

# Cheltenham Borough Council

## Cabinet

**6 December 2022**

## Household Support Fund Programme 2022

---

**Accountable member:**

Cllr Flo Clucas, Cabinet Member for Safety and Communities

**Accountable officer:**

Richard Gibson, Head of communities, wellbeing & partnerships

**Accountable scrutiny committee:**

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

---

**Key/Significant Decision:**

No

**Executive summary:**

Gloucestershire County Council has allocated two tranches of funding to Cheltenham Borough Council from its allocation of the government's household support fund:

- The first tranche of £150k to cover the period 1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022
- The second tranche of £143k to cover the period of 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023

The aim of the Household Support Fund is to provide support to vulnerable households in most need of support to help with significantly rising living costs in line with the eligible expenditure below.

This report summarises the allocation, distribution and monitoring of the grant.

**Recommendations:**

- 1. To approve the award of the first tranche of grant funding as set out as set out in para 2.8**

## **2. To approve the award of the second tranche of grant funding as set out in para 2.11 and 2.12**

---

### **1. Implications**

#### **1.1 Financial implications**

There are no financial implications for the Council of this decision. The first tranche of the Household Support Fund has been received from Gloucestershire County Council and unallocated funds will be re-paid at the end of the project. The second tranche will be invoiced for once the delivery plan has been signed off by GCC.

**Signed off by:** Andy Taylor, Finance Business Partner,  
[andrew.taylor@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:andrew.taylor@cheltenham.gov.uk)

#### **1.2 Legal implications**

The Council will enter into grant agreements with the providers which are based on the approved Small Grant Agreement for grants below £10,000 and the approved Standard Grant Agreement for grants of £10,000 and above.

All financial assistance given by the Council to non-individuals has to comply with the provisions of the Subsidy Control Act 2022 (the Act) which is partially in force. This replaced state aid when the UK left the EU. In order for financial assistance to be a subsidy, it has to meet 4 criteria; one of which is that it is given to an 'enterprise'. We consider that the recipients do not meet that definition "a person who is engaged in economic activity that entails offering goods or services on a market..." and therefore no further considerations of the Act are required.

**Contact: One Legal, [legalservices@onelegal.org.uk](mailto:legalservices@onelegal.org.uk)**

#### **1.3 HR implications**

There are no HR implications associated with the decision

#### **1.4 Environmental and climate change implications**

None identified as a result of this decision.

#### **1.5 Property/asset implications**

There are no property implications associated with the decision

#### **1.6 Corporate policy framework implications**

The decision will enable support to be provided to those individuals and families most in need to help with significantly rising living costs. This supports the Council's commitment to invest in and develop the strength and presence of our voluntary sector in our communities to help support the most vulnerable as set out in the Council's Recovery Strategy.

**Signed off by:** Richard Gibson, Head of communities, wellbeing & partnerships

---

#### **1.7 Promoting equality and reducing discrimination**

The project is delivered via an established network of community-based providers who all place

a high priority on promoting equality and tackling discrimination. Each of the providers will manage the scheme in line with their own equality and diversity policies.

As a network of providers, we are very much focused on ensuring that those that are in the most need are able to access the additional support funded by the household support fund. We have worked to ensure that there is both a good geographical spread of support across the borough via our network of five community food pantries, plus ensuring that the organisations that are working most closely those that are vulnerable (Citizens Advice, Childrens centres, CCP and the household essentials project) have the support to make a difference.

## **1.8 Performance management – monitoring and review**

The council submits a delivery plan to GCC to secure the funds. This includes an estimate of the numbers of people accessing support. Working with its providers, the Council, will monitor the numbers of people accessing support via this fund and report this back to GCC at the end of the scheme.

---

## **2. Background**

- 2.1** The objective of the Household Support Fund is to provide support to vulnerable households in most need of support to help with significantly rising living costs.
- 2.2** Councils have the flexibility within the scheme to identify which vulnerable households are in most need of support and apply their own discretion when identifying eligibility. In doing so, they should particularly consider households who cannot increase their income through work.
- 2.3** The first tranche of the funding (April 22 to Sept 22) was allocated against the following framework:
- At least one third of the total funding will be ring-fenced to support households with children,
  - at least one third of the total funding will be ring fenced to support pensioners
  - with up to one third of the total funding to other households genuinely in need of support. This may include households not currently in receipt of DWP welfare benefits;
- 2.4** The second tranche of the funding (Oct 22 to March 23) is to be used to provide support to vulnerable households in most need of support to help with significantly rising living costs using discretion on how to identify and support those most in need, taking into account a wide range of information
- 2.5** Eligible spend includes:
- Energy and water. The Fund should primarily be used to support with energy bills for any form of fuel that is used for the purpose of domestic heating, cooking or lighting, including oil or portable gas cylinders. It can also be used to support with water bills including for drinking, washing, cooking, and sanitary purposes and sewerage.
  - Food. The Fund should also primarily be used to provide support with food whether in kind or through vouchers.
  - Essentials linked to energy and water. The Fund can be used to provide support with essentials linked to energy and water (including sanitary products, warm clothing, soap, blankets, boiler service/repair, purchase of equipment including fridges, freezers, ovens, etc.), in recognition that a range of costs may arise which directly affect a household's ability to afford or access energy , food and water.

- Wider essentials. The Fund can be used to support with wider essential needs not linked to energy and water should Authorities consider this appropriate in their area. These may include, but are not limited to, support with other bills including broadband or phone bills, clothing, and essential transport-related costs such as repairing a car, buying a bicycle or paying for fuel. This list is not exhaustive.

- 2.6** For the period **1 April to 30 September 2022**, the government made available a total of £421m to County Councils and Unitary Authorities in England to support those most in need to help with significantly rising living costs.
- 2.7** From its allocation of £3,692,483.14, Gloucestershire County Council allocated **£150k** to Cheltenham Borough Council
- 2.8** Working within the framework set out above, the council worked with a range of key delivery partners to assemble the delivery plan – set out below:

<b>Provider</b>	<b>Household Support Fund Activity (Apr 22 – Sep 22)</b>	<b>allocation</b>
<b>#feedcheltenham</b>	Supermarket food vouchers and food pantry tokens to be distributed through the network of community food pantries	£47,025
	Admin	£3,150
<b>Cheltenham Children Centres</b>	Household items (eg cleaning / toiletries) for vulnerable families with under 5s, plus clothes and shoes or bedding vouchers.	£19,350
	Admin	£1,912.5
<b>Food Bank - energy vouchers</b>	Fuel Bank Foundation vouchers provision via Cheltenham Food Bank, CCP and Springbank	£50,625
	Admin	£1,912.5
<b>Chelt Household Essentials Project</b>	Access to household essentials / one-off items to vulnerable families, plus clothes and shoes or bedding vouchers.	£9,787.5
	Admin	£1,912.5
<b>CCP</b>	Access to household essentials / one-off items to vulnerable families, plus clothes and shoes or bedding vouchers.	£9,787.5
	Admin	£1,912.5
<b>Citizen's advice</b>	Clothes and shoes or bedding vouchers.	£1,350
	Admin	£1,125
		<b>£149,850</b>

- 2.9** The allocations outlined above were worked up by the head of communities, wellbeing & partnerships working with the network of providers and in consultation with the Cabinet Member Cabinet Member Safety and Communities. Due to some of the amounts being allocated to third parties being in excess of £10k, One Legal has advised that Cabinet should formally ratify those allocations in line with the Constitution in Table 5 of Part 3E.

**2.10** For the period **1 October to 31 March 2023**, the government has again made available a sum of £421m to County Councils and Unitary Authorities in England to support those most in need to help with significantly rising living costs.

**2.11** From its allocation of £3,692,483.14, Gloucestershire County Council allocated **£143k** to Cheltenham Borough Council. **£123k** of this will be allocated to its community partners in line with the proposed delivery plan set out below:

<b>Provider</b>	<b>Household Support Fund Activity (Oct 22 – Mar 23)</b>	<b>allocation</b>
#feedcheltenham	Supermarket food vouchers and food pantry tokens to be distributed through the network of community food pantries	£37,700
	Admin	£3,770
Cheltenham Children Centres	Household items (eg cleaning / toiletries) for vulnerable families with under 5s, plus clothes, shoes & bedding vouchers.	£14,170
	Admin	£1,417
Food Bank - energy vouchers	Fuel Bank Foundation vouchers provision	£19,500
	Admin	£1,950
Chelt Household Essentials Project	Access to household essentials / one-off items to vulnerable families, plus clothes, shoes & bedding vouchers.	£7,410
	Admin	£741
CCP	Access to household essentials / one-off items to vulnerable families, plus clothes, shoes & bedding vouchers.	£7,410
	Admin	£741
Citizen's advice	Energy vouchers	£26,000
	Admin	£2,600
		<b>£123,409</b>

**2.12** A further £20k has been agreed by GCC to support the distribution of additional food to vulnerable households in the run up to Christmas. The food will be purchased from a local supplier and distributed through our network of community food pantries.

### **3. Reasons for recommendations**

**3.1** Working within the framework set out above, the council has worked with a range of key delivery partners to assemble the delivery plan – set out above:

### **4. Alternative options considered**

**4.1** None

## **5. Consultation and feedback**

**5.1** Through our community food network, the council has developed good working relationships with a wide range of community organisations through our collective work to support people made vulnerable due to the pandemic. Through this network, we have collectively identified the most appropriate organisations to work with on the household support fund scheme. Regular updates are provided to the other organisations via the food network. The delivery plan was then developed in consultation with the providers identified in the tables above.

## **6. Key risks**

**6.1** The main risk to the council is any potential cost over-run e.g. by inadvertently paying out more to the providers that has been allocated in the delivery plan.

---

**Report author:** Richard Gibson Head of communities, wellbeing & partnerships

[richard.gibson@cheltenham.gov.uk](mailto:richard.gibson@cheltenham.gov.uk)

### **Appendices:**

- i. Risk Assessment

**Appendix 1: Risk Assessment**

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
	Potential cost over-run by inadvertently paying out more to the providers that has been allocated in the delivery plan	Richard Gibson	12.2.21	3	2	6	Reduce	Only pass money over to third parties up to the maximum that has been pre-allocated and monitoring spend	31.3.21