



## Job Centre Reform Speech

26/06/2017

“Over the last few days, the Labour Party have been busy electing a leader of the Scottish Labour Party and today we have been able to confirm that /u/VendingMachineKing has been duly elected as the leader. I am excited to welcome him into the role and I look forward to working with him in the coming days leading up to the Holyrood Election in July.

Something that I have been working on recently is a reform around the Job Centre, particularly how the Department for Work and Welfare (DWW) staff treat young people and people who suffer from mental health issues. I believe that those two groups should be cared for even more under the DWW. Young people are a particularly vulnerable group, but young people with mental health issues must receive extra care.

I pledge to fight for three major reforms in the Job Centre system:

1. The introduction of a Youth Programme to give young people the opportunity to build their skills and work experience without the thirty-five hour job search requirement,
2. The introduction of legislation to protect mental illness sufferers from benefit sanctions without their case being reviewed by at least three decision makers, and only after a face-to-face ‘assessment’ with a decision maker will a sanction be applied,
3. To train all DWP staff in **mental health first-aid** and train all Job Centre staff in positive face-to-face communication skills.

Further to this, I will fight to ensure Scottish Labour are committed to increasing the Job Seekers Allowance tariff for eighteen to twenty-four year olds from the current £57.90 to £73.10 per week, which will close the age gap between JSA claimants. The current tariff is simply not enough money for young people who are living independently.

Reforms to the system must happen and they must happen now. Only Scottish Labour will make radical improvements to the Job Centre system so please, on July 6<sup>th</sup> vote Scottish Labour and vote **IamJamieP** for Central Scotland.

Thank you.”