

Cabinet

Tuesday 19 March 2013

5.00 pm

Ground Floor Meeting Room GO2A, 160 Tooley Street, London
SE1 2QH

Supplemental Agenda No. 1

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	<p>To note that the Welfare Reform Action 2012 abolishes the existing discretionary elements of the Department for Work and Pensions' (DWP) administered social fund and to approve to the introduction of the Southwark emergency support scheme replacing the DWP social fund's crisis loans and community care grants.</p> <p>To agree that Community Action Southwark lead on the management and delivery of grant item(s) for successful applications.</p>	

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Date: 11 March 2013

Item No. 17.	Classification: Open	Date: 19 March 2013	Meeting Name: Cabinet
Report title:		Local Welfare Provision - Southwark Emergency Support Scheme	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
Cabinet Member:		Councillor Richard Livingstone, Finance, Resources and Community Safety	

FOREWORD - COUNCILLOR RICHARD LIVINGSTONE, CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolished the discretionary elements of the Department for Work & Pensions’ (DWP) Social Fund. As a part-replacement, local authorities have been given a significantly smaller budget with which to deliver local schemes.

In 2013/14, the funding totals £1.363m, with a further £288,000 with which to administer the fund. The administration budget will decline to £264,000 next year.

We have developed the proposed Southwark Emergency Support Scheme set out in this report to fulfil this function. Whilst we have been hampered by the DWP’s refusal to share adequate data on the current recipients of this fund, we have worked closely with the voluntary sector in the borough to try to ensure that the scheme is fit for purpose. We have also shared ideas with other London authorities in developing our approach.

The voluntary sector will play a key role in the delivery of the scheme and we are grateful to Community Action Southwark and a number of voluntary sector organisations for their support in its genesis. Pecan, London Re-Use, the British Heart Foundation, the Family Fund, St Giles Trust and the London Mutual Credit Union will all be involved in the delivery of the scheme.

Our aim over time is to devolve the administration of the scheme further to the voluntary sector.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1. Note that the Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolishes the existing discretionary elements of the Department for Work & Pensions’ administered Social Fund. The creation and delivery of a local scheme to be administered by councils takes effect from 1 April 2013, following receipt of a grant from central government.
2. Approve the introduction of the Southwark Emergency Support Scheme (SESS) with effect from the 1 April 2013 replacing the DWP Social Fund’s Crisis Loans and Community Care Grants and that Community Action Southwark (CAS) lead on the management and delivery of grant item(s) for successful applications to those most in need.

3. Provides the Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services with delegated responsibility to make any amendments to the application of the scheme following review and consultation.
4. Requests that the Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services set aside from within the Welfare Hardship Fund to supplement the SESS an amount of up to £400k in order to provide support for those households where the level of disability prevents temporary or full time employment.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

5. As part of the Welfare Reform Act (2012) the existing Community Care Grant and Crisis Loan elements of the Social Fund administered by the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) will be abolished with effect from 31 March 2013.
6. Local authorities with effect from the 1 April 2013 will be responsible for delivery of a local welfare provision administering the emergency financial assistance elements of the previous scheme.
7. The two elements of the existing DWP scheme can be described as follows:
 - a. Crisis Loans - Interest free loans available to anyone (whether on benefit or not) who cannot meet their immediate short term needs in an emergency or as a consequence of a disaster. Expenses that can be considered include:
 - Living expenses
 - Rent in advance to secure accommodation
 - Emergency travel expenses
 - b. Community Care Grants - A non-repayable grant awarded to help people establish themselves or remain in the community. Examples of which include payments to assist those leaving residential or institutional care and for the provision of household equipment.
8. Detailed information on specific local awards and demographics has not been made available by the DWP. Based on what information is available this shows:

Fig 1.

Year	Applications	Awards	% Awarded	Total Expenditure	Average Award
2005-2006	9,280	6,960	75%	£1,858,600	£239
2009-2010	14,700	9,400	64%	£1,876,100	£286
2010-2011	13,490	8,560	63%	£2,064,000	£336
2011-2012	10,270	6,310	61%	£1,506,900	£239

9. The government has only confirmed funding for the next two years as detailed in Fig 2. There is no guarantee that funding will be available for any future provision of the emergency scheme beyond 2014/15.

Fig 2.

	2013/14	2014/15
The Fund	£1,362,932	£1,362,932
Administrative funding	£287,998	£263,981

10. This represents a 10% reduction in available funding, when compared with expenditure from 2010/11.
11. Whilst officers anticipate similar numbers of successful applicants, reductions in cost will also be achieved through appropriate internal controls and management processes.
12. The government will retain responsibility for budgeting loans which are made available for a variety of purposes including, maternity or funeral expenses, improvement or maintenance of homes and repayment of debt in certain circumstances.
13. Southwark remains responsible for the distribution of Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) to assist with the payment of rent and Section 17 Children Act 1989 payment assistance in exceptional circumstances to support a child's welfare. A summary of some of the discretionary funds and loans available to residents is provided in Appendix 1 of this report.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The Model for delivery of Southwark's Emergency Support Scheme

14. The council considered a variety of models for a local scheme in November 2012 and reviewed the financial viability and key risks associated with each option. The preferred model forms the recommendation as detailed in this Cabinet paper.
15. Officers worked closely with a number of London Boroughs to explore different delivery options, share knowledge and good practice and identify specific local challenges. Round-table discussions were held and a number of these were hosted by Southwark council. A summary of other replacement schemes being considered by London boroughs is set out in Appendix 2.
16. In June 2012 the Child Poverty Action Group issued a research document, 'Delivering the social fund at London-level: Opportunities & Risks'¹, in which they highlighted the need for adequate referral mechanisms to existing support networks, maintenance of cash element to the scheme and ongoing review of interim models of delivery.
17. The proposed model takes into account all of the key issues identified in the report referred to in paragraph 16 and creates the opportunity for a greater sustainable future model involving the voluntary sector. This was selected through consultation with cross-departmental officers, members and the voluntary sector.
18. There are four key elements of the scheme:
 - Application & Assessment against agreed eligibility criteria
 - Operational Management of the scheme
 - Delivery of grant item(s) for successful applications
 - Review

¹ <http://www.cpag.org.uk/content/delivering-social-fund-london-level-opportunities-and-risks>

Application and assessment

19. In line with the council's aim to offer services 'digital by default' a web based application form will be available for customers to complete applications on line.
20. Customers will also be able to access the service through the council's service points via assisted self service and in partnership with other public sector providers.
21. The scheme will also be available through telephone contact to a dedicated team of skilled operatives who will take customers through a claim process. The intention is to extend the successful 'One Touch' team who currently assist customers with benefit applications and referrals to other services.
22. It is recognised that those accessing the scheme may be some of the most vulnerable in society and therefore may not ordinarily have access readily available. With this in mind a robust communications strategy has been developed to ensure referrals can be made.
23. The assessment process will be undertaken by the 'One Touch' team and where customers are successful, notification will be provided of the entitlement to a fulfilment partner. Customers will be entitled to a one stage review of their claim if they contest their entitlement, but there will be no right to appeal.
24. The council is committed to minimising fraud and error within the system and will ensure sufficient internal controls are in place. Any instances of suspected fraud will be referred to the council's fraud team for investigation.

Operational management of the scheme

25. The council's approach to developing a solution for the local delivery model of the emergency support scheme has taken account of existing strong partnerships within the voluntary sector.
26. On the 1 July 2011 the council entered into a contractual agreement with Community Action Southwark (CAS) for a period of three years in their role as an umbrella organisation delivering leadership and support for the voluntary sector.
27. The operational model of the emergency support scheme seeks to vary the existing contract for CAS to act as the lead voluntary sector partner for delivery of the scheme.
28. In principle the agreement will enable CAS to help sustain and build approaches to delivery of the scheme over the next two years through managing and maintaining relationships with key partners and ensuring delivery of grant item(s) for successful applications is adequately administered.
29. The council intends to work in partnership with CAS to ensure a sustainable model is achieved.

Management of successful applications

30. The council, in partnership with CAS, has actively engaged the voluntary sector to ensure delivery of the wide ranging requirements can be met locally.

31. Agreements in principle have been received from suppliers to cover the range of grant item(s) for successful applications as detailed below:

Fig 3.

Requirement	Provision	Supplier
Food	Food parcels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pecan (Peckham High St) Foodbank- charitable organisation currently in expansion to three other sites with volunteer assistance
White goods- fridge, freezers etc. Furniture – starter packs	Reconditioned white goods & furniture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> London Re-use network(based in Islington looking for further development opportunities) British Heart Foundation Family Fund
Rent advance for those leaving care or prison	Up front payment & accommodation support for those leaving care and ex-offenders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> St Giles Trust London Mutual Credit Union
Grants for replacement household items / reconnection charges for services / living expenses / clothing	Cash payment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> London Mutual Credit Union

32. The council in partnership with CAS will maintain flexibility with the suppliers list to ensure there is sufficient capacity to meet demand.
33. Similarly the council will ensure that risks are identified and sufficient support is provided to help mitigate any risks highlighted within the scheme.

Review

34. There is an intention to conduct ongoing reviews of the scheme to ensure it is meeting its principles. The report recommends that any urgent changes required are delegated to the strategic director of finance and corporate services. It is considered that changes may become necessary if vulnerable groups not currently known to the council are identified.
35. A formal review will take place after six months at which time information will be shared with neighbouring boroughs, in particular Lambeth and Lewisham, with whom the council has shared thinking around the development of respective schemes and to ensure schemes are operating effectively.

36. The council will conduct a formal yearly internal audit of the scheme to be detailed as part of the council's internal audit programme.

Guiding principles of Southwark's Emergency Support Scheme

37. The council has developed some guiding principles in relation to eligibility for the scheme. These are:

- To provide emergency support following a disaster, or in times of crisis
- To allow people to return to or remain in the community, such as those moving out of institutional or residential care and those at risk of not being able to remain in their communities without additional support
- To help families who are facing exceptional pressure, to help keep families together and to safeguard children
- To support the most vulnerable in the community and to adopt a holistic approach in doing so
- To help safeguard severely disabled households and specifically where entry into employment is not possible
- To support the most vulnerable in emergency situations through signposting to appropriate support services, advice, or through provision and access to goods
- To engage individuals with appropriate support services where needed to prevent repeat applications, or as an alternative to an award from the fund
- To ensure the fund is fair and equitable in its distribution to those most in need within the community

38. The key elements relating to the personal eligibility criteria are:

- A person must be 16 or over, have lived in Southwark for at least 6 weeks, be in receipt of a qualifying benefit and not fall under an excluded category as detailed in Appendix 3 either personally or in relation to the circumstance by which they are requiring assistance.
- In addition certain customer groups have been highlighted as eligible; these include, care leavers, ex-offenders and armed forces personnel.

39. The council has developed detailed eligibility criteria (set out in Appendix 3) in respect of those groups where it is determined there is the greatest need.

40. The criteria will remain under review during the first 6 months of operation to ensure the scheme is meeting the needs of the community.

41. In particular the scheme has been developed to complement eligibility criteria developed for discretionary housing payments and existing arrangements for Section 17 payments in children's services.

Southwark welfare hardship fund

42. As a consequence of council tax technical reforms (as approved by Council Assembly), on 12 February 2013 cabinet made provision for £800k in 2013/14 for the purposes of a welfare hardship fund. The hardship fund is separate to the Southwark Emergency Support Scheme.
43. The strategic director of housing and community services and strategic director of finance and corporate services were asked to develop a recommendation on the provision and criteria for delivery of this fund for future consideration by cabinet. This recommendation is still in the process of being finalised but will seek to support the broader aims of the council's economic wellbeing strategy.
44. In the interim, officers are concerned to ensure that the SESS includes sufficient capacity to help safeguard severely disabled households and specifically where entry into employment is not possible.
45. This report contains a recommendation to set aside for households where the level of disability prevents temporary or full time employment, a sum of up to £400k to provide support, subject to criteria set out in the SESS. The existing DWP arrangements for the social fund do not explicitly provide support for this vulnerable group.

Resource implications

46. The resourcing model based its requirement on the last two years data available from the DWP.
47. The estimated staffing requirement to administer Southwark's Emergency Support scheme is estimated to cost £143,326. This is based on recruitment to five grade 6 posts to supplement the 'One Touch' team.
48. It is anticipated that any requirement in addition to the five posts will be met through the existing establishment unless demand exceeds existing expectations by more than 10% (or 0.5 FTE).

Financial implications

49. The information contained within Fig 2 outlines the grant settlement from government to administer the scheme for the next two years.
50. The cash limited fund received from the DWP was based on a slight reduction in demand from customers following a change in their eligibility criteria during the year 2011/12. It is anticipated that the spend will be within the limits of the government grant allocated, however the full impact of welfare reform changes cannot be fully quantified at this stage and will be reassessed based on the impact of changes locally.
51. Officers have acknowledged the need for sustainability and value for money and therefore have endeavoured to ensure goods offered represent best use of the fund available. Reconditioned goods supplied by our partners remain guaranteed for six months and offer savings of at least 20% on new goods.
52. Officers will maintain close financial scrutiny of expenditure in partnership with

CAS and if necessary, provide a further update to Cabinet on any unexpected variances.

53. The costs associated with the set up and administration of the scheme equate to £39,450 which is the management support cost attributable to Community Action Southwark. However, some additional set-up costs relevant to the supply partners will be payable although it is anticipated that this will be no more than the residual balance of the administration budget. The costs set out here are separate to the staff costs detailed paragraph 47.
54. Any residual administrative grant will be used to supplement the existing grant for the provision of goods.
55. £400k will be earmarked for 2013/14 from the welfare hardship fund to supplement SESS to help safeguard severely disabled households where entry into employment is not possible. This will be reviewed throughout the year and future year needs assessed accordingly.

Policy considerations

56. Southwark Council is committed to achieving a fairer future for all, as set out in the Council Plan that was agreed by Council Assembly in July 2011. The council recognised that in times of reduced funding from central government, there is a need to focus our resources on the areas where we feel we make the most impact.
57. Following engagement with local people through the council's budget process in 2010/11 the council plan identified a number of principles that guide the promises and objectives of the council plan. These principles are:
 - Treating residents as we would wish members of our own families to be treated
 - Being open, honest and accountable
 - Spending money as if it were coming from our own pocket
 - Working for everyone to realise their potential
 - Making Southwark a place to be proud of
58. The introduction of the Southwark Emergency Support Scheme is in line with the principles above, recognising the importance of ensuring that support is provided to those most in need.
59. Further, the introduction of the scheme is part of the council's overall approach to supporting individuals and families as welfare reform changes are implemented. In November 2011, cabinet agreed an economic well-being strategy for the borough. Two of the core priorities are to promote financial wellbeing and independence and narrow the gap between Southwark and the London employment rate by supporting people into work.
60. The introduction of the scheme will assist those who have the greatest needs. However to deliver the priorities of the economic well-being strategy officers will continue to work with local partners to provide wider support, beyond that offered through this scheme, to assist local people into employment and promote individual well-being and financial independence.

Consultation

61. The government have provided no legal requirement for public consultation on the introduction of a new Local Welfare Provision scheme. However, Southwark has actively engaged with the voluntary sector, through CAS, to develop a solution to the emergency support scheme given the expertise and knowledge within the sector.
62. The council hosted a workshop with representatives from Community Action Southwark, Southwark Legal Advice Network, the CAB, St Giles Trust and Pecan (foodbank) on the 17 January 2013 to assist in the planning and design of a model for delivery.
63. The draft eligibility criteria (with the exception of the additional support from the welfare hardship fund for severely disabled households) for the scheme was issued to voluntary sector partners for consultation and a summary of responses is held at Appendix 4.

Community impact statement

64. The council must have due regard to the public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010 and is committed to ensuring the scheme is fair and equitable.
65. The council has been unable to obtain local information in respect of payments made to Southwark residents from the Social Fund administered by the DWP.
66. Therefore the approach to developing the eligibility criteria and proposed model for the scheme takes account of the best information available at a national level.
67. The scheme also takes into account the DWP's own impact assessment and equalities impact assessment².
68. The council has worked closely with the voluntary sector in developing the eligibility criteria and will ensure effective referral processes are in place to assist in communicating accessibility to the scheme. It is anticipated that there will be ongoing communication between the council and partners in determining the impact of the scheme on the wider community.
69. The council will collect data from the 1 April 2013 on applications and those eligible to receive grants. A full equalities assessment will be undertaken after six months of operation and will assist in determining whether changes to the criteria are required to be brought before Cabinet.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Director of Legal Services

70. Cabinet is advised that the legal framework for the abolition of the Social Fund is found under Part 3 of the Welfare Reform Act 2012. Local authorities will be provided with a central government grant to deliver local support in place of the Social Fund; authorities can design their own local welfare provision under s.1 Localism Act 2011.

² <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/welfare-reform/legislation-and-key-documents/welfare-reform-act-2012/impact-assessments-and-equality/>

71. Cabinet is advised to consider the council's duties under the Equality Act 2010 in consideration of the recommendations. The council is required to ensure that the creation, administration and delivery of the proposed fund complies with the duties outlined under s.149 of that Act.

Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services (FC13/014)

72. This report seeks approval for the creation and delivery of Southwark Emergency Support Scheme with effect from 1 April 2013 replacing the DWP Social Fund Crisis Loans and Community Care Grants. The funding for this will come from a specific grant, issued by central government.
73. The strategic director of finance and corporate services notes the financial implications outlined in paragraphs 49-55 and that funding has only been confirmed until March 2015. In order to ensure this scheme does not place additional burden on the council's budget a robust eligibility criteria is required alongside close scrutiny of demand and costs. This will help identify any significant variances, which will be reported to cabinet.
74. The administration element of this grant reduces in 2014/15 and officers will need to ensure that all set up costs have been met from the 2013/14 allocation. The strategic director of finance and corporate services notes the delivery arrangements through CAS and the need to ensure that any expansion of the role follows council's governance processes.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background papers	Held At	Contact
Cabinet report - 12 February 2013. The document is available on this web page (item 8): http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ielistDocuments.aspx?CId=302&MId=4251&Ver=4	Council offices, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH	Paula Thornton 020 7525 4395
Council Assembly agenda – 27 February 2013. The documents are available on this web page: http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ielistDocuments.aspx?CId=132&MId=4241&Ver=4	Council offices, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH	Lesley John 020 7525 7228

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Southwark discretionary / hardship fund analysis
Appendix 2	Round-table summary of London Council's Social Fund replacement schemes
Appendix 3	SES Eligibility Criteria – Southwark's Emergency Support Scheme Final
Appendix 4	SES Eligibility Feedback Summary

AUDIT TRAIL


Cabinet Member	Councillor Richard Livingstone, Finance, Resources and Community Safety	
Lead Officer	Gerri Scott, Strategic Director of Housing & Community Services	
Report Author	Dominic Cain, Assistant Director (Revenues & Benefits)	
Version	Final	
Dated	11 March 2013	
Key Decision?	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Legal Services	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance & Corporate Services	Yes	Yes
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	11 March 2013	

APPENDIX 1

	Short Term Advances (STA)	Budgeting Advances (BA)	Flexible Support Fund (FSF)	Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)	Section 17 Payments
Purpose	When someone makes a new benefit claim they may encounter a period of financial need before receiving their 1 st payment. STAs provide an advance on a future benefit award, which is recovered from subsequent payments	Ensures that those with the lowest incomes claiming Universal Credit continue to have access to an interest-free alternative to high-cost lending for emergency and unforeseen expenses	FSF gives Jobcentre Plus Districts greater freedom to tailor back to work support to individual need. Working within local guidelines and priorities, Jobcentre Plus Advisers have discretion to decide how to help individuals move closer to or into work	Discretionary fund to help housing and/or council tax benefit (HB/CTB) claimants in exceptional circumstances who do not receive full benefit and are having trouble paying their rent or council tax	Assistance in kind, or in exceptional circumstances cash, provided to a child, parent or carer to address identified needs to safeguard and promote a child's welfare where there is no other legitimate source of financial assistance
Budget 2012/13	(Figures unavailable) • £223,700 in 2011/12	(Figures unavailable) • £2,783,100 in 2011/12	Unknown	£331,962	£228,282
Budget 2013/14	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	£1,119,655	£228,282
Source of funding	Department for Work & Pensions	Department for Work & Pensions	Department for Work & Pensions	Government grant (ring-fenced)	Council core funded budget
Administered by	Department for Work & Pensions	Department for Work & Pensions	Department for Work & Pensions	Southwark Council (Private Tenancies Sustainment Team)	Southwark Council (Children's and Adults' Services)
Lead Officer / contact	Jobcentre Plus	Jobcentre Plus	Jobcentre Plus	Davinia Alexander	Gill Maxim
Application process	Current claims are via paper form	Current claims are via paper form	Claims via Jobcentre Plus advisor	Paper form	Face-to-face to Social Worker
Eligibility Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to claimants of any contributory / income-related benefit including Universal Credit Claimant must demonstrate that they are in financial need. The Regulations will define "financial need" and guidance will assist Decision Makers in how to apply it to applicants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In most cases require claimant to have been claiming Universal Credit - or have had a continuous claim to a legacy income-related benefit migrating to Universal Credit - for at least 6 months. (This requirement does not apply if the expense is required as a consequence of obtaining / retaining work) Available to those with lowest incomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to all Jobcentre Plus customers Some carers not receiving benefit Some lone parents not receiving benefit Partners of customers receiving benefit 	Any exceptional circumstances contributing to financial difficulties taken into account: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child maintenance or legal costs High heating costs due to time spent in home as a result of sickness/disability Additional travel costs to doctor/hospital or in acting as a carer Increased work-related travel costs as a result of moving due to welfare reform Likelihood of homelessness 	General duty of LA (a) to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need; and (b) promote the upbringing of such children by their families by providing a range and level of services appropriate to those children's needs.
Fulfilment	A loan to support claimants who have made or are about to make a new benefit claim for Employment and Support Allowance, Jobseekers Allowance or Incapacity Benefit. The loan supports claimants where they encounter a period of financial need before receiving their 1st payment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rent Furniture / household equipment Clothing or footwear Removal expenses Travelling expenses Things to help look for or start work Improving/maintaining/ securing a home Maternity or funeral expenses Repaying hire purchase or other debts in respect of any of the above 	Payments normally up to £300. There is no exhaustive list of needs that may be met by the FSF, but examples could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel costs and up to 2 nights overnight accommodation of up to £50 per night to enable interview attendance Tools Training Childcare costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rent deposits / rent in advance Rent arrears (where partial HB was payable when arrears accrued) Reductions in LHA resulting from changes from April 2011 Benefit Cap & Size criteria affected residents prioritised locally Foster families and Disabled households in adapted homes prioritised locally Shortfall between HB and rent in other exceptional circumstances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emergency Subsistence Clothing & equipment Travel expenses Childcare costs Accommodation Legal fees
Excluded persons	Persons not in receipt of ESA, JSA or Incapacity Benefit	Persons not in receipt of Income Support, JSA (IB), ESA (IR) or Pension Credit	Customers participating in the Work Programme, Work Choice or legacy provision		
Applications received	4,010 (2011/12)	9,360 (2011/12)	Unknown	622 (Apr – Dec 2012)	
Awards paid	3,600 (2011/12)	6,720 (2011/12)	Unknown	470 (Apr – Dec 2012)	
Welfare reform impact	STAs replace Interim Payments and Social Fund Crisis Loan alignment payments for all benefits from April 2013	BAs replace Budgeting Loans for eligible Universal Credit claimants from 1st April 2013. Budgeting Loans will continue to be available to those claiming legacy benefits until all such claims have either been closed or migrated to Universal Credit.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in budget Likely increase in demand in 2013/14 Proactive approach in targeting affected group 	
Likelihood of cross-over with other funding	Low	High	Medium	High	Medium
Notes	Maximum repayment period of 3 months, which may be extended to 6 months in exceptional circumstances	Maximum recovery period of 12 months, extendable to 18 months in exceptional circumstances	FSF also includes a grant funding mechanism enabling Jobcentre Plus to support local "partnerships" that address barriers to work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for 13 weeks to 1 year Previously no awards to LBS tenants 	

	No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)	Southwark Emergency Support Scheme (SESS)
Purpose	Assistance for families who have NRPF and those given leave to remain but not allowed access to housing and benefits	For unforeseeable, serious and significant emergencies or crisis where failure to give assistance will mean there is a serious risk of significant harm to the person or the person's family
Budget 2012/13	£232,944	(Figures unavailable) • £1,506,900 in 2011/12
Budget 2013/14	£807,944	£1,362,932
Source of funding	Council core funded budget	Government grant (non-ring fenced)
Administered by	Southwark Council (Children's & Adults Services)	Southwark Council (Revenues & Benefits)
Lead Officer / contact	Gill Maxim	Chris Fegan
Application process	Face-to-face to Social Worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One-touch team (phone) E-Form application
Eligibility Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single adults with physical / mental health problems waiting for an asylum claim or appeal Former unaccompanied asylum seeking children receiving 'leaving care' support Families who have overstayed their visa and waiting for a UKBA decision on an application for leave to remain on human rights grounds Women with children fleeing domestic violence waiting for a decision from the UKBA on an application for leave to remain under Domestic Violence Rule 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age 16 and above Resident in Southwark for at least six months (exceptions apply) In receipt of a means-tested "passport" state benefit
Fulfilment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accommodation Subsistence Additional social care 	<p>Examples of emergencies or crisis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A family member has been taken seriously ill or died A member of the family has been a victim of crime Family possessions have been destroyed in a fire or flood A person is fleeing domestic violence <p>The person requires assistance moving into, or remaining in the community.</p>
Excluded persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EEA nationals and dependents Persons granted refugee status by another EEA state and dependents Refused asylum seekers who have failed to comply with removal directions, and dependents Persons unlawfully present in the UK (including people who have overstayed visas or failed asylum seekers who made their initial claim in-country) 	Rough sleepers
Applications received		10,270 (2011/12)
Awards paid		6,310 (2011/12)
Welfare reform impact		Likely increase in demand in 2013/14
Likelihood of cross-over with other funding		Medium
Notes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Localised provision from April 2013 10% reduction in budget

Gap analysis of funds according to customer need / segment



Name	Short Term Advances (STA)	Budgeting Advances (BA)	Flexible Support fund (FSF)	Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP)	Section 17 Payments	No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)	Southwark Emergency Support Scheme (SESS)
Rough sleepers *	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red
Ex-offenders	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Red	Red	Orange
Single Parents	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Red	Orange
Families	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Red	Orange
Disabled households	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Red	Orange
Troubled families	Orange	Orange	Green	Orange	Green	Red	Orange
People in crisis	Orange	Green	Red	Red	Green	Red	Green
Fleeing domestic violence	Orange	Orange	Red	Orange	Green	Red	Green
Persons with a 'standard' income	Red	Red	Orange	Orange	Orange	Red	Orange
No recourse to public funds	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Orange	Red

Key	
No access	Red
Limited access / not purpose of funding	Orange
Access likely	Green

* (Although not supported through these funds, Southwark works in partnership with the homelessness charity St Mungos' outreach team to meet with rough-sleepers, carry out assessments and provide support. We look at options to reconnect people to their own area, or to support them to find accommodation, usually in the private rented sector. There are some categories of rough sleepers we cannot assist in this way due to immigration restrictions. In these cases we will try to reconnect them with their country of origin)

Round-table summary of London Council's Social Fund replacement schemes as of 4th February 2013 *

Authority	Contracting out?	Offering loans?	Application options	Local Connections Criteria	Cash?	Vouchers?
Southwark	No	Grants only	Online, telephone and referral	6 weeks with exemptions	In exceptional circumstances, via Credit Union	No
Barking & Dagenham		Grants only		6 weeks with exemptions	Yes	Yes
Barnet		Grants only		6 weeks with exemptions	Unknown	
Bexley	Yes	Grants only	Online and telephone	6 weeks with exemptions	In exceptional circumstances	Unsure
Brent		To be confirmed		Must reside in Borough		
Camden	Tendering	Grants only		6 weeks with exemptions		
City of London	No	Grants only	Online and paper	6 weeks	No	Unsure
Croydon		Grants only		3 Months with exemptions	No	
Ealing	No	Grants only	Online and telephone	6 months with exemptions	No	May consider as back up solution
Enfield	No	Grants Only	Online only	6 weeks with exemptions	Limited to small amounts	Yes
Greenwich	No	Grants only				
Hackney		To be confirmed	Email portal		Via Bacs or Post Office	
Harrow	No	Possibly through credit unions	Online and telephone	3 months with exemptions	In exceptional circumstances	Vouchers will be developed to refer to Foodbank that is currently being set up in Harrow
Havering	Yes	Loans (credit unions) and 'in kind' provision for food and furniture	Online, telephone, face to face	4 weeks with exemptions	BACS	Yes, for local foodbanks and furniture reuse providers
Hounslow	No	Grants only	On-line applications	Resident for at least 6 months or provide evidence of a secure tenancy	No	Being considered
Kensington & Chelsea	No	Grants only	Phone/ online	Must reside in Borough (apart from if placed outside by Housing Officer)	Generally non-cash but working with the Post Office	
Lambeth	Only the callcentre element to Capita	Yes, through credit unions (2% per month interest being charged)	Online and telephone	6 weeks with exemptions	Not if possible but if needed via Post Office pay Out	Food/Travel warrants and clothing vouchers
Lewisham	To be confirmed	Working with credit unions for loans. Grants in house	Online and telephone	6 weeks with exemptions	No	
Merton	No	Yes	Online and telephone	3 Months with exemptions	Post Office	Possibly
Newham		Yes, possibly loans only	Looking at Face-to-Face	Not yet considered	No	
Redbridge	Yes	Grants only	Online, telephone, face to face	6 weeks with exemptions	In exceptional circumstances	Possibly
Sutton	No	Yes	Online and telephone	6 weeks	In exceptional circumstances	Yes
Tower Hamlets	No	Grants only	Online and telephone	6 weeks - unless placed into current accommodation by the council	BACS (if no bank account available cash through Post Office Payout)	No
Waltham Forrest		Yes, through credit unions	Online or telephone	6 months with exemptions		
Westminster		Grants only		Must reside in Borough unless placed outside by a housing officer		

* This summary represents work in progress and the latest position as of the 4th February 2013. All councils are actively working on designing and implementing their local schemes. Gaps in the summary demonstrate that all authorities are working hard to meet challenging timescales



SOUTHWARK EMERGENCY SUPPORT SCHEME – ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA/QUALIFYING CONDITIONS

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1. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The guiding principles of Southwark's Emergency Support Scheme are:

- To provide emergency support following a disaster, or in times of crisis
- To allow people to return to or remain in the community, such as those moving out of institutional or residential care and those at risk of not being able to remain in their communities without additional support
- To help families who are facing exceptional pressure, to help keep families together and to safeguard children

- To support the most vulnerable in the community and to adopt a holistic approach in doing so
- To help safeguard severely disabled households and specifically where entry into employment is not possible
- To support the most vulnerable in emergency situations through signposting to appropriate support services, advice, or through provision and access to goods
- To engage individuals with appropriate support services where needed to prevent repeat applications, or as an alternative to an award from the fund
- To ensure the fund is fair and equitable in its distribution to those most in need within the community

2. ROUTE IN AND APPLICATIONS

- Southwark council will provide a process by which Southwark residents can make an application for an award from the fund
- Customer access will be via an online portal or via a telephone application process
- Facilities will be made available at the Council's "One Stop Shops" for customers to make free telephone applications and online applications via "assisted self-service"
- In exceptional circumstances it may be possible for a home visit to be arranged to assist elderly or vulnerable customers with their applications, but the council reserves the right to decline any request for a visit
- Advocacy and advice services will also be able to make referrals to the fund in respect of their clients
- Other Southwark Council departments such as Adult Social Care will also be able to make referrals to the fund in respect of their clients
- Awards from the fund will only be considered in respect of requests made via the above methods
- Verification of identity, address, income and circumstances may be required before assistance from the fund is offered
- All applications for assistance must include:
 - the name and current address of the person seeking assistance
 - details of how long the applicant has resided in Southwark
 - details of whether they have been placed in Southwark by another authority

- what support is being requested
- details of why the request is being made and what consequences there will be if the application is not successful
- details of what other assistance the applicant has considered or sought before making the application, and the result
- Details of the applicant's income, savings and capital
- The council may require applicants to be interviewed at their home, at the council's offices or One Stop Shops, or at some other place specified by the council at a reasonable time so that their application can be progressed
- Failure to attend an interview without good cause may result in the application being refused
- The council can require applicants to supply such information or documentary evidence within 14 days as it deems necessary in order to decide the application, including evidence of identity. Failure to supply the information or documentary evidence within the time limit without good cause will result in the application being refused (see "verification" section for more details)

3. ELIGIBILITY AND QUALIFYING CONDITIONS

3.1 QUALIFYING CONDITIONS

In order to make a decision to give assistance, staff administering the fund will need to be satisfied that qualifying conditions A or B or C below has occurred or is occurring:

A) There has been an unforeseeable, serious and significant emergency or crisis and failure to give assistance will mean there is a serious risk of significant harm to the person or the person's family. The council will take account of individual applicant's circumstances in assessing whether or not an emergency is considered to be serious and significant. In exceptional circumstances applications may be considered where, subject to evidence requirements, it can be demonstrated that a crisis has not yet occurred, but is imminent.

Examples of emergencies or crisis:

- A family member has been taken seriously ill or died
- A member of the family has been a victim of crime
- Family possessions have been destroyed in a fire or flood
- A person is fleeing domestic violence

B) The person requires assistance moving into, or remaining in the community.

C) A disabled household is unable to gain employment either as a result of the severity of the disability or because their household circumstances preclude this as a possibility.

3.2 PERSONAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Under qualifying condition **A** and **B**, a person is only entitled to assistance from this fund if they meet the following criteria:

- I. They are aged 16 or above
- II. They live in Southwark and have been resident in Southwark for at least six weeks prior to application ¹
- III. They are in receipt of a means-tested “passport” state benefit (Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance (income based), Employment Support Allowance (income based), or Guaranteed Pension Credit, or where it can be demonstrated that imminent receipt of such a benefit is likely ²
- IV. They are not an excluded person (section 6)
- V. They are not requesting assistance under circumstances which are listed as excluded (see section 5), or for an excluded item or need (see section 7)
- VI. They do not have the personal means, nor access to the means, for the provisions required.

Under qualifying condition **C**, a person must meet all personal eligibility criteria set out above other than criterion III. from which they are exempt. However in order to qualify under condition **C** an applicant must demonstrate that the disability in their household, or the household circumstances brought about as a result of that disability, precludes them from gaining employment.

Upon the introduction of Universal Credit, personal eligibility criterion III. above will be reviewed and amended. The Department for Work & Pensions have not yet notified councils as to whether “pass-porting” (receipt of the state benefit guaranteeing a particularly low income level) will be possible within the new Universal Credit system.

4. AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE OFFERED

For successful applicants, the following factors may affect the amount of assistance offered:

- Their age and the extent of their need
- The significance and implications of the emergency or crisis and the cost to them as a result
- The level of their income, savings and capital
- If they are moving out of institutional or residential care

¹ See “exceptional circumstances - residence” section 13.1

² See “exceptional circumstances - income” section 13.2

- If they are a parent of children under 16 who live with them
- If they are a person with a disability, restricted mobility, or mental or physical impairment
- If they are receiving assistance, financial or otherwise, from other sources

5. EXCLUDED CIRCUMSTANCES

Assistance will not be given for, or in, the following circumstances:

- Where the applicant is an excluded person (see section 6).
- Where the application is for an excluded item or need (see section 7)
- Where other statutory provisions are in place and are a suitable option for the applicant; including but not restricted to:
 - Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) budgeting loans
 - DWP “alignment” or “advance” benefit payments
 - DWP statutory social fund payments (for example winter fuel allowance)
 - Section 17 payments
 - Homelessness Prevention Fund
 - Finders Fee Scheme
- Where the applicant could gain assistance privately, either from their own money or resources, or where other people can support them.
- Where the council determines that an application would be more appropriate to an alternative discretionary fund, e.g. The Discretionary Housing Payment fund or Section 17 payments
- Where the application is for items which the council cannot reasonably provide.
- Where private insurance should cover the cost of damages.
- Where liability exists elsewhere which addresses the crisis (for example if liability for a flood lies with a neighbour or landlord).
- Where the application is to make up for a reduction in benefits which have been sanctioned, or where they are being paid at a reduced rate due to an overpayment being recovered.

6. EXCLUDED PERSONS

- Persons subject to immigration control, persons from abroad³ or those with no recourse to public funds
- Persons who could have applied for help to the DWP but have not done so
- Persons who have already had any award from the fund in the previous six months, or an award of the same item or an award for the same reason, within the previous 12 months⁴
- Persons in receipt of financial assistance for the same purpose from friends, family or another charitable organisation
- Persons with income, savings and or other capital deemed sufficient to cover need
- Persons whom the council has reason to believe do not reside at the address which is stated on the application form
- Persons who are full-time students and who are not in receipt of a DWP means-tested benefit
- Persons who have been placed in housing in Southwark by another local authority as part of the discharge of a statutory duty (unless it can be evidenced that they fall outside the qualifying terms of that borough's equivalent scheme or where that borough has no such scheme)
- Prisoners on temporary release

7. EXCLUDED ITEMS & NEEDS

- Any need which occurs outside the United Kingdom.
- An educational or training need including clothing and tools.
- Distinctive school uniform or sports clothes of any description for use at school or equipment of any description to be used at school.
- Travelling expenses to or from school.
- Expenses in connection with court (legal) proceedings such as legal fees, court fees, fines, costs, damages, subsistence or travelling expenses.
- Removal or storage charges where an applicant is re-housed following the imposition of a compulsory purchase order, or a redevelopment or closing order, or a compulsory exchange of tenancies, or pursuant to a housing authority's statutory duty to the homeless.
- Domestic assistance and respite care.

³ As defined in The Housing Benefit Regulations 2006

⁴ See "exceptional circumstances – awards" section 13.3

- Any repair to property of any body mentioned in section 80(1) of the Housing Act.
- A medical, surgical, optical, aural or dental item or service.
- Work related expenses.
- Debts to government departments.
- Investments.
- Costs of purchasing, renting or installing a telephone and of any call charges.
- Any expenses which the local authority has a statutory duty to meet.
- Costs of fuel consumption and any associated standing charges (although assistance may be offered in a crisis situation where utilities supply has been disconnected).
- Council water charges, arrears of community charge, collective community charge contributions or community water charges.
- Rent (except for rent in advance). For assistance with an ongoing shortfall between Housing Benefit and rent, an application should be made for a Discretionary Housing Payment
- Any items deemed by the authority as non-essential

8. PROVISIONS/PAYMENTS

Where a decision is made to give assistance, the council will usually provide it in one or more of the following ways.

By working with Local Voluntary Sector organisations, the Council intends to award the required goods as oppose to a cash amount, such as the current DWP scheme.

The Council intends to use a mixture of pre-paid cards/vouchers and locally sourced replacement items to meet the needs of successful applicants to the scheme. As such, an applicant will be offered either:

- Locally sourced second-hand items (for white goods all second hand items will have been safety checked and guaranteed for a minimum of sixty days).
- A voucher for food to be used at a Local Voluntary sector organisation.
- A voucher or prepaid card loaded to the value of the resettlement package, which can be used at specified stores to purchase agreed items

The decision on whether to award items or vouchers will be made by the Council on the basis of the need for which the application has been made and the availability of specific second-hand items.

Where need cannot be met using goods or services, we will provide a cash grant in partnership with the Southwark Credit Union.

If none of the above payment or provisions can be made, The Council will use discretion including the use of internal transfers as appropriate.

The council will, in each case, consider whether it is appropriate to refer an applicant on to other support services, in addition to or instead of an award from the fund, where the circumstances suggest they may benefit from that support.

It is anticipated that there will be instances where a referral to other support services will be a more appropriate course of action than a payment from the fund, even if the applicant meets the eligibility criteria.

9. VERIFICATION

The council will takes steps to carry out its own verification of an applicant's identity, address and circumstances, but where this is not possible an applicant will be required to provide documentation or other evidence which is reasonably required for verification purposes, such as:

- Identification and proof of address
- Income, savings, bank accounts and proof of other capital held
- Where crime or lost property is involved, evidence (such as a crime reference number) that these have been reported to the police
- Other evidence as may be reasonably required to demonstrate the circumstances leading to an application; e.g. photographic evidence of fire or flood damaged items
- The council may require that one of its officers visits an applicant's property to establish and verify the circumstances of an application

The Council takes instances of fraud seriously and will conduct an investigation where instances of fraud are suspected. Appropriate sanctions will be pursued where fraud has been proven.

10. DECISIONS

- All decisions will be notified in writing.
- Awards made as a result of a disaster or crisis will be decided within 2 days (or as long as is reasonably practicable) of the completed application being received.
- All other decisions will be made within 9 days (or as long as is reasonably practicable) of the completed application being received.
- Notifying in writing includes notifying by e-mail (except in certain circumstances where the applicant has specified that they do not have an email address).
- The council can decide to
 - a) Award the application in full

- b) Award the application in part
- c) Decline the application
- Where the council decides to decline an application, the council's decision notification will state the reason for that refusal.
- The council can decline an application if:
 - a) it has insufficient funds to make a payment, or
 - b) it has reason to believe it will run out of funds before the end of the financial year
- Where the council decides to make an award, the council's decision notification will state the type and/or amount of the payment

11. REVIEWS

- A customer who is unhappy about the outcome of their application is entitled to ask for a review of the decision provided that they have satisfied all the requirements set out within the scheme and can demonstrate that a material error has been made. All applicants will be advised of this right as part of the notification process
- There is no right of review against a decision made under sections 5, 6 or 7
- A request for a review must be made within 14 days of the decision notification letter being issued by the council
- The council has the discretion to extend the time limits specified above if special circumstances led to the delay in requesting a review.
- A review must:
 - be made in writing
 - be signed by the applicant or their representative
 - state the reasons why the applicant believes the decision is incorrect including any additional information which they believe should be taken into consideration.
- Any review will be heard by an officer of the council, of appropriate seniority, who is designated as a reviews officer and was not involved in the original decision
- The designated officer will make a decision within 2 days for those situations deemed a crisis and 5 days for all others, of a review request being received or as soon as reasonably practicable thereafter.

- The designated officer may request additional information or evidence in order to decide the review and the applicant must provide this within 14 days of the date of the designated officer's request.
- Failure to provide the information and/or evidence within the specified timeframe will lead to the review being declined
- The designated officer can
 - allow the review in whole
 - allow the review in part
 - refuse the review
- There is no further right of review against the decision of the reviews officer.

12. EQUALITIES

An equality impact analysis will be carried out by the council in respect of the proposed scheme.

13. EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

13.1 LOCAL RESIDENCE

The standard requirement to qualify for an award is that the applicant must live in Southwark and must have been resident in Southwark for a minimum of 6 weeks prior to applying. In certain exceptional circumstances, and subject to evidence requirements, an award will be considered without this criterion being met.

These circumstances are:

- The applicant has been placed in housing outside the borough by the London Borough of Southwark as part of the discharge of a statutory duty
- The applicant is fleeing domestic violence
- The applicant is a released prisoner who, immediately prior to prison, had lived in Southwark for 6 of the previous 12 months or 3 of the previous 5 years
- The applicant has been discharged from the armed forces, or is the former spouse or dependent of a recently deceased member of the armed forces and is about to move into Southwark (subject to Southwark Council being satisfied that the applicant will not qualify for an award under the terms of an equivalent scheme within the borough they are leaving)
- The applicant is leaving hospital or registered care and is about to move into Southwark (subject to Southwark Council being satisfied that the applicant will not qualify for an award under the terms of an equivalent scheme within the borough they are leaving)

13.2 INCOME

For qualifying condition A or B, the standard requirement to qualify for an award is that the applicant must be in receipt of a qualifying benefit as defined in section 3.2. In exceptional circumstances, and subject to evidence requirements, an award may be considered without this criterion being met.

These circumstances are where it can be demonstrated that the level of the applicant's income and capital is low enough that it is close to the qualifying threshold for those means tested benefits.

In exercising its discretion in such cases, the council will also take into account the size and significance of the emergency or crisis, the likely impact on and cost to the individual, and their ability to meet that cost.

13.3 AWARDS

As detailed in section 5, an applicant will be considered an excluded person, and therefore ineligible for an award, if they have had any award from the fund in the previous six months, or an award of/for the same item or for the same reason in the previous twelve months.

In exceptional circumstances, the council may use its discretion and consider making a further award to an individual if they have been subject to a series of crises or emergencies and the implications for the individual are considered particularly compelling.

13.4 GENERAL

All applications for awards will be judged against the criteria listed above. However, in exceptional cases, where the circumstances underlying an application are deemed extremely compelling, Southwark Council may, in accordance with the proper exercise of discretion, consider an award outside any of the provisions listed.

Southwark Emergency Support Scheme – Voluntary Sector Eligibility Criteria Feedback

From	Summarised comments	Southwark Response
Southwark Pensioners Centre	<p>1. "Face to face" and paper applications should be possible, particularly for elderly and deaf clients.</p> <p>2. Awards should not only be made for a "serious and significant" crisis and it should also include impending crises.</p> <p>3. The age of an applicant should be taken into consideration when deciding awards</p> <p>4. Local connection rule should not be 6 months</p> <p>5. Scheme shouldn't be restricted to applicants on means-tested DWP benefits.</p> <p>6. Customers should be able to apply for all statutory provisions at the same time</p> <p>7. Applications should not be declined on the grounds of how many awards have already been granted.</p> <p>8. Applicants should not be excluded because they were housed in Southwark by another LA.</p> <p>9. Provisions in the scheme should not be vouchers/goods only but it should feature cash too. It should also feature a medical item provision</p> <p>10. Decisions should be made within 1 day on crisis applications and within 10 for other applications</p> <p>11. Notification should not be by email.</p> <p>12. Decisions on eligibility for the social fund should not depend upon budgetary constraints</p> <p>13. Signposting to support services should not be a replacement for an award.</p>	<p>1 Vulnerable customers can take advantage of "assisted self-service" or make a free telephone application at One Stop Shops, or a home visit could be arranged to assist them in exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>3. Individual circumstances will be factored into decisions and criteria now include impending crises.</p> <p>4. Age will be considered a factor.</p> <p>5. This criterion has been changed to 6 weeks with exceptions.</p> <p>6. An exceptional circumstances provision has been included in respect of applicants with other low incomes.</p> <p>7. Not possible as provided by Local as well as Central Government, but we will seek to offer the correct advice at first point of contact.</p> <p>8. See answer 3 below.</p> <p>9. Such applicants should generally apply to the LA that housed them. An exceptional circumstances provision has been included for when this is shown to not be possible.</p> <p>10. The scheme will also feature an emergency cash provision, but it will not feature medical items. These will remain excluded.</p> <p>11. This is currently under consideration and we are working towards crisis decisions being made within 24 hours.</p> <p>12. Where applicants state they do not have an email address, we will always use an alternative method.</p> <p>13. This is not our intention, but the fund is finite. Following 6 months of operating the scheme, we shall undertake a review to ensure we are meeting the needs of those most vulnerable and achieving value for money.</p> <p>1. The extent of financial support we can offer over the year will inevitably be budget dependant.</p>
Citizens Advice /	<p>1. How will people know about the application</p>	<p>1. Publicity and communications plan currently being developed.</p>

Southwark Emergency Support Scheme – Voluntary Sector Eligibility Criteria Feedback

<p>SLAN / Faces in Focus / Community Action Southwark</p>	<p>methods?</p> <p>2. There may be equality act implications if people are not able to claim in person.</p> <p>3. In a crisis, customers should not be excluded due to previous awards.</p> <p>4. Will customers be advised to make a claim to the DWP when there is a more suitable statutory provision to apply for there?</p> <p>5. Re exclusion based on “savings”. This may need definition otherwise open to challenge.</p> <p>6. Re signposting and onwards referrals we need to agree clear referral criteria.</p> <p>7. We would like the Equality Human Rights panel to be involved in the equality analysis</p> <p>8. Exclusion due to immigration restrictions should this be clearer.</p> <p>9. Any voucher system should be as non-stigmatising as possible.</p> <p>10. There should be a cash fund.</p> <p>11. Not all overseas needs should be excluded (such as travel to a funeral overseas).</p> <p>12. How people are informed about the fund is key</p> <p>13. Some Schemes distinguish between crisis payments and Community Care Grants to help people stay in their homes or resettle</p> <p>14. There should be some discretion to assist people on low income even if not receiving the “passporting” benefits</p> <p>15. We feel there needs to be the facility for people to complete the forms in person</p> <p>16. Thought needs to be given to the role of ‘trusted intermediaries’ in terms of speeding up assessment of claims</p> <p>17. We feel there needs to be some facility for payment on the day for rent in advance</p> <p>18. The scheme should not overlap with planned resettlement for example social</p>	<p>2. There will be an option to claim over telephone or online with assistance at the One Stop Shops and local Job Centre Plus</p> <p>3. There will be a max number of awards rule, but provision has also been included for particularly compelling scenarios.</p> <p>4. We will always seek to signpost customers to the correct provision/fund.</p> <p>5. We will have to clearly define the exact rules around exclusion based on savings/capital and on the level of savings that will affect awards.</p> <p>6. CAB will be consulted further on this.</p> <p>7. This request will be considered.</p> <p>8. Definition has been expanded & clarified.</p> <p>9. We are aware of the potential stigmatisation and will work with our fulfilment partners to alleviate. Details of voucher system are currently being devised but vouchers considered vital to protect funds.</p> <p>10. There will be an emergency cash fund.</p> <p>11. It is felt that this exclusion should remain in the scheme as funding so limited.</p> <p>12. Publicity plan is currently being worked on.</p> <p>13. These distinctions feature in the Southwark scheme</p> <p>14. An exceptional circumstances provision is being included for others on low income</p> <p>15. Applications can be made at One Stop Shops using assisted self service.</p> <p>16. Scheme will feature referrals, so this may be possible. Requires further discussion.</p> <p>17. Such a facility is planned. Further discussion/consultation required.</p>
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Southwark Emergency Support Scheme – Voluntary Sector Eligibility Criteria Feedback

	<p>services responsibilities</p> <p>19. Thought should be given as to how the voucher system will not stigmatise</p> <p>20. The scheme needs to set out how much will be given for emergency living expenses and for how long</p> <p>21. Needs some more definition of the kind of items that will be considered</p> <p>22. An appendix could set out the suppliers of goods to be used</p> <p>23. A small cash fund should be retained</p> <p>24. The approach to residence test should align as far as possible with other London Boroughs. There should be the ability to exercise discretion</p> <p>25. FEHRS would like to comment on the EA when this is available</p>	<p>18. Work is being done to establish clearly drawn lines between different schemes, provisions and the council's statutory duties.</p> <p>19. Details of voucher system being worked on</p> <p>20. Exact amounts for living expenses currently being devised. Likely to be based upon DWP figures</p> <p>21. Work in progress on this.</p> <p>22. As above.</p> <p>23. An emergency cash fund is planned</p> <p>24. Exceptional circumstances provisions have been included re local connection and one included as per what LA's have agreed with St Giles for released prisoners.</p> <p>25. Will be considered</p>
<p>St Giles Trust</p>	<p>1. Residency in Southwark being a condition will exclude many released prisoners who we have to house outside Southwark.</p> <p>2. "Rent in advance" should not be excluded from scheme as those not currently in receipt of HB cannot claim it from the DHP fund.</p> <p>3. In our view, this will need to include arrangements for direct payment of rent in advance to a private landlord. Plus decisions on such cases should be expedited and payment made within one day, so property is not lost.</p>	<p>1. The residency/local connection criterion has been amended to include a provision covering St Giles' "released prisoners" client group, in line with their suggestion.</p> <p>2. "Rent in advance" can be claimed from the scheme in such circumstances.</p> <p>3. Such provisions are being considered and St Giles will be consulted further on these matters.</p>

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CABINET AGENDA DISTRIBUTION LIST (OPEN)**MUNICIPAL YEAR 2012/13**

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Chris Page, Cabinet Office	1	Dated: 30 January 2013 (pt)	
Laura Kavanagh, Opposition Group Office	1		
Press			
Southwark News	1		
South London Press	1		
Members of Parliament			
Harriet Harman, MP	1		
Tessa Jowell, MP	1		
Simon Hughes, MP	1		