**Universal Credit for Landlords**

An important feature of the Government’s Welfare Reform Agenda is the introduction of Universal Credit.

**This note gives a general guide to the changes relating to Universal Credit although each claimant will need to establish how they will be affected in their particular circumstances.**

In time and for working age people Universal Credit will replace:

* Jobseekers Allowance ( income based )
* Employment and Support Allowance ( income based )
* Income Support
* Tax Credits
* Housing Benefit

The position to 4th October 2017 is that Universal Credit has replaced Jobseekers Allowance and Housing Benefit for single unemployed customers who live in areas that are covered by Neath Port Talbot Council.

As from 4th October 2017 in Neath Port Talbot most new claims to the benefits listed above will instead be made to Universal Credit.

Also claimants currently in receipt of the above benefits who have a significant change in their circumstances will be required to make a claim for Universal Credit.

**With a few exceptions, for these tenants the council no longer have any responsibility for the payment of housing costs.**

Universal Credit customers receive a single monthly payment which consists of a Personal Allowance and a Housing Element. The customer is paid monthly in arrears.

The Housing Element **may** be paid direct to a landlord if a tenant has one month’s rent arrears due to persistent underpayment.

If a tenant has rent arrears of two months or more the Housing Element **will** be paid direct to a landlord and if requested deductions will be taken from the tenant’s Universal Credit payment to clear the arrears.

To request direct payments a landlord must complete Form UC47 ‘Landlord request for a Managed Payment.’ This is dealt with by Universal Credit and not the Council.

For further details relating to Universal Credit go to <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit>