



## 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 October 2022 – March 2023)

- To:** Councillor Ayre (Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects) and Craghill (Executive Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods)
- Date:** Monday, 14 November 2022
- Time:** 10.00 am
- Venue:** The Thornton Room - Ground Floor, West Offices (G039)

## AGENDA

### Notice to Members – Post Decision Calling In:

Members are reminded that, should they wish to call in any item\* on this agenda, notice must be given to Democratic Services by **4:00pm on Wednesday 16 November 2022.**

\*With the exception of matters that have been the subject of a previous call in, require Full Council approval or are urgent which are not subject to the call-in provisions. Any items that are called in will be considered by the Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee.

Written representations in respect of items on this agenda should be submitted to Democratic Services by **5:00pm on Thursday 10 November 2022.**

**1. Declarations of Interest**

At this point in the meeting, 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 17 October 2022.

**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 committee.

Please note that our registration deadlines are set as 2 working days before the meeting, in order to facilitate the management of public participation at our meetings. The deadline for registering at this meeting is **5:00pm on Thursday 10 November 2022**.

To register to speak please visit [www.york.gov.uk/AttendCouncilMeetings](http://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](http://www.york.gov.uk/webcasts).

During coronavirus, we made some changes to how we ran council meetings, including facilitating remote participation by public speakers. See our updates ([www.york.gov.uk/COVIDDemocracy](http://www.york.gov.uk/COVIDDemocracy)) for more information on meetings and decisions

**4. Household Support Fund October 2022 – (Pages 7 - 60)  
March 2023**

This paper presents the Household Support Fund (HSF) scheme October 2022 – March 2023 to the Executive Member for Finance & Major Projects in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing & Safer Neighbourhoods for approval.

**5. Regular update on routine procurements and (Pages 61 - 70)  
approval of ICT procurement over £250k**

This report presents a register of procurement exercises deemed routine for the period of April 2022 to October 2022. These have been defined as routine procurements as per the council's contract procedure rules and expenditure will fall within existing capital and revenue budget provisions. It is intended that these reports will be brought to this decision session every 6 months, with any non routine ICT or other procurements reported as they arise between £250k and £500k in value.

**6. Urgent Business**

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

Democracy Officer:

Name: Angela Bielby

Telephone: (01904) 552599

Email: 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
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports and
- For receiving reports in other formats

Contact details are set out above.

**This information can be provided in your own language.**

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

City of York Council

Committee Minutes

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Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects
Date	17 October 2022
Present	Councillor Ayre (Executive Member for Finance and Performance) and Councillor Craghill (Executive Member for Housing & Safer Neighbourhoods)
In Attendance	Tim Bradley (Asset Manager) Simon Brereton (Head of Economy) Tracey Carter (Director of Housing Economy and Regeneration) Ben Murphy (Regeneration Programme Manager) Katie Peeke-Vout (Regeneration Programme Manager) Pauline Stuchfield (Director Customer and Communities)

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### **Declarations of Interest [10:05]**

The Executive Members were 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. They confirmed he had none.

### **Minutes [10:05]**

Resolved: That the minutes of the Decision Session held on 11 July 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Executive Member.

### **Public Participation [10:05]**

It was reported that there had been one registration to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme. Cllr Douglas spoke on Agenda Item 7 - York Shared Prosperity Fund. She expressed disappointment in the central government funding. She explained that she was not convinced that the projects earmarked for the funding were suitable and that there had been a lack of progress for Acomb. She suggested that the funding should be used for place based projects based on the city plan.

**Submission of funding bids to Levelling Up Fund in accordance with delegations from Executive Committee at item 5, 16.6.22 [10:09]**

The Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects considered a report that set out the two final bid compositions to the second round of the Levelling Up Fund (LUF). The report formally recorded the subsequent decision (of the Corporate Director of Place, in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects, as delegated by the Executive), to submit the bids.

The Director Housing, Economy and Regeneration outlined the progress the progress towards the bids. The Regeneration Project Manager detailed the bids noting that both had business cases. The benefits of the bids were noted and it was added that elements of the schemes were as a result of public engagement. It was further noted that the timescales for bidding and spending were difficult to meet. The Executive Member thanked Officers for their work and the bids. He then;

Resolved:

- i. To formally note the decision of the Corporate Director of Place, in consultation with himself, to submit two LUF bids.

Reason: To comply with the constitutional requirements of the Council, and resolutions of the Executive.

- ii. That the final LUF bid compositions as set out in the report be formally noted.

Reason: To comply with the resolutions of the Executive Committee, confirm the final bid compositions that were submitted to government, and ensure public transparency of decision making and activity.

**Application for Community Right to Bid under the Localism Act 2011 [10:12]**

The Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects considered a report detailing an application from Naburn Parish Council to list Blacksmiths Arms, Naburn, York as an Asset of Community Value (ACV). The Asset Manager detailed the application noting that the public house was central to village life and he added that there had been no objections to the application, or updates to the published report. The Executive Member then;

Resolved: That approval be given to the renewal of the listing of Blacksmiths Arms, Naburn, York, as an Asset of Community Value (ACV) for the reasons outlined within this report.

Reason: To ensure the Council meets its legislative requirements of the Localism Act 2011 and promotes community access to community facilities.

### **York Shared Prosperity Fund [10:14]**

The Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects considered a report that outlined the City of York Council's Investment Plan, which was developed in partnership with local stakeholders and as agreed by the York UKSPF Partnership Board and the Executive Member, for the new UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). The Council was to be responsible for delivering York's UKSPF funds for the period 2022 to 2025 and further steps were required to formally agree the Investment Plan and confirm arrangements for expenditure once Government had agreed the Investment Plan. The report presented to the Executive Member addressed those issues, together with an outline of expenditure in the current financial year.

The Head of Economy advised that the Investment Plan had been based on consultation and he explained how the consultation had been carried out. He noted the priorities of the plan and how the £600k within in would be split between three themes. He explained the process for the expenditure of the fund. The Director Housing, Economy and Regeneration noted that the Council had made all efforts to make sure the fund would be spent in line with council strategies. It was acknowledged that the current year's spend was based on double within timescales. The Executive Member thanked Officers and partners for their work on the York UKSPF and he acknowledged the difficulties posed with the timescales for the spend of the fund. He then;

Resolved:

That the Endorse the York investment plan and its submission to Government be endorsed.

Reason: To support the York economy and shared prosperity.

That, subject to Government approval of the plan, it be recommended to Executive that they confirm expenditure in accordance with the plan and delegate the Corporate Director of Place to make allocations, in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects and the York UKSPF Partnership Board.

Reason: To support the York economy and shared prosperity.

That, following consultation with the York UKSPF Partnership Board, approval be given to launch of a call for proposals for financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25.

Reason: To support the York economy and shared prosperity

That, following consultation with the York UKSPF Partnership Board, delegation be given to delegate the approval and submission of the York Rural Prosperity Fund investment plan to the Corporate Director of Place.

Reason: To support the York rural economy and shared prosperity

### **Annual Report on Financial Inclusion and Welfare Benefits Activities (2021/22) [10:22]**

The Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects, in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods, considered a report presenting the Financial Inclusion/Welfare Benefits outturn report 2021/22 and an update on the first quarter of 2022/23. This included information on the financial support available to residents dealing with the challenges of covid-19 during 21/22 and the cost of living impacts moving into 2022/23; an update on benefits statistics and performance administered by the council including the York Financial Assistance Scheme; and other financial inclusion (FI) activity during 2021/22 including delivery of Financial Inclusion grant schemes.

The Director of Customer and Communities outlined the report noting that more work was being done directly with residents in their localities. She advised that there was 11.5k residents claiming Universal Credit, 48% of whom were in work. She thanked staff for their work on the additional delivery of grants. The Head of Customer and Exchequer Services reported that 1051 food vouchers and 367 fuel vouchers, amounting to £126k had been given to residents, and demand was increasing. He added that he demand for the York Financial Assistance Scheme was high, with 54% of the fund spent. He noted that what the council was providing was not meeting the demands for fuel and rent.



The Executive Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods commented that it was a difficult time for people and a challenge for staff. She noted the advice given to people to draw down more benefits and she welcomed York Challenge Poverty Talk Money Month. Noting the rise in Universal Credit claimants, she expressed concern over what was coming next in terms of finding further capacity without further support from the government. She noted the support in communities to help residents. The Executive Member for Finance and Major Projects supported the comments of Executive Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods. He acknowledged the hard work of officers, adding that would be a challenging winter for the council to put in the resources it had into supporting residents. He also noted that Ward Councillors could look at using Ward funding to help residents. It was then;

Resolved: That the content of the report and the support provided to residents who are financially vulnerable be noted.

Reason: To ensure councillors, residents and stakeholder groups are aware of the ongoing financial inclusion activity across the city. The use of associated funding including Covid-19 and cost of living support and their impacts.

Cllr Ayre, Chair

[The meeting started at 10:00 and finished at 10:31].

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**Executive Member for Finance & Performance**

**14 November 2022**

Report of the Director Customer and Communities

## **Household Support Fund October 2022 – March 2023**

### **Summary**

1. This paper presents the Household Support Fund (HSF) scheme October 2022 – March 2023 to the Executive Member for Finance & Major Projects in consultation with the Executive Member for Housing & Safer Neighbourhoods for approval.

### **Recommendations**

2. The Executive Member is asked to approve:
  - a) the council's HSF scheme October 22 – March 23 (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 through the October 2022 – March 2023 arising from the ongoing cost of living increases.*

### **Background**

3. On 26 May 2022, the Chancellor announced, as part of a number of measures to provide help with global inflationary challenges, the significantly rising cost of living and that the Household Support

Fund (HSF) would be extended from 01 October 2022 to 31 March 2023.

4. On the 26<sup>th</sup> August the DWP confirmed the scheme and in September confirmed funding of £1,037k for York. This is the same level of funding as for the first two HSF schemes.
5. The government guidance (Annex B) is broader than in previous HSF schemes 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.
6. The total funding including any administration costs for City of York Council is £1.037m. The funding is paid retrospectively in February and May 2023 following management returns and all funding must be spent or committed by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

#### HFS Scheme

7. This is the fifth 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 and the second HSF Scheme April 2022 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022. 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 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 that any resident can apply too. This scheme specifically looks to support potentially financial vulnerable families with children, support for vulnerable households who are ineligible for other government support, and families with disabled children who may be adversely affected by the increase in utility costs. The scheme still requires

that proper security checks are undertaken before making any payment.

8. City of York Council does not have details of households receiving Disability Living Allowance for a child. Therefore, an invitation letter cannot be sent. Families receiving DLA for a child will be invited to apply through a media campaign and promotion through CYC staff teams and partner agencies. The level of support is set out in Table B below.
9. The HFS scheme is set out at Annex A and in summary at Table A & B below:

Table A – Scheme

<b>DIRECT PAYMENT</b>	<b>£</b>
Households eligible for free school meals	£ 607,075
working age HB/CTS customers not in receipt of income support or universal credit.	£ 127,800
Foster Carers	£ 25,000
<b>APPLICATION</b>	
Broad means tested route- anyone can apply. Auto qualification if DLA for a child	£ 150,000
Student application referral from Educational establishment	£ 50,000
<b>OTHER</b>	
York Energy action - help with energy efficiency to customers	£ 5,000
Additional budget for discretionary housing payments	£ 10,000
Food and Fuel Vouchers	£ 50,000
Administration costs	£ 50,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£ 1,074,875</b>

Table B – Level of Support

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>£</b>
Households eligible for free school meals - 1 Child	£ 225
2 Children	£ 250
3 Children	£ 275
4+ Children	£ 300
Working age HB/CTS customers not in receipt of income support or universal credit	£ 200
Foster Carers	£ 250
Households receiving DLA for a child	£ 250
Student referrals	£ 200

10. 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 scheme will close on the 31<sup>st</sup> March or at the point the funds are exhausted.

11. The previous HSF scheme provided funding support for food/fuel vouchers. The new HSF scheme recommends that £50k of the funding is allocated to food/fuel vouchers. This scheme Table A and Annex A also looks to provide support to:
  - A student hardship fund (By University referral not direct application)
  - Energy efficiency measures through York Energy Advice
  - Support to Discretionary Housing Payments

## **Analysis**

12. The difference between this scheme and the former HSF scheme is that it removes the restrictions on the percentage that can be spent of specific groups and also looks to target those households who have not previously received any government support. Whilst the council has received a little over £1m this is a very small amount of money in comparison to the ongoing and increasing financial pressures many households are facing.
13. Whilst it may seem to be a considerable gap between approval and direct payments (January) this is arising due to additional pressures of administering the final payments of the discretionary element of the Energy Rebate and time to administer the new cohorts (Over 3.000 Households). This does not apply to those residents applying to the discretionary scheme.
14. There is continuing support through the York Financial Support Scheme (YFAS) and access to food/fuel vouchers as well as Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP).

## **Consultation**

15. 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. The

scheme has 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**

16.

### **Financial**

There are no financial implications as this is Government grant not council budget. The council does not receive new burdens 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 forecast to spend approx. £30k above the Government grant however based on past schemes not all direct payments are taken up so it is expected that the scheme will come in on budget and the £50k council costs will be held as a contingency budget until the scheme is delivered.

### **Human Resources (HR)**

There are no HR implications.

### **Equalities**

This report will impact on all communities equally. Equalities Impact Assessment attached at Annex C

### **Legal**

No implications

### **Crime and Disorder, Information Technology and Property**

No implications

### **Risk Management**

17. 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:**

David Walker

Pauline Stuchfield

Head of Customer & Exchequer Services

Director Customer and Communities

01904 552261

**Report  
Approved**

**Date  
02/11/  
22**

**Specialist Implications Officer(s):**

**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



## **Household Support Fund (HSF) Scheme 3**

**1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023**

### **Background**

1. On 26 May 2022, the Chancellor announced, as part of a number 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 October 2022 to 31 March 2023.
2. On the 26<sup>th</sup> August 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. The previous HSF scheme ended on 30 September 2022. The new scheme is similar and is to support the same demographic of the city.

### **Finance & Rules**

5. City of York Council has been given a budget £1,037,906 to cover the period 01 October 2022 to 31 March 2023.
6. Funding will be paid to the council by the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) in arrears. Two management information returns with a breakdown of spend across the core categories will be required by DWP to facilitate this. An interim MI return is required by 25 January 2023 for spend for the period 1 October 2022 to 31 December 2022. The interim MI return will be used to determine eligible spend to 31 December 2022 and an interim grant payment will be made to the Authority for this period when the information in your return has been verified.

7. A final MI return is required showing total spend from 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023 by 28 April 2023. The final MI return will be used to determine total eligible spend to 31 March 2023 and a final grant payment will be made to the Authority for this period when the information in your return has been verified.
8. A portion of the funding may be allocated to administration costs by the local authority. This must be detailed on the returns and be deemed reasonable by DWP.

## **City Of York HSF Details**

### **Overview**

9. 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. As set out in this scheme the scheme will close at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 or when the funds are exhausted. This will be done in two ways:
10. Providing support to financially vulnerable households already identified through eligibility to Council Tax Support, Housing Benefit, Disability Living Allowance for children and free school meals.
11. A complementary discretionary means tested application route available for other households needing support.

### **Target Audience**

12. Primarily we will target low-income households with families who are known to us and are most likely to need assistance with food, energy and water bills.
13. Anyone not in the above category in need of help with food, energy and water bills will also be able to apply through a means tested route.
14. Wider essential costs in line with the guidance will also be considered on a discretionary basis.

### **Distribution of Funds/Application Routes**

15. Funds will be distributed through the following routes
  - a. Identified eligible groups who apply will receive cash payments directly into customer bank accounts. This will provide the flexibility to pay for various household bills as appropriate.

- b. 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.
- c. CYC Food and Fuel Voucher Scheme: A budget of £50k will be allocated to CYC Food and Fuel Voucher Scheme.
- d. Student scheme: Discretionary means-tested application process for students supported by student support services.
- e. Energy efficiency measures: A budget of £5000 will be allocated to York Energy Advice to provide additional energy efficiency measures identified as part of advice and support provided.
- f. Discretionary Housing Payments: An additional budget of £10k will be allocated to Discretionary Housing Payments

16. There will be two main mechanisms for distributing funds:

**Route 1 – Direct payment**

17. All identified customers in the following groups

- a. Families entitled to Free School Meals on May 2022 Census.
- b. Council Tax Support and Housing Benefits customers who are working, but not receiving another income related benefit
- c. Foster Carers

18. This will involve a simple information gathering process in order for the customer to claim their award. These customers who meet eligibility criteria will be invited to apply to provide up to date bank details in order to make payment.

19. Payment amounts will be paid directly into their bank accounts.

20. Recipients will receive one payment per household in January to help with living costs. The payments will be as set out at Table B below.

**Route 2 - Discretionary.**

21. Discretionary means-tested application process to support other residents for any eligible essentials as set out in the Government's guidance. Referred students and households receiving Disability Living

Allowance for a child will qualify automatically (level of support set out in Table B below). Successful applications will receive cash payments directly into customer bank accounts.

22. A breakdown of the total spend is show at Table A below.

### Payment Frequency

23. There will be one application window for the standard payments for those via Route 1. Payments will be made January.

24. Discretionary payments will be made on an ad-hoc basis in conjunction with the payment periods as above.

### Table A - Scheme

DIRECT PAYMENT	£
Households eligible for free school meals	£ 607,075
working age HB/CTS customers not in receipt of income support or universal credit.	£ 127,800
Foster Carers	£ 25,000
APPLICATION	
Broad means tested route- anyone can apply. Auto qualification if DLA for a child	£ 150,000
Student application referral from Educational establishment	£ 50,000
OTHER	
York Energy action - help with energy effcienency to customers	£ 5,000
Additional budget for discretionary housing payments	£ 10,000
Food and Fuel Vouchers	£ 50,000
Administration costs	£ 50,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£ 1,074,875</b>

### Table B - Level of Support

CATEGORY	£
Households eligible for free school meals - 1 Child	£ 225
2 Children	£ 250
3 Children	£ 275
4+ Children	£ 300
Working age HB/CTS customers not in receipt of income support or universal credit	£ 200
Foster Carers	£ 250
Households receiving DLA for a child	£ 250
Student referrals	£ 200

## Annexe A

### City of York Household Support Fund 3

1. York Household Support Fund 3 (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.
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 is 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 problem<sup>1</sup>.

- 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

### **What assistance can I apply for?**

10. 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.
11. 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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

## How to apply

12. Grants will be provided through two routes

### Route 1 – Direct payment

13. All identified customers in the following groups
- a. Families entitled to Free School Meals on May 2022 Census.
  - b. Council Tax Support and Housing Benefits customers who are working, but not receiving another income related benefit
  - c. Foster Carers
14. Payment amounts will be paid directly into their bank accounts.
15. Recipients will receive one payment in the January to help with living costs. The payments will be as shown at Table B above.
16. Groups a - c above will be sent a letter inviting them to apply. The invitation will letter give details of how to apply. This will be through an online application. The web link is provided in the letter.
17. **City of York Council does not have details of households receiving Disability Living Allowance for a child. Therefore, an invitation letter cannot be sent. Families receiving DLA for a child will be invited to apply through a media campaign and promotion through CYC staff teams and partner agencies.**
18. 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.
19. This support will be provided as one payment in January 23. These payments are intended to help families with household bills.

### Route 2 - Discretionary applications

20. 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](http://www.york.gov.uk/householdsupportfund)
21. Grants will be through a discretionary means tested application which will require applicants to prepare some financial information.

Applications can also be made for exceptional financial circumstances relating to other essentials which will be assessed on a discretionary basis.

22. Any exceptional discretionary awards will be made on an individual basis as appropriate.

### **What information I will need to provide**

23. We will need to ask for information and evidence to show

Applicants meet the criteria 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.

24. We will need to establish why you are applying for financial support. We may ask about your personal circumstances in depth to make sure you are seeking all available support.

25. When applying for assistance with

- Energy bills – electricity, gas, oil
- Water bills (including sewerage)
- Other exceptional emergency costs

26. 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.

27. We will suggest and signpost you to agencies who 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 agencies such as, for example, the StepChange debt charity.

### **How many times can I apply?**

28. There will be one application award payment per household. The funding is ring-fenced and covers the period from 1 October 2022 until the 31 March 2023.

Route 1 -. Payments to be made in January for period 01/10/22-31/03/23

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

### **How will awards be made?**

29. Awards will be paid directly to people's bank account (x1).  
30. The award levels are set out at Table B

### **Reviews**

31. 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.
32. 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.
33. We will not review a claim if the funding is exhausted or the scheme has closed (31<sup>st</sup> March 2023).

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## Household Support Fund: Draft Guidance for County Councils and Unitary Authorities in England (1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023)

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## Introduction

1. £421 million has been made available to County Councils and Unitary Authorities in England to support those most in need to help with global inflationary challenges and the significantly rising cost of living. This funding covers the period 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023 inclusive. Local authorities (LAs) 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), LAs, 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 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), under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003, to administer The Fund and provide assistance to households most in need. **Note: County Councils and Unitary Authorities will be referred to as 'Authorities' and the Household Support Fund will be referred to as 'The Fund' throughout the remainder of this guidance.** Authorities must work together with District Councils to ensure the funding meets its objectives by identifying those 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. This includes the Cost of Living Payments set out on 26 May 2022 and the energy support set out on 3 February (enhanced on 26 May 2022), and detailed on [29 July 2022](#) (details on eligibility for these schemes are at **Annex A**). 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, people who begin a claim or return to payment of a benefit after the relevant qualifying date as well as people who have fuel costs but who cannot access the £400 of energy support from the Energy Bill Support Scheme or the equivalence package confirmed on 29 July 2022. 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 LAs 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, 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. 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.
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 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 (see paragraphs 64-68).

6. Authorities have the ability to deliver the scheme through a variety of routes including providing vouchers to households, making direct provision of food or goods, or issuing grants to third parties (with the exception of grants for advice provision). 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 LA.
7. Authorities have access to DWP's Searchlight portal which provides information on individual citizens' entitlement to (and confirms receipt of) DWP welfare benefits. Since June 2021 we have provided Authorities with 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. In April 2022, DWP established a data share covering people receiving the Guarantee Credit and/or Savings Credit elements of Pension Credit, as well as for all claimants on income-related (IR) Employment and Support Allowance (ESA IR). Authorities may find this information useful in identifying those most in need.
8. In October 2022, DWP will also introduce a further data share for those who are only in receipt of HB. This group is not eligible for the means-tested Cost of Living Payments unless they are of State Pension age or eligible for a Disability Cost of Living Payment. LAs should consider how they could use this data to provide support to this group.
9. 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 advice from professionals who come into contact with vulnerable households such as social workers and Supporting Families keyworkers and housing workers. As paragraph 5 above, Authorities should also have a process to consider applications for support.
10. 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**

11. The Authority must, as appropriate and practical, 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.
12. LAs must make public their plans for The Fund, for example on their Authority website.

## Objective and key principles

13. The objective of The Fund is to provide support to vulnerable households in most need of support to help with significantly rising living costs.
14. Although this is considered an extension to the previous two 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.
15. Funds should be spent or committed before 31 March 2023 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. However, 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 104 to 107 on committed spend).
16. 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 October 2022 to 31 March 2023 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
  - **Note:** this includes payments made, or committed to, by the Authority or any person acting on behalf of the Authority, from 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023
  - in exceptional cases of genuine emergency, the funding can additionally be used to support housing costs where existing housing support schemes do not meet this exceptional need, subject to the provisions at paragraph 30
  - 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 may 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.
17. When deciding how to help people, Authorities should consider:
  - how they plan to provide support to vulnerable households, in other words, paying into bank accounts, use of cash and vouchers, provision of goods
  - any risks associated with these payment methods (see section 'Managing the risk of fraud' at paragraph 107 for further information).

## Working with other organisations

18. Authorities must 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 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.

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

- registered charities and voluntary organisations
- schools
- food banks
- general practitioners
- care organisations

20. 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**

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

22. For audit purposes, where an Authority re-issues returned TPO funding they must confirm the following by email to [lawelfare.pdt@dwp.gov.uk](mailto: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**

23. 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.

24. 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 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.

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

- Energy Bills Support Scheme and the equivalence package confirmed on 29 July 2022
- Council Tax Rebate and the associated £144 million Discretionary Fund
- Cost of Living Payments for those on means tested benefits
- £150 Disability Cost of Living Payment
- One-off £300 Pensioner Cost of Living Payment (through the Winter Fuel Payment)

26. The eligibility criteria for the schemes listed in paragraph 24 can be found at **Annex A**. The majority of households in England will receive some form of support from at least one of the above schemes. 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.

27. However, the schemes listed in paragraph 24 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 HB only
- are ordinarily eligible for benefits but who had a nil award in the qualifying period due to, for example, a fluctuation in income
- have fuel costs but who cannot access the £400 of energy support from the Energy Bill Support Scheme or the equivalence package confirmed on 29 July 2022

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.

28. 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 LA 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. However, when an LA chooses to use all or part of this funding for an application based process, they must make sure that this support is clearly advertised to residents. Authorities can also proactively identify households who will benefit from support, as with previous schemes.



29. Where Authorities proactively identify households, 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**

30. 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 period products, warm clothing, soap, 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 LAs 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, and essential transport-related costs such as repairing a car, buying a bicycle, or paying for fuel. This list is not exhaustive.
- Housing costs. In exceptional cases of genuine emergency, where existing housing support schemes do not meet this exceptional need, the Fund can be used to support housing costs. 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 emergency 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).
- In exceptional cases of genuine emergency, 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.
  - 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
  - Eligible spend does not include:
    - advice services including debt advice
    - mortgage costs.

31. It is expected that the focus of support should be on bills and that support for housing costs should only be given in exceptional cases of genuine emergency. 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.

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

33. 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.

34. 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**

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

## **Individuals with No Recourse to Public Funds**

36. 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

37. 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**

38. 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 LAs (Access, handling, exchange and protection of DWPss' and HM Revenue and Customs' data)'.

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

40. 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.

41. 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@dw.gov.uk](mailto:lawelfare.lasupport@dw.gov.uk)

## **DWP Searchlight**

42. 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.

43. 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**

44. 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.
45. We are also introducing 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.
46. The UC, Pension Credit, ESA (IR) and HB only data will be provided monthly via Transfer Your File.
47. 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, and
    - the number of children in the household.
    - those whose award is subject to the benefit cap
    - those in receipt of the Removal of the Spare Room Subsidy and Local Housing Allowance (available from Autumn 2022)
  - 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 income-related 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)

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

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

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

48. 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 requirements

49. Authorities are required to make two Statements of Grant Usage and MI returns – see the **Grant Determination**.. The deadline for completing these returns is shown in the table below. Completed MI returns should be sent to [lawelfare.pdt@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:lawelfare.pdt@dwp.gov.uk)

50. An interim MI return is required by 25 January 2023 for spend for the period 1 October 2022 to 31 December 2022. The interim MI return will be used to determine eligible spend to 31 December 2022 and an interim grant payment will be made to your Authority for this period when the information in your return has been verified.

51. A final MI return is required by 28 April 2023 showing total spend from 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023. The final MI return will be used to determine total eligible spend to 31 March 2023 and a final grant payment will be made to your Authority for this period when the information in your return has been verified.

52. Authorities should use the standard MI reporting template provided, which incorporates the Statement of Grant Usage. For the purpose of this section:

- **Grant allocation** refers to the amount of grant allocated to a TPO to distribute to vulnerable households.
- **Grant award or spend** refers to the amount provided or paid to vulnerable households under the remit of this grant.

MI return	Reporting period		Deadline
	From	To	
Interim MI return	1 October 2022	31 December 2022	25 January 2023
Final MI return	1 October 2022	31 March 2023	28 April 2023

53. It is the responsibility of Authorities to provide the MI returns to DWP. Failure to return the MI by the deadline may result in a delayed payment or a payment being refused.

54. Where Authorities (including District Councils) issue awards directly to vulnerable households they should either obtain information at source or via information or data they have access to, in order to complete the split of spend and number of awards

across the reporting categories. For example, households with children and pensioners; food, energy bills, essentials linked to food and energy bills, wider essentials and (in exceptional circumstances) housing support. Where Authorities decide to deliver support to vulnerable households through TPOs they should use whatever information the TPO holds, or other available data, to split the level of spend and volume of awards across the eligibility criteria to the best of their ability.

55. The different elements of the MI template are shown below together with guidance on how to complete them.

Table 1 Governance

Table 1: Governance	Response
Local Authority (full name)	
Section 151 officer (name)	
Section 151 officer (email address)	
Is the Section 151 officer / CFO copied into the return to DWP? (Y/N)	
Reporting Period	
Approved signed off by	
LA Single Point of Contact	
Date Returned to DWP	

56. Each MI return must include your Section 151 Officer's name and email address to provide assurance on validation of funding spend. If the Section 151 Officer is also the SPOC (single point of contact) for the scheme, please input details in both response fields.

57. We also require you to copy your Chief Financial Officer/Section 151 Officer into the email, providing this assurance when you return the MI template to DWP. This will be checked against DWP records. By doing this you confirm that the Section 151 Officer has agreed the correctness of spend reported.

58. Please indicate that you have done this in row 4 of the table "Is the section 151 Officer/CFO copied into the return to DWP?" If the MI is incomplete or incorrect it will be returned to the Authority by the DWP for correction and re-submission which must also be copied to your Chief Financial Officer/Section 151 Officer.

59. Table 2: Total Awards

Table 2: Total Awards	
Item	Spend (£s)
a) Total amount provided to vulnerable households	
b) Administration Costs	
c) Total LA spend (a+b)	£ -

60. Total amount provided to vulnerable households – this is the total amount of The Fund that has been paid or awarded to vulnerable households. It includes amounts paid by Authorities and by TPOs on behalf of Authorities. It should not include amounts allocated to TPOs that have not been spent during the reporting period. This cell will automatically populate from the total in table 3. Note, all cells which automatically populate are shaded grey and are protected.

61. Administration 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

62. Total LA spend – this is the total of the above. It is the amount that will be used to determine the grant funding payment from DWP to cover the full cost of administering the grant in an Authority area. A single grant payment will be made in arrears on the receipt of a fully completed and verified MI return. This cell will automatically populate from the figures in rows a and b.

63. Table 3: Total value of awards split by household composition

Table 3: Total Value of Awards Split by Household Composition						
		a) Households with Children	b) Households with Pensioners	c) Households with a Disabled Person	d) Other households	e) Total amount provided to vulnerable households (a+b+c+d)
Row 1	Spend (£s)					£ -
Row 2	Volumes					-
Row 3	Number of Households Helped					-

64. Table 3 relates to grant spend, the volume of awards made, and number of households helped in relation to households with children, pensioners, a disabled person and all other households. Rows 1 and 2 relate to grant awards made by Authorities (including District Councils) directly to vulnerable households, and grant awards to vulnerable households made by TPOs. Row 3 refers to the number of households helped.

65. Spend (£s) - this is the amount paid/awarded to vulnerable households within the eligibility criteria. Authorities should make every effort to gather information to establish the household type. For example, for households with children whether a child resides in the household (including being the only member of the household) in order to complete the template as fully as possible. This information is important for DWP to evaluate how successful The Fund has been in providing support to households with children.

66. Authorities should either gather information or check existing records they hold or have access to, in order to establish whether the household includes a child or a pensioner (as defined below) or a disabled person and complete columns a, b and c accordingly. Responsibility for MI reporting rests with Authorities. Where Shire Counties pass grant allocations to District Councils, District Councils should pass the information relating to columns a, b and c to the County Council/Unitary Authority to collate the information and send one collated template to DWP.

67. For the purposes of recording spend in the MI template, if an award relates to more than one of 'Households with Children', 'Households with Pensioners' (in other words, pensioners living with children) and 'Households with a Disabled Person' (for example disabled people living with children), Authorities have the flexibility to categorise and record the spend under the household composition(s) which they consider more fitting. In determining this, Authorities should, as far as is possible, consider who the award is principally intended to support.

68. For the purpose of the reporting requirements for this grant (and without prejudice to other schemes):

- The definition of a household with a child is a household containing any person:
  - who will be under the age of 19 at the time of award or,
  - a person aged 19 or over in respect of whom a child-related benefit (for example, Child Benefit) is paid or FSMs are provided.
  
- The definition of a household with a pensioner is any household containing any person:
  - who has reached State Pension age at the time of award
  
- The definition of disability and disabled people aligns with the definition in the Equality Act 2010. Therefore, a disabled person is someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities:
  - ‘substantial’ is more than minor or trivial, for example it takes much longer than it normally would to complete a daily task like getting dressed;
  - ‘long-term’ means 12 months or more, for example a breathing condition that develops as a result of a lung infection.

69. For tables 3 to 6

- Volumes: this is the number of individual/separate payments made to vulnerable households within the eligibility criteria. If multiple awards are made to the same household throughout the period of The Fund each award should be counted separately. Where an award is made to a household with multiple children, it should be classed as a single award.
- Number of Households Helped: this is the number of individual households helped by The Fund within the eligibility criteria. There should be only one record for each household helped, even if multiple awards are made to the same household throughout the period of The Fund.
- Reporting TPO Spend and TPO Volumes: we acknowledge that some TPOs, for example, charitable and voluntary organisations such as food banks, have limited or no access to household information and may not be in a position to provide this information to the same level of accuracy as Authorities. We are therefore asking Authorities and TPOs to report the actual level of spend and the volume of awards across the different eligibility criteria in rows 1-3 to the best of their ability.

70. Table 4: Total Value of Awards Split by Category

Table 4: Total Value of Awards Split by Category								
		a) Energy and Water	b) Food excluding FSM support in the holidays	c) Free School Meals support in the holidays	d) Essentials linked to Energy and Water	e) Wider Essentials	f) Housing Costs	g) Total amount provided to vulnerable households (a+b+c+d+e+f)
Row 1	Spend (£s)							£ -
Row 2	Volumes							-
Row 3	Number of Households Helped							-

71. Table 4 relates to grant spend, volume of awards made, and households helped in relation to food, energy and water bills, essentials linked to energy and water bills, wider essentials, and (in exceptional circumstances) housing costs.



## 72. Table 5: Total Value of Awards Split by Types of Support

Table 5: Total Value of Awards Split by Types of Support							
		a) Vouchers	b) Cash Awards	c) Third Party Organisations	d) Tangible Items	e) Other	f) Total amount provided to vulnerable households (a+b+c+d+e)
Row 1	Spend (£s)						£ -
Row 2	Volumes						-
Row 3	Number of Households Helped						-

73. Table 5 relates to grant spend, volume of awards made, and households helped in relation to Vouchers, Cash Awards, Third Party Organisations, Tangible Items and Other.

74. By 'Tangible Items' we mean products that are of a physical nature such as clothing or household items.

## 75. Table 6: Total Value of Awards Split by Access Routes

Table 6: Total Value of Awards Split by Access Routes					
		a) Application-based Support	b) Proactive Support	c) Other	d) Total amount provided to vulnerable households (a+b+c)
Row 1	Spend (£s)				£ -
Row 2	Volumes				-
Row 3	Number of Households Helped				-

76. Table 6 relates to grant spend, volume of awards made, and households helped in relation to Application-based support, Proactive Support and Other.

77. By application-based support, we mean any awards made through a successful application for support made to the Authority by eligible recipients or through third parties who run self-referral support services on behalf of the Authority.

78. By proactive support we mean any awards made as a result of the Authority proactively identifying recipients.

79. Total - Table 3 Row 1 column g, Table 4 row 1 column g, Table 5 Row 1 column f and Table 6 column row 1 d are protected and will automatically add up spend across the different headings. This figure will automatically populate Table 2 row a.

80. When allocating spend and the volume of awards across the eligibility criteria please follow the guidance below.

- Each award needs to be allocated four times – one allocation for each of Tables 3-6 so that when you report on the total spent on:
  - Table 3, award by household composition
  - Table 4 award by category of spend
  - Table 5 type of support
  - Table 6 access route

the total amount you have paid will be the same across the four tables.

81. Tables 3 to 6 ask for spend and award volumes to be recorded against four sets of criteria, one for each table. Therefore, the details of each award need to be recorded four times; once against one set of criteria in Table 3, then a second time for Table 4 and again in Tables 5 and 6. Shown below is a worked example of how the MI template should be completed.

82. Authorities are asked to report and manage spend in relation to all of these areas. For example, if a £100 award of vouchers is made following a successful application for support to a household with children for food, you would allocate £100 to the 'Households with children' section in Table 3, £100 to the 'food' section in Table 4,

£100 to the Vouchers section of Table 5 and £100 to the Application-based support of Table 6. You would also allocate one award and one household supported in these sections of Tables 3 to 6.

83. If The Fund payments are paid directly to a vulnerable household's Council Tax Account in lieu of a different payment method: for example for food excluding FSM in the holidays /energy and water; then the amount paid must be recorded under the intended heading, in this case food excluding FSM support in the holiday. If the payment is in relation to both food and energy in equal measures put 50% of the award in each of the two categories.

### **Additional guidance and examples when working with TPOs**

84. Include, where possible, the amount of spend across the following categories:

- households with children, households with pensioners, households with a disabled person, other households, and
- energy and water bills, essentials linked to energy and water bills, wider essentials, and (in exceptional circumstances) housing costs.

85. For example, if you have allocated:

- grant funding to a food bank to provide food to vulnerable people, establish the amount of that allocation the food bank has spent and enter in Table 4 the full amount spent under 'food excluding FSM through the school holidays' as you know that the grant allocation has been spent in respect of food in term time and not covering FSMs, and in Table 3 provide the split across household composition to the best of your ability in accordance with the example below.
- grant funding to a charity that specialises in providing vulnerable children with clothing, establish the amount of that allocation the charity has spent and enter the full amount spent in 'households with children' and the full amount of the grant spent in 'wider essentials'. This is because you know that the purpose of the grant is for children and the nature of support is clothing which comes under wider essentials.
- As this is TPO spend record the full amount of the grant spend under 'Third Party Organisations' in Table 5 and record the full amount of the grant spend under 'Other' in Table 6. For all entries, please add volumes of awards and numbers of households helped when completing the MI.

86. The amount of MI available will vary considerably across each TPO. Use whatever information is already available or reasonable to collect to be as accurate as possible.

87. Shown below are some examples of how to complete the template.

#### **Example 1**

88. A food bank operates on an open basis where anyone can turn up and pick up food and supplies. This is not an award made directly to vulnerable households by an Authority. The cost is picked up by a TPO, for example, the food bank. The MI template should be completed as per guidance below. The award was not made as a result of an application nor proactive support.

89. The total value of grant spent, the volume of awards made by the charity or voluntary organisations providing the food bank and number of households helped should be

entered in Table 3 (The Authority or food bank provider will need to provide the split between household composition to the best of their ability) and column b (Food Excluding FSM support in the holidays) of Table 4. These values should be reported in column c (Third Party Organisations) of Table 5 and column c (Other) of Table 6.

## Example 2

90. The Authority directly provides vouchers to vulnerable households as a result of the Authority proactively identifying the recipients. These could be redeemable at a number of food outlets including supermarkets or food banks. Food voucher amounts can vary depending on how many children reside in the household. Authorities are expected to collect or verify information to establish whether the award is made to a household with children or a household with pensioners or a disabled person. The MI template should be completed as follows:

- the value of awards should be entered in Table 3 in 'spend' row 1 column a (households with children), row 1 column b (households with pensioners), row 1 column c (households with a disabled person) and row 1 column d (other households) based on the information the Authority has been capturing to split spend across these categories.
- the volume of awards should be included in Table 3 row 2 (Volumes) column a and row 2 column b based on the information the Authority has been capturing to split the volume of awards spent across these categories.
- the number of households helped should be included in Table 3 row 3 (number of households helped) column a and row 3 column b based on the information the Authority has been capturing to split the number of households helped across these categories.
- the value of awards should be entered in Table 4 row 1 column b because it relates to food excluding FSM support outside the holidays.
- the volume of awards should be included in Table 4 row 2 column b because it relates to food
- the number of households helped should be included in Table 4 row 3 (number of households helped) column b because it relates to food
- the value of awards should be entered in Table 5 row 1 column a because it relates to vouchers
- the volume of awards should be included in Table 5 row 2 column a because it relates to vouchers
- the number of households helped should be included in Table 5 row 3 column a because it relates to vouchers
- the value of awards should be entered in Table 6 row 1 column b because it relates to proactive support
- the volume of awards should be included in Table 6 row 2 column b because it relates to proactive support
- the number of households helped should be included in Table 6 row 3 column b because it relates to proactive support

## **DWP engagement**

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

92. 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, or
- 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.

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

94. Authorities are required to complete a delivery plan to outline their intentions for The Fund and to demonstrate some of the ways in which they intend to allocate their funding. The delivery plan will be due one month after the start of The Fund on 28 October 2022. At the end of the 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 2023.

95. DWP will also continue to engage with Authorities throughout the course of The Fund and will provide opportunities to engage with the department and other Authorities to share good practice and work collaboratively. DWP will continue to respond to questions we receive via the designated inbox as quickly as possible.

96. 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**

97. 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.

98. Payment of The Fund from DWP to Authorities will be made in arrears after the interim MI return in January 2023 and the final MI return at the end of grant period in April 2023 after we have 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. Both an interim and a final MI return will be required and grant payments will be made in respect of the periods 1 October 2022 to 31 December 2022 and 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023.
99. 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 by copying your Chief Financial Officer and Section 151 Officer into the email.
100. The guidance for completion is provided on a separate tab within the MI template.
101. The definition of spend includes grant funding that has been provided to vulnerable households, within the scope of the eligibility criteria, and within the period of The Fund 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023.
102. 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 2023 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.
103. 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.
104. 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.
105. For audit purposes where an Authority recycles and reuses expired vouchers the Authority must confirm by email to [lawelfare.pdt@dwp.gov.uk](mailto: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.

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

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

**Funding:**

Payment	Amount (%)	Date	Notes
Interim	Actual grant spend up to 100% of grant allocation*	February/March 2023	Payment made in arrears
Final	Actual grant spend up to 100% of grant allocation*	June/July 2023	Payment made in arrears

\*Subject to eligible spend criteria

**Managing the risk of fraud**

108. Fraudsters can target funds of this type.

109. 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.

110. 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.

111. 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.

112. Authorities are also encouraged to ensure checks are in place to verify the identity of those eligible.

113. 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.

114. 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.

115. 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.
116. 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 to ensure they take into consideration household income and rent liability which may be requested and reviewed as set out in the grant determination. 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.
117. 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.
118. If the Authority has any grounds for suspecting financial irregularity in the use of any grant paid under this 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.
119. If you suspect fraud, you should notify DWP of the:
  - number of instances
  - total amount lost
120. 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**

121. The funding is intended to benefit households most in need of support with energy bills, food, related essentials, wider essentials and (exceptionally) 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.
122. 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**

123. 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.
124. In all cases, Authorities should keep administrative costs to a reasonable level.

125. Administration costs for each Authority will be published on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) alongside detail of all spend and volumes related to The Fund.

### **Public Sector Equality Duty**

126. In accordance with the public sector equality duty, DWP has had due regard for the potential equalities impacts of this grant.

127. 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.

128. 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**

129. If you have any queries about the content of this guidance or use of the funding, you can contact [lawelfare.pdt@dwp.gov.uk](mailto: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 Bills Support Scheme can be found at:

[Energy Bills Support Scheme explainer - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/energy-bills-support-scheme-explainer)

Eligibility requirements for the Council Tax Rebate and information on the associated £144m Discretionary Fund can be found at:

[The council tax rebate 2022-23 – billing authority guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/council-tax-rebate-2022-23-billing-authority-guidance)

## 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)

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**City of York Council**  
**Equalities Impact Assessment**

**Who is submitting the proposal?**

<b>Directorate:</b>	Customer & Communities		
<b>Service Area:</b>	Customer and Exchequer Services		
<b>Name of the proposal :</b>	Household Support Fund October 2022 – March 2023		
<b>Lead officer:</b>	David Walker		
<b>Date assessment completed:</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> October 2022		
<b>Names of those who contributed to the assessment :</b>			
<b>Name</b>	<b>Job title</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Area of expertise</b>
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	<p><b>What is the purpose of the proposal?</b> Please explain your proposal in Plain English avoiding acronyms and jargon.</p>
	<p>To provide a support to financially vulnerable residents with their increased cost of living especially in relation to utility bills and food.</p>
1.2	<p><b>Are there any external considerations?</b> (Legislation/government directive/codes of practice etc.)</p>
	<p>This is a Government scheme</p>
1.3	<p><b>Who are the stakeholders and what are their interests?</b></p>
	<p>All residents in the city who may qualify for support</p>
1.4	<p><b>What results/outcomes do we want to achieve and for whom?</b> 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.</p>



	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.
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## Step 2 – Gathering the information and feedback

<b>2.1</b>	<b>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?</b> 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.	
	<b>Source of data/supporting evidence</b>	<b>Reason for using</b>
	Income based benefit data	Indicates financial vulnerability
	Council Tax Support Records	Indicates financial vulnerability
	Advice York Partners	Stakeholder feedback
	Free School Meal Data	To identify potentially financially vulnerable families

## Step 3 – Gaps in data and knowledge

<b>3.1</b>	<b>What are the main gaps in information and understanding of the impact of your proposal? Please indicate how any gaps will be dealt with.</b>		
<b>Gaps in data or knowledge</b>		<b>Action to deal with this</b>	
There are no obvious gaps in the data we hold other than knowing exactly the financial position of individual households		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 third such scheme so many households whom we are aware off that are experiencing financial difficulty will receive direct funding and all others across the city can apply	

#### Step 4 – Analysing the impacts or effects.

<b>4.1</b>	<b>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?</b> Remember the duty is also positive – so please identify where the proposal offers opportunities to promote equality and/or foster good relations.		
<b>Equality Groups and Human Rights.</b>	<b>Key Findings/Impacts</b>	<b>Positive (+) Negative (-) Neutral (0)</b>	<b>High (H) Medium (M) Low (L)</b>
<b>Age</b>	Will provide additional financial support for utility bills and Food	<b>+</b>	<b>H</b>
<b>Disability</b>	Will provide additional financial support for utility bills and Food	<b>+</b>	<b>H</b>

<b>Gender</b>	Will provide additional financial support for utility bills and Food	+	H
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	Will provide additional financial support for utility bills and Food	+	H
<b>Marriage and civil partnership</b>	n/a		
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	Will provide additional financial support for utility bills and Food	+	H
<b>Race</b>	Will provide additional financial support for utility bills and Food	+	H
<b>Religion and belief</b>	n/a		
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	n/a		
<b>Other Socio-economic groups including :</b>	<b>Could other socio-economic groups be affected e.g. carers, ex-offenders, low incomes?</b>		
<b>Carer</b>	Will provide additional financial support for utility bills and Food	+	H
<b>Low income groups</b>	Will provide additional financial support for utility bills and Food	+	H
<b>Veterans, Armed Forces Community</b>	Will provide additional financial support for utility bills and food	+	H
<b>Other</b>			
<b>Impact on human rights:</b>			

List any human rights impacted.	n/a		
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**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><b>High impact</b> (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><b>Medium impact</b> (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><b>Low impact</b> (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	<b>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?</b>
There are no adverse impacts arising from the support the benefit to all groups is a financial one where they qualify. The key group are those on low income in any of the categories within the EIA.	

**Step 6 – Recommendations and conclusions of the assessment**

6.1	<b>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:</b>
- <b>No major change to the proposal</b> – 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

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

## Step 8 - Monitor, review and improve

<b>8. 1</b>	<p><b>How will the impact of your proposal be monitored and improved upon going forward?</b>            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?</p>
	<p>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 crises.</p>





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14 November 2022

## **Executive Member for Finance & Performance**

Report of Chief Finance Officer

### **Regular update on routine procurements and approval of ICT procurement over £250k**

#### **Summary**

1. The report will present a register of procurement exercises deemed routine for the period of April 2022 to October 2022. These have been defined as routine procurements as per the council's contract procedure rules and expenditure will fall within existing capital and revenue budget provisions.
2. It is intended that these reports will be brought to this decision session every 6 months, with any non routine ICT or other procurements reported as they arise between £250k and £500k in value.

#### **Recommendations**

3. The Executive Member is asked to:
  - Note the routine procurements that were approved during the period April 2022 to October 2022 (Annex A).
  - Note the significant future routine procurement of the council's revenues and benefits system (Annex B).

*Reason: To ensure the that councillors receive reports on routine procurement decisions in line with the council's contract procedure rules and the public have the opportunity to see transparent decision-making in operation relating to major ICT procurements.*

## Background

4. The council's current contract procedure rules state:
  - 7.7 Where the aggregate contract value (including any extension) is between £250,000 and less than £500,000 then the decision to enter the contract requires the approval of an Executive Member or the Executive unless the procurement is treated as Routine as defined in clause 7.9.
  - 7.8 Where the aggregate contract value (including any extension) is £500,000 or more the decision will be regarded as a Key Decision unless the Chief Finance Officer acting in consultation with the Monitoring Officer has approved the procurement as Routine.
  - 7.9 A Routine procurement is any arrangement that represents a low commercial and legal risk to the Council and relates to procurement of goods, services or works with a clearly defined specification and that clearly relate to the routine day to day operation of the Council. Routine procurements will be limited to items such as utilities, insurance or stationery. Where Officers consider a procurement process may be Routine, they are required to liaise with Commercial Procurement who will advise on the relevant paperwork to be submitted to the Chief Finance Officer. Authorisation to treat a procurement as Routine must be sought before the procurement process commences. A Director may enter a Contract where the procurement has been treated as Routine. An updated register of routine procurement must be presented regularly to the Executive Member for Finance and Performance.
5. Annex A contains all routine procurements approved over the period by the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Monitoring Officer. All the procurement exercises listed were agreed as routine due to their low risk nature and that they relate to the day to day operation of the council.
6. Annex A contains all routine procurements approved by the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Monitoring Officer.
7. Annex B separately contains known significant ICT routine procurements coming up over the next few months – in this case the council's revenues and benefits system.
8. There are no ICT procurements over £250k to £500k of a non routine nature for Executive member approval on this occasion
9. Whilst in some cases the procurement route will be indicated in the annex, as a general rule the most appropriate procurement route will be used in

line with professional procurement advice, as determined at the time the council is ready to issue the related specification.

10. It is important to note that deeming a project routine does not mean that the work is not advertised or tendered in the normal way. The only impact of deeming a contract as routine is that it is not considered a key decision and therefore is not required to be agreed by Executive.
11. In many instances, contracts are reported to the relevant Executive Member. By including all routine procurement in this report, it promotes transparency and allows public scrutiny of the determinations made by the Chief Finance Officer and the Monitoring Officer.

### **Consultations**

12. The council's officer ICT Board, Directorate Management Team and statutory officers have been consulted in the formation of the recommended decisions in this report.

### **Options/Analysis**

13. Any options and analysis will be contained within the annexes where Executive Member approval is required for an ICT procurement.

### **Council Plan**

14. Outcomes achieved by the activities covered in this report help to deliver all services across the council, but particularly support the Council Plan 2019 - 23 priority of An Open and Effective Council in supporting the delivery of services.

### **Implications**

15.
  - a. **Financial:** There are no specific financial implications arising from this report. All the procurements designated as routine have followed the council's contract procedure rules and have been evaluated using both price and quality to ensure value for money.
  - b. **Human Resources (HR):** None
  - c. **Equalities:** None
  - d. **Legal:** None

**e. Crime and Disorder:** None

**f. Information Technology (ICT):** As covered in the Annexes

**g. Property:** None

**h. Other:** No known implications

### **Risk Management**

16. The controls and evidence in this report mitigate/minimise risks associated with high value procurement practice.

**Contact Details Author:**

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Chief Finance Officer  
01904 554161

**Chief Officers Responsible for the report:**

Debbie Mitchell  
Chief Finance Officer

Pauline Stuchfield  
Director - Customer &  
Corporate Services

**Report Approved**



**Date**

3<sup>rd</sup> November 2022

**Specialist Implications Officer(s)**

Legal: Bryn Roberts, Director of Governance

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

**All**

**Annex:**

Annex A – List of routine procurements April 2022 to date.

Annex B - Revenues & Benefits System Reprocurement

**Background Papers:**

None

**List of abbreviations used in this report:**

CYC	City of York Council
ICT	Information & Communications Technology
K	Thousand
M	Million

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## List of routine procurements April 2022 to October 2022 Annex A

Service	Date approved as routine	Annual Contract Value	Procurement Route
Financial Management System	11/08/22	51,000	Best value direct award – CCS (Digital Applications Solutions) Framework
Electricity	13/09/22	3,500,000	YPO single supplier framework
Revenues and Benefits System	08/10/22	200,000	Best value direct award – CCS (Digital Applications Solutions) Framework

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## Revenues & Benefits System Reprocurment

### Introduction / Background:

The council's contract through NEC provides its Revenue and Benefits software for administering Council Tax, Council Tax Support, Business Rates and Housing Benefits. This helps collect over £220m of income through several hundred thousand transactions from annual billing to reminders, summons and change of circumstances.

The system also manages historic council tax debts that are still being collected from prior years.

The council also have a contract with Govtech Solutions Limited that provides the online digital access to residents and landlords to report changes of address and other amendments into our NEC system. This solution provides the digital automation of the Revenue and Benefits service.

The NEC contract is due for renewal on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 and Govtech contract on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2023.

The council wishes to reprocur its contract with NEC through the Crown Commercial Service's DAS framework. The benefits of doing this are that it is a pre-tendered contract framework that will allow the council to secure continuity and resilience of a critical council service. The framework also delivers a saving against the current revenue budget.

This procurement includes replacing the current Govtech online technology with NEC's Citizen Access (SaaS). The technology is similar to Govtech's however as it runs on the NEC system it will allow more capability including online billing for Council Tax.

The current annual budget for both contracts is £230k. The cost of the new 5 year contract is set out in Table A below:

Table A

Discounted								
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5			
S&M	£127,934.28	£127,934.28	£127,934.28	£127,934.28	£127,934.28		£639,671.40	
SaaS	£73,200.00	£73,200.00	£73,200.00	£73,200.00	£73,200.00		£366,000.00	
Implementation	£31,500.00						£31,500.00	
<b>Total</b>	<b>£232,634.28</b>	<b>£201,134.28</b>	<b>£201,134.28</b>	<b>£201,134.28</b>	<b>£201,134.28</b>		<b>£1,037,171.40</b>	

Table A shows that 5 year costs which will provide a saving of nearly £100k across the contract period after taking into account the year one set up costs.

The key points to consider in approving the procurement are:

- The Director of Governance and Chief Finance Officer have confirmed that this is a routine procurement.
- The contract is being procured through an approved framework (Crown Commercial Service's DAS framework).
- The contract will deliver better access for residents including e-billing.
- The 5 year contact delivers nearly £100k of savings against the existing revenue budget.
- There is no risk to the integrity and resilience of the council's core revenue and benefits systems
- There are no further hidden inflationary costs.