**WBCIR:15769**

**1. How many households in your Local Authority area are eligible for the £150 council tax rebate announced by DLUHC in March 2022:**

36,661 (band A-D, including band E with Disabled reduction to band D) **For the avoidance of doubt, I am referring to households eligible for the scheme as per the following link:  
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-council-tax-rebate-2022-23-billing-authority-guidance/support-for-energy-bills-the-council-tax-rebate-2022-23-billing-authority-guidance  
a) Of these households, how many pay council tax by Direct Debit, and how many by other means? (e.g. cash / phone / cheque payments):**

27,902 Direct Debit payers identified as at 1Apr22 & 8,759 by other means **b) For households eligible for the £150 council tax rebate that pay for council tax by Direct Debit, how many have now received their £150 payment by July 1st 2022 and how was their payment processed? (i.e. transfer via BACS, postal cheque etc.):**

27,902 by BACS automatic payment **c) For households eligible for the £150 council tax rebate that do not pay for council tax by Direct Debit, how many have received their £150 payment by July 1st 2022 and how was their payment processed? (i.e. transfer via BACS, postal cheque etc.):**

2,810 refund by BACS from applications processed & 1,177 requested credit payment direct to council tax account applications processed **2. Is your council one of the 152 authorities responsible for distributing the Household Support Fund?** Yes

**And if so, could you please tell me how many applications has your Local Authority received for Household Support Fund Payments between October 6th 2021 to July 1st 2022? Please can you provide this information on a month-by-month basis?  
For the avoidance of doubt, I am referring to households eligible for the scheme as per the following link:**[**https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/household-support-fund-guidance-for-local-councils/household-support-fund-final-guidance-for-county-councils-and-unitary-authorities-in-england**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/household-support-fund-guidance-for-local-councils/household-support-fund-final-guidance-for-county-councils-and-unitary-authorities-in-england)

The Council does not hold this information. The application process is carried out by the Hardship Alliance, which includes Wokingham CAB; Wokingham Age UK; First Days (Wokingham); and Wokingham United Charities. They provide details to the Council of approved applications only. We have contacted them for further details.

**a) Of the applications made for the Household Support Fund payments between October 6th 2021 to July 1st 2022, what percentage of applications have been successful?**

The Council does not hold this information. The application process is carried out by the Hardship Alliance, which includes Wokingham CAB; Wokingham Age Concern; First Days (Wokingham); and Wokingham United Charities. We have contacted them for further details.

However, one of the main reasons for applications being refused is because a single household was referred by multiple agencies separately. **b) For households that have received the Household Support Fund payments between October 6th 2021 to July 1st 2022, how was their payment processed? (i.e. transfer via BACS, postal cheque etc.)**

For the Household Support Fund covering 1st October 2021 – 31st March 2022, the Council used: Cash Voucher; Direct Payment; Key Meter; Food Voucher; and Free School Meals.

For the Household Support Fund covering 1st April 2022 – 30th September 2022, the Council’s partners will be using Vouchers (providing Cash, Food or Fuel as requested by recipients). The first £40K spent on Free School Meals for children during the late May Half-Term was provided by way of Food Vouchers.

**c) A breakdown of number of awards made by type of household (i.e. with children, pensioners)**

Please note that the scheme for 1st October 2021 – 31st March 2022 set a requirement that a minimum of 50% of all funding should be spent on families with children. The spending was as follows:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Households with Children** | **Households without Children** | **Total** |
| **Spend (£s)** | £394,270 | £86,856 | £481,126 |
| **Number of Awards** | 11,718 | 930 | 12,648 |

Please note that the current scheme for 1st April 2022 – 30th September 2022 has set a requirement that a minimum of 33% of funding should be spent on families with children AND that a minimum of 33% of funding should be spent on households with pensioners and no children.

Funding from 1st April 2022 to 1st July 2022 has been as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Number of Awards** | **Spend (£s)** |
| **Households with only Children** | 407 | £68,881 |
| **Households with only Pensioners** | 8 | £3,103 |
| **Households with Children and Pensioners** | 4 | £720 |
| **Other Households (no children or pensioners)** | 25 | £3,086 |
| **Total** | **444** | **£75,790** |

In addition, £40K was spent on Free School Meals for children during the late May Half-Term via Food Vouchers.

**d) A breakdown of number of awards made by purpose (i.e. energy and water, food, housing costs, other essentials)**

For 1st October 2021 – 31st March 2022, funding was spent on the following purposes:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Food** | **Energy/Water** | **Essentials linked to Energy and Water** | **Wider Essentials** | **Housing Costs** | **Total** |
| **Spend (£s)** | £267,000 | £188,140 | £15,170 | £10,356 | £460 | £481,126 |
| **Number of Awards** | 11,227 | 900 | 259 | 260 | 2 | 12,648 |

For 1st April 2022 – 1st July 2022, funding was spent on the following purposes:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Number of Awards\*** | **Spend (£s)** |
| **Cash Vouchers** | 298 | £47,220 |
| **Food Vouchers** | 173 | £26,100 |
| **Fuel Vouchers** | 22 | £2,470 |
| **Total** | **493** | **£75,790** |

In addition, £40K was spent on Free School Meals during the late May Half-Term via Food Vouchers

\* Some households received awards for more than 1 category.

**e) What steps has your Local Authority undertaken to ensure that Household Support Fund payments are being used for their defined purposes?**

By using vouchers, this enables both the Council and the household to choose between food, fuel, or cash vouchers, to meet their specific needs; and enables the Council to record what the funding will be used for.