

**16 MAY 2022****REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR, PLACE AND COMMUNITIES****PROVISION OF FUNDING FOR CHILDREN ELIGIBLE FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS DURING THE MAY/JUNE HALF TERM SCHOOL HOLIDAY****Purpose of the Report**

1. To approve the use of c£450k of the latest Household Support Fund award to provide holiday food vouchers for those children entitled to Free School Meals during the May 2022 school holidays.

**Information**

2. In October 2021 the Government launched the Household Support Fund, which was due to come to finish in March 2022.
3. The Fund had been used to fund food for Free School Meal (FSM) entitled pupils during the period as well as to provide energy and food support to those households both with and without children. In the Chancellor's spring budget statement on 23 March 2022, it was announced that the Household Support Fund would continue.
4. On 1 April 2022, under the Council's Committee system, the Chief Executive used his urgent decision-making powers to enable the provision of meals to children eligible for FSM during the Easter Holidays.
5. Guidance relating to the distribution of the £5.6million fund was provided by the Government on 1 April 2022. This states that at least one third of the fund must be used to support pensioners and also that one third of the fund must be used to support families with children.
6. As required by Government, plans for deploying the whole of the £5.6m during the period have been developed by a Partnership Steering Group largely comprising of Borough and District Council representatives. Most of the initiatives for spending the money will be the subject of a future key decision(s) report to the Cabinet Member.
7. **Holiday Vouchers for May School Holidays**
8. One of the initiatives ratified by the partnership was to provide holiday food vouchers for the May/June School Holiday to those children entitled to FSM.
9. At the Easter holiday, there were 29,885 children entitled to FSM. It is estimated that this figure may have slightly increased to around 30,000.

10. The report proposes each child would receive vouchers to the value of £3 per day/£15 per week of the holiday. Therefore, the total costs of this proposal for 30,000 children would be £450k

### **Other Options Considered**

11. Not to provide the holiday food vouchers.

### **Reasons for Recommendation**

12. To allow the Council to work with schools to provide holiday food support to eligible families during the forthcoming May School Holidays. This will offer support to over c30,000 eligible pupils across the county.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

13. 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.

### **Financial Implications**

14. The Household Support Fund provided to the Council is £5.6million. The proposal in this report would utilise c£450k of the funding provided to the County.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

- 1) That the Cabinet Member approves the use of the Household Support Fund to provide food vouchers to children entitled to Free School Meals for the May/June 2022 half-term school holiday.

**Derek Higton**  
**Service Director, Place and Communities**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:** Mark Walker, Group Manager, Trading Standards and Communities, 0115 977 2173

### **Constitutional Comments (CEH 16/05/22)**

15. The recommendation falls within the remit of the Cabinet Member for Communities (COM.2).

### **Financial Comments (KRP 16/5/22)**

16. As set out in the report the anticipated costs of £450k will be fully funded from the Household Support Fund provided to the Council of £5.6m.

## **Background Papers and Published Documents**

- None

## **Electoral Divisions and Members Affected**

- All