

FOR PUBLICATION

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

13 January 2022

Report of the Managing Executive Director

Household Support Fund Grant

1. Divisions Affected

1.1 Countywide.

2. Key Decision

2.1 This is not a key decision.

3. Purpose

3.1 The purpose of this report is to ask Cabinet to note the urgent decision taken by the Managing Executive Director on 11 November 2021 to:

a) approve spending plans for Derbyshire County Council's allocation of the Household Support Fund grant; and

b) approve delegation of authority to the executive directors of Children's Services, Adult Social Care and Health, and the Managing Executive Director Commissioning, Communities and Policy to approve amendments and changes to plans for distributing the Household Support Fund in line with the overall scheme eligibility requirements. This will allow the Council to respond flexibly and effectively to any challenges, risks and opportunities that occur during the grant period and maintain our ability to swiftly distribute funds to vulnerable residents.

3.2 Cabinet is also asked to note the urgent decision taken by the Strategic Director of Children's services on 21 December 2021 to:

- c) approve the use of a non-DCC Framework - the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) RM6255 Voucher Framework - to appoint a supplier to provide food vouchers to fulfil the spending plans to utilise the Derbyshire County Council allocation of Household Support Fund.

The two urgent officer decision reports are attached for information in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3.

4. Information and Analysis

4.1 On 30 September 2021, the government announced, via press release, a package of extra targeted financial support for vulnerable households most in need over the winter period; notification and further draft guidance was issued to councils on 6 October 2021. Given that notification of Derbyshire's allocation of the funds and clarifying guidance was not received from the DWP until 6 October 2021, and that the Council was required to provide an indicative plan to the DWP by 29 October 2021 indicating how it will distribute the grant, time for the normal decision-making protocols has not been possible. Following consultation with DWP, this indicative plan was submitted on time subject to final approval of this Urgent Decision Report. The grant covers the period 6 October 2021 to 31 March 2022.

4.2 The Household Support Fund is issued to County Councils and Unitary Authorities by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to provide support to households who would otherwise struggle to buy food or pay essential utility bills or meet other essential living costs. In exceptional cases of genuine emergency, the fund can additionally be used to support housing costs where existing housing support schemes do not meet this exceptional need. Derbyshire County Council's allocation is £5,404,080.90

5. Alternative Options Considered

5.1 Previous DWP grants have been granted with guidance requiring Authorities to allocate the vast majority funds via vouchers to families and young people eligible for benefit related free school meals over the school holidays. However, this new fund covers a wider cohort of vulnerable households who would otherwise struggle to buy food, pay essential utility bills, or meet other essential living costs than previous grants, including those not eligible for welfare benefits. Therefore, in

Derbyshire, it was felt that a blended range of methods would be more effective, while maintaining a smaller element of vouchers to this group of vulnerable families in January as a 'winter support payment'.

- 5.2 As the Housing Support Fund is paid in arrears on the submission of an MI return, there is the option for the Council not to take up the funds and opt out of the funding. However, this would be a disservice to vulnerable households and families in Derbyshire who are likely to face significant financial pressure this winter. It may also put pressure on our own social care services further down the line if families and adults reach crisis due to their financial circumstances. In addition, not utilising the funds would deny the Derbyshire economy and local businesses the funds.

6. Implications

Appendix 1 sets out the relevant implications considered in the preparation of the report.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 The following background reports and published documents are available to aid decision making:

Household Support Fund Scheme Guidance

DRAFT Guidance -
Household Support F

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1- Implications.
8.2 Appendix 2 - Urgent Decision Report of the Executive Managing Director 11 November 2021.
8.3 Appendix 3 – Urgent Decision Report of the Strategic Director Children's Services 21 December 2021

9. Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet notes the decisions made under urgent delegated powers.

10. Reasons for Recommendation(s)

10.1 To inform Cabinet of the use of urgent delegated powers and to ensure there is appropriate transparency and oversight of their use.

11. Is it necessary to waive the call-in period?

11.1 No.

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Contact details: sarah.edwards@derbyshire.gov.uk

Implications

1. Financial

- 1.1 The Childrens Services and Adult Social Care and Health revenue budgets will be adjusted to reflect this new ring-fenced grant and it will be monitored through the usual financial monitoring process and in line with the grant conditions.
- 1.2 Grants awarded to third-party organisations will be awarded and monitored through the usual financial monitoring process and in line with the grant conditions.
- 1.3 The grant allocation of £5.4m to the Council has been issued as a ring-fenced Section 31 grant. The grant determination notice states that the purpose of the grant is to provide support to certain local authorities in England for expenditure lawfully incurred or to be incurred by them in accordance with the Grant Conditions to provide support to households who would otherwise struggle to buy food or pay essential utility bills or meet other essential living costs or housing costs (in exceptional cases of genuine emergency) this winter as the economy recovers.
- 1.4 Details of the proposed use of the funds and the allocations for the proposed schemes are set out in Urgent Decision Report in Appendix 2.
- 1.5 The grant determination notice sets out eligible expenditure for the scheme and this includes reasonable administrative costs which include, for example, staff costs, advertising and publicity and IT changes. The estimated staffing costs have been set out in section 2 above.
- 1.6 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
 - iii) 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.
 - iv) in exceptional circumstances of genuine emergency, the Authority may allocate grant funds to support with housing costs as set out in the Scheme guidance.

2. Legal

- 2.1 The Council's Constitution provides that "notwithstanding any other provision of the Constitution Executive Directors shall have the power, after discussion, if practicable, with the Leader of the Council or the relevant Cabinet Member or Chair, to take such actions deemed to be necessary and expedient in matters requiring urgent consideration and which, because of the timescale involved, or the need to safeguard the interests of the County Council, cannot be dealt with by submission to the next following meeting of the Council, Cabinet, Cabinet Member or Committee."

3. Human Resources

- 3.1 Redeployment of existing staff and the recruitment of agency staff will be utilised to increase the capacity of the DDF Team, Call Derbyshire and Early Help Teams. This will need to be managed at pace with the goal of ensuring DDF is fully staffed and training completed by early December 2021. This approach mitigates the risks and delays that would be faced by recruiting additional directly employed staff on short term contracts to March 2022. Current DDF Staff will manage demand until December as part of business as usual.
- 3.2 The DDF Team are currently undergoing a restructure, so close liaison with Human Resources colleagues with regards to redeployment / acting up opportunities will be necessary to ensure equability of opportunity.
- 3.3 The Council has an agreement with a broker – Comensura which simplifies the way agency workers are hired. Instead of directly contacting numerous agencies we only need to contact one broker (Comensura) who will contact all relevant agencies on our behalf. To encourage maximum engagement from suppliers, orders should be placed on C-Net, by the recruiting manager. Roles and pay rates are usually aligned to Council roles (and JPPs) to ensure we engage agency workers with the appropriate skills and comply with agency worker regulations. The flexible resource team will support where market rates demand a negotiation of pay rate to the worker and/or the type of worker is difficult to source.

4. Information Technology

- 4.1 No large-scale IT changes are required to administer the fund.
- 4.2 A new online form will be produced for claims to the DFF/Household Support Fund. This is being managed by the eContent Team and Channel Shift Team and may utilise the new Granicus CRM system.

- 4.3 Processes relating to connections between Early Help HSF applications and DDF to award funds will be managed using existing programs such as Microsoft and Mosaic.

5. Equalities Impact

- 5.1 The recommendations set out in this report has been fully considered in relation to equality. An Equality Impact Assessment is being undertaken to ensure that due regard is given to the impact that the proposed arrangements might have on all protected groups of people in Derbyshire. This will enable the identification of any groups of people who may be adversely affected by the proposed distribution of HSF grant and in some cases this will be mitigated through third sector grant awards.

6. Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 6.1 One of the aims of Vision Derbyshire is to work collaboratively with district and borough councils. To do that well, it's important for the Council to have efficient and effective processes to both establish our lead role and also to set up any collaborations with minimal disruption to efficiency.
- 6.2 The pandemic has had a significant impact on communities and key sectors of the economy. The Council is working with its partners to support community recovery across all areas of the county, ensuring equality of access to support.
- 6.3 This programme will address one of the Council's key priorities which is to provide effective early help for individuals and communities.

7. Other (for example, Health and Safety, Environmental Sustainability, Property and Asset Management, Risk Management and Safeguarding)

- 7.1 This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
OFFICER DECISION AND DECISION REVIEW RECORD

Officer: Emma Alexander, Managing Executive Director	Service: Across Council – Communities, Commissioning and Policy, Adult Social Care and Health (Public Health), Childrens Services																														
Delegated Power Being Exercised: <i>*The delegation detailed in the Constitution to the specified officer or emergency powers</i>																															
Subject of Decision: (i.e. services affected)	An urgent decision to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> approve spending plans for Derbyshire County Council's £5.4m allocation of the Household Support Fund (HSF); and delegate authority to the executive directors of Children's Services, Adult Social Care and Health, and the Managing Executive Director Commissioning, Communities and Policy to approve amendments and changes to plans for distributing the HSF in line with the overall scheme eligibility requirements. 																														
Is this a review of a decision? If so, what was the date of the original decision?	N/A																														
Key decision? If so have Democratic Services been notified?	This is a key decision due to the budget for the function concerned being over £500,000 and it is also likely to be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral areas in the County Democratic services have been informed.																														
Decision Taken (specify precise details, including the period over which the decision will be in place and when it will be (further) reviewed):	<p>The decision taken is to approve the allocation of Derbyshire's Household Support Fund grant of £5,404,080.90 in line with grant eligibility criteria. The grant covers the period 6 October 2021 to 31 March 2022.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Household Support Fund Allocation</th> <th>DDF</th> <th>District/ borough Councils</th> <th>Early Help/ Food Social Care / Support Leavers Teams 2021</th> <th>Winter and sector Energy Voucher January</th> <th>Third grants</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Funds intended for households with children</td> <td>35%</td> <td>50%</td> <td>95%</td> <td>98%</td> <td>50%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Funds intended for adult households</td> <td>65%</td> <td>50%</td> <td>5% (care leavers aged 18-25)</td> <td>2%</td> <td>50%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total cost</td> <td>£1,800,000</td> <td>£1,600,000</td> <td>£460,000</td> <td>£1,350,000</td> <td>£190,000</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Household split</th> <th>Percentage</th> <th>Total funds</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Household Support Fund Allocation	DDF	District/ borough Councils	Early Help/ Food Social Care / Support Leavers Teams 2021	Winter and sector Energy Voucher January	Third grants	Funds intended for households with children	35%	50%	95%	98%	50%	Funds intended for adult households	65%	50%	5% (care leavers aged 18-25)	2%	50%	Total cost	£1,800,000	£1,600,000	£460,000	£1,350,000	£190,000	Household split	Percentage	Total funds			
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	Total proposed for households with children	61%	£3,271,500
	Total proposed for households without children	39%	£2,128,500
	Total	100%	£5.4m
Reasons for the Decision (specify all reasons for taking the decisions including where necessary reference to Council policy and anticipated impact of the decision) Where the decision is subject to statutory guidance please state how this has been taken into consideration.	<p>Many Derbyshire residents will face financial hardship this winter and it is important the Council distributes the funds in a wide-reaching manner to support vulnerable households and takes the opportunity to boost the Derbyshire economy.</p> <p>Failing to distribute the funds to vulnerable households facing financial pressure may cause residents to enter crisis, which may put pressure on Council services further down the line.</p>		
Alternative Options Considered (if appropriate) and reasons for rejection of other options	<p>Other options for elements of the grant distribution were considered (detailed in the Household Support Fund Urgent Decision Report 2 November 2021) but it was felt that the routes indicated above would be more practical and make best use funds.</p>		
Has a risk assessment been conducted? - if so what are the potential adverse impacts identified and how will these be mitigated?	<p>A high level risk assessment has been undertaken to identify key adverse impacts and to put in place mitigating actions to address these. These key risks are listed in Section 5 of the attached report.</p>		
Would the decision normally have been the subject of consultation with service users and the public? If so, explain why this is not practicable and the steps that have or will be taken to communicate the decision	<p>Wider consultation with the service users and the wider public about plans to use of the HSF grant has not been possible due to tight timescales. In addition, although the DWP Guidance provides some flexibility, the criteria for utilising the grant is prescribed.</p>		
Has any adverse impact on groups with protected characteristics been identified and if so, how will these be mitigated?	<p>An Equality Impact Assessment is being undertaken to ensure plans to distribute the fund do not disadvantage any protected characteristic groups. Some negative potential impacts will be mitigated by the targeting part of the funds to third sector grants to organisations who work with/support groups identified. An action plan will be produced to mitigate any adverse impact identified.</p>		
Background/Reports/Information considered and attached (including Legal, HR, Financial, Equality and	<p>Final urgent decision report including legal, HR, Financial and initial equality implications – attached for decision.</p>		

other considerations as required))	
Consultation with relevant Cabinet Member (s) – please note this is obligatory.	Cabinet members were consulted about the proposal to utilise the grant at Cabinet CMT on 27.10.21
Approval of Chair of appropriate Improvement and Scrutiny Committee where call in is intended to be waived – please note this is obligatory in those circumstances	Call in period is intended to be waived. Approval of Cllr Kemp, Chair of Improvement and Scrutiny Committee - People was sought on 01/11/2021 and the waiver has been agreed.
Decision:	Approved by Emma Alexander, Managing Executive Director on 11/11/2021
Signature and Date: 	



DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

11 November 2021

URGENT DECISION UNDERTAKEN BY THE MANAGING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Household Support Fund Grant

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask the Managing Executive Director for an urgent decision to approve spending plans for Derbyshire County Council's allocation of the Household Support Fund grant. The report seeks permission for the delegation of authority to the executive directors of Children's Services, Adult Social Care and Health, and the Managing Executive Director Commissioning, Communities and Policy to approve amendments and changes to plans for distributing the Household Support Fund in line with the overall scheme eligibility requirements. This will allow the Council to respond flexibly and effectively to any challenges, risks and opportunities that occur during the grant period and maintain our ability to swiftly distribute funds to vulnerable residents.

2. Key Decision

- 2.1 This is a key decision due to the budget for the function concerned (this is currently defined as £500,000) and it is likely to be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral areas in the County.

3. Information and Analysis

- 3.1 The purpose of this report is to ask the Managing Executive Director for an urgent decision to approve spending plans for Derbyshire County Council's allocation of the Household Support Fund grant.

- 3.2 On 30 September 2021, the government announced, via press release, a package of extra targeted financial support for vulnerable households most in need over the winter period; notification and further draft guidance was issued to councils on 6 October 2021. Given that notification of Derbyshire's allocation of the funds and clarifying guidance was not received from the DWP until 6 October 2021, and that the Council was required to provide an indicative plan to the DWP by 29 October 2021 indicating how it will distribute the grant, time for the normal decision-making protocols has not been possible. The grant covers the period 6 October 2021 to 31 March 2022.
- 3.3 The Household Support Fund is issued to County Councils and Unitary Authorities by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to provide support to households who would otherwise struggle to buy food or pay essential utility bills or meet other essential living costs. In exceptional cases of genuine emergency, the fund can additionally be used to support housing costs where existing housing support schemes do not meet this exceptional need. Derbyshire County Council's allocation is **£5,404,080.90**.
- 3.4 The DWP is providing grant funding to Authorities under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003 to administer the scheme and provide assistance to households most in need. This covers a wide range of vulnerable households including those with children of all ages and those without children. This may include households not currently in receipt of DWP welfare benefits.
- 3.5 This is a new grant and underspends from previous DWP grants cannot be carried forward. This funding covers the period 6 October 2021 to 31 March 2022, funds must be spent or committed to before the end of the grant period and cannot be held over for future use.
- 3.6 The grant guidance states local authorities should develop a 'local eligibility framework and approach' and target their support within the scope of the conditions set out below:
- *at least* 50% of the total funding ring-fenced to support households with children
 - *up to* 50% of the total funding to other households genuinely in need of support this winter.
- 3.7 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. In exceptional circumstances of genuine emergency, the Authority may allocate grant funds to support with housing costs as set out in the Scheme guidance.
- 3.8 For the purpose of this grant the definition of a child is any person:
- who will be under the age of 19 as at 31 March 2022 or;

- a person aged 19 or over in respect of whom a child-related benefit (for example, Child Benefit) is paid or free school meals are provided.

Households which include a person aged 19 to 25 with special educational needs and disability (SEND) and/or care leavers may still be eligible for grant support, however, that support falls within the 50% allocation to households without children.

- 3.9 Authorities can deliver the scheme through a variety of routes, including providing vouchers to households, making direct provision of food or issuing grants to third parties (with the exception of debt advice provision). Flexibility is required to develop a local delivery approach that best fits the scheme's objectives. County Councils are expected to work collaboratively with district/borough councils and other third-party organisations in their area who may come into contact with those households who are eligible and would benefit from this grant. Authorities can allocate a reasonable amount of the funds for administration costs incurred in administering the fund. These include staffing costs, advertising and publicity, printing of application forms and small IT changes to facilitate process design or reporting.
- 3.10 An interim management information (MI) report setting out how the grant has been allocated in the first half of the grant period, including how it has been split between households with children and other households, must be submitted to the DWP by 21 January 2022.
- 3.11 The grant will be paid to authorities by the DWP in arrears. A final MI report must be submitted by 22 April 2022 to enable the Council to claim the funds. Authorities must submit a Statement of Grant Usage, along with a final MI report, to confirm the claim, which must be certified by the Authority's Section 151 Officer. Payment of the grant is subject to satisfactory returns and MI, including reporting on any funds passed to third parties.
- 3.12 The full scheme guidance can be found in Appendix 2.

4. Proposed Use of Funds

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Council utilises a varied and mixed approach to distributing the grant to help ensure the funds reach a wide range of households needing financial support this winter, including those who may not currently be claiming welfare benefits. Detailed HSF eligibility criteria based on the HSF grant guidance will be published on the DCC website.
- 4.2 The DWP have confirmed that after submitting the initial plan, authorities may review and make changes to these plans to respond to challenges and opportunities they face during the grant period. It is therefore recommended that spending of the fund is kept under close review to enable the Council to

take a flexible and pragmatic approach to administering the funds, taking into consideration factors such as demand, capacity and budget.

4.3 Overview – proposed allocation of funds breakdown.

Household Support Fund Allocation	DDF	District/ borough Councils	Early Help Teams (utilising DDF processes) / Care Leavers Team	Winter Food and Energy Support Voucher January 2022	Third sector grants
Funds intended for households with children	35%	50%	95%	98%	50%
Funds intended for adult households	65%	50%	5% (care leavers aged 19-25)	2%	50%
Total cost * including food, energy, wider essentials and administration	£1,800,000	£1,600,000	£460,000	£1,350,000	£190,000

4.4 Overall fund division between adult households and households with children

Household split	Percentage	Total funds
Total proposed for households with children	61%	£3,271,500
Total proposed for households without children	39%	£2,128,500
Total	100%	£5,400,000

To administer this grant in the swiftest possible timeframe, the Council will need to recruit additional staff to increase capacity, including the use of agency staff. However, administration costs will be kept to the absolute minimum to ensure as much of the grant as possible is distributed to vulnerable residents.

4.5 Derbyshire Discretionary Fund (DDF) Household Support Fund- £1.8m

4.6 It is recommended that £1.8m is allocated to DDF to allow Derbyshire households both with and without children to make claims to the fund to help with the costs of food, energy and essential living costs. This figure includes administration costs of £230,00 (including Call Derbyshire), leaving £1,570,000

to award to Derbyshire residents facing financial hardship. It's predicted that 35% will be allocated to families with children (£549,500) and 65% to adult households (£1,020,500).

- 4.7 The proportion of the Household Support Fund allocated to the DDF team would be used for two purposes:
- To make two payments over the period from this fund. (The DDF policy currently contains a limit of a maximum three payments in any twelve-month period and these two HSF payments would be *in addition* to this and offered *before* DDF.)
 - To temporarily increase the amount of a standard Emergency Cash Payment (ECP) from £54 to £64. (The amount of an ECP has remained unchanged since 2015); and to increase the amount awarded for each affected household member from £10 to £20. (This will enable more of the funding to be spent on households with children).
- 4.8 The fund would be promoted and referred to as the Household Support Fund. This will help ensure that any promotion is separated from the DDF offer and would allow the time limited availability of the fund to be made clear. The workings of DDF will revert to the original policy in terms of payment amount and frequency from 01/04/2022.
- 4.9 DDF already has a robust system for receiving and processing claims in place and its eligibility criteria and scope closely match that of the Household Support Fund. It is recommended that the existing DDF processes and eligibility criteria are utilised when claims are made to the Household Support Fund. The DDF scheme has existing reporting mechanisms which can be used to meet DWP MI reporting requirements, including the breakdown between households with children and adult households. DDF also has an established complaints and review process in place.
- 4.10 To ensure those facing financial hardship can access the fund and to meet expected demand, both Call Derbyshire and the DDF Assessments Team will need additional capacity in terms of staffing, training and IT equipment. It is proposed that the administration element of the grant is utilised to fund the recruitment additional agency staff.
- 4.11 The Council will make every effort to ensure people facing financial hardship are aware of the fund whilst being clear on eligibility criteria to manage expectations. Promotion methods can include information on the Council's website and social media channels, internal and external newsletters and by utilising existing links with partner agencies and elected members. This approach can be kept under review and promotion stepped up if needed based on Call Derbyshire and the DDF capacity / the number of claims.
- 4.12 Early Help Teams / Care Leavers Team £460k**

4.13 Early Help

- 4.14 Within Children's Services in Derbyshire, staff from across Early Help and Safeguarding work in localities to support vulnerable children and their families. The Early Help Team's currently support around 750 children across the county with another 5,000 children supported by social work/safeguarding teams.
- 4.15 It is recommended that staff from within Early Help and Safeguarding are utilised to support the awarding of the Household Support Fund by providing a process for vulnerable families facing financial hardship to access the fund. Utilising staff from Early Help and Safeguarding would draw value from the Teams' existing relationships with vulnerable families, as well as their established links with other professionals, partner agencies and schools who work with children and families in their communities. This would help to expand the reach of the Household Support Fund to ensure a range of vulnerable families facing financial hardship are able to benefit from support.
- 4.16 The proportion of funds allocated to the Early Help Duty Team HSF would be £440,000. The ability of Early Help, Safeguarding and staff from relevant partners to assess families and make applications to the fund would be widely promoted across the service and the wider children's partnership.

4.17 Care Leavers

- 4.18 A sum of £20,000 of the overall £460,000 fund would be allocated to the Care Leavers Team to support care leavers up to age 24 facing financial hardship this winter. The Care Leavers Team already have mechanisms in place to distribute funds to care leavers via vouchers, bank transfers and, in exceptional circumstances, cash payments.
- 4.19 Care leavers aged 16-18 who live semi-independently and who receive financial support by means of a weekly allowance from the Council have been receiving an additional £20 per week in line with the Universal Credit uplift. A decision was taken by Childrens Services SMT to end this additional payment from December 2021.

4.20 Winter Food and Energy Support Voucher January 2022 - £1.35m

- 4.21 It is proposed that Derbyshire funds a one-off award of winter grocery and energy vouchers to families eligible for benefit related free school meals in schools and further educational colleges, care leavers (up to age 21) and children in early years settings (who qualify for the Early Years Pupil Premium with qualifying benefits and Early Years 2 Year Old with qualifying benefits) in January 2022. Food and energy vouchers sit well within the scope of the scheme.
- 4.22 Families and care leavers who would receive grocery / energy vouchers received in January would still be able to make a claim via DDF if they face

financial hardship. There is no indication that another grant will be awarded once the Household Support Fund ends in March 2022 and therefore it is unlikely any funds will be available to provide vouchers to cover the Easter 2022 school holidays.

4.23 It is proposed that Winter HSF vouchers for the value of £50 (£30 for food plus a £20 winter fuel payment) are awarded in the New Year. Previous runs schemes for families eligible for benefit related free school meals and care leavers, the last being Summer 2021, saw 27,000 children and young people eligible for vouchers.

4.24 Voucher payments would be titled as Winter Food and Energy Support Payments. Recipients would also receive information signposting them to other sources of financial support that they could also access at other periods of financial hardship, including school holidays. To note, the Holiday Activity and Food (HAF) programme will also be running over the Christmas period.

4.25 Awarding Funds to District and Borough Councils - £1.6m

4.26 The scope of the Household Support Fund extends to support with emergency housing support, where households are not eligible for existing housing support schemes.

4.27 District and Borough Housing Teams have reported increased instances of homelessness and residents facing exceptional financial difficulty related to housing costs.

4.28 It is recommended that £1.6m is distributed to the 8 District and Borough Council's in Derbyshire to enable their housing teams to support those facing housing related financial difficulty. It is proposed that this will include additional funds for awarding Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) which are available to those eligible for Housing Benefit and the Housing Element of Universal Credit, as well as emergency funds for Derbyshire residents who don't qualify for DHP but who are facing exceptional housing related financial pressure. Should District and Borough Council not be able to target the funds to the grant criteria, this potential allocation would be redistributed to other funding strands.

4.29 Third Sector Grants - £190,000

4.30 It is recommended that £190,000 is awarded to Food Banks and/or other third sector organisations including Women's Refuges and age-related organisations. Approximately 50% of this support would be aimed at families with children and 50% for adult households.

4.31 Providing funds to third sector organisations who work with families and adults not known to social care services would provide an opportunity to reach a wider range of Derbyshire residents, including hard to reach groups, who may be

facing financial hardship this winter, including those who do not receive welfare benefits but may be on a low income.

- 4.32 An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken to ensure that due regard is given to the impact that the proposed arrangements might have on all protected groups of people in Derbyshire. This will enable the identification of any groups of people who may be adversely affected by the proposed distribution of HSF grant and in some cases, this will be mitigated through third sector grant awards.

5. Risk Management

Risk	Proposed mitigation
<p>If we use the HSF to provide vouchers for families with children eligible for benefit related FSM to cover all school holidays this may create dependency and ongoing expectation that DCC will do this in all holidays including Easter 2022 (which is a period, the fund does not extend to).</p>	<p>This group of vulnerable families will receive a £50 food and energy vouchers in January 2022. Families eligible for FSM will also be able to access other elements of the fund via Early Help Teams, District and Borough Councils and DDF at other times during grant period. This will include promotion of other schemes such as the HAF programme which is targeted at families eligible for benefit related FSM.</p>
<p>Not providing vouchers to children eligible for benefit related FSM over holiday periods may risk reputational damage to the Council if other neighbouring local authorities use HSF to continue to fund these.</p>	<p>Strategically targeting funding over the grant period, this group of vulnerable families will receive a £50 food and energy vouchers in January 2022. Eligible families will also be able to access other elements of the fund via Early Help Teams, District and Borough Councils and DDF at other times during grant period.</p>
<p>There is a risk that we do not collect the correct management information data to enable the Council to retrospectively claim the funds from DWP, given that the grant is paid in arrears.</p>	<p>We will ensure careful monitoring of funds the Council distributes. Funding agreements / Service Level Agreements will be put in place with third parties – Districts and Boroughs and CVS organisations.</p>
<p>There is a risk that we are unable to distribute all available funds to residents (£5.4m) in the timescale allowed up 31/3/2022.</p>	<p>We are working with partners and corporately across the council to create a range of accessible routes for residents to access the funds. Additional staff are also being recruited via agency and/or redeployment to increase capacity of</p>

	existing services including DDF, Call Derbyshire and Early Help and Safeguarding Teams, to help ensure funds can be distributed within the timescale. A significant amount of the funds will be utilised for targeted direct awards for key vulnerable groups (vouchers – food and energy). We will regularly review the spend with partners and finance.
There is a risk that communications about the availability of the fund do not reach some residents facing financial hardship.	Work will be carried out with professionals and organisations who work with hard to reach groups to promote the fund (BME Forum, financial inclusion group etc). Information will be made available in different formats and on multiple channels.
There is a risk that the Council could be overwhelmed by demand for support from residents facing financial hardship, especially given the short life span of the grant.	Communication about availability of the grant will be planned dependent on demand and capacity levels. We have engaged with a wide range of partners to increase the number of access points to the fund, make best use of existing capacity and optimise existing referral routes across the system.
There is a risk that demand may continue beyond the end of the funding provided by the government	Communication from the Council to residents and partners will be clear about the scope of offer this additional support because of temporary government funding that ends on 31/3/22.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 In summary it is felt that a blended approach as set out above is the preferable option as it provides the best opportunity to reach a wide range of families and households in Derbyshire facing financial hardship this winter. All of the proposed elements align with the scope and criteria of the Household Support Fund and make the best use of existing systems such as DDF and District Housing Teams. The approach proposed, which combines a direct application process as well as targeted support, will satisfy the directions of the DWP that people facing hardship should be able to apply to the fund. Distributing vouchers to those eligible benefit related free school meals, care leavers aged under 21 and those in receipt of the Early Years

Pupil Premium or Early Years 2 Year Old with qualifying benefits, will help make sure funds are allocated to a cohort likely to be affected by the loss of the Universal Credit uplift.

- 6.2 The proposed split between families with children's and households with adults is 61% to 39% which is well within the scope of the scheme. However, it is recommended that all elements of the scheme remain under close review and if significant demand, or lack of demand, is seen in particular areas then the costings can be adjusted accordingly. It is recommended that a Household Support Fund Programme Group made up of key officers and partners meet regularly to review how the fund is being utilised in real time, ensure a timely response to presenting need of Derbyshire residents and address any challenges.

7. Alternative Options Considered

- 7.1. Previous DWP grants have been granted with guidance requiring Authorities to allocate the vast majority funds via vouchers to families and young people eligible for benefit related free school meals over the school holidays. A number of other local authorities across the country are continuing this approach with plans to use the majority of their Household Support Fund allocation in this way. However, as the fund covers a wider cohort of vulnerable households who would otherwise struggle to buy food, pay essential utility bills, or meet other essential living costs than previous grants, including those not eligible for welfare benefits, in Derbyshire, it was felt that a blended range methods would be more effective, while maintaining a smaller element of vouchers to this group of vulnerable families in January as a 'winter support payment'.
- 7.2. As the Housing Support Fund is paid in arrears on the submission of an MI return, there is the option for the Council not to take up the funds and opt out of the funding. However, this would be a disservice to vulnerable households and families in Derbyshire who are likely to face significant financial pressure this winter. It may also put pressure on our own social care services further down the line if families and adults reach crisis due to their financial circumstances. In addition, not utilising the funds would deny the Derbyshire economy and local businesses the funds.

8. Implications

- 8.1 Appendix 1 sets out the relevant implications considered in the preparation of the report.

9. Consultation

- 9.1 In forming these proposals significant consultation has been undertaken between departments: Children's Services, Public Health and Commissioning, Communities and Policy. In addition, consultation has been undertaken with external partners such as District and Borough Councils and Rural Action Derbyshire. Benchmarking and liaison with other Authorities has been undertaken to understand more about their approach to distribution of the fund.

10. Appendices

- 10.1. Appendix 1 – Implications.
10.2. Appendix 2 - Household Support Fund – scheme guidance

11. Key Decision

Yes.

12. Call-in

Is it required that call-in be waived for any decision on this report?

Yes

13. Councillor Tony Kemp, Chair of Improvement and Scrutiny Committee – People has been asked to approve the waiver of the call in due to the urgent nature of the decision required; he has agreed special urgency applies and the notice of key decision is not required; and supports the action being taken.

14. Recommendation

That the Managing Executive Director makes an urgent decision to approve the plans for a blended approach to distribute the Household Support Fund, utilising the Derbyshire Discretionary Fund, Early Help Teams, Care Leavers, Food/energy vouchers and granting funds to District and Borough Councils and third sector organisations (Food Banks).

It is recommended that authority is delegated to departmental Executive Directors to approve amendments and changes to plans for distributing the Household Support Fund in line with the overall scheme eligibility requirements. This will allow the Council to respond flexibly and effectively to any challenges, risks and opportunities that occur during the grant period and maintain our ability to swiftly distribute funds to vulnerable residents.

15. Reasons for Recommendation

- 15.1. Many Derbyshire residents will face financial hardship this winter and it is important the Council distributes the funds in a wide-reaching manner to support vulnerable households and takes the opportunity to boost the Derbyshire economy.
- 15.2. Failing to distribute the funds to vulnerable households facing financial pressure may cause residents to enter crisis, which may put pressure on Council services further down the line
- 15.3. The blended approach proposed which combines a direct application process as well as targeted support will help reach a range of vulnerable people and make it less likely people fall through the gaps.

**Report Author: Sarah Edwards, Head of Service, Programmes,
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Implications

1. Financial

- 1.1 The Childrens Services and Adult Social Care and Health revenue budgets will be adjusted to reflect this new ring-fenced grant and it will be monitored through the usual financial monitoring process and in line with the grant conditions.
- 1.2 Grants awarded to third-party organisations will be awarded and monitored through the usual financial monitoring process and in line with the grant conditions.
- 1.3 The grant allocation of £5.4m to the Council has been issued as a ring-fenced Section 31 grant. The grant determination notice states that the purpose of the grant is to provide support to certain local authorities in England for expenditure lawfully incurred or to be incurred by them in accordance with the Grant Conditions to provide support to households who would otherwise struggle to buy food or pay essential utility bills or meet other essential living costs or housing costs (in exceptional cases of genuine emergency) this winter as the economy recovers.
- 1.4 Details of the proposed use of the funds and the allocations for the proposed schemes are set out in Section 2 above.
- 1.5 The grant determination notice sets out eligible expenditure for the scheme and this includes reasonable administrative costs which include, for example, staff costs, advertising and publicity and IT changes. The estimated staffing costs have been set out in section 2 above.
- 1.6 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
 - iii) 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.

- iv) in exceptional circumstances of genuine emergency, the Authority may allocate grant funds to support with housing costs as set out in the Scheme guidance.

2. Legal

- 2.1 The Council's Constitution provides that "notwithstanding any other provision of the Constitution Executive Directors shall have the power, after discussion, if practicable, with the Leader of the Council or the relevant Cabinet Member or Chair, to take such actions deemed to be necessary and expedient in matters requiring urgent consideration and which, because of the timescale involved, or the need to safeguard the interests of the County Council, cannot be dealt with by submission to the next following meeting of the Council, Cabinet, Cabinet Member or Committee.
- 2.2 Grants awarded to third-party organisations will be awarded and monitored through the usual financial monitoring process and in line with the grant conditions.
- 2.3 Improvement and Scrutiny Procedure Rules State: "13(6) The call-in procedure set out above shall not apply where the decision being taken by Cabinet is urgent. A decision will be urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public interest. All reports recommending that decisions be taken should say whether or not it is proposed that call-in be waived. The record of the decision, and notice by which it is made public, shall state whether in the opinion of the decision-making person or body, the decision is an urgent one, and therefore not subject to call-in. The Chairman of the appropriate Improvement and Scrutiny Committee should agree both the decision proposed is reasonable in all the circumstances and to it being treated as a matter of urgency

3. Human Resources

- 3.1 Redeployment of existing staff and the recruitment of agency staff will be utilised to increase the capacity of the DDF Team, Call Derbyshire and Early Help Teams. This will need to be managed at pace with the goal of ensuring DDF is fully staffed and training completed by early December 2021. This approach mitigates the risks and delays that would be faced by recruiting additional directly employed staff on short term contracts to March 2022. Current DDF Staff will manage demand until December as part of business as usual.

- 3.2 The DDF Team are currently undergoing a restructure, so close liaison with Human Resources colleagues with regards to redeployment / acting up opportunities will be necessary to ensure equability of opportunity.
- 3.3 The Council has an agreement with a broker – Comensura which simplifies the way agency workers are hired. Instead of directly contacting numerous agencies we only need to contact one broker (Comensura) who will contact all relevant agencies on our behalf. To encourage maximum engagement from suppliers, orders should be placed on C-Net, by the recruiting manager. Roles and pay rates are usually aligned to Council roles (and JPPs) to ensure we engage agency workers with the appropriate skills and comply with agency worker regulations. The flexible resource team will support where market rates demand a negotiation of pay rate to the worker and/or the type of worker is difficult to source.

4. Information Technology

- 4.1 No large-scale IT changes are required to administer the fund.
- 4.2 A new online form will be produced for claims to the DFF/Household Support Fund. This is being managed by the eContent Team and Channel Shift Team and may utilise the new Granicus CRM system.
- 4.3 Processes relating to connections between Early Help HSF applications and DDF to award funds will be managed using existing programs such as Microsoft and Mosaic.

5. Equalities Impact

- 5.1 The recommendations set out in this report has been fully considered in relation to equality. An Equality Impact Assessment is being undertaken to ensure that due regard is given to the impact that the proposed arrangements might have on all protected groups of people in Derbyshire. This will enable the identification of any groups of people who may be adversely affected by the proposed distribution of HSF grant and in some cases this will be mitigated through third sector grant awards.

6. Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 6.1 One of the aims of Vision Derbyshire is to work collaboratively with district and borough councils. To do that well, it's important for the Council to have efficient and effective processes to both establish our lead role and also to set up any collaborations with minimal disruption to efficiency.

6.2 The pandemic has had a significant impact on communities and key sectors of the economy. The Council is working with its partners to support community recovery across all areas of the county, ensuring equality of access to support.

6.3 This programme will address one of the Council's key priorities which is to provide effective early help for individuals and communities.

7. Other (for example, Health and Safety, Environmental Sustainability, Property and Asset Management, Risk Management and Safeguarding)

7.1 This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Household Support Fund Scheme Guidance



DRAFT Guidance -
Household Support F

CONTROLLED

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CHILDREN'S SERVICES
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DECISION**

Household Support Fund Grant: Approval to use a non-Derbyshire County Council Framework for a contract for the supply of food vouchers

Head of Service Submitting request	Sarah Edwards
Date of Submission	22nd December 2021
Date submitted to Executive Director	22nd December 2021
Executive Director Decision	Approved
Executive Director Approval	<p>Signed:</p>  <p>CAROL CAMMISS</p>
Date of Executive Director Decision	22nd December 2021



FOR PUBLICATION

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

21 December 2021

**URGENT DECISION TAKEN BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF
CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

**Household Support Fund Grant: Approval to use a non-Derbyshire County
Council Framework for a contract for the supply of food vouchers**

1. Divisions Affected

1.1 All

2. Key Decision

2.1 No

3. Purpose

3.1 The purpose of this report is to ask the Executive Director of Children's Services for an urgent decision to use a non-DCC Framework - the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) RM6255 Voucher Framework - to appoint a supplier to provide food vouchers to fulfil the spending plans to utilise the Derbyshire County Council allocation of Household Support Fund. It is proposed that the contractor will be used to supply vouchers for the delivery of one-off winter food vouchers to eligible families in January 2022, with an option to extend the contact to the end of the Framework in March 2023 to ensure the County Council has a contract in place to supply further food vouchers if further funding becomes available.

4. Information and Analysis

4.1 On 30 September 2021, the government announced the Household Support Fund (HSF) which is a package of targeted financial support for vulnerable households most in need over the winter period.

The HSF was issued to County Councils and Unitary Authorities by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to provide support to households who would otherwise struggle to buy food, pay utility bills or meet other essential living costs. Derbyshire County Council's grant allocation is **£5,404,080.90**. The grant covers the period 6 October 2021 to 31 March 2022.

- 4.2 Formal notification of the HSF grant was received on 6 October 2021 and a cross council group worked up the Council's proposals on how to distribute the fund at considerable pace. Once agreed an Urgent Decision Report was approved by the Council's Managing Director on the 11 November 2021. This report will be submitted to Cabinet in January 2022 for the urgent decision to be noted.

As part of the spending plans it was agreed that at least £1.35m of the HSF grant would be used to award of winter food and energy vouchers of £50 to:

- children/families eligible for benefit related free school meals
- care leavers aged up to 21 and
- children in early years settings receiving the pupil premium.

It was agreed that the vouchers would be distributed in January 2022 as this is a time of year that data sets from the Derbyshire Discretionary Fund and other similar schemes indicate is a period when families are most likely to experience hardship.

- 4.3 In order to distribute these vouchers in January 2022 the Council needs to urgently procure a voucher provider. If vouchers are not delivered in January 2022 it is likely to exacerbate hardship for eligible families and young children and increase pressure on the Derbyshire Discretionary Fund helpline – which already sees its highest call volumes each year in the months of January and February.

Failing to have a provider to distribute vouchers would cause the Council to have a significant underspend from the Household Support Fund of at least £1.35m. The lack of a voucher provider would also limit future options for distributing underspends from other elements of the Council's HSF plan or further funding received from the Government after the HSF expires. This report is therefore submitted to the Executive Director of Children's Services for an urgent decision as it is not possible for a decision to be made in accordance with the usual decision making process in the available timeframe.

Proposal to use Crown Commercial Service (CCS) RM6255 Voucher Framework

- 4.4 This Framework has been established by the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) and provides options to contract with 11 providers. Use of this Framework will enable the Council to establish a contract quickly with one of the providers. Call off under the Framework can be made by way of a direct award or mini competition. By using the CCS Framework to appoint a contractor the Council is confident that it will be able to meet its requirements to distribute approximately 27,000 grocery vouchers to vulnerable households in need in January 2022, and retain the option to deliver a further round of vouchers before the end of March 2022 if other elements of the HSF spending plans are underspent.
- 4.5 A Business case has been approved by the Director of Finance and ICT and the Director of Legal and Democratic Services in accordance with Protocol 2A of the County Council's Financial Regulations to procure a contractor to provide food vouchers using the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) RM6255 Voucher Framework. The award of a contract from the CCS Framework is a matter which is delegated to the Executive Director of Children's Services in accordance with Protocol 2b of the County Council's Financial Regulations.
- 4.6 The Department for Work and Pensions have not yet indicated whether the Council will receive additional or ongoing funding upon the HSF expiration at the end of March 2022. However, it is possible more funding could be provided. The Council has received blocks of funding of this nature since November 2020, often with late notification that more funding would be provided for the next period. In addition, there is evidence that the country will experience further disruption from the Omicron variant of COVID 19, which could lead to households experiencing ongoing financial hardship after the end of March 2022, increasing the likelihood of additional funding being granted to Councils. If ongoing funding is provided, it is likely the Council would strongly consider distributing at least some of the funding via food and/or energy vouchers and would require a provider in place to facilitate this. It is therefore proposed the Council uses the CCS Framework to award a contract up to the Framework end date of March 2023 (with the option to extend for two 12 month periods) to ensure a contractor is in place if the Council chooses to distribute further funding via vouchers.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 Not applicable.

6. Alternative Options Considered

- 6.1 The option not to use the CCS Framework and instead utilise a standard procurement method has been considered, but is not appropriate in the circumstances as it would not be possible to have a provider in place to deliver vouchers from January 2022 due the tight timescale.
- 6.3 No other alternative options would guarantee the Council has a provider in place to start distributing the fund from January 2022 due to the timescales involved.

7. Implications

- 7.1 Appendix 1 sets out the relevant implications considered in the preparation of the report.

8. Background Papers

- 8.1 Urgent Decision of the Manging Director – Household Support Fund signed 11/11/21
- 8.2 Voucher Provider Business Case for Protocols 2A – use of a Non-Derbyshire County Council Framework 3/12/21

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1- Implications.

10. Recommendation(s)

That the Executive Director of Children's Services makes an urgent decision:

- to approve the use of the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) RM6255 Voucher Framework to award a contract for the distribution of food vouchers in January 2022 to fulfil the spending plans to utilise the Derbyshire County Council allocation of Household Support Funding, with an option to extend the contract for the life of the CCS Framework, up to March 2023, to ensure the County Council has a contract in place to supply further food vouchers if the Household Support Fund is underspent, or further funding becomes available after March 2022.

11. Reasons for Recommendation(s)

- 11.1 This option is the only option which is available to meet the timescale to distribute vouchers in January 2022.

11.2 Extending the contract to March 2023 and approving a maximum spend through the contract of £5m will ensure the Council can respond to future changes to distribution plans and/or has a suitable method in place to distribute further funding.

12. Is it necessary to waive the call in period?

12.1 Yes.

12.2 Councillor Tony Kemp, Chair of Improvement and Scrutiny Committee – People has approved the waiver of the call in due to the urgent nature of the decision required; he has agreed special urgency applies and supports the action being taken.

Report Author: Sarah Edwards. Head of Service, Programmes Team

Contact details: sarah.edwards@derbyshire.gov.uk

This report has been approved by the following officers:

On behalf of: Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer Director of Finance and ICT	Paul Peat, Principal Solicitor - Legal Services Dean Bettison ACCA, Business Partner, Childrens Services
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Implications

Financial

- 1.1 The Contract will not require the Council to commit any additional funds as the Provider delivers services at no cost to the Council or end user, and instead generates income from the shops and suppliers where the vouchers are spent.

The value of the contract to the contractor appointed via the CCS Framework to deliver the £1.35m vouchers in January 2022 is likely to be approximately £67,000. Providers on the Framework receive differing rates from supermarkets based on the contracting arrangements they have in place, however the majority of providers on the Framework receive a percentage of around of 5%.

If the contract is used to distribute future vouchers up to the CCS Framework end date, it is estimated the upper value the County Council would spend through the contract would not exceed a total of £5m. If the Council were to spend this amount, the maximum value the contractor would receive from the contract would be approximately £250k.

Legal

- 2.1 The Director of Legal and Democratic Services is satisfied that based on the information contained in the report it is appropriate to procure a contractor via the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) RM6255 Voucher Framework for the distribution of food vouchers in January 2022 to fulfil the spending plans to utilise the Derbyshire County Council allocation of Household Support Funding.
- 2.2 The Council's Constitution provides that "notwithstanding any other provision of the Constitution Executive Directors shall have the power, after discussion, if practicable, with the Leader of the Council or the relevant Cabinet Member or Chair, to take such actions deemed to be necessary and expedient in matters requiring urgent consideration and which, because of the timescale involved, or the need to safeguard the interests of the County Council, cannot be dealt with by submission to the next following meeting of the Council, Cabinet, Cabinet Member or Committee.
- 2.3 Improvement and Scrutiny Procedure Rules State: "13(6) The call-in procedure set out above shall not apply where the decision being taken by Cabinet is urgent. A decision will be urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public interest. All reports recommending that decisions be taken should say whether or not it is proposed that call-in be waived. The record of the

decision, and notice by which it is made public, shall state whether in the opinion of the decision-making person or body, the decision is an urgent one, and therefore not subject to call-in. The Chairman of the appropriate Improvement and Scrutiny Committee should agree both the decision proposed is reasonable in all the circumstances and to it being treated as a matter of urgency.

Human Resources

- 3.1 The Childrens Programme's Team, which delivers the supply of vouchers, currently has vacancies and would need to delay or minimise involvement in other departmental programmes if they were to carry out the voucher administration without additional support. Additional support will therefore be required, but this is a matter at that will be dealt with by way of a delegated report to the Executive Director of Children's Services.

Information Technology

- 4.1 There are no additional IT implications. The providers on the Framework all have secure cloud-based systems approved by the Crown Commercial Service and this will be further scrutinised at call off.

Equalities Impact

- 5.1 If a voucher provider is not procured and vouchers are not delivered, those eligible will not be able to access food and/or energy vouchers to relieve hardship.
- 5.2 An Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken when formulating the overall plans to distribute the Household Support Fund. Work is ongoing to identify any gaps and ensure due regard is given to the impact that the arrangements might have on all protected groups of people in Derbyshire.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 6.1 Not applicable

Other (for example, Health and Safety, Environmental Sustainability, Property and Asset Management, Risk Management and Safeguarding)

- 7.1 None

Report Sign Off and Version Control

Report Title	Household Support Fund Grant: Approval to use a non-Derbyshire County Council Framework for a contract for the supply of food vouchers
Author	Sarah Edwards
Meeting and Date	21/12/2021
Version	V1.0
Key Decision (published)	No
Exempt item (notice of private meeting published)	No

Implications	Name and Comments	Date Approved
Finance	Dean Bettison ACCA, Business Partner, Childrens Services	20/12/21
Legal	Paul Peat, Principal Solicitor - Legal Services	20/12/21
Human Resources	NA	
Information Technology	NA	
Equalities	NA	
Corporate Objectives and priorities for change	NA	
Consultation	NA	
Other – please specify		

Author's Directorate Sign Off

		Date
Executive Director	Carol Cammiss	22.12.21
DMT – if applicable		
CMT – if applicable		
Cabinet Member briefed		
Other – please specify		