

Item 13. Distribution of COVID-19 funding from NFDC

Background

On December 14th 2020, the leader of New Forest District Council, Cllr. Barry Rickman, wrote to all Town & Parish Council Clerks within the District to advise the following:-

“At the December meeting of Cabinet, it was unanimously agreed that the Council would make a distribution of support grant funding to all 38 Town and Parish Councils within the District in the 2020/21 financial year totalling £107,308.

This funding is non ring-fenced so can be used at the discretion of your Council enabling you to consider the individual circumstances prevailing within your community. The distribution of funds is in recognition of the additional expenditure pressures faced by all Local Authorities as a direct consequence of the pandemic. We would therefore anticipate these funds will in the first place, be used to address issues related to the pandemic.

The individual awards have been based on a fixed £1.50 per Band D using the recently calculated Tax Base for 2021/22.”

A copy of the full letter is attached.

Copythorne Parish Council was awarded £1,832, this sum was received on January 18th 2021.

For many councils in the District this sum was to recognise the loss of income from services (leisure facilities, parish council halls, parking fees, etc.) or the additional costs of delivering those services.

Copythorne Parish Council fortunately derives none of its income from the supply of services, nor did it incur any attributable costs as a result of dealing with COVID-19.

Distribution of Funds

Many “not for profit organisations” that exist within - or support residents of - the parish have suffered a loss of income or incurred costs as a result of the pandemic.

As a Parish Council we are not allowed to financially support individuals or businesses but through the use of **Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972** the Council has the power to “incur expenditure which in their opinion is in the interests of and will bring direct benefit to their area or any part of it or all or some of its inhabitants.....”. Section 137 was amended by the **Local Government and Housing Act 1989 s 36** so that any expenditure must be commensurate with the benefit to the community. The amount permitted under the Act for 2020/21 is £8.32 per elector on April 1st 2020. The Parish of Copythorne has circa 2300 electors which would allow a sum of circa £19,000.

On December 16th 2020 I sent an e-mail to all councillors which read as follows:-

“Do you know of any local organisations or charities that have been financially impacted by COVID-19. I am interested in such bodies either based in - or who work with people living in - the Parish that have lost income or incurred higher operating costs specifically related to COVID-19. If so, can you please let me have the name of the organisation/charity concerned.”

Recommendation

Based on the eligible suggestions received from councillors I propose that we distribute (as LGA 1972 s137 expenditure) the funds received as follows:-

Organisation	Amount	Reason
Copythorne Scouts	£300	Lost income
Copythorne Guides	£300	Lost income
C A B New Forest	£300	Increased costs/demand
It's Your Choice	£300	Increased costs/demand (Youth support charity, Totton)
Victim Support Hampshire	£300	Increased demand
Copythorne Parish Hall	£332	Lost income (including from ourselves)
TOTAL	£1,832	

DAVID RIGBY
Parish Clerk/RFO
February 1st 2020



My Ref:
Your Ref:

Date: 14 December 2020

Dear Town/Parish Clerk

Support as a Result of Covid-19

I appreciate that the Covid-19 pandemic is continuing to put pressure on all aspects of our community, both residents and businesses. As I outlined in my previous letter to you, in May, as a Council we are committed to doing all we can to support our community through this time of crisis.

At the December meeting of Cabinet, it was unanimously agreed that the Council would make a distribution of support grant funding to all 38 Town and Parish Councils within the District in the 2020/21 financial year totalling £107,308.

This funding is non ring-fenced so can be used at the discretion of your Council enabling you to consider the individual circumstances prevailing within your community. The distribution of funds is in recognition of the additional expenditure pressures faced by all Local Authorities as a direct consequence of the pandemic. We would therefore anticipate these funds will in the first place, be used to address issues related to the pandemic.

This support funding is a further measure to the previous assurance that the Council has given to ensuring your receipt of full precept income for 2020/21.

The individual awards have been based on a fixed £1.50 per Band D using the recently calculated Tax Base for 2021/22. The timing of this distribution is to assist with the setting of the Band D Tax Base for 2021/22, as required by the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012. It is clear that there is a lower than usual growth in the overall Tax Base for 2021/22, and this support is aimed at assisting all Town & Parish Councils in achieving a balanced budget, whether that be in 2020/21, or in 2021/22.

The full schedule confirming the funds to be distributed to each individual Council, during January, is appended as Schedule 1.

Once again, I would wish to thank you for all the work you are all doing during this most difficult of times.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Barry Rickman', written in a cursive style.

Councillor Barry Rickman
Leader
New Forest District Council
Email: barry.rickman@newforest.gov.uk

Schedule 1

	£
ASHURST & COLBURY	1,389.5
BEAULIEU	769.7
BOLDRE	1,589.7
BRAMSHAW	510.6
BRANSGORE	2,737.5
BREAMORE	270.2
BROCKENHURST	2,843.9
BURLEY	1,189.4
COPYTHORNE	1,831.5
DAMERHAM	359.3
DENNY LODGE	247.2
EAST BOLDRE	574.8
ELLINGHAM HARBRIDGE & IBSLEY	929.7
EXBURY & LEPE	179.1
FAWLEY	6,905.3
FORDINGBRIDGE	3,529.8
GODSHILL	341.7
HALE	398.1
HORDLE	3,626.7
HYDE	768.8
HYPHE & DIBDEN	11,109.2
LYMINGTON & PENNINGTON	11,224.8
LYNDHURST	2,209.2
MARCHWOOD	3,086.6
MARTIN	295.8
MILFORD-ON-SEA	4,280.7
MINSTEAD	558.5
NETLEY MARSH	1,224.2
NEW MILTON	15,773.0
RINGWOOD	8,106.5
ROCKBOURNE	251.0
SANDLEHEATH	414.9
SOPLEY	586.7
SWAY	2,559.2
TOTTON & ELING	14,107.7
WHITSBURY	151.7
WOODGREEN	376.8
	107,308.1