

Appendix A – Policy & Resources Committee

Table 1 – Committee Decisions

Date of Decision	Decision	Summary of Decision	Legal Implications, Resources Implications, Other Implications (e.g. risk, equalities, consultation, etc.), Government directions or guidance
01.04.20	Temporarily Paused Debt Enforcement	Paused debt enforcement and reminders (except for Parking) up to June 2020	The delay in collecting income may lead to an increase in bad debt. This cost to the general fund will be funded by the Covid19 Government Grant. Financial implication estimated at £1m, reflected in financial implications set out in the covering report.
01.04.20	Crisis Fund Expansion	Expansion of criteria on Crisis Fund to allow all Barnet residents who are experiencing hardship. Removal of Minimum Income Floor from Council Tax Support calculation to mirror Government removing it from Universal Credit calculation.	This change is fully funded by a specific Government Grant and the council are passporting this money. Officers had regard to the public sector equality duty when coming to this decision. Delegated Powers Report: https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=7479 Financial implication estimated at £0.5m, reflected in financial implications set out in the covering report.
03.04.20	Performance Related Pay	Payment of flat-rate 2.25% performance element, for all employees entitled to be considered for performance-related pay.	The estimated cost of this decision is £750k and will be funded from within existing service budgets.
Decision Requested	Delegation of Virement Approval	Ordinarily the power to authorise virements in excess of £250k sits with Policy and Resources Committee. This decision seeks to delegate this authority to the Section 151 officer (Director of Finance) for approval of virements required directly in response to the Covid 19 pandemic. This will allow council officers to comply with the authorities' financial regulations in respect of budget management.	Funding will be allocated from the Government Grant in respect of financial implications of the Covid 19 pandemic.
03.04.20	Suspend Year 6 and 7 Capita Contract Reviews	Suspend year 6/7 review of the Capita contract reviews until further notice.	In accordance with the London Strategic Coordination Group and London Local Authority Gold instruction to move to provision of critical services only. Dedicated resources have been re-deployed to support critical service provision. There will be additional resource implications to re-starting the

			<p>Review, the detail of which will be assessed in due course. There are no legal, constitutional or equalities implications from this decision.</p> <p>Note: Oversight of the Review falls within the terms of reference of the Financial Performance & Contracts Committee.</p>
03.04.20	VCS Contract Extension	Extend existing Voluntary and Community Sector contracts to 31st March 2021	<p>Contracts for infrastructure funding to the VCS were due to expire mid year which would mean that notice would be given now. Given that a significant part of the council's response to the crisis is dependent on support from the the VCS sector the decision was taken to extend contact so as to not to destabilise the sector at this time. As soon as we are able, we will return to the work to develop a new approach to community participation. The cost of extension will be met from existing budgets.</p> <p>There are no legal, constitutional or equalities implications from this decision.</p>
01.04.20	Public Health Grant Additional Allocation	Public Health grant allocation for 2020/21 included an uplift of app. £750k that will be assigned to meeting the costs Government has announced following the settlement process such as Agenda for Change 3-year pay award for all NHS staff and commissioning of extra outpatient attendances for HIV Pre-exposure prophylaxis. Budget will be approved by the Chair of HWB Board and ratified at the first Health and Wellbeing Board coming.	Budget settlement 2020/21.
14.04.20	Extension of Healthy Child Programme	Due to Covid-19 pandemic, procurement of Healthy Child Programme had to be postponed from May to September 2020 to ensure competitive process. Extension of 12 months of the current contract had to be	DPH's/LBB statutory duty to provide Healthy Child Programme.

		further extended by 6 months, total of 18 months until October 2021.	
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Table 2 – Officer Decisions

Date of Decision	Decision	Summary of Decision	Legal Implications, Resources Implications, Other Implications (e.g. risk, equalities, consultation, etc.), Government directions or guidance
26.03.20	Business Rate Relief	Business rate relief for nursery places	Fully funded through government grant.
03/04/20	Phone Systems Access	Cease provision of telephony access to non-essential services	In accordance with the London Strategic Coordination Group and London Local Authority Gold instruction to move to provision of critical services only. Resources re-deployed to maintain access to critical services. There are no legal or constitutional implications from this decision. Officers have had regard to the public sector equality duty and telephone access to services for vulnerable people has been maintained to mitigate against any equalities implications. On-line access to services has also been maintained.
03/04/20	Access to Council Customer Access Points	Closure of face to face customer access points	In accordance with the London Strategic Coordination Group and London Local Authority Gold instruction to move to provision of critical services only. Clear sign-posting to alternative means of accessing services has been provided. Resources re-deployed to support delivery of critical services and maintain security of buildings. There are no legal, constitutional or equalities implications from this decision. Officers have had regard to the public sector equality duty when coming to this decision and ensured that clear information is in place to enable members of the public to contact the council through alternative means.

03/04/20	Reprioritisation of Project Resources	Focus Customer Transformation Programme on essential activities only	In accordance with the London Strategic Coordination Group and London Local Authority Gold instruction to move to provision of critical services only. This includes services that support vulnerable residents and those that are a direct response to the Covid-19 crisis. Resources re-deployed to support delivery of critical services. There will be additional resource implications, when the Programme re-commences in earnest, the detail of which will be assessed in due course. There are no legal, constitutional or equalities implications from this decision.
03/04/20	Redeployment of Staff	Retain eight temporary call handlers (previously on Green Waste) to support Help Hub	In response to MHCLG instruction to create Community Help Hub, additional call handling capacity has been retained to handle incoming calls to the Hub and to ensure resilience to enable continued telephone access to critical services. There will be an additional cost of approximately £63k, if these resources are retained to 30 June 2020. No legal, constitutional or equalities implications.
03/04/20	Deployment of Staff	Introduce weekend-working to support Help Hub	In response to MHCLG instruction to create Community Help Hub, extend Contact Centre opening hours to provide weekend capacity to handle incoming calls. Seeking to manage within existing resource envelope, through voluntary shift working. No legal, constitutional or equalities implications.
03/04/20	Deployment of Staff	Prioritisation of IT support to key workers/critical services	In accordance with London Gold Group instruction to move to provision of critical services only. There are no legal, financial, constitutional or equalities implications from this decision.
03/04/20	Reprioritisation of Project Resources	Accelerate Digital Workplace programme	Bring forward plans to implement additional tools (such as MS Teams) that facilitate remote working. Will be managed within existing resource allocations. There are no legal, constitutional or equalities implications from this decision.

03/04/20	Deployment of Staff	Introduce out of hours cover to support COVID-19 response team	In response to MHCLG instruction to create Community Help Hub and in order to support the council's emergency response, extend IT support provision to cover essential weekend working. Demands on the IT service generally prevent provision of this support on a shift basis, so overtime/call out costs of approximately £2k per weekend will be incurred. There are no legal, constitutional or equalities implications from this decision.
03/04/20	Supplier Payment and Performance	Implement Cabinet Office guidance in respect of continuing to pay for services and providing relief against contractual performance measures	As required by the Cabinet Office Procurement Policy Note (PPN) 02/20. Existing resources have been re-deployed to manage the process, but there are likely to be resource implications associated with the requirement to "true up" in due course. There are no legal, constitutional or equalities implications from this decision.
03/04/20	Estates Cleaning Programme	Cleaning regime improved to minimise risk of infection from hard surfaces within operational buildings	No financial impact identified.
01.04.20	Amending Purchase Card Limits	Changing individual P-card limits within Director of Finance responsibility	No financial impact identified.
01.04.20	Change to Supplier Payment Terms	Changed supplier payment terms to immediate payment	No budgetary implication (impact restricted to cashflow timing)
01.04.20	CHAPs Payments Signatures	Change from wet signatures to electronic for CHAPs payments	No financial impact identified.
01.04.20	Parking Debt Recovery Action	Temporarily allow parking to go to stage 1 of their debt recovery action (initial trace and letter). No further action to be taken, including reminders or enforcement visits.	No financial impact identified.

		This is a variation of the paused debt enforcement.	
01.04.20	Community Infrastructure Levy Payments	Allow additional 3 months for CIL payments from developers experiencing cash flow and/or operational difficulties	No financial impact identified.
01.04.20	Budget Sign-Off	Pausing the requirement for all budget holders to sign off their budgets, as required by a Policy & Resources Committee decision. To be reinstated following a return to Business as Usual.	No financial impact identified.
26.03.20	Complaints Handling	Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman suspends complaints enquiries of councils and care providers	There are no known legal implications to the council – the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman has taken the decision to suspended all casework activity and have informed local authorities of this decision. Complainants have been made similarly aware. For further information, please see: https://www.lgo.org.uk/coronavirus
26.03.20	Freedom of Information and Subject Access Requests	Statutory duty to comply with FOI and SARs within statutory timescales remains with IMT officers progressing on a best endeavours basis.	<p>The council has a duty to comply with these requests within statutory timeframes. A failure to do so would be a breach of our statutory obligations.</p> <p>The Information Commissioner’s Office has provided guidance in this area and noted that some Local Authorities may, during these unprecedented times be unable to meet these deadlines, and they are being pragmatic in their approach as regulators. https://ico.org.uk/about-the-ico/news-and-events/news-and-blogs/2020/04/how-we-will-regulate-during-coronavirus/</p> <p>It is not always possible to know why a request has been made but failure to respond to these requests could have personal implications for members of the public, depending on the reason as to why the information is being sought.</p>

26.03.20	Access to Paper Records	Minor variations to SLAs to maintain service levels	<p>No risk at present as service is performing very much as business as usual.</p> <p>If the situation changes, for example staff are redeployed or 3rd party providers are required to halt or reduce their service, then access to legal documents, files and deeds may become unavailable to officers. This could result in the inability to progress a council or legal matter in a timely manner. The situation is under constant review.</p>
On-going	Organisational Resilience - Covid19 Response	<p>Established Pandemic Advisory Group in January. Pandemic Flu Plan reviewed and exercise completed on 11 March 2020. Covid19 BECC (Borough Emergency Control Centre) opened on 16 March with separate shadow Emergency Response team operating in tandem for non-Covid related emergencies. Covid BECC moved to virtual from 24 March in line with Government guidance on home working.</p>	<p>The opening of the BECC was in line with our Contingency Management and Business Continuity plans developed to support our obligations under the Civil Contingencies Act. Apart from potential pressure in maintaining non-covid emergency response where we may call on mutual aid.</p> <p>There are no legal, constitutional or equalities implications from this decision.</p>
06.04.20	CAFT - Interviews Under Caution	<p>At present Interviews Under Caution have been suspended to comply with social distancing requirements with each investigation being considered on a case by case basis.</p>	<p>Covid19 legislation dictates that social distance needs to be adhered to for the purpose of reducing infection rates. Interviews under caution require a face to face meeting in a location that satisfies requirements under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act, i.e. at the Council offices. These interviews will resume when the social distancing rules are relaxed. However, where appropriate and in all serious cases and where circumstances allow during this time, CAFT will liaise with local Police Interview Suites to ascertain if alternative arrangements are in place to allow interviewing i.e. utilising dedicated video interviewing facilities</p>
06.04.20	CAFT - Visits	<p>At present CAFT have generally suspended pro-active in person visits. Each investigation is being considered on a case by case basis.</p>	<p>Covid19 legislation dictates that social distance needs to be adhered to for the purpose of reducing infection rates. In person visits require travel and a face to face meeting in a location that satisfies the requirements of the investigation.</p>

			Current internal CAFT processes and procedures that require a visit to be made are being reviewed and adapted with alternative solutions being put in place. However, where appropriate and in all serious cases and where circumstances allow during this time, CAFT will consider in person visits and liaise with local Police to ascertain if they can support.
06.04.20	Internal Audit – Delivery of Internal Audit Plan	Internal Audit work reduced and auditors to prioritise redeployment and / or responding to ad hoc requests for advice / support on maintaining a sound control environment during the COVID-19 response.	There are no legal, financial, constitutional or equalities implications from this decision
06.04.20	Internal Audit – Approval of 2020/21 Internal Audit Plan	Audit Committee scheduled for 29 th April cancelled due to no urgent business. 2020/21 Internal Audit Plan to be agreed via direct consultation with CMT and the members on the Committee instead (via email).	Plan approved using Director of Assurance’s delegated powers until a formal Committee meeting can be held. There is no statutory deadline for agreeing the 2020/21 audit plan. The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards just require it to have been properly consulted on with stakeholders. Copies of those emails to be retained as evidence of consultation.
06.04.20	Head of Internal Audit 2019/20 opinion	PwC to be commissioned to draft this during Head of Internal Audit redeployment. Head of Internal Audit to review and ultimately provide the opinion to meet statutory timescales.	Statutory requirement for the Head of Internal Audit to provide an opinion on the Council’s control environment. Opinion will be prepared to support the revised AGS deadline of 31 st August for draft and 30 November for final (as confirmed by The Accounts and Audit (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 which update the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.)
16.03.20	Council Committees	Council committees, licensing sub-committee hearings and school admissions appeals cancelled or postponed from 16 March 2020 onwards.	Decision taken to comply with Government directions relating to social distancing and London Gold decision to move to critical services. Consultation took place with Members and Council Management Team on the decision to cancel meetings. The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales)

			<p>Regulations 2020 have enabled local authorities to undertake virtual meetings for a fixed period. The Council will decide business critical items via virtual meetings and then review and agree the approach to other committees taking place over the forthcoming period.</p>
16.04.20	Postponement of Elections	London Mayoral and Greater London Authority elections deferred to May 2021.	<p>Legislation has been passed in Parliament (Coronavirus Act 2020) which meant that the London Mayoral and GLA elections were officially deferred to 6 May 2021. In addition, further legislation (Statutory Instrument 2020 No. 395 - coming into force on 7 April) means that any local by elections and referendums (including neighbourhood planning referendums) are also to be deferred to 6 May 2021. Officers were aware of a potential requirement to conduct a Neighbourhood Planning Referendum for the Mill Hill area this autumn.</p>