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Dear Councillor Cunliffe

Thank you for your letter of 6 February to the Secretary of State about the Get Britain Working White Paper. I am replying as the Minister for Employment, and I apologise for the delay in doing so.

I would also like to thank you for your support of the Government's recent proposals and shared aspiration to bring down the number of economically inactive people. I appreciate you taking the time to review the Get Britain Working White Paper proposals and for sharing your feedback. I agree – there is more that can be done to ensure these proposals address the issues faced.

We recognise that achieving these ambitions requires a different approach in how our departments operate, both with local areas to develop their Local Growth Plans, and between Departments, feeding into the Economic Growth and Breaking Down the Barriers to Opportunity Mission Boards.

For labour market issues specifically, these mission boards are complemented by a government architecture that supports a coherent approach to skills, health, migration and labour market policy. This architecture recognises that the labour market – at both national and local levels - is a product of factors stretching beyond the preserve of a single Department and that achieving the number one mission of economic growth requires Departments to think and work beyond their usual roles and boundaries, looking outwards to engage business, trade unions and local leaders. Across Government, we will achieve our goals in the labour market through collaborative working, including:

- the Department for Business and Trade's Employment Rights Bill and Industrial Strategy Council to make work more secure, boost wages, and help working people thrive.

- the Department for Education's creation of Skills England to bring together the fractured skills landscape and create a shared national ambition to boost the nation's skills; and,
- the Home Office's strengthening of the Migration Advisory Council to join-up migration and skills thinking.

We agree that we need to acknowledge the regional variation in economic inactivity levels and tailor approaches to tackling the problems faced. This is why we are changing our approach to employment support, to empower local areas to target their own needs through analysis of data and joining up existing work, health and skills support. The reforms that champion a local-led approach include plans for local Get Britain Working plans, Inactivity and Youth Trailblazers, Connect to Work and a new Jobs and Careers Service. The reforms give local areas more responsibility over the design and delivery of employment support than ever before.

Local Get Britain Working plans are central to our ambition for a thriving labour market, as they will be tailored to an area's individual needs, enabling us to target inactivity in all areas, especially those with the highest rates. They are intended to develop a whole system approach to tackling supply side and demand-led challenges within local labour markets.

I am pleased you recognise the value of Trailblazers. The Department for Work and Pensions will continue to work closely and at pace with Mayoral Authorities to mobilise these trailblazers to ensure we learn and use this to inform future policy design.

As part of the White Paper, we have commissioned an Independent Review into the role of the employer in creating and maintaining healthy and inclusive workplaces and tackling health related economic inactivity. The review published findings from its discovery phase on 20 March 2025 and is now engaging with stakeholders. Further information on the review, including how to respond and provide feedback, can be found on the Government website at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/keep-britain-working-review-discovery](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keep-britain-working-review-discovery). The review will make recommendations to the Government in Autumn 2025.

I would like to assure you that we recognise the challenges faced and the scale of our ambition. We remain committed to working collaboratively with you and other stakeholders to achieve these ambitions.



**ALISON MCGOVERN MP**  
**MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT**