

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL  
REPORT

To: POLICY & RESOURCES (FINANCE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES) SUB-COMMITTEE		Subject: SCOTTISH WELFARE FUND FIRST 6 MONTHS 2015/16 REPORT AND PROGRESS UPDATE
From: HEAD OF E-GOVERNMENT & SERVICE DEVELOPMENT		
Date: 13 <sup>th</sup> November 2015	Ref: IMcK/SD	

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- Provide a performance update for Scottish Welfare Fund activity for the first six months of 2015/16;
- Provide an update on the progress of the regulatory framework and funding of the scheme going forward; and
- Provide a rationale for the current priority setting of the fund.

2. Background

2.1 The Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF) went live on the 1st April 2013 and was designed as an interim two year scheme to deliver Community Care Grants and Crisis Grants. The interim scheme will be replaced by a permanent scheme from April 2016.

2.2 Programme funding of £2,956,014 for the scheme remains unchanged this financial year but is subject to change for the next three years beginning in April 2016.

3. Performance for first 6 months of 2015

3.1 During the months from April to end of September 2015, North Lanarkshire SWF has made a total of 11,044 decisions with 7,375 awards being made.

3.2 Table 1 below shows the number of decisions made by the service during the first 6 months of 2015.

Table 1

Period	CCG Awards	Refusals	Crisis Awards	Refusals	Total Awards	Total Refusals	Total Decisions
Apr-15	256	194	931	514	1187	708	1895
May-15	290	183	886	381	1176	564	1740
Jun-15	231	135	1032	455	1263	590	1853
Jul-15	229	177	983	420	1212	597	1809
Aug-15	281	160	957	392	1238	552	1790
Sep-15	370	194	929	464	1299	658	1957
First 6 months total	1657	1043	5718	2626	7375	3669	11044

3.3 Current levels of spend within the fund are being carefully managed during the early part of the financial year to ensure that there are sufficient funds available across the whole of the budget period through to 2016. The monthly budget for the fund when broken down equals £246,334, however demand is not equally spread over 12 monthly budget periods and this will result in some months having a lower percentage spend and others (particularly the winter months) where spend will be higher than monthly budget profile.

3.4 Table 2 below shows the spend profile of the fund for the first 6 months of 2015/16. NB. All spend figures are subject to change upon reconciliation of the ledger.

Table 2

Month	Monthly budget CCGs	Monthly Budget Crisis	CCG Spend	Crisis Spend	Total Spend	% of monthly budget
Apr-15	£ 177,105	£ 69,229	£ 135,499	£ 61,987	£ 197,487	80%
May-15	£ 177,105	£ 69,229	£ 174,928	£ 62,306	£ 237,235	96%
Jun-15	£ 177,105	£ 69,229	£ 143,139	£ 73,236	£ 216,375	88%
Jul-15	£ 177,105	£ 69,229	£ 150,426	£ 72,835	£ 223,261	91%
Aug-15	£ 177,105	£ 69,229	£ 161,953	£ 75,577	£ 237,530	96%
Sep-15	£ 177,105	£ 69,229	£ 206,877	£ 74,046	£ 280,922	114%
<b>Spend to date</b>					<b>1,392,810</b>	

3.5 Table 3 below provides a comparison between the top 6 councils for the first 6 months of 2015/16. The data shows that North Lanarkshire Council received over 1,000 more crisis applications than any other council in Scotland. Table 3 also shows that NLC has the highest number of Crisis Grant applications and also the second highest number of applications overall.

Table 3

Local Authority	Crisis Applications	National Share	Community Care Grants Applications	National Share	Total Applications for 1st 6 months
Glasgow City	7306	10.50%	7192	21.22%	14498
North Lanarkshire	<b>8344</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>2700</b>	<b>7.97%</b>	<b>11044</b>
Fife	5071	7.31%	1780	5.25%	6851
South Lanarkshire	3280	4.73%	2720	8.03%	6000
Edinburgh, City of	3687	5.32%	2034	6.00%	5721
Renfrewshire	4123	5.95%	1095	3.23%	5218

#### 4. Service Funding and Regulations Update

4.1 The Scottish Government will decide the model for funding allocation across the next 3 financial years during December. Current proposals based in spend to date and the income domain of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) have been discussed at the COSLA Settlement and Distribution Group and are as follows:

Year 1 – 80% Spend to Date, 20% Income Domain

Year 2 – Average (Spend to Date and Income Domain)

Year 3 – 100% Income Domain

- 4.2 Income Domain measures how many people in the data zones across Scotland are in poverty. This is an arbitrary measure and does not reflect demand for the service; rather it measures the potential rather than actual demand. The Spend to Date measure also ignores demand as it only measures the amount of money actually spent on grants by each council. Some councils augmented their programme budgets with additional funds. North Lanarkshire did not augment its programme budget.
- 4.3 Table 4 shows the current programme budget allocation for the big six councils against demand in the form of applications.

Table 4

Local Authority	Crisis	CCG's	Total Applications	Crisis Budget	CCG Budget	Total Budget
Glasgow City	7,306	7,192	14,498	£1,964,745	£5,756,371	£7,721,116
North Lanarkshire	8,344	2,700	11,044	£830,751	£2,125,263	£2,956,014
Edinburgh, City of	3,687	2,034	5,721	£757,891	£1,429,737	£2,187,628
South Lanarkshire	3,280	2,720	6,000	£604,302	£1,539,479	£2,143,781
Fife	5,071	1,780	6,851	£640,440	£1,219,553	£1,859,993
Renfrewshire	4,123	1,095	5,218	£454,938	£693,919	£1,148,857

## 5. Current Priority Setting of SWF

- 5.1 The priority setting of the fund is currently at 'High'. This is based on application demand and remaining available budget for the year.

## 6. Recommendations

- 6.1 It is recommended that the Committee note:-

- The current status of Scottish Welfare Fund provision for the 1<sup>st</sup> 6 months of 2015; and
- The proposals for funding going forward as outlined in section 4 para 4.1

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### Head of E-Government & Service Development

Members seeking further information on the contents of this report are asked to contact Irene McKelvey, on tel. 01698 520449, or Stephen Devine, Scottish Welfare Fund Manager on 01698 524816.