



Deputy Secretary
Work & Inclusion
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8 January 2019

Dear Stakeholder,

As you are aware, the recent introduction of Universal Credit (UC) in the Ballymena and Antrim areas completes the transition to UC in Northern Ireland. This is a significant milestone for the Programme and means that new claimants that would previously have claimed any of the six benefits will now claim UC, with some exceptions.

Whilst the Programme will continue to improve ongoing operational performance, attention will now turn to the planning of the Managed Migration phase, whereby existing claimants who continue to be in receipt of one of the legacy benefits, will be contacted by the Department and moved across to UC.

To that end, we had previously advised of our plans to start this phase in July 2019, however the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) recently announced that it would commence a pilot in 2019. It was also recently announced that the Managed Migration phase would now complete in December 2023.

In light of these changes, and to ensure Northern Ireland has the opportunity to consider learning from the pilot in Great Britain, the Department for Communities will not now commence Managed Migration in July 2019. Instead, we will defer the beginning of this phase until 2020 and aim to complete by the end of 2023. We will

monitor progress in DWP during the pilot phase and keep you updated on the precise arrangements for Northern Ireland claimants.

As you are aware, the introduction of Universal Credit is one of the most significant changes to the Welfare system in over 70 years and represents a transformation in how we deliver work-related benefits. We will shortly begin an extensive programme of stakeholder engagement in preparation for this next phase and I look forward to continuing to work with you.

Please contact the UC Programme Director, David Sales by email UniversalCreditProgramme@communities-ni.uk if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read 'Colum Boyle', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Colum Boyle