

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, PLACE AND COMMUNITIES

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND PROGRESS

Purpose of the Report

1. This report is to update the Committee on progress to develop the Fund, to ratify the scheme's design, and to seek approval to establish 5FTE temporary posts to provide staff resource to deliver the County's scheme.

Information

2. Members will recall that the Government allocated £5.6m to the Council to support those in immediate need this winter which needs to be spent by the end of March 2022. The funding is to provide to support with food, energy, and water bills, as well as essential costs related to those items, and (in exceptional cases) to housing costs.
3. A decision was taken at November's Children and Young People's Committee to spend £2.3m of the Fund to provide vouchers to up to 27,500 children for each of the five weeks of school holidays between October and the end of March.
4. Work has continued through the Household Support Fund partnership steering group that includes County, Borough, and District Council colleagues to design and deliver the Nottinghamshire scheme to apply the remaining £3.3m.
5. At the Communities Committee Meeting of the 3rd November, an Urgent Decision report was presented regarding the design and delivery of the remaining £3.3m of the Fund. The Committee decided that:
 - it would provide oversight of the elements of the Fund (£3.3m) not led by the Children and Young Person's Committee
 - further detailed development by officers of the scheme could proceed based on the principles set out in that report
 - the scheme should be launched by mid-November, and
 - that a further report be brought to this Committee to ratify the confirmed scheme.

Recent Progress

6. **Appendix One** to sets out the approach, eligibility criteria and the original planned timetable of phased rollout to deploy the residual funding developed by the partnership Steering Group.

7. The phased rollout of the scheme commenced on 15th November, and applications have been processed and support provided since that date where an assessment of need and eligibility has been made by nominated partnership professionals.
8. **Household Support Fund Central Team** - As agreed by the partnership steering group, the County Council has taken the lead in centrally managing, administering and co-ordinating the delivery of the £5.6m funding.
9. To undertake this, a small team of five posts sitting within the Trading Standards and Communities Service has been recruited to. In line with appropriate delegated authorities, temporary posts were offered and recruited to on a secondment basis, subject to ratification by this Committee.
10. The posts and their associated total costs for the period from appointment to the 31st March are:

Post	Band	FTE	Total Cost to 31 st March £	Start Date
Project Manager	Band C	1.0	19,533	18/11/2021
Project Officer	Band A	1.0	14,563	22/11/2021
Project Officer	Band A	1.0	10,160	01/01/2022
Business Support Administrator	NJE Grade 4	2.0	20,618	22/11/2021
	Total	5	£64,874	

11. **Support delivered** – the paragraph's below set out summary information regarding the support delivered at the time of writing, 5th of December 2021.
12. **School Holiday Vouchers** - The amounts for vouchers deployed by setting for the October **Distribution** Holiday for those children eligible for Free School Meals are:

Channel	Total Value £
Schools and Academies	750,795
Early Years Providers	71,250
Colleges	12,495
Inspire	1,560
RNN Group (Training Provider)	1,560
Education Other than at School (EOTAS)	2,910
Total	£840,570

Note: some of this funding will not have been fully spent, and so any residual will therefore be returned by the providers.

13. **Other support** – as at 5th December, 554 Households have been provided with £42,006 of Support, broken down between 'food' totalling £27,649 and 'energy' totalling £14,357. 348 of

these households have children, and 206 households were without children. Households can receive support for both food and energy if required.

14. For the 206 households without children supported, 164 food awards totalling £6,919 were made and 120 energy awards were made totalling £5,880.

15. For the 348 households with children supported, 292 food awards totalling £20,730 were made, and 173 energy awards were made totalling £8,477.

Other Options Considered

16. Not creating a central team to administer the funding.

Reasons for Recommendations

17. There is pressing needs for support in Communities that the money funding should be used to alleviate as soon as possible.

Statutory and Policy Implications

18. 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

19. £5.6m has been awarded to the Council, and £2.3m has already been committed at the Children and Young People's Committee on 1st November 2021, leaving £3.3m remaining to cover the costs of support and other reasonable administrative costs incurred.

20. The costs of the Household Support Fund team until 31st March is £64.9k and can be met from the Fund as reasonable administration costs.

21. A maximum of £840.6k has been provided to children eligible for Free School Meals to provide food during the October school holidays out of the £2.3m approved. The balance remaining for the Christmas and February holidays to provide food vouchers to those entitled to Free School Meals is £1,459,400.

22. As at 5th December, 555 Households have been provided with £42,006 of support.

23. Once the support cost of £42,006 and the cost of the central team of £64,874 has been applied, the balance remaining of the £3.3m funding is currently £3,193,120.

Human Resources Implications

24. The recruitment process to fill the temporary roles has taken place in accordance with relevant Nottinghamshire County Council human resources recruitment and selection procedures. Relevant existing job descriptions were utilised to ensure the timely recruitment to the posts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:

- 1) Ratifies the Household Support Fund design and progress made to deploy the Fund as set out in the report.
- 2) Ratifies the recruitment to the 5FTE temporary posts established within the Trading Standards and Communities Service to administer delivery of the Fund
- 3) Approves the continuance of the temporary posts until the end of March 2022
- 4) Approves the use of £64.9k of the Fund to cover the 5FTE posts
- 5) Approves that a further report be brought to the next Committee to update and to ratify further development of the scheme.

Derek Higton
Service Director, Place and Communities

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

Constitutional Comments (EKH 02/12/21)

25. The report falls within the remit of Communities Committee. Given the urgent need to action and spend this grant funding given to the Council Officers will need to work with Finance colleagues to get the grant funding included within the Council's revenue budget and reported to the appropriate place in accordance with the Financial Regulations in due course.

Financial Comments (RWK 06/12/21)

26. This report provides information on the proposed use of £5.6 million awarded to the County Council to support those in immediate need this winter. All the costs detailed in the report will be funded from the sum awarded. There will be no additional costs to the County Council.

Human Resources Comments (JP 02/12/21)

27. The HR implications are contained within the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All