

**FINANCE, INVESTMENT & CORPORATE SERVICES PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION –
17 FEBRUARY 2022**

COVID-19 ADDITIONAL RELIEF FUND (CARF) SCHEME

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 On 15 December 2021, the Government announced the COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF). This fund has replaced the legal right to appeal to the Valuation Office Agency on Material Changes of Circumstances grounds due to COVID-19.
- 1.2 The Government has provided funding of £4,356,538 to support businesses with an award directly onto their business rates account for the year 2021/22. We are keen to distribute this funding as soon possible to support businesses.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Government have recognised that COVID-19 has had a significant challenge for businesses and this funding is available to support businesses affected by the pandemic but that are ineligible for existing support linked to busies rates.
- 2.2 Government funding has been allocated to local authorities based upon the estimated rateable value which falls within the scope of the fund.
- 2.3 Although the Government have stated that local authorities are responsible for designing the discretionary relief scheme, they have stated that they must:
- not award relief to ratepayers who either are or would have been eligible for the Expanded Retail or Nursery Discount scheme
 - not award relief to unoccupied properties, and
 - direct their support towards ratepayers who have been adversely affected by the pandemic
- 2.4 The attached scheme aims to direct support to those businesses that are not eligible for the Expanded Retail or Nursery Discount, are occupied, trading, solvent and have been impacted by COVID-19. Certain properties will be ineligible for the relief, including advertising boards, communication masts, beach huts, and land used for storage.
- 2.5 Businesses will have to apply for this new grant via an eform. The amount to be allocated to businesses will be determined once all applications have been received, using the Governments funding allocation methodology as a basis to distribute the funding. The Council will fully utilise our funding to support businesses.
- 2.6 The scheme will be available for applications from 1 March 2022 to 10 April 2022, with payments being completed by 31 May 2022.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no financial implications to the Council as the relief awarded is fully funded by Central Government through the Section 31 payments.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL, CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no environmental, crime or disorder implications.

5. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no equality and diversity implications.

6. RECOMMENDATION

6.1 That the COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF) scheme be approved.

7. PORTFOLIO HOLDER ENDORSEMENT

7.1 I have agreed to the recommendation of this report.

Sign: Cllr Jeremy Heron

Date: 17 February 2022

For further information please contact:

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Background Papers

COVID-19 Additional Relief
Fund (CARF) scheme

Date on which notice given of this Decision – 17 February 2022

Last date for call in – 24 February 2022