

# MANAGING DIRECTOR DECISION RECORD

## EXTENSION FORM

Date of Extension: 15.01.21

<p>Reason for Extension</p>	<p>The original decision approving the Council’s Test and Trace discretionary scheme was approved 12.10.20. After meeting the standard scheme requirement, with the exception of being in receipt of benefit, the key local determinants of this scheme were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have capital of less than £3,000;</li> <li>• Have low income (in effect either receive no pay or sick pay during the isolation period); and</li> <li>• Be able to prove financial hardship.</li> </ul> <p>To date 53 applications have been approved at a cost of £26,500, against an initial grant allocation of £32,078. The scheme was expected to expire 31 January 2021.</p> <p>The government has confirmed the scheme extension to 31 March 2021 and provided additional funding. This included £29,922 for Hartlepool bringing the total discretionary scheme funding to £62,000.</p> <p>The government has reiterated that the discretionary scheme is for cases of financial hardship, although recognises it is for individual authorities to determine this.</p> <p>In the light of the additional funding, it is proposed to amend the discretionary scheme retrospectively from 1 January 2021 to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have capital of less than £3,000;</li> <li>• Have a loss of income (in effect either receive no pay, sick pay or demonstrable loss of income during the period)</li> </ul> <p>The proposal removes the need to prove financial hardship. Financial hardship will, in effect, be accepted</p>
-----------------------------	---

	<p>if applicants have a low level of savings and loss of income.</p> <p>Whilst in practice the majority of discretionary applicants are approved, the amendment should have the following beneficial impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced admin time of having to request and review evidence of financial hardship which is to some extent subjective;</li> <li>• Reduce the number of applicants who “give up” on the process as they are reluctant to have the LA examine their financial position; and</li> <li>• Increase the number of younger claimants, living at home, who receive the £500 since these are the cohort unable to demonstrate financial hardship.</li> </ul> <p>The risk of this approach is that the increase in applicants receiving discretionary payments, exceeds the grant funding available. This is not thought to be a significant risk. If it were to occur the Test and Trace administration grant would be used to top up the funding i.e. we would continue to make payment under the scheme.</p> <p>It is not possible to re-evaluate the claims that have been rejected since the launch of the scheme since the outcome of these cases has been logged with the DHSC.</p>
Value of Extension (total cost/income reduction)	£29,922 all funded through specific government grant.
Period Covered	01.01.21 to 31.03.21.

Managing Director – Denise McGuckin

Decision made in consultation with:

Leader of the Council - Cllr Shane Moore

Chair of [Policy Committee] –

Chief Solicitor and Monitoring Officer – Hayley Martin

Director of Finance and Policy – Chris Little