



THE SCOTTISH WELFARE FUND: KEY ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

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What is the Scottish Welfare Fund?

Purpose

“to provide a safety net to people on low incomes”

“intended to meet occasional or short term needs and not to provide an alternative source of regular income”

Funding model

“budget-limited scheme”

SG provides funding, local authorities may choose to top up (but no obligation to)

Delivery

Local authorities have “extensive discretion over how the scheme is delivered in their area” within central guidance

- Crisis Grants
- Community Care Grants

- **Large scale research-based review of the Fund, undertaken in 2022**
- **Report published March 24th 2023**
- **Evidence-base for ongoing conversations about future of the Fund**



Five key issues

Purpose under pressure

- Is there a need for the SG to revisit or re-state the purpose of the Fund, in the light of changed external circumstances?

Future funding

- In light of increased and increasing need and demand, what level of funding (including admin funding) is required for long-term sustainable delivery?

Achieving consistency with discretion

- What actions are needed to enhance the delivery of the Fund to improve consistency between and within local authorities, without losing the benefits of local delivery?

Improving applicants' experiences

- How can LAs learn from applicants, stakeholders and each other to improve applicants' experiences throughout the application process (and beyond)?

Ongoing data collection, audit and review

– How can the operation of the Fund be strengthened on an ongoing basis by improvements to routine data collection, audit and review?

THANK YOU.

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