

Record of Officer Decision

Household Support Fund 4

Decision Taker and Date Decision Taken:

Director of Adult and Community Services on 05 October 2023.

Summary of Matter or Issue Requiring Decision:

The Household Support Fund was introduced in October 2021, providing councils with funding to support those in the community most negatively impacted by the cost-of-living crisis. A fourth scheme commenced in April 2023 for a period of 12 months with a funding package of £2,470,714 provided for Torbay.

The allocation of funds based on Department for Work Pensions guidance was approved within a wider Cost of Living Response Plan and was based on predicted demand across the community. Subsequently, a delivery plan was submitted to the Department for Work and Pensions based on the guidance and anticipated demand.

The funding available through applications has been promoted on the Torbay Council website, social media, press release, with partner organisations, and The Beach Hut magazine to raise awareness of the financial support available. The Council has also contacted households who receive Housing Benefit due to their income but do not qualify for any Welfare Benefits to promote the scheme.

The Council has also looked to reach families through school communications to promote the scheme for low-income households struggling with the cost of living but who are not entitled to wider support after the school summer holidays.

Having reviewed demand from applications it was evident that the demand from households **not** in receipt of a Welfare Benefit was far lower than predicted. Therefore, a new spending profile was proposed as set out below:

Proposed new spending profile:

	Original Budget Proposal	Amended Budget
Households on a low income with a disposable weekly income of less than £50 but not entitled to a welfare benefit	£1,100,000	£150,000
Households receiving a welfare benefit	£450,000	£1,300,000
Essentials linked to energy and water - for example warm clothing, 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	£50,000	£150,000
Other criteria and budget remain the same, including food banks, food vouchers, Care Leavers, Debt advice services and	£870,714	£870,714

administration costs		
Total	£2,470,714	£2,470,714

Decision Taken:

That the amended funding allocation criteria for Household Support Fund 4 be approved and form part of the revised delivery plan for Department Work and Pensions, to be submitted at end of Quarter 2.

Summary of Reason(s) for Decision Taken:

Due to the change in demand profile it was necessary to reprofile the three areas for the remaining period of the fund. The spend would continue to be monitored to ensure that the funding was exhausted but with no overall overspend and no additional costs to the Council.

Summary of Alternatives or Options considered and rejected and Background Papers:

There were no alternative options considered, if not agreed, there is a risk of an underspend and requirement to return funds to government. There was also the requirement to work within the parameters of the Department for Work and Pensions spending plan.

Details of any conflict of interest and dispensation granted to the Officer taking the decision or by any Member of the Council in delegating responsibility for any specific express delegation:

None.

Implementation:

This decision will be implemented immediately.

A copy of this decision and any supporting documentation considered by the Officer taking this decision may also be available for inspection by the public at the Council's offices or posted upon payment of any copying and postage charges. Any member of the public wishing to take up either of these options is asked to please ring (01803) 207087 or email governance.support@torbay.gov.uk

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Director of Adults and Community Services)