

The **Public Sector Equality Duty** (Section 149 of the Equality Act) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people carrying out their activities.

The Equality Duty supports good decision making – it encourages public bodies to be more efficient and effective by understanding how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people’s needs. The Council’s Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) includes an assessment of the community safety impact assessment to comply with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act and will enable the Council to better understand the potential impact of proposals and consider mitigating action.

Name or Brief Description of Proposal	Acceptance of government funds under the Household Support Fund (HSF)
Brief Service Profile (including number of customers)	
<p>The HSF is funded by central government to provide direct payments to families and individuals in particular hardship at a time of rising costs.</p> <p>SCC has been advised that there will be an award in the region of £2m for the period 1/10/2022 to 31/3/2022 – to date the accompanying guidance and eligibility criteria for the fund have yet to be received, however the broad outline as indicated in the accompanying cabinet report</p>	
Summary of Impact and Issues	
<p>There may be groups who are vulnerable to rising prices even though they are supported through these schemes, for example large families or single-income families. It is important to stress that The Fund is intended to cover a wide range of low-income households in need including families with children of all ages, pensioners, unpaid carers, care leavers, and people with disabilities.</p> <p>Information to date advises that when administering the fund Authorities are encouraged to adopt the following principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use discretion on how to identify and support those most in need, taking into account a wide range of information; • use the funding from 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023 to meet immediate needs and help those who are struggling to afford energy and water bills, food, and other related essentials. Authorities can also use the funding to support households who are struggling to afford wider essentials; 	

- in exceptional cases of genuine emergency, the funding can additionally be used to support housing costs where existing housing support schemes do not meet this exceptional need,
- this includes payments made, or committed to, by the Authority or any person acting on behalf of the Authority, from 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023.
- work together with District Councils and third parties, including where necessary and appropriate other local services. This may include social workers, housing and family support services, and may incorporate intelligence and data from wider children's social care systems to help identify and support individuals, families and households within the scope of The Fund.

Failure to accept these funds would mean Southampton residents not having access to this at a time of rising costs

Potential Positive Impacts

- Support families and individuals in need at a time of rising prices
- Enable families to access other support including advice and guidance on benefits and other support they may be eligible for

Responsible Service Manager	Sara Crawford/Bryn Roberts
Date	2/9/22
Approved by Senior Manager	Mary D'Arcy
Date	2/9/22

Potential Impact

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
Age	Failure to accept and distribute this fund will impact significantly on poorer pensioner households who will be eligible for this support.	Accept the funding

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
Disability	Failure to accept and distribute this fund will impact significantly on households with a disabled person who will be eligible for this support.	Accept the fund
Gender Reassignment	None specific	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	None specific	
Pregnancy and Maternity	Failure to accept and distribute this fund will impact significantly on pregnant women or those unable to work households who will be eligible for this support.	Accept the fund
Race	Failure to accept and distribute this fund will impact significantly on individuals and families from all ethnicities who will be eligible for this support.	Accept the fund
Religion or Belief	Failure to accept and distribute this fund will impact significantly on individuals and families from all ethnicities who will be eligible for this support.	Accept the fund
Sex	None specific	
Sexual Orientation	None specific	
Community Safety	n/a	
Poverty	Failure to accept and distribute this fund will impact significantly on individuals and families from all parts of the City who are struggling financially and who will be eligible for this support.	Accept the fund
Health & Wellbeing	Failure to accept and distribute this fund will further impact on the health and wellbeing of families and individuals already negatively impacted by the cost of living crisis	Accept the fund

Impact Assessment	Details of Impact	Possible Solutions & Mitigating Actions
Other Significant Impacts		