



**Oversight and Governance**

Chief Executive's Department

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## Delegated Decisions

### Delegated Executive/Officer Decisions

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

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

Notice of call-in for non-urgent decisions must be given to the Democratic Support Unit by 4.30 pm on Thursday 21 October 2021. 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 non-urgent decision detailed below may be implemented on Friday 22 October 2021 if it is not called-in and the urgent decision detailed below may be implemented immediately.

## **Delegated Decisions**

### **I. Councillor Dave Downie, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills, Children and Young People:**

- I.1. Urgent Decision: Household Support Grant: Food Vouchers **(Pages 1 - 18)**
- I.2. Tender for Weekend and Holiday Support for Disabled Children **(Pages 19 - 32)**

# EXECUTIVE DECISION

made by a Cabinet Member



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


Executive Decision Reference Number – ESCYP04 21/22

Decision	
1	<b>Title of decision:</b> Household Support Grant: Food Vouchers
2	<b>Decision maker (Cabinet member name and portfolio title):</b> Councillor Dave Downie (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Children & Young People)
3	<b>Report author and contact details:</b> Emma Crowther, Strategic Commissioning Manager, 01752 304009
4	<b>Decision to be taken:</b> To approve the award of a contract to Wonde Limited to deliver eVoucher codes (food vouchers for supermarkets) at an estimated total cost of £1million, to cover the October 2021 half term, Christmas 2021 school holidays, February 2022 half term and Easter 2022 school holidays.
5	<p><b>Reasons for decision:</b></p> <p>Funding from central government for the Household Support Grant was confirmed on the 6<sup>th</sup> October, to support vulnerable households during the winter months including with food and fuel costs. This grant includes a requirement to spend at least 50% of the total funding on families to support households with children.</p> <p>The most effective way of distributing funds to vulnerable families to support with food costs is via e-vouchers and this method has been tried and tested over previous school holidays.</p> <p>Through a procurement process Plymouth City Council has identified a provider of food vouchers Wonde Limited, but this requires an urgent contract award to enable the provider to be able to mobilise in time for the delivery of vouchers for the October half term holiday.</p>
6	<p><b>Alternative options considered and rejected:</b></p> <p><b>Option 1: Do Nothing</b></p> <p>This is not an option as the Council has been awarded grant funding to support vulnerable households, which specifically includes a requirement to support households with families. To not use or accept this funding would be to the detriment of Plymouth families.</p> <p><b>Option 2: Use the previous food voucher provider again</b></p> <p>For the delivery of previous food voucher schemes the Council has used an alternative provider due to urgency and this provider is already set up on Council systems. However during the summer the Council carried out a procurement exercise in anticipation of possible grant funding for winter 2021/22 and identified Wonde Limited as the preferred provider due to the service they can offer including the range of supermarkets and their value for money.</p>

	<p><b>Option 3: Deliver food parcels</b></p> <p>Food parcels - PCC (CATERed) does not have the capacity or capability to deliver a cost effective solution due to the practicalities that would be required to produce and distribute food parcels.</p> <p><b>Option 4: Provide cash payments</b></p> <p>A cash payment for food was made to those entitled during October 2020 half term. However, as it was cash into banks, if the account it went into was already overdrawn the family did not have access to the money. Additionally, the procurement of pre-payment cards would incur service charges.</p>																				
7	<p><b>Financial implications and Risk:</b></p> <p>The funding for this contract is provided by the Department for Work and Pensions. The total grant for the Council is £2,294,796.82, to cover the winter of 2021/22.</p> <p>£1m is estimated to be needed to provide food vouchers for families for the October half term, Christmas holidays, February half term and Easter holidays – a total of 6 weeks.</p>																				
8	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Is the decision a Key Decision? (please contact <a href="#">Democratic Support</a> for further advice)</th> <th>Yes</th> <th>No</th> <th>Per the Constitution, a key decision is one which:</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>x</td> <td>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</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>x</td> <td>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></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td>x</td> <td>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.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>If yes, date of publication of the notice in the <a href="#">Forward Plan of Key Decisions</a></td> <td colspan="3">N/A</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Is the decision a Key Decision? (please contact <a href="#">Democratic Support</a> for further advice)	Yes	No	Per the Constitution, a key decision is one which:			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.	If yes, date of publication of the notice in the <a href="#">Forward Plan of Key Decisions</a>	N/A		
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If yes, date of publication of the notice in the <a href="#">Forward Plan of Key Decisions</a>	N/A																				
9	<p><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></p> <p>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 food.</p>																				
10	<p><b>Please specify any direct environmental implications of the decision (carbon impact)</b></p> <p>None</p>																				
<b>Urgent decisions</b>																					
11	<p><b>Is the decision urgent and to be implemented immediately in the interests of the Council or the public?</b></p>	Yes	√	(If yes, please contact Democratic Support ( <a href="mailto:democraticsupport@plymouth.gov.uk">democraticsupport@plymouth.gov.uk</a> ) for advice)																	
		No		(If no, go to section 13a)																	
12a	<b>Reason for urgency:</b>																				

There is an urgent need to mobilise a company able to deliver food vouchers to Plymouth families for the October half term, which starts on 25 <sup>th</sup> October. This will require the company to make arrangements for the delivery of vouchers and for the Council to set up the organisation on its system and ensure that comms are in place with schools and families.			
12b	<b>Scrutiny Chair Signature:</b>	Approved by email by Councillor Jemima Laing	<b>Date</b> 13/10/2021
	<b>Scrutiny Committee name:</b>	Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
	<b>Print Name:</b>	Jemima Laing	
<b>Consultation</b>			
13a	<b>Are any other Cabinet members' portfolios affected by the decision?</b>	<b>Yes</b>	
		<b>No</b>	x (If no go to section 14)
13b	<b>Which other Cabinet member's portfolio is affected by the decision?</b>	n/a	
13c	<b>Date Cabinet member consulted</b>		
14	<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
15	<b>Which Corporate Management Team member has been consulted?</b>	<b>Name</b>	Alison Botham
		<b>Job title</b>	Director of Children's Service
		<b>Date consulted</b>	12 <sup>th</sup> October 2021
<b>Sign-off</b>			
16	<b>Sign off codes from the relevant departments consulted:</b>	<b>Democratic Support (mandatory)</b>	DS56 21/22
		<b>Finance (mandatory)</b>	ba.21.22.131
		<b>Legal (mandatory)</b>	LS/37433/AC/12/10/21
		<b>Human Resources (if applicable)</b>	N/A
		<b>Corporate property (if applicable)</b>	N/A
		<b>Procurement (if applicable)</b>	HG/PS/603/ED/1021

Appendices									
17	<b>Ref.</b>	<b>Title of appendix</b>							
	A	Food Vouchers briefing report							
	B	Equalities Impact Assessment							
Confidential/exempt information									
18a	<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 I 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>						
			Exemption Paragraph Number						
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18b	<b>Confidential/exempt briefing report title:</b>  Evaluation Summary Food Vouchers				X				
Background Papers									
19	Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below.  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 I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.								
<b>Title of background paper(s)</b>			Exemption Paragraph Number						
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Cabinet Member Signature									
20	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.								

<b>Signature</b>		<b>Date of decision</b>	13/10/2021
<b>Print Name</b>	Councillor Dave Downie		

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# EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT – COMMUNITY

## COVID Winter Grant Scheme

<b>STAGE I: What is being assessed and by whom?</b>	
What is being assessed - including a brief description of aims and objectives?	<p>When considering this EIA it is important to have due regard to the public sector equalities duties imposed upon the Council by section 149 Equalities Act 2010.</p> <p>In Plymouth there are 9,900 (18.6%) children living in poverty, which is one in five. Data shows that 7,308 children under 16 are living in income deprived households with 79% living in workless households, indicating that they are more likely to be experiencing child poverty. For example, eight out of 10 children living in the Barne Barton neighbourhood are effected by income deprivation.</p> <p>The Household Support Grant has been agreed for the winter of 2021/22, to provide vulnerable people including households with families with support with food and fuel costs during the coldest months of the year.</p> <p>The Household Support Grant enables local authorities to provide extra support to the Free School Meals cohort, but also those families who have been identified by schools and early years settings as vulnerable to poverty.</p>
Responsible Officer	Ming Zhang, Service Director, Children, Young People and Families <a href="mailto:Ming.Zhang@plymouth.gov.uk">Ming.Zhang@plymouth.gov.uk</a>
Department and Service	Children's Services, Strategic Cooperative Commissioning
Date of Assessment	12 <sup>th</sup> October 2021
Author	Emma Crowther, Strategic Commissioning Manager

<b>STAGE 2: Evidence and Impact</b>				
<b>Protected Characteristics (Equality Act)</b>	<b>Evidence and information (e.g. data and feedback)</b>	<b>Any adverse impact?</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timescale and who is responsible?</b>
Age	There 60,200 CYP aged 0-19 in the city (22.9% 2015). Of the 16 SW authorities, we have the fifth highest percentage of children and young people (under 18). CYP under 18 account for 19.8 per cent of our population, within this 88.8 per cent are under 16. In Plymouth there are 9,900 (18.6%) children living in poverty, which is one in five. Data shows that 7,308 children under 16 are living in income deprived households with 79% living in workless households, indicating that they are more likely to be experiencing child poverty.	No. Our strategic intentions confirm the ambition to truly give every child “A Bright Future” by commissioning and providing place based Integrated Children, Young People and Families services covering wellbeing, physical and mental health, social care and education. Children, young people and families will be supported to stay safe, healthy, achieve and aspire. The Household Support Grant will support our ambitions, during these challenging times, which includes support to other vulnerable groups	Provide assistance and support for our most vulnerable children, young people and families in our society, across the full range of ages.	October 2021 – May 2022 Ming Zhang
Disability	There are 3,142 children with disability. Plymouth schools report that of every 1,000 children 17.5 have a learning difficulty. A total of 31,164 people (from 28.5 per cent of	No adverse disability related impact has been identified.		October 2021 – May 2022 Ming Zhang

<b>STAGE 2: Evidence and Impact</b>				
<b>Protected Characteristics (Equality Act)</b>	<b>Evidence and information (e.g. data and feedback)</b>	<b>Any adverse impact?</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timescale and who is responsible?</b>
	households) declared themselves as having a long-term health problem or disability (national figure 25.7 per cent of households), compared with the total number of people with disabilities in UK (11,600,000). 10% of our population have their day-to-day activities limited a lot by a long-term health problem or disability. 1,297 adults registered with a GP in Plymouth have some form of learning disability (2013/14). There are 27166 adults with a disability in work. There are 23,407 carers aged between 18 and 64 in Plymouth known to our services. There are 17,937 state pension age people with disability. 2011.			
Faith, Religion or Belief	There is no specific CYP data for this category. However, data shows 32.9% of the Plymouth population stated they had no religion. Those with a Hindi,	This projects & its work packages will not discriminate against faith, religion or belief as those affected will have social equality proactively		Ongoing. Policy and Intelligence Team  Commissioning team

<b>STAGE 2: Evidence and Impact</b>				
<b>Protected Characteristics (Equality Act)</b>	<b>Evidence and information (e.g. data and feedback)</b>	<b>Any adverse impact?</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timescale and who is responsible?</b>
	Buddhist, Jewish or Sikh religion combined totalled less than 1%. 58.1% of those who responded declared themselves Christian. 0.8% declared that they were of Islam, 0.3% Buddhist; 0.2% Hindu; 0.1% Jewish; 0.1% Sikh. 0.5% of the population had a current religion that was not Christian, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, or Sikh such as Paganism or Spiritualism.	enhanced. The in-scope services and functions affected will work with vulnerable children, and families, irrespective of faith, religion or belief.		
Gender - including marriage, pregnancy and maternity	Analysis from the Office for National Statistics shows that one in five women (compared to 4% of men) have experienced some type of sexual assault since the age of 16. Survey results have shown that 59% of girls aged 13-21 have faced some form of sexual harassment at school or college in the past year and almost a third (29%) of 16-18 year old girls have experienced unwanted sexual touching at school.	The project and its work packages will not discriminate against gender, as those affected will have social equality proactively enhanced. The services affected by the requirements of the project and its work packages will work with all vulnerable CYP and families, irrespective of gender.		Ongoing. Policy and Intelligence Team/Public Health England Child Health Profiles

<b>STAGE 2: Evidence and Impact</b>				
<b>Protected Characteristics (Equality Act)</b>	<b>Evidence and information (e.g. data and feedback)</b>	<b>Any adverse impact?</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timescale and who is responsible?</b>
Gender Reassignment	There is no specific CYP data for this category, but the average age for presentation for reassignment of male-to-females is 40-49. For female-to-male the age group is 20-29, it is anticipated the number of CYP affected in the city is small.	No gender reassignment related impact has been identified. The services affected by the project and its work packages will work with all vulnerable CYP and families, regardless of gender reassignment.		Ongoing. Policy and Intelligence Team/Public Health England Child Health Profiles
Race	White British boys are less likely to do well than most Black and Minority Ethnic Communities (BAME) pupils. Pupils from Indian and Chinese communities outperform White British pupils whilst children from Black Afro Caribbean, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi communities do less well. Roma and Irish Traveller children do least well. Some areas of the city are more diverse than others: the area around the university, the city centre, Stonehouse and the East End are among the most diverse.	The in-scope services and functions affected will work with all vulnerable CYP and families, irrespective of race.	PCC will ensure service accessibility via on-going commissioning management.  Appropriate measures need to be put in place to ensure that language barriers do not adversely affect person centred assessments and support.	Ongoing. Policy and Intelligence Team/Public Health England Child Health Profiles

<b>STAGE 2: Evidence and Impact</b>				
<b>Protected Characteristics (Equality Act)</b>	<b>Evidence and information (e.g. data and feedback)</b>	<b>Any adverse impact?</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Timescale and who is responsible?</b>
Sexual Orientation -including Civil Partnership	There is no precise local data on numbers of Lesbian, Gay and Bi-sexual (LGB) CYP in Plymouth.	No adverse impact has been identified in services affected by the project or its work packages.		October 2021 – May 2022 Ming Zhang

<b>STAGE 3: Are there any implications for the following? If so, please record 'Actions' to be taken</b>		
<b>Local Priorities</b>	<b>Implications</b>	<b>Timescale and who is responsible?</b>
<b>Reduce the inequality gap, particularly in health between communities.</b>	The actions identified above will positively impact on vulnerable CYP and families. This project aims to minimise the impact on outcomes of COVID and the winter season, by delivering food support to those that most need it.  Vulnerable CYP and families will experience improved support, not only during the winter months, but beyond.  Commissioning strategies, action plans and workforce development will continue to focus on innovation and integration between all the services that support vulnerable CYP & their families.	October 2021 – May 2022 Ming Zhang
<b>Good relations between different communities (community cohesion).</b>	No adverse impact on community cohesion has been identified, as statutory requirements will enable vulnerable CYP and families to access good quality support and services whatever their circumstances.	October 2021 – May 2022 Ming Zhang

<b>STAGE 3: Are there any implications for the following? If so, please record 'Actions' to be taken</b>		
<b>Local Priorities</b>	<b>Implications</b>	<b>Timescale and who is responsible?</b>
<b>Human Rights</b>	It is important that all CYP and families are treated fairly, their views are taken into account and that their human rights have been respected. No adverse impact on human rights has been identified.	October 2021 – May 2022 Ming Zhang

<b>STAGE 4: Publication</b>			
Director, Assistant Director/Head of Service approving EIA.	Ming Zhang	Date	12 <sup>th</sup> October 2021

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# HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT GRANT – FOOD VOUCHERS

## Contract Award Report

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to describe the requirement for the Local Authority (LA) to distribute Household Support Grant funding to vulnerable families, and to recommend the award of a contract to support this aim.

The recommendation is to award a contract to Wonde Limited to deliver circa eVoucher codes during the October, December, February and Easter school holidays, up to a value of £1m.

This support is needed for children at risk of going hungry during school holidays. Wonde have been selected by a mini-tender procurement process but due to the timing of the government confirmation of funding, now need to mobilise at speed to be able to provide vouchers for the October half term which starts on the 25<sup>th</sup> October. The details of the procurement process and outcome are contained in the confidential paper Evaluation Summary Food Vouchers.

### BACKGROUND

Since autumn 2020 the Government has awarded funding to local authorities to support families with children, other vulnerable households and individuals with the costs of food and fuel, due to the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic. This has included schemes like the Covid Winter Support Grant and now the Household Support Grant.

Plymouth City Council (PCC) has had some flexibility around how the wider grant funding is administered and this has included food vouchers and grants to Third Party Organisations (TPOs) and to vulnerable groups via small grants schemes.

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE

The guidance from the DWP states that the Council must ensure that:

- i) at least 50% of the grant is allocated to support households that include:
    - a person who will be under the age of 19 as at 31st March 2022, or
    - a person aged 19 or over in respect of whom a child-related benefit is paid or free school meals are provided during the Grant Period, and
  - ii) up to 50% of the grant is used to assist other households, and
- b) the Authority is to ensure that the grant is primarily allocated to support with the costs of food, energy (for heating, lighting and cooking), water (for household purposes, including sewerage) and other essential living needs in accordance with the Scheme guidance.
- c) in exceptional circumstances of genuine emergency, the Authority may allocate grant funds to support with housing costs as set out in the Scheme guidance.

**FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS**

The Household Support Grant is entirely funded by DWP – the value of the grant for Plymouth is £2,294,796.82. The food vouchers comprise part of the funding (approx. £1m) and a plan is being developed which will set out the Council's plans for the total grant amount. This also has to be reported to the DWP for transparency.

**RECOMMENDATION AND DECISION**

In order to support the health and well-being of the most disadvantaged children and continued engagement in their education, this report recommends that a delegated decision is taken to award a contract to Wonde Limited for the provision and administration of eVoucher codes at a value of £15 per week, redeemable at supermarkets by eligible families.

The following relates to exempt or confidential matters (Para(s) 3 of Part 1, Schedule 12A of the Local Govt Act 1972). Any breach of confidentiality could prejudice the Council/person/body concerned & might amount to a breach of the councillors /employees codes of conduct.

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# EXECUTIVE DECISION

made by a Cabinet Member




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

Executive Decision Reference Number – ESCYP05 21/22

Decision				
1	<b>Title of decision:</b> Tender for Weekend and Holiday Support for Disabled Children			
2	<b>Decision maker (Cabinet member name and portfolio title):</b> Councillor Dave Downie, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Children and Young People			
3	<b>Report author and contact details:</b> Penny Whitell, Interim Head of Service for SEND			
4	<b>Decision to be taken:</b> To agree to go out to the market in a competitive tender process to renew the weekend and holiday support services for disabled children. To delegate authority to the Service Director for Education, Participation and Skills to award the contract following the tender to the successful bidder.			
5	<b>Reasons for decision:</b> The total value of the service over the period of the contract is likely to be more than £500,000.			
6	<p><b>Alternative options considered and rejected:</b></p> <p><b>Option 1: Do Nothing</b> The contract will expire on 31 March 2022. This would leave families without a service that is highly valued and depended upon for the ongoing care needs of complex children. It could also leave Plymouth City Council open to challenge in respect to the delivery of its statutory duty.</p> <p>This option is not recommended.</p> <p><b>Option 2 :</b> Extend the contract and continue to purchase in the existing contract. We are required by procurement legislation to go out to a competitive tender process at this time.</p> <p>This option is not recommended</p>			
7	<p><b>Financial implications and risks:</b></p> <p>The cost of the contract will be £222,000 for block packages of care across the lifetime of the contract with an additional spend of approximately £393,000 spot purchased against the framework contract.</p> <p>This is already budgeted for as the service is being delivered currently but now needs to go to tender. The spend on both block and spot purchase support will continue to be closely monitored to ensure that services meet families' needs and offer value for money for the public purse.</p>			
8	<b>Is the decision a Key Decision?</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Per the Constitution, a key decision</b>

	(please contact <b>Democratic Support</b> for further advice)			<b>is one which:</b>
			√	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
			√	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>£1 million</b>
			√	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.
	If yes, date of publication of the notice in the <b>Forward Plan of Key Decisions</b>	n/a		
<b>9</b>	<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>	<b>A Bright Future 2021 – 26</b> The services included in this tender will contribute towards the following priorities within the Bright Futures paper. Stay Healthy and Happy – the activities support the improvement of mental and physical health of disabled children Be safe -Families receive their support in the places and from the people that best suit their needs, for as long as they need to embed resilience Aspire and achieve – young people attending the activities develop their skills for employment, resilience and independence.		
<b>10</b>	<b>Please specify any direct environmental implications of the decision (carbon impact)</b>	None		
<b>Urgent decisions</b>				
<b>11</b>	<b>Is the decision urgent and to be implemented immediately in the interests of the Council or the public?</b>	<b>Yes</b>		(If yes, please contact Democratic Support ( <a href="mailto:democraticsupport@plymouth.gov.uk">democraticsupport@plymouth.gov.uk</a> ) for advice)
		<b>No</b>	√	<b>(If no, go to section 13a)</b>
<b>12a</b>	<b>Reason for urgency:</b>			
<b>12b</b>	<b>Scrutiny Chair Signature:</b>		<b>Date</b>	
	<b>Scrutiny Committee name:</b>			

Print Name:			
<b>Consultation</b>			
I3a	Are any other Cabinet members' portfolios affected by the decision?	Yes	
		No	√ (If no go to section I4)
I3b	Which other Cabinet member's portfolio is affected by the decision?	n/a	
I3c	Date Cabinet member consulted		
I4	Has any Cabinet member declared a conflict of interest in relation to the decision?	Yes	If yes, please discuss with the Monitoring Officer
		No	
I5	Which Corporate Management Team member has been consulted?	Name	Alison Botham
		Job title	Director of Childrens Services
		Date consulted	12/10/2021
<b>Sign-off</b>			
I6	Sign off codes from the relevant departments consulted:	Democratic Support (mandatory)	DS48 21/22
		Finance (mandatory)	djn.21.22.119
		Legal (mandatory)	MS/24.09.21
		Human Resources (if applicable)	n/a
		Corporate property (if applicable)	n/a
		Procurement (if applicable)	n/a
<b>Appendices</b>			
I7	Ref.	Title of appendix	
	A	Business Case Weekend and Holiday Support for Disabled Children	
<b>Confidential/exempt information</b>			
I8a	Do you need to include any confidential/exempt information?	Yes	If yes, prepare a second, confidential ('Part II') briefing report and indicate why it is not for

		<b>No</b>	√	publication by virtue of Part I 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>Exemption Paragraph Number</b>						
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>18b</b>	<b>Confidential/exempt briefing report title:</b>							
<b>Background Papers</b>								
<b>19</b>	Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below.  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 I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.							
<b>Title of background paper(s)</b>		<b>Exemption Paragraph Number</b>						
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Cabinet Member Signature</b>								
<b>20</b>	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.							
<b>Signature</b>				<b>Date of decision</b>		13/10/2021		
<b>Print Name</b>	Councillor Dave Downie							



# **BUSINESS CASE**



# **HOLIDAY AND WEEKEND SPECIALIST SHORT BREAK SERVICE**

**Confidential**

Author: Janet Greaves Stocker

Date: 12/10/2021

Service Director: Alison Botham

Approval: Approved by email

Date: 12/10/2021

## I. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Evidence shows that short breaks make a positive impact on disabled children and their families' lives and provide support for families to be resilient and able to continue to care for their disabled child. Short breaks services are part of an early intervention strategy rather than a response to crisis and are an integral part of a commissioning approach which ensures there is a good level of provision to meet the needs of the families.
- 1.2 Children and young people who have significant additional needs or a disability may miss out on positive interaction with peers and the wider community as their social skills are often underdeveloped. This may lead to isolation from family members and the community, with the child or young person becoming disengaged with learning, which can in turn significantly reduce their life opportunities and prevent them from achieving their full potential. The spectrum of needs within the cohort makes it important that the opportunities offered are varied with options for different interests, ages, ability and communication and independence skills.
- 1.3 The Short Breaks Statement highlights the differing type of services defined under the Short Break Local Offer in Plymouth. As a part of this offer Plymouth City Council currently commission a specialist weekend and holiday short break service which is targeted to meet the needs of children and young people who have complex or severe physical, learning disabilities or other complex additional needs. The current contract has been in place since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 and expires in March 2022.
- 1.4 The specialist service:-
  - Is accessed as part of a package of care that supports parents to continue to manage the needs of the children and young people at home
  - Enables these children and young people to develop the personal and social skills that come from day to day interaction with their peers within community settings.
  - Contributes towards the development of the confidence of the children and young people through providing opportunities for them to participate in inclusive play, leisure and social activities.
- 1.5 This paper explores the options for the future of this service, and recommends Plymouth City Council tender for a replacement service for 3 years. The annual cost of the Block contract element is approximately £90,000 (total contract value £270,000) with a framework contract for the spot purchasing arrangements with typical annual spend of £60,000.

## 2. NATIONAL AND LOCAL POLICY DRIVERS.

- 2.1 In April 2011 the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011 came into force. Under this Duty, local authorities are legally bound to provide a range of short breaks services including:
  - day-time care in the homes of disabled children or elsewhere
  - overnight care in the homes of disabled children or elsewhere
  - educational or leisure activities for disabled children outside their homes
  - services available to assist carers in the evenings, at weekends and during the school holidays.
- 2.2 Plymouth has consulted with parents about the type of short breaks they would want for their child and how these can be accessed. Parents have told us that they value the

activities and support which enable their child to be included in mainstream activities but that they also want to be able to access specialist activities that they felt were essential for those children and young people with more complex needs.

- 2.3 Evidence gathered nationally shows that within mainstream facilities and venues, poor disability awareness and related skills on the part of staff was frequently cited as a barrier to participation for disabled young people in positive activities (EDCM 2008; Keil *et al* 2001; Kelly 2005; Ludvigsen *et al* 2005; Petrie and Poland 1998; Petrie *et al* 2007; Turner 2003). In addition, there is evidence nationally of disabled children and young people being excluded from mainstream positive activities, or their level of participation constrained, due to misinformed staff (Keil *et al* 2001; Petrie *et al* 2007).
- 2.4 Many disabled children can access their short break either through inclusion support into mainstream activities or from targeted groups that offer additional support and limited numbers of children attending. However, for a small number of children and young people a specialist service is the only way that they are able to safely access a group activity.

### **3. NEEDS AND MARKET ANALYSIS**

- 3.1 In addition to the social and emotional benefits of positive activities for disabled children and young people, short break services enable parents to continue caring for their disabled child at home and reduce family stress. Short breaks are an integral part of an early intervention strategy. Having a good level and range of provision that consistently meets the needs of the families requiring support prevents crises arising later on.
- 3.2 Research demonstrates that timeliness, reliability and regularity of short breaks are a key factor to families feeling able to continue caring for their disabled child. Families often need less support if they have easier and speedier access to more and varied opportunities than if they have to wait for more specialist services. However, some children's needs are complex and they require a specialist service in order to provide them with opportunities and to keep them safe.
- 3.3 The market position statement for short breaks provides the detail of the short break market place of which this business case is addressing the specialist day provision section of the market.
- 3.3 The specialist short break market for holiday day activities and weekend support in Plymouth has been developed in recent years to provide families with choice and control over the way that they and their children access short break services. The proposal outlined below will continue to provide families with choice and control over their break from caring.
- 3.9 Some families choose to access their short breaks through direct payments and make their own arrangements for the care of their child using a trusted adult while they have a break from caring. It is likely that families who access their short breaks through Direct Payments will continue to access their short breaks in this way. The number of families making this choice has remained relatively stable and is likely to remain at or around 100 families.

### **4. CURRENT OFFER**

The current provision is delivered via a block contract and framework contract.

There are around 60 children in total attending one or more of the Holiday and Weekend day activity provision:

- 19 children aged between 8 to 17 currently attend Adventure Breaks
- 32 children aged between 8 to 17 currently attend the Beckly Centre
- 11 children aged between 5 and 7 currently attend Radford Rascals

### **Adventure Breaks - Outdoor Based Activity Days (8 Places block purchased)**

The current offer is a block contract for 8 places on a Saturday weekly throughout the year with children accessing a place once a fortnight. The children are taken out and about to participate in activities in the environment in and around Plymouth e.g. Beachcombing, canoeing, Gorge walking, Moors Walking etc.

The offer also includes two days a week in the holidays with children accessing one day a week as part of their package.

### **Beckley Centre - Centre Based Activity Days( All places spot purchased)**

The current offer is a block contract for 8 places on a Saturday weekly throughout the year with children accessing a place once a fortnight. The children access a centre where they participate in activities that are quieter and meet their needs in a more nurturing environment. These include sensory activities, soft play, arts and crafts, cooking etc. The offer also includes two days a week in the holidays with children accessing one day a week as part of their package.

### **Radford Rascals - After School Activity (8 places block purchased)**

The offer here is for young children who might struggle to manage a whole day away from their family in an activity centre. The children are taken to the centre by school transport and then taken home by the provider. This allows the families to have an evening break. The children are then offered a day a fortnight in the holidays.

The services are meeting the needs of the children. There have been some issues in the last 18 months due to additional restrictions on numbers attending the service due to the Covid pandemic.

### **Brokerage**

The current offer provides brokerage for Direct Access activities and the Inclusion Service Funding provided by Plymouth City Council to support children with additional needs to access holiday activities. This forms part of the Local Authorities Early Help Offer. The broker acts as first point of contact for parents, carers and professionals seeking short break advice for services to meet the needs of their child. The broker will follow the criteria set out by Plymouth City Council to determine whether Inclusion Funding can be provided to support the setting/provider with appropriate staffing levels to support the child and advise Plymouth City Council accordingly. The broker will assess whether the needs of the child are such that universal and targeted services cannot meet those needs and refer to the SEND Short Breaks team for a specialist assessment of needs where needed.

This service greatly reduces the impact on Plymouth City Council staffing levels as this was previously provided in-house from the SEND Service.

## **5. PROJECT SCOPE**

- 5.1 The need for the specialist weekend and holiday support service is likely to continue at its current level as this has been relatively stable over the last 5 -10 years with between 50 – 60 children and young people accessing the service. These are young people with the most complex needs who are not able to access the direct access activities or to be included in mainstream activities. The main outcome of the package of care is to enable children to remain in the family home and to prevent children coming into care and potentially being placed out of area in a high cost residential school setting.

- 5.2 The service was completely redesigned 10 years ago within the redesign of Short Break services as a result of the Aiming High grant and continues to meet the needs of the children and young people that access it as well as providing a much needed short break for families.
- 5.3 The holiday and weekend specialist support service delivers activities that are valued by parents and their disabled children as they offer opportunities for their children to participate in activities that they may not otherwise have the opportunity to do. These include hill walking, climbing, canoeing ice skating going and other activities that the young people enjoy. The young people plan many of the activities themselves which helps them to engage with choice and consequences which are an integral part of growing up.
- 5.4 In order to maximise the Short Breaks Budget some of the places are block purchased to enable the provider to manage the numbers and ensure that the activities offered are cost effective. The remainder are spot purchased against the framework contract so that only those places used are funded by the budget.
- 5.5 There is an agreed cancellation policy for funding of places to minimise the loss to the Council if a family choose not to take a place that is offered without providing adequate notice to the provider. This allows them to offer the available place to another family.

## **6. OPTIONS APPRAISAL FOR FUTURE OF THE SERVICE**

### **6.1 Option 1 Do nothing**

The contract will expire on 31 March 2022. This would leave families without a service that is highly valued and depended upon for the ongoing care needs of complex children. It could also leave Plymouth City Council open to challenge in respect to the delivery of its statutory duty.

This option is not recommended.

### **6.2 Option 2 Extend the contract for the service**

This service was tendered five years ago, so is now due for tender under procurement legislation, with no clear case for extension.

There is potentially an opportunity to extend the contract to provide the time to review the need for this offer, or redesign the service.

This option is not recommended as families continue to tell us that they value the service and that it meets their needs. This is demonstrated by the feedback received by the current provider and by our own SEND teams.

### **6.3 Option 3 Tender the service for a 3 year contract**

#### **Benefits**

This will provide continuity of offer for children and young people with complex needs, supporting their families to continue to manage their needs.

The service is working well and is valued by families.

This is in line with procurement legislation requirements which require us to competitively procure this service, which was last tendered 5 years ago.

This option is recommended.

## 7. COSTS

The current cost of the service is described in the table below and is approximately £90,000 and it is anticipated that the costs will remain reasonably stable as the service is purchased on a block booking basis and families receive a standard package.

Service	Current Value 2021/22 Budget	Proposed Value Per annum
Outdoor Activity Days	£46,168.80	£50,000
After School Sessions	£26,481.60	£30,000
Brokerage	£10,000	£10,000
Spot Purchasing arrangements	£131,000	£131,000
Total costs	£213,650.4	£221,000

The framework contract spot purchasing costs are purchased on an individual basis for each child as required.

The total cost for the services for the period of the contract is anticipated to be £270,000 for the block contracts with an additional spot purchased spend of up to £393,000 across the life of the contract.

## 8. ANTICIPATED BENEFITS

The service provides vital support for families of disabled children with complex needs. The specialist short break service will benefit families and enable them to have a family life supporting their own mental health and physical health needs as well as continuing to care for their disabled child.

There is evidence nationally that participating in positive activities impacts positively on disabled children's outcomes in terms of physical and psychological wellbeing.

Using inclusive services and mainstream community facilities can be a negative experience for disabled children and young people because of the negative attitudes and behaviours of peer group users, staff and members of the public.

Taking part in positive activities can be an important source of enjoyment for disabled children and young people. It would appear that the social aspects of doing a positive activity can be as, or even more, important as the activity itself.

The opportunity to experience success has been identified as a further potential outcome of participating in positive activities. More specifically, positive activities can allow disabled children and young people to learn and develop skills, both those specific to an activity (for example, a particular sport) but also more generic life skills.

Positive activities can also provide a means by which disabled children can make a positive contribution to their local communities. There is evidence that inclusive positive activities help to promote disabled children and young people's sense of belonging to their local community.

The retender of the service will provide an opportunity to ensure that value for money is achieved through the competitive process and will provide an opportunity to develop the service and bring in innovation and new ideas.

In addition the service will develop a staff skill set that can work with the children in the cohort to provide a high quality service that can offer a choice of opportunities for children and young people that will respond to their likes and dislikes as well as meet their needs appropriately.

## 9. RISKS

This service has been delivered for a number of years and families depend on the short breaks provided by the service for their disabled children. If it was decided not to commission a specialist short break service this would have a significant impact on families' ability to continue to care for their disabled child and may result in a number of children with complex needs no longer being cared for in their family home but having to go into residential care.

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
There is a risk that the market is not able to deliver the high quality service that is needed to support the children with the most complex needs	Medium	Low	Investment in training over the last few years along with market development has mitigated this risk.  The framework contract will encourage new providers into the market place which will mitigate the risk further
More families may choose to find short break support in other ways.	Medium	Low	This is not something that is anticipated but should be identified as a potential risk. The learning from pathfinder authorities and from parent consultation is that families within this cohort are already stretched in maintaining their caring role and do not want to add the management of the short break service on top of that.
TUPE of staff may take longer than anticipated and may prove problematic	High	Medium	Learning from previous tender exercises will inform the way that the TUPE is dealt with. The main impact will be to the targeted part of the service as there is one member of staff who may be eligible for TUPE transfer although it is not known whether the % of her role will tip it into TUPE arrangements.
Timing slips into the new year before tender is up and running	High	Medium	It is vital that the timescale is maintained so that the new service will be up and running allowing sufficient time for any TUPE transfers before the end of the current contract.



**10 HIGH LEVEL MILESTONE PLAN**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Date</b>
Sign off on business case and Tender documentation	30 <sup>th</sup> September 2021
Single stage ITT issued	4 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2021
Deadline for submission	18 <sup>th</sup> November 2021
ITT Evaluation	18 <sup>th</sup> November – 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2021
Standstill	1 <sup>st</sup> – 15 <sup>th</sup> Dec2021
Contract Award	4 <sup>th</sup> January 2022
New service implementation	1 <sup>st</sup> April 2022

**7.. RECOMMENDATION AND IMPLEMENTATION**

It is recommended that Option 3 is taken where the service is tendered in a competitive procurement process to be undertaken between October 2021 and January 2022. The process will be a single stage tender exercise which will be in line with the procurement legislation and contract standing orders. The tender will be divided into 4 lots which are described above and will be

Lot 1 Block Contract Group Based Weekend and Holiday support activities

Lot 2 Block Contract Group based after school activities

Lot 3 Brokerage Contract

Lot 4 Framework Contracts to deliver group based Weekend and Holiday Support

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