

**NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE**  
**CORPORATE DIRECTOR DECISION**

**29<sup>TH</sup> June 2021**

**COVID LOCAL SUPPORT GRANT – SUMMER 2021 SCHOOL HOLIDAY PERIOD**

**1.0 Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To set out, and seek approval for, the deployment of the Covid Local Support Grant allocation for the Summer 2021 school holiday period to support vulnerable households and families with children affected by the pandemic.
- 1.2 As this matter has arisen so urgently, there has not been time to comply with all the Access to Information Procedure Rules around the taking of key decisions. Appropriate consents have therefore been sought from and granted by the Chair of the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Chairman of the County Council to this matter being dealt with under the special urgency and call in exemption procedures respectively.

**2.0 Background**

- 2.1 On 8 November 2020, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) announced £170m ring-fenced Covid Winter Grant funding for targeted financial support for vulnerable households and families with children affected by the pandemic and in need over the winter period to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. This included families who normally have access to Free School Meals during term time. Local authorities received further details, including individual LA allocations, on 11 November 2020. DWP issued specific scheme guidance on 19 November 2020. On the 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021, a further notification was received from DWP announcing an extension of the Covid Winter Grant to provide support for the full two week Easter 2021 school holiday period rather just the initial 3 days of the holiday period to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.
- 2.2 North Yorkshire County Council received an allocation of £1,435,400.85 through the original Grant and a further £499,013 through the Grant extension.
- 2.3 On 26<sup>th</sup> November 2020, the Chief Executive approved a local eligibility framework. The objective of the scheme was delivered through a range of grant payments to schools and academies, early years' providers and post-16 schools and colleges. Funding allocations were also made to support eligible Care Leavers and through the North Yorkshire Local Assistance Fund (NYLAF). The final deployment of the Covid Winter Grant was reported to the Executive on the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2021.
- 2.5 Schools and academies, early years providers and post-16 schools and colleges were provided with an allocation based on free school meal or pupil premium data

with **up to** 20% additional grant payments enabling them to use discretion to support more families based on local understanding of the needs of pupils and their families. Payments were also made to care leavers living independently or semi-independently, care leavers living in supported lodgings and those living in independent emergency accommodation. Payments were made through supermarket vouchers. In total, up to an estimated 17,800 individuals have benefited from the scheme over the three school holiday periods.

2.6 Covid Winter Grant payment allocations have been made for each school holiday period on the following basis:

- Christmas 2020 (2 weeks) - £20 per week per eligible child
- February 2021 half term (1 week) - £15 per week per eligible child
- Easter 2021 (2 weeks) - £15 per week per eligible child + £20 one off allocation per eligible child.

2.7 The Covid grant support arrangements have been further extended by the DWP to cover Summer 2021 through the Covid Local Support Grant (CLSG).

### **3.0 Covid Local Support Grant**

3.1 On the 14<sup>th</sup> April 2021, the DWP announced a further extension of the Covid grant support for vulnerable families through the CLSG. This funding was up to 20 June 2021, with a further £40 million of support provided nationally. North Yorkshire County Council will receive a funding allocation of £337,741. The CLSG support continued on the same basis as the Covid Winter Grant and supermarket vouchers at £15 per week per eligible child were provided to cover the one week of the Summer 2021 half term school holiday. The 'up to 20% discretionary element' was retained so that those families identified over the previous holiday periods were able to continue to benefit over the Summer 2021 half term. The cost of funding the voucher support is still to be finalised, but is estimated to be £293,235. £25k of the remaining balance was allocated to the North Yorkshire Local Assistance Fund (NYLAF) for the provision of support to vulnerable families and individuals who fall outside of the main distribution of the Grant and the remainder (approx. £19.5k), has been retained by the Local Authority as a contribution towards the Grant administration costs.

3.2 The CLSG has the same eligibility criteria as the previous Covid Winter Grant Scheme.

3.3 On the 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2021 DWP announced a further, and final, extension of the Covid Local Support Grant to cover the period 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021. North Yorkshire County Council will receive a grant allocation of £1,350,966.

3.4 It is proposed that the CLSG support is continued on the same basis as previous grant allocations. The grant funding plus a Local Authority contribution (£94k), which will be funded from Covid support grant funds previously retained by the LA for administration of the grant, will allow for supermarket vouchers to the value of £75 per eligible child to be provided for the Summer 2021 school holiday period. The voucher support equates to £15 per week per eligible child for the five full weeks of the Summer 2021 school holiday period. It is intended that all vouchers will be distributed by the 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2021 (before the end of school term prior to the school holiday period). It is intended to retain the 'up to 20% discretionary element' so that

those families identified over the previous holiday periods can continue to benefit over the Summer 2021 holiday period. The estimated cost of the funding support is £1,445,085.

- 3.5 At this stage, the Local Authority is not intending to retain any of the grant funding provided through the extension of the CLSG for administration purposes.
- 3.6 The DfE and DWP have confirmed that disadvantaged pupils are able to benefit from support from both the DWP Covid Local Support Grant and the DfE Holiday Activities and Food Programme over the Summer 2021 holiday period.

#### 4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 Financial modelling has been undertaken; indicative funding allocations are as follows:

Description	Estimated Cost for Summer Holiday Period	Potential Number of Recipients
Schools and Academies (Reception – Y11)	£1,161,600	15,488
Early Years Providers	£197,850	2,638
Schools and Academies (Post-16)	£50,700	676
Care Leavers	£16,575	221
Admin Fees for Third Party Distributors	£18,360	0
North Yorkshire Local Assistance Fund (NYLAF)	0	0
NYCC Administration Cost	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,350,966</b>	<b>19,023</b>

- 4.3 The financial modelling includes allocations up to an additional 20% for schools, academies, colleges and early years' providers to use discretion to deploy vouchers to vulnerable households and families with children.
- 4.4 Payments will be made in early July prior to the end of the Summer term. Following the Covid support scheme grant processes, it is anticipated that schools, academies, colleges and early years' providers will have experience of organising, purchasing and deploying vouchers.

#### 5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 There are no legal implications identified for this report other than those identified in paragraph 1.2

#### 6.0 Equalities Implications

- 6.1 The Department for Work and Pensions has undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment on the national scheme. For the local implementation of the Covid support scheme in North Yorkshire, an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) form has been undertaken and can be found at **Appendix 1**. There has been no change in the

proposed eligibility for the scheme – the financial modelling has changed the duration and rate in response to the CLSG funding allocation.

## **7.0 Communication Implications**

- 7.1 Information on the scheme, conditions of grant and monitoring forms will be provided to schools and academies through the normal communication channels. Early Years providers will be contacted directly by letter.
- 7.2 In addition to press releases, details of the scheme will be communicated through social media including: LinkedIn, twitter.

## **8.0 Risk Management Implications**

- 8.1 The local authority will transfer cash funding to schools, academies and early years providers as a grant. This will be accompanied by conditions of grant which stipulate how the grant scheme should be administered. To reduce the risk of fraud, schools will be required to buy and distribute supermarket vouchers rather than cash or hampers. Schools, academies and early years' providers will be required to complete and return a monitoring form to the local authority. In addition, they will be required to maintain an audit log of recipients for audit purposes. It will be made clear in the conditions of grant that the local authority reserves the right to inspect records on the distribution of grant funding.
- 8.2 The local authority seeks to receive monitoring forms from schools, academies and early years' providers very quickly following the half term holiday period in order to evaluate the grant scheme. Given that there are up to 1,000 organisations that range from 1,500 pupil secondary schools to 20 pupil primary schools and from multi-setting day nurseries through to individual childminders, there may be some non-response or late returns. The local authority will put in place arrangements to chase up on returns prior to, and following, the Summer holiday period.

## **9.0 Recommendation**

- 9.1 It is recommended that the Corporate Director - Children and Young People's Services:
- (i) approves the deployment of funding to schools, academies, colleges and early years' providers to provide supermarket vouchers totalling £75 per eligible child (£15 per week for 5 weeks) prior to the start of the Summer 2021 school holiday break.
- (ii) approves the allocation of supermarket vouchers totalling £75 (£15 per week for 5 weeks) per eligible care leaver prior to the start of the Summer 2021 school break.

*Report Prepared by Howard Emmett, Assistant Director – Strategic Resources*

## Equality impact assessment (EIA) form: evidencing paying due regard to protected characteristics

(Form updated April 2019)

### Covid Winter Grant Scheme

If you would like this information in another language or format such as Braille, large print or audio, please contact the Communications Unit on 01609 53 2013 or email [communications@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:communications@northyorks.gov.uk).



যদি আপনি এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায় বা ফরমেটে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদেরকে বলুন।

如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھئے۔

Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are public documents. EIAs accompanying reports going to County Councillors for decisions are published with the committee papers on our website and are available in hard copy at the relevant meeting. To help people to find completed EIAs we also publish them in the Equality and Diversity section of our website. This will help people to see for themselves how we have paid due regard in order to meet statutory requirements.

Name of Directorate and Service Area	CYPS – All Directorates
Lead Officer and contact details	Howard Emmett, AD Strategic Resources <a href="mailto:Howard.Emmett@northyorks.gov.uk">Howard.Emmett@northyorks.gov.uk</a> 01609 532118
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the EIA	Amanda Newbold, AD Education and Skills Sally Dunn, Head of Finance Iain Pick, Strategy and Performance Alice Wild, Project Manager
How will you pay due regard? e.g. working group, individual officer	Working Group

When did the due regard process start?	17 November 2020
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**Section 1. Please describe briefly what this EIA is about.** (e.g. are you starting a new service, changing how you do something, stopping doing something?)

On Sunday 8 November 2020, the government announced a significant package of extra-targeted financial support for those in need over the winter period.

The £170 million COVID Winter Grant Scheme, which will be made available in the next month, will see new funding issued to County Councils and Unitary Authorities (including Metropolitan Councils and London Boroughs), to support those most in need across England with the cost of food, energy and water bills and other associated costs.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will provide funding to County Councils and Unitary Authorities, under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003, who will administer the scheme and provide direct assistance to vulnerable households and families with children particularly affected by the pandemic. This will include some families who normally have access to Free School Meals during term time. County Councils and Unitary Authorities in England will have the ability to deliver the scheme through vouchers or grants for example.

This funding will be ring-fenced and cover the period until the end of March 2021. It will be distributed by County Councils or Unitary Authorities in England, who will have the ability to deliver the scheme through vouchers or grants. The scheme was extended through the Covid Local Support Grant through to June, and subsequently over the summer holiday period to September 2021.

There will be a requirement to provide DWP with MI to help us understand which groups have benefited from grants, the administrative costs and payment assurance.

Grant payments will be made to schools, academies and early years' providers to provide support (in the form of supermarket vouchers) to vulnerable households and families with children. Vouchers will also be provided to eligible Care Leavers.

**Section 2. Why is this being proposed? What are the aims? What does the authority hope to achieve by it?** (e.g. to save money, meet increased demand, do things in a better way.)

This is being proposed due to additional funding being received by the government. This will be a temporary change for vulnerable households and families with children in receipt of additional vouchers during the Christmas holidays in 2020 and February half term 2021. This has been extended over Easter and Summer term and the latest – and final – allocation relates to the summer holiday period 2021.

**Section 3. What will change? What will be different for customers and/or staff?**

There will be no long-term changes for staff. Input has been required from staff in Finance, Legal, Education and Skills and project management in the short-term.

Some additional work will be required from schools, EY providers, academies and colleges to distribute the vouchers.

**Section 4. Involvement and consultation** (What involvement and consultation has been done regarding the proposal and what are the results? What consultation will be needed and how will it be done?)

Given the timescales required, informal discussions have been undertaken with a limited number of early years' providers and school representatives. No formal consultation is planned as part of this process. Schools, EY providers, academies and colleges will all be communicated with via the Red Bag and letters. Updates will be added to the NYCC website and social media where relevant.

**Section 5. What impact will this proposal have on council budgets? Will it be cost neutral, have increased cost or reduce costs?**

Given the DWP's parameters on the scheme, the proposal is to ensure a coherent offer for the Easter period. Modelling of payments within the local eligibility framework have been amended since the scheme began reducing the payment for February half-term to £15 per week per recipient (compared to £20 per week per recipient in the two weeks over the Christmas period). However, the proposal considers that the payment period should cover the equivalent of two weeks for the Easter period compared to only three days in the original modelling. Overall, this results in a potential requirement to use up to £148k council funding in addition to the Covid Winter Grant Scheme allocation. However, this will provide a more coherent offer for recipients.

The summer-holiday allocation may result in using LA funds to ensure a coherent offer.

<b>Section 6. How will this proposal affect people with protected characteristics?</b>	<b>No impact</b>	<b>Make things better</b>	<b>Make things worse</b>	<b>Why will it have this effect? Provide evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information etc.</b>
Age		X		There will be a positive impact for children and young people who are eligible for the additional vouchers over the school holidays.
Disability	X			Vouchers will be provided to children and young people who are eligible and disability will not be taken into account as part of this.

Sex	X			Vouchers will be provided to children and young people who are eligible and sex will not be taken into account as part of this.
Race	X			Vouchers will be provided to children and young people who are eligible and race will not be taken into account as part of this.
Gender reassignment	X			Vouchers will be provided to children and young people who are eligible and gender reassignment will not be taken into account as part of this.
Sexual orientation	X			Vouchers will be provided to children and young people who are eligible and sexual orientation will not be taken into account as part of this.
Religion or belief	X			Vouchers will be provided to children and young people who are eligible and religion / belief will not be taken into account as part of this.
Pregnancy or maternity		X		There will be a positive impact for families who are eligible for the additional vouchers over the school holidays.
Marriage or civil partnership	X			Vouchers will be provided to children and young people who are eligible and marriage / civil partnership will not be taken into account as part of this.

<b>Section 7. How will this proposal affect people who...</b>	<b>No impact</b>	<b>Make things better</b>	<b>Make things worse</b>	<b>Why will it have this effect? Provide evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information etc.</b>
..live in a rural area?		X		There will be a positive impact for children and young people who are eligible for vouchers and live in a rural area.
...have a low income?		X		There will be a positive impact for children and young people who are eligible for vouchers and live within a low-income family.
...are carers (unpaid family or friend)?	X			Vouchers will be provided to children and young people who are eligible and carers (unpaid family or friend) will not be taken into account as part of this.

<b>Section 8. Geographic impact – Please detail where the impact will be (please tick all that apply)</b>	
North Yorkshire wide	X
Craven district	
Hambleton district	



Harrogate district	
Richmondshire district	
Ryedale district	
Scarborough district	
Selby district	
<b>If you have ticked one or more districts, will specific town(s)/village(s) be particularly impacted? If so, please specify below.</b>	
N/A	

**Section 9. Will the proposal affect anyone more because of a combination of protected characteristics? (e.g. older women or young gay men) State what you think the effect may be and why, providing evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information etc.**

It is not anticipated that this will affect a combination of protected characteristics.

<b>Section 10. Next steps to address the anticipated impact. Select one of the following options and explain why this has been chosen. (Remember: we have an anticipatory duty to make reasonable adjustments so that disabled people can access services and work for us)</b>	<b>Tick option chosen</b>
<b>1. No adverse impact - no major change needed to the proposal.</b> There is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact identified.	<b>X</b>
<b>2. Adverse impact - adjust the proposal</b> - The EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. We will change our proposal to reduce or remove these adverse impacts, or we will achieve our aim in another way which will not make things worse for people.	
<b>3. Adverse impact - continue the proposal</b> - The EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. We cannot change our proposal to reduce or remove these adverse impacts, nor can we achieve our aim in another way which will not make things worse for people. (There must be compelling reasons for continuing with proposals which will have the most adverse impacts. Get advice from Legal Services)	
<b>4. Actual or potential unlawful discrimination - stop and remove the proposal</b> – The EIA identifies actual or potential unlawful discrimination. It must be stopped.	
<b>Explanation of why option has been chosen.</b> (Include any advice given by Legal Services.)	
This will be a positive change for children and young people who are eligible for the vouchers.	

**Section 11. If the proposal is to be implemented how will you find out how it is really affecting people? (How will you monitor and review the changes?)**

Monitoring will be completed as per the Department for Work and Pensions monitoring form. Schools, academies and early years' providers will be required to complete a simple monitoring form. The local authority will review available management information following the Christmas period and will evaluate the scheme including any reasonable adjustments to the scheme in relation to February half-term and a few days in relation to the Easter holiday.

**Section 12. Action plan.** List any actions you need to take which have been identified in this EIA, including post implementation review to find out how the outcomes have been achieved in practice and what impacts there have actually been on people with protected characteristics.

Action	Lead	By when	Progress	Monitoring arrangements
Review available management information and evaluate the scheme post-Christmas	Howard Emmett	22 January 2021	The scheme was reviewed in January (post-Christmas period) and amended for the February half-term. Further proposals to extend the payment for the equivalent of two weeks at Easter (compared to 3 days in the original modelling) at £15 per week (compared to £20 per week) should result in a higher overall allocation per eligible recipient.	CWGS working group
Review available management information and evaluate the scheme post-Easter	Howard Emmett	30 April 2021	The scheme was reviewed post-Easter. Further proposals to extend the payment over the summer-holiday person at £75 in total.	CWGS working group

**Section 13. Summary** Summarise the findings of your EIA, including impacts, recommendation in relation to addressing impacts, including any legal advice, and next steps. This summary should be used as part of the report to the decision maker.

The proposed local eligibility framework and approach has a potential positive impact for children and young people and their families who are eligible for vouchers. There are no identified adverse impacts.

**Section 14. Sign off section**

This full EIA was completed by:

**Name: Alice Wild**

**Job title: Project Manager**

**Directorate: Central Services**

**Signature: Alice Wild**

**Completion date: 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021**

**Authorised by relevant Assistant Director (signature): Howard Emmett**

**Date: 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021**