

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK
COUNCIL TAX ENERGY REBATE – DISCRETIONARY SCHEME

April 2022

1. THE DISCRETIONARY COUNCIL TAX ENERGY REBATE SCHEME

On 3 February 2022 government announced a package of measures to assist people with rising energy costs. Part of this package was a £150 council tax energy rebate for all households in council tax bands A to D, to be administered by local authorities. [Full guidance](#) for the scheme was issued on 23 February 2022 and [FAQs](#) were published on 16 March 2022.

The guidance confirms the following for the main Energy Rebate scheme:

- The £150 is a payment, not a discount on the council tax bill
- It is a payment, not a loan, and does not need to be repaid
- It is non-taxable and will not affect welfare benefits
- It is payable to households in bands A-D and those in band E who have a Disabled Band Reduction
- It is for properties which are someone's home – second homes and empty properties are not eligible
- Householders who pay by Direct Debit (DD) will have the payment automatically credited to their bank account. There will be an alternative process for non DD payers

Government has provided funding of £9,015,150 for the main Energy Rebate. It has also provided funding of £319,800 to allow us to design our own discretionary Energy Rebate scheme for those who are not eligible for the main scheme but who are vulnerable or most in need.

This scheme details the categories of households eligible for the discretionary Energy Rebate, and the rebate amounts. The vast majority (88%) of our households are in bands A-D and are eligible for the main Energy Rebate, so this scheme identifies those households in other bands who are on low incomes or who may be vulnerable, based on data already held in the council tax records. We also have sufficient funding to top up the main Energy Rebate for households receiving Council Tax Support.

2. ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS

Eligibility is based on the qualifying date of 1 April 2022.

The following categories of household are eligible for the discretionary scheme:

- Those in bands A-D receiving Council Tax Support on 1 April 2022, who will receive a top up to the main Energy Rebate payment
- Those in bands E-H:
 - receiving Council Tax Support on 1 April 2022,
 - eligible for an exemption as all members of the household are under 18, Severely Mentally Impaired, Students or dependent relatives living in an annexe,

- have a person in the household who is disregarded for council tax purposes in one of the following categories:
 - Severely Mentally Impaired
 - Live In Carers (Class 1)
- Those in bands F-H receiving Disabled Band Reduction
- Households in the following categories:
 - Where the council tax band is reduced to an eligible band as a result of an appeal made to the Valuation Office before 3 February 2022, and the new band is effective on 1 April 2022,
 - Households living in Houses of Multiple Occupation, where the householder is directly liable for paying their own energy from a recognised energy provider, and is named on the energy bill,
 - Those with refugee status who are an eligible household but who fall outside the main scheme criteria as they are not liable for council tax on 1 April 2022

Exclusions:

Any household who is eligible for the main payment, unless the discretionary payment is being paid as a top up amount (see section 3).

Any household living in a House of Multiple Occupation where the landlord is responsible for the energy bill.

3. PAYMENT AMOUNT

There are three levels of PAYMENT:

Households living in a House of Multiple Occupation	£100
Households not eligible for Council Tax Support on 1 April 2022	£150
Households eligible for Council Tax Support on 1 April 2022	£175*

The higher amount for households receiving Council Tax Support reflects the fact that these households are on the lowest incomes and are likely to be spending a higher proportion of their income on energy costs.

**This will be paid as £150 under the main scheme, and a top up of £25 under the discretionary scheme*

4. MEMBER DISCRETION

This scheme allows individual applications to be considered on an exceptional basis.

Awards will be made on a recommendation basis by the s151 Officer or Revenues and Benefits Manager, in consultation with the Council Leader or the Portfolio Holder for People and Communities and are wholly at the discretion of the Council.

5. APPLICATIONS

Where a household pays their council tax by Direct Debit, the Energy Rebate will be paid as a credit directly to this bank account, subject to validation checks. No application is required.

Where there is no Direct Debit in place, or where the validation checks are insufficient, households will be required to complete an online application form. Council staff will be able to assist with application forms if needed.

6. FRAUD AND MISREPRESENTATION

We will not accept fraudulent applications for the Energy Rebate and will carry out checks to ensure all applications for payments are accurate. We may refuse to pay the Energy Rebate if we suspect an application is fraudulent for any reason. We will check information at the time of application and may also carry out spot checks at a later date, including asking for further evidence. We will recover any payments found to have been claimed fraudulently.
