

**REPORT FROM: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES**

**TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES**

**DATE: 8<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2022**

**Report Author: RICHARD GIBSON**  
**Tel. No: 01282 661634**  
**E-mail: Richard.gibson@pendle.gov.uk**

## **HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND AND ENERGY REBATE UPDATE**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

The Purpose of the report is to provide an update on the Household Support Fund Schemes and Energy Rebate Scheme.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) Note the scope of the Council's Household Support Fund schemes 1, 2 and 3 as set out in the report
- (2) Delegate Authority to the Director of Resources, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to agree a local Pendle scheme for the financial year 2023/24.
- (3) Note the outcome of the Energy Rebate scheme as set out in the report.

### **REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

To give sufficient flexibility to allow all funds to be spent in accordance with the Guidance

### **ISSUE**

1. On 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021, The Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) announced a new Government Grant called Household Support Fund. The total allocation was £421million with Lancashire receiving an allocation of £9,678,235.22. All moneys needed to be spent by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022. The guidance allowed for the administration of the scheme and a proportion of the funding has been used internally and by partners to fund the associated staffing costs to deliver the scheme.
2. A report was taken to Policy & Resources Committee on 16th December 2021 which sought delegated approval for the then Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to agree a local scheme for Pendle.

3. Since the initial Household Support Fund was announced a further two tranches of funding have been released, both via Lancashire County Council to support district wide initiatives and both with slightly different targets. Each scheme is set out in more detail below.

#### **Household Support Fund 1 (November 2021 to March 2022)**

4. Pendle's local allocation was initially £270,000 then later increased to £340,000. The fund was split between local foodbanks (£60,000) and BPR CVS (Burnley, Pendle & Rossendale Council for Voluntary Services). In total 2,228 households were supported across both schemes and helped to purchase food, energy and wider essentials.

#### **Household Support Fund 2 (April 2022 to October 2022)**

5. Pendle's local allocation was £430,000. HSF2 was targeted towards families and pensioners. Families were again support by foodbanks (£150,000) with 1,365 households receiving support. All pensioner households in receipt of Council Tax Support received a £90 voucher via the Post Office Voucher scheme. A total of 2,891 households received a voucher. The Post Office voucher scheme proved to be a very effective method of distributing funds quickly and will be used again in the HSF3 scheme (see below).

#### **Household Support Fund 3 (November 2022 to March 2023)**

6. Pendle's local for HSF3 is £430,000. The Government require some form of application process and also wanted Authorities to target households not covered by previous iterations of HSF. In order to target as many households as possible the allocation has been split as follows;
  - a. £75,000 allocated to local foodbanks and community food organisations
  - b. £40,000 allocated to Burnley & Pendle Citizens Advice Bureau to allow residents to apply directly for an award (this would allow residents outside of the criteria to apply via an application process as the first priority)
  - c. £300,000 to a Post Office Voucher scheme to award £70 to all Band A properties in receipt of CTS (around 4,300 properties)
  - d. £15,000 local top up for DHP (Discretionary Housing Payment) as the 2022/23 fund is now spent.
7. A further £10k top up for DHP is to be funded locally from Pendle Borough Council.
8. Council is asked to note the three schemes.

#### **Household Support Fund 2023/24**

9. In its Autumn Statement Government announced the continued support for the Household Support Fund in to 2023/24. In England this totals £842m, running from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. Guidance and individual Local Authority indicative allocations for this further extension will be announced in due course
10. Council is asked to give delegated authority to the Director of Resources, in conjunction with The Leader of the Council, to continue to determine a local scheme in accordance with the grant conditions that best meets local need.

#### **Energy Rebate Scheme Update**

11. In February 2022 Government announced that all Band A – D properties would receive an energy rebate payment of £150 per property and this would be administrated by each

Local Authority.

12. Pendle Borough Council received £5,439,900 for the main scheme (households in Bands A-D) and a further £232,200 for the discretionary scheme. It was also awarded £55,853 as a new burdens payment towards the cost of administration.
13. Pendle Borough Council has 41,009 households in total, of which 37,624 are in Bands A-D and 3,385 in Bands E - H.
14. The core scheme was originally due to close on 30th September 2022, but was extended to end simultaneously with discretionary scheme 30th November 2022. As at 31st October 2022, 35,840 payments had been made to eligible households, at a total cost of £5,376,000. All unspent funds will be returned to Government in line with guidance.
15. A report was taken to Policy and Resources Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2022 to agree the Discretionary Scheme for Pendle Borough Council residents as follows;
  - a. A payment of £150 was made to all households in Bands E – H that were in receipt of Council Tax Support on 1st April 2022. As agreed by Committee a further 9 properties in Band E-H in receipt of Council Tax Support were awarded the energy rebate that subsequently became eligible on 1<sup>st</sup> November. A total of 93 households received this award.
  - b. A credit top up of £28 was applied to the Council Tax account of all households in Bands A – D that were in receipt of Council Tax Support 1st April 2022. As at 31<sup>st</sup> October 7,514 households received this award.
16. The Discretionary scheme has paid out £223,854 as at 31<sup>st</sup> October as it closes formally on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022. All unspent funds will be returned to Government in line with guidance.
17. Council is asked to note the outcome of the Energy Rebate scheme.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

**Policy:** As set out in the report.

**Financial:** As set out in the report.

**Legal:** None arising from the report.

**Risk Management:** None arising from the report.

**Health and Safety:** None arising from the report.

**Sustainability:** None arising from the report.

**Community Safety:** None arising from the report.

**Equality and Diversity:** None arising from the report.

## **APPENDICES**

None

## **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**