**Vulnerable Hub Meeting 22.01.2020**

**Attendees : Rachel, Rasha Alshalabi, Diana Minns, Fran Bailey, Dragan Cvejic, Margaret Saner, Simon Pearce, Donna Linsey, Dan Goddard, Mary Hyde, Jigna Vyas Gosal, Suzi Gilbey, Sarah Watkins-Groves, Richard Smith, Stephen McGoldrick, Greta Burrows, Amanda Freeman**

All minutes accepted from last meeting – Sorry for the delay in getting these out to everybody.

**Wendy** discussed the 7 new members of staff to Cambridge Jobcentre who will be starting 5 weeks of training this week and another group at the beginning of February. 2 will do Legacy benefits and 5 will become UC work coaches.

**Simon** from Cambridge Water briefly explained their new plans to help UC claimers by giving them 8 weeks free water. These plans are not finalised and will be discussed at a later date.

**Donna** raised concerns about UC claimants not receiving housing costs for an 8 week period meaning they are left to make up the balance.

**AP - Wendy to look into this and get back to us at next meeting.**

**Suzi** asked if the DWP provide grants for help with furniture for claimants moving.

**Rachel** explained that Citizens Advice have access to lots of grants so please refer back to Cit A.

**Simon** discussed concerns about partnership working from social housing partners. Simon has tried to get housing providers onboard regarding water tariffs and support for benefit claimants but is not having much luck.

**Rachel** asked if people can refer clients who need to make a claim for universal credit to contact Cit A. Rachel explained the importance of using the Citizens Advice or the funding will be cut in April.

[**Helptoclaim@cambridgecab.org.uk**](mailto:Helptoclaim@cambridgecab.org.uk) **or 01223 222660 for appointments with a Help to Claim Team member.**

**Wendy** asked that all support agency ask their clients to check their journals if there have been any changes on their claims as not accepting new commitments can mean that their claim is closed and they would need to reclaim. This can push back payment dates for the client putting them into further hardship. Any emails regarding vulnerable claimants should be sent to [cambridge.vulnerableclaimantqueries@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:cambridge.vulnerableclaimantqueries@dwp.gov.uk). Please do not send to our individual email address.

**Wendy** discussed with everyone making sure they have a signed right to share information, this can be taken verbally over the phone from the client.

**Rachel** explained her role around universal credit and the support she can give to new claimants from making a claim to support with budgeting during the 5 week wait till first payment.

Rachel is happy for you to email with any questions you may have.

[Rachelg@cambridgecab.org.uk](mailto:Rachelg@cambridgecab.org.uk)

**Wendy** asked **Dan** from YMCA about his job role, Dan explained that he works to support clients into work; he is currently working with Jo Conde and Dave to speak with the clients directly at the YMCA.

**Richard** asked about a question that had been asked previously relating to the service centre email.

**AP - Wendy to discuss this issue with Paul and update!!**

**Dragan** asked when does the work allowance come in to effect

Wendy explained once HMRC send through the real time earnings the deduction will start once earnings are notified.

**RTI ?**

**Wendy** explained that many claims were closed over the Christmas period due to the employers processing payments early, this meant that a client may have been paid twice within one assessment period zeroing out the UC payment.

All agreed that some training for employers would be good.

**Margaret** from Food Bank explained that if you are printing a food voucher out for a client then you must sign it in a red or green pen due to clients making photo copies. This will be passed on to issuers of food bank vouchers across the board.