

EXECUTIVE DECISION

made by a Cabinet Member



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


Executive Decision Reference Number – L27 22/23

Decision	
1	Title of decision: Food Voucher Provider Business Case
2	Decision maker (Cabinet member name and portfolio title): Councillor Richard Bingley, Council Leader
3	Report author and contact details: Rachel Silcock, rachel.silcock@plymouth.gov.uk
4	<p>Decision to be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To approve the business case; • To approve the commencement of a mini competition conducted in accordance with the Crown Commercial Services Payment Solutions framework agreement RM6248; • To delegate the award of contract to the Director of Public Health where they would not already have the authority to do so.
5	<p>Reasons for decision:</p> <p>Continued funding from central government for the Household Support Fund (HSF) was confirmed in the Autumn Statement 2022, to support vulnerable households during the financial year 2023/24 for 12 months with food and energy costs. Specific government guidance on priority groups has not yet been received for this next round (Round 4) of HSF funding, however, families with children have been a priority for each previous round of HSF. In addition to this, research into food insecurity in the city (March 2022) has highlighted that families with children on low incomes are very vulnerable to food insecurity. The City Council has therefore previously committed funding from each round of HSF towards providing food for vulnerable families during the school holidays.</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 in Plymouth.</p> <p>The current contract for a provider of food vouchers expires on March 31st 2023. However, Crown Commercial Services have carried out a procurement and there is a new framework agreement in place that Plymouth City Council can access to procure a food voucher provider. A decision is needed to carry out a procurement process to select a provider from this framework to ensure there is a contract in place for a provider of eVouchers from April 2023 to March 2024, so that if the City Council again commits funding to Free School Meals families for this period there is an efficient method for delivering this support. The award of contract</p>

	needs to be delegated to the DPH to enable this to happen in the timescales required, particularly during a pre-election period.			
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, of which families with children on low incomes are a target group based on local intelligence. To not use or accept this funding would be to the detriment of Plymouth families.</p> <p>Option 2: 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 3: Provide cash payments or post office vouchers</p> <p>This option would require a significant amount of preparatory work which couldn't be carried out in time for May half-term. Additionally, the procurement of pre-payment cards would incur service charges.</p>			
7	<p>Financial implications and risks:</p> <p>There are no financial implications as the funding for food vouchers is delivered from a ring fenced grant, the government's Household Support Fund provided by the Department for Work and Pensions. The total grant for the Council for 2023/24 has not yet been confirmed but over the previous 3 years the Council has received a six monthly amount of £2,294,796.82, or around £4.6m annually. The annual spend on food vouchers has been around £2m.</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> <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</p> <p>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</p> <p>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>
	<p>If yes, date of publication of the notice in the Forward Plan of Key Decisions</p>			
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 nutrition.</p>		

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		(If yes, please contact Democratic Support (democraticsupport@plymouth.gov.uk) for advice)
		No	x	(If no, go to section 13a)
12a	Reason for urgency:			
12b	Scrutiny Chair Signature:		Date	
	Scrutiny Committee name:			
	Print Name:			
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?			
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	Ruth Harrell	
		Job title	Director of Public Health	
		Date consulted	17 February 2023	
Sign-off				
16	Sign off codes from the relevant departments consulted:	Democratic Support (mandatory)	DS109 22/23	
		Finance (mandatory)	DJN.22.23.381	
		Legal (mandatory)	MS/00001151/15.02.23	

		Human Resources (if applicable)	N/A						
		Corporate property (if applicable)	N/A						
		Procurement (if applicable)							
Appendices									
17	Ref.	Title of appendix							
	A	Food Voucher Provider Business Case							
	B	Equalities Impact Assessment							
Confidential/exempt information									
18a	Do you need to include any confidential/exempt information?		Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						
			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

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 (2010) and those who do not. For further details please see the EIA attached.		
Signature		Date of decision	7 March 2023
Print Name	Councillor Richard Bingley, Leader of Plymouth City Council		