

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	Title of decision: Household Support Grant: Food Vouchers
2	Decision maker (Cabinet member name and portfolio title): Councillor Dave Downie (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Children & Young People)
3	Report author and contact details: Emma Crowther, Strategic Commissioning Manager, 01752 304009
4	Decision to be taken: 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>Reasons for decision:</p> <p>Funding from central government for the Household Support Grant was confirmed on the 6th 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>Alternative options considered and rejected:</p> <p>Option 1: Do Nothing</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>Option 2: Use the previous food voucher provider again</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>Option 3: Deliver food parcels</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>Option 4: Provide cash payments</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>Financial implications and Risk:</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	<p>Is the decision a Key Decision? (please contact Democratic Support for further advice)</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Per the Constitution, a key decision is one which:</p>
			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 £1million
			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.
	<p>If yes, date of publication of the notice in the Forward Plan of Key Decisions</p>	N/A		
9	<p>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:</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>Please specify any direct environmental implications of the decision (carbon impact)</p>	None		
Urgent decisions				
11	<p>Is the decision urgent and to be implemented immediately in the interests of the Council or the public?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>√</p>	<p>(If yes, please contact Democratic Support (democraticsupport@plymouth.gov.uk) for advice)</p>
		<p>No</p>		<p>(If no, go to section 13a)</p>
12a	<p>Reason for urgency:</p>			

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 th 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	Scrutiny Chair Signature:	Approved by email by Councillor Jemima Laing	Date 13/10/2021
	Scrutiny Committee name:	Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
	Print Name:	Jemima Laing	
Consultation			
13a	Are any other Cabinet members' portfolios affected by the decision?	Yes	
		No	x (If no go to section 14)
13b	Which other Cabinet member's portfolio is affected by the decision?	n/a	
13c	Date Cabinet member consulted		
14	Has any Cabinet member declared a conflict of interest in relation to the decision?	Yes	If yes, please discuss with the Monitoring Officer
		No	x
15	Which Corporate Management Team member has been consulted?	Name	Alison Botham
		Job title	Director of Children's Service
		Date consulted	12 th October 2021
Sign-off			
16	Sign off codes from the relevant departments consulted:	Democratic Support (mandatory)	DS56 21/22
		Finance (mandatory)	ba.21.22.131
		Legal (mandatory)	LS/37433/AC/12/10/21
		Human Resources (if applicable)	N/A
		Corporate property (if applicable)	N/A
		Procurement (if applicable)	HG/PS/603/ED/1021

Appendices								
17	Ref.	Title of appendix						
	A	Food Vouchers briefing report						
	B	Equalities Impact Assessment						
Confidential/exempt information								
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
18b	Confidential/exempt briefing report title: Evaluation Summary Food Vouchers				X			
Background Papers								
19	<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 I 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
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	13/10/2021
Print Name	Councillor Dave Downie		