

Public



To:
All members of the
Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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Date: 23 March 2017

Supplementary Agenda

Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Tuesday, 28 March 2017

Dear Councillor

I enclose the following item which is an appendix to Item 5. on the agenda for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting to be held on Tuesday, 28 March 2017:

5. Welfare Reform and Universal Credit Appendix

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To consider an update report on welfare reform and the introduction of Universal Credit.

Yours sincerely

Gillian Hobbs
Committee Services

To the members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillors:

C.A. Davis (Chairman)
S.C. Mooney (Vice-Chairman)
R.O. Barratt
S. Capes
S.M. Doran

Q.R. Edgington
M.P.C. Francis
A.L. Griffiths
N. Islam
J.G. Kavanagh

D. Patel
O. Rybinski
R.A. Smith-Ainsley
B.B. Spoor

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Timeline and plan for notifications to residents re Universal Credit (UC)

Currently:

- The impact to date has been minimal on Spelthorne with few people affected and affordability due to the Universal Credit assessment not being raised with ourselves by the public on a regular basis.
- Advice on Universal Credit is on our website with directions to the www.gov.uk website where the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) supply full information and communications on Universal Credit which they administer.
- Any enquiries from the public received in writing; telephone or in person we would answer and advise them on the next course of appropriate action.

In relation to New Claims from February 2016 to August 2018 (equating to approximately 5% of total claimants):

- We are not aware in advance who will be applying and making a new claim for Universal Credit so we cannot do an advance information campaign to potentially all residents of the Borough as the vast majority of people would not be affected by these changes.
- Once we receive notification from the DWP that a person is claiming Universal Credit we will write to them on how this will affect any benefit claim with Spelthorne.
- Our Department is available to offer support and advice if required during this process.

In relation to All New Claims from August 2018 (further 15% of claimants):

- We will not be made aware in advance who will be applying and making a new claim for Universal Credit so we cannot do an advance information campaign to potentially all residents of the Borough as the vast majority of people would not be affected by these changes.
- Once we receive notification from the DWP that a person is claiming Universal Credit we will write to them on how this will affect their benefit claim with Spelthorne.
- Our Department is available to offer support and advice if required during this process.

Migration of current Housing Benefit Claims Between 2019 – 2022:

- The DWP have not informed us who; how or when they are planning to migrate existing claims to Universal Credit as the DWP have not decided on when or how they will manage this process.
- Once Spelthorne is informed of the details of the process of migration we will then write to the Benefit Claimants concerned to inform them of how the transfer will affect their Benefit claim and what they need to do to continue their entitlement.
- Our Department will continue to be available to offer support and advice during this transition.

The Council website and staff will be updated with relevant information to keep residents informed on the current situation for Spelthorne as and when this process changes.

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