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

Purpose of the report:	<i>As requested by Members this report provides details specific questions asked by the Committee.</i>
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Recommendation:	Members are asked to note the report.
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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:

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