



REPORT OF: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

DATES: 26th NOVEMBER 2020

Contact Details: Wayne Forrest
Tel. No: 01282 661044
E-mail: wayne.forrest@pendle.gov.uk

FOR INFORMATION

BURNLEY, PENDLE AND ROSSENDALE EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GRANT SCHEME

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise Policy and Resources Committee of the recently launched Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale Emergency Assistance Grant Scheme (BPR EAGS)

ISSUE

On 4th August 2020, Government launched the Local Authority Emergency Assistance Grant for Food and Essential Supplies –

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-local-authority-emergency-assistance-grant-for-food-and-essential-supplies/coronavirus-covid-19-local-authority-emergency-assistance-grant-for-food-and-essential-supplies>

This grant is for local authorities in England to use to support people who are struggling to afford food and other essentials due to COVID-19.

The grant has specific objectives and principles, which include:-

- The funding is intended to benefit individuals struggling to afford food and other essential items as a result of COVID-19. The funds should not be used for any economic undertaking.

Councils should:

- use discretion on how to identify and support those most in need
- use the funding for existing schemes and other support which deliver the same outcomes and where the need is greatest
- work together with other local authorities to provide support and ensure the funding meets its objectives

When deciding how to help people, Councils should consider:

- using cash or vouchers where practical - this may reduce pressure on your local partners
- advising and providing information to people to help them access longer term support they might need, such as benefits – Councils should decide which approach is suitable in its community

There is an expectation that the risk of fraud is managed to ensure that individuals who are not in genuine need of assistance are not recipients and that payments are not spent on non-essential items by checking that applicants meet relevant eligibility criteria and that applicants' identity and bank account details are verified, where relevant.

The monies can also be used to support people who have no recourse to public funds, providing 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

Consideration of an individual's circumstances need to be made when making a decision on their support claim through this grant. Individuals may be receiving other forms of support, including Universal Credit and if families are receiving food vouchers for children through the Covid Summer Food Fund, this should be taken into account to avoid duplicating provision.

However, families receiving Covid Summer Food Fund vouchers are not excluded from receiving support through the grant. For example, a family may:

- have additional wider needs in terms of food
- require other essential supplies
- include individual family members that are not in receipt of these vouchers

Funding for the grant

The fund was made available to unitary authorities and Lancashire County Council (LCC) were awarded £1,453,005.64. LCC have since devolved this funding to the districts and as such, the Council has entered into a grant agreement (Appendix 1) with LCC and received £134,237.89.

The Council's approach

Due to the need to utilise this funding quickly, keep administrative costs to a minimum and, where possible, avoid a postcode lottery-type approach towards distribution of this fund, Burnley, Rossendale and Pendle Councils have, in conjunction with partners, developed the Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale Emergency Assistance Grant Scheme (BPR EAGS) – Appendix 2. The scheme is being delivered by Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale Council for Voluntary Services (BPR CVS) across all three boroughs. The 'food element' of the scheme in Pendle is being delivered by Pendle Food Alliance.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy

There are no policy implications arising from this report.

Financial

A grant of £134,237.89 has been paid by LCC to the Council which will be used fully in both administering the scheme and for grants being awarded to successful applicants.

Legal

A grant agreement has been put in place between LCC and Pendle BC regarding the funding. Service Level Agreements have been agreed with both BPR CVS and Pendle Food Alliance for the administration of the grant scheme.

Risk Management

Risk will be managed by monitoring service delivery through both the SLA's agreed.

Health and Safety:

There are no health and safety implications arising from this report.

Sustainability:

This fund will be used to support people who are struggling to afford food and other essentials due to COVID-19 in our community, although the funding is time limited.

Community Safety:

The fund will help people avoid hardship and thus contribute towards community safety within the borough.

Equality and Diversity:

There are no equality and diversity issues arising from the contents of this report.

APPENDICES –

Appendix 1 – Grant Agreement Health Protection Project 07-09-2020

Appendix 2 – BPR EAGS specifications