



# Summary Minutes

<b>Title of meeting:</b>	Joint DWP/Practitioners Operational Group/ LA Welfare Steering Group/LA Funding Group
<b>Date/timings:</b>	30 April 2020 – 10:30 – 14:00
<b>Location:</b>	Skype & Audio
<b>Attendees:</b>	<p><b>DWP:</b> Darren Baker (chair), Carolyn Pollard (Secretariat), Kay Bendell, Sheena Parker, Amanda Sowerby, Graham Roberts, Joanne Hawkins, Susan Johnson, Sarah Turner, Paul Selby, Adrian Shooter, Tracy Williams, Carly Dykes, Jonathan Bottomer, Susannah King, Graham Walmsley, Amanda Frankland</p> <p><b>MHCLG:</b> Rosie Pearce, Peter Bates, Sanna Jenkins, Vicky Bendle</p> <p><b>LAs:</b> Sam Ashton (LC), June Deans (Glasgow), Lisa Hayward (WLGA), Andrew Cameron (Leeds) Rose Doran (LGA), Paul Ellary (RBK&amp;C) Matthew Evans (Wrexham), Adrian Mills (Ang Revs), Asha Vyas (Brent), Pam Richardson (Gateshead), Jayne Henderson (Newcastle), Linda Davies (WG), Moira Smith (SG), Helen Paine (Gateshead), Paul Knevett (LGA Districts), Gwyn Thomas (Westminster), Paula Doherty (Dumfries&amp;Galloway), Mandy Fathers (West Oxford), David Kinnair (Bham), Lisa Fuller (Renfrewshire), David Jackman (Leeds), Chris Boylett (Newham), Mark Gillmore (EK services), Callum Smith (SG), David Northey, Gill Wilson, Barry Jardine, Robert Fox</p>
<b>Apologies</b>	Clare Elliott (DWP), Anil Gupta (COSLA), Ian Brown (Wiltshire), Ian Adams (Islington), Simone Hines (IN&B), Tim Savill (Bham), Susan Donald (Aberdeenshire), Sarah Price (MT)
<p><b>1. Welcome and Introductions:</b></p> <p>Darren Baker opened the meeting.</p> <p><b>2. COVID-19 Hardship fund (England only)</b></p> <p>As part of its response to COVID-19, the government announced in the Budget on 11 March that it would provide local authorities (LAs) in England with £500 million of new grant funding to support economically vulnerable people and households in their local area.</p> <p>On 24 March 2020, the department published guidance and allocations to billing authorities on delivery of the hardship fund. The guidance and allocation of funding can be found <a href="#">here</a></p>	

### **3. Update: LA Partnership, Engagement and Delivery COVID-19 team**

The LA-PED COVID-19 team continue to manage LA issues through to resolution.

#### **Temporary pause of Third Party Deductions in Universal Credit**

The Secretary of State confirmed on Thursday 30 April 2020, that there has been an unprecedented 1.5 million Universal Credit (UC) applications made since March 2020. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has rightly prioritised the processing of these claims to ensure people get the support they need during the COVID-19 crisis.

Third Party Deductions that have been suspended include: Rent arrears, Service Charge arrears and Council Tax arrears. Direct payments for rent will continue and are not affected by this temporary pause, this also includes Scottish Choices and Managed Payments to Landlords.

### **4. Potential data collection to understand the impacts of COVID-19 on Discretionary Housing Payments**

Update was provided.

### **6. Temp absence outside Great Britain over 4 weeks**

Update was provided.

### **7. Update - Performance Development Team**

An overview of the Performance Development Team (PDT) current engagement approach, and feedback from the Performance Relationship Managers (PRMs) was shared.

Meeting closed

<b>Date, time and location of next LAWSG</b>	<b>The date of the next LA Welfare Steering Group/POG meeting is to be confirmed</b>
<b>Secretariat:</b>	Carolyn Pollard
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:carolyn.pollard@dwp.gsi.gov.uk">carolyn.pollard@dwp.gsi.gov.uk</a>
<b>Direct line:</b>	01253 689848