

Nottingham City Council Delegated Decision



Reference Number:	4898
Author:	Lee Kimberley
Department:	People
Contact:	Lee Kimberley (Job Title: Head of Nottingham Catering, Email: lee.kimberley@nottinghamcity.gov.uk, Phone: 01158765432)
Subject:	Acceptance and Allocation of Household Support Fund 4 Grant
Key Decision (decision valued at more than £1million):	Yes
Key Decision (decision affects 2 or more wards):	Yes
Total Value:	£7,113,868.00 (Type: Revenue)
Decision Being Taken:	1. Accept the latest Household Support Fund 4 grant from the Department for Work and Pensions, confirmed as £7,113,868.00 for the period April 2023 to March 2024. 2. Approve that the existing working group makes recommendations about how the grant should be allocated, in conjunction with the Cost of Living Steering Group; 3. delegate authority to the Director of Education to allocate the grant, based on recommendations as set out in (2), which will be subject to the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and in accordance with the grant conditions from Government. 4. To approve the call off through Crown Commercial Framework RM6255, to Sodexo for the supply of Supermarket Vouchers for FSM children and Vulnerable Residents.
Reasons for the Decision(s)	The Government have extended HSF grant support for vulnerable families to continue from the end of the current scheme in from 1st April 2023 until 31st March 2024, with a further March 2023 until the end of March 2024.) The purpose of the grant is to provide support to certain local authorities in England for expenditure lawfully incurred or to be incurred by them in accordance with the Grant Conditions to provide support to households, who would otherwise struggle to buy food or pay essential utility bills or meet other essential living costs or housing costs (in exceptional cases of genuine emergency), to help them with significantly rising living costs. A direct award through Crown Commercial Contract RN6255 to Sodexo is required to procure the supermarket food vouchers in time to support this scheme for the April 2023 school holiday period and for subsequent vouchers for school holidays and for vulnerable residents.

Briefing notes documents: FINAL Household Support Fund (2023-2024) Launch Letter.docx

Other Options Considered: There is an option not to accept and administer this grant from the government but that would not be in the best interests of the city so has not been considered further.

Background Papers: None

Published Works: None

Affected Wards: Citywide

Colleague / Councillor Interests: None.

Consultations: Those not consulted are not directly affected by the decision.

Crime and Disorder Implications: The council is required by the grant to consider the risks of fraud and take steps to prevent and detect any fraudulent activity and report this to the DWP.

Equality: Please login to the system to view the EIA document: EIA Acceptance and Allocation of Household Support Fund 4 16-3-23 Final.pdf

Social Value Considerations: N/A

Decision Type: Leader's Key Decision

Subject to Call In: No
The call-in procedure does not apply to the proposed decision because the delay likely to be caused by the call in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public's interests. The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (or Vice-Chair) in his/her absence has been consulted and agreed both that the decision proposed is reasonable in all circumstances and that it should be treated as a matter of urgency.

Person Consulted: Councillor Sam Gardiner
Consultation Date: 16/03/2023

The DWP grant notification did not allow time to enable the usual notice and call-in process and enable the distribution of support for Easter holiday period to be made successfully. The council has continued to provide holiday support to its vulnerable children to tackle the current cost of living crisis, providing supermarket vouchers to 18,500 FSM eligible children since the commencement of the Household Support Fund. The schools will need to distribute vouchers directly to parents in advance of the commencement of the Easter holiday commencing 3rd April 2023, meaning that the vouchers need to be obtained and distributed to schools week commencing 27th March 2023 at the latest. Other forms of support will commence from May 2023 onwards to support residents with energy and food vouchers as well as support via community organisations such as Food Banks.

Advice Sought:

Legal, Finance, Procurement, Equality and Diversity

Legal Advice:

The HSF grant will be subject to grant terms and conditions which must be adhered to, failing which clawback of the grant could be sought by the grant funder. Any contracts procured with the funding must be in compliance with public procurement rules and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. The proposed use of a framework agreement to award a contract to Sodexo is in compliance with such rules provided that the procedure for call-off from the framework is fully adhered to. Advice provided by Sarah O'Bradaigh (senior solicitor) on 21/03/2023.

Finance Advice:

The Household Support grant provides support for vulnerable families who struggle to meet costs of food, essential utility bills and other essential living costs. The grant has been extended for a further year from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024 and the amount of the grant available to Nottingham is £7,113,868. Expenditure needs to be in accordance with the grant conditions to avoid the risk of clawback and grant should be spent or committed before 31 March 2024 and cannot be carried over for future usage. The financial advice is to recommend acceptance of the grant for the benefit of supporting vulnerable families in Nottingham, subject to adherence to the associated grant conditions. Advice provided by Paul Stevenson (Interim Strategic Finance Business Partner) on 20/03/2023.

Procurement Advice:

The proposal involves using a framework to enter into a contract. The framework has specific call-off terms for awarding contracts. Provided the framework process is followed, the award of contract would be compliant with procurement law and therefore there would be no significant Procurement concerns Advice provided by Utari Wytchard (Procurement officer) on 17/03/2023.

**Equality and Diversity
Advice:**

EIA has been submitted for this proposal. Comments were provided for consideration by the Equality & Employability team. Comments have now been addressed and a final EIA has been signed off. EIA will need to be updated is there are any further changes to this proposal. Advice provided by Nasreen Miah (Equality & employability consultant) on 16/03/2023.

Signatures:

David Mellen (Leader/ PH Strategic Regeneration Communications)
SIGNED and Dated: 24/03/2023
Catherine Underwood (Corporate Director for People)
SIGNED and Dated: 23/03/2023