

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Personnel Policy**Crisis Resilience Fund Policy****1. Purpose of Report**

To approve the implementation of the Crisis and Resilience Fund Housing Payment Policy to replace the existing Discretionary Housing Payment policy following consideration at Policy Overview and Working Group.

2. Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to APPROVE the Crisis and Resilience Fund Housing Payment Policy and recommend the implementation to Cabinet.

3. Detail

Policy Overview and Working Group considered the Policy on 9 July 2026 making recommendations relating to the inclusion of member involvement in any reconsideration process and identifying appropriate portfolio holders to be included in the decision-making process.

The Council has historically administered discretionary financial assistance through its Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) policy. The scheme has provided short-term support to residents facing housing-related financial difficulties, where Housing Benefit or Universal Credit Housing Costs have not fully met rental liabilities.

The DHP scheme has played an important role in:

- Preventing homelessness
- Supporting vulnerable households
- Assisting residents affected by welfare reform
- Enabling residents to sustain accommodation where there is a realistic prospect of improved financial stability.

Over recent years, the demand profile for discretionary support has evolved. Increasing financial pressures with the cost-of-living and price inflation, rising energy costs, and broader economic uncertainty have resulted in residents requiring support for a wider range of financial difficulties extending beyond traditional housing-related hardship. In response, the government created the Household Support Fund (HSF), which has been administered by Nottinghamshire County Council.

As part of an evaluation of the schemes, it was initially proposed to bring both the DHP and HSF into one manageable fund. However, during the interim period prior to Local Government Reorganisation, the government has now

provided two Crisis Resilience Funds (CRF), one to district councils and one to county councils, both replacing the previous DHP and HSF funds respectively.

The County Council's CRF framework focuses on supporting residents experiencing immediate financial hardship and aims to provide preventative support that reduces escalation into more significant social crises.

It is proposed to provide the CRF fund in an almost identical manner to the DHP policy to ensure clear and consistent approaches for residents.

Each application will continue to be assessed on its individual merits, taking account of household circumstances, income, expenditure, vulnerabilities, and the potential impact of refusing support.

The proposed Crisis and Resilience Fund Housing Payment Policy, including a breakdown of proposed changes, can be found in **Appendix 1**.

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is detailed in **Appendix 2**.

In addition to the CRF Policy, the Council will explore the development of a supplementary financial support scheme to assist members of the community who do not qualify for assistance through either the Council's CRF or Nottinghamshire County Council's CRF, but who are assessed as being on a low income.

4. Financial Implications

The comments from the Interim Deputy Chief Executive and Section 151 Officer were as follows:

The proposed Crisis and Resilience Fund Housing Payment Policy does not create a new financial assistance scheme but instead repositions and reframes the Council's existing discretionary support arrangements. As such, the Council will continue to receive funding from the government in line with previous DHP arrangements, anticipated to be in the region of £83,000 for 2026/27.

As with the previous policy, the Council will continue to monitor expenditure levels, demand trends, and award outcomes to ensure that available funding is targeted effectively and remains sustainable within existing budget allocations.

5. Legal Implications

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

The Crisis Resilience Fund remains a discretionary scheme administered by the Council within the relevant legislative and policy framework governing welfare assistance and local authority discretionary support. The Council can support

this type of local welfare provision under the “Local authority’s general power of competence”, as set out in S.1 of the Localism Act 2011

The policy has been designed to ensure consistency, fairness, and transparency in decision-making which is consistent with relevant public law principles.

6. Human Resources Implications

Not applicable.

7. Union Comments

Not applicable.

8. Climate Change Implications

Not applicable.

9. 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.

10. Equality Impact Assessment

As this is a change to policy / a new policy an equality impact assessment is included in the appendix to this report.

11. Background Papers

Nil.