

**ACTION TAKEN BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ON THE GROUNDS OF URGENCY**

Committee: Finance & Assets Committee

Date: 23 June 2022

Author: John Hill, Chief Executive

[X26]

1.0 **ISSUE**

1.1 To note the action taken by the Chief Executive on the grounds of urgency.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 That the action taken by the Chief Executive on grounds of urgency be noted.

3.0 **BACKGROUND**

**Council Tax Energy Rebate**

3.1 The Government has passed onto the Council funding of £4,502,100 for the mandatory Council Tax fuel rebate scheme and £113,700 in relation to a discretionary scheme that the Council needs to determine locally.

3.2 As the main scheme is mandatory, no approval is required, but approval is required for the discretionary scheme, where residents will be required to demonstrate financial hardship / low income.

3.3 For the record, with regard to the mandatory scheme the vast majority of people will receive a £150 payment direct into their bank account in either late April or early May. The amount will be paid into the bank account from which they pay their Council Tax Direct Debit (DD). Anybody setting up a new DD in early 2022, will need to pay their first monthly instalment of Council Tax before they are given the £150.

3.4 For those who do not pay by direct debit, ARP will send them a letter asking them to apply for the money and provide details of a bank account where the money should be paid. They will be given 28 days to provide this information and this will be verified before payments are made to reduce the likelihood of fraud. Where no reply is received, the money will be credited to their Council Tax account, and as such, they will receive no direct payment.

3.5 Approval is requested to use the discretionary amount in the following manner:

- Give all residents receiving either Council Tax Support (CTRS), Support Mortgage Interest (SMI) or disabled benefit (DBR) in E to H properties on 1st April 2022, the standard £150. This is estimated to be around 140 residents and would therefore use £21,000 of our allocation.

- Give a discretionary top up for all residents who receive CTRS (property bands A to H) an additional £20, this would mean that these residents would receive £170. There are currently 3,705 of these, so would cost a further £74,100.
- Give residents in houses of multiple occupation £100, there is estimated to be 35 of these, so would cost £3,500.
- Give residents in E to H properties that are responsible for fuel on 1st April 2022, but only become eligible for CTRS / SMI / DBR after this date, but before September 2022 £150, this is forecast to cost around £7,500
- This would leave £7,600 for other residents to claim via a simple application, where individual circumstances will be reviewed on a case by case basis. This would be advertised on our and ARPs website.

### **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)**

- 3.6 At its meeting in January 2022, the Finance & Assets Committee allocated up to £192,000 of CIL funding to the St. Mary's Church Building Transformation Project. On 23rd April 2022, the Council received a letter stating that due to increased costs, as a result of the discovery of graves beneath the floor and subsequent delays, St Mary's Parochial Church Council had taken the decision to defer the west end extension element of the project. As this is a change to the project that the Committee agreed to fund, approval is required for funding of the revised project.
- 3.7 Although no longer providing additional floor space for community use, the works, including removal of the wooden pews, will still make the existing space more useable by the community. The existing, and very old, warm air heating system and gas boiler will still be replaced with new underfloor and secondary heating system driven by air source heat pumps and new energy-efficient lighting will be installed. Therefore, the funding allocation of up to £192,000 for the revised St. Mary's Church Building Transformation Project has been approved.
- 3.8 To ensure maximum community use of the space by the general public, the project Funding Agreement will be amended to require St Mary's Parochial Church Council to submit a plan setting out how they will promote this community facility to potential users, which should include targets. ECDC will require the Church Council to monitor and report back this usage for the period of one year and if the targets are not met, the Council may request repayment of part or all of the CIL funding awarded.
- 3.9 The decision has been taken on the grounds of urgency, rather than wait until the next meeting of the Finance & Assets Committee on 23rd June 2022, because the Church Council will need to pause the project to await the decision and this delay will cause them to incur further costs.
- 3.10 In accordance with Part 3B(II) paragraph 5.1 of the Constitution, the Chief Executive consulted the Chairman of the Finance & Assets Committee prior to the delegated decision. The spokespersons of the Committee and the Leaders

of the three Political Groups were subsequently notified of the delegated action taken.

3.11 In accordance with Part 3B(II) paragraph 5.1 of the Constitution, the urgent action is being reported to the Finance & Assets Committee for information.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

4.1 There are no additional financial implications.

4.2 Equality Impact Assessment (INRA) not required for the purposes of this report.

5.0 APPENDICES

None

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**Background Documents**

Urgent Action Memos dated 11 & 25 May  
2022

**Location**

Room 103  
The Grange  
Ely

**Contact Officer**

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