

# KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF OFFICER DECISION

**DECISION TAKEN BY:**

John Betts – Interim Corporate Director Finance

**DECISION NO:**

OD/22/0005

For Internal Records, Publication Not Required

**Subject matter:**

Household Support Fund Extension

**Cabinet Member decision to which this action relates:**

Decision Number 21/00107

**Decision:**

1. Accept the Household Support Fund Extension in full (£11.065m) for use in accordance with the guidance published by Department of Work and Pensions and relevant terms and conditions, and manage this grant money under the funding/governance framework put in place by decision 21/00107.
2. Approve the full funding of Free School Meals in the May half term and a £50 flat rate to families over the summer holidays (£3.555m).
3. Approve £4.74m to be issued to District and Borough Councils in Kent, with £3.6m ringfenced for pension age residents for energy bills, and the remaining funding allowed for local targeting of support in line with the government guidance.
4. Approve £1.22m for countywide initiatives to support households who need support with energy and water, and essentials linked to energy and water.
5. Approve £1.55m of the Household Support Fund Extension to be used by KCC services including the Kent Support and Assistance Service and other services to distribute to families in financial hardship.

**Reason(s) for decision:**

Government announced in March the Household Support Fund Extension, which is in line with previous Fund. It is appropriate and necessary for these previous arrangements to be noted and the ongoing acceptance and deployment of the Fund to be agreed in consultation with the Leader.

As set out in the ROD for decision 21/00107, the Leader agreed to:

“7. Authorise the Corporate Director Finance in consultation with the Leader, to accept and administer any further grant monies providing they are given by government on very similar terms of reference and that they can be appropriately managed under the funding / governance framework put in place by this decision.”

Government guidance for this fund states that at least one third of the total funding must be spent on families with children and at least one third must be spent on pensioners. The allocations listed above have been calculated to meet this requirement, and reflect the organisations partnered with to distribute the previous Household Support Fund.

**Financial Implications:**

The Household Support Grant provides the Council £11.065m to support the most vulnerable residents in the County over the winter period without a direct impact on the Council’s budget. There is a risk, however, that the costs slightly exceed the amount given, for example if the number of families entitled to free school meals and families in need has increased. In this event, the County Council may have to allocate some of its other Covid related grant funding to cover the additional cost.

**Legal implications:**

All funding awarded must be in line with the [Covid Winter Grant Scheme Policy Funding Framework](#)

This decision comes under the legal implications as set out in the Report for decision 21/00107.

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:**

This decision comes under the equality implications as set out in the Report for decision 21/00107.

**Comments received from any Members or Officers consulted:**

This decision relates to Decision 21/00107. Member comments were sought at that stage and are available via the relevant Decision Report.

The Leader and Cabinet were consulted with the proposal and approved the allocations listed above.

**Any alternatives considered and rejected:**

The option of turning down the grant was rejected as there are many Kent families in need who will benefit from receiving this support.

We considered providing all funding to Districts to deliver through localised solutions however there are some elements of support that would be best provided at a county level, for example Free School Meals.

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

No conflicts declared.

John Betts

17 May 2022

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signed

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date