

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Executive Decision Record

Decision Maker:	Leader of the County Council/Executive Member for Policy and Resources
Date:	19 May 2021
Title:	COVID Local Support Grants
Report From:	Steve Crocker, Director of Children's Services

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1. The decisions:

- 1.1 That the Leader approves the grant of £561,030 funding to schools, colleges and early years settings for them to purchase and provide one £15 food voucher per child for the one-week May half term school holiday, in accordance with the grant criteria set out in paragraph 10 of the report. Vouchers will be available for all children eligible for free school meals and additionally all children with a social worker, all children open to early help, 16-18 year olds previously eligible for FSM, all 2-4 year olds accessing childcare and eligible for Early Years Pupil Premium, as described in paragraph 16 of the report. An estimated 37,402 children will benefit from vouchers through this initiative.
- 1.2 That the Leader approves the purchase of one £15 food or fuel voucher for each care leaver not forming part of the extended FSM cohort identified in paragraph 16, to the total value of up to £5,000. An estimated 320 care leavers will benefit from vouchers through this initiative.
- 1.3 That the Leader approves a grant of up to £3,000 to be made to the Hampshire Young Carers Alliance such that vouchers and/or gifts and/or food can be provided to young carers not in receipt of vouchers through the free school meal voucher offer. Such grant will be provided on terms to be agreed by the Director of Children's Services and in accordance with the grant criteria set out in paragraph 10 of the report.
- 1.4 That the Leader delegates authority to the Director of Children's Services to approve community grant awards to organisations, including those of over £5,000, delivering services that meet the criteria of the grant (as set out in paragraph 10 of the report) for targeted financial support for those in need in consultation with the Leader up to the total value of £112,000.

1.5 That the Leader delegates approval to the Director of Children's Services to approve the reallocation of any COVID Winter Grants remaining or underspent funds to organisations delivering services that meet the criteria of the grant set out in paragraph 10 of the report, in consultation with the Leader.

2. Reasons for the decisions:

2.1 On 17 April 2021, the Government announced an extension to the COVID grant support for vulnerable families. A further £40 million of support has been made available to local authorities to support those most in need across England with the cost of food, energy and water bills and other associated costs.

2.2 This funding builds on the previous Covid Winter Grant administered by the Department for Work and Pension, and Hampshire County Council's funding under this grant totals £682,047, to be spent by 20 June 2021.

2.3 The conditions of the COVID Local Support Grant are the same as those that applied to the Covid Winter grant, i.e.:

- at least 80% of the total funding will be ring-fenced to support families with children, with up to 20% of the total funding allocated for other types of households, including individuals.
- at least 80% of the total funding will be ring-fenced to provide support with food, energy and water bills (including sewerage), with up to 20% made available for other essential items.

2.4 Allocation of funding is therefore proposed to replicate some of the initiatives previously funded by the Covid Winter Grant. This approach will allow rapid distribution of funding to those can make best use of it, supported by evidence of successful outcomes between December 2020 and April 2021.

3. Other options considered and rejected:

3.1 Hampshire County Council could have delegated all funding to schools and/or district councils to administer locally. This option was rejected as these organisations are already administering other schemes and by working across the County with a range of partners, it was felt that an offer complementary to other schemes could be delivered, with the aim of reaching more vulnerable households.

4. Conflicts of interest:

4.1 Conflicts of interest declared by the decision-maker: none

4.2 Conflicts of interest declared by other Executive Members consulted: none

5. Dispensation granted by the Conduct Advisory Panel:

6. Reason(s) for the matter being dealt with if urgent:

Due to the need for funding to be distributed to education settings prior to the May half term break, and the grant conditions and end dates set by the Department for Work and Pensions, an urgent decision is required

7. Statement from the decision maker:

Approved by:

Date:

Councillor Keith Mans
Leader/Executive Member for Policy and Resources

19 May 2021