



Universal Credit Full Service in Sheffield- First Impressions

Summary

Sheffield's first impression of Universal Credit Full Service mirrors all the problems that have been experienced elsewhere in the country and are well-documented by a range of evidence reports produced nationally by Citizens Advice.

Recent Government announcements and a recent High Court Challenge suggest that there is a growing realisation of the need for a Root and Branch review of Universal Credit to ensure it works effectively for all, including vulnerable people who may need it most. This review must involve engagement with all stakeholders across sectors.

Pending such a review we are calling for immediate remedies to mitigate some of the negative effects experienced by those claimants unable to manage the demands of the new system. Further details and explanatory notes below.

These are:

- **Increased resources for the DWP Universal Credit helpline**
- **Transparent and workable arrangements for all "non-digital" claimants**
- **Telephone facilities for claimants in Job Centres alongside digital access**
- **A system to register date of claim pending submission of full information and evidence**
- **Improved protections for vulnerable claimants**
- **Better training for all DWP staff dealing with UC claimants**
- **Compensation where people have been wrongly directed to claim UC**
- **Immediate implementation of improvements already announced.**

It is still early days for us in Sheffield in terms of analysing the Impact of Universal Credit as we weren't fully "live" on the full service across the City until 12 December 2018.

While Universal Credit may be working for some, there are significant numbers of people who are having problems-many of whom are in vulnerable situations and most in need of support.