

## Record of operational decision

<b>Decision title:</b>	Award of Funding from the Household Support Fund to third party organisations											
<b>Date of decision:</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> November 2024											
<b>Decision maker:</b>	Head of Communities											
<b>Authority for delegated decision:</b>	Cabinet member decision on 7 November 2024 delegated operational matters in relation to the Household Support Fund to the Talk Community Lead Link: <a href="#">Decision - Household Support Fund 6 - Herefordshire Council</a>											
<b>Ward:</b>	Countywide											
<b>Consultation:</b>	Cabinet member for finance, corporate services and planning and Director of Finance have been consulted about the approach to support third party organisations as part of the Household Support Fund framework.											
<b>Decision made:</b>	To provide funding from the Household Support Fund to third party voluntary and community organisations so that vulnerable residents in Herefordshire can access help with essential household bills.											
<b>Reasons for decision:</b>	<p>Herefordshire Council has received an allocation of £1,329,601.78 from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) under the Household Support Fund. In line with DWP guidance most of the funding has been earmarked to support families with children and pensioner households who would otherwise struggle with energy, food and energy bills as well as other essential costs. The decision to support third party organisations will enable those organisations to support other Herefordshire households who are struggling to meet essential household bills.</p> <p>The funding to third party organisations is an important component of the support that is provided to low-income households. Providing funding to third party organisations will mean that those organisations can provide residents who are struggling with the increase in the cost of living.</p> <p>Having regard for the time available to deliver the scheme, Herefordshire Council identified existing trusted partners which had already been recipients of government grants to support low income households during the Covid 19 pandemic. The partners have also been identified based on the need to support all the eligible spend categories specified by the DWP guidance and to provide support to vulnerable households, across Herefordshire whatever their household composition.</p> <p>The amount of funding requested is to support residents until 31 March 2025.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr style="background-color: black; color: white;"> <th style="text-align: center;">Name of third-party organisations</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Type of Support provided</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Amount of Household Support Grant</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Age UK Hereford and Localities</td> <td>Home energy checks / energy advice</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£51,000.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bromyard Foodbank and Money Advice Centre</td> <td>Emergency food provision</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£41,000.00</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Name of third-party organisations	Type of Support provided	Amount of Household Support Grant	Age UK Hereford and Localities	Home energy checks / energy advice	£51,000.00	Bromyard Foodbank and Money Advice Centre	Emergency food provision	£41,000.00
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	Ethos	Emergency food provision, household items to reduce energy consumption, budget advice and cooking courses. Emergency household payments.	£66,000.00
	Hereford Foodbank	Emergency food provision; support for cooking equipment	£71,980.00
	Herefordshire Community Foundation	Support for energy; support for other essentials linked to energy and water	£115,000.00
	Ledbury Foodbank	Support for food; support for other essentials	£56,000.00
	Leominster Foodbank (including the Money Advice Centre)	Support for food	£20,000.00
	Putson Baptist Church	Support for food; support for energy; support for other essentials	£79,650.00
	Severn Wye Energy Agency	Support for energy; support for other essentials linked to energy and water	£22,000.00
	YES Energy Solutions	Support for energy; support for other essentials linked to energy and water	£54,000.00
	<b>Total</b>		<b>£576,630.00</b>
	By utilising the funding from government, this will have a positive impact on low-income households by minimising the debt burden on those that struggle to pay essential bills.		
<b>Equality Considerations:</b>	<p>The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the Council to consider how it can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations and demonstrate that it is paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services.</p> <p>Due to the scope of this project and its potential impact on certain protected characteristics, an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is attached as an appendix to the cabinet report.</p> <p>In summary, this project impacts on protected characteristics as follows:</p> <p>a. Age - Pensioners who are just above the pension credit threshold will be eligible for support for their heating over the winter months. Working with Age UK will enable us to identify those pensioners most in need.</p> <p>b. Disability - Services within the council that work with disabled people in receipt of adult social care services will be asked to identify households in need of support financially to help reduce the impact of increasing energy costs.</p> <p>c. Pregnancy &amp; Maternity - Parents identified by professional colleagues, who need financial support to pay for essentials related to children, for example, nappies, formula milk, clothing, or food.</p> <p>d. Other: Carers, care leavers, homeless, economic deprivation - Services within the council that support unpaid carers will be consulted with to consider how financial support can be offered to households most in need.</p>		

	The EIA did not identify any negative impacts at this time. Any future negative impacts will be reviewed and mitigated accordingly.
<b>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</b>	The cost of the scheme will be funded through the Household Support Fund allocation of £1,329,601.78. The council recognises that the pandemic has exacerbated the inequalities in our society, and this is being further compounded by the increased cost of living. By providing funding to third-party organisations, the council will be supporting low-income families who are struggling with energy or food price increases.
<b>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</b>	Not to approve spend to provide funding to third party organisations. This is not recommended. The Household Support Fund is expected to support households in most need. By working with third party organisations, this will enable the funding to reach struggling households as well as provide them with further advice and support that many of these organisations offer.
<b>Details of any declarations of interest made:</b>	None

Signed  
Head of Communities

Date: 21/11/24