

Decision Notice

Delegated Decision

Decision No:	DD25
Subject:	HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND
Notification Date:	20 December 2021
Implementation Date:	20 December 2021
Decision taken by:	Mike Davis, Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) and Section 151 Officer
Delegated Authority:	<p>(a) Delegation C48 to the Section 151 Officer of Section 6 (Scheme of Officer Delegations) of Part 3 (Responsibility for Functions) of the Constitution: ‘To make application for and to accept grants or other assistance on behalf of the Council.’</p> <p>(b) In accordance with Cabinet decision CAB 98 of 1 March 2021, the Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) is ‘authorised, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance and Digital to administer funding for local businesses and families as intended by Government’.</p>
Decision Type:	Executive Non-Key Decision
Call-In to Apply?	No (<i>Call-in does not apply to Non-Key Officer decisions</i>)
Classification:	Unrestricted

Reason for the Decision:	To receive and implement Dover District Council’s share of the Household Support Grant in accordance with the Government’s intentions and timetable for the grant.
Decision:	That Dover District Council accepts the award of £171,826 of Household Support Fund from Kent County Council and applies it to make grants to local partners.

1. Background

- 1.1 Kent County Council (KCC) has been awarded an £11.065 million Household Support Grant from government. This grant is intended to be used to “support households who would otherwise struggle to buy food or pay essential utility bills or meet other essential living costs or housing costs (in exceptional cases of genuine emergency) this winter as the economy recovers”.
- 1.2 Eligible spend includes:
 - (a) Food.
 - (b) Energy and water (including sewerage).
 - (c) Essentials linked to energy and water (including sanitary products, warm clothing, soap, blankets, boiler service/repair, purchase of equipment including fridges, freezers, ovens, etc.).

- (d) Wider essentials including but are not limited to, support with other bills including broadband or phone bills, clothing, and essential transport related costs such as repairing a car, buying a bicycle or paying for fuel.
- (e) Housing Costs in exceptional cases of genuine emergency (eligibility for Discretionary Housing Payments must first be considered and whether the claimant is at statutory risk of homelessness and therefore owed a duty of support through the Homelessness Prevention Grant).

1.3 KCC has decided to allocate 20% of the £11 million grant to district councils as follows:

District	50% Population: 25% Deprivation: 25% Weekly cases
	£
Ashford	183,832
Canterbury	207,285
Dartford	173,538
Dover	171,826
Folkestone & Hythe	171,358
Gravesham	168,702
Maidstone	218,435
Sevenoaks	143,843
Swale	244,416
Thanet	222,325
Tonbridge & Malling	160,227
Tunbridge Wells	147,282
	2,213,076

1.4 Government requires all funding to be spent by 31 March 2022. It is proposed to allocate the funds to support families and over 50s in food and/or fuel poverty crisis by allocation of provisions or vouchers, to reach those residents and households most in need of financial support over the winter months, as follows:

- (a) Dover Foodbank - £40,000
- (b) Deal Foodbank (which includes rural provision)- £40,000
- (c) Sandwich Age Concern – £20,000
- (d) Deal Centre (Age Concern) - £20,000
- (e) Dover Riverside Centre (Friend of Age UK) - £20,000
- (f) CAB Dover District - £20,000
- (g) United Families - £1,500
- (h) SWEP - £10,326 (to support rough sleepers in severe weather)

2. Identification of Options

2.1 The options identified are:

- (a) Decline the grant
- (b) Set up a DDC-managed process for applications from individuals
- (c) Use the grant to make payments to local partner organisations

3. Evaluation of Options

Decline the Grant

3.1 This would mean forgoing £172,000 of support to hard-pressed individuals and families within the Dover district. For this reason, this is not the preferred option.

Set up a DDC-managed process for applications from individuals

3.2 This would entail establishing some form of means testing and grant award system. It would require staff resources and all grants would have to be made by 31 March 2022. There is a risk that this would be resource intensive and would struggle to meet the deadline, with possible clawback of the grant. For these reasons this is not the preferred option.

Use the grant to make payments to local partner organisations

3.3 As set out above, the grant could be awarded to several partner organisations to use for the government's specified purposes. These organisations are in close touch with the needs of their clients and their work with clients will meet the requirements of the grant, as set out by government.

3.4 By making the awards DDC would meet the government's timetable and avoid the risk of clawback.

3.5 For these reasons this is the preferred option.

4. Any Conflicts of Interest Declared?

4.1 None.

5. Resource Implications

5.1 The grants will be fully funded by the award from KCC. There are no resource implications.

6. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

6.1 There are no climate change or environmental implications.

7. Corporate Implications

7.1 Comment from the Director of Finance: Accountancy have been consulted on the financial matters in this report and have no further comments to add. (LS)

7.2 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council: The Head of Governance and HR has been consulted during the preparation of this report and has no further comment to make.

7.3 Comment from the Equalities Officer: This report does not specifically highlight any equality implications, however in discharging their duties members are required to comply with the public sector equality duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149>

8. Background Papers

8.1 None.

Contact Officer: Mike Davis, Strategic Director (Corporate Resources)

https://dovergovuk.sharepoint.com/sites/msteams_389aa4/Shared Documents/General/Cabinet Council Scrutiny and LF/Household Support Fund/Delegated Decision Notice v2.doc