

RECORD OF DECISION MADE UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

Any interest to declare/ or conflict and any dispensation granted for the Officer or Executive Member
[NO]

Any conflict with any Member of the Panel and the bodies concerned **[NO]**

SERVICE DIRECTORATE: Legal and Community

1. DECISION TAKEN

1.1 Approval to use the April 24 to September 24 Household Support Fund phase 5 (£50,000 + £5k admin) to continue a district wide food education project that was delivered from April 23 to March 24 using Household Support Fund phase 4.

2. DECISION TAKER

2.1 Executive Member for Community and Partnerships, Cllr Val Bryant, in consultation with the Service Director – Legal and Community).

3. DATE DECISION TAKEN:

30.5.24

4. REASON FOR DECISION

4.1 £55,000.00 Household Support Fund phase 5 has been allocated to North Herts Council from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) via Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) for the period April 2024 to September 2024. The funding is to be used to support vulnerable households experiencing food and energy poverty.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 There are no other reasonable alternative options.

6. CONSULTATION (INCLUDING THE EFFECT ON STAKEHOLDERS, PARTNERS, AND THE PUBLIC)

6.1 The Leadership Team have considered the proposals before these were submitted to the Executive Member.

7. FORWARD PLAN

7.1 This decision is not a key Executive decision and has therefore not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

8. BACKGROUND/ RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Previous district/borough Household Support Funding from 2021 to 2023 provided supermarket vouchers to low-income households distributed by partner organisations. This support continues countywide through Citizens Advice and Hertshelp and vouchers provided through schools to families in receipt of free school meals for school holiday support.

- 8.2 In July 2023, a delegated decision was taken to utilise phase 4 of the fund to provide a district wide food education programme from April 2023 to March 2024 to support households to gain the knowledge, skills and confidence to cook low cost healthy meals, in anticipation of this level of support being withdrawn. During this time:
- 8.2.1 177 households received monthly food boxes benefitting 684 individuals and providing 5190 healthy meals from 1038 boxes. Only 5 households dropped out.
 - 8.2.2 681 individual children attended a food education session for under 5's, totalling 1,234 attendances.
 - 8.2.3 8 food education sessions were offered to carers supporting 13 individuals and totalling 44 attendances.
 - 8.2.4 19 food education sessions were provided for disabled adults supporting 51 individuals and totalling 372 attendances.
 - 8.2.5 37 food education sessions were offered to older adults, supporting 211 individuals, and totalling 487 attendances.
 - 8.2.6 Projects were delivered in partnership with Age UK Hertfordshire, First Garden Cities Homes, Carers in Hertfordshire and numerous pre-schools, nursery classes and community groups.
- 8.3 On 6th March 2024, the Chancellor announced a 6 month extension to the current funding at the same value as the 2023/24 programme.
- 8.4 To continue to deliver a programme of this scale under very short timescales, the Community Wellbeing Team wish to:
- 8.4.1 Continue to deliver a programme of face-to-face food education classes for groups in the local community including carers, young people, people living with a disability, families, older people, and culturally diverse households. These programmes will be funded from the 75% allocation for food education.
 - 8.4.2 Continue to deliver food boxes to households who prefer not to access face to face food education classes, containing low cost, healthy ingredients, and recipes for 5 dinners, 5 breakfasts and snacks for a household of 4 to 5 people. These programmes will be funded from the 75% allocation for food education.
 - 8.4.3 Develop and deliver a programme of air frying and slow cooking courses to our deprived communities, working with housing associations and other partners to target those who need it most and supply participants who commit to the programme with an appliance to reduce their energy use in the home. These programmes would be funded from the 25% for energy support. These programmes will be funded from the 25% allocation for food education.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Executive Member has delegated authority to make these Executive decisions under section 14.6.8(b)((ii)A 5 of the constitution, in consultation with the Service Director: Legal & Community. That decision will be subject to a 5 clear working day call-in period, following publication in the Members Information Service (MIS) and on the Council's website.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 75% (£37,500) of the 2024/25 funding is to be used for food education programmes and food boxes. 25% (£12,750) is to be used for energy support this will fund air frying and slow cooking courses for deprived and vulnerable households with

appliances given to committed participants to reduce their home energy consumption. The remaining £5000 is for administration costs.

- 10.2 A purchase order has now been received from HCC for the full allocation of £55,000 and has been invoiced against which HCC have confirmed in writing will be paid on immediate payment terms by HCC. The Community Wellbeing Team Leader has invoiced HCC for the full £55k allocation following receipt of a purchase order. HCC have confirmed in writing this will be paid on immediate payment terms.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The funding criteria means there is a short timeframe for us to use the allocated money to deliver essential support to vulnerable households. Therefore, there is a potential reputational risk associated with not using the full allocation and not delivering the maximum support possible. This decision notice aims to mitigate the risk by allowing experienced officers to make the required preparations and commence delivery quickly.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2 This proposal will target households in the district who are in greatest need and experiencing food poverty.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The Social Value Act and “go local” policy do not apply to the matters contained within this report, as there are no recommendations on procurement.

14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 To support both an increase in the consumption of low cost vegetables and assist with food safety, the programme will focus on cooking with vegetarian ingredients, which is reported by the Vegetarian Society to contribute to reduced carbon emissions.
- 14.2 Air frying and slow cooking have been identified as energy efficient in comparison to oven cooking.

15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 The work will be overseen by existing members of the Community Wellbeing Team.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

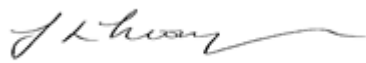
- 16.1 None.

17. APPENDICES

- 17.1 None.

NOTIFICATION DATE

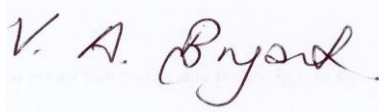
31.5.24



Signature of Service Director Consulted

Date 29.5.24

Signature of Executive Member for Community and Partnerships



Decision Taker

Date 30.5.24

Please Note: that *unless urgency provisions apply* EXECUTIVE decisions cannot be implemented until 5 clear working days have elapsed after the decision has been taken to allow for scrutiny call-in.

Call-in does not apply to NON-EXECUTIVE DECISIONS