

Not Confidential

Decision Notice From: **Leader Decisions**

Date: **26 November 2021**

Title: **HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND:**

Wards Affected: **All Wards**

Key Decision: **Yes** Implementation Date: **26 November 2021**

Urgent Decision: **Yes**

DECISION:

- That delegated authority be given to the Deputy Chief Executive (Communities) who in consultation with the Leader and relevant Portfolio Holder be authorised to implement the policy in respect of administration of the funding.
- That a 'trusted referral' application route for professionals supporting vulnerable residents to apply for grants on behalf of residents be developed.
- That Payments be made to utility suppliers and vouchers purchased for residents through a web-based platform 'Charis'. Charis is an established grants administrator of hardship funds for vulnerable households providing a web-based 'shop' that can be accessed to purchase food and utility vouchers.

This scheme sits with Prosperous Communities team within the newly created Communities Department to support the S&ELCP.

Reason for the Decision:

- Due to the urgent need to support struggling households with immediate needs this Winter, delegation is required to sign off policy and procedure outside of the committee process in order to successfully launch the local scheme on 1st December 2021.
- This is not a transactional grants scheme so should be outside of existing processes to ensure it is flexible to respond to immediate need. Officers working with people and communities have the relationships and trust with the third sector to deliver partnership approach.

There will be no public facing application, but 'trusted referral' will ensure any household needing support will have the opportunity to receive this funding alongside any additional needs that are identified.

Alternative options considered:

- Not to accept the allocation of Household Support Fund and decline to deliver local scheme.
- Provision of a public facing online application form for eligibility assessment and direct payments into bank accounts through PSPS Revenue and Benefits.
- Public facing direct payments into bank accounts with applications assessed by 'community support' and payments processed by PSPS Revenue and Benefits.
- To deliver through other grant and voucher providers.

Conflict of interest declared:

None.

Dispensations granted in respect of a conflict of interest:

N/A