

Policy in Practice helps councils allocate £18.5 million in Household Support Funds

LIFT platform case study

Challenge

Local authorities were faced with a six month time limit to spend £421 million to support households during economic recovery as a result of the pandemic

Solution

Using administrative data via the LIFT platform, local authorities identified households that were struggling, at risk, or in crisis in terms of financial resilience

Impact

Nine local authorities used LIFT to distribute **£18.5 million** to their most vulnerable households.

On average, households received between **£100 to £200** each.

Up to **149,000 households** were supported using this data-driven preventative approach.

Policy in Practice were finalists in the Digital Impact category at the LGC Awards 2022.

Judges praised our work with local authorities distributing the Household Support Fund via LIFT, a digital tool that brings datasets to life:

“A deeply impressive data analysis platform, converting council data into actionable insight to help councils address the cost of living crisis.”

The challenge facing local authorities

Local authorities have had to administer a multitude of support schemes since the start of the pandemic. Getting critical support to those who need it most has called for innovative approaches to identifying need and targeting support.

As part of the funding packages announced by the Government, £421 million was made available to local authorities in England to support households during the final stages of the economic recovery. This was called the Household Support Fund (HSF).










HSF came into effect on 6 October 2021 and needed to be spent by the end of March 2022. Some guidance was provided by the DWP, however the funding allocation was at the discretion of each local authority.

Councils used LIFT to distribute over £18.5 million to those most in need

Policy in Practice's Low Income Family Tracker (LIFT) platform was instrumental in helping many local authorities accurately target their Household Support Funds using their administrative data. In this way over **£18.5 million** in financial support has been successfully allocated to vulnerable households.

Policy in Practice helped nine clients target their HSF, ensuring the funds reached the pockets of those who needed it most as soon as possible.

The following table details the councils we have worked with, and the amount of discretionary money we helped to allocate:

 Camden £2,006,931	 ISLINGTON £2,218,159	 Sutton £1,155,788
 ENFIELD Council £2,847,994	 Luton £1,829,274	 TOWER HAMLETS £2,996,279
 Haringey LONDON £2,406,671	 Slough Borough Council £1,177,691	 City of Westminster £1,951,507

The LIFT platform brings together the monthly administrative datasets our clients hold on their low income households. This allows them to analyse these datasets via one accessible cloud based platform.

For this funding, many LAs used LIFT to highlight households that were struggling, at risk, or in crisis in terms of financial resilience. These insights can be enhanced with other information about households, for example whether a household is in food, fuel, water or relative poverty.

Allocating the HSF in this way negated the need for application forms which has helped our clients to manage the administrative burden on their teams, and make the process more efficient.

Councils put significant funds in to the pockets of vulnerable residents

The impact was felt across the local authorities we worked with.

On average, households received between £100 to £200 each, totalling up to 149,000 households who have been supported using this data-driven preventative approach. Households received either cash or vouchers to use on vital supplies of food, or to meet energy costs.

Haringey Council distributed **£2 million** of their £2.4 million household support fund grant through a data led approach. They have attributed around £1.3 million of this distribution directly to the LIFT platform helping them to identify which households to target.

Haringey used the LIFT functionality to distribute short term support, while providing long term plans to residents. Around 86% of eligible households were contacted and helped with applying for the Warm Home Discount.

“I wanted to illustrate that you can use data for good and that it can make a difference to both the community and the council’s bottom line.”

Margaret Gallagher, Head of Performance and Business Intelligence, Haringey Council

“LIFT has provided us with the assurance that we have targeted the HSF to our least financially resilient households.”

Robbie Rainbird
Assistant Director -
Community Financial
Resilience
Islington Council

Highlights from HSF campaigns

Islington Council

- Distributed **£1.7 million (80% of total)** by Christmas Day 2021
- **£1.2 million** attributed to LIFT

Tower Hamlets Council

- Distributed **£2.3 million** to over **2,000 families**

Sutton Council

- Allocated **£150** each to 2,000 most vulnerable households

0330 088 9242
hello@policyinpractice.co.uk
www.policyinpractice.co.uk