

Report to: Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health

Date of meeting: 2 March 2023

By: Director of Adult Social Care and Health

Title: Household Support Fund

Purpose: To agree the proposed use of the latest extension of the Household Support Fund (“the Fund”) and agree the development of a scheme to distribute grant funding as set out in the report

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Lead Member is recommended to:

- 1) Agree the proposed use of the Household Support Fund, to provide support to households with pensioners, households with a disabled person and other vulnerable households between 1 April – 31 March 2024; and**
- 2) Delegate to the Director of Adult Social Care and Health authority to take all actions necessary to implement the scheme**

1 Background

1.1 On 17 November 2022 the Government announced in the Autumn Statement that the Household Support Fund (HSF) would be extended for a fourth time to support those most in need. The extension will run from 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024.

1.2 Contextually the grant arrives just as the last round of HSF will finish on 31 March 2023. The grant follows previous similar schemes which commenced in December 2020: the Winter Covid Fund Support Grant, the Covid Local Support Fund Grant and the Household Support Fund (1 October – 31 March 2022, 1 April – 30 September 2022, and 1 October 2022 – 31 March 2023).

1.3 East Sussex County Council (ESCC) has been notified that £7,793,567 has been allocated for the new HSF period 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024.

2 Supporting information

2.1 While it is helpful that the Government has announced that the new extension covers the entire financial year (1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024), the proposals being brought forward at this stage are for the first six months of the financial year (1 April 2023 – 30 September 2023) outlined in 2.2, with a review planned for August 2023. Proposals for the remaining six months (1 October 2023 – 31 March 2023) will be brought forward for decision in September 2023.

2.2 It is proposed that the latest HSF is distributed to households in need in several ways as set out in the table below:

Allocations Table - 6 Month Plan (1 April – 30 September 2023)

| Partner | Amount (£) | Note |
|---|------------------|--|
| FSM eligible pupils 19,500 (2-19 yrs) Hugg food vouchers | 1,852,500 | £30 for 2-week Easter holiday £15 for May half-term £50 for summer holidays Total of £95 (48% of total funding) CSD Managed |
| Children's Services Teams | 200,000 | CSD Managed |
| CSD Total | 2,052,500 | |

| | | |
|--|------------------|--------------|
| Voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) partners | 700,000 | ASCH managed |
| Warmer Homes | 50,000 | ASCH managed |
| Districts and Boroughs | 844,500 | ASCH managed |
| Foodbanks and Food Partnerships | 250,000 | ASCH managed |
| ASCH Total | 1,844,500 | |
| ESCC Total | 3,897,000 | |

2.3 The six month proportion of the HSF fourth round grant that Adult Social Care and Health will manage is £1,844,500 and will be allocated to the 5 Districts and Boroughs, VCSE sector partners and Food Banks and Food Partnerships, and Warmer Homes programme.

2.4 Distributing the grant to the same partners that ESCC worked with last time ensures continuity in the allocation of support to the full range of beneficiary groups outlined in DWP Guidance. Utilising VCSE partners to implement the scheme adds considerable value in terms of local community knowledge and an ability to engage with vulnerable households that may not be comfortable with statutory services.

2.5 The DWP Guidance issued states that ESCC and partners should also consider the needs of various households including families with children of all ages, pensioners, unpaid carers, care leavers and disabled people, and that the eligible spend includes:

- energy and water
- food
- essentials linked to energy and water
- wider essentials
- advice services.
- housing costs

2.6 As the HSF fourth round covers a 12-month period the DWP Guidance states that there will be four monitoring return periods:

- an interim Management Information (MI) return for the period 1 April 2023 to 30 June 2023 will be due by 21 July 2023
- a second interim MI return for the period 1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023 will be due by 20 October 2023
- a third interim MI return for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 December 2023 will be due by 26 January 2024
- a FINAL MI return and delivery record for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 will be due by 26 April 2024.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 The scheme provides a further opportunity to extend the support to households with pensioners, households with a disabled person and other vulnerable households within East Sussex who are experiencing financial challenges.

3.2 The Lead Member is recommended to:

1) Approve the proposed use of £1,844,500 of the Household Support Fund, to provide support to households with pensioners, households with a disabled person and other vulnerable households between 1 April – 31 March 2024: and

2) Delegate to the Director of Adult Social Care and Health authority to take all actions necessary to implement the scheme.

MARK STANTON

Director of Adult Social Care and Health

Contact Officer: Paul Rideout
Email paul.rideout@eastsussex.gov.uk
Telephone 07485 114326

LOCAL MEMBERS

All

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None