



Report to Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee

29 January 2015

Report of: Director of Policy, Performance and Communications

Subject: Welfare Reform – January 2015 Update

Author of Report: Nicola Rees, Policy and Improvement Officer
0114 27 34529
nicola.rees@sheffield.gov.uk

Summary:

At the meeting of the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee in July 2013, members requested that an update on welfare reform issues be provided to Committee Members bi-monthly. This update report for January 2015 presents the most recent data relating to Under-occupancy (Bedroom Tax), Council Tax Support, Benefit Cap and hardship schemes/discretionary payments.

Type of item:

Reviewing of existing policy	
Informing the development of new policy	
Statutory consultation	
Performance / budget monitoring report	
Cabinet request for scrutiny	
Full Council request for scrutiny	
Community Assembly request for scrutiny	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	
Other	X

The Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee is asked to note the contents of the update report.

Category of Report: OPEN

Welfare Reform in Numbers – January 2015

3903

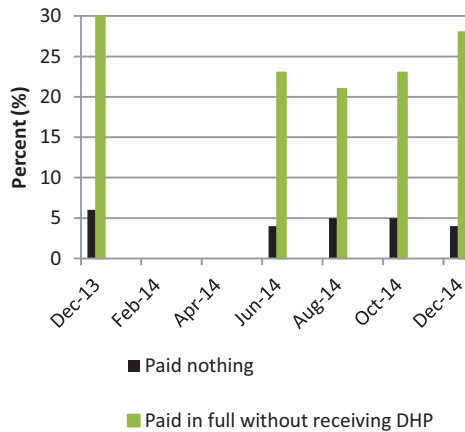
Sheffield council tenants are affected by under-occupancy rules ('bedroom tax') of a total of 39,878 council tenants

94 less than two months ago

28%

have paid in full the shortfall in their benefit resulting from under-occupancy without receiving a DHP* payment

up from 23% two months ago



4%

have paid nothing towards the shortfall in their benefit resulting from under-occupancy

down from 5% two months ago

31,552

working age tax payers in Sheffield receive council tax support



all of whom must now pay at least 23% of their Council Tax

compared to around 33,000 working age CTS customers this time last year

14,295

summonses have been issued to Council Tax Support customers since April 2014 for non payment of Council Tax



compared to 17,518 summonses issued to CTS customers during the financial year 2013/14 at end December 2013

£4.1m

= value of summonsed debt for Council Tax Support customers during 2014/2015

average amount of debt = £287**



compared to £4.6m summonsed debt for CTS customers during the financial year 2013/14 at end December 2013

£929,917

= value of Discretionary Housing Payment awards made since 1st April 2014



£493,697

= value of Council Tax Hardship Scheme awards made since 1st April 2014

All figures are to 31 December 2014

*DHP = Discretionary housing payment

** At this stage the full annual outstanding debt is summonsed, not the unpaid debt to that date

Welfare Reform: Further data updates

- At the end of December 2014, 151 households in Sheffield were subject to the Benefit Cap, the number of children within these households was 780.

This compares to 148 households subject to the Benefit Cap at the end of October 2014 (736 children).

- At the end of December 2014, 1153 LAS grants had been awarded since 1st April 2014.

This is an increase from 981 at the end of October 2014.

- At the end of December 2014, 485 LAS loans had been awarded since 1st April 2014.

This is an increase from 406 at the end of October 2014.

This page is intentionally left blank