



We would like to request a detailed breakdown of Wigan Council's "Cash First" initiative for the following period:- 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025, and/ or the most recent full financial year.

Specifically, please provide the following information:

1. A total figure of the budget allocated to the "Cash First" initiative for the specified period. £5,636,468.60
2. A detailed breakdown of how this budget was spent, including:
 - a. The total amount of direct financial payments made to individuals or households. a. 0
 - b. The total amount spent on any other forms of support provided under the initiative (e.g., vouchers, support services). b. £5,342,968.60
 - c. The total amount, if any, allocated to administrative costs associated with the initiative. c. £293,500
3. The full eligibility criteria used to determine who receives financial support through the "Cash First" initiative. Please include any specific thresholds, conditions, or priority groups. Please see attachment
4. The number of unique individuals or households that received support from the initiative during this period. 98,039 awards – we do not record unique awards
5. Details of any partnerships or third-party organisations involved in the delivery or administration of the "Cash First" initiative. Zero

Household Support Fund

1 April 2024 to 30 September 2024

Families in receipt of means tested free school meals

The Council is offering support to all families currently in receipt of means tested free school meals.

Wigan will make payment for scheduled school holidays to fund from this scheme with help towards food.

Families in receipt of means tested free school meals will be contacted directly with an award payment. There is no application required for this support.

Other households with children can still access support through the wider offer.

Pensioner households

Wigan will provide targeted support to pensioner households in receipt of Council Tax Reduction with a payment to support with the rising costs in energy, no application process will be required.

Other pension households not in receipt of Council Tax Reduction can still access support through the wider offer.

Care leavers

We will provide support to care leavers who have housing cost bills, a payment to support with the rising costs in energy will be made, no application process will be required.

Care Leavers can still access ongoing support through the wider offer.

Households with disabled family members

Households in receipt of Council Tax Disabled Band Reduction will receive a single award, with no required application process.

Other households not receiving a Council Tax Disabled Band Reduction can access support through the wider offer.

Wider offer of support

As well as providing targeted support Wigan's scheme will also offer support to other vulnerable households. This will include:

- families not in receipt of means tested free school meals
- pensioner households
- households without children
- individuals
- care leavers
- households with a cancer diagnosis
- unpaid carers

The above list is not exhaustive.

Types of support available:

- Energy vouchers for households with pre-paid meters and support towards bills for households without pre-paid meters
- food vouchers
- low energy cooking appliances

Eligibility

Requests for support will be directed through our current local welfare support offer and criteria to establish households and individuals' circumstances, considering those who are struggling to afford food and energy costs.

Households may be receiving other forms of support, and this will be considered to avoid duplicating provision where possible.

However, families receiving other forms of assistance are not excluded from receiving support through this grant. For example, a household may have additional wider needs in terms of food.

To apply for support applicants will need to be:

- resident of Wigan Borough
- aged sixteen years or more
- struggling to afford food and energy costs

Applicants with no recourse to public funds can apply regardless of their immigration status if there is a genuine care need that does not arise solely from destitution. For example, if:

- there are community care needs
- they have serious health problems
- there is a risk to a child's wellbeing

Household Support Fund

1 October 2024 to 31 March 2025

Families in receipt of means tested free school meals

The Council is offering support to all families currently in receipt of means tested free school meals.

Wigan will make payment for scheduled school holidays to fund from this scheme with help towards food.

Families in receipt of means tested free school meals will be contacted directly with an award payment. There is no application required for this support.

These dates are taken from [School term dates \(wigan.gov.uk\)](https://www.wigan.gov.uk/school-term-dates), however some schools may have slightly different term dates and durations.

Other households with children can still access support through the wider offer.

Pensioner households

Wigan will provide targeted support to pensioner households in receipt of Council Tax Reduction with a payment to support with the rising costs in energy, no application process will be required.

Other pension households not in receipt of Council Tax Reduction can still access support through the wider offer.

Care leavers

We will provide support to care leavers who have housing cost bills. A payment to support with the rising costs in energy will be made, no application process will be required. Care Leavers are identified from any that have an exemption on their Council Tax.

Care Leavers can still access ongoing support through the wider offer.

Households with disabled family members

Households in receipt of Council Tax Disabled Band Reduction will receive a single award, with no required application process.

Other households not receiving a Council Tax Disabled Band Reduction can access support through the wider offer.

Wider offer of support

As well as providing targeted support Wigan's scheme will also offer support to other vulnerable households. This will include:

- families not in receipt of means tested free school meals
- pensioner households
- households without children
- individuals
- care leavers
- households with a cancer diagnosis
- unpaid carers

The above list is not exhaustive.

Types of support available:

- Energy vouchers for households with pre-paid meters and support towards bills for households without pre-paid meters
- food vouchers
- low energy cooking appliances

Eligibility

Requests for crisis support will be directed through our current local welfare support offer and criteria to establish households and individuals' circumstances, considering those who are struggling to afford food and energy costs.

Households may be receiving other forms of support, and this will be considered to avoid duplicating provision where possible.

However, families receiving other forms of assistance are not excluded from receiving support through this grant. For example, a household may have additional wider needs in terms of food.

To apply for support applicants will need to be:

- resident of Wigan Borough
- aged sixteen years or more
- struggling to afford food and energy costs

Applicants with no recourse to public funds can apply regardless of their immigration status if there is a genuine care need that does not arise solely from destitution. For example, if:

- there are community care needs
- they have serious health problems
- there is a risk to a child's wellbeing