



DWP Serious Case Panel Minutes

- Title of meeting:** DWP (Department for Work and Pensions) Serious Case Panel
- Date:** Tuesday 2 July 2024
- Location:** Virtual
- Attendees:** David Bennett, Non-Executive Director (Chair)
Amanda Reynolds, Director General for Service Excellence
Cheryl Holgate (obo Liz Fairburn), Director for Customer Experience
Barbara Bradley, Director General for Work & Health Services
Catherine Vaughan (also obo Peter Schofield), Director General for Finance
Julie Blomley, Director General for People and Capability
Alison Nunn (obo Henry Ripley), Director for Legal
Joanna Wallace, Independent Case Examiner
James Wolfe (obo Katherine Green and Sophie Dean), Director General, Labour Market, Policy and Implementation
Bill Thorpe (obo Katie Farrington), Director General for Disability, Health and Pensions
Neil Couling, Director General for Change and Resilience
Gail Allsopp, Chief Medical Advisor
Robert Currens, Deputy Director Advanced Customer Support
- Presenters:** Redacted, Advanced Customer Support
Redacted, Customer Experience, Insight, Research and Analysis
Redacted, Move to Universal Credit
Redacted, Advanced Customer Support
Amy Doncaster, Deputy Director Universal Credit Transformation and Design
Deborah Boore, Director, Universal Credit Programme
- Apologies:** Peter Schofield, Permanent Secretary
Liz Fairburn, Director for Customer Experience
Henry Ripley, Director for Legal
Katherine Green, Director General, Labour Market, Policy and Implementation
Sophie Dean, Director General, Labour Market Policy and Implementation
Katie Farrington, Director General for Disability, Health and Pensions
Richard Corbridge, Director General for Digital
Debbie Alder, Director General for Corporate Transformation

1. Welcome and introductions

1.1 David Bennett opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.

2. Emerging Issues

2.1 Robert Currens provided a verbal update on emerging issues which included bringing the panel's attention to the new GOV.UK page [Get extra help and support to manage your benefits or pension - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/get-extra-help-and-support-to-manage-your-benefits-or-pension)

3. Whitemail Update

3.1 Redacted and redacted provided a verbal update on their involvement in the ongoing work to deliver a digital solution which improves DWP's capability to identify potential vulnerability in written correspondence. They explained that there will be a full evaluation package to support this work and as part of this session they can provide early feedback from the initial user research as live testing continues. This small-scale research with DWP colleagues has provided positive feedback and valuable insight to inform continued development. It was reiterated that this automated solution does not replace current processes centred around colleague intervention but enhances them by providing an additional safety net to improve the speed and efficiency of identifying potential vulnerability from correspondence.

4. Learning from Move to Universal Credit (UC)

4.1 Redacted provided the panel with an update on Move to UC, in particular, early insight from the enhanced customer journey that is part of the design to provide support to customers with complex needs who may require additional support. Redacted explained that the multi-disciplinary approach brings together expertise from the Visiting Officers and Advanced Customer Support Senior Leaders to provide essential support when required to migrate people safely to Universal Credit. A new Complex Case Coach role has been implemented as part of that enhanced support.

5. Identifying Vulnerability

5.1 Redacted and redacted led a discussion based on learning from serious cases describing the customer impact when we miss opportunities to identify vulnerability and tailor our services and support. Panel members recognised the work that is already underway to deliver improvements. They also supported the assertion that processes to identify and support vulnerability should be routinely designed into both new services going forward and existing processes if appropriate.

6. DWP Trauma Informed Approach Update

6.1 Amy Doncaster provided an overview and update on the DWP Trauma Informed Approach work to date. Insight for the development of this work has been shaped from existing best practice across the public sector alongside critical insight from colleagues and key partners including members from DWP's Operational Stakeholder Engagement Forum (OSEF).

7. Any Other Business (AOB) and Close

7.1 There was no AOB raised. David Bennett and members of the Serious Case Panel thanked the presenters and their teams for their updates.

Next meeting: Tuesday 17 September 2024