

URGENT EXECUTIVE DECISION

made by a **Cabinet Member**



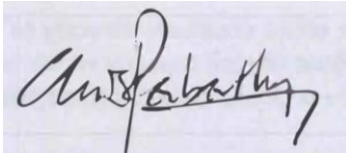
REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY BY AN INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER

Executive Decision Reference Number – HCDC05 24/25

Decision	
1	Title of decision: Household Support Fund Round 7
2	Decision maker: Councillor Chris Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities)
3	Report author and contact details: Zoe Sydenham (Community Empowerment Operational Lead) 01752 307849
4	Decision to be taken: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. To approve the distribution of the latest round of Household Support Fund monies (£4,044,511.26) through the proposed Framework for April 2025 – March 2026.
5	Reasons for decision: An extension of the Household Support Fund (HSF) has been approved by DWP on 4 March 2025. There is therefore an urgent need to agree on a framework for the next year of HSF. The particular focus will be on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 Easter holidays which is in 4 weeks' time). This will continue to be administered through a contract with Wonde. • 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. • Preventative work which supports people falling into crisis in the future <p>The level of funding for the full year is £4,044,511.26 for the full FY 25/26</p>
6	Alternative options considered and rejected: <p>Option 1: Do Nothing 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>Option 2: Provide cash payments or post office vouchers directly to claimants 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	Financial implications: <p>Distribution of Household Support Fund monies (£4,044,511.26) through the proposed Framework for April 2025 – March 2026. The funding for this contract is provided by the Department for Work and Pensions.</p>

8	Legal Implications: None			
9	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 annually	
		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	N/A		
10	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:	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. The decision links to the Corporate Plan priorities of Keeping Children, Adults and Communities Safe, and Spending Money Wisely.		
11	Please specify any direct environmental implications of the decision (carbon impact)	None		
Urgent decisions				
12	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: The Department of Work and Pensions has recently provided notification that the Household Support Fund would be extended by a further twelve months, from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. Nationally, communications for this scheme were approved for the 19 March 2025. In order to provide adequate notice for partners preparation to deliver the scheme, the Monitoring Officer has agreed that an urgent decision is required. This includes notification to Schools by 21 March 2025, to ensure school food vouchers are distributed in time for the school holidays, beginning 05 April 2025. This timeframe does not allow for a call-in period for this decision.			
12b	Scrutiny Chair Signature:	<i>John Stephens</i>	Date	20/03/2025
	Scrutiny Committee name:	Scrutiny Management Board		

Print Name:		John Stephens		
Consultation				
13a	Are any other Cabinet members' portfolios affected by the decision?	Yes	X	
		No		(If no go to section 14)
13b	Which other Cabinet member's portfolio is affected by the decision?	Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture and Communications)		
13c	Date Cabinet member consulted	20/03/2025		
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	Professor Steven Maddern	
		Job title	Director of Public Health	
		Date consulted	13 March 2025	
Sign-off				
16	Sign off codes from the relevant departments consulted:	Democratic Support (mandatory)	JSI 15 24/25	
		Finance (mandatory)	DJN.24.25.184	
		Legal (mandatory)	LS/00001312/2/AC/I 5/3/25	
		Human Resources (if applicable)	N/A	
		Corporate property (if applicable)	N/A	
		Procurement (if applicable)		
Appendices				
17	Ref.	Title of appendix		
	A	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

		No	X	publication by virtue of Part 1 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)				
		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 1 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 and those who do not. For further details please see the EIA attached.							
Signature			Date of decision		19.3.25			
Print Name	Councillor Chris Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities)							