
Report of Urgent Action: Regulation 19

- 1** Under regulation 19 of the The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 the County Council is required to receive a report from the Leader on any decisions taken under regulation 11. These are key decisions which were not in the Forward Plan and which needed to be taken with less than five clear days' notice. Such urgent decisions can only be taken with the agreement of the relevant Scrutiny Committee Chairman or, in his or her absence, the Chairman of the County Council. Key decisions taken with less than five clear days' notice which are in the Forward Plan are reported via the Executive Decision Database.
- 2** Such action is avoided wherever possible as it circumvents the normal mechanism for publication of decisions and ensuring that members have the opportunity to comment before decisions are taken.
- 3** However, on occasion this is not possible and the County Council is asked to note the following decisions which have been taken by the Director of Law and Assurance with the agreement of the relevant decision-maker and Scrutiny Committee chairman.

COVID Winter Grant Scheme

- 4** A £170m COVID Winter Grant Scheme has been announced by the Department of Work and Pensions to support those most in need across England with the cost of food, utilities and other essentials. The County Council's share of the grant is £1,989,591.80 which is to cover the period from 1 December 2020 until 31 March 2021. At least 80% of the total funding must be ring-fenced to support households with children, with up to 20% of the total funding to other households experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, poverty during the winter period of the pandemic.
- 5** The Director of Law and Assurance, with the agreement of the Cabinet Member for Fire & Rescue and Communities and the Chairman of the Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee, has used his delegated powers under Standing Order 5.23 to approve the allocations from the COVID Winter Grant Scheme and arrangements for distribution and support to include a review at the end of January 2021. He has also authorised the Director of Communities, in consultation with the Director of Finance and Support Services, to rebalance the allocation according to greatest need in the event that the funds allocated prove insufficient, and otherwise to administer the allocated fund following the review of January 2021.
- 6** The reason for urgency was the County Council, having received COVID Winter Grant Scheme Government funding, needed to respond with a live scheme from 1 December 2020.

Commissioning additional community capacity to support hospital discharge during the Covid-19 pandemic

- 7** The Sussex resilience forum has declared a major incident due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the capacity of the NHS resources to manage demand.

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- 8** Pressures on acute and community hospitals are intense and to support this the Council has been working in partnership with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to manage access to community provision both via the Home First (care at home) model and referral and admission to care homes. The CCG and Council are working within the parameters of the Hospital Discharge guidance issued by the Government on 21 August 2020 which has established a discharge to assess model which enables people to be discharged from hospital when they are medically fit and for their ongoing care needs to be assessed at home or in an interim setting within given timescales.
 - 9** The Director of Law and Assurance, with the agreement of the Cabinet Member for Adults and Health and the Chairman of the Health and Adults Social Care Scrutiny Committee, has therefore used his delegated powers under Standing Order 5.23 to approve the sourcing of accommodation with live in care to support hospital discharge during the Covid-19 pandemic.
 - 10** The reason for urgency was that the current numbers of people who are medically ready for discharge is at an unprecedented level and the Council is seeking to respond to this by creating additional community capacity through a 'Care Hotel' model.

Allocation of Adult Social Care Rapid Funding from Central Government - Lateral Flow Device Testing

- 11** On 23 December 2020, the Government announced a specific support package for adult social care providers backed by £149m to support the rollout of Lateral Flow Device (LFD) testing in care homes. The specified purpose of this funding is to support additional rapid testing of staff in care homes, and to support visiting professionals and enable indoors, close contact visiting where possible. This includes adult social care providers with whom the local authority does not have a contract.
- 12** The West Sussex allocation of this money is £3.284m. The expectation from the Government is that 80% of the money is passported directly to registered care home providers and the remaining 20% is allocated to the care sector, for the same purpose, based on local discretion.
- 13** The Council is required to comply with a number of conditions set out in the grant circular distributed by the Government.
- 14** The Director of Law and Assurance, with the agreement of the Executive Director Adults and Health and the Chairman of the Health and Adults Social Care Scrutiny Committee, has therefore used his delegated powers under Standing Order 5.23 for approval to be given that:
 - (1) 80% of the Adult Social Care Rapid Testing Funding is paid to care home providers, in line with government guidance, subject to the Government's grant conditions, and the providers' acceptance of the terms and conditions of the Council's grant agreement with them; and
 - (2) the allocation of the remaining 20% of the Rapid Testing Fund, will be allocated at the same rate per bed to support extra care and supported living settings. The remaining 20% funds will be allocated to smaller care homes and supported living settings where the proportionate costs are

greater to implement LFD testing. This allocation is made for the same purpose as the 80%, based on local need and made subject to appropriate grant conditions.

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Leader

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