



Doncaster Council

Report

To Mayor Ros Jones

Date: 6th June 2022

Household Support Fund Part 2

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Mayor Ros Jones	All	Yes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. As part of the Spring Statement, the Chancellor made further Household Support Fund available. Doncaster Council's share is £2,989,273.08 to cover the period from 1st April 2022 to 30th September 2022.
2. This is the same as the previous amount but the criteria set by the government is a bit different. This time, at least one third of the allocation must be paid to both pensioners and vulnerable households with children, this amounts to at least £996,424.36 to each of these groups.
3. Separate decisions have already been made to provide Easter and May school holiday food vouchers and payments to all-age children entitled to free school meals or from families on housing benefit or council tax reduction amounting to a total cost of £697,495 from this fund. These were urgent decisions to ensure these were in place for those school holidays.
4. The purpose of this report is to agree the remaining spend in line with the specified government criteria and the recommendation is to provide the following:
 - A £100 payment to all Doncaster pensioners on housing benefit or council tax reduction estimated to be a cost of £1,013,100;
 - A £100 payment to all working age households on housing benefit or council tax reduction estimated to be a cost of £1,116,640;
 - £5k food for each of the 21 food banks at a cost of £105,000; and
 - £15k to the Hygiene Bank.

EXEMPT REPORT

5. N/A

RECOMMENDATIONS

6. To approve the following payments from the Household Support Fund Part 2:
- A £100 payment to all Doncaster pensioners on housing benefit or council tax reduction estimated to be a cost of £1,013,100;
 - A £100 payment to all working age households on housing benefit or council tax reduction estimated to be a cost of £1,116,640;
 - £5k food for each of the 21 food banks at a cost of £105,000; and
 - £15k to the Hygiene Bank.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

7. The objective is to provide much needed further financial support to pensioners, families with children and other households on the lowest incomes and in most need of support at a time when the cost of energy and food has increased significantly.

BACKGROUND

8. The Government introduced a Household Support Fund (HSF) available to Authorities in England to support those most in need from 6th October 2021 to 31st March 2022. The share of this grant for Doncaster Council was £2,989,273.08.
9. At least 50% of the total funding had to be spent on families with children. In terms of the type of support, the expectation was that the Household Support Fund should primarily be used to support households in the most need with food, energy and water bills.
10. The Council agreed to provide the following:
- £15 a week school holiday food provision through to 31st March 2022 (October, December and February) to children currently in receipt of free school meals and to non-school age and other children where the household was in receipt of a council tax reduction or housing benefit due to low income;
 - A winter £100 fuel payment to the same families and to households who do not have children but were in receipt of a council tax reduction or housing benefit due to low income;
 - £5k food for each of the 21 food banks; and
 - £15k to the Hygiene Bank.
11. As part of the Spring Statement, the Chancellor has made further Household Support Fund available. Doncaster Council's share is for the same amount, £2,989,273.08, to cover the period from 1st April 2022 to 30th September 2022.

12. However, there are some differences to how the government are specifying how this further allocation should be utilised. This time, at least one third of the allocation must be paid to both pensioners and vulnerable households with children, this equates to at least £996,424.36 to each of these groups.

13. We have already provided the following to vulnerable households with children over the Easter Holidays out of this further allocation of Household Support Fund and are doing the same for the May school holidays.

- The provision of £15 a week school holiday food vouchers to children currently in school and in receipt of free school meals or from a family in receipt of housing benefit or council tax reduction; and
- A £15 a week payment for the same period to non-school age children where the household is in receipt of a council tax reduction or housing benefit due to low income.

The estimated cost for these is £697,495.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

14. The only other option considered was to include summer school holiday food vouchers and payments. However, due to the cost of this being an estimated £1,267,975, there is not enough funds within the Household Support Fund to achieve this without excluding other low-income households. Therefore, the Council is considering this as part of the outturn report.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

17. The huge energy price increase is having a real impact on all low-income households and this option includes support for as many households as possible in line with the government criteria as well as provision in food banks across the borough and the hygiene bank.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

18.

	Outcomes	Implications
	<p>Doncaster Working: Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better access to good fulfilling work • Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish • Inward Investment 	
	<p>Doncaster Living: Our vision is for Doncaster's people to live in a</p>	

	<p>borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster • More people can live in a good quality, affordable home • Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport • Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean • Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage 	
	<p>Doncaster Learning: Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school • Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better • Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work 	
	<p>Doncaster Caring: Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children have the best start in life • Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust • Older people can live well and independently in their own homes 	<p>This proposal will mean that economically vulnerable families and individuals have further financial support during the current volatile economic situation.</p>
	<p>Connected Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A modern, efficient and flexible workforce • Modern, accessible customer interactions • Operating within our resources and delivering value for money • A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and 	

	aspirations of residents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths • Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance 	
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RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

19. The only risk associated with the allocation of this Fund is not reaching everyone eligible for this support. The Council will issue payments into bank accounts proactively wherever possible and use appropriate methods to increase reach, in particular, to those who are not digitally active.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Name: SRF Date: 13.05.22]

20. Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 gives the local authority the power to do anything that individuals may generally do. The funding must be spent in accordance with any guidance provided by Government.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: CC Date: 13/05/22]

21. As indicated in the body of the report, Doncaster Council has been allocated £2,989,273.08 Household Support Fund (HSF) grant to cover the period from 1st April 2022 to 30th September 2022. The cost of these proposals are estimated to be in the region of £2,947,235 (final cost dependent upon eligibility) and will be fully met by the HSF grant – this is a one-off ring fenced grant that will be payable in arrears following the submission of two quarterly returns outlining activity and spend.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: RH Date: 13/5/22]

22. There are no specific HR implications associated with this report.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials PW Date 13/05/22]

23. No new technology is required to deliver this proposal. As outlined in the body of the report, the Council will issue payments into bank accounts proactively wherever possible. Where applicable, a digital application form will be developed to make it as easy and swift as possible.

HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: CH Date: 17/05/22]

24. Strong approach to address the immediate affects around wider determinate of health targeting at risk groups in addressing current financial stresses. Further consideration needs to be made to ensure the strategy addresses the digitally excluded and underserved communities such as BAME, sensory impaired and where English is not the first language etc.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: JG Date: 12.05.22]

25. Due regard will be taken to ensure any required adjustments are implemented in the process for households and individuals receiving this financial support.

CONSULTATION

26. N/A

BACKGROUND PAPERS

27. None

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

28. Not applicable.

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