

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Personnel Policy

HOUSING BENEFIT – WAR PENSION DISREGARD1. Purpose of Report

To seek approval for the continuation of the War Pension Disregard in respect of Housing Benefit claims in 2024/25.

2. Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to RESOLVE that the continuation of the current Local Scheme Disregarding War Pensions for Housing Benefit Applications in 2024/25 be approved.

3. Detail

The Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit (War Pensions Disregards) regulations 2007 allow for Local Authorities to develop a local scheme that can disregard War Pension income from the calculation of Housing Benefit.

Since the introduction of Housing Benefit, the Council has always disregarded this income when calculating a claim for Housing Benefit. The Department for Works and Pension has recently requested that each local authority has their local scheme approved each year.

The local scheme is discretionary and, as a result, the Council is expected to meet the cost. However, under the Housing Benefit subsidy arrangements, the government reimburses the Council 75% of the expenditure where a local scheme is implemented.

4. Financial Implications

The comments from the Head of Finance Services were as follows:

The table below shows the amounts awarded and cost to the Council in recent years. The 2023/24 figures are not available until the end of the financial year.

Year	Amount Awarded	Total Cost to Broxtowe (25% of amount awarded)
2022/23	£15,664	£3,916
2021/22	£14,828	£3,707
2020/21	£15,411	£3,853
2019/20	£17,789	£4,447
2018/19	£16,561	£4,140

5. Legal Implications

The comments from the Head of Legal Services were as follows:

The Regulations providing for this are the Housing Benefit Regulations 2006 paragraph 40(2) and schedule 5, and Housing Benefit (Persons who have attained the qualifying age for state pension credit) Regulations 2006 paragraph 33(9). Sections 134 and 139 of the Social Security Administration Act 1992 provide the Council with the discretion to modify the Housing Benefit scheme by disregarding a further amount, or all, of specified war disablement pensions and payments.

6. Human Resources Implications

There were no comments from the Human Resources Manager.

7. Union Comments

There were no Unison comments in relation to this report.

8. Data Protection Compliance Implications

This report does not contain any [OFFICIAL(SENSITIVE)] information and there are no Data Protection issues in relation to this report.

9. Equality Impact Assessment

As there is no change to policy an equality impact assessment is not required.

10. Background Papers

Nil.