

## Record of operational decision

<b>Decision title:</b>	Council to provide grant funding for up to three private nurseries to enable children of key workers and vulnerable children to attend childcare provision for the next 8 weeks
<b>Date of decision:</b>	1/4/2020
<b>Decision maker:</b>	Chris Baird Director for Children and Families
<b>Authority for delegated decision:</b>	Council constitution 3.7.9 all necessary decisions in the case of emergencies
<b>Ward:</b>	Countywide
<b>Consultation:</b>	<p>Consultation has taken place with Cabinet Member for Children and Families Councillor Norman who is supportive of the decision being made</p> <p>Consultation has taken place with the section 151 officer who is supportive of this decision.</p> <p>Consulted with the solicitor to the council who has required an officer decision to be recorded</p>
<b>Decision made:</b>	Council to provide grant funding to up to three private nurseries to enable children of key workers to attend childcare provision for the next 8 weeks.
<b>Reasons for decision:</b>	<p>Pre-school settings and child minders will largely by Monday 27th March be closed. Those that remain open do not have the capacity to take on any more children in three areas of the county where there may be a need from a key worker and/or vulnerable child perspective as a response to COVID-19. Herefordshire Council has a statutory responsibility to provide childcare for children of key workers and vulnerable families. In order to fulfill this duty Herefordshire Council needs to set up emergency hubs for pre-school age children of vulnerable families and key workers to attend.</p>
<b>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</b>	<p>The decision has been discussed with finance and legal advice has been sought. The risk of legal challenge is minimised by the use of a clawback provision in the grant agreement to private nurseries. Further legal advice will be provided in relation to the grant agreements</p> <p>The risk of not progressing is that there will be insufficient places for the pre school age children of key workers who are required to work in the emergency situation under Covid19 or for vulnerable children who the government expects to attend as part of the COVID-19 response. Suggest that this should come from the COVID-19 grant</p>
<b>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</b>	There is no option as without this provision as the private nurseries are closed there is insufficient early years childcare provision for children of key workers
<b>Details of any declarations of interest made:</b>	None identified

Signed

Date: 1 April 2020