

DAVID REES AM

TEMPORARY OFFICE ARRANGEMENTS

Due to the increasingly serious situation with the Covid19 (Coronavirus) outbreak, my constituency office has been operating differently from Friday 13th March 2020 until further notice.

In line with advice from the UK and Welsh Governments, and for the safety of both constituents and my office staff, my constituency office is closed to visitors and I will not be holding any face-to-face meetings or appointments, including drop-in advice surgeries, in the coming weeks.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU NEED MY ADVICE

Please note that we continue to support constituents via our email and telephone system.

Post should be received as normal.

Please continue to use the following telephone number until further notice and leave a message. (The phone is on a transfer system so it may take a few more rings than normal. However we will pick up messages and then call you back at the earliest opportunity):

01639 870779

You can also email me: david.rees@assembly.wales

SOCIAL MEDIA

My website is: <https://www.davidrees.wales/en/>

I also have my Facebook page: **David Rees AM** on which I will post key public health messages.

And I am on twitter: **@DavidReesMS**

CASEWORK

All my staff have access to email and telephones so they will continue to pursue casework as best we are able.

However we must all recognise that many of the organisations that we deal with could be under significant pressure in the weeks ahead due to Covid-19. The NHS, care services and our local authorities have an important role in sustaining services as the virus will affect their staff and services.

VOLUNTARY SUPPORT

There are several groups across the constituency who are providing support to their local community. I am in the process of creating a list for all areas across Aberavon and will publish that as soon as possible. In the meantime you may wish to contact your local councillor who may have details of their local groups.

You can also contact Neath Port Talbot CVS for details on volunteering and they should be able to advise you and provide contacts in your area.

ADVICE AND HELP

As you may know a range of websites are offering advice about the current situation and the main ones are listed below:

<https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/latest-information-on-novel-coronavirus-covid-19/>

<https://twitter.com/WelshGovernment>

<https://twitter.com/PublicHealthW>

<https://www.facebook.com/welshgovernment/>

<https://www.facebook.com/PublicHealthWales/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

Given the speed at which advice can change these websites are worth checking.

BUSINESS ADVICE

I am aware that many local businesses are very concerned about the impact of the virus. Your initial queries should be directed via the

- **Business Wales** website which has a page on Coronavirus and support packages <https://businesswales.gov.wales/coronavirus-advice>

and their phone number is **03000 6 03000**

Other business and employment advice

I have been contacted by a number of local businesses and self-employed constituents and I know this is an uncertain time for you all.

Advice is constantly being updated but I hope the following websites and helplines may be useful if you need to speak to anyone seeking expert advice on the latest situation.

- **UK Government Business Advice** see the page here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19>
- **HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC)** has a dedicated helpline for businesses concerned about being able to pay tax due to COVID-19: 0800 0159 559.
- **ACAS** provides workplace advice for employers and employees. It has a page on Coronavirus that is being updated daily

<https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus>

and provides a helpline: 0300 123 1100.

- **Wales TUC** – the Wales TUC are supporting their members as are individual unions <https://www.tuc.org.uk/covid-19-coronavirus-wales>

For example the public services union:

- **UNISON** - <https://www.unison.org.uk/coronavirus-rights-work/>

WORK AND BENEFITS ADVICE

- **DWP** advice can be found here:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions>
- **Citizens Advice Cymru** :provide a wide range of advice about benefit rights and debt management etc
<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/wales/benefits/>.

OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS AND WEBSITES

Neath Port Talbot Council: <https://www.npt.gov.uk/> 01639 686868

UK Government Universal Credit advice:
www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/coronavirus

Coronavirus financial advice service:
www.moneyadvice.service.org.uk/en/articles/coronavirus-what-it-means-for-you

Transport for Wales Coronavirus travel advice <https://tfwrail.wales/covid-19>

Foreign Office travel advice: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>

Advice for people who have booked tickets to travel abroad:
<https://www.abta.com/news/coronavirus-outbreak>

Welsh Government schools and education advice: <https://gov.wales/education-coronavirus>

Welsh Government advice on social distancing: <https://gov.wales/how-reduce-risk-catching-or-spreading-coronavirus>

Welsh Government social and community care advice:
<https://gov.wales/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-social-or-community-care-and-residential-settings>

UTILITIES

Gas Leak - 0800 11 999

Power Cut - 0800 678 3105

Dwr Cymru - 0800 085 3968

OTHERS

Tai Tarian Housing - 0300 777 0000

Coastal Housing – 01792 479200

Port Talbot Food Bank - 07491 922211

Police (non-emergency) 101

Healthcare (non-emergency) 111 **Please only call this number if your condition has worsened and cannot be managed at home**

Live Fear Free - 0808 801 0800

Dan 24/7 (Drugs and Alcohol) - 0808 808 2234

The Samaritans - 116 123

BBC tips on looking after your mental health: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-51873799>

Mental healthy charity Mind's advice on protecting your mental health: <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/>

Useful mental health helpline contact numbers:

- Mind – 0300 123 3393
- Samaritans Cymru – 116 123
- CALL Helpline Wales – 0800 132 737
- Hafal – 01792 816 600
- Bipolar UK – 0333 3233 880

PLEASE NOTE

As you will be aware this remains a fast moving situation so please check back with the websites regularly. We must all accept that if the impact of the virus gets more severe then serious disruption must be anticipated.

So please follow the public health advice and we can help each other to reduce the impact of this serious virus.