

Report to: Cabinet



Date of Meeting 4 January 2023

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

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## Cost of Living Hardship Fund Policy

### Report summary:

Following the recommendations of the Poverty Panel at their meeting on 8 December 2022 this report provides details on the proposed policy and the funding available to support households who are struggling to afford essentials due to the high cost of living and in particular the current energy prices.

### Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes  No

Policy Framework Yes  No

### Recommendation:

1. That Cabinet agree to the Cost of Living Hardship Fund Policy which replaces the Covid-19 Hardship Fund Policy as recommended by the Poverty Panel.
2. That Cabinet agree for delegated authority to be given to the Assistant Director for Revenues, Benefits, Customer Services and Fraud & Compliance in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Homes and Communities to amend the policy to allow for targeted support to be provided if needed.

### Reason for recommendation:

Supports the recommendation of the Poverty panel at their meeting on 8 December 2022. Updating the previous Covid-19 Hardship Fund Policy to the Cost of Living Hardship Fund Policy means that we have an up to date policy in place to support residents who are struggling to afford essentials. This is particularly important as should we run out of HSF residents will still be able to access emergency support. The policy builds in flexibility to allow the Council to provide targeted support where it is identified that there is a particular need as well as dealing with claims on a case by case basis through delegated authority to the Assistant Director in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Sustainable Homes and Communities. This means that we can respond quickly to distribute funds where identified.

Officer: Libby Jarrett, Assistant Director Revenues, Benefits, Corporate Customer Services

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets

- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

### **Equalities impact** High Impact

We recognise that having a discretionary fund to support to residents who are financially struggling with the cost of living will have a high relevance on some of the groups with protected characteristics, these are age, disability, children and vulnerable adults. However, we consider that our policy does not adversely impact these protected groups. The draft policy makes provision that should we subsequently look to provide targeted support then a further impact assessment will need to be carried out. [Equalities Impact Assessment](#)

### **Climate change** Low Impact

**Risk:** Low Risk;

### **Links to background information**

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
- A greener East Devon
- A resilient economy

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## **1.0 Background**

1.1 The Council agreed at its meeting on 19 October 2022:

“Council requests officers to investigate creating an additional discretionary energy support fund based on evidence from the poverty dashboard data. This will look at taking into account existing funds, how this additional fund could be financed from the level of grants and also explore the systems and staff resources required to design and administer the scheme. The report will be presented at a Poverty panel meeting for consideration and potential recommendations”.

1.2 At the Poverty panel meeting on 8 December 2022 Members agreed to the proposed policy and approach being presented.

1.3 At the 2 November 2022 Cabinet Meeting under the report titled “Household Support Fund (HSF) and Discretionary Fund” it was highlighted that the Council already had funds set aside of £257K to support households struggling to afford essentials. It was proposed that we could use this funding in addition to the Household Support Fund we had been given to help struggling households.

1.4 For any Members who aren't aware the government have extended the HSF to cover the period up to 31 March 2023. The HSF is funding to help support households who are struggling to afford essentials, including help with energy costs this winter. Funding goes direct to Upper tier authorities and Devon County pass on a proportion of that funding to Billing Authorities to run their own schemes as part of a Devon framework. We have been given £323,030 and this money has to be spent before 31 March 2023. The HSF is in addition to the government cost of living payments currently being received by households. Cabinet Members at their meeting on 2 November 2022 agreed the policy for how we would utilise the HSF which is for

approximately two thirds of the funding to go on targeted support and one third to be retained for open applications. More information about this scheme is available here. ([Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Cabinet, 02/11/2022 18:00 \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](#)).

## 2.0 Proposed approach/policy

2.1 Members had agreed (see para 1.1) that we took account of evidence from our poverty dashboard in order to help inform how any additional funding would be best utilised as part of designing and shaping a scheme to help residents with the cost of living crisis. As we are currently prioritising launching the HSF which includes providing targeted support we are not in a position to identify any additional cohorts for targeted support at this stage. Our proposal is to update the previous Covid-19 Hardship Fund policy (see appendix 1) which has been renamed “Cost of Living Hardship Fund”. This will mean we can run this alongside the HSF policy. As the HSF is time limited we will always seek to use that funding first, however there maybe occasions when we utilise funding from both schemes at the same time. For example, insufficient funding available from the HSF to fully cover a cost.

2.2 The draft policy has also been updated to reflect:

- Households struggling due to the Cost of Living crisis instead of Covid-19
- The fund will only be used when it is not possible to draw upon other available financial support schemes, such as the HSF
- Where a resident has been declined for financial assistance for the same support from another scheme unless due to unavailable funding.
- Using data to help build understanding through the social resilience (poverty) dashboard
- Updates relating to application process, data protection, fraud, etc.

2.3 This updated draft policy allows flexibility over how this fund will be utilised. As already mentioned we are not in a position to identify where the need is for further support until we have distributed the targeted funding from the HSF, and have a better understanding of who is still approaching for financial support through the open application process. For instance we know with the discretionary energy rebate scheme that there were a number of households who did not want additional financial support even though they were in the cohort for receiving a targeted payment. It should also be noted that the government have provided a number of other measures to help households this winter. Information about the different energy support schemes provided is shown in appendix 2.

2.4 We also recognise that there will be residents who have not received targeted support either through the HSF or from the government’s cost of living payment but nevertheless are still in financial need – for example those that are just above the income thresholds for pension credit or those where their personal circumstances have taken a turn for the worse and who have not yet claimed the benefits they are eligible to receive.

2.5 Clearly the cost of living crisis is not going to be over quickly and energy prices are likely to stay high for some time. As part of the Council’s poverty strategy we are keen to build upon more of the proactive work we can do in addressing root causes. As these are our own funds we have built into the policy the ability to utilise some of the funding to provide more energy efficient/saving measures to help reduce energy consumption and lower bills.

2.6 For instance, we know there are a number of low income households who are living in low energy rated accommodation and our aim would be to explore the possibility of trialling joint working on a small number of cases with Exeter Community Energy and Private Sector Housing to try and improve their accommodation, and we would utilise this fund to support this work when appropriate. It is important to note where we can access funding from other schemes we would always do that first. Doing more proactive work not only helps reduce household expenditure on energy costs it could also help to address health and wellbeing issues as well as supporting our climate strategy.

2.7 In mid to late January 2023 we will have a better understanding of demand on the HSF including the take up rate for those we are prioritising for targeted support. This means we will be able to assess whether there are particular cohorts where it would make sense to provide further targeted support as well as understanding the need of those applying on a case by case basis. The proposed policy would allow us to include providing further targeted support if required.

2.8 It is important that we have a joined up approach not only between the HSF and this proposed scheme but also that we linking in with partner organisations to access other funds they have available.

2.9 Applications under the Cost of Living Hardship Fund will be via our existing request for Financial Support form.

2.10 An equalities impact assessment has been carried out and is available [here](#).

### **3.0 Other considerations/priorities**

3.1 We currently have a number of priorities that the service is delivering on which means we are having to juggle resources but also meet some key critical deadlines which cannot be moved. Due to the different types of skill sets and experience needed, unfortunately it is not just a case of bringing in more administrative staff in order to set these schemes up. Current priorities are:

#### Household Support Fund

As already highlighted our focus is currently on launching the HSF3. Setting up the scheme has been resource intensive as we have had to:

- Model and review many different data sets in order to help inform policy including writing policy documents, equalities impact assessments, reports, etc
- Manually review identified cases in order to ensure amounts awarded for targeted support are correct due to system limitations. This work is essential for processing of applications as the data sits within the tables behind the application form.
- Produce system specification for Strata and carry out testing before going live
- Produce communication materials in readiness for go live.

We are aiming to go live with the scheme before Christmas 2022.

#### Working Age Council Tax Reduction Scheme

The report for changes to our Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2023/24 was considered by Cabinet on 2 November 2022, and we have proposed changes to our scheme which will lead to circa 2960 (65%) households seeing increases in the amount of support they receive. These changes include those on the lowest incomes (Band 1) seeing the relief being increased from 85% to 100% which will lift them out of paying Council Tax altogether. Public consultation closed mid December 2022. Results of the consultation have needed to be analysed and a full equalities impact assessment carried out before proposing the final scheme to be recommended for approval to Council at its meeting on 4 January 2023.

Link to the Committee report: [\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Cabinet, 02/11/2022 18:00 \(eastdevon.gov.uk\)](#).

#### Energy Bills Support Scheme – Alternative Funding

BEIS (Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy) wrote to local authorities on 18 November 2022 to advise that they are requiring local authorities to work in partnership to deliver the Alternative Funding Scheme (see appendix 2 for details) There is approximately £1million households across the UK who do not directly contract with a domestic electricity supplier and therefore miss out on the Energy Bills Support Scheme. The government are providing a one-off payment of £400 of support to applicants via their bank accounts. The government will host the application form and we will be expected to verify eligibility and make

the payment. This is a different approach to how we've operated previous government schemes and it is still unclear how data will be passed between government systems and our office. We are still waiting on further guidance for the scheme however the government expect the scheme to go live in January 2023.

### Energy Rebate Scheme (Main & Discretionary Scheme)

The Discretionary Energy Rebate Scheme closed on 30 November 2022 and our priority up until then was to ensure that we deployed all the government funding to our residents. The main scheme was due to be closed on 30 September 2022 but was extended until 30 November 2022. Our current priority is now to complete the government return in relation to both schemes including the reconciliations, governance arrangements, our approach for our discretionary scheme, etc.

As Members may recall under our local scheme we targeted the majority of funding at households where there was a resident with a disability or carer present. Although we received a good number of applications we also found that there were a number of residents who didn't want the funding. For those residents that couldn't apply online, staff resources were needed to support residents being able to make a claim and we also had to undertake a lot of phone work and repeated reminders to encourage applications. Despite these measures not everyone made an application. Overall, delivering the Energy Rebate Scheme (main and discretionary) has taken a significant amount of staff resources which only came to an end mid December 2022. Despite this being the largest scheme we've had to deliver at short notice we've provided financial support to over 47,000 households and provided circa £7.268m in financial support to our residents.

### 3.2 Other priorities (Core work)

In addition to the above government schemes we also have to deliver on the following:

- **Business Rates**
  - Business Rates Revaluation – All businesses are being revalued (last revaluation was 2017) and as part of this work we need to ensure the new rating list is implanted onto our billing system, all reconciliations are carried out and that the lists are kept aligned until 1 April ahead of annual billing.
  - As part of the Autumn Statement the government announced a number of new rate relief schemes – Supporting Small Businesses (supporting businesses with the impact of revaluation), continuation of the Expanded Retail Discount Scheme (increasing from 50% to 75%) and new transitional arrangements.
  - Business rates annual billing work commences in late January and as this will be more complex due to revaluation this will require more resources to test, etc before issuing annual bills end of February/early March.

This is the busiest time of the financial year for Revenues and Benefits teams as we prepare for annual billing whilst also moving into the last quarter of the collection cycle.

## **4.0 Resources**

4.1 At this stage it is unclear what the demand will be this winter and how resource intensive the latest government schemes (Alternative Funding Scheme) will be on the Service especially as they are expecting this to be delivered at pace. Once we are issued with the guidance we will be in a better position to know what additional resources are needed and our capacity to set up and administer new schemes. BEIS have also indicated that we are likely to be involved with administering the Alternative Fuel Payment but again we don't have any details on timeliness or on scheme guidance.

- 4.2 As mentioned we are keen to part use the Cost of Living Hardship Fund to build upon proactive measures to address poor energy rated properties especially those occupied by our vulnerable residents who are also in low income households. If members are in agreement with this approach then in mid to late January we can start scoping up our approach as this will involve working with partners. This will include how we can resource this project and the appetite from partner agencies to work collaboratively on solving underlying causes.
- 4.3 We are currently recruiting to vacant posts as well as bringing in two additional temporary staff to support the additional work. However, we are very much reliant on utilising existing staff on these additional areas due to the knowledge, skills and experience needed to set these schemes up as well as administer applications.

## **5.0 Summary**

- 5.1 As can be seen there are a number of schemes we have delivered or in the process of delivering that are providing support to low income households but require resources to implement.
- 5.2 Anyone struggling is able to access support now as they can be dealt with under the Household Support Fund. The government have already indicated that they will be extending the Household Support Fund post 31 March 2023.
- 5.3 The proposed draft Cost of Living Hardship Policy provides flexibility in how this funding is utilised and means if we do identify the need to provide further targeted support then there is also provision to do that within this policy.
- 5.4 At this stage we consider that the £257,000 currently available within the Hardship Fund is sufficient but this will be monitored and an update will be provided at the next Poverty panel meeting on the demand for HSF and Cost of Living Hardship Fund including balances of each budget.
- 5.5 Should we run out of HSF we can still support households in need by utilising the Cost of Living Hardship Fund.
- 5.5 It is important that we take a joined up approach to all these different schemes to ensure that we are able to support those most in need and where current support does not go far enough as well as linking in with other funds available by partner organisations.
- 5.6 Members of the Poverty panel agreed to this approach at their meeting on 8 December 2022 where a briefing paper and draft policy was presented.

### **Financial implications:**

The financial implications have been outlined in the report and the funds identified to support this Policy are in place.

### **Legal implications:**

What is proposed is within the authority of Cabinet to agree and the policy appears reasonable. Members must have regard to the equalities impact assessment prepared to support the proposal in terms of discharging the public sector equality duty. Otherwise there are no legal implications requiring comment.

## Financial Hardship Support due to Cost of Living

Issue details	
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Cost of Living Hardship Fund Policy</b>
<b>Version number</b>	<b>2.0</b>
<b>Officer responsible:</b>	<b>Service Lead – Revenues, Benefits, corporate Customer Services</b>
<b>Authorisation by:</b>	
<b>Authorisation date:</b>	

History of most recent Policy Changes – Must be completed			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Origin of change (eg change in legislation)</b>
2022	All	<b>Updated to reflect funding to be used to support the impact of the current cost of living instead of Covid-19</b>	December 2022 Poverty Panel meeting.
<b>27 April 2020</b>		<b>Covid-19 Financial Hardship Fund Policy</b>	<b>Delegated Officer decision</b>

# East Devon District Council

## Cost of Living Hardship Fund Policy

### 1 Why has the council introduced this policy?

The Council has provided funding to financially support residents who are struggling to afford essential bills due to the cost of living crisis.

### What is the council's policy?

#### 2.0 Objectives

- 2.1 This fund is available to help ease the financial pressure on households who are on low incomes and who are struggling to afford essentials. As part of administering this fund along with short term emergency support we will also explore how we can provide financial support to achieve long term outcomes. This fund will only be used when it is not possible to draw upon other available financial support schemes, such as the Household Support Fund
- 2.2 Although the focus of this fund is on direct support to applicants, it can also be used to support our partners who are working with us directly in helping address and solve the wider issues affecting residents who are experiencing financial hardship that have been referred to them.
- 2.3 The scheme will compliment and support other schemes already running within East Devon District Council such as the Household Support Fund, Discretionary Housing Payments, Council Tax Exceptional Hardship Payments and other government schemes we are administering on their behalf.

#### 3.0 Eligibility Criteria

- 3.1 Our eligibility criteria balances supporting as many residents as we can with targeting our limited funds to support those who need our help the most.

##### Applicants must:

- Be over the age of 16; and
- Live in the District (as their main residence); and
- Be without sufficient resources to meet the immediate short-term needs of themselves or dependents.
- not have received financial assistance from another source for the same reason or have been declined for the same support from another fund unless due to unavailable funding.

##### 3.2 The scheme will not award:

- Mortgage support - homeowners could still qualify for the other elements of the Fund (such as food, energy, water, essentials linked to energy and water and wider essentials). Where a homeowner is having difficulty with their mortgage payments, they should contact their lender as soon as possible to discuss their circumstances as lenders will have a set procedure to assist.
- Payments for debt and money advice services



#### **4.0 Application Process – for residents**

- 4.1 Applications for the Cost of Living Hardship Fund will be made via our online request for Financial Support form for direct applications from residents or a referral agency.
- 4.2 All applicants will be required to have a telephone interview with an officer to complete a basic financial assessment to determine the need for assistance and to ascertain what measures the applicant is taking to alleviate the situation.
- 4.3 EDDC may request any reasonable evidence in support of an application.
- 4.4 The Financial Resilience team will administer the scheme on behalf of the Council. The type and level of assistance will take account of any circumstances that make the applicant or their family vulnerable, for example the number of dependent children, physical/mental health issues, or incidence of Domestic Violence and Abuse.
- 4.5 A declaration will be signed by the applicant which will allow the Council to share information with third parties to help prevent fraud. Records will be kept on each application approved.
- 4.6 An award will not usually be a cash payment but made through the use of electronic vouchers (including post office vouchers) or invoices for payment being sent directly to East Devon District Council. All awards from the fund will be made as quickly as possible to meet the agreed needs of the household.
- 4.7 Support will usually be provided from the fund once. In exceptional circumstances repeat applications will be considered on merit. In the case of repeat applications further work and referrals to other agencies will be discussed with the applicant and any further awards may be conditional on the agreed identified actions (e.g. referrals to Exeter Community Energy to help reduce ongoing energy costs).
- 4.8 If the applicant has not applied for a welfare benefit they are entitled to receive or Council Tax Reduction they will be provided with, or signposted to, support to make a claim.

#### **4.9 Application process for requests for funding from partners**

Request for funding from our direct partners will be via agreement with the Assistant Director for Revenues, Benefits & Customer Services and in line with our procurement policy where necessary

#### **5.0 Assessment process**

- 5.1 It is important that the scheme is discretionary – there is no legal right to the scheme; it should be flexible and avoid any rigid interpretation of rules.
- 5.2 Decisions will depend on the individual applicant's circumstances/needs determined by the financial assessment and the reasons provided on the application. Officers should be relatively free to determine the financial help or support required depending on the individual household situation and the short term crisis.
- 5.3 In making a decision on whether to make an award from the scheme and the amount to be awarded the officer will consider the eligibility criteria and our approach to prioritisation, as well as the funds that we have available at the time of application. Once we have assessed whether the application falls within our eligibility criteria, we will consider whether the applicant meets one or more of our prioritisation criteria.
- 5.4 Our officers will consider all the information at their disposal to assess the risk faced by the applicant and the relative priority of their application including but not limited to:

- Applicants financial circumstances
- Access to other forms of financial support
- Circumstances and reasons for the claim
- Preventative measures taken by the applicant or partner
- Impact of making or not making of the award
- The budgetary situation of the fund

If the officer feels that there are sufficient grounds for an award to be made based on priority and vulnerability they will then consider the amount of the award.

- 5.5 As part of the application, the resident will be asked to give an indication of the support that is required. However, the assessing officer will determine the amount of support based on other factors such as; access to other funds, financial circumstances and available budget, etc.

## **6.0 Advising you of a decision**

Once the officer has made a decision on your application we will give you a written notice advising you:

- Whether an award has been made and the reason for the decision
- The intended use of the award
- The amount of the award

We will also let you know about other services in the council and the community which may be able to provide further support. We will also advise you as to how the award will be made.

## **7.0 Reviewing unsuccessful applications**

- 7.1 The scheme is discretionary and there are no appeal rights to an Independent Tribunal, but you can ask us to look at your case again within 5 days of our decision if you are not happy with the outcome of your application. Requests for a review of our decision need to be made in writing. It must state the reasons why you are asking for a review of the decision and be signed and dated.
- 7.2 Decision will be reviewed by the Benefits and Financial Resilience Manager or the Assistant Director for Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services.
- 7.3 You will be notified of the review decision within 14 days of your request. This decision will be final. If you do not have access to a computer, you can get in touch with us and we will advise you on how you can request a review.

## **8.0 Other considerations**

- 8.1 As this is a limited fund once exhausted the scheme will close. The budget will be monitored on a regular basis.
- 8.2 As this policy has been established to respond rapidly to the cost of living crisis it may need to be revised to ensure the scheme meets the needs of both our residents and the Council. Delegated authority is given to the Assistant Director for Revenues, Benefits, Customer Services in consultation with the Finance Portfolio Holder and the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Homes and Communities to adjust the policy where further need which has not

yet been identified or in the administration of the scheme and would need to be done in conjunction with an equalities impact assessment to ensure that we had considered the impact of providing targeted support against those with protected characteristics. This would also include providing targeted support of a fixed amount to a particular cohort by inviting them to make a claim.

8.3 In line with the principles of good administration, all applications will be treated fairly and consistently under the terms we have set out here. Applications will be processed in a timely manner.

8.4 We will monitor this scheme on an ongoing basis. We will regularly review the scheme to ensure that we are making the best use of the money we have available. To support our monitoring and evaluation, we may get in touch with applicants after decisions on awards have been made in order to ask for feedback about the scheme and may also share your data with other colleagues in the council to support our monitoring and evaluation of the scheme.

## **9.0 How will we use & share your information**

9.1 The Council will only collect data relevant to your application. Your data will also be held on our digital platforms and will be protected using up-to-date technical and organisational security measures.

9.2 Your data will be used to:

- Determine your eligibility for a cost of living hardship payment
- Contact you about decisions or updates related to an application
- Issue the payment to your nominated Bank or Building Society account where appropriate
- Monitor the needs of our residents to enable the aims of the poverty strategy to be met and help inform future policies, strategies and operational matters.

9.3 Your personal data will not be kept longer than necessary (in line with our existing retention schedule).

9.4 Information collected during the application process will be used to assess your claim. Information may be cross matched with other data held by the Council and third-party agencies e.g. Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) for verification purposes.

9.5 The Council can also share data with both internal and external organisations for the purposes of validating any applications you may make or have made for other Council services such as Housing Applications, School Placements, Homeless Applications.

9.6 With your permission we may share your data with partner agencies to enable them to provide the necessary support in order to achieve long term outcomes in building financial resilience.

9.7 In addition, we may also share your data within the organisation to support our efforts to redirect you to other support that may be available (for example our Discretionary Housing Payment Scheme, Council Tax Reduction Scheme).

## **10.0 Fraud**

10.1 Your data may be shared within the organisation or with other Government agencies in order to prevent and/or detect potentially fraudulent activity. Subject to a legal gateway,

your information may also be shared for the prevention of fraud and criminal activity with (list not exhaustive):

- The police
- Immigration Service, Absconder Services and/or UK Border Agency
- Health and social care organisations
- Other Local Authorities

10.2 Failure by the applicant to disclose a material fact or to make a false application will be treated as a fraudulent application.

10.3 Where fraud has been detected the applicant will be refused any further assistance and where appropriate, the Council may prosecute the applicant.

## 11.0 Links related Policies/Strategies, Procedures and Legislation

Discretionary Housing Payment Policy

Council Tax Discretionary & Exceptional Hardship Policy

Council Tax Reduction Scheme Policy

Household Support Fund Policy

Appendix 2

## Government Support – Support with Energy Costs

Since February 2022 the government have announced a number of support packages to help residents with rising energy costs and these are summarised below:

No	Scheme	Amount
Announced 3 February 2022		
1	Council Tax Energy Rebate – Main & Discretionary Scheme <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-council-tax-rebate-2022-23-billing-authority-guidance">The council tax rebate 2022-23 – billing authority guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a>	
1a	Main scheme (government criteria based scheme) Residents living in Council Tax Bands A-D. Eligibility based on living at the address on 1 April 2022. Administered by local authorities. In East Devon we paid out £6,998,500 to 46,659 households Scheme closed on 30 September.	One off amount of £150.00. (Non means tested but linked to your council tax band)
1b	Discretionary Scheme – we were allocated an amount of £269,850 to provide extra support with energy costs. Scheme closes 30 November 2022 and any unspent funds will need to be repaid to government. Scheme approved by Cabinet. <a href="#">Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 4th May, 2022, 6.00 pm - East Devon</a>	Two levels of payments £40 or £150 (Based on eligibility to certain qualifying

	<p>Our local scheme is in two parts – targeted support and special cases to be considered on a case by case basis.</p> <p>Targeted support was directed at those on low incomes who were not eligible under the main scheme and alongside this to provide an additional top-up payment to disabled households and households with carers.</p>	benefits or council tax discounts).
Announced 26 May 2022		
2	<p>Energy Bills Support Scheme</p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/getting-the-energy-bills-support-scheme-discount">Getting the Energy Bills Support Scheme discount - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p> <p>Provides a £400* non-repayable discount to households with a domestic electricity connection in England, Scotland and Wales to help with their energy bills over winter 2022 to 2023.</p> <p>Discount will be applied:</p> <p>£66 in October and November</p> <p>£67 in December, January, February, &amp; March</p> <p>*This replaced the £200 repayable discount that was previously announced in February 2022.</p>	<p>One off £400 discount off your electricity bill.</p> <p>Non means tested</p>
3	<p><b>Cost of Living Support – providing 3 different levels of targeted support and extending the Household Support Fund</b></p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/cost-of-living-support-factsheet">Cost of living support factsheet: 26 May 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p>	
3a	<p>£650 one-off Cost of Living Payment for those on means tested benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Universal Credit</li> <li>• income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA)</li> <li>• income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)</li> <li>• Income Support</li> <li>• Pension Credit</li> <li>• Child Tax Credit</li> <li>• Working Tax Credit</li> </ul> <p><u>Qualifying period and amounts – no award if qualifying period nil UC award</u></p> <p>£326 for qualifying period 26.04.2022 – 25.05.2022</p> <p>£324 for qualifying period 26.08.2022 to 25.09.2022</p> <p>Tax Credit has annual award of £26 or above</p>	<p>£650 one off payment which is means tested</p>
3b	<p><b>b) £150 Disability Cost of Living Payment</b></p> <p>For those receiving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance Allowance</li> <li>• Constant Attendance Allowance</li> <li>• Disability Living Allowance for adults</li> <li>• Disability Living Allowance for children</li> <li>• Personal Independence Payment</li> </ul>	<p>£150</p>

3c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Armed Forces Independence Payment</li> <li>War Pension Mobility Supplement</li> </ul> <p>Must have received payment for one of these qualifying benefits as of 25.05.2022 to get the payment.</p> <p><b>c). One off £300 Pensioner Cost of Living Payment</b></p> <p>Pensioner households will receive an extra £300 this year to help them cover the rising cost of energy this winter.</p> <p>All pensioners who receive the Winter Fuel Payment (between £200-£300) will receive an extra £300 this year to help them cover the rising cost of energy this winter.</p>	£300
3d	<p><b>£500m increase and extension to the Household Support Fund (HSF)</b></p> <p>The HSF helps those in most need with payments towards the rising cost of food, energy and water bills. Funding is provided to upper tier councils.</p> <p>As part of Team Devon framework, East Devon receives a proportion of that funding in order to operate our own HSF scheme.</p>	No fixed amount but local policy to be agreed.
Updated December 2022		
4	<p><b>Energy Price Guarantee</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.gov.uk">Energy Price Guarantee - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a></p>	
a)	<p>The Energy Price Guarantee reduces (compared to the undiscounted price of energy) the amount you can be charged per unit of gas or electricity, to an annual equivalent of around £2,500 for a typical household in Great Britain. This means a typical household in Great Britain will save around £900 this Winter, compared to undiscounted energy prices under the price cap.</p> <p>Scheme will be in place from – 1October 2022 to 31 March 2023.</p>	Typical household will save £900 this winter – reducing bills by roughly a third.
b)	<p><b>If not using main gas for your heating</b></p> <p>The Alternative Fuel Payment (AFP) will provide a one-off £200 payment to UK households that use alternative fuels for heating, such as heating oil or LPG.</p> <p>Awaiting for scheme details but it is likely that we will have to support have just found out that local authorities will be required to support government in the administration of this scheme.</p>	One off £200 payment who use alternative fuels for heating.
c)	<p><b>For households who do not directly contract with a domestic electricity supplier and therefore miss out on the Energy Price Guarantee (EPG).</b></p> <p>The Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Funding Support will provide a one off £400 payment for those households who haven't benefitted from the EPG because the household is not on a domestic supply. For instance this could apply to residents who live in care homes or in properties where the pay to the Landlord who is on a non-domestic supply.</p>	One off £400 payment