

AGENDA SUPPLEMENT

Decision Session - Executive Member for Finance and Performance

To: Councillor Ayre
Date: Wednesday, 7 October 2020
Time: 1.00 pm
Venue: Remote Meeting

The Agenda for the above meeting was published on **29 September 2020**. The attached additional documents are now available for the following agenda items:

- 4. Covid-19: Local Restrictions Support Grant** (Pages 1 - 34)
This report outlines the financial support scheme for businesses during local lockdown, the rules of which are set by government but include an element of local discretion for businesses with no rateable value, and will ask the Executive Member to approve the York scheme.

- 5. Covid-19: Self- Isolation Financial Support** (Pages 35 - 102)
This report outlines the financial support scheme for residents who are financially vulnerable and have to isolate due to Covid-19, the rules of which are set by government but include an element of local discretion for those facing financial hardship who do not meet the rules, and will ask the Executive Member to approve the York scheme.

This agenda supplement was published on **Thursday, 1 October 2020**.

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**Decision Session - Executive Member for
Finance & Performance**

7 October 2020

Report of the Assistant Director, Customer & Digital Services

Covid-19 – Local Restrictions Support Grant

Summary

1. This paper provides the Executive Member for Finance & Performance with the relevant details of the Government's local restrictions support grant and the council's scheme for approval.

Recommendations

2. The Executive Member is asked to:
 - a) Note the details of the Government's scheme.
 - b) Approve the council scheme and discretionary scheme attached at Annex A
 - c) Approve the value of the discretionary payments (Paragraph 11)

Reason: To provide financial support to financially effected businesses in York during any local lockdown.

Background

3. The Government announced on the 9th September 2020 that it is going to provide financial support to businesses that are required to close during lockdown restrictions that may be put in place to manage coronavirus and save lives in a specified local area.
4. The localised restrictions are legally binding restrictions imposed on specific Local Authority areas or multiple Local Authority areas, where the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care requires the closure of businesses under regulations made using powers in Part 2A of the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 in response to the threat

posed by coronavirus and commonly as part of a wider set of measures.

5. As part of the scheme the council will receive two elements of funding:
 - a) Funding to meet the cost of payments to businesses within the business rates system based on an assessment of the number of eligible business hereditaments. This is those businesses that have a rateable value (RV)
 - b) An additional 5% to be used as discretionary grant funding to support businesses which are closed but are not in the business rating system (No RV) as well as businesses that may not be required to close but which are severely impacted (e.g. because of closure of their suppliers or the customers they supply to).
6. The detailed Government guidance is attached to this paper at Annex B.

The Council Scheme

7. The eligible City of York businesses who are within the area covered by localised restrictions will receive a grant of up to £1,500 for each eligible hereditament as prescribed by Central Government and for each three-week period that the restrictions are imposed as a result of the use of Government powers.
8. Businesses occupying hereditaments appearing on the local rating list with a rateable value less than £51,000 on the date of the commencement of the local lockdown will receive a payment of £1,000 per qualifying lockdown period.
9. Businesses occupying hereditaments appearing on the local rating list with a rateable value of exactly £51,000 or above on the commencement date of the local lockdown, will receive £1,500 per qualifying lockdown period.
10. The scheme is only available where a business is forced to close due to the terms of the lockdown. Any business not forced to close but that for any reason may need to can only claim against the council's discretionary scheme. To be clear the funding provided for the discretionary (5%) of total award will be low and potentially inadequate to meet any demand that may arise. The government prescribed amounts are also exceptionally low for any business with and RV having to close for a three week period.

11. The Council will also receive an additional 5% top up amount of business support funding to enable them to help other businesses affected by closures which may not be on the business rates list. This will apply for each three-week qualifying period. This should include those types of business that are required to close as a result of the local lockdown. In addition, the council can support other businesses that may have no choice but to close (e.g. because their customer businesses are closed; because essential suppliers are closed). The council will use its discretion in relation to the appropriate level of grant payment and how it prioritises discretionary support. Payments made to businesses from this discretionary fund can be any amount up to and including £1,500.
12. The Government has kept the payment criteria simple based on RV and providing a small amount of financial support. This paper recommends that the discretionary payment is fixed at £750. This takes into consideration the amount set by Government for businesses with qualifying RV and also mirrors the £250 per week Isolation Support payments for residents.
13. Businesses eligible for the discretionary element of the scheme will be entitled to receive one grant per business (not one per business premises as those businesses with an RV are entitled to) within the lockdown zone in each three-week qualifying period. The council has the discretion to pay grants to the same businesses or to different eligible businesses in subsequent qualifying periods.
14. The person who according to the billing authority's records was the ratepayer in respect of the hereditament on the date of the first full day of local lockdown is eligible for the grant. Where the council has reason to believe that the information that they hold about the ratepayer on the first full day of the local lockdown is inaccurate they may withhold or recover the grant and take reasonable steps to identify the correct ratepayer. The council must make clear to recipients that the grant is for the ratepayer and may be liable for recovery if the recipient was not the ratepayer on the eligible day.
15. The council must call or write to the business, stating that by accepting the grant payment, the business confirms that they are eligible for the grant schemes. This includes where Local Authorities already have bank details for businesses and are in a position to send out funding immediately, or where the Local Authority is sending a cheque to a business.
16. The council, as with the previous Covid-19 related business grants, must continue to ensure the safe administration of grants and that

appropriate measures are put in place to mitigate against the increased risks of both fraud and payment error. The Government Grants Management Function and Counter Fraud Function have waived the annual fee and continue to make their digital due-diligence tool, Spotlight, available to Local Authorities to support the administration of Covid-19 emergency grants until 31 March 2021.

17. The council will, as with previous Covid-19 related schemes, have to provide regular information to central government on payments made for audit purposes.

Implications

Financial

18. The council will be fully reimbursed for all payments made to hereditaments with rateable values. The discretionary funding is based upon 5% of award which limits the number of payments that can be made to the value of the fund otherwise it will create an unrecoverable overspend. The funding allocation figures have not yet been provided.

Human Resources (HR)

The council will receive new burdens funding to meet any additional costs including staffing costs arising from delivering the scheme.

Equalities

This report will impact on all communities equally.

Legal

No implications

Crime and Disorder, Information Technology and Property

No implications

Risk Management

19. The key risk associated with administering this scheme is in relation to the discretionary element and the finite budget. As the Government grant only meets those business that are forced to close under the terms of a lockdown and with an RV the demand on the discretionary may be disproportionate to the funding provided. Previous schemes have shown that York has a high number of small businesses without RV.

Author responsible for the report:

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Report Approved

01/10/20

Specialist Implications Officer(s):

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: None

Annexes

Annex A – City of York council’s local restrictions support scheme

Annex B – Detailed Government Guidance

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City of York Council Local Restrictions Support Grant

Version Control

Version	Version date	Revised by	Description
1	May 2020	DA	INITIAL SCHEME

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1.0 Purpose of the Scheme and background.

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to determine eligibility for a payment under the Council's Local Restrictions Support Grant Scheme (the Grant Scheme).
- 1.2 The Grant Scheme has been developed in response to an announcement made by the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy made on 9th September 2020 which sets out circumstances whereby a grant payment may be made by the Council to a business which has to close due to localised restrictions being put in place to manage coronavirus and save lives.
- 1.2 Whilst the awarding of grants will be the Council's responsibility, the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has set down criteria which **must** be met by each business making an application. The Department has also indicated the types of business which should be given the grant.
- 1.3 The scheme is broadly divided into two:
- (a) **Scheme 1** - Grants for businesses who occupy hereditaments which appear on the Local Rating List at the date of the local lockdown and have had to close due to localised restrictions being put in place to manage coronavirus; and
 - (b) **Scheme 2** - Discretionary Grants for businesses who **do not** appear on the Local Rating List at the date of the local lockdown and have had to close due to localised restrictions being put in place to manage coronavirus.
- 1.4 The scheme **only** applies where local restrictions put in place. Localised restrictions are legally binding restrictions imposed on specific Local Authority areas or multiple Local Authority areas, where the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care requires the closure of businesses in a local area under regulations made using powers in Part 2A of the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 in response to the threat posed by coronavirus and commonly as part of a wider set of measures.
- 1.5 Grants under this scheme will be available for the 2020/21 financial year only and will be issued for each three-week period that a business is closed following the implementation of statutory localised restrictions and business closures.
- 1.6 No grant shall be paid for any period where the localised restrictions were in place prior to 9th September 2020.
- 1.7 This document sets out the criteria which BEIS have provided to the Council to determine eligibility for the Local Restrictions Support Grant. It also outlines the approach the Council will take in determining whether an award should be paid or not.

2.0 Funding

- 2.1 Central Government will provide the Council with funding in two parts as follows:
- Funding to meet the cost of payments to businesses within the business rates system based on an assessment of the number of eligible business hereditaments; and
 - An additional 5% to be used as discretionary grant funding to support businesses which are closed but are not in the business rating system as well as businesses that may not be required to close but which are severely impacted.
- 2.2 In the case of the discretionary awards, the Council will limit the total awards to the level of funding available from Government.

3.0 Eligibility criteria and awards

- 3.1 Government, whilst wanting Council's to exercise their local knowledge and discretion, has set national criteria for the funds. In all cases, the Council will only consider businesses for grants where **all** of the criteria are met.

Scheme 1 – Local Restrictions Support Grant, Business rate paying businesses

- 3.2 The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (the Department) has stated that businesses that were open as usual and providing in-person services to customers from their business premises and then required to close for a consecutive period of no less than three weeks as a result of regulations made under the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 will be eligible for this funding.
- 3.3 Guidance from the Department states that this could include, non-essential retail, personal services or cafes/restaurants that operate primarily as an in-person venue but have been forced to close these services and instead provide takeaway-only services.
- 3.4 Businesses in a local lockdown that is implemented for less than three weeks and businesses that are closed for less than three weeks are not eligible for grant funding.

Scheme 1 – Grant Awards

- 3.5 The amount of grant in respect of Scheme 1 are fixed as follows:
- Businesses occupying hereditaments appearing on the local rating list with a rateable value less than £51,000 on the date of the commencement of the local lockdown will receive a payment of £1,000 **per** qualifying lockdown period; and
 - Businesses occupying hereditaments appearing on the local rating list with a rateable value of exactly £51,000 or above on the commencement date of the local lockdown, will receive £1,500 **per** qualifying lockdown period.

- 3.6 Any business failing to meet the criteria will not be awarded a Local Restrictions Support Grant.

Scheme 1 – Excluded businesses

- 3.7 The following businesses will **not** be eligible for an award:
- (a) Businesses that are able to continue to trade because they **do not depend** on providing direct **in-person services** from premises and can operate their services effectively remotely (e.g. accountants, solicitors);
 - (b) Businesses in areas outside the scope of the localised restrictions, as defined by Government;
 - (c) Businesses that have chosen to close but not been required to will not be eligible;
 - (d) Businesses which have already received grant payments that equal the maximum levels of State aid permitted under the de minimis and the COVID-19 Temporary State Aid Framework;
 - (e) Businesses that were in administration, are insolvent or where a striking-off notice has been made at the date of the local lockdown; and
 - (f) Businesses still subject to national closures (e.g. nightclubs).

Scheme 1 – Additional Criteria

The Effective Date

- 3.8 The effective date for eligibility is the date of the local restrictions and, in **all** cases, the following must have existed at the effective date:
- The hereditament **MUST** be shown in the local rating list as at the date of the local restrictions;
 - Any changes to the local rating List (Rateable Value or to the hereditament) after that date, including changes which have been backdated to this date, will be ignored for the purposes of eligibility;
 - The Council is not required to adjust, pay or recover grants where the local rating list is subsequently amended retrospectively to the date of the local restrictions;
 - In cases where it was factually clear to the Council that at the date of the local restrictions that the local rating List was inaccurate on that date, the Council may withhold the grant and/or award the grant based on their view of who would have been entitled to the grant had the list been accurate. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has stated that this provision is entirely at the discretion of the Council and is **only** intended to prevent manifest errors. It is not intended for ratepayers who subsequently challenge their Rateable Value;
 - Where a hereditament is exempt from rating as at the date of the local restrictions, no grant shall be payable.

The Ratepayer

3.9 In all cases the following shall apply:

- The person who will receive the grant will be the person who, according to the Council's records, was the ratepayer in respect of the hereditament at the date of the local restrictions;
- The ratepayer must be liable to occupied property rates at that date. It should be noted that grants will not be awarded where the hereditament is unoccupied;
- Where the Council has reason to believe that the information it holds about the ratepayer at the date of the local restrictions is inaccurate, it may withhold or recover the grant and take reasonable steps to identify the correct ratepayer;
- Where, it is subsequently determined that the records held are incorrect, the Council reserves the right to recover any grant incorrectly paid; and
- Where any ratepayer misrepresents information or contrives to take advantage of the scheme, the Council will look to recover any grant paid and take appropriate legal action. Likewise, if any ratepayer is found to have falsified records in order to obtain a grant.

Scheme 2 - Discretionary Grants – Business not on the local rating list

3.10 The Council has been given discretion to award grants to businesses who:

- (a) are not on the local rating list at the date of the local restrictions; and
- (b) are business that are required to close as a result of the local lockdown.

Scheme 2 – Discretionary Grant Awards

3.11 The Council has decided in such cases, it will make an award of £750 **per** qualifying lockdown period.

Scheme 2 – Excluded businesses

3.12 The following businesses will not be eligible for a discretionary award:

- (a) Businesses that are able to continue to trade from premises and can operate their services effectively remotely;
- (b) Businesses in areas outside the scope of the localised restrictions, as defined by Government;
- (c) Businesses that have chosen to close but not been required to do so;
- (d) Businesses which have already received grant payments that equal the maximum levels of State aid permitted under the de minimis and the COVID-19 Temporary State Aid Framework;
- (e) Businesses that were in administration, are insolvent or where a striking-off notice has been made at the date of the local lockdown are not eligible for funding under this scheme; and
- (f) Businesses still subject to national closures.

4.0 How will grants be provided to Businesses?

- 4.1 The Council is fully aware of the importance of these grants to assist businesses and support the local community and economy. The Local Restrictions Support Grant scheme will offer a lifeline to businesses who are struggling to survive due to the COVID-19 crisis.
- 4.2 In all cases, a simple application form is required, and this can be completed on-line at the Council's website <https://www.york.gov.uk/COVIDBusiness>. Supplementary information may also be required, and all businesses should look to provide this, where requested to the Council as soon as possible.
- 4.3 An application for a Local Restrictions Support Grant is deemed to have been made when a duly completed application form is received via the Council's online procedure.
- 4.4 Only one grant will be awarded to any business in any one period of lockdown.
- 4.5 In order to fairly administer the discretionary scheme (Scheme 2) as it has limited funding, the Council has decided that awards will be determined as follows:
- (a) Claims can be made by business any time from the date of the imposition of the local restrictions up to 1 month after restrictions have been lifted;
 - (b) Any businesses wishing to claim should complete the necessary form on the Council's website. This will also include the provision of such evidence as required by the Council;
 - (c) All claims will be made online and will be on a 'first come- first serve' basis;
 - (d) Depending on the number of applications and the amount left in the grant fund, the Council reserves the right to change the level of funding available.
- 4.6 All monies paid through the Discretionary Business Grant scheme will be funded by Central Government and paid to the Council under S31 of the Local Government Act 2003. However, as mentioned earlier, the funds are limited and, as such, the Council is not able to award a grant where funds are no longer available.

5.0 EU State Aid requirements

- 5.1 Any Local Restrictions Support Grant is given as aid under the Temporary Framework for State aid measures to support the economy in the current COVID-19 outbreak published on 19 March 2020. This means that businesses receiving support under these provisions can receive up to €800,000 in aid over three years (being the current and the previous two years).
- 5.2 Any grant awarded is required to comply with the EU law on State Aid.² This will involve the applicant declaring to the Council if they have received any other de minimis State aid or aid provided under the EU Commission COVID-19 Temporary Framework.
- 5.3 If the applicant has not received any other de minimis State aid, they are not required to make that declaration to the Council or to complete any declaration statement.

6.0 Scheme of Delegation

- 6.1 The Leader of the Council, in line with delegated powers, has approved this scheme on behalf of the Council.
- 6.2 Officers of the Council will administer the scheme and the Head of Customer and Exchequer Services is authorised to make technical scheme amendments to ensure it meets the criteria set by the Council and, in line with Central Government guidance.

7.0 Notification of Decisions

- 7.1 Applications will be considered on behalf of the Council by the Revenues and Benefits Service.
- 7.2 All decisions made by the Council shall be notified to the applicant either in writing or by email. A decision shall be made as soon as practicable after the closure of the application period.

8.0 Reviews of Decisions

- 8.1 The Council will operate an internal review process and will accept an applicant's request for an appeal of its decision.
- 8.2 All such requests must be made in writing to the Head of Customer and Exchequer Services, within 14 days of the Council's decision, and should state the reasons why the applicant is aggrieved with the decision of the Council. New information may be submitted at this stage to support the applicant's appeal.
- 8.3 The application will be reconsidered by a senior officer, as soon as practicable and the applicant informed in writing or by email of the decision.

9.0 Complaints

- 9.1 The Council's 'Complaints Procedure' (available on the Councils website) will be applied in the event of any complaint received about this scheme.

10.0 Other grant conditions

- 10.1 **Tax** - The Council has been informed by Treasury that all grants are taxable. Applicants should make their own enquiries to establish any tax position or liability.
- 10.2 **Special Cases** - The Council recognises that there will be occasions when a business does not satisfy the criteria for a discretionary grant (Scheme 2). The criteria are not restrictive and nothing in them shall be taken as restricting the Council's ability to depart from its general policy as to the award of grants if it sees fit to do so bearing in mind the facts of the case.

11.0 Managing the risk of fraud

- 11.1 Neither the Council, nor the Government will accept deliberate manipulation of the scheme and fraud. Any applicant caught falsifying information to gain grant money or failing to declare entitlement to any of the specified grants will face prosecution and any funding issued will be recovered from them.
- 11.2 Applicants should note that, where a grant is paid by the Council, details of each individual grant may be passed to Government.
- 11.3 The Council reserves the right to reclaim any grant paid in error.



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

Local Restrictions Support Grant

Guidance for Local Authorities



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The guidance

1. This guidance is intended to support Local Authorities in administering the Local Restrictions Support Grant announced on 9th September 2020 to support businesses that are required to close during localised restrictions. This guidance applies to England only and applies from the date of this announcement. It is not retrospective.
2. This guidance is issued by the Secretary of State for the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to Local Authorities and sets out the criteria for the Local Restrictions Support Grant.
3. Local Authority enquiries on this measure should be addressed to businessgrantfunds@beis.gov.uk. Businesses seeking information should refer to the Government's [business support website](#).

Introduction

4. On Wednesday 9th September, the [Government announced there would be further funding to support businesses that are required to close](#) due to localised restrictions being put in place to manage coronavirus and save lives.
5. This support will take the form of a grant funding scheme in Financial Year 2020-2021, called the Local Restrictions Support Grant.
6. These grants will be issued for each three-week period that a business is closed following the implementation of statutory localised restrictions and business closures.
7. This document provides guidance to Local Authorities about the operation and delivery of the grant fund.
8. This funding is only available for businesses that were required to close because of the formal publication of local lockdown guidance that resulted in a first full day of closures on or after the 9th September. This funding is not retrospective.

How will the grants be provided?

9. Localised restrictions are legally binding restrictions imposed on specific Local Authority areas or multiple Local Authority areas, where the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care requires the closure of businesses in a local area under regulations made using powers in Part 2A of the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 in response to the threat posed by coronavirus and commonly as part of a wider set of measures.

10. The Government will, in line with the eligibility criteria set out in this guidance, reimburse Local Authorities that pay grants to eligible businesses that are affected by a local lockdown and required to close (with normal reconciliation between grant allocation and actual eligible costs). Central government will fully reimburse Local Authorities, in line with the following guidance and the grant offer letter sent to Local Authorities, for the cost of the grant (using a grant under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003). Local Authorities will be responsible for delivering the funding to eligible businesses.
11. Local Authorities will receive two elements of funding:
 - a) Funding to meet the cost of payments to businesses within the business rates system based on an assessment of the number of eligible business hereditaments.
 - b) An additional 5% to be used as discretionary grant funding to support businesses which are closed but are not in the business rating system as well as businesses that may not be required to close but which are severely impacted (e.g. because of closure of their suppliers or the customers they supply to).
12. Local Authorities that will be responsible for making payments to businesses, and which will receive funding from Government, are business rate billing authorities in England.
13. This grant scheme will offer support to businesses required to close as part of the management of coronavirus transmission and infection in areas where business closures as part of a nationally agreed package of localised restrictions are put in place.
14. We are committed to meeting the New Burdens costs to Local Authorities for this scheme. A New Burdens Assessment will be completed, and funding then provided to authorities.

How much funding will be provided to businesses?

15. Eligible businesses who are within the relevant Local Authority area covered by localised restrictions will receive a grant of up to £1,500 for each eligible hereditament and for each three-week period that the restrictions are imposed as a result of the use of Government powers.
16. The Local Authority will receive an additional 5% of top-up funding allowing the Local Authority to run a local discretionary scheme to provide support to non-business rate paying businesses that are required to close, as well as other businesses that are not required to close but which may be severely affected (e.g. as a result of the closure of customer businesses). It will be at the Local Authority's discretion as to which types of closed and severely impacted businesses are most relevant to their local economy. There will be no penalty for Local Authorities because of their use of discretion to prioritise some business types. Local Authorities may use their discretion to provide grants of any value up to and including £1,500.

17. The 5% top-up funding will be renewed for each three-week closure period. It is up to Local Authorities to choose whether to help the same businesses with the discretionary funding in each period, or whether to help a wider range of businesses.

Who will benefit from these schemes?

Local Restrictions Support Grant – business rate paying businesses

18. Businesses that were open as usual and providing in-person services to customers from their business premises and then required to close for a consecutive period of no less than three weeks as a result of regulations made under the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 will be eligible for this funding.
19. This could include, for example, non-essential retail, personal services or cafes/restaurants that operate primarily as an in-person venue but have been forced to close these services and instead provide takeaway-only services.
20. Businesses in a local lockdown that is implemented for less than three weeks and businesses that are closed for less than three weeks are not eligible for grant funding.
21. This funding is only available for business closures caused by restrictions that had their first full day on or after the 9th September. It is not retrospective.
22. Businesses occupying hereditaments appearing on the local rating list with a rateable value less than £51,000 on the date of the commencement of the local lockdown will receive a payment of £1,000 per qualifying lockdown period.
23. Businesses occupying hereditaments appearing on the local rating list with a rateable value of exactly £51,000 or above on the commencement date of the local lockdown, will receive £1,500 per qualifying lockdown period.
24. Any changes to the rating list (rateable value or to the hereditament) after the first full day of localised restrictions and business closures regulations came into force including changes which have been backdated to this date, should be ignored for the purposes of eligibility. Local Authorities are not required to adjust, pay or recover grants where the rating list is subsequently amended retrospectively to the local lockdown date. In cases where it was factually clear to the Local Authority on the local lockdown date that the rating list was inaccurate on that date, Local Authorities may withhold the grant and/or award the grant based on their view of who would have been entitled to the grant had the list been accurate. This is entirely at the discretion of the Local Authority and only intended to prevent manifest errors.
25. The precise set of businesses eligible for the scheme may vary between each local lockdown area based on the localised restrictions that are established in recognition of the specific evidence and conditions for each area.

26. Subject to State aid limits, businesses will be entitled to receive a grant for each eligible hereditament within the lockdown zone. So, some businesses may receive more than one grant where they have more than one eligible hereditament.

Exclusions to Local Restrictions Support Grant (business rate payers)

27. Businesses that are able to continue to trade because they do not depend on providing direct in-person services from premises and can operate their services effectively remotely (e.g. accountants, solicitors).
28. Businesses in areas outside the scope of the localised restrictions, as defined by Government, are also excluded.
29. Businesses that have chosen to close but not been required to will not be eligible for this grant.
30. Businesses which have already received grant payments that equal the maximum levels of State aid permitted under the de minimis and the Covid-19 Temporary State Aid Framework.
31. For the avoidance of doubt, businesses that were in administration, are insolvent or where a striking-off notice has been made at the date of the local lockdown are not eligible for funding under this scheme.
32. Businesses still subject to national closures (e.g. nightclubs) will not be eligible.

Who will receive this funding?

33. The person who according to the billing authority's records was the ratepayer in respect of the hereditament on the date of the first full day of local lockdown is eligible for the grant. Where the Local Authority has reason to believe that the information that they hold about the ratepayer on the first full day of the local lockdown is inaccurate they may withhold or recover the grant and take reasonable steps to identify the correct ratepayer. Local Authorities should make clear to recipients that the grant is for the ratepayer and may be liable for recovery if the recipient was not the ratepayer on the eligible day.
34. The Local Authority must call or write to the business, stating that by accepting the grant payment, the business confirms that they are eligible for the grant schemes. This includes where Local Authorities already have bank details for businesses and are in a position to send out funding immediately, or where the Local Authority is sending a cheque to a business.

Discretionary funding criteria

35. Local Authorities will also receive an additional 5% top up amount of business support funding to enable them to help other businesses affected by closures which may not be on the business rates list. This will apply for each three-week qualifying period. This should include those types of business that are required to close as a result of the local lockdown. In addition, Local Authorities can support other businesses that may have no choice but to close (e.g. because their customer businesses are closed; because essential suppliers are closed). The Local Authority will use its discretion in relation to the appropriate level of grant payment and how it prioritises discretionary support. Payments made to businesses from this discretionary fund can be any amount up to and including £1,500.
36. Businesses eligible for the discretionary element of the scheme will be entitled to receive one grant per business (not one per business premises) within the lockdown zone in each three-week qualifying period. Local Authorities have the discretion to pay grants to the same businesses or to different eligible businesses in subsequent qualifying periods.
37. In applying their discretion on the amounts of grant and the eligible businesses for each qualifying period it will be for Local Authorities to adapt the approach to local circumstances, such as providing support for micro-businesses with fixed costs or support for businesses that are crucial for their local economies.
38. In taking decisions on the appropriate level of grant, Local Authorities may want to take into account the level of fixed costs faced by the business in question, the number of employees, whether businesses have had to close completely and are unable to trade online, and the consequent scale of COVID-19 losses.
39. Businesses that are not required to close during the local lockdown will only be eligible for discretionary funding based on decisions made by the Local Authority. There will be no penalty for Local Authorities because of their use of discretion to prioritise some business types.
40. Local Authorities should set out the scope of their discretionary grant scheme on their website, providing clear guidance. It is recognised that Local Authorities may want to run some form of application process in order to capture all necessary eligible businesses.
41. An application process will allow Local Authorities to undertake proportionate pre-payment checks to confirm eligibility relative to their local scheme and to allow each Local Authority to determine how to use its discretion in relation to the appropriate level of grant. Pre-payment checks must include confirming that by accepting payments recipients are in compliance with State aid rules.
42. The Local Authority must call or write to the business, stating that by accepting the grant payment, the business confirms that they are eligible for the grant scheme, including that

any payments accepted will be in compliance with State aid requirements. Suggested wording for State aid declarations is included at Annex B of this guidance.

43. Local Authorities must use their discretion in identifying the right business owner to receive this funding, based on their application process.

Will these grant schemes be subject to tax?

44. Grant income received by a business is taxable, therefore the Local Restrictions Support Grant will need to be included as income in the tax return of the business.
45. Only businesses which make an overall profit once grant income is included will be subject to tax.

Managing the risk of fraud

46. The Government will not accept deliberate manipulation and fraud – and any business caught falsifying their records to gain additional grant money will face prosecution and any funding issued will be subject to claw back, as may any grants paid in error.
47. Local Authorities must continue to ensure the safe administration of grants and that appropriate measures are put in place to mitigate against the increased risks of both fraud and payment error. In this respect, grant administrators should consider supplementing existing controls with digital tools to support efficient, appropriate and accurate grants awards. The Government Grants Management Function and Counter Fraud Function have waived the annual fee and made their digital due-diligence tool, Spotlight, available to Local Authorities to support the administration of Covid-19 emergency grants until 31 March 2021.
48. Spotlight complements existing pre-award due-diligence checks and highlights areas of risk to inform grant-making decisions, through fundamental (basic) due diligence checks. Spotlight can also provide enhanced due diligence, through a paid-for service, and grant administrators are encouraged to consider the benefits of enhanced due diligence.

Local Authorities should discuss their digital tool requirements with the Government Grants Management Function at: spotlightlocalauthority@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Post event assurance

49. All Local Authorities are required to follow this guidance and conduct activity to provide assurance that the grants have been paid out in line with the eligibility and State aid guidance for these schemes.

50. The general principle applies that Local Authorities are responsible and accountable for the lawful use of funds under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972. The Section 151 Officer within the Local Authority is required to exercise their duties in line with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) guidance, ensuring their oversight of the proper administration of financial affairs within the Local Authority including these grants.
51. Local Authorities must be satisfied that all State aid requirements have been fully met and complied with when making grant payments. Full details, including sample declaration forms, are contained in in this guidance.
52. The Government Grants Management Function and Counter Fraud Function will support Local Authorities to carry out post-event assurance work to identify high risk payments and to estimate and measure the likely incidence of fraud and error that has occurred in the scheme. This requires statistically significant sample testing of key residual risks to assess the level of fraud / error that has arisen from the residual aspect of identified fraud risks. Post-event assurance is therefore dependent upon a detailed fraud risk assessment being undertaken for the scheme. Guidance will be made available to Local Authorities to support the development of Post Event Assurance Action Plans.
53. Where checks discover that payments have been made in error or have been claimed as a result of fraud, any initial recovery action will need to be undertaken by the Local Authority.

Monitoring and reporting requirements

54. Local Authorities must retain necessary data and BEIS will undertake regular data collection exercises. The data will include:
 - a) numbers of businesses eligible for the scheme,
 - b) number of payments being processed, and
 - c) number of actual payments.
55. Local Authorities may be required to provide data in order to allow reporting by Parliamentary constituency and BEIS will work with Local Authorities to facilitate such reporting.
56. [Annex A](#) contains information on Post Payment Monitoring requirements.
57. If Local Authorities detect fraud (successful rather than attempted fraud), or if they suspect fraud (attempted as well as actual) that is organised, large scale, systematic or crosses Local Authority boundaries, they must report it in real time. It is critical to capture this information in real time, so we recommend Local Authorities report it simultaneously to the dedicated inboxes at NAFN (intel@nafn.gov.uk) and the National Investigation

Service (report@natis.pnn.police.uk). Local Authorities may be contacted for further information to assist with lines of enquiry being pursued.

58. The Government Counter Fraud Function has worked in partnership with Experian to introduce two new complementary products to assist public bodies in addressing residual fraud risks when dispersing funds for the Covid-19 financial support schemes by addressing their residual fraud risks. These tools will allow Local Authorities to:
- verify the bank accounts of companies in receipt of these business grants; and
 - provide insight into whether the company was trading at the relevant date for these grants.
59. These tools are available via the National Fraud Initiative (NFI) and can be used for both pre- and post-payment checks, they apply to both registered companies (at Companies House) and unregistered companies such as sole traders. For further information and to access please email helpdesk@nfi.gov.uk

State aid

60. The United Kingdom left the EU on 31 January 2020, nonetheless under the Withdrawal Agreement the State aid rules continue to apply during a transition period, subject to regulation by the EU Commission. The Local Authority must be satisfied that all State aid requirements have been fully met and complied with when making grant payments, including, where required, compliance with all relevant conditions of the EU State aid De-Minimis Regulation, the EU Commission Temporary Framework for State aid measures to support the economy in the current COVID-19 outbreak, the approved Covid-19 Temporary Framework for UK Authorities, and any relevant reporting requirements to the EU Commission.
61. Payments made can be provided under the existing De Minimis rules, provided doing so does not exceed the €200,000 threshold. Payments made where the De Minimis threshold has been reached should be paid under the Covid-19 Temporary Framework for UK Authorities (threshold €800,000).
62. Any business that has reached the limits of payments permissible under the De Minimis and the UK Covid-19 Temporary State Aid Framework will not be able to receive further grant funding.
63. [Annex B](#) of this guidance contains two sample declarations which Local Authorities may wish to use with either payments under the De Minimis rules or under the Covid-19 Temporary Framework for UK Authorities. Where Local Authorities have further questions about De Minimis or other aspects of State aid law, they should seek advice from their legal department in the first instance.

Annex A – Post-payment reporting

Background

1. Local Authorities will be required to report to the department on the fund.
2. Local authorities may be required to provide data in order to allow reporting by Parliamentary constituency and BEIS will work with Local Authorities to facilitate such reporting.
3. Reports will cover:
 - Numbers of businesses eligible for the scheme
 - Number of actual payments per lockdown period
 - Issues encountered in implementing the scheme to allow BEIS to support development of solutions with Local Authorities
4. The return will be completed using the DELTA Reporting system.

Process

5. Local Authorities will report on progress in making payments to both eligible rate paying businesses and those businesses supported through the discretionary grant element, for each lockdown period.
6. Each report will only cover grants provided by Local Authorities to eligible business during the period as per paragraph 4. The Cities and Local Growth Unit will consolidate the reports to create an accumulative total and monitor progress against the initial allocation of funding per Local Authority.

Definitions

Term	Explanation
Total number of eligible businesses	This reflects the number of eligible businesses identified by the Local Authorities to receive funding under the scheme, split by mandatory and discretionary.
Total number of grants provided under each element of the scheme (£1.5k, £1k and discretionary award).	Number of grants paid (in that lockdown period) to the eligible businesses identified by the Local Authorities.
Expected Date of Completing all payments to Eligible Businesses	Date at which the Local Authorities believes it will have identified and provided grants to all eligible businesses.
Comments	Highlight in this box issues that Local Authorities are encountering while implementing the scheme.

Annex B – State aid: Sample paragraphs that could be included in letters to grant recipients

Template to send to beneficiaries of aid awarded based on the UK COVID-19 Temporary Framework¹

Dear [Name of Aid Recipient]

Confirmation of State aid received under the Covid-19 Temporary Framework for UK Authorities scheme

Following the outbreak of the Coronavirus, the European Commission has approved schemes to aid businesses affected by the Coronavirus outbreak on the basis of their Temporary Framework, including the COVID-19 Temporary Framework scheme for the UK.

The maximum level of aid that a company may receive is €800 000 (€120 000 per undertaking active in the fishery and aquaculture sector or €100 000 per undertaking active in the primary production of agricultural products). This is across all UK schemes under the terms of the European Commission's Temporary Framework.

The Euro equivalent of the Sterling aid amount is calculated using the Commission exchange rate² applicable on the date the aid is offered.

Any aid provided under this scheme will be relevant if you wish to apply, or have applied, for any other aid granted on the basis of the European Commission's Temporary Framework. You will need to declare this amount to any other aid awarding body who requests information from you on how much aid you have received. You must retain this letter for four years after the conclusion of the UK's transition from the EU and produce it on any request from the UK public authorities or the European Commission.

Aid may be granted to undertakings that were not in difficulty (within the meaning of Article 2(18) of the General Block Exemption Regulation³) on 31 December 2019, but that faced difficulties or entered in difficulty thereafter as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.⁴ This undertaking in difficulty test does not apply to small and micro undertakings (less than 50 employees and less than EUR 10 million of annual turnover and/or annual balance sheet)

¹ Approval reference.

² https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/how-eu-funding-works/information-contractors-and-beneficiaries/exchange-rate-infoeuro_en

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:02014R0651-20170710>

⁴ If you are an undertaking in difficulty within the meaning of Article 2(18) of the General Block Exemption Regulation you may still be entitled to de minimis aid if you have received less than €200,000 in de minimis aid in the last three years. You should contact us if you consider that you may qualify for de minimis aid on this basis.

unless they were already in insolvency proceedings, have received rescue aid that has not been repaid, or are subject to a restructuring plan under State aid rules.⁵

This aid is in addition any aid that you may have received under the De Minimis regulation allowing aid of up to €200,000 to any one organisation over a three fiscal year period (i.e. your current fiscal year and previous two fiscal years), and any other approved aid you have received under other State aid rules, such as aid granted under the General Block Exemption Regulation.

Confirmation of State aid received under x Scheme, and Undertaking in Difficulty status

Please sign the attached statement confirming your eligibility, in principle, for aid.

I confirm that I have received the following aid under measures approved within the European Commission's Temporary Framework between March 2020 and December 2020.

I confirm that I am not a small or micro company, and that my undertaking was not in difficulty (within the meaning of Article 2(18) of the General Block Exemption Regulation) on 31 December 2019.

Body providing the assistance/ aid	Value of assistance (in €)	Date of assistance

DECLARATION

Company	
Company Representative Name	
Signature	
Date	

⁵ Third amendment to the [Covid-19 Temporary Framework](#).

Template to send to beneficiaries of aid awarded based on De Minimis Rules

Dear []

NON-DOMESTIC RATES ACCOUNT NUMBER: _____

The value of the grant payment to be provided to [name of undertaking] by [name of local authority] is £ [] (Euros []).

This award shall comply with the EU law on State aid on the basis that, including this award, [name of undertaking] shall not receive more than €200,000 in total of de minimis aid within the current financial year or the previous two financial years). See the [de minimis Regulations 1407/2013](#) (as published in the Official Journal of the European Union L352 24.12.2013).

Amount of <i>de minimis</i> aid	Date of aid	Organisation providing aid	Nature of aid

I confirm that:

- 1) I am authorised to sign on behalf of _____[name of undertaking]; and
- 2) _____[name of undertaking] shall not exceed its De minimis threshold by accepting this grant payment.

SIGNATURE:

NAME:

POSITION:

BUSINESS:

ADDRESS:

I confirm that I wish to accept the grant payment in relation to the above premises.

DATE:

Refusal of Grant form

Name and address of premises	Non-domestic rates account number	Amount of Grant Funding

I confirm that I wish to refuse grant in relation to the above premises.

I confirm that I am authorised to sign on behalf of _____ [name of undertaking].

SIGNATURE:

NAME:

POSITION:

BUSINESS:

ADDRESS:

DATE:

Name and address of premises	Non-domestic rates account number

This publication is available from: www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-local-restrictions-support-grant-guidance-for-local-authorities

If you need a version of this document in a more accessible format, please email enquiries@beis.gov.uk. Please tell us what format you need. It will help us if you say what assistive technology you use.



**Decision Session - Executive Member for
Finance and Performance**

7 October 2020

Report of the Assistant Director, Customer & Digital Services

Covid-19 – Self-Isolation Financial Support

Summary

1. This paper provides the Executive Member for Finance & Performance with the relevant information on the Government's self-isolation financial support (also known as Test and Trace Support Payment) and the council's scheme for approval.

Recommendations

2. The Executive member is asked to:
 - a) Note the details of the self-isolation scheme.
 - b) Approve the council scheme and discretionary scheme attached at Annex A & Annex B.
 - c) Approve that decisions on discretionary payments are made by the service administering the council's discretionary welfare support.

Reason: To provide financial support to financially vulnerable residents who have been formally asked to self-isolate through the Governments track and trace scheme.

Background

3. The Government announced on the 20th September 2020 that it is going to provide financial support for financially vulnerable customers who have to self-isolate due to covid-19 infection. Individuals who are required to self-isolate and who meet the benefits-linked eligibility criteria will be entitled to £500. This will be payable as a lump sum. This also includes the self-employed who cannot work from home

during the 14 day self-isolation period. The detailed guidance is attached to this paper at Annex C.

4. These changes came into effect on 28 September 2020, alongside the legal duty to self-isolate. Local authorities are expected to have their systems in place by 12 October; individuals who are eligible prior to that date will be able to make a backdated claim. The scheme will run until 31 January 2021. During this time, the government will continue to review the scheme, including the impact of COVID-19 incidence levels.

Self-isolation Scheme

5. The council's scheme is prescribed by Government regulations. To be eligible for the Self-Isolation Support payment, an individual must:
 - have been asked to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace either because they've tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive;
 - be employed or self-employed;
 - be unable to work from home and will lose income as a result; and
 - be currently receiving Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit, income-based Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit and/or Pension Credit.
6. Residents will need to make an online application (or a telephone application if they are digitally excluded) and submit as supporting evidence:
 - a notification from NHS Test and Trace asking them to self-isolate (this will include a Unique ID number);
 - a bank statement; and
 - proof of employment, or, if they are self-employed, evidence of self-assessment returns, trading income and proof that their business delivers services which cannot be undertaken without social contact.
7. There is a discretionary fund (Annex B) for individuals who do not qualify for the Test and Trace Support Payment but require corresponding financial support to self-isolate. Payments under this element of the scheme will be made at the discretion of the council

and taking into account the resident's financial circumstances. The funding provided for this element of the scheme is a one off sum. If payments are made above the allocated amount on or before the 31st January 2021 this will be a cost to the council not central government. This paper recommends that in these circumstances the decision is delegated to the service administering the council's current discretionary welfare support and is based upon Government guidance and the councils discretionary scheme (Annex B).

8. In making any payments the council will be required to undertake all proper checks in relation to applications including using the Government Searchlight facility, HMRC records and NHS test and trace data.
9. The scheme will be fully publicised and support provided to those residents who cannot make a digital application. Applications can be made through third parties such as support agencies but any payment is made directly into the qualifying customer's account.

Implications

Financial

10. There financial implications associated with this paper is that the funding for discretionary payments is a one off payment through to 31st January 2021 any spend above this amount will be a cost to councils own budget. The funding for the core scheme is met in full by Central Government.

Human Resources (HR)

The Government is providing new burdens funding to cover the cost of setting up this scheme including any staffing costs incurred by the council.

Equalities

This report will impact on all communities equally.

Legal

No implications

Crime and Disorder, Information Technology and Property

No implications

Risk Management

11. There key financial risks associated with this paper is that the discretionary funding is a one off payment to the end of the scheme period (31st January 2021). Any additional awards above the funding provided will be a cost to the council.

Author responsible for the report:

Chief Officer responsible for the report:

David Walker

Pauline Stuchfield

Head of Customer & Exchequer Services

Assistant Director Customer and Digital Services

Report Approved

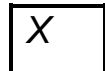


Date
01/10/20

Specialist Implications Officer(s):

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: None

Annexes

Annex A – Council’s self-isolation scheme

Annex B – Councils discretionary self-isolation scheme

Annex C – Detailed government guidance



City of York

Test and Trace Support Payments Scheme

Version Control

Version	Version date	Revised by	Description
1	September 2020	DA	INITIAL SCHEME

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Definitions

The following definitions are used within this document:

- ‘Applicant’**; means the individual making an application for a payment under this scheme;
- ‘Contact Tracing and Advice Service (CTAS)’**; means the web-based system used by Public Health England to contact and trace individuals who are required to self-isolate;
- ‘CTAS Account ID’**; means the unique number provided by Public Health England through the Contact Tracing and Advice Service (CTAS);
- ‘COVID-19’**; means the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus;
- ‘Housing Benefit’**; means the benefit administered by local authorities under either the Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 or the Housing Benefit (Persons who have attained the qualifying age for state pension credit) 2006;
- ‘income-related Employment and Support Allowance’**; means the means-tested Employment and Support Allowance administered by the Department for Work and Pensions under the Welfare Reform Act 2007;
- ‘income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance’**; means the means-tested Jobseekers Allowance administered by the Department for Work and Pensions under the Jobseekers Act 1995;
- Income Support’**; means the means-tested Income Support administered by the Department for Work and Pensions under the Income Support (General) Regulations 1987;
- ‘NHS Test and Trace’**; means the service provided to the National Health Service in England, established in May 2020 to track and help prevent the spread of COVID-19;
- ‘Pension Credit’**; means the means-tested Guarantee or Savings Credit administered by the Department for Work and Pensions under the State Pension Credit Regulations 2002;
- ‘Qualifying benefit’**; means any of the following benefits: Housing Benefit, Income support, income-based jobseeker’s Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit;
- ‘Self-isolation, Self-isolate’**; means the legal requirement for an individual to self-isolate when told to by NHS Test and Trace or the NHS COVID-19 app and the legal duty to self-isolate under the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Self-Isolation) (England) Regulations 2020 which came into force on 28th September 2020;
- ‘Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme’ (‘Standard Scheme’)**; means the Standard Scheme introduced by Government on 28th September and administered by Local Authorities;
- ‘Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme’ (‘Discretionary Scheme’)**; means the Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme which has been agreed by the Council and which *may* be available for individuals who are unable to access the ‘Standard Scheme’.
- ‘Universal Credit’** means the means-tested Universal Credit administered by the Department for Work and Pensions under the Universal Credit Regulations 2013;

'Working Tax Credit'; means the means-tested benefit administered by Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs under the Working Tax Credit (Entitlement and Maximum Rate) Regulations 2002.

1. Background to Self-Isolation and Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme

- 1.1 From 28th September 2020, Government has changed the legislation so that certain people will have to self-isolate due to the current COVID-19 crisis.
- 1.2 A package of legislative measures has been introduced both to ensure that those who are required to self-isolate, do so and, that those on a low income, receive a payment to assist their finances and to encourage compliance with the legislation.
- 1.3 The Council, together with Government, recognises that self-isolation is one of the most powerful tools for controlling the transmission of the Covid-19 virus and this scheme document details who will be eligible and how the Test and Trace Support Payment will be made. It also outlines the approach the Council will take in determining whether a payment will be made or not.
- 1.4 This document, which covers the **Standard Scheme**, should be read alongside the Council's Test and Trace Discretionary Support scheme which *may* be available to individuals who do not qualify a payment under this scheme.

2. An overview of the Test and Trace Payment scheme (the standard scheme).

- 2.1 From 28th September 2020, individuals will be entitled to a Test and Trace Support Payment of £500 from the Council if they meet the eligibility criteria listed below:
 - (a) Make an application to the Council in the prescribed form and provide all the evidence and verification required;
 - (b) Are a resident within the Council's area;
 - (c) Have been told to stay at home and self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, either because they have tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive;
 - (d) Are employed or self-employed;
 - (e) Are unable to work from home and will lose income as a result; and
 - (f) Are currently receiving any of the following 'qualifying benefit's:
 - Universal Credit;
 - Working Tax Credit;
 - income-based Employment and Support Allowance;
 - income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
 - Income Support;
 - Housing Benefit; or

- Pension Credit.

- 2.2 This particular scheme is designed for those individuals (applicants) who:
- meet the standard conditions 2.1 (a) to (e) above;
 - are in receipt of one of the qualifying benefits listed in 2.1(f); and
 - comply with the self-isolation requirements laid down by Government;
- 2.3 Where individuals meet all the requirements but are **not in receipt of a qualifying benefit (2.1 (f))**, no payment can be made; however, they may be able to apply for a discretionary payment under the Council's Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme which is available on the Council's website www.york.gov.uk
- 2.4 Individuals will **not** be entitled to apply for both a payment under the Standard Scheme and under the Council's Discretionary Scheme.

3. Commencement of the scheme and scheme closure

Commencement

- 3.1 This scheme is available to all individuals who meet the eligibility criteria and who are told to self-isolate **on or after** 28th September 2020.
- 3.2 Individuals who are required to self-isolate **before** 28th September 2020 will not be eligible for a payment.

Scheme closure

- 3.3 At the present time, Government has stated that this Standard Scheme will be available until 31st January 2021.

4. Applying for a Test and Trace Support Payment (the Standard Scheme).

- 4.1 Individuals who are resident within the Council's area will be entitled to make an application for a Test and Trace Support Payment under this scheme. In all cases, the 'applicant' will be required to answer **all** of the questions asked and provide the information required by the Council in the specified timescale.
- 4.2 In order to receive a payment, all applicants must meet the full eligibility criteria, details of which are shown within Section 6 of this scheme. The applicant will be required to self-verify certain criteria and also confirm that they will comply with the self-isolation requirements set by Government.

- 4.3 Where the applicant fails to meet the eligibility criteria, they will not receive a payment and will be informed of this by the Council, either at the point of application or as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 4.4 Where the applicant is successful, the Council will notify them accordingly and make payment in line with the timings and methods shown in Section 8.
- 4.5 Applications can **only** be accepted from individuals who are resident in the Council's area.
- 4.6 Applications will be accepted from a third party in respect of any individual who meets the eligibility criteria for a payment. However, the following should be noted:
- The person making the application will need to provide evidence of their identity and also the reason why they are applying on behalf of another person; and
 - That any payment **must** only be made by the Council to the person who is self-isolating. No payment will be made to a third party under any circumstance.
- 4.7 All applications shall be made online using the Council's dedicated webpage www.york.gov.uk. There are no paper or other types of application processes; however, should individuals experience difficulties in making any application, they should contact the Council on 01904 551550.

5. Time limits for making an application for a payment

- 5.1 No application for a payment can be made before the 28th September 2020 or for any individual who has been required to self-isolate before 28th September 2020.
- 5.2 Eligible individuals can apply for a Test and Trace Support Payment at any time up to 14 days after their period of self-isolation ended. The Council will **not** accept any applications after this point.
- 5.3 Where an individual has been required to self-isolate on or after 28th September but before the Council's scheme opened on 7th October 2020, an application for a backdated payment must be made by 22nd October 2020 (14 days after commencement of scheme).

6. Multiple claims within the household and from the same applicant

- 6.1 Individuals in the same household can each make an application to receive a Test and Trace Support Payment, if they each meet the eligibility criteria in full.
- 6.2 An individual may make an application more than once but only:
- If the individual is told to self-isolate multiple times; **and**
 - they meet the eligibility criteria for each individual application; **and**
 - the periods of self-isolation do not overlap.

6.3 The Council is mindful that this can be confusing for applicants and it will be essential, where multiple applications are made by an individual, to ensure correct eligibility. Therefore, a new application will need to be made for each distinct period of self-isolation.

7. The eligibility criteria and evidence required for the Test and Trace Support Payment (the Standard Scheme).

7.1 For payment to be made under this scheme, all of the criteria **must** be met. As with the application form itself, all evidence will need to be provided electronically. The Council provides facilities for all applicants to upload documents, evidence and photographs.

7.2 Where documentation is only held in 'hard copy' or paper form, the Council will accept digital images or photographs provided they show all the relevant information.

7.3 The Council will keep all information supplied by applicants, secure and in accordance with Data Protection legislation.

An individual must make a valid application to the Council in the prescribed form and provide the all evidence and verification required

7.4 As mentioned in Section 4, a valid application must be made via the Council's website www.york.gov.uk. All applicants will be required to provide details sufficient to identify themselves, their address and to allow the Council to contact them including:

- Full name;
- Address;
- National Insurance Number;
- Telephone number; and
- Email address.

7.5 In addition to the above, all applicants will be required to submit a copy of their current bank statement(s) in order to:

- Verify that their income has reduced due to having to self-isolate (see later); and
- Provide details of the bank account number and sort code of the account into which a payment would be made.

That they are a resident within the Council's area

7.6 The applicant will be required to verify that they have their sole or main residence in the Council's area. The Council will check other records held (and make other enquiries where appropriate) to determine this.

- 7.7 Where necessary, the Council will ask the applicant to provide additional evidence of residence.

Have been told to stay at home and self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, either because they have tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive

- 7.8 A key requirement of the scheme is that the applicant has been instructed by the NHS Test and Trace to stay at home and self-isolate either because:
- they have tested positive for COVID-19 (coronavirus); or
 - have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive.
- 7.9 All applicants will be required to provide the 8-digit unique ID number which has been provided to them by NHS Test and Trace.
- 7.10 For information, the NHS Test and Trace service uses the Contact Tracing and Advice Service (CTAS) to record information about people who have tested positive for COVID-19 and their contacts. The CTAS Account ID is an 8-character identifier unique to each case (e.g. 3b1a3015c). Most individuals who test positive for COVID-19 or are a contact of someone who has had a positive test, will receive a digital invitation from the CTAS system to undertake the contact tracing journey.
- 7.11 All cases and contacts who have completed the contact tracing journey (including those who were ineligible for the digital invitation such as children or individuals with a landline number only) will receive a citizen advice message upon completion of the NHS Test and Trace questionnaire. The citizen message (sent either via a text message/email or postal service for people with no access to mobile phone or email) contains the 8-character Account ID.
- 7.12 The Council will check that the applicant has a valid Account ID produced by the Contact Tracing and Advice Service. Only this number will allow an application to be processed.
- 7.13 The Council will not make payment to anyone who does not have a valid notification (Account ID) from NHS Test and Trace. It should be noted that there is a legal duty to self-isolate which only applies to people who have been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace.
- 7.14 The Council will not accept a notification from the NHS Isolation Note service. Where the applicant has provided this only, they will be given an opportunity to provide a valid NHS Test and Trace notification if they have one.

- 7.15 This scheme does not cover people who are self-isolating after returning to the UK from abroad, unless they have tested positive for COVID-19 (coronavirus) or have been instructed to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace.

All applicants must be currently employed or self-employed

- 7.16 Only those applicants who are currently employed or currently self-employed will be entitled to claim a Test and Trace Support Payment. For the sake of clarity, this scheme requires all applicants to provide sufficient evidence of their current employment or self-employment status. In the case of employed applicants, full details of their employer must be given on the application form including contact numbers.

- 7.17 The Council will also require applicants to provide proof such as listed below:

Employed

- Current wages or salary slips;
- Employment contract; or
- Letter from the employer confirming current employment.

Self Employed

- Self-assessment form;
- Details of HMRC registration as self-employed;
- Current accounts; or
- Current accounts and trading statements

- 7.18 The above list is not exhaustive.

- 7.19 As this is an essential requirement in order for a Test and Trace Support Payment to be made, the applicant must satisfy the Council that they meet this criterion.

Are unable to work from home and will lose income as a result

- 7.20 All applicants will have to certify on the application form that they are:

- Unable to work from home; and
- Will lose income as a result.

- 7.21 The Council will need to be satisfied that any applicants meet these conditions in full.

Unable to work from home

- 7.22 The Council will require applicants to give details about the nature of their work and whether they can undertake this work from home.

- 7.23 Only those applicants that cannot work from home whilst self-isolating will meet the criteria and therefore, each applicant will not only be required to verify the fact, but also provide details of the reasons why this is the case, together with details of the type of work that they would normally undertake.
- 7.24 This criterion applies whether an applicant is either employed or self-employed and Government has provided a number of examples as follows:
- An applicant with a single job whose employer continued to pay them a full wage while they self-isolated would not meet the criteria;
 - An applicant whose employer paid them a reduced wage while they self-isolated would meet the criteria (as they have lost income); and
 - An applicant with two part-time jobs who continued to be paid a full wage by one employer, but whose other employer did not pay them while self-isolating, would be eligible.

Are currently receiving any of the qualifying benefits.

- 7.25 The final criterion is that the applicant **must be in receipt** of one of the following qualifying benefits:
- Universal Credit;
 - Working Tax Credit;
 - income-based Employment and Support Allowance;
 - income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
 - Income Support;
 - Housing Benefit; or
 - Pension Credit.
- 7.26 Applicants must be **actually** in receipt of the listed benefits. Each applicant will be required to verify that they are in receipt of one of the benefits and provide evidence of that to the Council. Evidence will need to be provided electronically but typically could be copies of bank statements showing the payments, confirmation of benefit entitlement or award /payment summaries (as in the case of Universal Credit). The Council will accept 'screenshots' of any online benefit account.
- 7.27 Where an applicant has yet to apply for a qualifying benefit; is awaiting a decision on a benefit; is currently appealing a negative decision; or is unable to apply for a qualifying benefit, they will not be entitled to a payment under the Standard Scheme and will be directed to apply for a payment under the Council's Test and Trace Discretionary Payment Scheme.
- 7.28 The Council will verify the current receipt of a qualifying benefit with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs (HMRC) as appropriate.

8. How much grant will be paid, methods of payment and timings.

- 8.1 Where an applicant meets all of the eligibility criteria, a single payment of £500 shall be paid for each period of self-isolation. Payments will be made direct to the applicant's bank account within 3 working days, starting with the date of application.
- 8.2 Where further information or evidence is required from the applicant, the Council will look to make payment within 3 working days starting with the date when all of the required information is received.
- 8.3 Full details of the applicant's bank account must be supplied on the application form and this will be cross checked with the copies of the bank statements provided as part of the verification process.
- 8.4 As required by Government, payments can only be made to the applicant's bank account. No payments can be made to third parties whatsoever.
- 8.5 The Council is aware that in some cases, applicants may be overdrawn and may not be able to gain access to the payment. In these cases, the applicant may apply for protection. This protection is called a 'first right of appropriation of funds order'. More details of this can be obtained from the Council's website or from Citizens Advice.

9. Notification of Decisions

- 9.1 Applications will be considered by officers of the Council and all decisions made by the Council shall be notified to the applicant either in writing or by email.

10. Implications for other benefits and reductions

- 10.1 The Council has been advised by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) that the Test and Trace Support Payment will be disregarded for the purposes of all means-tested benefits.
- 10.2 The Council has decided that any payment made under this scheme shall not affect entitlement to Council Tax Reduction.

11. Review of Decisions

- 11.1 Whilst there is no statutory appeal process, the Council will operate an internal review process and will accept an applicant's request for an appeal of its decision by a senior officer.
- 11.2 All such requests must be made in writing to the Council, within 3 days of the Council's decision, and should state the reasons why the applicant is aggrieved with the decision of the Council. New information may be submitted at this stage to support the

applicant's appeal. The application will be reconsidered as soon as practicable, and the applicant informed in writing or by email of the decision.

12. Complaints

- 12.1 The Council's 'Complaints Procedure' (available on the Councils website) will be applied in the event of any complaint received about this scheme.

13. The Discretionary Test and Trace Payment Scheme and its relationship with the Standard Scheme

Standard Scheme

- 13.1 This 'Standard' Scheme has been determined by criteria set down by Government and is primarily aimed at all applicants who are working or self-employed; are unable to work from home and will therefore have a reduction in income and are in receipt of certain qualifying benefits (Universal Credit; Working Tax Credit; Income-based Employment and Support Allowance; income-based Jobseeker's Allowance; Income Support; Housing Benefit; or Pension Credit).

- 13.2 The receipt of one of those benefits is essential in order for a payment to be made.

Discretionary Scheme

- 13.3 The Council's Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme is for any individual who meets all the required criteria **except** that they are not currently in receipt of a qualifying benefit. The reason for this could be, for example, that a claim for a benefit has not yet been made or that the individual, whilst normally resident in the UK, is unable to gain access to public funds.

- 13.4 Details of the Council's Test and Trace Discretionary Payment Scheme can be found at www.york.gov.uk.

Claiming from the schemes

- 13.5 Individuals who are entitled to a payment from the Standard Scheme are unable to make a claim from the Council's discretionary scheme.

- 13.6 However, an applicant who is refused a 'Standard Scheme' payment on the basis that they meet all the criteria **except** that they are not in receipt of a qualifying benefit, will be directed to make an application for a discretionary payment.

14. Funding of the scheme

- 14.1 Government has confirmed that it will reimburse the Council for all payments correctly made under this scheme.

15. Taxation and provision of information to HMRC

- 15.1 The Council has been informed by Government that all payments under this scheme are taxable. However, the payments will not be subject to National Insurance contributions.
- 15.2 The Council does not accept any responsibility in relation to an applicant's tax liabilities and all applicants should make their own enquiries to establish any tax position.
- 15.3 All applicants should note that the Council is required to inform Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) of all payments made to individuals.

16. Managing the risk of fraud

- 16.1 Neither the Council, nor Government will accept deliberate manipulation of the scheme and fraud. Any applicant caught falsifying information to gain payments will face prosecution and any payment issued will be recovered from them and this may also include other recovery costs.
- 16.2 Applicants should note that, where a Test and Trace Support Payment is paid by the Council, details of each individual applicant will be passed to Government. Applicants should also note that the Council utilises a number of databases and Government systems to verify information in connection with any applications submitted.

17. Recovery of amounts incorrectly paid

- 17.1 If it is established that any Test and Trace Support Payment has been made incorrectly due to incorrect information provided to the Council by an applicant or their representative(s), the Council will look to recover the amount in full.

18. The Council's duties in relation to self-isolation

- 18.1 The duty to self-isolate is an important one. Ensuring infected individuals and their close contacts isolate is one of our most powerful tools for controlling transmission.
- 18.2 We know that someone with the virus can remain infectious to other people for up to 10 days after developing symptoms. It can take up to 14 days for individuals to develop coronavirus symptoms after they catch the virus, and in this time, they can unknowingly pass it on to others, even if they don't have symptoms.

- 18.3 Self-isolating helps prevent family, friends and the community from contracting coronavirus, as well as helping to protect the health and care system.
- 18.4 The changes announced by Government on 20th September 2020 and brought into force on 28th September 2020 (as well as providing for the Test and Trace Support payments scheme):
- introduce a new legal duty on individuals to self-isolate if someone tests positive or is identified as a contact by NHS Test and Trace;
 - introduce penalties for those breaking the rules, including fines of at least £1,000 and up to a maximum of £10,000 for repeated or very serious offences; and
 - place a new legal obligation on employers that they must not knowingly enable or encourage their employees to break the law on self-isolation.
- 18.5 As part of this, the Council has a duty If it becomes aware, either through post-payment verification checks or through other means, that someone has not self-isolated, to refer the case to the police.
- 18.6 The Council has been informed by Government that, in order to ensure compliance with the new legislation NHS Test and Trace call handlers will be increasing contact with those self-isolating. Police resources will be used to check compliance in highest incidence areas and in high-risk groups, based on local intelligence including acting on instances where third parties have identified others who have tested positive, but are not self-isolating.
- 18.7 The Council will continue to focus on the principle of encouraging, educating and supporting self-compliance.

19. Delegated Powers

- 19.1 The Council has implemented this scheme in line with Government requirements and guidance.
- 19.2 Officers of the Council will administer the scheme and the Section 151 Officer is authorised to make technical scheme amendments to ensure it continues to meet the criteria set by the Council and, in line with Central Government guidance.

20. Data Protection and use of data

- 20.1 All information and data provided by businesses shall be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Data Protection policy and Privacy Notices which are available on the Council's website.

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City of York Council

Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme

Version Control

Version	Version date	Revised by	Description
1	September 2020	DA	INITIAL SCHEME

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Definitions

The following definitions are used within this document:

‘Additional Eligibility Criteria’; means the additional criteria decided by the Council that need to be met, in order to receive a payment under the Council’s Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme. These will be in addition to the standard criteria and are allowable under Government guidance;

‘Applicant’; means the individual making an application for a payment under this scheme;

‘Contact Tracing and Advice Service (CTAS)’; means the web-based system used by Public Health England to contact and trace individuals who are required to self-isolate;

‘CTAS Account ID’; means the unique number provided by Public Health England through the Contact Tracing and Advice Service (CTAS);

‘COVID-19’; means the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus;

‘face financial hardship’; a key criterion of the Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme is that all applicants will, if not for the payment, face financial hardship solely due to their need to self-isolate;

‘Housing Benefit’; means the benefit administered by local authorities under either the Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 or the Housing Benefit (Persons who have attained the qualifying age for state pension credit) 2006;

‘income-related Employment and Support Allowance’; means the means-tested Employment and Support Allowance administered by the Department for Work and Pensions under the Welfare Reform Act 2007;

‘income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance’; means the means-tested Jobseekers Allowance administered by the Department for Work and Pensions under the Jobseekers Act 1995;

Income Support’; means the means-tested Income Support administered by the Department for Work and Pensions under the Income Support (General) Regulations 1987;

‘NHS Test and Trace’; means the service provided to the National Health Service in England, established in May 2020 to track and help prevent the spread of COVID-19;

‘Pension Credit’; means the means-tested Guarantee or Savings Credit administered by the Department for Work and Pensions under the State Pension Credit Regulations 2002;

‘Qualifying benefit’; means any of the following benefits: Housing Benefit, Income support, income-based jobseeker’s Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit;

‘Self-isolation, Self-isolate’; means the legal requirement for an individual to self-isolate when told to by NHS Test and Trace or the NHS COVID-19 app and the legal duty to self-isolate under the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Self-Isolation) (England) Regulations 2020 which came into force on 28th September 2020;

‘Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme’ (‘Standard Scheme’); means the Standard Scheme introduced by Government on 28th September and administered by Local Authorities;

'Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme' ('Discretionary Scheme'); means the Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme which has been agreed by the Council and which *may* be available for individuals who are unable to access the 'Standard Scheme'.

'Universal Credit' means the means-tested Universal Credit administered by the Department for Work and Pensions under the Universal Credit Regulations 2013;

'Working Tax Credit'; means the means-tested benefit administered by Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs under the Working Tax Credit (Entitlement and Maximum Rate) Regulations 2002.

1. Background to Self-Isolation and the Test and Trace Payments

- 1.1 From 28th September 2020, Government has changed the legislation so that certain people will have to self-isolate due to the current COVID-19 crisis.
- 1.2 A package of legislative measures has been introduced to ensure that those who are required to self-isolate, do so and that those on a low income receive a payment to assist their finances and to encourage compliance with the legislation.
- 1.3 The Council, together with Government, recognises that self-isolation is one of the most powerful tools for controlling the transmission of the Covid-19 virus. The Government has set down the requirements for two payment schemes to be set up by the Council as follows:
 - (a) The **Test and Trace Support Payments Scheme (the Standard Scheme)** for those eligible applicants who are in receipt of Housing Benefit, Income support, income-based jobseeker's Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit (the qualifying benefits); and
 - (b) The **Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme (the Discretionary Scheme)** for those applicants who are **not** in receipt of any of the qualifying benefits but who are on a low income and will face financial hardship as a result of not being able to work while they are self-isolating.
- 1.4 This document details who will be eligible for a payment under the **Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme**.
- 1.5 Any applicant who is in receipt of a qualifying benefit, should apply for a payment under the standard scheme details of which are available at www.york.gov.uk

2. An overview of the Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme (the Discretionary Scheme).

- 2.1 From 28th September 2020, individuals will be entitled to a payment of £500 from the Council's Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme if they meet the eligibility criteria listed below:
 - (a) Make an application to the Council in the prescribed form and provide all the evidence and verification required;
 - (b) Are a resident within the Council's area;
 - (c) Have been told to stay at home and self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, either because they have tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive;

- (d) Are employed or self-employed;
- (e) Are unable to work from home and will lose income as a result;
- (f) Are **NOT** currently receiving any of the following benefits:
 - Universal Credit;
 - Working Tax Credit;
 - income-based Employment and Support Allowance;
 - income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
 - Income Support;
 - Housing Benefit; or
 - Pension Credit; **and**
- (g) Meet the Council's addition criteria for a discretionary payment.

- 2.2 This particular scheme is designed for those individuals (applicants) who:
 - meet the standard conditions 2.1 (a) to (g) above;
 - are **not** receiving a benefit listed in 2.1(f); and
 - comply with the self-isolation requirements laid down by Government;
- 2.3 Where individuals meet all the requirements but **are in receipt of a benefit stated in 2.1 (f)**, no payment can be made under the Discretionary Scheme; however, they may be able to apply for payment under the Standard Scheme which is available on the Council's website
www.york.gov.uk
- 2.4 Individuals will **NOT** be entitled to apply for both a payment under the Standard Scheme and under the Council's Discretionary Scheme.

3. Commencement of the scheme and scheme closure

Commencement

- 3.1 This scheme is available to all individuals who meet the eligibility criteria for a discretionary payment and who are told to self-isolate **on or after** 28th September 2020.
- 3.2 Individuals who are required to self-isolate **before** 28th September 2020 will not be eligible for a payment.

Scheme closure

- 3.3 At the present time, Government has stated that this Discretionary Scheme (and the Standard Scheme) will be available until 31st January 2021.

4. Applying for a Test and Trace Discretionary Payment (the Discretionary Scheme).

- 4.1 Individuals who are resident within the Council's area *may* make an application for a Test and Trace Discretionary Payment under this scheme. In all cases, the 'applicant' will be required to answer **all** of the questions asked and provide the information required by the Council in the specified timescale.
- 4.2 In order to receive a payment, all applicants must meet the full eligibility criteria, details of which are shown within Section 6 of this scheme. The applicant will be required to self-verify certain criteria and also confirm that they will comply with the self-isolation requirements set by Government.
- 4.3 Where the applicant fails to meet the eligibility criteria, they will not receive a payment and will be informed of this by the Council, either at the point of application or as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 4.4 Where the applicant is successful, the Council will notify them accordingly and make payment in line with the timings and methods shown in Section 8.
- 4.5 Applications can **only** be accepted from individuals who are resident in the Council's area.
- 4.6 Applications will be accepted from a third party in respect of any individual who meets all the eligibility criteria for a payment. However, the following should be noted:
- The person making the application will need to provide evidence of their identity and also the reason why they are applying on behalf of another person; and
 - That any payment **must** only be made by the Council to the person who is self-isolating. No payment will be made to a third party under any circumstance.
- 4.7 All applications shall be made online using the Council's dedicated webpage www.york.gov.uk. There are no paper or other types of application processes; however, should individuals experience difficulties in making any application, they should contact the Council on 01904 551550.

5. Time limits for making an application for a payment

- 5.1 No application for a discretionary payment can be made before the 28th September 2020 or for any individual who has been required to self-isolate before 28th September 2020.
- 5.2 Eligible individuals can apply for a Test and Trace Discretionary Payment at any time up to 14 days after their period of self-isolation ended. The Council will **not** accept any applications after this point.

- 5.3 Where an individual has been required to self-isolate on or after 28th September but before the Council's scheme opened on 7th October 2020, an application for a backdated discretionary payment must be made by 22nd October 2020 (14 days after commencement of scheme).

6. Multiple claims within the household and from the same applicant

- 6.1 Individuals in the same household can each make an application to receive a Test and Trace Discretionary Payment, if they each meet all the eligibility criteria in full.
- 6.2 An individual may make an application more than once but only:
- If the individual is told to self-isolate multiple times; **and**
 - they meet the eligibility criteria for each individual application; **and**
 - the periods of self-isolation do not overlap.
- 6.3 The Council is mindful that this can be confusing for applicants and it will be essential, where multiple applications are made by an individual, to ensure correct eligibility. Therefore, a new application will need to be made for each distinct period of self-isolation.

7. The eligibility criteria and evidence required for a Test and Trace Discretionary Payment.

- 7.1 For payment to be made under this Discretionary Scheme, all of the criteria **must** be met. As with the application form itself, all evidence will need to be provided electronically. The Council provides facilities for all applicants to upload documents, evidence and photographs.
- 7.2 Where documentation is only held in 'hard copy' or paper form, the Council will accept digital images or photographs provided they show all the relevant information.
- 7.3 The Council will keep all information supplied by applicants, secure and in accordance with Data Protection legislation.

An individual must make a valid application to the Council in the prescribed form and provide the all evidence and verification required

- 7.4 As mentioned in Section 4, a valid application must be made via the Council's website. All applicants will be required to provide details sufficient to identify themselves, their address and to allow the Council to contact them including:
- Full name;
 - Address;
 - National Insurance Number;

- Telephone number; and
- Email address.

7.5 In addition to the above, all applicants will be required to submit a copy of their current bank statement(s) in order to:

- Verify that their income has reduced due to having to self-isolate (see later); and
- Provide details of the bank account number and sort code of the account into which a payment would be made.

That they are a resident within the Council's area

7.6 The applicant will be required to verify that they have their sole or main residence in the Council's area. The Council will check other records held (and make other enquiries where appropriate) to determine this.

7.7 Where necessary, the Council will ask the applicant to provide additional evidence of residence.

Have been told to stay at home and self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, either because they have tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive

7.8 A key requirement of the scheme is that the applicant has been instructed by the NHS Test and Trace to stay at home and self-isolate either because:

- they have tested positive for COVID-19 (coronavirus); or
- have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive.

7.9 All applicants will be required to provide the 8-digit unique ID number which has been provided to them by NHS Test and Trace.

7.10 For information, the NHS Test and Trace service uses the Contact Tracing and Advice Service (CTAS) to record information about people who have tested positive for COVID-19 and their contacts. The CTAS Account ID is an 8-character identifier unique to each case (e.g. 3b1a3015c). Most individuals who test positive for COVID-19 or are a contact of someone who has had a positive test, will receive a digital invitation from the CTAS system to undertake the contact tracing journey.

7.11 All cases and contacts who have completed the contact tracing journey (including those who were ineligible for the digital invitation such as children or individuals with a landline number only) will receive a citizen advice message upon completion of the NHS Test and Trace questionnaire. The citizen message (sent either via a text message/email or postal service for people with no access to mobile phone or email) contains the 8-character Account ID.

- 7.12 The Council will check that the applicant has a valid Account ID produced by the Contact Tracing and Advice Service. Only this number will allow an application to be processed.
- 7.13 The Council will not make payment to anyone who does not have a valid notification (Account ID) from NHS Test and Trace. It should be noted that there is a legal duty to self-isolate which only applies to people who have been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace.
- 7.14 The Council will not accept a notification from the NHS Isolation Note service. Where the applicant has provided this only, they will be given an opportunity to provide a valid NHS Test and Trace notification if they have one.
- 7.15 This scheme does not cover people who are self-isolating after returning to the UK from abroad, unless they have tested positive for COVID-19 (coronavirus) or have been instructed to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace.

<p>All applicants must be currently employed or self-employed</p>
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7.16 Only those applicants who are currently employed or currently self-employed will be entitled to claim a Test and Trace Support Payment. For the sake of clarity, this scheme requires all applicants to provide sufficient evidence of their current employment or self-employment status. In the case of employed applicants, full details of their employer must be given on the application form including contact numbers.

7.17 The Council will also require applicants to provide proof such as listed below:

Employed

- Current wages or salary slips;
- Employment contract; or
- Letter from the employer confirming current employment.

Self Employed

- Self-assessment form;
- Details of HMRC registration as self-employed;
- Current accounts; or
- Current accounts and trading statements

7.18 The above list is not exhaustive.

7.19 As this is an essential requirement in order for a Test and Trace Discretionary Payment to be made, the applicant must satisfy the Council that they meet this criterion.

Are NOT currently receiving any of the following benefits.

- 7.20 To receive a discretionary payment the applicant **must not be in receipt** of one of the following benefits:
- Universal Credit;
 - Working Tax Credit;
 - income-based Employment and Support Allowance;
 - income-based Jobseeker's Allowance;
 - Income Support;
 - Housing Benefit; or
 - Pension Credit.
- 7.21 Where applicants are in receipt of any of the above benefits, then payments can **ONLY** be made through the Standard Scheme. The Council has designed the application process so that the same form can be used to claim either payment (Standard Scheme or Discretionary Scheme) and applicants who fail to qualify for a Standard Scheme payment because they are in receipt of one of those benefits, will automatically be directed to the Discretionary Scheme.
- 7.22 Where an applicant has yet to apply for one of the benefits listed; is awaiting a decision on a benefit; is currently appealing a negative decision; or is unable to apply for a qualifying benefit, they *may* make an application under this Discretionary Scheme.

Are unable to work from home and will lose income as a result and will face financial hardship as a result of not being able to work while they are self-isolating

- 7.23 All applicants will have to certify on the application form that they are:
- Unable to work from home;
 - Will lose income as a result; **and**
 - Will face financial hardship as a result of not being able to work while they are self-isolating
- 7.24 The Council will need to be satisfied that any applicants meeting these conditions in full.
- 7.25 The Council will require applicants to give details about the nature of their work and whether they can undertake this work from home.
- 7.26 Only those applicants that cannot work from home whilst self-isolating will meet the criteria and therefore, each applicant will not only be required to verify the fact, but also provide details of the reasons why this is the case, together with details of the type of work that they would normally undertake.

- 7.27 The Council will also require all applicants making an application for a discretionary payment to provide evidence of financial hardship. All applicants will be required to demonstrate that the financial hardship is **solely** due to having to self-isolate

<p>Meet the Council's additional criteria for discretionary payments</p>

- 7.28 The Councils additional criteria for discretionary payments are as follows:
- (a) All residents can claim with the exception of full-time students who are entitled to a grant or loan and who are **excluded from claiming Housing Benefit**
 - (b) The applicant is normally or habitually resident in the UK;
 - (c) The applicant has capital of no more than £16,000;
 - (d) The applicant's normal gross Income shall not be less than £80 per week and not more than £280 per week; and
 - (e) The applicant's income has reduced solely due to self-isolation;
- 7.29 Given that the funding for the Discretionary Scheme is limited (see Section 14), Government has stated that it will be up to each Council to determine additional criteria that have to be met if a payment is to be made. The additional criteria are shown below:

8. How much discretionary payment will be paid, methods of payment and timings.

- 8.1 Where an applicant meets all of the eligibility criteria for a discretionary payment, a single payment of £500 shall be paid for each period of self-isolation. Payments will be made direct to the applicant's bank account within 3 working days, starting with the date of application.
- 8.2 Where further information or evidence is required from the applicant, the Council will look to make payment within 3 working days starting with the date when all of the required information is received.
- 8.3 Full details of the applicant's bank account must be supplied on the application form and this will be cross checked with the copies of the bank statements provided as part of the verification process.
- 8.4 As required by Government, payments can only be made to the applicant's bank account. No payments can be made to third parties whatsoever.
- 8.5 The Council is aware that in some cases, applicants may be overdrawn and may not be able to gain access to the payment. In these cases, the applicant may apply for protection. This protection is called a 'first right of appropriation of funds order'. More details of this can be obtained from the Councils website or from Citizens Advice.

9. Notification of Decisions

- 9.1 Applications for discretionary payments will be considered by officers of the Council and all decisions made by the Council shall be notified to the applicant either in writing or by email.

10. Implications for other benefits and reductions

- 10.1 The Council has been advised by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) that all Test and Trace Support Payments (of any type) will be disregarded for the purposes of all means-tested benefits.
- 10.2 The Council has decided that any payment made under this scheme shall not affect entitlement to Council Tax Reduction.

11. Review of Decisions

- 11.1 Whilst there is no statutory appeal process, the Council will operate an internal review process and will accept an applicant's request for an appeal of its decision by a senior officer.
- 11.2 All such requests must be made in writing to the Council, within 3 days of the Council's decision, and should state the reasons why the applicant is aggrieved with the decision of the Council. New information may be submitted at this stage to support the applicant's appeal. The application will be reconsidered as soon as practicable, and the applicant informed in writing or by email of the decision.

12. Complaints

- 12.1 The Council's 'Complaints Procedure' (available on the Councils website) will be applied in the event of any complaint received about this scheme.

13. The Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme and its relationship with the Standard Scheme

Standard Scheme

- 13.1 This 'Standard Scheme' has been determined by criteria set down by Government and is primarily aimed at all applicants who are working or self-employed; are unable to work from home and will therefore have a reduction in income and are in receipt of certain qualifying benefits (Universal Credit; Working Tax Credit; Income-based Employment and Support Allowance; income-based Jobseeker's Allowance; Income Support; Housing Benefit; or Pension Credit).
- 13.2 The receipt of one of those benefits is essential in order for a payment to be made.
- 13.3 Details of the Standard Scheme can be found at www.york.gov.uk

Discretionary Scheme

- 13.3 The Council's Test and Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme is for any individual who meets all the required criteria (including the Council's additional criteria) **except** that they are not currently in receipt of a qualifying benefit and they would face financial hardship due to self-isolation. The reason for this could be, for example, that a claim for a benefit has not yet been made or that the individual, whilst normally resident in the UK, is unable to gain access to public funds.

Claiming from the schemes

- 13.4 Individuals who are entitled to a payment from the Standard Scheme are unable to make a claim from the Council's Discretionary Scheme.
- 13.5 However, an applicant who is refused a 'Standard Scheme' payment on the basis that they meet all the criteria **except** that they are not in receipt of a qualifying benefit, will be directed to make an application for a discretionary payment. It should be noted that in all cases, where an individual applies for a discretionary payment, they will have to satisfy not only the basic criteria laid down by Government but also the additional criteria set by the Council.

14. Funding of the Discretionary Scheme

- 14.1 The Council will receive a fixed amount of funding from Government which will be for the four months that the Discretionary Scheme is intended to last. Government has confirmed that **no** additional monies will be given to the Council.
- 14.2 In view of this, and to ensure that discretionary payments are available throughout the period to 31st January 2021, the Council reserves the right to change the Test and

Trace Discretionary Payments Scheme at any time to ensure funds go to those who face the most financial hardship.

15. Taxation and provision of information to HMRC

- 15.1 The Council has been informed by Government that all payments under this scheme are taxable. However, the payments will not be subject to National Insurance contributions.
- 15.2 The Council does not accept any responsibility in relation to an applicant's tax liabilities and all applicants should make their own enquiries to establish any tax position.
- 15.3 All applicants should note that the Council is required to inform Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) of all payments made to individuals.

16. Managing the risk of fraud

- 16.1 Neither the Council, nor Government will accept deliberate manipulation of the scheme and fraud. Any applicant caught falsifying information to gain payments will face prosecution and any payment issued will be recovered from them and this may also include other recovery costs.
- 16.2 Applicants should note that, where a Test and Trace Discretionary Payment is paid by the Council, details of each individual applicant will be passed to Government. Applicants should also note that the Council utilises a number of databases and Government systems to verify information in connection with any application submitted.

17. Recovery of amounts incorrectly paid

- 17.1 If it is established that any Test and Trace Discretionary Support Payment has been made incorrectly due to misrepresentation or incorrect information provided to the Council by an applicant or their representative(s), the Council will look to recover the amount in full.

18. The Council's duties in relation to self-isolation

- 18.1 The duty to self-isolate is an important one. Ensuring infected individuals and their close contacts isolate is one of our most powerful tools for controlling transmission.
- 18.2 We know that someone with the virus can remain infectious to other people for up to 10 days after developing symptoms. It can take up to 14 days for individuals to develop coronavirus symptoms after they catch the virus, and in this time, they can unknowingly pass it on to others, even if they don't have symptoms.

- 18.3 Self-isolating helps prevent family, friends and the community from contracting coronavirus, as well as helping to protect the health and care system.
- 18.4 The changes announced by Government on 20th September 2020 and brought into force on 28th September 2020 (as well as providing for the Test and Trace Support Payments Schemes):
- introduce a new legal duty on individuals to self-isolate if someone tests positive or is identified as a contact by NHS Test and Trace;
 - introduce penalties for those breaking the rules, including fines of at least £1,000 and up to a maximum of £10,000 for repeated or very serious offences; and
 - place a new legal obligation on employers that they must not knowingly enable or encourage their employees to break the law on self-isolation.
- 18.5 As part of this, the Council has a duty If it becomes aware, either through post-payment verification checks or through other means, that someone has not self-isolated, to refer the case to the police.
- 18.6 The Council has been informed by Government that, in order to ensure compliance with the new legislation NHS Test and Trace call handlers will be increasing contact with those self-isolating. Police resources will be used to check compliance in highest incidence areas and in high-risk groups, based on local intelligence including acting on instances where third parties have identified others who have tested positive, but are not self-isolating.
- 18.7 The Council will continue to focus on the principle of encouraging, educating and supporting self-compliance.

19. Delegated Powers

- 19.1 The Council has implemented this Discretionary Scheme in line with Government requirements and guidance.
- 19.2 Officers of the Council will administer the scheme and the Section 151 Officer is authorised to make technical scheme amendments to ensure it continues to meet the criteria set by the Council and, in line with Central Government guidance.

20. Data Protection and use of data

- 20.1 All information and data provided by applicants shall be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Data Protection policy and Privacy Notices which are available on the Council's website.



Department
of Health &
Social Care

Test and Trace Support Payments: Implementation Guide for Local Authorities in England

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1. Purpose of this document

This guidance sets out what local authorities will need to do to enable people in their area to claim the Test and Trace Support Payment, including discretionary payments. Please note that this is a working draft and future changes to this guidance will be made in the coming days.

2. Test and Trace Payments: an overview

From 28 September 2020, individuals will be entitled to a Test and Trace Support Payment of £500 if they:

- Have been told to stay at home and self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, either because they have tested positive for coronavirus or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive
- Are employed or self-employed
- Are unable to work from home and will lose income as a result
- Are currently receiving Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit, income-based Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit and/or Pension Credit.

This payment is designed to support people on low incomes, if they will lose income as a result of self-isolating, and to encourage them to get tested if they have symptoms. This is important to help stop the transmission of COVID-19 and avoid further economic and societal restrictions. The scheme will last until 31 January 2021.

These payments will be made available from 28 September 2020, and local authorities should have arrangements in place to administer them by no later than 12 October 2020. Someone told to self-isolate on or after 28 September (but before the scheme is

operational in their local authority) will need to be able to make a backdated claim for payment.

Local authorities will also be able to make a discretionary £500 lump sum payment in exceptional circumstances to an individual who meets the main qualifying criteria for the Test and Trace Support Payment (i.e. they are a low-income worker who is unable to work because they are self-isolating) but is not in receipt of qualifying benefits and could suffer financial hardship as a result of not being able to work.

3. Eligibility for payments

Backdating

Eligibility for the NHS Test and Trace Support Payment, including discretionary payments, will be for people who are told to self-isolate on or after 28 September 2020 and who meet the relevant eligibility criteria.

Residents in local authorities who do not have arrangements in place to administer the payment from 28 September 2020 will be able to claim retrospectively, as long as their period of self-isolation began on or after this date.

Local authorities should not accept applications from people told to self-isolate before 28 September 2020, even if the period of self-isolation continues after 28 September.

Applications from members of the same household

People in the same household can each make an individual application to receive the payment, if they each meet the eligibility criteria.

Multiple claims

Someone can claim more than once (if they are told to self-isolate multiple times), as long as they meet the eligibility criteria for each individual claim and their periods of self-isolation do not overlap. Local authorities may wish to consider keeping a record of individuals who make multiple claims to guard against potential fraud.

Applications made after someone's period of self-isolation has ended

Eligible individuals can make a claim up to 14 days after their period of self-isolation ended. Local authorities should not accept applications after this point.

Third-party applications

Applicants can apply on behalf of someone else. However, the £500 must be paid into a bank account in the name of the person for whom the application is being made (so, for example, if someone applied on behalf of a parent, the payment would be made into the parent's bank account).

Applicants with other support needs

As part of the information available on the online application form and in the design process, local authorities are encouraged to reference any other local support that is available for people who have been instructed to self-isolate, such as food packages.

Applicants who are self-isolating who haven't been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace

Local authorities should not approve applications for anyone who does not have a valid notification from NHS Test and Trace. The legal duty to self-isolate that comes into force on 28 September applies only to people who have been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace. This means it is important that people who have tested positive share accurate information about their recent contacts with NHS Test and Trace.

Applicants who are quarantining after returning to the UK

The Test and Trace Support Payment scheme does not cover people who are self-isolating after returning to the UK from abroad, unless they have tested positive for coronavirus or have been instructed to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace.

Applicants who are furloughed

Local authorities should not make payments to applicants whose income is lower than normal because they are furloughed. Your website and online application form should make this clear. The Test and Trace Support Payment is for people facing a reduction in income because they cannot work while self-isolating.

4. Application process

Local authorities will need to put arrangements in place to process and verify applications, issue payments to successful applicants and prevent and detect fraud.

Each local authority will need to have its own online application system – and an alternative system for non-digital users.

To apply, applicants will complete an online form (or a telephone application if digitally excluded) and provide their local authority with:

- A notification from NHS Test and Trace asking them to self-isolate;
- Proof of receipt of one of the qualifying benefits;
- A bank statement; and

- Proof of employment or, if they are self-employed, evidence of self-assessment returns, trading income and proof that their business delivers services which cannot be undertaken without social contact.

Once this evidence has been verified, the local authority will pay the applicant £500. This payment should be made within three working days of receiving an eligible application.

Local authorities will need to determine equivalent processes for submission and assessment of claims for discretionary funding, where someone is on a low income but does not receive one of the qualifying benefits.

Application form

Local authorities will need to design their own application form. An example of a payment application form can be found below.

Accessibility requirements

Local authorities will need to ensure accessibility of forms for citizens across languages and disabilities.

How will people provide evidence?

As applicants will be self-isolating at home, local authorities will need to put in place arrangements to allow them to upload their evidence electronically wherever possible. It is the responsibility of local authorities to ensure data security and that evidence provided is retained in line with their local policies.

As some applicants will not have access to scanning equipment while they self-isolate, this should include accepting photographs of documents wherever possible.

Will local authorities need to put in place arrangements to allow automated application processing?

Based on projected volumes of eligible applicants, we do not anticipate the need for automated processing systems.

5. Application form: minimum data requirements

The following table sets out the minimum data requirements to be collected from a citizen to support their application for a payment. Local authorities may wish to change the sequence in which questions are asked and when supported evidence is requested in the journey.

Applicant details

This form does not allow anonymous reporting.

This is an account-based form

This form should NOT allow the manual input of addresses if outside of the borough boundary

Field	Business Rule	Type/Value
Title	Mandatory	Options • Mr • Mrs • Miss • Ms • Other
If other is chosen		Please state your title
First Name	Mandatory	Text Box
Last Name	Mandatory	Text Box
Postcode	Mandatory	Preferable link to Address base with search option Or Text Box
Business Building Name/Number	Mandatory	Preferable link to Address base with search option Or Text Box
Street	Mandatory	Preferable link to Address base with search option Or Text Box
Town	Mandatory	Preferable link to Address base with search option Or Text Box
Contact Number	Mandatory	Text Box
Email Address	Mandatory	Must meet email standard e.g. xxx@xxx.xxx

Service Specific Details Page

No	Question	Business Rules	Type/Values
1	Application Information		
2	If you have been contacted by NHS Test and Trace and have been told to self-isolate, you may be entitled to financial support. If you meet all the following eligibility criteria, you are entitled to a lump sum payment of £500:		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You have been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace on or after 28 September 2020. You are employed or self-employed. You cannot work from home and will lose income as a result. You are currently receiving at least one of the following benefits: Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit, income-based Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit and/or Pension Credit. <p>This application is for one person only and any further applications within the same household must be made by each individual.</p> <p>Please ensure that you have the below information available before starting the application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NI number Your 8 digit test and trace ID number Your most recent bank statement, proof of self-employment or wage slips 		
3	Applicant details		
4	Who are you completing this application for?	Mandatory	Options • Yourself • On behalf of someone else
5	<p>If yourself selected go to 8 If on behalf of someone selected go to 6</p>		
6	Name of applicant	Mandatory	Text -100
7		Mandatory	Text -100
8	Test and Trace		
9	Have you been contacted by NHS Test and Trace?	Mandatory	Options – tick box • Yes • No
10	<p>If Yes selected go to 12 If no is chosen go to 11</p>		
11	Unfortunately you do not meet the criteria for this scheme as you must have been contacted by the NHS Test and Trace service End form.		
12	Please provide your 8 digit NHS	Mandatory	Free text (8)

	Test and Trace ID number		
13	Please provide the start date of your isolation period	Mandatory	Date picker from
14	Please provide the end date of your isolation period	Mandatory	Date picker to

No	Question	Business Rules	Type/Values
15	Employment Details		
16	Are you	Mandatory	Options <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employed • Self-employed • Neither
17	<p>If Neither is chosen go to 18</p> <p>If Employed is chosen go to 19</p> <p>If self-employed is chosen go to 22</p>		
18	Unfortunately you do not meet the criteria for this scheme End form		
19	Employer name	Mandatory	Text -100
20	Employer's address	Mandatory	Text -100
21	Employer's contact number	Optional	Free text – go to question 24
22	What is the nature of your job?	Mandatory	Free text
23	If you are self-employed please provide proof of your self-employment status	Optional	Upload
24	Are you able to work from home during your isolation period?	Mandatory	Options <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No
25	If yes selected “Unfortunately you do not meet the criteria for this scheme as you are able to work from home during your isolation period” end form If no selected go to 26		

26	Will you have a reduction in earned income?	Mandatory	Options • Yes • No
27	If yes selected move to 28 If no selected "Unfortunately you do not meet the criteria for this scheme". End form		

No	Question	Business Rules	Type/Values
28	Benefits		
29	Which of the following benefits/support do you receive?	Mandatory	Radio buttons • Universal Credit • Working Tax Credit • Job seekers Allowance • Income support • Employment support Allowance • Housing Benefit • Pension Credit • None of these
30	If none of these is chosen go to 31 If any other option is chosen go to 32		
31	Unfortunately you do not meet the criteria for this scheme End form		
32	Please provide your National Insurance Number	Mandatory	National insurance prefix

No	Question	Business Rules	Type/Values
33	Bank Details		
34	Please provide the following details of the bank account you wish the payment to go into?		
35	Bank account name	Mandatory	Text
36	Account number	Mandatory	Text
37	Sort Code	Mandatory	Text
38	Please upload your evidence documents one by one. If you are employed this	Optional	Upload

	should also include proof of employment i.e. wages being paid to you or your most recent wage slips/bank statements		
--	---	--	--

No	Question	Business Rules	Type/Values
39	Declaration		
40	I confirm that the information is true and accurate. I agree to self-isolate for the required period and understand that if I fail to do will be required to pay the funds back. The Council relies on your consent to access your records contained in NHS Test and Trace data system, known as CTAS, for the purposes of confirming your eligibility for this scheme of payment. You can find more information on CTAS via the Privacy Notice please click here. Your data will not be shared with other entities outside of the Council for any purpose and you may withdraw your consent at any time by contacting the Council on 588119. Please be aware that if you do withdraw your consent, you will no longer be entitled to the payments under this scheme. For information about how we will process the information gathered on the form, please click here.		
41	Do you agree to the above declaration	Mandatory	Tick box to agree
Summary Page			
All form details to pull through to summary page			

Suggested Submission Email to customer
<p>Subject: Application for financial support for residents self-isolating (Service Request ID)</p> <p>Dear <Customer/Name></p> <p>Thank you for your application.</p> <p>Your reference for this request is <ID></p>

A member of our team will check and verify all details in your application. You will receive email confirmation to notify you if your application has been successful.

If you are successful it will be our intention to make payment within 2 working days.

Thank you

<Team responsible>

<Local Authority name>

Queue accessibility or back office email

Revs and Bens staff to access SRs from queue

Verify checks to be made on Track and Trace data Accept or Reject

Verify checks to be made on DWP re benefits – Accept or reject

Overall outcome Approve or Reject

Email required for both SR to auto close

Suggested Successful application - email to customer

Subject: Application for financial support for residents self-isolating (Service Request ID)

Dear <Customer/Name>

Your application has been successful and a payment will be made to the bank account details provided within the next 2 working days.

Thank you

<Team responsible>

<Local Authority name>

Suggested Rejected application - email to customer

Subject: Application for financial support for residents self-isolating (Service Request ID)

Dear <Customer/Name>

Unfortunately your application has been unsuccessful.

Our team have checked and verified the details provided and you do not meet the criteria at this time.

<consider adding a statement here regarding eligibility for discretionary payment>?

Thank you

Team responsible>

<Local Authority name>

6. Applications for discretionary payments: minimum data requirements

Guidance around data requirements to support discretionary applications is currently in progress and will be issued upon completion.

7. Pre-payment checks

Local authorities will need to carry out three main pre-payment checks. These are to verify that each applicant:

- Is receiving one of the benefits in the eligibility criteria;
- Has been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace; and
- Is employed or self-employed and will lose income because they cannot work from home.

Checking that an applicant is receiving one of the qualifying benefits

Local authorities should use the DWP's Searchlight system to check that each applicant is receiving one of the qualifying benefits.

Applicants who have applied for benefits but are not yet receiving them, or have an outstanding appeal against a decision not to award them a benefit

If the applicant meets all the other eligibility criteria but is not yet in receipt of one of the qualifying benefits, local authorities could choose to make a discretionary payment.

Checking that an applicant has been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace

Only people who have been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace can claim the Test and Trace Support Payment. To check this, local authorities should use data provided from the Contact Tracing and Advice Service (CTAS) system (see below).

Applicants may try to provide a notification from the NHS Isolation Note service rather than NHS Test and Trace. If this happens, local authorities should not reject their application, but give them an opportunity to provide a valid NHS Test and Trace notification if they have one.

Checking that an applicant is employed or self-employed and will lose income because they cannot work from home

The application process should ask applicants about the nature of their work and whether they can do this work from home, and whether they are employed or self-employed. These questions should be asked before applicants are asked to confirm whether they will lose income while self-isolating.

For applicants who are self-employed, local authorities should confirm they are satisfied with the evidence of self-assessment returns and trading income provided by the applicant.

Checking that an applicant will lose income because they cannot work from home

The application form should ask applicants to confirm both that they cannot work from home while they are self-isolating and that they will have a reduction in earned income because they are self-isolating.

As long as someone meets the other eligibility criteria and is losing income because they have been told to self-isolate and cannot work from home, they are eligible. So, for example:

- Someone with a single job whose employer continued to pay them a full wage while they self-isolated would not be eligible.
- Someone whose employer paid them a reduced wage while they self-isolated would be eligible (they have lost income).
- Someone with two part-time jobs who continued to be paid a full wage by one employer, but whose other employer did not pay them while self-isolating, would be eligible.

8. Obtaining a CTAS number

The NHS Test and Trace service uses a web-based tool called the Contact Tracing and Advice Service (CTAS) to record information about people who have tested positive for COVID-19 and their contacts. The CTAS Account ID is a 8-character identifier unique to each record on the web tool (e.g. 4a2c204a).

Most citizens who test positive for Covid-19 or are a contact of someone who has had a positive test will receive a digital invitation from the CTAS web tool to undertake the contact tracing journey. The invitation message (sent either via a text message or email) contains the 8-character Account ID.

All cases and contacts who completed the contact tracing journey (including those who were ineligible for the digital invitation such as children or individuals with a landline number only) will receive a citizen advice message upon completion of the NHS Test and Trace questionnaire. The citizen message (sent either via a text message/email or postal service for people with no access to mobile phone or email) contains the 8-character Account ID.

Local authorities will be able to use the web-based PowerBI based Eligibility Checker to check whether an applicant has a CTAS number. We will provide advice very shortly on how local authorities can indicate which users need to have access to the Eligibility Checker.

9. Making payments

Local authorities should pay eligible individuals within three working days of receiving their application. Payments should be made up front, as a single payment, to the bank account matching the bank statement they have provided, via the most appropriate payment mechanism.

Local authorities should send each recipient a letter or email to confirm that they have been paid.

Applicants who are overdrawn

Local authorities may wish to link to information to tell people how to exercise their first right of appropriation on the £500 payment, so their bank doesn't use it to pay their overdraft if they are overdrawn. Guidance from Bradford Council and an example template can be seen in this [link](#). Local authorities may also wish to produce a similar template that can be shared with eligible individuals who are overdrawn.

Appeals

Local authorities will not be required to provide a right of appeal against any decision not to award a payment, either for the main Test and Trace Support Payment or for applications to receive a discretionary payment. People who are turned down will not be eligible because they do not meet the criteria.

However, where possible, local authorities should work with applicants to make sure they provided the necessary evidence to support a successful application. For instance, someone who is self-employed may have forgotten to provide their self-assessment return in the first instance. This person should not be rejected but given the opportunity to provide further evidence if they have it.

If an individual is rejected because they do not meet the eligibility criteria, local authorities may wish to consider if the individual meets the criteria for a discretionary payment.

10. Records to be kept by local authorities

We will confirm shortly the arrangements for monitoring and reporting. As a minimum, we anticipate that local authorities will need to keep a record for these purposes of:

- The number of applications for payments under the standard eligibility criteria
- The number of approved applications for payments under the standard eligibility criteria
- The number of applications for discretionary payments under the scheme
- The number of approved applications for discretionary payments under the scheme
- The number of approved applications for which post-payment checks indicate the applicant was not eligible.

11. Taxation

These payments will be subject to income tax. Payments under the standard eligibility criteria will not be subject to National Insurance contributions; we will confirm the position shortly for discretionary payments. The table in **Appendix 2** provides an initial overview of the data HMRC will require from local authorities to be able to tax the payments. Further operational guidance will be provided setting out how this information will be shared with HMRC.

12. Eligibility for other benefits

These payments will be disregarded when calculating eligibility for other benefits. This includes calculating entitlement to Universal Credit.

13. Evidence of failure to self-isolate

If a local authority becomes aware, either through post-payment verification checks or through other means, that someone has not self-isolated, they will need to refer the case to the police. Guidance will follow on how to handle recovery of the payments made to the individual.

14. Fraud

Local authorities will be responsible for fraud-prevention measures. Discussions are currently underway around best practices to bolster counter-fraud measures and guidance will be issued in due course.

Local authorities will have the right to recover costs from people who claim the payment fraudulently and can keep any money recovered to put towards your costs of running the scheme. Local authorities will not be liable for any unrecoverable costs due to fraud.

15. Funding and demand

Funding

The UK Government will provide funding to meet the full estimated costs of delivering the Test and Trace Support Payment and the discretionary fund. This includes your set-up, programme and administration costs.

Further details will follow on the funding for programme costs (costs of payments to applicants), administrative costs and the discretionary fund.

There will be a 'down-payment' based on expected programme/admin costs with additional funding provided as necessary on a monthly basis (based on changes in estimated costs) – and a fixed four-month envelope for the discretionary fund.

The administrative funding will be designed to cover the full estimated costs of both setting up the scheme and running the scheme, but it will not be possible to match funding to the specific costs incurred by individual local authorities.

Projected demand

If you introduce the scheme later than 28 September, you will need to be prepared to work through an initial backlog of cases.

Local authorities should be prepared for potential increases in cases, either when the Coronavirus Job Retention (furlough) scheme ends on 31 October 2020 or due to increased COVID-19 transmission over the period of the scheme.

Our modelling estimates that 800 people per day across England would receive the Test and Trace Support Payment if average COVID-19 incidence was at its levels on 17 September 2020, with likely costs varying in proportion to changes in incidence above or below that baseline level.

Demand will depend in part on COVID-19 transmission levels in each area. If the 800 cases in England per day in the scenario above were evenly distributed across the country, a local authority with 250,000 residents could expect four people per day to become eligible, with likely numbers varying in proportion to changes in incidence above or below that baseline level.

APPENDIX 1: Wider policy on self-isolation

Why does self-isolation matter?

Ensuring infected individuals and their close contacts isolate is one of our most powerful tools for controlling transmission.

We know that someone with the virus can remain infectious to other people for up to 10 days after developing symptoms. It can take up to 14 days for individuals to develop coronavirus symptoms after they catch the virus, and in this time, they can unknowingly pass it on to others, even if they don't have symptoms.

Self-isolating helps prevent family, friends and the community from contracting coronavirus, as well as helping to protect the health and care system.

The changes announced by the government on 20 September 2020 will:

- introduce a new duty on individuals to self-isolate if someone tests positive or is identified as a contact by NHS Test and Trace.
- introduce a new Test and Trace Support Payment of a £500 lump sum payment for those on low incomes to support them if they cannot work during their self-isolation period.
- introduce penalties for those breaking the rules, including fines of at least £1,000 and up to a maximum of £10,000 for repeated or very serious offences.
- place a new legal obligation on employers that they must not knowingly enable or encourage their employees to break the law on self-isolation.
- provide discretionary funding for local authorities to help those who require corresponding financial support to the Test and Trace Support Payment to self-isolate, but do not meet all the eligibility criteria.

What difference does it make if self-isolation has a legal basis?

This change is intended to make clear the importance of people self-isolating when they have COVID-19 or they have been in recent and close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. A new legal obligation, implemented rapidly nationwide, will help stop the virus continuing to spread.

What is the aim of the Test and Trace Support Payment?

The Test and Trace Support Payment has been introduced in response to feedback from local authorities and directors of public health that some of their residents were struggling to self-isolate as directed due to financial constraints. It is to help ensure that people on

low incomes self-isolate when they test positive or are identified as a contact, and to encourage more people to get tested. This will help to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 and avoid further societal and economic restrictions, including local lockdowns.

How will the duty to self-isolate be imposed?

The proposed legal duties will apply in England only. Anyone notified of a positive test result and any of their notified contacts will have a legal duty to self-isolate. Guidance will make clear that people who have symptoms should, as now, self-isolate while they get a test.

Those testing positive for COVID-19 will be legally obliged to self-isolate for a period ending 10 days after the onset of symptoms or, for people who did not have symptoms when they were tested, 10 days after the date of the test. Other members of their household will be legally obliged to self-isolate for a period ending 14 days after the onset of the infected person's symptoms (or, if they were asymptomatic, after the date of the test). Non-household contacts will be obliged to self-isolate for the period notified to them by NHS Test and Trace (the period ending 14 days after their most recent exposure to the person who has tested positive).

What is the role of local authorities in supporting the requirement to self-isolate?

NHS Test and Trace and local authorities will continue to work together to help ensure that people understand their obligations on self-isolation and why it is so important to self-isolate – and help them access any support they need to do so

Local authorities will focus on the principle of encouraging, educating and supporting self-compliance – they will not be expected to enforce the legal requirements. Local authorities should pass on the details of anyone they suspect of breaking the rules to the police. Where there is clear evidence that someone is not following the rules, the police will determine what follow-up action to take and, where necessary, issue fixed penalty notices.

Do local authorities need to launch a communications campaigns to advertise the Test and Trace Support Payment?

The government is running a central communications campaign to publicise the new legal duty to self-isolate and the Test and Trace Support Payment. We will support local authorities in arranging additional local communications, publicity and engagement.

Do local authorities need to check that Test and Trace Support Payment recipients are self-isolating?

Local authorities should focus on encouraging, educating and supporting self-isolation compliance. They should pass on the details of anyone they suspect of breaking the rules to the police.

APPENDIX 2: Proposed data to share with HMRC for tax reporting

Data Item	Description	Format	Priority 1 = High 2 = Medium 3 = Low	Source Applicant, LAs/DAs and/or LA/DA reference systems
Supplier Reference	Unique reference to allow HMRC (DA&E team) to uniquely identify the data Supplier and data purpose. Required for audit and data quality purposes.	AANNNNN format. Reference can be included in correspondence (potentially a Notice) and supported documents sent to LAs as per DAE normal Notice issuing protocols.	Mandatory	LA/DA (but allocated by HMRC)
Local Authority Name / DA Name	Name of Local Authority	Char (60) – If uses LA names (This field is usually reported at the start of DAE Excel templates after the reference)	Mandatory	LA/DA
NINo	National Insurance Number	NINO format MUST be: AANNNNNNA or AANNNNNN e.g. QQ123456A or QQ123456 If you DO NOT know the final NINO character (A-D) you can leave this character BLANK DO NOT include Spaces or Dividers Temporary NINOs are NOT acceptable	Mandatory	LA verified
Payment Amount		Payments MUST be reported in NUMERICAL FORMAT to 2 decimal places e.g. 999.99 DO NOT include Commas, Spaces, Currency or Minus Symbols	Mandatory	LA/DA
Payment Date		Insert the date on which the payment was made	Mandatory	LA/DA

		Format MUST be: DDMMYYYY e.g. 03082017 DON'T include Spaces or Dividers		
Payment Type	'Payment' or 'Clawback' of payment – required for incorrect payments or non-compliance	P or C flag Field validation will restrict to only the agreed options and will be mandatory. Max 1 Character	Mandatory	LA/DA
Payment Funding Source	'Main' or 'Discretionary' fund – potentially required if handled differently	M or D flag Field validation will restrict to only the agreed options and will be mandatory. Max 1 Character	Mandatory	LA/DA
Employment/Self- Employment or Neither	Employment/Self- Employment flag to ensure i) coding notices applied only to employed ii) future reference for self- employment returns (20/21) iii) Neither	E, S or N flag Field validation will restrict to only the agreed options and will be mandatory. Max 1 Character	Mandatory	Applicant [If an individual is both E and S - the 'tax law' default to confirm Employed first to assist with tax code changes)
Title	For QA purposes and exception handling and SA matching	insert the individual's title/name prefix in this column e.g. Mr, Mrs, Dr etc. Data entries such as 'Ditto', 'Not Known' or 'See Above' are NOT acceptable	Conditional if known	Applicant
Forename(s) / Given Names(s)	For QA purposes and exception handling and SA matching	Individual's forename(s)/given name(s) Data entries such as 'Ditto', 'Not Known' or 'See Above' are NOT acceptable	1 Conditional if known	Applicant
Surname/Family Name	For QA purposes and exception handling and SA matching	Individual's Surname/Family Name Data entries such as 'Ditto', 'Not Known' or 'See Above' are NOT acceptable	1 Conditional if known	Applicant
DOB	Date of Birth	Format MUST be: DD/MM/CCYY e.g. 03/08/1966	1 Conditional if known	Applicant

	For QA purposes and exception handling and SA matching	If NOT known leave BLANK		
Address Line 1	Requires a good description for these if they follow Post Office Approach or our file format (many websites use the number/postcode lookup to complete well-constructed address format)	Care of (C/O) addresses are NOT acceptable DON'T include UK postcodes here DON'T include Carriage Returns or any Line Breaks in the address Data entries such as 'Ditto', 'Not Known' or 'See Above' are NOT acceptable Max 40 characters	2 Conditional if known	LA/DA
Address Line 2	For QA purposes and exception handling and needed for self-employed matching	Care of (C/O) addresses are NOT acceptable DON'T include UK postcodes here DON'T include Carriage Returns or any Line Breaks in the address Data entries such as 'Ditto', 'Not Known' or 'See Above' are NOT acceptable Max 40 characters	2 Conditional if known	LA/DA
Address Line 3	For QA purposes and exception handling and needed for self-employed matching	Care of (C/O) addresses are NOT acceptable DON'T include UK postcodes here DON'T include Carriage Returns or any Line Breaks in the address Data entries such as 'Ditto', 'Not Known' or 'See Above' are NOT acceptable Max 40 characters	2 Conditional if known	LA/DA
Address Line 4	For QA purposes and exception handling and needed for self-employed matching	Care of (C/O) addresses are NOT acceptable DON'T include UK postcodes here DON'T include Carriage Returns or any Line Breaks in the address	2 Conditional if known	LA/DA

		Data entries such as 'Ditto', 'Not Known' or 'See Above' are NOT acceptable Max 40 characters		
Address Line 5	For QA purposes and exception handling and needed for self-employed matching	Care of (C/O) addresses are NOT acceptable DON'T include UK postcodes here DON'T include Carriage Returns or any Line Breaks in the address Data entries such as 'Ditto', 'Not Known' or 'See Above' are NOT acceptable Max 40 characters	2 Conditional if known	LA/DA
Post Code	Postcode of the applicant's residential address for QA purposes and exception handling and SA matching	ONLY insert postcodes Data entries other than postcodes are NOT acceptable Max 8 characters	1 Conditional if known	Applicant

Additional considerations:

The field requirements are taken from HMRC's DAE standard Template supporting guidance, but the following may need consideration.


All fields - where fields have defined formatting requirements, these are taken from DAE existing specifications and comply with HMRC data standards for Bulk Third Party information ingestion.

Supplier Reference – HMRC DAE systems require a supplier unique reference for each supplier / data type combination to support audit and data quality processes. Local authorities are familiar with being allocated these for different data type requests. This will be allocated by HMRC DAE and in a prescribed format and must be used in the data return submitted

Care of Addresses – Usually not accepted as it may be a registered business office or accountants address and not the individual's residential address. If local authorities are confident that addresses supplied will be residential then the C/O requirement can be dropped.

APPENDIX 3: Application Form Example

Below are mock screenshots of the application form and should purely be used as a guide for reference.

 **Test and Trace Self Service Isolation**

Applicant details

First name

Last name

Contact number

Email

What is your address?

Building and street

Town or city


County

Postcode

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Application information

If you have been contacted by national or local Test and Trace and have been advised to self-isolate, you may be entitled to financial support. If you meet the all of the following eligibility criteria, you are entitled to a lump sum payment of £500:

- You have been asked to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace on or after 28 September 2020.
- You are employed or self-employed.
- You cannot work from home and will lose income as a result.
- You are currently receiving at least one of the following benefits: Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit, income-based Employment and Support Allowance, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit and/or Pension Credit.

This application is for one person only and any further applications within the same household must be made by each individual. Please ensure that you have the below information available before starting the application:

- NI number
- Your 8 digit test and trace ID number
- Your most recent bank statement, proof of self-employment or wage slips

Who are you completing this application for?

- Yourself
- On behalf of someone else

Name of applicant

Have you been contacted by NHS Test and Trace?

- Yes
- No

Please provide your 8 digit CTAS ID

Please provide the start date of your isolation period

For example, 12 09 2020

Day	Month	Year
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Please provide the end date of your isolation period

For example, 12 09 2020

Day	Month	Year
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

[Save and continue](#)

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Employment details

Are you

- Employed
- Self-employed
- Neither

Employer name

Employer address

Building and street

Town or city

County

Postcode

Employer contact number

What is the nature of your job?

If you are self-employed please provide proof of your self-employment status

No file chosen

Are you able to work from home during your isolation period?

- Yes
- No

Will you have a reduction in earned income?

- Yes
- No

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Benefits details

Which of the following benefits do you receive?

- Universal Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- Job seekers Allowance
- Income support
- Employment support Allowance
- Housing Benefit
- Pension Credit
- None of these

National Insurance number

It's on your National Insurance card, benefit letter, payslip or P60. For example, 'QQ 12 34 56 C'.

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Bank details

Please provide the following details of the bank account you wish the payment to go into.

Bank or building society account details

Name on the account

Sort code

Must be 6 digits long

Account number

Must be between 6 and 8 digits long

Building society roll number (if you have one)

You can find it on your card, statement or passbook

Please upload your evidence documents one by one. If you are employed this should also include proof of employment i.e. wages being paid to you or your most recent wage slips/bank statements

No file chosen

Save and continue

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Declaration

I confirm that the information is true and accurate. I agree to self-isolate for the required period and understand that if I fail to do will be required to pay the funds back.

The Council relies on your consent to access your records contained in the NHS Test and Trace data system, known as Data System (CTAS,) for the purposes of confirming your eligibility for this scheme of payment. You can find more information on CTAS via the Privacy Notice please click here. Your data will not be shared with other entities outside of the Council for any purpose and you may withdraw your consent at any time by contacting the Council on 588119. Please be aware that if you do withdraw your consent, you will no longer be entitled to the payments under this scheme. For information about how we will process the information gathered on the form, please click here.

Do you agree with the above declaration?

Save and continue

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Review your answers

Name	Sarah Philips	Change
Date of birth	5 January 1978	Change
National insurance number	AB 12 34 56 C	Change
Contact information	72 Guild Street London SE23 6FH	Change
Contact details	07700 900457 sarah.phillips@example.com	Change
Bank details	Santander 12-34-56 12345678	Change
CTAS ID	C123456789	Change
Employer name	Window Maker Ltd	Change
Employer contact information	172 High Street London SE1 6FH	Change
Employer contact details	07700 900457 window.maker.ltd@example.com	Change
Are you re-submitting the application	No	Change

Submit your application

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Application submitted

Application complete

Your reference number
HDJ2123F

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