

## Officer Decision Record – Executive Decision

If Key Decision: Decision Ref. No.

B...000 /21.....

*If not a Key Decision write n/a above*

### OFFICER DECISION RECORD <sup>i</sup>

Officer Key Decisions are subject to the Council's Call-In Procedure (Annex 9 of the Council's Constitution <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/freedom-of-information-and-council-data/open-data-statistics-about-hertfordshire/who-we-are-and-what-we-do/who-we-are-and-what-we-do.aspx>)

**Subject:** *Awarding the contract for the provision of supermarket vouchers for Free School Meals eligible pupils during the 2021 Easter and Whit school holidays.*

**Type of Decision:** Executive

**Key Decision (Executive Functions only):** Yes

**Executive Member/Committee Chairman:**

**Cllr Terry Douris** (Executive Member, Education, Libraries & Localism)

**Portfolio (Executive Functions only):**

Education, Libraries & Localism.

**Officer Contact: Simon Newland** (Operations Director, Education—Children's Services).

**Tel:** 01992 588 755.

April 2020

## 1. **Decision**

To award **Edenred** the contract for the provision of supermarket vouchers for Free School Meal eligible pupils during the 2021 Easter and Whit school holidays.

## 2. **Reasons for the decision**

Awarding the contract to Edenred has many advantages for Hertfordshire County Council, its partners and residents:

- a. Urgent service need
  - Contracting options have only recently become clear following developments within the Crown Commissioning Service.
  - A voucher system will need to be ready by week commencing 22<sup>nd</sup> March to deliver support to almost 26,000 children in the Easter 2021 holidays.
- b. Better value for money
  - No administration fee will be required.
  - Aligns with the national voucher ordering system via Edenred, reducing administration for education partners.
  - Reduced administrative, data and customer support required from Hertfordshire County Council.
  - Spare vouchers will no longer need to be ordered en masse, as education partners can order vouchers to respond to emerging need.
- c. Improved support using vouchers
  - Education partners will be able to monitor which vouchers have been redeemed, enabling closer support for families who may be struggling to use them.
  - Edenred have a dedicated customer service function to support education partners and voucher beneficiaries (previously this has had to be triaged via Hertfordshire County Council).

## 3. **Alternative options considered and rejected**

The alternative option of continuing with the Family Fund Trust has been considered. The Family Fund Trust had delivered supermarket vouchers for Free School Meal eligible pupils in Hertfordshire for the Christmas 2020 and February half-term 2021 holidays.

However the option of continuing with the Family Fund Trust has been rejected for the following reasons:

- The Family Fund Trust charge an administration fee of £1.50 per voucher.
- There are significant staff resourcing costs for HCC to support the Family Fund Trust system.

- Spare vouchers need to be ordered en masse when using the Family Fund Trust, as education partners cannot order their own vouchers to respond to newly eligible pupils.
- The lack of a direct customer support interface between the voucher supplier and education partners/voucher beneficiaries.
- The increased pressures on education partners of having to operate 2 Free School Meal voucher systems (the term-time Edenred system funded by DFE and the holiday time Family Fund Trust system currently funded by HCC).

4. **Consultation** (see Summary of Requirements below)

**Was any Councillor consulted?**      **Yes/No** (delete as applicable)

**If yes:**

(a) Comments of Executive Member

RE: Consultation: Easter/Whit food voucher provider

Terry Douris  
 To: Felix Gilding (ACS)  
 Cc: Simon Newland; Juliet Whitehead; Michelle Diprose; Judith Gover

Reply Reply All Forward  
 Tue 02/03/2021 13:36

Felix

For the avoidance of doubt, I support this action.

Terry

**Terry Douris**  
 County Councillor for Bridgewater Division  
 Cabinet Member for Education, Libraries and Localism  
**Hertfordshire County Council**  
 Phone: 01442 402273  
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(b) Comments of other consultees

5. **Any conflict of interest declared by a councillor who has been consulted in relation to the decision**

No.

**April 2020**

*(If a Councillor declares a conflict of interest DO NOT PROCEED without seeking advice from Democratic Services or Legal Services).*

6. **Following consultation with the Executive Member I am proceeding with the proposed decision.**

Signed:

Title: Simon Newland, Operations Director—Education, Children’s Services.

Date: 02/03/2021

Copies of record to:

- All consultees
- hard & electronic copy (if required to be made available for public inspection) to Democratic Services Manager - Room 213 County Hall.<sup>ii</sup>

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**Summary of Requirements to Inform/Consult Councillors**

<b>Significance of Proposed Action</b>	<b>Controversial</b>	<b>Relevant Councillor(s) to be Consulted</b>
Technical/Professional/ Routine	No	No need to inform or consult councillors
Technical/Professional/ Routine	Yes	<b>Executive Functions:</b> Consult relevant Lead Executive Member and, where appropriate, Local Councillor <b>Non-Executive Functions:</b> Relevant Committee Chairman and, where appropriate, Local Councillor
Local	No	<b>Executive Functions:</b> Inform Lead Executive Member and Local Councillor <b>Non-Executive Functions:</b> Inform Local Councillor
Local	Yes	<b>Executive Functions:</b> Consult Lead Executive Member and Local Councillor <b>Non-Executive Functions:</b> Consult Local Councillor
General or County-wide	No	<b>Executive Functions:</b> Consult relevant Lead Executive Member (s)

		<b>Non-Executive Functions:</b> Consult relevant Committee Chairman
General or County-wide	Yes	<b>Executive Functions:</b> Consult relevant Lead Executive Member (s) and the Leader of the Council <b>Non-Executive Functions:</b> Consult relevant Committee Chairman/Leaders all Political Groups