

Surrey Heath Borough Council
Executive
15th March 2022

Household Support Grant – Update

Portfolio	Support & Safeguarding – Cllr Shaun Garrett
Strategic Director/ Head of Service	Louise Livingston – Head of HR, Performance & Communications
Report Author	Jayne Boitout – Community Partnership Officer
Date Portfolio Holder Signed off the Report	18 February 2022
Key Decision	Yes
Wards Affected	All

Summary and purpose

To note the additional £21,650.39 (giving a new total of £198,470.56) awarded in relation to this Central Government scheme for distribution, to those who are in the greatest need locally based upon the revised action plan detailed at 2 and funding breakdown at point 3.

Recommendation

The Executive is advised to RESOLVE that

- (i) the revised action plan outlined in paragraph 22, and the allocation outlined in paragraph 3 of this report be agreed; and
- (ii) in order to ensure that all money is allocated, authority be delegated to the Head of HR, Performance & Communication in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Support & Safeguarding to distribute the funds as required

1. Background and Supporting Information

- 1.1 On the 18th November 2021 an urgent Action was sought by the Executive to approve and implement in-advance of the Council Executive on the 7th December a new government (DWP) fund aimed to provide financial support for vulnerable households over the winter months. Full details available in item 79/E.

- 1.2 With the approval provided local arrangements were put in place quickly after agreeing a 'local eligibility framework and approach' with our partners at Citizens Advice Surrey Heath.
- 1.3 The new grant, known as the Household Support Grant is available until the 31 March 2022 and totals £500m Nationally. Surrey County Council's allocation of the funding totalled £5,290,829.72, which is based on the population of each authority weighted by a function of the English Index of Multiple Deprivation.
- 1.4 The original allocation for Surrey Heath is £176,820.17, and this has been received and confirmed by the Chief Accountant. Submission of Management Information was dispatched for the first period ending 31st December 2021 outlining the authority's grant spend.

2. Other Considering Factors

With some underspends from other authorities Surrey County Council asked if other B&Ds could use extra funding and this has resulted in Surrey Heath receiving an additional award of £21,650.39, giving a new total of £198,470.56.

2.1 Surrey Heath Revised Action Plan December February – March 2022

- A. Letters were sent in November to all households who receive the Council's Tax Subsidy (2500+) advising of the HSF and inviting them to apply. Citizens Advice have to date (17/02) awarded £77,000 and will award a further £44,000 in second applications to qualifying households. An minimum allocation can be made available of up to a further £33,000 to meet the demand from new applications. Citizens Advice are confident that by the 31st March at least £27,000 will be expended.
- B. Discussions are ongoing with the main foodbanks to contribute towards food provision for residents impacted by hardship. The awards will be distributed to each foodbank depending upon identified gaps to ensure the service has sufficient funds to meet the demand.
- C. It is suggested that an allocation be made available from Initial discussions that are underway in the Community Support WG areas to develop a 'community larder project' with seed funding up to £5,000.
- D. The fund will continue to be promoted via social media, flyers, posters provided to community organisations for distribution.
- E. Continue to work with our community and statutory partners to promote far and wide, via twitter/Instagram.

- F. To retain the open dialogue with partners, and this will be managed via regular (virtual) monitoring meetings to ensure that we can be responsive to local change and offer a quick time flexible approach to bridge gaps and meet the community needs.
- G. The vouchers will be awarded until the close of business on the 31st March 2022, allowing redemption until end of April 2022.
- H. To complete the Central Government returns as necessary to ensure of the second payment.
- I. The Section 151 officer and Council's Chief Accountant to be kept fully informed during the time of that this fund is operational.
- J. The Council's Community Partnership Officer will be the named key contact for this scheme.

2.2 Revised Suggestions for the funding breakdown for all funds recieved:

Area	Amount	Organisation
Admin Expenses	£9,000	Citizens Advice (Nov-March 2022)
Advertising/banners Printing costs, letters, information, and Postage Costs	£7,500	SHBC Dec 2021 – Feb 2022
Food bank additional funding if necessary	£15,000 - £20,000	Camberley Besom, West End, and Woking
Community Larder – seed funding	Up to £5,000	Project details and location to be confirmed.
Direct awards to families and individuals who meet the criteria	£ 150,000- £156,000	Citizens Advice this will be paid in two instalments.
Sub-Total	£197,500	

3. Proposal and alternative options:

3.1 The Executive has the option to:

3.1.1 Approve the options in 2.1 & 2.2

3.1.2 Not to approve the options outlined in 2.1 & 2.2

3.1.3 Approve some of the option outline in 2.1 & 2.2

3.1.4 It is suggested to approve at 3.1.1 above

4. Contribution to the Council's Five Year Strategy

4.1 Within the Council's 5 Year plan this fund and we will take a positive approach to supporting all sectors of our community, including those who are most vulnerable.

4. Resource Implications

4.2 *There are no issues arising at this time.*

5. Section 151 Officer Comments:

5.1 The expenditure is funded from government grant that is disbursed by Surrey County Council. Therefore there is no direct pressure on existing budgets.

5. Legal and Governance Issues

5.2 There are no issues arising at this time.

6. Monitoring Officer Comments:

6.1 There are no matters arising at this time

7. Other Considerations and Impacts

7.1 There are no issues arising at this time.

Environment and Climate Change

7.2 There are no issues arising at this time.

Equalities and Human Rights

7.3 The organisations support vulnerable people with information, advice and/or funding and increase participation in activities to improve social inclusion.

Risk Management

7.4 There are no issues arising at this time.

Community Engagement

7.5 The availability of this scheme will be promoted widely through all known routes.