

## **Decisions taken by the Leader of the Council and Chief Officers in accordance with Delegated Powers**

The following matters have been determined by the Leader of the Council and Chief Officers since the last meeting of the Emergency Committee on 25 March 2020, in accordance with their delegated remit.

### **Leader of the Council – Urgent Decision**

#### **31 March 2020 Temporary Suspension of Parking Charges on Town Centre Car Parks**

The Leader of the Council, acting in accordance with her delegated authority **Agreed:-**

1. To suspend Parking Charges on Town Car Parks from 30<sup>th</sup> March until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020
2. The Chief Executive monitors the impact of removing the car parking charges and consider amendments or reversal of this decision should there be evidence that social distancing requirements are not being met.
3. To maintain parking charges on-street and in Sandwell Valley.

#### **Reason for Decision**

Implementation of the proposals would assist key workers and those making essential trips for shopping during COVID 19 partial lockdown, to be able to do so without incurring additional charges.

### **Chief Executive**

#### **1 April 2020 Increase of Cash Deposit Limits**

The Chief Executive, acting in accordance with his delegated authority:

- Agreed that in light of the current COVID-19 crisis, approval is given to increase the Council's short term cash deposit limits with approved financial institutions and Money Market Funds (MMFs) from £1 Om to £20m during the period of the pandemic.

#### **Reason for Decision**

Due to the current COVID-19 crisis, there is a necessity to give greater flexibility to the Council's daily cashflow processes to allow it to deposit money into safe instant access accounts where it can be called upon immediately.

The Council is due to receive an amount of approximately £73m in relation to the Small Business Grant Fund on V April 2020 and, whilst plans are being finalised on how to most effectively utilise and distribute these resources, they need to be invested in secure financial instruments that can be called upon immediately.

The number of safe institutions and funds that the Council can invest with is limited and so it is necessary to temporarily increase the limits to allow greater cashflow flexibility until the crisis is over.

### **3 April 2020 - The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020 Appointment of Officer**

Decision:

1. That the Director of Prevention and Protection is granted delegated authority to exercise the statutory provisions of The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020.
2. That the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer be granted delegated authority to commence any proceedings required in line with the Regulations.

### **Reason for Decision**

These new powers came into force on 26th March 2020 as part of the national response to the COVID-19 Coronavirus. It was for the Council's Head of Paid Service to authorise officers to act in order that the Council can be compliant with any statutory provisions.

### **Director – Prevention and Protection**

### **31 March 2020 - Variations to the Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy**

Decision:

1. That approval is given to proposed temporary variations to the Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy as detailed in Appendix 1 so as to enable:
  - The delivery model for Child Sexual Exploitation and Safeguarding Training to be changed from 'face to face' to online with a self declaration on completion
  - Timescales for medical assessments and alternative methods for securing assurance on medical fitness to drive to be permitted with a monthly review.
  - MOT renewal dates to be extended in line with the Department of Transport permitting 6 month extensions to MOTs with renewal dates from 30 March 2020.
  - Extension of expiry dates for interim vehicle checks by three months
  - Suspension of the requirement for licence holders on renewal to display plates with valid dates subject to the issue of an exemption document that confirms renewal requirements have been met.
2. That where appropriate and/or necessary to address the impact and implications of Covid-19, approval is given to the deferment of payment of licensing fees
3. That the above-mentioned approval of temporary variations to the Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy and authority to defer payment of licensing fees shall continue until 31 December 2020 unless otherwise revoked by the Director of Prevention and Protection or Licensing Committee.

## **Reason for Decision**

As the council and other organisations continue to develop their response to the Covid-19 outbreak many non-essential services are ceasing or becoming subject to restrictive access. This includes services that drivers need to fulfil the requirements of the councils Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy.

It is therefore proposed that variations are made to the requirements under the current policy to maximise the potential for taxi drivers to continue working and to reduce the risk to drivers and council officers by reducing the need for face to face contact