

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE	COUNCIL	5 DECEMBER 2022	11

FULLY FUNDED REVENUE BUDGET INCREASE - HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

SUMMARY

The report details the imminent receipt of further from the government grant funding stream for Household Support.

This is now the third amount of Household Support Funding provided by the government which is intended to support vulnerable houses across the country to help them with essentials. The latest funding round has seen a further £421 million pounds allocated to upper tier authorities to cover the period up to 31 March 2023.

As a result Fylde Council has been notified by Lancashire County Council (LCC) that it will receive a further £270,000 to support low-income families. It is anticipated that this amount will have been received by the 5th of December council meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

The Council is requested to approve a further fully funded revenue budget increase of up to £270,000 in 2022/23, fully funded from the government grant funding stream for Household Support Fund running to the period 31st March 2023.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

Council – 4th July

Approval of fully funded budget increase in the sum of £270,000.

Environment, Health and Housing Committee - 4th January 2022

It was RESOLVED:

1. To note the position with respect to the allocation and spend to date of the Household Support Grant which has been allocated under the Chief Executive's delegations pursuant to Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972;
2. To approve the projected spending against projects identified within this report; and
3. To recommend to Finance and Democracy Committee a revenue budget increase of up to £150,000 in 2021/22 fully funded from the government grant funding stream for Household Support Grant.

Finance and Democracy Committee - 24 January 2022

Following a number of members speaking in support of the grant, it was RESOLVED to approve a revenue budget increase of up to £150,000 in 2021/22, fully funded from the government grant funding stream for Household Support Grant.

Environment, Health and Housing Committee - 14 June 2022

It was RESOLVED to:

1. Note the position; and
2. Request that Council approve a fully funded budget increase in the sum of £270,000 for household support funding.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES	
Economy – To create a vibrant and healthy economy	✓
Environment – To deliver services customers expect	✓
Efficiency – By spending money in the most efficient way	✓
Tourism – To create a great place to live and visit	

REPORT

HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUNDING

1. In September 2021, the government announced that vulnerable households across the country would be able to access a new £500 million support fund to help them with essentials over the winter period. This funding was provided to LCC who, in turn, passed £150k to Fylde Council. The grant was to directly help those who needed it most and was distributed through small payments to support vulnerable households meet daily costs such as food, clothing and utilities. The funding was directed at individuals and families irrespective of age. The Environmental, Health and Housing Committee has received updated information on the programme.
 2. In Summer 2022, Fylde Council was notified that it is to receive a further £270,000 of funding from LCC which was to be used largely to support the elderly.
 3. A further third round of Household Funding Support has been announced by the government with £421 million provided to upper tier authorities to cover the period up to 31 March 2023.
 4. Fylde Council has been notified by Lancashire County Council that it will receive a further £270,00 to provide support to vulnerable households for the period running to 31st March 2023. At the time of writing this report the funding had yet to be received but it hoped that it will have been receipted by the council meeting. Funds should be spent or committed by 31st March 2023 and should not be carried forward for future use.
 5. Authorities are encouraged to use the following principles to identify and support those most in need. The funding should be used to meet the immediate needs and help those who are struggling to afford energy and water bills, food and related essentials. Authorities can also use the funding to support households who are struggling to afford wider essentials. In exceptional cases of emergency the funding can additionally be used to meet housing costs.
 6. Authorities are encouraged to work in partnership with third party organisations. As a result an indicative programme of support is envisaged as outlined in the attached appendix.
 7. An update report will be provided to the Environment Health and Housing Committee at its 7th March meeting.
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IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	The report recommends to Council that they approve a further fully funded revenue budget increase of up to £270,000 in 2022/23, fully funded from the government grant funding stream for Household Support Fund, as detailed in the report.
Legal	The council needs to put in place accountable and transparent decision-making powers.
Community Safety	There are no implications.
Human Rights and Equalities	There are no implications.
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	There are no implications.
Health & Safety and Risk Management	There are no implications.

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
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BACKGROUND PAPERS		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
Household Support: final guidance for county councils and unitary authorities in England	24 th October 2022	www.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Indicative Allocation of Funding – Household Support Fund Round 3 (running to 31st March 2023)

- **CAB**, energy bills support via applications **£160k**
- **Foodbanks**, community support via vouchers and food parcels **£20K**
- **Homestart**, white goods purchases via signposting from professionals and partners **£5k**
- Targeted support to disability groups and the elderly would be via sign posting from **One Fylde, Disability first, Empowerment, Age UK**, schools and our volunteer sector. These groups could signpost directly to CAB, Foodbanks and Homestart start for help.
- **The Housing Service**, multiple schemes as set out below **£85k**

£2,500 – Aldi vouchers

The fund has been used previously for providing Aldi Vouchers. Payments of £10 or £20 for a single person and £50 for a family have made a significant difference to assist clients buy food when the food bank is not open. This payment has had the biggest impact where households are in B&B prior to going into temporary self-contained accommodation in St Annes, the vouchers have assisted with the extra costs of providing food.

£2,500 – Argos Vouchers

Previously the fund has been used to provide household support packs which included cutlery, bedding, toasters, kettles etc. The provision of such items has been essential when clients move into new accommodation, however not all items in the packs were needed. The use of vouchers to provide items households need will assist clients in setting up in move on accommodation.

£10,000 – white goods and carpets

The ability to assist clients with up to £400 towards cooker/fridge/carpets made a significant difference to households moving into accommodation.

£20,000 – Top up Rent in Advance and Bond/RIA for households in employment

The Housing service currently has unprecedented levels of households in temporary accommodation whose options for social housing and affected by the lack of turnover of housing stock and private rental levels are unaffordable in their present circumstances. Households in receipt of HB can apply for rent bond or rent in advance from DHP and Vickers Relief. Many are sourcing accommodation slightly above LHA rates, concerns around affordability after 6 months results in applications to DHP and Fylde Council help 2 Rent scheme being refused. The additional funding would be used to commit to the top up from HB levels for 6 months' rent in advance to get the person moved on into independent accommodation and out of temporary accommodation. Households in employment the options for rent bond or RIA are limited to Vicars Relief Charity as they are not eligible for DHP funding. The additional funding would be used to assist these households into independent accommodation and based on affordability would cover the rent bond and rent in advance.

£50,000 – Affordable Warmth Top up

A report went to EHH in November 2022 advising of allocation of £59,856 by Lancashire County Council to Fylde Borough Council for the delivery of an Affordable Warmth Scheme during 2022/23. The scheme is to provide capital measures for home energy improvements to vulnerable residents where an affordability issue has also been identified. The funding is aimed at the most vulnerable to harm from cold or damp homes. This could

include a wide range of individuals who either are, or are at serious risk of, experiencing poor health and wellbeing due to a cold home.

Households are eligible for funding if they meet at least one of the detailed vulnerabilities and have a low income. Low income is someone being in receipt of means tested benefit or have a total household income not in excess of £31,000, or there is a 'declaration' by the Local Authority or health / social care professional that affordability issues are present.

£50,000 of match funding will be used to provide home energy improvements to homeowners who do not qualify for the Eco 4, Eco Flex or the affordable warmth vulnerabilities or low-income criteria (£31,000) and would be available to those on low to middle income up to a maximum household's income of £45,000. The funding will provide a grant of up to £2,000 per households. This funding will allow the local authority to extend energy measures to ease the burden on fuel poor households that fall short of the current schemes.

The ECO4 is a government energy efficiency scheme to tackle fuel poverty and help reduce carbon emissions. The scheme supports low income and vulnerable households who receive a means tested benefit. The scheme will improve the least energy efficient homes helping to meet the Government's fuel poverty and net zero commitments. The ECO Flex Grants Scheme helps those householders who are not in receipt of one of the qualifying benefits but who are living on a low income and are vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home.

The housing service will target households who have been eligible for a Disabled Facilities Grant to encourage them to consider energy efficiency measures to their homes using either of the funding streams available:

- Eco 4
- Eco Flex
- Affordable Warmth
- Affordable Warmth Top up