

**To: UC Programme Board****From : JP Marks  
UC Operations  
Director General****Universal Credit Operations Update****Summary**

As at the 29 May sixteen more Jobcentres are delivering Universal Credit Full Service, bringing the total sites to 283 (net of closures) with 660k claimants supported by 26 Service Centres nationally. In Live Service, the caseload continues to decrease and is now 270k, down 22k on April. Expansion in May has gone well, with new sites positive.

As updated last month, we have taken steps to increase volumes of Habitual Residence Test decision making. This has started to show steady progress, with the Head of Work for payment blockers at 6.5 days which is the lowest since January 2018, with payments in full and on time in the first assessment period up 1.8% to 78.5%. Further improvement activity is planned during June, including the rollout of a more efficient decision allocation approach.

Telephone call volumes in May were larger than forecast, placing extra strain on the network. This has been caused by multiple factors, including persistent levels of payment enquires and appointment re-booking, with increased contact from the annual rent exercise and some stability issues. As a result, Average Speed of Answer in May was 7 minutes 30 seconds in Universal Credit Full Service.

	30/04/2018	07/05/2018	14/05/2018	21/05/2018
Forecast	90254	93923	117017	120328
Offered	88620	106102	123397	123067
	98.2%	113.0%	105.5%	102.3%

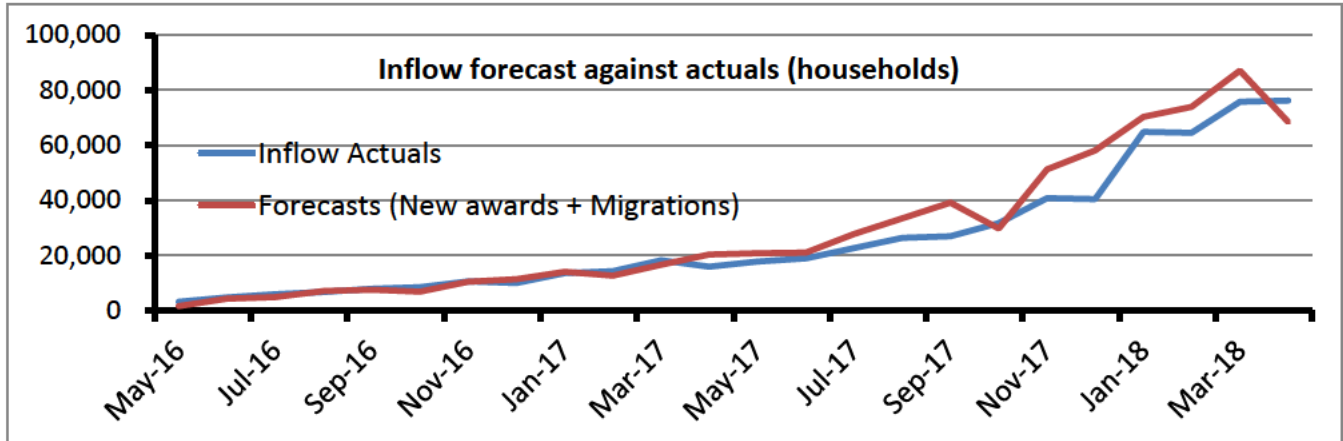
We have made progress rolling out telephony routing, where performance is improved. At the beginning of May integrated telephony teams saw 17% of calls overspill to the national tier, answering 95% of the remaining calls at an average speed of answer of 1 minute 40 seconds.

On 14 May Universal Credit Full Service and Serco experienced error messages when accessing the Booking Bug application. This impacted customers ability to book appointments and departmental ability to answer phone calls. And a priority 1 incident affecting 2 out of the 3 Doxford servers impacting operations across DWP on 4 June. This hindered delivery of both UC live and full from start of business until late afternoon, the knock on impact of this incident is likely to last a number of days with increased call volumes.

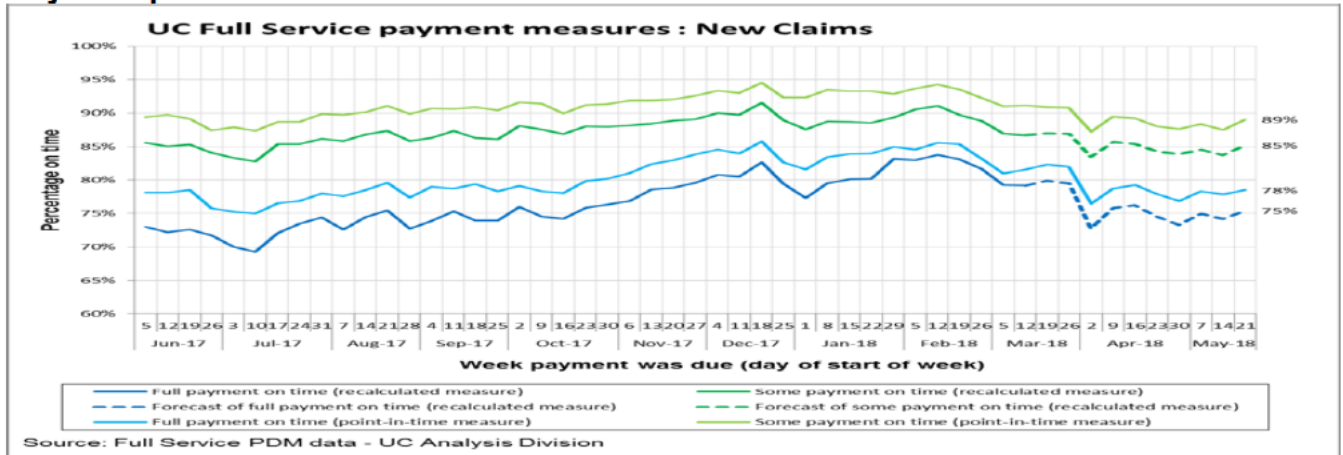
At the last Board we discussed cultural transformation and how we evidence this e.g. the 2017/18 Q3 scorecard Claimant Service and Experience Survey saw satisfaction of Universal Credit Full Service claimants increase by a statistically significant 7% to 79%. We've included two examples of qualitative feedback in the annex.

Looking ahead, having managed down supply friction and budget pressure, we are seeing hot spot risks appear, with patches of higher than assumed attrition. This month UC OET will consider bottom up plans to recruit in targeted areas working with our Business Partners and subject to scrutiny we will take through UC governance for approval. This is mitigation for the Programme Board Capacity risk and will help protect performance improvement in Q3/Q4.

## New Claims Flow vs Actual



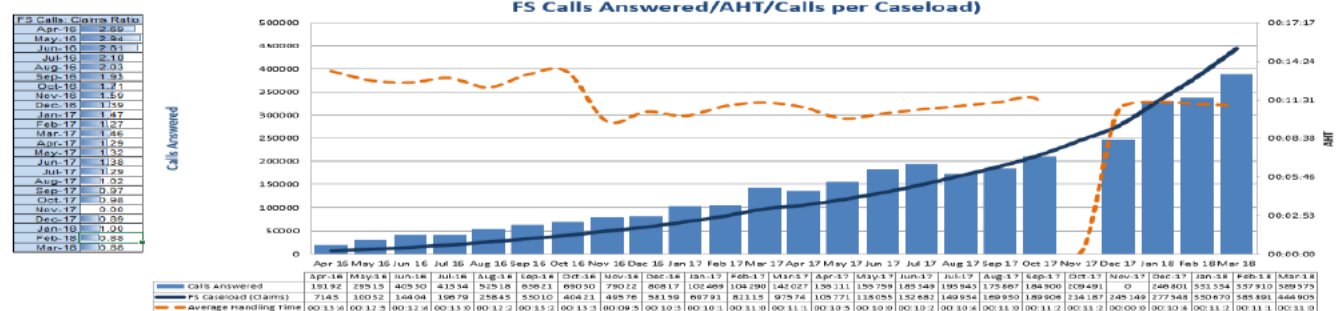
## Payment performance



Payment timeliness improved in May, primarily as a result of work around decision making. We are also targeting levels of variation between sites.

## Telephony

Telephony performance for 12 months May 17 – April 18 for Calls Answered was 89.5%, with an Average Speed of Answer at 3 minutes 40 seconds.



November data is unavailable as NGCC data is missing and not recoverable.

## Advances

New Claim or Benefit Transfer advances were 60% in February and 59% in March.

## Decision Making

Volumes are increasing in line with increases in caseload. Head of Work for payment blockers is 6.5 days and non-payment blockers is now at 20.5 days. Further gaps in the cost model

were identified relating to 'Habitual Residency Test' and 'Prove You Can Apply' cases. Operation Planning and Performance colleagues are in the process of updating the latest Decision Maker resource model. Further resources are being diverted to decision making:

1. 45 Live Service Decision Makers will move to Full Service in June 2018
2. Training of 76 Work Coach Decision Makers began week commencing 28 May, with work commencing the following week. They will work initially on Fail to Attend cases which account for one third of all Universal Credit Full Service decisions.
3. During May focus was given to 'Habitual Residency Test' and 'Prove You Can Apply' cases, reducing outstanding decisions from 9,200 to 6,590.

We are working closely with Programme and Working Age teams to identify improvements, including a more efficient allocation model and streamlining decision notifications to claimants.

### Quality

Tier 2 results measured by the National Quality Assurance Team was 88% for April in-month, with the 3 month rolling average stable at 89%, consolidating trend improvements.

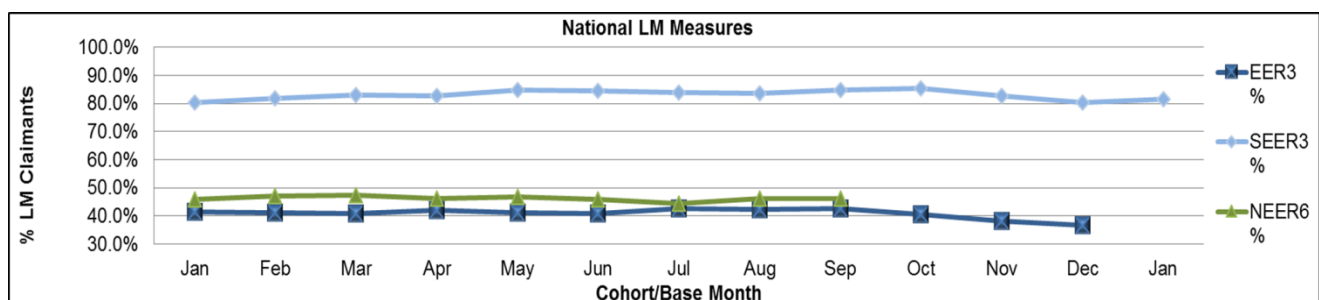
### Case Management

Telephony integration rollout is now complete for four sites (Bangor, Blackpool, Canterbury and Dundee). We are testing site level routing in Bangor and Canterbury whereby calls not picked up by the owning Case Manager or their team are offered to other Case Managers on site. The next phase going live week commencing 11 June.

### Labour Market – Health campaign

A number of initiatives have been introduced across the country to build, develop and improve relationships between National Health Service and Universal Credit. These include

- Placing advisers in doctors surgeries offering advice on obtaining or returning to work with appropriate support.
- Working with General Practitioners to include more detail on fit notes, explaining how it supports tailoring conditionality.
- Raising doctors' awareness of the support available to customers. Explaining the focus on what customers can do rather than what they can't and how doctors can support this by discussing with the customer the work they are able to do.
- Using Flexible Support Fund to purchase provision, including one to one support for 8 weeks and 4 month community workshops for customers with Mental Health barriers. This includes access to clinical psychologists and mental health experts.



### Claimant Orientation

Common origin customers ringing both Live and Full Service has reduced this month to 4.75%, the lowest since September 2017. We have commissioned further user research to

scope the next steps for our GOV. UK update and delivered products to support the orientation of customers to New Style ESA.

**ID Verification**

In April 64.3% of claimants attempted to verify their ID via GOV.UK Verify, with 37% of those attempting successfully verifying ID online.

**Housing**

The number of Landlords using the Landlord Portal has increased by a further 40 to 215. March saw more than 6,000 rent verification requests made via the Portal, equating to circa 51% of all Social Rented Sector rent verifications. Of these, 94% were verified within the first assessment period, compared to 79% for Non-Portal cases.

**Complex Needs**

We continue to support our people to interact with vulnerable customers and analysis of this will support future Universal Learning Leadership development. Evaluation of the Domestic Abuse video is currently in progress and will also form part of the Universal Learning teams site visits. The upcoming Complex Needs call scheduled for 13 June will be focused on support for refugees.

**UC Live Service**

Live Service caseload continues to reduce and currently stands at 270k, with a backlog of 492k outstanding tasks. Exit opportunities are being explored to reduce telephony demand and focus on the prioritisation of work including managing backlogs. This will maximise the resource available to complete transfers of claims from Live to Full Service. A trial is taking place with Bishop Auckland's Live Service caseload involving an end to end workflow approach. The trial will explore opportunities for Jobcentres to prepare caseloads and complete additional activities currently undertaken by Service Centres.

A joint Programme and 'Operational Live Service Exit plan' has been developed, which will be managed through the Live Service Exit Steering Group, to ensure a safe and successful exit from Live Service by mid 2019.

**Annex**

**Letter from Alex Burghart MP Brentwood and Ongar**





HOUSE OF COMMONS  
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12 April 2018

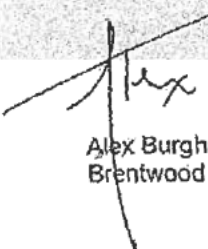
Dear [redacted]

I just wanted to drop you a line to thank you very much indeed for your assistance with [redacted] and arranging for him to see [redacted] in the Brentwood office.

As you know, [redacted] is registered blind and was struggling with reading all the information available to him regarding the changes to SMI. [redacted] read the booklet to [redacted] and, with great professionalism and knowledge, was able to answer all [redacted] queries to enable him to reach a decision on how he wished to proceed with confidence. I understand that arrangements have also been made for [redacted] to return to the office when the loan has been processed and efforts are being made to get [redacted] back into work.

I am immensely proud to have such a professional DWP office looking after the interests of my constituents, and one that can respond so quickly with such kindness and the 'personal touch' which [redacted] so desperately needed. Please convey my grateful thanks to [redacted] for her all her hard work.

With kind regards

  
Alex Burghart MP  
Brentwood and Ongar

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**Note from Phil Jones, Member of Social Security Adviser Committee and Director of Princes Trust Cymru following a series of induction visits to Jobcentres and Wrexham Service Centre**

I write with my SSAC 'hat' on.

I just wanted to drop you a note to say how much I've enjoyed visiting various JCPs and the Wrexham Service Centre in recent weeks. Although it's fair to say that The Trust's excellent relationship with Job Centre staff positively influenced my pre-conceptions, I went in with a very open mind on what I was going to see from a SSAC perspective.

I have to say, I have been incredibly impressed by every single DWP employee I have met. I have found the culture to be very positive and customer-centred. The work coaches I met really care about their work and the people they are trying to progress. The local leadership have clearly

worked very hard on this and conveyed to me a real pride in the working environment they were trying to establish. From what I understand and have been briefed on by your staff, the introduction of Universal Credit has to a large degree necessitated this more holistic approach. Only time will tell whether UC Full Service introduction in the coming months and years across the whole of the UK will genuinely change the JCP paradigm in the way I have encountered it in Wales. What I *do* know is that this culture and leadership approach comes from the top. I'd therefore like to congratulate you and encourage you on what you are trying to achieve.

I have one or two JCP visits yet to visit, which include Bangor in a few weeks. I was due to visit Haverfordwest today but had to cancel at the last minute due to the dreaded bus replacement service between Cwmbran and Cardiff. The resulting delays scuppered the plan, but I will go there another day. I have sent my apologies.

In the meantime **s40**, thanks very much for facilitating all these visits. As you know only too well, for DWP policies to work, the technical detail of secondary legislation is only half the story. The behaviours of DWP people on the frontline are fundamental to policy success or failure. Seeing those behaviours in action during my visits has therefore been very useful indeed.

Thank you!