

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Lead Member for Children's Services and Young People
Date:	2 February 2021
Title:	COVID Winter Grants – Holiday Activities and Community Grants
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for grant awards to organisations offering holiday activity and food schemes to vulnerable children during the February half term holiday.

Recommendation(s)

2. It is recommended that the Executive Lead Member approves the award of grants to the organisations identified in Appendix 1 to this report to a total value of £121,275.
3. It is recommended that the Executive Lead Member delegates authority to the Director of Children's Services to approve any future grants awards for February half term activity and food schemes in consultation with the Executive Lead Member up to the total value of £198,725.
4. It is recommended that the Executive Lead Member delegates approval to the Director of Children's Services to approve the reallocation of any COVID Winter Grants remaining or underspent funds to organisations delivering services that meet the criteria of the grant set out in paragraph 8 in consultation with the Executive Lead Member.

Contextual Information

5. On 8 November 2020, the government announced a significant package of extra targeted financial support for those in need over the winter period.
6. The £170 million COVID Winter Grant Scheme is being distributed through County and Unitary Councils and aims to support those most in need across England with the cost of food, energy and water bills and other associated costs.
7. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), the government department that is providing the funding, expects top tier local authorities to administer the scheme and provide direct assistance to vulnerable households and families with children particularly affected by the pandemic. This is expected to include families whose children are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) as well as those who qualify by age for the universal free school meal offer.
8. The conditions of the COVID Winter Grant are that:
 - at least 80% of the total funding will be ring-fenced to support families with children, with up to 20% of the total funding allocated for other types of households, including individuals.
 - at least 80% of the total funding will be ring-fenced to provide support with food, energy and water bills (including sewerage), with up to 20% made available for other essential items.
9. Hampshire's share of the COVID Winter Grant is £2.898M, to be spent between December 2020 and 31 March 2021.

Hampshire's Approach

10. In her decision day on 9 December 2020, the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services and Young People approved funding for a variety of initiatives providing direct financial support to vulnerable households this winter, with a particular focus on food and fuel support.
11. This included:
 - a. Distribution of funding to schools, colleges and childcare providers to provide food vouchers to eligible children for the December and February school holidays.
 - b. Discretionary grants for schools and colleges to support families experiencing financial difficulty.
 - c. Funding to provide food and fuel vouchers to care leavers.
 - d. A grant to the Hampshire Young Carers Alliance to support young carers.

- e. Funding to provide food vouchers to frontline agencies working with families including domestic abuse organisations, health visitors and social work teams.
- f. A grant to Citizens Advice to provide fuel support to vulnerable households.
- g. Funding to enable the establishment of a community pantry in each district of Hampshire.
- h. A community grant fund available to organisations working with local communities.

12. These initiatives are being delivered under a programme of work named 'Connect4Communities'.

13. In the 9 December 2020 report, approval was sought to invite grant applications from organisations able to provide holiday activity and food schemes in the February half term school holiday. £320,000 was set aside to fund such schemes, with the intention to provide a comprehensive Hampshire wide offer that would be subject to a separate Executive Member decision. The latest Covid-19 lockdown, the partial closure of schools and uncertainty as to whether any changes in guidance would affect the childcare offer means that the County Council has had to scale back its intentions for the February half term. Detailed assessment of what can be offered within the current Covid guidelines, working with providers and Public Health, has resulted in the need for an urgent decision such that, where possible, free of charge provision can be offered to vulnerable children.

14. The County Council has received a number of applications from existing holiday activity providers who are able to offer activity schemes over the February half term holiday. These applications for funding have been evaluated and assessed against data showing areas of highest need (based on uptake of benefits related free school meals). Furthermore, County Council officers have had to confirm with any schools identified as the base for such schemes, that the school is satisfied that the holiday activity provider can operate in their premises.

15. Appendix 1 of this report identifies seven holiday activity and food providers offering over 4,000 free spaces for free school meal eligible children over half term. Approval to award a total of £121,275 funding to these organisations is sought in this report.

16. Further applications for February half term holiday activity schemes have been submitted and are currently being assessed, and there is potential for further applications to be received in the forthcoming weeks. To aid rapid decision making, it is recommended the Executive Lead Member delegates authority to the Director of Children's Services to approve and future grants for February

half term activity and food schemes in consultation with the Executive Lead Member up to the total value of £198,725.

17. In the event that there is funding remaining from the £320,000 originally allocated for holiday activity and food schemes, it is proposed that such unallocated funding is transferred to the community grant fund or other initiatives forming part of the connect4communities programme that would benefit from additional funding, such as discretionary grants to schools.

Finance

18. A summary of the connect4communities funding in scope of this report is set out in table 1:

Table 1

Connect4Communities – Hampshire’s Winter Grant Scheme Holiday Activities and Food Funding	
Component	
Original Connect4Community Holiday Activities & Meals Scheme – February half term allocation	£320,000
Grant awards included in this report	£121,275
Balance	£198,725

Performance

19. All funding granted to third party organisations (including schools, colleges and early years providers) will be supported by a grant agreement setting out the conditions of the funding as well as reporting requirements.
20. Third party organisations will be required to report to the County Council on how they have spent the funding provided, in line with the DWP grant criteria set out in paragraph 13.

Consultation and Equalities

21. An Equalities Impact Assessment was completed as part of the 9 December 2020 report.

Conclusions and Recommendations

22. It is recommended that the Executive Lead Member approves the award of grants to the organisations identified in Appendix 1 to this report to a total value of £121,275.

23. It is recommended that the Executive Lead Member delegates authority to the Director of Children's Services to approve any future grants awards for February half term activity and food schemes in consultation with the Executive Lead Member up to the total value of £198,725.

24. It is recommended that the Executive Lead Member delegates approval to the Director of Children's Services to approve the reallocation of any COVID Winter Grants remaining or underspent funds to organisations delivering services that meet the criteria of the grant set out in paragraph 8 in consultation with the Executive Lead Member.

Appendix 1 – Recommended Grant Awards

1. CM Sport (Hampshire), the sum of £76,500

CM Sport will provide 2,400 free spaces to vulnerable children, between the ages of 4-14 years, during February half-term at Trosnant Junior School, Riders Junior School, Bidbury Infant, St Columba C of E Primary, Wallisdean Junior School, Alver Valley School, St Peters Primary, St Anthony's Primary, Rucstall Primary, Bordon Junior School, Liss Junior School, Herne Junior School, Wootey Junior School, Guillemont Junior School, St. Patrick's Primary and Horndean Infant School. CM Sport will provide childcare and hot meal for 30 children per day in each location.

2. Hayley Oliver (Basingstoke), the sum of £650

Hayley Oliver (childminder) will provide two free spaces to free school meal eligible children, between the ages of 4-14 years, during February half-term at her childminder setting. Hayley will provide a meal, snacks and activities to the children. These children attend Hayley's provision after school and the funding would enable them to attend full time during the half-term.

3. Tree Tops Holiday Club (Basingstoke, East Hants, Eastleigh), the sum of £10,950

Tree Tops Holiday Club will provide 600 free spaces to vulnerable children, between the ages of 4-14 years, during February half-term at Tadley Primary School, Medstead Primary School, The Butts Primary School and Kings Copse Primary School. The Club will provide childcare and hot lunch for 30 children per day in each location.

4. Sport Skool (Winchester), the sum of £7,875

Sport Skool Ltd will provide 300 free spaces to vulnerable children, between the ages of 5-13 years, during February half-term at The Westgate School and John Keble C of E Primary. Sport Skool will provide childcare and hot lunch for 30 children per day at each location.

5. Active8 Minds (Havant, East Hants, Fareham), the sum of £10,500

Active8 Minds will provide 400 free spaces to vulnerable children, between the ages of 5-13 years, during February half-term at the Springwood Federation Waterlooville, Langrish Primary, Emsworth Primary and St Matthew's C of E Liss. Active8 Minds will provide childcare and hot lunch for 20 children per day at each location.

6. 360 Degrees Sport Coaching (Eastleigh, Test Valley, Winchester Hampshire), the sum of £12,000

360 Degrees Sport Coaching will provide 300 free spaces to vulnerable children between the ages of 5-14 years, during February half-term at The Romsey School, Weeke Primary School, Wallop Primary School and the Pavilion on the Park, Eastleigh. 360 Degrees will provide childcare and a hot lunch for 20 children per day at each location.

7. Fun House Nursery (Basingstoke), the sum of £2,800

Fun House Nursery will be providing 32 free spaces to vulnerable children between the ages of 4-11 years, during the February half-term. Fun House will provide childcare and fresh healthy meals for 16 children per day.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND 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:	no
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:	
<u>Title</u> Covid Winter Grants – Executive Lead Member for Children’s Services and Young People Decision Day	<u>Date</u> 9 December 2020
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents	
<p>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.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

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 by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

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

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

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

Equalities Impact Assessments have been completed for each project.