



<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Tuesday 08 June 2021
<b>Subject</b>	Local Delivery Readiness
<b>Agenda No.</b>	4
<b>Paper No.</b>	23.2
<b>Prepared By</b>	Local Delivery Team
<b>Purpose</b>	Discuss

## 1. Background

- 1.1. To update the Executive Advisory Body on our progress and readiness to launch a Local Delivery service in the Child Disability Payment Pilot areas of Perth and Kinross, Dundee and Western Isles.

## 2. Key points

- 2.1. This paper provides an update on the activities and progress to date of the Local Delivery service as we prepare to launch on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2021. It focuses on our readiness in relation to our people, clients and stakeholders.
- 2.2. This paper also highlights how we have adapted our service offering as a result of COVID 19 implications and restrictions, to enable delivery of a support service in a post pandemic environment.

## 3. Conclusions

- 3.1. Local Delivery ask you to note our progress to date and our readiness to deliver a local client focussed service.
- 3.2. We welcome your comment and specifically welcome insight and advice on your understanding of:
  - Evidence of client behaviour changing in a post pandemic environment.
  - COVID 19 impact on providing a local service.



## Substantive Paper

### Local Delivery Update

#### Background

Since our last update on 21st January 2020 over 80 of our Local Delivery staff have been redeployed into operational and corporate roles to support Social Security Scotland deliver and pay benefits to clients during the COVID 19 pandemic. A small number of staff were retained and continued to work with programme colleagues to prepare for the launch of the Child Disability Payment Pilot and the provision of our face to face client support service. We continued to engage and maintain our local stakeholder relationships through digital channels to support the launch and take up of Scottish Child Payment.

Our Local Delivery service will commence on 26th July 2021 in the three Child Disability Payment Pilot areas - Perth and Kinross, Dundee and Western Isles and will be available throughout Scotland in all 32 Local Authorities in Autumn 2021.

Local Delivery staff will provide pre-claims advice across the country and support and encourage people to take up the payments that they are entitled to. We will be mobile and flexible, travelling to and operating from locations across local areas and within locations that people are familiar with and already make use of. This will be from permanent co-located delivery sites and outreach venues such as community hubs, GP practices and libraries. Additionally we will offer services in a client's home and within prison or hospital settings.

#### People

We currently have 120 staff in post to support the Child Disability Payment Pilot and the subsequent national launch of the Child Disability Payment.

We have commenced a recruitment campaign for additional Team Leaders and Client Support Advisers to support the transfer of existing Disability Living Allowance Child cases from Department of Work and Pensions and the Adult Disability Payment Pilot. These staff will be brought into the Agency in tranches from early Autumn 2021. Once fully operational, there will be at least 400 staff spread across all local authority areas in Scotland.

The Local Delivery team comprises of the following job roles:

**Administrative Team** –will undertake the administrative tasks to support appointment bookings. Tasks will include speaking to clients to book/ amend/ cancel video, telephony or face to face appointments, arranging interpreters and booking transport for the Client Support Advisers.



**Client Support Advisers** –will meet with, and support clients during an appointment, assisting with application completion, providing advice on our range of benefits and signposting to other support services where applicable.

**Client Support Team Leaders** –will manage the Client Support Advisers in each of the 32 local areas, co-ordinating services and availability across the regions.

**Local Delivery Relationship Leads** –will engage with local organisations and stakeholders, championing Local Delivery in the community. This will involve participating in and influencing local network groups, such as financial inclusion networks and poverty reduction groups. They will raise awareness of Social Security Scotland, the devolved benefits and our access channels to encourage benefit take-up. They will deliver benefit awareness events, work collaboratively with and seek feedback from local stakeholders to improve our service and make best use of our combined resources to benefit local people.

## Training

Job specific training routeways have been developed for each role and provide a blended learning approach for staff. The training routeways will provide our people with the necessary skills and knowledge to provide support.

The training routeways contain:

- mandatory learning modules e.g. health and safety, lone working and information security.
- technical modules e.g. benefit knowledge, operating processes and systems.
- soft skills e.g. Poverty, mental health awareness, handling difficult situations and conversations.

For those Local Delivery staff who have been redeployed to other areas, plans are underway to refresh their knowledge and skills.

Child Disability Payment training is scheduled for the 19 pilot staff consisting of Client Support Advisers, Client Support Team Leaders and administrative staff. A further 19 Client Support Advisers will be trained to provide additional capacity if needed. Alternative work has been identified if the demand for additional support is not required.

## Delivery Locations

Local Delivery locations have been identified based on feedback from experience panels and by working alongside community partners including the voluntary sector. This insight helped to identify venues that are easily accessed and which many of our clients already make use of. To further support our decision making on delivery



venues, an accessibility toolkit was developed by Inch Architecture. Final recommendations on our venues were submitted to and signed off by the Local Delivery Project Board to ensure appropriate governance and value for money.

Local Delivery staff will operate from different locations on different days and times, making it easier for people to access a range of support in the heart of communities. Support will be provided for all new and existing Social Security Scotland benefits as required from Outreach venues across the three pilot areas. Work is already well underway to identify and secure suitable locations across Scotland in preparation for the national launch of Child Disability Payment.

## **Operating Systems and Tools**

A range of systems, processes and applications have been developed to enable the delivery of a local service:

Appointment Booking Tool – the tool will enable the booking and monitoring of Local Delivery appointments. In addition, the booking tool will hold information on the accessibility characteristics of our venues. This ensures that, in discussion with our Admin team, we are able to book the most suitable venue and appointment time to meet the individual needs of the client.

Application Capture Tool – the tool will allow us to efficiently capture a client's application digitally without the need for re-keying, enabling electronic transfer of applications into the organisation, whilst safeguarding information and our people. This tool is available off-line and reduces the need for paper documents.

Lone Worker app – this is an additional health and safety tool which will support Local Delivery staff to operate in a safe and secure manner. The app will allow Client Support Advisers to check-in and raise an alert for support where they consider their safety to be compromised.

A range of travel solutions will be available to support our mobile staff, recognising the challenges of travelling in different areas of the country. Consideration will be given to the most efficient and effective mode of transport taking into account our carbon footprint whilst also making best use of time and resources. The Client Support Advisers will have the option to utilise pool cars, hire cars, car clubs, grey fleet or public transport to meet their needs within the parameters of Social Security Scotland travel policy.

## **Client Support Advisers**

Initially the Local Delivery service will be accessed by appointment only. As our staff are mobile and work from a variety of locations, this approach will ensure a Client



Support Adviser is available on a date and at a venue that suits the client. As our service builds, we will review this approach.

Clients or their representatives in the pilot areas will be able to book an appointment by phoning the main telephony number. The Client Adviser will discuss the client's requirements and arrange for the Local Delivery admin team to book an appointment.

Local Delivery Client Support Advisers will answer any queries about Social Security Scotland benefits, help complete paper or online application forms, provide identity and document verification and help people submit "change of circumstances" information.

They will offer information on the process and timescales of redetermination and appeals but they will not provide advice or representation. Instead they will signpost or refer people to services that can offer this support, including Social Security Scotland's Independent Advocacy Service.

Client Support Advisers will not provide advice or support for DWP or Local Authority benefits but will signpost or refer people to services that can offer this support. Data sharing agreements and processes to enable signposting and referring into and out of our organisation is under development by our National Engagement Team and Programme colleagues.

## Stakeholders

Over the last two years, Local Delivery Relationship Leads have been building relationships with local authorities, health and social care organisations and the third sector in order to understand the local advice service landscape and promote Social Security Scotland and the benefits we deliver. They have integrated into the local advice services network, participating in financial inclusion, child poverty, poverty reduction groups and other networks within their local community.

To keep our key national and local stakeholders informed, our communication plans will:

- make people in the pilot areas aware that face to face support is available as an option, to access our service alongside post, phone and online.
- ensure people know what Local Delivery will offer
- ensure people in the three pilot areas know how to access our service
- ensure our key stakeholders that are based within, or provide services to, the Child Disability Payment pilot areas, are aware of our new service offering and can signpost their clients to the Local Delivery service where appropriate



In collaboration with our National Engagement Team, three targeted virtual stakeholder events will be delivered to advice & advocacy services, health and local authority officials, and general stakeholders. These messages will be reinforced through our stakeholder newsletter and a co-ordinated broadcast and social media campaign. Invitations to the stakeholder events will be issued by our National Engagement Team and the Local Delivery Relationship Leads.

## Communications

The communication plan developed by our corporate communications team is heavily stakeholder focused to ensure key organisations will be informed of the launch of Child Disability Payment and the availability of the new Local Delivery service in the pilot areas. The Local Delivery service will be promoted as an additional access route alongside our telephone number 0800 182 2222 and mygov.scot.

## Challenges and Future Ways of Working

There is anecdotal evidence that the ongoing pandemic has increased the pace of change in the way people access services, with more people utilising digital methods. However, we don't want a service that only works for the majority, it needs to work for everyone. As a result, alternative Local Delivery access routes are in development to provide support to those who would like face to face support but not in person or where COVID 19 restrictions prohibit in person services. We will now offer support to clients

- virtually via Video Calling, enabling visual interactions via a digital channel, letting clients see who they are talking to from the comfort of their own home or another place of their choosing.
- via telephone calls at a pre-arranged time. Given the needs of our clients, and the fact that some appointments may be long in nature, the appointment may be completed in one call or over a number of calls if this would better suit our clients' needs

As our service matures and we understand the effect that COVID 19 has had on the way our clients want to interact with us, we will continue to review our need for, and use of, the co-located venues we are using.

## 4. GOVERNANCE CHECKLIST



**Please ensure that you detail which Corporate Plan Strategic Objective the paper contributes to. These strategic considerations should be use to assist you with the content of your paper.**

Strategic Objective	Contribution
<p><b>Dignity, fairness and respect</b></p> <p>Delivering a service with dignity, fairness and respect at its core.</p>	<p>The paper contains information on our readiness to deliver a face to face service for the people of Scotland who wish to understand more or apply for Social Security Scotland benefits. It also details our relationships with local stakeholders and our approach to promoting access to Social Security Scotland benefits.</p>
<p><b>Equality and tackling poverty</b></p> <p>Promoting equality and tackling poverty.</p>	<p>The Local Delivery service will promote our benefits by building relationships with local stakeholders, delivering local information events and participating in local network groups to make sure people know what is available and how to apply.</p>
<p><b>Efficiency and alignment</b></p> <p>Ensuring efficiency and aligning our activities with wider public sector for the benefit of the people we serve.</p>	<p>We will complement existing services through co-location and collaborative working with local stakeholders.</p>
<p><b>Economy, society and environment</b></p> <p>Contributing to our economy, society and protection of our environment.</p>	<p>Local Delivery will promote Social Security Scotland benefits and support clients to claim their entitlement. We will contribute to improved benefit uptake whilst working closely with our National Engagement and Benefit Uptake policy colleagues. Our Local Delivery colleagues will be mobile and operate from a range of places to support client needs whilst adhering to Social Security Scotland travel policies. Our people will use the most efficient, economic and environmentally friendly means of travel, taking into account costs and savings in official time.</p>

**State here how the paper considers these areas and any consultation undertaken in the agency. Only complete the section(s) relevant to your paper.**

Strategic consideration	Impact
Environment	Not Applicable
Governance	Not Applicable
Data	Not Applicable
Finance	Not Applicable
Staff	Not Applicable
Equalities	Not Applicable



Strategic consideration	Impact
Estates	Not Applicable
Communications and Presentation	Not Applicable

### Impact Assessment

**An impact assessment must be carried out during the development of all new Agency policies and services and when making significant changes to policies and services.**

**If relevant, please lay out the key findings here.**

Equality Impact Assessment for Pilot has commenced, currently at framing stage where information is being gathered to understand the impact of the Local Delivery element of the pilot will have on protected characteristics within the following groups: clients, colleagues, stakeholders and partners. First actions are to identify sources of data and evidence, engage with key internal stakeholders to gather primary insight.

Timeline for Local Delivery Impact Assessment:

Stage 1 & 2: Framing/ Gathering evidence and consultation 10<sup>th</sup> May 2021 – 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Stage 3 & 4: Assess Impact, Identify Mitigation, Draft Summary of findings 7<sup>th</sup> June 2021 – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021

Stage 5: Draft Impact Assessment for Local Delivery/ Child Disability Payment Pilot to be submitted 10<sup>th</sup> July 2021 – 16<sup>th</sup> July 2021