



Report of:	To:	Date
Councillor Michael Vincent, Resources Portfolio Holder	Council	27 October 2022

Executive Report: Resources Portfolio Holder

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1** To inform Council of progress on key objectives and the current position on issues within the Resources Portfolio, as set out below.

2. Finance

- 2.1** The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan went before Cabinet on 19 October. The plan shows our financial forecast for the current year and four years ahead with a revised projected gap of £3.5m in 2026/27. This results largely from an assumed reduction in central government funding owing to the lack of a multi-year settlement, as well as unusually high inflationary pressures.
- 2.2** A technical consultation paper on the 2023/24 Local Government Finance Settlement is expected to be produced for local authorities to consider shortly. Ultimately the full details and their impact on Wyre's finances is only expected to be known in December and as a result, the forecast will be further updated in the new year to reflect the outcome of the wider consultation process on the settlement.

3. Human Resources

- 3.1** Unison's consultation with members on the National Employers' pay offer has now ended with them voting by 63.5% to 36.5% to accept. However, the council will need to wait for the outcome of both Unite and GMB's membership consultations before an agreement is likely to be reached. This means that notification of an agreed pay award may be announced by late October/early November.

4. Contact Centre

- 4.1** Wyre's £1.6m Covid-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF) allocation which provides business rate relief for businesses adversely impacted by the pandemic, who weren't eligible for other reliefs, has been awarded to 329 hereditaments, successfully closing the scheme.

- 4.2** As of the end of September 42,589 households have received a mandatory energy rebate payment of £150 with the total spent being £6,388,350. This figure is subject to change over the coming months as investigations continue to be carried out to check entitlement. So far, 223 households have advised us they are not eligible and this can be for a range of reasons including second homes. The discretionary scheme is still ongoing and ends 30 November 2022. So far we have spent a total of £36,750 to 245 households.
- 4.3** Under the Ukraine thank you payments scheme we currently have 26 active sponsors, but there have been 35 sponsors in total since the scheme launched. Guests are starting to move on from their sponsor's household with some returning to Ukraine. We have paid out just over £48,000 in total and are awaiting reimbursement from Lancashire County Council.
- 4.4** The second tranche of Household Support Fund closed on 30 September and a third tranche has since been announced. We await formal confirmation from Lancashire county Council of our allocation but expect it to be in the region of £380,000, similar to tranche 2. The scheme has helped provide additional one-off payments to 4,819 working age claimants (receiving £50 each) and 3,528 pensioners (receiving £90 each). Greater flexibility is expected under the third tranche of funding and we expect to set aside some support for Warm Places contributions with further details to be reported as the scheme develops.

5. Comments and questions

- 5.1** In accordance with procedure rule 11.3 any member of Council will be able to ask me a question or make a comment on the contents of my report or on any issue, which falls within my area of responsibility. I will respond to any such questions or comments in accordance with Procedure Rule 11.5.