27th March 2020

Dear Claire

I thought I would let you know what is happening with the Citizens Advice Service in Oxfordshire South & Vale.

We have now closed all our Advice Centre’s and are enabling our advisers and supervisors to provide a service from home. There are several technology, security and confidentiality issues to deal with but it’s going well. By the end of next week, we expect about 40 advisers and our full complement of supervisors to be operational. These advisers will be:

- dealing with clients on Advice-Line which is our phone advice service

- providing phone appointments on debt

- providing phone appointments on benefits including Universal Credit

- providing phone appointments on employment and other issues

The demand is substantial and help with applying for Universal Credit, enormous. We operate the Universal Credit Help to Claim service and in normal times, meet our target of about 600 clients each year. But this programme was never set up to deal with a National crisis. If the Universal Credit application process is overwhelmed, DWP will need to decide how to get money to people who urgently need it.

Do let me know if you would like any further information.

Kind regards



Jon Bright

Director, Citizens Advice Oxfordshire South & Vale