

**Small grant funding for heating support for vulnerable groups/individuals in winter fuel poverty exacerbated by the cost-of-living pressures.**

**Cllr John Howard Cabinet Member for Adult Social Health and Public Health**

**January 2023**

**Deadline date: 4 January 2023**

Cabinet portfolio holder:	Councillor John Howard, Cabinet Member for Adult Social, Health and Public Health
Responsible Director:	Jyoti Atri, Director of Public Health
Is this a Key Decision?	YES If yes, has it been included on the Forward Plan: NO – Urgency Procedure Invoked
Is this decision eligible for call-in?	NO – Waiver of Call-in Procedure Invoked
Does this Public report have any annex that contains exempt information?	NO
Is this a project and if so has it been registered on Verto?	NO

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Cabinet Member is recommended to approve the following:

- The allocation of funding to a small grants fund for distribution to vulnerable groups/individuals who are experiencing fuel poverty exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis.
- Through a Partnership and Delegation agreement, Peterborough City Council (PCC) will delegate authority to Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) to commission a voluntary sector organisation to administer the grants as part of the joint Stay Well this Winter programme

## 1. PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

- 1.1 This report is for the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health, and Public Health to consider exercising delegated authority under paragraph 3.4.3 of Part 3 of the Constitution in accordance with the terms of their portfolio at paragraph (g) in support of the recommendations found in this CMDN.
- 1.2 With the approval of the Chairman of the Adults and Health Scrutiny Committee, the urgency, special urgency and waiver of call-in procedures have been invoked to suspend the requirement to publish advance notice of the decision for 28 days, to publish the full decision for a 5 day 'consideration period' and to waive the 3 day call in period. These procedures have been invoked because of the cost-of-living pressures that have exacerbated the fuel poverty experienced by many people during the winter months when needs are high. Keeping warm is associated with mitigating the impact of poor health especially respiratory conditions on the under-fives, older people and those with an underlying health condition. This is especially important when there are extreme demand pressures upon both primary care and hospital health services.

## 2. TIMESCALES

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	<b>NO</b>	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	<b>N/A</b>
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## 3. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 Since 2013, PCC and CCC have worked with key partners from across the local health and care system, both statutory and non-statutory to mitigate and reduce the impact that cold conditions and winter weather has upon the health of those most vulnerable through the Stay Well this Winter Programme.
- 3.2 A key element of the Stay Well this Winter Programme is its Stay Well Grant. This grant is used to offer direct financial aid to contribute towards, but not limited to, future heating costs, small home improvements, shelter (such as tent), sleeping bags for vulnerable individuals and families living in fuel poverty.
- 3.3 The wider objective is to strengthen local communities, offer resilience to those in crisis, create opportunities and tackle the issues of disadvantage and exclusion.
- 3.4 Although there has been funding for the Stay Well grant in CCC since 2013, in PCC funding has only been available for two years since 2013.

## 4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The Stay Well this Winter initiative is a partnership with representation for from PCC, CCC (including adult and children's services), the Integrated care Partnership and its provider organisations, voluntary sector, and district councils. All experience the demand arising from fuel poverty and identify the grants as helping to mitigate these pressures supported by positive feedback from recipients.

## 5. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

- 5.1 **Financial impact**

PCC allocation = £50,000  
CCC allocation £250,000

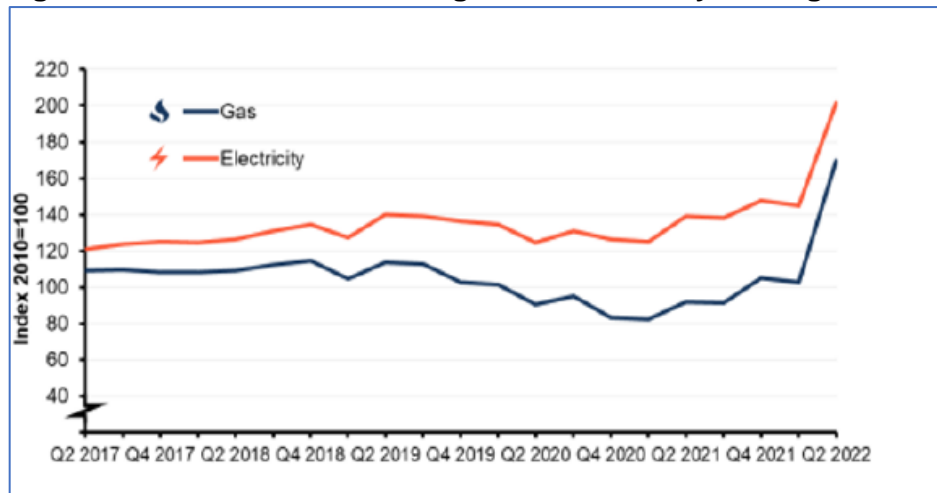
Total funding allocated for Peterborough and Cambridgeshire = £300,000

## 6. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

6.1 These recommendations are driven by the following factors.

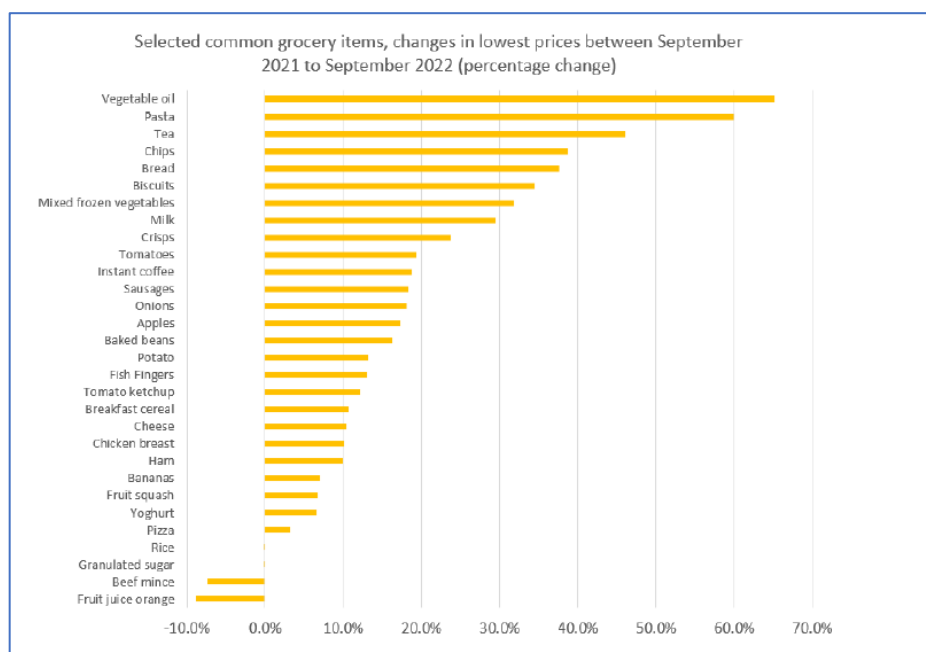
- This PCC Public Health funding is a new allocation this year and represents acknowledgement of the risks to health and wellbeing arising from fuel poverty amongst vulnerable groups/individuals; exacerbated by the cost-of-living increases. The grants will support efforts to address the significant unmet need evidenced by the unprecedented demand for support from our most vulnerable to stay safe, warm, and well this winter. Figure 1 shows the increase in domestic heating costs

**Figure 1: Increases in domestic gas and electricity heating costs**



- The pressures created by domestic fuel increases upon the budgets of those most vulnerable have been exacerbated through huge food increase as indicated below in Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Food costs increase of 17% in past year**



- The Stay Well this Winter Programme covers the PCC and CCC areas. There is an established mechanism for distributing the grants and the voluntary sector organisation that is commissioned through a grant agreement with CCC is very experienced in grant distribution and has been providing the service for a long period. It is familiar with the grant criteria and has the supporting infrastructure to administer grants. Therefore distribution is immediate.

## 7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 7.1 Having a PCC stand-alone contract has been considered but this would not have the benefit of a readymade distribution network and the ability to start immediately.

## 8. IMPLICATIONS

### 8.1 Legal Implications

This will require a Partnering and Delegation with CCC to enable PCC to delegate authority to CCC for commissioning the voluntary sector organisation to administer the grant.

CCC has waiver in place to support the grant agreement with the voluntary sector organisation.

### 8.2 Equalities Implications

The grants are targeted at the vulnerable groups and individuals most affected by fuel poverty through promotion and referral from agencies working with them. The members of the Stay Well in Winter Partnership are key to promoting the grant programme with these organisations helping to ensure that it reaches the most vulnerable.

### 8.3 Other implications

Carbon Impact Assessment: This project will have a neutral impact on the council's carbon emissions but will support increased domestic use of carbon fuels but given the fuel poverty pressures and risks to health immediate action is required. However carbon impact considerations need to be factored into longer term planning for supporting people living in fuel poverty.

**9. DECLARATIONS / CONFLICTS OF INTEREST & DISPENSATIONS GRANTED**

9.1 None

**10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985) and The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

10.1 None.

**11. APPENDICES**

11.1 None.