

Dear Chancellor,

We are writing to request that you support trials of Universal Basic Income across The UK and that Guildford be considered as a site for one such trial- not least as a response to the ongoing economic shocks caused by coronavirus.

Hundreds of people in Guildford and millions across the UK have missed out on the government's support packages leaving countless families facing poverty and extreme hardship. We note findings that show Universal Credit is insufficient and has been linked to high mortality rates and believe that it is ill-equipped to support people through the kind of financial insecurity that many now find themselves in.

Guildford Borough Council passed a motion in support of UBI because we believe that innovative approaches have to be employed to create an income floor for everyone, allowing our families and communities to thrive. The pandemic showed that we urgently need to strengthen our social security system. The creation of a Universal Basic Income (UBI) – a regular and unconditional cash payment to every individual in the UK – could be the solution.

This Government promised to level up. What better way to level up than to guarantee every adult UK citizen a basic income. The security and wellbeing this would facilitate would truly allow us to build back better, whilst saving tax payers money that would otherwise go on social and medical care. Studies suggest, in fact, that such savings could cover the cost of UBI.

Local authorities across the UK (Liverpool, Sheffield, Hull, Norwich, Leeds, Belfast, Newry, Mourne and Down, Derry and Strabane, Edinburgh, Fife, Glasgow and North Ayrshire), the Scottish Government and the Welsh Senedd have all expressed their intention to trial a UBI. But they need cooperation and support from the DWP and HMRC to move forwards. We, as a cross party council, are calling on you and the government to take action to support these trials.

Your sincerely,

Leader

Deputy Leader

Leader of each party group

Councillors (optional)