

**COUNCIL MEETING
23rd SEPTEMBER 2013**

WRITTEN QUESTION FROM A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC

From Dr John Parke to the Portfolio Holder for Resources

How much money has the Council saved by reducing benefits under the "Bedroom Tax", when the house is deemed a spare bedroom, compared with the cost of rehousing families made homeless because they could not live on the reduced benefit?

Reply:

The reduced Housing Benefit expenditure resulting from the removal of Housing Benefit Spare Room Subsidy is matched by a corresponding reduction in subsidy received from the Government. Therefore the change is cost neutral to the Authority.

The level of Government funding made available to Bromley in 2013/14 for the awarding of Discretionary Housing Payments increased to £700,174 from £226,883 in the previous year. Part of this additional funding is provided in recognition that in certain circumstances it would not be appropriate for a household to move to smaller accommodation and remaining in the existing home could result in increased financial pressure.

This legislative change brings the calculation of Housing Benefit for social sector tenants closer in line with those renting from private landlords. The private sector entitlement calculations already took into account the size of accommodation required by the household.

The Authority is not aware of any Bromley household that has been made homeless as a result of the introduction of Housing Benefit Spare Room Subsidy