

Hi Roy,

As previously advised, Cambridgeshire County Council are preparing for HSF funding coming to an end as there has been no confirmation of any extension by Central Government. As a result, we wanted to make contact to advise of these plans and to give you as much notice as possible.

In anticipation for the end of HSF, a staff consultation has been launched proposing a closure of the service - this consultation will run for 30 days.

We intend to complete all application processing by 31/03/24, this means that **you will be able to make Trusted Partner applications up to Wednesday 27/03/24 at 4pm. After this time the Trusted Partner application form will close.**

Where you are indicating in your application that you would like a resident to receive the 'core offer' from the HAST service, please can I ask that this is made clear that it will be further information and advice on financial support available - and will not be additional funding.

**Direct Applications made by the public to the HAST team in CCC will be closing on 11/03/24.** It is important that we close this route early to ensure all residents continue to get the full offer of support and all processing is completed by the end of March. Our website will be updated to reflect this change in the coming days.

There is currently a 3-month minimum time period between awards. With the expected closure of the scheme, we are welcoming any resident in need of support and eligible to apply as soon as possible. Therefore, anyone eligible for a 2<sup>nd</sup> payment between now and the 31<sup>st</sup> March can apply and this will be processed, regardless of the 3 month minimum gap.

We will be emailing any resident eligible for a 2<sup>nd</sup> payment before 31<sup>st</sup> March who has directly applied to the HAST team to ask them to apply before the 11<sup>th</sup> March.

Once we reach 27/03, please may you remove any HSF information from your websites or centres.

We are aware the Spring Budget on 06/03 brings the possibility of announcements. If we receive confirmation of any extension to the funding from Central Government, we will of course update you as soon as possible. *Please note, the £3m funding for the continuation of a direct food voucher scheme was agreed at last week's Full Council meeting - therefore families eligible for Free School Meals will continue to get this in the next financial year regardless of any national HSF decisions.*

So to summarise:

- Trusted partner applications to remain open until 4pm on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March.
- Direct applications into the County team to close on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March
- Anyone eligible between now and 31<sup>st</sup> March can receive a payment – we are removing the 3-month minimum wait for the remainder of the scheme
- Anyone due a payment in April will not be eligible under HSF 4.

During this time of transition, we will continue to update you regularly – so please keep an eye out for these updates.

And again, just wanted to thank you all for your support in the delivery of the Household Support Fund over recent years. A huge number of households have been helped and it has been great to deliver this in collaboration with this network of trusted partners.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do let me know.

Thanks,

Nikitta

**Nikitta Vanterpool**

**Anti-Poverty Strategic Lead  
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