

# HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

## Decision Report

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Executive Lead Member for Children's Services
<b>Date:</b>	20 February 2024
<b>Title:</b>	Approval to Spend for 2024 – 2026 Wraparound Childcare Programme
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Children's Services

**Contact name:** Suzanne Smith, Assistant Director, Children's Services

**Email:** Suzanne.Smith2@hants.gov.uk

### Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval to spend in relation to the Wraparound Childcare Programme.
2. To seek approval for delegated authority to be granted to the Director of Children's Services to approve funding allocations for 2024-2026 in consultation with the Executive Lead Member, once arrangements have been finalised, up to the total value of £5.899m.

### Recommendation(s)

3. It is recommended that the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services gives approval to spend up to £5.889m for the Wraparound Childcare Programme for a total period of two years from 2024 to 2026.
4. It is recommended that the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services delegates approval to the Director of Children's Services to approve the allocation of Wraparound Childcare Programme funds to partner organisations once arrangements have been finalised, up to a maximum of £5.899m, in consultation with the Executive Lead Member.

### Executive Summary

5. In the 2023 Spring Budget, the Government announced that local authorities and schools will be given additional funding for "wraparound care" so that parents of primary school-age children can access childcare in their local area from 8am – 6pm should they wish to.
6. Grant allocations and requirements were published by the Department for Education (DfE) on 30 October 2023. Hampshire County Council has been allocated funding of up to £50,877.88 for financial year 2023-24,

£3,996,585.78 for financial year 2024-25 and a provisional £1,841,348.13 for financial year 2025-26.

7. The County Council is considering a variety of funding opportunities to best support schools to deliver wraparound childcare. These could include; devolved fixed rate funding to schools, a fixed rate grant, a variable rate grant, a training and support package or a combination of these.

### **Contextual information**

8. The national wraparound childcare programme is part of the childcare reforms announced at the 2023 Spring Budget. The Government's ambition is that by 2026, all parents and carers of primary school-aged children who need it will be able to access term time childcare in their local area from 8am-6pm, so that parents can access employment and improve labour market participation.
9. To support this ambition, the Government announced that it will provide up to £289 million of start-up funding over two academic years to support local authorities and providers in England to introduce or expand childcare provision, which parents of primary school-aged children will be able to pay to access.
10. Wraparound childcare is childcare that 'wraps around' the conventional school day, during school term time for school age children. This provision can be offered by schools and private, voluntary and independent (PVI) providers (including childminders and early years settings) and can be run on a school site or at another setting in the area. It should not require parents to pick their children up from school and drop them off at another location.
11. The programme will deliver provision that is child centred, easily accessible, and responds to the needs of the families, including those of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
12. The funding period will run from September 2024 until April 2026, and is for schools and local authorities to introduce or expand childcare provision on either side of the school day and enable them to test flexible ways of providing childcare and gather evidence of what works. The Government expects that most schools will be able to deliver wraparound childcare that is self sustaining from the end of the programme.
13. This programme will only focus on primary school-aged children from reception to year 6, Monday to Friday during term time. The expectation is that all wraparound provision is 8am-6pm, enabling parents to work a full day with travel time.
14. Schools are central to the delivery of the programme as they operate at the heart of the community, understand the needs of local families, and are usually the first port of call for parents for wraparound childcare. Wraparound provision should be set up around the needs of schools, given that it takes

place directly before or after school hours, and should recognise the circumstances of each school. It is expected that most parents will access childcare either through provision on a school site (either provided directly by the school or by an external provider), or through the school signposting them to alternative local provision, for example PVIs and childminders. There are currently 426 Primary and all through schools in Hampshire, an initial assessment indicates there are 231 with full wrap around provision, 184 with partial provision and 11 with none. Of the total available existing provision, the current mix of the wraparound market is:

<b>Breakfast Clubs</b>	<b>After School Clubs</b>
School led 58%	School led 40%
PVI on school site 32%	PVI on school site 42%
Schools where children access a community provision 10%	Schools where children access in the community 18%

15. The principal aims of the programme are to ensure childcare provision is regular, has longer hours and is more dependable for working parents and remains sustainable for schools when funding ends so that from 2026 onwards provision continues, funded by continued parental demand and payments.
16. In order to enter into timely and cost-effective arrangements with providers, the County Council are considering a variety of funding opportunities to best support schools to deliver wraparound childcare. Whilst funding levels are indicative, the following outlines what this could look like:

devolved fixed rate funding to schools or fixed rate grant. This funding method would be used to support the development of new wraparound or extend existing partial provision to 0800-1800, and would take the form of a fixed hourly unit cost to cover contributions for staffing, premises, food, admin etc.

fixed rate grant application for existing provision with waiting lists in areas where supply is insufficient to meet current demand. A fixed annual cost for the creation of each additional place

variable cost grant round or sustainability grant. Funding to support existing provision that is at risk due to sustainability issues or to provide bespoke solutions for schools working collaboratively together.

a training and support package to promote inclusion and develop the wraparound care workforce skills and increase workforce retention.

17. Approval is sought to delegate authority to the Director of Children's Services to approve funding allocations for 2024-2026 once arrangements have been finalised, in consultation with the Executive Lead Member, up to the total

value of £5.988m.

18. The funding is provided by a DfE grant, for the purposes of commissioning and extending wraparound childcare services for working families.
19. The County Council will support schools to ensure that providers have met minimum standards and quality requirements, in accordance with the wraparound quality framework.
20. As required by Hampshire County Council's financial scheme of delegation, approval to spend is sought from the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services for spend to be committed to the total value of £5.889m over the three year period 2024-2026.

### **Finance**

21. The DfE grant allocations and requirements were published on 30 October 2023. Hampshire County Council has been allocated funding of up to £50,877.88 for financial year 2023-24, £3,996,585.78 for financial year 2024-25 and a provisional £1,841,348.13 for financial year 2025-26.
22. Hampshire County Council's anticipated spend is therefore up to £5.889m over the life of the funding period. After which the aim for the programme is for the substantial majority of new/expanded provision to be self-sustaining with provision continuing, funded by continued parental demand and payments.

### **Performance**

23. All funding granted to third party organisations (including schools, private, voluntary, independent childcare providers) will be supported by an agreement setting out the conditions of the funding and the reporting requirements.
24. All organisations receiving funding will be required to report to the County Council on how they have spent the funding provided, in line with the DfE grant criteria.

### **Consultation and Equalities**

25. The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment parental consultation undertaken in 2019 outlined a need for out of school childcare.
26. An Equality Impact Assessment has been submitted and is included as a separate attachment.

## **Climate Change Impact Assessment**

27. The carbon mitigation tool and climate change adaptation tool were not applicable because the decision relates to a funding programme and is strategic/administrative in nature.

## **Other Key Issues**

28. The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires the County Council as public authority 'to have regard to economic, social and environmental well-being in connection with public services contracts. The Social Value is either defined in the Service Specification for a contract, for example asking the provider to use apprentices or employ people from disadvantaged groups. Alternatively, during the tender process, the provider is asked how it adds Social Value to a service.
29. The Modern Slavery Act 2015 requires the County Council to incorporate human rights due diligence within procurement practices and supply chains and establishing shared awareness and common goals with providers in tackling modern slavery.
30. The County Council, as contracting authority, has an obligation to shape the tendering processes to allow small to medium businesses fair access to winning contracts.

## **Conclusions**

31. It is recommended that the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services gives approval to spend up to £5.889m to deliver the wraparound childcare programme for a total period of three years from 2024 to 2026.
32. It is recommended that the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services delegates approval to the Director of Children's Services to approve the allocation of Wraparound Childcare Programme funds to partner organisations once arrangements have been finalised, up to a maximum of £5.889, in consultation with the Executive Lead Member.

**REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:**

**Links to the Strategic Plan**

<b>Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:</b>	Yes
<b>People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:</b>	Yes
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:</b>	No
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:</b>	Yes

**Other Significant Links**

<b>Links to previous Member decisions:</b>	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
<b>Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives</b>	
<a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/wraparound-childcare-guidance-for-local-authorities">Wraparound childcare: guidance for local authorities - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>	October 2023

**Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents**

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

## **EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:**

### **Equality Duty**

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

The Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) is included as a separate attachment.