Dear Bob,

PUBLICATION OF THE EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY

Today, the Government is launching the Education and Employment Strategy for adult prisoners. As you know, reoffending by those released from custody costs society around £15 billion per year. The overwhelming majority of prisoners will be released at some stage in their lives and so our vision is that when an offender enters prison they are immediately put on a path to employment on release. Progress has been made, but improvement is needed in key areas.

Work has the power to change people’s lives, especially those of ex-prisoners. A prison sentence rightly serves as a punishment, depriving someone of their liberty. However, for those offenders who want to turn their backs on crime, prison should also be a catalyst for change.

The strategy seeks to set out how we will ensure that prison education compliments prison work, is oriented towards employment on release and is integrated both into prisoners’ sentence plans and prison regimes. It explores how prisons can better link prison work to employment on release, provide placements in real workplaces, including through Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL), and engage more effectively with employers whilst providing effective, coherent supervision of prisoners on release.

Taken together, these measures are designed to produce a system in which each prisoner is set on a path to employment, with prison education and work geared towards employment on release. To deliver this important programme of reform, governors will be given the levers to make a difference, the support to make the most of new powers and accountability for delivering results.

It is with great pleasure that I would like to invite you to a Parliamentary reception to support the strategy. The event will take place at 12.45 on 6th June, in the Wilson Room, and is designed to be a drop-in event. It will be an excellent opportunity to hear from an ex-prisoner and meet with a range of employers already doing fantastic work in the criminal justice space.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and the Justice Select Committee for all of your help to date and I look forward to the work ahead.

RT HON DAVID GAUKE MP