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Calls may be recorded for training or monitoring

Date: 30/04/2020

Dear xxx

### **Service Level Agreement Funding – Year 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021**

We are living in unprecedented times. Nobody could have predicted the position we all find ourselves in, both as citizens and as those whose roles are to work with and support our communities.

The Council is acutely aware of the impact that the pandemic is having on all of its partner organisations. I am writing to you at this early stage to explain that over the coming weeks the Council will need to agree its position in relation to the Service Level Agreement funding for this year. We are estimating that our response to the COVID crisis and the measures we have taken to support the local community will impact on the Council's finances by between £3-6m this financial year and this will also have long lasting effect on our budgets, which will not be covered by government funding. We are having to react to this pressure by examining every cost and income to see how we can cut our cloth and still deliver our services at this time of heightened demand.

All Service Level Agreement partner organisations are currently delivering either a different or reduced service, and some are closed. Given the circumstances and the need to comply with government guidelines we understand the obligation you have to ensure the safety of your service users, staff and volunteers. As a gesture of goodwill and to support the ongoing fixed costs of organisations, the Council will be making all grant payments as normal in April to support your cash flow. This guarantees your funding for the first 6-month period of 2020/21. If you have not already done so, please submit your invoice to claim your normal April grant payment.

On the subject of the arrangements for the second half of this year, the Council will need to consider its position regarding grant payments from 1 October 2020 to 31 March 2021. Even during these difficult times, the Council has a duty to ensure that the services it funds are being delivered. Although we do not know how long the pandemic will affect the delivery of organisations' services, our Executive will consider options for the release of any future payments for the second half of this financial year on an individual basis in light of closure



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



periods and which services some organisations are continuing to deliver, complementing other Council priorities.

For organisations that receive a smaller grant in one tranche in April, this may mean clawing back some grant if appropriate. This may mean that a retrospective recalculation of the funding will be necessary which could result in a repayment to the Council of some of the grant paid. Our aim is to continue to hold the six month Service Level Agreement review meetings virtually, if possible, or by telephone, which will assist with these decisions. We will be in touch with you soon to make the necessary arrangements.

These are difficult times and I know that you will be very concerned about your organisation's future. Staff and volunteers work tirelessly to support some of our most vulnerable residents and we continue to be grateful for all their efforts. None of us could have anticipated the serious position we find ourselves in and regrettably we cannot avoid the need for the Council to review its funding arrangements given that some organisations are continuing to deliver services and incur costs, whilst some remain closed or have significantly reduced their services.

As mentioned, we will be in touch to arrange a Service Level Agreement review meeting. However, if you have any questions before then, please do not hesitate to contact Katie or me.

Yours sincerely



Andrew Smith  
Head of Housing Delivery and Communities

