

Response to Request for Information

Reference FOI 002086
Date 9 March 2018

Council Tax Support Scheme and Local Welfare Assistance Scheme for 2018-2019

Request:

I would like to request the following information relating to the local council tax support scheme (sometimes referred to as council tax reduction) and local welfare assistance schemes in your area.

Section 1: Changes to the CTS scheme in 2018/19

1. Does your local authority intend to change its current council tax support scheme in April 2018?
Yes
2. If yes, please outline if and how any of the following components of the scheme will change in 2018/19:

Component of Council Tax Support Scheme	Will this be different in 2018/19? (Yes or No)	Details (such as reducing the savings limit to £6,000 or changing the taper rate to 25%)
Require all residents to pay at least some of their council tax liability, regardless of income (a minimum payment)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	No change
Cap the amount that can be claimed based on the band of the property	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	No change
The rate at which council tax support is withdrawn (tapered) as income increases	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	No change
The maximum capital/savings someone can have to be eligible for council tax support (savings limit)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	No change
The minimum amount of council tax support that can be claimed before it is withdrawn in full	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	No change

Entitlement to a second adult rebate	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	No change
Components of income that are included in the means-test (e.g. child maintenance, disability benefits)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	New disregards of bereavement support allowance, 'We love Manchester Emergency Fund' (WLMEF) and 'London Emergencies Trust' (LET)
The hardship funding available to affected residents	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	No change
Assumption of a minimum income for the self-employed	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	No change
Removal of the Family Premium	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	No change
Do protections or exemptions for any vulnerable groups exist in your local authority's current council tax support scheme?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	No change
The maximum amount of support available is determined by income bands	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	No change

3. Please could you provide us with a link or a copy of the regulations for the 2018/19?

Our scheme can be accessed on our web page
<http://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/counciltaxreduction>

Section 2: Local Welfare Assistance scheme

Until 2013, the Discretionary Social Fund provided Community Care grants and Crisis Loans to people in financial hardship across the UK. These elements of the Social Fund were centrally administered by the DWP until 2013 when they were abolished. They have been replaced by Local Welfare Assistance Schemes (LWAS) in England.

1. Does your local authority intend to have a local welfare assistance scheme in 2018/19?

Yes

2. If yes, please outline the details of the 2018/19 scheme in the table below:

Local Welfare Assistance Scheme	Details
Does the scheme provide support to people who have experienced a disaster such as flood or fire?	<p>Yes (if so, tick all types of support available)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> Vouchers (e.g. retail, transport or energy vouchers, not food bank referrals) <input type="checkbox"/> In-kind support (e.g. furniture/white goods) ✓ Loans
Does the scheme provide support to people facing an emergency such as running out of food or energy supply?	<p>Yes (if so, tick all types of support available)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> Vouchers (e.g. retail, transport or energy vouchers not food bank referrals) <input type="checkbox"/> In-kind support (e.g. food bank referral/parcel) ✓ Loans
Does the scheme provide support to people needing support to set up a home or remain living independently?	<p>Yes (if so, tick all types of support available)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> Vouchers (e.g. retail, transport or energy vouchers not food bank referrals) <input type="checkbox"/> In-kind support (e.g. furniture/white goods) ✓ Loans

[NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED]

Are the eligibility criteria similar to those for the Discretionary Social Fund?	✓ Yes
If no, how do they differ?	
What is the budget set aside for the 2018/19 LWAS?	Nil. The scheme is in partnership with the Wolverhampton City Credit Union and is built on initial pump-prime funding allocated in 2014 and 2015.