

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO HEALTH AND HOUSING COMMITTEE

meeting date: THURSDAY, 27 OCTOBER 2022
title: AFFORDABLE WARMTH GRANT (2022/23)
submitted by: NICOLA HOPKINS, DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING
principal author: NICOLA HOPKINS, DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To update Members on an Affordable Warmth Grant which has been offered to all Lancashire District Authorities by Lancashire County Council
- 1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:
- Community Objectives – To improve the health and wellbeing of people living and working in our area.
 - Corporate Priorities – To help make people's lives safer and healthier

2. BACKGROUND

- 1.3 In July 2022 LCC announced the £1 million Affordable Warmth Lancashire fund which will be distributed to Lancashire's district councils on a grant basis, for them to allocate the funding to assist residents on low incomes and those who are vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home.
- 1.4 The final guidance, application form and monitoring forms were e-mailed to the Districts on 1st September with a deadline for applications of 16th September.
- 1.5 The fund is aimed at improvements such as insulation and efficient heating systems and is intended to supplement ongoing work with the district housing authorities in Lancashire on domestic energy efficiency schemes, using government and Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding and adding value to existing delivery schemes in place such as Cosy Homes in Lancashire (CHiL).
- 1.6 The funding is subject to Lancashire County Council approving proposals and we could apply for £ 41,315.

3. FUND

- 1.7 The fund is subject to certain eligibility criteria as follows. Households will be eligible for funding if they meet at least one of the following vulnerabilities and have a low income.
- 1.8 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

1.9 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.

1.10 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
- A 'declaration' by the Local Authority or health / social care professional that affordability issues are present.

4. GRANT SCHEME

1.11 LCC expect Districts to prioritise properties that have an energy efficiency need such as properties that are likely to be EPC rating D or below, although a formal EPC rating and assessment is not required.

1.12 The funding available can be used for capital or revenue expenditure, however this funding stream is not expected to be repeated, and where possible interventions should make a long-term contribution to helping people keep their homes warm.

1.13 The guidance from LCC includes suggested interventions which this fund can be used for. These are appended at Appendix 1. Measures can be fully funded (in the case of any match funding not being available) or a contribution towards costs made at a level deemed appropriate by the district.

1.14 We are expected to target owner occupied housing, however where there is an identified need other tenures may be included. In the case of private rented all reasonable enforcement options must have been shown to have been pursued. For social housing, interventions / contributions from housing associations / other partners should be sought in the first instance.

5. DELIVERY

1.15 We will receive the grant directly (subject to approval) in advance and will be responsible for delivery and coordinating work with partners including voluntary and community sector organisations. There is the possibility of clawback of unspent and uncommitted funding at the end of March. A copy of the Grant Agreement is attached at Appendix 2.

1.16 Lancashire County Council must be referenced as the source of the funding when the grant is being promoted or publicised.

1.17 A monitoring report will be required every 3 months summarising:

- Funding spent/ committed and on what areas of intervention, numbers of jobs.
- How many households and people have been helped
- Breakdown of why households were eligible for the scheme
- Number of people benefiting from work
- Ethnic Group

- Record of any professional referrals into the scheme for example from health or social care
- If applicable summary of any match funding secured
- Confirmation of what the health and affordability need is should be recorded in the monitoring returns, any evidence should be retained locally.

6. GRANT SCHEME FOR RIBBLE VALLEY

- 1.18 LCC required Districts to complete an application form (Appendix 3) prior to 16th September 2022 to gain access to the fund.
- 1.19 In terms of applying to the fund consideration was given to the relatively small amount of our allocation, the resource implications of creating a scheme which we administer, other resources/grants which are already available in the Borough and the aims of the fund.
- 1.20 Cosy Homes for Lancashire (CHiL) is already in place to offer a range of measures for keeping homes warm across Lancashire (Green Homes Grant) and we often direct people to this grant when they contact the Council. CHiL is managed by Rhea Projects Ltd on behalf of the Lancashire Local Authorities (Blackburn with Darwen commissioned Rhea Projects Ltd).
- 1.21 It was considered that the provision of a new/ serviced boiler will result in cost saving for the property (this is not something CHiL deliver without a full EPC assessment), can be administered in house and will have a long-term contribution to heating properties which is one of the aims of this fund.
- 1.22 To ensure that we don't replicate the above Green Homes Grant the recommendation is to directly offer a grant of up to £4000 per property for the following intervention:
- Servicing, repairs and replacement boilers and heating systems and associated works, including controls and replacement of unsafe heating appliances
- 1.23 An online application process requires details of the applicant's vulnerability, income, and benefits to ensure that they meet the required criteria. The applicant would need to provide 2 quotes for the work and if they met the eligibility criteria we would approve in principal and make the payment when the works are complete.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 1.24 The approval of this report may have the following implications:
- Resources – the level of funding is limited and as such interest may exceed our funding. Applications will be assessed on a first come first served basis. If the funding runs out details of further applicants will be retained in the event of other funding streams becoming available and they will also be directed to CHiL

Staff within the Housing Team will administer this grant which will have capacity impacts however the level of funding available and the targeted nature of the offer should assist in enabling the scheme to be managed internally.

- Technical, Environmental and Legal – there is a signed grant agreement with LCC which sets out the parameters of this grant
- Political – The Council is committed to assisting our residents
- Reputation – None.

- Equality & Diversity – if it is not possible for an eligible resident to complete the form online assistance from the housing team will be provided.

8. RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

- 1.25 Endorse the grant scheme which is available to assist our residents based on the grant criteria from LCC



NICOLA HOPKINS
DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING

Appendix 1- Suggested Interventions

Proposals may include the following interventions, but are not restricted to them:

- Servicing, repairs and replacement boilers and heating systems and associated works, including controls and replacement of unsafe heating appliances
- Repairs to and new radiators and radiator reflectors
- Gas fire services and repairs
- Draught proofing measures – windows, doors, loft hatches, electrical fittings on walls and ceilings, suspended floorboards, pipework leading outside, ceiling-to-wall joints . Thermal blinds and carpets may be included as draught proofing measures in appropriate circumstances where other long-term measures have been considered and the thermal benefit can be demonstrated – details for inclusion must be provided in the monitoring.
- Appropriate Ventilation measures
- Standard loft and cavity wall insulation
- Interventions for 'hard to treat' cavities and solid walls such as non-standard insulation solutions and external or internal wall insulation.
- Glazing improvements
- Emergency heating and dehumidifiers measures e.g. portable heaters for use whilst heating systems are repaired
- Advice on fuel poverty -advice to reduce costs through fuel switching, income maximisation, income maximisation, managing fuel bills & debts, warm home checks
- Additional and targeted work with landlords to improve properties,
- Emergency Top up fuel cards / vouchers
- Temperature and relative humidity monitors/ Carbon monoxide monitors



Grant Agreement

Applicant: Ribble Valley Borough Council

Address: Council Offices Church Walk Clitheroe

Date of Agreement: 21/09/2022

This Agreement covers the total sum of **£41,315** that the applicant has been awarded from the County Council's Affordable Warmth Fund for high impact affordable warmth interventions to individuals who are the most vulnerable to harm from cold or damp homes for winter 2022-23.

£41,315 is payable in advance, once you have confirmed your acceptance of this agreement by signing and returning it to PHAdmin@lancashire.gov.uk, please use the subject title 'Affordable Warmth 2022/23' or by post to Public Health, Lancashire County Council, Level 1 CCP, County Hall, Preston, PR1 8XB.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND CO-ORDINATION

1. If the named contact, as per your application form, should change during the delivery of the project then details must be provided to Lancashire County Council

MONITORING AND PROVISION OF INFORMATION

2. You will need to ensure that the funding is used for the purposes intended as outlined in your application form and in line with the eligibility criteria set out in the AFW Grant Guidance 2022/23, in terms of expenditure and outcomes.
3. This funding must not be used to replace existing resources, or resources that the applicant or partners has a statutory obligation to provide. It may only be used to add additional resources in line with the approved application. It is understood that any costs related to statutory interventions are recovered by districts councils.
4. You must complete the Monitoring Spreadsheet that has been provided to monitor the effectiveness of the work done and to capture the learning and outcomes of the work. Please return the first completed monitoring sheets by the 13th January 2023, for all activity up to the end of December 2022, and then a further report up to the end of March by the 14th April to PHAdmin@lancashire.gov.uk, please use 'Affordable Warmth Monitoring' in the subject title.
5. You must retain all evidence to support the expenditure in your project and be able to evidence that the project has been delivered in line with your application. Original documents such as invoices, receipts and bank statements and photographs should be retained, and made available to LCC when requested.

6. Visits to the project and requests for documents may be made at any time by representatives of Lancashire County Council. We will normally expect to give you reasonable notice of any visits.
7. If you identify that any aspect of the project cannot be delivered, please inform LCC immediately, and we will endeavour to work with you to achieve an appropriate outcome.

COMMUNICATION

8. You are required to reference Lancashire County Council as the source of the funding, when the grant is being promoted or publicised.

Acceptance

I accept the terms and conditions of the Agreement as set out overleaf.

For and on behalf of Lancashire County Council

Print Name:	Clare E Platt
Signature:	
Position held in Organisation:	Head of Health Equity, Welfare & Partnerships
Date:	21/09/2022

For and on behalf of the Organisation named as 'Applicant'

Print Name:	
Signature:	
Position held in Organisation:	
Date:	

Appendix 3- Application Form

Lancashire Affordable Warmth Funding 2022-23

Name of Local Authority	Ribble Valley BC
Contact Name	Rachael Stott
Address	Council Offices Church Walk Clitheroe
Telephone Number of contact	01200 413235
Email address of contact	Rachael.stott@ribblevalley.gov.uk
Tel and Email contact for public enquires / professional referral if different to above	Housing @ribblevalley.gov.uk

Please add additional rows as required

Detail of the activity / intervention to be provided	Estimate of Proportion of budget (£)	Why is this needed?	Who will deliver it? (identify partners)	Please outline <u>how</u> you will target the groups listed in the guidance
<p>Servicing, repairs and replacement boilers and heating systems and associated works, including controls and replacement of unsafe heating appliances</p>	<p>£41315</p>	<p>To deliver boiler repairs and servicing to assist our residents with a long term contribution to heating properties</p>	<p>In house</p>	<p>Promotional work online and in the press</p>