

Record of officer decision

Decision title:	Decision to continue to administer the test and trace support payments to individuals on low income and losing earnings due to being required to self-isolate
Date of decision:	16 September 2021
Decision maker:	Chief Finance Officer, Deputy Chief Executive
Authority for delegated decision:	Chief Executive Scheme of Delegation – Updated 7 June 2021 SA92 – Finance Services
Ward:	Countywide
Consultation:	None
Decision made:	To continue to administer the payment of £500 to individuals on low income self-isolating due to either a positive Covid 19 test or have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive and are not exempt from self-isolation. The scheme has been extended to 31 March 2022
Reasons for decision:	<p>Since 28 September 2020, the council has administered the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme to support people on low incomes who are unable to work from home and will lose income if they are required to self-isolate because of COVID-19.</p> <p>Eligible individuals receive a £500 payment. This is to help ensure people who have tested positive for COVID-19 and their close contacts self-isolate for the required period, and to encourage individuals who have symptoms to get tested. This is important to help stop the transmission of COVID-19 and avoid further economic and societal restrictions.</p> <p>The scheme end date has been extended to 31 March 2022. This decision recommends continuing with the scheme until the new end date.</p> <p>To be eligible for the Test and Trace Support Payment, an individual must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● have been asked to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace either because they've tested coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive and are not exempt from self-isolation; ● be employed or self-employed; ● be unable to work from home and will lose income as a result; and ● be currently receiving, or in the same household as someone who is 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. <p>To be eligible for a discretionary Test and Trace Support Payment, an individual must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● have been asked to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace either because they've tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive and are not exempt from self-isolation; ● be employed or self-employed and earn up to £400 a week; ● be unable to work from home and will lose at least 50% of earned income

	<p>as a result; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have less than £3,000 in savings. <p>A parent or guardian of a young person who is required to self-isolate may be eligible for a payment if they live in England and meet the following criteria (even if they are exempt from self-isolation):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they are the parent or guardian of a young person in the same household who is self-isolating and need to take time off work to care for them; • they are unable to work from home and will lose income; • the young person is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o aged 15 or under and has been told to stay at home and self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace because they have tested positive for COVID-19; or o aged 25 or under with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan and been told to stay at home and self- isolate by NHS Test and Trace because they have tested positive for COVID-19; or o aged 25 and under, is not exempt from self-isolation from 16 August, has an EHC Plan and has been notified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19 (by NHS Test and Trace or the NHS COVID-19 app); or o self-isolating because there was an outbreak at their education or childcare setting, and they have been sent home by their local public health team. • the young person normally attends an education or care setting; and • the parent or guardian meets all the other criteria for a ‘main’ or ‘discretionary’ payment <p>Herefordshire Council will verify eligibility, process applications and make payments.</p>
<p>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</p>	<p>The cost of the main scheme will be reconciled and funded by central government. The cost of the discretionary scheme is funded by central government up to a fixed capped amount, any underspends must be repaid. Reasonable administration costs will also be funded by central government.</p> <p>Councils will have the right to recoup money from any recipients who do not adhere to the terms of the scheme</p>
<p>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Details of any declarations of interest made:</p>	<p>None</p>

Signed

Date: 16 September 2021

Andrew Lovegrove
Chief Finance Officer, Deputy Chief Executive