



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Peter Schofield CB
Permanent Secretary
Department for Work and
Pensions
Caxton House, Tothill Street
London
SW1H 9DA

ps@dw.gov.uk

Dame Meg Hillier MP
Chair Public Accounts Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA
Sent electronically

22 March 2024

Dear Meg

PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING UNIVERSAL CREDIT

Thank you for sharing the transcript of the hearing on 11th March. We committed to writing on the following subjects:

Targeted Case Review

You asked for an estimate of the forecasted savings from the Targeted Case Review in the next financial year. We are currently reviewing our forecasts and in the process of finalising our performance expectations and the fraud and error savings target for the year ahead including the TCR element. I suggest I write to you with the new target in early Summer as I did last year.

Visiting Officers

You asked us to confirm how many Visiting Officers we have as of now. Across the whole of DWP, as of the end of February, we had 415 Visiting Officers including those going through training. We are recruiting to build this capacity to 500 by early in the 2024-25 financial year.

Out of this complement, we will move 33 full time equivalent Visiting Officers to support the Move to UC enhanced support for DWP legacy customers by July. This will grow to 56 full time equivalent Visiting Officers by December, which is when we anticipate we will have the peak requirement.

Help to Claim

You also asked for details of the annual cost of the Help to Claim service since it was introduced, which is set out in the table below. The NAO report *Progress in Implementing Universal Credit* noted that DWP has provided total grant funding of £192.4 million from 2019-20 through to 2025-26. So far, the service has supported nearly 900,000 people.

Help to Claim							
	Face to Face, Telephony and Webchat			Telephony and Webchat only			
Year	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Budget	2025/26 Budget
Help to Claim Grant outturn (£m)	37.9	38.8	37	20.2	21.9	20.0	17.7

Your sincerely


Peter Schofield CB
 Permanent Secretary