

**Written statement of a key decision**  
**Cabinet member environment, economy and skills**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Covid 19 Additional Restrictions Grant Scheme</b>
Decision maker	Cabinet member environment, economy and skills Information about cabinet, including the names and contact details of the cabinet members, can be found here: <a href="http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=251">http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=251</a>
Date of decision	24 November 2020
Report exemption class	Open
Reason for being a key decision	This is a key decision because it is likely to result in the council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the council's budget for the service or function concerned. A threshold of £500,000 is regarded as significant.
A notice was served in accordance with Part 3 (Key decisions) of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.	
Special urgency (as defined in the constitution)	Yes
Purpose	To seek approval to accept and spend the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) funding (£3,856,020) allocation from government, to support businesses affected by the second national Covid 19 lockdown period, and any future periods of restriction up to the end of March 2022.  This decision is specific to the Additional Restrictions Grant. The national guidance indicates that the council can use this funding for business support activities but it is expected to primarily take the form of discretionary grants to businesses to support them through period of trade restrictions due to Covid 19. The offer letter implies that this allocation is for the current national and any future national or local restrictions (the funding will not be refreshed) through to the end of March 2022.
<b>Decision</b>	<b>That:</b> <b>(a) The cabinet member for Environment, Economy and Skills approves the expenditure (£3,856,020) of government funding provided for the Covid 19</b>

	<p><b>Herefordshire Additional Restrictions Grant Fund.</b></p> <p><b>(b) The cabinet member for Environment, Economy and Skills approves the approach to delivering the Additional Restrictions Grant scheme.</b></p> <p><b>(c) To delegate to the Director for Economy and Place following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment, Economy and Skills and the Section 151 Officer the authority to vary the grant support for businesses in accordance with the national government guidance to be able to urgently respond to fast changing Covid 19 circumstances.</b></p> <p><b>(d) The Head of Economic Development and the Economic Development Manager be authorised to approve grant awards to businesses following satisfactory appraisal of the applications received (up to a value of £5,000 per business).</b></p>
Reason for the decision	<p>As set out in the report. Documents relating to this decision are available at</p> <p><a href="http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=50035869">http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=50035869</a></p>
Options considered	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do nothing - to not accept the Additional Restrictions Grant funding. Herefordshire businesses have been severely affected by Covid 19 and the impacts of the related lockdown periods. If we don't accept the available funds, then local businesses would be unable to benefit from the national government support which may lead to business closures.</li>   <li>2. Open to wider business base – The government <a href="#">guidance</a> states that Local Authorities can use their discretion to consider who should be eligible for the grant, and the level of available funding that could be provided. The proposed approach outlined in this decision paper is based on supporting only those businesses that have been instructed to close but don't have a rateable value (so will not receive support via an alternative route) or those that can demonstrate they have lost significant levels of trade due to the second lockdown. Proposed levels of grant are aligned to the Local Restrictions Support Grant Closed (LRSG (Closed)). The approach to the ARG grant scheme as proposed will ensure consistency with the levels of grant awarded through the LRSG (Closed), and are proportionate in considering the funds provided are to cover both the current lockdown and any future period where restrictions may need to be introduced.</li> </ol>

Declarations of interest (see ▪ below)	
Call-in expiry date (decisions are not subject to call-in where special urgency provisions apply)	This decision is to be taken under the <b>special urgency</b> provisions as set out in paragraphs 4.2.52-54 of the constitution of Herefordshire Council. It will not be subject to call in.

Councillor: ..... Cabinet member environment, economy and skills (Councillor Ellie Chowns)	Date 24 November 2020
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- a record of any conflict of interest declared by any executive member who is consulted by the member which relates to the decision;
- and
- in respect of any declared conflict of interest, a note of dispensation granted.