



North Devon Council

Report Date: Monday, 5 August 2024

Topic: Household Support Fund

Report by: Sarah Higgins, Head of Customer Focus

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Household Fund was launched by Government in October 2021.
- 1.2. The Fund is designed to provide rapid short-term financial support to address economic vulnerability and financial hardship.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. To approve the re-allocation of up to £30,000 of admin grant funding to the application scheme.
- 2.2. To note the additional £20,000 grant allocated to NDC from DCC to support the scheme within North Devon.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1. To ensure, when we re-open the scheme at the end of August 2024, we will have sufficient funds in place for the application process to remain open until end of September 2024 when the Household Fund 5 closes across the whole country.

4. REPORT

- 4.1. The 1st Household Fund opened in October 2021 and NDC is currently administering the 5th version of the fund. The amount of funding provided for this latest scheme running from April 2024 to September 2024 was £253k. Since 2021, NDC has awarded over £1.6million to the most vulnerable households in North Devon.
- 4.2. This has been administered by NDC as a combination of direct awards and application schemes.
- 4.3. For the current scheme, NDC has deployed almost 90% of the funding meaning we have needed to suspend our application scheme over the summer weeks to allow us to re-open for September for the colder Autumn period.
- 4.4. Due to the demand so far we anticipate the remaining funds will not allow us to remain open for the whole of September.
- 4.5. Taking note of our situation, DCC have awarded an additional £20,000 to allocate to our application scheme from the wider household fund they have available.
- 4.6. As part of the scheme, each authority has an allocated fund for administration. Some Councils use this admin grant to outsource the delivery of the fund.

- 4.7. As NDC administers in-house using existing resources, our direct administrative costs are kept minimal. Due to this we will have an un-allocated admin grant of approximately £30,000.
- 4.8. To allow us to guarantee our application scheme is able to remain open until end of September and to maximise the benefit of the scheme to our most vulnerable households in North Devon, we are requesting this £30,000 un-allocated admin grant is made available for further applications.
- 4.9. The proposal to utilise the admin grant in this way is a positive intervention for the Council to make and is similar practice to previous household support fund schemes we have delivered to ensure North Devon residents receive as much as possible of this crucial support.
- 4.10. Including the above amount outlined in paragraph 4.9, in total this Council have re-directed £100k of admin grant to increase the amount of direct funding delivered in supporting those most vulnerable households in North Devon.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. None – scheme is administered internally with 3rd party organisations providing the application referrals on behalf of their clients.

6. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

- 6.1. It is not anticipated this re-allocation of funding will result in any adverse equalities impact on any group or individual.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

- 7.1. There are no anticipated environmental implications arising from the re-allocation of this funding.

8. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 8.1. What impact, positive or negative, does the subject of this report have on:
 - 8.1.1. People Matter – looking after our community by maximising financial support via the Household Support Scheme.

9. CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

- 9.1. The decision in respect of the recommendations in this report can be made by this Committee pursuant to delegated powers provided in Part 3 Annexe 1

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 background papers are available for inspection and kept by the author of the report.

12. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL ADVICE

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