

Lancashire County Council

External Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 11th January, 2022 at 10.30 am in Committee Room 'A' - The Tudor Room, County Hall, Preston

Agenda

Part I (Open to Press and Public)

No.	Item	
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1.	Apologies	
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2.	Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests	
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Members are asked to consider any Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests they may have to disclose to the meeting in relation to matters under consideration on the Agenda.

3.	Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 November 2021	(Pages 1 - 6)
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4.	Universal Credit	
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(a)	Universal Credit in Lancashire - Department for Work and Pensions	(Pages 7 - 24)
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(b)	Universal Credit Update	(Pages 25 - 48)
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5.	Electricity North West - Storm Arwen	
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Paul Bircham, Regulation and Communications Director from Electricity North West will attend the meeting to present on the impact of Storm Arwen across Lancashire and the organisations response.

6.	External Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2021/22	(Pages 49 - 54)
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7. Urgent Business

An item of urgent business may only be considered under this heading where, by reason of special circumstances to be recorded in the Minutes, the Chair of the meeting is of the opinion that the item should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency. Wherever possible, the Chief Executive should be given advance warning of any Member's intention to raise a matter under this heading.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the External Scrutiny Committee is currently scheduled to be held on Tuesday 1 March 2022 at 10.30am in Committee Room 'A' – The Tudor Room, County Hall, Preston.

L Sales
Director of Corporate Services

County Hall
Preston

Lancashire County Council

External Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday, 29th November, 2021 at 10.30 am in Committee Room 'A' - The Tudor Room, County Hall, Preston

Present:

County Councillor Peter Britcliffe (Chair)

County Councillors

R Swarbrick	K Iddon
A Ali OBE	J Mein
N Aziz	M Salter
L Beavers	M Tomlinson
A Cheetham	D Westley
S Clarke	

County Councillors Jennifer Mein and David Westley replaced County Councillors Nikki Hennessy and John Singleton JP for the meeting.

1. Apologies

There were no apologies received.

2. Constitution: Chair and Deputy Chair; Membership; Terms of Reference

Resolved: That the appointment of Chair and Deputy Chair; the membership of the committee and the terms of reference, as presented, be noted.

3. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

No interests were declared.

4. Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 March 2021

Resolved: That the minutes from the meeting held on 16 March 2021, be confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

5. Supporting Lancashire Businesses during COVID-19

Andy Walker, Head of Business Growth, Lancashire County Council, Amin Vepari, Senior Project Officer, Lancashire County Council and Andy Leeming, Boost Programme Manager, Lancashire County Council, presented a report on the funding made available from the Government and the support provided by the county council to businesses in Lancashire during the COVID-19 pandemic.

County Councillor Aidy Riggott, Cabinet Member for Economic Development was also in attendance to support the presentation and answer any questions from the committee.

The presentation covered the following topics in relation to the support and funding available to businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- National Business Support Offer
- Local ERDF Grants
- Local Business Support Provision (Boost)
- Financial Support Offer
- Skills and Employment
- Early thoughts on the impact

A copy of the presentation is set out in the minutes.

In terms of the questions raised by the committee following the presentation, the following points were clarified:

- In terms of the take up of the European Regional Development Fund Covid 19 Grants (delivered on behalf of Boost) there was a consistent recognition of a lower awareness and take-up of the Boost scheme in general across Hyndburn than in other areas which might have explained the low take-up. However, the committee was informed that this point needed to be offset with the actions taken by Hyndburn Borough Council at the time Covid 19 grants were offered through Boost. It was reported Hyndburn Borough Council was very active and quick in offering its own grants for businesses in the area , which may have appealed to some businesses in the area if they were looking to access funding in response to Covid 19.
- In relation to the financial networks (Lancashire Business Angels Networks), it was noted that there were two financial hubs set up in Lancashire. One in Central Lancashire and one in the North of Lancashire. The reason for why there were only two hubs in Lancashire, was due to the financial advisors only travelling within a 1-hour radius of each hub to visit businesses. Having the hubs in these two locations, covered most of Lancashire. However, work was planned in 2022 to introduce another hub in East Lancashire.
- On bounce back loans, it was noted that procedures were in place to ensure grants were not granted to dubious entities. However, careful consideration was needed to ensure grants were given to those companies that truly needed them, while still ensuring the companies' credentials were valid.
- In terms of repaying Pay As You Grow loans, it was noted that the Government had employed a team of people whose jobs it was to pursue any debts and to reclaim the money.
- It was noted that a Bite Size Briefing would be held for all county councillors, at the beginning of 2022 on the Financial Support Programme

for Lancashire Businesses. The briefing would inform county councillors on what support was available to businesses and how councillors were able to find out more information, so they could inform the businesses in their division.

- It was clarified that the total number of loans offered through government backed funding mechanisms either through the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) and the Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBLs), were to individual organisations. There was no duplication.
- Access to Finance Lancashire organisation provided impartial advice and was not aligned with any specific fund. There were a number of cases where businesses had identified additional ways to access funding, release capital and make efficiency savings to demonstrate resilience rather than take on additional debts.
- On whether there was less take-up of the European Regional Development Fund Covid 19 Grants and less support available for rural businesses, it was noted that the scheme was being administered by the county councils' dedicated rural grants team, and there was a strong presence of rural businesses accessing funding and support.
- On lessons learned from working with district council colleagues it was felt that integrating district councils' knowledge of businesses through business rates interactions combined with the county council's knowledge of businesses through the sectors they operated in could be explored. It was noted that there was a difficulty in recruiting the right level of skilled staff for the demand that was currently required by businesses.
- A number of areas were being explored in relation to any future County Deal with discussions taking place between the county council and the district councils across Lancashire, building on the goodwill and partnership working developed during the pandemic.

Members expressed thanks for all the support provided by the county council in providing advice and support for businesses throughout the pandemic.

Resolved: That, the support provided to businesses in Lancashire during the COVID-19 pandemic, be noted.

6. Lancashire Strategic Assessment 2022-2025

Debbie Thompson, Public Health Specialist, Lancashire County Council, Alison Wilkins, Senior Public Health Practitioner, Lancashire County Council, Lee Sculpher, Lancashire Constabulary and Steffani Hull, Lancashire Police and Crime Commissioner's Office presented a report on the Lancashire Strategic Assessment 2022-2025. County Councillor Peter Buckley, Cabinet Member for Community and Cultural Services was in attendance in support of the report.

It was noted that the purpose of this Strategic Assessment was to highlight significant crime and anti-social behaviour threats and issues that impacted on community safety. It was the key evidence base that supported the Community

Safety Agreement, local partnership plans, the Policing and Crime Plan and the Constabulary Control Strategy.

It was reported that the key risks and threats impacting across the county included the following:

- Domestic abuse
- Violence
- Exploitation – criminal and sexual
- Serious Organised Crime
- Road safety

In terms of the questions raised by the committee, the following points were clarified:

- The committee raised concerns about young offenders being sent outside of the County and the risks this posed to breaking up families. It was noted that the points raised would be taken away and sent to the services.
- Following concerns raised by the committee about raising awareness within schools in relation to hate crimes, it was noted that funding had been received to improve awareness and work had begun in conjunction with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner to educate children in schools, such as introducing the Healthy Relationship Programme. The Healthy Relationship Programme was rolled out to all schools from 1 November 2021 and was being provided by local specialist organisations covering topics such as consent, misogyny, sexual harassment, stalking and digital online abuse. It was agreed that a copy of the Healthy Relationships Programme document be circulated to members of the External Scrutiny Committee following the meeting.
- Concerns were also raised about how easy it was for young people to obtain alcohol, drugs and fake I.Ds. The points raised were noted and would be taken back to be investigated.
- It was noted that following the Notice of Motion passed at the last Full Council meeting on 14 October 2021 in relation to making misogyny a hate crime, it was noted that discussions were ongoing between the relevant Cabinet Members, members, officers and the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office.

Resolved: That;

- i. The key themes within the Strategic Assessment, as the main elements that will feature in the Community Safety Agreement, be noted as they would be the issues that underpin the development of local partnership plans, and the setting of priorities for the next three years.
- ii. The Strategic Assessment and local district profiles will be used as evidence to support commissioning activity and targeting of issues across the county be recognised.

- iii. Support be given for the Strategic Assessment as the evidence base to enable further work on the related issues, for example, domestic abuse, exploitation (criminal/sexual), vulnerability and safeguarding, and cyber-crime.

7. External Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2021/22

The committee reviewed the draft work programme for 2021/22.

In noting that Universal Credit appeared under the list of topics for potential inclusion on the programme, it was suggested that at the next meeting of the committee, the scrutiny report on Universal Credit be presented and a discussion take place on the findings

County Councillor Keith Iddon proposed that the report on Universal Credit be assessed by the Chair with officers so that a decision could be taken on when the report be submitted to the External Scrutiny Committee. The proposal was seconded by County Councillor David Westley. An amendment was proposed by County Councillor Azhar Ali that by the end of the week, the report on Universal Credit be circulated to members of the External Scrutiny Committee and for it to be brought back to the next scheduled meeting of the External Scrutiny Committee meeting on 11 January 2022. The amendment was seconded by County Councillor Lorraine Beavers.

Having been put to the vote, the amendment was lost, and the substantive proposal was passed. It was therefore:

Resolved: That, the report on Universal Credit be assessed by the Chair with officers so that a decision could be taken on when the report be submitted to the External Scrutiny Committee.

8. Urgent Business

There were no items of Urgent Business.

9. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the External Scrutiny Committee would take place on Tuesday 1 March 2022 at 10.30am.

L Sales
Director of Corporate Services

County Hall
Preston

External Scrutiny Committee

Meeting to be held on Tuesday, 11 January 2022

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Corporate Priorities:
Caring for the vulnerable;
Delivering better services;
Improving services;
Supporting economic growth.

Universal Credit in Lancashire - Department for Work and Pensions

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

Gary Halsall, Tel: (01772) 536989, Senior Democratic Services Officer (Overview and Scrutiny), gary.halsall@lancashire.gov.uk

Brief Summary

A presentation on Universal Credit by representatives from the Department for Work and Pensions.

Recommendation

The External Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider both this report and item 4b – Universal Credit Update on the agenda to:

1. Identify the key issues faced by the Department for Work and Pensions in the roll out of Universal Credit and helping the people of Lancashire.
2. Formulate any recommendations on joint working between the Lancashire County Council and the Department for Work and Pensions to resolve any issues identified from this piece of work and the implications identified from previous work on this matter as set out at agenda item 4b – Universal Credit Update.

Detail

Elaine Herbert, Senior Partnership Manager, Cumbria and Lancashire Work and Health Services, and Shane Byrne, Partnership Manager, from the Department for Work and Pensions will attend the meeting to deliver the presentation set out at appendix A.

Since January 2020, the External Scrutiny Committee has embarked on a themed review of Universal Credit in Lancashire with a specific focus to identify the key issues faced by the Department for Work and Pensions in the roll out of Universal

Credit and helping the people of Lancashire. Further detail and the findings of this review are set out at item 4b on the agenda – Universal Credit Update.

In considering the presentation, the External Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider both this report and the information provided as part of item 4b – Universal Credit Update on the agenda, to identify the key issues faced by the Department for Work and Pensions in the roll out of Universal Credit and helping the people of Lancashire. The Committee is advised to formulate any recommendations on joint working between the Lancashire County Council and the Department for Work and Pensions to resolve the issues identified from this piece of work and the implications identified from previous work on this matter as set out at agenda item 4b – Universal Credit Update.

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

This report has no significant risk implications.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A



Department
for Work &
Pensions



Universal Credit – Lancashire CC Information Guide

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UC Universal
Credit

Opening up work_

Universal Credit – What is it all about

Universal Credit is the biggest change to the welfare state in 60 years combining 6 benefits into 1:



It is an in and out of work benefit focusing on earnings rather than hours.

This means that the previous 16 hour cliff edge no longer applies.

As a claimant earns more money, their Universal Credit reduces. This is called a taper rate and is currently set at 55%. This means for every £1 earned, Universal Credit is reduced by 55p.

Claimants with a child or limited capability for work may have a work allowance – an amount they can earn before the taper begins.

For more information

Visit <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit> and search for the following terms:

‘Universal Credit Work Allowances’ and ‘How Your Earnings Affect What You Get’

There is also a campaign site with more information: <https://www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk>

Searching for specific information

[Home](#) > [Benefits](#)

GOV.UK is where you can find all the latest information on Universal Credit. You can find out where all the information is by going to www.gov.uk and clicking on benefits and then Universal Credit.

You are likely to require the detailed guidance section if you are dealing with an uncommon issue.

Benefits

Births, deaths, and care

Business and s

Childcare and

Citizenship and UK

Crime, justice

Disabled peop

Driving and tra

Education and

Employing pec

Environment a countryside

Housing and lo

Money and tax

Passports, trav abroad

Visas and immi

Benefits

How benefits work

Benefit calculators, how payments work, changes of circumstance, benefit fraud and appeals >

Universal Credit

Applying, signing into your account, and help with housing, disability, health conditions and unemployment >

Tax credits

Getting Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit, managing your tax credits and when tax credits stop >

Jobseeker's Allowance and low income benefits

Getting JSA, Income Support, Budgeting Loans and other help if you're on a low income >

Carers and disability benefits

Help for disabilities including Personal Independence Payment, Carer's Allowance, and Employment and Support Allowance >

Universal Credit

Overview

Universal Credit

Housing costs and Universal Credit

Health conditions, disability and Universal Credit

Self-employment and Universal Credit

Make an application

How to claim Universal Credit: step by step

Apply for Universal Credit

Benefits calculators

After you've applied

Sign in to your Universal Credit account

How to claim 'new style' Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA): step by step

How to claim 'new style' Employment and Support Allowance (ESA): step by step

Detailed guidance

Universal Credit

GOV.UK links to more detailed guidance for specific areas

- [Advances](#)
- [Armed Forces and their families](#)
- [Benefit calculators](#)
- [Benefit Cap](#)
- [Childcare and Universal Credit](#)
- [Couples on Universal Credit](#)
- [Debt and deductions that can be taken from Universal Credit guide](#)
- [Free school meals entitlement](#) (See sections 6 and 7)
- [Group Partnership Managers Page](#)
- [Help with childcare costs](#)
- [Housing Benefit Bulletins for Local Authorities](#)
- [Housing queries routeway \(PDF\)](#)
- [Housing costs](#)
- [Health conditions, disabilities and Universal Credit](#)
- [Health and disabilities guide for Universal Credit](#)
- [Homeless Guide](#)
- [New Style ESA](#)
- [New Style JSA](#)
- [Payment cycles on Universal Credit / How your earnings affect your payment](#)
- [Prison Leavers](#)
- [Self Employment and Universal Credit](#)
- [Students and Universal Credit](#)
- [Support for families with more than two children and Universal Credit](#)
- [Universal Credit and You](#) (which is also included for claimants on their account).

Most of these guides are also stored on the [Universal Credit Toolkit for Partner Organisations](#). This is currently being redesigned to provide better navigation and detail for when DWP begins moving claimants from other benefits onto Universal Credit.

You can also find a full A-Z list of guides on [Universal Credit Browse](#).

More information is also available on [Understanding Universal Credit](#).

[Touchbase](#) is the DWP wide news and article collection.

Universal Credit – Staying up to date with the latest changes

[Home](#) > [Benefits](#) > [Universal Credit](#)

Email alert subscription

Universal Credit

You'll get an email each time content is published or updated in this topic.

Create subscription

Universal Credit is constantly changing, evolving and improving. To stay up to date you can have alerts emailed to you from GOV.UK for anything that contains the words 'Universal Credit'. Follow the steps below. The best page to do this from is the [GOV.UK Browse page](#) under Universal Credit so you are notified when any guide is updated.

Get emails when pages are added or updated

How often do you want to get updates?

- As soon as they happen
- Once a day
- Once a week

Next

Enter your email address

You're subscribing to get email notifications about:
'Benefits: Universal Credit'.

You'll get an email every time a page is added or changed.

What's your email address?

ENTER EMAIL HERE

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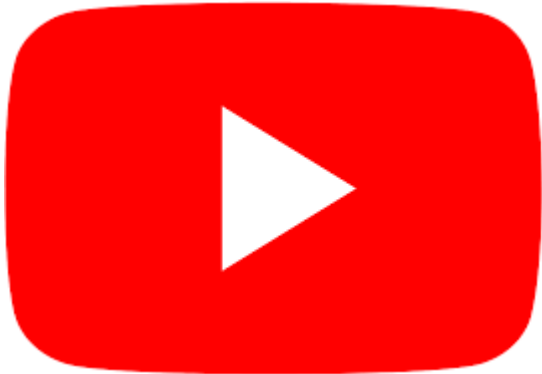
Subscribe

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Universal Credit and its online service

- The online service is constantly improved – with new updates usually fortnightly.
- All correspondence is contained within the online account using a journal to discuss details.
- Claimants are expected to keep their account updated and complete tasks called to dos.
- Each month a claimant will receive a detailed statement giving a breakdown of their entitlement.
- Partners join accounts together using a linking code and must both agree any account changes.

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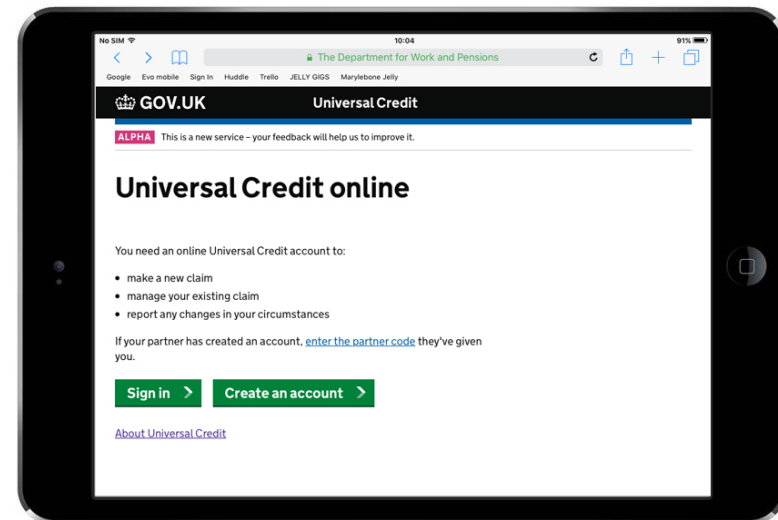


Walkthrough videos are available on YouTube.

<http://www.youtube.com/UniversalCreditinAction>

The walkthroughs show:

- How to claim
- ID verification
- Using the journal
- Resetting a password
- Reading the statement and much more.



Support is in place for vulnerable claimants

If someone cannot use the online service they can:

- Use telephony routes
- Receive support using computers in the jobcentre
- Receive a home visit
- Use an agent by proxy approach to maintain their claim.

There is also the free Help to Claim service ran by Citizens Advice and Citizens Advice Scotland. This support is available until a claimant receives their first correct payment.

A Universal Credit advance is available after DWP has established a claimants identity. A walkthrough of how this works is available on the [Universal Credit in Action](#) YouTube channel.

Budgeting and financial advice is available from local services as well as Money Advice Service.

The service is accessible via programmes such as DRAGON, ZoomText and JAWS. The service is also designed for a reading age of 9 to aid claimants with reading difficulties.

How does DWP determine that someone is classed a vulnerable?

Tier 1 - Highly likely / probable need for Alternative Payment Arrangements
Drug / alcohol and / or other addiction problems e.g. gambling
Learning difficulties including problems with literacy and/or numeracy
Severe / multiple debt problems
Homeless
Domestic violence / abuse
Mental Health Condition
Currently in rent arrears / threat of eviction / repossession
Claimant is young: either a 16/17 year old and / or a Care leaver
Families with multiple and complex needs
Tier 2 - Less likely / possible need for Alternative Payment Arrangements
Third party deductions in place (e.g. for fines, utility arrears etc.)
Claimant is a refugee / asylum seeker
History of rent arrears
Previously homeless and/or in temporary or supported accommodation
Other disability (e.g. physical disability, sensory impairment etc.)
Claimant has just left prison
Claimant has just left hospital
Recently bereaved
Language skills (e.g. English not spoken as the 'first language')
Ex Service personnel
NEETs - Not in Education, Employment or Training

Alternative Payment Arrangements – process for supporting claimants with rent

Landlord identifies that claimant is in arrears of housing costs of 2 months or more, or the Landlord identifies another tier 1 or tier 2 factor applies.

Landlord/Support Worker/Work Coach advises DWP that claimant is identified as vulnerable (under Tier 1 or 2 categories) and may benefit from direct payment to landlord (or more frequent payments)
Claimant can also make a request themselves.

Claimant requests split UC payments between two members of a couple where there is physical or financial abuse. This could be offered as alternative to single payment by the work coach, following conversation had with claimant at interview.

Landlords and claimant support groups can request an APA at any point by completing and returning form UC47 on Gov.uk. Social Landlords can request an APA on the tenants rent verification form at the outset of a claim, or using the Landlord Portal (if they are on it).

Decision Maker/Case Manager/Work Coach considers request and if agreed to pay landlord direct or make 3rd party deductions for rent arrears, will inform the landlord. If refused a letter will be sent to the landlord.

Social landlords are paid APAs via the Third Party Deductions scheme.

Private landlords are paid up to 7 calendar days after the claimants assessment period.

More frequent payments may be made fortnightly.

Split payments will be made. How they are split is determined on a case by case basis.

Occasionally a claimant may need support to be able to resolve an issue or understand information. For someone to do this on a claimants behalf they will need to have explicit consent to do so.

A claimant can do this by telephone, face to face or via a message in their journal.

Explicit consent is only effective when:

- Consent is given for their personal information to be disclosed
- What information can be disclosed (e.g. to protect the privacy of the claimant where required).
- Why the information is needed to be disclosed (e.g. to solve an issue).
- The name of the third party representative and/or organisation who they want to handle the issue on their behalf.

Only then will DWP be able to transact with a third party to solve an issue.

Explicit consent only lasts until that specific issue is resolved or until the end of that assessment period – whichever occurs first. If the issue is not resolved, explicit consent must be given again.



Jobcentre Plus – Escalation Routeway

Claimant Escalation Routeway

Legacy Benefits (e.g. JSA, ESA, Income Support)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call Benefit Enquiry Line on 0800 169 0310.
Universal Credit Full Service (Digital UC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digitally – via Journal Facility in UC Digital System • Call the UCFS Service Centre on 0800 328 5644

Partner Organisation Escalation Routeway

- Please note – this escalation Routeway is used to support Partner Organisations/Providers – **please do not issue this to claimants** as they will only be directed into the Routeway above.
- For UCFS we need **Explicit Consent** from the claimant to talk to a provider/partner organisation. The claimant can provide this via the Journal in their Digital Account or verbally to the Service Centre. They need to include the point of contact & name of organisation they give permission for us to speak to and details of the issue

General Queries & Questions	For generic queries that may affect multiple claimants <i>e.g. what will happen if somebody on UCFS moves into temporary accommodation in Whitehaven?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact Local Partnership Manager • Helen Smith • HELEN.SMITH18@DWP.GOV.UK
Individual Claimant queries or escalation	<i>e.g. We are supporting Joe Bloggs who has not received his housing payments and is under threat of eviction, can you look into this so Housing costs can be made asap ?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the local Work Coach Team Leader for the relevant claimants office and benefit (see Page 2)
Complaints	If a claimant has a complaint about DWP they can complain using the online form or write into their Local Jobcentre Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.makeacomplaint.dwp.gov.uk

PRESTON LEYLAND CHORLEY



Department for Work & Pensions

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Katy Driver

**Lancashire Social Justice Managers
(Supporting LA Care Leavers, Ex Offenders, Armed Forces Focus Families & Schools)**

KATY.DRIVER@DWP.GOV.UK



Jobcentre Plus - Key Job Roles

Job Role	Responsibilities
Work Coach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting all claimants to equip themselves with the tools/skills they need to progress towards, or into employment. Responsible for delivering personalised and quality interventions with claimants Working with claimants with complex health conditions and/or a disability. Manage a caseload of claimants and hold regular interventions tailored to the needs of the claimant.
Disability Employer Adviser	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing mentor support to Work Coaches to deliver an excellent service to claimants who have a complex health condition or disability which impacts on their ability to find or sustain work. Liaising with Partner Organisations, GPs, NHS and charities in the local area who can provide specialist support to claimants with health conditions.
Work Coach Team Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for Line Managing the Work Coach team Providing mentoring and coaching to ensure quality of the interventions to our claimants. Building effective relationships with Partner Organisations, working as one to deliver a dynamic customer focused service.
Employer Adviser	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with Employers to proactively secure vacancies and opportunities for our claimants. Managing a portfolio of claimants/employers and providers building & maintaining effective working relationships. Supporting employers and encourage Disability Confident. Offer bespoke tailored recruitment package to support employers.
Social Justice Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for delivering the DWP's Social Justice agenda which is about enabling disadvantaged individual's to access to benefits and support to help them turn their lives around. Managing the Focus Families Work Coaches and the Schools Advisor Supporting Local Authority Care Leavers with access to benefits, training, apprenticeships and employment opportunities Working with external organisations and Work Coach Team Leaders to ensure that ex offenders receive targeted support Ensure DWP's maintains commitment to support the Armed Forces and their families and veterans, and raise the profile of the support available to this community through key partnerships both internal & external
Partnership Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works collaboratively with all local partners and stakeholders within their local area to support moving all claimants into employment. Supports local partners and stakeholders providing information and advice about Welfare Reform changes & DWP updates



Jobcentre Plus - Key Job Roles

Job Role	Responsibilities
Job Centre Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Jobcentre Customer Service Manager is responsible for developing a welcoming, dynamic and professional feel and look to the inside and outside of the Jobcentre. This encourages customers/claimants to use our facilities, including digital, at every opportunity to either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> find and secure work conduct work preparation. Also, the Jobcentre Customer Service Managers have responsibility for the effective leadership of their sites' health and safety. They also have a joint responsibility with the Work Coach Team Leader for the health and safety of all colleagues in the Jobcentre, in addition to line manager responsibility for their own team.
Service Delivery Coach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides an effective first point of contact service for claimants entering the Jobcentre, establish visitor needs and signpost as appropriate: Ensure claimant flow is managed to prevent queues/bottlenecks Issue forms and leaflets as appropriate Identify claimants requiring an appointment or face to face help Identify claimants requiring additional support including: 16/17 year olds; claimants from abroad (HRT action); claimants with health conditions; claimants who have recently been bereaved; claimants with complex needs and ensure they are supported appropriately Handle claimant disputes sensitively and ensure that all complaints/compliments are recorded appropriately Work with other roles e.g. Customer Care Officers to form a single 'One DWP' customer service team Maintain the Customer Support Appointment and payment diary for face-to-face appointments Action Statement of Fitness For Work (SOFFW) in accordance with operational instructions
Service Delivery Team Leader	<p>Delivering Customer Service from the front of house ensuring all stages of the claimant journey are supported</p> <p>The role of the Service Delivery Coach is to deliver a professional and engaging service to claimants, when not participating in activities with their work coach, to enable them to find and secure employment or support for work preparation. They will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a welcoming environment for partners and employers who are working with us and ensure suitable space is provided whenever possible Provide effective leadership through a coaching culture. Build own and teams capability, ensuring they have the confidence and skills to support their colleagues Build effective relationships with colleagues and partners, working as one to deliver a dynamic customer focused service Focus on working as One DWP with colleagues inside and out of own immediate business area

External Scrutiny Committee

Meeting to be held on 11 January 2022

Report of Clare Platt, Head of Health Equity, Welfare & Partnerships

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Corporate Priorities:
Caring for the vulnerable;
Improving Services

Universal Credit Update

(Appendices A and B refer)

Contact for further information:

Clare Platt, Head of Service, Health Equity, Welfare and Partnerships,
clare.platt@lancashire.gov.uk; Tel 01772 532780

Brief Summary

The presentation (as at Appendix B) provides an update on changes to Universal Credit and outlines the potential impact of the continued migration of people from legacy benefits onto Universal Credit on a range of Lancashire County Council service areas. This follows the initial findings of the report that was presented to the Committee as part of the Chair's update at its meeting on 16 March 2021.

Recommendation

The External Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider:

- i. The information presented.
- ii. The implications of the continued roll out and changes to Universal Credit across Lancashire, including the implications for Lancashire County Council as a consequence of service user contributions to the cost of care.

Detail

Universal Credit was one of the topics External Scrutiny Committee agreed to review as part of its workplan under the previous administration. At its meeting on 12 January 2021, County Councillor Gillian Oliver was asked to produce a report for the Committee outlining her findings in respect of changes to Universal Credit.

As part of the Chair's Update to the meeting of 16 March 2021, County Councillor Gillian Oliver presented the initial findings, as agreed at the previous meeting. The full report is attached at Appendix A. At this meeting the committee also suggested that the topic of Universal Credit should be a continuing item for the External Scrutiny Committee to review.

At its meeting on Monday 29 November, members of the Committee requested that an update on Universal Credit be provided. This report provides that update. The information (as at Appendix B) will be presented at the meeting. Whilst providing some background to Universal Credit and details of recent changes, the main purpose is to inform members of the likely impact the migration of people from legacy benefits to Universal Credit may have on our services.

The Care Financial Assessment Team undertake financial assessments for those receiving adult social care services to determine how much service users are required to contribute to their care costs in accordance with the Care Act 2014.

It is anticipated that the changes will have a financial impact on a range of council services including:

- Financial Safeguarding Team – Manage the financial affairs of vulnerable people assessed as lacking mental capacity.
- The Shared Lives Service – Supports adults who have a social care assessment and an identified need for support to live in the community. Shared Lives matches those adults with a carer who shares their home and provides all the support required to live as independent a life as possible.

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

Financial

There is an estimated reduction in income to the council of c £3.5 million per annum as a result of the changes set out in this report, as a consequence of reduced service user contributions to care costs. It is understood that this potential risk has been considered as an element of the Council's updated Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Legal

There are no legal implications as there are no proposals contained within the report.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None		
Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate		

N/A

March 2021

Universal Credit & Lancashire County Council

Cllr Gillian Oliver, reportage – for the External Services Committee

Summary This note highlights three LCC services where the administration of Universal Credit (UC) has a direct impact on front line services and budgets. It is the culmination of evidence received by the External Services Committee 2017-2021 in response to the roll out of Universal Credit which culminates in 2024. It incorporates experience of the pandemic and resulting restrictions 2020/1.

What follows forms the basis for a letter to from LCC Cabinet Lead to the Secretary of State, Feb 2021

It does not cover all the problems the council's Welfare Rights team encounters.

In House Carers

Carers provide a home for people who need support to live in the community, including disabled residents and fostered children. The person being cared for receives benefits in their own right, and they pay the carer 'bed and board' as part of a licence agreement. LCC pays a further amount to top up the client contributions to an agreed level as outlined in the agreement. As carers and the people they care for begin a transition to Universal Credit, they will both lose out financially, and their benefit income could reduce to nil.

- Currently there are 268 active carers ('Shared Lives Carers') supporting 352 individuals.
- Under UC the housing element award paid to the carer can be £20 to £30 per week less than for those on legacy benefits (varies depending on Local Authority area). The service users have a lower income and are either left with a much lower disposable income after paying their contribution to the carer, or in some cases cannot afford the board payments.
- There is no data available to identify how many carers are themselves in receipt of welfare benefits, and it will take more time to see if LCC loses any carers as a result of UC rules. Therefore the council will need to monitor this issue.
- There is a DRAFT Cabinet item with a new proposed financial framework to mitigate some of the impact of UC to the carers and service users.

(Contact: Mike Schofield, Registered Manager, Shared Lives Service)

Care Financial Assessment Team (CFAT)

This team undertakes financial assessments to determine whether a service user should make a financial contribution to the cost of their care package. Again, residents of working age will not have the same level of income under UC as they would have had before. This will eventually mean that all working age service users who are reliant on UC will pay less or nothing at all. Moreover, as pension age increases more service users will necessarily be of working age. So, even if numbers are stable, the proportion who pay zero will continue to grow, and the income generated by the council will fall.

There will also be a period during the transition to UC where the CFAT team may need to undertake more than one annual financial assessment per resident as their circumstances change, putting further pressure on staff time. Crucially, financial assessors can struggle to undertake the charging assessment if service users are unable to speak to UC to clarify award amounts, and this can put more pressure on vulnerable service users and/or their carers to find and provide the information.

- There are currently 12,159 service users receiving non-residential chargeable services. Of these 6642 are working age, and 715 of these are in receipt of UC, the rest will be impacted if and when they are migrated on to UC.
- The average client contribution to the cost of care for the working age group is £27.13 per week, but the current average contribution for those on UC is only £5.26 per week.
- This indicates that from the client contributions LCC is already receiving approximately £800k per year less income than it would be if we had no service users on UC.
- Not all working age services users will move to UC due to other forms of income or savings, but if we project 50% of the service users do migrate, based on the above averages it indicates a loss of income of £3.5 million per year. If all 6642 service users were in receipt of UC, based on the above averages, LCC will receive £7.5 million less income a year (once any 'grace period' has expired).

(Contact: Karen Jones, Care Finance Assessment Manager, Corporate Finance)

Financial Safeguarding

Since Covid-19, the Department of Work/Pensions (DWP) has made no home visits. This, together with its insistence that all claims must be digital, has meant extremely vulnerable residents are prevented from claiming what they are entitled to. The DWP's response has been to push residents into appointing someone to claim for them. However, the Welfare Rights team has argued against this (vulnerable people can manage their finances with support, and should not have to accept an appointee because they are unable to make a digital claim). The DWP needs to provide its own solution to this, as support services can no longer instigate paper claims as they could in the past. This council has had referrals for people with no income - but pending benefit clarity - moving in to residential care, and the council needs to pay in full while the wait goes on.

- Even though there are a small number of clients on UC (22), council officers have highlighted a list of problems that mean they are spending far more time processing and managing the UC appointeeships than for those on legacy benefits.
- Most of the service users they support require a weekly payment to assist them in managing their budget. As UC is paid monthly and often the budget is very tight - this causes additional difficulties.
- There is also the matter of financial abuse, where friends and family retain the benefit for themselves and do not benefit the client with it. UC does not have a clear process to set up a corporate appointee where there is already a UC claim in payment. This inevitably means it is a very long process and a lot of chasing from the financial safeguarding team to have payments suspended where financial abuse is taking place, and to set up alternative payment arrangements. There is also no flag on the system that there is a corporate appointee, therefore the vulnerable adults can change their payment details and take out loans which continues to put them at risk of financial abuse.

(Contact: Karen Jones, Care Finance Assessment Manager, Corporate Finance)

Gillian Oliver, Cllr

March 2021

Universal Credit Impact in Lancashire

Jo Barker
Welfare Rights Service

What is Universal Credit?

- A means tested-benefit introduced by The Welfare Reform Act 2012
- For working age claimants – Pension Credit remains for pension age claimants/couples
- Payable to people who are working as well as those not working, depending on their means

Which benefits is UC replacing?

- Income Support
- Income related Employment & Support Allowance
- Income related Jobseekers Allowance
- Housing Benefit
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit

Many people are still receiving these benefits which are now being referred to as 'legacy benefits'.

People on UC (September 21)

People on UC - September 21					
	Not in Employment	In Employment	Total		% in work
Burnley	7673	4986	12659		39.4%
Chorley	4398	3502	7900		44.3%
Fylde	2864	2254	5118		44.0%
Hyndburn	5863	3745	9608		39.0%
Lancaster	7598	5636	13234		42.6%
Pendle	5947	3767	9714		38.8%
Preston	9297	6250	15547		40.2%
Ribble Valley	1283	1217	2500		48.7%
Rossendale	3676	2297	5973		38.5%
South Ribble	3826	3135	6961		45.0%
West Lancs	5208	3597	8805		40.9%
Wyre	4879	3656	8535		42.8%

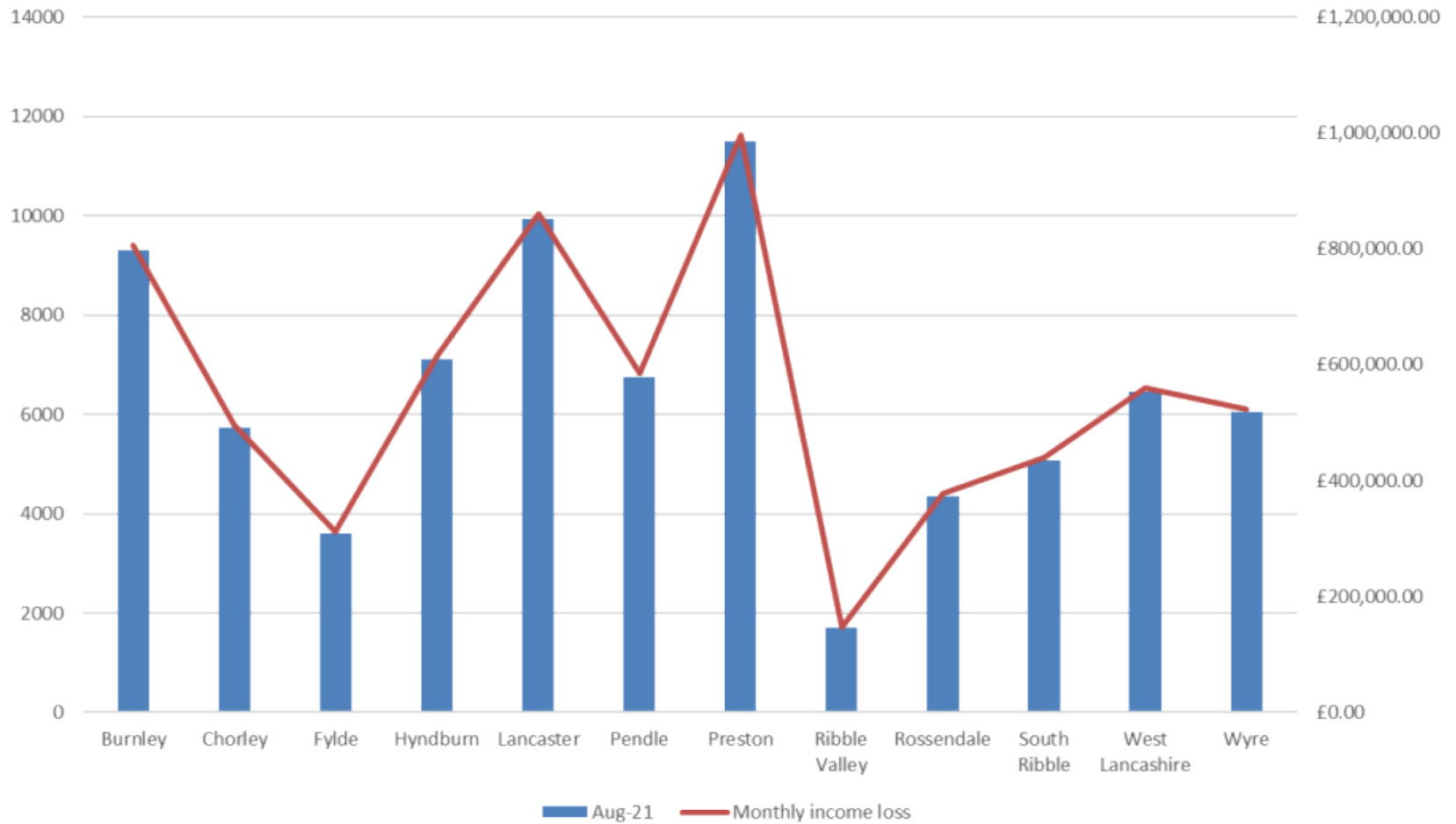
Households on UC

	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21
Burnley	9444	9337	9354	9357	9307
Chorley	5825	5703	5694	5721	5732
Fylde	3955	3799	3774	3715	3610
Hyndburn	7226	7108	7156	7155	7118
Lancaster	10340	10084	10065	10076	9929
Pendle	6721	6640	6685	6697	6745
Preston	11443	11295	11334	11464	11492
Ribble Valley	1822	1735	1744	1758	1703
Rossendale	4462	4345	4369	4415	4353
South Ribble	5198	5035	5064	5105	5076
West Lancashire	6651	6479	6518	6530	6462
Wyre	6363	6154	6133	6131	6048
Total	79450	77714	77890	78124	77575

Ending of temporary uplift

	Aug-21	Monthly income loss
Burnley	9307	£806,637.69
Chorley	5732	£496,792.44
Fylde	3610	£312,878.70
Hyndburn	7118	£616,917.06
Lancaster	9929	£860,546.43
Pendle	6745	£584,589.15
Preston	11492	£996,011.64
Ribble Valley	1703	£147,599.01
Rossendale	4353	£377,274.51
South Ribble	5076	£439,936.92
West Lancashire	6462	£560,061.54
Wyre	6048	£524,180.16
Total	77575	£6,723,425.25

Estimated Monthly Income Loss by District

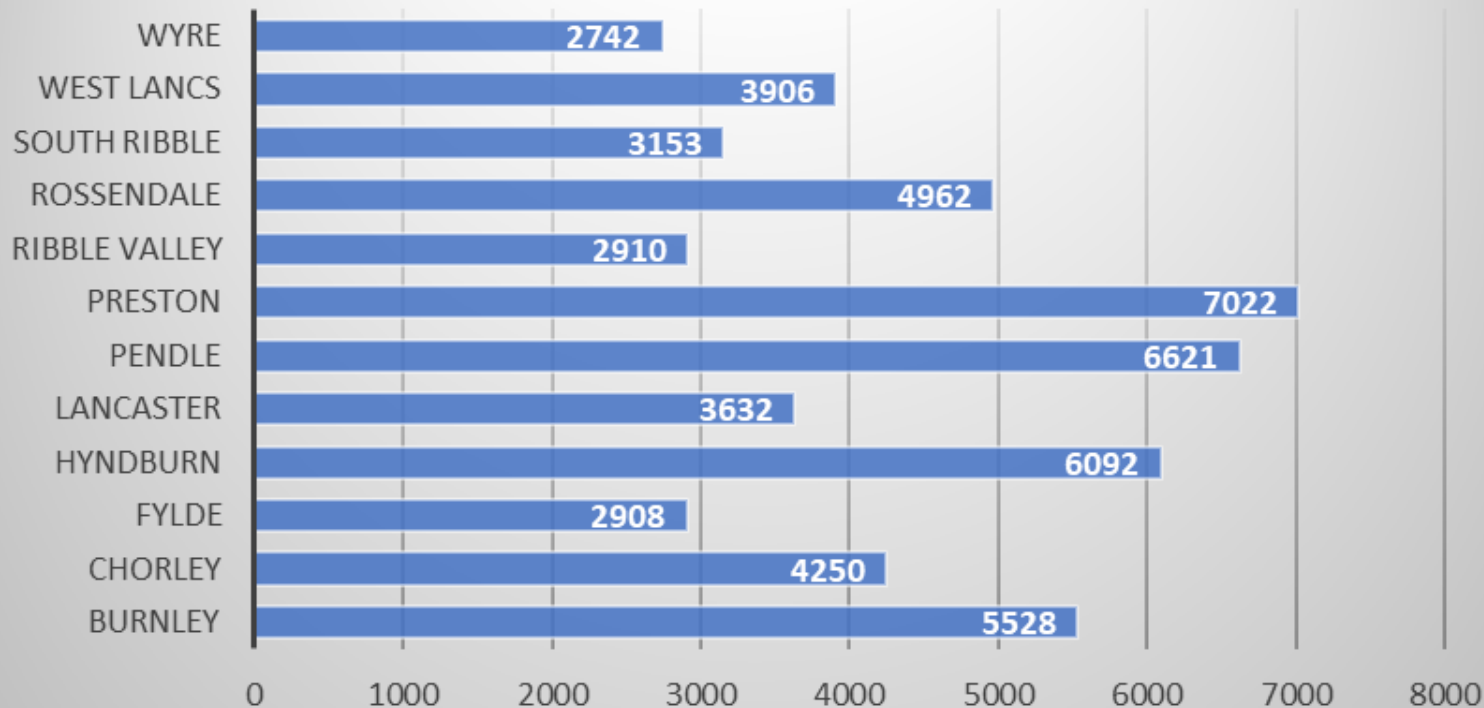


UC for claimants in work

- Increase to 'taper rate' – keep an extra 8p in the £1. (Any household with earnings of £250 per week, recouped equivalent to £20 uplift)
- Increase the work allowance for those with children or limited capacity for work:
 - increase the lower work allowance from £293 to £335 per month (for those who receive help with housing costs); and
 - increase the higher work allowance from £515 to £557 per month (for those who do not receive help with housing costs).

Households on legacy benefits

Estimated household numbers



General Summary

- Just over 77,500 households estimated to be losing £86.67 pcm in their UC claims.

Approx. 50,000 not benefitted by Nov changes.

- Estimated initial loss of £6.7 million pcm across Lancashire

Unable to determine overall impact of November changes for working households (already seen cases benefitting)

- Around 54,000 more households yet to move from their legacy benefit to UC

Impact to LCC - Examples

- Impacts Shared Lives placements and Special Guardianship Order placements – less money from UC so potential more for LCC to contribute
- To date, seeing a reduction of estimated £1million per year in income from client contributions
- Increased number of Corporate Appointeeship issues

Shared Lives Service

- Currently 230 permanent placements with Shared Lives carers
- Further work is ongoing to estimate the financial impact of changes to Universal Credit on LCC and the carers

Care Financial Assessment Team

- Currently 6763 working age SUs in receipt of non-residential chargeable services.
- Average client contribution for working age SU is £28.46 per week, but for those on UC it is £7.29 per week.
- Currently seeing a reduction in income of an estimated £1.1 million per year income from client contributions

Care Financial Assessment Team

- Average client contribution for pensioners is £69 per week, but welfare reform will impact
- Current annual financial assessment reviews unlikely to be sufficient due to increased frequency of UC amendments
- Due to the lack of access to DWP records – assessments are expected to be more difficult to undertake

Financial Safeguarding Team

- Currently 513 SU's require corporate appointee for benefit purposes
- 240 of these are working age SU's, and 37 of them are on UC
- Noticeable shift from mostly acting for older people to increasing numbers of working age SU's
- Increase in referrals and time spent on UC cases means there is now a 3 month backlog of referrals
- Backlog includes 35 working age clients

Financial Safeguarding Team

Difficulties working on UC cases includes:

- Some customers already in serious debt to priority creditors, need specialist debt advice
- Delayed or no response to journal requests, and lengthy delays to DWP phone lines
- Still problems in getting UC to follow agreed process with corporate appointees
- Problems with access to journals

Other impacts of migration

- Many of those on legacy benefits will include long term disabled, complex needs etc.
- May increase numbers coming in to services for support as not coping/in crisis
- Libraries have been approached by DWP re digital offer
- Employment Support Team vital – getting people in to work

Any questions for.....

Jo Barker – Welfare Rights

**Karen Jones – Care Financial Assessment &
Financial Safeguarding Teams**

Agenda Item 6

External Scrutiny Committee

Meeting to be held on Tuesday, 11th January 2022

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Corporate Priorities:
N/A

External Scrutiny Work Programme 2021/22

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

Gary Halsall, 01772 536989, Senior Democratic Services Officer (Overview and Scrutiny), gary.halsall@lancashire.gov.uk

Brief Summary

The draft work programme for the External Scrutiny Committee is attached at Appendix 'A'.

The topics included in the work programme were identified at the joint work planning workshop for Internal and External Scrutiny held on 9 July 2021.

Recommendation

The External Scrutiny Committee is asked to:

- i. Discuss and agree the draft work programme for 2021/22.
- ii. Consider key lines of enquiry for future meeting topics.
- iii. Discuss any additional representation required from key officers, cabinet members and partners.

Detail

A draft statement of the work to be undertaken by the External Scrutiny Committee for the 2021/22 municipal year is set out at Appendix 'A'.

The work programme will be presented to each meeting for consideration by the committee.

Members are requested to discuss and agree the draft work programme, discuss any additional representation from key officers, cabinet members and partners and consider key lines of enquiry for future meeting topics.

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

This report has no significant risk implications.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

External Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2021/22

The External Scrutiny Committee Work Programme details the planned activity to be undertaken over the forthcoming municipal year through scheduled or extraordinary committee meetings, task group, events, and through use of the 'rapporteur' model.

The items on the work programme are determined by the committee following the work programming session at the start of the municipal year in line with the Overview and Scrutiny Committees Terms of Reference detailed in the county council's Constitution. This includes provision for the rights of county councillors to ask for any matter to be considered by the committee or to call-in decisions.

Coordination of the work programme activity is undertaken by the chair and deputy chair of all of the scrutiny committees to avoid potential duplication.

In addition to the terms of reference outlined in the [Constitution](#) (Part 2 Article 5) for all Overview and Scrutiny Committees, the External Scrutiny Committee will:

1. Review and scrutinise issues, services or activities carried out by external organisations including public bodies, the voluntary and private sectors, partnerships and traded services which affect Lancashire or its inhabitants, and to make recommendations to the Full Council, Cabinet, cabinet members, cabinet committees, or external organisations as appropriate
2. Review and scrutinise the operation of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership in Lancashire in accordance with the Police and Justice Act 2006 and make reports and recommendations to the responsible bodies as appropriate
3. In connection with 2. above, to require an officer or employee of any of the responsible bodies to attend before the committee to answer questions
4. Co-opt additional members in accordance with the Police and Justice Act 2006 if required, and to determine whether those co-opted members should be voting or non-voting
5. Review and scrutinise the exercise by risk management authorities of flood risk management functions or coastal erosion risk management functions which may affect the local authority's area

The Work Programme will be submitted to and agreed by the scrutiny committees at each meeting and will be published with each agenda.

The dates are indicative of when the External Scrutiny Committee will review the item, however, they may need to be rescheduled and new items added as required.

Topic	Scrutiny Purpose (objectives, evidence, initial outcomes)	Lead Officers/organisations	Proposed Date(s)
Community Safety Partnerships – Lancashire Strategic Assessment 2022-2025	Review the key themes within the Strategic Assessment, as the main elements that will feature in the Community Safety Agreement	Debbie Thompson, LCC	29 November 2021
Supporting Lancashire Businesses during COVID-19	Review of the funding made available from Government and to identify lessons learned to help inform recommendations for future joint working with District Councils	CC Aidy Riggott, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Growth, Andy Walker, LCC	
Universal Credit in Lancashire	Update from LCC Welfare Rights Service on the implications on county council frontline services and budgets.	LCC and DWP representatives	11 January 2022
Electricity North West	Response to Storm Arwen	ENW representatives	
Strengthening Flood Risk Management and Preparedness	Progress report on agreed actions arising from recommendations of scrutiny task and finish group review.	Rachel Crompton and Laura Makeating, Flood Risk Managers, LCC and CC Shaun Turner, Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change	1 March 2022
Community Safety Agreement 2022-25	Review the proposed agreement for 2022-2025	Debbie Thompson, LCC	12 April 2022

Topics for potential inclusion on the programme:

- Transport for the North – infrastructure and routes

- Decarbonisation in Lancashire
- Road Safety Partnership (Community Safety Partnerships) - Review of strategy/policy and preparations for the new changes to the Highway Code
- Greater Lancashire Plan
- HS2

