



South Cambridgeshire District Council:

## Local Energy Rebate - Scheme Policy

April 2022



## Background

In February 2022, the Government announced a package of support to help households with rising energy bills.

The Council Tax Energy Rebate scheme is a payment of £150 for eligible households in Council Tax bands A-D (including band E where, as a result of the Disabled Band Reduction, the Council Tax band is reduced to D). In addition to this scheme, Government has provided additional funding of £209,850 to SCDC to design a local scheme. This document provides details regarding the Local Energy Rebate Scheme.

## Local Energy Rebate Scheme

The Local Energy Rebate Scheme will provide grants to households in South Cambridgeshire as follows:

| Eligible Households  | Rebate Amount  |
|--|--|
| Households in Council Tax band in E-H, who are receipt of Local Council Tax Support as at 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2022                                     | £150 per household   |
| Households in Council Tax Bands E-H which are exempt from paying Council Tax under classes N (excluding HMOs), S, U, W* as at 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2022 | £150 per household   |
| Households in Council Tax Bands F-H which, as the result of a Disabled Band Reduction, are in bands E – G as at 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2022               | £150 per household   |
| Households with a Council Tax band in A-D, who are in receipt of Local Council Tax Support as at 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2022                              | £25 per household, in addition to the main grant of £150 per household |

\*Council Tax Exemption class categories:

N = all residents are students (excluding Houses of Multiple Occupation)

S = all residents are under 18

U = all residents are severely mentally impaired

W = annexe occupied by family's elderly or disabled relative.

Eligibility will be determined based on the position on the Council's systems at the end of the day on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022.



Where records relating to household circumstances in respect of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 are retrospectively updated and as a result the household no longer meets the eligibility criteria, the rebate must be repaid and action will be taken to recover the grant. Due to funding limitations, backdating does not apply where retrospective updates create eligibility.

## Exclusions:

The following are ineligible for the Local Energy Rebate Scheme:

- Homes where the liable party for Council Tax is a local authority, corporate body or other such body such as a housing association, the Government or any Governmental body.
- Homes which do not have a Council Tax valuation band as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022
- Houses of Multiple Occupation

## Application Process

Where the Council believes the household is eligible for a Local Energy Rebate and there is an active direct debit in payment, the local energy rebate will be paid automatically to the bank details held after the first Council Tax payment has been successfully collected and all pre-assurance checks have been completed.

Where there is not an active direct debit in place, eligible households will be invited to complete a brief application form to provide us with bank details to which the payment can be made.

Households may choose to have the rebate credited to their Council Tax account instead of receiving a direct payment. Where this option is selected, it should be noted that households are unable to retrospectively change their mind, and any refund from the Council Tax account can only be made if the Council Tax account is in credit.

## Payments

Payments will be made to the bank account of the person liable to pay Council Tax, following pre-assurance checks. In cases where the Council Tax account is in arrears or an outstanding liability of £150 or more, applicants can request that the Council Tax account is credited instead of receiving the payment directly. Where this is requested, refunds cannot be requested at a later date, unless the Council Tax account is in credit.

In order to provide assurance that rebates are only made to those who are eligible, we will complete checks before any payments are made. In some cases, this may mean that there is a slight delay in payment and / or further evidence is requested.



The scheme will run from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 to 30<sup>th</sup> October 2022, or until funding from Government has been exhausted, whichever is sooner. All payments must be made by 30<sup>th</sup> October 2022. Where the Council believes that the household is entitled to receive a payment under the Local Energy Rebate Scheme, but bank account details to facilitate that payment are not provided by the household by 30<sup>th</sup> October 2022, the Council may opt to credit this payment to the relevant Council Tax account instead to ensure the award is paid before the Government's deadline of 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

## Appeals

There is no right of appeal regarding decisions to award the Local Energy Rebate.

## Fraud

South Cambridgeshire District Council is committed to ensuring that rebates are only paid to those that are genuinely entitled to receive it. Whilst we understand that most people are honest there are unfortunately, some people or groups that will deliberately attempt to commit fraud to misdirect funds for their own personal gain or to fund more serious crime.

To provide assurance that rebates are only made to those who are truly eligible, South Cambridgeshire District Council will be adopting recommended pre-assurance checks. This may mean that there is a slight delay in receiving a rebate, and applicants may be required to provide additional evidence in support of their application as requested.