

EXECUTIVE DECISION

made by a Cabinet Member




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

Executive Decision Reference Number – HCD07 20/21

| Decision | |
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| 1 | Title of decision: Free School Meals (FSM) |
| 2 | Decision maker: Councillor Chris Penberthy, Cabinet Member for Housing and Co-operative Development |
| 3 | Report author and contact details: Judith Harwood (Judith.harwood@plymouth.gov.uk) |
| 4 | Decision to be taken: To approve the decision to make a payment of £11 available to families whose child is eligible for FSM. |
| 5 | <p>Reasons for decision:</p> <p>To support families over the school holiday period. In Plymouth there is a continuing increase of eligible families for free school meals and since March numbers have risen in the city by over 14%. Universal credit claimants (28,500 in September 2020) also continue to increase meaning that the trend upwards of FSM will continue.</p> <p>We recognise that families experiencing poverty and exceptional circumstances over a period of longer than 7 months do need additional financial support at this time, in order to ensure that they can feed their children over the half term break.</p> |
| 6 | <p>Alternative options considered and rejected:</p> <p>In previous school holidays arrangements were made to ensure that children not attending school, who are eligible for FSM, had vouchers through the national voucher scheme, could pick up take away meals from their school, or collect weekly food parcels. The government recognised that those eligible for FSMs would need continued support during the long summer holiday period and the national voucher scheme was put in place.</p> <p>Along with other Local Authorities and school leaders we have lobbied the government to ensure that arrangements for the October school break were put in place, and in view of the timing of previous announcements had anticipated a late decision in relation to this half term. This has not been forthcoming.</p> |
| 7 | <p>Financial implications:</p> <p>If all families with children eligible for FSM did make a claim, there is a potential full cost impact of over £90k. However it is more likely that around a third of those most in need will apply and this will bring a cost of £30k.</p> |

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| | In the event that these funding options are not possible, it is the case that this spend will be additional COVID related expenditure for the Council. Our current understanding of how existing national grants are being deployed means that we do anticipate this may bring an additional financial burden that will need to be managed within the COVID Council related reserve. | | | |
| 8 | Is the decision a Key Decision? (please contact Democratic Support for further advice) | Yes | No | Per the Constitution, a key decision is one which: |
| | | | x | in the case of capital projects and contract awards, results in a new commitment to spend and/or save in excess of £3million in total |
| | | | x | in the case of revenue projects when the decision involves entering into new commitments and/or making new savings in excess of £1 million |
| | | X | is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the local authority. | |
| | If yes, date of publication of the notice in the Forward Plan of Key Decisions | | | |
| 9 | 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: | With other factors related to COVID likely to cause further disruption to children's education, we will continue to support schools to manage periods of self isolation among pupils and staff. We believe we should support access to a holiday meal for those families that do need additional financial assistance over the school holiday. | | |
| 10 | Please specify any direct environmental implications of the decision (carbon impact) | None | | |
| Urgent decisions | | | | |
| 11 | Is the decision urgent and to be implemented immediately in the interests of the Council or the public? | Yes | x | (If yes, please contact Democratic Support (democraticsupport@plymouth.gov.uk) for advice) |
| | | No | | (If no, go to section 13a) |
| 12a | Reason for urgency: | In recognition of the hardship experienced by many families, and the impact for their children this required an urgent decision, and actions to be taken as half term began. | | |

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| 12b | Scrutiny Chair Signature: | Councillor Mary Aspinall Approved by email. | Date | 28/10/20 |
| | Scrutiny Committee name: | Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee | | |
| | Print Name: | Councillor Mary Aspinall | | |
| Consultation | | | | |
| 13a | Are any other Cabinet members' portfolios affected by the decision? | Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| | | No | <input type="checkbox"/> | (If no go to section 14) |
| 13b | Which other Cabinet member's portfolio is affected by the decision? | Councillor Jon Taylor (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Transformation) | | |
| 13c | Date Cabinet member consulted | 27/10/20 | | |
| 14 | Has any Cabinet member declared a conflict of interest in relation to the decision? | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | If yes, please discuss with the Monitoring Officer |
| | | No | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| 15 | Which Corporate Management Team member has been consulted? | Name | Alison Botham | |
| | | Job title | Director for Childrens Services | |
| | | Date consulted | 27 October 2020 | |
| Sign-off | | | | |
| 16 | Sign off codes from the relevant departments consulted: | Democratic Support (mandatory) | DS55 20/21 | |
| | | Finance (mandatory) | Djn.20.21.122 | |
| | | Legal (mandatory) | lt/62225/271020 | |
| | | Human Resources (if applicable) | | |
| | | Corporate property (if applicable) | | |
| | | Procurement (if applicable) | | |
| Appendices | | | | |
| 17 | Ref. | Title of appendix | | |
| | A | Free School Meals (FSM) Briefing report | | |
| | B | Equality Impact Assessment | | |
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| Confidential/exempt information | | | | | | | | | |
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| 18a | 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 publication by virtue of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box in 18b below. (Keep as much information as possible in the briefing report that will be in the public domain) | | | | | |
| | | No | | | | | | | |
| | | | Exemption Paragraph Number | | | | | | |
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 18b | Confidential/exempt briefing report title: | | | | | | | | |
| 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. | | | | | | | | |
| Title of background paper(s) | | | Exemption Paragraph Number | | | | | | |
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
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| 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. | | | | | | | | |
| Signature |  | | | Date of decision | | | 29/10/2020 | | |
| Print Name | Councillor Chris Penberthy, Cabinet Member for Housing and Co-operative Development | | | | | | | | |