this will be the case, so to attempt to build hard rules around eligibility may inadvertently take people out of eligibility and encourage risky behaviour. For this reason, the recommendation is that the PCC discretionary scheme will consider each application on its merits and will include Public Health input in the decision via the Duty Manager.

RECOMMENDATION

The Plymouth City Council Test & Trace Discretionary Payment Scheme will have the following eligibility criteria, the applicant

1. **has been told to stay at home and self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, either because they have tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive**
2. **is employed or self-employed**
3. **is unable to work from home and will lose income as a result**
4. **would, without the payment, be unable to self-isolate**
5. **is not currently receiving Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit, income-based Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit and/or Pension Credit; and**
6. **is on low income and will face financial hardship as a result of not being able to work while they are self-isolating**

The above are all taken directly from the published government guidance.

It is recommended that the following additional local criteria are necessary in order to focus the discretionary fund on the customers most likely to need it in order to self-isolate;

7. **Applicants with less than £6k capital will be considered**
8. **University or higher education students may be considered under exceptional circumstances for instance underlying entitlement to a means tested benefit as they are responsible for children or have disabilities but not receiving benefits; students who rely on wages to pay accommodation costs or a mortgage**

In the event that Government Guidance changes and/or the implementation of the scheme progresses and operational issues arise, rapid changes may be needed to the discretionary scheme. For these reasons, the following recommendation is made:

9. **Any review and changes to the discretionary framework to be delegated to the Strategic Development Manager (Customer Services), in consultation with the Director of Public Health and Councillor Chris Penberthy as Portfolio Holder.**
10. **The Plymouth City Council discretionary scheme will end once the discretionary fund of £77,368.83 is exhausted, unless additional funds are provided by Government**