

# Press release: £35 million of innovative employment schemes to benefit thousands of disadvantaged people

The schemes will be developed and delivered by 6 combined authorities in partnership with the government. The specialist tailored support is expected to help over 18,000 people – including disabled people and older people – tackle long-term barriers to work and in-work progression.

Up to £28 million has been committed by the Department for Work and Pensions for the schemes. They include:

- a 'Health and Care Sector Progression Academy' to train social care workers in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
- an 'early intervention' scheme in Sheffield to prevent people from long-term unemployment
- a new business-led training hub for modern work skills in the Tees Valley

Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, David Gauke said:

We have record numbers of people in work which is great news, but there are still people missing out on the available opportunities because of barriers to employment.

These pilots are yet another step forward in our efforts to help people of all backgrounds enjoy the benefits of work, and will boost the wide ranging support we currently offer through local experts like Jobcentre Plus.

Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Sajid Javid added:

As part of the devolution revolution we've handed swathes of power and significant investment to help boost jobs and growth across the country.

Now we're going even further to support 6 areas with devolution deals by working with the new combined authority mayors to pilot innovative employment schemes.

These pilots will trial new approaches to help the most disadvantaged people in our society to get the security of a good job and a regular pay packet, helping to build a country that works for everyone.

Commenting on the 'Health and Care Sector Progression Academy' pilot, Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, James Palmer said:

This is a prime example of the benefits Cambridgeshire and Peterborough will receive because of our devolution deal with central government. The additional £5.2 million is set to create 600 new apprenticeships, providing us with an opportunity to upskill local people whilst supporting the health and care industry. I am excited to see this pilot develop and help us make a difference in the county.

Commenting on the new business-led training hub, Tees Valley Mayor, Ben Houchen said:

Over the last 4 years, the unemployment rate in the Tees Valley has halved. Our economy is growing, and more people are in work providing for themselves and their families.

Things are getting better, but there remain stubborn barriers to work. This new investment from the government, secured because we have a mayor, gives us a unique opportunity to address long-term unemployment.

Today I'm calling on local support services, voluntary organisations and local councils to work together to provide the best possible support to help people back to work.

These new pilots were agreed with 6 combined authority areas as part of ground-breaking devolution deals and the government's plan to hand new funding and powers back to local areas across the country. These schemes are aimed at boosting growth and jobs by working with the new combined authority mayors.

This announcement follows on from the [Work, health and disability: improving lives](#) green paper, which marks the next stage of the government's action to confront prejudices and misunderstandings within the minds of employers and across wider society.

In total, 6 combined authorities with a devolution deal will receive support from government.

## **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority**

Create a new Health and Care Sector Progression Academy to train those outside the sector to gain employment, and help those already working in the sector to progress.

## **Tees Valley Combined Authority**

Create a Tees Valley Hub to join up the services available to the individual and offer key workers to provide one-to-one support.

## **Sheffield City Region Combined Authority**

Implement a new early intervention system for individuals identified as being at high risk of becoming long term unemployed.

Leader of Rotherham Borough Council and Chair of the Sheffield City Region Skills, Employment and Education Board, Councillor Chris Read said:

I am very pleased to see this pilot, which will help underpin the inclusive approach of the Sheffield City Region. We are in the vanguard of this work. As we see the numbers of our high value jobs growing we are ensuring that no one in our communities misses out on this growth.

## **West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA)**

Testing the value of utilising social networks and social capital in removing barriers to paid employment.

WMCA lead member for skills and productivity and leader of Coventry City Council, Councillor George Duggins said:

Supporting those who need it most is a fundamental value for the WMCA and why we will be using this pilot scheme to help disadvantaged people into work.

Having a secure and properly paid job is one of the most effective ways for people to improve their quality of life but we have to make sure that everyone in society benefits from the job opportunities being created, especially those on low incomes and the young, unemployed people so they can reach their full potential.

## **West of England Combined Authority**

Set up a new system which supports individuals trapped in low paid jobs to achieve in work progression through tailored interventions.

West of England Mayor, Tim Bowles said:

This is an important project that will help improve the skills and opportunities of up to 3,000 adults across the region. It will help grow our skills base to ensure a stronger economy and higher

quality of life for all.

Through this scheme, we will work with individuals who are already in employment, claiming in-work benefits and are social housing tenants. We will help them raise their own skill levels and gain more secure and higher-quality jobs.

I am committed to improving people's skills and supporting our residents to benefit from the prosperity and opportunities available in the West of England region.

## **Liverpool City region**

Test a new approach which focuses efforts on households where 2 or more adults are out of work.

Liverpool City Region Metro Mayor, Steve Rotheram said:

Improving the employment and skills prospects for our residents is a key priority for the combined authority. Our Households into Work programme is an example of where assisting our residents with tailored support will help them to prosper, as well creating opportunities that they might previously not have been able to access. I look forward to seeing this programme develop over the coming months.

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