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Paul Gray CB
Chair
Social Security Advisory Committee
5th Floor
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17 August 2015

Dear Paul,

Social Security Advisory Committee Review Of Localisation And Social Security

Thank you for sending me a copy of the committee's recent review into Localisation and Social Security. The Government strongly supports the principle of localisation and has long valued the importance and benefits of working locally across the Jobcentre Plus network. Freedom and flexibilities in Jobcentre Plus have helped to better serve the needs of claimants and support the local labour market. We work closely with local authorities, community groups and charities to join-up delivery.

Although the Government will continue to primarily deliver social security benefits through a national framework, we will absolutely support and continue to build local partnerships. For example, in the North-East of England our offices have worked closely across the voluntary sector, education, local authority and local employers to give support to young people not in education, employment or training. In West London a Mental Health Increased Access to Psychological Therapies pilot for the first time saw a real integration of services between Department for Work and Pensions, Department for Communities and Local Government, local authorities and Department of Health. In North Lincolnshire, Jobcentre Plus used both Flexible Support Fund and past experience in utilising the Wage Incentive to create employment opportunities for unemployed local young people. The success of these led to a partnership with North Lincolnshire Council, who funded further such programmes and built new partnerships with the local private sector to create more jobs.

Similar pilots will continue to be rolled-out, and we await with great interest the early findings from these localisation programmes.

I am grateful to the committee for their consideration of these matters.
Please find my response attached.

Yours sincerely
David

Lord Freud

Minister of State for Welfare Reform