



Notice of a public

Decision Session - Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects

Meeting to be held in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods (for agenda item 4 Household Support Fund 4)

- To:** Councillors Ayre (Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects) and Craghill (Executive Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods)
- Date:** Friday, 24 March 2023
- Time:** 10.00 am
- Venue:** The Thornton Room - Ground Floor, West Offices (G039)

AGENDA

Written representations in respect of items on this agenda should be submitted to Democratic Services by **5:00pm on Wednesday 22 March 2023**.

1. Declarations of Interest

At this point in the meeting, the Executive Members are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest or other registerable interest they might have in respect of business on this agenda, if they have not already done so in advance on the Register of Interests.

2. Minutes

(Pages 1 - 6)

To approve and sign the minutes of the Decision Session held on 13 March 2023.

3. Public Participation

At this point in the meeting members of the public who have registered to speak can do so. Members of the public may speak on agenda items or on matters within the remit of the Executive Member.

Please note that our registration deadlines have changed to 2 working days before the meeting, in order to facilitate the management of public participation at meetings. The deadline for registering at this meeting is 5:00pm on Wednesday 22 March 2023.

To register to speak please visit www.york.gov.uk/AttendCouncilMeetings to fill in an online registration form. If you have any questions about the registration form or the meeting, please contact Democratic Services. Contact details can be found at the foot of this agenda.

Webcasting of Public Meetings

Please note that, subject to available resources, this meeting will be webcast, including any registered public speakers who have given their permission. The meeting can be viewed live and on demand at www.york.gov.uk/webcasts.

4. Household Support Fund 4 (Pages 7 - 60)

This paper presents the Household Support Fund (HSF) scheme April 2023 – March 2024 to the Executive Member for Finance & Major Projects in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing & Safer Neighbourhoods for approval. The councils scheme details must be submitted to the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) by 17 May 2023.

5. Urgent Business

Any other business which the Executive Member considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

Democracy Officer:

Angela Bielby

01904 551088

a.bielby@york.gov.uk

For more information about any of the following, please contact the Democracy Officer responsible for servicing this meeting:

- Registering to speak
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Contact details are set out above.

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我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim własnym języku. (Polish)

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

 **(01904) 551550**

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 (01904) 551550

City of York Council

Committee Minutes

Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects
Date	13 March 2023
Present	Councillor Ayre
In Attendance	John Madden (Strategic Manager Corporate Strategy and City Partnerships) Pauline Stuchfield (Director of Customer and Communities) David Walker (Head of Customer and Exchequer Services)
Apologies	Councillor Craghill

25. Declarations of Interest [10.00]

The Executive Member was asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests, not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests that he might have had in respect of business on the agenda. He confirmed he had none.

26. Public Participation [10.00]

It was reported that there had been one registration to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Hughie Ferguson spoke on agenda item 6 - Council Tax Hardship fund and Retail Hospitality and Leisure relief. He expressed concern regarding energy costs and the cost of living crisis for sports facilities, in particular swimming pools such as the New Earswick Swimming Pool. He noted that the Ward profile for Huntington and New Earswick showed obesity in Reception and Year 6 which was an area of concern for York and he and asked how this problem would be tackled.

27. Minutes [10.02]

Resolved: That the minutes of the Decision Session of the Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects held on 12 January 2023 be approved and signed by the Executive Member as a correct record.

28. Council Tax Hardship fund and Retail Hospitality and Leisure relief [10.02]

The Executive Member considered a report that provided details of the Retail, Hospitality & Leisure (RHL) business rate relief and Council Tax Support (CTS) hardship schemes 2023/24 for noting by the Executive Member for Finance & Major Projects. To avoid complications with the 2023/24 annual billing cycle an officer decision was made by the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Executive Member on 14 February 2023. This was shown at Annex D of the report. With reference to recommendation C, the Director of Customer and Communities advised that recommendation for approval, and not noting.

The Head of Customer and Exchequer Services detailed the report noting that it continued rate relief from the government but did not address increased costs for swimming pools which may be addressed in the Chancellor's Spring Budget. The Executive Member thanked staff for their work and then;

Resolved: That;

- a) The council's RHL scheme (as detailed in paragraphs 5 – 12 of the published report) be noted.
- b) The council's CTS hardship scheme (as detailed in paragraphs 13 – 19 of the published report) be noted.
- c) The delegation of discretion to decide on qualifying and non-qualifying businesses (outside of those set out in Annex A of the published report) to the Head of Customer and Exchequer Services in consultation with the Head of Economic Development be approved.
- d) Approval be given to the delegation to make any changes to the council's RHL and CTS hardship scheme within the broader scope of the scheme guidance (as set at Annexes A and B of the published report) to the council's s151 officer (Chief Finance Officer) in consultation with the Executive Member for

Finance and Major Projects (as detailed in paragraphs 11 & 19 of the published report).

Reason: To provide cost of living support to business and residents hardest hit by the current economic pressures.

[The meeting adjourned from 10.07 to 10.09]

29. Recommendations for approval of grants from the Financial Inclusion Steering Group (FISG) Grant Scheme 2023/24 [10.09]

The Executive Member considered a report that sought approval of the recommended awards of grants under the above scheme for 2023/24 following a round of competitive bids and a rigorous selection panel process. The Director of Customer and Communities gave an overview of the grants from the FISG grant scheme, detailing how these had been awarded. She noted that the Strategic Manager Corporate Strategy and City Partnerships had supported the panel and he thanked the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust for their input to the FISG.

The Executive Member thanked the Strategic Manager Corporate Strategy and City Partnerships and the panel for their work on the grant scheme and he welcomed the additional £100k for the scheme. He then;

Resolved: That approval be given to the award of a total of £150,000 of grants to fund 11 projects for 2023/24, as set out in the table below, to deliver a range of financial inclusion activities by partners across the city. There is an approved budget of £50,000 for 2023/24 which will be increased to £150,000 using one-off growth. All projects are for a twelve-month period.

1. £11,644 to Age UK (York) for providing Benefits Advice through Home Visit for the extension of their Money and Benefits advice service offered to people over pension age, providing an additional two days per week of support in response to increased demand.
2. £14,585 to the Welfare Benefits Unit for Advice Extra to deliver a continuation of the Advice Extra project, building on innovative practice developed

- over the last few years helping to underpin first tier advisors in responding to more complex cases.
3. £25,764 to the Peasholme Charity for My Money, My Life, to continue delivery of its financial capability pathway service, offering a range of interventions to support people from a point of 'crisis' through to a place of financial stability.
 4. £20,000* to the Community Furniture Store for their IT Reuse project to continue to help reduce digital exclusion through device provision and skills enhancement, building on key partnerships and learning from existing project. Collect digital equipment, which is wiped/repaired/configured by volunteers for distribution to individuals facing digital exclusion, enabling users to access information, manage finances, look for work, and upskill, enhancing their well-being, financial security.
 5. £9,800* to Experience Counts for their 50+ Project to deliver two employment related wrap around training programmes to residents aged 50+ providing individualised coaching and support to advance into employment, self-employment, volunteering or further training.
 6. £15,840 to Cotermious CIC Employment & Enterprise Programme to provide practical support and employment advice to help people navigate their way back into meaningful employment through focussed training and workshops. Aimed at York's most marginalised residents many of whom are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
 7. £6,938 to OCAY (Older Citizens Advocacy York) for Benefits Advocacy to deliver comprehensive advocacy support to clients (aged 50+) caught in the benefits system to ensure they maximise their entitlement. Provides emotional/practical support to manage the challenges many face in making claims.
 8. £14,271* to Refugee Action York (RAY) for Financially Included – supporting access to services and support. In collaboration with CAY continue and build on the existing project to support refugees, asylum seekers and migrants to access practical support, information and

guidance, to relieve hardship, reduce isolation, advance education and improve integration.

9. £16,221 to York Community Energy for supporting parents struggling with energy bills. The project aims to increase the financial resilience of single parents/ families with children who are struggling with their energy and other bills, ensuring they get support with managing bills and keeping warm while saving energy where possible. Includes outreach activities and practical support on energy and other issues.
10. £4,100* to York Explore for 100% Digital York Partnership. The project exists to focus on supporting digital inclusion across the city working with over 15 partners. This funding extends the post of Digital Inclusion Co-ordinator (18.5 hours p.w.) for an extra 3 months to 31/3/24 (currently funded to 31/12/23).
11. £10,837 to Citizens' Advice York for Financial Inclusion for the Traveller Community to continue the existing project working with the Travellers Trust to deliver and co-ordinate advice services to the Gypsy & Traveller Community.
*four projects part funded

Reason: To ensure that funds set aside to support the delivery of financial inclusion activity are allocated appropriately.

30. Financial Inclusion Interim Strategy 2023-25 [10.12]

The Executive Member considered a report that outlined the work undertaken to produce a draft interim strategy in line with the current Council Plan objective to *Review the Council's approach to Financial Inclusion*. The production of the strategy and its delivery priorities had been delayed by the coronavirus pandemic and then the focus of all resources has been to deliver significant support needed for residents facing the Cost-of-Living Crisis. The strategy was interim, given the launch in March 2023 of the Poverty Truth Commission, the work of which would inform strategic policy on Financial Inclusion matters going forward.

The Director of Customer and Communities detailed the report, explaining the work undertaken to produce the draft strategy and

the aims of it. The Executive Member noted also the work of the ICS York Place Board and noted the need to tackle the causes to poverty. He further noted the need to work with different partners in health and housing. He then;

Resolved: That the Interim Financial Inclusion Strategy 2023-25 be approved.

Reason: To ensure all the priorities outlined in the strategy are a focus for the council and its partners to mitigate the impact of the Cost-of-Living Crisis and drive work to address underlying causes of poverty, ensure resident income is maximised and long-term recovery is achieved.

Cllr Ayre, Executive Member

[The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 10.19 am].



Executive Member for Finance & Major Projects

24 March 2023

Report of the Director Customer and Communities

Household Support Fund April 2023 – March 2024

Summary

1. This paper presents the Household Support Fund (HSF) scheme April 2023 – March 2024 to the Executive Member for Finance & Major Projects in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing & Safer Neighbourhoods for approval. The council's scheme details must be submitted to the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) by 17th May 2023.

Recommendations

2. The Executive Member is asked to approve:
 - a) the council's HSF scheme April 2023 – March 24 (Annex A).
 - b) that any changes to the scheme that do not fundamentally alter the purpose be delegated to the Section 151 officer in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance & Performance.
 - c) the delegation of discretion to pay claims made within the broader scope of the scheme guidance as set out by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) (Annex B) to the Head of Customer & Exchequer Services.

Reason: To provide financial support to the city's most financially vulnerable residents from April 2023 to March 2024 arising from the ongoing cost of living increases.

Background

3. In October 2022, the Chancellor announced that as part of a number of measures to provide help with global inflationary challenges and

the significantly rising cost of living, the Household Support Fund (HSF) would be extended from 01 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

4. On 8 February 2023 the DWP provided guidelines for the scheme and confirmed funding of £2,075,813 for York for the proposed twelve-month period. The previous three schemes have provided half of this amount for each relevant six-month period.
5. The government guidance (Annex B) follows a similar approach to the previous HSF scheme and rather than focussing on one specific vulnerable group, local authorities are being asked to provide support to a broad cross section of vulnerable households to prevent escalation of problems, including families with children of all ages, pensioners, unpaid carers, care leavers, and people with disabilities; particularly considering support for those vulnerable households who are ineligible for other government support with the cost of living. All schemes must have a discretionary application process for residents. This new scheme (Annex A) will provide direct payments to residents and importantly provides funding for other targeted groups and 'wraparound' support within communities.
6. The total funding including any administration costs for City of York Council is £2,075,813. The funding is paid retrospectively following the first management information return due by 21 June 2023, and all funding must be spent or committed by 31st March 2024.

HSF Scheme

7. This is the sixth government scheme following the Winter Support Grants (WSG) from December 2020 to April 2021, the Local Covid Support Grant (LCSG) from April 2021 to September 2021, the initial HSF scheme October 2021 to March 2022, the second HSF Scheme April 2022 to 30th September 2022 and the third HSF scheme October 2022 to 31st March 2023.
8. The scheme allows as far as possible to mitigate the necessity for potentially qualifying customers to have to make a claim. This has been well received with the previous schemes and ensures support is distributed as fairly and widely as possible. As with previous schemes and as set out in the DWP guidance there is a discretionary scheme running until 31st March 2024 that any resident can apply to.

9. Funding will be distributed as efficiently as possible to families with children, and other vulnerable households in most need of support with food, energy, and water bills. This will be done via the following routes:

- Providing support to financially vulnerable working age households already identified through eligibility to Council Tax Support.
- Providing support to financially vulnerable foster carers and care-leavers.
- A discretionary means tested application route open to all other households in the city needing support.
- A specialist advice support worker to reach out into the community to target groups, those who are not digitally engaged or have other reasons why they are not aware or able to apply for financial support; provide support to apply where needed and information about other support which might be available.
- Provide direct support via food and fuel e-vouchers as part of advice and support provided by both CYC and VCS services, including Local Area Coordinators, Housing Management Officers, Citizens Advice York, Age UK, OCAV, York Carers Centre, Peasholme Charity and Family Wellbeing Service.
- Support and development of community hubs offering community food provision, Warm Places, and information to local communities.
- Support with additional energy efficiency measures identified as part of advice and support provided by York Energy Advice, where other funding is not available.
- Working with Community First Credit Union to pilot a scheme offering interest free loans to people who do not qualify for grant funding through this scheme or through other financial support schemes.

10. The HSF scheme is set out at Annex A and the financial support in summary at Table A below:

Table A – Scheme

Spend	£
4400 working age CTS claimants (2 x £185 Payments in June & Nov 2023)	1,628,000
Discretionary	200,000
Care leavers	25,000
Foster Carers	25,000
Food/Fuel Vouchers	47,813
Practical energy saving	10,000
Advice worker supporting community-based services and settings	40,000
Community food and warm places	40,000
Credit Union - Interest Free loans	10,000
Administration Costs	50,000
TOTAL Cost	2,075,813
Budget	2,075,813

11. The scheme is there to support those households in financial difficulties with food, fuel, and other utility bills. A resident does not have to be in receipt of DWP benefits to claim though the discretionary fund and each claim will be considered on its own merits. Any resident who does not qualify will be signposted to other support both internally and externally including the York Financial Assistance Scheme (YFAS). The HSF scheme will close on the 31 March 2024 or at the point the funds are exhausted.

Analysis

12. The difference between this scheme and former HSF schemes is that it removes the restrictions on the percentage that can be spent on specific financially vulnerable groups. The new scheme also allows for funding to be allocated to advice and support with applying along with additional wraparound support to ensure that residents are claiming all financial welfare benefit support they are entitled too.
13. The community food and warm spaces allocation of £40,000 will repeat the grant scheme in place for this last winter which not only secured the sustainability of some venues as warm spaces but also as potential community hubs. This will help with a longer-term strategic approach for winter 23/24.
14. The aim is to have the scheme live by the end of April 2023, with the first direct payments to be paid in June before the summer holidays and November before the Christmas break.
15. Whilst the council will receive a little over £2m this is no more than in the previous schemes and is a very small amount of money in comparison to the ongoing and increasing financial pressures many households are facing. There is continuing support available through the York Financial Support Scheme (YFAS) and access to food/fuel vouchers as well as Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP).

Consultation

16. This is a government scheme and there was no consultation with City of York Council on its design. There is, however, some latitude within the scheme on how it is delivered, and the council has consulted with its Advice York partners as part of the Equalities Impact Assessment (Annex C) on how it will be delivered. Key elements of the scheme have been discussed with the council's charity, voluntary and community sector partners (Advice York) and reflects their thoughts in terms of getting money to Households as quickly and simply as possible

Implications

17.

Financial

There are no financial implications as this is Government grant not council budget. The council does not receive new burdens funding in respect of this scheme but can take reasonable administration costs

that are reported through the management return. The council costs are estimated at £50k. The current scheme is planned to come in on budget, however based on past schemes not all direct payments are taken up so it is expected that there will be some funding available after the November direct payments that can be targeted at any new or arising pressures within the scope of the scheme or to buy further food and fuel vouchers.

Human Resources (HR)

There are no HR implications that are not already covered in the finance implications.

Equalities

An Equalities Impact Assessment attached at Annex C and the recruitment of an additional adviser will help to support those who may normally have difficulty accessing support. The scheme will impact positively on all those protected under the act with low incomes and particularly older and/or disabled residents, carers, and care leavers.

Legal

The decisions in this report do not carry legal implications for the council, as the Council is effectively 'passporting' the funds from central government to affected individuals. As such, providing the approved scheme is implemented in accordance with Annex A, the Authority is acting within its discretion

Crime and Disorder, Information Technology and Property

No implications

Risk Management

18. The key risk associated with this paper relates to ensuring that the scheme is delivered within and up to the financial value of the Government grant received. This is managed by basing the scheme on existing data around vulnerable family numbers in the city and taking a prudent approach to the grant payments.

Author responsible for the report:

Chief Officer responsible for the report:

Paul Sanderson
Income Manager

Pauline Stuchfield
Director Customer and Communities

**Report
Approved**

**Date
14/03/
23**

Specialist Implications Officer(s):

Debbie Mitchell – Chief Finance Officer

Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

Annexes

Annex A – HSF Scheme

Annex B – DWP Guidance

Annex C - EIA

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Household Support Fund (HSF) Scheme 4

1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

Background

1. On 17 November 2022, the Chancellor announced, as part of a collection of measures to provide help with global inflationary challenges and the significantly rising cost of living, that the Household Support Fund (HSF) would be extended from 01 April 2024 to 31 March 2024.
2. On the 8th February 2023 the DWP confirmed the scheme and rather than focussing on one specific vulnerable group, local authorities should provide support to a broad cross section of vulnerable households to prevent escalation of problems, including families with children of all ages, unpaid carers, care leavers, and people with disabilities; particularly considering support for those vulnerable households who are ineligible for other government support with the cost of living.
3. The expectation is that the Household Support Fund should primarily be used to support households in the most need with food, energy and water bills. It can also be used to support households with essential costs related to those items and with wider essential costs where appropriate. In exceptional cases of genuine emergency, it can additionally be used to support housing costs where existing housing support schemes do not meet this exceptional need.
4. Through the experience of delivering previous schemes, it has been of national concern that there may be qualifying residents who are not able to engage with these schemes through no fault of their own. With this in mind this scheme follows Government guidance and includes the funding of a specific specialist advice role within the Council. This temporary role will exist until the expiry of the scheme on 31st March 2024 and has the specific purpose to identify and reach out to those who are less able to engage with the scheme so they will benefit from financial support.
5. The previous HSF scheme will end on 31st March 2023. The new scheme is similar and is to support the same demographic of the city, however in contrast to previous 6 month schemes this new scheme covers a period of 12 months ending on 31st March 2024

Finance & Rules

6. City of York Council has been given a budget £2,075,813 to cover the period 01 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

7. Funding will be paid to the council by the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) in arrears after the council provides each management information return has been provided. Four management information returns with a breakdown of spend across the core categories will be required by DWP to facilitate this. The first interim MI return is required by 1 July 2023 for spend for the period 1 April 2023 to 30 June 2023. The table below shows the dates for the following MI returns including a final return due on 26 April 2024.

8. MI Return	Reporting period: from	Reporting period: to	Deadline
Interim 1	1 April 2023	30 June 2023	21 July 2023
Interim 2	1 April 2023	30 September 2023	20 October 2023
Interim 2	1 April 2023	31 December 2023	26 January 2024
Final Return	1 April 2023	31 March 2024	26 April 2024

9. A portion of the funding may be allocated to administration costs by the local authority and providing advice and support to residents. This must be detailed on the returns and be deemed reasonable by DWP.

City Of York HSF Details

Overview

10. Funding will be distributed as efficiently as possible to families with children, and other vulnerable households in most need with food, energy and water bills. This will be done via the following routes:
- Providing support to financially vulnerable working age households already identified through eligibility to Council Tax Support.
 - Providing support to financially vulnerable Foster carers and care-leavers.
 - A discretionary means tested application route available for other households needing support.
 - A specialist advice support worker to reach out into the community to target groups, those who are not digitally engaged or have other reasons why they are not aware or able to apply for financial support; Provide support to apply where needed and information about other support which might be available.

- Provide direct support via food and fuel e-vouchers as part of advice and support provided by both CYC and VCS services, including Local Area Coordinators, Housing Management Officers, Citizens Advice York, Age UK, OCAY, York Carers Centre, Peasholme Charity and Family Wellbeing Service.
- Support and development of community hubs offering community food provision, Warm Places and information to local communities.
- Support with additional energy efficiency measures identified as part of advice and support provided by York Energy Advice, where other funding is not available.
- Working with Community First Credit Union to pilot a scheme to offer interest free loans to people who do not qualify for grant funding through this scheme or through other financial support schemes.

Target Audience

11. The direct payment scheme will primarily target working age council tax support customers who are known to us and are most likely to need assistance with food, energy and water bills.
12. Anyone not in the above category in need of help with food, energy and water bills will also be able to apply through the discretionary means tested route.
13. Wider essential costs in line with the guidance will also be considered on a discretionary basis.

Distribution of Funds/Application Routes

14. Funds will be distributed through the following routes
 - a. Identified working age households receiving council tax support who apply will receive cash payments directly into customer bank accounts. * This will provide the flexibility for households to pay for various household bills as appropriate.
 - b. Discretionary means-tested application process with a budget of £200,000 to support other residents for any eligible essentials as set out in the Government's guidance. Successful applications will receive cash payments directly into customer bank accounts*.

*Where people do not have a bank account alternative payment arrangements will be made via e-vouchers.

- c. CYC Food and Fuel Voucher Scheme: A budget of £47,813 will be allocated to CYC Food and Fuel Voucher Scheme.
 - d. Energy efficiency measures: A budget of £10,000 will be allocated to York Energy Advice to provide additional energy efficiency measures identified as part of advice and support provided.
 - e. Foster carers will have a budget of £25,000.
 - f. Care-leavers will have a budget of £25,000.
 - g. Budget funding of £40,000 will be allocated to employ a specific council advice worker to reach out to qualifying residents to encourage applications and provide support to apply where needed.
 - h. Budget funding of £40,000 will be allocated to support and development of community hubs offering community food provision, Warm Places and information to local communities.
 - i. Credit Union will receive funding of £10,000 to enable guaranteed interest free loans of up to £500 each to be provided to applicants applying for funding to replace or improve energy efficiency for their homes and/or white goods. Monitoring reports will be required to be provided by the Community Bank to the council at least 14 days in advance of the deadline for each Government MI return.
15. There will be two main mechanisms for distributing funds:
- Route 1 – Direct payment**
16. Direct payments will be made to all identified Working age customers receiving Council Tax Support .
 17. This will involve a simple information gathering process for the customer to claim their award. Customers who meet eligibility criteria will be invited to apply to provide up to date bank details in order to receive their payment.
 18. Payment amounts will be paid directly into their bank accounts.
 19. Recipients will receive up to two payments per household in to help with living costs. The payments will be as set out at Table B below and be paid in June and November.
 20. Where possible eligible customers who receive the first payment and continue to meet security checks will automatically receive the second payment.

21. Households who do not pass continued security checks and new eligible council tax support households will be invited to apply for the second-round payments.

Route 2 – Discretionary payment.

22. Discretionary means-tested application process to support other residents for any eligible essentials as set out in the Government's guidance. Successful applications will receive cash payments directly into customer bank accounts
23. Residents who have not been invited to apply and need financial assistance to help with significantly rising living costs can apply directly for a grant at www.york.gov.uk/householdsupportfund
24. Residents in the following groups have been identified as been particularly impacted by the increase in cost of living and will be encouraged to apply if they need additional support
 - People with disabilities, including children
 - Carers
 - People with health conditions that are affected by the cold, such as COPD, severe asthma, cardiovascular disease, sickle cell anaemia
 - Pensioners
 - Single adult households with high energy, rent or mortgage costs
25. A breakdown of the total spend is show at Table A below.

Payment Frequency

26. There will be two application windows for the standard direct payments via Route 1. Payments will be made in two stages during 2023, the first by the end of June and the second by the end of November 2023.
27. Discretionary payments will be made on an ad-hoc basis in conjunction with the payment periods as above to a maximum of 2 x £185 payments.

Table A – Scheme Spend Allocations

Spend	£
4400 working age CTS claimants(2 x £185 Payments in June & Nov 2023)	1,628,000
Discretionary	200,000
Care leavers	25,000
Foster Carers	25,000
Food/Fuel Vouchers	47,813
Practical energy saving	10,000
Advice worker supporting community based services and settings	40,000
Community food and warm places	40,000
Credit Union - Interest Free loans	10,000
Administration	50,000
TOTAL	2,075,813
Budget	2,075,813

Scheme:

City of York Household Support Fund 4

1. York Household Support Fund 4 (HSF) is provided by City of York Council to support vulnerable households in most need of support to help with significantly rising living costs.
2. York HSF will consider the needs of various households including families with children of all ages, pensioners, unpaid carers, care leavers, and people with disabilities.
3. York HSF can provide assistance with
 - Food
 - Energy bills – electricity, gas, oil
 - Water bills (including sewerage)
 - Other essential costs linked to energy or water
 - Other wider essentials on a discretionary basis, these may include for example support with other bills including broadband or phone bills, clothing, and essential transport-related costs such as repairing a car, buying a bicycle, or paying for fuel.
 - Some exceptional housing costs.
4. Direct grant award payments will be made to the applicant's bank account. Where people do not have a bank account, alternative payment arrangements will be made via e-vouchers.
5. Discretionary awards will be assessed on the criteria set out. Applicants who are assessed as outside the criteria will be directed to alternative advice and support as appropriate.

Who can apply?

6. The scheme is open to City of York residents who are over 16 years of age, who require urgent financial assistance over the period.
7. To be considered you must need financial assistance to help with significantly rising living costs **and** have inadequate savings to meet eligible costs in line with the scheme.
8. A person in need of additional support may include, but not restricted to:
 - Anyone suffering severe financial hardship
 - Someone age 24 or under with an Education, Health and Care plan

- Someone age 19 or under classed as not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- A person who has a physical or sensory impairment, learning disability or mental health problem¹.
- Elderly, frail or confused older people
- People who are seriously ill or have a severe long term health condition.
- People who are recently bereaved
- Pregnant women or those who have recently given birth
- Recently unemployed people
- Care leaver
- Those fleeing domestic abuse
- Those who have difficulty in understanding, speaking or reading English

Who cannot apply?

9. The following categories of people do not qualify for help:
 - People who do not live within the City of York Council boundaries
10. Assistance will be considered based on propensity to pay essential bills in line with the scheme eligibility criteria. We will use monthly expenses, liabilities and capital for your household to determine this.

How to apply

11. Grants will be provided through two routes

Route 1 – Direct payment

12. All identified customers in the following group
 - a. Working age Council Tax Support customers
13. Payment amounts will be paid directly into their bank accounts.
14. Working age Council Tax Support customers will be sent a letter inviting them to apply. The invitation will give details of how to apply.

¹ The Royal College of Psychiatrists and Money Advice Trust's Debt collection and mental health: ten steps to improve recovery provides useful guidance and further definition of what constitutes a mental health problem

This will be through an online application. The web link is provided in the letter.

15. Anyone who needs assistance to apply can
 - contact our Benefits Team
 - talk to one of the advice and support services across the city
 - contact our customer service team.
16. This support will be provided in two payments. This first to be made by 30 June 2023, the second to be made by 30 November 2023. These payments are intended to help families with household bills.
17. Where possible eligible customers who receive the first payment and continue to meet security checks will automatically receive the second payment.
18. Households who do not pass continued security checks and new eligible council tax support households will be invited to apply for the second-round payments.

Route 2 - Discretionary applications

19. Residents who have not been invited to apply and need financial assistance to help with significantly rising living costs can apply directly for a grant at www.york.gov.uk/householdsupportfund
20. Residents in the following groups have been identified as been particularly impacted by the increased cost of living in York and will be encouraged to apply if they need additional support
 - People with disabilities, including children
 - Carers
 - People with health conditions that are affected by the cold, such as COPD, severe asthma, cardiovascular disease, sickle cell anaemia
 - Pensioners
 - Single adult households with high energy, rent or mortgage costs
21. Grants will be through a discretionary means tested application which will require applicants to prepare some financial information.

22. Approved awards for assistance with food, energy bills – electricity, gas, oil and Water bills (including sewerage) will be standard amounts based on household size.
23. Applications can also be made for exceptional financial circumstances relating to other essentials which will be assessed on a discretionary basis. Any exceptional discretionary awards will be made on an individual basis as appropriate.

What information I will need to provide

24. We will need to information about your circumstances and what assistance you are applying for.
25. We will need to ask for information and evidence to show applicants meet the criteria, such as
 - your household includes a child/ren
 - you are a person in need of additional support
 - Your household income, savings, and expenditure, including
 - Earnings
 - DWP benefits
 - Any other income
 - Readily available funds - cash in hand, in the bank or building society accounts.
26. We may ask for further information about your personal circumstances in depth to make sure you are seeking all available support.
27. When applying for assistance with
 - Energy bills – electricity, gas, oil
 - Water bills (including sewerage)
 - Other exceptional emergency costs

We will need to see evidence you are liable for these costs and the amounts owed and how your utilities are paid for e.g., Pre-payment meter, monthly direct debit, and quarterly.

28. We will have a specialist advice support worker to reach out into the community to those who are not digitally engaged or have other reasons why they are not aware or able to apply for financial support. Advice agencies will also provide information and advice, if there may

be other support available or you are not seeking the support you need. For example, this could be getting you some advice and help on how to prepare an income and expenditure budget or by helping you to access more specialist support such as, for example, StepChange debt charity.

How many times can I apply?

29. There will be one application award payment per household. The funding is ring-fenced and covers the period from 1 April 2023 until the 31 March 2024.

Route 1 -. 2 payments to be made in June and November for period 01/04/23- 31/03/24

Route 2 - Discretionary payments will be made on an application basis through to 31st March.

How will awards be made?

30. Awards will be paid directly to people's bank account.

31. The award levels are set out at Table A.

Reviews

32. The whole scheme (Direct payments & Discretionary awards) is discretionary meaning that there is no right of appeal. However, you do have the right to a review if you are unhappy with our decision. In this case the decision will be looked at again by someone who did not make the original decision.

33. Where the Council cannot help it will provide you with information about other agencies that may be able to help and where appropriate, make a referral on your behalf. If you remain unhappy you can use the Council's complaints process.

34. We will not review a claim if the funding is exhausted, or the scheme has closed (31st March 2024).

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Annex B

Household Support Fund: Guidance for County Councils and Unitary Authorities in England (1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024)

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Introduction

1. £842m has been made available to County Councils and Unitary Authorities in England to support those most in need and to help with global inflationary challenges and the significantly rising cost of living via the Household Support Fund (“The Fund”). This funding covers the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 inclusive (“The Fund Period”). County Councils and Unitary Authorities have discretion on exactly how this funding is used within the scope set out in the accompanying grant determination and this guidance. This guidance sets out the required collaboration between the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), County Councils and Unitary Authorities, including their delivery partners (such as District Councils as well as any charitable or third-party organisations) to successfully meet the policy intent within the agreed framework. It also provides the framework that County Councils and Unitary Authorities need to work within and the arrangements for distribution of funding and reporting.
2. DWP is providing funding to County Councils and Unitary Authorities (including Metropolitan Councils and London Boroughs – hereafter referred to as “Authorities”), under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003, to administer The Fund and provide assistance to households most in need.
3. The expectation is that The Fund should be used to support households in the most need; particularly those who may not be eligible for the other support government has recently made available but who are nevertheless in need and who require crisis support. This includes the Cost of Living Payments and the energy support we are providing for 2023/24 set out on [17 November 2022](#) (information on these schemes can be found at Annex A). For the Cost of Living payments this may include, but is not limited to, people who are entitled to but not claiming qualifying benefits, people who are claiming Housing Benefit (HB) only and people who begin a claim or return to payment of a benefit after the relevant qualifying date. There may be groups who are vulnerable to rising prices even though they are supported through these schemes, for example large families or single-income families. It is important to stress that The Fund is intended to cover a wide range of low income households in need including families with children of all ages, pensioners, unpaid carers, care leavers and disabled people.
4. Energy bills may be of particular concern to low income households during the period of The Fund and Authorities should prioritise supporting households with the cost of energy. Support which can make a quick but sustainable impact on energy costs is particularly encouraged; for example, the insulation of hot water tanks, fitting draft excluders to a door, or replacing inefficient lightbulbs or white goods. The Fund can also be used to support households with the cost of food and water bills, essential costs related to energy, food and water, and with wider essential costs. The Fund can additionally be used to support housing costs where existing housing support schemes do not meet this need.
5. Authorities should also consider providing support to disabled people in their area. Disabled people in particular may be facing acute challenges due to the disproportionate impact that rising costs bring for the additional services they need in

order to manage their conditions, remain independent and avoid becoming socially isolated. For example, some disabled people may have increased utility bills due to the usage of equipment, aids or adaptations associated with their disability. They may also have additional heating, water or transport costs. Authorities are therefore strongly encouraged to explore ways in which this group may be supported and must record the total value of awards granted to disabled people in their Management Information (MI) returns for this grant.

6. Authorities should also consider providing support to people with caring responsibilities in their area. People with caring responsibilities may be facing acute challenges incurred through their fulfilling these responsibilities for vulnerable citizens due to the disproportionate impact that rising costs may bring for the additional services they need. For example, they may have additional heating, water or transport costs. Authorities are therefore encouraged to explore ways in which this group may be supported.
7. Authorities have the ability to deliver the scheme through a variety of routes including providing vouchers or cash to households, making direct provision of food and goods, or issuing grants to third parties. Every area must operate at least part of their scheme on an application basis - in other words, residents should have the opportunity to come forward to ask for support. There is flexibility on exactly how this can be run, including through third parties rather than directly by the Authority. We expect Authorities to offer application-based support throughout the duration of The Fund, either continuously over the majority of The Fund Period or in regular intervals throughout the scheme.
8. Authorities are expected to offer support throughout the duration of The Fund Period and must develop their delivery plans to reflect this.
9. Authorities have access to DWP's Searchlight portal which provides information on individual citizens' entitlement to (and confirms receipt of) DWP welfare benefits.
10. DWP is providing data and information to Authorities to support them to identify those in need in their area. We are providing:
 - information relating to Universal Credit (UC) claims with limited capability for work or earnings below the Free School Meals (FSMs) and free prescription thresholds in their area
 - data on people receiving the Guarantee Credit and/or Savings Credit elements of Pension Credit
 - data on all claimants on income-related (IR) Employment and Support Allowance (ESA IR).
11. In October 2022, DWP introduced a further data share for those who are only in receipt of HB. This group is not eligible for the up to £900 means-tested Cost of Living Payment. Authorities may find this information useful in identifying those most

in need. Authorities should consider how they could use this data to provide support to this group.

12. However, support is not restricted only to vulnerable households in receipt of benefits. Therefore, Authorities should also use other sources of information to identify vulnerable households, including by taking advice or application referrals from professionals who come into contact with vulnerable households such as social workers, keyworkers delivering early help and family support, health visitors and housing support officers.
13. This guidance applies to Authorities in England only and when finalised should be read in conjunction with the Household Support Fund Grant Determination issued alongside it.

Communication

14. It is mandatory for Authorities to reference that the grant is funded by the Department for Work and Pensions or the UK Government in any publicity material, including online channels and media releases.
15. It is mandatory for Authorities to make public their plans for The Fund, including how and when they intend to deliver the application-based portion of their scheme. This should be through a website page dedicated to the Fund headed with 'Household Support Fund' on their Authority website. This webpage must be easily accessible for residents and outline the Authority's plans for funding, including with details of who is eligible in the area, as well as how and when residents might be able to apply for the application-based element of the scheme. Links to the Government's [Cost of Living Hub](#) should be included, as well as a specific reference that the grant is funded by the Department for Work and Pensions or the UK Government.
16. Authorities should consider inclusive and accessible ways in which they might advertise the availability of The Fund to their residents for example in local family or community hubs and GP surgeries. We expect Authorities to advertise the scheme – and in particular the application-based element of their provision – through various channels and not just online.

Objective and key principles

17. The objective of The Fund is to provide crisis support to vulnerable households in most need of support to help with significantly rising living costs.
18. Although this is considered an extension to the previous three Household Support Fund schemes, it is a new grant subject to its own grant conditions as is set out in the Grant Determination letter. Any underspends from the previous schemes cannot be carried forward.
19. Funds should be spent or committed before 31 March 2024 and cannot be carried over for future usage. All Authorities are encouraged to ensure, wherever possible, that any vouchers issued are redeemed before the end of The Fund, or shortly thereafter, or consider recycling unused vouchers. It is acceptable for vouchers that have been purchased and delivered to households before the end of The Fund to be spent shortly thereafter (see paragraphs 70 to 74 on committed spend).

20. When administering The Fund, Authorities are encouraged to adopt the following principles:

- use discretion on how to identify and support those most in need, taking into account a wide range of information
- use the funding from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 to meet immediate needs and help those who are struggling to afford energy and water bills, food, and other related essentials. Authorities can also use the funding to support households who are struggling to afford wider essentials including housing costs where existing housing support does not meet this need

- **Note:** this includes payments made, or committed to, by the Authority or any person acting on behalf of the Authority, from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

- work together with District Councils and third parties including, where necessary and appropriate, other local services. This may include social workers, housing and family support services and local charities. This may also incorporate intelligence and data from wider children's social care systems to help identify and support individuals, families and households within the scope of The Fund. It may also include receiving referrals for support and applications made on behalf of an individual from professionals working with vulnerable individuals such as social workers, keyworkers delivering early help and family support, health visitors and housing support officers.

21. When deciding how to help people, Authorities should consider:

- how they plan to provide support to vulnerable households, such as by paying into bank accounts, use of cash and vouchers, provision of goods. When determining the most appropriate mechanism of providing support for households, Authorities should consider any potential risks to vulnerable individuals, for example the risk of holding cash, as well as the risk of any potential for fraud
- any fraud risks associated with these payment methods (see section 'Managing the risk of fraud' at paragraphs 76-88 for further information).

Delivery Plans

22. Authorities are required to complete a delivery plan to outline their intentions for The Fund, clearly setting out their priorities and approach for use of the Fund, and to demonstrate the ways in which they intend to allocate their funding.

23. Authorities are required to send the delivery plan to DWP by 17 May 2023. At the end of The Fund we will also ask for a summary of spend against the final delivery plan with this due at the same time as the final MI in April 2024. Delivery plans must be signed off by your Section 151 Officer and responsible Cabinet Member before submission to DWP.

24. Authorities are required to appoint an appropriate Senior Responsible Officer who will be accountable for ensuring a strong delivery plan is developed and agreed through necessary decision making mechanisms including engagement with the

relevant Cabinet Member, and ensuring compliance with and progress against their commitments in the delivery plan

25. We understand that local priorities for The Fund may change over the course of The Fund Period, including in response to local feedback such as from professionals working with households. Authorities should engage with DWP if they wish to revisit their delivery plan during The Fund Period.

Working with other organisations

26. Authorities must work together with District Councils to ensure the funding meets its objectives by identifying those most in need. Authorities must likewise work collaboratively with District Councils and other organisations in their area who may come into contact with those households who may benefit from this grant. Authorities should work closely with third sector and other partner organisations who may come into contact with people in need.

27. Authorities that do not have the mechanisms in place to administer this grant should consider whether District Councils are better placed to do so on their behalf. Authorities are encouraged to engage with District Councils as quickly as possible to ensure roles, responsibilities and effective arrangements are put in place to deliver The Fund promptly and efficiently.

28. Third party organisations (TPOs) may include but are not limited to:

- registered charities and voluntary organisations
- schools
- food banks
- general practitioners
- organisations providing support in particular circumstances (such as but not limited to “baby banks”)

29. Where Authorities are working with TPOs, this should be done on an objectively fair, transparent and non-discriminatory basis whilst having regard to the time available to deliver The Fund. As with District Councils, Authorities should make arrangements with any TPOs as quickly as possible.

Unused funding returned from a TPO

30. Where a TPO returns unused funding before the end of The Fund, the Authority is free to spend that funding in any eligible category for the duration of The Fund Period.

31. Where a TPO returns unused funding after The Fund Period has ended the Authority can re-issue any returned funding within a reasonable timeframe, but only under the same category that the spend was originally reported against. Authorities are able to distribute this funding themselves and do not have to go back through the original TPO.

32. For audit purposes, where an Authority re-issues returned TPO funding after The Fund Period has ended, they must confirm the following by email to **lawelfare.pdt@dwp.gov.uk** (copying in their Section 151 Officer):

- the amount that has been returned
- reason for the return (for example TPO underspend)
- what the original spend was reported against in their **final** management information (MI) return
- the intention to spend the total unspent amount against the same category of spend for the same group.

Establishing eligibility

33. In accordance with their general legal duties, Authorities must have a clear rationale or documented policy/framework outlining their approach, including how they are defining eligibility and how households access The Fund. We expect Authorities to review any existing approach and to have a strong rationale for their targeting so that funding is available to the households who most need it.

34. Authorities have the flexibility within The Fund to identify which vulnerable households are in most need of support and apply their own discretion when identifying eligibility. Rather than focus on one specific vulnerable group, Authorities should use the wide range of data and sources of information at their disposal, including through engagement with relevant TPOs, to identify and provide support to a broad cross section of vulnerable households to prevent escalation of problems. Authorities should ensure that they consider the needs of various households including families with children of all ages, pensioners, unpaid carers, care leavers and disabled people.

35. Authorities should particularly consider how they can support those vulnerable households who are ineligible for other government support with the cost of living, including:

- amended Energy Price Guarantee from April 2023
- up to £900 in Cost of Living Payments for those on eligible means tested benefits
- £150 Disability Cost of Living Payment
- one-off £300 Pensioner Cost of Living Payment (through the Winter Fuel Payment).

Details on these schemes can be found at **Annex A**.

36. Authorities should have regard to the fact that receipt of any of the above support should not exclude a resident from receiving support through The Fund in principle and households in receipt of support from these schemes may still be in need. It remains at the discretion of Authorities to establish their local eligibility and identify those most in need in their area.

37. However, the schemes listed in paragraph 35 do not cover everyone and Authorities should consider prioritising those households, who (for example):

- are eligible for but not claiming qualifying benefits
- become eligible for benefits after the relevant qualifying dates
- are in receipt of Housing Benefit only
- are ordinarily eligible for benefits but who had a nil award in the qualifying period due to, for example, a fluctuation in income.

This list is not exhaustive and there may additionally be households that are vulnerable to rising costs despite being in receipt of this government support with the cost of living.

38. Authorities must operate an application-based service for support to ensure those in need have a route to emergency support. This can be delivered directly by the Authority or by a TPO on their behalf. Authorities should establish eligibility criteria for their application service and should communicate with residents to ensure that their scheme and the mechanism for applying is clear and accessible. Authorities could make the entirety of their scheme application-based. Authorities must make sure that this support is clearly advertised to residents and is available throughout the majority of The Fund Period, either continuously or in regular intervals over the course of the scheme.

39. Where Authorities proactively identify households who may benefit from support, they should consider how they can ensure that they are focusing on those in the most need to prevent escalation of problems. There is no requirement for Authorities to undertake a means test or conduct a benefit check unless this specifically forms part of the Authority's local eligibility criteria. However, in relation to housing costs, Authorities must establish whether other forms of support are available to the household, such as Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs).

Types of support

40. Eligible spend includes:

- **energy and water:** The Fund should primarily be used to support energy bills for any form of fuel that is used for the purpose of domestic heating, cooking, or lighting, including oil or portable gas cylinders. It can also be used to support water bills including for drinking, washing, cooking, as well as for sanitary purposes and sewerage.
- **food:** The Fund can be used to provide support with food, whether in kind or through vouchers or cash.
- **essentials linked to energy and water:** The Fund can be used to provide support with essentials linked to energy and water (for example warm clothing, blankets, the purchase of equipment such as fridges, freezers, ovens, slow cookers), in recognition that a range of costs may arise which directly affect a household's ability to afford or access energy, food and water. In particular, we encourage Authorities to consider supporting households on low incomes to repair or replace white goods and appliances with more energy efficient

ones, or to invest in simple energy efficiency measures which will pay back quickly, such as insulating a hot water tank, fitting draft excluders to a front door, or replacing inefficient lightbulbs or white goods. The intention of this is to provide sustainable support which could result in both immediate and long-lasting savings for the household.

- **wider essentials.** The Fund can be used to support wider essential needs not linked to energy and water should Authorities consider this appropriate in their area. These may include, but are not limited to, support with other bills including broadband or phone bills, clothing, period and hygiene products, essential transport-related costs such as repairing a car, buying a bicycle, or paying for fuel. This list is not exhaustive.
- **advice services.** The Fund may be used to provide supplementary advice services to award recipients, including debt and benefit advice, where Authorities consider this appropriate. Authorities are reminded that the primary intention of The Fund is to provide crisis support for households, and we would expect any advice services to complement this. We would not expect a large portion of funding to be spent on advice services. We would expect to see a connection between the funding provided for advice services and the practical support provided under HSF. We anticipate that a significant proportion of this will be through signposting to existing advice services funded through other routes, such as the Help to Claim scheme which supports those making a claim to Universal Credit.
- **housing costs.** The Fund can be used to support housing costs. However, where eligible, ongoing housing support for rent must be provided through the Housing cost element of UC and HB rather than The Fund. In addition, eligibility for DHPs must first be considered before housing support is offered through The Fund. The Authority must also first consider whether the claimant is at statutory risk of homelessness and therefore owed a duty of support through the Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG). It is expected that the focus of support should be on bills and that support for housing costs should only be given where existing housing support schemes do not meet need. Beyond this, Authorities have discretion to determine the most appropriate Fund for their area, based on their understanding of local need and with due regard to equality considerations.
 - Households in receipt of HB, UC, or DHPs can still receive housing cost support through The Fund if it is deemed necessary by their Authority. However, The Fund should not be used to provide housing support on an ongoing basis or to support unsustainable tenancies.
 - Individuals in receipt of some other form of housing support could still qualify for the other elements of The Fund, such as food, energy, water, essentials linked to energy and water and wider essentials.
 - The Fund cannot be used to provide mortgage support, though homeowners could still qualify for the other elements of The Fund (such as energy, food, water, essentials linked to energy and water and wider essentials). Where a homeowner is having difficulty with their mortgage payments, they should contact their lender as soon as possible to

discuss their circumstances as lenders will have a set procedure to assist. Those who are in receipt of or treated as receiving a qualifying benefit could be entitled to [Support for Mortgage Interest](#).

- The Fund can exceptionally and in genuine emergency be used to provide support for historic rent arrears built up prior to an existing benefit claim for households already in receipt of UC and HB. This is because these arrears are excluded from the criteria for DHPs. However, support with rent arrears is not the primary intent of the fund and should not be the focus of spend.

- **reasonable administrative costs.** This includes reasonable costs incurred administering The Fund. These include for example:
 - staff costs
 - advertising and publicity to raise awareness of The Fund
 - web page design
 - printing application forms
 - small IT changes, for example, to facilitate MI production

41. There is no prescriptive definition of essentials. Authorities have discretion to assess what is reasonable to assist those in genuine need with regard to the examples above.

42. Individual awards can be whatever type and amount is deemed appropriate by Authorities for the receiving household, bearing in mind the overall spend eligibility priorities listed above and the risk of fraud and error. Awards to any given household can cover several or only one of the spend eligibility categories listed above.

43. Authorities should not make The Fund eligibility conditional on being employed or self-employed, or directly linked to a loss of earnings from employment or self-employment. This will ensure that there is no National Insurance contribution liability payable on any payments by either the citizen, the Authority or employer.

Funding overlap

44. Authorities should consider household circumstances when making a decision on how to spend this grant. Households could be receiving other forms of support, and this should be taken into account to avoid duplicating provision where possible. In particular, Authorities should prioritise those who have not already received additional support for the cost of living. However, households receiving other forms of assistance are not excluded from receiving support through The Fund.

Individuals with no recourse to public funds

45. Authorities can provide a basic safety net support to an individual, regardless of their immigration status, if there is a genuine care need that does not arise solely from destitution, for example if:

- there are community care needs

- they have serious health problems
- there is a risk to a child's wellbeing

46. The rules around immigration status have not changed. Authorities must use their judgement to decide what legal powers and funding can be used to support individuals who are ineligible for public funds or statutory housing assistance.

Access to data

47. The Household Support Fund is being classified as Local Welfare Provision (LWP). The provision of DWP data to Authorities is under the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the 'Department for Work and Pensions and local authorities (LAs) (Access, handling, exchange and protection of DWPs' and HM Revenue and Customs' data)'.

48. Authorities who have signed and returned the relevant section (Annex C) of the current DWP/LA MoU have legal permission to access DWPs Searchlight portal and specific UC, Pension Credit, ESA (IR) and HB only data through a monthly data share for the purpose of The Fund.

49. Authorities will need to ensure they sign future iterations of the MoU and the appropriate Annex to continue to have the legal permission to access the data sources for LWP.

50. Staff accessing Searchlight will need to be registered with the Employee Authentication System. Further information on Searchlight can be found in the Local Authority Searchlight Training Pack available in the Searchlight folder on Glasscubes (the LA/DWP online collaboration tool). If your Authority needs to discuss access to Glasscubes, contact DWP at lawelfare.lasupport@dwp.gov.uk

DWP Searchlight

51. This portal provides information on individual citizens' entitlement to (and confirms receipt of) DWP welfare benefits. Therefore, this data can be used to help Authorities identify and target those families and individuals to support. Authorities may also wish to establish if other forms of support are available to the household. In relation to housing costs this must include checking whether the household could receive DHPs. The Authority must also first consider if the claimant is at statutory risk of homelessness and, therefore, owed a duty of support through the HPG.

52. Searchlight can only be used to verify a specific individual's DWP benefit information. Therefore, if an Authority identified a group of potential claimants who may be eligible for The Fund from their own records, they can access Searchlight to verify each claimant's DWP benefit entitlement (although benefit entitlement is not a condition of support).

Monthly data share

53. We are providing Authorities with details of UC claimants in their Authority whose income is below the FSM and free prescription thresholds and those with Limited Capability For Work both at individual level and summary level by Ward. We are also providing Authorities with details of those in receipt of Guarantee Credit and/or Savings Credit element of Pension Credit and their appointees if appropriate, as well as for all claimants on ESA (IR). Authorities may find this information useful in

identifying those most in need. We are also providing a further data share for those in receipt of HB only. Individuals in this group are not eligible for a means-tested Cost of Living Payment and so this data share will allow Authorities to identify them and more easily consider their need for support.

54. The UC, Pension Credit, ESA (IR) and HB only data will be provided monthly via Transfer Your File.

55. Authorities will receive two data shares on a monthly basis:

File one - contains individual data of the National Insurance number and names of UC claimants within the Authority area and:

- income below the thresholds of £7,400 per year for FSMs and income below the free prescription threshold of £935 per month as identified in their last UC assessment period
 - those with a Limited Capability for Work indicator within the last assessment period
 - the number of children in the household.
 - those whose award is subject to the benefit cap
 - those with a deduction for Removal of the Spare Room Subsidy and who receive Local Housing Allowance
- the National Insurance number, names, addresses and contact telephone numbers of those in receipt of Guarantee Credit and/or Savings Credit element of Pension Credit and their appointees if appropriate, as well as for all claimants on ESA (IR).
 - the National Insurance number, names, addresses and contact telephone numbers of customers who are in receipt of HB but not in receipt of a means tested benefit (for example: UC, Income based Jobseekers Allowance, ESA (IR), Income Support and Pension Credit) or Tax Credits.

File two - contains aggregate data showing those UC claimants that are:

- at or below the FSM income threshold
- at or below the free prescription income threshold, and
- in the Limited Capability for Work group.

56. For a full breakdown of the file contents see Local Welfare Provision monthly data share field definitions at Annex B.

57. Authorities also have access to their own non-DWP data to help identify vulnerable households who may be eligible for support under The Fund.

Reporting and Management Information

58. Authorities are required to comply with DWP's reporting and Management Information (MI) requirements. For full details of MI and reporting requirements, see Household Support Fund (2023-2024) MI Reporting requirements.

DWP engagement

59. LA Performance Relationship Managers (PRMs) from DWPs LA Partnership, Engagement and Delivery (LA-PED) division will contact Authorities to provide support and gather information throughout The Fund. LA-PED will contact Authorities for initial compliance (where necessary) including where:

- the MI templates or delivery plans have not been completed and returned,
- the MI templates have not been copied to the Authority's Section 151 Officer or Chief Finance Officer.
- an incorrect template has been used – MI should only be returned on the MI template provided. No local versions or PDF copies are acceptable.

60. They will also contact Authorities where further clarification is needed in respect of the information provided on the MI reporting template, if for example:

- critical data is missing, or the data looks odd
- the Authority is reporting a high value of awards where they have not been able to establish the household composition. We may need the Authority to explain why that is the case and provide supporting evidence.
- the Authority is reporting a high value of administration costs. We may need the Authority to explain why that is the case and provide supporting evidence.
- there is a significant gap between actual and allocated spend. We may need the Authority to explain why spend was so low.

61. They will look to identify good practice and identify case studies where appropriate.

62. DWP will also continue to engage with Authorities throughout the course of The Fund Period and will provide opportunities to engage with the department and other Authorities to share good practice and work collaboratively. DWP will host quarterly Ministerial roundtable events focused on Authority MI returns; where Authorities are invited to these events, an appropriate representative will be expected to attend. DWP will continue to respond to questions we receive via the designated inbox as quickly as possible.

63. Where Authorities work with District Councils and TPOs it is the responsibility of Authorities to collect and collate MI and complete one collated MI return and submit to DWP.

DWP funding arrangements

64. The Fund is ring-fenced to be spent as detailed in this guidance and the accompanying grant determination. To ensure that the objectives of The Fund are being met during the course of the grant and reduce administration costs for all concerned, including the need for DWP to recover underspend, grant payment will be made in arrears upon DWP being satisfied with the MI returns. This will enable DWP to adjust the amount of the payment based on the MI returns.

65. Payment of The Fund from DWP to Authorities will be made in arrears after the interim MI returns in July and October 2023 and January 2024 and the final MI return

at the end of The Fund Period in April 2024 after DWP has verified the MI. If an Authority feels that the payment arrangements will create significant cash flow problems, please notify DWP as soon as possible with supporting evidence. Three interim returns and a final MI return will be required and grant payments will be made in respect of the periods 1 April 2023 to 30 June 2023, 1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023, 1 April 2023 to 31 December 2023 and 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

66. MI returns must be endorsed by the Section 151 Officer in accordance with their statutory assurance responsibility in order for the grant payment to be made.
67. Authorities must copy their Chief Finance Officer/Section 151 Officer into the email.
68. The guidance for completion is provided within the Household Support Fund (2023-2024) MI Reporting Requirements document.
69. For MI purposes, the definition of spend is grant funding that has been provided to vulnerable households, within the scope of the eligibility criteria, and within The Fund Period of 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.
70. Spend also includes 'committed spend'. For the purpose of The Fund committed spend relates to grant funding that has been spent and delivered to vulnerable households even though the vulnerable household may not have used their grant funding. An example would be the award of a food voucher on 31 March 2024 to a vulnerable household. It would be unreasonable to expect the household to be restricted to redeem the voucher on the day of receipt. In this example, spend has been committed by the Authority, support has been provided to a vulnerable household and, therefore, should be included as eligible grant spend. It would be reasonable to expect the vulnerable household to redeem the food voucher during the month following the end of The Fund.
71. However, committed spend does not include large volumes of food vouchers, procured quite late in The Fund, which cannot be distributed to vulnerable households within the period of The Fund.
72. Authorities that plan to order vouchers in bulk should attempt to be realistic in the volumes ordered to avoid holding large stocks of unused vouchers at the end of The Fund. Alternatively, Authorities may want to consider:
 - purchasing vouchers on a sale or return basis, so that they can return any unused vouchers, or
 - expired vouchers returned to an Authority after The Fund has ended can be recycled and re-issued within a reasonable timeframe but must be done so under the same categories of spend as originally reported and under the same terms as The Fund they were issued under.
73. For audit purposes where an Authority recycles and reuses expired vouchers the Authority must confirm by email to lawelfare.pdt@dwp.gov.uk, copying in the Section 151 Officer:
 - the amount that has been returned
 - reason for the return (for example, expired voucher)
 - what the original spend was reported against in their **FINAL MI** return

- confirm they intend to spend the total unspent amount against the same category of spend for the same group.

74. The definition of committed spend for the purpose of The Fund does not affect its accounting treatment in accordance with normal rules.

75. The timetable for provision of funding is as follows:

Funding:

Payment	Amount	Date	Notes
Interim	Actual grant spend	August/September 2023	Payment made in arrears
Interim	Actual grant spend less any previous interim payment	November/December 2023	Payment made in arrears
Interim	Actual grant spend less any previous interim payment	February/March 2024	Payment made in arrears
Final	Actual grant spend up to 100% of grant allocation* less any previous interim payment	June/July 2024	Payment made in arrears

*Subject to eligible spend criteria

Managing the risk of fraud

76. Fraudsters can target funds of this type.
77. As with any welfare payment to vulnerable recipients there is a risk of fraud, as recipients might appear to be eligible when they are not.
78. To help mitigate this risk, Authorities should involve District Councils and other organisations chosen to administer The Fund to help identify vulnerable families, households and individuals.
79. Authorities wishing to work with TPOs to deliver The Fund must carry out suitable due diligence checks to ensure they are viable and able to deliver the support. So, for example, ensuring all charities are registered and taking extra caution if they are new organisations.

80. Authorities are also encouraged to ensure checks are in place to verify the identity of those eligible.
81. Authorities are encouraged to ask neighbouring Authorities to work together to help prevent double provision and/or no provision – especially where allocation of provision is by school in one area and by residential address in another.
82. It is for Authorities to decide how payments are made to recipients. However, when making decisions, Authorities should consider the risks involved. Although they still carry fraud risks, vouchers should be used instead of cash where possible as this helps to mitigate the risk of the money being spent by the recipient on things outside of the policy intent.
83. Authorities should ensure that they consider and put in place suitable controls when making use of vouchers as part of The Fund. Authorities may wish to consider restricting access to these vouchers; and also consider restricting usage to ensure that they cannot be spent outside the intended scope of The Fund.
84. It is important to be vigilant to fraud and error risks in relation to housing costs, and to assure yourself that the appropriate checks are in place. Authorities should take appropriate steps, which may be requested and reviewed as set out in the grant determination, to ensure they take into consideration household income and rent liability. We expect Authorities to work with district councils to ensure support is going to those with genuine need and to help minimise the risk of fraud on housing support.
85. Where possible, any payments made into a bank account should be in the same name of the person that is eligible for that payment. Authorities have access to a range of data sources, and checks can be carried out against this data to verify the identity of the recipient. Authorities are also encouraged to use existing tools at their disposal to verify personal bank accounts.
86. If the Authority has any grounds for suspecting financial irregularity in the use of any grant paid under the determination, it must notify DWP immediately, explain what steps are being taken to investigate the suspicion and keep DWP informed about the progress of the investigation. For these purposes 'financial irregularity' includes fraud or other impropriety, mismanagement, and the use of grant for purposes other than those for which it was provided.
87. If you suspect fraud, you should notify DWP of the:
 - number of instances
 - total amount lost
88. This will help DWP identify any emerging threats and share them with other Authorities, so they can take steps to prevent and detect any fraud in their Fund.

Complying with Subsidy (previously State Aid) rules

89. The funding is intended to benefit households most in need of support with energy bills, food, related essentials, wider essentials and (in limited circumstances where existing housing support does not meet need) housing costs, in order to help with global inflationary challenges and the significantly rising cost of living. The funds should not be used for any economic undertaking.

90. Whichever way you use the funding, including where you work in partnership with others, you should consider all Subsidy rules (previously State Aid) issues. Check whether the 'de minimis' regulation exception applies. You should also follow government procurement procedures where relevant.

Administration costs

91. The Household Support Fund funding allocation includes reasonable administration costs to enable Authorities to deliver The Fund. Authorities should deduct their administration costs from the total allocation to determine the amount remaining.
92. In all cases, Authorities should keep administrative costs to a reasonable level.
93. Administration costs for each Authority will be published on www.gov.uk alongside detail of all spend and volumes related to The Fund.

Public Sector Equality Duty

94. In accordance with the public sector equality duty, DWP has had due regard to the potential equalities impacts of this grant.
95. Under the Equality Act 2010, all public authorities must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty. For the purposes of this grant, you should consider how any support that helps people facing severe financial hardship impacts those with characteristics protected under the Equality Act.
96. When developing your local delivery frameworks, you should ensure people are not disadvantaged or treated unfairly by The Fund. For example, any application process should be easy to access and to navigate.

Contact

97. If you have any queries about the content of this guidance or use of the funding, you can contact lawelfare.pdt@dwp.gov.uk

Eligibility for cost of living and energy support

Detailed eligibility requirements for the Cost of Living Payments can be found at:

[Cost of Living Payment - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/cost-of-living-payment)

Further details on the Energy Price Guarantee can be found at

[Energy Price Guarantee - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/energy-price-guarantee)

Local Welfare Provision monthly data share field definitions

The definitions will be updated to include information regarding the additional data share of those who are in receipt of HB only when the details are confirmed.

File 1 – The list of Individuals:

Field Name	Description
claimant1_nino	The national insurance number (NINO) of the lead UC claimant
claimant1_surname	The surname of the lead UC claimant in the Household
claimant1_forename1	The forename of the lead UC claimant in the Household
claimant2_nino	If applicable the NINO of the UC partner in the household. In some cases this may be the same as the UC claimant NINO, usually where the partner NINO data is not available.
claimant2_surname	The surname of the UC partner if Claimant 2 NINO provided
claimant2_forename_1	The forename of the UC partner if Claimant 2 NINO provided
ap_start_date	The start date of the household's UC assessment period (AP)
ap_end_month	This will always be the month of the extract.
has_children_latest_ap	Set to 1 if the UC Household is recorded to have children in the AP used for the extract 1= children 0 = no children
total_children	The number of children recorded in the UC Household for the AP used in the extract, null = no children, the field HAS_CHILDREN_LATEST_AP will also be 0 if there are no children
has_lcw_latest_ap	Set to 1 if a member of the UC Household is in the UC limited capability for work group
eligible_prescription_latest_ap	Set to 1 if the UC Household is below the Free Prescription threshold
earnings_below_fsm_threshold	Set to 1 if the UC Household is below the Free School Meal threshold
country_name	England Scotland Wales
local_authority_name	Your LA name

local_authority_code	the standard lookup code for your authority
tyf_la_id_code	the LA ID code as registered on Transfer Your File for your authority
postcode_outward_code	Postcode sector in the ward
ward_name	Name of the ward
ward_code	Code of the ward
cap_applied	True, False or Null
spare_room_subsidy_removal	True, False or Null
local_housing_allowance_applied	True, False or Null
BENEFIT_TYPE	Will show one of the following: UC PC GC SC SC/GC ESA-IR HB
PC/ESA-IR/HB_NINO	The NINO of the PC/ESA-IR/HB customer
PC/ESA-IR/HB_SURNAME	The surname of the PC/ESA-IR/HB customer
PC/ESA-IR/HB_FORENAME_1	The first name of the PC/ESA-IR/HB customer
PC/ESA-IR/HB_ADDRESS_LINE_1	The PC/ESA-IR/HB customer address as recorded on the PC/ESA-IR/HB claim
PC/ESA-IR/HB_ADDRESS_LINE_2	The PC/ESA-IR/HB customer address as recorded on the PC/ESA-IR/HB claim
PC/ESA-IR/HB_ADDRESS_LINE_3	The PC/ESA-IR/HB customer address as recorded on the PC/ESA-IR/HB claim
PC/ESA-IR/HB_ADDRESS_LINE_4	The PC/ESA-IR/HB customer address as recorded on the PC/ESA-IR/HB claim
PC/ESA-IR/HB_POSTCODE	The postcode as recorded on the PC/ESA-IR/HB customer claim
PC/ESA-IR/HB_TELEPHONE_NO1	The telephone number of the PC/ESA-IR/HB customer as reported on the PC/ESA-IR/HB claim
PC/ESA-IR/HB_TELEPHONE_NO2	The second telephone number (if applicable) of the PC/ESA-IR/HB customer as reported on the PC/ESA-IR/HB claim
PC_APPOINTEE_SURNAME	If appropriate the surname of the Personal/Corporate Acting Body as reported on the PC claim
PC_APPOINTEE_FORENAME_1	If appropriate the forename of the Personal/Corporate Acting Body as reported on the PC claim
PC_APPOINTEE_ADDRESS_LINE_1	If appropriate the address of the Personal/Corporate Acting Body as reported on the PC claim
PC_APPOINTEE_ADDRESS_LINE_2	If appropriate the address of the Personal/Corporate Acting Body as reported on the PC claim

PC_APPOINTEE_ADDRESS_LINE_3	If appropriate the address of the Personal/Corporate Acting Body as reported on the PC claim
PC_APPOINTEE_ADDRESS_LINE_4	If appropriate the address of the Personal/Corporate Acting Body as reported on the PC claim
PC_APPOINTEE_POSTCODE	If appropriate the address of the Personal/Corporate Acting Body as reported on the PC claim
PC_APPOINTEE_TELEPHONE_NO1	If appropriate the telephone number of the Personal/Corporate Acting Body as reported on the PC claim
PC_APPOINTEE_TELEPHONE_NO2	If appropriate the second telephone number of the Personal/Corporate Acting Body as reported on the PC claim

File 2 – The Aggregate file

This shows for your Authority:

Country (England, Scotland or Wales)

Local Authority (the name of your Authority)

LOCAL_AUTHORITY_CODE (the standard lookup code for your authority)

TYF_LA_ID_CODE (the Transfer Your File code for your authority)

For each postcode sector (POSTCODE_OUTWARD_CODE) in a ward (WARD_NAME), (WARD_CODE)

Number of Households in the ward with UC Limited Capability to Work group (HAS_LCW_LATEST_AP)

Number of UC households in the Authority without children

(HHS_NO_CHILDREN_IN_LA)

Number of UC households in the Authority with children

(HHS_WITH_CHILDREN_IN_LA)

Number of children in the Authority in UC households with children

(NO_OF_CHILDREN_IN_LA)

Number of UC households without children in the postcode sector that are below the Free School Meal income threshold and free prescription threshold (HHS_NO_CHILDREN_PRESC_OR_FSM)

Number of UC households without children in the postcode sector that are below the Free Prescription income threshold (HHS_NO_CHILDREN_PRESC)

Number of UC households without children in the postcode sector that are below the Free School meal income threshold (HHS_NO_CHILDREN_FSM)

Number of UC households with children in the postcode sector that are below the Free School Meal income threshold and free prescription threshold (HHS_WITH_CHILDREN_PRESC_OR_FSM)

Number of UC households with children in the postcode sector that are below the Free Prescription income threshold (HHS_WITH_CHILDREN_PRESC)

Number of UC households with children in the postcode sector that are below the Free School meal income threshold (HHS_WITH_CHILDREN_FSM)

Number of children in UC households in the postcode sector that are below the Free School Meal income threshold and free prescription threshold (CHILDREN_PRESCRIPTIONS_OR_FSM)

Number of children in UC households in the postcode sector that are below the Free Prescription income threshold (CHILDREN_PRESCRIPTION)

Number of children in UC households in the postcode sector that are below the Free School meal income threshold (CHILDREN_FSM)

**City of York Council
Equalities Impact Assessment**

Who is submitting the proposal?

Directorate:	Customer & Communities		
Service Area:	Customer and Exchequer Services		
Name of the proposal :	Household Support Fund (HSF) Scheme 4 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024		
Lead officer:	Paul Sanderson		
Date assessment completed:	9 March 2023		
Names of those who contributed to the assessment :			
Name	Job title	Organisation	Area of expertise
Susan Wood	Welfare Benefits & Strategic Partnership Manager	CYC	Welfare Benefits
Debbie Plummer	Housing Benefits Manager	CYC	Welfare Benefits
Advice York	N/A	Advice York	Welfare Benefits

Step 1 – Aims and intended outcomes

1.1	What is the purpose of the proposal? Please explain your proposal in Plain English avoiding acronyms and jargon.
	To provide a support to financially vulnerable residents with their increased cost of living especially in relation to utility bills and food.

1.2	Are there any external considerations? (Legislation/government directive/codes of practice etc.)
	This is a Government scheme

1.3	Who are the stakeholders and what are their interests?
	All residents in the city who may qualify for support

1.4	What results/outcomes do we want to achieve and for whom? This section should explain what outcomes you want to achieve for service users, staff and/or the wider community. Demonstrate how the proposal links to the Council Plan (2019- 2023) and other corporate strategies and plans.
	To provide within the budget provided by Central Government support with utility and food costs to those financially vulnerable households who are struggling with the cost of living pressures.

Step 2 – Gathering the information and feedback

2.1	What sources of data, evidence and consultation feedback do we have to help us understand the impact of the proposal on equality rights and human rights? Please consider a range of sources, including: consultation exercises, surveys, feedback from staff, stakeholders, participants, research reports, the views of equality groups, as well your own experience of working in this area etc.	
	Source of data/supporting evidence	Reason for using
	Income based benefit data	Indicates financial vulnerability
	Council Tax Support Records	Indicates financial vulnerability
	Advice York Partners	Stakeholder feedback
	York and North Yorkshire Covid Recovery Insight Project Food Insecurity Research Draft report February 2023,	Understand what kind of food security models/provision is available in York and North Yorkshire. Understand the efficacy of different

	<p>food models/provision and explore the outcomes/benefits they can deliver.</p> <p>Use data, insight and evidence to understand the scale of the food insecurity issue now and in future e.g., considering the impacts of the cost-of-living crisis.</p> <p>Improve approaches to short-term action planning, longer-term strategy development, commissioning and grant deployment that could contribute to a reduction in food insecurity in York and North Yorkshire.</p>
<p>Looking at evidence from other Local Authorities, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - North Yorkshire CC and borough councils - Warm Homes on Prescriptions https://es.catapult.org.uk/project/warm-home-prescription/ - Trussell Trust/ Leeds CC cash first pilot 	<p>Learn from good practice.</p>
<p>Discussions with existing and potential delivery partners, including York Energy Advice, Public Health, Community First Credit Union,</p>	<p>Discussion about what has work well and not so well to date, understand continuing needs and potential developments.</p>

Step 3 – Gaps in data and knowledge

3.1	What are the main gaps in information and understanding of the impact of your proposal? Please indicate how any gaps will be dealt with.		
Gaps in data or knowledge		Action to deal with this	
The gap in information is having specific data on individual residents/households and particular target groups, to ensure people know about the scheme and supported to apply if needed.		The adviser and community support will enable us to extend our reach to specific target communities to try to address this. Working with trusted providers to deliver food and fuel vouchers to their clients directly. The scheme is open to any household in the city to apply and will be well communicated through CYC and its partners. It is the fourth such scheme so many households whom we are aware of that are experiencing financial difficulty will receive direct funding and all others across the city can apply	

Step 4 – Analysing the impacts or effects.

4.1	Please consider what the evidence tells you about the likely impact (positive or negative) on people sharing a protected characteristic, i.e. how significant could the impacts be if we did not make any adjustments? Remember the duty is also positive – so please identify where the proposal offers opportunities to promote equality and/or foster good relations.		
Equality Groups and Human Rights.	Key Findings/Impacts	Positive (+) Negative (-) Neutral (0)	High (H) Medium (M) Low (L)
Age	Will provide additional financial support for utility bills and Food. Extra support will be provided through the support of	+	H

	the adviser on eg digital support. Care Leavers are specifically receiving additional support.		
Disability	Will provide additional financial support for utility bills and Food. Extra support will be provided through the support of the adviser on eg digital support, and extra support for carers.	+	H
Gender	Will provide additional financial support for utility bills and Food for single parents who are exposed to the Cost Of Living Crisis more than most.	+	H
Gender Reassignment	Will provide additional financial support for utility bills and Food	+	H
Marriage and civil partnership	n/a		
Pregnancy and maternity	Will provide additional financial support for utility bills and Food at a time when income is low and costs are high for a woman.	+	H
Race	Will provide additional financial support for utility bills and Food. Communities team will work with Migrant officer to ensure awareness raising across minority groups in York.	+	H
Religion and belief	n/a		
Sexual orientation	n/a		
Other Socio-economic groups including :	Could other socio-economic groups be affected e.g. carers, ex-offenders, low incomes?		
Carer	Will provide additional financial support for utility bills and Food. This group is targeted by the additional support in the	+	H

	scheme recognising that their income can be particularly affected by their caring responsibilities.		
Low income groups	Will provide additional financial support for utility bills and Food. This group is targeted by the support and additional officer will target groups that have been notified but not claimed previously.	+	H
Veterans, Armed Forces Community	Will provide additional financial support for utility bills and food	+	H
Other			
Impact on human rights:			
List any human rights impacted.	<p>There are no known impacts of this scheme affecting any human rights detrimentally. The scheme may positively impact on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Right not to be treated in an inhuman or degrading way (addressing stigma and isolation) by the additional community based support provided - Right to life (addressing impact of health inequalities shortening life expectancy) with the wraparound advice to help support access to benefits and other opportunities to improve life chances. 	+	H

Use the following guidance to inform your responses:

Indicate:

- Where you think that the proposal could have a POSITIVE impact on any of the equality groups like promoting equality and equal opportunities or improving relations within equality groups
- Where you think that the proposal could have a NEGATIVE impact on any of the equality groups, i.e. it could disadvantage them
- Where you think that this proposal has a NEUTRAL effect on any of the equality groups listed below i.e. it has no effect currently on equality groups.

It is important to remember that a proposal may be highly relevant to one aspect of equality and not relevant to another.

<p>High impact (The proposal or process is very equality relevant)</p>	<p>There is significant potential for or evidence of adverse impact The proposal is institution wide or public facing The proposal has consequences for or affects significant numbers of people The proposal has the potential to make a significant contribution to promoting equality and the exercise of human rights.</p>
<p>Medium impact (The proposal or process is somewhat equality relevant)</p>	<p>There is some evidence to suggest potential for or evidence of adverse impact The proposal is institution wide or cross-Unit, but mainly internal The proposal has consequences for or affects some people The proposal has the potential to make a contribution to promoting equality and the exercise of human rights</p>
<p>Low impact (The proposal or process might be equality relevant)</p>	<p>There is little evidence to suggest that the proposal could result in adverse impact The proposal operates in a limited way The proposal has consequences for or affects few people The proposal may have the potential to contribute to promoting equality and the exercise of human rights</p>

Step 5 - Mitigating adverse impacts and maximising positive impacts

5.1	Based on your findings, explain ways you plan to mitigate any unlawful prohibited conduct or unwanted adverse impact. Where positive impacts have been identified, what is been done to optimise opportunities to advance equality or foster good relations?
There are no adverse impacts arising from the support the benefit to all groups is a financial one where they qualify. There is extra targeted funding and resources for identified groups such as carers and care leavers, and additional support within communities such as additional advice and funding for warm spaces with food provision.	

Step 6 – Recommendations and conclusions of the assessment

6.1	Having considered the potential or actual impacts you should be in a position to make an informed judgement on what should be done. In all cases, document your reasoning that justifies your decision. There are four main options you can take:
- No major change to the proposal – the EIA demonstrates the proposal is robust. There is no potential for unlawful discrimination or adverse impact and you have taken all opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations, subject to continuing monitor and review.	

- **Adjust the proposal** – the EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. This involves taking steps to remove any barriers, to better advance quality or to foster good relations.
- **Continue with the proposal** (despite the potential for adverse impact) – you should clearly set out the justifications for doing this and how you believe the decision is compatible with our obligations under the duty
- **Stop and remove the proposal** – if there are adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated, you should consider stopping the proposal altogether. If a proposal leads to unlawful discrimination it should be removed or changed.

Important: If there are any adverse impacts you cannot mitigate, please provide a compelling reason in the justification column.

Option selected	Conclusions/justification
Continue with the proposal	This is a time limited central government scheme that provides financial support to low income households and those households experiencing financial difficulties across the city. It is open to all residents.

Step 7 – Summary of agreed actions resulting from the assessment

7.1 What action, by whom, will be undertaken as a result of the impact assessment.			
Impact/issue	Action to be taken	Person responsible	Timescale
N/A			

Step 8 - Monitor, review and improve

8. 1	How will the impact of your proposal be monitored and improved upon going forward? Consider how will you identify the impact of activities on protected characteristics and other marginalised groups going forward? How will any learning and enhancements be capitalised on and embedded?
	All payments need to be recorded for Government records and internal control. This data provides information to the council on the Households receiving support. This is a cash first approach empowering households to manage their financial pressures arising from the cost of living crisis but in this latest scheme there are opportunities to provide more support for sustainable change. The scheme will be monitored by the partnership Financial Inclusion Steering Group also be reported on as part of 6 monthly reports to the Executive Member portfolio holders as part of a welfare benefits update report.