



Information Governance Team

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Dear Sir/Madam

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)

Request ID: FOI606391142

Thank you for your request for information relating to Household Support Fund spending details.

You have requested the following information:

These questions specifically pertain to the funding allocated to English Local Authorities as part of the UK Household Support Fund from 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024. The questions below are also included in the supporting document provided.

We understand that the late announcement of the extension of the Household Support Fund may mean that you are still making spending decisions. However, we hope that our report will influence any further extension of HSF so we need to gather our data asap to publish our report in the summer. Please answer as many questions as you can and if you are unable to answer any, please let us know when that information will be available and whether we need to submit a fresh FOI to obtain it.

There have been four tranches of the Household Support Fund so far, we are referring to the fourth tranche. We believe you were awarded £6,448,445 as part of this tranche.

1. Please provide us with a copy of the management information return you are required to provide to the DWP for tranche four of the Household Support Fund.

The information you requested is being withheld as it falls under the exemption(s) in Section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which relates to Information Intended for Future Publication. The information will be published by the Department for Work and Pensions and can be viewed via

the Government website. Please use the following webpage to assist with searching the information:

<https://www.gov.uk/search/all?keywords=household-support-fund-management-information&order=relevance>

Application of Section 22 is subject to the public interest test. There are a number of factors that must be considered and weighed in the balance.

The Council understands there is public interest in favour of disclosure which include promoting accountability and transparency for the Council's decisions and in its spending of public money. It will assist the public to understand and challenge our decisions and enable the public to better scrutinise the public monies spent.

However, the Council believe there are arguments against disclosure. The return has been submitted to the DWP and it is in the best interests of the public to withhold information that is yet to be published by the DWP. The DWP intend to publish the information on their website before the end of the year.

Having carefully weighed the public interest relating to possible disclosure of the information requested, under Section 22 we are satisfied that it is not appropriate at this time to disclose the requested information as it is intended for future publication. The Council is satisfied that maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

2. Please provide a breakdown of how tranche four was spent:

(a) Targeted Grants (by targeted grants we mean any direct grants/proactive support given to households that did not need to be applied)

(b) Free School Meal Holiday Vouchers

(c) Direct applications to the scheme (this means the amount that was open to application, but not through your local welfare assistance scheme)

(d) Local Welfare Assistance Scheme

(e) Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations

(f) Advice Services

(g) Other (please clarify)

Figures provided below:

2a) £0.00

2b) £1,401,458.51

2c) £4,106,097.50

2d) £0.00

2e) £120,000

2f) £0.00

2g) £820,888.59

3. (a) If you accepted applications to this fund how many did you receive?

55,958.

3 (b) How many applications were successful?

44,077

4. Excluding funding given to local welfare schemes or third-party organisations, how much of the HSF did you spend on helping people with furniture and appliances?

£167,672.53

5. How much did you spend on:

- (a) Vouchers**
- (b) Cash awards**
- (c) Third party organisations**
- (d) In kind furniture support**
- (e) In kind support for other purposes**
- (f) Other**

Figures provided below:

5a) £4,551,713.24

5b) £0.00

5c) £712,877.01

5d) £44,060.04

5e) £603,035.46

5f) £536,759.25

6. How much do you plan to spend on free school meal vouchers in the holidays in 2024/25? If HSF is not renewed in September, will you continue with the vouchers for the second half of the year? And if so, how will you be funding it?

Our delivery plan does not currently include Free School Meal support.

7. Did you take on additional staff for HSF 4 and if so are these staff likely to be retained for HSF 5?

We recruited 8 additional FTE to support HSF4. 2 of those FTE remain.

8. To what extent does the short notice of the availability of funding inhibit the planning and delivery activity of HSF (e.g. internal finance and policy decision making, resource requirements, engagement with internal departments and external partners)?

We were not able to retain a number of staff funded directly by Household Support Fund grant funding. We had modelled and implemented an exit strategy that had to be reversed, as well as beginning the process of preparing a Delivery Plan for formal sign-off.

9. When HSF 5 ends, what do you expect the impact to be on:

- Resources**
- Local Welfare Provision scheme**
- External partner agencies**
- Communities**

We cannot comment on our activities after the cancellation or continuation of the Household Support Fund at this time.

The supply of information in response to a FOI/EIR request does not confer an automatic right to re-use the information. You can use any information supplied for the purposes of private study and

non-commercial research without requiring further permission. Similarly, information supplied can also be re-used for the purposes of news reporting. An exception to this is photographs. Please contact us if you wish to use the information for any other purpose.

For information, we publish a variety of information such as: [FOI/EIR Disclosure Log](#), [Publication Scheme](#), [Facts about Coventry](#) and [Open Data](#) that you may find of useful if you are looking for information in the future.

If you are unhappy with the handling of your request, you can ask us to review our response. Requests for reviews should be submitted within 40 days of the date of receipt of our response to your original request – email: infogov@coventry.gov.uk

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our review, you can write to the Information Commissioner, who can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or email icocasework@ico.org.uk.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in your response.

Yours faithfully

Information Governance