

## **Welfare Reform Update**

### **Purpose**

For information.

### **Summary**

This report summarises principle activity in welfare reform.

### **Recommendation**

That the LGA Resources Board note the update.

### **Action**

As directed by members.

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## **Welfare Reform Update**

### **Breathing Space**

1. The Government confirmed its commitment to implementing a 'breathing space' for those facing problem debt in an announcement on 19 June.
2. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/individuals-to-be-protected-from-devastating-impact-of-problem-debt>
3. The LGA is currently working with HMT and councils to ensure that appropriate New Burdens funding is put in place for councils when the scheme is introduced, as well as continuing to put forward ideas and concerns as part of our wider work on 'reshaping financial support'.

### **Fairness Advisory Group**

4. The LGA has joined a Fairness Advisory Group, chaired by Cabinet Office, to advise on a fair and effective cross-Government approach to debt recovery. Colleagues are also in discussion with MHCLG about local approaches to council tax debt recovery, and may build this in to the 'reshaping financial inclusion' pathfinders

### **Universal Credit**

5. DWP has everything in place to commence the 'Move to UC' pilot in Harrogate in July, but is still waiting for the regulations to be debated. This needs to take place before the summer recess for the pilot to proceed on the present schedule.

### **Reshaping Financial Support**

6. The tender has gone out to find a delivery partner for the programme set out to members at the last Board meeting. The closing date for submissions is the 24<sup>th</sup> June. We will work with the delivery partner and the steering group over the summer to finalise the design of the programme, with a view to commencing in early Autumn. Thanks to Resources Board members who have provided contacts in their authorities, Rose Doran will be in touch with them once the Expression of Interest has been finalised.

### **Implications for Wales**

7. There are no implications for Wales.

### **Financial Implications**

8. There are no new financial implications for the LGA.