

## Cheltenham Borough Council

### Housing Benefit War Pensions Disregard Policy

Council 24 July 2023

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This policy sets out the circumstances in which War Pensions will be fully disregarded when working out a claimant's income in their Housing Benefit assessment.
- 1.2. The Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 make statutory provision for the first £10.00 of income from the War Pension and War Widow(er)'s Pension schemes to be disregarded in any Housing Benefit assessment. The cost of this disregard is fully reimbursed to the Council.
- 1.3. The Social Security Administration Act 1992 gives the Council discretion to disregard any amount it chooses in addition to the statutory provision. The Council has fully disregarded the income claimants receive from the War Pension and War Widow(er)'s Pension schemes.

#### 2. Policy Aims

2.1. The policy aims to:

- Ensure income from the schemes is treated consistently when assessing entitlement to Housing Benefit;
- Ensure that everyone affected gets fair, consistent treatment;
- Promote a transparent and simple process that is easily understood; and
- Provide staff with guidance for making reasonable, fair and consistent decisions.

#### 3. Policy

- 3.1. In line with Section 134(8) of the Social Security Administration Act 1992 the Council will fully disregard income from War Pension and War Widow(er)'s Pension schemes when assessing entitlement to Housing Benefit.

#### 4. Evidence and changes in circumstances

- 4.1. The claimant will be required to provide evidence of the income at the application stage. They will also be required to provide evidence of changes to the income each April. This will ensure that the Council claims the correct amount of Housing Benefit subsidy from the Department for Work and Pensions annually.

## **5. Fraud**

- 5.1 The Council takes fraud seriously and has adopted a zero tolerance approach. All allegations of fraud will be investigated; should a person make a false statement or provide incorrect evidence in support of their application for Housing Benefit, they may commit a criminal offence. All such instances will be dealt with in accordance with the Counter Fraud and Anti-Corruption Policy and any overpaid monies will be recovered.