

Record of decision taken under delegated powers by a council officer



Title:	Surrey County Council Response to Covid: Local Authority Emergency Assistance Grant for Food and Essential Supplies
Divisions Affected:	All divisions
Key Decision:	Yes
Reason Key:	Affects two or more Divisions
Decision taken under delegation by virtue of:	Cabinet decision 31 March 2020 Min ref: 41/20

Summary

On 10 June 2020, The Prime Minister announced a grant of £63 million for local authorities in England to help those who are struggling to afford food and other essentials due to COVID-19. The funding is a one-off contribution for the 2020-21 financial year and is made under Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003. Surrey County Council has been granted an allocation of £788,015.67.

This additional funding is intended to help local authorities to continue to support those struggling to afford food and other essentials over the coming months due to COVID-19. The government anticipates that most of the funding will be spent within 12 weeks of receipt of the funding (received end of July).

Discussions held within the Welfare Cell, unanimously concluded that the most vulnerable residents would benefit most from a partnership approach to the distribution of these funds, building on the existing relationships across the County Council, Borough & District Councils and voluntary, community & faith sector (VCFS) which have been utilised in the joint approach to the response to the pandemic.

The SRG approved the proposal to allocate these funds in the following ways, which the Welfare Cell considers to be the best mechanism to ensure coverage across the County and that the funding is targeted at those most in need of financial assistance for food and essential items, as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic:

- the majority of the allocation (£648k) is to be distributed to the **Borough and District Councils** to use to target those in need and provide additional grant funding **to local food banks and VCFS** organisations supporting the purchase and distribution of food, medical supplies and other essential items. The approach to utilisation will be determined at a local level based on need and delivery mechanisms.

It is proposed that the allocation of these funds across the 11 Boroughs and Districts replicate the DEFRA assessment of need (based on population data weighted by the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) for the authority area).

- **Surrey Crisis Fund** is an existing fund, run by Surrey County Council, supporting vulnerable people across the County experiencing hardship.
- **Bookham food distribution centre** (previously located at The Spectrum Guildford) continues to distribute food parcels to shielding residents and those self-isolating as a result of test and trace. The funding will be used to continue operation of the central food distributions centre reaching across the County and covering demand where government food banks are due to cease operation. This additional funding will enable opportunities to expand the offer to include toiletries, sanitary items, and other essential items.

Decision made

Decision made:

It was AGREED that:

The proposed allocation of the Local Authority Emergency Assistance Grant for Food and Essential Supplies is as follows:

Organisation/Activity	Allocation
Surrey Crisis Fund	£60,000.00
Bookham Food Distribution	£80,000.00
Elmbridge	£63,282.67
Epsom and Ewell	£38,598.65
Guildford	£78,789.58
Mole Valley	£44,122.96
Reigate and Banstead	£88,548.94
Runnymede	£55,447.46
Spelthorne	£71,067.86
Surrey Heath	£40,922.23
Tandridge	£54,305.98
Waverley	£56,243.83
Woking	£56,685.51
	£788,015.67

Reasons for Decision:

To assist those most in need with the purchase of food and other essential items due to financial hardship caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, in accordance with the grant conditions.

Decision taken by:	Leigh Whitehouse – Executive Director for Resources Mel Few – Cabinet Member for Resources
Decision taken on:	4 August 2020

To be implemented on:	One-off payments to be made to the organisations, as set out above.
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Alternative options considered

The alternative is to not accept the funding allocation from DEFRA which would reduce the ability of local authorities within Surrey to assist those in the County most in need to assistance with the purchase of food and essential supplies.

A number of allocation mechanisms were considered, but the proposal above was deemed to provide the most impact and coverage across the County.

Summary of any financial implications

The DEFRA grant allocation amounts to £788,015.67 and has been received by Surrey County Council. This allocated as above.

Declarations of conflicts of interest

None

Consultation/Process Followed

Decision taken in consultation with all partners within the Welfare and Vulnerability Cell and the Surrey Local Resilience Forum.

Background Documents

Exempt:

Cabinet report 31st March 2020 setting out the council’s response to Covid-19.

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