

Direction of Robin Porter, Chief Executive, Luton Council, under [The Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit \(Electronic Communications\) Order 2006](#).

Luton Council, ('the authority'), in accordance with paragraph two of:

- Schedule 11 to the Housing Benefit Regulations 2006
- Schedule 10 to the Housing Benefit (Persons who have attained the qualifying age for state pension credit) Regulations 2006
- Schedule 9 to the Council Tax Benefit Regulations 2006
- Schedule 8 to the Council Tax Benefit (Persons who have attained the qualifying age for state pension credit) Regulations 2006
- Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2013

('The 2006 Regulations') hereby makes the following directions:

1. Provided an approved method is used, electronic communication may be used in the following circumstances:
 - a. making a claim for Housing Benefit or Council Tax Reduction
 - b. amending a claim for Housing Benefit or Council Tax Reduction
 - c. notifying a change in circumstance for Housing Benefit or Council Tax Reduction
 - d. making a claim for Discretionary Housing Payment
 - e. making a claim for Council Tax Exceptional Hardship
 - f. making an application for a Council Tax Discount
 - g. notifying a claimant of a decision via email to access the decision letter via the council's web portal
2. The following methods are approved by the authority for using electronic communication. as follows:
 - a. The claim form used must be that which is on the authority's website (www.luton.gov.uk).
 - b. The form must be completed in accordance with the instructions set out on the website.
 - c. The change of circumstances form must be that which is on the authority's website (www.luton.gov.uk).
 - d. Any electronic communication must be sent to revenues@luton.gov.uk or as directed on the authority's website.
 - e. Any person sending any electronic communication to the authority must clearly state their name, full postal address and claim number/council tax account number where appropriate. Any communication where the authority is unable to authenticate the identity of the sender shall be deemed invalidly made.
 - f. Any documentary evidence to support a new claim/change of circumstance/ Discretionary Housing Payment / Council Tax Exceptional Hardship should be uploaded on the authority's website (www.luton.gov.uk).
 - g. Automated downloads received from DWP, HMRC in the form of ATLAS, Real Time Information (RTi), Verified Earnings & Pensions (VEP), Universal Credit Data Share (UCDS).

3. The methods approved by the Authority for using telephonic communication are as follows:
 - a. interviewing the claimant by telephone and populating the approved claim or change of circumstances form or other approved format for amending existing claims
4. Notwithstanding the approved methods of communications in this direction, the authority may still require the claimant's signature to validate a claim, amendment or change of circumstance and to provide proof of original identity to support a claim where necessary.

Signed by

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Robin Porter', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robin Porter
Chief Executive
Luton Council

Dated 15 October 2019