



LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000

REGISTER OF URGENT DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

NORTH DEVON COUNCIL CONSTITUTION – Part 3 Annexe 2: Officer Delegations
– Chief Executive

1) SUBJECT: HFU Host Payments

2) REQUESTED DECISION: Increase in host payments.

3) STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR THE REQUEST AND WHY IT IS URGENT:

A previous Urgent Decision had authorised the increase in payments to hosts to provide a monthly payment of £450 for the first guest and £400 for each additional guest. The Urgent decision stated that this would be paid during the winter months up until March 2023.

Shortly after that decision was made and prior to its implementation, the government announced an increase to the funding to £500 per month after the first 12 months.

The Council's concern has been that after the initial 6 month commitment, hosts would decide to cease the arrangements which would then increase the burden on the council's temporary accommodation. Whilst the increase in government funding is welcomed, there is concern that it is only to be paid after an initial 12 month period and will therefore do little to encourage hosts to continue the arrangement once the 6 months have expired.

It is therefore proposed that rather than implement the previous Urgent Decision, the Council will simply pay the enhanced rate of £500 per month with immediate effect.

There is a perceived need to provide some reassurance to hosts now, prior to Christmas, so that the council has done all that it can to prevent breakdowns over what is generally a period where we experience higher demand.

4) FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

(NOTE: Please state if there are any financial implications. If so, state whether there are sufficient funds within the agreed budget. If there are insufficient funds please state how the decision will be financed).

NDC have funding from the scheme that will cover these additional costs without impacting on housing budgets

5) ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED: We could leave the fees as they exist at present and rely on the enhanced government funding rates being introduced after 12 months but this will still create pressure on the hosts and could then create situations where guests are homeless and presenting to the council. Increasing the fees immediately will hopefully alleviate some of that pressure.

6) A RECORD OF ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARED:

None

7) A NOTE OF ANY DISPENSATION IF GRANTED N/A

8) LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

(but not including published works or those which disclose exempt or confidential information (as defined in paragraph 10.4 and 10.5 of the Access to Information Procedural Rules Part 4 of the Constitution):

9) CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN:

The following have been consulted on this urgent decision:

Consultee	Consulted Yes/No	Date
Leader of Council (<i>or Deputy Leader</i>)	Y	19/12/22
Chair of Committee (with the Authority to take the decision) (<i>or Vice-Chair</i>)		
Lead Member	Y	19/12/22
Ward Member(s)		
Head of Service (name) J Mann	Y	19/12/22
Finance	Y	19/12/22
Legal		

10) OFFICER REQUESTING URGENT DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Sarah Bentley – Service Lead Housing Options & Homelessness

11) APPROVED BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE: YES

12) DATE OF DECISION: 20/12/22

13) CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S COMMENTS: I agree that all steps possible should be taken to ensure that guests on the scheme remain with hosts if possible. At the present time, we have not seen a significant increase in demand because of breakdowns but many other councils have. Implementing an increase in fees seems a sensible step to take to ensure that hosts are not adversely affected financially.

14) DATE TO BE PRESENTED TO STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE: 6 February 2023

GUIDANCE NOTES

NOTE:

PROCEDURE FOR URGENT DECISIONS:

1. Completed form to be passed to the Chief Executive following consultation with the interested parties.
2. If a decision is specific to a Ward, efforts should be made to ascertain the views of the local Councillor (s).
3. The Chief Executive will make his decision.

PROCEDURE FOR URGENT DECISION MAKING AS PER THE CONSTITUTION

Officer Delegations: the Chief Executive:

Urgent Decision Making

- 3.48 To take a decision on any matter falling within the remit of any Committee in cases of urgency where it is not reasonably practicable to obtain prior approval of a Committee SUBJECT TO:
 - 3.48.1 the prior consultation, where practicable, with the Leader or Deputy Leader and the Chair or Vice Chair of the relevant Committee, and
 - 3.48.2 the proviso that this power will not extend to the determination of any application submitted pursuant to the Planning Acts or under the Licensing Act 2003 or the Gambling Act 2005, and
 - 3.48.3 the decision being reported to the next meeting of the relevant Committee and the next meeting of Strategy and Resources Committee.