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OFFICER DECISION RECORD

Date of Decision: 14/09/2022

Department: Resources and Development

Division: Finance

Officer Making Decision: Director of Resources and Development in consultation with the Managing Director and Chair of Finance and

Policy Committee

Subject / Description & Reason for Decision:

Finance and Policy Committee approved the Councils Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund Scheme (CARF) on the 14 March 2022. This scheme was designed to distribute Business Rate relief for the 2021/22 financial year in line with the proposed scheme as a direct award.

The report included the proposal to vary the relief in order to maximise the S31 grant award of £1.585m i.e. to limit the amount of grant funding returned to government. Approval was delegated to the Director of Resources and Development in consultation with Chair of Finance and Policy and the Managing Director.

The initial 55% relief has resulted in an underspend against the grant allocation. It is therefore proposed to increase the relief to 70% in order to maximise grant usage and provide as much support to eligible Hartlepool businesses as possible.

In addition, two businesses that were not included in the scheme have come forward and made a case for this relief. It is important that as a council we do not "fetter our discretion" and exclude those who, whilst not strictly meeting the criteria, nevertheless are able to demonstrate a clear case for support. To that end a contingency was held and an application period to the end of June 2022 made available. Having reviewed the two applications received, including supporting evidence provided it is

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proposed to include them within the final scheme and also grant 70% relief. In accordance with Article 12 – 12.3 - the decision is not defined as a Key decision for the following reason:-The Expenditure is inevitable as a result of the Government providing a Section 31 grant ('New Burden' Funding) to help fund the impact of specific legislative commitments where there is no in year cost, or future commitment for the General Fund. Details of any Section 31 grants and the commitments which need to be funded will be reported to the Finance and Policy Committee and the relevant Policy Committee as soon as is reasonably practicable thereafter. Finance and Policy Committee – 14 March 2022 – minute 91 refers - That the Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund Scheme (CARF) scheme as proposed be approved, including that delegated approval be given to the Director of Resources and Development to vary the level of relief to maximise the relief awarded in consultation with the Chair of Finance and Policy Committee and the Managing Director. None.

Type of Decision:

Nature of Delegation Being Exercised:

Alternative Options Considered & Rejected:

Any Declared Register of Interest No

Director of Resources and Development – Chris
Little

Decision made in consultation with:

Leader of the Council - Cllr Shane Moore

Managing Director – Denise McGuckin