Department for Work & Pensions

DWP Local Authority Welfare Steering Group
Terms of Reference

Remit

DWP has a statutory obligation to consult representatives of local government on changes to HB regulations. In practice, it has fulfilled this by consulting the local authority associations and extending the consultation to all matters relating to Housing Benefit, including funding. The main forum for engaging with the local authority associations is the DWP/Local Authority Welfare Steering Group.

The DWP Local Authority Welfare Steering Group (WSG) is a second tier group that reports into the DWP LA Partnership Forum (first tier).

The WSG will be responsible for considering and providing a strategic expert view from a local authority perspective into all Housing Benefit, Universal Credit, Universal Support and other DWP welfare related matters, to support their on-going development, refinement, implementation and delivery.

The Practitioners' Operational Group (POG) will be third tier group that will sit underneath the WSG and provide operational advice on Housing Benefit matter and Universal Credit operational impacts for LAs.

This sets out its approach in its simplest terms but we understand that work will need to flow between the groups, for obvious reasons. To help facilitate this process a number of attendees are members of both groups.

Membership

Standing internal members of the DWP LA Welfare Steering Group:

- HDD to chair the group
- Senior Advisers from UC Programme, HDD and HPD
- Secretariat
- The chairs of the UC Scottish Advisory Group and the UC Welsh Advisory Group
- Other DWP representatives will be invited to attend for their specific agenda items.

Local Authority Associations

The number of advisers appointed by each LAA, provisionally at head of Revenue and Benefits level, will be as follows:

- Local Government Association (LGA) – 10 LA reps (maximum 2 London LAs) + 1 LGA rep
- Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) – 3 LA rep + 1 COSLA rep
- Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) – 2 LA rep + 1 WLGA rep

Other external local government sector representatives:

- The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) – 2 reps

- Scottish Government – 1 rep
- Welsh Government – 1 rep
- Umbrella body for Council Treasurers – 1 rep
- London Councils – 1 rep

Where a nominated representative is unable to attend then we would welcome a suitable deputy being fielded in their place.

Other external representatives will be invited to contribute on specific topics as necessary

Annex A provide specific details of members

Methods of Working

- **Chair** – Claire Elliott, Head of Housing Delivery Division.

- **Frequency of meetings** – Between 7 and 9 meetings a year on a 6 – 8 weekly cycle. A programme of meeting dates will be set in advance for each calendar year. A proposed schedule for the next 12 months is attached as **Annex B**.

- **Timings** – The group will meet for a minimum of three hours between the hours of 10:00 - 11:00 (LAAs pre-meet) and 11:00 - 16:00. Timings will be determined by discussion at the previous meeting and at the agenda setting telekit two weeks prior to the next meeting.

- **Sub-groups** – There will be no standing sub groups although ad-hoc working parties to assist in the delivery of the group's remit may be created for a prescribed reason with a specific time bound requirement. There will be potential to use spare time on the day of the main meeting facilitate any such groups.

- **Secretariat support** – Provided by DWP. This will include keeping minutes, a record of key decisions and action points for named individuals. Full minutes will be circulated to group members and summary minutes will be published on the .gov.uk website.

- **Agenda and Papers** – There will be an agenda setting telekit with the Local Government Association reps two weeks prior to the meeting (members for this telekit have an * next to their name) – this will be the final chance ahead of the meeting to set the agenda. This is to allow DWP time to be able to prepare papers. All papers for the meeting will be provided to all members at least one week in advance of the meeting, although there maybe occasions where papers / presentations have to be tabled on the day due to the nature and restrictions places on that material. In addition; written updates for non-agenda items will be provided in a standard format for information or comment at this time

- Overall the group will set direction, commission work and evaluate products from the Practitioners' Operational Group (POG), the UC Welsh Advisory Group, and the Scottish UC Advisory Group. Providing strategic expert views and technical guidance within agreed time spans through:
  - written clearance of non-contentious items as and when required;
  - quality assurance and written clearance of products

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- The DWP LA Welfare Steering Group will agree and provide a written update to the DWP LA Partnership Forum for each meeting.

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Annex A – DWP LA Welfare Steering Group Membership

* denotes membership of the agenda setting telekit

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)		
Position	**Name**	**Title / Area**
Chair	Claire Elliott	Deputy Director, Head of Housing Delivery Division
Senior Adviser	Cath Hamp	Deputy Director, Head of External Relations and Orientation Division, UC Programme
	Karina Stibbards	Deputy Director, Head of Housing Policy Division
	Chris Franks *	UC LA Strategic Engagement Manager, Universal Credit Programme
	Annette Madden*	UC LA Strategic Engagement Manager, Universal Credit Programme
	Darren Baker *	Business Team Manager, Housing Delivery Division
Secretariat Team	Christine Sanderson *	UC LA Engagement Manager, Universal Credit Programme
	Steve Frakes *	UC LA Engagement Manager, Universal Credit Programme
	Mont Goldman *	LA Gateway Team, Housing Delivery Division
UC Scottish Advisory Group Chair	Susan Johnston	Devolved Administrations and Devolution Manager for Scotland, UC Programme
UC Welsh Advisory Group Chair	Graham Roberts	Devolved Administrations and Devolution Manager for Wales, UC Programme
UC Design and Build	Lewis Childs	User Research Team, UC Programme

Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG)	
Name	**Title / Area**
1. Andrew Keck	Welfare and Housing Support
2. Mercy Adebisi	Local Council Tax Support (LCTS)
3. Kelly Verney	Lead: Welfare Reform Team

Devolved Governments

Scottish Government	
Name	**Title / Area**
1. Frank McGregor	
Deputy – Martyn Lindsay	

Welsh Government	
Name	**Title / Area**
1. Linda Davis	
Deputy	

Local Authority Associations

Local Government Association (LGA)	10 LA reps (max 2 from London) + 1 LGA rep
Name	Authority
Helen Paine	Gateshead alternating (tbc)
Jayne Henderson	Newcastle alternating (tbc)
Lee Hemsworth	Leeds
Kirsty Johnson	Wigan alternating (tbc)
Howard Mason	Manchester alternating (tbc)
Tim Savill	Birmingham
Gary Layzell	Melton
Adrian Mills	Anglia Revenues
Andrew Stevens	East Kent (Canterbury, Dover, Thanet)
Ian Brown	Wiltshire
LGA – * Rose Doran	

Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)	3 LA reps + 1 COSLA rep
Name	Authority
1. Susan Donald	Aberdeenshire
2. June Deans	Glasgow
3. Peter Meehan	
Substitute: Sheila Haig	Edinburgh
COSLA – Michael McClements*	

Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA)	2 LA reps + 1 WLGA rep
Name	Authority
1. Matthew Evans	Wrexham
2. Sarah Price	Merthyr Tydfil County
Deputy – Nick Jones	Rhondda Cynon Taff
WLGA – Lisa Hayward*	
WLGA Deputy – Colin Wallbank	

Other bodies

London Councils	
Name	Title / Area
1. * Sam Ashton	London Councils

2. Jennifer Wynter	Hackney	To rotate between the three
3. Zena Cooke	Tower Hamlets	representatives
4. Mark Fowler	Croydon	

Umbrella body for Council Treasurers	
Name	**Title / Area**
1. *Simone Hines	Director – Finance and Procurement Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council

Annex B – Meeting Schedule

Proposed series of DWP LA Welfare Steering Group Meetings

- Agenda setting meeting by telekit
- Main meeting held 10:00 – 16:00 (decided at agenda setting meeting)

Meeting #	Date	Room	Time	Chair
1 – Agenda	21/06/2017	Telekit		
1 – Main	**05/07/2017**	5.21	10.00 – 16.00	Clare Elliott
2 – Agenda	22/08/2017	Telekit		
2 – Main	**05/09/2017**	2.30	10.00 – 16.00	Clare Elliott
3 – Agenda	04/10/2017	Telekit		
3 – Main	**18/10/2017**	5.21	10.30 – 16.00	Clare Elliott
4 – Agenda	09/11/2017	Telekit		
4 – Main	**23/11/2017**	6.24	10.00 – 16.00	Clare Elliott
5 – Agenda	03/01/2018	Telekit		
5 – Main	**17/01/2018**	5.22	10.00 – 16.00	Clare Elliott
6 – Agenda	21/02/2018	Telekit		
6 – Main	**07/03/2018**	2.30	10.00 – 16.00	Clare Elliott
7 – Agenda	11/04/2018	Telekit		
7 – Main	**25/04/2018**	2.30	10.00 – 16.00	Clare Elliott

Telekit details for agenda setting and main meeting

- Landline: 0800 368 0636 or Mobile: 0330 336 6013
- Participant code: 440042#