

Annex D – What other Local authorities are doing

	26 wks	24 wks	26 wks	28 wks	22 wks
	NE Lincs	East Riding	N Lincs	Hull	York
Applications made	708	1,172	384	4538	1587
Number Awarded	366	665	256	3513	867
Budget	£696,000	£557,071	£453,000	£1,481,500	£315,141
Budget Allocated	£103,000	£156,501	£169,000	£498,433	£166,541
Percentage Spent	15%	28%	37%	34%	53%

North East Lincolnshire provides:

Crisis awards, up to 2 per year for disaster and require the customer to attend an interview on the second application. Awards paid via Pay point cash payment.

Care awards to help people stay in the community using BACS transfer into accounts or Pay point cash payments for amounts less than £200.

Decisions are made after looking at individual circumstances taking into account income, savings, special circumstances such as disability or illness, and ability to re-arrange current finances.

East Riding provides:

Local welfare assistance

Emergency loans are provided for crisis and disaster. No eligibility criteria other than being without resources to meet their needs. Customers can apply for 2 loans and must enter a formal repayment plan.

Support grants to help vulnerable residents live independently in the community. Eligibility via qualifying benefits e.g. Income Support.

Payment of grants is through BACS, Pay point or provision of goods.

North Lincolnshire provides:

Community Support grants. The scheme is similar to North East Lincolnshire scheme Crisis awards and Care awards.

Hull provides:

Community Crisis loans. No eligibility criteria other than being without resources to meet their needs. Customers can apply for 2 loans and must enter a formal repayment plan.

Community Support grants to help vulnerable residents live independently in the community. Eligibility via qualifying benefits e.g. Income Support.

Payment is via BACs transfer or to a trusted referrer through a 'supervised spending arrangement.'

NYLAF is North Yorkshire County Council's Local Assistance Fund.

The County Council has commissioned the scheme for geographically dispersed District Councils. This scheme provides goods in kind supplying 'vital household goods and basic necessities'. There are no cash payments. Items include essential items of household furniture and basic necessities'. There are no cash payments. Items include essential items of household furniture and equipment, beds and bedding, food vouchers, utility top-up vouchers, utility reconnection charges and essential home repairs.

A customer can apply for two awards of emergency food or utility vouchers per year. Other items under the fund are restricted to three per year but only one can be white goods. Applications are through authorised agencies and the NYLAF claim is seen as part of the support package. Applications are made on-line and Charis Grants handle the fulfilment of the award using criteria set by NYCC. Eligibility is determined by the receipt of means-tested benefits or income below the government's low income threshold. Awards for exceptional pressure are restricted to families caring for children.

At a recent stakeholders review session feedback about the scheme was positive. Changes made last year were for example, to replace food parcels with vouchers, include additional items such as cots, gas cookers and table top hobs. The utility credit was introduced in November 2013 and utility top-ups and food have comprised the majority of awards made by NYLAF in 2014/15. Pressures on the fund led to a reduction in white goods allowance to one items per year. In 2013/14 white goods comprised 35% of NYLAF awards compared to 38% of awards through YFAS. Rent deposits were removed from the scheme following review with District partners. Although low volume at around 40 awards per annum they were high value at around £800 each. York operates a bond scheme through Housing Options. April to August 2014 saw 1,731 applications with spend of 34% of the government grant.

Other Local Authorities

Like York, Warwickshire, Brighton & Hove and Leicester initially refused to make awards where people were subject to a benefit sanction but changed their policies due to the considerable hardship this was causing. Manchester initially restricted Community awards for single people with no medical needs. For example, they provided a microwave rather than a cooker, and didn't provide a fridge on the basis that applicants could go to the shops every day to get milk and perishables. However this changed over the course of the first year additionally providing freezers so people could buy in bulk and cut costs.

Leeds City Council operates their Local Welfare Support Scheme as a cashless system available to priority vulnerable groups. Eligibility is linked to low household income and help with basic household goods is limited to cookers, fridges, washing machine, beds and bedding, clothing if affected by disability, removal costs linked to homelessness prevention, travel costs linked to domestic violence or the welfare of children and curtains in cases of a move due to domestic violence and in certain mental health cases. Emergency help includes provision for major upheaval or disaster, food, essential goods linked to children.