



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 20 March 2015 and the information is correct at the time of publication (03:38 P.M., 20 March 2015). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

Questions marked thus **[R]** indicate that a relevant interest has been declared.

Questions with identification numbers of **900000 or greater** indicate that the question was originally tabled as an oral question and has since been unstarred.

ANSWERS**BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS****■ Adult Education**

Tim Loughton: [\[227789\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what estimate he has made of the level of funding his Department will provide to further education colleges for the provision of adult education in each of the next five years; and if he will make a statement.

Nick Boles:

The total budget for post 19 Further Education for 2015/16 is £3,741,472,000.

We do not have any budgets beyond 2015-16 as these will be agreed in the next Spending Review.

■ Adult Education: North East

Alex Cunningham: [\[227639\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what the budget for funding of adult skills in (a) the North East and (b) Stockton North constituency is for 2015-16; and what the percentage change is from that budget in 2014-15.

Nick Boles:

[Holding answer 19 March 2015]: The Skills Funding Agency does not allocate funding to specific geographical areas. The Agency allocates funding to colleges and training providers, some of whom operate on very local geographic footprints, whilst others provide training and skills services to learners and employers across the country. College and training providers are required to work with local enterprise partnerships and local stakeholders to ensure that what they deliver locally is responding to local needs.

■ Adult Education: West Midlands

Richard Burden: [\[227650\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what the budget for the funding of adult skills in (a) the West Midlands and (b) Birmingham, Northfield constituency is in 2015-16; and what the percentage change is from the 2014-15 adult skills budget.

Nick Boles:

[Holding answer 19 March 2015]: The Skills Funding Agency does not allocate funding to specific geographical areas. The Agency allocates funding to colleges and training providers, some of whom operate on very local geographic footprints, whilst others provide training and skills services to learners and employers across the country. College and training providers are required to work with local enterprise partnerships and local stakeholders to ensure that what they deliver locally is responding to local needs.

■ Adult Education: Yorkshire and the Humber

Nic Dakin:

[227607]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what funding has been allocated for adult skills in (a) Yorkshire and the Humber and (b) each parliamentary constituency in Yorkshire and the Humber in 2015-16; and what the percentage change is between that funding and the funding allocated in 2014-15.

Nick Boles:

[Holding answer 19 March 2015]: The Skills Funding Agency does not allocate funding to specific geographical areas. The Agency allocates funding to colleges and training providers, some of whom operate on very local geographic footprints, whilst others provide training and skills services to learners and employers across the country. College and training providers are required to work with local enterprise partnerships and local stakeholders to ensure that what they deliver locally is responding to local needs.

■ Conditions of Employment

Pamela Nash:

[227540]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how many staff in his Department and its executive agencies and associated bodies were engaged off-payroll in each of the last five years up to the most recent period for which figures are available.

Jo Swinson:

New tighter rules governing 'off-payroll' appointments in central government were established in May 2012 when the Chief Secretary to the Treasury published the Review of the Tax Arrangements of Public Sector Appointees.

The recommendations of the Review mean that the most senior staff must go on the payroll, and departments are now able to seek assurance in relation to the tax arrangements of their long-term, high paid contractors.

The Treasury has carried out two evaluations of compliance with the rules which were published on 11 March 2014 and 5 March 2015. The most recent review revealed that the large majority of central government departments are operating the rules effectively. The Treasury issued £3 million in fines in 2014 and 2015 to a small number of departments who did not fully comply with the requirements of the guidance.

Data on the number of off payroll staff engaged in the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and its Partner Organisations since August 2012 has been published in BIS Annual Reports and Accounts:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bis-tax-arrangements-for-off-payroll-appointees-august-2012-to-march-2013>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bis-tax-arrangements-for-off-payroll-appointees-april-2013-to-march-2014>

Earlier data is not available.

■ Further Education

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[227452\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what the average number of subjects or courses offered by further education colleges was in each of the past five years; and what estimate he has made of the average number of subjects or courses that will be offered by further education colleges in each of the next five years.

Nick Boles:

Information on the number of course undertaken by government-funded learners at Further Education providers in each academic year is published in the FE and Skills National Aims Report (link below).

The Department do not produce forecasts for the number of courses expected to be undertaken in a given year.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/378266/feandskills-national-aims-report-1314.xls

■ Higher Education: Bradford

Mr David Ward: [\[225608\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how many students from Bradford were the first to go to university from their family in each year since 2005.

Greg Clark:

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) collects and publishes data on students enrolled at UK Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

The Table shows the proportion of students from Bradford Local Authority area and the UK overall who started a full-time first degree course at a UK Higher Education Institution in the academic years 2008/09 to 2013/14 and who declared that their parents did not hold a higher education qualification. Comparable information is not available for the earlier years.

Information for the 2014/15 academic year will become available from the Higher Education Statistics Agency in January 2016.

Full-time first degree entrants domiciled in Bradford Local Authority and the UK whose parents do not hold a higher education qualification

UK Higher Education Institutions

Academic Years 2008/09 to 2013/14

Academic Year	BRADFORD			UK OVERALL		
	Percentage of entrants whose parents do NOT have any higher education qualification	Count of respondents	Count of students where information is unknown	Percentage of entrants whose parents do NOT have any higher education qualification	Count of respondents	Count of students where information is unknown
2008/09	60%	2,040	550	47%	270,345	91,080
2009/10	60%	2,280	560	47%	281,410	95,540
2010/11	58%	2,225	505	45%	280,600	90,800
2011/12	58%	2,445	510	45%	303,690	90,895
2012/13	59%	2,270	535	46%	275,430	81,585
2013/14	62%	2,745	390	48%	323,850	63,110

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Student Record.

(1) Domicile refers to a student's permanent or home address prior to entering their course.

(2) More information on how Parental HE is measured is available here:

https://www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php?option=com_studrec&task=show_file&mnl=14051&href=a^ ^PARED.html

■ Intellectual Property

Adam Afriyie:

[227518]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what steps he plans to take to clarify intellectual property regulations.

Mr Edward Vaizey:

The Intellectual Property Office as an Executive Agency of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills leads on intellectual property issues. The Intellectual Property Office offers a comprehensive range of guidance, self help tools and educational seminars which bring clarity to existing regulations for businesses and consumers in the UK and overseas. Full details are available on gov.uk. Where the Intellectual Property Office receives feedback or evidence that regulations require clarification, it will consider this and set out an appropriate plan for action. We have no immediate plan for new regulations.

Technology: Apprentices

Adam Afriyie: [\[227505\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how many apprentices were doing their apprenticeships in technology companies in (a) 2012, (b) 2013 and (c) 2014.

Nick Boles:

Information on apprenticeship starts by sector subject area and framework is published in supplementary tables to a Statistical First Release (SFR) in the FE Data Library:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-apprenticeships>

Apprenticeship data are not available by industrial sector.

CABINET OFFICE**Conditions of Employment**

Sir Hugh Bayley: [\[227990\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, (a) how many people and (b) what proportion of the workforce were employed on zero hours contracts in (i) York Central constituency, (ii) City of York local authority area, (iii) England and (iv) the UK in 2010 and each subsequent year; and what the average number of hours worked each week by such people was in each such year.

Mr Rob Wilson:

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the Authority to reply.

Attachments:

1. ONS Letter to Member - Zero Hour Contracts [PQ 227990 ONS 107.pdf]

Research

Mr Chuka Umunna: [\[227553\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what amount his Department and its agencies spent on research and development in each year since 2010-11; and what proportion such spending was of total departmental spending.

Mr Francis Maude:

Complete information is not held centrally.

Technology: New Businesses

Adam Afriyie: [\[227507\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many new technology businesses have been registered in (a) Windsor constituency, (b) Berkshire and (c) the UK since 2010.

Mr Rob Wilson:

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the Authority to reply.

Attachments:

1. ONS Letter to Member - Technology Businesses [PQ 227507 ONS 106.pdf]

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Affordable Housing: Blackpool

Mr Gordon Marsden:

[227929]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many affordable homes were built (a) for rent and (b) for purchase in Blackpool South constituency in each year from 2010 to 2015.

Brandon Lewis

From April 2010 to September 2014, 400 affordable homes have been delivered in Blackpool.

Statistics on total additional affordable housing provided in England and in each local authority district, including Blackpool, are published in the Department's live table 1008, which is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-affordable-housing-supply>

They include both newly built housing and acquisitions and do not show separate figures for rent and purchase.

These statistics are not available by parliamentary constituency.

■ Housing: Blackpool

Mr Gordon Marsden:

[227930]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many families were recorded as living in overcrowded conditions in Blackpool South constituency in (a) 2010 and (b) the most recent date for which data is available.

Brandon Lewis:

The social housing reforms in the Localism Act have given local authorities and social landlords the tools they need to tackle overcrowding; while retaining the reasonable preference provisions in the allocation legislation which ensure that overcrowded families continue to get priority for social housing. HomeSwap Direct is there to make it easier for overcrowded social tenants to swap with those who want to downsize. The removal of the spare room subsidy also encourages the more effective use of social housing, by addressing the under-occupation of family homes.

Our Affordable Homes Programme is on track to deliver 170,000 new affordable homes between 2011 and 2015, with £19.5 billion of public and private funding. A further £38

billion public and private investment will help ensure 275,000 new affordable homes are provided between 2015 and 2020.

Data on occupancy at the local authority level from the 2011 Census is published at:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/census/2011-census/key-statistics-and-quick-statistics-for-wards-and-output-areas-in-england-and-wales/rft-qs412ew.xls>

■ Housing: Construction

Sir John Stanley: [\[227732\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many private and public sector housing completions there were in England in each year from 1985 up to the latest year for which figures are available.

Brandon Lewis:

Annual statistics on house building completions by tenure in England are published in the Department's live table 244 which is available at the following link.

<http://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-house-building>

Taken together, house building statistics by housing association and local authority tenures provide estimates of total social housing completions, but these figures understate total affordable supply. This is because the house building figures are categorised by the type of developer rather than the intended final tenure, leading to under recording of affordable housing, and a corresponding over recording of private enterprise figures.

A more complete account of additional affordable housing including new build and acquisitions is provided for England and is published in the Department's live table 1009, which is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-affordable-housing-supply>

■ Non-domestic Rates: Lancashire

Andrew Stephenson: [\[228218\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the number of small firms and shops likely to be affected by the planned reduction in business rates in (a) Pendle constituency and (b) Lancashire in 2015-16.

Kris Hopkins:

The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced at the 2014 Autumn Statement an extra £650 million of support for 2015-16 business rate bills, bringing the total support of 2013 and 2014 Autumn Statement polices to £1.4 billion. This help includes:

- doubling small business rate relief for a further year. In England, this means an estimated 400,000 properties will pay no rates at all, while a further 200,000 properties will benefit from tapered relief;

- a 2% cap on the increase of the small business rates multiplier. This is a continuation of the 2% cap introduced in 2014-15 as part of Autumn Statement 2013 measures;
- increasing the temporary discount for shops, pubs and restaurants with rateable values below £50,000 from £1,000 to £1,500 for 2015-16, benefitting an estimated 200,000 properties in England; and
- extending the existing transitional relief scheme for two years for properties with a rateable value up to and including £50,000.

These measures are in addition to previous Autumn Statement measures that continue into 2015-16, including:

- a 50 per cent discount for 18 months to new occupants of vacant shops;
- allowing businesses to keep their small business rate relief for a year where they take on an additional property;
- business rates relief for empty new builds; and
- allowing businesses to pay their business rate bills over 12 months, in order to assist with their cash flow.

Central Government also now funds 50% of any additional local discounts granted.

The Department does not collect data on a constituency basis, but Pendle constituency lies entirely within the boundary of Pendle Borough Council. Table 1 (attached) shows the estimated number of properties in 2015-16 within the boundary of Pendle Borough Council that benefit from business rates measures extended in this year's Autumn Statement. Table 2 (attached) presents the same information for properties within Lancashire County Council.

Attachments:

1. Table 1 and Table 2 [228218 Stephenson.docx]

■ **Social Rented Housing: Blackpool**

Mr Gordon Marsden:

[227928]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many households in Blackpool South constituency were on local authority housing waiting lists in (a) May 2010 and (b) February 2015.

Brandon Lewis:

Statistics on the numbers of households on local authorities' housing waiting lists in each local authority district, including Blackpool, are published in the Department's live table 600, which is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-rents-lettings-and-tenancies>

These statistics are not available by parliamentary constituency.

In the Blackpool local authority area, housing waiting lists under the last Labour Government rose from 4,159 in April 1997 to 6,769 in April 2010. Under this Government, they have fallen to 4,843 as of April 2014.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Football: Qatar

Mr Gregory Campbell: [\[227864\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if he will make representations to FIFA on reducing deaths among workers constructing stadia and infrastructure for the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

Mrs Helen Grant:

The British Government takes the issue of migrant workers rights seriously and we would expect FIFA to do the same.

We are encouraged by the steps taken by the Qatari Government in response to concerns about the rights of migrant workers and continue to support efforts where we can. The Qatari Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy has responsibility for those working on 2022 World Cup infrastructure and has ensured that a Workers Charter is incorporated into all infrastructure contracts to protect workers.

DEFENCE

■ Air Force: Cadets

Mr Gregory Campbell: [\[227862\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what progress is being made by the RAF on recruitment to the Northern Ireland University Air Squadron.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Following confirmation earlier this month that the Royal Air Force would establish a Northern Ireland University Air Squadron at Aldergrove, two squadron staff posts are in the process of being established and expect to be recruited in time for the next academic year of 2015-16. There will be 24 student places from September 2015.

■ Armed Forces: Safety

Angus Robertson: [\[227404\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 11 March 2015 to Question 226517, if he will place a copy of the review by the Tornado Collision Service Inquiry Panel in the Library.

Mr Philip Dunne:

A copy of the review is attached.

Attachments:

1. 227404 - Tornado Collision Service Inquiry Panel [20140618-SI_Safety_Man_EP_MilCap_Response_REDACTED-O[1].pdf]

■ HMS Victory**Mr Kevan Jones:**[\[227989\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 16 March 2015 to Question 226869, for what reasons the Answer stated that approval for the Maritime Heritage Foundation to manage the site of HMS Victory 1744 has not been removed, when in his letter of 27 February 2015 to Lord Lingfield he stated that he had decided to withdraw that approval.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The letter of 27 February 2015 from my right Hon. Friend, the Defence Secretary, to Lord Lingfield concerns the withdrawal of the approval to recover at risk surface artefacts from the site of HMS Victory 1744, not the Maritime Heritage Foundation's management of the wreck site itself. The letter also made clear that the related issues raised in a Judicial Review application, that has now been withdrawn, are being considered by officials; it would therefore be inappropriate to comment until this process is concluded.

■ Reserve Forces**Dan Byles:**[\[227987\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether any recent study has been made of the value for money and operation of the Reserve Forces and Cadets' Associations.

Mr Julian Brazier:

An internal review of the Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Associations was undertaken between August and December 2014. The review was initiated in order to consider what Defence requires of the Associations and to propose any change to outputs, processes, structure or staffing that would better meet Defence needs. The recommendations resulting from the review are currently being considered as part of wider business as usual in the Ministry of Defence.

■ Tornado Aircraft**Angus Robertson:**[\[227978\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to paragraph 3 of Annex F of MAA RA 1210, how and when he expects the validity of Tornado GR4 ALARP statement to be decided by the appropriate court.

Mr Philip Dunne:

There are no current or pending court proceedings in which the validity of the Tornado GR4 As Low As Reasonably Practicable statement would be decided.

■ USA

Paul Flynn: [\[227420\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the statement by the Chief of Staff of the US Army that he was very concerned by the UK's defence budget.

Michael Fallon:

The UK has the second largest defence budget in NATO, and is meeting the target of spending 2% of GDP on defence. In addition the UK will spend more than £160 billion over the next 10 years on new and improved equipment for the Armed Forces.

EDUCATION

■ Absent Parents

Tim Loughton: [\[227792\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will update her guidance to schools on the release of reports and other information on the educational progress of pupils to non-resident parents; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Edward Timpson:

The Department for Education has no plans to issue guidance to schools on this matter. The Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005 (S.I. 1437) require maintained schools to keep curricular and educational records for each pupil, disclose these records to parents and pupils, and report, at least annually, to all parents on their child's progress and attainment.

Section 576 Education Act 1996 (applicable to The Pupil Information Regulations) provides that the definition of 'parent' includes all natural parents, whether they are married or not, and any person who has care of a child, irrespective of whether they are a natural parent or have parental responsibility.

The exception applies in circumstances where there is a court order limiting an individual's exercise of his or her parental responsibility which expressly amends their entitlement to receive such information.

If a parent feels that they are not receiving the statutory information to which they are entitled, under education law, from the school, they can complain formally to the school by following its complaint procedure.

These statutory duties do not apply to mainstream Academies or Free Schools. As an independent public body, an Academy or Free School is directly responsible, under the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA), for the collation, retention, storage and security of all information that they produce and hold. In an Academy or Free School, a pupil has the right to a copy of their own educational information under the DPA. In certain circumstances, requests for this information may be made by a parent on behalf of their child.

■ Children: Day Care**Adam Afriyie:**[\[227506\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent steps she has taken to help parents in work with the costs of childcare.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

The Department for Education understands that the cost of childcare can be a concern for many parents. In order to help support parents, the Department has increased funding in the early years from £2 billion to £3 billion a year over the course of this Parliament.

The Department has provided funding for 15 hours a week of free childcare for all three- and four-year-olds, and for disadvantaged two-year-olds. The funding for all three- and four-year-olds is worth £2,500 per child, per year to parents. This gives an additional £425 per child, per year, when compared to funding prior to the last election. The funding for approximately 40% of two-year-olds is also worth £2,500 per child, per year.

In addition, the Department is introducing Tax-Free Childcare, under which up to 1.8 million working families could benefit from up to £2,000 per child, per year.

For working parents on lower incomes, working tax credit pays up to 70% of their childcare costs. This could be worth up to £6,370 for their first child. Under Universal Credit, the subsidy rate will increase to 85% of childcare costs and support will be available, for the first time, to those working fewer than 16 hours per week.

Furthermore, the Department has taken action to give more choice to parents by creating child minder agencies and supporting schools to open nurseries and offer provision from 8am to 6pm. The Department is also introducing shared parental leave.

Sir Hugh Bayley:[\[227993\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the average cost per hour of childcare was (a) in a nursery and (b) with a child minder in (i) York Central constituency, (ii) City of York local authority area and (iii) England in 2010 and each subsequent year.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

The Department for Education does not record childcare costs for parents at constituency or local authority level. Furthermore, the Department does not record day care or child minder costs on an annual basis.

The Department's Childcare and Early Years Providers survey (2010) indicated that the average hourly fee charged by full day care providers for three-year-olds was £3.60. The same survey conducted in 2013 indicated a figure of £3.90 for three and four-year-olds. The average hourly child minder fee for children of any age was £3.80 in 2010 and £4.10 in 2013. These surveys are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/childcare-and-early-years-providers-survey-2010>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/childcare-and-early-years-providers-survey-2013>

The Family and Childcare Trust also conduct annual childcare cost surveys; these are available at:

<http://www.familyandchildcaretrust.org/childcare-costs-surveys>

■ Conditions of Employment

Pamela Nash: [227546]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many staff in her Department and its executive agencies and associated bodies were engaged off-payroll in each of the last five years up to the most recent period for which figures are available.

Mr Nick Gibb:

The number of staff who were engaged off-payroll in the Department for Education (including its Executive Agencies) can be found online at www.data.gov.uk.

The Department for Education does not collect data on the number of staff engaged off-payroll in its associated bodies.

■ Free School Meals

Greg Mulholland: [227625]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to ensure that wider provision of free school meals does not affect take-up of pupil premium funding.

Mr David Laws:

The Department for Education has communicated with schools and local authorities to remind them of the importance of working with parents to encourage those who meet the benefits-based free school meals (FSM) criteria to continue to register their entitlement. The department has made advice and guidance available to help them to do so, based on best practice and lessons learned in areas which have previously offered universal FSM whilst successfully maintaining their registration rates.

This includes the publication of a model registration form, based on forms developed by those areas, which schools can choose to use as part of their enrolment process to gather information from parents to enable them to undertake FSM eligibility checks.

We are looking closely at the data on registration for benefits-based FSM gathered through the January 2015 school census, and will take appropriate action if the census shows a significant drop in registration rates among infant-age pupils.

We are also exploring what opportunities exist for the more efficient identification of disadvantaged pupils, particularly in the context of Universal Credit being rolled out nationally.

■ Free Schools

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[227867\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether her Department plans to update the data contained in its publications of Capital funding for open free schools and Revenue expenditure for free schools before the dissolution of Parliament.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

The department has no plans to update the data before the end of March.

The department publishes capital funding once construction contracts are finalised and data checked, and update GOV.UK following that at this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/capital-funding-for-open-free-schools#history>.

Revenue funding data for free schools that opened in September 2014 will be published in due course. Project Development Grant (PDG) and Post Opening Grant (POG) revenue funding data for free schools that opened up until September 2013 has been published and can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/revenue-expenditure-for-free-schools>.

■ Research

Mr Chuka Umunna: [\[227557\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what amount her Department and its agencies spent on research and development in each year since 2010-11; and what proportion such spending was of total departmental spending.

Mr Nick Gibb:

The total amount the Department for Education and its agencies has spent on formal research and development in each year since 2010-11; and what proportion such spending was of total Departmental spending, can be found in the table below:

YEAR	RESEARCH SPEND ACTUAL (£M)	RESEARCH EXPENDITURE AS A PROPORTION OF TOTAL DEPARTMENTAL EXPENDITURE
2010-11	27	0.046%
2011-12	13	0.023%
2012-13	14	0.027%
2013-14	14	0.026%

The 2010-2013 data is available from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) online at:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcm%3A77-352137>. The figures we have supplied for research spend for the financial year 2013/14

have already been supplied to the ONS as part of the 2014 Government Research and Development Survey. This survey has yet to be published.

■ School Leaving

Adam Afriyie: [\[227568\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will estimate the proportion of students who left school having had practical work experience in (a) the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, (b) Berkshire and (c) the UK in each of the last three years.

Nick Boles:

Schools are not required to provide information about pre-16 work experience and therefore we do not hold the information requested.

■ Schools: Admissions

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[227869\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many planning areas in England are in need of additional primary school places by September 2015; in how many of those planning areas there has never been an application to open a primary or all-through mainstream free school; and how many of these planning areas have no open primary or all-through mainstream free schools.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

The Department collects information from local authorities on the number of school places in state-funded primary and secondary schools as part of the annual School Capacity Collection. Out of a total of 2,444 primary planning areas across England, there were 584 primary planning areas where the local authority forecast for 2015/16 (from May 2014) was greater than the capacity as reported at May 2014. This comparison of forecasts and capacities does not take into account the number of additional places that have been or will be created after May 2014, through targeted basic need projects, new free schools, and places being provided through local authority projects.

In the early stages of the free school policy, proposer groups were not obliged to provide a specific site for their proposed school so we are unable to ascertain the number of planning areas in need of additional primary school places in 2015 where there has never been a primary or all-through free school application.

As at May 2014, 573 of the 584 planning areas in need of additional school places by September 2015 did not have an open primary free school or all-through primary free school. Ten of these planning areas had a primary-phase free school open in September 2014.

Every free school has been opened in response to either the need to provide extra school places, the need to provide parents with greater choice or the need to provide more high quality school places. Almost three quarters of free schools have opened in areas with a forecast need for more places and 94 per cent of free schools approved since January 2014 plan to open in areas with a need for more school places.

Richard Fuller:

[227943]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will amend the School Admissions Code to allow schools to take into account the length of time a child has been on a waiting list in instances when that length of time has been longer than one year and that child matches that school's admissions criteria.

Mr David Laws:

The Department for Education currently has no plans to amend the School Admissions Code in this respect.

It is government policy that all school places must be allocated in accordance with each school's oversubscription criteria. Such criteria are determined following consultation with the local community and reflect local needs.

■ Teachers

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[227868]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many specialist teachers of (a) art, (b) history, (c) English, (d) physical education and (e) drama taught mathematics in state secondary schools in (i) 2009-10, (ii) 2010-11, (iii) 2011-12, (iv) 2012-13 and (v) 2013-14.

Mr David Laws:

The information requested could only be produced at disproportionate cost.

■ Teachers: Standards

Adam Afriyie:

[227517]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she has taken to enable people with local business expertise to enhance teaching in schools.

Nick Boles:

The government wants to see more schools and employers working together to help open young people's eyes to the world of work. We have funded a new, independent careers and enterprise company to help businesses and schools to engage with each other more easily so that young people get the inspiration and guidance they need to leave school or college ready to succeed in working life.

Business people also have an important role to play in school governance, bringing a range of transferable skills to help governing bodies carry out their demanding strategic functions. In May 2014 we launched the Inspiring Governors Alliance to bring together all organisations with a role to play in increasing both demand for and supply of high quality governors, particularly from the world of work. We have awarded £1m of funding in 2015-16 to embed a strategic partnership between SGOSS, Governors for Schools and the Education and Employers' Taskforce at the heart of the alliance to engage employers and help schools find the high quality governors they need.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE■ **Electricity: Prices**

Mr John Redwood: [227743]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what the average industrial electricity price is in the (a) UK and (b) US.

Matthew Hancock:

Estimates of average annual industrial electricity prices for IEA countries, including the UK and USA, are shown in Table 5.3.1 of DECC's publication Quarterly Energy Prices (QEP).

The table is available at the following web link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/388200/qep_531.xls

■ **Energy Supply**

Oliver Colvile: [227688]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, pursuant to the Answer of 9 January 2015 to Question 219617, whether further evaluation of the benefits of supporting projects of outside the UK has been undertaken since the publishing of that paper in August 2014; and if he will reconsider the expansion of the list of technologies eligible for support from UK CfDs.

Matthew Hancock:

The priority of the department is to finalise the implementation of the CFD scheme across the UK.

There has been no further evaluation into the benefits of supporting projects outside of the UK since publishing the paper in August 2014.

■ **Green Deal Scheme**

Jonathan Reynolds: [226627]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, pursuant to the Answer of 2 March 2015 to Question 224408, on Green Deal Scheme, how many assessor organisations and installers those proportions represent; and for what reasons each such authorisation was removed.

Amber Rudd:

I can confirm, as of 9 March, that 43 Green Deal assessor organisations and 324 Green Deal installers have had their authorisation as a Green Deal participant removed. The reasons for removal include:

Ceased trading: legal entity has ceased trading; non-renewal of membership: installer or assessor organisation has not renewed their membership; the withdrawal by

Certification Body for non-compliance: installation quality did not meet the appropriate standard.

Certification Bodies and the Green Deal Oversight and Registration Body hold the data regarding the reasons why each Green Deal participants have had their authorisation removed.

■ Natural Gas: Prices

Mr John Redwood:

[227735]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, what the current average industrial gas price is in the (a) UK and (b) US.

Matthew Hancock:

Estimates of average annual industrial gas prices for IEA countries, including the UK and USA, are shown in Table 5.7.1 of DECC's publication Quarterly Energy Prices (QEP).

The table is available at the following web link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/388202/qep_571.xls.

■ Offshore Industry

Mr Jim Murphy:

[227019]

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, when Ministers of his Department last met representatives of the oil and gas industry; what was discussed at that meeting; and if he will make a statement.

Matthew Hancock:

Details of meetings between Ministers and external organisations are published quarterly on the www.gov.uk website at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments%5B%5D=department-of-energy-climate-change&publication_type=transparency-data

Meetings from July 2014 to December 2014 are currently being collated and checked prior to publication.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Agriculture: Subsidies

Tim Loughton:

[227790]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what representations she has received from farmers required to submit single farm payment applications online on concerns related to poor broadband speeds and access in rural areas.

George Eustice:

The Secretary of State has received a number of representations from farmers and industry associations regarding the online submission for Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) claims.

From Monday 23 March, farmers and their agents can use established forms and processes to complete their claims by the deadline. The RPA will input the data into the core system. All agents will soon have received maps of their clients' land and those dealing with the most complex cases will be offered additional support. The RPA is also working to give them direct access to the system. If farmers or agents need help they should contact the Rural Payments Agency helpline on 0300 0200 301.

Tim Loughton:[\[227791\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, for what reasons farmers are currently unable to register online for the new single farm payment application.

George Eustice:

All farmers and landowners are able to register to use the Rural Payments service using either GOV.UK Verify or through the Rural Payments Agency helpline (0300 0200 301). As of 18 March 2015 72,070 had done so. This represents 84% of anticipated claimants. We are encouraging any farmers who have not yet registered to do so.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE■ **Iran****David T. C. Davies:**[\[227580\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what restrictions are in place on the export of medical equipment to Iran.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

EU sanctions against Iran are not intended to affect humanitarian goods, and explicitly exclude medical equipment. Furthermore, the Joint Plan of Action includes provisions to make transactions with Iran for humanitarian purposes much easier. Provided no designated entities are involved, the UK issues, as a priority, licenses for transactions for humanitarian goods.

■ **Research****Mr Chuka Umunna:**[\[227560\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what amount his Department and its agencies spent on research and development in each year since 2010-11; and what proportion such spending was of total departmental spending.

Mr David Lidington:

Information on the total amount of expenditure by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on both research and development and the total departmental spending on services is publically available on gov.uk as part of the Country and Regional Analysis

statistical release. This information covers 2009-10 through to 2013-14 and can be found at the following web link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/country-and-regional-analysis-2014>

This data can be accessed by using either the 'interactive tables' or the 'database'.

HEALTH

■ Astrology

Debbie Abrahams: [\[227794\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what representations he has received since 2010 on the efficacy of astrology in healthcare.

Jane Ellison:

My Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health has not received any representations since 2010 on the efficacy of astrology in healthcare.

■ Brain Cancer

Adam Afriyie: [\[227519\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the effect of a ketogenic diet in treating brain cancer patients.

Jane Ellison:

No such assessment has been made.

■ Cancer

Sir Hugh Bayley: [\[227991\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the average waiting time was for cancer test results (a) at York Hospital and (b) in England in 2009-10 and each subsequent year.

Jane Ellison:

Information is collected on waiting times from referral to test, but not from test to test result and is published online at:

<http://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/cancer-waiting-times/>

The collection includes all waits for 15 key diagnostic tests and procedures, but it is not possible to identify which were for suspected cancer.

■ Conditions of Employment

Pamela Nash: [\[227548\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many staff in his Department and its executive agencies and associated bodies were engaged off-payroll in each of the last five years up to the most recent period for which figures are available.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

The number of staff (expressed as Full Time Equivalent: (FTE)) engaged 'off payroll' - defined as agency workers, contractors and consultants - by the Department and its executive agencies: the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and Public Health England (PHE) are given in the tables below.

Figures for the Department

FINANCIAL YEAR	TOTAL FTE
2010 - 11	507.1
2011 - 12	353.1
2012 - 13	399.5
2013 - 14	262.7
2014 – 15 to date	187.5

Figures for MHRA

FINANCIAL YEAR	TOTAL FTE
2010 - 11	Nil
2011 - 12	Nil
2012 - 13	2.0
2013 - 14	3.0
2014 – 15 to date	2.7

Figures for PHE (Established 1 April 2013)

FINANCIAL YEAR	TOTAL FTE
2013 - 14	490.9
2014 – 15 to date	283.7

■ **Contraceptives**

Fiona Bruce:

[\[227923\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what arrangements are in place to monitor side-effects resulting from women's use of emergency hormonal contraception.

Fiona Bruce: [\[227924\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what research his Department has considered on the long-term effects of repeat use of emergency hormonal contraception on women's health.

Fiona Bruce: [\[227925\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the long-term effects on women's health of emergency hormonal contraception given without (a) prescription and (b) monitoring multiple use.

George Freeman:

In the United Kingdom emergency hormonal contraception is available from pharmacies, with or without prescription as Levonelle/Levonelle One Step (levonorgestrel-containing products) and as ellaOne (containing ulipristal acetate). Product licences were granted following advice from the UK's Commission on Human Medicines (formerly the Committee on Safety of Medicines) and the European Union's Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use respectively, based on a review of all the available evidence for safety, efficacy and quality.

As with all other licensed medicines, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) keeps the safety of emergency hormonal contraception under close review using a number of data sources. These include reports of suspected adverse drug reactions, provided by health professionals and patients through the 'Yellow Card scheme', periodic safety update reports, published medical literature and the results of any new clinical trials or epidemiological studies. Any of these data sources may include information on single use, repeat use or suspected long-term adverse effects.

No clinical studies of the long term safety of emergency hormonal contraception have been conducted. However, levonorgestrel has been available worldwide since the 1980s. Since then millions of women have used it for emergency contraception and no major safety concerns have arisen. For the more recently authorised ellaOne a pregnancy registry to collect further information on the safety of ellaOne has been established and could yield long-term safety data in the future. Clinical trial data show that the safety of repeated administration of ellaOne is comparable with that of a single dose. Information provided for health professionals and women advises that emergency hormonal contraception should be used as an occasional method and encourages repeat users to seek advice on regular contraception.

As with all marketed medicines, the MHRA will continue to monitor the use of emergency hormonal contraception.

■ Contraceptives: Young People

Fiona Bruce: [\[227926\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether his Department has conducted or commissioned research into whether there is a link between the promotion of hormonal

contraceptives in teenage pregnancy reduction schemes and levels of sexually transmitted infections in young people.

Fiona Bruce: [\[227979\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of the implications for his policies of the assertion that there is some evidence that emergency hormonal contraception schemes are associated with higher teenage conception rates, in the article, The impact of emergency birth control on teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, by Professor David Paton of the Nottingham University Business School, published in the Journal of Health Economics in March 2011.

Jane Ellison:

No assessment has been made of the publication in question.

In 2013, the under 18 conception rate was 24.3 per 1,000 women aged 15-17, a fall of 12.3% from 2012 and the lowest rate for 40 years. No research has been commissioned into the links between use of contraception and rates of STIs in young people.

■ Diabetes

Sir David Amess: [\[227501\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what arrangements his Department has in place to monitor and assess the progress of local clinical commissioning groups in implementing the recommendations of NHS England's Action for Diabetes strategy.

Sir David Amess: [\[227502\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what measures and indicators his Department uses to monitor and assess the quality of diabetes care.

Sir David Amess: [\[227503\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will take steps to implement the recommendations of Diabetes UK's report State of the Nation (England): Challenges for 2015 and beyond, published in January 2015.

Jane Ellison:

Diabetes UK's *State of the Nation* report called for good care for everyone with diabetes, and a greater focus on prevention. Over recent years, the quality of NHS services for people with diabetes has improved and, as a result, so have health and care outcomes.

NHS England has prioritised the prevention of Type 2 diabetes. It has recently launched a programme which will make England the first country to implement at scale a national Type 2 diabetes prevention programme, modelled on our own and international proven experience. It will link into the NHS Health Check programme, which helps identify people between 40 and 75 at risk of diabetes early on so that action can be taken to prevent the disease from occurring. In the last year, almost 3 million NHS Health Check offers were made and almost 1.5 million appointments were taken up.

Outcomes for people with diabetes are measured through the NHS Outcomes Framework and the Clinical Commissioning Group Outcomes Indicator Set, which are

both updated and published annually. This provides clear, comparative information for clinical commissioning groups (CCGs), health and wellbeing boards, local authorities, patients and the public about the quality of health services commissioned by CCGs and the associated health outcomes. Reviewing progress against these indicators forms part of NHS England's on-going assurance of CCGs.

In addition, Public Health England has produced *Healthier Lives: Diabetes*, an online tool with interactive heat maps demonstrating prevalence, complications, levels of care provided and the quality of care achieved for people with diabetes by local authority, clinical commissioning group and general practice. This allows local comparisons to be made against the England average as well different localities.

Action for Diabetes set out a broad vision and direction for how NHS England will support improvements in outcomes for people with and at risk of diabetes in the coming years, as a direct commissioner of services and supporting CCGs in their commissioning role. There were no recommendations specifically for CCGs to deliver.

■ Drugs: Young People

Mr Charles Walker: [\[227980\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people under 18 years of age have been treated in NHS-funded mental health units for cannabis-induced psychosis in each of the last five years.

Mr Charles Walker: [\[227981\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the cost is to the NHS of caring for people suffering from (a) addiction to skunk cannabis and (b) mental or physical ill-health as a result of the use of skunk cannabis in each of the last five years.

Jane Ellison:

The table below shows finished admission episodes (FAEs) with a primary or secondary diagnosis of cannabis-induced psychosis, for patients aged 0-17 in the period 2009/10 to 2013/14. This is not a count of people as one person may have had more than one admission episode within the same time period. The clinical codes used for collecting data do not distinguish between different forms of cannabis or between different cannabinoids. Nor does the information identify the type of unit where the patient was treated. Information on the cost of providing healthcare to people misusing or dependent on cannabis is not available.

Count of FAEs ¹ with a primary or secondary diagnosis ² of cannabis-induced psychosis ³, for patients aged 0-17, 2009-10 to 2013-14 ⁴

ACTIVITY IN ENGLISH NHS HOSPITALS AND ENGLISH NHS COMMISSIONED ACTIVITY IN THE INDEPENDENT SECTOR

Year	FAEs
2009-10	27
2010-11	32

ACTIVITY IN ENGLISH NHS HOSPITALS AND ENGLISH NHS COMMISSIONED ACTIVITY IN THE INDEPENDENT SECTOR

2011-12	24
2012-13	22
2013-14	38

Source: Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Health and Social Care Information Centre

Notes:

¹ Finished admission episodes

A finished admission episode (FAE) is the first period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. FAEs are counted against the year or month in which the admission episode finishes. Admissions do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the period.

² Number of episodes in which the patient had a primary or secondary diagnosis

The number of episodes where this diagnosis was recorded in any of the 20 (14 from 2002-03 to 2006-07 and 7 prior to 2002-03) primary and secondary diagnosis fields in a Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) record. Each episode is only counted once, even if the diagnosis is recorded in more than one diagnosis field of the record.

³ Clinical Coding

Clinical codes used to identify cannabis-induced psychosis:

F12.5 Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of cannabinoids Psychotic disorder
Includes but is not limited to cannabis induced psychosis

F12.7 Mental and behavioural disorders due to use of cannabinoids, Residual and late-onset psychotic disorder

Includes but is not limited to cannabis induced late onset psychosis

⁴ Assessing growth through time (Admitted patient care)

HES figures are available from 1989-90 onwards. Changes to the figures over time need to be interpreted in the context of improvements in data quality and coverage (particularly in earlier years), improvements in coverage of independent sector activity (particularly from 2006-07) and changes in NHS practice. For example, apparent reductions in activity may be due to a number of procedures which may now be undertaken in outpatient settings and so no longer include in admitted patient HES data. Conversely, apparent increases in activity may be due to improved recording of diagnosis or procedure information.

Note that HES include activity ending in the year in question and run from April to March, e.g. 2012-13 includes activity ending between 1 April 2012 and 31 March 2013.

Mr Charles Walker:

[\[227982\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people under 18 years of age have been referred to addiction treatment services in each of the last five years.

Jane Ellison:

The following table shows the numbers of under 18s receiving treatment for substance misuse problems in England for the last five years.

2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
23,528	21,955	20,688	20,032	19,126

Source: The National Drug Treatment Monitoring System (NDTMS)

■ Health Services: Devon

Mr Ben Bradshaw:

[\[227753\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will publish the final report by PwC on the financial challenge facing the NHS in Devon, which was completed in August 2014.

Jane Ellison:

Monitor, the NHS Trust Development Authority and NHS England jointly commissioned work to support the 11 local health economies (LHEs) that were identified as being financially challenged, including Devon.

We are advised that consultancy firms (in Devon's case, Pricewaterhouse Coopers) were not commissioned to produce a report as described in the question, but to support the LHEs with the development and strengthening of their strategic plans.

Work based on this support is ongoing, and a number of steps have to be taken in each of the LHEs. These include the consideration of strategic plans, consultations on possible reforms and the implementation of recommendations flowing from this. It would not be appropriate to release information ahead of these steps.

Mr Ben Bradshaw:

[\[227754\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent discussions Ministers in his Department have had with NHS England on the increasing financial deficit in NHS organisations in Devon.

Mr Ben Bradshaw:

[\[227795\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent discussions his Department has had with NHS England on potential intervention measures to address financial problems in the NHS in Devon; what criteria will be used to decide on the timing of the application of such measures; and whether he expects the application of such measures to be affected by the timing of the general election.

Jane Ellison:

This is a matter for the National Health Service.

Devon is one of eleven financially challenged health economies to be provided with support from NHS England, Monitor and the NHS Trust Development Authority to develop and strengthen their strategic plans. The report of this joint work was published in December 2014 and is attached.

Work based on this support is ongoing in each of the local health economies. This includes the consideration of strategic plans, consultations on possible reforms and the implementation of recommendations flowing from this. The timescales for these processes will be different in each of the 11 areas.

We hold meetings with NHS England on a regular basis to discuss a wide range of issues, including NHS services in the South West of England.

Attachments:

1. Joint report of strategic plans [Making local health economies work better for patients.pdf]

■ **Homeopathy**

Debbie Abrahams: [\[227793\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what meetings Ministers of his Department have held with external organisations to discuss the efficacy of homeopathy in healthcare since 2010.

Jane Ellison:

There have been no ministerial meetings with external organisations to discuss the efficacy of homeopathy in health care since 2010.

■ **Non-departmental Public Bodies**

Liz Kendall: [\[226783\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much each of his Department's non-departmental public bodies spent on consultancy services in (a) 2013-14 and (b) 2014-15 to date.

Dr Daniel Poulter:

[Holding answer 12 March 2015]: Since 2009-10, the Departmental Group, as defined at the end of the 2013-14 financial year, has spent 25% less on consultancy services, equating to a £194 million reduction in costs.

Total Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPB) spend on consultancy services in the year 2013-14 is shown in the table below. Data for 2014-15 will not be available until the accounts are published after the financial year end.

NDPB CONSULTANCY SPEND 2013-14	£000s
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NHS England	56,745
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NDPB CONSULTANCY SPEND 2013-14	£000s
Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority	0
Human Tissue Authority	0
Monitor	23,065
Care Quality Commission	5,881
Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care	0
Health & Social Care Information Centre	0
National Institute for Health and Care Excellence	0
NDPB total	85,691

Consultancy services are defined as “The provision to management of objective advice and assistance relating to strategy, structure, management or operations of an organisation in pursuit of its purposes and objectives. Such assistance will be provided outside the ‘business as usual’ (BAU) environment when in-house skills are not available and will be of no essential consequence and time-limited. Services may include the identification of options with recommendations and/or assistance with (but not delivery of) the implementation of solutions.”

The figures provided are disclosed as expenditure on “consultancy services” in the administration and programme costs notes in the Department’s Annual Report and Accounts.

NHS administration spending is down from 4.27% in 2010 to 2.77% currently. This has resulted in £5 billion of efficiency savings, which is now being put into frontline patient care.

■ Procurement

Mr Chuka Umunna:

[\[227523\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what technologies are being developed with support from the Small Business Research Initiative programmes of (a) his Department and (b) NHS England; and what assessment he has made of the future potential uses of those technologies.

Jane Ellison:

The Department, through the Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI), is currently funding the development of a number of technologies aimed at promoting patient empowerment and sustainability in kidney care. Six phase 2 SBRI contracts valued at £2 million were awarded in February 2015. The technologies being developed range from diagnostics to digital solutions, for use in the home and in secondary care. Potential uses

include early infection detection in patients on peritoneal dialysis, prevention of acute kidney injury and renal patient transport.

The Department is also supporting, through SBRI, the development of enabling technologies for genomics sequence data analysis and interpretation. In March 2015 five phase 2 SBRI contracts, valued at £8 million, were awarded for the development of next generation sequencing technologies which were assessed as having the potential to help deliver the Prime Minister's 100,000 Genome Project. Potential uses are in the areas of diagnostics related to genome screening, clinical research, gene-discovery and wider use of stratified medicine. The technologies are hoped to provide more accurate variant calling and annotation pipelines, new ways of expressing the reference genomes, improving human leukocyte antigen genotyping and intuitive user interfaces to allow clinicians to interpret variants from next generation sequencing machines.

The NHS England SBRI Healthcare programme currently has 138 contracts with companies to develop innovative technologies to address known healthcare needs. These range from diagnostics to digital management solutions; embracing conditions such as cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, dementia and patient safety and bringing solutions for mental health, primary and acute care. Assessment of the programme by the Office of Health Economics and the SBRI Healthcare team in 2014 has shown that since 2012 the pipeline has a potential to secure £434 million efficiency savings each year for the next decade. Assessment of the programme also shows that 150 jobs have been created, 31 patents awarded and over £10 million of additional investment has been leveraged.

The technologies supported include a light therapy sleep mask for the prevention of diabetic retinopathy; ultraviolet scope enabling intraoperative visibility of cancer cells in surgery; a point of care cardiac diagnostic to fully diagnose a heart attack within 20 minutes and a blood test to definitively rule out a diagnosis of colorectal cancer.

■ Research

Mr Chuka Umunna:

[\[227561\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what amount his Department and its agencies spent on research and development in each year since 2010-11; and what proportion such spending was of total departmental spending.

George Freeman:

Total spend by the Department and its agencies on research and development (R&D) in the years 2010-11 to 2013-14 is shown in the table below.

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
R&D spend (£ million)	966	966	995	1,049
R&D spend as proportion of total	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
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departmental
spend (per cent)

■ York Hospital

Sir Hugh Bayley:

[\[227992\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the average waiting time was for elective inpatient or day-case treatment at York Hospital (a) overall and (b) in each speciality in 2009-10 and each subsequent year.

Jane Ellison:

The information is not available in the format requested. Information available at Trust level is included in the attached table for York Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

Attachments:

1. Data of waiting times per speciality-York Hospital [Waiting times - 2009-10 to 2013-14.xlsx]

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

■ Research

Mr Chuka Umunna:

[\[227563\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what amount her Department and its agency spent on research and development in each year since 2010-11; and what proportion such spending was of total departmental spending.

Justine Greening:

Details of DFID's total spent on centrally commissioned research (via DFID's Research and Evidence Division) over financial years 2009 to 2014 can be found on the table below.

Table 1

FINANCIAL YEAR	DFID'S TOTAL GROSS SPEND	DFID'S TOTAL SPEND ON CENTRALLY COMMISSIONED RESEARCH	PROPORTION OF CENTRALLY COMMISSIONED RESEARCH AS % OF TOTAL DFID BUDGET
2009-10	£6.63b	£177m	2.7%
2010-11	£7.69b	£203m	2.6%
2011-12	£7.68b	£222m	2.9%

FINANCIAL YEAR	DFID'S TOTAL GROSS SPEND	DFID'S TOTAL SPEND ON CENTRALLY COMMISSIONED RESEARCH	PROPORTION OF CENTRALLY COMMISSIONED RESEARCH AS % OF TOTAL DFID BUDGET
2012-13	£7.67b	£230m	3.0%
2013-14	£10.06b	£305m	3.0%

JUSTICE

■ Prisons: Private Sector

Dr Julian Huppert:

[\[227750\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what funds his Department allocated to contractors to manage each privately-run prison in (a) 2012, (b) 2013 and (c) 2014.

Andrew Selous:

The following table shows the annual expenditure for the contracted prisons for each of the last three financial years 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14 for which information is available.

PRISON	OPERATOR	DIRECT RESOURCE EXPENDITURE (£000s)		
		2011-12 (restated)	2012-13	2013-14
Altcourse	G4S	46,219	46,494	45,538
Ashfield	Serco	26,426	27,660	23,451
Birmingham	G4S	14,022	30,035	28,611
Bronzefield	Sodexo	27,629	28,873	29,871
Doncaster	Serco	19,714	18,273	17,789
Dovegate	Serco	37,573	38,846	39,331
Forest Bank	Sodexo	34,626	35,682	37,187
Lowdham Grange	Serco	26,063	27,478	28,128
Northumberland	Sodexo	n/a	n/a	11,352
Oakwood	G4S	n/a	24,800	19,473
Parc	G4S	58,529	59,413	56,708

PRISON	OPERATOR	DIRECT RESOURCE EXPENDITURE (£000s)		
Peterborough	Sodexo	32,418	33,085	34,133
Rye Hill	G4S	18,663	19,138	19,997
Thameside	Serco	143	27,561	31,027
Wolds	G4S	8,470	8,598	2,157

TO NOTE WITHIN THE TABLE:

1. Birmingham transferred to the management of G4S on 1st October 2011
2. Thameside became operational on 27th March 2012
3. Oakwood became operational on 24th April 2012
4. Wolds transferred to Public Sector management on 1st July 2013
5. Altcourse had Cabinet Office savings initiative from 2011 c £1m per year
6. Altcourse had 96 Additional Prisoner Places (APP's) deactivated in Dec 2012 and 75 deactivated in April 2013
7. Forest Bank has a disinvestment of c £1m per year from July 2012
8. Parc had 138 APP's deactivated in April 2013
9. Oakwood had £7.2m of fixed costs included in 2012-13
10. Thameside became operational at the end of 2011-12 and "ramp-up" progressed through 2012-13
11. Northumberland (merger of HMPs Acklington and Castington) transferred to the management of Sodexo in December 2013

Expenditure between prisons and years is not directly comparable, as this may vary due to a number of factors, including inflation uplift, contract variations, new prisons becoming operational or prisons transferring between the public and private sector, and additional prison places being commissioned or decommissioned.

The Department is committed to delivering prison capacity changes designed to modernise the prison estate and, where possible, reduce prison costs, whilst maintaining a high quality service.

From the financial years 2009-10 to 2013-14 there was a real terms reduction of 17% in the overall average cost for each prisoner in England and Wales, with a reduction of 5% achieved during the last financial year 2013-14.

The Department routinely publishes annual net resource expenditure for individual prisons in England and Wales each year alongside the management information addendums to the NOMS Annual Report and Accounts. The most recently published figures for financial year 2013-14, can be accessed by the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/prison-and-probation-trusts-performance-statistics-201314>

The published expenditure figures for 2012-13, and restated figures for 2011-12 can be accessed by the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/prison-and-probation-trusts-performance-statistics-201213>

Expenditure for financial year 2014-15 is not yet finalised and will be published in due course after the end of this financial period.

■ Research

Mr Chuka Umunna: [\[227564\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what amount his Department and its agencies spent on research and development in each year since 2010-11; and what proportion such spending was of total departmental spending.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

Information on the total amount of expenditure by the Ministry on both research and development and the total departmental spending on services is publicly available on gov.uk as part of the Country and Regional Analysis statistical release. This information covers 2009-10 through to 2013-14 and can be found at the following web link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/country-and-regional-analysis-2014>

This data can be accessed by using either the 'interactive tables' or the 'database'.

TRANSPORT

■ Conditions of Employment

Pamela Nash: [\[227508\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many off-payroll engagements there were in (a) his Department and (b) each of his Department's arms-length bodies in each of the last five years.

Claire Perry:

In 2012, the Treasury published its Review of the Tax Arrangements of Public Sector Appointees. It began requiring Departments to report on these arrangements in their Annual Reports and Accounts, and to implement tax assurance processes. The Department for Transport's Annual Reports and Accounts are all available on gov.uk. The off-payroll assurance process for the current financial year is ongoing and final results will be published in the Annual Report and Accounts in June. Data is not

available, other than at disproportionate cost, for years prior to 2012, and for those being paid less or who have been engaged to work for less than six months.

■ High Speed 2 Railway Line

Frank Dobson: [228005]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what forecast his Department has made of the number of passengers from each London transport zone who will board or leave High Speed 2 (HS2) trains in London in each phase of HS2; and what forecast he has made of the number and proportion of such passengers who will so board or leave at Euston.

Mr Patrick McLoughlin:

There is no specific forecast available of the number of passengers from each London zone who will board or alight from HS2. Our forecasts of the split of passengers between HS2 and other rail services is undertaken at the level of station to station passenger movements as opposed to the level of start locations. Full details of the PLANET framework model and how it works can be found on our website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planet-framework-model-pfm-v43-model-description>.

Frank Dobson: [228006]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what (a) surveys, (b) modelling or (c) other methods his Department used to calculate the distribution across London transport zones of High Speed 2 passengers; and whether figures used for such calculations were of mainline or other passengers.

Mr Patrick McLoughlin:

The distribution of existing rail demand across the Greater London area has two steps. The first step spreads the demand across London into 7 high level zones in the PLANET framework model on the basis of National Rail Travel Survey (NRTS) data and ticket sales data. The second step to disaggregate the demand from these high level zones into 1211 smaller zones uses demand distributions from Transport for London's detailed RAILPLAN model.

Frank Dobson: [228009]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what forecast his Department has made of the number of passengers who will use High Speed 2 in (a) the year after the opening of Phase 1, (b) the year after the opening of Phase 2 and (c) the last year of the planning period; and how many passengers in each such period his Department forecasts will use (i) Euston and (ii) Old Oak Common station to board or leave the train.

Mr Patrick McLoughlin:

The number of passengers forecast to be travelling on HS2 per day in 2026/27 once Phase One is open is 112,731. The number of passengers forecast to be travelling on HS2 after the opening of Phase Two in 2036 is 302,350. Based on modelling for the economic case for HS2 (October 2013) the forecast number of passengers using Euston to board and leave HS2 services in Phase One is 71,445, and Old Oak Common is

38,040. The forecast number of passengers from the economic case modelling using Euston to board and leave HS2 service in 2036 (3 years after Phase Two has opened) is 158,258. The equivalent number for Old Oak Common is 84,428. Forecasts for other years are not available as the forecasting tools only provide information for two years, the opening year of Phase One (2026) and the year in which the demand cap is reached (2036).

■ Railways: Greater London

Tim Loughton: [227788]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the level of punctuality was for Southern and Thameslink passenger rail services running into London in the last 12 months.

Claire Perry:

The Public Performance Measure for Southern for the last 12 months has been 83.6% (up to 28 February 2015)

Thameslink services were provided by First Capital Connect until 12 September 2014 and by Govia Thameslink Railway since 13 September 2014. The Public Performance Measure for Thameslink services for the last 12 months has been 85.1% (up to 28 February 2015).

The Public Performance Measure for all operators is published online by the Office of Rail Regulation at <http://dataportal.orr.gov.uk/browse/reports/3>

Frank Dobson: [228007]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will place in the Library a map showing the assumed origin and destination overground, underground or mainline station in London used to predict the passenger use of Euston and Old Oak Common.

Mr Patrick McLoughlin:

A map with the details requested has not been produced from the economic case modelling work undertaken.

However, section 6b of the HS2 Phase One Environmental Statement Volume 5 Transport Assessment demonstrates the change in passenger flows at Network Rail and London Underground stations across London for the AM and PM peak periods. The document can be viewed here:

http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140810181550/http://assets.dft.gov.uk/hs2-environmental-statement/volume-5/traffic/Vol_5_TA_London_assessment_CFA1-3%28Sec6b%29_Part4_wm.pdf

Frank Dobson: [228008]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what formula his Department used to calculate the likely distribution of use between Euston and Old Oak Common of passengers from each London transport zone; and how his Department determined the inputs for that formula.

Mr Patrick McLoughlin:

The distribution of passengers between Euston and Old Oak Common is forecast using the PLANET framework model. This model takes into account the time taken to access stations from passengers' start locations, the possible route options from starting stations to destination stations, the time to get to final destinations and the level of crowding on trains. Based on this information, the model predicts passengers' choices on the best starting locations for their journeys. In turn this drives the distribution of passengers between any station options in any area, in this case Euston and Old Oak Common. Full details of the PLANET framework model and how it works can be found on our website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planet-framework-model-pfm-v43-model-description>.

■ **Research****Mr Chuka Umunna:**[\[227565\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what amount his Department and its agencies spent on research and development in each year since 2010-11; and what proportion such spending was of total departmental spending.

Claire Perry:

The amount the Department for Transport and its Agencies spent on Research & Development (R&D) in each year since 2010 and the proportion of such spending against the Departmental spending are provided in the table below:

YEAR	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Net R&D Spending	34,000,000	38,000,000	38,000,000	43,000,000
Total Department Spend	10,411,727,000	12,744,204,000	12,549,868,000	12,513,124,000
Percentages	0.33%	0.30%	0.30%	0.34%

TREASURY■ **Corporation Tax****Mr Andrew Turner:**[\[227983\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether there is a lower corporation tax limit for clubs, voluntary organisations and charities below which such organisations are not required to submit corporation tax returns.

Mr David Gauke:

Where the corporation tax liability of a club or an unincorporated organisation does not exceed £100, and where that club or organisation is run exclusively for the benefit of its members, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) will not generally require that club or organisation to complete corporation tax returns. HMRC review such treatment every 5 years. This treatment does not apply to companies which are wholly owned by, or subsidiaries of, charities.

HMRC recognises that asking a charity to formally claim tax relief every year would be administratively burdensome and therefore they do not require every charity to file a tax return every year.

However, they do require every charity to file a tax return once every few years so that they can check that the charity is claiming any tax exemptions and reliefs in accordance with the law. In addition, charities have an obligation to complete a tax return where they have reason to believe that they should be paying tax on some of their income or gains.

If HMRC send a notice to a charity to file a tax return, the charity must complete it and submit it within the time limits given on the forms or they may face a penalty.

■ Electronic Cigarettes: Taxation

Mark Garnier: [\[227745\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions he has had with the European Commission and his counterparts from other EU member states on the taxation of e-cigarettes.

Priti Patel:

There are not been any ministerial level discussions with the European Commission or other EU member states on the taxation of e-cigarettes.

Mark Garnier: [\[227748\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what his policy is on proposals for EU-level harmonised taxation on e-cigarettes; and if he will make a statement.

Priti Patel:

There are no proposals for EU-level harmonised tax treatment of e-cigarettes.

■ Oil: Prices

Mr Jim Murphy: [\[227020\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, when Ministers of his Department last met representatives of the oil and gas industry to discuss the fiscal implications of falling oil prices for the North Sea oil and gas industry.

Priti Patel:

The government understands the challenges currently facing the UK oil and gas industry and is engaging closely with stakeholders on this.

We have been proactive in our response to the fall in oil price. Budget 2015 announced an ambitious programme of reform across the oil and gas tax regime to make sure the North Sea continues to attract investment and safeguard the future of this vital national asset. The government announced an immediate cut to the rate of the Supplementary Charge, from 30% to 20%, which is already in effect; a reduction to Petroleum Revenue Tax, from 50% to 35%, from January 2016; and the introduction of a new Investment Allowance to support investment in the UK Continental Shelf.

This package is expected to deliver over £4bn of additional investment and increase production by 15% by 2019, the equivalent of 0.1% of GDP.

Details of meetings between Treasury Ministers and external organisations are published on the Gov.UK website at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmt-ministers-meetings-hospitality-gifts-and-overseas-travel>.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Housing Benefit: Social Rented Housing

Sir Hugh Bayley:

[227994]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people in (a) York Central constituency and (b) City of York local authority area had their housing allowance abated because of the under-occupancy penalty in (i) 2013-14 and (ii) 2014-15.

Mr Mark Harper:

The information requested by local authority and parliamentary constituency in Great Britain is published and available at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/>

Guidance on how to extract the information required can be found at:

https://sw.stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/Stat-Xplore_User_Guide.htm

MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

HEALTH

■ Clinical Commissioning Groups: Cumbria

Mr Jamie Reed:

[\[226114\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what funding (a) in total and (b) per capita has been allocated for Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Group for each year from 2013-14 to 2019-20.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 6 March 2015. The correct answer should have been:

George Freeman:

Clinical commissioning group (CCG) funding has not been decided beyond 2015/16.

Notified revenue allocations and per capita allocations for Cumbria CCG are:

YEAR	ALLOCATION £000	PER CAPITA £
2013/14	692,122 663,133	1,330 1,274
2014/15	677,324	1,299
2015/16	685,654	1,313

These figures exclude running cost and Better Care Fund allocations.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

■ Prompt Payment – Implementing the Duty on Large Companies to Report on Payment Practices and Policies

Minister of State for Business, Enterprise and Energy (Matthew Hancock):
[\[HCWS428\]](#)

Tackling late payment is at the heart of our drive to help small businesses. Standing at £41.5 billion, late payment remains a significant problem for the UK economy. Small businesses shoulder the vast majority of this burden. The Government is absolutely clear that large companies should lead by example in paying their suppliers promptly and fairly, with 30 day terms the norm and 60 days the maximum. We need to improve corporate culture to drive home the message that it is not right to pay small suppliers late or to use unfair payment terms.

I am therefore delighted to be able to announce today the Government's plans for implementing clause 3 (Companies: Duty to Publish Report on Payment Practices) of the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Bill.

These plans are subject to the will of Parliament. Given the importance of these proposals I believe it imperative to give those affected as much notice as possible to prepare for their future obligations.

Large companies will be required to report on their payment practices and policies from April 2016. We are therefore developing the secondary legislation, IT systems and guidance needed to give effect to them. The Government intends to lay secondary regulations early in the next Parliament.

In November 2014 I published a consultation paper, draft secondary regulations and accompanying pre-consultation stage Impact Assessment on detailed proposals for obliging large companies to publish detailed information about their payment practices and performance. This sought views in particular on: which companies should be obliged to report; the information they should be required to provide; the frequency and location of reporting; and the penalties for breaches of the reporting obligation. The consultation closed on 2 February 2015.

On 2 March 2015 the Government published a Summary of Responses. This summarised the views expressed by 59 respondents – primarily business representative bodies, trade organisations and professional bodies. I am grateful to all who responded, and look forward to continued dialogue and engagement as we develop and implement our proposals.

The majority of responses agreed with the Government's proposals that the reporting duty should be mandated for large organisations – large private companies, large LLPs and all quoted companies. There was support for relying on Companies Act definitions to determine the threshold of "large". Having considered the views of the Regulatory Policy Committee, which queried the original proposal for extending the requirement to small and medium

quoted companies, I can now confirm that duty will only cover large quoted companies. This better meets the policy's aim of highlighting and changing the payment practices of large organisations.

Having considered the views of respondents and arguments put forward during Parliamentary debates, we have concluded that large organisations should be required to report on the following narrative and metrics:

- standard payment terms, including any changes to these in the last reporting period. We will provide guidance to further clarify the expectations of companies in circumstances where they have different standard terms for different kinds of products;

- average time taken to pay;

- proportion of invoices paid beyond agreed terms;

proportion of invoices paid in 30 days or less; paid between 31-60 days; and paid beyond 60 days. The Government will, however, not require reporting on the proportion of payments between 61-120 days and beyond 120 days, because we are clear that all payments beyond 60 days represent bad practice. This is why we have recently introduced a maximum 60 day payment term in the voluntary Prompt Payment Code;

- amount of late payment interest owed and paid;

- whether financial incentives were required to join or remain on supplier lists;

- dispute resolution processes;

- the availability of: e-invoicing; supply chain finance; preferred supplier lists

- membership of a Payment Code

We will also consider whether to mandate reporting on other payment practices, such as reverse-fixed payments. At present, the Government is not minded to do so.

An indicative format for the report is attached.

Most respondents to the consultation argued that the Government's original proposal for quarterly reporting was overly burdensome. The Government will consequently require reporting on a half-yearly basis, thereby striking a proportionate balance between reduced reporting obligations whilst still ensuring up-to-date data. To ensure high levels of transparency and comparability, large organisations will need to provide this in open data format to a single central digital location. The Government will work with stakeholders in the coming months to design and implement a system that is as business- and user-friendly as possible.

These proposals will allow organisations with good payment records to highlight and celebrate their payment performance, whilst raising public awareness and scrutiny of poorer payers. This has the potential to cause a fundamental shift in the payment performance of the UK's large organisations. I look forward to working with businesses in the coming months to make this a reality, and tackle the UK's late payment practices once and for all.

Attachments:

1. Indicative format for the report [WMS PROMPT PAYMENT attachment.docx]

■ The Pay and Work Rights and ACAS Helplines

Parliamentary under Secretary of State for Employment Relations and Consumer Affairs (Jo Swinson):

[[HCWS433](#)]

Advice and Guidance services currently provided by the Pay and Work Rights Helpline will transfer to Acas from 1 April. The Acas Helpline will, in addition to their usual services, answer queries on:

- The National Minimum Wage
- Working for an employment agency
- Working hours, rest breaks and holidays
- Agricultural workers' rights
- Working for a gangmaster.

The new arrangement will allow for a "one-stop shop" service for employers and employees who will be able to contact Acas for free and confidential advice on all employment rights and workplace issues.

Acas advice can be accessed either online (www.acas.org.uk/helplineonline) or by phone on 0300 123 1100 between 8 am to 8 pm Mondays to Fridays and 9 am to 1 pm on Saturdays. This number costs the same to call as geographic 01/02 numbers, even from a mobile phone. It is included in callers' free minutes on their landline and mobile tariffs. The current Pay and Work Rights Helpline is a 0800 number, which costs between 7p and 40p per minute for callers from a mobile phone. As the majority of calls to the Pay and Work Rights Helpline are from mobiles, the new arrangement is likely to be cheaper overall for users.

Having spoken to an Acas adviser, if an individual or third party wishes to make a complaint, Acas will transfer their call to the relevant government enforcement body. Individuals and third parties will continue to be able to complain directly online to the relevant government enforcement body as follows:

- HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) - about the National Minimum Wage
- Employment Agency Standards inspectorate - about employment agency legislation (except Agency Worker Regulations)
- Gangmasters Licensing Authority (GLA) – about agency workers in agriculture, horticulture, shellfish gathering or associated processing and packaging
- Health and Safety Executive (HSE) - about working time issues, including maximum weekly working hours
- Defra - about agricultural wages

Customers who ring the current Pay and Work Rights Helpline number from 1 April will receive an automated message advising them to ring the Acas Helpline. This automated message will be in place for at least the next 12 months.

More information on the above can also be found on www.gov.uk "

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**■ European Regional Development Fund**

Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Mr Eric Pickles):

[\[HCWS440\]](#)

I wish to inform the House today of the launch of the €3.6 billion (approximately £2.9 billion) England European Regional Development Fund Operational Programme for 2014-20.

From 20 March 2015, applicants will be able to apply for funding to invest in projects that support innovation and boost businesses across local economies in England. This is on the basis of progress my Department has made in agreeing the major points of principle with the European Commission about the European Regional Development Fund Operational Programme.

By launching the programme and project calls on 20 March, local teams will be able to begin assessing applications. This will mean that we will be able to sign funding agreements as soon as the Operational Programme has been formally adopted by the European Commission, which we anticipate happening in June.

Decentralising funding to local economic areas

The 2014-2020 European Regional Development Fund Operational Programme is the most locally-led that we have ever had in England. We have abolished unelected regional quangos that were previously in charge of the schemes and given an important role to Local Enterprise Partnerships and other local partners to shape and influence how the money is spent.

We also believe local partners should have a direct role in decision-making outside of a formally delegated arrangement, to further increase local engagement. The European Commission ruled this out however, as not being compliant with European Union regulations. We have nevertheless ensured a strong local role for partners, whose advice will be pivotal in determining the priorities of project calls and the funding decisions that are taken – ensuring that projects are focused on the interests of local communities. We are committed to reviewing partnership arrangements in 12 months' time and will effect changes as necessary.

Accordingly, the Operational Programme is built on the priorities of England's 39 Local Enterprise Partnership areas, and all funding decisions will be taken within this framework; local needs are therefore embedded into the programme and the funding decisions that will follow.

As a result, the Operational Programme is made up of the following funding priorities:

- strengthening research, technological development and innovation,
- improving access to, and use and quality of information and communications technology,
- increasing the competitiveness of small and medium sized enterprises,
- supporting the shift towards a low carbon economy in all sectors,

- supporting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management,
- preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency,
- encouraging sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly,
- technical assistance.

To ensure that local areas can fully exploit the range of European programmes that are available for the 2014-20 period, the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and part of the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development are being combined in England into a single local growth package. This will be called the 'European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme'. Local areas will benefit from combined allocations that support this approach.

Navigating the European Union bureaucracy

The programme has to operate within the rigid rules set by the European Commission. There are significant financial risks involved in running what are highly complex and bureaucratic European programmes. These can carry large financial penalties for which the Government – and therefore UK taxpayers – always remains financially liable.

That is why the Government has completely overhauled the way in which European Regional Development Fund programmes have been managed in England. Previously, the schemes were poorly overseen by the Government Offices for the Regions (2000-06 programme) and the Regional Development Agencies (2007-13 programme). The Coalition Government inherited in 2010 a situation facing hundreds of millions of pounds of liabilities for breaches of the complex rules.

We have tackled this and sorted out £236 million of financial liabilities which we took on in 2010, and are on track to completely close the 2000-06 programmes with a dramatically reduced financial liability. In addition, all programmes in 2007-13 are maintained through an enhanced, disciplined and effective management process to minimise potential liabilities.

Ensuring value for taxpayers' money

Every euro cent received from European funding schemes is UK taxpayers' money. The European Regional Development Fund is a circular programme. UK taxpayers' money is given to the European Union budget. Under the Fund, a local project receives a contract, spends money and then claims from DCLG. DCLG then claims funds back from the European Commission. The whole process goes through a complex auditing process involving DCLG auditors and then European Union auditors. There is a debate to be had about the involvement of the United Kingdom's future involvement with these types of Structural Funds. There is a strong argument that it would be better if Structural Funds were repatriated - and the United Kingdom had its money back, cutting out the middle man of the European Commission.

Turning to the 2014-20 programme, we think it is important that the role of UK taxpayers in funding these programmes is clear to all. That is why projects which are funded with Government money will be branded with the UK Government logo.

Spending public funds wisely is central to our Government's approach in getting maximum value for money for the taxpayer. Reflecting the changes we have made to DCLG grant agreements, as I outlined in my statement of 23 February 2015, *Official Report*, HCWS292, we are also inserting new provisions into the funding agreements to stop taxpayer-funded lobbying with these European funds.

The Institute of Economic Affairs which has undertaken detailed research in to the widespread and unhealthy practice of taxpayers-funded lobbying and so-called 'sock puppets'. Their analysis has also identified the spending of millions of taxpayers' money on the 'European project' – Euro funds going to groups to promote ever closer European integration, bigger EU budgets and more EU regulation. This is not a good use of public funds.

Our funding guidance now states: "The following costs are not eligible expenditure:- Payments that support activity intended to influence or attempt to influence the UK Parliament, Government, political parties, European Union Institutions, or inappropriately attempting to influence the awarding or renewal of contracts and grants, or attempting to influence legislative or regulatory action in the United Kingdom or the European Union." Nothing in this prevents third party institutions from campaigning with their own private funds for whatever causes they want, but they should not do it with taxpayers' money.

The myth of "free money" from Europe

My Department also oversees a number of 'European Territorial Cooperation' (or, INTERREG) programmes. In the past, these programmes have suffered due to poor management and investing money in unsuitable projects which have not been consistently focussed on economic growth. My Department will ensure that 2014-20 programmes invest money much more efficiently.

Under the last Administration, funds were wasted on vanity projects for artificial pan-national Euro regions, such as the "Transmanche". Pointless expenditure included a series of Cross-Channel Cycle Lanes, films on European fairy tales, a Cross-Channel Circus, a human treadmill, transnational dance troupes and an Atlas which renamed the English Channel as "Le Pond".

Some parts of the public and voluntary sector have viewed European funding as "free money", and not applied the same financial discipline that would apply to the direct spending of UK Government funding. Yet, there is no 'free' money from the European Union: there is only UK taxpayers' money. Indeed, the UK is even more of a net loser given the massive amount spent on bureaucracy, complex auditing and projects that would never have been funded by the UK Government directly. We have therefore sought to ensure that the 2014-20 schemes focus on jobs and growth, as well as tackling genuine maritime-related issues such as coastal flooding.

I will shortly be writing to partners to outline our robust approach in defending the interests of UK taxpayers with regard to INTERREG programmes.

■ Housing Update

Minister of State for Housing and Planning (Brandon Lewis):

[\[HCWS441\]](#)

I would like to update hon. Members on some of the recent actions that the Coalition Government is undertaking on housing.

Providing more housing for older people

I would like to update hon. Members on recent measures the Government has taken to encourage the development of more housing for older people. We are committed to addressing the challenge of our ageing population. The Government is working to help older people to plan ahead and to provide them with choice over the housing that best meets their needs. This could help people to live independently for longer, and reduce costs for health and social care services.

Helping older people to remain in their own homes and preventing or delaying the need to go into hospital or residential care can help improve the quality of life for older people and reduce costs to local services. Providing more options for older people to move to more suitable housing, when they want to, can also help to free up larger homes for use by families.

Strengthening planning guidance : The National Planning Policy Framework already requires local planning authorities to plan for a mix of housing based on current and future populations, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community, including older people. This applies to specialist accommodation as well as general housing for older people.

Many older people do not want or need specialist accommodation or care and may wish to live in general housing, or in homes which can be adapted to meet any change in their needs. Shortly we are publishing updated planning guidance to reinforce our expectation that all local planning authorities will assess and plan to meet the diverse housing needs of older people in their local communities. Local planning authorities need to be clear about the future level of both general and specialist accommodation that is needed for older people in their area.

There are already many great examples of innovative, well-designed housing schemes which help older people to live as independently as possible, such as the Joseph Rowntree retirement community scheme at Hartrigg Oaks in York and Lark Hill Retirement Village in Nottingham which both provide a broad range of options for older people, with support on-site as people's needs change. There is help available to support local planning authorities to identify the type of housing that is required, such as the Strategic Housing for Older People toolkit produced by the Housing Learning and Improvement Network and Association of Directors of Social Services. The Planning Advisory Service will support local authorities in ensuring their plans recognise the needs of their older people by promoting and sharing best practice.

Care and Support Specialised Housing Fund : Increasing choice for older people who want to move to more suitable accommodation is important in helping people to live independently for longer. The Government is supporting the development of more

affordable housing for older people and adults with disabilities and mental health problems, through the Care and Support Specialised Housing Fund. Phase 1 of the programme is on track to provide over 4,000 new homes by 2018, and the Department of Health has recently announced a further phase of up to £155 million for new homes for older people and disabled adults. Specialist housing providers, local authorities and other groups are invited to put forward bids for Phase 2, which outside of London will prioritise housing for people with mental health problems and encourage the provision of private market housing available for rent, shared ownership and purchase. Inside London the focus will be on delivering additional privately funded housing for older people, disabled people and people with mental health problems.

Right to Buy Social Mobility Fund : The Government also recently announced a new £42 million fund in 2015-16 to help council tenants who are eligible for Right to Buy to purchase a home on the open market. This will prioritise several groups of council tenants, including older people and will give those older people an opportunity to buy a home which is more suitable for their needs, or closer to family or support networks.

Improved Information and Advice : It is important that older people and their family have access to independent information and advice on their housing and care options to enable them to plan ahead and make the right choices. The Government recently announced a further £1 million funding for the FirstStop online and telephone information and advice service. This will enable it to continue in 2015 -16 and to expand its local partner service which provides face-to-face advice to older people who need support with making the right choices about their housing and care.

Increasing house building by councils

In England, council house building starts are now at a 23 year high and twice as many council homes have been built in the last 4 years than from 1997 to 2009.

For local authorities, the self-financing reforms of 2012 which abolished the unpopular housing subsidy system have given stock-holding councils greater freedoms and the flexibility to manage their own housing businesses. Local authorities are now building again and more homes have been built since 2010 than in the last thirteen years combined. However, this has been at a time where we also needed to address the deficit left by the previous Administration and it was necessary to place limits on the amount of indebtedness a local authority could hold on its housing business.

Despite the limits on indebtedness that have been put in place the current 166 stock holding councils have borrowing headroom of over £3 billion which they can use to manage, maintain and renew their stock. The Government has also allocated an additional £222 million borrowing to 36 councils to support the provision of over 3,000 new affordable homes.

As councils are now taking the opportunities that self-financing has brought to start developing new homes again and are looking at a number of different ways in which to do this, the Government therefore thinks it would be helpful to set out policy in this area. The Government's policy is that where a local authority is developing or acquiring and retaining new social or affordable homes for rent, that they should be brought forward using the

powers available to them under part II of the Housing Act 1985 and that housing accounted for through the Housing Revenue Account. Where the numbers of units are very small – up to 200 units - the Secretary of State will consider, on application, issuing an exemption from the requirement to hold a Housing Revenue Account in line with one of the recommendations made by Natalie Elphicke and Keith House in their independent review into the role of local authorities in housing supply. If an authority is retaining more than 200 units for rent it should reopen its Housing Revenue Account and discuss with the Department the setting of a new indebtedness limit.

The Government is aware that some authorities may be using their general power of competence under the Localism Act 2011 to develop new social or affordable housing and accounting for that stock in its General Fund. Accounting for stock in this way is not in line with Government policy and if councils continue to develop social or affordable stock which they fail to account for within the Housing Revenue Account the Secretary of State will consider issuing a direction under section 74 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 to bring that stock into the Housing Revenue Account.

However, the requirement to account for stock in the Housing Revenue Account does not include accommodation being used to prevent homelessness or end a homelessness duty in the private rented sector, or for use as temporary accommodation. Temporary accommodation, including for homelessness purposes, would not normally be held within the Housing Revenue Account.

A key element of the Government's drive to support people to achieve their aspiration for home ownership is through the reinvigorated Right to Buy. More than 33,000 new homeowners have been created since 2012 through the reinvigoration of the scheme. And we are giving more tenants the opportunity to buy their home, by increasing discounts in line with inflation and, subject to Royal Assent to the Deregulation Bill, taking forward a change in the minimum eligibility criteria, from five years to three years public sector tenancy.

For the first time, we have ensured that local authorities can keep the receipts from additional Right to Buy sales to invest in the provision of new affordable homes for rent. This is because we recognize the valuable role that local authorities can play in providing new homes for local people.

It is important that new council tenants should have access to the Right to Buy, and that new homes should not be built by councils which are excluded from the Right to Buy. In order to be eligible, local authority tenants need to have a secure tenancy. All forms of secure council tenancies are subject to the Right to Buy, including new flexible tenancies, regardless of whether they are accounted for in the local authority's Housing Revenue Account or the General Fund.

A number of local authorities have established local housing companies to help deliver local housing solutions. The Government recognises the benefits that public private partnerships can bring in supporting new forms of housing, and notes that the Elphicke-House review into the role of local authorities in housing supply identified that different housing delivery organisations offer different strengths and opportunities. The Government welcomes

approaches where local housing companies are developing new homes for market sale or purchasing private rented homes for the accommodation of homeless households, through an appropriate legal entity structure and/or the borrowing does not count as public sector borrowing.

However, it is not acceptable for local authorities to establish new wholly owned or controlled housing companies deliberately to avoid the Government's reinvigorated Right to Buy policy and the limits on indebtedness put in place to help address the inherited deficit. Specifically, the Government will not support the establishment of such companies where they are developing or acquiring and retaining new social or affordable units for rental purposes. The Government believes that local authorities should support people to achieve their aspiration for home ownership through the Right to Buy.

Supporting sustainable and secure buildings

We will shortly be laying before the House the fifth report required under the provisions of the Sustainable and Secure Buildings Act 2004. The Report considers the progress towards the sustainability of the building stock in England over the preceding two years. During the period we have taken two important further steps on the road to zero carbon homes in 2016. We have improved the energy efficiency of new homes by over 30 per cent since coming into office delivering typical fuel bill savings for new home-owners of £200 per annum.

We have also introduced in the Infrastructure Act 2015 the powers needed to enable off-site carbon abatement measures (Allowable Solutions) to contribute to achieving the Zero Carbon Standard. During the period we have consulted on our proposals to rationalise technical housing standards through the Housing Standards Review. We are streamlining them whilst maintaining essential standards for sustainability including the opportunity for higher water efficiency standards to be set in water stressed areas. The Government has sought to balance sustainability with the need to build new homes and promote economic growth. This report and its predecessors sets out our strong record in achieving that goal.

I hope these issues illustrate how this Government's long-term economic plan is working and that building more houses, giving more power to local communities, and helping people move onto and up the housing ladder.

■ **Open Recruitment**

Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Mr Eric Pickles):
[\[HCWS439\]](#)

I would like to update the House on what my Department is doing to increase transparency in government.

My Department has taken a series of steps to deliver savings for taxpayers. Staff costs for core DCLG have fallen from £216 million in 2009-10 to £95 million in 2013-14, a reduction of 56 per cent in cash terms and an annual saving of £121 million a year. The number of staff has been reduced by 57 per cent from 3,781 full-time equivalent in 2009-10 to 1,622 in 2013-14. Spending on temporary staff (which can be cheaper than permanent staff for specific projects) has fallen from £14.4 million in 2009-10 to £3.3 million in 2013-14.

Spending on consultancies has fallen from £36.6 million in 2009-10 to £0.5 million in 2013-14. Yet there remains a need to replace staff from time to time due to general turnover.

The Coalition Agreement pledged: "We will open up Whitehall recruitment by publishing Central Government job vacancies online". So, in April 2014, my Department became the first Whitehall Department to do this systematically. Under the situation we inherited from the last Administration, between a third and half of all job vacancies were not advertised to the wider public, but only to the Civil Service. This was the last closed shop – and a practice that was unfair not just to those in the voluntary or private sector, but also those who worked elsewhere in the public sector (such as local government). Under the last Administration, the practice also resulted in higher spending on consultancy contracts and recruitment agencies to bring in private sector expertise.

All jobs are now advertised online at: <https://www.civilservicejobs.service.gov.uk/>.

From April 2014 to the beginning of March, we have made 136 appointments:

- 30% were filled internally;
- 30% were filled by applicants from other Departments; and
- 40% were filled by external candidates.

I believe this provides a good balance between promoting hard working staff internally, tapping into the expertise of the Civil Service, and benefiting from the skills and experience of those from the wider public, voluntary and private sector.

Parts of the Civil Service has been somewhat shy about recognising the benefits of this policy. I hope the wider government will embrace such openness in the months ahead.

■ Unpublished research reports commissioned by the last Administration

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Kris Hopkins): [\[HCWS438\]](#)

The last Administration spent £26 million on DCLG research reports that were never published. Throughout this Parliament, we have taken steps to publish this significant backlog of reports. We are publishing a further batch today, representing £9.5 million (excl. VAT) of taxpayers' money.

The reports and findings do not relate to forthcoming policy announcements. They are not necessarily a reflection of this Government's policies, and should be treated as a statement of the last Administration. We are publishing these documents in the interests of transparency.

(i) ***Enhancing Young People's Involvement in Regeneration: New Deal for Communities and the Young Advisors Initiative.*** This report explores youth engagement and empowerment through a focus on the implementation of the DCLG devised 'Young Advisors' initiative which began with a pilot hosted by four New Deal for Communities and eventually comprised 43 projects hosted by a variety of organisations. This research was commissioned in 2005 as part of a programme of research on New Deal for

Communities. The total cost of the New Deal for Communities research programme was £8,897,113 (excl VAT).

(ii) ***New Deal for Communities: National Evaluation Phase Two: Technical Report.***

This Technical Report provides a wide range of supporting evidence including details of the design of the New Deal for Communities Programme and the national evaluation, data sources, statistical methods, analytical tools and outputs from analyses undertaken as part of New Deal for Communities Evaluation. This research was commissioned in 2005 as part of a programme of research on New Deal for Communities. The total cost of the New Deal for Communities research programme was £8,897,113 (excl VAT).

(iii) ***Housing Support in the Growth Areas - research report and Excel model guide.***

This report considers how the need for housing-related support, funded through the Supporting People programme, is likely to change as the population in the Growth Areas continued to change. The report was commissioned in 2008 at a cost of £60,000, excluding VAT.

(iv) ***London 2012 Olympics: Regeneration legacy evaluation framework.*** This report presents a Framework for the Department to measure the regeneration impacts and legacy of the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics. The report was commissioned in 2009 at a cost of £95,780, excluding VAT

(v) ***Coalfields regeneration: evaluation framework report.*** This monitoring and evaluation framework builds on previous research into coalfield areas. It provides an interim evaluation of the coalfields regeneration programmes in England. The study was commissioned in April 2005 at a cost of £270,517, excluding VAT.

(vi) ***Timely Information for Citizens Pilots: Evaluation Summary.*** This report was commissioned to maximise and disseminate the learning from the 'Timely Information for Citizens' pilots. The evaluation aims to provide evidence on the efficiency and effectiveness of the 'Timely Information for Citizens' programme; outcomes from the pilots and 'what works'; and transferable learning. This research was commissioned in 2009 at a cost of £98,150 (excl VAT).

(vii) ***Working Neighbourhoods Fund Evaluation: feasibility report.*** This report builds upon the findings of the Scoping Study which was published in February 2010 and specifies the work that needs to be undertaken to complete an interim evaluation of the Working Neighbourhoods Fund. This report was commissioned in 2008 at a cost of £113,506 (excl VAT).

To help pay off the deficit left by the last Administration, this Government has sought to deliver better value for money for future research and ensured that sums expended are reasonable in relation to the public policy benefits obtained. My Department now has far more rigorous scrutiny and challenge processes for commissioned research. We commission less, and we do it better.

Copies of these reports are attached and are available on the Department's website.

Attachments:

1. Coalfields Regeneration [Coalfields Regeneration - monitoring and evaluation framework 0315.pdf]
2. Enhancing Young people [Enhancing Young People's Involvement in Regeneration 0315.pdf]
3. Housing Growth Guide [Housing Support in Growth Areas - Guide 0315.pdf]
4. Housing Growth Report [Housing Support in Growth Areas - Report 0315.pdf]
5. London 2012 Olympics [London 2012 Olympics 0315.pdf]
6. NDC Evaluation [NDCevaluationphase2 0315.pdf]
7. WNF Scoping Study [WNF Scoping Study Evaluation 0315.pdf]
8. time citizen [Timelycitizen 0315.pdf]

DEFENCE**■ Government Pipeline and Storage System Sale Update**

Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Ministry of Defence) (Mr Philip Dunne):
[\[HCWS434\]](#)

I am pleased to announce the successful sale of the Government Pipeline and Storage System (GPSS) to Compañía Logística de Hidrocarburos (CLH) of Spain for £82 million, following a competitive sale process.

This means that I am close to completing the three major elements of the Asset Management Programme that the Ministry of Defence (MOD) launched following the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review. I have previously announced the successful sale of the Defence Support Group land business to Babcock for £140 million, along with a 10-year contract to buy back services. The contract will save the Army around £500 million over that period – a saving of over a third. Last month I announced that Solent Gateway had been selected as preferred bidder for the concession to manage, and exploit the commercial potential of, the Marchwood Sea Mounting Centre – again generating significant savings to Defence. The sale of the GPSS leads to a further substantial receipt of £82 million. It also allows the Government to transfer its commercial fuel transportation business to the private sector, while still preserving the GPSS's military capability and ensuring national resilience is not compromised.

As part of the transaction, an enduring contract has been agreed between the Secretary of State for Defence and CLH, which will protect the provision of GPSS-supplied aviation fuel to UK military bases, including those supporting US visiting forces; over the first 10 years of the contract the MOD share will cost some £237 million.

CLH will bring unique experience to the operation of GPSS as it operates and maintains a network of oil pipelines (over 4,000 km) and storage systems serving major airports across Spain. In addition it provides fuel transportation services (including storage and pipeline facilities) to military customers in Spain.

Of the staff employed by the Oil and Pipelines Agency, the Government body which manages the GPSS, just under 80 are in scope of the sale and will become CLH employees on completion of the sale, expected to occur on 30 April 2015. They will transfer under Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) regulations which will protect their terms and conditions of service. The GPSS sale does not include the six UK Oil Fuel

Depots owned by the MOD, which will continue to be operated and maintained by the residual Oil and Pipelines Agency.

In summary, this sale will generate a significant sale receipt while placing the GPSS network on a sustainable long-term footing, ensuring that the capability to supply aviation fuel to UK military bases and civil airports is retained.

■ Iraq Fatalities Investigations

Secretary of State for Defence (Michael Fallon):

[\[HCWS437\]](#)

I wish to inform the House of progress in responding to the High Court's decision in 2013 that a process akin to a Coroner's inquest be established to examine a small number of fatalities of Iraqi nationals arising from UK operations in Iraq where the deceased person was in the custody of or under the control of UK forces.

Sir George Newman today publishes his report into the deaths of Mr Nadheem Abdullah on 11 May 2003 and Mr Hassan Abbas Said on 2 August 2003. Sir George's Terms of Reference do not include making findings on any person's criminal or civil liability but he has carefully examined the deaths of the two men and has considered the wider circumstances that contributed to them.

The report concludes that Mr Abdullah died after soldiers from 3 PARA used excessive force in restraining and searching him and the vehicle in which he was travelling after it avoided a vehicle checkpoint on 11 May 2003. With regard to the death of Mr Said, the report concludes that he died when a soldier attached to 1 KINGS fired a single shot after he attempted to seize the barrel of his rifle, and appeared to reach for the pistol of the soldier attempting to handcuff him. There is evidence that Mr Said was one of several men who fled when challenged by the 1 KINGS patrol for pushing a cart containing ammunition.

Sir George has made a single recommendation, which I have accepted in principle, that focused training on policing and peacekeeping roles in hostile and potentially life-threatening situations should be provided to any service personnel deploying on similar operations in future.

In the light of the facts as found by Sir George, and in particular the finding that excessive force was used, I wish to express the Government's regret at the death of Mr Abdullah in particular. We are prepared to pay appropriate compensation to his family. The soldiers in both cases have already been prosecuted and acquitted, and will not face fresh prosecutions as a result of these inquiries.

I expect to establish one or more further such non-statutory inquiries into other fatalities during Operation Telic within the coming months.

EDUCATION**■ A World-Class Teaching Profession**

Secretary of State for Education (Nicky Morgan):

[\[HCWS429\]](#)

The driving force behind the delivery of this Government's plan for education is a world-class teaching profession. We share a common goal with thousands of dedicated professionals in classrooms throughout the country: of improving the lives of children and young people, and preparing them for success in modern Britain. We are committed to taking action that promotes and supports the development of the teaching profession.

In December last year, the Minister of State for Schools and I launched a consultation setting out what we believe Government can do to give teachers that support. Today we are announcing our plan of action designed to help teachers improve the quality of their professional development, and to strengthen the professional leadership of teaching overall. Alongside this we are publishing a report detailing the responses to the consultation that have led us to this plan.

The absence of a professional body, independent of Government, marks teaching out from other professions. We agree with the many teachers and school leaders who believe that the existence of such a body – set up and owned by teachers for teachers – could be a power for good in raising the professional status of teaching, and improving the development opportunities available to its members. What we have seen in other professions, such as law and medicine, is that their professional bodies' play a leading role in advancing practice and we believe a College of Teaching would be no different, becoming a key plank of our vision of a self-improving school led system. For that reason we invited expressions of interest from organisations seeking to establish a new College of Teaching, and we set out our offer of Government support to make that new College a reality.

The Minister of State and I are today announcing that we intend to work with the "Claim Your College" consortium – a coalition of leading organisations in the education sector – in support of their proposal to establish a new College of Teaching. The College of Teaching is expected to be fully independent of Government, established and led by teachers. It is intended that its start-up costs will be met by a significant injection of Government funding, along with funding from a range of other sources. We, as well as the organisations and individuals leading this project, are clear that support must be offered wholly in recognition of the new body's independence from Government. But if Government can play any part in facilitating this important step towards promoting the professional status of teachers and teaching, then it is right that we should do so.

In the longer term, a new professional body could play a leading role in the promotion of high-quality professional development for teachers. A commitment to high-quality, evidence-based professional development is one of the defining characteristics of all great professions. Teachers should be able to fulfil their own passion for knowledge and betterment by pursuing learning opportunities throughout their careers, enhancing their own practice and at the same time securing better outcomes for their pupils. Responses to the consultation, however, confirmed that teachers still face significant barriers in identifying and accessing

those high-quality professional development opportunities, based on sound evidence of what works.

Recognising the critical importance of high-quality professional development, we proposed to support teachers with a new, high-profile fund for professional development programmes. These would be delivered under the leadership of the growing Teaching Schools network, and rigorously evaluated for impact. Programmes supported by the fund would help to ensure that many more teachers have access to high-quality development opportunities, particularly teachers working in those schools which have the greatest need for additional support.

This proposal was positively received. So we are today confirming that we intend to invite Teaching Schools to bid for funding – for projects worth up to £300,000 each – to deliver high-quality, evidence-based professional development. The growing reach of the Teaching Schools network, and the broad alliances of schools that they work with, will ensure that access to high-quality professional development opportunities becomes a reality for many more teachers. Our announcement today is for the first phase of this scalable fund, for which we are making up to £5million available in the first year. We will consider extending this amount based on demand and we hope that this step will be the first of many, helping build and secure a robust evidence base for teachers to draw upon.

Our proposal to work with the sector to establish a new, online portal to facilitate the sharing of evidence about proven approaches to professional development was also well received. We therefore intend to continue working closely with sector organisations to further explore how we might support the establishment and effective use of a new forum, not least to ensure that the rigorous evaluations of programmes funded through the Professional Development Fund become freely available to all teachers, in formats that will allow the findings to translate easily into practice. Doing so will help to ensure that, in future, teachers are able to make better-informed decisions about the professional development they undertake, based on evidence of what is proven to work in practice.

Alongside the consultation we also committed to establish an expert group tasked with producing a new Standard for Teachers' Professional Development. This standard will set out a clear and succinct statement of the key elements of effective professional development practice, helping to shape both the demand for and supply of high-quality development opportunities for teachers. The Minister of State and I are pleased to be able to announce the appointment of David Weston, Chief Executive of the Teacher Development Trust, to chair the new expert group. We expect that the group will submit its report to Ministers early next year.

Copies of the consultation report will be placed in the libraries of both Houses.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

■ WOOD REVIEW IMPLEMENTATION: GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO CALL FOR EVIDENCE

Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change (Mr Edward Davey):

[\[HCWS427\]](#)

Today we are publishing the Government's response to the Wood Review Call for Evidence, which sought views on how to best implement the Wood Review's recommendations to empower the Oil and Gas Authority (OGA) to be a strong and influential regulator, equipped with necessary powers to regulate and steward the UK Continental Shelf.

The Call for Evidence ran from 6 November to 31 December 2014. During the Call for Evidence process, we held a number of industry workshops in London and Aberdeen to discuss, in detail, the questions posed in the Call for Evidence. The workshops were well attended by a wide range of industry stakeholders and the evidence gained from them, as well as from the written responses, has now been reviewed. The responses received were broadly supportive of the policy positions set out in the Call for Evidence and the stakeholder views and the evidence presented have been carefully considered in deciding how to move forward.

Key policy decisions

Governance and scope : The OGA will be a strong, effective regulator, established as an Executive Agency on 1 April 2015, before (subject to the will of Parliament) transitioning to a Government Company in summer 2016. To effectively respond to the challenges posed to the UKCS, a significant shift in regulatory culture is needed, and the OGA will be a confident and credible regulator, creating long-lasting cultural change within the industry for the ultimate benefit of the UK.

Delivering Maximising Economic Recovery from the UKCS (MER UK) : The MER UK Strategy was a key recommendation made in the Wood Review. Work is ongoing apace between all members of the tripartite – Industry, the OGA and HMG – to define MER UK and develop a fit for purpose Strategy, which will help to deliver overall benefits to the UK.

New powers : The OGA will be provided with necessary tools to be a strong and effective regulator and to enable delivery of its objectives.

- Meetings access: We will ensure the OGA has the right to attend industry meetings as an observer. This should apply to all parties covered by the MER UK Strategy and should include meetings between operators within a joint venture, and meetings between licensees, where matters relating to licence obligations or matters relating to MER UK are being discussed.

- Sharing data and information: We want to ensure the OGA has sufficient powers to gather relevant information. We are therefore proposing to take a power in primary legislation, allowing the powers to be developed as the priorities of the OGA become clearer, and ensuring time for further discussion with industry to ensure disproportionate burdens are not placed on them. Provisions will also be made to allow for sanctions to be imposed for breaches of any data or information obligations.

- Dispute resolution: There is a recognised need for the OGA to have a non-binding role in the resolution of disputes. However, dispute resolution should be seen as a last resort and only used after the parties have made sufficient attempts to reach a resolution, working informally with the OGA. It is important that the OGA has the operational freedom to define the process by which it will consider and resolve disputes. However, the Government will set

the scope of the scheme to ensure that the dispute resolution process assists in the delivery of MER UK. Any dispute that relates to licence terms or that impacts, or has the potential to impact, on MER UK may be resolved by the OGA and any party to the dispute or the OGA will be capable of initiating the process. The OGA will have information gathering powers and the ability to set timeframes for the provision of information, with the aim of speeding up the dispute resolution process. The OGA will also have the power to impose sanctions where parties do not comply with the dispute resolution process.

- Reviewing existing powers: A review of the existing powers is under way to ensure they remain fit for purpose and will sufficiently support the OGA, once transferred, in its role of regulating and stewarding the UKCS.

- Sanctions Regime: We will introduce a more graduated set of sanctions, which will include improvement notices and financial penalties. Sanctions will be applicable to all parties within scope of the MER UK strategy and will be applicable for breaches of MER UK as well as non-compliance with licence conditions and key powers exercised by the OGA. We are committed to ensuring sanctions are proportionate so will place a statutory limit of £1 million on individual financial penalties imposed. If, however, this amount does not prove to be a suitable deterrent in the future, the Government intends to reserve the right to increase this limit to £5 million subject to consultation and Parliamentary approval.

Cost Recovery : The OGA's costs will be met by a combination of the extant fees and charges regime, and a new levy on industry. We agree with industry that it is important that the levy is simple, transparent and cost-reflective. A detailed consultation on final proposals for administering the levy will be published later this month. In line with the early focus of the OGA, we have determined that initially the activities and costs, which fall under the levy will only relate to offshore petroleum licence holders. We intend that the OGA will begin collecting the levy in October 2015. The OGA will continue to recover the costs associated with permits and consents via the extant fees and charges regime. However, to comply with the Managing Public Money principles, the scope of the charging regime will be reviewed in due course.

Conclusion

The Call for Evidence was a crucial opportunity to hear industry's views and shape our policies. We are now working hard to prepare a Bill which, subject to the will of the Government, will be introduced to Parliament during summer 2015. The Bill will establish the OGA as a Government Company, as well as providing it OGA with the above-mentioned powers.

I will be depositing a copy of the Government Response in the Libraries of the House.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE**■ Tunisia: Terrorist Attack**

Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr Philip Hammond):
[\[HCWS435\]](#)

I wish to update the House on the terrorist attack in Tunis on 18 March. I condemn this despicable murder of innocent people.

A small group of terrorists attacked the Bardo Museum in central Tunis at around 11.30 GMT on 18 March. The gunmen fired on foreign tourists disembarking from buses outside the museum (adjacent to the Parliament building). As people took refuge in the museum, they were trapped inside by the gunmen. Tunisian security forces later entered the museum, killed two of the attackers and, we understand, arrested a third, bringing the incident to an end. The attack resulted in the death of two Tunisians and at least 20 foreign tourists, including one British national.

As details of the attack became known, British Embassy consular staff deployed quickly to hospitals and to two cruise ships at the port, to check on the welfare of British nationals. They learned of a possible UK casualty whose location was, at that time, unknown. At around 18.00 GMT they learned the likely location of the casualty in hospital and redeployed. They provided consular support to the family throughout this time. On the morning of 19 March we received confirmation that, very sadly, Sally Adey had been killed in the attack. We continue to provide her family with consular support. My thoughts are with them at this very difficult time.

The Prime Minister wrote to President Essebsi yesterday to express his condolences and assure him that Britain stood firmly with Tunisia in the face of this shared extremist threat. I spoke in similar terms to Prime Minister Habib Essid on the afternoon of the attack. I told him that the terrorists sought to undermine Tunisia's successful transition to democracy, but that they would not succeed.

Since Tunisia's revolution, the British Government has worked with the Tunisian Government in a number of areas, including security and counter terrorism, where we have provided training and equipment and shared expertise. We stand ready to provide further assistance, including through the deployment of police from the Metropolitan Police Counter Terrorism Command (SO15) to support the post attack investigation. SO15 and UK military Counter Terrorism experts will also be providing longer term capacity building. We will be working alongside EU partners and the US to help Tunisia manage the foreign fighter threat, whilst continuing to provide assistance in areas such as aviation security and tourist resort protection.

We are aware of reports that ISIL has claimed responsibility and given names of the attackers, but the Tunisian investigation is continuing and this information is as yet unconfirmed.

This brutal attack illustrates the threat from terrorism faced by Tunisia, and other countries in North Africa. Our Travel Advice prior to the attacks indicated that the threat of terrorism in Tunisia was high and that attacks could be indiscriminate, including in places visited by

foreigners. We reviewed the threat level after the attack and the Travel Advice has been amended to indicate that further attacks are possible. We are not advising against travel to Tunisia. We keep our Travel Advice under constant review.

NORTHERN IRELAND

■ Report by Lord Carlile of Berriew QC CBE on the National Security Arrangements in Northern Ireland

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mrs Theresa Villiers): [\[HCWS436\]](#)

This is a summary of the main findings from the report by Lord Carlile, the independent reviewer of national security arrangements in Northern Ireland, covering the period from 1 December 2013 to 31 December 2014:

“Throughout the year I have been briefed extensively on the state of threat in Northern Ireland. The context in which national security activities are performed in Northern Ireland remains challenging. There have been successes in 2014 and a number of trials of significant alleged terrorists are pending. This is a very dangerous, unpredictable terrorist threat, though one which is much smaller than in the days of PIRA terrorist activity. The authorities are achieving a good level of attrition. Most of the public lead lives unaffected by terrorism.

I regard 2014 as a year of continuing success in thwarting and detecting terrorism. Pending trials are likely to demonstrate this, as have trials during the year. However, there is no sign of reduced ambition in the minds of terrorists, and limited evidence of a lack of capacity on their part. Attrition and continued effort against the dissident republican groups remain a paramount requirement. The number of ongoing investigations remains high. The work is painstaking and, for some involved, potentially dangerous. Peace is in no small way the result of these efforts by PSNI and MI5 personnel.

In preparing this report I have considered the current threat level, and what I have learned of events of a terrorist nature during the year. There have been several serious incidents during 2014, as well as a spate of crude letter bombs. Once again the parading season proved a challenge. Although there were some injuries as a result of sectarian clashes, it was more peaceful than in 2013, with fewer injuries to police and public.

During 2014, I have met a range of stakeholders. I have engaged with PSNI and MI5 and examined the relationship between them and others. I have held meetings with HM Inspectorate of Constabulary concerning activities relevant to this Report, and with the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Executive's Minister of Justice, David Ford MLA. The liaison between Mr Ford and those responsible for national security issues is satisfactory. I have also engaged with the Independent Human Rights Advisor to the Northern Ireland Policing Board (NIPB) and the Board itself. The Policing Board can feel reassured that the Human Rights Advisor is well able to discharge her duties in respect of national security. The Board has been shown the material reports in relation to Northern Ireland of the Office of the Surveillance Commissioners, subject to minor redactions. Compliance is at 'best in class' level. I am grateful to NIO Ministers for their close interest in

national security matters discussed; meetings with Ministers have occurred. Ministers are always very well informed on all material security issues.

I am satisfied that the periodic briefings provided to me have been full and not selective, and that I have a good understanding of relevant matters. I note that when matters of moment occur, active steps are taken to ensure that I am briefed. When I request access, it is given.

I have asked questions again this year about the relationship between MI5 and PSNI staff working alongside each other in security operations in Northern Ireland. Comments made to me in 2014 about the relationship between the two services were strongly mutually supportive. That they work together well and in the national interest is beyond question. The effectiveness of what they do is demonstrated by the successful disruptions that have taken place over the year.

This year once again I have reviewed in some detail the arrangements for Covert Human Intelligence Sources (CHIS). Overall, the use of CHIS has been effective. All activity and decision making concerning CHIS are documented carefully and European Convention on Human Rights issues are fully considered. There is a rigorous legal and policy framework for dealing with CHIS. The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) 2000, and associated orders and codes, provide the legal framework for authorising and managing CHIS within the UK in a way that is compatible with the European Convention on Human Rights, and particularly the right to privacy. It requires that use of a CHIS is subject to prior senior officer authorisation, limits the purposes for which the CHIS may be used, ensures detailed records are maintained, establishes independent oversight and inspection, and provides an independent appeals mechanism to investigate complaints.

I have also considered a number of issues relating to terrorism prosecutions including arrangements for the continuation of the temporary and renewable non-jury trial arrangements provided under the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007. The situation continues to improve. The number of cases requiring non-jury trial diminishes. The Director of Public Prosecutions for Northern Ireland uses considerable and proper care in the identification and selection of such cases. It is fully recognised that the norm is jury trial but the residual serious and lethal threat of terrorism justifies the continuation of the non-jury system.

There is no evidence of any disadvantage in terms of outcome to Defendants in the current system of non-jury trials. They are as likely to be acquitted as in jury trials, and have the advantage of reasoned judgments, and less inhibited access to appeals.

Part of the criminal justice setting in need of appraisal is sentencing in terrorism related cases. Generally such sentences are considerably shorter than comparable sentences in England and Wales, with notably different tariffs in murder cases.

I remain as concerned as before about the disclosure regime operated in scheduled cases in Northern Ireland. In England and Wales issues of Public Interest Immunity and other disclosure issues are dealt with by the trial judge, who of course is not the tribunal of fact save in the rarest of trial exceptions, or in 'Newton' hearings where there has been a plea of guilty on a disputed factual basis. In Northern Ireland in non-jury trials there is a separate

disclosure judge. This still leads not only to delays in trials, but to a disconnect between the day by day reality of the trial and the insulated disclosure process.

I remain concerned that the disclosure issue outlined above is a real difficulty in dealing with non-jury cases. Given the high regard held generally for the quality of the reasoned judgments given in such cases, and also for the fairness of the trials, I find it difficult to accept that there would be any diminution in actual fairness if the trial judge dealt with disclosure too.

I have enquired about the use of intercept evidence. I remain satisfied that there is solid scrutiny and review of interception, in an environment in which communications technology is developing quickly.

As before, I have asked about loyalist paramilitaries. These are people and groups whose real interest is in making money from crime. The authorities are well sighted against these organisations. I have enquired about violent Islamism in Northern Ireland. For the present this is not a significant threat.

Continued vigilance and the maintenance of counter-terrorism resourcing are essential. However, once again I have drawn comfort from the successful joint operations between MI5 and the PSNI. Normality is a genuine and mostly realisable ambition, rather than merely an aspiration.

I have measured performance in 2014 against the five key principles identified in relation to national security in Annex E to the St Andrews Agreement of October 2006. My conclusions in relation to Annex E are set out in the attached Table."

TEXT OF ANNEX E

CONCLUSIONS

Further to reinforce this comprehensive set of safeguards, the Government confirms that it accepts and will ensure that effect is given to the five key principles which the Chief Constable has identified as crucial to the effective operation of the new arrangements, viz:

All Security Service intelligence relating to terrorism in Northern Ireland will be visible to the PSNI.

There is compliance. Arrangements are in place to deal with any suspected malfeasance by a PSNI or MI5 officer.

PSNI will be informed of all Security Service counter terrorist investigations and operations relating to Northern Ireland.

There is compliance.

Security Service intelligence will be disseminated within PSNI according to the current PSNI dissemination policy, and using police procedures.

There is compliance. Dissemination policy has developed since the new arrangements came into force.

The great majority of national security CHIS in Northern Ireland will continue to be run by PSNI officers under existing police handling protocols.

The majority of CHIS are run by the PSNI. Protocols have not stood still. A review of existing protocols and the development of up to

TEXT OF ANNEX E**CONCLUSIONS**

There will be no diminution of the PSNI's responsibility to comply with the Human Rights Act or the Policing Board's ability to monitor said compliance.

date replacements should always be work in progress and clearly accountable.

The PSNI must continue to comply. The Policing Board, with the advice of their Human Rights Advisor as a key component, will continue the role of monitoring compliance.

TRANSPORT**■ EU Transport Council**

Secretary of State for Transport (Mr Patrick McLoughlin):

[\[HCWS431\]](#)

I attended the first Transport Council under the Latvian Presidency (the Presidency) in Brussels on Friday 13 March.

The first item on the agenda was a policy debate on the Fourth Railway Package. The Presidency sought further guidance on the market pillar of the package in order to reach their ambition of achieving a General Approach by June. I set out the great success of our liberalised market and urged Member States to grasp the opportunity of the market pillar to develop a true single market for rail and support a vibrant, competitive and sustainable rail sector across Europe.

The debate on the three key issues identified by the Presidency – the independence of infrastructure managers and ex-ante oversight role of regulatory bodies on appointments to infrastructure boards under the governance file and how to ensure non-discriminatory access to rolling stock under the public service obligation file – drew a split response.

On governance, I had strong support from a range of Member States for the approach that a truly separated model was the most effective remedy against potential discrimination by the infrastructure manager towards the railway undertakings, and that additional regulation was not required in such cases.

On providing non-discriminatory access to rolling stock to ensure an effective opening of the market, I shared our positive experience of establishing a leasing market. Whilst all Member States recognised the need to address this barrier, many Member States pressed for flexibility to choose from a "toolbox" of options.

There was a call for a progressive move towards competitive tendering to avoid market failure from a sudden change, and mixed views on reciprocity measures if a long transition period were granted. The differing needs of Member States under fierce competition from bordering third countries was highlighted and consideration of the social dimension of new operators entering the market was requested.

The Presidency presented a paper on EU competitiveness and transport policy, focussing particularly on the funding opportunities from the new European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI). Commissioner Bulc then stressed three key principles: firstly, the need to invest in infrastructure and the shortfall within the EU for such activities; secondly, the need to embrace innovation for example, autonomous vehicles; and, thirdly, the need to remove technical and legal barriers to enable the transport sector to grow.

Other Member States views included the need to invest in innovation; the importance of the EFSI fund; less regulatory burdens; and State Aid rules becoming more permissive to help ensure that there was a level playing field with non-European countries.

I emphasised the importance of preparing projects so that they were ready to begin by the end of the year and called upon the Commissioner to return to Council to outline which transport projects were being funded by EFSI so that the existing grant mechanisms could be reviewed in light of developments there. Commissioner Bulc agreed to my request to report back on EFSI transport funding and repeated that her key mission was to ensure that EU transport policy was built around citizens and industry needs.

Under any other business the Presidency informed Council about the forthcoming Asia European meeting of Transport Ministers on 29-30 April in Riga, noting that increasing trade between Europe and Asia called for enhanced connectivity.

The Presidency updated Council on the outcome of the Conference on Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems on 5 – 6 March in Riga, drawing attention to the Riga Declaration which summarised the key principles of developing a risk-based and light-touch approach to regulation but with sufficient speed to provide the necessary investment conditions in this fast-developing sector.

Commissioner Bulc updated Council on actions taken following the downing of aircraft MH17 over Ukraine in July 2014, and encouraged Member States to support the European Aviation Safety Agency's mechanism for sharing civil and military risk assessments of civil aviation flights over conflict zones.

The Commission delivered a presentation on their Energy Union Communication of 25 February, emphasising that the goal of decarbonised transport called for a gradual transformation of the entire transport system. The Commission believe that their planned Road Package, to be published in 2016, will address reducing CO2 emissions from vehicles felt that success would depend upon Member State actions, not least in implementing alternative fuels infrastructure and supporting local authority sustainable urban mobility plans.

Lastly, France and Germany called for a comprehensive air transport agreement between the EU and the six members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) as a means to persuade the GCC to adopt "fair competition" principles. Germany emphasised that if the conditions of fair competition and limited market opening were achieved, she would be willing to consider a mandate for a comprehensive agreement with the GCC. Both Member States pressed their support for the Commission to bring forward a revision or replacement of Regulation (EC) 868/2004 on protection against subsidisation and unfair pricing.

Several Member States supported this position whilst the need to address distorted working conditions within the EU was highlighted. I advocated the wider benefits of liberalised international air transport for both business and the consumer in UK and across Europe through the creation of jobs and growth, better regional connectivity and improved customer choice and quality. I noted the potential benefits of a comprehensive air transport agreement and a review of the unfair pricing regulation but urged Member States not to lose sight of the value of Europe's relationship with the GCC states in air transport which extends to purchases from EU manufacturers.

The Commission suggested it may proceed with a comprehensive air transport agreement as a means to send a strong and united EU position to the GCC states whilst its work would continue on bringing forward a revised or entirely new Regulation 868/2004 with sufficient teeth to be effective.

■ Publication of the Highways England Framework Document

Minister of State for Transport (Mr John Hayes):

[[HCWS430](#)]

Last week I announced to the house the formal appointment of Highways England as the strategic highways company with effect from 1 April 2015 and published a number of key governance documents.

Today I am publishing the final part of the formal governance framework, the Highways England Framework Document. This sets out the relationship with Government, especially the arrangements for accountability to Parliament and stewardship of public money.

As I have made clear before, Ministers will continue to be accountable for making sure the network is managed responsibly, in a way that safeguards value for public investment and meets the needs of road users and wider society, both today and for future generations.

A copy of this Framework document has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses and is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/roads-reform>

Attachments:

1. The Framework Document [150319 - HE Framework FINAL.pdf]
2. b. Annex C to the Framework Document (the Protocol [150319 - Protocols Document FINAL.pdf])

■ Rail Franchising

Secretary of State for Transport (Mr Patrick McLoughlin):

[[HCWS426](#)]

I am pleased to inform the House that my Department has reached agreement with First Keolis TransPennine Express Limited to continue to operate train services in the North of England and Scotland. This means that the current franchisee will remain in place for a period of 12 months from 1st April. There will be an optional extension period of **up to 10** months. This deal ensures that passengers across the North continue to benefit from TransPennine Express' experience of running this franchise. It also paves the way for the new competitively-let TransPennine Express franchise, which will deliver new trains and improved services.

As I announced on the 8th January, my Department has reached agreement with Northern and TransPennine Express to ensure continuity of services after five of TransPennine Express' Class 170 diesel trains are transferred to Chiltern Railways, by their owner, Porterbrook Rail Leasing Ltd. I can inform the House that my Department has agreed with Direct Rail Services Ltd to operate an enhanced train service on the Cumbrian Coast line, between Carlisle and Barrow-in-Furness as part of this deal.

■ Triennial Review of Passenger Focus

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport (Claire Perry): [\[HCWS432\]](#)

I am today publishing the report of the Triennial Review of Passenger Focus (PF).

The review has considered the continuing need for PF's functions and the case for it to remain a non-departmental public body (NDPB). It has also looked at the control and governance arrangements in place to ensure that PF is complying with recognised principles of good corporate governance.

PF represents the interests of rail passengers in England, Scotland and Wales, bus and tram passengers in England (outside of London) and passengers on scheduled domestic coach services in England. It will shortly be taking on a new additional role representing users of the strategic road network in England.

I am pleased to announce the conclusion of the review and the publication of the report.

The report concludes that the functions of PF are still necessary, that it remains the right body for delivering them and that PF should remain a NDPB (Stage 1 of the review). The report also concludes that PF is managed to a high standard with well-structured and effective governance systems in place, with only a few minor administrative issues which should be capable of being quickly addressed (Stage 2 of the review).

Although the review did not consider in detail PF's future role in relation to highways, the report comments that the organisation appears to be in good shape to take this on, with well-established structures and procedures, and led by an effective and well-engaged Board.

The report also says that with substantial change and expansion of scope imminent as PF takes on the highways role, it is right that PF is undertaking a review of its current structure and funding arrangements to ensure they remain fit for purpose.

I would like to thank Andrew Murray for carrying out a thorough analysis of PF and its governance arrangements, and PF for their assistance as well as all the other stakeholders who were involved during the course of the review.

The review was conducted in accordance with Cabinet Office guidance (Guidance on reviews of non-departmental public bodies, June 2011).

The report is available on GOV.UK and I have made available copies in the libraries of the House.

Attachments:

1. Report of the Triennial Review of Passenger Focus [Triennial Review of PF - final report (Mar 15).pdf]