

Report – Policy and Resources Committee

Report of Urgent Action Taken: London Councils Grants Scheme 2020/21 Levy

To be presented on Thursday, 5th March 2020

*To the Right Honourable The Lord Mayor, Aldermen and Commons
of the City of London in Common Council.*

SUMMARY

The City of London Corporation is responsible for issuing the annual levies for subscriptions to all the constituent councils of the London Councils Grants Scheme (LCGS). The Court of Common Council can only consider the levies if at least two-thirds of the constituent councils (i.e. 22 out of 33 of the London local authorities) have approved the total expenditure to be incurred under the Grants Scheme.

Having received confirmation from London Councils that the budget had been agreed by over two thirds of the Constituent Councils, the approval of the Court was sought under the urgency procedures to issue the levies before the statutory deadline of 15 February 2020.

We therefore report that, on 7 February 2020, approval was given in accordance with Standing Order No. 19 to issue the levies as set out in the appendix to this report.

MAIN REPORT

1. The budget for the London Councils Grants Scheme and the City of London Corporation's contribution to the Scheme is considered on an annual basis by your Policy and Resources Committee. At its meeting on 23 January 2020 the Committee considered and approved the total amount of expenditure to be incurred in 2020/21 (£6.668m, to come from the constituent councils of the Scheme) as well as the City Corporation's subscription to it (£6,520).
2. The City Corporation is also responsible for issuing levies for subscriptions to all the constituent councils of the Scheme. This element of the Grants Scheme can only be approved by the Court of Common Council. The London Councils' Grants Scheme operates under section 48 of the Local Government Act 1985 which requires at least two-thirds of the constituent councils (i.e. 22 out of 33 of the London local authorities) to have approved the total expenditure to be incurred. Constituent councils have until 1 February to do this and a decision to issue the levies cannot be taken until such time as this has happened. The Court is therefore required to make its decision as levying body between 1 and 15 February each year as, in accordance with regulations, levies have to be issued before 15 February 2020.

3. Following the receipt of confirmation from London Councils that over two-thirds of constituent councils had agreed the expenditure to be incurred for 2020/21, approval to issue the levies before the statutory deadline was sought under urgency procedures pursuant to Standing Order No.19 (as the Court of Common Council was not due to meet ahead of 15 February).
4. Approval was subsequently given to a levy of £6.668m being applied to constituent councils for 2020/21, as set out in the appendix to this report.

APPENDIX – Borough Subscriptions for 2020/21.

All of which we submit to the judgment of this Honourable Court.

DATED this 7th day of February 2020.

SIGNED on behalf of the Committee.

Deputy Catherine McGuinness
Chair, Policy and Resources Committee