

# Public Document Pack



Democratic Services  
White Cliffs Business Park  
Dover  
Kent CT16 3PJ

Telephone: (01304) 821199  
Fax: (01304) 872452  
DX: 6312  
Minicom: (01304) 820115  
Website: [www.dover.gov.uk](http://www.dover.gov.uk)  
e-mail: [democraticservices@dover.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@dover.gov.uk)

04 December 2018

Dear Councillor

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at the meeting of the **SCRUTINY (POLICY AND PERFORMANCE) COMMITTEE** on Tuesday 4 December 2018 at 6.00 pm, the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

12 **UNIVERSAL CREDIT UPDATE** (Pages 2 - 7)

To receive an update on Universal Credit.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nicky", is written over a large, sweeping horizontal line that extends across the width of the signature area.

Chief Executive

---

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>UNIVERSAL CREDIT UPDATE - EAST KENT HOUSING</b>
<b>Meeting and Date:</b>	<b>Scrutiny (Policy &amp; Performance) Committee 4 December 2018</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Matthew Gough, Director of Customer Services, East Kent Housing</b>
<b>Decision Type:</b>	<b>For Information</b>

---

**Purpose of the report:** *As requested by Members this report provides details specific questions asked by the Committee.*

---

**Recommendation:** Members are asked to note the report.

---

1. Summary

Following discussions at the Scrutiny (Policy & Performance) Committee on the 2 October the Committee agreed that an item would be discussed at a future meeting to consider the wider impact of Universal Credit. In advance of this discussion East Kent Housing has been asked to provide a response to a number of specific questions.

This paper provides responses to those items that relate to East Kent Housing.

**1. Percentage of people yet to switch over to UC that would be eligible to be switched to UC**

For those households who live in accommodation managed by East Kent Housing within the Dover District as of October 2018, 735 are in receipt of Universal Credit and there are 2289 on Housing Benefit, which would indicate that approximately 24% of households have switched. Details of the Government's timetable for transition and migration are awaited.

**2. The money paid by DWP (management fee?) to help implementation of UC**

East Kent Housing do not have any involvement with this.

**3. Whether EKH has the resources to manage the switch to UC and recovery arrears**

We are currently in discussions with the four council owners regarding the possibility of additional resources being made available to manage the additional service demand generated by the roll out of Universal Credit.

**4. Cost to EKH/DDC of administration of UC support/switch over (or if no cost figures, when it is expected we will know them)**

Universal Credit is administered by DWP, the work required by EKH to manage the additional administration associated with UC is currently being managed within our resources, although as the roll out continues this will not continue to be the case.

**5. Plan for recovery of arrears arising from UC**

The recovery process for all arrears cases is similar, but will take into account the individual circumstances of the tenant, which is to ensure early contact is made with households and to ensure they are engaging with DWP and other support agencies as is appropriate. To explain to them what we would be expecting in relation to their repayment plan, to make arrangements for the plan. To review and monitor the repayment plan and then to consider further action if the plan is not followed.

#### **6. Details of the targeted support to be provided to UC switch over tenants**

If the household are new tenants at sign up they are provided with face to face advice and information, they will then be contacted within 2 weeks of sign up to ensure they have made the appropriate contact and arrangements. If a household is identified as being vulnerable they would be provided with additional support and assistance by EKH, which could include joint working with social care, Floating Support provider or other organisation depending on the nature of their vulnerability.

If the household is transitioning they will have been informed by DWP and should receive the relevant sign posting, when we receive notification from DWP or contact from the resident we will write to them setting out details of their account and our expectations in terms of their rent, we would also review the household information we hold and may refer to specialist support from EKH or to other agencies. The EKH support available could include face to face benefits and money advice.

#### **Contact Officers:**

Matt Gough, Director Customer Services, East Kent Housing



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

**David Crumley**  
Partnership Manager  
Channel Cluster  
Folkestone JCP  
Palting House, Trinity Road  
Folkestone, Kent  
CT20 2RH

3 December, 2018

Briefing Note for the attention of:  
Dover District Council  
Scrutiny Committee on Universal Credit

## **Dover District Council - Scrutiny Update on Universal Credit 04 December 2018**

### **Update Requested**

In particular, the committee is seeking the following information that DWP may be able to provide:

1. Percentage of people yet to switch over to Universal Credit that would be eligible to be switched over
2. Details on the funding provided by DWP to the Council to help with the implementation of Universal Credit
3. The timetable for implementation/roll out of Universal Credit in the Dover District

---

### **1. Percentage of People yet to switch over to Universal Credit**

Based on the latest published claimant figures, to October 2018, there are 4,563 people claiming Universal Credit at Dover Jobcentre Plus. The total number of benefit claimants at Dover Jobcentre is 8,408, so on this basis there remain 46% of claimants yet to migrate to Universal Credit.

The claimant figures at Dover Jobcentre, by benefit, are as follows:

<b>JSA</b>	<b>335</b> (as of October 2018)
<b>ESA</b>	<b>2,810</b> (as of May 2018)
<b>IS</b>	<b>700</b> (as of May 2018)
<b>UC</b>	<b>4,563</b> (as of October 2018) out of which <b>2,459</b> are in the All Work Related Requirements activity group

Statistics for the number of people on Universal Credit relate to the second Thursday of each month and are downloaded from Stat Explore.

However, it is important to note that we fully expect to see higher numbers in the claimant figures in future because Universal Credit is replacing a range of different benefits. People who were

previously not included in the claimant figures now fall under them because they're in receipt of Universal Credit. The additional claimants fall into the following high-level groups:

- Those previously claiming only Housing Benefit (HB), only Child Tax Credit (CTC) or both but not Jobseekers Allowance.
- Partners in unemployed or very low earning households.
- Claimants who are awaiting or appealing a Work Capability Assessment (WCA).

The purpose of extending conditionality to this wider group is to encourage and support these individuals into work.

## **2. Details on the funding provided by DWP to the Council to help with the implementation of Universal Credit**

### **Universal Support**

Dover District Council is funded to for the current year (through to 31 March 2019) to deliver Universal Support, comprising Assisted Digital Support and Personal Budgeting Support. Please refer to Annex A for details of the support delivered.

In October 2018, the secretary of State for Work and Pensions announced a new partnership between DWP and Citizens Advice to deliver the service of Universal Support from 1 April 2019.

### **Partnership Grants**

The DWP is able to award Partnership Grants, giving it the ability to pool money with Local Authorities and other approved Lead Accountable Bodies (LABs).

We are currently exploring a number of project ideas which may be eligible for this type of funding with Shaun Taylor, Community Development Manager at Dover District Council.

There is a requirement on the part of DWP that for a project to be eligible, some form of funding will be in place from the Local Authority, though there is flexibility on the form this might take. Delivery of the project could be via or in conjunction with an approved Partner or Partners of the LA, who themselves may be making a financial contribution. The partner organisation could be the LAB, but the LA must still be contributing to the funding pool or the project would not be eligible for an FSF Partnership Grant. In practice, it is recommended that the Lead Accountable Body would be the Local Authority as they are, to generalise, unlikely to fail our stringent finance checks.

The grants sit under the Department's Flexible Support Fund (FSF), which is designed to support an overall objective of maximising off flows into work and delivering value for money, supported by a menu of flexible support, (which includes FSF). The other key objective is to ensure that those customers who are not yet ready to return to (or commence) employment receive the appropriate level of support to ensure they remain as close to the labour market as possible with minimal cost (primary strategy - to maximise employment opportunity for all to support economic growth / secondary strategy - to support the Government's child poverty aims).

The idea is that the Department works with relevant local (public sector) partners on tackling common priorities.

## **3. The timetable for implementation/roll out of Universal Credit in the Dover District**

UC full service was rolled out in Dover Jobcentre in May 2017.

UC full service rollout was completed in Kent in November 2018, with Maidstone and Tonbridge Jobcentres completing the rollout across the county.

UC full service rollout will complete nationally in December 2018.

The plan for migrating claimants to Universal Credit from their existing benefits has been carefully revised; we have extended the testing period to make sure that we take the necessary time to get this absolutely right.

Testing will take place from July 2019 and the full roll out will run from November 2020 and complete in 2023.

ENDS

## Assisted Digital Support

### Make a claim

- Support the claimant to transact with UC using personal computer or their specific device
- Security awareness: to ensure claimant keeps (log-in) credentials safe
- Setting up a personal email address if claimant doesn't already have one, on whatever device they have access to
- Claimant able to access email account to retrieve the email code
- Telephone number (NB if the claimant does not have a mobile phone, the standard entry on the application should be a series of 11 zeros and not a telephone number that the claimant does not control and the claimant should select email as their preferred method of contact)
- Claimant is aware of the details they need to have to hand to safely complete their identity verification and claim UC
- Support to complete online claim data gather
- Understand how to access the 'partner code' and requirement for their partner to complete their online claim (using the partner code)

### To maintain claim

- Manage UC via the online UC account on whatever device they have access to
- Manage own email account on whatever device they have access to
- Navigate and clear 'To Do's'
- Make journal entries (and actually raising an entry to confirm they have been helped by US and the name of the LA)
- Upload documents including CV/Med Cert
- Notify change of circumstances
- Generate and make enquiries
- Print documents

## Personal Budgeting Support

PBS is offered to all UCFS claimants when they transition to UC. This is to support claimants to manage their monthly payments and prioritise essential bills such as rent/utilities.

LAs will provide support for claimants who require personal budgeting support to manage their UC payments. This will be achieved through:

- Processing all personal budgeting support referrals from Jobcentre Plus including those claimants who have alternative payment arrangements;
- Identifying the appropriate channel and provider to deliver personal budgeting support (may not be the LA) and referring the claimant to the right place immediately;
- Providing (or arranging provision of) telephone or face to face personal budgeting support and follow up action as appropriate;
- Referring claimants to Jobcentre Plus who may need an alternative payment arrangement e.g. because of rent arrears or vulnerability
- Referrals to external organisations for other support services such as debt advice or help with pass-ported benefits

Resulting in claimants being able to:

- Understand their UC award and what they can claim
- Work out monthly income and outgoings