

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

meeting date: TUESDAY 19 JANUARY 2021
title: COVID-19 DELEGATED DECISIONS
submitted by: CHIEF EXECUTIVE
principal author: OLWEN HEAP

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To inform members of the decisions taken by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Leader of the Opposition under delegated powers given by the Emergency committee on 7 May 2020 with regard to the Local Government Act 1972, the Coronavirus Act 2020 and other legislation governing local authority decision making.
- 1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:
- Community Objectives –
 - Corporate Priorities – To be a well-managed Council
 - Other Considerations – To safeguard the health and welfare of Members and officers of the Council.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Committee system operated at Ribble Valley is predicated on Members physically coming together to make decisions in a public forum. The Council Leader and Leader of the Opposition, in consultation with the Chief Executive, agreed that the present Covid-19 pandemic, together with requirements under the Coronavirus Act 2020 and regulations made thereunder, mean that it was not advisable, reasonable or safe for the Council to continue to meet as normal. That being the case, it was necessary to put in place alternative decision-making processes for the Council which had to be within the context of the Local Government Act 1972, the Coronavirus Act 2020 and other legislation governing local authority decision making.
- 2.2 On 4 April 2020, the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 ('the regulations') came into force, and will remain in effect until 7 May 2021.

3 ISSUES

- 3.1 The Council is required to have arrangements in place to continue to make necessary decisions. The most appropriate mechanism, based on the requirement to avoid social contact and public gatherings, and ADSO guidance for Councils that operate a Committee system of governance, was the delegation of decisions to officers.
- 3.2 It was agreed at the Emergency committee on 7 May 2020 that the Council delegate the following decision-making powers to the Chief Executive, or in his absence his

nominated deputies in consultation where appropriate with the Leader and the Leader of the Opposition.

- Power to take any decision on behalf of the Council which can lawfully be delegated to officers, subject where appropriate to the decision maker, before taking the decision, having taken appropriate steps to consult the Leader and Leader of the Opposition and if necessary the Chairman of the relevant Committee which would, save for the delegated power, have taken the decision

- Power to cancel Council, Committee or Sub-Committee meetings

3.3 At the Policy & Finance committee in November 2020 a number of decisions that had been taken were reported to members. Since that committee in November 2020 the following decisions have been taken under those powers

| DATE | COMMITTEE UNDER WHICH THE DECISION WOULD NORMALLY BE TAKEN | DECISION |
|-------------|---|--|
| 18.12.2020 | Policy & Finance | Approval to pay Additional Restrictions Support Grants for the new Period 3 (2 December onwards) |

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

- Resources – Budgets either already approved or made available from Central Government.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – None arising from this report
- Political – None arising from this report
- Reputation – None arising from this report
- Equality & Diversity – None arising from this report

5 CONCLUSION

5.1 Committee note the decision made under delegated powers as outlined in paragraph 3.3 above.

OLWEN HEAP
ADMINISTRATION OFFICER

MARSHAL SCOTT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

For further information please ask for Marshal Scott, extension 4400