

<b>Committee(s)</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Finance Committee	3 <sup>rd</sup> May 2022
<b>Subject: Report of (public) Action taken under DA or Urgency procedures since the last meeting of the Committee</b>	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>Y/N</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Report of: Town Clerk</b>	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> John Cater, Committee Clerk, Finance Committee	

## Summary

This report advises Members of urgent and/or delegated public action taken by the Town Clerk since the last meeting of the Committee, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, in accordance with Standing Orders No. 41(a) and 41(b).

## Recommendation

Members are asked to note the report.

## Main report

### **Subject 1: Emergency Relief - Tonga Appeal (Delegated Authority – 21<sup>st</sup> February)**

#### **Background**

By request of the Chairman of the Finance Committee, officers explored options of making a donation to support Aid efforts in Tonga. From discussions with International Partners the International Federation of Red Cross (IFRC) & Red Crescent coordinated fundraising to support work on the ground. The British Red Cross outlined that they would be happy to accept a donation on behalf of the IFRC, as they coordinated support with major donors in the UK.

The City's International Disaster Fund (IDF) has an annual budget of £125,000 available to support appeals of this kind. To date three donations had been made in 2021/22 totaling £75,000, leaving a remaining budget of £50,000.

Further information on the Appeal is below:

## **Tonga: Volcanic eruption and tsunami**

In the Pacific, the country of Tonga was cut off from the rest of the world after an enormous volcanic eruption and subsequent tsunami hit the country on Saturday 15 January 2022. All communication lines in the country were disrupted for more than three days. Communication lines started to slowly restore with limited connectivity in some parts of the country.

There was significant damage to homes with some houses completely wiped out as well as infrastructure on the west coast of Tongatapu island, not far from the Tongan capital.

Thousands of people do not have access to safe and clean drinking water due to the saltwater flooding from the tsunami and widespread ashfall from this volcanic eruption, one of the biggest on record in the South Pacific.

This disaster also created a double burden for communities amid the social and economic hardships caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. While Tonga has so far escaped the worst of the health impacts of the virus, people affected by the volcanic eruption and tsunami are already facing severe hardships because of the economic impacts of COVID-19, including reduced tourism and other income. The impact of COVID-19 has left many households with little economic security, and this recent disaster has further compounded the hardships, destroying crops and fishing equipment, sweeping away the livelihoods of families on many islands.

### **The Red Cross response**

Tonga Red Cross staff and volunteers, have been assisting people from the moment the tsunami alert was triggered, and are ramping up the delivery of drinking water, temporary shelters and other critical relief supplies across the country's many islands.

There are currently ten Tonga Red Cross staff and 70 Red Cross volunteers mobilised to respond to the disaster. Prepositioned relief supplies for **1200** households are being distributed, including blankets, shelter kits and kitchen sets.

The IFRC emergency appeal aims to provide urgent assistance including safe water, tarpaulins, shelter materials- including tool kits to rebuild, household items- including kitchen cooking sets and hygiene kits and the IFRC is mobilising resources to initially support **3300** more households.

There are grave concerns that the tsunami and ashfall has damaged safe water supplies and food crops for thousands of people across Tonga. Trained Red Cross teams are responding to this concern, providing access to safe water as many drinking water sources have been affected by ashfall from the volcanic eruption and salt water from the tsunami. Coordinating with local authorities, Red Cross is providing hygiene kits and working with communities to reduce the risks of water-borne diseases, such as diarrhea and malaria.

The Red Cross is also supporting communities as they get back on their feet. Tonga Red Cross teams are already distributing supplies including key relief items such as shelter tool kits and tarpaulins to help people with temporary shelter and to start rebuilding their homes.

**RESOLVED** – That the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman, approved a donation of £25,000, to be sourced from the International Disaster Fund, to the British Red Cross, on behalf of the International Federation of Red Cross (IFRC) in support of the Tonga appeal.

## **Subject 2: Emergency Relief – Ukraine Appeal (Delegated Authority – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022)**

### **Background**

In response to the escalating conflict in Ukraine, officers were asked to explore options to support people effected by the crisis. UNICEF has launched a Ukraine Crisis Appeal and will be supporting children impacted by the conflict.

The City's International Disaster Fund (IDF) has an annual budget of £125,000 available to support appeals of this kind. To date four donations have been made in 2021/22 totalling £100,000 leaving a remaining budget of £25,000.

A donation of £25,000 from the International Disaster Fund was recommended to the UNICEF Ukraine Crisis Appeal.

More Information:

Conflict is escalating in Ukraine, putting millions of children and their families in immediate danger.

More than half a million children in Ukraine are already affected as the conflict in the east of the country enters its eighth year. Homes, schools, water supplies and hospitals are damaged. Landmines pose a major threat to children's lives.

UNICEF is especially concerned for the safety and wellbeing of children who have become separated from their families.

UNICEF has been working around the clock to keep children safe since this conflict began eight years ago. We are helping to make sure that child health and protection services are sustained and families have clean water and nutritious food.

**RESOLVED** – That the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, approved a donation of £25,000, to be sourced from the International Disaster Fund to UNICEF, in support of their Ukraine Crisis Appeal.

### **Contact:**

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