



**Oversight and Governance**

Chief Executive's Department

Plymouth City Council

Ballard House

Plymouth PL1 3BJ

T 01752 305155

[www.plymouth.gov.uk/democracy](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/democracy)

Published 16/10/24

## Delegated Decisions

### Delegated Executive/Officer Decisions

Delegated Executive and Officer decisions are published and are available at the following link - <https://tinyurl.com/ms6umor>

Cabinet decisions are published at the following link - <http://tinyurl.com/yddrql6>

Please note – urgent decisions and non-key Council Officer decisions cannot be called in. Copies of the decisions together with background reports are available for viewing as follows:

- on the Council's Intranet Site at <https://modgov/mgDelegatedDecisions.aspx>
- on the Council's website at <https://tinyurl.com/jhnax4e>

The decisions detailed below may be implemented immediately.

## **Delegated Decisions**

### **I. Councillor Chris Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities):**

Ia. Urgent Decision - HCD02 24/25 - Household Support Fund Round 6

**(Pages 1 - 14)**

# URGENT EXECUTIVE DECISION

made by a **Cabinet Member**



## REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY BY AN INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER

Executive Decision Reference Number – HCDC02 24/25

Decision			
1	<b>Title of decision:</b> Household Support Fund Round 6		
2	<b>Decision maker:</b> Councillor Chris Penberthy, Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities		
3	<b>Report author and contact details:</b> Zoe Sydenham, Community Empowerment Operational Lead, 01752 307849		
4	<b>Decision to be taken:</b> To approve the distribution of the latest round of Household Support Fund monies through the proposed Framework for October 2024-March 2025		
5	<p><b>Reasons for decision:</b> An extension of the Household Support Fund (HSF) has been approved by DWP on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2024, for six months 'at current levels'. There is therefore an urgent need to agree on a framework for the next 6 months of HSF. The particular focus will be on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families in crisis, with children in need and/or with a cash shortfall or multiple debt. (This includes funding for food vouchers for children entitled to free school meals in the October Half term Holidays which is in 4 weeks' time)</li> <li>Prevent households from becoming homeless and support those affected by homelessness and/or in crisis</li> <li>Grants for energy, with a particular focus on supporting older people with fuel payments over the winter.</li> </ul> <p>There will be the same level of funding that Plymouth City Council has received for the last five rounds which will be £2,294,796.82 for six months.</p>		
6	<p><b>Alternative options considered and rejected:</b></p> <p><b>Option 1: Do Nothing</b> This is not an option as the Council has been awarded grant funding to support vulnerable households. To not use or accept this funding would be to the detriment of Plymouth households at a time of an ongoing cost of living crisis.</p> <p><b>Option 2: Provide cash payments or post office vouchers directly to claimants</b> This option would require a significant amount of staff capacity which wouldn't be in place in time to deliver the funding. Additionally, the procurement of pre-payment cards would incur service charges.</p>		
7	<b>Financial implications:</b> The funding for this contract is provided by the Department for Work and Pensions.		
8	<b>Is the decision a Key Decision?</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
			<b>Per the Constitution, a key decision is one which:</b>

	(please contact <b>Democratic Support</b> for further advice)	X	in the case of <b>capital</b> projects and contract awards, results in a new commitment to spend and/or save in excess of <b>£3million</b> in total
		X	in the case of <b>revenue</b> projects when the decision involves entering into new commitments and/or making new savings in excess of <b>£1million</b>
		X	is <b>significant</b> in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising <b>two or more</b> wards in the area of the local authority.
	<b>If yes, date of publication of the notice in the <a href="#">Forward Plan of Key Decisions</a></b>	N/A	
9	<b>Please specify how this decision is linked to the Council's corporate plan/Plymouth Plan and/or the policy framework and/or the revenue/capital budget:</b>	This proposal links to the Child Poverty agenda for the city and also A Bright Future 2021 – 26 in supporting children to stay safe and well, through the provision of adequate nutrition.	
10	<b>Please specify any direct environmental implications of the decision (carbon impact)</b>	None.	

### Urgent decisions

11	<b>Is the decision urgent and to be implemented immediately in the interests of the Council or the public?</b>	Yes	X	(If yes, please contact Democratic Support ( <a href="mailto:democraticsupport@plymouth.gov.uk">democraticsupport@plymouth.gov.uk</a> ) for advice)
		No		<b>(If no, go to section 13a)</b>


**12a Reason for Urgency:** The Monitoring Officer has confirmed that this can be considered to be an Urgent Decision, due to the extremely late announcement from the government of the continuation of HSF beyond September 2024. This decision was therefore unexpected and leaves very little time to set up the mechanism to fund and distribute food vouchers for parents during the October half term – the schools will have to be informed by 16<sup>th</sup> October; and to administer the Welcome/Warm Spaces grant, which will need to be announced on 15<sup>th</sup> October. As central government funding was not announced until the end of September, it has not been practicable to include the decision in the Forward Plan.

12b	<b>Scrutiny Chair Signature:</b>	Approved via email	<b>Date</b>	11 October 2024
	<b>Scrutiny Committee name:</b>	Scrutiny Management Board		
	<b>Print Name:</b>	Councillor John Stephens		

### Consultation

13a		Yes	X	
-----	--	-----	---	--

	<b>Are any other Cabinet members' portfolios affected by the decision?</b>	<b>No</b>		<b>(If no go to section 14)</b>
<b>13b</b>	<b>Which other Cabinet member's portfolio is affected by the decision?</b>	Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture and Communications) and Councillor Mary Aspinall (Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care)		
<b>13c</b>	<b>Date Cabinet member consulted</b>	01 October 2024		
<b>14</b>	<b>Has any Cabinet member declared a conflict of interest in relation to the decision?</b>	<b>Yes</b>		If yes, please discuss with the Monitoring Officer
		<b>No</b>	X	
<b>15</b>	<b>Which Corporate Management Team member has been consulted?</b>	<b>Name</b>	Ruth Harrell	
		<b>Job title</b>	Office of the Director of Public Health	
		<b>Date consulted</b>	01 October 2024	
<b>Sign-off</b>				
<b>16</b>	<b>Sign off codes from the relevant departments consulted:</b>	<b>Democratic Support (mandatory)</b>	DS58 24/25	
		<b>Finance (mandatory)</b>	DJN.24.25.094	
		<b>Legal (mandatory)</b>	LS/00001312/1/AC/9/10/24	
		<b>Human Resources (if applicable)</b>	N/A	
		<b>Corporate property (if applicable)</b>	N/A	
		<b>Procurement (if applicable)</b>	N/A	
<b>Appendices</b>				
<b>17</b>	<b>Ref.</b>	<b>Title of appendix</b>		
	A	Briefing report for publication		
	B	Equalities Impact Assessment		
<b>Confidential/exempt information</b>				
<b>18a</b>	<b>Do you need to include any confidential/exempt information?</b>	<b>Yes</b>		If yes, prepare a second, confidential ("Part II") briefing report and indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box in <b>18b</b> below.  (Keep as much information as possible in the briefing report that will be in the public domain)
		<b>No</b>	X	
		<b>Exemption Paragraph Number</b>		

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>18b</b>	<b>Confidential/exempt briefing report title:</b>							
<b>Background Papers</b>								
<b>19</b>	<p>Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below.</p> <p>Background papers are <u>unpublished</u> works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based. If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</p>							
Title of background paper(s)		Exemption Paragraph Number						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Cabinet Member Signature</b>								
<b>20</b>	<p>I agree the decision and confirm that it is not contrary to the Council's policy and budget framework, Corporate Plan or Budget. In taking this decision I have given due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not. For further details please see the EIA attached.</p>							
<b>Signature</b>			<b>Date of decision</b>			14/10/2024		
<b>Print Name</b>	Councillor Chris Penberthy							

# HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND

Round 6 October 2024 to March 2025

Briefing note



## BACKGROUND

On the 20 September, the City Council received the final grant determination and guidance for the next iteration of the HSF for the period 1 October to 31 March 2025

It is confirmed that Plymouth City Council will receive the same amount as for the last 5 rounds which will be £2,294,796.82 for six months to be spent or committed between October 1<sup>st</sup> and March 31<sup>st</sup> 2025.

The priorities for spend reflect existing city priorities:

- Families in crisis, with children in need and/or with a cash shortfall or multiple debt
- Prevent households from becoming homeless and support those affected by homelessness and/or in crisis
- Grants for energy, with a particular focus on supporting older people with fuel payments over the winter.

The following details the amount of funding will be allocated to each area of spend, not including administration costs.

## PROPOSED DELIVERY PLAN

- (i) **Food vouchers for school holidays for children entitled to free school meals and other struggling families as identified by schools.**

During the previous round of HSF 4 that there was an increasing number of children identified by the schools as needing this support. It has increased from 12,516 children to 13,000 children during the year 2023/24. This will have a significant impact on the amount of funding needed for these vouchers which leaves less money for other households in need, for example, people with high energy needs, people with physical disabilities or mental ill-health, carers, care leavers, pensioners, people at risk of homelessness and people needing crisis food support.

During the HSF5 delivery plan for 1 April to 30 September 2024, there were 9 weeks of school holidays, and it was therefore agreed to lower the amount on food vouchers (from £13 to £10 per voucher) to enable the remaining funds to be distributed elsewhere. Due to reduced number of school holidays (5 weeks) during the Winter period, we are now proposing to increase this once again to £13 reflect the need for additional and hot food for children over the winter period.

- (ii) **Energy**  
Grants for energy will be available through Citizens Advice Plymouth and Plymouth Energy Community (PEC). Distributing the bulk of energy support through these organisations will bring significant added values as the beneficiaries will have access to their on-going core offers of support, information and guidance.

- (iii) **Eligible Households, with an additional focus on Pensioners**

An online application process via Citizens Advice Plymouth where eligible applicants will receive food and fuel vouchers, as well as help to purchase essential household goods. Citizens Advice will also employ an Advice Worker that will support the Council in using the Low-Income Family Tracker tool (LIFT) to identify households that live in the private

rented sector and have a cash shortfall, who may also be at risk of homelessness or who are in multiple debt, with a particular focus on people of pension age who are in cash shortfall but fall outside the eligibility for winter fuel payment. HSF can be targeted at these households alongside income maximisation and debt advice.

**(iv) Eligible Households, Voluntary Sector targeted groups and Emergency Food**

To target the following households as has been done in all previous rounds:

- Adult Carers, Veterans and households where there is a physical disability or mental ill-health via Improving Lives Plymouth;
- Families using the PAUSE and PDAS services to support their resettlement following trauma and domestic abuse.
- PATH for households in crisis or at risk of homelessness in the private rented sector, particularly single people
- Emergency Food for people in absolute crisis via the Soup Run, Plymouth Food banks, Provide Devon, Eldertree

**(v) Community Connections**

To prevent households from becoming homeless, or who live in temporary accommodation with no access to cooking facilities, or to aid resettling into permanent accommodation or otherwise in need as identified by Community Connections. This work can also be supported by the LIFT dashboard.

**(vi) Care Leavers, Young Carers and Children's Social Care families in need.**

Children's Social Care will target families in crisis or with children in need, as well as care leavers and young carers.


**(vii) Warm & Welcoming Spaces**

Grants to support the VCSE to deliver welcoming and warm spaces within the community. Applications will open on 15 October with a simple online application outlining clear criteria. Grants will be awarded to constituted, not for profit organisations, with experience in reaching vulnerable groups, distributing aid, and managing grant funds. As there are limited funds available, not all applications may be funded. Decisions will be based on the imperative to support a wide range of people who will be in need and provide a geographic and community spread. Therefore, some applications may not be funded, not because of quality, but because of the need to support a wide range of people and the Council may approach organisations to make an application should a gap in provision be identified after the submission deadline.



# EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT – HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND

## SECTION ONE: INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROPOSAL

<b>Author(s):</b> The person completing the EIA template.	Zoe Sydenham	<b>Department and service:</b>	Public Health	<b>Date of assessment:</b>	1.10.24
<b>Lead Officer:</b> Head of Service, Service Director, or Strategic Director.	Ruth Harrell	<b>Signature:</b>		<b>Approval date:</b>	10/10/2024
<b>Overview:</b>	<p>On the 20 September, the City Council has received the final grant determination and guidance/framework for the next iteration of the HSF for the period 1 October to 31 March 2025.</p> <p>It is confirmed that Plymouth City Council will receive the same amount as for the last five rounds which will be £2,294,796.82 for six months to be spent or committed between October 1<sup>st</sup> and March 31<sup>st</sup> 2025.</p> <p>The priorities for spend reflect existing city priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Families in crisis, with children in need and/or with a cash shortfall or multiple debt</li> <li>• Prevent households from becoming homeless and support those affected by homelessness and/or in crisis</li> <li>• Grants for energy, with a particular focus on supporting older people with fuel payments over the winter.</li> </ul> <p>A detailed Delivery Plan will be submitted to the DWP by the 1<sup>st</sup> November at the latest.</p>				
<b>Decision required:</b>	To approve the distribution of the latest round of Household Support Fund monies through the proposed Framework for October 2024-March 2025				

**SECTION TWO: EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING TOOL**

<p><b>Potential external impacts:</b> Does the proposal have the potential to negatively impact service users, communities or residents with protected characteristics?</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>		<p><b>No</b></p>	<p>x</p>
<p><b>Potential internal impacts:</b> Does the proposal have the potential to negatively impact Plymouth City Council employees?</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>		<p><b>No</b></p>	<p>x</p>
<p>Is a full Equality Impact Assessment required? (if you have answered yes to either of the questions above then a full impact assessment is required and you must complete section three)</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>		<p><b>No</b></p>	<p>x</p>
<p>If you do not agree that a full equality impact assessment is required, please set out your justification for why not.</p>	<p>The proposal sets out support for cost of living targeted at service users, communities and residents who are most at need.</p>			

**SECTION THREE: FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

Protected characteristics (Equality Act, 2010)	Evidence and information (e.g. data and consultation feedback)	Adverse impact	Mitigation activities	Timescale and responsible department
Age	<p>Plymouth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16.4 per cent of people in Plymouth are children aged under 15.</li> <li>• 65.1 per cent are adults aged 15 to 64.</li> <li>• 18.5 percent are adults aged 65 and over.</li> <li>• 2.4 percent of the resident population are 85 and over.</li> </ul> <p>South West</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15.9 per cent of people are aged 0 to 14, 61.8 per cent are aged 15 to 64.</li> <li>• 22.3 per cent are aged 65 and over.</li> </ul> <p>England</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 17.4 per cent of people are aged 0 to 14.</li> <li>• 64.2 per cent of people are aged 15 to 64.</li> <li>• 18.4 per cent of people are aged 65 and over.</li> </ul> <p>(2021 Census)</p>	No adverse impact.		

<p><b>Care experienced individuals</b> (Note that as per the Independent Review of Children’s Social Care recommendations, Plymouth City Council is treating care experience as though it is a protected characteristic).</p>	<p>It is estimated that 26 per cent of the homeless population in the UK have care experience. In Plymouth there are currently 7 per cent of care leavers open to the service (6 per cent aged 18-20 and 12 per cent of those aged 21+) who are in unsuitable accommodation.</p> <p>The Care Review reported that 41 per cent of 19-21 year old care leavers are not in education, employment or training (NEET) compared to 12 per cent of all other young people in the same age group.</p> <p>In Plymouth there are currently 50 per cent of care leavers aged 18-21 Not in Education Training or Employment (54 per cent of all those care leavers aged 18-24 who are open to the service).</p> <p>There are currently 195 care leavers aged 18 to 20 (statutory service) and 58 aged 21 to 24 (extended offer). There are more care leavers aged 21 to 24 who could return for support from services if they wished to.</p>	<p>No adverse impact.</p>		
<p><b>Disability</b></p>	<p>9.4 per cent of residents in Plymouth have their activities limited ‘a lot’ because of a physical or mental health problem.</p> <p>12.2 per cent of residents in Plymouth have their activities limited ‘a little’ because of a physical or mental health problem (2021 Census)</p>	<p>No adverse impact.</p>		

<p><b>Gender reassignment</b></p>	<p>0.5 per cent of residents in Plymouth have a gender identity that is different from their sex registered at birth. 0.1 per cent of residents identify as a trans man, 0.1 per cent identify as non-binary and, 0.1 per cent identify as a trans women (2021 Census).</p>	<p>No adverse impact.</p>		
<p><b>Marriage and civil partnership</b></p>	<p>40.1 per cent of residents have never married and never registered a civil partnership. 10 per cent are divorced, 6 percent are widowed, with 2.5 per cent are separated but still married.</p> <p>0.49 per cent of residents are, or were, married or in a civil partnerships of the same sex. 0.06 per cent of residents are in a civil partnerships with the opposite sex (2021 Census).</p>	<p>No adverse impact.</p>		
<p><b>Pregnancy and maternity</b></p>	<p>The total fertility rate (TFR) for England was 1.62 children per woman in 2021. The total fertility rate (TFR) for Plymouth in 2021 was 1.5.</p>	<p>No adverse impact.</p>		
<p><b>Race</b></p>	<p>In 2021, 94.9 per cent of Plymouth’s population identified their ethnicity as White, 2.3 per cent as Asian and 1.1 per cent as Black (2021 Census)</p> <p>People with a mixed ethnic background comprised 1.8 per cent of the population. 1 per cent of the population use a different term to describe their ethnicity (2021 Census)</p> <p>92.7 per cent of residents speak English as their main language. 2021 Census data shows that after English, Polish, Romanian, Chinese, Portuguese, and Arabic are the most spoken languages in Plymouth (2021 Census).</p>	<p>No adverse impact.</p>		

<p><b>Religion or belief</b></p>	<p>48.9 per cent of the Plymouth population stated they had no religion. 42.5 per cent of the population identified as Christian (2021 Census). Those who identified as Muslim account for 1.3 per cent of Plymouth’s population while Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish or Sikh combined totalled less than 1 per cent (2021 Census).</p>	<p>No adverse impact.</p>		
<p><b>Sex</b></p>	<p>51 per cent of our population are women and 49 per cent are men (2021 Census).</p>	<p>No adverse impact.</p>		
<p><b>Sexual orientation</b></p>	<p>88.95 per cent of residents aged 16 years and over in Plymouth describe their sexual orientation as straight or heterosexual. 2.06 per cent describe their sexuality as bisexual, 1.97 per cent of people describe their sexual orientation as gay or lesbian. 0.42 per cent of residents describe their sexual orientation using a different term (2021 Census).</p>	<p>No adverse impact.</p>		

**SECTION FOUR: HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS**

Human Rights	Implications	Mitigation Actions	Timescale and responsible department
	No adverse impact.		

**SECTION FIVE: OUR EQUALITY OBJECTIVES**

Equality objectives	Implications	Mitigation Actions	Timescale and responsible department
<p><b>Work together in partnership to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ promote equality, diversity and inclusion</li> <li>▪ facilitate community cohesion</li> <li>▪ support people with different backgrounds and lived experiences to get on well together</li> </ul>	No adverse impact.		
<p><b>Give specific consideration to care experienced people to improve their life outcomes, including access to training, employment and housing.</b></p>	No adverse impact.		
<p><b>Build and develop a diverse workforce that represents the community and citizens it serves.</b></p>	No adverse impact.		
<p><b>Support diverse communities to feel confident to report crime and anti-social behaviour, including hate crime and hate incidents, and work with partners to ensure Plymouth is a city where everybody feels safe and welcome.</b></p>	No adverse impact.		

This page is intentionally left blank