

Impact Assessment Level 1: Initial screening assessment

Subject of assessment:	Household Support Fund (HSF) scheme 2025/2026			
Coverage:	Crosscutting			
This is a decision relating to:	<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Function
	<input type="checkbox"/> Process/procedure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Programme	<input type="checkbox"/> Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Review
	<input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state)		
It is a:	New approach:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Revision of an existing approach:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
It is driven by:	Legislation:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Local or corporate requirements:	<input type="checkbox"/>

<p>Description:</p>	<p>Key aims, objectives and activities</p> <p>To assess the impact of proceeding with the adoption of the proposed Household Support Fund 2025/26 scheme.</p> <p>Statutory drivers</p> <p>The Council is required to adopt a new scheme as part of the Household Support Fund to distribute £2.91m. The funds are provided by Central Government to support households who would otherwise struggle to buy food or pay essential utility bills or meet other essential living costs or housing costs (in exceptional cases of genuine emergency) and to promote or undertake activity that prevents households facing similar hardship in the future. The delivery plan is due to be returned to the DWP by 30 May 2025.</p> <p>Differences from any previous approach</p> <p>The Council acknowledge that Central Government changed legislation in 2024 which meant that a number of pensioners did not receive a Winter Fuel Payment (WFP). As things stand, this will continue in 2025 and the funding for those pensioners who are missing out on a WFP is proposed to be increased in the 2025/26 scheme. The Delivery Plan includes an element of support for these pensioners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pensioners in receipt of Council Tax Reduction but not eligible for the Winter Fuel Payment. • Pensioners who are not in receipt of Council Tax Reduction subject to the qualifying criteria. <p>Key stakeholders and intended beneficiaries (internal and external as appropriate)</p> <p>Key stakeholders: Council and local residents.</p> <p>Intended outcomes.</p> <p>To seek approval for the delivery plan required by the DWP in line with Central Government criteria. That delegated authority is provided to the Director of Finance and Transformation to make any modifications or minor revisions to the scheme and make decisions in respect of any remaining funds to ensure they are distributed in line with the guidance and within the defined timescales. Any revisions or modifications will be done in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance.</p>
<p>Live date:</p>	<p>The Executive will consider the HSF scheme by 30 May 2025.</p>
<p>Lifespan:</p>	<p>Funding has been provided for the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.</p>
<p>Date of next review:</p>	<p>April 2026</p>

Screening questions	Response			Evidence
	No	Yes	Uncertain	
Human Rights Could the decision impact negatively on individual Human Rights as enshrined in UK legislation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The HSF scheme is provided by central government to provide crisis support to vulnerable households in most need with the cost of essentials. The local scheme is based on government guidance and criteria, and is designed to support households with children, pensioners, those with disabilities and other households who may be experiencing financial difficulties. This support does not reduce or replace other existing forms of support and therefore no resident will be adversely affected. Support will be provided through a combination of direct automated awards and application-based claims. In addition, contingency is in place to provide for situations where an award of relief might be justifiable outside of the eligibility criteria. In light of the above, it is not considered that the report will have an adverse impact on individuals in terms of human rights.
Equality Could the decision result in adverse differential impacts on groups or individuals with characteristics protected in UK equality law? Could the decision impact differently on other commonly disadvantaged groups?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The HSF scheme is provided by central government to provide crisis support to vulnerable households in most need with the cost of essentials. The local scheme is based on government guidance and criteria, and is designed to support households with children, pensioners, those with disabilities and other households who may be experiencing financial difficulties. This support does not reduce or replace other existing forms of support and therefore no individuals will be adversely affected. Support will be provided through a combination of direct automated awards and application-based claims. In addition, contingency is in place to provide for situations where an award of relief might be justifiable outside of the eligibility criteria. In light of the above, it is not considered that the report will have an adverse impact on different groups or individuals in terms of equality.

* Consult the Impact Assessment further guidance appendix for details on the issues covered by each of these broad questions prior to completion.

Screening questions	Response			Evidence
Community cohesion Could the decision impact negatively on relationships between different groups, communities of interest or neighbourhoods within the town?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The HSF scheme is provided by central government to provide crisis support to vulnerable households in most need with the cost of essentials. The local scheme is based on government guidance and criteria, and is designed to support households with children, pensioners, those with disabilities and other households who may be experiencing financial difficulties. This support does not reduce or replace other existing forms of support and therefore no community groups will be adversely affected as a result. Support will be provided through a combination of direct automated awards and application-based claims. In addition, contingency is in place to provide for situations where an award of relief might be justifiable outside of the eligibility criteria. In light of the above, it is not considered that the report will have an adverse impact on relationships between different groups, communities of interest or neighbourhoods within the town.
Next steps: ➡ If the answer to all of the above screening questions is No then the process is completed. ➡ If the answer of any of the questions is Yes or Uncertain, then a Level 2 Full Impact Assessment must be completed.				

Assessment completed by:	Rachael Burton	Head of Service:	Janette Savage
Date:	10.04.2025	Date:	10.04.2025