



"Golden Hellos" for Local Jobless

I'm backing new help for people who lose their jobs including up to £2,500 'golden hellos' to encourage businesses to recruit and train local jobless people.

There are still 1167 vacancies in Corby and East Northamptonshire but we cannot afford to be complacent about unemployment.

In the last recession short term unemployment become long term unemployment because they didn't give people the help they needed.

The longer local people are out of work the more help they will get.

I urge local businesses to get in touch with Jobcentre Plus and to take advantage of the money we are putting in.

As part of a half a billion pounds package those unemployed for 6 months will get a guarantee of extra support.

We will help people pay the mortgage if the worse happens but I know people don't want benefits, they want a job so they can support their families.

Even in these tough times most people get work quickly.

But we need to do more so we are guaranteeing anyone who is still unemployed after 6 months new help to get a job.

I think we have a choice. We can invest millions in people's future now or pay billions in a future where people are stuck on benefits.

In Corby and East Northamptonshire at any time 270 would benefit from this new help with a range of new options available:

- **'Golden Hellos' - cash for employers to recruit and train unemployed people.**
- **Money and support for the unemployed to set up their own business.**
- **Training to improve skills to get a job.**
- **More chances to volunteer while looking for a job.**

Extra Support

The Extra support that Labour is offering pensioners during this winter, has been increases in the Winter Fuel Payment, an extra £60 on top of the Christmas bonus of £10 as well as an extra £100 million pounds allocated to the Government's Warm Front scheme which helps insulate homes for pensioners.

19,380 pensioners in Corby and East Northamptonshire will benefit from an increase in the Winter Fuel Payment and 23,480 will be receiving an extra £60 in their pocket *[If applicable: and many will be benefiting from cold weather payments of three times more than usual],*

It is critical that we continue to support pensioners with their heating and insulation in these difficult economic times.

NEW LAWS TO SUPPORT VICTIMS OF CRIME

Modernisation of the coroners system and better protection for witnesses during criminal investigations were amongst the new measures announced by Justice Secretary Jack Straw in Parliament this week when he published the Coroners and Justice Bill.

The Bill is part of Labour's aim to deliver a fairer, more transparent and responsive criminal justice system that puts the needs of victims at its heart.

I believe that putting the needs of victims and the witnesses of crime at the heart of the criminal justice system is essential. People tell me that they want to know that justice is on the side of the law-abiding majority.

One of the most important measures is extending the use of "special measures" in criminal proceedings (such as the use of live video links and screens around the witness box) so that vulnerable and intimidated witnesses can give their best evidence.

Another is to bring Investigation Anonymity Orders that will protect the identity of witnesses from the moment they contact the police.

This will give witnesses more confidence to come forward and giving them the support they need to testify in court. Their will also be tougher Sentences for Public Protection for a greater number of offences - particularly those relating to terrorism.

I will support this Bill in parliament and keep you up to date with its progress.

Real Help For Business

I know that some businesses in Corby and East Northamptonshire are finding it difficult to finance their current business plans. Not because their business has suddenly been transformed from a success to a failure; but because the credit crunch has impacted on the availability of capital and banks have changed their approach to risk, tightening lending conditions.

This means that access to finance, and working capital in particular, is an increasing concern to many businesses.

Labour has announced a support package to help small and medium sized businesses with loan guarantees and a new Enterprise Fund aimed at helping companies struggling to access finance for working capital and investment.

Labour's package consists of loan guarantees to the value of more than £20 billion as well as a new £75 million Enterprise Fund aimed at helping companies struggling to access finance. We are taking action to give real help to families and businesses now and for the future. By contrast, the Conservatives will do nothing

The measures include:

- ✓ A £10bn Working Capital Scheme, securing up to £20bn of short term bank lending to companies with a turnover of up to £500m.
- ✓ An Enterprise Finance Guarantee Scheme, securing up to £1.3bn of additional bank loans to small firms with a turnover of up to £25m.
- ✓ A £75m Capital for Enterprise Fund (£50m from Government augmented by £25m from the banks) to invest in small businesses which need equity.

For more information (including an initial appraisal for businesses on eligibility, and bank contact details), go to the Help with Finance web page hosted on www.businesslink.gov.uk/realhelp