

1. How much funding from the Household Support Fund for the 2023/24 financial year has been spent so far in your council? If all the funding has already been spent, please can you provide the date by which it was spent by.

£5,369,420 (at 26th February 2024)

2. How many applications for:

- a) vouchers and
- b) grants under the HSF scheme have been rejected so far in the 2023/24 financial year

If possible, please can you provide a breakdown of the reasons why these applications were rejected, e.g. incomplete application, deemed ineligible.

- a) 58,042 (awards)
- b) None rejected unless duplicate application received within the same period and we do not capture data in a format that allows us to report on this

3. What is the longest time in days it has taken to process an application for

- a) a grant and
- b) a voucher under the HSF scheme in the 2023/24 financial year so far?

- a) We do not award grants under the HSF
- b) We do not hold the information that you have requested in an easily retrievable format. Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) relieves a public authority from the obligation to comply with a request for information where the estimated time required to locate, review and extract the information exceeds a certain threshold set out in Regulations.

The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/3244) set out the rules in relation to the cost limit (otherwise called the "appropriate limit"). These Regulations are published by the Office of Public Sector Information (OPSI) and are viewable on their web site from this link: http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2004/uksi_20043244_en.pdf

The Regulations set out the cost limit for Government departments and for other public authorities. For local government, Regulation 3 states that the cost limit is £450 and Regulation 4(4) states that the prescribed hourly rate is £25. Regulation 4(4) further provides that where the local authority estimates the time taken to gather the information would exceed this limit (which based on the prescribed hourly rate, equates to 18 officer hours), it may refuse the request under section 12 of FoIA.

I am satisfied the cost limit applies to your request and will explain why this is the case.

We aim to process applications within 24 hours. During periods of high demand the timescale to process applications does exceed 24 hours however we do not capture data in a way that would provide the actual longest time to process. To respond to this question would entail a manual interrogation of over 58,000 awards which would take considerably longer than the 18 officer hours stipulated in the Freedom of information Act.