

Council

Wednesday, 15th May, 2024, 6.00 pm

Shield Room, Civic Centre, West Paddock, Leyland, PR25 1DH

Agenda

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|---|-----------------------|
| <p>1 Apologies for absence</p> | |
| <p>2 Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 27 March 2024 of Council</p> | <p>(Pages 3 - 12)</p> |
| <p>3 Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Members are requested to indicate at this stage in the proceedings any items on the agenda in which they intend to declare an interest. Members are reminded that if the interest is a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (as defined in the Members' Code of Conduct) they must leave the room for the whole of that item.</p> <p>If the interest is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, but is such that a member of the public could reasonably regard it as being so significant that it is likely that it would prejudice their judgment of the public interest (as explained in the Code of Conduct) then they may make representations, but then must leave the meeting for the remainder of the item.</p> | |
| <p>4 Mayors Announcements</p> | |
| <p>5 Appointment of Cabinet, Lead Members and Member Champions - 2024/2025</p> <p>To note the appointment of Members of the Cabinet appointed by the Leader of the Council; to note amendments to the Cabinet portfolios and to approve appointments to Lead Member roles.</p> | <p>(To Follow)</p> |
| <p>6 Appointments to Committees, Panels and Working Groups for 2024/25</p> <p>To approve the appointment of Members of the Council to Committee's Working Groups, etc for 2024/25.</p> <p>Nominations to follow.</p> | <p>(To Follow)</p> |
| <p>7 Appointment to outside bodies for 2024/25</p> | <p>(To Follow)</p> |

To appoint Members of the Council to represent the Authority on outside bodies in 2024/25.

8 Council Meetings in 2024/25

To note the programme of Council Meetings for 2024/25:

- 22 May 2024
- 17 July 2024
- 25 September 2024
- 27 November 2024
- 29 January 2025
- 26 February 2025
- 26 March 2025
- 14 May 2025
- 21 May 2025

9 Household Support Fund 5

(Pages 13 - 34)

To receive and consider the report of the Director of Communities and Leisure.

Chris Sinnott
Chief Executive

Electronic agendas sent to Members of the Council

The minutes of this meeting will be available on the internet at
www.southribble.gov.uk

Forthcoming Meetings

6.00 pm Wednesday, 22 May 2024 - Shield Room, Civic Centre, West Paddock,
Leyland, PR25 1DH

Minutes of	Council
Meeting date	Wednesday, 27 March 2024
Committee members present:	Councillors Chris Lomax (Mayor), Peter Mullineaux (Deputy Mayor), Will Adams, Jacky Alty, Deborah Ashton, Hilary Bedford, Jane Bell, Julie Buttery, Anielsa Bylinski Gelder, Colin Coulton, Matthew Farnworth, Paul Foster, Peter Gabbott, Jasmine Gleave, James Gleeson, Mary Green, Michael Green, Harry Hancock, Jo Hindle-Taylor, David Howarth, Lou Jackson, Will King, James Lillis, Keith Martin, Nicky Peet, Pete Pillinger, Lesley Pritchard, John Rainsbury, Wesley Roberts, Colin Sharples, David Shaw, Margaret Smith, Phil Smith, Emma Stevens, Elaine Stringfellow, Caleb Tomlinson, Matthew Tomlinson, Angela Turner, Karen Walton, Ian Watkinson, Connor Watson, Kath Unsworth, Paul Wharton-Hardman and Haydn Williams
Committee members attended virtually (non-voting):	Councillors Matt Campbell, James Flannery and Mathew Forshaw
Officers present:	Chris Sinnott (Chief Executive), Chris Moister (Director of Governance) and Coral Astbury (Democratic and Member Services Officer)
Public:	0

A video recording of the public session of this meeting is available to view on [YouTube here](#)

103 Announcements

The Mayor congratulated Councillor Jo Hindle-Taylor on her recent sky dive raising money for St Catherines Hospice.

The Mayor announced that the current Head of Legal Services, Dave Whelan was due to retire in April and thanked him for his years of service.

104 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Damian Bretherton, James Flannery, Mathew Forshaw, Clare Hunter, George Rear and Matt Campbell.

Councillors Matt Campbell, James Flannery and Mathew Forshaw attended via Microsoft Teams.

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105 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Michael Green declared a personal, non-pecuniary interest in items 5, 10 and 11.

106 Minutes of the last meeting

Councillor John Rainsbury indicated that he had attended the last meeting virtually and this was not reflected in the minutes.

Councillor Angela Turner indicated that her question to the Cabinet Member (Planning, Business Support and Economic Development) had not been included in the minutes. The Mayor advised that Democratic Services would look into this matter.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the last meeting are agreed as a correct record for signing by the Chair.

107 Mayors Announcements

The Mayor gave an update on his recent duties, including the opening of Leyland St Mary's school library, judging at South Ribble Primary Schools Dance Competitions and Tesco Leyland gold disc day.

108 Urgent Decisions

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Foster, outlined the report and explained that three decisions had been taken since the last Council meeting.

It was proposed by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Foster and seconded by the Deputy Leader of the Council and subsequently,

Resolved:

Report was noted.

109 Cabinet

Members received a general report of the Cabinet held on 13 March.

It was proposed by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Foster and seconded by the Deputy Leader of the Council and subsequently,

Resolved:

Report was noted.

110 Scrutiny Committee

Members received a general report of the Corporate, Performance and Budget Scrutiny Committee (CPBS) held on 11 March.

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Members were encouraged to complete and return the questionnaire circulated by the Cultural Strategy Scrutiny Task Group.

It was proposed by the Chair of CPBS, Councillor Will Adams and seconded by the Vice-Chair, Councillor Michael Green and subsequently,

Resolved:

Report was noted.

111 Changes to Committee Membership

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Foster, presented a report that sought approval for the proposed changes to committee membership and outside bodies.

Councillor Foster explained that some changes were necessary due to recent changes to Cabinet and outlined some slight amendments to the report:

- Councillor Deborah Ashton would replace Councillor Colin Sharples on Governance Committee and be appointed as Vice-Chair.
- The substitute member for Planning Committee would be Councillor Keith Martin instead of Councillor Chris Lomax.

It was proposed by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Foster and seconded by the Deputy Leader, Councillor Aniela Bylinski Gelder and subsequently,

Resolved: (Unanimously)

1. That Councillor Deborah Ashton replace Councillor Colin Sharples on Governance Committee.
2. That Councillor Wesley Roberts be appointed as Chair of Governance Committee and Councillor Deborah Ashton be appointed as Vice-Chair.
3. That Councillor Colin Sharples is removed as a substitute on Planning Committee and replaced with Councillor Keith Martin.
4. That Councillor James Flannery is removed from the Leyland Town Deal Board and replaced with Councillor Ian Watkinson.
5. That Councillor James Flannery is removed from Central Lancashire Strategic Planning Joint Advisory Committee and replaced with Councillor Ian Watkinson.
6. Councillor Mathew Forshaw to remain on Licensing and Public Safety Committee as an independent member.
7. That Councillor Damian Bretherton replace Councillor Mathew Forshaw as substitute on the Corporate, Performance and Budget Scrutiny Committee.

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8. That Councillor Matthew Farnworth replace Councillor Colin Sharples as Chair of the My Neighbourhood Community Hub – Leyland.

112 Amendment to Standing Orders: Questions to Council

Members referred this item to the Governance Committee for consideration under Standing Order 14.2.

The item will be presented to a future meeting of Council after consideration by Governance Committee.

113 Bikeability Contract Approval

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Foster, presented a report that provided an update on the outcome of tender submission between Lancashire County Council (LCC) and South Ribble Borough Council (SRBC) to deliver Bikeability from 1 April 2024.

Councillor Foster advised that the authority had secured funding from LCC to continue the existing scheme.

Members welcomed the grant funding and acknowledged the benefits of the programme for children.

It was proposed by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Foster and seconded by the Deputy Leader, Councillor Aniela Bylinski Gelder and subsequently,

Resolved: (Unanimously)

1. That Council accepts the funding from Lancashire County Council to deliver Bikeability. Noting the funding is provided for a four year period and funding is for the duration of the contract.
2. That a revenue budget be established to administer the funding which has been allocated to South Ribble.
3. That delegation be granted to the Director of Communities and Leisure, in consultation with the Cabinet Member (Communities, Leisure and Wellbeing) to enter into contract arrangements and to agree, accept and implement the final delivery plan with Lancashire County Council.

114 Parks and Open Spaces Capital programme

The Cabinet Member (Finance, Assets and Public Protection), Councillor Matthew Tomlinson presented a report that sought approval for a list of schemes that would develop a future Parks and Open Spaces Capital Programme for the next three years.

Councillor Tomlinson advised that the list was not exhaustive, and projects already agreed in the budget would continue. Drainage of football pitches had also been included within the list of projects and the programme would show continued investment into green spaces, parks and playgrounds.

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It was proposed by the Cabinet Member (Finance, Assets and Public Protection), Councillor Matthew Tomlinson and seconded by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Foster and subsequently,

Resolved: (Unanimously)

1. That Council approve the list of projects identified in the report.
2. That Council approves the creation of budgets for projects identified in the report. The budgets will be funded through a combination of Section 106 monies, existing capital programme budgets and some one off UKSPF grant funding linked to Economic Development.
3. That Council approves the re-allocation of budgets as identified in the report.

115 Statement of Community Involvement

The Cabinet Member (Planning, Business Support and Economic Development), Councillor Ian Watkinson introduced a report that presented a revised Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in relation to consultation procedures to be undertaken by the Council for planning policy and development functions, for approval.

Councillor Watkinson explained the SCI would set out how South Ribble would consult and notify stakeholders about development in their areas. It was a requirement to publish the SCI every five years and a public consultation of six weeks had been completed, with 27 responses received.

Members thanked Officers for their work and commented on the inclusion of the consultation comments, along with responses, in the report.

It was proposed by the Cabinet Member (Planning, Business Support and Economic Development) Councillor Ian Watkinson and seconded by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Foster and subsequently,

Resolved: (Unanimously)

1. That Council agrees the Statement of Community Involvement 2024 be formally adopted, replacing earlier versions of the document.

116 Update to Local Development Scheme

The Cabinet Member (Planning, Business Support and Economic Development), Councillor Ian Watkinson introduced a report that presented the contents of the updated Local Development Scheme (LDS).

Councillor Watkinson advised that it was a requirement to publish the outline timetable for the local plan creation and review. The current LDS was out of date and in order to meet planning policy the updated LDS needed to be adopted.

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It was proposed by the Cabinet Member (Planning, Business Support and Economic Development) Councillor Ian Watkinson and seconded by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Foster and subsequently,

Resolved: (Unanimously)

1. That the updated Local Development Scheme be published on the Central Lancashire Local Plan website and associated Central Lancashire Authority websites.

117 Questions to the Leader of the Council

A written question was received in advance from Councillor Emma Stevens which requested a misogyny working group to be established. In response, the Leader gave his support and explained a notice of motion had previously been agreed by the Council on misogyny and a letter sent to the Home Office.

The Leader undertook to ask the Cabinet Member (Community Wealth Building, Social Justice, Equality & Diversity), Councillor Jacky Alty, to bring forward a report to a meeting of Cabinet with detailed proposals, terms of reference, work programme and potential outputs for the working group. With a view to establishing the working group at Cabinet.

Councillor King asked the Leader about a recent newspaper article stating that business owners faced uncertainty over the futures of Longton and Penwortham Live. The Leader explained that the article was incorrect, and the events were going ahead.

Councillor King asked the Leader if there were plans to hold Bamber Bridge Live and Penwortham Live on the same day as Longton Live. The Leader advised he had not been involved in any discussions about a Bamber Bridge live and the events were not organised by South Ribble, it was a Creative Network event.

Councillor Roberts advised that British Youth Council was closing its doors after 75 years and asked the Leader if he could re-commit to the Youth Council of South Ribble. The Leader agreed and confirmed the authority was committed to the youth council and had currently received representations to increase the age range eligible to participate.

Councillor Howarth asked if the misogyny working group could also take into consideration that men could also be carers. The Leader responded, saying he hoped there would be some male Councillors involved with the working group.

Councillor Adams asked the Leader if he would meet with residents to listen to concerns about the traffic on Leyland Road and the A582 and to help build a unified council position to challenge LCC and the Government's decision to not dual the A582. The Leader agreed to meet with residents.

Councillor Walton referred to the traffic concerns outlined by Councillor Adams and asked if the residents of Farington East and West and Longton could be included in the residents meeting. The Leader advised he would speak to officers and Councillor Adams to discuss the idea of setting up a public debate to discuss the issue of the A582 for the residents of Bamber Bridge, Lostock Hall, Farington East & West and

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Longton. There may also be a possibility of the two My Neighbourhood Community Hub collaborating and creating a public meeting, with planning officers and experts on hand to answer queries.

Councillor Walton referred to the previous minutes and explained that Councillors Bretherton and Campbell had not received the agreed letter on flooding and drainage at Bamber Bridge. The Leader advised that they would receive a response from the Cabinet Member (Communities, Leisure and Wellbeing), Councillor Clare Hunter.

Councillor M Smith expressed concern that there had been a possibility that Longton Live would be cancelled and asked if it would be keeping the name, "Longton Live" and continuing past 2024. The Leader responded and explained the decision had not been taken by Cabinet, all the venues and events were organised by Creative Network. The Leader reassured Council that Penwortham Live and Longton Live would carry on.

Councillor Michael Green asked if the Leader could give the Council's views on the A582 and Western Distributor to LCC. The Leader explained that he did not feel comfortable with the question being asked by a member of Cabinet at LCC and explained that he highlights the A582 delivery as critical at every meeting of the City Deal Executive.

Councillor Alty asked if the Leader would write to LCC about the poor condition of roads, in particular potholes cause not just vehicle damage but damage to health. The Leader undertook to write to LCC about the condition of the roads.

118 Questions to Cabinet Members

Cabinet Member (Planning, Business Support and Economic Development)

Councillor Michael Green referred to the siting of hot takeaways near schools and young children and asked for a progress update on any changes to policy which may alleviate the issue. Councillor Watkinson undertook to write to Councillor Green with the requested information.

119 Exclusion of Press and Public

It was proposed by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Foster and seconded by the Deputy Leader, Councillor Aniela Bylinski Gelder and subsequently,

Resolved: (Unanimously)

That the press and public be excluded from the following items of business on the ground that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

120 Civic Centre - Accommodation Review

The Cabinet Member (Finance, Assets and Public Protection) introduced a confidential report that set out proposals for Civic Centre accommodation in line with

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changes and opportunities that have arisen with the success of hybrid working over recent years.

Councillor Karen Walton on behalf of the Conservative Group, seconded by Councillor Phil Smith proposed an amendment to the report:

“To replace recommendation 7 of the recommendations to Council with the following;

7. To approve the creation of a Cross Part Working Group to examine the proposals for the creation of a fixed permanent Council Chamber and future improvements to the working spaces at the Civic Centre.”

Councillors Walton, Adams, M Tomlinson, Pillinger, Howarth, Foster and P Smith participated in the debate on the amendment.

Councillor M Tomlinson indicated he was not willing to accept the amendment.

A vote was taken on the amendment, and it was subsequently,

Resolved: (For: 15, Against: 27)

For: Councillors Gleave, Mary Green, Michael Green, Hancock, Howarth, King, Lillis, Mullineaux, Rainsbury, Shaw, M Smith, P Smith, Turner, Walton and Watson.

Against: Councillors Adams, Alty, Ashton, Bedford, Bell, Bylinski Gelder, Farnworth, Foster, Gabbott, Gleeson, Hindle-Taylor, Jackson, Lomax, Martin, Peet, Pillinger, Pritchard, Roberts, Sharples, Stevens, Stringfellow, C Tomlinson, M Tomlinson, Unsworth, Watkinson, Wharton Hardman and Williams.

The debate resumed on the substantive motion and Councillors Foster, C Tomlinson and Martin participated in the debate.

It was proposed by the Cabinet Member (Finance, Assets and Public Protection), Councillor Matthew Tomlinson and seconded by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Foster and subsequently,

Resolved: (For: 32, Against: 10)

1. That a fixed permanent Council Chamber and improvements to working spaces at the Civic Centre be approved.
2. That the creation of a capital budget in addition to the utilisation of funds from the Corporate Buildings capital programme be approved.
3. That the procurement strategy for the associated works be approved.

For: Councillors Adams, Alty, Ashton, Bedford, Bell, Bylinski Gelder, Farnworth, Foster, Gabbott, Gleeson, Hancock, Hindle-Taylor, Howarth, Jackson, Lillis, Lomax, Martin, Peet, Pillinger, Pritchard, Roberts, Sharples, Shaw, Stevens, Stringfellow, C Tomlinson, M Tomlinson, Turner, Unsworth, Watkinson, Wharton Hardman and Williams.

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Against: Councillors Gleave, Mary Green, Michael Green, King, Mullineaux, Rainsbury, M Smith, P Smith, Walton and Watson.

121 City Deal - Update

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Foster presented a report that updated members on the negotiations in relation to the City Deal agreement.

Councillor Foster expressed concern that Councillor Michael Green remained in the meeting given that he is a Cabinet Member at LCC. Councillor Green explained that he had sought advice from the Monitoring Officer and was advised he could remain in the meeting providing he kept an open mind, but he was willing to leave the meeting.

The Monitoring Officer provided that Councillor Green could remain in the meeting as he has no disclosable pecuniary interest. Councillor Green would need to ensure that he had no bias or pre-determination but this would be for the individual member to assess, it would be for Councillor Green to make a decision.

Councillor Green stated that he was happy to leave the meeting and left, although he advised he had no DPI and an open mind.

Councillors Foster, Shaw and M Smith participated in the debate.

It was proposed by the Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Foster and seconded by the Deputy Leader, Councillor Aniela Bylinski Gelder and subsequently,

Resolved: (Unanimously)

1. That Council authorise, subject to the approval of the proposed terms by the City Deal Executive Board, the Director of Governance to progress the development of a new City Deal Agreement based upon the proposed terms in the report.
2. That Council authorise the Director of Governance, in consultation with the Leader of the Council to agree minor, non-material changes to the proposal where such changes have been recommended by the City Deal Executive Board.

Chair

Date

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Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Communities and Leisure (Introduced by Cabinet Member (Communities, Leisure and Wellbeing))	Council	Wednesday, 15 May 2024

Household Support Fund 5

Is this report confidential?	No
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Is this decision key?	Not applicable
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Savings or expenditure amounting to greater than £100,000	Significant impact on 2 or more council wards
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Purpose of the Report

1. To agree to the proposals and delivery plan for South Ribble's allocation of Household Support Fund 5.

Recommendations to Council (delete if not applicable)

2. To accept the grant allocation of £329,741 from Lancashire County Council.
3. To establish a revenue budget in line with the grant allocation for the purposes of administering Household Support Fund 5.
4. Any changes to the delivery plan and budget to be delegated to the Director of Communities in consultation with the Cabinet Member for communities, Leisure and Wellbeing.

Reasons for recommendations

5. Household Support Fund is targeted at those most in need. If the Council was to not accept the funding, it would limit the ability of the Council to provide direct financial assistance, advice and support.
6. The Council has established in its Corporate Plan a project for supporting the Cost of Living. Household Support Fund and its distribution is a key component of that project and will support the Council in ensuring residents have access to advice and services when they need it.

Other options considered and rejected

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5. The approach to how the fund is delivered is to be determined by the local district council, whilst adhering to the requirements of the grant agreement. The time limit for the fund and required delivery timescales requires that the Council moves at pace. For these reasons the delivery plan is determined on known local need from previous funding rounds as well as established routes for funding.
6. The council could ask partners to administer grants on our behalf. This has been done in the past. However, ensuring capacity and quick mobilisation, the aim is to retain inhouse processing and grant distribution.

Executive summary

5. South Ribble Borough Council has been allocated £329,741 in the fifth round of the Household Support Fund. The funding is made available through the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) and administered by Lancashire County Council (LCC). Lancashire County Council have been provided with £9,678,235, of which £4,500,000 is allocated to the district councils.
6. LCC will be providing through their portion of the fund, free school meal provision in holiday periods and support with fuel advice and household goods.
7. South Ribble's provision will be focused on providing direct grant and financial assistance to residents through a range of schemes, together with supporting local organisations and building resilience within local services that directly support people with the cost of living.

Corporate priorities

8. The report relates to the following corporate priorities:

An exemplary council	Healthy and happy communities
Opportunities for everyone	Green and clean neighbourhood

Background to the report

9. The government in the spring budget, extended the delivery of Household Support Fund. Information has now been shared by Lancashire County Council with the district councils regarding the allocations and requirements for delivery.
10. The guidance continues to provide flexibility to identify which vulnerable households are in most need of support and apply at our discretion eligibility criteria. We must ensure that in doing so we have considered the needs of various households including families with children of all ages, pensioners, unpaid carers, care leavers and disabled people.
11. The guidance has identified the following types of support:
 - Energy and water, as well as essentials linked to energy and water
 - Food
 - Wider essentials such as clothing, broadband, period and hygiene products
 - Advice services including debt, benefit and/or employment advice
 - Housing costs
 - Reasonable administrative costs

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12. The operational period of the funding is between April 2024 and September 2024.

Identifying Areas of Need

13. Household Support Fund has been provided under four previous schemes. Each delivery period enables learning and review to ensure that targeted support and schemes delivered by the Council are effective.
14. The delivery plan for April – September 2024 is based on knowledge from officers and consideration of existing data/information. The fund provides flexibility for the Council to determine local need and appropriate schemes that can support households. The areas that they determine we should focus on are:
- families with children of all ages,
 - pensioners,
 - unpaid carers,
 - care leavers,
 - disabled people,
15. So that the Council is sure that support is targeted effectively, there will be a focus on where support is provided to ensure that it reaches those most in need.
16. An assessment of local need would suggest that consideration is given to the following areas and groups:
- Households living in areas of deprivation within the borough:
 - Seven Stars,
 - Leyland South West,
 - Bamber Bridge,
 - Middleforth,
 - St Ambrose.
 - Households that are 'property rich, cash poor' (fixed incomes) where more sustainable and long-term change can be provided through adaptation and energy efficiency.
 - Single Person households (the numbers of households on Council Tax Support and single person discount is 69%).
17. The proposed delivery plan will take in to account access to the different offers of support for all groups identified above. It will also provide consideration on any local grants provided to organisations and groups, on the extent to which they will make an impact in the identified areas of deprivation.

Delivery Plan

18. A framework has been developed to outline the provision of Household Support Fund 5. This framework builds on learning from previous delivery and is aimed at being able to discharge the grant in a timely way and quickly commit / spend the monies to ensure South Ribble receives its full allocation. The framework is attached at Appendix A.

Administrative Costs

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19. It is important that the scheme is resourced. The administrative fee will be used to meet the costs of the Council in delivering the overall coordination of the Household Support Fund, as well as directly meeting costs to deliver the Household Support Fund Payment scheme.

Advice and Support

20. The delivery plan proposes that resource is provided so that households and individuals can access advice and support to address immediate challenges and put in place measures or changes that will improve their overall financial security.
21. The Council will provide this through its Social Prescribing Service. The funding will be used to provide the capacity with the team to manage referrals related to cost of living. Their role will be to provide initial advice and provide signposting to appropriate services and support.
22. As part of Household Support Fund, the Council has already been able to invest in the low-income family tracker. This enables the Council to target low-income households more effectively where it is likely that they will be able to increase their current income through additional support and benefits. In identifying these households, advice and information will be sent to them to provide the support to enable them to have any benefits reviewed and support their income maximisation.
23. Wider advice and access to services will be provided through a one-week cost of living roadshow. This will be targeted to areas of the borough based on delivery outcomes from the initial roadshow delivered in February/March 2024. The same model will be deployed with key partners attending the bus to provide direct advice and support in local communities.

Financial Support (Energy, Food, Household)

24. The proposals under this area will directly put financial resources in the hands of residents. A number of schemes will be provided that can support a wide number of households. The schemes proposed are:
- Household Support Fund Payments: This is an application based scheme where residents can directly apply to the Council for help with short-term living costs such as food, gas electric, water, household bills and clothing.
 - Step Up Grants: This scheme is available through referral from professional bodies / agencies supporting individuals and vulnerable households. The funding provided can support with larger household items and costs, and in exceptional cases further housing costs where Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) has already been provided. The purpose of the scheme is to provide longer term sustainable change.
 - Affordable Warmth (Warm Homes): The funding will be used to extend the operation of the existing warm home scheme until September. The scheme provides replacement of boilers, windows and insulation with the view to improving energy efficiency, reducing carbon footprint and energy bills.
 - Social Prescribing Discretionary Support Fund: This scheme will support individuals engaged with the social prescribing service and provide small immediate relief to assist with access to training / employment courses and wellbeing activities. For example, it may provide the purchase of a phone, or data

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to enable them to not be digitally excluded or access to short courses and travel to help develop skills.

- School Uniform Pop-Up Shop: This provides practical support to families who need to access school uniforms and other associated items such as school bags. It will be delivered as a pop-up shop in locations within the borough, particularly those identified with higher levels of deprivation.

Housing Costs

25. In the previous round of Household Support Fund, additional funding was needed to increase the levels of budget available for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP). These payments help people with their rent when their housing benefit or Universal Credit housing costs payment does not meet the full value of their rent. Based on last year the same level of funding is to be provided to enable more households to access DHP.

Infrastructure and Community

26. There are acute pressures on many community-based delivery partners and local services due to the cost of living. Significant support in Household Support Fund has been provided through to Food Banks which have seen a large increase in the numbers of households seeking support.
27. Within infrastructure and community, the aim of the financial support to be provided to partners is to support sustainability, meet capacity and where needed increase provision to meet demand. The two schemes that have been proposed are:
- Local Resilience Fund: This is to provide larger/staffed not for profit organisations with additional funding for existing services which support people with the cost of living. We would invite partners to submit expressions of interest which will be assessed and determined.
 - Community Provision Grants: Community Hubs are well placed to identify local need and the small community organisations that provide support and warm spaces for residents. The hubs will be provided with a budget of £15,000 which will be distributed between hubs to identify local not for profit groups who need support to provide information/advice and practical support in the shape of access to services such as luncheon clubs, cafes, cooking facilities and spaces with free wi-fi.
28. Due to the time scales and restrictions on funding, both processes will need to have identified the groups for funding by 30th May so that there is assurance monies can be committed by the 30th June.

Proposed Budget Allocations

29. Within the terms provided by County Council, the district allocations have the following percentage allowances:
- 10% allocated to support form filling / advice services,
 - maximum of 8% to support administration costs.
30. The following budget profile has been determined to support delivery of Household Support Fund 5:

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	Budget	
Allocation	£	329,741
Administration	£	26,379
Advice Services	£	32,974
Un Ringfenced	£	270,388

Proposed Budget Allocations for Household Support Fund 5

Item	Budget	
Programme Coordination (Administration)	£	10,182
Household Support Payment Administration	£	16,197
Social Prescribing (Advice and Support)	£	26,974
South Ribble Information Bus (Advice and Support)	£	6,000
Extension to Affordable Warmth	£	35,000
Discretionary Housing Payment	£	16,000
Step Up Grants	£	35,000
School Uniform Shop	£	4,388
Social Prescribing Discretionary Support Fund	£	10,000
Partners Resilience Fund	£	55,000
Household Support Fund Payment	£	100,000
Community Hubs Community Fund	£	15,000

Resourcing and Capacity

31. The scheme will be coordinated and managed within the Community Development Team through existing resources. The service will act as the key point of contact and liaison with LCC, providing required monitoring information and attendance at regular delivery meetings.

Programme Governance

32. The Household Support Fund 5 Framework is the basis for the governance of the scheme, setting out the eligibility criteria as well as processes for the different grant schemes.
33. To maintain effective delivery and management of the programme, an internal working group is established, consisting of representatives from Benefits, Private Sector Housing, Community Development, Customer, Finance, Audit and Communications. These meetings will take place every two weeks to ensure momentum and maintain clear oversight of deliverables and the budget position.
34. Council governance processes will apply for procurements and budget management.

Climate change and air quality

35. The work noted in this report impacts on the following areas of climate change and sustainability targets of the Councils Green Agenda.:
 - a. net carbon zero by 2030,
 - b. limiting non sustainable forms of transport,

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Equality and diversity

36. The Equality Impact Assessment for this programme of activity identifies a general positive impact due to the nature of the support and services provided.
37. An area that needs to be considered is the support for different ethnic groups, particularly around the supply of food, which can vary between cultures as well as accessible information in different languages. Working with the Community Integration Officer, the programme will look to identify where there is a need for materials to be printed in different languages as well as engaging through different cultural leaders to promote access to the funds.
38. A focus on single people will also look to address the socio-economic gap created where single people may be left more vulnerable to rising costs due to limited income in the household. This is similar for those where there need may be greater due to disability and higher costs for energy use and adaptations.
39. An area of a positive benefit is older age groups, where they are single occupants and or living in a property that is not energy efficient. The scheme will provide some resource to extend affordable warmth to provide updates and new technology that can help reduce energy bills over the long-term.
40. Families will face pressures and the support for school uniform shop, together with other packages of support aim to help those families with young children.

Risk

41. The council will receive 80% of the grant by 31st May and a further 20% will be advanced by 30th June. However, this is dependent on the council having spent or committed at least 50% of the first instalment by 30th June. The risk to the council is underspend on the funding. If it is likely that the Council will be underspent there is risk of funding being reduced and total spend plans not being realised. Therefore, the plan must be robust and effectively managed to ensure early indications on issues are addressed where they arise. To address this risk an internal project working group will meet every three weeks to review progress and update on project elements.
42. Fraud is a key risk when undertaking any grant or payments to residents based on assessment. When providing direct payments to residents, a clear structured process and checks against council tax records will reduce the risks of fraud. The Council also deploys a voucher based system so that funds provided can be targeted towards specific purchase types.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

43. The Household Support Fund Phase 5 (HSF5) allocation to South Ribble Council of £329,741 is a continuation of previous funding which will be used to administer the grant based on the specific criteria set out in the government guidance and detailed above. This report allows for the establishment of the relevant budget in line with the allocation.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

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44. The council has a general power under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything that an individual may generally do, provided it is not prohibited by other legislation and the power is exercised in accordance with the limitations specified in the Act. Therefore, the council is able to receive and accept the grant and utilise it as per the contents of the report and in line with the terms and conditions set out in the government guidelines and the grant agreement. Legal Services will assist the delivery of the scheme, by formalising agreements as and when required.

Background documents

There are no background papers to this report.

Appendices

Appendix A: Household Support Fund 5 Framework

Report Author:	Email:	Telephone:	Date:
Howard Anthony (Head of Communities and Housing)	howard.anthony@southribble.gov.uk	01772 625276	25/04/2024

Household Support Fund 5

April 2024 – September 2024

Framework

Background

Lancashire County Council is providing South Ribble Borough Council with £329,741 as part of the Household Support Fund, from the UK Government. The fund is being awarded to Upper Tier Authorities (Lancashire County Council) who are encouraged to coordinate with Districts and partner organisations where appropriate. They have provided [guidance by the Government \(GOV.UK website\)](#) which sets out how we are to deliver the Household Support Fund.

The fund runs from 1 April 2024 – 30 September 2024. The intentions of the scheme are to provide extra support to those most in need who would otherwise struggle with household bills and essentials.

Objectives

The fund is primarily be used to support households in the most need with food, energy, and water bills. It can also be used to support households with essential costs related to those items and with wider essential costs. In exceptional cases of genuine emergency, it can additionally be used to support housing costs where existing housing support schemes do not meet this exceptional need.

The Fund is intended to cover a wide range of low-income households in need:

- Households with children
- Households with pensioners
- Households with a disabled person
- Households with unpaid carers
- Households with a single occupancy
- Households subject to an unforeseen financial shock

Principles

In delivery of the program of support we apply the following principles:

- a) Funding is used to meet immediate needs and help those who are struggling to afford household essentials.
- b) Funding is used based on local intelligence and the need to identify and support those most in need.
- c) Funding should also provide a long-term sustainable impact such as income maximization, advice, signposting to benefit, debt and employment services.
- d) Work with local services, partners and not for profit organizations to help identify and support individuals and households.

Provision

The provision to be provided under the Household support fund in South Ribble is split in to three strands:

- **Advice and Support**

This strand of the programme is there to provide households and individuals with advice and support that can enable them to address immediate challenges and put in place measures or changes that will improve their overall financial security.

This strand will be delivered through enhancing the South Ribble Social Prescribing Service with additional capacity to manage referrals related to cost of living support. This will enable effective signposting and support individuals to make changes through a targeted health coaching approach.

Further to this, the authority will be able to deploy a low-income family tracker to effectively target low-income households that may be able to increase their current income through additional support and benefits that may be available to them.

- **Financial and Practical Support**

This strand will directly put financial resources in the hands of residents. A number of schemes will be operational that can support a wide number of households. Each scheme will have a set of criteria to ensure that funds are distributed fairly and with robust management to ensure claims are valid and meet the requirements of the Household Support Fund.

The support that will be available will include support for

- Energy and Water
- Food
- Essentials linked to energy, water and food (boiler replacement, washing machines etc)
- Wider essentials such as car repair, other bills, hygiene products, clothes
- Housing Costs (mortgage support is excluded)

- **Infrastructure and Community Investment**

This strand is focused on providing financial support to local communities who provide services and support directly to community members. This may be through local events where people can access services for advice and support or not for profit community groups providing services such as luncheon clubs, warm spaces.

The fund will provide money directly to larger partners delivery existing services which require additional capacity or boost. Further funding will be provided to Community Hubs, to identify local groups and projects.

To ensure that there is effective use of resources, all infrastructure and community investment opportunities will be identified by 30th May.

Budget Profile

Allocation

Administration (8%)	£	26,379
Advice Services (10%)	£	32,974
Un Ringfenced	£	270,388
Total	£	329,741

The budget profile broken down by activity is:

	Delivery	Description	Budget
Advice and Support			
	Social Prescribing Support	Contribution to costs of service which will provide advice and support around income maximization and signposting to key partners / organizations	£26,974
	Outreach and Engagement	South Ribble Cost of Living Bus – a focused campaign of activity over one week with partners to reach communities to provide access to advice and support	£6,000
			£32,974
Financial and Practical Support	Households Support Fund Payments	The scheme can help with short-term living costs such as food, gas electric, water, household bills and clothing	£100,000
	Step Up Grant	This fund is accessible by application referrals from professionals who come into contact with vulnerable households. This may include but is not limited to social workers; keyworkers delivering early help and family support; health visitors; and housing support officers.	£35,000
	Affordable Warmth (Warm Homes)	Support for residents in owner occupied properties to fund home adaptations that create energy efficiency improvements, therefore creating long-term sustainable reductions to energy bills.	£35,000
	Discretionary Housing Payments	Additional provision of Discretionary Housing Support.	£16,000
	School Uniform Pop-Up Shop	Targeted support for families with Children for access to school uniform, advice and support.	£4,388
	Discretionary Fund	Accessible through the social prescribing team, a small immediate relief fund to assist with access to training / employment courses, wellbeing activities.	£10,000
			£200,388
Infrastructure and Community	Local Resilience Fund	Fund to support local agencies and partners providing direct support to residents with cost-of-living support. Council to work collaboratively with partners to increase capacity or sustain existing schemes of support available.	£55,000
	Community Fund	To provide the Community Hubs with a budget of £3k per hub to identify local community provision for advice, and practical support	£15,000
			£70,000

The administration costs are used to support officer time to administer the grants program as well as coordination of the delivery of Household Support Fund 5.

Financial and Practical Support Schemes

The detail of the individual schemes is provided within this framework to set clear criteria and requirements for the provision of support.

Where financial support is provided, the council utilizes a platform called Huggg. The default method of providing funds is by voucher which is accessible by letter, email or phone. This enables the council to provide targeted support to households with vouchers that must be used within a time period and also for a particular purpose i.e. energy, food, household items.

In exceptional circumstances cash vouchers are issued where there is no other viable option. This will require approval from a Head of Service level before payment is made.

Household Support Fund Payments

Purpose:

The scheme can help with short term living costs such as food, gas electric, water, household bills and clothing (this is not an exhaustive list).

The scheme will also sign post applicants to other sources of advice and support to ensure that you get all the assistance you may be entitled to including Welfare Benefits and Debt Advice to help address long term needs, before any decisions are made.

Eligibility

- A resident of the South Ribble area
- Experiencing financial hardship and not have enough resources to meet your immediate short-term needs.

Applicants may apply more than once during the duration of this round of funding, however applications will not be accepted within a 3 month period and we will request evidence that the funds awarded previously have been used for the intended purposes.

Restrictions

The scheme does not cover:

- Any requests for items that are not essential for example debts incurred by gambling or loans/credit cards, overdrafts, HP etc.
- Applications from those with sufficient income, savings, capital and assets
- Requests for household items where these are the responsibility of the landlord.
- Rent arrears and/or deposits unless meeting exceptional need.

Information required to access support will include:

- Address
- Full household details
- Applicant circumstances
- Applicant income
- All applications must be supported with bank statements for all adults in the household and for all accounts held – these must be for one full month – showing transactions in and out of the account and must be dated within the last 2 months. Screenshots showing the bank account details only will not be accepted but pictures of bank statements may be submitted.

If complete bank statements are not provided the application will not be considered

- Energy bills paid by direct debit will require a copy of the front and back page of the most recent bill showing:
 - balance owed
 - account number
 - confirmation of what type of meter you have installed.

If there are arrears on energy bills a copy of the bill will be required showing the arrears and payments made towards these arrears and payment details of the supplier.

- Evidence of any gambling on bank statements provided will be investigated further as awards may not be made where there is evidence of gambling.
- What support you need and why the support is required – a full explanation of the applicants circumstances is required giving a full in depth explanation, it is not adequate to simply put “increase in household bills”.

Amount of Award

The amount of an award that can be made is £300. This is to be provided in appropriate vouchers.

For single-person households an additional £50 will be provided. (a total of £350)

Payment of cash vouchers will only be provided in exceptional circumstances where the applicant demonstrates that the vouchers provided for use at certain providers / retailers is not suitable.

Discretionary Housing Payment

Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP's) help people with their rent when their housing benefit or Universal Credit housing costs payment does not meet the full value of their rent.

Applicants must be in receipt of some housing benefit or Universal Credit housing costs for an award to be made.

The full scheme and application process is on the South Ribble Website:

[Discretionary Housing Payments \(DHP\) - South Ribble Borough Council](#)

Step Up Grants

This fund is accessible by application referrals from professionals who come into contact with vulnerable households. This may include but is not limited to social workers; keyworkers delivering early help and family support; health visitors; and housing support officers.

Eligibility

- A resident of the South Ribble area
- Experiencing financial hardship and not have enough resources to meet immediate short-term needs.
- Applicants may only apply once during the duration of this round of funding.
- Applications must be made by an approved professional / partner agency

Use of Funding

The aim of this grants scheme is to create sustainable positive change for residents, by covering expenses that other schemes do not, and or that exceed the value that can be awarded through the Household Support / Energy Grants. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Furniture
- Carpets
- Whitegoods
- Deep cleans
- Arrears (housing support costs*)

In exceptional cases of genuine emergency where existing housing support schemes do not meet an exceptional need, the Fund can be used to support housing costs.

Where eligible, ongoing housing support for rent must be provided through the housing cost element of Universal Credit (UC) and Housing Benefit (HB) rather than the Household Support Fund.

In addition, eligibility for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) must first be considered before emergency housing support is offered through the Household Support Fund. However, the Fund should not be used to provide housing support on an ongoing basis or to support unsustainable tenancies.

Support toward mortgage is not permitted.

Information Required

The professional should be able to robustly demonstrate the hardship experienced by the household and the sustainability that can be realised. A full explanation of the applicants circumstances is required giving a full in depth explanation, it is not adequate to simply put "increase in household bills and lack of funds".

Information required to access support will include:

- Address
- Full household details

- Applicant circumstances
- Applicant income
- All applications must be supported with bank statements for all adults in the household and for all accounts held – these must be for one full month – showing transactions in and out of the account and must be dated within the last 2 months. Screenshots showing the bank account details only will not be accepted but pictures of bank statements may be submitted.
- Evidence of any gambling on bank statements provided will be investigated further as awards may not be made where there is evidence of gambling.

Approved partner agencies include:

(This list may be added to as the fund progresses and is not limited to those below)

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| • SRBC Internal Departments | • Primary and Secondary Schools located within South Ribble | • The Base Community Centre |
| • Lancashire Constabulary | • Key Unlocking Futures | • The Place Community Centre |
| • Lancashire Fire and Rescue | • Progress Housing Group | • Community Network Outreach Service |
| • NHS | • Home Start | • New Day Foodbank |
| • Department for Works and Pensions | • Unify Credit Union | • Bamber Bridge Christian Community Larder |
| • Lancashire County Council | • Christians Against Poverty | • Penwortham Foodbank |
| • Parish and Town Councils | • Onward Homes | • St Mary's Foodbank |
| • Other local authorities | • Places for People | • St Mary's Community Centre |
| • Citizen's Advice | • Inspire | • Churches and other religious institutions located within South Ribble |
| | • Calico | • Talkin Tables |
| | • Serco | • Recognised Resocialisation Cafes |

Amount of Award

The amount of an award that can be made is £2,000. This is to be provided in appropriate vouchers.

Payment of cash vouchers will only be provided in exceptional circumstances where the applicant demonstrates that the vouchers provided for use at certain providers / retailers is not suitable.

Affordable Warmth (Warm Home Grants)

The aim of this grants scheme is to support residents in owner occupied properties to fund home energy efficiency improvements, therefore creating long-term sustainable reductions to their energy bills.

This scheme targets residents who cannot reasonably afford to fund the home improvements themselves. This scheme will operate on the same basis of the Affordable Warmth scheme managed by the council.

Improvements that this scheme funds includes:

- Replacement of broken boiler
- Replacement of inefficient boiler (EPC rating F or below)
- Replacement of broken timber single glazed windows or doors
- Cavity Wall Insulation
- Loft Insulation (Loft must be clear of any belongings)

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

Vulnerabilities:

- people with a diagnosed cardiovascular conditions
- people with a diagnosed respiratory conditions (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 will 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^[1]
- A 'declaration' by the Local Authority or health / social care professional that affordability issues are present.

^[1] This is inline with the income criteria set for ECO4 Flexible Eligibility in the Statement of Intent template: <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/publications/eco4-guidance-local-authority-administration>

Social Prescribing Discretionary Support Fund

The aim of this fund is to create sustainable positive change for residents, by covering expenses that other schemes do not. Support being referred for must contribute towards enabling positive outcomes on health and wellbeing for the person (or family) experiencing financial hardship.

Eligibility

- A resident of the South Ribble area
- Experiencing financial hardship / low income
- Be an engaged client of the Social Prescribing Service having attended at least two appointments
- Applicants may only receive funding once during the duration of this round of funding.

Use of Funding

The support that can be provided are:

- Gym passes / memberships
- Support with personal care / hygiene i.e. haircuts
- Travel costs associated with attending community groups / courses
- Costs linked to courses that could promote wellbeing / employment
- Support with holiday club cover
- Specialist clothing for work / employment

Information Required

The social prescribing link worker should be able to robustly demonstrate the hardship experienced by the household and the sustainability that can be realised. A full explanation of the applicants circumstances is required giving a full in depth explanation, it is not adequate to simply put "increase in household bills and lack of funds".

Information required to access support will include:

- Address
- Full household details
- Applicant circumstances
- Applicant income
- All applications must be supported with bank statements for all adults in the household and for all accounts held – these must be for one full month – showing transactions in and out of the account and must be dated within the last 2 months. Screenshots showing the bank account details only will not be accepted but pictures of bank statements may be submitted.
- Evidence of any gambling on bank statements provided will be investigated further as awards may not be made where there is evidence of gambling.

Decision Process

Funds are at the discretion of the allocated link worker, and will be assessed by the Senior Social Prescribing Link Worker for approval.

Where a referral is submitted by the Social Prescribing Team Leader, this will be assessed and decided upon by head of service.

Amount of Award

The amount of an award that can be made is £150. This is to be provided in appropriate vouchers or paid directly to an education provider or retailers where appropriate.

Local Resilience Fund

The local resilience fund will be provided to local partners and service delivery organisations, who provide existing support or packages that assist in the cost of living.

The purpose of the fund is to provide additional capacity, sustainability or extension so that individuals / households can continue to access support.

The schemes they operate must meet the following criteria:

- The support is provided to a resident of South Ribble
- The support is targeted at those experiencing financial hardship and not have enough resources to meet immediate short-term needs.

How the money will be distributed

Partners will be invited to submit an expression of interest, which must detail:

- The service provided
- How the service is funded and how additional support can add capacity, sustain or extend provision
- Detail who are the beneficiaries
- Provide demonstrable evidence of current success / support

Decision

A decision will be made by the Cabinet Member of Communities, Housing and Leisure in consultation with the Director for Communities and Leisure

Grants have no minimum or maximum (only that which is the limit of the budget allocation). Any spending must be committed by 30th May. If it is not committed, then the funding will be released to support schemes in the Financial and Practical Support Strand. The schemes it will be redistricted too will be based on demand for particular schemes and levels of budget available.

Community Provision Grants

To support local community provision, it is essential to support those small community based organisations which provide essential support to people struggling with the cost of living.

The council will work with its Community Hubs to provide an allowance to each area. This allowance will be based on an allocation to each hub calculated by the number of members within the hub. The funding must be committed by 30th June and used for the following:

- Provide funding to support provision for social based services i.e. luncheon clubs, warm spaces, access to spaces with Wi-Fi, cooking facilities, laundry.
- Events / Community outreach that provides advice and support which must involve agencies who can offer support for debt, energy, employment and income maximisation

Groups eligible must

- Be not for profit and constituted
- Based in South Ribble
- Have less than £20,000 in income per year

Community groups in receipt of funding must provide effective monitoring and capture required data which would be set out in a grant agreement.

Decisions and approvals

Approval for spends will follow established processes in the council's constitution for hub spending.

Grants should not be any less than £500. Any spending must be committed by 30th May. If it is not committed then the funding will be released to support schemes in the Financial and Practical Support Strand. The schemes it will be redistricted too will be based on demand for particular schemes and levels of budget available.

Definitions

Households with children

- For the purposes of reporting of this fund a child is defined as being 19 or under on date of application or a person aged 19 or over in respect of whom a child-related benefit (for example, Child Benefit) is paid or free school meals are provided.
- Where an eligible child lives on his or her own, they are a household that includes a child covered in the third allocation for households with children.

Households with pensioners

- For the purposes of reporting of this fund, a household with a pensioner is defined as any household containing any person: who has reached state pension age by date of application.

Households with a disabled person

- For the purposes of reporting of this fund, and under the Equality Act 2010, a person with a disability is somebody that has a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities. Disabilities must be acknowledged by a medical professional.

Households with unpaid carers

- For the purposes of reporting of this fund, a household with an unpaid carer is a person of any age who provides unpaid help and support to wife, husband, partner, son, daughter, parent, relative, partner, friend or neighbour who has a diagnosed medical condition and cannot manage without the carer's help.

Households with care leavers

- For the purposes of reporting of this fund, a household with a care leaver is an adult who has spent time living in the care system, away from their family. This could be with a foster family, in a children's home or supported housing service, or under another arrangement as agreed by their social worker. Young people usually leave care when they are 18 years old.

Households of a single occupancy

- For the purposes of reporting we will consider a household where they are eligible or receiving single persons council tax discount.

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