

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Public Health
Date:	23 May 2018
Title:	Local Welfare Assistance (LWA) funding (2018-20)
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

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1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Executive Member for Public Health gives approval to make grants from the Local Welfare Assistance (LWA) budget totalling £80,500 over 2 years (2018-20) to the Borough/District Councils as set out in table 1 in 4.2 of the report to support families in crisis.
- 1.2 That the Executive Member for Public Health delegates authority to the Director of Children's Services in consultation with the Executive Member, to award grants over £5,000 to any of the Councils listed in 4.2 of the report from any underspend of the original grant allocation to facilitate the full distribution of the total grant funding of £80,500.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. The purpose of this paper is to provide the Executive Member with an overview of LWA in Hampshire and its alignment with Hampshire's Supporting Families Programme (SFP).
- 2.2. The LWA budget falls under the authority of the SFP so approval of LWA spend is required by the Executive Member for the SFP.
- 2.3. This paper sets out a proposal to use the Hampshire LWA budget, over two years (2018-20), to provide SFP Local Co-ordination Groups (LCGs) with funding to provide additional support to SFP families. An overview of how the LWA Crisis Funding could be used locally by LCGs is also provided.

3. Contextual information

- 3.1. The provision of on-going Government funding for LWA ceased in March 2015. A finite budget has been identified utilising unspent funds of delivering LWA over a period of 3 to 5 years. This funding is required to support vulnerable families so there is a clear link with those families who are part of the SFP cohort.

- 3.2. The Hampshire model is built upon a vision to manage crisis and critical need proportionally through a three tiered approach;
- 3.2.1 What can the individual do for themselves – have all the options available to them been explored?
 - 3.2.2 What community based organisations (local, national, statutory and third sector) could help to resolve the immediate crisis?
 - 3.2.3 Where are the gaps in practical support that LWA can contribute to addressing?
- 3.3. There are three main areas of need that have been prominent within comprehensive local and national research and the subsequent development and delivery of the Hampshire LWA model;
- Food
 - Fuel
 - Furniture (Including white goods)
- 3.4. LWA funding has been used by Hampshire County Council to fund and support innovative solutions to welfare concerns throughout Hampshire. Other projects funded by the LWA include the Local Welfare Assistance line, The Furniture Reuse Network and Fuel Poverty payments (managed through the LWA telephone helpline).
- 3.5. Through the continued commitment of Hampshire County Council to deliver crisis support to vulnerable residents, providing funding to families in crisis has remained a key priority focus. Consultation with SFP local Senior Responsible Offices and local partners in each borough/district council area has provided an opportunity to extend the reach of the LWA funding to SFP Families.
- 3.6. Current SFP funding has been used by local groups to fund some small one off crisis payments, to support and engage families within the programme.
- 3.7. The focus of this collaboration would be to ensure that LWA is meeting the crisis needs of families engaged in support from Hampshire's SFP and that support provided is in line with the agreed family plan.

4 Finance

- 4.1 Proposed funding for this provision will be £80,500 over two years with an initial commitment to allocate £40,250 across SFP Local Coordination Groups. At the end of 2017/18 there was £330,000 remaining in the LWA budget.
- 4.2 The funding would be allocated in line with SFP LCG borough/district funding allocations, based on local borough/district target numbers of families in both 2018/19 and 2019/20 (see Table 1). Borough/District Councils in Hampshire act as the bankers for SFP grants.

District	Local Welfare Crisis Budget for 2018/19 and 2019/20 To be allocated in two equal payments
East Hampshire	£4,200
Fareham	£4,400
Gosport	£10,000
Havant	£10,000
Winchester	£4,200
Test Valley	£7,900
New Forest	£7,400
Eastleigh	£6,400
Basingstoke	£19,400
Hart and Rushmoor	£6,600
	£80,500

- 4.3 Due to the nature of the funding it is understood goods and or services will need to be accessed quickly and funding requests will need a rapid resolution. SFP Senior Responsible Officers (SRO)/SFP LCGs will be accountable for the correct use of the funds, including ensuring value for money
- 4.4 Funding request forms will be submitted to the SRO/SFP LCG and kept as a record of spending. Copies of funding request forms will be required to be submitted quarterly to the SFP Central Team for audit and monitoring purposes.
- 4.5 It is proposed LWA grants will be made annually in both 2018/19 and 2019/20 to allow adjustment in the second year if required. It is proposed that if any variation is required in 2019/20 to the allocation made to districts this authority is delegated to the Director of Childrens Services in consultation with the Executive Member. All grants will be made in line with HCC policy and relevant terms/conditions will apply.

5 Performance

- 5.1 As per 4.4 the amount and type of LWA spend in each borough/district will be audited/monitored.

6 Consultation and Equalities

- 6.1 An equalities impact assessment was completed by the programme team as part of the initial programme planning in October 2012. This highlighted that the programme may disproportionately impact upon families within particular age groups and families with women in the household due to the Government's definition of a troubled family in Phase 1 of the programme.
- 6.2 The extended Government criteria used to identify Phase 2 families since

2015 means that virtually all families in need of support from the programme can now be considered.

7 Other Key Issues

7.1 LWA payments are to be considered as a one off for families and only used when other options have been explored. Funding requests should be agreed locally as with local governance of the SFP funding. Funding should be allocated in line with the LWA definition of crisis which is:

- LWA payments should only be made if unavoidable. Where possible providers need to determine that the emergency is not the result of an act or omission for which the individual or partner is responsible and that they could not have taken reasonable steps to avoid. This means considering circumstances such as gambling losses, selling of existing goods, intentional unemployment.
- Access to goods and voucher fulfilment will be to respond where there is a potential serious risk to the health and safety of an individual and / or a member of their family.
- Crisis covers day-to-day living expenses and essential items and services that can clearly be identified as resolving immediate crisis and risk.
- Discretionary outcomes should be accessed where no other resolution exists or can be found.
- Discretionary outcomes will only be available to individuals known to a service or provider that is working with them to address social causes of crisis and family problems.

7.2 Families will only be eligible for this funding if they are on the SFP programme (or entering into the programme). Details of the crisis should be recorded as a part of the family plan that is required for all SFP families.

7.3 LWA resolutions should be seen as a last resort and not form part of SFP core service delivery. Where existing solutions and support are available, regardless of time or difficulty these should be explored and accessed first. This includes contacting the LWA line for assistance and using the furniture re-use network where possible.

7.4 Examples of how LWA funding should be used, but not limited to:

- Carpet
- Furniture (essentials only). Furniture re-use networks should be explored first before new items.
- White goods
- Transport
- Clothing
- Baby essentials
- Safeguarding, for example changing locks.

- Where an intervention is highly likely to reduce the future likelihood of crisis or risk.

8 Future direction

8.1 The Supporting Families Programme is funded up to 31/3/2020 by Government and as it stands the Supporting Families Programme will end at that point. Should this remain the case and if there is likely to be any unallocated LWA funding left at that stage this will be reported to the Executive Member in 2019/20.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Strategic Plan**

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	yes
OR	
This proposal does not link to the Strategic Plan but, nevertheless, requires a decision because: Not applicable.	

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Supporting (Troubled) Families Programme	29/10/12
Supporting (Troubled) Families Programme update	22/7/13
Supporting Troubled Families in Hampshire Programme Update and Preparations for Phase 2	14/12/14
Supporting (troubled) Families Programme (STFP) Executive Members update report	26/7/17
Supporting (Troubled) Families Programme (STFP) update to Cabinet.	15/9/17
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
DCLG Financial Framework for the Expanded Troubled Families Programme https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/financialframework-for-the-expanded-troubled-families-programme	April 2015
DCLG Supporting disadvantaged families Troubled Families Programme 2015-20: Progress so far https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/611991/Supporting_disadvantaged_families.pdf	April 2017

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equality Duty

8.2 The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- 8.2.1 The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- 8.2.2 Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- 8.2.3 Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

8.3 Equalities Impact Assessment:

- 8.3.1 An equalities impact assessment was completed by the SFP central team as part of the initial programme planning in October 2012. This highlighted that the programme may disproportionately impact upon families within particular age groups and families with women in the household due to the restrictive Government definition of a troubled family in phase 1. The extended Govt criteria used to identify phase 2 families means this is no longer the case.
- 8.3.2 This is a positive programme designed to improve the lives of some of Hampshire's most troubled families and communities, and therefore the impacts are likely to be positive.

9 Impact on Crime and Disorder:

- 9.1 A key objective of the programme remains to reduce offending and anti social behaviour amongst families targeted for support.

10 Climate Change:

- 10.1.1 How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption? Not applicable

10.1.2 How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts? Not applicable