

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Executive Decision Record

Decision Maker:	Executive Lead Member for Children's Services
Date:	18 October 2021
Title:	COVID Household Support Fund – Vouchers for October 2021 Half Term
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

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The decision:

1. That the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services approves the grant of £591,810 funding to schools, colleges and early years settings for them to purchase and provide one £15 voucher per child per week for the one week October half term holiday. Vouchers will be provided for all children eligible for free school meals plus all children with a social worker, all children open to early help, all 2-4 year olds accessing Early Years Pupil Premium, as described in paragraph 13 of the report.

Reasons for the decision:

2. On 6 October 2021, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) shared draft guidance and funding allocations for the Covid Household Support Fund with local authorities.
3. The expectation is that the grant should primarily be used to support households in the most need with food, energy and water bills. It can also be used to support households with essential costs related to those items and with wider essential costs. In exceptional cases of genuine emergency, it can additionally be used to support housing costs where existing housing support schemes do not meet this exceptional need.
4. Hampshire County Council (the Council) have been awarded £7,124,127.25 to spend by 31 March 2022.
5. The Hampshire October half term commences on 25 October 2021, and therefore an urgent decision is required to enable the granting of funding to schools, colleges, and early years education providers such that food vouchers can be provided to eligible families

Other options considered and rejected:

- 6. Hampshire County Council could have chosen not to issue any funding to eligible families for the October half term. This option was rejected as it was considered that provision of vouchers would meet a significant proportion of vulnerable families, and the expectation of the Department for Work and pensions was that funding would be allocated from 6 October 2021.

Conflicts of interest:

- 1.1 Conflicts of interest declared by the decision-maker: none
- 1.2 Conflicts of interest declared by other Executive Members consulted: none

Dispensation granted by the Conduct Advisory Panel: N/A

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

- 7. Due to the need for funding to be distributed to education settings prior to the school holiday, and the grant conditions and end dates set by the Department for Work and Pensions, an urgent decision is required.

Statement from the decision maker:

Approved by: ----- Cllr R Chadd	Date: 18 October 2021
Executive Lead Member for Children's Services	