



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

Amanda Solloway MP
Minister for Energy Consumers
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Department for Energy Security
& Net Zero
1 Victoria Street
London
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To: Local Authority Leaders
[Sent via email]

1 March 2023

Dear Local Authority Leaders,

Thank you for your engagement to date with the Department to launch both the Energy Bill Support Scheme Alternative Funding and the Alternative Fuel Payment Alternative Fund. I wanted to write to set out the next steps, and to emphasise the importance I personally place on the successful delivery of these vital policies. These schemes are part of the Government's landmark package of support for households which we've all worked hard to deliver – covering around half of a typical household's energy bills this winter when combined with the Energy Price Guarantee. Local Authorities are critical delivery partners, and I know that you will want to make every effort to help us ensure these schemes are a success.

Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Funding

The Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Funding (EBSS AF) launched on Monday 27 February for all eligible households across England, Scotland, and Wales to apply for their support and will be open for applications until 31 May 2023.

The government is grateful for Local Authorities' co-operation in delivering this support and especially at such a busy time of the year. The launch of applications is the culmination of my Department's close work with stakeholders and Local Authorities across the country over the last three months. I look forward to seeing help reach all those eligible to apply – over 900,000 households across Great Britain, which includes some of the most vulnerable groups in society.

I would also like to thank the pilot Local Authorities who have been instrumental in refining the digital system and application process to ensure delivery of the scheme is as robust and effective as possible. I hope the extended pilot phase provided Local Authorities with more time to prepare for the launch of the scheme across Great Britain.

I am now asking Local Authorities to do everything they possibly can to support the scheme and deliver the support to those households who have not yet received support with their energy bill costs. The Government acknowledges the challenges in delivering two complex schemes at once, but we have faith in Local Authorities' ability to deliver this essential help for households.

Domestic Alternative Fuel Payment Alternative Fund

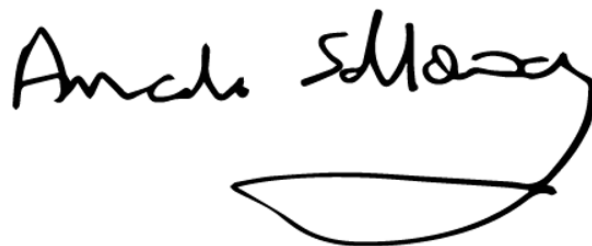
As you will now be aware following recent communication from my officials, the Alternative Fuel Payment Alternative Fund (AFP AF) will now launch by the 6 March. We expect this additional week will give all Local Authorities time to prepare to lead the delivery of the scheme, so that eligible households can receive their support as quickly as possible.

The Department has made significant efforts to align the delivery mechanisms for both the EBSS and AFP Alternative Funding schemes, including a single digital solution and scheme guidance, making this as simple as possible for both Local Authorities and for applicants to navigate. Local Authorities will have already received both the Grant Determination Letter and the Data Sharing Agreement, and both must be returned as soon as possible this week in order for the scheme to launch by the 6 March.

With these preparations in place, in combination with the additional week between opening up the EBSS AF and AFP AF schemes, we expect Local Authorities will be able to successfully launch on 6 March.

Households are now in great need of this support and are relying on Local Authorities' efforts to make payments as soon as possible. I know that I can rely on your support and efforts in delivering for households and communities across the country.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amanda Solloway". The signature is written in a cursive style. Below the signature is a large, simple, hand-drawn flourish that resembles a wide, shallow bowl or a stylized leaf, with a curved line extending from the right side of the signature down to the bottom of the flourish.

AMANDA SOLLOWAY MP
Minister for Energy Consumers and Affordability