

Core Cities: Proposed Schemes to Replace Social Fund

City	Current Status Of Scheme	The Section That Will Process Social Fund	Key Elements Of Proposed Scheme	Method Of Making Payments	Other Features Of Scheme
Birmingham	<p>Draft policy written and internal consultation being sought before it is shared with Voluntary Organisations and Key Stakeholders.</p> <p>Delivery mechanisms are being drafted for consideration.</p>	<p>Benefits Service will process Social Fund alongside Discretionary Housing Payments but will remain as two separate budgets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is accessible to applicants • Is delivered on a grants-based system and will not require applicants to repay any award made to them • Will have a streamlined assessment and decision making process • Will make use of technology to minimise cash transactions. • Will deliver value for money through efficient procurement of key goods and services. • Provide an Out Of Hours service for those in crisis. • Methods of payment will be respectful of the dignity of those who apply. 	<p>Still being agreed with Finance - trying to avoid cash payments.</p> <p>For Community Support Grants we hope to procure the goods through existing procurement channels and have goods delivered and fitted to the home.</p> <p>For Crisis Grants we are in talks with large chain supermarkets to see whether we can agree a process with them in advance.</p> <p>This is in the very early stages of negotiation, but would assist in terms of providing 24 hour access to food, in crisis.</p>	<p>Are considering: Where an application is made via a support agency.</p> <p>Some type of priority system. But this again is still being developed.</p> <p>After the first application, we will consider what other support might be available to the individual (debt advice, benefits advice, other funding available, support through internal departments.</p> <p>Recommend only 2 applications per financial year.</p> <p>No right of appeal, but will reconsider a decision if there is new information that was not provided at the time.</p>
Bradford	Proposed	Revenues & Benefits	To be decided	No decision yet	No decision yet
Bristol		Commissioning out a service.	<p>The Crisis and Prevention Fund will provide basic household goods and emergency payments to those who have greatest difficulty managing their finance. Eligibility is low income not benefit eligibility.</p> <p>Applicants will be signposted for additional</p>	Awards will be given as vouchers, useable in respect of household goods. There will also be vouchers for food and pre-payment utility cards/keys	

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			support where relevant – budgeting advice, energy advice, benefit advice and possibly signposted to.		
Coventry	Policy approval from Members due 8th January 2013.	Revenues & Benefits	<p>The Community Support Grant Scheme is designed to support vulnerable people, experiencing financial difficulties. The support will be given for food, goods or services in a crisis situation or where there is exceptional financial pressure on an individual or families.</p> <p>The Benefits Service will work with the local voluntary sector, social landlords and other stakeholders in the City.</p> <p>The Benefit Service works closely with a money management and welfare benefits advice service to provide budgeting and income maximisation advice.</p> <p>There will be Crisis claims and also Support Grant claims.</p>	<p>Application can be made by the customer and The Council will also consider applications submitted by Advice/Support Providers who on behalf of individuals routinely provide support and guidance for their clients.</p> <p>Such applications must be made with the individual's explicit consent.</p> <p>These applications will usually be made on line.</p>	<p>Applications will be processed by the Revenues and Benefits Discretionary Payments Team between 8.30 am and 4.00pm Monday to Friday.</p> <p>In the case of an out of hour's emergency the Council's Emergency Duty Team can be contacted.</p>
Hull	In development. We are in the process of writing our scheme for cabinet in January 2013.	The team will be within the Revenues and Benefits department under Housing Benefits with links to our Adjudication team.	<p>Hull's scheme will involve two awards: Community Crisis Loans (CCL) Community Support Grants (CCG)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualification will be reliant upon being a Hull resident. • Repayment of Community Crisis Loans will be required (something which the DWP advise against however workshops/members unanimously believe it must be mandatory and demand without the need to repay would be impossible to determine. We believe the key is to be careful around recovery escalation opting for a self regulating penalty of future award exclusion for non 	<p>Options presently being explored include the Post Office "Pay Out" product and a voucher system developed by Pay Point.</p> <p>BACS will also be used as a default.</p>	To be determined

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • repayment). • 2 Community Crisis Loan awards maximum per rolling 12 months with a potential for more within a period if one is repaid in full. • Maximum ongoing overall debt ceiling for CCL's • Predominant call centre access • Intelligent form to include a pre screening process to identify non qualifying excluded individuals at first point of contact. • Signposting to alternative means of help such as a more suitable discretionary fund, food bank, Legal advice centre or voluntary organisation. • Maximum awards for daily needs. 		
Leeds	<p>Proposed scheme approved by Executive Board 07/11/2012.</p> <p>Final scheme details to be submitted at a later date following consultation with stakeholder groups.</p>	Revenues & Benefits	<p>The Local Welfare Support Scheme has Two elements: Basic household goods and emergency provision. Also use settlement fund to support existing and new initiatives to create an integrated Local Welfare support Scheme across Leeds. Trusted third parties to make recommendations based on their assessment. Decision making remains with the council' Eligibility criteria on vulnerable groups similar to current scheme with some additions. Qualification dependent on low income and priority of individual application. All decisions subject to availability of funds.</p>	<p>Under discussion and negotiation.</p> <p>Direct payments to suppliers of basic household goods and supermarket vouchers for emergency provision. All subject to getting over the technical difficulties such as procurement.</p> <p>If possible avoid cash payments as otherwise will create unmanageable demand.</p>	<p>To develop a sustainable scheme of local welfare support, community based and with low council overheads.</p> <p>Recognition that funding is initially limited to two years.</p>
Liverpool	<p>Consultation ended on 9.11.12.</p> <p>Draft policy still to be finalised.</p>	The Benefits Service	<p>The Discretionary Financial Support Policy will seek to assist vulnerable people in meeting their need for subsistence or financial support where they are unable to meet their immediate short term needs or where they require assistance to maintain</p>	<p>Still consulting on options including Goods / Vouchers / Services but seeking to avoid any cash payments.</p>	

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			their independence within the community. Application can be made by the applicant, their appointee or representative		
Middlesbrough	Approved by corporate management team, awaiting discussion at next Council meeting. Once proposed to members, there will be a 4 week consultation period with recognised service providers	The Benefits Service	<p>The Community Support Scheme will look to provide Crisis Awards cover scenarios where, due to a crisis, there is a severe risk to the health and safety of the applicant or an immediate family member or dependent which cannot be met from another source.</p> <p>Community Support Awards will enable the Council to provide support for vulnerable people in financial crisis.</p> <p>Application can be made by the applicant or by a Recognised Service Provider.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vouchers for Crisis Awards • Goods For Community Support awards 	<p>Limited to 2 crisis awards per year.</p> <p>Referred for money advice should they spend money before next benefit payment date - if they have similar crisis in the future and have not been for money advice, claim to be refused.</p> <p>No cash awards.</p> <p>No repayment of awards, unless fraud detected.</p> <p>Recognised service providers will be allowed to complete applications and verify documentation on behalf of their residents.</p> <p>Replacement CCG scheme to be considered prior to occupation of the tenancy which differs to current working practices</p>
Portsmouth	Approval to commission service out gained in June 2012.	Commissioned Service	Aim of scheme being commissioned is to provide support to people in financial hardship. In kind and/or cash awards still being considered. Scheme will be targeted	In kind and/or cash awards still being considered.	Consultation has been undertaken with key services in the city who support people in

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			<p>at those most in need. May follow similar eligibility criteria to DWP in the first year, until more learning has been gained around demand and the drivers for demand. Scheme will look at how it can harness the support that is available from other agencies; and the role of the referral process in this, to ensure that wider community support has been accessed, in order to provide longer term solutions to people's problems.</p>		<p>financial hardship in order to shape the new scheme.</p>
Southampton	Proposed	No section – absorbed into current services	<p>A Tiered Approach:</p> <p>Tier 1: Website: Information for the public about where to get help, advice and information to deal with crisis and emergency. (This information will be given to DWP nationally to signpost enquiries).</p> <p>Tier 2: Signposting 'Toolkit': General Information to frontline staff /practitioners on support available and how to support residents to access it.</p> <p>Tier 3: Crisis Emergency Support: Increased capacity to respond to emergency/ crisis within key services (i.e. distribution of vouchers for food banks / supermarkets). Access via service (based on need).</p> <p>Tier 4: Crisis Prevention: Increased capacity to support vulnerable people to enable them to live as independently as possible within key services (i.e., rent deposit, help with removal costs, clothing, furniture).</p>	"In kind" support rather than cash	<p>Also use the fund to support existing and new initiatives to create an integrated and sustainable Local Welfare Assistance across Southampton.</p>