

POLICY NOTE

THE WELFARE FUNDS (SCOTLAND) REGULATIONS 2016

SSI 2016/xxx

The above instrument is to be made in exercise of the powers conferred by section 3(3) and 4 of the Welfare Funds (Scotland) Act 2015. The instrument is subject to affirmative procedure.

Policy Objectives

The Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF) established in April 2013 replaced elements of the Social Fund abolished by the Department for Work and Pensions. The SWF is administered by all 32 local authorities. Draft guidance was issued by Scottish Government, providing local authorities with a decision making structure on which to operate the interim SWF, until the permanent arrangements come into force on 1st April 2016 under the Welfare Funds (Scotland) Act 2015.

The purpose of the instrument is to provide a framework for the elements of the funds that should be approached consistently across local authorities when the Welfare Funds (Scotland) Act 2015 comes into force.

Consultation

A public consultation was held on the draft regulations and statutory guidance under the Welfare Funds (Scotland) Act 2015 coming into force on 1st April 2016. The consultation opened on 27th May 2015 and ran until 21st August 2015. The consultation sought views about the new permanent arrangements for the funds, policy issues and the contents of the draft regulations and guidance.

The results of the consultation, two years of statistical data held and conversations with stakeholders have shaped and informed the content of the regulations, the guidance and the presentation of the fund application form.

Impact Assessments

A combined Child Rights and Wellbeing and Equality Impact Assessment has been completed on the policy and is attached.

An updated Privacy Impact Assessment can be accessed from the following link:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/fairerscotland/scottishwelfarefund/welfarefundsbill/pia>

Financial Effects

The Minister for Housing and Welfare confirms that no Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment is necessary, as the instrument has no financial effects on the Scottish Government, local government or on business.

Scottish Government
Housing Regeneration and Welfare Directorate
16 December 2015