

ITEM No ...9.....

REPORT TO: CITY GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 24 JUNE 2024
REPORT ON: CUSTOMER SERVICES & IT: SCHOOL CLOTHING GRANTS
REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OR CORPORATE SERVICES
REPORT NO: 176-2024

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to recommend an increase in Dundee City Council's School Clothing Grant payments based on the inflationary uplift in the 2024-25 Local Government Budget Settlement.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Committee is asked to approve an increase of £5 for every eligible pupil with payment to be made in July 2024 in time for academic year 24/25.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The Scottish Government provided an additional £31,000 of funding to support an uplift in school clothing grants. Based on current take-up of 5,818 eligible pupils the proposed increase will cost £29,090. It should be noted that the number of eligible pupils varies from year to year.

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 In June 2021, Scottish Government and COSLA Leaders reached an agreement to increase the national minimum amount of School Clothing Grant. The minimum levels increased to £120 per eligible primary school pupil and £150 per eligible secondary school pupil.

4.2 Scottish Government contacted Local Authorities in April 2024 to ask for support in considering an inflationary uplift to the national minimum amounts to School Clothing Grants. In 2024-2025, the Scottish Budget included an inflationary uplift of £0.9 million on the previous year's funding to support Local Authorities manage this increase. Dundee City Council's share of this funding is £31,000.

Below details the current and predicted cost based on supporting 5,818 pupils

	Current		Plus £5 each	
	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary
No of pupils	3396	2422	3396	2422
Clothing Grant amount	£120	£150	£125	£155
Sub total	£407,520	£363,300	£424,500	£375,410
Total	£770,820		£799,910	

4.3 Reducing child poverty and inequalities in incomes, education and health is one of Dundee City Council's key priorities. By increasing School Clothing Grants, we are continuing to prioritise welfare support grants to children and families, which drives toward the Council's and Scotland's national mission to end child poverty.

4.4 School Clothing Grants provide financial assistance towards the cost of school clothing for families on a low income. The eligibility criteria are entitlement to one of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Job Seekers Allowance - Income Based,
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance,
- Universal Credit (where take-home pay is less than £796 per month),
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999,
- Housing Benefit,
- Council Tax Reduction
- or Child Tax Credit with an income of less than £19,995 (as assessed by HMRC),

4.5 The Council's Benefit Delivery Team support citizens by automatically awarding School Clothing Grants to eligible families. The team actively promotes Council Tax Reduction, which not only supports citizens with their Council Tax but allows for an automatic award for School Clothing Grant without the need for a separate application.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This report has been subject to an Integrated Impact Assessment to identify impacts on Equality & Diversity, Fairness & Poverty, Environment and Corporate Risk. An impact, positive or negative, on one or more of these issues was identified. An appropriate senior manager has checked and agreed with this assessment. A copy of the Integrated Impact Assessment showing the impacts and accompanying benefits of the mitigating factors for them is included as an Appendix to this report.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

6.1 The Council Leadership Team was consulted in the preparation of this report.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None

ROBERT EMMOTT
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

DATE: 6 JUNE 2024

JACQUI KOPEL, HEAD OF CUSTOMER SERVICES & IT.

Integrated Impact Assessment

Committee Report Number: 176/2024

Document Title: School Clothing Grants

Document Type: Policy

Description:

A committee report recommending an increase to School Clothing Grants

Intended Outcome:

To agree an increase of £5 to every eligible pupil

Period Covered: 01/07/2024 to 30/06/2025

Monitoring:

The Benefit Delivery Team will monitor this through monthly reports

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Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

Impacts & Implications

Age: Positive

School pupils will benefit from this increase, ensuring fairness and equality.

Disability: No Impact

Gender Reassignment: No Impact

Marriage & Civil Partnership: No Impact

Pregenancy & Maternity: No Impact

Race / Ethnicity: No Impact

Religion or Belief: No Impact

Sex: No Impact

Sexual Orientation: No Impact

Are any Human Rights not covered by the Equalities questions above impacted by this report?

No

Fairness & Poverty

Geographic Impacts & Implications

Strathmartine:	Positive
Lochee:	Positive
Coldside:	Positive
Maryfield:	Positive
North East:	Positive
East End:	Positive
The Ferry:	Positive
West End:	Positive

Positive Implications: All of the families with eligible school children entitled to receive School Clothing Grants within Dundee will be positively impacted with this recommendation.

Household Group Impacts and Implications

Looked After Children & Care Leavers: Positive

This increase will be a welcome boost to care experienced children who may encounter multiple disadvantages and all young people who are eligible to these grants.

Household Group Impacts and Implications

Carers: Positive

This increase will support families who may be facing financial difficulties due to caring responsibilities.

Lone Parent Families: Positive

Lone parent families will be significantly supported as data suggests they are twice as likely to be in relative poverty after housing costs.

Single Female Households with Children: Positive

As lone parent above.

Greater number of children and/or young children: Positive

Larger families who are more likely to be reliant on out of work benefits, which may be capped, will embrace this increase.

Pensioners - single / couple: No Impact

Unskilled workers or unemployed: Positive

Low income families most at risk from poverty will benefit from this increase.

Serious & enduring mental health problems: No Impact

Homeless: Positive

Families with an unsettled lifestyle require as much support as possible - more than one school uniform may be needed throughout the year. Therefore this increase is much needed.

Drug and/or alcohol problems: Positive

Families with chaotic lifestyles will be positively impacted with this additional support.

Offenders & Ex-offenders: No Impact

Socio Economic Disadvantage Impacts & Implications

Employment Status: No Impact

Education & Skills: Positive

Reducing child poverty and inequalities is one of the Council's key priorities, by increasing School Clothing Grants we are continuing to prioritise welfare support grants to children and families to help remove stigma and encourage children to achieve their best.

Income: Positive

Additional financial assistance is beneficial to all low income families.

Caring Responsibilities (including Childcare): No Impact

Affordability and accessibility of services: No Impact

Fuel Poverty: No Impact

Cost of Living / Poverty Premium: Positive

Most families on a low income will benefit from the increase in a School Clothing Grant

Connectivity / Internet Access: No Impact

Income / Benefit Advice / Income MaximisationPositive

Awarding the increased grants automatically ensures eligible families are not missing out.

Employment Opportunities: Positive

Employment opportunities can be enhanced through an improved school experience.

Education: Positive

The increase may encourage better school engagement which will lead to better life outcomes.

Health: No Impact

Life Expectancy: No Impact

Mental Health: No Impact

Overweight / Obesity: No Impact

Child Health: Positive

The increase will support low income families

Neighbourhood Satisfaction: No Impact

Transport: No Impact

Environment

Climate Change Impacts

Mitigating Greenhouse Gases: No Impact

Adapting to the effects of climate change: No Impact

Resource Use Impacts

Energy efficiency & consumption: No Impact

Prevention, reduction, re-use, recovery or recycling of waste: No Impact

Sustainable Procurement: No Impact

Transport Impacts

Accessible transport provision: No Impact

Sustainable modes of transport: No Impact

Natural Environment Impacts

Air, land & water quality: No Impact

Biodiversity: No Impact

Open & green spaces: No Impact

Built Environment Impacts

Built Heritage: No Impact

Housing: No Impact

Is the proposal subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)?

No further action is required as it does not qualify as a Plan, Programme or Strategy as defined by the Environment Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005.

Corporate Risk

Corporate Risk Impacts

Political Reputational Risk: No Impact

Economic/Financial Sustainability / Security & Equipment: No Impact

Social Impact / Safety of Staff & Clients: No Impact

Technological / Business or Service Interruption: No Impact

Environmental: No Impact

Legal / Statutory Obligations: No Impact

Organisational / Staffing & Competence: No Impact

Corporate Risk Implications & Mitigation:

The risk implications associated with the subject matter of this report are "business as normal" risks and any increase to the level of risk to the Council is minimal. This is due either to the risk being inherently low or as a result of the risk being transferred in full or in part to another party on a fair and equitable basis. The subject matter is routine and has happened many times before without significant impact.

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