

Household Support Fund

April 2023 – March 2024

Allocation Proposal

May 2023

SUMMARY

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (“the Secretary of State”) has allocated Croydon Council £6,027,379 Household Support Fund Grant (HSF) for the period 1 April 2023 - 31 March 2024.

The purpose of the HSF is to provide cost of living crisis support to vulnerable households most in need, to help those who are struggling to afford energy and water charges, food, and related essentials such as appliances.

The funding can also be used to support wider appropriate essentials such as transport related costs and housing costs (in exceptional circumstances, where existing support does not meet this need), and a small amount of HSF can be used to provide complimentary advice.

Authorities are expected to prioritise support with energy costs, particularly for households who may not be eligible for other help that the Government has recently made available but are nevertheless in need and require crisis support.

This report sets out the Council’s proposals to allocate the HSF in accordance with the Household Support Fund Grant requirements (Determination 2023 No 31/6496).

We propose to release the application-based proportion of the HSF in phases during Spring/Summer, Autumn, and Winter. This will ensure that sufficient funds are reserved for the duration of the scheme, particularly during the colder months of the year. Other services allocated discretionary HSF budgets will be expected to do likewise.

BACKGROUND

The Government launched the Household Support Fund (HSF) in October 2021 and to date Croydon has used the HSF to provide 88,449¹ packages of support to households in the Borough.

The fund’s initial aim was to support vulnerable households across the country over the Winter and covered the period 1 October 2021 - 31 March 2022.

There followed two further six - month rounds of funding to address the ongoing rise in the cost of living; from 1 April 2022 - 30 September 2022, and then again from 1 October 2022 - 31 March 2023. Each of these awards have been for just over £3m.

The most recent round of funding for 1 October 2022 – 31 March 2023 alone has provided help to over 21,658 households in Croydon (as of 1 March 2023).

The Government has extended the HSF for a further year to take account of Global inflationary challenges and rising cost of living. On 20 February 2023 Croydon was informed that we will receive £6,027,379 for the 12-month period 1 April 2023 - March 2024.

¹This includes residents who have received more than one type of support since the fund started or repeated bi-annual support (such as food vouchers for qualifying school children). Due to evolving reporting requirements, it has not been possible to extrapolate a reliable figure for the number of unique households or individuals that have received support since October 2021.

Distribution of HSF since October 2021

Total HSF for Croydon	October 2021- March 2022	April 2022 - September 2022	October 2022 – February 2023	April 2023- March 2024
Duration	6 months	6 months	6 months	12 months
Total HSF Award	£3,013,689.49	£3,013,689.49	£3,013,689.49	£6,027,379

Education	October 2021- March 2022	April 2022 - September 2022	October 2022 – February 2023	April 2023- March 2024
Allocation	£1,728,750.00	£1,321,000.00	£1,610,000.00	£3,080,040
Number of children helped	Not available ²	25,583 ³	21,467 ⁴	21,467(E) ⁵

Variation in data capture and reporting requirements ²Oct 21-Mar 22 Returns not available, ³Apr 22- Sep 22 grouped all children helped by HSF including those who had been identified by Education as having free school meal entitlement or other low-income discretionary need and households with children who had received other forms of HSF. ⁴Oct 22 -Feb 23 Children identified by Education, ⁵Apr 23-Mar 24 Children identified by Education (estimate).

Discretionary Support Team	October 2021- March 2022	April 2022 - September 2022	October 2022 – March 2023	April 2023- March 2024
Allocation	£388,492.00	£440,185.83	£527,340.49	£ 900,000
Number of Households	1151	1947	1306 ⁶	4,000(E)
Number of support packages	3198	3318	2094 ⁶	4,500(E)

⁶Oct 22-March 23 Figures lower as distribution began in December 23 and still to include figures for March 23.

Direct Support	October 2021- March 2022	April 2022 - September 2022	October 2022 – February 2023	April 2023- March 2024
Allocation	£896,447.49	£1,252,503.66	£876,349.00	£2,047,339(E)

The number of recipients of direct support will be included in the monthly returns for April 2023 - 2024.

DETAILED PROPOSAL**Government Guidance on Household Support Grant 2023 – 2024**

The expectation is the fund should be used to support vulnerable households in the most need, in crisis and to prevent escalation.

Authorities are encouraged to prioritise supporting households with the cost of energy. The fund can also be used to provide support with food, essentials linked to energy and water, wider essentials such as appliances, and housing costs (in exceptional circumstances, where existing support does not meet this need).

There also remains an expectation of Authorities to particularly consider those groups who may not have benefited from any of the recent cost of living support, this may include, but is

not limited to people who are entitled to but not claiming qualifying benefits for other Cost of Living payment, people who are claiming Housing Benefit and people who begin a claim or return to a benefit after the relevant qualifying period.

There may be groups who are vulnerable to rising prices even though they are supported through these schemes, for example large families or single-income families. It is important to stress that the fund is intended to cover a wide range of low-income households in need including families with children of all ages, pensioners, unpaid carers, care leavers and disabled people.

Key changes

There are a number of changes to the guidance for how the HSF for 2023 – 2024 can be spent. The key differences are:

- Authorities must make sure that the mandatory element of application-based support delivered through the scheme is clearly advertised to residents and is available throughout the majority of the fund period, either continuously or in regular intervals over the course of the scheme.
- Details of the scheme must also be publicised on a dedicated website page with specific requirements set out in the guidance.
- Funding for supplementary advice services, including debt and benefit advice, is now considered eligible spend within the HSF scheme. As the primary focus of this grant is on practical support, expenditure on such services is expected to be limited and linked to the provision of practical support.
- It is mandatory that in any publicity material for the scheme, including via online channels and media releases, Authorities make clear that this funding is being provided by the Department for Work and Pensions or the UK Government.
- The guidance document itself has been reduced in size and there is now separate Management Information and Delivery plan guidance.
- Delivery plans must be signed off by both the 151 Officer (Jane West Corporate Director of Resources and S151 Officer) and the responsible Cabinet Member (Cllr Lynne Hale Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Homes).

The Government Launch Letter, Grant Determination and Guidance are included below:



FINAL Household Support Fund (2023) FINAL Household Support Fund (2023) FINAL Household Support Fund (2023)

Identifying need and targeting support in Croydon

Croydon has over 43,948 households known to be on low incomes (as of 22 March 2023). Source: Department for Work and Pensions data share file 22 March 2023.

Fuel poverty by ward

The latest published Government Fuel Poverty Statistics highlight the wards with the highest proportion of households in fuel poverty:

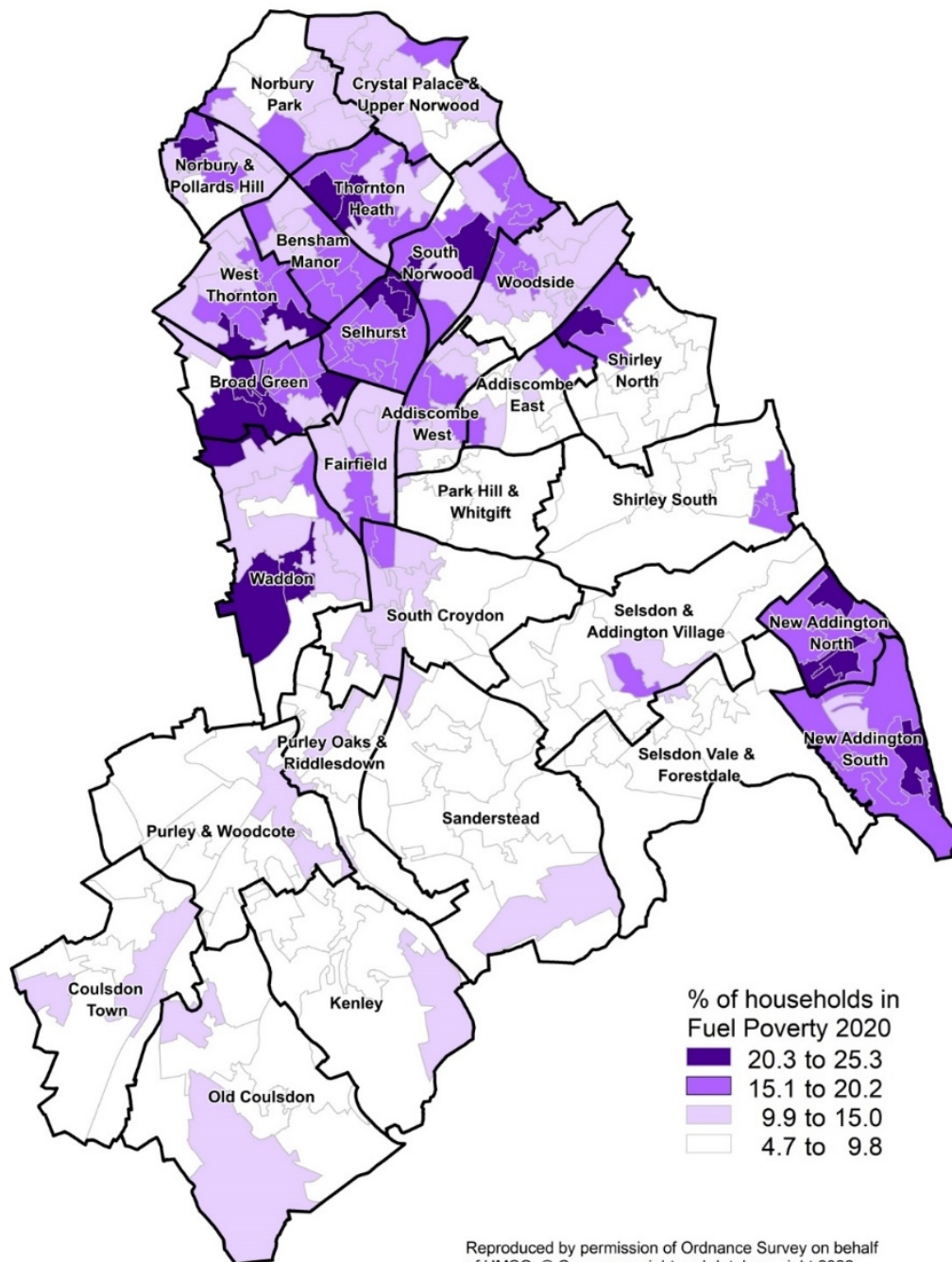
- Waddon
- New Addington
- Broad Green
- Selhurst
- Shirley North

- South Norwood
- Thornton Heath
- West Thornton
- Norbury & Pollards Hill

This evidence is based on research conducted in 2020. Although the numbers of households in fuel poverty are likely to have risen locally as the crisis continues, an assumption has been made that this is a proportional increase.

Targeted marketing campaigns will run in the above nine wards during Spring/Summer, Autumn, and Winter to maximise awareness and take-up from those most in need.

Percentage of Households in Fuel Poverty 2020



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Applicants in receipt of benefit, by benefit type and family profile

The DWP has provided the Council with a range of information to help calculate budgets for people with one or more target needs based on the type of benefit they receive.

The data helps to identify people with specific needs such as medical need, disability, health and wellbeing issues, child food poverty, older people, and households in low-paid employment.

Claimant profile by benefit type	Number
On UC and free prescription threshold (with children)	11,636
On UC and free prescription threshold (without children)	16,236
On UC with limited capacity for work (with children)	2,093
On UC with limited capacity for work (without children)	6,673
On UC with earnings below Free School Meals (FSM)	9,120
On Pension Credit receiving Guarantee Credit and/or Saving Credit	2,009
On income related Employment and Support Allowance	4,804
HB only (not eligible for means tested cost of living payment)	3,047

Source: Department for Work and Pensions data share file 22 March 2023.

The Council will use periodically updated information from DWP to help target support and validate individual claims for application-based support for the duration of the HSF.

Other Households

Support is not restricted only to vulnerable households in receipt of benefits, and we are using other sources of information to identify vulnerable households including advice from schools, social workers, health and wellbeing practitioners, housing support officers and third-party organisations.

CROYDONS PRIORITIES AND APPROACH

We will offer a combination of application-based support, direct support, and discretionary emergency support.

We will complete specific campaigns that incorporate the following priorities:

- Targeted marketing in the most deprived wards
- People who do not qualify for other cost of living support
- People who pay for energy and water through pre-paid top up meters
- People with medical conditions that require additional energy
- People with disabilities inc.mental health, physical health and learning disabilities
- School age children normally eligible for free school meals due to low income
- Unpaid carers, including those who are not already known to support services
- Care experienced young people in temporary accommodation
- Tenants who pay energy and water bills through service charges
- Tenants who require additional energy due to lack of energy efficiency/ condition of

- People who are homeless/at risk of homelessness not covered by other support
- Older people via direct applications, usually if they do not receive alternative support

TYPES OF SUPPORT AVAILABLE

Application based support

- Top-ups for pre-paid energy and water meters
- Assistance with energy and water bills debts
- Food vouchers
- Essential items relating energy or water e.g., clothing, bedding, heater, an appliance
- Essential items relating to food e.g., slow cooker, microwave, cooker, fridge
- Items related to essential transport e.g., travel ticket, bicycle and helmet
- Other essential household items e.g., furniture, minor adaptations, draft excluders
- Housing support (in exceptional circumstances, excluding mortgage payment)
- Typically 1-2 week turnaround. Urgent applications 1-3 working days

Direct support

- Fixed credits to rent/ service charge/ council tax accounts
- Vouchers in place of fixed credits where necessary
- Food vouchers for school children from low-income households ordinarily entitled to free school meals
- Gifted energy efficient oil filled radiators for no-heat households

Discretionary Emergency Support

- First point of contact capped immediate crisis assistance
- Distributed by/or referrals from, schools, social workers, voluntary organisations
- Vouchers for warm clothing, shoes or food, pre-paid energy top-up, travel cost
- In exceptional circumstances one-off cash help

CRITERIA FOR APPLICATION BASED FUND

A. Primary criteria

- Evidence of a low income, and
- Evidence of a crisis or
- Evidence of hardship or
- Risk of escalation (including referral from statutory services), and
- An identified need e.g., vulnerability disability, health issue, carer, children

B. Secondary criteria

- Priority given to first time applicants, those not eligible for other types of help
- Typically, one appliance only per application
- Awards typically capped and prioritised in accordance with published guidelines
- Additional discretion can be applied in exceptional circumstances
- Support with housing costs will only be provided in exceptional circumstances
- It will not be awarded for ongoing housing costs or unsustainable tenancies
- It will not be awarded to provide mortgage support
- In exceptional and genuine emergencies, it can provide support for historical arrears

TARGETED MARKETING CAMPAIGN

A targeted campaign in the wards identified as having the highest levels of fuel poverty will form part of the Croydon-wide communication plan to raise awareness and improve accessibility particularly for people who may be least able to access the HSF.

The communication plan will include professional and community partners and encourage informed word of mouth promotion and take-up.

The campaign will be updated and repeated three times to account for seasonal changes during Spring/Summer, Autumn, and Winter.

Information will be accessible and produced in a variety of formats and channels, not just on-line.

The Croydon webpage for the Housing Support Fund

- The HSF fund, how it is allocated and the award criteria
- How to apply for the application-based support
- Links to the Councils Healthy Homes page and other cost of living support sites
- Links to free money and debt management services

Multi-Media publications

- Quarterly promotional material on local platforms
- e-newsletters, Facebook, Twitter, radio, and other social media
- Croydon Open House Tenant and Leaseholder newsletter

Professional and Community Promotion

- Agenda item for Statutory Partnership Boards, Management Team Meetings
- Electronic and paper flyers
- Local family and community hubs
- GP surgeries
- Referrals
- Periodic information pack sent to the partnership distribution list
- Flyers distributed to key sites, residents' associations
- Cost of Living Crisis Support Worker located in a Community Support Service

Promotional bus / mobile campaign vehicle

- Advertising in key target areas with greatest need

DELIVERING THE FUND

Working in partnership

Croydon Council already has several well-established working arrangements to promote and distribute the fund and propose to expand this successful collaborative approach to include a wider range of internal and external partners.

In principle agreement have been reached or are being worked through for Housing Needs to distribute the fund in partnership with the following services and agencies:

- Adult Social Care
- Children Social Care
- Education
- Healthy Homes
- Housing Management
- Job Centre
- Public Health
- Citizens Advice
- Third Party Organisation - referrals

(This is not an exhausted list and as with previous fund may change as discussions continue.)

ALLOCATION OF FUNDS**Summary Proposals for 2023 – 2024**

Allocation	Purpose/ client group	Amount
Education	School age children experiencing energy/food poverty, or at risk of food poverty during school holidays	£3,080,040
Discretionary Support Team	Direct applicants help with energy/water/food/essentials/emergency/ housing costs in exceptional circumstances	£ 900,000
Social Housing	Social tenants with higher energy needs/ energy paid via service charges/ not eligible for other funds	£ 700,000
Revenues and Benefits	To distribute to qualifying residents in accordance with the HSF criteria identified through the Council Tax service.	£ 600,000
Housing Need	Households at risk of homelessness/in temporary accommodation not covered by other support	£ 245,000
VCF distribution	A proportion of the fund will be allocated to a named voluntary sector organisation to award to qualifying residents in crisis	£ 80,000
CEYP	Care experienced young people	£ 80,000
Carers	Unpaid carers including those not known to other services	£ 80,000
Children Service	Vulnerable families with children known to social services	£ 67,000
Adult Services	Vulnerable adults known to social services	£ 60,000
Fund admin	Two admin officers to process applications /funds	£ 80,000
Publicity	Publicity to provide rolling promotion of funds through the year	£ 35,000
Healthy homes	Practical support for households in 'no heat' situations	£ 20,000
Contingency		£ 339
Total		£6,027,379

⁶Any remaining contingency not required for publicity will be appropriately allocated in phase three/four.

Detailed breakdown**A. Education**Proposed Allocation

£3,080,040 Average award(food) £120, (clothing) £50, No. Children 21,467 (E)

Breakdown

- £2,144,048 funding will be given to schools to fund 8 weeks of £15 food vouchers for families who would ordinarily qualify* for Free School Meals (FSM)
(17,867) children @ £15 x 8 weeks = £2,144,040
- £503,952 will be given to schools to provide discretionary crisis awards for warm protective clothing such as coats or shoes in exceptional circumstances
Estimate 10,080 awards @ £50.00 = £504,000
- £432,00 funding will be given to schools to provide discretionary awards for food for families not in receipt of FSM
(3,600) children @ £15 x 8 weeks = £432,000

*Families who ordinarily qualify due to welfare benefit entitlement. Does not match the Mayor of London announcement 100% FSM entitlement for primary school children.

Rationale

Croydon will continue to work with the Education Services to support children at risk of food poverty over school holidays and will extend the discretionary emergency support for food and essential clothing poverty during term time.

Each school will receive an allocated budget to issue FSM qualifying pupils 8 food vouchers worth £15 per voucher to cover 50% each school holiday period of two or more weeks.

Each school will also receive a discretionary budget calculated as a percentage of their FSM budget to offer discretionary support to children most in need to offer emergency support with essentials like warm clothing shoes or food.

There is a need to support families on the cusp of poverty that are unable to access other funds due to benefit eligibility. The discretionary element of the award can be used to help to address this issue.

It will be the responsibility of the schools to decide which families are entitled to this limited discretionary pot.

Schools will be made aware of the application channel for the HSF to signpost or refer families to the Discretionary Support Team and /or the Advice and Practical Support Workers.

B. Discretionary Support TeamProposed allocation

£900,000 Average award £150 - £250

Breakdown

- Energy support average value £150.00
- Food average value £150.00
- Essential appliances average value £250.00
- Other essentials average value £200
- £18,000 transactional fees to Family Fund

Residents will be able to make direct applications to the council for help with energy and water, food, essentials linked to energy and food and wider essentials linked to travel and household costs.

Awards will be assessed in accordance with Croydon's published eligibility criteria and guidance.

Rationale

Priority will be given to applicants with no energy supply or at immediate risk of no energy supply, who are not eligible for other cost of living crisis support, who have not previously received HSF.

Emergency help for households with pre-paid top-up meters are typically on the highest tariffs, with charges that peak when consumption increases and are therefore at most risk of having no supply. Qualifying applicants will typically receive three £50 top-up credits.

Billed energy charges are usually evenly spread across the year to allow for more consistent household budgeting, and suppliers are more willing to negotiate with customers to prevent disconnection during the current economic climate. HSF help with energy bills will typically be capped at £150.

Very limited funds will be made available in exceptional circumstances to help with one-off essential travel costs.

The Councils will typically limit replacement essential appliances or bicycles to one item per household and prioritise households who have not previously received HSF.

The value of individual appliances has been reviewed and capped to achieve the best value for money whilst achieving energy efficiency.

- Cooker – capped at £260 (electric) or multi-function large microwave/oven/grill
- Standard microwave (if cooker / multi-function microwave not suitable) capped at £100
- Slow cooker capped at £60
- Oil filled radiator capped at £90
- Fridge/freezer capped at £250 or £450 more energy efficient
- Boiler repairs (will need to allocate more budget)
- It is proposed that gas cookers are only provided in exceptional circumstances (to support long-term environmental sustainability targets and net-zero carbon emissions)
- Bicycle and safety helmet (capped at £250)

Administration

The two existing HSF funded administrative support assistants will have their agency contracts extended for a further 12 months. (See 'Detailed Allocation K' below) They will continue to work with the Discretionary Support Team to process the direct applications until the planned Housing Needs restructure in August 2023. They will then join another team within the Housing Needs Service (subject to consultation).

Referrals

The administrative support assistants will also assess households referred by third party public sector and voluntary sector organisations including, but not limited to:

- Croydon GP collaborative⁷ -
- Job Centre Plus
- Patient Advice and Liaison Service⁷ -
- Public Health Social Prescribers⁷ -
- Sickle cell and Thalassaemia Centre⁷ -
- South London and Maudsley NHS foundation⁷ -
- Temporary accommodation team
- Age UK⁷ -
- Alzheimer's Society
- Carers Support Centre Croydon⁷ -
- Family Justice Centre
- IASS⁷ -
- Mind
- South-West London Law Centre
- Step Change

⁷ Meetings being arranged with individual organisations to agree working arrangements

Distribution

As with previous HSF, Family Fund an established partner will work with the Discretionary Support Team and suppliers to distribute application-based awards. Awards are cashless, and the system does have the flexibility to make cash awards where needed.

C. Social Housing

Proposed allocation

£ 700,000

Typical award £250 - £650

Breakdown

A one-off payment of £400 for tenants under 65 who pay energy costs directly to the

Council via service charges.

An additional one-off payment of £150 to those tenants identified above who live in areas with the greatest energy poverty who pay some energy charges directly to the supplier.

A one-off payment will be made to those residents living in social housing known to have increased energy consumption (due to unsatisfactory stock condition) whilst awaiting planned maintenance (including Housing Association Stock).

Exceptionally and in genuine emergencies a one-off payment to provide support for housing costs or historic rent arrears (built up prior to an existing benefit claim for households in receipt of UC and HB).

Rationale

Social Housing tenants under 65 who pay energy costs directly to the Council via service charges are not eligible for support with energy bills. Residents over 65 usually receive additional age-related mandatory awards and can apply for HSF through the application-based HSF.

Residents in social housing with increased energy consumption due to the condition of stock that has been identified as requiring significant planned maintenance.

One off housing costs may include paying an amount towards historic arrears or towards essential start-up costs (furniture/appliance/removal) to enable a vulnerable tenant in need to move to suitable accommodation, sustain their tenancy or prevent a crisis from escalating.

The HSF will not be used to provide housing support on an ongoing basis or to support unsustainable tenancies.

Distribution

The award is cashless and will be credited to the resident's rent account or issued as vouchers for specific goods.

D. Revenue and Benefits

Proposed allocation

£ 600,000 Typical award £250 - £650

Discretionary Direct Payments will be made to people identified from the Council Tax register who qualify for HSF and may not be in receipt of other Cost of Living funds.

Distribution

The award is cashless and will be credited to the residents Council Tax Account or issued as vouchers for specific goods.

E. Housing Need

Proposed allocation

£245,000 Average award £350.00

Breakdown

There are approximately 3,500 households in temporary accommodation (including emergency accommodation).

An average award of £350.000 can help an estimated 700 households in crisis.

Rationale

A discretionary fund will be provided to support residents in emergency and temporary accommodation in crisis or with historic rent arrears, typically to prevent escalation or to enable them to move to more settled accommodation.

This discretionary one-off payment will only be made in exceptional circumstances not covered by other support (such as discretionary housing payment).

The HSF will not be used to provide ongoing support for housing costs or to support unsustainable tenancies.

The fund cannot be used to provide mortgage support though homeowners could still qualify for other elements of the fund.

Administration

The Temporary Accommodation Team will make referrals to the HSF Support Assistants to complete the necessary eligibility checks.

Distribution

The award is cashless and will be credited to the resident's rent account by the Income Team or issued as vouchers for specific goods.

F. Care Experienced Young People in Temporary AccommodationProposed allocation

£80,000

Award £150 - £500

Breakdown

There are approximately 438 Care Experienced Young People (CEYP) aged between 18-25 in temporary accommodation.

- typically claiming Housing Benefit rather than Universal Credit, this cohort of young people may not receive other benefit related cost-of-living support.
- A one-off payment of £150 to all CEYP in temporary accommodation

438 young people@ £150 = £65,700

- A discretionary one-off payment to support CEYP in most need or with historic rent arrears in temporary accommodation, typically to prevent escalation, average award £350.00

Rationale

All Care Experienced Young People (CEYP) are eligible for support from the Leaving Care Service (LCS) until they reach 25. Depending on an individual's age and circumstances their case may be closed before then, although they can still actively approach the LCS for help until they are 25.

One off housing costs may include paying an amount towards historic arrears or towards essential start-up costs (furniture/appliance/removal) to enable a vulnerable tenant in need to move to suitable accommodation, sustain their tenancy or prevent a crisis from escalating.

The discretionary one-off payment towards historic arrears will only be made in exceptional

circumstances not covered by other support (such as discretionary housing payment). The HSF will not be used to provide ongoing support for housing costs or to support unsustainable tenancies.

All CEYP can also be considered for application-based HSF and support packages associated with independent living and move-on costs.

Administration

The Temporary Accommodation Team will cross reference records with the Leaving Care Service.

Distribution

The award is cashless and will be credited to the young person's rent account by the Income Team or issued as vouchers for specific goods.

G. Unpaid Carers

Proposed allocation

£80,000

Average award £150

Rationale

Welfare Rights advisors have advised that carers are often unpaid living on very low incomes and not in receipt of carers allowance.

The Discretionary Support Team will work with Adult Social Care and The Croydon Carers Support Centre who are well established and may be able to offer greater visibility of this fund to carers not already known to services. They will be made aware the application channel for the HSF to signpost or refer carers to the Discretionary Support Team and /or the Advice and Practical Support Workers.

All carers can be considered for application-based HSF and other support in accordance with the relevant criteria.

Distribution

Awards are cashless, typically vouchers, and will be administered by the Discretionary Support Team and/or a TPO once confirmed. The system does have the flexibility to make cash awards where needed.

H. Children's Services

Proposed allocation

£67,000

Average award £200

Rationale

An emergency discretionary energy food or travel crisis payment to families with children known to Social Service or presenting at the front door.

To provide immediate relieve and prevent escalation for those residents who are unable or unlikely to submit an application to the discretionary support team, and do not qualify for alternative emergency support from Children's Services.

Distribution

The discretionary award is usually cashless and will be distributed by Children Social Care practitioners in exceptional circumstances, consisting of energy top-ups or vouchers capped at £200.

Children's Social Care will be responsible for deciding who to issue an emergency payment to from this limited discretionary pot.

Children's Social Care will also be made aware the application channel for the HSF to signpost or refer families to the Discretionary Support Team.

I. Adult ServicesProposed allocation

£60,000 Average award £150

Rationale

An emergency discretionary energy food or travel crisis payment to households with vulnerable adults known to Social Service or presenting at the front door.

To provide immediate relieve and prevent escalation for those residents who are unable or unlikely to submit an application to the discretionary support team, and do not qualify for alternative emergency support from Adult Social Care

Distribution

The discretionary award is usually cashless and will be distributed by Adult Social Care practitioners in exceptional circumstances, consisting of energy top-ups or vouchers capped at £150.

It will be the responsibility of Adult Social Care to decide who qualifies for this limited discretionary pot.

Adult Social Care will also be made aware the application channel for the HSF to signpost or refer families to the Discretionary Support Team .

J. Funding for VCF⁸ to distribute to residentsProposed allocation

£80,000 Third Party VCF⁸ Organisation (TBC)

Rationale

Proposed distribution of HSF via an established generic third-party Voluntary Community and Faith Sector (VCF) organization to distribute application-based funds to residents in crisis in accordance with the published criteria who may not ordinarily approach the Council.

This proposal will allow for a wider equitable reach for applicants, referrals, and recipients of the fund.

⁸ Voluntary Community and Faith Sector

K. AdministrationProposed allocation

£80,000 No. Business Support officers x 2 No. applications/referrals assessed 9,000 (E)

Breakdown

X 2 Agency Business Support Officers @ £40,00 per officer = £80,000

Rationale

There are 2 experienced agency business support officers administering the current HSF. It is proposed to extend their contracts for a further 12 months.

Administration

The HSF Business Support Officers will continue to:

- Assess and prioritise applications against the specified criteria
- Administer limited funds
- Ensure that the funds are spent within given time frames
- Conduct affordability checks on applications
- Safeguarding funds against fraudulent claims

L. Publicity

Proposed allocation

£35,000 No. campaigns x 3

Breakdown

Printing and distribution £5,000

Publicity bus = £11,000 - £22,000 per campaign x 2 = £30,000 (E)

Rationale

Three campaigns will run, one in the Spring/Summer when the HSF first becomes available and repeated in Autumn and again in Winter.

Although the basic indicative cost of the publicity on buses is quoted at between £11,000 – £22,000 this varies considerably depending on the specification and consideration will need to be given to using it for 2 of the 3 campaigns to achieve greatest value for money.

The sum allocated for publicity will be reviewed in September and a top-up in the region of £15k may be considered either from the contingency fund or repurposing of underspend.

Administration

The appointed senior responsible officer accountable for delivering the HSF in conjunction with the corporate communications team.

M. Healthy Homes

Proposed allocation

£20,000 average award £90

Breakdown

222 oil filled radiators @ £90= £19,980.00

Rationale

Primarily for low-income homeowners with broken/inadequate fixed heating systems, who may otherwise be using plug in convection heaters which are far more expensive to run.

They may also be provided for low- income private renters. Although landlords are required provide residents with working heating systems, but there is no requirement for them to be energy/cost efficient.

Distribution

The Healthy Homes Team will purchase and deliver 222 oil-filled radiators to over 100 households, many of these will be large families with a need for more than one heater. These radiators will be gifted to the recipients