

**Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)**  
**Central Freedom of Information Team**

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx@xxx.xxx.gov.uk

**Our reference: 4905**

**Date:** 23 December 2014

Dear R Davis

*Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on 9 November 2014. You asked:*

*Thank you for your reply dated 6th November 2014, which is helpful insofar that it does provide new information, which, as far as I am aware, has hitherto not been seen before.*

*However, your response raises new questions:*

1 - Within the rather brief "Operational Framework" which is rather vague and short, it refers to an "F&F Catalogue" - please provide a link to this catalogue so that all Yes's and Maybe's can be viewed.

2 - This F&F catalogue doesn't appear to answer my actual question though in any event, as I am surmising that this "F&F catalogue is a general "ideas sharing resource" (or similar) where DWP staff can suggest changes/improvements to how things are done on either a local or national scale.

*My specific question already posed, specifically asked whether local DWP staff operating in your jobcentre network, have the immediate scope to ignore published DWP policy (a significant amount of this DWP policy has been published by responding to this and many other FOI information requests which is all I reference in principle in my original enquiry) and operate independently of this published DWP policy?*

*If the answer to this specific question is "Yes" - please advise the process a single member of DWP staff, working in a local jobcentre somewhere in the country, would need to go through, or the considerations they would need to make, or the authority that they would need to obtain and from whom in order to ignore published policy and do something that is contrary to it? Please also provide all guidance that is issued either to your frontline staff, or any of their higher management structure that enables them to consider whether they can independently operate contrary to your published policy.*

*If the answer to this specific question is "No, they cannot ignore published DWP policy", please just say so in your response.*

## Response

I attach a copy of the Freedoms and Flexibilities catalogue.

As I explained in the response to your previous request, the Freedom of Information Act concerns the provision of recorded information held by public authorities such as DWP; the Act does not require that we create new information or generate answers to questions. Therefore, if a request is made in the form of a question, we provide the recorded information already held that answers the question.

The DWP Freedoms and Flexibilities approach and framework issued in my last response provides the process and considerations a member of staff would need to go through should they wish to operate outside existing DWP policy. When an individual takes an idea through the framework, risks and business benefits must be identified and key stakeholders consulted. A decision is not made in isolation. Once the change has been agreed it must be delivered in a consistent approach and monitored and evaluated.

If you have a specific complaint about service received from a Jobcentre, you may wish to contact the office directly. Further information is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/complain-jobcentre-plus>

If you have any queries about this letter please contact us quoting the reference number above.

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central Fol Team

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### **Your right to complain under the Freedom of Information Act**

If you are not happy with this response you may request an internal review by e-mailing [freedom-of-information-request@dwpgsi.gov.uk](mailto:freedom-of-information-request@dwpgsi.gov.uk) or by writing to: DWP, Central Fol Team, Caxton House, Tothill Street, SW1H 9NA. Any review request should be submitted within two months of the date of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office for a decision. Generally the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted our own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliff House, Water Lane, Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF

[www.ico.org.uk/Global/contact\\_us](http://www.ico.org.uk/Global/contact_us) or telephone 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745