

Copeland Discretionary Housing Payments**Lead Officer: Julie Betteridge, Head of Customer and Community Services****Recommendation**

The Strategic Housing Panel is requested to

- a) Note the current spend and reasons for allocating the DHP and expectation that all the DHP available budget will be spent within the financial year;
- b) Note the refusal decisions detail; and
- c) Discuss and consider the option of bringing the DHP allocation and delivery into the Council's Strategic Housing Service in line with the end of the Shared Service Arrangement ie by 1st July 2015.

1 DHP Finances up to 23/02/15

Government contribution	£171,911.00	100%
<i>less</i> Committed DHP spend	£141,332.62	82%
<i>add</i> Recovered DHP overpayments	£1,645.38	1%
Available budget	£32,223.76	19%

2 DHP awards up to 23/02/15

Award reason	Cases	Payments Made	Future Payments	Committed spend	% of total spend	% of total budget
Disability	10	£3,118.62	£318.52	£3,437.14	2	2
LHA reforms	26	£6,198.59	£515.29	£6,713.88	5	4
Low income	1	£110.00		£110.00	0	0
No Impact	8	£1,698.24	£90.00	£1,788.24	1	1
Rent restrictions	3	£1,467.38	£141.16	£1,608.54	1	1
Social Size	291	£116,254.54	£10,476.24	£126,730.78	90	74

Criteria						
other	7	£944.04		£944.04	1	1
Total	346	£129,791.41	£11,541.21	£141,332.62	100	82

3 DHP refusals up to 23/02/15

Refusal reason	Cases	%
Can afford	54	53
HB increased	17	17
Failed to provide information	17	17
Not taking adequate steps	7	7
HB covers the full rent	2	2
Not in receipt of HB	2	2
Other	3	3
Total	102	100

Definition of terms used:

“Disability” relates to properties where additional assistance is required due to disability. For example, if a claimant requires an additional room for medical treatment or to store medical supplies.

“LHA reforms” relates to awards to (post-2008) private sector tenants who have been affected by the reforms to the Local Housing Allowance.

This will be mainly single claimants aged between 25 and 34. This claimant group previously had their Housing Benefit calculated based upon a 1 bedroom self-contained property, however as part of the Welfare Reform Programme, their Housing Benefit is now restricted to the level for 1 bedroom in a shared house.

“No Impact” relates to cases that have not been affected by the Welfare Reform Programme. Such cases would be based upon insufficient income to meet housing costs.

“Rent restrictions” relates to (pre-2008) private sector tenants whose eligible rent has been restricted by the Valuation Office Agency.