

To: UC Programme Board Members

From: s40, PM's Implementation Unit, Cabinet Office, Pauline Crellin, Universal Credit Programme

Sponsor: Neil Couling

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Paper Title: How effective is support for vulnerable Universal Credit claimants?

Issue: *The Prime Minister's Implementation Unit (PMIU) conducted a deep dive on the effectiveness of support for vulnerable Universal Credit (UC) claimants, as commissioned by No10 and Cabinet Office ministers in June. The accompanying report provides the main findings and recommendations, along with an update on how this work is now being taken forwards.*

Recommendations/Decisions required:

Programme Board is asked to note and comment on the report and support the joint work to progress the recommendations moving forwards. We seek Programme Board agreement to task the Complex Needs Steering Group with tracking and implementing the recommendations of the PMIU report.

Timing: *The Programme Board's response will inform a follow-up discussion on this report and the follow-up actions between John Manzoni and Neil Couling in mid-November.*

Introduction

Over the summer of 2019, the Prime Minister's Implementation Unit conducted a review looking into the question of "How effective is the support for vulnerable claimants of UC?". This report aimed to look at the identification of claimants, whether they access the available support, and whether this support improves their outcomes, with a particular focus on the experience of care leavers and victims of domestic abuse.

The team conducting the review embarked on some intensive and wide-ranging qualitative research, including

- Fieldwork visits to 14 JCPs including Blackpool, Leeds, Hull, Barnsbury (where the team saw a newly launched trial of the service for deaf claimants), Nottingham, Grays, Kennington, Birmingham, Hackney,

Norwich, Govan, Dumbarton and Edinburgh, and to Basildon Service Centre;

- Spending time with teams in DWP, including the Evidence Sprints team, DWP analysts, the Complex Needs Steering Group (where the PMIU shadowed some powerful training for frontline staff working with homeless claimants and victims of domestic abuse, delivered by Women's Aid) and the “Help to Claim” team; and
- Exploring Local Authorities' perspectives on the join-up of enhanced support, with EDS Projects about their work with HMT on addressing barriers faced by citizens with multiple complex needs, and with DCMS on promoting digital inclusion to access government services.

The report is now complete and is attached.

Summary

1. s36 [Redacted]
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2. s36 [Redacted]
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3. The report also addresses s36 [Redacted]
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4. DWP and the PMIU have been working together to consider these findings in detail and to look at how we might work together to implement them. Some of these recommendations have been straightforward to agree actions s36

[REDACTED]

5. There are some more complex recommendations that we are continuing to consider how best to implement. s36

[REDACTED]

6. s36 [REDACTED]

Decision / Recommendation

7. Programme Board is asked to note and comment on the report and support the joint work to progress the recommendations moving forwards. We seek Programme Board agreement to task the Complex Needs Steering Group with tracking and implementing the recommendations of the PMIU report.