

To: UC Programme Board**From : Susan Park
UC Operations
Director General****Universal Credit Operations Update****Summary**

This month has been a productive one with some further improvements in payment delivery and in the 1st Assessment period (AP). However, we have had some operational challenges affecting the telephony channel whilst embedding Next Generation Contact Centre (NGCC) technology, network issues and the introduction of Amazon Web Services (AWS) as the new hosting platform for the digital build. We have experienced some slow running and reduced visibility of real time telephony Management Information (MI).

Our July expansion completes on the 19th of the month introducing 29 additional Jobcentres delivering Universal Credit Full Service (UCFS). This brings the total to 101, supported by 10 Service Centres.

Overall performance remains relatively stable and we have detailed plans in place to ensure we continue to deliver through the summer period. However following the transition to AWS and completion of NGCC roll-out in the last few weeks, telephony performance has been impacted by outstanding snagging issues.

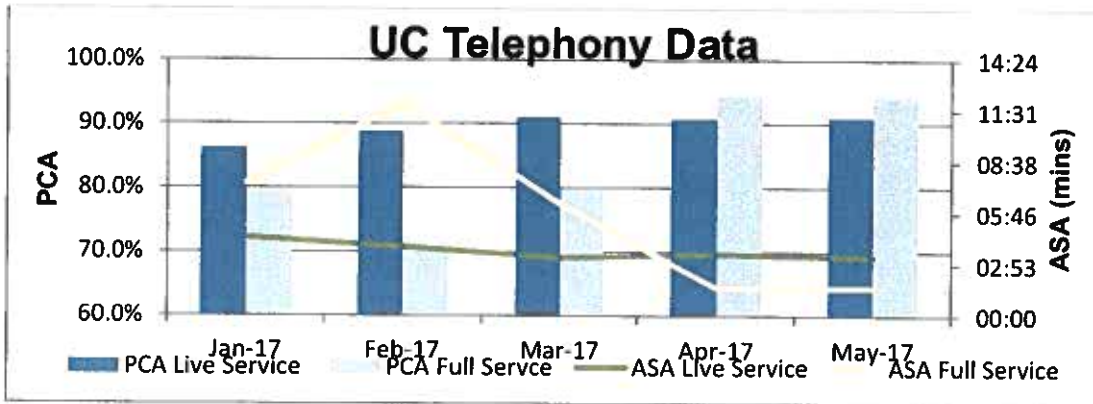
We are finalising our geographic alignment and site plans for October and November 2017 following impacting at a senior level to ensure we land safely into new sites. At this time our resource and recruitment plans remain on track to meet October scaling.

Our Full Service Decision Making and Appeals performance is now back within our 'head of work' of 9.9 days and we have cleared all old cases. We have also planned and confirmed anticipated volumes with the Centre for Health and Disability Assessments (CHDA) who provide our Work Capability Assessments (WCAs) to create a timeline to ensure availability of WCAs through to April 18.

We continue to make visible within the Information Control Centre (ICC) our operational top issues focusing on;

- Health
- Children
- Housing
- ID Verification

Performance



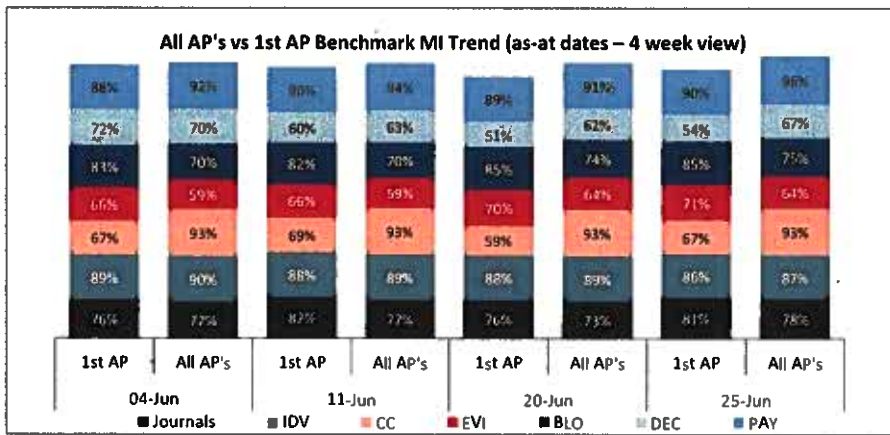
Aside from the recent dip relating to the technical changes, UC telephony performance remains good cumulatively, with current Average Speed of Answer (ASA) and Percentage of Calls Answered (PCA) in a strong position above target.

The plans to test integrating telephony back into Case Management have moved to the right to an indicative date in September. This will have an effect on how we move tactical telephony back into Service Centres. We are currently undertaking some complex scenario planning of how we would do this against a backdrop of People and Locations Programme (PLP) estates decisions and future alignment planning.

Universal Credit Full Service Case Management:

We have introduced a case management model so we can see for the first time a projected caseload by Jobcentre / Service Centre which will help land the growing caseload in a more controlled and managed way. We are testing the scalability of case management in three teams to understand the effect of caseload size including telephony, on sustaining performance with large caseloads. We will share initial findings in the next update.

Current data (June 17) shows the highest Payment level since Benchmark analysis began at 96% for all Assessment Periods (APs), and 90% for payments in the 1st AP. We continue to focus improvement activities to reduce performance variation between sites in particular Payment Evidence and Decisions.



The latest results (from Analytical Division for May 17) show a slight dip in performance for the first Assessment Period measures of payment timeliness – this may be the result of bringing our cases up to date as part of the case management principle. However the underlying trend is improving and the early indicator suggests that performance in June 17 will show an increase. We are developing new, timelier measures which also show improvements in June.

Finalised results for May-17						Early indicator results for Jun-17
Measure			Live Service	Full Service	Overall	Full Service
Measure a.	Claims with some payment on time	First AP	85%	80% (-2)	82% (-2)	89% (+6)
Measure b.		All APs	95%	92% (+2)	94%	96% (+6)
Measure c.	Claims with full payment on time	First AP	73% (-3)	65% (-4)	69% (-4)	Early indicator in development
Measure d.		All APs	92%	87% (+1)	91%	

Labour Market

We have focussed attention on improving complex Labour Market journeys including:

Self-Employment (SE)

- We have improved the learning routeway for self-employment.
- The automation of self-declared earnings is under development and will enable a channel shift from the current process (a telephone call) to the customer self-reporting.
- We are working across operations to understand the complex journeys within self-employment and providing additional support to work coaches e.g.in the handling of company director accounts.

Health

- Delivered improvement which ensures claimants migrating to Universal Credit from Employment Support Allowance (ESA) because of a change in circumstances gain access to the relevant rate of UC and associated Labour Market grouping without the need to go through the Work Capability Assessment process.
- To help increase the confidence levels of Work Coaches and Team Leaders, Health Masterclasses have been specifically developed and tested and will be incorporated into learning routeways. Additional learning events, including supporting claimants with mental health conditions.
- We have identified higher numbers of customers with complex health issues who need more specific interventions and coaching support. We are reviewing the learning routeways to see if they are fit for purpose for these more complex customer groups as well as what other stakeholders, delivery partners and providers we need to work closely with.

Forward Look – Operational Concerns

As we look forward to October scaling and beyond there are a number of headline measures that are giving us cause for concern which are visible within the Information Control Centre (ICC).

Health

32.2% of UC Full Service customers have an identified health issue. As numbers grow we recognise the interface for UC Full Service and our Health Assessment provider needs to be more streamlined and automated. Features are under development in product design but in their current work programme will not be implemented into operations until after October 17. As the caseload rises this causes significant manual work for case managers.

Child Elements

The Automated interface with HMRC has been delayed until October '18, which will impact operations in verifying children in UCFS claims. An impact of the delay is that there will be insufficient Child Benefit On line (CBOL) licences across UC Operations to manage verification. Programme colleagues are currently looking at alternative solutions to ensure we can accurately verify children and make prompt payments.

Housing Verification

We are in the early stages of testing rolling out the Landlord Portal, currently 2 landlords are engaged in the new process. Whilst we roll out the portal across the country, housing cost verification process remains inefficient. The delivery and rollout of more landlords onto the portal over the summer is critical as we progress to scale.

ID Verification

Percentage of claimants using on line ID verification remains stubbornly at 30%. Complimentary service "prove your identity" is unlikely to be available nationally and on best assumptions would only get us to 40%. We are exploring how we support verification in the Jobcentre and other administrative tasks connected with Verify.

As always we are working together with the Programme on all of the above issues.