

## Will Quince MP – Minister for Welfare Delivery

### Weekly Note - Week commencing 28<sup>th</sup> September

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Dear Thérèse,

This week I've had several meetings with stakeholders. I joined a virtual employment scheme operated by a housing association for vulnerable people. It was great to hear a number of participants have applied to join DWP on the recent Work Coach recruitment campaign. I also met Action for Children, CPAG and the Children's Society where we discussed maintaining the UC £20 Standard Allowance increase and tackling child poverty broadly. The British Red Cross also raised the same points.

The meeting we had with officials on poverty was helpful. I think we are in agreement about the need to focus on policy priorities. As you know, my preference is to maintain the £20 increase to the Standard Allowance permanently but appreciate the concern that HMT may not be supportive. I think we have a strong argument about why it's sensible to maintain it. I absolutely agree with you that we should come up with an alternative plan should that fail; maintaining the £20 increase to the Standard Allowance for a year and looking at more wide scale reform. If you would like me to explore this further, I am happy to. It would be great to discuss at our next 1:1 if you would find that helpful.

**NR** and I also met with officials to discuss Food Banks and JCPs. It's come to light there's disparity in terms of some JCPs signposting people to Food Banks and others referring. The policy is the former and **NR** and I have suggested strengthening this guidance. I believe you will receive this advice shortly to provide a final steer.

I am due to chair my UC programme board w/c 26<sup>th</sup> October. We are just finalising dates. I will use this as an opportunity to first understand what is in the pipeline and where there are opportunities to accelerate/change priorities. As I've said before, I am very keen to accelerate the changes we have announced on the repayment of advances to go-live sooner. It's scheduled for October 2021 and I would like for it be done early next year should there be capacity.

**NR** and I had another session as part of our major projects ministerial course – it is progressing well and we're enjoying it. **NR** is a guest presenter in a few weeks!

Thanks,  
Will