

Bolsover District Council

Meeting of the Executive on Monday 11th July 2022

Household Support Fund Service Level Agreement

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Housing

Classification	This report is Public
Report By	Karen Hanson – Executive Director of Resources
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PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

To seek approval to enter into the Service Level Agreement between Derbyshire County Council and Bolsover District Council which sets out the funding arrangement for the grant of Household Support fund.

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

- 1.1 On 6th October 2021 the government announced a Household Support Fund (HSF) grant would be made available to County Councils and Unitary Authorities in England to support those most in need over the winter. Bolsover District Council was awarded £200,000 to cover the period 6 October 2021 to 31 March 2022.
- 1.2 A further scheme has been announced to cover the period 1st April 2022 to 30th September 2022, to help support those most in need to help with significantly rising living costs.

2. Details of Proposal or Information

- 2.1 The purpose of the grant is to provide support to vulnerable households who would otherwise struggle to buy food or pay essential utility bills, essential living costs and housing costs.

- 2.2 Following discussions with Derbyshire County Council it was agreed that Derbyshire County Council would retain a portion of their grant funding to assist vulnerable households with regards to food and utility bills and Bolsover District Council would utilise the grant of £114,456 around housing costs specifically;
- Provide support with Council Tax /Council Tax Arrears for customers who are in financial difficulty due to unforeseen or exceptional circumstances, or financial hardship that affects their ability to pay their Council Tax liability.
 - Additional homeless prevention funds to assist those threatened with homelessness in social tenancies.
 - Clearing arrears for households experiencing financial hardship/threatened with homelessness in social tenancies.
 - Whilst additional resources have been made available for private renters by the Government to top up prevention funds for private renters, should these become exhausted, additional homeless prevention funds to assist those threatened with homelessness in the private sector.
 - Call B4 you Serve team to access the Law Centre prevention fund to prevent homelessness from the private rented sector.
 - Emergency welfare payments for those in temporary accommodation or to establish tenancies/relieve homelessness.
 - Additional support for those suffering fuel poverty.
 - Additional support for those struggling with food provision.
- 2.3 A Service Level Agreement has been provided by Derbyshire County Council which is provided at Appendix 1, and sets out how the grant must be administered, and reporting information.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 This grant is an opportunity to financially assist vulnerable households across the district, to prevent homelessness and to sustain tenancies.
- 3.2 In order to receive this grant the Service Level Agreement needs to be signed. The Councils legal team have approved the agreement in its current form.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 Do nothing. This option is rejected, to refuse the Service Level Agreement would mean residents in the district could not benefit from the funding and may suffer financial hardship.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Executive supports the recommendation to enter into the Service Level Agreement for the Household Support Fund.

Approved by Councillor Sandra Peake, Portfolio Holder for Housing

IMPLICATIONS:**Finance and Risk:** Yes ☒ No ☐**Details:**

All expenditure will be covered by the £114,456 Household Support grant provided by Derbyshire County Council.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes ☒ No ☐**Details:**

The Service Level Agreement has been reviewed by Legal. On entering this agreement there will be a formal legal contractual relationship with DCC for the delivery of the Housing Support Fund scheme.

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Staffing: Yes ☒ No ☐**Details:**

There are no staffing issues arising from signing the Service Level Agreement or the Administration of the grant funding.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds: Revenue - £75,000 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i>	Yes £114,456
Is the decision subject to Call-In? (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)	Yes

District Wards Significantly Affected	No
Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Executive <input type="checkbox"/> SLT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Members <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	Details: The Cabinet Portfolio Holder has been consulted

Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy and Environment.

Customer Service

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Appendix No	Title
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1.	Service Level Agreement

Background Papers

<i>(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive you must provide copies of the background papers).</i>