Portfolio Holder decision record sheet

Name of decision maker: Cllr Andrew Williams, Cllr Graeme Elliot and Cllr Alan Anderson. **Portfolio: Economic Development** **Date of Portfolio Holder decision: 17th January 2022**

Title of decision: Additional Resilience Grant (ARG) Policy update.
Part II:
Part II reason:

Background to report: Dacorum Borough Council has received circa £4m in ARG funding to support local businesses to date circa £3m of these funds have been allocated. In addition the Council has recently received an additional £345k of ARG for distribution. This seeks approval for the award of unspent Additional Recovery Grant funds to support businesses in the wake of the introduction of Plan B restrictions and the impact of Omicron.

Decision made and reasons: The decision to Invest the remaining ARG grant to support the leisure, hospitality and travel businesses which have been worst affected by Plan B restrictions The aim is to use the residual ARG to support businesses impacted by the emergence of the Omicron variant and the introduction of Plan B restrictions. The government has provided additional business rates relief in the form of the Omicron Hospitality and Leisure relief. The use of the residual £1m of ARG is to support businesses in these sectors that will not be eligible for this relief but are equally impacted by the new restrictions. After analysing the business data we have collated throughout the Covid period we estimate there are circa 450 eligible businesses that could apply for these grants. The value of the grant is expected to be between £2 - £3k per business as it is dependent on the number of applications as the grant will be equally apportioned across all successful applicants. Allocation of ARG has been the subject of three earlier PH Decisions and these are listed below and can be accessed via ModernGov.

Reports considered: (here reference can be made to specific documents) Portfolio Holder Decisions: PH-025-20 Dated 7 December 2020 PH-013-21 Dated 25 May 2021 PH-017-21 Dated 1 November 2021

Officers/Councillors/Ward Councillors/Stakeholders consulted: Robin Barton – Strategic Director, Corporate and Commercial James Doe – Strategic Director, Place Nigel Howcutt – Chief Finance Officer

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Sara Whelan – Group Manager, Place Community and Enterprise
Lorna Sherlock – Team Leader, Economic Development
Chris Baker – Group Manager, Revenues and Benefits
Clare Dempsey – Team Leader, Finance

Monitoring Officer comments:
No comments to add to the report.

Chief Financial Officer comments:
The ARG grant is a Government grant provided to support local businesses impacted by the Covid pandemic. This Phase 3 policy is in line with the government guidance and the councils desire to support those businesses most impacted by Covid.

Implications:
The Proposals aim to focus the support to sectors not covered by the new Omicron direct grant, and to those most affected by current restrictions.

Risk:
The remaining funds, plus additional resource recently announced by BEIS have to be allocated by 31 March 2022 or they will have to be returned to central government.

Value for money:
The proposals are entirely about the distribution of funds from central government to support business. The only direct cost to DBC is officer time which is met from current staffing.

Options considered and reasons for rejection:

General distribution to all businesses the subject of earlier ARG awards, including non-essential retail where businesses are unlikely to be affected by current restriction levels.

Portfolio Holders' signatures:

Cllr Andrew Williams

Cllr Alan Anderson

Cllr Graeme Elliot

Date: 17 January 2022

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Details of any interests declared and any dispensations given by the Standards Committee: