



## Response to Request for Information

Reference      FOI 001642  
Date            1 November 2017

### ***Universal Credit***

#### **Request:**

Under the Freedom of Information Act, how much is the Council:

- (i)      spending in 2017/18 and
- (ii)     planning to spend in 2018/19 to offset the impact of the Universal Credit roll out in the Council's area.

This includes money spent to prevent tenants from being evicted due to rent arrears caused by Universal Credit.

#### **Spend in 2017/18**

Total spend in 2017/18 specifically on Universal Credit is approximately £210,500, however a lot of the mitigation activities are being done within existing resources working with partners to minimise cost implications.

DWP have provided a grant of £89,000 in 2017/18 to deliver Universal Support for Universal Credit claimants including assisted digital and personal budgeting support to help Universal Credit claimants get online and claim. Due to the high demand for this support, we intend to negotiate an increase in grant.

DWP have also provided a grant of £34,000 to manage the migration process and administer Council Tax Reduction together with £10,000 to support complex housing cost cases, £47,000 for housing benefit stop notices and £18,000 for payment deduction. Spend is allocated to specific aspects of the administration of Universal Credit.

The Council has also provided assistance with housing costs through the award of discretionary housing payments. So far around £16,000 has been awarded however demand is expected to increase following the expansion of Universal Credit in Wolverhampton during December.

There may be further expenditure in relation to printing costs for workshops and leaflets.

## **Spend in 2018/19**

We are awaiting to hear whether there will be any further DWP funding for Universal Support and the level of Discretionary Housing Payment grant in 2018/19.

However as a Council, we are planning to allocate quite a considerable resource in relation to existing spending to UC mitigation.