

Freedom of Information request 1612/2013

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Information request

What provision is in place for anybody requiring emergency funding to purchase everyday items such as furnishings, white goods, clothing etc?

Has the DWP done any form of impact assessment on this matter, if the cash provision was removed?

DWP response

From 1 April 2013, Crisis Loans were abolished, and the funding transferred to local authorities in England, and the Scottish and Welsh governments.

Prior to 1 April 2013, Crisis Loans were available to anyone, regardless of whether they were in receipt of a benefit or in work. The applicant or a member of their family must, however, have been facing an emergency or disaster situation for which payment of a Crisis Loan was the only way of preventing serious damage or risk to their, or that of a family members, health or safety.

From 1 April 2013, the English local authorities and the Scottish and Welsh governments have been delivering the new local welfare provision. The new provision allows local authorities to give tailored, flexible support to those in greatest need based on detailed knowledge of the issues they are facing in their communities.

An Impact Assessment on the abolition of the discretionary scheme and the passing of funds to LAs etc. was carried out as part of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 Parliamentary process and can be found here:

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-12/welfarereform/documents.html>

As for Impact Assessments on what LAs etc. are doing with the funding, that will be for the LAs and Scottish and Welsh Governments to have carried out. This is because they are introducing a new provision and are not replacing or revising the old scheme. Their IAs will therefore necessarily be about what provision they have put in place and how it impacts on their citizens not how the old one did and how the new one changes that.