

Report to Cabinet



Date of Meeting	2 nd December 2019
Portfolio	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance
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Public/Private Document	Public

Risk Based Verification

Executive Summary

1. This report seeks approval to stop using the Risk Based Verification policy for Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Support claims from 1 April 2020.

Recommendation

2. Cabinet is recommended to approve the ending of the use of the Risk Based Verification policy.

Reason for Recommendation

3. On 3 August 2015, Cabinet approved the implementation of the Risk Based Verification policy for Housing Benefit and Local Council Tax Support claims.

Risk Based Verification is a method of applying different levels of verification checks to benefit claims according to the predicted risk associated with those claims. This policy was primarily aimed at Housing Benefit claims from people of working-age.

Following the introduction of Universal Credit full service on 16 May 2018, the majority of new claims from people of working-age who need help to pay their rent have to be made to the Department for Work and Pensions.

Claims from people of pension age and claims for Local Council Tax Support are in the main low risk and the Risk Based Verification policy is no longer considered to be necessary.

Key Points for Consideration

4. The Risk Based Verification policy can only be amended or ended at the start of a financial year. This request could have been made 12 months' ago, but it was decided to continue using it and evaluate its effectiveness and value following the Universal Credit full service go-live. The conclusion of this

extended review is that the policy is no longer required.

4.1 **Alternatives Considered**

The Risk Based Verification policy could continue to operate. However, its primary purpose of identifying high and medium risk Housing Benefit claims for people of working-age has been removed by the introduction of Universal Credit full service.

Costs and Budget Summary

5. There are no financial implications from this report.

Risk and Policy Implications

6. There are no risk implications from this report. The Risk Based Verification policy will cease to be used.

Consultation

7. Consultation is not required.

Background Papers	Place of Inspection
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| 8. None | |
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