

CLACKMANNANSHIRE COUNCIL

Report to Clackmannanshire Council

Date of Meeting: 14 September 2023

Subject: Increase in Footwear and Clothing Grant

Report by: Business Manager, Education Services

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to seek Council agreement to increase the level of school clothing grants in line with the increases in inflation.

2.0 Recommendations

It is recommended that the Council agrees to increase the value of the footwear and clothing grant to the following levels and notes that in order for the increase to be maintained beyond this year, and further increased in line with inflation, provision would need to be included as part of the 2024/25 budget settlement.

- 2.1. Primary school age children from £120 to £140
- 2.2. Secondary age children from £150 to £175

3.0 Considerations

- 3.1. The eligibility criteria for footwear and clothing grants and the grant level are set by each local authority. This is in contrast to free school meals eligibility criteria which are set by the UK Government. In 2021 years, the Scottish Government has provided additional funding for authorities to pay a minimum grant level which is £120 for primary age children and £150 for secondary age children up until age 16. These are the rates currently paid by Clackmannanshire. Secondary age children aged 16 or over are eligible to apply for an education maintenance allowance of £30 per week. In 2022 Clackmannanshire Council agreed to align the eligibility criteria between free school meals and clothing grants, however the actual amounts paid have not been increased since 2021.
- 3.2. Since 2021, there has been significant inflation which has impacted on families particularly those on low income. The Consumer Price Index which is used as a measure of inflation has risen by 17% between August 2021 and July 2023. It is recommended that the amount payable in clothing grant

should be increased to reflect this change and the new amounts would therefore be £140 for primary age children and £175 for secondary age children. These changes would be effective from this summer and parents who have already received their clothing grant would be paid the additional element of £20 and £25 by week ending Friday 6 October 2023.

- 3.3. Information obtained from other local authorities would indicate that Clackmannanshire Council rates would be amongst the highest in Scotland following the change.
- 3.4. The estimated costs for 2023/24 of this increase are £41,140 these would be funded from the balance of Covid recovery funds that the Council holds. As this funding is temporary funding, if the Council wishes to maintain this increase and continue to ensure that the level of grant award keeps up with increases in inflation then this would need to be considered as a demand pressure as part of the 2024/25 budget considerations.

4.0 Sustainability Implications

5.0 Resource Implications

5.1 Financial Details

The financial details are contained in the report.

Exempt Reports

- 5.2 Is this report exempt? Yes (please detail the reasons for exemption below) No

7.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

- (1) **Our Priorities** (Please double click on the check box)

Clackmannanshire will be attractive to businesses & people and ensure fair opportunities for all	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Our families; children and young people will have the best possible start in life	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Women and girls will be confident and aspirational, and achieve their full potential	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Our communities will be resilient and empowered so that they can thrive and flourish	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

- (2) **Council Policies** (Please detail)

8.0 Equalities Impact

8.1 Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations?
Yes No

9.0 Legality

9.1 It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. Yes No

10.0 Appendices

11.0 Background Papers

11.1 Have you used other documents to compile your report? (All documents must be kept available by the author for public inspection for four years from the date of meeting at which the report is considered)
Yes (please list the documents below) No

Author(s)

NAME	DESIGNATION	TEL NO / EXTENSION
Michael Boyle	Business Manager Education	2454

Approved by

NAME	DESIGNATION	SIGNATURE
Lorraine Sanda	Strategic Director, People	

