

OFFICER DELEGATED DECISIONS FORM

State the Delegated Authority that you are relying on in order to make this decision: e.g. specific (identified in constitution) or general

Following approval at the Individual Executive Meeting on the 2 December 2020, delegated authority to approve modifications to the Winter Grant Payment and Financial Assistance and Advice Support Payment was given to the Section 151 Officer.

Subject of decision: *Household Support Fund Grant*

Allocations of grant funding continue to be made consecutive to the initial Covid Winter Grant launched in 2020. The DWP continue to provide assistance to vulnerable households and children and do so under what is now called the Household Support fund.

The Section 151 officer's approval is required for the new arrangements appropriate to the disbursement of further awards to Middlesbrough residents under this scheme.

Text of decision: e.g. can include monies received by the Council, list any terms agreed, brief summary of the policy – Do not include any confidential information.

The Household Support Scheme has been extended a number of times, with the DWP announcing that the scheme will again continue from April 2022 to September 2022.

The funds will be distributed in line with government guidance however each Local Authority has been asked to design a local scheme that will provide support to vulnerable households/those most in need. Grant funding requirements now include a specific allocation of funds to provide support for pensioners.

Furthermore Local Authorities have also been requested to give particular consideration to households who are not able to increase their income through work, such as pensioners, people with disabilities unpaid carers and parents of young children.

The councils approach will specifically support, in the main, these identified groups with the following minimum funding allocations:-

- **Children** = At least 1/3 of the total funding will be ring fenced to support households with children
- **Pensioners** = At least 1/3 of the total funding will be ring fenced to support pensioners.
- **Other** = support vulnerable households not in the first two groups.
- **The cost of administering** the scheme needs to be met from the funding, with £100k being allocated to this.

Children

- **Free School Meal Eligibility Support**
 - Allocated to households who have children and who meet the free

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school meal eligibility criteria. A one off payment of £60.00 per child will be made to eligible households.

- **Households Registering Births.**

- Allocated to households who register a birth with the Registrar's Office. High Street vouchers worth £25.00 will be given as part of the registration process to support with essential costs. It is anticipated that support for around 800 families will be provided under this initiative.

- **Other Households with Children**

- Households will be eligible for a one off payment of £60.00 per child under the age of 5 provided other children within the same household have received a payment under the Free School Meal Eligibility Support or the household is in receipt of Council Tax Reduction and/or Universal Credit. Payment will be subject to an application process.
- Additional support will also be provided to vulnerable families resident in Middlesbrough who are identified as needing this by the relevant Middlesbrough school. The amount to be provided will be based on the circumstances and size of the family and capped at £100.00. Each case will be reviewed under the council's welfare strategy, with focus on providing longer term solutions for these families.
- Application will also be open to other households with children that fall outside of the above that are identified by Children's Services or are unpaid carers, or who can demonstrate that they are struggling to meet essential payment obligations and are borderline crisis or have special circumstances.

Support for Pensioners

- Pensioners who are in receipt of Council Tax Reduction, or in receipt of Pension Credit Guarantee Credit or who can demonstrate that they are struggling to meet essential payment obligations and are borderline crisis or have special circumstances.
 - Payment will be subject to an application process and based on individual circumstances.
 - Awards will be a one off payment of £100.00 for a single person and a one off payment of £150.00 for a couple.

Other

- **Households without Children**

- A one off payment to households who can demonstrate that they are struggling to meet essential payment obligations and are borderline crisis or have special circumstances.
 - Payment will be subject to an application process.
 - Payment will be a one off payment of £40.00 for a single person and £60.00 for couples with an option to enhance both rates by £20.00 if there is limited capacity to work


- **Food Support**

- £20k of financial support will be provided to partnering organisations to provide food support to those in need ensuring that no child/adult will go hungry.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community Support<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Additional financial support of £50k will be allocated to be provided through Community Support to deliver energy efficient items such as white goods, light bulbs, slow cookers and crisis support for other groups such as non Council Tax Reduction customers. <p>Spend will be monitored periodically and if necessary the scheme will be reviewed to ensure it continues to meet local economic needs. As funds are limited, application will be processed on a first come basis. Once funds are committed, awards under the scheme, or to a funding group as appropriate, will end.</p> <p>Unspent Funds Any unspent funds from any of the groups will be distributed evenly across relevant council accounts with a liability to ensure all funds are utilised.</p>
Reason for Decision
The DWP are providing further funding to support vulnerable households who are very much in need against a background of reduced income and rising living costs for many in Middlesbrough.
Other options considered (if any)
NA
Has an Impact Assessment been completed Yes/No – if yes please attach to the decision.
No
Declarations of Interest by any member or relevant local government body
N/A
Who have you consulted as part of the decision making process e.g. Head of Service, Executive Member, Community Association, Surveyor?
N/A
Date of decision
5 May 2022
Service area
Finance Directorate.

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Name of Delegated Officer making decision - i.e. Officer who is designated the power in the Constitution
Mr Ian Wright, Director of Finance and Section 151 Officer.
Name of the Officer making the decision – if power has been sub-delegated to another Officer.
NA.
List of background papers (do not list if contain exempt/confidential information)
Signed: Mr I Wright 
Dated: 5 May 2022.