



North Devon Council

Report Date: 6th June 2022

Topic: Household Support Fund April – September 2022

Report by: Sarah Higgins – Head of Customer Focus

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Following the initial Household Support Fund October 2021 – March 2022, a further £500m has been allocated nationally to cover the period April 2022 – September 2022.
- 1.2. Devon County Council (DCC) and Devon district councils have been working together since the start of April 2022 to put together a scheme to benefit residents of Devon.
- 1.3. This report seeks approval of a policy to achieve this within NDC's administrative area.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. Note the contents of Household Support Fund (HSF2): Devon's Approach (Appendix A)
- 2.2. Approve the North Devon Policy Household Support April – September 2022 (Appendix B)

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1. To enable NDC to achieve the criteria for the Household Fund as set out by Government.

4. REPORT

- 4.1. DCC has been awarded funding of £5,064,876.12 by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) for a second Household Support Fund (HSF2) for the period 1st April 2022 to 30th September 2022.
- 4.2. The fund is designed to provide rapid short-term financial support to address economic vulnerability and financial hardship. It should be used to support households who are struggling to meet their food, energy, water and other essential living needs. It can also be used to support households with essential costs related to those items and with wider essential costs.
- 4.3. At least 33% of the fund must be used to support households which have children / young people within them
- 4.4. At least 33% of the fund must be used to support households which contain people of State Pensionable Age within them.
- 4.5. The remainder of the funding may be used for other vulnerable households who are struggling to meet their food, energy, water and other essential needs.

- 4.6. To meet the criteria in 4.3 above, DCC will again be awarding free school meal holiday vouchers for May half term and school summer holidays 2022.
- 4.7. To meet the criteria in 4.4 above, all district councils in Devon have agreed to use council tax data to identify all households (a) with a liable party who is of state pensionable age and (b) who claim an element of council tax reduction. Those households which claim this reduction have had their income and household/personal circumstances assessed.
- 4.8. This data is then to be used to award these households a one-off payment to assist with increasing household expenses.
- 4.9. NDC will directly award this using the Post Office payout scheme whereby recipients can obtain their cash at any Post Office using a barcode issued to them. Identification will be required and a 3rd party may collect on behalf of the recipients.
- 4.10. It has been agreed Devon wide that there will be a uniform payment of £90 per household.
- 4.11. NDC will receive an additional allocation to assist DCC to meet the criteria in 4.5 above. NDC will not know the level of this allocation until after 6th June 2022;
- 4.12. Using this allocation and other identified funding (as outlined in Appendix B) NDC will direct award an amount to working age households who claim an element of council tax reduction.
- 4.13. The amount of this award will be determined by the level of this additional allocation.
- 4.14. This award will be administered in the same way as outlined in 4.7 – 4.9

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. This scheme will be mainly financed by grant funding from Devon County Council (DCC), together with a small contribution from residual funds from the Covid-19 Hardship Fund and Economic Financial Hardship Fund.
- 5.2. NDC will receive a financial allocation from DCC to administer this scheme

6. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

- 6.1. Please detail if there are/are not any equalities implications anticipated as a result of this report. If so, please complete the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Summary form available on Insite and email to the Corporate and Community Services Team at equality@northdevon.gov.uk
- 6.2. No equality implications have been identified

7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

7.1. Please undertake an Environmental Assessment and complete the checklist (EAC) form available on Insite. If there are no environmental implications arising from your proposals please state that there are none. If after completion of the assessment there are environmental implications please provide a brief summary. If you require any further information please contact the Sustainability and Climate Change Officer. Email completed EACs to donna.sibley@torridge.gov.uk

7.2. There are no environmental implications arising from the proposals in this report

8. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

8.1. What impact, positive or negative, does the subject of this report have on:

8.1.1. The commercialisation agenda

8.1.2. Improving customer focus – this scheme will give our most financially disadvantaged households a cash boost to assist with the ongoing increase in household expenses.

8.1.3. Regeneration or economic development

9. CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

9.1. Article of Part 3 Annexe 1 paragraph:

9.2. Referred or delegated power? Delegated

10. STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

This report contains no confidential information or exempt information under the provisions of Schedule 12A of 1972 Act.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- Household Support Fund (HSF2): Devon's Approach (Appendix A) (being adopted by DCC on 26th May 2022)

12. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL ADVICE

The author (below) confirms that advice has been taken from all appropriate Councillors and Officers: Sarah Higgins – Head of Customer Focus