

## POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 13 JUNE 2022

### PART I - DELEGATED

#### 7. PROPOSALS FOR SPENDING OF THE HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND (DCES)

##### 1 Summary

- 1.1 Following on from funding awarded in September 2021 and subsequent report presented to Policy and Resources Committee on 6 December 2021, Hertfordshire County Council has been provided with a further £6.172m funding from the Government's Household Support Fund (HSF), this figure doesn't include administration support. This funding will be used to help people in need with the cost of food and energy between April to the end of September 2022.
- 1.2 Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) are working with a range of partners across the county to make sure we can get the right help to those who need it, at the right time. This targeted approach will mean that residents can be supported and get professional assistance from the county council, borough and district councils and organisations such as HertsHelp, the Money Advice Service and local Citizens Advice services.
- 1.3 Three Rivers District Council will receive a total of £33,000 for food support and £22,000 for fuel support.
- 1.4 The Household Support Fund has been extended past the 30 September, however we are awaiting clarification on what Three Rivers District Councils allocation will be.

##### 2 Details

- 2.1 Three Rivers' District Council have received funding from the Government's extended "Household Support Fund" which aims to help families and households most in need with the cost of living crisis.
- 2.2 This allocation of Household Support Fund to County has to be split into thirds, 33% must be allocated to pensioners, 33% must be allocated to households with families and 33% can be allocated to other households.
- 2.3 Of the funding received by Three Rivers District Council, 50% will be ring-fenced to support households with children, with up to 50% of the total funding to other households or individuals in need of support. Funding for pensioners will be administered by HCC.
- 2.4 The funding can support households not currently in receipt of DWP welfare benefits.
- 2.5 **Eligible spend includes:**
- 2.6 **Food**
- 2.7 The Fund should primarily be used to provide support with food whether in kind or through vouchers or cash.
- 2.8 **Energy and water**

2.9 The Fund should also 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.

2.10 **Essentials linked to Food, energy and water.**

2.11 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 food, energy and water.

2.12 **Wider essentials.**

2.13 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 buying a bicycle or paying for fuel. This list is not exhaustive.

2.14 A breakdown of the proposed allocations of the Household Support Fund in Three Rivers can be seen below. We are proposing to fund a number of partner organisations to distribute the funds to families or individuals as well as our own Housing and Revenue and Benefits teams to ensure a wide reach and so that vulnerable people are identified.

2.15 **Food Support – Total Provided £33,000**

Partner/Distributing Agency	Total Amount	Details
Three Rivers District Council	£3000	Administrational costs
Three Rivers Housing	£2000	Funding for additional food stock and essential food related items
Three Rivers Community Partnerships	£3500	Miscellaneous funding to support identified residents cover food and essential items linked to food not supported by additional partners e.g. cookers
South Oxhey Food bank	£2000	Funding for additional food stock and essential food related items
Rickmansworth Food bank	£2000	Funding for additional food stock and essential food related items
Thrive Homes	£4500	Funding to support identified residents with food & essential items linked to food.
Watford Community Housing	£4500	Funding to support identified residents with food & essential items linked to food.

Herts Mind Network	£4500	Funding to support identified residents with food & essential items linked to food.
Catalyst Housing	£1000	Funding to support identified residents with food & essential items linked to food.
CGL	£3000	Funding to support identified residents with food & essential items linked to food.
South West Herts Partnership	£3000	Funding to support identified residents with food & essential items linked to food.

#### 2.16 Utility Support - £22,000

Partner/Distributing Agency	Total Amount	Details
Three Rivers District Council	£2000	Administrational costs
Three Rivers Revs & Bens	£4000	Vouchers for people on DHP and the benefit Capped
Thrive Homes	£3500	Funding to support identified residents with Energy & water support and essential items linked to energy & water.
Watford Community Housing	£3500	Funding to support identified residents with Energy & water support and essential items linked to energy & water.
Catalyst Housing	£1000	Funding to support identified residents with Energy & water support and essential items linked to energy & water. In particular we will look to focus on Supported Housing for young people.
CGL	£2000	Funding to support identified residents with Energy & water support and essential items linked to energy & water.
South Oxhey Foodbank	£2000	Funding to support identified residents with Energy & water support and essential items linked to energy & water.

Rickmansworth Foodbank	£2000	Funding to support identified residents with Energy & water support and essential items linked to energy & water.
Herts Mind Network	£2000	Funding to support identified residents with Energy & water support and essential items linked to energy & water.

## 2.17 Monitoring and Evaluation.

2.18 All distributing partner agencies will report back monthly monitoring and evaluation of the following

- Client No.
- Number of individuals within the household including adults, dependant adults and children under 18.
- Value Food Support Provided
- Value Energy & Water Support Provided
- Value of Essentials linked to food, energy and water
- Value of Wider essentials
- Details of items purchased under the category of essential
- Postcode (To trace whether any duplication has occurred)
- Total Value of grant For Household
- Names of any other services that are also working with the household if known
- Details of whether any onward referrals distributing partners have been made for the household
- Any Other Details/Information? Why is support required
- Good news/ Feedback received, if any?

2.19 For more info visit the HCF website here: [Hertfordshire Household Support Fund \(hertscf.org.uk\)](http://hertscf.org.uk)

2.20 For more information on the Household Fund at HCC please visit the [Hertfordshire County Council](http://hertscf.org.uk) website.

## 3 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 To agree the plan for spend of the Household fund so that funds can accessed by vulnerable people to the end of September 2022 in Three Rivers through a range of partners as identified above.

3.2 To agree that future fund allocation decisions be delegated to the Leader and Executive Head of Services for agreement in order to prevent a delay in support vulnerable residents.

## 4 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

4.1 The recommendations in this report are not within the Council's agreed policy and budgets. This is Government funding to support vulnerable people through the Covid pandemic. Clear guidance exists on how these monies should be spent.

**5 Equal Opportunities, Environmental, Community Safety, Public Health, Customer Services Centre, and Health & Safety Implications**

5.1 None specific.

**6 Financial Implications**

6.1 The funding must be spent by the end of September 2022.

**7 Legal Implications**

7.1 None specific.

**8 Equal Opportunities Implications**

8.1 Relevance Test

Has a relevance test been completed for Equality Impact?	No
Did the relevance test conclude a full impact assessment was required?	N/A

**9 Staffing Implications**

9.1 Staff in the Community Partnerships Team and Customer Service Centre will administer the funding, and Community Partnerships will oversee the monitoring and evaluation.

**10 Communications and Website Implications**

10.1 The website will be updated to include this information. People will be contacted directly when identified so that they can receive support.

**11 Risk and Health & Safety Implications**

11.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk>. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.

11.2 The subject of this report is covered by the Community Partnerships service plan(s). Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this/these plan(s).

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response <i>(tolerate, treat, terminate, transfer)</i>	Risk Rating <i>(combination of likelihood and impact)</i>
Funding not distributed to Vulnerable residents	More issues in the community with people suffering from food and fuel poverty	To agree funding plan and work with partner organisations to deliver the household fund	Tolerate	6

11.3 The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

Very Likely ↓ Likelihood Remote	Low 4	High 8	Very High 12	Very High 16
	Low 3	Medium 6	High 9	Very High 12
	Low 2	Low 4	Medium 6	High 8
	Low 1	Low 2	Low 3	Low 4
Impact Low -----> Unacceptable				
<b>Impact Score</b> 4 (Catastrophic) 3 (Critical) 2 (Significant) 1 (Marginal)		<b>Likelihood Score</b> 4 (Very Likely (≥80%)) 3 (Likely (21-79%)) 2 (Unlikely (6-20%)) 1 (Remote (≤5%))		

11.4 In the officers' opinion none of the new risks above, were they to come about, would seriously prejudice the achievement of the Strategic Plan and are therefore operational risks. The effectiveness of the management of operational risks is reviewed by the Audit Committee annually.

## 12 Recommendation

- 12.1 To agree the plan for spend of the Household fund so that funds can accessed by vulnerable people during the winter to the end of September 2022 in Three Rivers through a range of partners as identified above.

Report prepared by: Shivani Dave, Partnerships Manager

### Data Quality

Data sources: Household

Fund <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/household-support-fund-guidance-for-local-councils>

Data checked by: Freddy Chester, Partnerships Officer

Data rating:

1	Poor	
2	Sufficient	✓
3	High	

### Background Papers

Not applicable