

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF OFFICER DECISION

DECISION TAKEN BY:

Dave Shipton, Interim Section 151 Officer

DECISION NO:

OD/26/00005

For publication**Subject matter:**

Crisis Resilience Fund (CRF)

Cabinet Member decision to which this action relates:

Decision Number 21/00107

This decision is taken under the authority delegated to the Section 151 Officer by Key Decision 21/00107, which permits acceptance of grant funding and management of that funding within the parameters of that decision. This Officer Decision does not approve or determine any new activity

Decision:

- 1. Accept the Crisis Resilience Fund in full (£19.2m yr 1, £19.2 yr 2 and £22.1m year 3) for use in accordance with the guidance published by Department of Work and Pensions and relevant terms and conditions and manage the grant money under the funding/governance framework put in place by decision 21/00107 via the Council's S151 delegated officer.*

Reason(s) for decision:

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is introducing the Crisis Resilience Fund (CRF), replacing the Household Support Fund (HSF) and incorporating Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP). The fund provides KCC with a multi-year, consolidated grant, enabling a more stable and preventive approach to supporting vulnerable residents.

This Officer Decision is limited solely to the acceptance of the CRF funding allocation under existing delegated authority and within the parameters established by the previous Key Decision 21/00107. Acceptance of the funding at this stage is necessary to avoid financial detriment to the Council; however, it does not constitute approval of any new activity, scheme design, or policy approach.

The detailed policy framework for deployment of the Crisis Resilience Fund (CRF) has not yet been determined and will be the subject of a separate Executive Key Decision in the May 2026 decision cycle. No new CRF funded activity will be launched until that Executive Key Decision has been taken and the future approach formally confirmed.-

Pending the development and approval of that framework, only existing practice previously used under the Household Support Fund (HSF) will continue on a temporary basis, and only where such activity complies with CRF funding conditions. This limited continuation ensures operational continuity, remains fully within existing delegations, and does not commit the Council to any future policy direction or scheme design.

This decision therefore concerns *only* the acceptance of the allocated funding and does not initiate, approve, or predetermine any new activity. Immediate deployment of a new scheme is not required, and no actions are taken through this decision that would exceed current delegations or imply an endorsement of the future CRF policy framework.

The funding covers the period of 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2029 inclusive. This includes specified funding for housing support in the third and final year of delivery. In Year 1 and Year 2, local authorities are expected to maintain existing levels of spending on Housing Payments, using the FYE March 2026 allocations for DHPs as a guide. From Year 3, District Councils will no longer receive an allocation for The Fund. Instead, all the CRF funding will be distributed to Unitary Authorities.

Financial Implications:

This Officer Decision is **strictly limited to the acceptance of the multi-year consolidated revenue grant** allocated to the Council through the Local Government Finance Settlement. The total allocation comprises:

- **£19.2m in Year 1**
- **£19.2m in Year 2**
- **£22.1m in Year 3**, which includes an estimated £2.8m for the consolidated contribution previously distributed to District Councils for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)

Acceptance of this funding is required at this time to respond to the Government's commencement of funding from 1st April 2026 and avoid financial detriment to the Council. If the grant is not drawn down within the timescales set by Government, the Council risks losing access to the allocated resource.

This Officer Decision **does not determine, approve, or pre-empt** how any part of this funding will be spent. It does **not** establish any new schemes, eligibility criteria, financial allocations, or policy positions. No commitments—financial or operational—are made through this decision beyond the receipt of the grant itself.

The policy framework and spending approach for the Community Resilience Fund (CRF) will be brought forward separately for an **Executive Key Decision in the May 2026 cycle**. Only once that decision is taken will any CRF-funded activity be authorised.

Until that point:

- **No new CRF funded activity will commence.**
- Only **existing Household Support Fund (HSF)-style practice** may continue on a temporary basis, and **only** where such activity is compliant with CRF conditions.
- This limited continuity ensures service stability while avoiding any action that might constrain future Executive decision-making or exceed current officer delegations.

Accordingly, the financial effect of this Officer Decision is confined to the formal acceptance and recognition of the grant funding envelope. It creates **no new expenditure obligations, no forward financial commitments, and no determination of future CRF deployment**. All decisions on the use of the funding will be subject to the forthcoming Executive Key Decision process.

Legal implications:

Funding must be used in accordance with the guidance set by Government, and the terms and conditions of the grant. KCC will apply appropriate legal mechanisms as part of issuing or deploying any grant monies to ensure any partners or third parties in receipt of grant funding remain compliant.

Equality Implications:

Projects undertaken using this funding will conduct a full EQIA, and equalities implications will be reviewed as work progresses.

Comments received from any Members or Officers consulted:

The Leader has been consulted and confirms approval for the Corporate Director of Finance to proceed with the Officer Decision to accept and take receipt of the Crisis Resilience Fund grant from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Decline or defer acceptance of CRF – rejected due to loss of funding and inability to meet statutory and strategic objectives.

Any conflict of interest declared by any executive member consulted by the decision maker and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:



03/03/2026

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signed

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date