

## NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

### CABINET

## HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND UPDATE

### 1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 This report sets out an update arising from the continuation of the Household Support Fund Scheme (originally Winter 2021/22) in North Lincolnshire.

### 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 North Lincolnshire was allocated £2,647,786 in 2022/23 as two allocations of the Household Support Fund each for a six-month period (HSF2 and HSF3). The guidance is that it should primarily be used to support households in the most need particularly those including children and pensioners who would otherwise struggle with energy bills, food and water bills.
- 2.2 Throughout 2022/23, the scheme has delivered the following support to local vulnerable residents with final distribution continuing through March:
- a) **Welfare Assistance:** Citizen's Advice Bureau was commissioned to deliver a welfare assistance grant scheme, open to all North Lincolnshire households who meet the eligibility criteria, to apply for support in compliance with the national guidance. In total £0.9m of the £2.6m allocation has been distributed through application-based support to over 6,000 households with assistance contributing to energy and water bills (26%), food (33%) and other essentials (40%).
  - b) **Food Voucher Scheme:** An element of the grant was allocated to the direct provision of food vouchers. Partnership working with schools has been used to identify eligible families, and the local approach has also scoped in families with children outside of the free school meals cohort, and care leavers with immediate support needs. In total £0.7m of the £2.6m allocation has been distributed through the issue of food vouchers to over 8,000 families in summer and winter 2022.

c) **Energy payment:** Data from HSF1 indicated a low rate of applications from pensioners despite the understood need so a proportion of the second and third allocations was allocated to c.5,000 pensioner households in receipt of council tax support. In total £1m of the £2.6m allocation has been distributed through issue of Post Office payout vouchers in September 2022 and January 2023.

2.3 The funding for Household Support Fund in 2023/24 was extended in the Autumn Statement. The allocation for North Lincolnshire is £2,647,786 and the associated guidance is being reviewed to develop proposals for cabinet consideration in preparation for the delivery plan submission to DWP by 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023. These will align with council priorities supporting community development and enablement.

### **3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

3.1 Option 1: Note the update of the 2022/23 Household Support Fund scheme in North Lincolnshire and the 2023/24 allocation.

### **4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

4.1 Report for noting.

### **5. FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (e.g. LEGAL, HR, PROPERTY, IT, COMMUNICATIONS etc.)**

5.1 The total funding allocation for North Lincolnshire for 2022/2023 was £2,647,786. This is expected to be fully distributed in line with the scheme guidance.

5.2 A further allocation of £2,647,786 has been made for 2023/24.

### **6. OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS (e.g. CRIME AND DISORDER, EQUALITIES, COUNCIL PLAN, ENVIRONMENTAL, RISK etc.)**

6.1 The design of the scheme aligns local delivery with the principles and priorities set out in the Council Plan. They are aimed at the most vulnerable and enable and promote equality of opportunity and self-responsibility.

### **7. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)**

7.1 No adverse impacts have been identified.

**8. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED**

8.1 None

**9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 Cabinet members are invited to note the update and ongoing outcomes arising from the Household Support Fund Scheme in North Lincolnshire.

DIRECTOR: GOVERNANCE AND COMMUNITIES

Church Square House  
SCUNTHORPE  
North Lincolnshire  
DN15 6NL

Author: Nina Torr, Assistant Director Resources and Performance  
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**Background Papers used in the preparation of this report-**  
DWP Grant Letter and supporting National Guidance  
Local Delivery Framework