

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Executive Decision Record

Decision Maker:	Executive Lead Member for Children's Services
Date:	1 April 2022
Title:	Department for Work and Pensions Household Support Fund – Vouchers for Easter 2022 School Holiday
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

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1. The decision:

1.1 It is recommended that the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services approves the grant of £733,560 funding to schools, colleges and early years settings for them to purchase and provide one £15 voucher per child per week for the two-week Easter holiday. Funding will be provided to all settings who are more than two miles from a connect4communities Community Pantry and vouchers will be provided for all children at those settings 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 12 of the report.

2. Reasons for the decision:

2.1 In the Spring Statement delivered on the 23 March 2022, the Chancellor announced that the funding for the Household Support Fund will continue to help households with the cost of essentials such as food, clothing and utilities. The DWP will be distributing a further £421m to Local Authorities in England, meaning the total funding has doubled from the original announcement last year.

2.2 Draft guidance and confirmation of the award amount has not yet been shared with local authorities. However, the Council can assume that the grant conditions remain unchanged due to the reference to extension of the previous grant. Should the funding allocation remain the same as the previous awards, the Council could expect to be awarded £7,124,127.25, to be spent by 30 September 2022.

2.3 The expectation is that the grant should primarily be used to support households in the most need with food, energy and water bills. As per

previous grant rounds, it can also be used to support households with essential costs related to those items and with wider essential costs and 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. Local authorities will be expected to continue to engage with District Councils and can choose to work with third party organisations including schools, food banks and care organisations.

3. Other options considered and rejected

3.1 Hampshire County Council could have decided not to issue vouchers during the Easter holidays This option was rejected as Distributing funding rapidly for the Easter holidays in this way will provide essential financial support whilst allowing further time for the Council and partners to consider the most effective approach to utilising the remaining funding.

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: N/A

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

6.1 On this occasion it was not possible to publish a notice for the Decision Day, or the report relating to this decision in accordance with Part 3, Chapter 4 of the County Council's Constitution. This is due to the short timescale between confirmation of the available funding by government and a decision being required to allow for timely implementation.

7. Statement from the decision maker: N/A

Approved by: ----- Councillor Roz Chadd Executive Lead Member for Children's Services	Date: 1 April 2022
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