

SERVICE UPDATE

<u>Name of Function:</u>	Early Intervention and Community Empowerment
<u>Date:</u>	16 August 2023
<u>Title of Update:</u>	Fuel and Food Initiatives Update
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Fuel

Energy Price Guarantee and Price Cap

The UK Government Energy Price Guarantee, which limited average household bills to £2500 has ended. The Energy Price Cap, set every three months by Ofgem, has been set a £2074 from 1st July 2023 and will be revised again on 1st October.

The Council's Revenue and Benefits Team have been administering the Energy Bill Support Scheme Alternative Fund and the Alternative Fuel Alternative Fund and the latest figures are below. These are expected to be the final figures for these funds:

£400 Energy Bill Support Scheme Alternative Fund:

Applications received to date: 264

Applications awarded to date: 208

Applications declined to date: 56

Spend to date: £83200 [208 x £400]

Decline reasons are mainly being connected to mains energy supply and therefore not eligible for the alternative fund. A few that were fully Council funded.

£200 Alternative Fuel Alternative Fund:

Applications received to date: 141

Applications awarded to date: 128

Applications declined to date: 13

Spend to date - £25600 [128 x £200]

Decline reasons include bank account name not matching Applicant name, and invoice dated prior to date required in guidance.

Total spend between the two schemes - £108800.00

Food

The Scottish Government has allocated £1.8m for a cash first approach to tackling food insecurity, as part of steps towards removing the need for emergency food banks.

They expect to support around 8 projects at c£200k over two years, with bids being submitted by 1st September and the outcome known in October 2023.

Locally, ACVO hosted a meeting on 15th October 2023 with a number of third sector partners interested in submitting a bid and this will now be developed for submission. While it is hoped the bid will be successful, it is recognised that it will be competitive and that should the bid be unsuccessful, the group will explore ways to continue progressing the anticipated improvements and potentially seek other funding sources to do so.

In addition, the Scottish Government are providing direct funding to community and third sector organisations responding to food insecurity through the Investing in Communities Fund.