
Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Health
Date	14 June 2018
Present	Councillor Runciman

1. **Declarations of Interest**

The Executive Member confirmed that she had no personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, nor any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests, to declare in the business on the agenda.

2. **Minutes**

Resolved: That the minutes of the Decision Session held on 15 March 2018 be approved and signed by the Executive Member as a correct record.

3. **Public Participation**

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak at the session under the Council' Public Participation Scheme.

4. **Welfare Benefit Update and Financial Inclusion Out-turn Report 2017/18**

The Executive Member considered a report which examined how effectively the council was providing welfare support to residents following the roll-out of 'full service' Universal Credit (UC) in September 2017, and the progress made in delivering financial inclusion activity across the city.

The impact of UC in York had been low to date, due to high employment levels and the gradual transition of customers to UC. However, its effects were starting to be felt, notably in Housing. Digital services had improved service levels, and a pilot appointment scheme had operated for council tax and housing benefits customers since March, reducing waiting times by allocating dedicated time to each customer. Citizens Advice York (CAY) and other agencies had reported an increase in UC-related queries, and in the use of foodbanks by customers moving to UC. There were also concerns around the low take-

up of the council tax discretionary reduction scheme and increased demand on Discretionary Housing Payments. Activities supporting financial inclusion in the city, including those overseen by the Financial Inclusion Steering Group (FISG), were detailed in paragraphs 28 to 45 of the report.

In response to questions from the Executive Member, Officers confirmed that:

- Support was available in the Customer Centre and other venues for those needing assistance with their claims;
- The GP Surgeries Advice project was working well, and the council and CAY were happy to continue funding it;
- The council would also fund the York Advocacy service for a further year when the current funding ended in November.
- CAY were keen to develop their Information and Budgeting Cafe model further;
- Good results had been obtained by the Experience Counts: 50 Plus project.

The Executive Member expressed approval for the work being done in this priority area for the council and

Resolved: (i) That the impact of Universal Credit (UC) to date, and the welfare support provided by the council to residents in 2017/18, be noted

Reason: To confirm that the Executive Member is aware of the impact of UC and of the welfare support available to residents

(ii) That the council continue to work proactively with third sector partners on the wide range of support, early intervention and advice through the activity of the Financial Inclusion Steering Group (FISG).

Reason: To ensure that residents and groups are aware of financial inclusion activity.

Cllr C Runciman, Executive Member
[The meeting started at 12.00 pm and finished at 12.20 pm].