

## QUESTIONS TO MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL: 21 FEBRUARY 2019

### Question 1

**From Councillor Wendy Marchant to Councillor Jill Wilshaw, Cabinet Member for Housing:**

'How much has Mid Suffolk rent arrears increased since the roll out of Universal Credit? And how many evictions have there been?'

### **Answer:**

The roll out of Universal Credit has been ongoing for more than 18 months with Stowmarket Job Centre become 'full service' from May last year.

Between April and November 2018, arrears have increased by 24% from £359k to £445k. Whilst we can identify £81k arrears are linked to tenants in receipt of Universal Credit, these tenants may have already had arrears prior to being in receipt of Universal Credit.

As a percentage of total debit our current rent arrears performance is 96.75% which is 1.25% below our target of 98%

We have made many changes to how we work to combat the effects of universal credit and it is testament to the hard work of our officers.

Officers have recently prepared a report for Joint Overview & Scrutiny which reviewed the implementation of Universal Credit within our districts.

There have been no evictions this financial year in response to rent arrears.