

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Cllr Richard Samuel, Cabinet Member for Resources	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	On or after 12 <sup>th</sup> June 2021 (for single Member decision)	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 3282
TITLE:	Test and Trace Support Payment Policy Extension	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: Test and Trace Support Payment Policy. DHSC Guidance.		

## 1 THE ISSUE

The Test and Trace Support Payment Scheme is being extended until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021, and eligibility criteria is being extended to parents and carers who have to take time off work to look after children who are self-isolating, in line with guidance from the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC). The council's policy on these payments must be updated to reflect these changes, and to give guidance to Officers dealing with applications under discretionary rules as to what constitutes as low income.

## 2 RECOMMENDATION

**The Cabinet Member is asked to**

**Approve the attached policy document, which has been agreed with the WECA councils as a shared policy on this support scheme.**

## 3 THE REPORT

3.1 The Test and Trace Support payment scheme was introduced in September 2020 to support residents who were under a legal duty to self-isolate and faced a loss of earnings because of self-isolation with a £500 lump sum payment. The scheme was originally extended from 01.01.2021 to 31.03.2021 and has now been extended until 30.06.2021.

3.2 Although the rules of the scheme have been drawn up by DHSC, the payments are made as Local Welfare Provision and so the council has drawn up a policy framework to cover the administration of the scheme and this must now be

altered to reflect the new end-date and the widening of DHSC eligibility criteria to include parents and carers of children who are required to self-isolate.

- 3.3 An element of the scheme relates to local discretion in cases where residents fulfil all other qualifying criteria but do not receive one of the prescribed social security benefits or tax credits stipulated by DHSC and are nonetheless on a low income. To ensure consistency with neighbouring councils a common approach to the concept of low income should be taken; with a combined household earnings figure of £350.00 per week, which should be used by officers to determine whether a resident will qualify for the payment, providing they fulfil all other DHSC criteria.

#### **4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS**

The scheme was introduced to encourage compliance with the legal requirement to self-isolate for residents who have tested positive for Covid-19 or contacts of residents who have tested positive.

#### **5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)**

The scheme is managed by the Welfare Support team through existing resources. Applications are made by residents through a web-form which is available on the council's public website, or by telephone to the Welfare Support team. The web form and back office system used to process applications are owned by the council and although additional work was carried out by IT services to build the application processes and back office system this has been managed through existing resources.

#### **6 RISK MANAGEMENT**

A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision-making risk management guidance.

#### **7 EQUALITIES**

An EIA has not been carried out by the council because the criteria for deciding applications is largely determined by DHSC.

#### **8 CLIMATE CHANGE**

Not Applicable

#### **9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

None

#### **10 CONSULTATION**

S 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer, WECA Councils, DHSC, B&NES Public Health team, Director of Education.

<b>Contact person</b>	Damian Peak
<b>Background papers</b>	Test and Trace Support Payment Policy DHSC Guidance
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	