

Report of	Assistant Director – Customer	Author	Jason Granger ☎ 07889 445614
Title	Update - Mitigations which the Council can make regarding loss of Universal Credit uplift and financial inequalities		
Wards affected	All Wards		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 In response to the Covid-19 pandemic the Government announced an uplift to Universal Credit and Working Tax credits worth £20 a week. Initially planned to last for a year, the policy was extended by six months in the March 2021 budget. The uplift ended from 6 October 2021.
- 1.2 On 24 November 2021 a [report](#) was presented to the Policy Panel describing how the Council can support residents who no longer received this uplift and help reduce wider financial inequalities.
- 1.3 This report provides an update to mitigations provided to residents by the Council.

2. Action Required

- 2.1 The panel is invited to consider, review and comment on the Council's mitigations to date as detailed in **Appendix A**.
- 2.2 The panel is invited to note the following recommendations have also been completed:
 - The report of 24 November 2021 has been circulated to all elected members
 - An all-member briefing is to be held on 16 March 2022 to provide further information on how the Council is supporting residents
 - Cabinet considered and agreed the minute from the Policy Panel at its meeting on 26 January 2022.

3. Reason for Review

- 3.1 The Covid-19 pandemic resulted in significant Government support for residents, businesses, and communities. Many of these support schemes have, or are, being withdrawn. This could lead to a rise in financial inequality.
- 3.2 The Council, alongside key partners, can offer practical support to residents adjusting to the withdrawal of support with the intention of preventing hardship and financial inequality.

4. Background Information

- 4.1 **Appendix A** is a presentation by Assistant Director – Customer that details the practical support that has, and is, being provided by the Council to help residents navigate changes to Universal Credit and the wider financial implications of the Covid-19 pandemic.

5. Standard References

- 5.1 This is an update to the report of 24 November 2021. There are no particular consultation or publicity considerations, or equality, diversity and human rights; financial; health, wellbeing and community safety; health and safety or environmental and sustainability Implications.

6. Strategic Plan References

- 6.1 The Council's Strategic Plan sets out 15 priorities, one of which being: 'Tackle the causes of inequality and support our most vulnerable people' This report details Council interventions aimed to help mitigate financial inequalities with Colchester.

7. Risk Management Implications

- 7.1 This report outlines support provided to residents as national government Covid-19 support schemes are withdrawn. The support is intended to mitigate any resulting financial inequalities.

Appendices

- **Appendix A** is a presentation by Assistant Director – Customer that details the practical support that has, and is, being provided by the Council to help residents navigate changes to Universal Credit and the wider financial implications of the Covid-19 pandemic.