

Report of	Record of	Date
Director (Communities) (Introduced by Executive Member (Early Intervention))	Executive Member Decision	13/12/22

Affordable Warmth Grant

Is this report confidential?	No
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Is this decision key?	Yes
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	Significant impact on 2 or more council wards
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Purpose of the Report

1. The report outlines the proposed delivery plan for the Affordable Warmth Grant (AWG) funds received from Lancashire County Council (LCC) for the winter 2022/23.

Recommendations

2. To approve the proposed delivery plan.
3. To work alongside current partners to deliver successful interventions and use a cohort of existing residents needing support.

Reasons for recommendations

4. To approve the plan via Executive Member Decision (EMD) due to the urgency to distribute funding and time required to mobilise and implement the approach.

Other options considered and rejected

5. There are no alternative viable options given the time constraints.

Corporate priorities

6. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

Housing where residents can live well	A green and sustainable borough
An enterprising economy with vibrant local centres in urban and rural areas	Healthy, safe and engaged communities

Background to the report

7. Affordable warmth interventions are available for people vulnerable to ill health because of not being able to keep their home warm. People with long term health

conditions are particularly vulnerable. Young and older people can also experience ill health effects of cold homes.

8. LCC has utilised part of its allocation of the governments Contain Outbreak Management Fund to provide a one-off grant to assist residents across Lancashire to live in warmer homes.
9. The Affordable Warmth Grant fund has been distributed to Lancashire's district councils who will allocate the funding and work with others, such as Home Improvement Agencies, to assist residents on low incomes and those who are particularly vulnerable to the health effects of living in a cold home.
10. This report sets out recommendations for how the funding could be allocated with the objectives of directing the funding towards those in most need and meeting the guidance provided.
11. Ultimately, the funding aims to reduce levels of death and illness over the winter months and to improve people's wellbeing; as a consequence, leading to a reduction in hospital admissions and demand for health and social care services.
12. The funding has now been received; therefore work can commence immediately once the proposed plan is approved.
13. The total amount available across all 12 district areas is £1,000,000. Chorley Council have been awarded £76,796 to use this winter, up to 31st March 2023.
14. LCC have allocated the funds to Districts based on the relative Fuel Poverty levels in Lancashire.
15. Chorley's rates of Fuel Poverty (based on 2020 statistics – as there is always a time lag when reporting these data sets) are one of the lowest in NW England. Chorley has 48,185 households, of which 5,567 of which are said to be experiencing fuel poverty. Table 1 provides additional details.

Table 1: NW England Districts with the lowest incidences of Fuel Poverty in 2020

District	Percentage of household deemed to be living in fuel poverty in 2020	Percentage of household deemed to be living in fuel poverty in 2019
South Ribble	10.5	10.8
Cheshire East	10.8	10.9
Warrington	11.3	11.6
Chorley	11.6	11.9
Fylde	11.6	11.2
Ribble Valley	11.6	11.7

Eligibility criteria

16. Households will be eligible for funding if they meet at least one of the following vulnerabilities and have a low income, defined in the grant agreement by LCC as follows.

Vulnerabilities:

- people with a diagnosed cardiovascular condition
- people with a diagnosed respiratory condition (in particular, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and childhood asthma)
- people with diagnosed mental health conditions
- people with diagnosed disabilities
- older people (65 and older)
- households with young children (up to the age of 5)
- pregnant women
- people who are terminally ill
- people with suppressed immune systems (e.g. from cancer treatment or HIV)
- people who have attended hospital due to a fall

The following vulnerable groups are to be considered on referral from a professional organisation

- people who move in and out of homelessness
- people with addictions
- Recent immigrants and refugees.

Low income

Low income can be confirmed in one of the following three ways:

- Someone being in receipt of means tested benefits
- Have a total household income not in excess of £31,000 per year
- A 'declaration' by the Local Authority or health / social care professional that affordability issues are present.

Proposed approach

17. The fund will be allocated into 4 areas for intervention:

- £36,000 for servicing and repairing boilers/heating systems and appliances/radiators/gas fires
- £3,392 for emergency heating and dehumidifiers
- £18,000 for draught proofing measures, appropriate ventilation measures and glazing improvements
- £11,700 for advice on fuel poverty and emergency top up vouchers

18. Chorley Council will set aside 10% of the overall funding amount for administrative overheads. This has been approved by LCC.
19. This is not recurring funding and cannot be rolled into the next financial year, therefore it is important that the money is used in an agile and responsive way.
20. The Council already sets aside an element of DFG funding for Affordable Warmth interventions. However, given the time-bound nature of the LCC funding, it is proposed that this funding source is utilised first and only when it has been fully utilised would the Council's own funding be used.
21. Delivery will be supported by existing partners such as Cosy Homes in Lancashire (CHIL), Handyperson service via Preston care and repair, and Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB).
22. The Wellbeing team within the Communities team will work through existing primary care network partnerships to identify high risk cohorts and also use internal data such as single occupancy, EPC ratings and passported benefit data to identify those most in need to target.
23. Residents whom we have already supported through recent population health work and social prescribing cases will be reviewed and assessed to receive this funding.

Climate change and air quality

24. The work noted in this report has an overall positive impact on the Council's Carbon emissions and the wider Climate Emergency and sustainability targets of the Council.
25. In particular the report impacts on the following activities:
 - **energy use / renewable energy sources**

Equality and diversity

26. The funding is specifically targeted at disadvantaged households as outlined in paragraph 17 above.

Risk

27. A reputational risk exists in the event of the Council being unable to fully utilise the allocated funding received.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

28. This is one-off funding for the specific purpose detailed. Utilising these funds in this way will be the best use of resource to ensure the Council maximises the use of this grant funding.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

29. The grant funding has been issued to the Council by LCC as part of the affordable warmth grant fund, and therefore the funding should be distributed in accordance to the eligibility criteria defined in the grant agreement.

Background documents

There are no background papers to this report

Appendices

None

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Following careful consideration and assessment of the contents of this report, I approve the recommendation(s) contained in Paragraph 2 and 3 of the report in accordance with my delegated power to make executive decisions.



Councillor Beverly Murray
Executive Member for Early Intervention Dated 13/12/22

This decision will come into force and may be implemented five working days after its publication date, subject to being called in in accordance with the Council's Constitution.