

Press release: Amber Rudd: Harlow Jobcentre Plus is backing the jobseeker

Amber Rudd has set out a fresh approach to Universal Credit, including help for claimants to access money more regularly and working with private landlords to avoid rent issues.

Making her first visit since her [announcement about the future of the new benefit](#), Amber Rudd will visit the Jobcentre Plus in Harlow to meet staff and charities working together to help people into employment.

There are more than 68,000 people who've moved into work in Essex since 2010 – delivering a record employment rate of 78.4%, above the UK average.

Work and Pensions Secretary Amber Rudd said:

For the vast majority of people it is ultimately work, not benefits, which provides the route to a better life, so it's excellent that staff at the Harlow Jobcentre Plus are already working hard to support local people into employment.

I've seen that Universal Credit is a force for good, but it's important to remember that universal should not mean one size fits all.

So I want to understand how it is working for different people across the UK and how we can best support these different needs.

The changes I've announced will help make sure everyone can reach their full potential, ensuring that work always pays and protecting those who cannot work from hardship.

Since her appointment in November, Amber Rudd has been reviewing the government's key welfare reform, Universal Credit, which replaces 6 different benefits with one single payment.

Earlier this month, Rudd announced that the government will not extend the 2-child limit on Universal Credit for children born before April 2017, when the policy came into effect, benefiting around 15,000 families.

She also announced changes designed to make Universal Credit fairer, including pilot schemes to provide more frequent payments for new claimants, a new online system for private landlords and a more flexible approach to childcare provisions.

Her visit to Jobcentre Plus in Harlow will be an opportunity to understand

how the new benefit is working for the community and she will be discussing that with the local Citizens Advice, Shaw Trust and Streets2Home, a homeless charity based in Harlow.

Local MP Robert Halfon will also join the visit to explain how the benefit system is helping his constituents.

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 3267 5144

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[News story: New funding for UK organisations to innovate with global partners](#)

UK organisations will be able to get funding to participate in a collaborative international programme that aims to speed up the time it takes to get highly-commercial innovations to market.

Innovate UK has up to £6 million to support organisations to work with partners in Europe and beyond to advance disruptive technologies – from tiny, micro and nano electronic devices to the next-generation 5G network.

It is part of the [EUREKA Cluster programme](#), which brings together ‘cluster’ countries to collaborate on projects in strategically-important areas of industry and become globally competitive.

Previously, if UK organisations wanted to participate they could only do so as a non-grant claiming partner.

The funding competitions are in 3 cluster areas and will be run across 2019.

Micro and nano electronics

The [PENTA cluster](#) supports research, development and innovation in micro and nano electronic-enabled systems and applications.

The aim is to grow the electronics, sensors and photonics community, build knowledge and expertise, and quickly exploit ideas that will give a competitive advantage.

There is up to £2 million for UK organisations for projects in:

- electronic components and systems, particularly focusing on the value chain

- power electronics
- large area electronics
- sensors and sensor systems
- photonics

To be eligible to lead a project and make a full funding application, organisations first need to submit a project outline.

Supporting the development of 5G

Part of the programme cluster for next-generation telecommunications, [CELTIC-NEXT](#) is specifically interested in 5G technologies.

5G – the latest iteration of the mobile network communications system – will be much faster and open up new uses for mobile data, helping to transform the digital economy.

UK innovation projects could share up to £2 million to look at applications and services that leverage 5G networks, such as:

- the Internet of Things
- infotainment mobile services, such as websites and social media apps
- immersive content production and distribution, such as virtual, augmented and mixed reality

They could also incorporate artificial intelligence or satellite communications.

Applicants to CELTIC-NEXT do not need to submit a project outline. Instead, they need to apply for funding with a project proposal.

UK organisations can go to an event in London on 5 February 2019 to get more information about the competition and find project partners. [Sign up to attend](#).

Smarter manufacturing

The third and final funding competition will be in advanced manufacturing, known as the [SMART Cluster](#).

There will be up to £2 million for UK organisations to collaborate with international advanced manufacturing businesses and researchers on projects that are close-to-market.

Focus areas for projects include:

- advanced manufacturing processes
- intelligent and adaptive manufacturing systems
- digital, virtual and efficient companies
- person-machine collaboration

- sustainable manufacturing
- customer-based manufacturing

Projects could consider how their work might impact on core sectors, including aeronautics, automotive, railways and capital and consumer goods.

The competition is due to run in autumn 2019. Details of the opportunity including the scope will be released nearer the time.

[News story: Police and National Crime Agency pay review bodies appoint new chair](#)

Anita Bharucha will oversee independent recommendations on police and NCA officer pay.

Anita Bharucha has been a member of the PRRB since December 2014. Her appointment as chair commenced on 18 December 2018 and will last for three years.

Ms Bharucha is currently Chief Operating Officer of the Smith School of Enterprise and Environment at the University of Oxford. She also chairs the audit and governance committee of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority.

Furthermore, the Home Secretary has appointed four members to sit on the PRRB and NCARRB. The appointees are Andy Bliss, Richard Childs, Patrick McCartan and Trevor Reaney.

Mr Bliss QPM had a career of more than 20 years in policing, most recently serving as chief constable of Hertfordshire Constabulary between 2011 and 2016.

Mr Childs QPM served as a police officer for 30 years and has also ran his own private consultancy across various industries, including security and policing.

Mr McCartan CBE has previously chaired the Independent Financial Review Panel of the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Police Pensions Board Northern Ireland.

Mr Reaney CBE most recently served as Clerk and Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Assembly between 2008 and his retirement in 2016. He was also previously the Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Policing Board.

The PRRB makes independent recommendations concerning the pay and conditions

of police officers to the Home Secretary and the Northern Ireland Minister of Justice.

The PRRB's recommendations concern police officers at or below the rank of chief superintendent and cover allowances, hours of duty, leave and other matters.

The NCARRB makes independent recommendations to the government on the pay and allowances of NCA officers designated with operational powers.

Press release: Cardiff bankrupt sentenced for hiding assets from Official Receiver

On 23 January at Cardiff Crown Court, Darren Brian Pole (48) received a six-month sentence, suspended for two years, having been found guilty of failing to disclose an asset in his bankruptcy.

Darren Pole, a self-employed tiler, was declared bankrupt in October 2013 following a petition by the tax authorities for unpaid taxes of more than £100,000.

People who are made bankrupt have a duty to declare their assets, which will be used to pay off their debts. Initially Darren Pole told the Official Receiver that he only owned two properties that had no equity in them.

However, following the appointment of a Trustee in Bankruptcy, further investigations identified a third property owned by Darren Pole. The property was mortgage-free and had equity of at least £70,000, making it his most valuable asset.

When Darren Pole was confronted about his failure to disclose the third property, he stated that he was holding the property in trust for a friend, despite being shown as the owner on the Land Registry.

Darren Pole was prosecuted for making a material omission in a statement relating to his affairs in failing to disclose the asset. He stood trial at Cardiff Magistrates Court on 12 December 2018 where he was found guilty of the offence.

He was later sentenced at Cardiff Crown Court before HHJ Neil Bidder Q.C. where in addition to the suspended prison sentence, Darren Pole was fined £1,000, with 45 days imprisonment in default, and ordered to pay costs of £3,884, along with a victim surcharge of £150.

During sentencing the judge said: "It is essential that there be honesty in bankruptcy proceedings – the "bankruptcy bargain". Where people are not honest it is inevitable that a custodial sentence will follow'."

Rob Kilgour, Investigation Officer, of the Insolvency Service, said:

As a bankrupt you have a duty to declare all your assets as these will be used to clear your debts. But Darren Pole decided to take the law into his hands when he sidestep the rules and failed to declare the third property in order to avoid paying what he rightfully owed as a bankrupt.

Hiding assets is a serious offence and Darren Pole's sentence should serve as a stark warning to others that we will use all our powers to not only find your hidden assets but pursue enforcement action against those that flout the law for their own personal gain.

Darren Brian Pole is from Cardiff and his date of birth is November 1970. He was prosecuted under section 356(1) of the Insolvency Act 1986

The Insolvency Service administers the insolvency regime, investigating all compulsory liquidations and individual insolvencies (bankruptcies) through the Official Receiver to establish why they became insolvent. It may also use powers under the Companies Act 1985 to conduct confidential fact-finding investigations into the activities of live limited companies in the UK. In addition, the agency deals with disqualification of directors in corporate failures, assesses and pays statutory entitlement to redundancy payments when an employer cannot or will not pay employees, provides banking and investment services for bankruptcy and liquidation estate funds and advises ministers and other government departments on insolvency law and practice.

Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 7637 6498

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

[News story: Katie Kapernaros and John Osmond appointed as directors to the](#)

BPDTS board

Katie Kapernaros has been in information technology (IT) for about 30 years, mainly with IBM, in a variety of positions in Europe and Asia Pacific. She has managed many large digital teams and programmes, including the Sydney Olympics. As well as corporate governance experience, Katie has also been active in the voluntary sector, serving on a charity board and various sports committees. She was recently appointed to the board of The Property Ombudsman.

John Osmond's 35 years experience in the IT and services industry encompasses senior management positions in alliance management, strategy, transformation consultancy, programme and risk management. As a non-executive, John has held positions in both the public and third sectors. He has been a governor of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy, a director of the Disabled People's Employment Corporation (formerly known as Remploy) and a director of the Compaid Trust, a Kent based charity supporting disabled people. He is also a Justice of the Peace.

Welcoming the appointments, Jeremy Moore, chair of the BPDTS board said:

I'm very pleased to welcome 2 new non-executive directors to BPDTS's board – Katie Kapernaros and John Osmond. Katie has a wealth of digital and governance experience, having worked for many years in senior executive roles at IBM in Europe and around the world. John also brings an extensive IT background along with an impressive portfolio of board positions in the public and third sector, including charity trusteeships and audit and risk management roles. We look forward to working with them.