



Department for Communities and Local Government

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***Department for Communities and Local
Government***

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Dear Chief Finance Director

Treatment of payments from the We Love Manchester Emergency Fund and London Emergencies Trust

This letter sets out guidance to local authorities on treatment for the purposes of local council tax support schemes of payments made from the charitable fund which has been established to provide financial assistance to victims and relatives of those affected by the horrific terrorist attacks that occurred in Manchester on 22 May and in London on 22 March and 3 June.

The cross-government Victims of Terrorism Unit (VTU) wrote to all local authorities' Chief Executives in England on 9 June 2017 to introduce its work remit and update them on recent developments following the Manchester bombing and London terrorists attacks. The letter mentioned that we would shortly write to Finance Directors of local authorities in England to provide guidance on these incidents.

As you may know, Manchester City Council in partnership with the British Red Cross has launched the **We Love Manchester Emergency Fund (WLMEF)** (<https://www.justgiving.com/campaigns/charity/redcross/manchesteremergencyfund>), to support people who have been injured or bereaved by the Manchester bombing. In London **the London Emergencies Trust (LET)** (<http://www.londonfunders.org.uk/london-emergencies-trust>) has been set up to support those affected by the recent London terror attacks.

Under section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, local billing authorities have the flexibility to grant reductions or exemptions on an individual basis or for a class of council taxpayers. **We therefore would like to encourage local authorities to consider using this power to disregard fully payments awarded from both funds to those injured or bereaved** as a result of these incidents when reviewing existing cases or assessing eligibility for their schemes.

Provision has previously been made at paragraph 16(1)(a) of Schedule 16 to the Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012/2885) to disregard payments from the **LBRCF** following the terrorist attacks in London on 7 July 2005. We would like to apply the same provision to payments from the **WLMEF** and the **LET** as has been made in respect of the LBRCF.

The Department for Work and Pensions has already amended the relevant statutory provisions to ensure that all payments from the **WLMEF** and the **LET** are disregarded for benefits purposes. We will explore the option of amending SI 2012/2885 this autumn to ensure that the same disregard is applied in respect of local council tax support schemes.

Regarding those affected by the Grenfell fire, DCLG are working with DWP and local authorities to consider the impacts of this tragic incident on their existing and new benefits and local council tax support cases and offer relevant support.

If you require any further information regarding the contents of this letter please contact Mercy Adebisi at: Mercy.Adebisi@Communities.gsi.gov.uk.

Chris Megainey

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Chris Megainey', with a large loop at the end.

Chris Megainey
Deputy Director, Local Government Finance
A Senior Civil Servant within the Department for Communities and Local Government

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