

Scrutiny Response

DHP is specifically advertised on the Pendle BC website along with the on-line version of the application form. Links below -

http://www.pendle.gov.uk/info/20014/housing_benefit/307/discretionary_housing_payment

http://www.pendle.gov.uk/forms/form/161/en/discretionary_housing_payment_application_form

With every benefit notification letter a leaflet that is part of the notification letter is also sent – this advertises the DHP Scheme. (Copy Attached)

All Council Tax and Customer Service staff are trained on the DHP policy and process as well as the Housing Benefit staff – Recovery officers also assist customers who attend court following a summons to ensure customers are receiving all assistance they are entitled to on both Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support.

We work closely with all RSL's particularly after the introduction of the Social Sector Size restriction (bedroom tax) and the Benefit Cap Welfare Reform changes to ensure customer's experiencing hardship as a result of the reforms receive any entitlement they are due.

As the DHP fund is a cash limited pot, we have to ensure that the publicity of the fund is specific and effective to reach those customers who are really in need of this additional help. We need to ensure we do not use up the entire fund with still some of the financial year left and leave the possibility of very deserving cases being left in poverty.