



Elmbridge

Borough Council

... bridging the communities ...

Household Support Phase 4 Policy 2023/24

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In response to the Cost-of-living crisis Surrey County Council have been allocated additional funding as part of a fourth tranche of funding under the Household Support Scheme which provided a further £842 million to County Councils and Unitary Authorities in England. This tranche of funding needs to be spent by 31 March 2024.
- 1.2 As a result, Surrey County Council (the initial recipients of the funding), have allocated £368,000 to Elmbridge.

2. Eligibility for the Household Support Fund 4

- 2.1 The Council will use council tax records and the information gathered for the energy rebate payments, the discretionary energy rebates and household support funds 2 and 3 to make payments for Household Support Fund 4.
- 2.2 In order to be eligible for Household Support Fund 4 the following must apply:
 - I. Be in receipt of Housing Benefit or Council Tax Support on the 15 September 2023 and have at least one of:
 - a) A member of the household who satisfies the criteria of a Disability Premium within their Housing Benefit or Council Tax Support award as meets one of the conditions below:
 - i) Disability Living Allowance (any rate)
 - ii) Personal Independence Payment (any rate)
 - iii) Child Disability Payment (any rate)
 - iv) Adult Disability Payment (any rate)
 - v) Attendance Allowance (any rate)
 - vi) Incapacity Benefit (Long term rate)
 - vii) Tax Credits (disabled element)
 - viii) Employment and Support Allowance with Support component
 - ix) War Pension / Armed Forces Compensation award
 - x) Universal Credit (Limited Capability Work Related Activity)
 - xi) Severely sight impaired / blind
 - b) and/or Carer Allowance / Carers Element of Universal Credit
 - c) A member of the household who is of pensionable age on 15 September 2023
 - d) A member of the household who is a child aged under sixteen on 15 September 2023
 - or
 - II. Be the liable Council Tax payer in receipt of a 100% care leaver discount on 15 September 2023.
- 2.3 All eligible households per 2.2 will be eligible for a fund payment of £65. Households in 2.2(I) with a child aged under sixteen will be eligible for a top-up payment of £35 and therefore will receive a total payment of £100.00.

- 2.4 Ineligible households, including working age claimants, are those not in receipt of any of the above 2.2 (I,II).
- 2.5 For the avoidance of doubt, only one claim will be paid per household (claimant). For example, a household with a disabled, carer and pensioner member under 2.2(I) would receive one payment of £65. Where a child aged under sixteen is a member they would receive one payment of £100. Care Leaver households under 2.2(II) will be receive one payment of £65.00 with no child top up.
- 2.6 Based on the eligibility criteria set out above there are approximately 4,800 households who will be eligible for a payment.
- 2.7 Payment will be made directly to the bank account or credited to the Council Tax account by the 22 December 2023 where details are held.
- 2.8 We will write to households who may be eligible. Where we have not contacted them before or do not hold payment information we will invite them to apply.

3. Payments

- 3.1 Included within the energy rebate and household support fund payments in 2022 and 2023 the Council reserved the right to make payments using the information we had gathered during processing these payments to make future payment.
- 3.2 Eligible claimants who have not applied or provided any amended payment information by 6 December 2023 will have payment made as per 3.3.
- 3.3 Where the household pass pre-payment checks and have a direct debit for payment of council tax collected from in 2023/24, we will look to automatically make payment to those bank details. Where we do not hold direct debit details we will look to automatically make payment to the payment information held per 3.1.

Where payment information is not held and no application is made, but the claimant is liable for council tax we will look to credit the council tax account.

- 3.4 If payment is rejected by the bank, we will contact those affected to obtain bank details for further payment in January 2024. Where valid payment information is not obtained, but the claimant is liable for council tax we will look to credit the council tax account.
- 3.5 Where the council has not been able to make payment (for example no valid bank details or council tax account held) the payment will be treated as ineligible.
- 3.6 Should funding of a similar nature become available from Government or Surrey County Council the Council also reserves the right to use the data from this scheme to make payments, subject to the Household meeting the relevant eligibility criteria.
- 3.7 Except in exceptional circumstances, or by the publication of an amended policy the use of this data to make future payments will apply until 31 March 2025.

4. Fraud

- 4.1 By accepting the household support funding, you confirm that you meet the eligible criteria for the Discretionary funding. The Council and the government will not tolerate any household falsifying their records or providing false evidence to gain access to the Household Support funding. A person(s) who provides false information or makes false representation in order to benefit from the Discretionary Fund may be guilty of fraud under the Fraud Act 2006. Any payment will be subject to claw back if paid in error.
- 4.2 The Council will use all available tools to identify potential fraud, before, and after the payment. If you are making a claim, you are consenting for the Council to share the data on the application form for the purposes of validating the claim with any appropriate organisations. If you do not consent to the sharing of the information the application will be deemed invalid.

5. Appeal rights

- 5.1 Whilst there is no formal right of appeal except by judicial review, in the interests of natural justice and to eliminate the risk of administrative error, applicants may seek a review of the decision from the Council.