



## City and County of Swansea

### Notice of Meeting

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

## Cabinet

**At:** Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS Teams

**On:** Thursday, 21 April 2022

**Time:** 10.00 am

**Chair:** Councillor Rob Stewart

**Membership:**

Councillors: M C Child, R Francis-Davies, D H Hopkins, E J King, A S Lewis, A Pugh, R V Smith, A H Stevens and M Thomas

**Also Invited:** L S Gibbard

**Watch Online:** <https://bit.ly/36RoGYa>

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**Webcasting:** This meeting may be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet Site. By participating you are consenting to be filmed and the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and / or training purposes.

**You are welcome to speak Welsh in the meeting.**

Please inform us by noon, two working days before the meeting.

### Agenda

	Page No.
<b>1. Apologies for Absence.</b>	
<b>2. Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.</b> <a href="http://www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests">www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests</a>	
<b>3. Minutes.</b> To approve & sign the Minutes of the previous meeting(s) as a correct record.	<b>1 - 6</b>
<b>4. Announcements of the Leader of the Council.</b>	
<b>5. Public Question Time.</b> Questions must be submitted in writing to Democratic Services <a href="mailto:democracy@swansea.gov.uk">democracy@swansea.gov.uk</a> no later than noon on the working day prior to the meeting. Questions must relate to items on the agenda. Questions will be dealt with in a 10 minute period.	

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|--|---------|
| 6. Councillors' Question Time.   |         |
| 7. Local Authority Governor Appointments.                                | 7 - 11  |
| 8. Cost of Living Support Scheme – Mandatory and Discretionary Elements. | 12 - 41 |

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*\* **Call In Procedure - Subject to Pre-Decision Scrutiny:** This decision is exempt from the Authority's Call In Procedure as "the decision has been subject to Pre-Decision Scrutiny and there is no material change in relevant information / evidence".*

*\*\* **Call In Procedure - Urgency:** This decision is exempt from the Authority's Call In Procedure as "either the Head of Paid Service, the Section 151 Officer or the Monitoring Officer certifies that any delay likely to be caused by the Call In Procedure could seriously prejudice the Council or the Public Interest including failure to comply with Statutory requirements".*



**Huw Evans**  
**Head of Democratic Services**  
**Monday, 11 April 2022**

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**Contact: Democratic Services - Tel: (01792) 636923**

# Agenda Item 3.



City and County of Swansea

## Minutes of the **Cabinet**

Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS

Teams

Thursday, 17 March 2022 at 11.00 am

**Present:** Councillor R C Stewart (Chair) Presided

**Councillor(s)**

M C Child  
E J King  
A H Stevens

**Councillor(s)**

R Francis-Davies  
A S Lewis  
M Thomas

**Councillor(s)**

L S Gibbard  
R V Smith

**Officer(s)**

Huw Evans  
Adam Hill  
Tracey Meredith  
Phil Roberts  
Ben Smith

Head of Democratic Services  
Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Resources  
Chief Legal Officer / Monitoring Officer  
Chief Executive  
Director of Finance / Section 151 Officer

**Also present**

Councillor(s): -

**Apologies for Absence**

Councillor(s): D H Hopkins, A Pugh

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### 133. Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, the following interests were declared:

- 1) Councillors L S Gibbard & A H Stevens declared a Personal & Prejudicial Interest in Minute 138 "Local Authority Governor Appointments" and withdrew from the meeting prior to its consideration.
- 2) Councillor R V Smith declared a Personal & Prejudicial Interest in Minute 138 "Local Authority Governor Appointments" and stated that he had dispensation from the Standards Committee to Stay, Speak but Not Vote on matters relating to the Appointment of Local Authority Governors.
- 3) Councillors M C Child, R Francis-Davies & R V Smith declared a Personal Interest in Minute 142 "Leisure Partnerships Annual Report 2020/2021".

- 4) Councillor M C Child declared a Personal & Prejudicial Interest in Minute 150 "Proposed Locations for Outdoor Play Facilities within West Cross".

**134. Minutes.**

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the meeting(s) listed below be approved and signed as a correct record:

- 1) Cabinet held on 17 February 2022.

**135. Announcements of the Leader of the Council.**

**1) Cabinet Members Standing Down at the Local Government Elections on 5 May 2022**

The Leader of Council stated that Councillors Mark C Child & Mark Thomas had decided to stand down at the forthcoming elections in May 2022. He thanked and paid tribute them both for their excellent and dedicated contribution to Swansea Council and the Cabinet.

**136. Public Question Time.**

No questions were asked.

**137. Councillors' Question Time.**

No questions were asked.

**138. Local Authority Governor Appointments.**

The Local Authority Governors Appointment Group submitted a report, which sought approval of the nominations submitted to fill Local Authority (LA) Governor vacancies on School Governing Bodies.

**Resolved** that:

- 1) The following nominations recommended by the Director of Education in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Education Improvement, Learning & Skills be approved:

1)	Craigfelen Primary School	Dylan Williams
2)	Dunvant Primary School	Clr Louise Gibbard
3)	Penyrheol Primary School	Nicola Matthews
4)	St Joseph's Cathedral Primary School	Caroline Thraves
5)	Terrace Road Primary School	Kayleigh Danter Folake Ibiwoye
6)	Bishop Vaughan Roman Catholic Comprehensive School	Daniel Minster

**139. HWB In School Infrastructure Programme.**

The Cabinet Member for Education Improvement, Learning & Skills submitted a report that sought approval of the Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO) for additional budget for programme from the Schools Innovation Fund, Hwb Infrastructure Reserve and transfer Schools Network Capital budget to Hwb In School Infrastructure Program to ensure programme costs are covered for 2021/22.

**Resolved** that:

- 1) The RCCO and the financial implications in paragraph 4 of this report is approved.

**140. Quarter 3 2021/22 Performance Monitoring Report.**

The Cabinet Member for Business Improvement & Performance submitted a report that outlined the Corporate Performance for Quarter 3 2021-2022.

**Resolved** that:

- 1) The performance results for Quarter 3 2021/22 be endorsed and their use to inform executive decisions on resource allocation and, where relevant, corrective actions to manage and improve performance and efficiency in delivering national and local priorities be approved.

**141. Disabled Facilities & Improvement Grant Programme 2022/23.**

The Cabinet Member for Homes, Energy & Service Transformation submitted a report that provided details of the Disabled Facilities & Improvement Grant Programme and sought approval to include schemes in the 2022/23 Capital Programme. To comply with Financial Procedure Rule No.7 (Capital Programming and Appraisals) - to commit and authorise schemes as per the Capital Programme.

**Resolved** that:

- 1) The Disabled Facilities and Improvement Grant Programme as detailed, including its financial implications, be approved and included in the 2022/23 capital budget.

**142. Leisure Partnerships Annual Report 2020/2021.**

The Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism submitted an information report that provided details of the partnership operations of key facilities within the Cultural Services portfolio.

**143. Building Capital Maintenance Programme 2022/23.**

The Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance & Strategy submitted a report that sought approval of the schemes to be funded through the Capital Maintenance programme.

**Resolved** that:

- 1) The proposed capital maintenance schemes as listed in Appendix A of the report be approved.
- 2) The schemes and their financial implications as identified in Appendix C of the report be authorised to be included in the capital programme.

**144. FPR7 Capital Allocation to Highway Infrastructure Assets 2022-23.**

The Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement & Infrastructure Management submitted to confirm the Capital Work Programme for highway infrastructure assets.

**Resolved** that:

- 3) The proposed indicative allocations, together with the Financial Implications set out in Appendix A of the report be approved and included in the Capital Programme.
- 4) Authority be delegated to the Head of Service for Highways and Transportation with the agreement of the Cabinet Member for Environment Enhancement and Infrastructure Management to prioritise, finalise and allocate funding to the appropriate schemes in line with the prioritisation approach detailed in the report.

**145. Child & Family Services In-house Residential Capital Investment.**

The Cabinet Member for Children Services submitted a report that sought approval for the Capital Investment to purchase properties to develop an in-house residential solution for Swansea Council and to comply with Financial Procedure Rule 7 (Capital Programming and Appraisals) to commit and authorise a scheme to the Capital Programme.

**Resolved** that:

- 5) The capital investment for an in-house residential solution and its financial implications and adds the scheme set out in paragraph 3 of the report to the capital programme.

**146. National Collaborative Arrangements for Welsh (Local Authority) Adoption and Fostering Services. National Adoption Service for Wales and Foster Wales – Enhancing Governance, Leadership and Enabling.**

The Cabinet Member for Children Services submitted a report that provided an update on the proposals for developing the governance and enabling for the National Adoption Service for Wales as it assumes responsibility for Foster Wales. It also sought to achieve agreement to signing the Joint Committee Agreement for the proposed Joint Committee.

**Resolved that:**

- 1) The Council sign the Joint Committee Agreement for the National Adoption Service and Foster Wales attached at Appendix C of the report and authorises the Chief Legal Officer to enter into the Agreement on behalf of the Council.
- 2) The Cabinet Member for Child and Family Services be appointed as the Council's representative and voting member of the Joint Committee.

**147. Exclusion of the Public.**

Cabinet were requested to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of the item(s) of business identified in the recommendations to the report(s) on the grounds that it / they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as set out in the exclusion paragraph of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007 relevant to the items of business set out in the report(s).

Cabinet considered the Public Interest Test in deciding whether to exclude the public from the meeting for the item of business where the Public Interest Test was relevant as set out in the report.

**Resolved** that the public be excluded for the following item(s) of business.

**(Closed Session)**

**148. Disposal of Highway Land at Mumbles, Swansea.**

The Cabinet Member for Delivery & Operations submitted a report that provided an update on progress and sought consideration of revised options in respect of the future use of the land identified in this report.

**Resolved** that the recommendations as detailed in the report be approved.

**149. Capital Programme Authorisation for the Cefn Hengoed Community Hub Project.**

The Cabinet Members for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism and Education Improvement, Learning & Skills submitted a report that sought to comply with Financial Procedure Rule 7 "Capital Programming and Appraisals) to commit and authorise schemes in the Capital Programme.

**Resolved** that the recommendations as detailed in the report be approved.

**150. Proposed Location for Outdoor Play Facilities Within West Cross.**

The Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism submitted a report that sought consideration of an open space within West Cross, to benefit from

outdoor play enhancements as part of the Capital Play Investment Programme  
2021/22

**Resolved** that the recommendations as detailed in the report be approved.

The meeting ended at 11.55 am

**Chair**

<b>Call In Procedure – Relevant Dates</b>	
Minutes Published:	<b>17 March 2022</b>
Call In Period Expires (3 Clear Working Days after Publication):	23.59 on 22 March 2022
Decision Comes into force:	23 March 2022



# Agenda Item 7.



## Report of the Local Authority Governor Appointment Group

Cabinet – 21 April 2022

### Local Authority Governor Appointments

<b>Purpose:</b>	To approve the nominations submitted to fill Local Authority Governor vacancies in School Governing Bodies
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	Local Authority (LA) Governor Appointments Procedure (Adopted by Council on 26 October 2017)
<b>Consultation:</b>	Access to Services, Finance, Legal
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	It is recommended that:  1) The nominations recommended by the Director of Education in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Education Improvement, Learning and Skills be approved.
<b>Report Author:</b>	Gemma Wynne
<b>Finance Officer:</b>	Peter Keys
<b>Legal Officers:</b>	Stephen Holland/Melissa Parry
<b>Access to Services Officer:</b>	Catherine Window

#### 1.0 The nominations referred for approval

1.1 The nominations are recommended for approval as follows:

1. Cadle Primary School	Cllr Elliott King
2. Cwmglas Primary School	Dr Amanda Roberts

#### 2.0 Financial Implications

2.1 There are no financial implications for the appointments; all costs will be met from existing budgets.

### **3.0 Legal Implications**

3.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

### **4.0 Equality and Engagement implications**

4.1 The Council is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Wales) and must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socioeconomic disadvantage

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2005 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'. Our Integrated Impact Assessment process ensures that we have paid due regard to the above.

**Background papers:** None

**Appendices:** Appendix 1 - Integrated Impact Assessment Form

Please ensure that you refer to the Screening Form Guidance while completing this form.

**Which service area and directorate are you from?**

Service Area: Achievement and Partnership

Directorate: Education

**Q1 (a) What are you screening for relevance?**

- New and revised policies, practices or procedures
- Service review, re-organisation or service changes/reductions, which affect the wider community, service users and/or staff
- Efficiency or saving proposals
- Setting budget allocations for new financial year and strategic financial planning
- New project proposals affecting staff, communities or accessibility to the built environment, e.g., new construction work or adaptations to existing buildings, moving to on-line services, changing location
- Large Scale Public Events
- Local implementation of National Strategy/Plans/Legislation
- Strategic directive and intent, including those developed at Regional Partnership Boards and Public Services Board, which impact on a public bodies functions
- Medium to long term plans (for example, corporate plans, development plans, service delivery and improvement plans)
- Setting objectives (for example, well-being objectives, equality objectives, Welsh language strategy)
- Major procurement and commissioning decisions
- Decisions that affect the ability (including external partners) to offer Welsh language opportunities and services

**(b) Please name and fully describe initiative here:**

Appointing Local Authority governors to schools in Swansea

**Q2 What is the potential impact on the following: the impacts below could be positive (+) or negative (-)**

	High Impact		Medium Impact		Low Impact		Needs further investigation
	+	-	+	-	+	-	
Children/young people (0-18)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Older people (50+)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other age group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Future Generations (yet to be born)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race (including refugees)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asylum seekers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gypsies & travellers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or (non-)belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welsh Language	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty/social exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carers (inc. young carers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community cohesion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage & civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q3 What involvement has taken place/will you undertake e.g. engagement/consultation/co-productive approaches?  
Please provide details below – either of your activities or your reasons for not undertaking involvement**

This activity does not require consultation

**Q4 Have you considered the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 in the development of this initiative:**

- a) Overall does the initiative support our Corporate Plan’s Well-being Objectives when considered together?  
Yes  No
- b) Does the initiative consider maximising contribution to each of the seven national well-being goals?  
Yes  No
- c) Does the initiative apply each of the five ways of working?  
Yes  No
- d) Does the initiative meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs?  
Yes  No

**Q5 What is the potential risk of the initiative? (Consider the following impacts – equality, socio-economic, environmental, cultural, legal, financial, political, media, public perception etc...)**

High risk

Medium risk

Low risk

**Q6 Will this initiative have an impact (however minor) on any other Council service?**

Yes  No **If yes, please provide details below**

**Q7 What is the cumulative impact of this proposal on people and/or communities when considering all the impacts identified within the screening and any other key decisions affecting similar groups/ service users made by the organisation?**

*(You may need to discuss this with your Service Head or Cabinet Member to consider more widely if this proposal will affect certain groups/ communities more adversely because of other decisions the organisation is making. For example, financial impact/poverty, withdrawal of multiple services and whether this is disadvantaging the same groups, e.g., disabled people, older people, single parents (who are mainly women), etc.)*

In order for schools to run effectively they need to have effective Governing Bodies.

**Outcome of Screening**

**Q8 Please describe the outcome of your screening below:**

- **Summary of impacts identified and mitigation needed (Q2)**
- **Summary of involvement (Q3)**
- **WFG considerations (Q4)**
- **Any risks identified (Q5)**
- **Cumulative impact (Q7)**

We have identified high impact on children and young people because it is in school environment and Governors are appointed to those school. Race, Religion and Welsh language have been also identified as high impact because we have some religious and welsh language schools. There is no need for mitigation as impacts that have been identified are not negative impacts The panel choose Governors ,no public consultation required. In order for schools to run effectively they need to have effective Governing Bodies, this appointment supports this..

(NB: This summary paragraph should be used in the relevant section of corporate report)

Full IIA to be completed

Do not complete IIA – please ensure you have provided the relevant information above to support this outcome

NB: Please email this completed form to the Access to Services Team for agreement before obtaining approval from your Head of Service. Head of Service approval is only required via email.

<b>Screening completed by:</b>
<b>Name: Gemma Wynne</b>
<b>Job title: Governor Support Officer</b>
<b>Date: 25/10/21</b>
<b>Approval by Head of Service:</b>
<b>Name: Kate Phillips</b>
<b>Position: Head of Achievement and Partnership</b>
<b>Date: 25/10/21</b>

Please return the completed form to [accesstoservices@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:accesstoservices@swansea.gov.uk)

# Agenda Item 8.



## Report of the Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance and Strategy (Leader)

Cabinet – 21 April 2022

### Cost of Living Support Scheme – Mandatory and Discretionary Elements.

<b>Purpose:</b>	To provide information on the mandatory scheme and to consider the wide discretionary powers also available to the Authority under the Welsh Government's Cost of Living Support Scheme to provide immediate financial support to householders considered to be in need of assistance with living costs.
<b>Policy Framework:</b>	Tackling Poverty
<b>Consultation:</b>	Access to Services, Finance, Legal, Social Services
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	It is recommended that:  1) The details of the mandatory scheme set out in this report are noted and that they are already implemented. 2) The details of the discretionary powers relating to the Cost of Living Support Scheme are also noted. 3) The following categories and amounts are approved as the basis for discretionary payments under the Cost of Living Support Scheme:  a) £150 will be paid to recipients of Council Tax exemptions awarded in respect of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Care Leavers</li><li>• People with a Severe Mental Impairment (SMI)</li><li>• Occupants of certain self-contained annexes</li><li>• Residents under 18 years old</li><li>• Care home residents</li><li>• People resident elsewhere as they are receiving care</li><li>• People resident elsewhere as they are providing care</li><li>• Students studying elsewhere</li></ul> b) Other categories for which a payment of £150 will be made:

- Households occupying domestic dwellings in bands F to I for which a disability adaptation reduction has been granted.
- Tenants of Swansea Council not in receipt of support from Housing Benefit (HB) or Universal Credit (UC) – in addition to any main scheme payment they are entitled to.
- Any household Swansea Council can identify as being eligible for a £150 payment from the main scheme and which is required to register for a payment but has not done so by a date 2 weeks before the scheme closes.

c) Additional measures

- £52,500 be placed in a fuel costs support fund to be used to support people having difficulty meeting fuel costs.
- £28 to be paid to all households occupying domestic dwellings in Council Tax Bands A and B (in addition to any other single payment of £150 they are already entitled to from the main or discretionary scheme). One payment per property.

d) The maximum payment to one household from the Cost of Living Support Scheme as a whole will be £300.

**Report Author:** Julian Morgans

**Finance Officer:** Ben Smith

**Legal Officer:** Debbie Smith

**Access to Services Officer:** Rhian Millar

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 As part of the Welsh Government’s Supplementary Budget, on 15 February 2022 the Welsh Government announced a Cost of Living Support Scheme (“the scheme”) to be administered on its behalf by local authorities. The guidance for the scheme was published on 23 March 2022 – see Appendix A to this report.
- 1.2 The Scheme is part of a national package of measures to help people with the cost of living crisis. The national package includes £152m to provide a £150 cost of living payment to eligible households (the main scheme) and £25m to provide discretionary support for other purposes related to living costs. The schemes are intended to provide **immediate** support as Wales recovers from the pandemic and support households to deal with the impact of increasing energy and other costs.
- 1.3 The Discretionary Scheme fund can be used by each local authority to support other households it considers to be in need of assistance with their living costs. Each local authority can determine its use of discretionary support as it deems appropriate to address known and identified local needs.

## 2. The Main Scheme

2.1 A payment of £150 can be made to a household under the main scheme if the householder(s) meets one of the following conditions. The authority has no powers to vary these criteria. We estimate that there are 80,000 households in Swansea that will be eligible for a payment under the main scheme, resulting in a payment of £12,000,000 in total.

### 2.1.1 Council Tax Reduction Scheme entitlement condition

If the householder(s) was in receipt of support through the Council Tax Reduction Scheme on 15 February 2022, they are automatically entitled to a payment of £150.

### 2.1.2 Council Tax Band condition

Households occupying properties in Council Tax Bands A to D are assessed as being entitled to a payment of £150 provided they satisfy **all** of the following criteria:

- Liable for council tax on a property in Swansea on 15 February 2022
- Not in receipt of an exemption for that property on 15 February 2022
- Living in that property as their main or primary residence on 15 February 2022
- Responsible for paying the associated utility and other regularly incurred bills for that property on 15 February 2022.

2.2 Welsh Government advises that local authorities will be able to make the reasonable assumption that household(s) liable to pay council tax are also responsible for paying the utility and other regularly incurred bills.

2.3 Households living in properties which attract a disability adaptation band reduction are eligible for a payment, for example, a property which has been valued as Band E but which receives a disability adaptation band reduction to Band D is eligible.

2.4 Only **one** payment of £150 is to be made in relation to any single dwelling under the main scheme. In cases of joint and several liability, only one payment is to be made and it should be paid to the first named person on the Council Tax bill. Where this is not possible, local authorities have discretion to identify the most appropriate person to whom the payment should be made.

2.5 Local authorities are encouraged to use existing databases to identify households eligible for a payment under the main Cost of Living Support Scheme. Furthermore, if current bank details are held by the local authority and the authority is satisfied that the data is correct, they may make an automatic payment to the relevant bank account without the recipient needing to complete a registration form. Swansea has already made approximately 45,000 payments by this method.



- 2.6 Households who appear to be eligible for a £150 payment but for whom all the necessary information is not already held by the Council in a usable form, **must** complete a registration form to provide the authority with the required information. Registration **must** be completed by 5.00pm on 30 September 2022. The authority has **no** discretion to extend this deadline and late registration cannot be accepted.
- 2.7 Payments will usually be made directly into a recipient's bank account but alternative payments arrangements will be made available for anyone who does not have a bank account.

### **3. The Discretionary Scheme**

- 3.1 In addition to supporting the eligible categories outlined above through the main scheme, each local authority may use the funding provided under the Discretionary Scheme to provide support to households it considers to be in need of assistance with their living costs. This support may take **any** form the Authority considers appropriate in order to satisfy the aims of the scheme. For example a payment to a household not already covered in the main scheme; an additional payment on top of the £150 or by covering the cost of other services provided to households in need by setting up an emergency fund to deal with a specific issue.
- 3.2 Each local authority has complete autonomy to determine how it utilises the available funds in its area to achieve the aims of the overall scheme. Also the amount that is paid under the discretionary scheme. As a result of that flexibility the guidance does not indicate an application is required in every case for a payment to be made from the discretionary scheme. This is because the funds might not always be utilised to provide support to individuals. Where a discretionary payment is to be issued to an individual, an application may be needed where the council does not already hold sufficient information to make such a payment.
- 3.3 Payments will usually be made directly into a recipient's bank account but alternative payment arrangements will be made available for anyone who does not have a bank account.
- 3.4 Developing the discretionary scheme at rapid pace is considered of the utmost and primary importance as the cost of living crisis and substantial bill increases are already upon households now. With such a major grant scheme affecting 10,000+ people it would clearly be preferable to conduct a co-produced, fully impact assessed, wide consultation process but that in itself would somewhat defeat the pressing nature of the matter at hand, as bills are due now. The pragmatic approach is thus to more heavily rely on information we already hold which enables us to know who may have already faced extra cost of living pressures, and that could include groups previously directly affected by decisions already taken by Council through normal budgetary processes, such as for example, increases in housing rents at a pace far greater than council tax increases because of the fundamentally different nature of the funding

models for both funds. The Council funds must remain separate but the cost of living pressures faced by both groups as individual households as a direct result of previous Council decisions are significantly different and crucially known about by Council already and that has driven part of the design of the discretionary package.

3.5 Whilst there are risks of challenge with a “design at haste and repent at leisure scheme” the balance is tilted towards immediate decision and action to achieve the policy objective of Welsh Government which is immediate relief of part of the cost of living where the authority is reasonably practicably able to do so. No individual in receipt of a payment is disadvantaged, so the scheme in absolute terms is beneficial. The risk of challenge would be in the choice of who is and was considered eligible but the mitigation is that it is entirely for the authority to decide, with no right of appeal, on how to operate the scheme, in line with the discretionary grant offer from Welsh Government. It is felt the initial screening justifies the “act now” principle as the primary driver over other considerations.

3.6 Taking account of the available funding of £2,000,000, the recommendations in relation to payments from the discretionary scheme are as follows:-

3.6.1 Households who reside in properties in respect of which they are liable for Council Tax and for which the following exemptions from Council Tax have been awarded. These households have been excluded from the main scheme. A discretionary payment of £150 will be made from the scheme.

Exemption Class	Estimated Number	General Description	Estimated Cost
<p><b>U – Severe Mental Impairment (SMI)</b></p>	<p>373</p>	<p>A person who is medically certified as having a severe impairment of their intellectual or social functioning, that appears to be permanent.</p> <p>Conditions that can lead to severe mental impairment include Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease and other forms of dementia. To be eligible, the person with the SMI must also be entitled to one of a list of specified benefits which includes Incapacity Benefit, Attendance Allowance or Personal Independence Payment</p> <p><b>Rationale:</b> This recognises the circumstances of the occupant means they should be entitled to a payment to assist with the cost of living.</p>	<p>£55,950</p>

<b>X – Care leavers</b>	64	Who are 18 or over but have not yet reached the age of 25  <b>Rationale:</b> This recognises the circumstances of the occupant means they should be entitled to a payment to assist with the cost of living.	£9,600
<b>W – Occupied annexes (often known as ‘granny flats’)</b>	12	A self-contained annex, where the person who lives in it is a dependent relative of the owner of the main house. The dependent must be 65 or over, severely mentally impaired or have a substantial and permanent disability.  <b>Rationale:</b> These annexes will be smaller properties usually in bands A-D so this reflects continuity of approach and also recognises the circumstances of the occupant.	£1,800

3.6.2 Households who reside in properties in respect of which they are **not** liable for Council Tax and for which the following exemption from Council Tax has been awarded. These households will not be eligible under the main scheme as they are not liable to pay Council Tax. A discretionary payment of £150 will be made from the scheme.

<b>Exemption Class</b>	<b>Estimated Number</b>	<b>General Description</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>
<b>S – Under 18’s</b>	28	All residents in the property are under the age of 18. The landlord will be liable for Council Tax due (although nothing is payable)  <b>Rationale:</b> The residents will in most cases be paying the utility bills and should be entitled to a payment to assist with the cost of living.	£4,200

3.6.3 Households where the person liable for Council Tax is not in residence and so is **not** eligible for a payment from the main scheme. A discretionary payment of £150 will be made from the scheme.

Exemption Class	Estimated Number	General Description	Estimated Cost
<b>E – care home resident</b>	258	The liable person resides in a care home which is their sole or main residence. <b>Rationale:</b> they will still have bills to pay in respect of the property. Standing charges, insurance etc	£38,700
<b>I – absent and receiving care elsewhere</b>	44	The liable person is absent from the property as they are <u>receiving</u> care elsewhere but not in a care home. <b>Rationale:</b> they will still have bills to pay in respect of the property. Standing charges, insurance etc	£6,600
<b>J – absent and providing care elsewhere</b>	11	The liable person is absent from the property as they are providing personal care to another person elsewhere. <b>Rationale:</b> they will still have bills to pay in respect of the property. Standing charges, insurance etc	£1,650
<b>K – property left unoccupied by student owner studying elsewhere</b>	3	An unoccupied dwelling which was last occupied only by student(s) who are studying elsewhere. <b>Rationale:</b> they will still have bills to pay in respect of the property. Standing charges, insurance etc and most likely accommodation charges for their place of study.	£450

3.6.4 Households resident in domestic dwellings in Council Tax Bands F to I that are in receipt of a disability adaptation band reduction. They are not eligible for a payment under the main scheme. A discretionary payment of £150 will be made from the scheme.

Class	Number	General Description	Cost
<b>Disability adaptation – premises in bands F to I</b>	184	Domestic dwellings in Bands F to I for which a disability adaptation reduction into a lower Council Tax band has been granted.	£27,600

		<b>Rationale:</b> The cost of living for any person with a disability is higher than for those without a disability.	
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3.6.5 Tenants in local authority owned properties who are **not** in receipt of support from Housing Benefit or Universal Credit towards their rental costs. A discretionary payment of £150 will be made from the scheme. This payment is in addition to any payment of £150 the household is entitled to from the Main Scheme.

Landlord	Estimated Number	General Description	Cost
Tenants of Swansea Council <b>not</b> in receipt of support from Housing Benefit (HB) or Universal Credit (UC)	4192	<p><b>Rationale:</b> we are able from data, we already hold as a landlord, to rapidly identify those likely to be eligible.</p> <p>68% of Council Tenants receive HB/UC to assist with their rent. The estimated number given here reflects the remaining 32%.</p> <p>This payment will be credited directly to tenants' rent accounts.</p>	£628,800

3.6.6 All households occupying domestic dwellings in Council Tax Bands A (15,243) and B (25,723) will be paid a further top up payment of £28.00 in addition to any other single payment of £150 they are already entitled to. This will **not** be paid to Council Tenants who are entitled to the additional discretionary payment of £150 detailed in para 3.6.5 above.

3.6.7 Any household Swansea Council can identify as being eligible for a £150 payment from the main scheme which is required to register for a payment but has not done so by the time the scheme is about to close. A discretionary payment of £150 will be made from the scheme.

With such a large number of eligible citizens (80,000) there is potential that there will be a number of people who do not submit the necessary registration by the closing date of the scheme, for any number of reasons in spite of the Council's best efforts to encourage them to do so. To prevent any people in this group missing out on the available financial support if:

- By 5:00pm on 16 September 2022, a date 2 weeks before the scheme closes at 5:00pm on 30 September 2022
- A person the Council has identified as eligible for a main scheme payment has failed to complete the necessary registration
- A discretionary payment of £150 will be made directly to their Council Tax account to reduce any balance outstanding (a new bill will then be issued to show the reduced balance and amended instalments as appropriate).

The number in this group are unknown at this time but sufficient funding

will be transferred from the main scheme to the discretionary scheme in order for this payment to be made.

- 3.6.8 £52,500 will be placed in a fuel costs support fund to be administered by a partner organisation in the city to be used to support people having difficulty meeting fuel costs. The partner organisation will be given full discretion to authorise £150 payments from this fund without seeking approval from the authority. Payments from this fund may be made in addition to other payments from the Cost of Living Support Scheme.
- 3.6.9 The Section 151 Officer (or his nominated representative) will have unfettered discretion to consider, on a case by case basis and in exceptional circumstances, any individual compelling cases for payments from the Cost of Living Support Scheme in circumstances other than those specified in this report. This discretion being subject to amount of funding provided by Welsh Government for the scheme in Swansea.
- 3.6.10 The maximum total payment that can be paid to a single household from the Cost of Living Support Scheme (from the Main and/or Discretionary Schemes) where all the necessary eligibility criteria are satisfied is £300.

#### **4. Impact on Tax and Benefits**

- 4.1 The DWP has confirmed that that payments (main scheme or discretionary) are considered a Local Welfare Provision and so are disregarded in the assessment of Income Support, Income Based Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) and Income Related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), so these will not be affected. In their LA Welfare Direct Lite Bulletin issued on 14 March 2022, the DWP confirmed that the Government has legislated to ensure that payments made under the Energy Rebate scheme announced on 3 February 2022 for England and equivalent schemes in the devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales, do not affect entitlement to Universal Credit.
- 4.2 HMRC has confirmed that the payments from this scheme would be made as Local Welfare Provision and are not taxable.

#### **5. Integrated Assessment Implications**

- 5.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
  - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
  - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage
- Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
- Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
- Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

5.1.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.

5.1.2 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

5.2 Although Welsh local authorities have been given the ability to determine their own local discretionary schemes with their own local criteria, they have also been tasked by the Minister for Finance and Local Government to proceed with designing and delivering their schemes as soon as they are able to do so. With that requirement in mind, and furthermore the obvious need to deliver immediate financial support to those in difficulty the period over which engagement would normally take place has been foreshortened with only informal discussions with partner organisations having taken place. There has been, by necessity, a trade-off between a lengthy consultation process and swift action to support Swansea's citizens at a difficult time.

5.3 However, the ability to make rapid payments from the Cost of Living Support Scheme will have a positive impact for recipients. The support will help maximise income to households and will help reduce hardship in the city. Additionally, there may also be positive impacts on the workload of the Poverty and Prevention Service, Housing and Finance Departments. By rapidly designing and implementing the discretionary scheme so we can issue payments to citizens in need without delay as the authority has been asked to do by the Minister for Finance and Local Government.

## **6. Financial Implications**

6.1 Welsh Government has provided funding of £14,155,208 to cover all costs associated with the Scheme. At this time, this has been allocated as follows although this distribution may be subject to change as the scheme progresses as all costings are based on estimates of the number of eligible households:

- Payments of £150 to the 80,000 households we estimate are eligible for a payment from the main scheme (£12,000,000)
- Payments from the Council’s Discretionary Scheme (£2,000,000)
- All administration costs – additional staffing, IT, postage and printing etc (£155,208)

6.2 The authority is able to move funding between the main scheme and discretionary scheme as it deems necessary in order to achieve the overall aims of the scheme.

## **7. Legal Implications**

7.1 The risks attaching to the selection of criteria for the allocation of the Discretionary Scheme are set out in paragraphs 3.4 and 3.5 of this report. There is a risk that individuals or groups of individuals who feel aggrieved that they have not benefitted from the Discretionary Scheme may seek to challenge the Council’s decision making process. This risk is mitigated by the fact that Welsh Government has arranged for the grant funding to be received by the Council on 11/4/22 to deliver the clearly stated purpose – “The schemes are intended to provide immediate support as Wales recovers from the pandemic and support households to deal with the impact of increasing energy and other costs.” Welsh Government has given Councils discretion to develop the criteria for their schemes whilst expecting these to be delivered as expeditiously as possible.

**Background Papers:** None

### **Appendices:**

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| Appendix A | Welsh Government Guidance for the Cost of Living Support Scheme |
| Appendix B | Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form                     |





Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Appendix A

PUBLICATION

# Cost of Living Support Scheme: guide for local authorities

Advice on how local authorities can manage the cost of living support scheme.

First published: 23 March 2022

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This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://gov.wales/cost-living-support-scheme-guide-local-authorities-html> for the latest version.

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# Purpose

This guidance provides local authorities with information to enable them to deliver the £150 Cost of Living Support Scheme (COLSS) and a Discretionary Cost of Living Support Scheme (DCOLSS) on behalf of the Welsh Government.

The package was announced as part of the Welsh Government's Supplementary Budget on 15 February 2022.

## Overview

The Welsh Government announced a package of measures to help people with the cost of living crisis. The package includes £152m to provide a £150 cost of living payment to eligible households (the main scheme) and £25m to provide discretionary support for other purposes related to living costs.

The schemes are intended to provide immediate support as Wales recovers from the pandemic and support households to deal with the impact of increasing energy and other costs.

The Discretionary Scheme fund can be used by each local authority to support other households it considers to be in need of assistance with their living costs. Each local authority will determine its use of discretionary support as it deems appropriate to address local needs.

## Eligibility for payments: Cost of Living Support Scheme

A payment of £150 can be made to a household under the main scheme if the householder(s) meets one of the following conditions.

## **A: Council Tax Reduction Scheme entitlement condition**

If the householder(s) was in receipt of support through the Council Tax Reduction Scheme on 15 February 2022, they are automatically assessed as being entitled to a payment of £150 regardless of the valuation band in which their property is placed.

## **B: Council Tax Band condition**

Households occupying properties in council tax Bands A to D are assessed as being entitled to a payment of £150 provided they satisfy all of the following criteria:

- liable for council tax on a property on 15 February 2022
- not in receipt of an exemption for that property on 15 February 2022
- living in that property as their main or primary residence on 15 February 2022
- responsible for paying the associated utility and other regularly incurred bills for that property on 15 February 2022.

Local authorities administering the scheme will be able to make the reasonable assumption that household(s) liable to pay council tax are also responsible for paying the utility and other regularly incurred bills.

Households living in properties which attract a disability adaptation band reduction are eligible for a payment, for example, a property which has been valued as Band E but which receives a disability adaptation band reduction to Band D is eligible.

Households are eligible for a payment under this scheme if their property's band as recorded in the council tax banding list on the 15 February 2022 is amended retrospectively after this date to fall within an eligible band, for example, because of a successful banding challenge made to the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) that concluded after this date. Households living in new-builds awaiting a banding from the VOA are also eligible for a payment if the band subsequently

allocated by the VOA, effective on 15 February 2022, meets the eligibility criteria for the scheme. Any disputes about property banding should be resolved through the VOA's usual processes. However, for operational reasons, payments will no longer be made in these respects after the scheme has closed on 30 September 2022.

## **Each household is restricted to only one payment of £150**

Only one payment is to be made in relation to any single dwelling under the main scheme. In cases of joint and several liability, only one payment is to be made and it should be paid to the first named person on the council tax bill. Where this is not possible, local authorities have discretion to identify the most appropriate person to whom the payment should be made.

## **Eligibility for payments: Discretionary Cost of Living Support Scheme**

In addition to supporting the eligible categories outlined above through the main scheme, each local authority may use the funding provided under the Discretionary Scheme to provide support to households it considers to be in need of assistance with their living costs. This support may take the form of a payment to a household not already covered in the main scheme, or it may cover the cost of essential services provided to the household, for example extending the provision of free school meals or meals-on-wheels.

Each local authority will determine how it utilises the available funds and some areas for consideration in the local discretionary scheme are listed below:

- Payments (or other support) may be provided to households who do not fall into one of the eligible classes A or B in the main scheme but who live in a property which is exempt from council tax, for example care leavers and people with a severe mental impairment exemption.
- Payments may be made to separately identifiable households living in

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).

- Households who are receiving housing support services and/or are living in temporary accommodation or a refuge may be awarded a payment.

The supplementary nature of this scheme recognises that these households may be more difficult to identify and may require the exercise of a local authority's discretion in determining whether a household should be eligible for support.

The authority will also have discretion to award a reduced amount or pay by instalments if it considers making a full payment would not be in a household's best interests or that it might compromise their welfare.

It is recognised that payments or the provision of other support to such households may be more readily administered by specialist services within the local authority e.g. social services, homelessness services, educational support services etc. separately from the administration of payments based on council tax records.

## Process

Local authorities will use existing council tax databases to identify households eligible for a payment under the main Cost of Living Support Scheme. They hold all the property information on valuation bands needed to select the relevant cohort for support. If current bank details are held by the local authority for direct debit payment, and the authority is satisfied that the data is correct, they may make a payment to the relevant bank account.

Local authorities are also asked to identify eligible households from existing Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) caseload data. Where the authority is satisfied that it holds current bank details, again it may make a payment to the relevant bank account.

There will however be many households who appear to be eligible for the £150 payment but for whom all the necessary information is not held. People in this

group will be required to complete a registration form to provide the authority with the required information. Each local authority will be responsible for providing its own registration form in whatever format it considers appropriate. The Welsh Government will work with local authorities to design a 'model' form for this purpose.

Responses to the registration must be completed by 5.00pm on 30 September 2022.

## Accessibility requirements

Authorities will need to ensure the registration form, and any local awareness-raising materials are accessible. They will also need to provide information in Welsh and English and support customers who have difficulty using online facilities.

## Verification requirements

### Verification of identification

It is anticipated that the information provided through the registration process and/or already recorded as part of council tax records or Council Tax Reduction Scheme data will be sufficient to validate identification of the householder(s) (and their partner). Authorities can decide to implement more stringent verification checks according to their risk appetite and these should be clearly stated within the content of the registration process.

To prevent authorities from having to undertake verification of associated property costs for all applicants, it has been agreed that if a householder (or their partner) is liable for council tax and in occupation of the property, this can be accepted as proof that they and/or their partner are responsible for paying the associated bills.

The Welsh Government accepts that there is very small risk that a householder

(or their partner) could be liable for council tax but not be responsible for paying the utility bills. This risk would not justify undertaking verification of such liability for all payments and would be mitigated in part by the householder's declaration that they are the utility bill payer as part of the registration process, where such registration is required.

It is also acknowledged that there are some situations where the person(s) liable to pay the associated utility bills may not be liable for council tax. Such households could be considered for support under the Discretionary Scheme.

## **Checking that the householder or their partner has not already received a payment under the scheme**

The main scheme is intended to provide one-off support to each eligible household although additional support may be provided under the Discretionary Scheme to households which have received support under the main scheme. Authorities will need to ensure that they have mechanisms in place to prevent duplicate payments unintentionally being made to households where they or their partner have already received a payment from the authority under the scheme either as a single person or as part of the same or a different household.

## **Decisions, payments and appeals**

### **Decisions**

An award made under the Cost of Living Support Scheme is not a crisis payment or an income replacement. For this reason, there is no specific timeframe for making decisions. However, decisions must be made promptly to facilitate payments as soon as possible. A suitable time window will be determined for operational purposes.



## Payments

Authorities are encouraged to provide payments to eligible households in a timely manner and payments should be made as soon as practically possible after a decision to pay has been made.

Payments under the main scheme should be made as a single payment of £150 to the bank account details available or provided on registration. It is recognised that some authorities may wish to make the payments by cheque or other method. Therefore, local authorities have discretion to choose how this support is delivered to each eligible household in order to best ensure speedy delivery.

Each recipient should receive a letter, email, or a text message to confirm that they are eligible and that their payment has been processed.

## Appeals

There is no right of appeal against any decision not to award a payment. People who are declined a payment will not be eligible because they do not meet the eligibility criteria. However, it would be good practice to outline the reason for refusal and make it clear that people can resubmit information if it was incorrect.

## Impact on tax and benefits

The DWP has confirmed that payments made under Local Welfare Provision are disregarded in the assessment of Income Support, Income Based Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) and Income Related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), so these will not be affected. Universal Credit claimants will not experience any change in entitlement as a consequence of receiving a payment under this scheme.

HMRC has confirmed that the payment of £150 would be made as Local Welfare Provision and is not taxable. As a result, authorities will not need to provide details to HMRC of the payments made under this scheme.

As this payment is classed as Local Welfare Provision, it will also be disregarded as income for the purposes of assessing entitlement to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

## **Funding and projected demand**

### **Funding**

As outlined above, a total of £177m of funding has been identified for the Cost of Living Support Scheme and the Discretionary Scheme. It has been noted that there will be large volumes of cases where the local authority will not hold all the relevant information to make payment and will have to ensure the scheme is available to all households identified as eligible.

### **Projected demand**

The Welsh Government has identified around 740,000 properties currently in council tax Bands A to D.

There are also around 273,000 properties that are in receipt of support under the Council Tax Reduction Scheme, including 18,600 in Bands E to I.

To assist authorities with resource planning, more detailed calculations of expected volumes for each authority will be provided.

Authorities will be required to baseline a starting position for the delivery of the scheme by extracting the volumes of eligible properties from council tax and council tax reduction scheme databases.

## **Records to be kept by Welsh authorities**

Authorities should provide requested information to the Welsh Government to

allow for reporting on the delivery of the Cost of Living Support Scheme. This information should include:

- number of properties identified in each of the property bands A to D
- number of CTRS properties in Bands E to I
- number of households eligible
- number of registration requests
- number of payments made
- breakdown of the categories under which they have been paid.

The frequency of returns will be monthly.

## Privacy notices

As the data processors, authorities are advised to update privacy notices to indicate that they are processing Cost of Living Support Scheme payments.

Read our [privacy notice](#).

## Monitoring and evaluation

The Cost of Living Support Scheme will be monitored, and evaluations shared with Welsh Government officials and authority scheme contacts. Updates will be provided to Welsh Ministers as required.

This will include reporting on the number of households supported under the scheme, overall expenditure and an overview of any issues experienced in relation to the administration of the scheme.

## Escalation of queries

Queries in relation to the scheme should be directed as follows:

- All disputes relating to the award/non-award of payment should be addressed to the relevant local authority.
- Issues relating to the overall principles of the main Cost of Living Support Scheme should be addressed to the Welsh Government via the Welsh Local Government Association.

## Frequently asked questions

### **If authorities can identify eligible households and have current bank details for them, can the Cost of Living Support Scheme payment be made without the need for confirming details?**

Yes provided the local authority has satisfied its own requirements.

### **There will be groups of low-income households who are not liable for council tax. Why have these not been included as eligible for the scheme?**

This scheme is intended to provide support to those easily identifiable through the use of council tax data. A Discretionary Scheme is also being provided to assist households who are not liable to pay council tax.

Households can also apply to the [Discretionary Assistance Fund](#) if they are experiencing financial hardship.

### **Will the £150 payment affect means-tested benefits?**

The DWP has confirmed that payments made under Local Welfare Provision are disregarded in the assessment of Income Support, Income Based JSA and Income Related ESA so these will not be affected. For Universal Credit claimants, there is no such provision but as there is no period attached to the

payment, it will count as capital and claimants may need to report this to the DWP if their capital is over £5,800.

**A householder(s) who has their main residence in England has applied to the scheme for their second property in Wales. They are liable for paying council tax and are responsible for paying the fuels bills at the property, are they eligible for a payment?**

No. The scheme is there to support households in their primary residence only.

**A householder(s) owns two homes in Wales, are they eligible for assistance through the scheme?**

Only in respect of the property they inhabit as a primary residence (if they do occupy one of these properties as their primary residence).

**A householder(s) lives in a Band E property but receives a Disability Band Reduction which drops the charge to that of a B and D property, are they eligible?**

Yes. The revised band is used in eligibility for this scheme.

**Is there a target date by which payments should be made?**

No. Authorities are encouraged to make payments in a timely manner and as soon as practically possible after a successful decision.

**Can a householder(s) appeal against a decision not to**

## **award a payment under the Cost of Living Support Scheme?**

No. There is no right of appeal against a decision not to grant a payment as a refusal will arise because the household does not meet the conditions of the scheme. Authorities should look to reconsider cases where new information may change the outcome, for example, where a property is retrospectively listed as liable for council tax.

## About this document

This document is a copy of the web page [Cost of Living Support Scheme: guide for local authorities](#) downloaded.

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Please ensure that you refer to the Screening Form Guidance while completing this form.

**Which service area and directorate are you from?**

Service Area: Revenues and Benefits & Poverty and Prevention

Directorate: Financial Services & Social Services

**Q1 (a) What are you screening for relevance?**

- New and revised policies, practices or procedures
- Service review, re-organisation or service changes/reductions, which affect the wider community, service users and/or staff
- Efficiency or saving proposals
- Setting budget allocations for new financial year and strategic financial planning
- New project proposals affecting staff, communities or accessibility to the built environment, e.g., new construction work or adaptations to existing buildings, moving to on-line services, changing location
- Large Scale Public Events
- Local implementation of National Strategy/Plans/Legislation
- Strategic directive and intent, including those developed at Regional Partnership Boards and Public Services Board, which impact on a public bodies functions
- Medium to long term plans (for example, corporate plans, development plans, service delivery and improvement plans)
- Setting objectives (for example, well-being objectives, equality objectives, Welsh language strategy)
- Major procurement and commissioning decisions
- Decisions that affect the ability (including external partners) to offer Welsh language opportunities and services

**(b) Please name and fully describe initiative here:**

**Cost Of Living Support Scheme Payment – discretionary element.**

As part of the Welsh Government’s Supplementary Budget, on 15 February 2022 the Welsh Government announced a Cost of Living Support Scheme (“the scheme”) to be administered on its behalf by local authorities. The criteria of the ‘Main Scheme’ have been determined by Welsh Government but for part of the funding provided, Welsh LAs have been given the discretion to determine their own local discretionary schemes with their own local criteria. The report outlines the options available and provides recommendations to Cabinet for adoption as the Council’s Local scheme. Authorities have been tasked by the Minister for Finance and Local Government to proceed with designing and delivering their schemes as soon as they are able to do so.

**Q2 What is the potential impact on the following: the impacts below could be positive (+) or negative (-)**

	High Impact		Medium Impact		Low Impact		Needs further investigation
	+	-	+	-	+	-	
Children/young people (0-18)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Older people (50+)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other age group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Future Generations (yet to be born)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race (including refugees)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asylum seekers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gypsies & travellers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or (non-)belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

Welsh Language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty/social exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carers (inc. young carers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community cohesion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage & civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy and maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q3 What involvement has taken place/will you undertake e.g. engagement/consultation/co-productive approaches?  
Please provide details below – either of your activities or your reasons for not undertaking involvement**

As the developers of the whole scheme, welsh government would be expected to have carried out any engagement considered necessary or required. In respect of the discretionary scheme the criteria for which are determined locally, we have been required to develop and implement the scheme at pace so payments can be issued rapidly to deal with the immediate hardship caused by increases in the cost of living already being experienced by our citizens. With that requirement in mind, there is no time for a 'normal' engagement process to be undertaken as the delay caused by that process would defeat the aims of the scheme as a whole. Informal discussions with partner organisations such as Citizens Advice and local registered social landlords on their needs and the implications to the scheme have taken place. These have fed into the development of the discretionary scheme.

**Q4 Have you considered the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 in the development of this initiative:**

- a) Overall does the initiative support our Corporate Plan's Well-being Objectives when considered together?  
     Yes                       No
  
- b) Does the initiative consider maximising contribution to each of the seven national well-being goals?  
     Yes                       No
  
- c) Does the initiative apply each of the five ways of working?  
     Yes                       No
  
- d) Does the initiative meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs?  
     Yes                       No

**Q5 What is the potential risk of the initiative? (Consider the following impacts – equality, socio-economic, environmental, cultural, legal, financial, political, media, public perception etc...)**

High risk <input type="checkbox"/>	Medium risk <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Low risk <input type="checkbox"/>
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## Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form

**Q6 Will this initiative have an impact (however minor) on any other Council service?**

Yes

No

If yes, please provide details below

Anyone who needs to make a payment to the Council for goods and services provided by any department will have a greater financial resources available to do so.

**Q7 What is the cumulative impact of this proposal on people and/or communities when considering all the impacts identified within the screening and any other key decisions affecting similar groups/ service users made by the organisation?**

*(You may need to discuss this with your Service Head or Cabinet Member to consider more widely if this proposal will affect certain groups/ communities more adversely because of other decisions the organisation is making. For example, financial impact/poverty, withdrawal of multiple services and whether this is disadvantaging the same groups, e.g., disabled people, older people, single parents (who are mainly women), etc.)*

£14,000,000 paid to Swansea citizens to help them deal with the rising cost of living. This is a positive outcome and will assist with alleviating poverty in the area.

### Outcome of Screening

**Q8 Please describe the outcome of your screening below:**

Rapid payments made from the Cost of Living Support Scheme will have a positive impact for recipients. The support will help maximise income to households and will help reduce hardship in the city. Additionally, there may also be positive impacts on the workload of the Poverty and Prevention Service, Housing and Finance Departments. By rapidly designing and implement the discretionary scheme so we can issue payments to citizens in need without delay which is what the authority has been asked to do by the Minister for Finance and Local Government.

(NB: This summary paragraph should be used in the relevant section of corporate report)

Full IIA to be completed

Do not complete IIA – please ensure you have provided the relevant information above to support this outcome

NB: Please email this completed form to the Access to Services Team for agreement before obtaining approval from your Head of Service. Head of Service approval is only required via email.

<b>Screening completed by:</b>
<b>Name: Julian Morgans</b>
<b>Job title: Head of Revenues and Benefits</b>
<b>Date: 05/4/22</b>
<b>Approval by Head of Service:</b>
<b>Name:</b>
<b>Position:</b>
<b>Date:</b>

Please return the completed form to [accesstoservices@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:accesstoservices@swansea.gov.uk)