



Summary Minutes

Title of meeting:	DWP/ LA Welfare Steering Group
Date/timings:	16 January 2020 - 11:00 – 14:00
Location:	Room G.42, Caxton House
Attendees:	<p>DWP: Darren Baker (chair), Carolyn Pollard (Secretariat), Kay Bendell, Amanda Sowerby, Graham Roberts, Joanne Hawkins, James Wolfe, Emily Desmond, Johnathan Bottomer</p> <p>LAs: Rose Doran (LGA), Sam Ashton (LC), June Deans (Glasgow), Lisa Hayward (WLGA), Andrew Cameron ((Leeds), Sarah Price (MT), Anil Gupta (COSLA), Asha Vyas (Brent), Tim Savill (Bham),</p> <p>MHCLG: Emily Whiteside</p> <p>Dial in: Clare Elliott (DWP), Moira Smith (SG), Susan Johnson (DWP), Helen Paine (Gateshead), Pam Richardson (Gateshead), Adrian Shooter (DWP), Paul Knevett (LGA Districts), Adrian Mills (Ang Revenues), Jayne Henderson (Newcastle), Paul Garlick (Croydon)</p>
Apologies	Ian Brown (Wiltshire), Sheena Parker (DWP), Nic Vaughan (DWP), Marie Savage (DWP), Howard Mason (Manchester), Peter Meehan (COSLA), Matthew Evans (Wrexham), Ian Keating (LGA), Natalie Keogh (DWP), Simone Hines (IN&B), Ian Adams (Islington), Susan Donald (Aberdeenshire), Linda Davies (WG), Julia Pitt (Croydon), Kyle Murray (Edinburgh)
<p>1. Welcome and Introductions:</p> <p>Darren Baker opened the meeting. Introductions were made round the table and for those dialing in.</p> <p>2. Matters Arising (Previous Minutes/Action Points, previous POG Minutes)</p> <p>The previous LA Welfare Steering Group (LAWSG) minutes were agreed, the last Practitioners' Operational Group (POG) took place by telekit on 14 November 2019, due to Purdah no minutes were produced.</p> <p>Action points were discussed</p> <p>3. LA Welfare Highlight Report</p> <p>The highlight report which consists of a one-page slide showing issues closed by POG, issues for potential closure and outstanding issues under investigation.</p>	

Future Direction of Discretionary Housing Payments – The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has been given additional funding for Discretionary Housing Payments in the spending review. LA Funding Group has been consulted on allocation methodology.

Feedback from recent LA Engagement Events

Housing Delivery Division (HDD) held a series of 14 Engagement Events with local authorities (LAs) and DWP Partnership Managers in the following locations

In total there were 348 attendees, 236 from LAs, 112 from DWP Partnership Teams.

The events gave visibility to all LAs of the type of issues that are discussed with POG and LAWSG and the events were shaped utilising information obtained as part of our issues resolution process and feedback from LAs/DWP Partnership Managers.

The events were used to communicate to LAs and DWP Partnership Managers what's happening in relation to Housing Benefit across DWP and HDD and the Universal Credit (UC) Programme.

An electronic evaluation questionnaire was issued following each event to the attendees.

4. Introduction from James Wolfe, New Housing Policy Director

James started with a brief summary of his DWP career to date. He understands the importance of good relationships and dialogue with LAs.

5. AOB

UC Data sharing

DHP

6. National Statement of Expectations – Supported Housing

This National Statement of Expectations (NSE) has been developed in collaboration between the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and DWP with input from local councils and the supported housing sector. Together, they are committed to seeing delivery of high quality supported housing which meets residents' needs and represents value for money.

Meeting closed

Date, time and location of next LAWSG	The date of the next LA Welfare Steering Group is 25 March 2020, Room 5.22, Caxton, 11.00 – 14:00.
Secretariat:	Carolyn Pollard
Email:	carolyn.pollard@dwp.gsi.gov.uk
Direct line:	01253 689848