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Following our discussions at the Roundtable on the 25 March and the announcement of the expansion of Universal Credit in north west England I wanted to update you on the progress of the Local Support Services Framework.

We recently held a series of successful co-hosted webinars for local authority and DWP colleagues and will be publishing the LSSF Expression of Interest Trialling Prospectus imminently on gov.uk. The prospectus sets out how partnerships can get involved in robustly trialling elements of LSSF over the next 12 months so we can learn more about what works in the delivery of local support services for Universal Credit. The prospectus has already been shared directly with Local Authority Chief Executives and JCP District Managers as key delivery partners in LSSF.

This formal trialling is not our only approach for learning about good practice examples of local support services delivery. In fact, we know that there are many great examples of this happening now, as I have seen in my visits to a number of partnerships. It is also critical we learn from the support already in place for vulnerable people in live UC sites. This support will expand as we further roll out UC in both geographical terms and claimant types and as we test our end state service.

I am grateful to all delivery partners for the innovation progressing across the UK, enabling diversity of local services to deliver universal, flexible support for all households - essential help for those with more barriers to work - both in our UC live service and partnerships across the UK. By optimising provision, securing value-for-money from early intervention, and working closer together, we can ensure we maximise the benefit felt by households from welfare reform.

The activity over the next year will contribute to the next definitive version of the LSSF which, as discussed with the LSSF Taskforce, will now be published in autumn 2015. This will allow us to take account of this valuable learning and evidence, and will assist with local authority resource planning for 2016, by the end of which we intend that all areas of Great Britain will go live with new claims for Universal Credit from all claimant groups. However, this information will not be our only communication on LSSF. We will share further update information in October 2014 and we plan to share examples of good

practice from partnerships across England, Scotland and Wales on a regular basis ahead of the final publication of the LSSF. I look forward to continuing to work with you in making LSSF a reality.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Freud". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lord Freud

Minister for Welfare Reform