

**Daily Report****Tuesday, 21 March 2017**

This report shows written answers and statements provided on 21 March 2017 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:34 P.M., 21 March 2017). 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

### ATTORNEY GENERAL

#### ■ Attorney General: Procurement

**Jon Trickett:**

[\[68004\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, pursuant to the Answer of 13 March 2017 to Question 66990, what the pay grades are of the (a) 330 lawyers from the GLD's litigation group, (b) 12.5 full-time equivalent Crown Prosecution Service staff and (c) three Serious Fraud Office staff employed.

**Jeremy Wright:**

(a) Government Legal Department: The 330 lawyers in the Litigation Group are at Senior Civil Service, Grade 6 and Grade 7.

(b) Crown Prosecution Service: The grades of the 12.5 (FTE) members of commercial staff are shown in the below table.

CIVIL SERVICE GRADE	CPS COMMERCIAL STAFF @ 31/01/2017
G7	2.0
SEO	4.5
HEO	3.0
EO	1.0
AO	0.0
AA	2.0
Total	12.5

(c) Serious Fraud Office: The three members of the procurement team are one Grade 6 (who also manages the Facilities Management Team), one Senior Executive Officer and one Higher Executive Officer.

### BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

#### ■ Carbon Emissions

**Mr Jim Cunningham:**

[\[68259\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to publish the carbon reduction plan required by the Climate Change Act 2008 following the adoption of the fifth carbon budget.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

The Government's intention is to publish the plan as early on in 2017 as possible in order to move on to the delivery stage. The plan will set out how to reduce emissions through the 2020s and send an important signal to the markets, businesses and investors.

**■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Australian High Commission and Macquarie Group****Caroline Lucas:****[67698]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many meetings at which Government Ministers and officials of his Department have been present have taken place with representatives or employees from (a) Macquarie Group and (b) the Australian Embassy to the UK since January 2015.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

Records of all Ministerial meetings are published quarterly on the Gov.uk website at the following links:

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments%5B%5D=department-for-business-energy-and-industrial-strategy&publication\\_type=transparency-data](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments%5B%5D=department-for-business-energy-and-industrial-strategy&publication_type=transparency-data)

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/bis-quarterly-publications-april-to-june-2012>

Department for Energy and Climate Change

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ministers-meeting-with-external-organisations>

**■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Procurement****Jon Trickett:****[67748]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many contracts procured by his Department and its arms-length bodies are covered by TUPE regulations in each of the last three financial years.

**Margot James:**

The Department does not hold details of the number of contracts covered by TUPE Regulations and information is not held on this matter for the Department's arms-length bodies.

Contracts are created using standard terms and conditions which generally contain clauses that relate to TUPE and, amongst other things, place obligations on the supplier to provide information and to cooperate with the Department during any transfer of services.

**Jon Trickett:**

[\[67763\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many contracts procured by his Department and its arms-length bodies require that the contractor pays those of its employees undertaking the work contracted for the real living wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation in each of the last three financial years.

**Margot James:**

The Department is currently in transition following the announcement of its formation in July last year and the bringing together of the functions of the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) along with the business, industrial strategy and innovation functions of the former Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS).

DECC adopted the (real) Living Wage in 1 April 2014. This was not a contractual requirement but achieved by a contract variation negotiated with our facilities management supplier to enable them to pay two of their subcontractors (security and catering service providers) the higher rate of pay to their staff in scope. BIS has no contracts requiring the contractor to pay its employees the real Living Wage. The Department does not hold on information on this matter for the Department's arms-length bodies.

#### ■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Secondment

**Jon Trickett:**

[\[67731\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many staff have been seconded to his Department from (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Accenture, (d) McKinsey & Co, (f) Ernst and Young and (g) Bain & Company since July 2016.

**Margot James:**

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has one member of staff on secondment from (b) Deloitte, whose secondment started prior to July 2016 but is on-going. We had a member of staff on secondment from (a) PwC, which started prior to July 2016 and ended in September 2016. There have been no other staff seconded from PwC, Deloitte, Accenture, McKinsey & Co, Ernst and Young or Bain & Company since July 2016.

#### ■ Electricity: Exports

**Callum McCaig:**

[\[67874\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the average price of electricity exported from the UK through interconnectors was in the last 12 months.

**Jesse Norman:**

*[Holding answer 20 March 2017]:*

The Government does not hold prices on electricity exports over interconnectors. This is commercial information held by market participants.



**Callum McCaig:**

[\[67875\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much electricity was exported from the UK through interconnectors in the last 12 months.

**Jesse Norman:**

*[Holding answer 20 March 2017]:*

The Government routinely publishes total export figures from interconnectors in the annual Digest of UK Energy Statistics (DUKES), and the quarterly National Statistics Energy Trends data. The next Digest is due to be published on 27 July 2017, and provisional 2016 data will feature in the next Energy Trends report due for publication on 30 March.

The latest available 12 month period of data spans Q4 2015 to Q3 2016 and shows a total export of 1,255GWh.

## ■ Electricity: Imports

**Callum McCaig:**

[\[67876\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the average price of electricity imported into the UK through interconnectors was in the last 12 months.

**Jesse Norman:**

*[Holding answer 20 March 2017]:*

The Government does not hold prices on electricity imports over interconnectors. This is commercial information held by market participants.

**Callum McCaig:**

[\[67877\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much electricity was imported into the UK through interconnectors in the last 12 months.

**Jesse Norman:**

*[Holding answer 20 March 2017]:* The Government routinely publishes total import figures from interconnectors in the annual Digest of UK Energy Statistics (DUKES), and the quarterly National Statistics Energy Trends data. The next Digest is due to be published on 27 July 2017, and provisional 2016 data will feature in the next Energy Trends report due for publication on 30 March.

The latest available 12 month period of data spans Q4 2015 to Q3 2016 shows a total import of 21,986GWh.

## ■ Electricity: Prices

**Callum McCaig:**

[\[67903\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the average wholesale price of electricity was in 2016.

**Jesse Norman:**

*[Holding answer 20 March 2017]:* The average base load wholesale price of electricity in the day-ahead market for the period January to November 2016 was £42 per megawatt-hour\*.

\*Source: Ofgem electricity prices, <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/chart/electricity-prices-day-ahead-baseload-contracts-monthly-average-gb>

**■ Energy Companies Obligation****Steve McCabe:****[68253]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 1 March 2017 to Question 65125, what the target is for the current Energy Company Obligations scheme; and whether the suppliers of that scheme are on course to meet that target.

**Jesse Norman:**

The targets under the current obligation are:

- Carbon Emission Reduction Obligation – 12.4 MtCO<sub>2</sub>
- Carbon Savings Communities Obligation – 6 MtCO<sub>2</sub>
- Affordable Warmth - £3.7bn of notional lifetime bill savings

These must be met by March 2017. There are 12 obligated suppliers.

As of December 2016:

- 5 of 12 had provisionally met their CERO target
- 8 of 12 had provisionally met their CSCO target
- 6 of 12 had provisionally met their HHCRO target

Combined, suppliers have delivered 103% of the CERO target, 104% of the CSCO target and around 105% of the Affordable Warmth target.

Detailed information can be found at: <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/environmental-programmes/eco/contacts-guidance-and-resources/eco-public-reports-and-data>

These numbers will include some provisional measures, so progress against the targets, and the meeting of the targets cannot be confirmed until all measures have been approved by the administrator, Ofgem.

**Steve McCabe:****[68254]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 1 March 2017 to Question 65125, on housing: carbon emissions, what the targets were for all previous Energy Company Obligation schemes; and whether those targets were met.

**Jesse Norman:**

Between January 2013 and March 2015 the ECO targets were:

- Carbon Emission Reduction Obligation – 20.9MtCO<sub>2</sub>

- Carbon Savings Communities Obligation – 6.8MtCO<sub>2</sub>
- Affordable Warmth - £4.2bn of notional lifetime bill savings

All obligated suppliers met these targets with the results published at:

[https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/sites/default/files/docs/2015/09/eco\\_final\\_report\\_0.pdf](https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/sites/default/files/docs/2015/09/eco_final_report_0.pdf)

## ■ EURATOM: Membership

**Tom Blenkinsop:**

**[68028]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, which nuclear energy stakeholders he consulted on whether the UK should seek to withdraw from the European Atomic Energy Community (a) before and (b) after the publication of the European Union (Notification of Withdrawal) Bill 2016-17.

**Jesse Norman:**

*[Holding answer 20 March 2017]:* The Government has had detailed discussions with nuclear sector stakeholders since the referendum. Both officials and Ministers have been in frequent contact with nuclear industry and research stakeholders, and we will continue to work closely with them as we take the negotiations forwards.

## ■ Foreign Companies: Ownership

**Pauline Latham:**

**[68151]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that foreign companies which own properties in the UK publish details of their ultimate beneficial ownership.

**Margot James:**

The Government remains committed introducing the register of beneficial ownership for foreign companies that own UK property, which was announced at the Anti-Corruption summit in 2016.

This register is an important element of the forthcoming anti-corruption strategy. It will give assurance that the UK is a hostile environment for hiding the proceeds of corruption or laundering money.

## ■ Green Deal Scheme

**Anne McLaughlin:**

**[67076]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what criteria were used to draw up the list of approved installers under the Green Deal Home Improvement Fund.

**Jesse Norman:**

Capita, as the scheme administrator for the Green Deal Home Improvement Fund (GDHIF), received information on registered installers from the Green Deal Oversight and Registration Body (GD ORB), which managed the authorisation scheme for participants. A company was listed on the GDHIF Register if it was on the Green Deal Register.

**Anne McLaughlin:**

[\[67151\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many firms have been removed from the approved list of Green Deal installers in each calendar year of the scheme to date.

**Jesse Norman:**

The table below shows the number of firms that have been removed from the Green Deal (GD) Participants Register each calendar year since the GD scheme began.

YEAR	INSTALLERS WITHDRAWN BY CBS
2012	99
2013	11
2014	191
2015	410
2016	206
2017	14
Total	931

#### ■ Green Deal Scheme: Misconduct

**Anne McLaughlin:**

[\[67075\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what responsibility his Department takes for malpractice by accredited Green Deal installers.

**Jesse Norman:**

Green Deal Certification Bodies are responsible for certifying Green Deal Installers and monitoring their compliance against the requirements in the Publicly Available Specification (PAS) 2030 and/or Microgeneration Certification Scheme and the Green Deal Code of Practice. The Green Deal Ombudsman and Investigation Service provides a redress path for consumers who have a Green Deal Plan in place and experience problems with the measures installed.

#### ■ Insolvency: Prosecutions

**Tom Brake:**

[\[67505\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many prosecutions have been carried out of company directors continuing to trade when insolvent in each of the last five years.

**Margot James:**

While “continuing to trade whilst insolvent” is not a criminal offence in itself, under s993 Companies Act 2006 (and previously under s458 Companies Act 1985)

“If any business of a company is carried on with intent to defraud creditors of the company or creditors of any other person, or for any fraudulent purpose, every person who is knowingly a party to the carrying on of the business in that manner commits an offence.”

The table below provides the number of persons prosecuted for an offence of fraudulent trading in respect of an individual company for the last five financial years, irrespective of verdict.

DATE	
April 12 – March 13	17
April 13 – March 14	13
April 14 - March 15	35
April 15 – March 16	6
April 16 to March 17	5
TOTAL	76

The offence may be committed by a person other than a director and separate records of the number of directors prosecuted are not centrally collated.

#### ■ Land Registry: Privatisation

**John Healey:** [\[67681\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to publish the Government's response to the consultation on moving the operations of the HM Land Registry to the private sector.

**Margot James:**

As announced in the 2016 Autumn Statement, the Government has decided to transform HM Land Registry in the public sector and is reviewing options for modernisation. Government will respond in due course.

#### ■ Local Growth Deals

**Alan Brown:** [\[68255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 14 March 2017 to Question 67254, what funds are available for allocation to city or regional growth deals.

**Margot James:**

The Government are focused on taking forward city deals with Edinburgh, Stirling and Tay cities as we look to agree city deals for all of Scotland's great cities. The government has also published its green paper on the Industrial Strategy and is

engaging closely with the Scottish Government and local partners on how the strategy can work for the all parts of the UK.

## ■ Local Growth Deals: Easington

**Grahame Morris:**

[\[67545\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 8 March 2017 to Questions 66289 and 66310, on manufacturing industries: Durham, how much of the £379.6 million has been invested in (a) Peterlee and (b) Easington constituency to date.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

The Local Growth Fund is awarded to Local Enterprise Partnerships, who prioritise projects for funding in accordance with their local assurance frameworks.

Through its Growth Deal the North East Local Enterprise Partnership has allocated £7.84m from the Local Growth Fund (LGF) to support two priority projects in Easington.

The first project is the construction of a new Horden (Peterlee) Station on the Durham Coast Line, which will be supported by £3.44m from the LGF. The second project involves improvements to the A19/A189 Seaham/Murton interchange, which will be funded by £4.4m of LGF. Both projects will help the residents of Easington and the North East to access new and existing job opportunities.

## ■ Nuclear Reactors

**Andrew Stephenson:**

[\[67344\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will provide an update on the Government's timetable for the publication of the techno-economic assessment of small modular reactors.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Government is currently considering the key findings of the techno-economic assessment of small modular reactors as part of on-going SMR policy development. Government will provide more information on the plan for publication of the techno-economic assessment in due course.

## ■ Parental Leave

**Mr David Lammy:**

[\[68327\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what meetings he has held with external organisations on shared parental leave and the effectiveness of Government policy on that leave; and what representations he has received from external organisations on that policy.

**Margot James:**

Shared parental leave has been raised at several wider meetings that I have held with external organisations, and also at meetings with my officials.

**Mr David Lammy:**

[\[68338\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans his Department has to conduct a review into the effectiveness of shared parental leave policy; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr David Lammy:**

[\[68339\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of (a) financial considerations and (b) considerations of gendered working culture as barriers to fathers taking up shared parental leave.

**Margot James:**

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has committed to undertake a review of the effectiveness of Shared Parental Leave and Pay in 2018.

## ■ **Parental Leave: Males**

**Mr David Lammy:**

[\[68337\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many and what proportion of eligible men have taken up shared parental leave since it was introduced.

**Margot James:**

The Government does not hold information on the take-up of Shared Parental Leave since it was introduced in December 2014 for the parents of children due or placed for adoption from 5 April 2015.

Based on a small sample of the data provided to HM Revenue & Customs by employers, we estimate that around 6,000 employees claimed either statutory Shared Parental Pay or Additional Paternity Pay (the predecessor to Shared Parental Pay) in 2015/16.

## ■ **Pay**

**Paul Blomfield:**

[\[67782\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 10 March 2017 to Question 66151, on pay, what assessment his Department has made of the merits of providing assistance to workers who are unable to determine whether they have been paid the national minimum wage or national living wage as a result of their pay slips lacking in transparency.

**Margot James:**

The Low Pay Commission recommended that the Government consider the case for requiring employers to provide more information on hours worked in workers' payslips. The Government is currently engaging with stakeholders to better understand this proposal, and will consider the recommendation in the light of this.

**■ Renewable Energy****Mr Jim Cunningham:** [67819]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the total proportion of UK energy supply which will come from renewable sources in each of the next 10 years; and if he will make a statement.

**Jesse Norman:**

*[Holding answer 20 March 2017]:* The EU 2020 renewable energy target requires the UK to achieve 15% of final energy consumption from renewables in electricity generation, heating and transport by 2020.

We are currently progressing in line with the trajectory set out in the Renewable Energy Directive, having met the Directive's interim targets for 2011/12 and 2013/14.

The latest progress report can be found here:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/493857/3RD\\_UK\\_PROGRESS\\_REPORT\\_ON\\_RENEWABLE\\_ENERGY.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/493857/3RD_UK_PROGRESS_REPORT_ON_RENEWABLE_ENERGY.pdf)

**■ Renewable Energy: Construction****Mr Jim Cunningham:** [67976]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the completion dates for renewable energy projects across the UK for which (a) planning permission has been approved and (b) the installed capacity is to be equal to or above one gigawatt; and if he will make a statement.

**Jesse Norman:**

*[Holding answer 20 March 2017]:* In England and Wales, the following offshore wind projects have development consent and capacities equal or higher than one gigawatt: Dogger Bank Creyke Beck A (1.2GW), Dogger Bank Creyke Beck B (1.2GW), Dogger Bank Teeside A (1.2GW), Dogger Bank Teeside B (1.2GW), Hornsea One (1.2GW), Hornsea Two (1.8GW) and Triton Knoll (1.2GW).

Hornsea One is currently under construction with target commissioning dates of 31 March 2019, 31 March 2020 and 31 March 2021 for its three phases. Completion dates for the other projects listed above are not known.

In Scotland, the Moray Firth offshore wind project has consent for 1.116GW. The completion date for this project is not known.

**CABINET OFFICE****■ Cabinet Office: Freedom of Information****Andrew Gwynne:** [68036]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the average response rate was of his Department to individual Freedom of Information requests in each month since July 2016.



**Andrew Gwynne:**

[\[68271\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what 10 Downing Street's average response rate was to individual Freedom of Information requests in each month from July 2016 to date.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The Prime Minister's Office is an integral part of the Cabinet Office and is included in this reply.

FOI statistics are Official Statistics and are governed by the standards set out by the UK Statistics Authority (UKSA) in their Code of Practice. To publish information outside of the release timetable would be a breach of Protocol 2 of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

#### ■ **Cabinet Office: Secondment**

**Jon Trickett:**

[\[67732\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many staff have been seconded to his Department from (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Accenture, (d) McKinsey & Co, (f) Ernst and Young and (g) Bain & Company since July 2016.

**Chris Skidmore:**

Since July 2016, two individuals were seconded to my Department from (a) PWC. Both assignments have since been completed. There have been no staff seconded to my Department from (b) Deloitte, (c) Accenture, (d) McKinsey & Co, (f) Ernst and Young and (g) Bain & Company since July 2016.

#### ■ **Companies: Ownership**

**Mr Roger Godsiff:**

[\[68007\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps his Department is taking to encourage the Crown Dependencies to introduce public registers of beneficial ownership.

**Chris Skidmore:**

*[Holding answer 20 March 2017]:* The UK Government works closely with the Crown Dependencies on tax and transparency issues. Our priority is the implementation of the new bilateral arrangements concluded with them in 2016, which are due to come into effect by June this year. Under these arrangements, the Crown Dependencies have committed to establish, where they have not already done so, central registers of beneficial ownership information, or similarly effective systems and to give UK law enforcement and tax authorities near real-time access to beneficial ownership information on corporate and legal entities incorporated in their jurisdictions. Nevertheless, it remains the Government's ambition for public registers to become the global standard. If this happens, we would expect the Crown Dependencies to follow suit.

**■ Electoral Register: Disability****Cat Smith:** [\[67539\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 9 March 2017 to Question 66275, on electoral register: disability, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that accessible information on the forthcoming local and mayoral elections is made available for people with a learning disability.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The responsibility to provide information to electors on local and national elections rests with the Electoral Commission and Returning Officers. For previous polls the Royal Mencap Society and the Electoral Commission produced easy read guidance to help people with a learning disability to register and to vote which the Cabinet office funded with a grant of £58,734. For the forthcoming local and mayoral elections the law provides that Returning Officers make relevant information available in accessible formats and we have been working with the Electoral Commission, the Association of Electoral Administration and representative organisations like Mencap to promote provision of such materials.

**■ Foreign Investment in UK: Pakistan****Andrew Stephenson:** [\[67230\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate he has made of the level of foreign direct investment in the UK from Pakistani investors in each of the last five years.

**Chris Skidmore:**

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

**Attachments:**

1. UKSA Response to PQ67230 [PQ67230 v.03 (002) (1) (1).pdf]

**■ Government Contracts****Jon Trickett:** [\[67473\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the average time taken has been to produce tendering documents for Government contracts below £10,000 in each year since 2010.

**Jon Trickett:** [\[67474\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the average number of work hours spent producing tendering documents for Government contracts above £10,000 but below the level specified by the Official Journal of the European Union is.

**Jon Trickett:** [\[67475\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the average time taken has been to produce tendering documents for Government contracts above the level specified by the Official Journal of the European Union in each year since 2010.

**Jon Trickett:** [\[67476\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the average time taken has been to produce tendering documents for Government contracts above £10,000 but below the level specified by the Official Journal of the European Union in each year since 2010.

**Jon Trickett:** [\[67477\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what proportion of Government procurement is tendered through the Official Journal of the European Union; and what proportion of staff (a) hours and (b) wages is spent on that work.

**Jon Trickett:** [\[67478\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the average cost has been to produce tendering documents for Government contracts above the level specified by the Official Journal of the European Union in each year since 2010.

**Jon Trickett:** [\[67479\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the average cost has been to produce tendering documents for Government contracts valued below £10,000 in each year since 2010.

**Jon Trickett:** [\[67480\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the average cost has been to produce tendering documents for Government contracts above £10,000 but below the level specified by the Official Journal of the European Union in each year since 2010.

**Jon Trickett:** [\[67481\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the average amount of work hours spent producing tendering documents for Government contracts below £10,000 is.

**Jon Trickett:** [\[67482\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the average amount of work hours spent producing tendering documents for Government contracts above the level specified by the Official Journal of the European Union is.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The requested information is not held centrally.

## ■ Government Departments: Disclosure of Information

**Justin Tomlinson:** [\[67910\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate he has made of potential savings arising from increased data sharing across Whitehall.

**Justin Tomlinson:** [\[67911\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what recent assessment he has made of the efficacy of data sharing across Whitehall.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The Government Transformation Strategy, published in February, includes an assessment of how data sharing across Whitehall could be made more efficient. Specific opportunities for improvement identified within the strategy include the development of registers to ensure reference data is easy to maintain and use.

The potential of data sharing to save time and resource in several key areas across Whitehall has been analysed as part of the data sharing measures set out in the Digital Economy Bill. These measures enable easier data sharing to improve the public services and functions we deliver. For example, providing automatic rebates to those in fuel poverty would cost less than £1 per household to deliver, while non-automated methods can cost up to £30 per customer.

Industries outside the public sector will also benefit from cost savings enabled by the Digital Economy Bill: the transformation of data collection practices will lead to reduction, over time, of costs associated with compliance, currently estimated at £24 million annually for UK businesses.

**Leukaemia**

**Kelvin Hopkins:** [\[68245\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what comparative assessment he has made of survival rates for chronic lymphocytic leukaemia in the UK and other EU countries.

**Kelvin Hopkins:** [\[68257\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many patients were diagnosed with chronic lymphocytic leukaemia in each of the last 10 years.

**Chris Skidmore:**

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

**Attachments:**

1. UKSA Response to PQ68245 and PQ68257 [PQ68257 & 68245 holding response (1).pdf]

**Prime Minister: Staff**

**Christian Matheson:** [\[67648\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people who work in 10 Downing Street are not employed in the Civil Service.

**Chris Skidmore:**

The Prime Minister's Office is an integral part of the Cabinet Office.

The information requested is not held centrally.

## ■ Self-employed

**Mr Stephen Hepburn:**

[\[67658\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people have been registered as self-employed in (a) Jarrow constituency, (b) South Tyneside, (c) the North East and (d) the UK in each of the last seven years.

**Mr Stephen Hepburn:**

[\[67659\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people are registered as self-employed in (a) Jarrow constituency, (b) South Tyneside, (c) the North East and (d) the UK.

**Chris Skidmore:**

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

### Attachments:

1. UKSA Response to PQ67658 and PQ67659 [PQ 67658 & 67659 v.02 (1) (2).pdf]

## TREASURY

## ■ Housing: Sales

**Mrs Anne Main:**

[\[67559\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many additional residential property transactions valued between (a) £125,000.01 and £250,000, (b) £250,000.01 and £925,000, (c) £925,000.01 and £1.5 million and (d) over £1.5 million there have been in St Albans district since 2012; and what the total Stamp Duty Land Tax revenue generated by those transactions was in (i) 2012, (ii) 2013, (iii) 2014, (iv) 2015 and (v) 2016 by price band.

**Mrs Anne Main:**

[\[67560\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many residential property transactions valued between (a) £125,000.01 and £250,000, (b) £250,000.01 and £925,000, (c) £925,000.01 and £1.5 million and (d) over £1.5 million there have been in St Albans district since 2012; and what the total Stamp Duty Land Tax revenue generated by those transactions was in (i) 2012, (ii) 2013, (iii) 2014, (iv) 2015 and (v) 2016 by price band.

**Mrs Anne Main:**

[\[67561\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many residential property transactions valued between (a) £125,000.01 and £250,000, (b) £250,000.01 and £925,000, (c) £925,000.01 and £1.5 million and (d) over £1.5 million there were in London in (i) 2012, (ii) 2013, (iii) 2014, (iv) 2015 and (v) 2016; and what the total Stamp Duty Land Tax revenue generated by those transactions was in each of those years by price band.

**Mrs Anne Main:** [67562]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the value of Stamp Duty Land Tax receipts has been in St Albans district in (a) 2012-13, (b) 2013-14, (c) 2014-15, (d) 2015-16 and (e) 2016-17.

**Mrs Anne Main:** [67563]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many additional residential property transactions valued between (a) £125,000.01 and £250,000, (b) £250,000.01 and £925,000, (c) £925,000.01 and £1.5 million and (d) over £1.5 million there were in London in (i) 2012, (ii) 2013, (iii) 2014, (iv) 2015 and (v) 2016; and what the total Stamp Duty Land Tax Revenue generated by those transactions was in each of those years by price band.

**Mrs Anne Main:** [67564]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the value of Stamp Duty Land Tax receipts in London from additional residential properties has been in (a) 2012-13, (b) 2013-14, (c) 2014-15, (d) 2015-16 and (e) 2016-17.

**Mrs Anne Main:** [67565]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the Stamp Duty Land Tax receipts in London were in (a) 2012-13, (b) 2013-14, (c) 2014-15, (d) 2015-16 and (e) 2016-17.

**Mrs Anne Main:** [67566]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the stamp duty land tax receipts from additional residential properties in St Albans District were in (a) 2012-13, (b) 2013-14, (c) 2014-15, (d) 2015-16 and (e) 2016-17.

**Mrs Anne Main:** [67675]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the total value of receipts from stamp duty land tax in England was in (a) 2012-13, (b) 2013-14, (c) 2014-15, (d) 2015-16 and (e) 2016-17; and if he will make a statement.

**Jane Ellison:**

Annual statistics on the total number of transactions and total Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT) receipts by country (including England), region (including London) and local authority (including St Albans) are published by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) in the annual 'UK Stamp Tax Statistics'. These publications cover the financial years from 2012-13 to 2015-16.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-stamp-tax-statistics>

Table 3.6 of the latest release, for 2015-16, also contains statistics broken down by the price band of the property and the region.

Statistics relating to 2016-17 are due to be published in September 2017.

The higher rate of SDLT paid on 'additional properties' was introduced in April 2016. An estimate of the total number of transactions and receipts from additional properties is published in HMRC's 'Quarterly Stamp Duty Statistics'.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/quarterly-stamp-duty-statistics>

Further breakdowns of the SDLT statistics, for example by alternative price bands, or by calendar year, are not readily available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

## ■ **LIBOR: Fines**

**Mr Steve Reed:** [68345]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to ensure that charities are able to bid more effectively and transparently for any future allocation of funding from Libor fines.

**Mr Steve Reed:** [68346]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, for what reasons no funds from Libor fines were allocated in the Spring Budget 2017.

**Mr David Gauke:**

The governance of LIBOR Grants complies fully with the mandated requirements of the 'Minimum Standards for Government Grants' which came into force on 1st December 2016. The details of any future LIBOR grants scheme open for public application will be published on the gov.uk website and advertised widely through social media and across the charity sector. All applications that meet the published criteria will be considered fully.

No funds from Libor fines were allocated in the Spring Budget 2017 due to insufficient time being available between the Autumn Statement 2016 and the Budget, in which to conduct mandated due diligence on the significant number of applications anticipated.

## ■ **Mortgages: Self-employed**

**Rachel Reeves:** [67498]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans he has to improve the access of self-employed people to a mortgage.

**Simon Kirby:**

The Government is committed to increasing competition in banking and creating an environment in which firms compete to offer a range of products that suit the varying needs of their customers.

The independent Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) rules do not prevent self-employed customers from getting a mortgage. The FCA's rules recognise that lenders should have flexibility to decide what evidence of income they can accept from self-employed customers for the purposes of an affordability assessment.

There are a wide variety of mortgage products available in the UK and lender's policies will vary so self-employed customers may benefit from shopping around.

■ **National Insurance Contributions: Self-employed**

**Tim Farron:** [\[67417\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many people are registered as Class 4 national insurance contribution payers by (a) parliamentary constituency and (b) region.

**Richard Burgon:** [\[67829\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the number of people paying Class 4 national insurance contributions in (a) Leeds East constituency, (b) Leeds and (c) Yorkshire.

**Jane Ellison:**

The information requested is attached.

This is based on the Survey of Personal Incomes 2014-15. Constituency numbers are rounded to the nearest 100, and regional numbers to the nearest 1,000. Due to rounding the sum of numbers for Parliamentary constituencies may be different to regional numbers.

**Attachments:**

1. class 4 NICs list [170315 Region and constituency for HMT.docx]

**Rachel Reeves:** [\[67497\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans he has to reform the minimum income floor in universal credit for self-employed people as a result of the planned increase in Class 4 national insurance contributions.

**Rachel Reeves:** [\[67500\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of extending the start-up period under universal credit exempting self-employed people from the minimum income floor in their first year of trading.

**Mr David Gauke:**

The Minimum Income Floor is designed to encourage and incentivise self-employed Universal Credit claimants to increase their level of earnings and work their way out of welfare dependency. In order to give individuals a fair and proportionate amount of time to grow their business, the government has introduced a start-up period of up to twelve months (for those eligible) where the Minimum Income Floor will not be applied. Once an individual is deemed to be self-employed for the purposes of Universal Credit, they will not be expected to undertake 'work search' requirements so that they can concentrate on making a success of their business and increasing their earnings to lift them out of welfare dependency.

The government has no current plans to reform the Minimum Income Floor or to extend the start-up period for self-employed claimants in Universal Credit.



## ■ Personal Injury: Compensation

**Jonathan Edwards:**

[\[67506\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the effect on Welsh Government funding of changes to the personal injury discount rate.

**Mr David Gauke:**

The change to the personal injury discount rate to minus 0.75% applies to England and Wales. We will publish a consultation by Easter, which will consider options for reform, and are engaging with the Welsh Government throughout the consultation process to ensure that any impacts from the rate change are managed appropriately.

## ■ Personal Pensions: Self-employed

**Rachel Reeves:**

[\[67499\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans he has to ensure that more self-employed people pay into a private pension scheme.

**Jane Ellison:**

The Government has taken a number of steps to ensure that self-employed people can pay into pension schemes and save for their retirement.

It has created the National Employment Savings Trust (NEST) to offer low-charge pension schemes. The Government has also introduced flexibility through the carry forward of the Annual Allowance to help individuals with irregular earnings, including the self-employed, to contribute more to their pension.

The Government will introduce the Lifetime ISA from 6 April which supports younger adults to save up to £4,000 each year for later in life by providing a generous bonus of up to £1,000 a year on these contributions. Although the Government has made it clear that the Lifetime ISA is not being introduced as a replacement to pension savings products, it will provide an additional option for long term saving to the self-employed.

The Government will also review automatic enrolment this year. The review includes a theme about coverage for those who do not currently benefit from automatic enrolment, including the self-employed.

## ■ Stamp Duty Land Tax

**John Healey:**

[\[67696\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much he expects the higher rate of stamp duty land tax on additional properties to raise in each year from 2017-18 to 2020-21.

**Jane Ellison:**

Forecast revenues for the higher rate of stamp duty land tax on additional properties for 2017-2018 to 2020-21 are published by the Office of Budget Responsibility in Table 2.6 of the Economic and Fiscal Outlook – supplementary fiscal tables.

<http://budgetresponsibility.org.uk/download/march-2017-economic-and-fiscal-outlook-supplementary-fiscal-tables-receipts-and-other/>

**■ Tax Collection****Diana Johnson:****[67540]**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 12 July 2016 to Question 42176, on tax collection, for what reason technical risks not subject to litigation do not form part of the tax gap; and what proportion of unpaid corporation tax identified as technical risks not subject to litigation was collected by the Exchequer in the last two fiscal years for which figures are available.

**Jane Ellison:**

The large business corporation tax gap relates to those cases where it was not possible to reach agreement on the amount of tax to be paid. Tax on technical risks not subject to litigation are excluded from the tax gap because for these cases agreement is expected or has been reached between HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and the customer in line with the Litigation and Settlement Strategy. HMRC collects the tax due under the law in accordance with the published Litigation and Settlement Strategy.

**■ Treasury: Migrant Workers****Tulip Siddiq:****[67471]**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many and what proportion of people employed by his Department are from other EU countries.

**Simon Kirby:**

All Government Departments are bound by legal requirements concerning the right to work in the UK and, in addition, the Civil Service Nationality Rules.

Evidence of nationality is checked at the point of recruitment into the Civil Service as part of wider pre-employment checks, but there is no requirement on departments to retain this information beyond the point at which it has served its purpose.

More broadly, the Government will be consulting in due course on how we work with businesses to ensure that workers in this country have the skills that they need to get a job. There are no proposals to publish lists of the number or proportion of foreign workers.

## ■ VAT

**Dr Rosena Allin-Khan:**

**[67573]**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans his Department has to provide guidance on changes to the flat rate VAT scheme.

**Jane Ellison:**

Following the Chancellor's announcement at Autumn Statement 2016, details of the new measure, draft legislation and a supporting technical note were placed on GOV.UK for an 8 week consultation period. At the beginning of January, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) contacted business representative bodies, to discuss the change and ask for their feedback. Changes were made to the legislation and guidance in response to this feedback.

At the end of February, HMRC delivered an online calculator to help businesses work out whether they have limited costs. This provides a link to the updated VAT Notice 733, where the changes are explained in more detail. These products were developed using feedback from businesses using the scheme and their agents. They were made available once the changes to the legislation were agreed to help businesses get ready for the change.

Once the flat rate change takes effect, businesses who have not already used these tools will be able to link to these products when registering for VAT or when completing a VAT return on line.

During March, HMRC will contact all flat rate businesses by letter and also by email (where an email address is held), advising them of the change and telling them what they need to do next. HMRC began issuing these emails and letters on 10 March.

Many flat rate businesses are represented by an agent. At the beginning of March, HMRC used one of their weekly Agent Talking Point meetings to highlight the changes to the VAT flat rate scheme and provide the opportunity for agents to talk with subject matter experts from HMRC. Agent Talking Points are weekly online digital meetings for tax agents and advisers, and over 1,900 agents attended the flat rate scheme session.

## COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### ■ Empty Property

**Grahame Morris:**

**[67601]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will introduce proposals to fund large scale replacement and redevelopment of housing in areas with high vacancy rates and high numbers of derelict properties.

**Gavin Barwell:**

The Estate Regeneration National Strategy and funding package was launched on 8 December 2016. The funding will help accelerate and improve estate regeneration schemes and was developed following work with over 120 estates across England.

The funding comprises £140 million of recoverable loan funding, £30 million of enabling grant and £2 million of capacity building grant.

The programme represents a huge opportunity for providing new housing, as well as tackling blight and social problems. Estate regeneration can transform neighbourhoods by delivering high quality, well designed housing and public space, a better quality of life and new opportunities for residents. In many cases it can also deliver additional homes for local people.

This approach can be applied to areas of housing with high vacancy rates and large numbers of derelict properties. The national strategy aims to encourage local partners to assess options for regeneration in consultation with local communities, including demolition and redevelopment, in-fill or refurbishment. Many local authorities are already taking a strategic approach to place-making by addressing housing need alongside infrastructure and connectivity, service reform and employment opportunities.

**■ Industrial Estates: Easington****Grahame Morris:****[67596]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will make financial support available to provide incentives for businesses to relocate and operate from designated business parks in Peterlee and Seaham where there is significant under-occupancy.

**Andrew Percy:**

Government has actively supported and invested in the creation of a network of Growth Hubs to provide businesses with tailored advice and support at the local level. Growth Hubs are locally-driven and led by Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs).

LEPs, through their Growth Hubs, are best placed to determine appropriate arrangements for delivering business support locally, such as advice on or support to help with businesses relocation or expansion of premises.

In Peterlee and Seaham this support is delivered by the North East Growth Hub. Further details on the advice and funding they are able to provide can be accessed via: <https://www.northeastgrowthhub.co.uk>.

The North East LEP also manages an Investment Fund which is aimed at encouraging local economic growth and creating jobs. This fund can support capital projects such as the new construction, expansion, or renovation of existing facilities. This is backed by £45 million of funding provided by Government.

## ■ Non-domestic Rates: North West

**Andrew Stephenson:**

[\[67881\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, with reference to paragraph 3.17 of the Spring Budget 2017, what estimate the Government has made of the number of public houses that will be eligible for the £1,000 business rate discount in (a) Pendle, (b) Lancashire and (c) the North West.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

At the Budget on 8 March the Chancellor announced a new relief scheme for pubs with a rateable value below £100,000. Under the scheme, eligible pubs will receive a £1000 discount on rate bills. My Department will shortly consult on guidance which will include proposals on the eligibility criteria and other aspects of the scheme.

## ■ Non-domestic Rates: Public Houses

**Neil Coyle:**

[\[67716\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, with reference to table 2.1 in the Spring Budget 2017, how many pubs in (a) the SE1 postcode area and (b) London the Government expects to give help to in order to mitigate the proposed business rates rise.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

The Government will shortly be consulting on the eligibility criteria for the pubs discount. All eligible pubs with a rateable value less than £100,000 will receive up to a £1000 discount.

## ■ Public Houses: Closures

**Simon Danczuk:**

[\[67916\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of the removal of permitted development rights for the conversion or demolition of pubs on trends in pub closures.

**Gavin Barwell:**

Briefing provided by the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) suggests that only 10 per cent of the pubs that change use do so under permitted development rights. Planning permission is required where permitted development rights for the change of use or demolition are removed. Planning applications are determined in accordance with the Local Plan, any neighbourhood plan, and other material considerations.

It is not possible to estimate what proportion of these pubs that have changed use via permitted development rights would in any case have received planning permission to do so or, if refused planning permission, would have closed.

## ■ Right to Buy Scheme

**Richard Graham:** [\[68258\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what progress has been made on the expanded regional voluntary right to buy pilot scheme; and which (a) housing associations and (b) regions will be included in that pilot.

**Gavin Barwell:**

We are working with the National Housing Federation to identify the most effective location for the expanded regional pilot. More details will follow once a location has been identified.

## CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

### ■ Arts: Finance

**Grahame Morris:** [\[67599\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what conditions the Arts Council places on funding for the Royal Opera House, the Royal Ballet and the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House to increase participation in the arts and conduct outreach work in the regions.

**Matt Hancock:**

The Royal Opera House (ROH), which encompasses the Royal Ballet and the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House is an Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation. Both the Royal Opera House and the ROH Bridge Delivery Organisation grants for 2015-2018 have funding conditions linked to increasing participation in the arts and outreach work.

Based at High House Production Park in Thurrock, the ROH Bridge Organisation works with schools, arts organisations, museums, libraries, heritage sites, and councils across Essex, Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and North Kent. The ROH also works with BP to produce Big Screen live relays of opera and ballet direct from Covent Garden to sites across the country. This enables ROH to reach as many people as possible with exhilarating live performances, allowing them to experience the very best of opera and ballet in their hometown for free.

The ROH is also required to contribute to the Arts Councils goals, including Goal 5 whereby they are expected to establish a working relationship with their local Bridge organisations, engage with Arts Award, establish a working relationship with their local Music education hub or hubs, where appropriate, and support schools to achieve an Artsmark.

### ■ Department for Culture, Media and Sport: Migrant Workers

**Tulip Siddiq:** [\[67457\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how many and what proportion of people employed by her Department are from other EU countries.

**Matt Hancock:**

All Government Departments are bound by legal requirements concerning the right to work in the UK and, in addition, the Civil Service Nationality Rules.

Evidence of nationality is checked at the point of recruitment into the Civil Service as part of wider pre-employment checks, but there is no requirement on departments to retain this information beyond the point at which it has served its purpose.

**Discover England Fund: North East****Grahame Morris:**[\[67685\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what proportion of the Discover England Fund has been allocated to (a) the North East, (b) Country Durham and (c) Easington constituency since that fund was established.

**Tracey Crouch:**

Discover England Fund is a three year grant programme. Organisations are invited to apply and funding is allocated on merit.

A fund recipient, Heritage Cities are working on augmented reality heritage content in Durham Cathedral. UK Countryside Tours are organising tours throughout England, including in the North East. A number of other national thematic projects will benefit the whole of England.

A second round of successful projects will be announced in the summer.

**Football****Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[68246\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps she is taking to promote opportunities for supporters to have increased involvement in the running of football clubs.

**Tracey Crouch:**

On the 27 February, the Department published progress one year on from the report of the Government Expert Working Group on Football Supporter Ownership and Engagement. This progress report is a summary of the achievements made so far by the football authorities, supporter representative groups and government to implement the Working Group's recommendations. The report is available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/football-expert-working-group-progress-report>.

In particular, changes are already in place to help Supporters Trusts bid to buy insolvent clubs, as well as requiring all 92 professional clubs to meet with their supporters at least twice a year to discuss the matters of most importance. These meetings lead the way in ensuring fans are better informed, and consulted on club activities.

**■ Greyhound Racing**

**Andrew Rosindell:** [67697]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what plans her Department has to reform the model of funding for greyhound racing.

**Tracey Crouch:**

The government supports the existing system of funding and encourages all bookmakers to pay the voluntary levy. There are no plans to reform the current system.

**■ Horse Racing: Betting**

**Anna Turley:** [67948]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, when she plans to lay provisions for the new Horseracing Betting Levy Scheme before Parliament.

**Tracey Crouch:**

The Horserace Betting Levy Regulations 2017 were laid before Parliament on 7th March 2017 and can be viewed via the following link:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2017/9780111155530/introduction>

The regulations will ensure a level playing field amongst bookmakers based in Britain and those offshore while ensuring a fair return to the sport.

**■ Public Libraries**

**Gill Furniss:** [68299]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to the post on the Libraries Taskforce blog of 8 August 2016, entitled Book dataset first steps, for what reason the library provisions dataset has not yet been published.

**Mr Rob Wilson:**

We will publish data about public libraries in England shortly.

**■ Social Services: Investment**

**Tom Watson:** [68305]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what estimate her Department has made of the (a) staffing, (b) advertising and marketing and (c) other administrative costs of developing each of the 32 currently operational social impact bonds.

**Mr Rob Wilson:**

The 32 social impact bonds (SIB) have been developed by a range of local and central government commissioners so DCMS does not hold this information. We are working closely with partners to develop our understanding of the costs of setting up and running a SIB.



**■ Voluntary Organisations: Migrant Workers**

**Mr Steve Reed:** [\[68343\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what recent estimate she has made of the number of non-UK EU nationals working in the UK's voluntary sector.

**Mr Rob Wilson:**

The Government is working with the voluntary sector to assess the impact of leaving the EU, including how the sector's workforce may be affected. Securing an agreement that will guarantee the status of EU nationals here and UK nationals in the EU is one of government's top priorities.

**■ Voting Behaviour: Young People**

**Cat Smith:** [\[67607\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 8 March 2017 to Question 66308, what assessment the Government has made of the effect of full-time social action on youth voter engagement.

**Mr Rob Wilson:**

The Government has not conducted an assessment of the effect of full-time social action on youth voter engagement.

The Government has established a Review of Full Time Social Action by Young People which will consider the benefits and challenges of full-time volunteering among young people.

**Cat Smith:** [\[67608\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 8 March 2017 to Question 66308, whether the review of full-time social action by young people will consider the implications of full-time social action on young voter engagement.

**Mr Rob Wilson:**

The scope for the Review of Full Time Social Action by young people will be decided in collaboration with the Chair and panel.

**DEFENCE****■ Air Force: Recruitment**

**Steven Paterson:** [\[68132\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recruitment methods and incentives his Department is using to recruit engineers and intelligence officers to the RAF.

**Mike Penning:**

The RAF is actively promoting careers in the engineering branch through: University Road Shows at universities with courses which focus on Science Technology Engineering and Maths (STEM); through specifically targeted marketing and media campaigns; and via Station events. The RAF is also offering attractive incentives

such as sponsorship of STEM based university students, a 'Golden Hello' for Engineering Officers and the Continued Accelerated Promotion programme. Additionally, the RAF continues to engage with a number of national youth organisations to promote future careers in STEM.

The RAF is not encountering any difficulty in recruiting Intelligence Officers. Therefore, there is no focused recruiting or incentives for the intelligence branch outside of the current recruitment campaign.

## ■ Armed Forces: Compensation

**Mrs Madeleine Moon:**

[\[67947\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he expects the findings of the consultation on Better combat compensation to be published; and if he will make a statement.

**Mike Penning:**

We are grateful for the comments received, including those from the hon. Member, and will announce our conclusions in due course.

## ■ Coleshill Auxiliars

**Justin Tomlinson:**

[\[67988\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will make it his policy to recognise the Coleshill Auxiliars with a specific service medal.

**Mike Penning:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answers given by my hon. Friend the then Minister for Defence Personnel and Veterans (Anna Soubry), on 8 May 2014, (Official Report, column 278W), and 10 October 2013, (Official Report, columns 414-15W). There are no plans to institute a specific award for the Coleshill Auxiliars. However, please be assured that this does not imply that their contribution to the defence of the country has not been appreciated.

### Attachments:

1. 170049 - Hansard extract on Coleshill Auxiliars  
[20131010\_Hansard\_extract\_on\_Coleshill\_Auxiliars.docx]
2. 197464 - Hansard extract on Coleshill Auxiliars  
[20140508\_Hansard\_extract\_on\_Coleshill\_Auxiliars.docx]

## ■ Cyprus: Military Bases

**Sir Roger Gale:**

[\[68092\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps his Department is taking to prevent the illegal netting of wild birds within the sovereign base areas of Cyprus; and what steps are being taken to apprehend and prosecute those responsible for such acts.

**Mike Penning:**

We remain committed to tackling illegal trapping and poaching of birds in the Sovereign Base Areas (SBA).

Over the last twelve months we have arrested 55 poachers and conducted 39 police-led operations, seizing 3,031 items of netting equipment. Since November 2014, we have removed 61 acres of acacia at a cost of over €400,000.

The Sovereign Base Areas Administration will continue to work with the RSPB, BirdLife Cyprus and other Non-Government Organisations to do all they can to further reduce bird trapping within the SBA.

■ **Ministry of Defence: Secondment**

**Jon Trickett:**

[\[67735\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many staff have been seconded to his Department from (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Accenture, (d) McKinsey & Co, (f) Ernst and Young and (g) Bain & Company since July 2016.

**Mark Lancaster:**

None.

■ **USA: Military Bases**

**Rachael Maskell:**

[\[68108\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will list all the US military bases sited in the UK.

**Mike Penning:**

The following bases in the UK are made available to the United States Visiting Forces:

RAF Alconbury

RAF Barford St. John

RAF Croughton

RAF Fairford

RAF Feltwell

RAF Lakenheath

RAF Menwith Hill

RAF Mildenhall

RAF Molesworth

RAF Welford

**EDUCATION**■ **Apprentices: Taxation****Alex Cunningham:****[68297]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether she plans to review the requirement on schools to pay the apprenticeship levy.

**Robert Halfon:**

The levy is being introduced to fund a step change in apprenticeship numbers and quality. Levying all employers with annual pay bills over £3 million is the simplest, fairest and most objective way of implementing the levy which is charged at 0.5% of an employer's annual pay bill. We have been clear that there can be no exemptions to this.

We expect local authorities to work closely with the schools in their areas to ensure schools contributing to the levy can access the funding for apprenticeship training and assessment in order to get the valuable skills they need.

There are already apprenticeships that schools can access, including for Teaching Assistants, business administration and early years. Employer-led groups are also currently developing high-quality apprenticeship standards specifically for schools, including a teaching apprenticeship and school business manager apprenticeships.

We recently published guidance for schools on apprenticeships, and how the apprenticeship levy and public sector apprenticeship target apply to schools in England on gov.uk available at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/598603/Schools\\_guide\\_to\\_apprenticeship\\_reforms.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/598603/Schools_guide_to_apprenticeship_reforms.pdf)

■ **Department for Education: Migrant Workers****Tulip Siddiq:****[67459]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many and what proportion of people employed by her Department are from other EU countries.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

The Department does not require its employees to record their country of birth. There is a check to ensure that people satisfy the civil service nationality rules, but this does not extend to recording country of birth. It is not therefore possible to provide this information.

■ **Department for Education: Procurement****Jon Trickett:****[67752]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many contracts procured by her Department and its arms-length bodies are covered by TUPE regulations in each of the last three financial years.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

**Jon Trickett:****[67767]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many contracts procured by her Department and its arms-length bodies require that the contractor pays those of its employees undertaking the work contracted for the real living wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation in each of the last three financial years.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

This information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

**■ Overseas Students: Loans****Mrs Anne Main:****[67603]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 8 March 2017 to Question 65926, on overseas students: loans, for what reasons the amount lent in 2015-16 was greater than that lent in 2014-15; and if she will make a statement.

**Joseph Johnson:**

The increased spend in tuition fee loans to both English and EU domiciled students in the financial year 2015-16 is due to increasing numbers of students receiving support and a higher proportion of those students being on post-2012 tuition fee loan arrangements.

Statistics covering English student support paid to English and EU domiciled borrowers in each academic year are published annually by the Student Loans Company (SLC) in the Statistical First Release (SFR) 'Student Support for Higher Education in England'.

<http://www.slc.co.uk/official-statistics/financial-support-awarded/england-higher-education.aspx>

**Mrs Anne Main:****[67604]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 8 March 2017 to Question 65926, on overseas students: loans, what proportion of the 2.8 per cent of borrowers resident overseas are (a) British, (b) EU and (c) non-EU nationals; and what the total value of the amount lent to borrowers resident overseas is.

**Joseph Johnson:**

Statistics covering English student loans are published annually by the Student Loans Company (SLC) in the Statistical First Release (SFR) 'Student Loans in England'.

<http://www.slc.co.uk/official-statistics/full-catalogue-of-official-statistics/student-loans-debt-and-repayment.aspx>

The latest statistics show that there were around 113,600 English student loan borrowers, liable to repay, who were known to be overseas at the beginning of the

financial year 2016-17. Of these around 25,300 (22%) were EU domiciled borrowers (those resident in the EU prior to studying).

Data provided by SLC shows that the overall outstanding loan balance of these borrowers resident overseas was around £1.6 billion, of which around £220 million (14%) was held by EU domiciled borrowers.

Information has been provided on the basis of the borrower's prior residence as equivalent information on the basis of the borrower's nationality would only be available at disproportionate cost.

**Mrs Anne Main:**

**[67717]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 8 March 2017 to Question 65926, on overseas students: loans, if she will take steps to reduce the number of borrowers who have not repaid their loans.

**Joseph Johnson:**

The Department is taking action to reduce the number of borrowers due to repay who are not repaying their loans.

If borrowers based overseas fail to remain in contact with the SLC, the SLC will set up a fixed repayment schedule and will place those borrowers in arrears. Borrowers with post-2012 loans who have not remained in contact with the SLC are charged the maximum interest rate of RPI+3% until they get back in touch. Further action, including legal action, can then be taken to secure recovery. The SLC established a dedicated Repayments Evasion Unit in 2016 to detect borrowers overseas who fail to comply with their statutory obligations to repay their loans.

The Department published a Joint Repayment Strategy in February 2016, which sets out how action will be taken to trace borrowers and act to recover loans where avoidance or evasion is identified. This publication can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/student-loan-repayment-strategy>.

## ■ Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education

**Ian Austin:**

**[67902]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if the Government will make an assessment of the financial effect of making personal, social and health education compulsory in all schools.

**Edward Timpson:**

The Secretary of State for Education confirmed the Government's ambition to support all young people to stay safe and prepare for life in modern Britain by making Relationships Education (Primary), Relationships and Sex Education (RSE - Secondary) and, subject to the outcome of a thorough consideration of the subject, Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE - both) statutory in all schools. The government amended the Children and Social Work Bill on 1 March 2017, and intends the new statutory subjects to come into effect from September 2019.

In advance, the Department for Education intends to conduct thorough and wide-ranging engagement on the subjects – considering subject content, school practice and quality of delivery - to determine the content of the regulations and statutory guidance, which will then be consulted on.

This process will look closely at potential associated costs, taking into consideration the fact that most schools are already delivering PSHE in some form and there is extensive existing good practice to learn from. The Department has been clear that schools will continue to be supported to deliver high-quality teaching.

## ■ Pre-school Education

**Jess Phillips:**

**[67839]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many new nursery places have been created by free schools that have opened since November 2015.

**Caroline Dinanage:**

The most recent school census (January 2016) shows that 520 nursery pupils were attending free schools. The census is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2016>

This census does not include data for the 20 primary free schools that opened in September 2016. The number of nursery pupils attending these schools will be included in the January 2017 school census, which is due to be published in June this year.

In January this year the Department announced £50 million of capital funding to help create almost 9,000 new places for children eligible for 30 hours of free childcare.

This will support the expansion of a range of nurseries and pre-schools, and we expect free schools to make a modest contribution to the creation of additional nursery places.

## ■ Pre-school Education: Standards

**Michael Gove:**

**[68082]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what her strategy is for raising standards in pre-school education.

**Caroline Dinanage:**

The early years foundation stage profile results show year on year improvements for children achieving a good level of development (GLD) by age 5. For the 2015 to 2016 academic year, the results show that 69.3% of children achieved a GLD compared to 51.7% in 2013.

The quality of early years provision is also improving with 93% of settings rated by Ofsted as good or outstanding in December 2016 compared to 74% in 2012. Ofsted's Childcare providers and inspections as at 31 December 2016 statistics are available

at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/childcare-providers-and-inspections-as-at-31-december-2016>.

Key to this is a well-qualified workforce with 77% of group based staff in 2016 holding at least a level 3 qualification relevant to childcare and 29% holding at least a level 6. Evidence shows that settings which employ more highly qualified staff are more likely to attract a good or outstanding rating from Ofsted. The Early Years workforce strategy published earlier this month, outlines how we will help employers attract, retain and develop staff to deliver high quality provision. The strategy is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-workforce-strategy>.

The Government is working hard to ensure parents and children have access to high quality early years education places through the funded 15 hour entitlement for disadvantaged two-year-olds and for all three- and four-year-olds. The Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) provides over £300 per eligible child to support better outcomes for disadvantaged three- and four-year-olds and the Foundation Years website includes good practice examples to help providers decide how to use the EYPP to improve outcomes for the disadvantaged children in their care. The EYPP will be kept under review.

#### ■ Sandymoor School

**Derek Twigg:** **[68119]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 7 March 2017 to Question 66085, on Sandymoor School, why on page 15, in the final paragraph, of the Independent Reporting Accountants Assurance Report on Regularity to Sandymoor Free School and the Education Funding Agency (EFA) it states that a recovery plan has been implemented which includes advanced funding from the EFA with cost savings to achieve a balanced budget.

**Edward Timpson:**

The EFA has not requested a recovery plan from the Trust, nor has it arranged for any advance of funding for them. This appears to be a mistake made by the auditors on the financial statements of the Trust. The EFA is urgently pursuing this apparent anomaly with the Trust and their auditors.

#### ■ Schools: Finance

**Tracy Brabin:** **[68304]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much (a) in total and (b) as a proportion of total annual expenditure paid to students by Student Finance England was spent on non-repayable support paid to students from low income families in England in each of the last seven years.

**Joseph Johnson:**

Statistics covering support paid by Student Finance England (SFE) to English and EU domiciled students are published annually by the Student Loans Company (SLC) in the Statistical First Release (SFR) '*Student Support for Higher Education in England*'.



<http://www.slc.co.uk/official-statistics/financial-support-awarded/england-higher-education.aspx>

Table 3A of the SFR shows how much means-tested support was paid to full-time English domiciled students as non-repayable maintenance grants up to the academic year 2015/16. In the academic year 2015/16, a full maintenance grant was available to students with a household residual income up to £25,000, and a partial grant to those with a household residual income up to £42,620. For comparison, table 2 of the SFR provides an overview of all support awarded to applicants up to the academic year 2015/16.

Larger maintenance loans have been available in place of maintenance grants to help with living costs for full-time students entering higher education since August 2016. Table 6.3 of the SFR shows early indicative data (two months into the academic year) on maintenance grants awarded in the academic year 2016/17. More complete information for the academic year 2016/17 will be published in November 2017.

Other non-repayable targeted support is available to eligible students with disabilities, or with adult or child dependants, however information on the payment of these to students from low income families is not available.

#### ■ Schools: Transport

**Angela Rayner:**

[67583]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether her Department has made an estimate of the increase in the number of children who will be eligible for the new offer of free travel to their closest selective school compared to the previous offer.

**Caroline Dinanage:**

The Department does not collect data on the take-up of any entitlement to free home to school transport, including extended rights for pupils from low-income families. However, at January 2016, over 3,000 free school meal pupils aged up to 16 attended a selective school and whilst some of these may already be in receipt of free transport, we expect a large proportion to be able to benefit from the new measure. This is in addition to new pupils who will be able to attend a selective school because we have removed the barrier to choice and access that high transport costs can present to low-income families.

**Dr Sarah Wollaston:**

[67935]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will publish a list of school transport plans with no mechanism for engaging schools and colleges as active stakeholders.

**Caroline Dinanage:**

The statutory responsibility for transport to education and training for children of compulsory school age and for 16 to 19 year olds rests with local authorities, enabling them to make decisions which best match local needs and circumstances.

Local authorities are required to consult a range of stakeholders including schools and colleges about their post-16 transport policies. When developing transport policies for children of compulsory school age statutory guidance strongly encourages local authorities to consult.

Local authorities publish transport policies for school age children and post-16 young people on their websites. The department does not assess these to determine the extent to which local authorities meet these expectations for consultation. Links to post-16 transport policies can be found at [www.gov.uk/subsidised-college-transport-16-19](http://www.gov.uk/subsidised-college-transport-16-19).

#### ■ **Students: Loans**

**Mr Stephen Hepburn:**

**[67687]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that repayment terms will not be affected by the proposed sale of the student loans book for those paying off such loans.

**Joseph Johnson:**

The position of people who hold student loans, including those whose loans are within the scope of the planned sale, will not be affected in any way as a result of the planned sale. The sale will not and cannot alter the mechanisms and terms of repayment.

#### ■ **Voting Rights: Females**

**Lady Hermon:**

**[67840]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether the fund announced in the Spring Budget 2017 to mark the centenary of women's suffrage will be open for applications from Northern Ireland bidders; and if she will make a statement.

**Lady Hermon:**

**[67841]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what criteria bidders will be required to meet to secure funding from the fund announced in the Spring Budget 2017 to mark the centenary of women's suffrage; and if she will make a statement.

**Caroline Dinéage:**

The Government has set up a £5m fund to help celebrate this important occasion. Funding will be available for projects in England, and details including application criteria will be announced in due course. The Barnett formula has been applied to this funding in the usual way and it is for the devolved administrations to decide whether, and how, they choose to mark the centenary.

**ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS****Ash Dieback Disease: North West****Andrew Stephenson:****[67937]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to help local authorities in the North West whose area is affected by ash dieback.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

We are working closely with local authorities to help them deal with the impacts of ash dieback by supporting them to be prepared and by providing guidance.

Infected ash trees can survive dieback for many years, continuing to provide recreational and biodiversity benefits, and could provide a source of disease tolerance in the future. For this very reason we are not encouraging the removal of infected ash unless it poses an immediate health and safety risk.

To ensure that the issue of health and safety is addressed we have convened an ash dieback taskforce with a number of key stakeholders and local authorities. We are working closely with this group to develop action plans for local authorities and supplement existing guidance for landowners, such as that published by the National Tree Safety Group. We will be making the action plans available for all local authorities in due course.

Local action plan work has initially focused on the areas most likely to be affected in the next few years, but we have been working with other areas and held workshops across the country to inform the research, and we will be engaging local authorities in the North West in this work later this year.

**Bovine Tuberculosis: Disease Control****Mary Glendon:****[67290]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of the levels of bovine TB in areas which are (a) under and (b) not under badger control measures.

**George Eustice:**

The report on the comparison of the effect of the first two years of badger control in the first two areas is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bovine-tb-incidence-of-tb-in-cattle-in-licensed-badger-control-areas-in-2014-to-2015>

**Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Migrant Workers****Tulip Siddiq:****[67460]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many and what proportion of people employed by her Department are from other EU countries.

**George Eustice:**

All Government Departments are bound by legal requirements concerning the right to work in the UK and, in addition, the Civil Service Nationality Rules.

Evidence of nationality is checked at the point of recruitment into the Civil Service as part of wider pre-employment checks, but there is no requirement on departments to retain this information beyond the point at which it has served its purpose.

■ **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Procurement****Jon Trickett:**[\[67882\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 27 February 2017 to Question 64997, what the pay grades are of the 14 civil servants of her Department who oversee contracts awarded to external providers.

**George Eustice:**

The 14 civil servants are employed in the following grades.

GRADE	NUMBER OF STAFF
Grade 6	3
Grade 7	7
Senior Executive Officer	3
Higher Executive Officer	1

■ **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Work Experience****Justin Madders:**[\[66893\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many people undertook an unpaid work placement in her Department in each of the last five years for which figures are available; and how many such placements lasted for longer than one month.

**George Eustice:**

Defra does not retain details centrally on the number of work placements in the Department and to identify the information requested could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

■ **Dog Fighting****Julian Knight:**[\[67928\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans her Department has to increase the maximum penalty for dog fighting.

**George Eustice:**

The maximum penalties for animal welfare offences are kept under regular review. The Sentencing Council has very recently published revised magistrate's court sentencing guidelines, including those in relation to animal welfare offences, which include dog fighting, with the aim of ensuring that the most serious cases of animal cruelty receive appropriately severe penalties within the available maximum penalty.

**■ Dogs: Animal Breeding****Jim Shannon:**[\[67641\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will make it her policy to introduce legislation reducing the maximum number of dog litters bred for sale from four to two a year.

**George Eustice:**

Last month, the Government published its Next Steps document which set out proposals for modernising the licensing of the breeding and selling of dogs in England. The Government proposes that anyone breeding and selling three or more litters of dogs in a twelve month period will need a licence. The majority of responses to our earlier consultation supported this proposal which strikes the right balance between being reasonable to enforce, providing a proportionate response and helping to target regulatory effort on those breeders producing dogs on a commercial basis.

**■ Joint Air Quality Unit: Staff****Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[68244\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what number of full-time equivalent civil servants have worked in the Joint Air Quality Unit in each month since it was established since April 2016; and if she will make a statement.

**Mr Jim Cunningham:**[\[68300\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the cost of the Joint Air Quality Unit has been in each month since it was established in April 2016; and if she will make a statement.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

The Joint Air Quality Unit (JAQU) includes staff from two Government Departments, Defra and the Department for Transport.

The table below sets out what number of full-time equivalent civil servants have worked in the JAQU as well as the associated pay cost in each month from April 2016 to February 2017. The increase seen across the period is a reflection of this Government's commitment to improving air quality in the shortest possible time, both by adding new resources to the team and by bringing existing Defra analysts into the unit to work exclusively on the Government's revised plan for nitrogen dioxide.

These figures are the most accurate and up to date available. The JAQU has also had two full-time Civil Service Fast Streamers working for it from September 2016 to February 2017. They are not included in the above numbers as Fast Streamers are employed under separate, Government-wide arrangements.

MONTH	FTEs	Cost £
Apr-16	7.07	34,938
May-16	9.07	39,004
Jun-16	9.07	49,980
Jul-16	9.67	50,540
Aug-16	9.67	52,643
Sep-16	9.67	64,262
Oct-16	8.67	50,627
Nov-16	8.67	51,125
Dec-16	10.67	60,985
Jan-17	24.67	125,081
Feb-17	28.27	157,293
<b>Total</b>		<b>736,478</b>

## ■ Slaughterhouses: Animal Welfare

**Derek Thomas:**

**[67950]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department takes to ensure that welfare standards are met in slaughterhouses; and what steps her Department takes in particular relation to such standards as they relate to pre-stunning.

**George Eustice:**

The Government encourages the highest standards of welfare at slaughter. The Government would prefer all animals to be stunned before slaughter but respects the right of the Jewish and Muslim communities to eat meat prepared in accordance with their religious beliefs.

Official veterinarians (OVs) from the Food Standards Agency (FSA) are present in all approved slaughterhouses in England and take a prompt, proportionate and risk based approach to enforcement action when animal welfare breaches are identified.

Defra works closely with the FSA to ensure that the welfare of animals is protected in all slaughterhouses. There is a wide ranging, systemic programme of animal welfare monitoring activity including strengthened verification of compliance through the establishment of welfare assurance teams; a welfare themed audit programme; targeted unannounced inspections; additional checks for non-compliant business operators; and improved education and instruction through an animal welfare publicity campaign in slaughterhouses.

#### ■ **Veterinary Services: Migrant Workers**

**Neil Coyle:**

[\[67918\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans she has to make the language requirements for non-EU national veterinary surgeons to practice the same as with those which apply to non-UK EU nationals .

**George Eustice:**

The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons already has a statutory examination for non-EU registrants whose examinations are not automatically recognised by the College. Applicants must reach level 7 of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) before applying to sit this exam. Government is currently reviewing the content of the EU Mutual Recognition Directive.

### FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

#### ■ **Albania: Russia**

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[67678\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with the Government of Albania on the extent of Russian influence in that country.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

The Government has regular discussions with Albania, a NATO ally, on a range of international issues including Russian influence in the region. The Foreign Secretary spoke to the Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama and Foreign Minister Bushati on this issue on 14 November in Brussels. The Defence Secretary also visited Tirana in September and discussed a range of defence issues with Defence Minister Kodheli. I also met the Albanian Minister for European Integration, Ms Klajda Gjoshaj on 8 February in London.

#### ■ **Burma: Rohingya**

**Imran Hussain:**

[\[67509\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his counterparts in Myanmar since the publication of the report by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Rohingya on 3 February 2017.

**Alok Sharma:**

We are deeply concerned by recent reports detailing human rights violations against the Rohingya in Rakhine State of Burma. These include reports by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Burma and by a range of international human rights organisations. We are also concerned by the humanitarian situation facing the people in Rakhine with up to 70,000 refugees fleeing across the border into Bangladesh.

I met the Burmese Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, U Kyaw Tin, on 27 February at the Human Rights Council in Geneva. In the context of the report by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, I stressed the need for humanitarian access and a credible investigation into reports of violations. During his recent visit to Burma in January, the Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Boris Johnson), raised similar concerns with State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi as well as military-appointed government ministers. The Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my noble Friend, the Rt Hon. Baroness Anelay of St Johns did likewise when she visited Burma last November.

I also discussed these issues with the Government of Bangladesh when I visited Dhaka from 2 to 4 March. In my meetings, I welcomed the humanitarian assistance provided by Bangladesh to the Rohingya people and discussed ways in which the UK and Bangladesh could work together to encourage a durable solution for the Rohingya people in Burma.

With our international partners, we are currently negotiating a Resolution at the Human Rights Council in Geneva, where we are advocating for the renewal of the mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Burma. We are also seeking to establish a mechanism which has the support of both the Burmese authorities and the international community to establish the facts and help deliver accountability for violations.

**Imran Hussain:****[67690]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with counterparts in other countries, excluding those in Myanmar, on the human rights situation in Myanmar since the publication on 3 February 2017 of a report by the UN High Commissioner on the Rohingya.

**Alok Sharma:**

We are deeply concerned by recent reports detailing human rights violations against the Rohingya in Rakhine State of Burma. These include reports by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Burma and by a range of international human rights organisations. We are also concerned by the humanitarian situation facing the people in Rakhine with up to 70,000 refugees fleeing across the border into Bangladesh.

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**Imran Hussain:**

[\[67692\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the humanitarian situation in Myanmar since publication on 3 February 2017 of a report by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on the rights of the Rohingya.

**Alok Sharma:**

We are deeply concerned by recent reports detailing human rights violations against the Rohingya in Rakhine State of Burma. These include reports by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Burma and by a range of international human rights organisations. We are also concerned by the humanitarian situation facing the people in Rakhine with up to 70,000 refugees fleeing across the border into Bangladesh.

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## ■ Colombia: Death

**Robert Ffello:**

[\[68261\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to his Colombian counterpart on the deaths of (a) Alicia López Guisao on 2 March 2017 in Antioquia, (b) Fabián Rivera on 2 March 2017 in Antioquia, (c) José Antonio Anzola Tejedor on 5 March 2017 in Meta and (d) Luz Ángela Anzola on 5 March 2017 in Meta; and if he will make a statement.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

I last raised our concerns about increasing violence by illegal armed groups against Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) with the Colombian Ambassador to the UK on 7 February and the Colombian Minister for Labour on 14 February. She reassured me that impunity for such crimes is something the Government of Colombia will not tolerate. Ministerial colleagues and I will continue to raise our human rights concerns,

including individual cases, with the Government of Colombia, as will our Ambassador in Bogota.

#### ■ **Developing Countries: Poverty**

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[67557\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether funds spent by his Department as part of the annual 0.7 per cent of gross national income spend on official development assistance must comply with the purpose of poverty reduction set out in the International Development Act 2002.

**Boris Johnson:**

All spending on official development assistance by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office must comply with the International Development Act.

#### ■ **Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Conflict, Stability and Security Fund and Prosperity Fund**

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[67558\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what the total amount of funding his Department received from the (a) Conflict, Stability and Security Fund and (b) Prosperity Fund was for the 2016-17 financial year.

**Boris Johnson:**

a) The Foreign & Commonwealth Office received approximately £661.7 million from the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund in the financial year 2016/17. This figure includes assessed Peacekeeping contributions.

b) The Foreign & Commonwealth Office received approximately £55 million funding from the Prosperity Fund in the financial year 2016/17.

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[67568\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, in which countries his Department spent funds allocated from the (a) Conflict, Stability and Security Fund and (b) Prosperity Fund in 2016-17.

**Boris Johnson:**

a) Below is a list of countries in which the FCO spent funds allocated from the core discretionary allocation Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) in FY16/17 in line with NSC direction and oversight. Some exclusions have been made on the grounds of operational security;

Afghanistan, Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Burma, Burundi, Chad, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Georgia, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libya, Macedonia, Mali, Morocco, Moldova, Nepal, Nigeria, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Overseas Territories, Pakistan, Peru, Serbia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, Uzbekistan, Ukraine and Yemen.

The CSSF also funded, as part of its spending review settlement, migration work in France, China, Eritrea, Ghana, Greece, India, South Africa, Turkey, Vietnam, Zimbabwe and Counter Terrorism Programme work in Indonesia, Maldives, Philippines, and Turkey.

b) In 2016/17, the FCO spent Prosperity Fund money in Argentina, Brazil, Burma, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, France, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Vietnam, Ireland, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Thailand, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Tanzania, Turkey, USA. The FCO also spent Prosperity Fund money allocated to the Commonwealth Marine Economies programme in Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Dominica, Fiji, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Kiribati, Maldives, Mauritius, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Seychelles, Solomon Islands, St Lucia, St Vincent & The Grenadines, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[67569\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, which projects were funded by his Department from the (a) Conflict, Stability and Security Fund and (b) Prosperity Fund in 2016-17.

**Boris Johnson:**

Details of projects funded by the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund and the Prosperity Fund will be released in Spring 2017 as part of the FCO's Official Development Assistance spend data. Both funds plan to release an annual report on 2016/17 this year.

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[67582\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to table 1.6 of Budget 2017, Departmental Resource Budgets, what proportion of his Department's estimated resource budget for (a) 2017-18, (b) 2018-19 and (c) 2019-20 consists of funding allocated from the (i) Conflict, Stability and Security and (ii) Prosperity Funds.

**Boris Johnson:**

Table 1.6 of Budget 2017 does not include any funding allocated to the FCO from the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund in 2017-18, 2018-19 or 2019-20. Only £5m in 2017/18, rising to £6m from 18/19 to 19/20, of the total Prosperity Fund is currently included in the FCO baseline.

## ■ Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Migrant Workers

**Tulip Siddiq:**

[\[67462\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many and what proportion of people employed by his Department are from other EU countries.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

The Aliens' Employment Act 1955 makes it a requirement that all UK-based staff must be British nationals or dual nationals where one of those nationalities is British. We do not hold centrally details of staff who are dual nationals.

We do not collect centrally details of the nationality of our staff employed locally overseas.

**Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Procurement****Jon Trickett:**[\[67949\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 2 March 2017 to Question 64998, if he will estimate the proportion of contracts awarded to external providers that are defined as major departmental contracts.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

The FCO awarded 20 major contracts over the last 3 year period. Major contracts are defined as those with a whole life cost over £15m. The FCO does not centrally hold data about all contracts and to provide this information would incur disproportionate cost.

**Mahmoud Abbas****Bob Blackman:**[\[67669\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 28 February 2017 to Question 64413, if he will make representations to President Mahmoud Abbas on his posing with a photograph of Dalal Mughrabi.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Mr Johnson), raised the issue of incitement with President Abbas and Foreign Minister Malki during his visit to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories on 8 March. UK officials will raise this incident as part of their regular dialogue with the Palestinian Authority on the matter. We continue to support the reinstatement of the Tripartite Committee on Incitement as the best channel to deal with any allegations of incitement from either side.

**Nuclear Disarmament****Mr Roger Godsiff:**[\[68321\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 13 March 2017 to Question 66495, on nuclear disarmament, for what reasons the Government believes that a step-by-step approach is a more effective route to nuclear disarmament; and what steps the Government is taking to further nuclear disarmament using that approach.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

The Government firmly believes that the best way to achieve a world without nuclear weapons is through gradual multilateral disarmament negotiated using a step by step approach and within the framework of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Such an approach is needed in order to build trust and confidence and to take tangible steps towards a safer and more stable world where countries with nuclear weapons feel able to relinquish them. We continue to work on disarmament verification, and will continue to press for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and successful negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty in the Conference on Disarmament as key steps towards multilateral disarmament.

**■ Overseas Aid****Emily Thornberry:**[\[67567\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what estimate he has made of the total amount to be spent by his Department in 2016-17 which will count towards the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income spent on official development assistance.

**Boris Johnson:**

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office was allocated £466 million to spend on official development assistance (ODA) in 2016-17. ODA is formally measured on a calendar year basis. Provisional spending figures for 2016 will be published in April.

**■ Yemen: Armed Conflict****Ian Murray:**[\[68316\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with aid partners in Yemen and other international counterparts on changes to the humanitarian situation in Yemen.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

Yemen is one of the most serious humanitarian crises in the world. I regularly discuss the humanitarian situation in Yemen with a wide range of interlocutors including the UN, international partners, Government of Yemen and humanitarian organisations. I most recently discussed Yemen humanitarian issues on March 13 with the UN Special Envoy to Yemen, Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed and with the Kuwait Deputy Foreign Minister on March 16.

**■ Yemen: Imports****Ian Murray:**[\[68315\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that humanitarian and commercial supplies are not prevented from entering Yemen.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

Conflict is making humanitarian and commercial access into and within Yemen extremely difficult. We continue to urge all parties to the conflict to take all reasonable steps to allow and facilitate rapid and safe humanitarian access.

In addition, since 2015 the Department For International Development has supported the following UN agencies who are helping to facilitate humanitarian and commercial access:

- The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), who broker humanitarian access for the international response (£1.8 million).
- The UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) to provide an air bridge into Yemen for UN and Non-Government Organisation humanitarian staff (£1 million).
- The UN Verification and Inspection Mechanism (UNVIM) to speed up the clearance process for ships and improve commercial confidence (£1.4 million).

**HEALTH****■ Ambulance Services****Mr Roger Godsiff:**[\[67605\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether he has received representations on the G4S Ambulance provision of the Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals Patient Transport Service; what guidance his Department provides to the NHS when outsourcing similar provisions on ensuring the safety and security of ambulance parking areas; and whether liability for damage to ambulances on the equipment they contain rests with the NHS or with companies to whom ambulance transport services are outsourced.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

No such representations have been received. This is an operational matter for the local NHS Trust. Liability for damage to ambulance vehicles would be for local determination between local National Health Service bodies and the companies to whom ambulance transport services are outsourced.

**Jonathan Ashworth:**[\[67693\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what guidance is given to NHS ambulance trusts on (a) how often ambulances should be replaced and (b) the risks of not replacing ambulances within any such specified timeframes.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

The Department does not provide such guidance. This is an operational matter for individual National Health Service ambulance trusts.

## ■ Anakinra

**David Morris:**

[\[909378\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to improve the availability of the drug Anakinra.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Anakinra is available for the treatment of patients in the United Kingdom, subject to decisions by the relevant commissioner. In the absence of guidance from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence for this drug, it is for commissioners to make decisions based on an assessment of the available evidence and on an individual patient's clinical circumstances.

## ■ Asthma

**Mrs Theresa Villiers:**

[\[67450\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what cost-benefit assessment he has made of GPs in England providing regular asthma testing for patients.

**David Mowat:**

The information for this assessment is not held centrally. It is for local clinicians to decide what treatment is most appropriate for their patients.

## ■ Capita

**Karin Smyth:**

[\[67933\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the cost to the NHS of dealing with the missed requirements of Capita in relation to the contract for the management of primary care support services.

**David Mowat:**

NHS England hold the contract with Capita Business Services Ltd for primary care support services. No estimate has been made of the cost to the National Health Service of dealing with the missed requirements of Capita in relation to the contract, but NHS England inform us that they continue to work with Capita to mitigate implications for the service and rectify any issues to ensure that services are at an acceptable and sustainable standard.

## ■ Catheters

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[67640\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people have been infected by using a catheter in each of the last three years.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The data is not collected in the format requested.

## ■ Clinical Commissioning Groups: Pharmacy

**Mrs Theresa Villiers:** [\[67449\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make it his policy to require clinical commissioning groups in England to include a representative of local pharmacists on their governing boards.

**David Mowat:**

The Government has no current plans to require clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) to include a representative of local pharmacists on their governing boards.

However, the Health and Social Care Act 2012 allows CCGs to appoint pharmacists to governing boards as lay members, in accordance with their constitutions.

## ■ Clinical Reference Groups: Disclosure of Information

**Kevin Barron:** [\[67484\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will ask NHS England to publish the sources of data used by clinical reference groups when drawing up their recommendations.

**David Mowat:**

The data used by the clinical reference groups in developing their recommendations on clinical commissioning policies includes clinical evidence reviews, stakeholder views which are gathered through initial stakeholder testing, and responses to the public consultation. The evidence reviews are published as part of the stakeholder and consultation testing.

## ■ Continuing Care

**Margaret Greenwood:** [\[68412\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether NHS continuing health care is means-tested at clinical commissioning group level.

**David Mowat:**

Eligibility for NHS Continuing Healthcare is not means-tested.

NHS Continuing Healthcare is a complete package of ongoing care arranged and funded solely by the National Health Service, where it has been assessed that the individual has a 'primary health need'.

## ■ Dementia

**Jim Shannon:** [\[67643\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with (a) the Royal College of Nursing and (b) health representative groups on the implications of sleeping patterns for diagnoses of dementia.



**David Mowat:**

We have had no discussions with the Royal College of Nursing or with health representative groups on this issue.

**Dental Services: Birmingham****Steve McCabe:**[\[909377\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to reduce the incidence of emergency teeth extractions in Birmingham.

**David Mowat:**

Improving oral health, particularly of children, is a priority. Nationally, NHS England and the Department are testing new ways of providing dental care focussed on preventing future disease. NHS England also intends to roll out a scheme across the West Midlands to support dentists to intervene early where children's oral health is at risk.

**Department of Health: Migrant Workers****Tulip Siddiq:**[\[67463\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many and what proportion of people employed by his Department are from other EU countries.

**David Mowat:**

Evidence of nationality is checked at the point of recruitment into the Civil Service as part of wider pre-employment checks for the right to work in the United Kingdom and the Civil Service Nationality Rules.

The Department does not retain this information once pre-employment checks have been completed.

**Diabetes****Jim Shannon:**[\[67644\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with (a) the Royal College of Nursing and (b) other health representative groups on the implications of gum disease for diagnoses of diabetes.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

There have been no discussions with the Royal College of Nursing or other health representative groups on the implications of gum disease for diagnoses of diabetes.

**Jonathan Ashworth:**[\[68307\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many hospital admissions there were with a primary diagnosis of diabetes in each of the last seven years.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The number of finished admission episodes<sup>1</sup> with a primary diagnosis<sup>2</sup> of diabetes between 2009-10 and 2015-16 is shown in the following table.

2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
73,655	79,845	75,606	65,375	64,641	65,002	68,920

Source: Hospital Episode Statistics (HES)

1. 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. The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 20 (14 from 2002-03 to 2006-07 and seven prior to 2002-03) diagnosis fields in the HES data set and provides the main reason why the patient was admitted to hospital.

## ■ Electronic Cigarettes

**Kevin Barron:**

[\[67483\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps are being taken by (a) his Department, (b) the Medical and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency and (c) Public Health England to encourage research into the use of e-cigarettes.

**Kevin Barron:**

[\[67667\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the oral contribution of Lord Prior of Brampton of 4 July 2016, House of Lords, Official Report, column 1828, on Public Health England being commissioned to update its evidence report on e-cigarettes annually until the end of the current Parliament, when Public Health England plans to publish its next evidence report.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Department is working closely with Public Health England (PHE) and the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) to encourage research into the use of electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) and monitor the emerging evidence.

PHE's next updated evidence report on e-cigarettes is expected to be published before the end of the 2017. In addition to the publication of an evidence review, PHE have partnered with Cancer Research UK and the UK Centre for Tobacco and Alcohol Studies to develop a forum that brings together policy makers, researchers, practitioners and the non-governmental organisation representatives to discuss the emerging evidence, identify research priorities and generate ideas for new research projects, thereby enhancing collaboration between forum participants.

The MHRA will continue to undertake market surveillance of e-cigarettes as part of their role as the Competent Authority, feeding back any intelligence to the Department and PHE.

## ■ General Practitioners

**Mrs Theresa Villiers:**

[\[67448\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make it his policy to require clinical commissioning groups to transfer areas of work from GPs to pharmacists where there is evidence that such a transfer would be more efficient.

**David Mowat:**

With regard to utilising the important role that community pharmacists fulfil, measures announced on 20 October 2016 mean that from 1 December 2016, we have helped to relieve pressure on other parts of the National Health Service, by embedding pharmacy into the urgent care pathway, including for those who need urgent repeat prescriptions and treatment for urgent minor ailments and common conditions. Patients who need urgent repeat prescription medicines will be referred from NHS 111 directly to community pharmacies, rather than via a general practitioner out-of-hours service, and NHS England will encourage clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) to commit to national coverage of minor ailments services delivered through pharmacies commissioned locally by April 2018. This will build on the some half of CCGs which already commission this service from community pharmacies.

The new Pharmacy Integration Fund has been established to support additional programmes to better embed pharmacists' clinical skills within NHS services, including more effective integration with general practice.

We are committed to employing up to 2,000 pharmacists in general practices across the country. To date, the pilot programme has successfully integrated 491 clinical pharmacists into 658 general practices across England and funding is now available for the deployment of the further 1,500 clinical pharmacists in general practices by 2020.

## ■ Health Services

**Jonathan Ashworth:**

[\[68336\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what role accountable care organisations will play in the NHS; and whether all accountable care organisations will be exempted from VAT.

**David Mowat:**

Through the development of Sustainability and Transformation Plans, local health and care systems are developing new ways working together to improve the outcomes for the populations they serve. Many systems are looking at developing accountable 'population health' focused models of care, in which a provider or the system as a whole takes accountability for the resources and care quality of a defined population. Some new care model vanguards developing multispecialty community providers and integrated primary and acute care collaborations are developing along these lines.

The VAT rules that will apply to new care models and accountable care organisations are set by HM Revenue and Customs and are the same as those that apply to all other organisations.

■ **Health Services: Contracts**

**Robert Ffello:** [\[68335\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 27 January 2017 to Question 61445, on health services: contracts, if he will publish the paper referred to in that Answer with any commercially sensitive information redacted.

**David Mowat:**

NHS England's internal meeting papers are not routinely published.

■ **Health Services: Ethnic Groups**

**Neil Coyle:** [\[67919\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans he has to extend counselling opportunities for BME groups in the NHS.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme enables over 900,000 people a year to access psychological therapy. In 2017/18 part of the Quality Premium (a financial incentive) for clinical commissioning groups is aimed at improving outcomes from Improving Access to Psychological Therapies services for people from black and minority ethnic groups.

■ **Health Services: Yorkshire and the Humber**

**Richard Burgon:** [\[67832\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to paragraph 5.8 of the Spring Budget 2017, what estimate he has made of how much of £325 million funding for local sustainability and transformation plans will be allocated to (a) Leeds East constituency, (b) Leeds and (c) Yorkshire.

**David Mowat:**

The Department has not yet determined which Sustainability and Transformation Plan areas will receive the additional funding allocated in the Spring Budget.

■ **Heart Diseases**

**Jonathan Ashworth:** [\[68308\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many hospital admissions there were with a primary diagnosis of heart disease in each of the last seven years.

**David Mowat:**

The number of finished admission episodes<sup>1</sup> with a primary diagnosis<sup>2</sup>, or combination of primary and where applicable their secondary diagnosis<sup>3</sup>, codes of heart disease between 2009-10 and 2015-16 is shown in the following table.

2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
574,696	575,160	584,458	586,024	593,614	599,826	619,231

Source: Hospital Episode Statistics (HES)

1. 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. The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 20 (14 from 2002-03 to 2006-07 and seven prior to 2002-03) diagnosis fields in the HES data set and provides the main reason why the patient was admitted to hospital.
3. As well as the primary diagnosis, there are up to 19 (13 from 2002-03 to 2006-07 and six prior to 2002-03) secondary diagnosis fields in HES that show other diagnoses relevant to the episode of care. Please refer to the diagnosis codes sheet for the list of codes used and their combinations for this response.

## ■ Heart Diseases: Surgery

**Kevin Barron:**

[\[67543\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to page 122 of the NHS Atlas of Variation in Healthcare, published by Public Health England in September 2016, what steps he is taking to encourage (a) clinical commissioning groups and (b) primary care clinicians to tackle variations in the provision of transcatheter aortic valve implantation procedures in (i) Rother Valley constituency and (ii) England.

**David Mowat:**

The initial diagnosis and follow-up of those with heart valve disease across England is commissioned by clinical commissioning groups. NHS England is the commissioner of cardiac valve surgery and Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation (TAVI).

Service specifications and policy for the surgical and interventional treatment of heart valve disease are published by the NHS England Cardiac Clinical Reference Group (CRG), which is chaired by the National Clinical Director for Heart Disease, Professor Huon Gray. These are important in clearly defining what NHS England expects to be in place for providers to offer evidence-based, safe and effective services.

NHS England hosted a Clinical Summit in June 2016, bringing together cardiologists and cardiac surgeons and commissioners to examine the issues relating to aortic valve disease, including variations in provision. The outputs from this meeting are now part of the CRG work plan and will be likely be part of a national cardiac review in 2017/18. This will support the review of current clinical commissioning policy, will

seek to address variation, clinical and cost-effectiveness and inform the future commissioning position.

TAVI has been demonstrated to be an effective intervention and the reasons for increase in demand and variation are multifactorial. The CRG have agreed that a review of the wider aortic stenosis pathway will be an appropriate way to address the issues. This will include the medical therapy and traditional surgical pathway and will include specialist centres, secondary care and primary care clinicians.

In relation to the Rother Valley, a review of variation in implant rates for TAVI was undertaken by the Yorkshire and Humber specialised commissioning hub. This has resulted in the commissioning of an additional centre to extend access.

### ■ Medical Equipment: Innovation

**Kevin Barron:**

[\[67485\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people at NHS England are working on the development of NHS England's updated regime for the second phase of device procurement.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

There are currently two NHS England clinicians (who have other roles) working on the development of NHS England's updated regime for the second phase of device procurement, plus 0.2 staff (whole time equivalent) of clinical support. They will be joined by clinicians from the Clinical Reference Group and provider organisations once the evaluation process has started.

### ■ Meningitis: Children

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[67642\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many children have contracted meningitis in each of the last five years; and how many of those children have (a) died and (b) survived.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Public Health England (PHE) collects data on laboratory confirmed cases of invasive meningococcal disease in England which is caused by the *Neisseria meningitis* bacteria, and is a major cause of bacterial meningitis and septicaemia in children. The following table summarises the number of cases and deaths in children younger than 15 years over the past five years.

Number of laboratory confirmed cases of invasive meningococcal disease (IMD) in children less than 15 years of age in England by year: 2011/12 to 2015/16

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Cases of IMD	424	440	320	355	376
Registered deaths of IMD cases <sup>1</sup>	16	15	11	26	13

Note:

1. Deaths registered with the United Kingdom Office for National Statistics attributable to IMD and linked to confirmed cases of IMD

2. Source: Health Protection Report

### ■ **Mycobacterium chimera**

**Jim Shannon:**

**[67639]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people in the UK have contracted mycobacterium chimera in each of the last three years.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Public Health England has been notified of two cases of Mycobacterium chimaera invasive, disseminated or surgical site infection diagnosed in 2014, 11 cases in 2015, and six cases in 2016. This information can be accessed:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mycobacterial-infections-associated-with-heater-cooler-units>

Due to the long incubation period of this infection, the exposure to the infection may have been in a different year to that in which it was diagnosed. No cases are known to have arisen from surgical exposure after January 2015.

### ■ **NHS: Drugs**

**Stephen Timms:**

**[68260]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 23 January 2017 to Question 60583, on NHS: drugs, if he will publish those initial assessments.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Indication specific pricing enables multiple prices for a single medicine, dependent on the indication. Under an indication-based pricing system, companies would no longer be required to offer additional discounts on the price of a product in order to ensure that it was recommended for use in less-effective indications. It would therefore result in higher costs for the National Health Service, which may not be matched by gains in net patient outcomes. Indication specific pricing would also place a significant additional administrative burden on the NHS, particularly because of the need to track the use of medicines on an individual patient basis in a consistent way across the

NHS in order to pay the correct price per dose to the pharmaceutical company. This would add to operational costs for the NHS.

### ■ **NHS: Reorganisation**

**Michael Dugher:** [\[909370\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what progress has been made on the development of sustainability and transformation plans.

**David Mowat:**

All 44 Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) have now been published, and areas are working to engage local people as they turn their proposals into plans.

National Health Service organisations have also submitted their operational plans for 2017-19.

The additional £325 million announced in the budget will help STPs with the strongest projects make progress in improving care for local communities.

### ■ **NHS: Statistics**

**Jonathan Ashworth:** [\[68320\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, for what reasons NHS England extended the publication period for 2016-17 weekly and daily situation reports beyond 3 March 2017; and on what dates he expects NHS England to publish those reports in 2017-18.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

The weekly winter report remained in place beyond 3 March 2017 to provide continued help and support to the National Health Service on accident and emergency over this period and ceased on 17 March.

No decisions have been taken on reporting for winter 2017/18.

### ■ **Nurses: Training**

**Mrs Flick Drummond:** [\[909372\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans his Department has to improve access to opportunities for people to train to become nurses while working in the NHS.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

Developing new work based routes into nursing is a priority for the Department.

That is why we have developed the new Nursing Associate role and Nursing Degree Apprenticeship which will open up routes into the registered nursing profession for thousands of people from all backgrounds and allow employers to grow their own workforce.

The first 1,000 Nursing Associates were recruited to commence their training in January and the second wave of a further 1,000 Nursing Associates are due to commence training next month.



## ■ Obesity: Children

**Geraint Davies:**

[\[909371\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what progress his Department has made on implementing its childhood obesity strategy.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Department's childhood obesity plan, which launched in August last year, includes a number of measures such as the soft drinks industry levy, reformulation and school-based interventions which will help all children.

We will be monitoring progress carefully including through the National Child Measurement Programme and will routinely publish developments on the all key measures for the programme.

## ■ Pharmacy: Finance

**Grahame Morris:**

[\[67597\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he made of the potential effect of reductions in community pharmacy funding on people (a) with legally protected characteristics and (b) living in the most deprived areas in England.

**David Mowat:**

The Government believes efficiencies can be made within community pharmacy without compromising the quality of services or public access to them.

As part of community pharmacy reforms, we have introduced a Pharmacy Access Scheme (PhAS) to protect pharmacies in areas where there are fewer pharmacies and higher health needs, and no area need be left without access to a community pharmacy.

Our assessments included the consideration of the potential impacts on the adequate provision of National Health Service pharmaceutical services, including individuals with protected characteristics.

The table below shows how community pharmacy funding is expected to be distributed between deciles of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). It shows that a larger proportion of the funding was received by pharmacies in higher IMD deciles (i.e. more deprived areas) in 2015/16 and these proportions are expected to remain virtually unchanged in 2016/17 and 2017/18.

INDEX OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION DECILE	% OF PHARMACIES IN A CLUSTER (THREE OR MORE IN A 10 MINUTE WALK)	OF 2015/16 FUNDING, % RECEIVED BY EACH DECILE	OF 2016/17 FUNDING, % RECEIVED BY EACH DECILE (AFTER PHAS)	OF 2017/18 FUNDING, % RECEIVED BY EACH DECILE (AFTER PHAS)
Most deprived - 1	59%	17%	17%	17%
2	54%	14%	14%	14%
3	49%	13%	13%	13%
4	47%	11%	11%	11%
5	37%	10%	10%	10%
6	37%	9%	9%	9%
7	30%	7%	7%	7%
8	26%	7%	7%	7%
9	20%	7%	7%	7%
Least deprived - 10	9%	5%	6%	6%

### ■ Prescriptions: Sanitary Products

**Helen Goodman:**

[\[67493\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the number of women qualifying for free prescriptions who have requested prescriptions for sanitary products from their GP.

**David Mowat:**

The Department has made no such estimate. Products allowable on a National Health Service prescription should be for the treatment of a medical condition, which can include diagnosis and prevention. This does not include items that could be considered more appropriate for the social care of an individual e.g. incontinence pads or sanitary products.

### ■ Social Services: Public Consultation

**Corri Wilson:**

[\[68147\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to paragraph 6.1 of the Spring Budget 2017, if the Government will engage with third sector organisations and charities during the consultation process for the social care green paper.

**David Mowat:**

The Government is committed to establishing a fairer, more sustainable basis for funding adult social care, in the face of the future demographic challenges the country faces. We will bring forward proposals in a green paper later this year to put the state funded system on a more secure long-term footing. The Secretary of State for Health, his ministerial team, and officials meet regularly with stakeholders from the voluntary sector. We intend to build on and continue this engagement in developing our proposals. Once published the green paper will provide further opportunity for people across the sector to consider and respond to our proposals.

**Sugar****Jonathan Ashworth:**[\[67594\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of limiting the sugar content of milk-based drinks.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Any soft drinks that ultimately remain out of scope of the Government's Soft Drinks Industry Levy (SDIL) will be included in Public Health England's sugar reduction and wider reformulation programme, which aims to see voluntary reductions in sugar content of 20% by 2020 across a number of food and drinks categories.

The SDIL will be applied to producers and importers of packaged added sugar drinks to encourage product reformulation, but will not apply to fruit juices, smoothies and packaged drinks containing more than 75% milk content.

**Surrogate Motherhood****Catherine West:**[\[909375\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent discussions he has had with the Law Commission on proposals to review surrogacy legislation.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Department officials met representatives of the Law Commission on Monday 30 January 2017 to discuss the inclusion of a project on surrogacy in its thirteenth law reform programme. The Law Commission has consulted on the programme and we await its decision on how it wishes to proceed.

**Tinnitus****Jim Shannon:**[\[67679\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people have had tinnitus in the UK in each of the last five years; and what the cost was to the NHS of treating tinnitus in each of those years.

**David Mowat:**

The information requested is not collected centrally for England.

Health is a devolved matter; therefore the information requested in respect of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland would be a matter for the devolved administrations.

■ **Tobacco: Health Education**

**Philip Davies:** [\[67538\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will cease his Department's budget spending on tobacco control programmes abroad.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Department sponsors and provides governance to one Tobacco Control project led by the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control Secretariat based at the World Health Organization in Geneva. The project is scheduled to run over a five year period (2016-17 to 2020-21) and the Department monitors progress on project delivery and outcomes, and assess annual budgets accordingly.

## HOME OFFICE

■ **Asylum**

**Mrs Anne Main:** [\[67686\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 8 March 2017 to Question 65944, on asylum, for what reasons her Department does not record that data; for what reasons the target was set at 28 days; and by what measure targets on asylum seekers' access to benefits, employment and accommodation are met.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

All those granted refugee status in the UK are given access to the labour market and benefits, and are encouraged to access organisations that can assist with integration. It is a matter for individuals as to when and where they choose to exercise these rights. Data on the processing times of mainstream benefit applications is a matter for the Department for Work and Pensions. Following the final determination of a claim for asylum, the grace period during which support continues is prescribed in Regulation 2 of the Asylum Support Regulations 2000 and was developed with input from a range of stakeholders.

**Deidre Brock:** [\[67787\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make it her policy to match-fund the costs to local authorities of refugees and asylum seekers with central government funding.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Government has committed £129 million to assist with local authority costs over years two-five of the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement scheme. This is in addition to the first 12 months of a refugee's resettlement costs, which are funded by central government using the [Official Development Assistance](#) budget. The grant to local authorities is not ring fenced, and can be used for example towards support for

costs such as counselling, social care and other needs. Funding payments (per individual refugee) can be pooled and managed across all the refugees a local authority takes in.

For unaccompanied asylum seeking children, local authorities receive a daily rate towards the costs of care. Last year the Government significantly increased the funding it provides to local authorities caring for unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) by 28% for those aged 16 and 17 and by 20% for those aged under 16. These rates are based on the information provided to the Home Office by local authorities about their actual expenditure in looking after UASC. We will be conducting a review of these rates in the coming months.

Refugees and asylum seekers also have access to health and education services, which are funded through the normal per capita funding routes. In addition, local authorities are also able to apply to the £140m Controlling Migration Fund which was announced by the Home Secretary in October 2016. This fund is intended to cover a broad range of costs associated with migration and local authorities have been encouraged to consider whether the fund could help with any short-term pressures as a result of recent arrivals of UASC.

**Mr Andrew Smith:**

**[67904]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the effect of the introduction of safe return reviews on (a) the resources needed by her Department to implement that policy and (b) the integration of refugees into the UK.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

UK Visas & Immigration already have a dedicated resource in place to undertake safe return reviews when considering settlement applications from those granted refugee status or humanitarian protection. Caseworkers must consider whether there have been significant changes in country conditions or personal circumstances which means that an individual no longer needs our protection.

Those who need protection are normally granted 5 years' limited leave after which they are able to apply for permanent settlement. This policy has been in place since 2005 when automatic settlement for refugees was abolished, so this Government has never operated a policy of automatic settlement for refugees. All applications are carefully considered on their individual merits and we have always been clear that protection will be granted for as long as it is needed.

Refugees have and will continue to make a valuable contribution to British society but those who want to remain in the UK permanently need to complete a qualifying period of leave before obtaining the benefits of settlement. Refugees have immediate and unrestricted access to the labour market and where it is clear that they continue to face persecution or serious harm on return to their country they are normally granted settlement. Those who are no longer at risk due to significant change in the country situation are able to return home or can choose to apply to remain here under other provisions of the Immigration Rules.

## ■ Asylum: Children

**Deidre Brock:**

**[67781]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of parents who have sent their children to the UK as unaccompanied asylum seekers.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

Data on the number of parents who have sent their children to the UK as unaccompanied asylum seekers is not recorded centrally. The UNICEF report "Neither Safe Nor Sound" provides accounts of interviews with children in northern France whose decision to migrate is described as part of a family strategy, or a result of a decision by their parents.

## ■ Crimes of Violence: Females

**Richard Burgon:**

**[67834]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to paragraph 5.13 of the Spring Budget 2017, what estimate she has made of how much of £100 million funding for implementing the Government's Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy will be allocated to (a) Leeds East constituency, (b) Leeds and (c) Yorkshire.

**Sarah Newton:**

The Government's Violence against Women and Girls Strategy (VAWG) published in March 2016 committed increased funding of £80 million for VAWG services. A further £20 million was announced in the March 2017 Budget to support organisations that tackle domestic violence and abuse and work is ongoing to integrate this with the already announced funding.

We have provided approximately £2 million of central funding for VAWG services in Yorkshire which has supported refuge provision, Independent Domestic Violence Advisers, Independent Sexual Violence Advisers and Rape Support Centres.

We have also set out a clear blueprint for local action through our new National Statement of Expectations (NSE) and Commissioning Toolkit, which is available to local commissioning bodies and groups. Our move to support through the VAWG Service Transformation Fund will encourage better collaboration and new, joined-up approaches between local commissioners, and with specialist VAWG service providers. This will help promote better collaboration and joint leadership, encourage new approaches incorporating early intervention, and establish and embed the best ways to help victims, survivors and their families.

In addition, we will shortly be announcing successful bids in our three year £15 million VAWG Service Transformation Fund.

## ■ Deportation

**Shabana Mahmood:**

**[67970]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with which countries the UK has a Memorandum of Understanding to facilitate enforced deportation to a third country.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The UK has a number of agreements with other countries to facilitate the removal and deportation of those with no right to remain in the UK. The Dublin III Regulation is EU law that enables transfer of asylum seekers to other participating States in Europe who are responsible for examining the claim. The UK participates in 14 EU Readmission Agreements, some of which contain clauses to return third country nationals, meaning individuals who are not a national of that country. Returns to other countries may also be on a case by case basis with the consent of the third country.

## ■ Deportation: Children in Care

**Jess Phillips:**

**[67099]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 7 March 2017 to Question 66044, whether her Department holds details of which countries the 40 young people that left care, were referred to in the Department for Education's statistical release entitled Children looked after in England including adoption: 2015 to 2016, published on 28 February 2017, were deported to.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Home Office does not comment on individual cases.

## ■ Entry Clearances: EEA Nationals

**Mr David Hanson:**

**[67828]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications for the European Economic Area family permit have been (a) submitted, (b) rejected and (c) accepted in each year since 2010.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The information requested on the number of applications, grants and refusals for the European Economic Area family permit in each year since 2010 is published in the Home Office's quarterly Immigration Statistics Visa tables volume 1, table vi\_01\_q, latest edition available from <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-october-to-december-2016/list-of-tables#visas>

## ■ Home Office: Secondment

**Jon Trickett:**

**[67741]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many staff have been seconded to her Department from (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Accenture, (d) McKinsey & Co, (f) Ernst and Young and (g) Bain & Company since July 2016.

**Sarah Newton:**

The Home Office has not seconded in any staff from (a) PwC, (b) Deloitte, (c) Accenture, (d) McKinsey & Co, (f) Ernst and Young and (g) Bain & Company since July 2016.

**■ Immigration Bail****Mr Andrew Smith:**[\[67878\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she expects paragraph 11 of Schedule 10 of the Immigration Act 2016 to be brought into force.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

We are currently working with the Ministry of Justice, Her Majesty's Court Service and the First-tier Tribunal to implement the Secretary of State's duty to arrange consideration of bail, as set out in paragraph 11 of Schedule 10 to the Immigration Act 2016. This is just one part of a large number of changes necessary to implement the wider immigration bail provisions in Schedule 10 and it will be commenced alongside those other provisions in due course.

**■ Immigration Officers: Training****Alison Thewliss:**[\[67718\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what additional training is provided to officials who deal with asylum claimants who are survivors of torture.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Home Office are working closely with Freedom from Torture and other key partners to review and make further improvements to the process and training relating to claims involving survivors of torture.

**■ Immigration: EU Nationals****Stephen Kinnock:**[\[67446\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans her Department has to expedite the process of permanent residency applications from nationals of other EU member states.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

In fairness to all applicants, applications for residence documentation under the Immigration (European Economic Area) Regulations 2016, including applications for documents certifying permanent residence, are considered in order of date of receipt.

In some exceptional circumstances, European Casework will expedite consideration of an application on grounds of family emergencies such as bereavement or serious illness or the need to travel for essential medical treatment overseas.



**Stephen Kinnock:**

**[67447]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she has taken to ensure there are sufficient staff in her Department to process the increase in applications for permanent residency in the UK from citizens of other EU member states.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

UKVI have implemented a number of measures to deal with increased application intake since the referendum, including the redeployment of staff from other government departments and recruitment of agency staff. UKVI have now commenced measures to recruit a number of additional permanent staff.

**Tulip Siddiq:**

**[68058]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she has taken to streamline the process by which EU nationals can apply for permanent residence to the UK.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

UK Visas & Immigration launched an online version of the permanent residence application in September 2016. Initially it was available to sole EEA or Swiss applicants who qualified in their own right. In February 2017 the online application was extended to enable family members to apply online alongside their EEA or Swiss sponsor.

Those applying online may find the time taken to complete the application is quicker than the equivalent paper form as the online form directs the applicant to specific questions relating to their individual circumstances.

Online applicants can also use the European Passport Return Service. This service, available via participating local authorities, allows the original passport to be checked and returned immediately to the holder, with only a copy submitted along with the papers to the Home Office.

UK Visas & Immigration are working towards digitalising all application routes for EU Nationals and their family members. The intention is to enable customers to apply online across our services and immigration routes in a straight-forward and customer-focused way.

**Tulip Siddiq:**

**[68060]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what (a) financial and (b) human resources have been spent on managing permanent residency applications for EU nationals since 23 June 2016.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

UK Visas and Immigration operate flexible staffing resources and deploy staff in line with demands on the service. UKVI's budget is approved on an annual basis in line with the new financial year. Decisions on resources and funding levels over the next two years will be negotiated on the basis of forecast intake levels. Applications for permanent residency are being considered within the published service standards.

**Tulip Siddiq:** [68205]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether EU citizens who have been living in the UK for five years when the UK leaves the EU will have an automatic right to permanent residency in the UK.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

Securing the status of EU nationals in the UK, and UK citizens in the EU, is one of the Government's twelve key objectives for exit and we are looking to reach agreement on this point as early as possible once formal negotiations begin.

**Tulip Siddiq:** [68207]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications from EU nationals seeking permanent residency in the UK are currently being processed.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The most recent published figures for the number of applications from EU nationals seeking permanent residency in the UK are available in the Table InC\_04 of the Transparency Data which is available here:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/594457/UKVI\\_TM\\_PM\\_Transparency\\_Data\\_Q4\\_2016.ods](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/594457/UKVI_TM_PM_Transparency_Data_Q4_2016.ods)

## ■ Immigration: Foreign Nationals

**Stephen Kinnock:** [67542]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of applications for permanent residency made by (a) non-UK EU nationals and (b) non-EU nationals were processed within official target times in the last 12 months.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

All applications by EU nationals for a document certifying permanent residence and by non-EU nationals for a permanent residence certificate were processed within official target times in the last 12 months.

The latest published citizenship and visa application statistics are available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/temporary-and-permanent-migration-data-february-2017>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-october-to-december-2016>

## ■ Immigration: Health Insurance

**Stephen Kinnock:** [68196]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether legal advice was sought on the changes made to comprehensive sickness insurance for non-UK nationals applying for permanent residency.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

There have been no changes to the requirement for EU national self-sufficient persons or students to hold comprehensive sickness insurance in order to qualify for a right to reside since it was set out in the Free Movement Directive (2004/38), which was adopted in 2004 and transposed into UK law in the Immigration (EEA) Regulations 2006.

**Stephen Kinnock:**[\[68197\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her policy is on the level of comprehensive sickness insurance required as a qualifying criterion for permanent residency.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Free Movement Directive (Directive 2004/38/EC) states that EU citizens who are exercising Treaty rights as a self sufficient person or student must not become a burden on the social assistance system of the host Member State and must hold comprehensive sickness insurance.

The Home Office has published guidance on the GOV.UK website which clarifies what is required to satisfy this criterion. The guidance can be found here at pages 30 to 38:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/588174/EEA-qualified-persons-v4\\_0EXT.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/588174/EEA-qualified-persons-v4_0EXT.pdf)

**■ Refugees: Children****Diana Johnson:**[\[67511\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many local authorities approached her Department to support children under the Dubs scheme; and how many of those authorities have or are due to support children under that scheme.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 21 February 2017 to Question 63693 to the hon. Member for Brighton, Pavilion.

**■ Skilled Workers: Visas****Steve McCabe:**[\[68340\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of the UK leaving the EU on the need to review the Shortage Occupation List.

**Steve McCabe:**[\[68341\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans she has to include GPs in the next review of the Shortage Occupation List.

**Steve McCabe:**

[68342]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to review the Shortage Occupation List.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The independent Migration Advisory Commission (MAC) reviews the Shortage Occupation List when commissioned to do so by the Government. The MAC's reports and recommendations take account of all of the labour market conditions at the time. As future immigration arrangements for EU nationals are yet to be determined, it would be premature to try to assess the impact on the Shortage Occupation List at this stage.

The MAC has carried out two full reviews and four partial reviews of the Shortage Occupation List since May 2010. This includes a review of GPs in February 2015. The MAC recommended waiting until a Department of Health initiative to incentivise medical graduates to become GPs is evaluated, before considering the addition of GPs to the Shortage Occupation List. The report can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/partial-review-of-the-shortage-occupation-lists>.

The Government will consider further reviews of the list as part of the MAC's wider work plan.

## ■ Travel Restrictions

**Neil Coyle:**

[68405]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate her Department has made of the cost of additional staff resources at a departmental and agency level required by changes in travel restrictions after the UK leaves the EU.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

We are considering a number of options as to how future controls on EU migration will work, and their impact after we leave the EU. It would not be appropriate to set out further positions at this stage.

## ■ Undocumented Migrants: Deportation

**Philip Davies:**

[68153]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people who entered the UK illegally in each of the last three years were deported without charge.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

Statistics on persons returned from the UK is published in the Home Office's Immigration Statistics. The latest release can be found at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/593036/returns5-q4-2016-tables.ods](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/593036/returns5-q4-2016-tables.ods)

## ■ Visas

**Corri Wilson:**

[\[68074\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if her Department will review the application process for visit visas to ensure the requirements are as clear as possible; and if she will make it her policy to include additional questions on the financial support of applicants and the family ties applicants retain in their home states.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The visit visa application form already includes questions about an applicant's personal and financial circumstances. There is also a section where an applicant can provide any other information that they may feel is relevant to their application.

However, the Home Office is continuously working to refine and improve the products and services on offer to customers, and keeps the efficiency and effectiveness of the visa application process under regular review. Recent improvements include the launch of a new online application route for visitors, and the expansion of priority visa services.

## ■ Visas: Appeals

**Corri Wilson:**

[\[68073\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department plans to reinstate the right to appeal visa decisions.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Government has no plans to reinstate the right to appeal visit visa decisions.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

### ■ House of Commons Commission: Procurement

**Jon Trickett:**

[\[67820\]](#)

To ask the right hon. Member for Carshalton and Wallington, representing the House of Commons Commission, pursuant to the Answer of 28 February 2017 to Question 65000, at what pay grades the 228 contract managers are employed.

**Tom Brake:**

House Service staff managing contracts have different pay grades and positions in the organisation. These individuals may hold positions as directors, managers or specialists in addition to their duties as contract managers. Contract management is just one element of their wider role. Staff pay grade is not necessarily a criterion for assigning contracts to staff; we do not therefore collate this information for contract management purposes.

**INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT****■ Sustainable Development: Marine Environment**

**Mr Nigel Evans:** [\[67961\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to support smaller countries toward achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goal 14 on conservation and sustainable use of the marine environment.

**James Wharton:**

The UK Government is playing a leading role in helping developing countries achieve the SDGs, including Goal 14. As part of a strong cross-Government effort, DFID supports the Global Environment Facility, which includes assistance for small island developing states in managing their marine territories.

**■ Yemen: Overseas Aid**

**Ian Murray:** [\[68314\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that British-funded aid is not blocked at ports in Yemen.

**Rory Stewart:**

The UK continues to lobby all parties to the conflict to facilitate commercial and humanitarian access, and is supporting the UN Verification and Inspection Mechanism, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the UN Humanitarian Air Service to improve access for humanitarian agencies.

**JUSTICE****■ Companies: Prosecutions**

**Mr Roger Godsiff:** [\[68306\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many corporate prosecutions took place for (a) environmental crimes, (b) health and safety related offences, (c) corporate manslaughter, (d) bribery or corruption, (e) fraud, (f) tax evasion offences and (g) any other type of corporate crime in each of the last five years.

**Sir Oliver Heald:**

The information requested can be found in the 'Criminal Justice Statistics Quarterly: December 2015' on Gov.uk

[www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-justice-system-statistics-quarterly-december-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-justice-system-statistics-quarterly-december-2015)

## ■ **Drugs: Sentencing**

**Tim Farron:** [68248]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many people were given prison sentences for drug possession in the last year.

**Tim Farron:** [68249]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many people are serving prison sentences for personal drugs possession.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

The number of people given a custodial sentence for drug offences is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-justice-system-statistics-quarterly-december-2015>

## ■ **Harassment: Court Orders**

**Jess Phillips:** [67915]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether her Department plans to issue a pro forma for courts in England and Wales to assist with the precise wording of restraining orders.

**Sir Oliver Heald:**

There are no plans to issue a pro forma for courts in England and Wales to assist with the precise wording of restraining orders. The terms in which court orders are made is a matter for the court and the prohibitions imposed by a restraining order will depend to a significant extent on the circumstances of the individual case.

## ■ **Northumberland Prison**

**Richard Burgon:** [67487]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment her Department has made of alleged contractual breaches by (a) Sodexo Justice Services and (b) Novus at HM Prison Northumberland; and if she will make a statement.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

The allegations made by BBC Panorama were extremely serious and were urgently investigated. In the White Paper published last November, the Secretary of State clearly set out that levels of violence and self-harm in our prisons are too high, which is why we are investing an extra £100m annually to support reform in the prison estate. As we implement the changes set out in the White Paper, we will ensure that these will work for private prisons wherever possible. We will also continue to engage with providers of private prisons on how the new approaches to working with prisoners could be implemented alongside other actions they might already be taking to improve safety.

These are long-standing issues which will not be resolved in weeks or months but we are determined to make our prisons places of safety and reform. We have robust

processes in place to closely monitor and manage private contractors and will not hesitate to take action when standards fall short. Whilst the allegations were serious, there has been no evidence of any breach of contract by Sodexo or Novus, but we are working with them to deliver improvements to ensure the safe, secure and decent running of the establishment.

**Richard Burgon:**

**[67488]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps she has taken to ensure that inmates at HM Prison Northumberland are receiving educational services; and if she will make a statement.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

The allegations made by BBC Panorama were extremely serious and were urgently investigated. In the White Paper published last November, the Secretary of State clearly set out that levels of violence and self-harm in our prisons are too high, which is why we are investing an extra £100m annually to support reform in the prison estate. As we implement the changes set out in the White Paper, we will ensure that these will work for private prisons wherever possible. We will also continue to engage with providers of private prisons on how the new approaches to working with prisoners could be implemented alongside other actions they might already be taking to improve safety.

These are long-standing issues which will not be resolved in weeks or months but we are determined to make our prisons places of safety and reform. We have examined the review undertaken by Novus into education provision at HMP Northumberland and have agreed to put in place improvements. We are determined to make our prisons places of safety and reform and have robust processes in place to closely monitor and manage private contractors and will not hesitate to take action when standards fall short.

**Richard Burgon:**

**[67490]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps Sodexo has taken to address allegations of drug use and violence within HM Prison Northumberland; and if she will make a statement.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

The allegations made by BBC Panorama were extremely serious and were urgently investigated. In the White Paper published last November, the Secretary of State clearly set out that levels of violence and self-harm in our prisons are too high, which is why we are investing an extra £100m annually to support reform in the prison estate. As we implement the changes set out in the White Paper, we will ensure that these will work for private prisons wherever possible. We will also continue to engage with providers of private prisons on how the new approaches to working with prisoners could be implemented alongside other actions they might already be taking to improve safety.



These are long-standing issues which will not be resolved in weeks or months but we are determined to make our prisons places of safety and reform. We have robust processes in place to closely monitor and manage private contractors and will not hesitate to take action when standards fall short.

Recently, overall staffing at the prison has increased by 37 above the resource profile in Sodexo's bid to operate the prison, this includes 20 additional Prison Custody Officers. Sodexo work with the police and, prior to the programme, purchased a Body Scanner to support the detection of illicit items.

### ■ **Package Holidays: Compensation**

**Andrew Bridgen:**

[\[68075\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what measures her Department is taking to tackle illegitimate and fraudulent activity by claims-handling companies in relation to gastric illness claims made by package holiday customers.

**Andrew Bridgen:**

[\[68079\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if she will meet senior leaders of the travel industry to discuss the increasing incidence of gastric illness claims made by package holiday customers.

**Sir Oliver Heald:**

The Government is concerned about the apparent recent increase in holiday sickness claims and its potential implications for tour operators and the holiday industry more generally. My department is liaising with the Association of British Travel Agents and other industry representatives to understand the underlying problems and identify the most appropriate and effective response.

Tackling fraudulent claims is a key priority. The Claims Management Regulator is investigating claims management companies which are soliciting holidaymakers to make sickness claims and is actively working with industry representatives, the Solicitors Regulation Authority and other regulators to target and respond effectively to any abuses. We remain committed to ensuring that those CMCs which contact consumers to offer claims services do so legally.

### ■ **Prison Officers: Mental Illness**

**Yasmin Qureshi:**

[\[67892\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prison officers were on leave of absence due to mental illness in 2015-16; and for how many days each such absence lasted.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

In 2015-16, 1,405 band 3-5 prison officers took sickness absence due to mental and behavioural disorders. In accordance with the Data Protection Act, figures on the length of each sickness absence cannot be published.

NOMS is committed to providing safe, decent and secure places of work and takes the health, safety and wellbeing of its employees extremely seriously. The Ministry of Justice is investing an extra £100m annually to boost the frontline by 2,500 officers.

NOMS also recognises that the physical, emotional and social wellbeing of employees is paramount to attracting and retaining staff that will build a strong and capable organisation. All NOMS staff have access to an occupational health service and employee assistance programme. This includes 24 hour, 365 days a year access to signposting and counselling; trauma support services; a wide ranging health promotion website and personal wellbeing zone.

In addition, counselling is available to staff who have experienced trauma. Fast track referrals to see an occupational health nurse are encouraged for staff who have experienced trauma and, where staff are absent as a result of a mental and behavioural disorder, an immediate referral to occupational health is recommended.

#### ■ Prisons: Drugs

**Paul Flynn:**

[67996]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many random mandatory drug tests have been undertaken in prisons in England and Wales each of the last six years.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

The information requested is planned for routine publication by the Ministry of Justice and will be available on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) in the NOMS Annual Digest on 27 July 2017.

### NORTHERN IRELAND

#### ■ Asylum: Northern Ireland

**Lady Hermon:**

[67846]

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how many (a) refugees from Syria and (b) unaccompanied refugee children from Europe have been settled in Northern Ireland in the last year; and if he will make a statement.

**Kris Hopkins:**

Under the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement scheme, 309 Syrian refugees were resettled to Northern Ireland in 2016.

Unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children are supported by the relevant authorities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and in accordance with their respective children's legislation. In July last year the Government introduced the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) to ensure there is a more even distribution of caring responsibilities for unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children across the country.

The Home Office are working to extend the transfer provisions in the Immigration Act 2016 to the devolved administrations. Building upon Northern Ireland's positive contribution to the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement scheme, the Home Office

continues to be in contact with the Northern Ireland Executive regarding unaccompanied asylum seeking children. We remain open to any offers of NTS places from the relevant authorities in the devolved administrations however, no unaccompanied asylum-seeking children have been resettled in Northern Ireland under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016 yet.

#### ■ Northern Ireland Assembly: Powers

**Lady Hermon:**

[67845]

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what steps he is taking to ensure the devolution of additional powers to the Northern Ireland Assembly after the UK leaves the EU; and if he will make a statement.

**Kris Hopkins:**

As set out in the Government's White Paper, *The United Kingdom's exit from, and new partnership with, the European Union*, the Government's guiding principle is to ensure that as the UK leaves the EU, no new barriers to living and doing business within the Union are created. We will work with the devolved administrations on an approach to returning powers from the EU that works for the whole of the UK.

#### ■ Northern Ireland Office: Freedom of Information

**Andrew Gwynne:**

[68051]

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what the average response rate was of his Department to individual Freedom of Information requests in each month since July 2016.

**Kris Hopkins:**

The latest Freedom of Information statistics were published in December 2016 and are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/freedom-of-information-statistics-july-to-september-2016--2>

#### ■ Northern Ireland Office: Procurement

**Jon Trickett:**

[67884]

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, pursuant to the Answer of 1 March 2017 to Question 65004, what the pay grades are of the 10 civil servants of his Department who oversee contracts awarded to external providers.

**Kris Hopkins:**

The pay grades of the 10 civil servants in the Department who oversee contracts which have been awarded to external providers are:

4 Band As;

2 Band Bs;

3 Band Cs; and  
1 Band D.

## SCOTLAND

### ■ Food Banks: Scotland

**Alison Thewliss:** [\[68020\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, whether he plans to visit a food bank in April 2017.

**David Mundell:**

I currently have no plans to visit a food bank in my capacity as Secretary of State for Scotland.

### ■ Local Growth Deals: Ayrshire

**Alan Brown:** [\[68256\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, pursuant to the Answer of 14 March 2017 to Question 67218, of the meetings he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many and on what dates the subject of funding for the Ayrshire Growth Deal was discussed.

**David Mundell:**

I regularly meet the Chancellor of the Exchequer to discuss a range of issues. In line with the practice of successive administrations details of ministerial discussions are not routinely disclosed.

## TRANSPORT

### ■ Bus Services: Migrant Workers

**Daniel Zeichner:** [\[67519\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what research his Department has commissioned into what proportion of bus (a) drivers and (b) workers are non-UK EU nationals.

**Andrew Jones:**

The majority of bus services in the UK are operated commercially by private bus companies, who are responsible for the recruitment of their employees.

My Department collects statistical information on the number of staff employed by bus operators, however it does not collect information on the nationality of staff.

## ■ Crossrail 2 Line

**Stephen Hammond:**

[\[68061\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he expects the next stage of public consultation for Crossrail 2 to take place.

**Paul Maynard:**

Government is currently reviewing the Crossrail 2 Strategic Outline Business Case it has received from Transport for London and is carefully considering it to ensure it is robust and includes a fair, sustainable and deliverable funding plan. The next steps and timescales for the project, including when the next stage of public consultation will take place, will therefore be decided as part of our consideration of this business case.

**Stephen Hammond:**

[\[68240\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he plans to respond to Transport for London's Strategic Outline Business Case for Crossrail 2.

**Paul Maynard:**

We have only recently received the Strategic Outline Business Case from Transport for London. Any project requires full and detailed scrutiny of its business case. Given the scale and cost of this project, it is right that Government spends sufficient time reviewing all the evidence to be able to make an informed decision.

It would not be appropriate to make any judgments before the business case has been fully considered.

## ■ Cycling: Finance

**Daniel Zeichner:**

[\[67838\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many local authorities have applied for Bikeability funding since 2015; and how many of those applications were successful.

**Andrew Jones:**

In 2016 the Department asked Local Authorities to apply for Bikeability funding. 107 Local Authorities applied and every authority was awarded grant funding.

**Daniel Zeichner:**

[\[67941\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the effect of using Bikeability funding to deliver Bikeability Plus on the provision of Bikeability training.

**Andrew Jones:**

Bikeability Plus has been developed to address specific barriers to children cycling more often, in addition to and support of the core Bikeability training. It was piloted in a number of areas across England. During the pilot, the number of children who cycled to school at least once a week more than doubled. During the piloting of Bikeability Plus, a number of authorities reported positive impacts on the provision of core Bikeability training. It was found that in areas where Bikeability Plus had been

delivered, instructors delivering core Bikeability modules were able to spend more time on the road training children. Monitoring of Bikeability and Bikeability Plus programmes is ongoing.

## ■ Department for Transport: Contracts

**Christian Matheson:**

[\[67666\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, which contracts issued by his Department or its executive agencies are held by (a) Balfour Beatty, (b) Mott MacDonald and (c) Balfour Beatty Mott MacDonald joint venture.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The contracts issued by my Department or its executive agencies held by Mott MacDonald are listed in Table A below. No contracts are held by my Department or its executive agencies with Balfour Beatty or Balfour Beatty / Mott MacDonald joint venture.

Table A – live contracts with Mott MacDonald

TITLE	REFERENCE	START DATE	END DATE	VALUE
PQQ Passport Evaluation	PPRO 04/101/026	1 June 2016	1 June 2018	£20,000
Network Services Directorate (NSD) West Team and NSD Intercity Team Economic Advisors	PPRO 04/101/44	3 January 2017	3 <sup>rd</sup> January 2019 Option to extend contract for a further 1 year + 1 year period	£500k + £250k +£250k
Network Services Directorate (NSD) London and South East Team Economic Advisors	PPRO 04/101/046	3 January 2017	3 January 2019 Option to extend contract for a further 1 year + 1 year period	£265k, £132.5k and £132.5k

## ■ Department for Transport: Migrant Workers

**Tulip Siddiq:**

[\[67470\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many and what proportion of people employed by his Department are from other EU countries.

**Mr John Hayes:**

All Government Departments are bound by legal requirements concerning the right to work in the UK and, in addition, the Civil Service Nationality Rules.

Evidence of nationality is checked at the point of recruitment into the Civil Service as part of wider pre-employment checks, but there is no requirement on departments to retain this information beyond the point at which it has served its purpose.

■ **Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency****Charlotte Leslie:**[\[67513\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 24 February 2017 to Question 64008, on Driver Vehicle Licensing Agency, how much was paid by each local authority area in each of the last five years.

**Andrew Jones:**

Local authorities cover the administrative cost associated with requests for vehicle keeper and driver licensing information held by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA).

The table below shows how much was paid to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) by each local authority over the last five years. Audited information for this financial year 2016-17 is not yet available.

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
<b>Local Authority</b>				
<b>A</b>				
Aylesbury Vale DC	-	£125	£225	£485
<b>B</b>				
Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council	£2,985	£606	£636	£737
Bath & North East Somerset	£2,985	£552	£552	£572
Birmingham City Council	£1,054	£557	£435	£303
Blackburn with Darwen BC	£3,841	£939	£375	-
Bolton Council	£3,129	£18	£3	£367
Bradford Council	-	-	-	£3,453

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Brighton & Hove City Council	-	-	-	£4,067
Bristol City Council	£6,789	£2,460	£5,651	£3,045
Bury Metropolitan Borough Council	£2,985	-	-	£1,040
<b>C</b>				
Caerphilly County Borough Council	-	-	£2,985	£217
Cardiff City Council	-	-	£1,320	£2,062
Cheshire Council	-	-	-	£37
Crawley Borough Council	-	-	£2,986	£560
Cumbria County Council	£631	£1,252	£1,984	£1,881
<b>D</b>				
Darlington Borough Council	-	-	£2,985	£414
Denbighshire County Council	-	-	-	£3,012
Doncaster Council	£13	£2,469	£1,589	£3,849
<b>E</b>				
Essex County Council	£1,525	£2,498	£2,569	£1,843
<b>G</b>				
Glasgow City Council	-	-	-	£4,505
<b>H</b>				
Hertfordshire County Council	-	£1,009	£653	£1,063



	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Huntingdonshire District Council	£1,332	£4	£6	£3,009
<b>I</b>				
Inverclyde Council -		-	£594	£799
Isle of Wight Council	£400	£318	£658	£923
<b>K</b>				
Kirklees Council -	-	-	£1,625	£2,892
Knowsley Borough Council	-	-	-	£3,451
<b>L</b>				
Leeds City Council	£3,385	£488	£4,162	£10,082
London Borough of Harrow Council	£15,213	£3,305	£189	£216
London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham	-	£1,664	£3,224	£3,536
London Councils -	-	£1,040	£2,080	£2,080
<b>M</b>				
Manchester City Council	£1,342	£6,475	£6,075	£6,385
Middlesbrough Council	-	-	£2,985	£1,119
Monmouthshire County Council	-	-	-	£2,986
<b>N</b>				
Newark & Sherwood District Council	-	-	-	£162
North Devon	£128	£193	£352	£246

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
District Council				
North Somerset Council	£48	£91	£272	£340
North Tyneside Council	-	-	-	£4,157
Northampton Borough Council	£3,279	£3,346	£50	£829
Nottingham City Council	£3	£1,746	£1,949	£2,029
Nottinghamshire County Council	£3	£3,003	£112	£3,609
<b>O</b>				
Oldham Council	-	-	£737	£1,190
Oxford City Council	£4	£3,465	£836	£877
<b>P</b>				
Plymouth City Council	-	-	-	£3,075
Portsmouth City Council	-	-	-	£2,992
Powys County Council	-	-	-	£2,985
<b>R</b>				
Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council	-	-	-	£3,347
Rochdale Borough Council	-	-	-	£2,985
Rushcliffe Borough Council	-	£476	£588	£700

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
<b>S</b>				
Sedgemoor District Council	-	-	-	£65
Sefton Council	£2,985	£5	£1,331	£1,825
Sevenoaks Council	-	-	-	£2,998
Sheffield City Council	-	-	£1,387	£2,049
South Cambridgeshire Council	-	£72	£339	£331
South Lanarkshire - Council		-	£2,985	£541
South Somerset District Council	-	-	£2,985	£197
South Tyneside Council	-	-	£2,986	£521
Southampton City - Council		£13	£378	£419
St Edmundsbury Borough Council	-	-	-	£58
St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council	-	-	£2,986	£740
Swansea Council	-	-	-	£2,985
<b>T</b>				
Test Valley Borough Council	-	-	£143	£296
Torfaen County Borough Council	-	£295	£262	£259
Transport for London	-	£8,319	£9,188	£46,775

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
<b>W</b>				
Walsall Council	-	-	-	£2,985
Warrington Borough Council	-	£237	£343	£505
Wigan Council	-	-	-	£1,209
Wolverhampton City Council	-	-	-	£992
Wyre Council	-	£3,325	£469	£434

### ■ East Coast Railway Line: Suicide

**John Mann:**

**[67720]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to prevent suicides on the East Coast Main Line through Retford.

**Paul Maynard:**

The Department is aware of the fatalities in the Retford area between 2014 – 2016 and recognises that each death by suicide on the railway is one too many. The rail industry has a significant work stream in place to prevent suicide on the network which brings together the Rail Delivery Group, Samaritans, the British Transport Police and the Department in a bid to reduce the risk of suicide on our railways.

Part of Network Rail's suicide prevention escalation process is to alert local authorities where it is believed a cluster (as defined by Public Health England guidance) of suicides or attempted suicides are taking place. Network Rail is proactive in contacting the relevant local authority to ask about their suicide prevention work and how this can be supported.

Network Rail takes preventative measures including fencing on disused platforms, along with signage and training of staff.

In particular high risk areas, they also work with the local community to look for those who are vulnerable to suicide. It is important that the police, the wider rail industry, as well as other appropriate local stakeholders, should be involved in the development and implementation of local authorities suicide prevention plans, particularly in high-risk locations.

## ■ Great Western Railway Line: Electrification

**Kate Hollern:**

[\[67577\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he plans to take to address the fact that Network Rail did not deliver the Great Western electrification scheme on time.

**Paul Maynard:**

In 2015, in response to cost increases and schedule delays on aspects of Network Rail's investment programme, Sir Peter Hendy was asked to replan the programme in a way that was both affordable and deliverable.

In response to the recommendations of the Bowe Review into the planning of the current rail investment period, Network Rail have undertaken an Enhancements Improvement Plan which has strengthened, among other things, cost estimation, project and portfolio monitoring, project delivery, and project governance.

Four electrification projects were deferred on the Great Western Programme in autumn 2016 in order to address cost pressures within the current rail investment period covering 2014-2019 and to bring forward delivery of infrastructure that will allow passengers to benefit from further service improvements. We will continue to assess all elements of the Programme to ensure they remain deliverable and affordable.

Network Rail are delivering the Great Western electrification programme to the revised schedule set out in the Hendy Review.

## ■ London-Brighton Railway Line

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[68148\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 27 June 2016 to Question 40729, on the London-Brighton railway line, if he will take steps to safeguard critical land in the central Croydon area for the Brighton Mainline upgrade; and if he will make a statement.

**Paul Maynard:**

In developing proposals to upgrade the Brighton Mainline, Network Rail is considering land requirements. As I have indicated previously, the Government will continue to support Network Rail in further developing and refining the upgrade proposals. We will consider proposals Network Rail puts forward on land requirements on their merits, and in light of the overall business case for the upgrade, which is at an early stage of development.

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[68149\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 27 June 2016 to Question 40729, on the London-Brighton railway line, what estimate he has made of the potential cost to Government of safeguarding critical land in the central Croydon area for the Brighton Mainline upgrade; and if he will make a statement.

**Paul Maynard:**

Network Rail will refine its cost estimates for the Brighton Mainline upgrade proposals over time, including for land requirements. Any decision on land requirements needs to be made in view of the overall business case for the upgrade, which is at an early stage of development.

**Railway Stations: Greater London****Kwasi Kwarteng:**[\[67835\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether he plans to designate stations outside the current Greater London boundary as Greater London Stations for the purposes of possible inclusion in the services devolved to Transport for London.

**Paul Maynard:**

The Secretary of State has no such plans.

**Railways: South West****Charlotte Leslie:**[\[67647\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what rail infrastructure investment was in the South West region from 1997-98 to 2015-16.

**Paul Maynard:**

The Department specifies rail investment as part of a planning process that includes publishing a High Level Output Specification (HLOS). This sets out how much public expenditure it wishes to devote to rail and what it wants the railway to deliver. This takes into account rail infrastructure in England and Wales, including the South West. It does not include infrastructure investment made by third parties.

The first HLOS was published in 2007 and covers the period 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2014 and the second HLOS published in 2012 covers the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2019. During these periods rail infrastructure has been delivered or is in delivery in the South West including Reading Station redevelopment, the Great Western Route Modernisation Programme and the Wessex Capacity Programme.

Further information can be found at the following links;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/delivering-a-sustainable-railway-white-paper-cm-7176>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/high-level-output-specification-2012>

**Railways: Tickets****Caroline Lucas:**[\[68328\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to page eight of the Action Plan for Information on Rail Fares and Ticketing, published in 2016, what progress has been made on delivering the commitment on enabling customers to claim back relevant expenses relating to having forgotten a valid railcard at the time of travel.

**Paul Maynard:**

A rule change has just been introduced by all train companies which means that, once a year, someone penalised for failing to show a Railcard which they should have been carrying can get a refund if they are able to produce the card later.

This is the first improvement for customers to be accomplished out of a wide-ranging action plan agreed last December between the government, train companies, and consumer groups.

**Southern: Standards****Peter Kyle:**[\[67853\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer to Question 60337, on Southern: standards, when the full report and recommendations of Chris Gibb's project board into rapid improvements of Southern Rail will be published.

**Paul Maynard:**

Industry expert Chris Gibb has provided advice to the department on Southern Rail. His recommendations, which are technical in nature, and the Government's response will be published in due course.

**WALES****Jobcentres: Wales****Hywel Williams:**[\[67515\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what discussions he has had with the Department for Work and Pensions on proposed jobcentre closures in Wales.

**Alun Cairns:**

My Department and I are fully engaged with DWP on this issue. The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Wales is scheduled to meet with the Minister of State for Employment this week to discuss the proposals as they impact Wales.

**National Insurance Contributions: Wales****Hywel Williams:**[\[67517\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on proposed changes to national insurance contributions for the self-employed in Wales.

**Alun Cairns:**

I have regular discussions with the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Following the oral statement made by the Chancellor in the House of Commons last week, the Government will no longer be proceeding with the changes announced at Spring Budget 2017 to increase Class 4 National Insurance contributions (NICs).

**WOMEN AND EQUALITIES****■ Hereditary Peers: Gender****Rachel Reeves:**[\[67854\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what discussions she has had with Cabinet colleagues on the effect of male primogeniture on the gender balance of hereditary peers in the House of Lords.

**Caroline Dinanage:**

The Government supports the principle of gender equality and sympathises with the concerns over gender inequality in the succession to peerages.

However, neither a life peerage nor a hereditary peerage, as a dignity or honour conferred by the Crown, is a public or personal office for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010. As such, the Register of Hereditary Peers is not subject to equalities legislation.

**WORK AND PENSIONS****■ Child Support Agency: Telephone Services****Rosie Cooper:**[\[68250\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether his Department has made an assessment of the effect on constituents of being unable to make telephone contact with the appropriate Child Support Agency administrative office to discuss their case; and if he will make a statement.

**Caroline Nokes:**

During the 2016/2017 operating year, there have been two issues with the Child Support Agency telephone system which impacted client calls. These were (1) Monday 07 November 2016 from 16:30 to 20:00 with some client calls cut off; and (2) Monday 20 February 2017 from around 11:00 to 19:30 an issue with the IT system meant we needed to deploy a telephone call plan requesting clients call back the following day.

These faults were resolved quickly minimising impacts on our clients. During the 2016/2017 operating year 97.4% of calls were answered within 60 seconds.

The Child Support Agency telephony system has an intelligent call routing system which utilises details input by the client to direct them to their Caseworker. If for some reason the Caseworker isn't available the telephony routing redirects the caller to a different Caseworker with the correct skills to help the client.

**Rosie Cooper:**[\[68251\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department is taking to resolve the faults with the Child Support Agency's automated telephone system.



**Caroline Nokes:**

During the 2016/2017 operating year 97.4% of calls were answered within 60 seconds. During this period, there have been two issues with the Child Support Agency telephone system which impacted client calls. These were (1) Monday 07 November 2016 from 16:30 to 20:00 with some client calls cut off; and (2) Monday 20 February 2017 from around 11:00 to 19:30 an issue with the IT system meant we needed to deploy a telephone call plan requesting clients call back the following day.

These faults were resolved quickly minimising impacts on our clients

**Rosie Cooper:**[\[68252\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what monitoring and reporting mechanisms are in place for identifying operational issues at the Child Support Agency, including faults with the automated telephone system; and when the problem with the operation of that automated telephone system was first identified.

**Caroline Nokes:**

The Child Support Agency has a number of steps in place to help identify any telephony system issues. Including:

(1) Technical Monitoring - There is extensive monitoring and assessment of the overall Child Support Agency with a full incident and problem management process in place.

(2) Business call monitoring – we have real time management information to help us identify:

- Numbers of our Caseworkers available to take calls from clients
- If queues are starting to build up on any of our lines
- Average waiting time for client calls
- Call abandonment rates from clients hanging up

This information helps our telephony performance and Network Management Teams to monitor the service being provided to clients and urgently respond to any issues

(3) CSA Operational colleagues will raise incidents when they become aware of issues they are experiencing, or if clients report any difficulties when their call is answered.

During the 2016/2017 operating year 97.4% of calls were answered within 60 seconds. During this period, there have been two issues with the Child Support Agency telephone system which impacted client calls. These were (1) Monday 07 November 2016 from 16:30 to 20:00 with some client calls cut off; and (2) Monday 20 February 2017 from around 11:00 to 19:30 an issue with the IT system meant we needed to deploy a telephone call plan requesting clients call back the following day.

These faults were resolved quickly minimising impacts on our clients

**■ Department for Work and Pensions: Migrant Workers****Tulip Siddiq:** [\[67472\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many and what proportion of people employed by his Department are from other EU countries.

**Caroline Nokes:**

All Government Departments are bound by legal requirements concerning the right to work in the UK and, in addition, the Civil Service Nationality Rules.

Evidence of nationality is checked at the point of recruitment into the Civil Service as part of wider pre-employment checks, but there is no requirement on departments to retain this information beyond the point at which it has served its purpose.

**■ Jobcentre Plus: Staff****Stephen Timms:** [\[68262\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the effect on the workload of Jobcentre Plus staff of proposals to (a) close jobcentres, (b) increase the frequency of visits by some jobseekers and (c) introduce conditionality for people in work.

**Damian Hinds:**

The proposed closure of Jobcentres is not a staff or service reduction programme, it is about redesigning our estate in a way that delivers value for the taxpayer while continuing to deliver vital support to our claimants. In fact these proposals will not lead to a reduction to the number of front line Jobcentre staff. The number of Work Coaches in Jobcentres is set to increase and we expect to have more Work Coaches in every nation and region in March 2018 compared to today.

**■ Jobcentres: Wales****Hywel Williams:** [\[67516\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what representations he has received from the Welsh Government on proposed jobcentre closures in Wales.

**Damian Hinds:**

DWP has received a number of communications regarding the proposed limited number of jobcentre closures in Wales. This has included representation from the Welsh Government. Responses will be considered as we continue to develop plans for DWP's future estate.

**■ Occupational Pensions****Hywel Williams:** [\[68247\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what progress has been made by his Department on helping members of the plumbing and mechanical services industry pension scheme to manage their employment liabilities.

**Richard Harrington:**

The Green Paper “Security and Sustainability of defined benefit pension schemes” asks if new measures are needed to help schemes like the Plumbers manage pension liabilities. This is a highly complex area and the Green Paper seeks to start an informed debate and build consensus on what, if any, changes to legislation may be needed.

**Pensions****Mr Roger Godsiff:**[\[67606\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that pension providers simplify, expedite and ensure the security of transfer between providers.

**Richard Harrington:**

I strongly support the principle of more efficient transfers between pension schemes. This will give consumers greater choice and flexibility. Whilst many members experience pension transfers in fewer than 20 days, I am aware that transfer practice is not uniformly good – some schemes are making the process unnecessarily complex, and some transfers are taking longer than they should. I continue to monitor options to improve this.

The Pensions Regulator has issued guidance for schemes on standards, including how transfers can be processed promptly and accurately without exposing savers to a greater risk of pension scams – this includes the use of electronic platforms and standardised documentation wherever it is practical to do so. The Regulator is continuing to monitor performance, and aims to set out further guidance about its expectations later in the Spring.

In addition, my Department and the Financial Conduct Authority have given pension schemes and providers a statutory duty to report on the promptness and accuracy with which they carry out certain core financial transactions, including transfers.

**Personal Independence Payment****Mr Barry Sheerman:**[\[67632\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department takes to monitor the performance of Atos in conducting personal independence payment assessments.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The Department has a strong contract management and operational monitoring regime in place that enables us to robustly monitor the performance of contracted providers including the requirements for the quality of assessments which are assessed through independent audit.

There are a range of mechanisms in place to address performance falling below expected standards, including the application of financial remedies where appropriate.

**Mr Barry Sheerman:**

[\[67684\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of recording all personal independence payment assessments.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

On 13 March a small-scale pilot started to test whether there are any benefits to audio recording Personal Independence Payment (PIP) face-to-face assessments. Once the results of this pilot have been processed and evaluated, we will be able to make further decisions on whether DWP will consider recording further assessments in the future. We have always made clear that we are continuously looking to identify opportunities to improve the entire PIP claim process. This small-scale pilot is entirely voluntary and all recordings will be subject to claimant consent.

There is an existing process for those who wish to record their assessments which is publicised on the websites of both assessment providers and this pilot does not affect the existing arrangements. Claimants can continue to record their PIP assessment using their own equipment, provided it meets the requirements as set out by DWP. Once the results of this trial have been processed and evaluated, we will be able to make further decisions on whether DWP will consider further recording of assessments in the future.

#### ■ **Personal Independence Payment: Epilepsy**

**Mr Virendra Sharma:**

[\[67502\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps he has taken to improve the personal independence payment assessment process for people with epilepsy.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

New claims are now being cleared in under a third of the time they were in July 2014, with the average time taken to clear a new claim 12 weeks from registration to decision. We are committed to ensuring that all our processes work effectively across the spectrum of disabilities and health conditions, including mental health conditions, cognitive impairments, physical disabilities and conditions that fluctuate such as epilepsy. We recognise that for some individuals with epilepsy, attending a consultation at an unfamiliar location could create an element of anxiety. We have made it very clear that when attending a face-to-face consultation, claimants can bring someone with them in order to support them or help them manage any anxiety they may feel. In some cases we will also carry out consultations in claimants' homes.

#### ■ **Poverty: Sanitary Protection**

**Helen Goodman:**

[\[67492\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether the Government offers any provision of female sanitary products for women who consider themselves unable to afford such products.

**Damian Hinds:**

Benefits administered by DWP do not include a specific amount for sanitary products, just as they do not include a specific amount for any other item such as food or fuel charges. Instead, an “applicable amount” is set through legislation passed by Parliament for each benefit.

An applicable amount is a standard national figure which the Government believes reflects the basic living needs of an applicant and their family.

There is no objective way of deciding what an adequate level of benefit should be. Every person has different requirements, and the Government strongly believes that individuals should be free to spend their benefits in the way that best suits their individual circumstances.

**■ Social Security Benefits: Epilepsy****Mr Virendra Sharma:****[67503]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people with epilepsy have (a) had their personal independence payment award decreased or disallowed following disability living allowance reassessments in (i) each year before and (ii) the period since November 2016 and (b) successfully appealed a disability living allowance reassessment where their award was decreased or disallowed.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

Table 1 below gives statistics on the number of people with a primary disabling condition of epilepsy who have had their benefit payments reduced following reassessment for Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

**Table 1** – Decreased awards following reassessment for PIP for claimants with a primary disabling condition of Epilepsy.

	AWARD DECREASED	DISALLOWED POST REFERRAL TO THE ASSESSMENT PROVIDER
Jan-Dec 2014	180	410
Jan-Dec 2015	610	1600
Jan-Oct 2016	1550	4540

Notes: Data has been rounded to nearest 10.

The Department published statistics on Disability Living Allowance (DLA) reassessment claims to Personal Independence Payment (PIP) on 14 December 2016:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/personal-independence-payment-statistics>

These statistics are intended to be published annually and therefore data on reassessments occurring from November 2016 onwards isn't readily available and in order to provide a reply it would require us to link together several complex datasets and assure the quality of the results, this would incur disproportionate costs.

The Department does collect some information on appeal outcomes broken down by initial award outcome from the PIP administrative data but to provide a reply would require us to link together several complex datasets and assure the quality of the results, this would incur disproportionate cost.

Information on the number of PIP appeals is published by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). A link to the latest national level statistics published on 9 March 2017 is here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/tribunals-and-gender-recognition-certificate-statistics-quarterly-october-to-december-2016>

### ■ State Retirement Pensions: EEA Nationals

**Hywel Williams:**

[67514]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what discussions he has had with the Department for Exiting the European Union on the future of the state pensions top-up scheme for which European Economic Area citizens are currently eligible.

**Richard Harrington:**

The State Pension top up scheme is open for applications until 5 April 2017. Once the contribution has been made, the individual's State Pension payment is increased. UK State Pensions are payable worldwide but they are uprated abroad only where there is a legal requirement to do so. The reciprocal rights and entitlements that will apply following the UK's exit from the EU are subject to the wider negotiations on our future relationship with the EU. We have not yet begun these negotiations, so it is not possible to set out any positions in advance.

### ■ Universal Credit

**Mr Steve Reed:**

[68344]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many universal credit claimants to date have had their payments stopped automatically when their child turned five-years old in (a) England and (b) each local authority area.

**Damian Hinds:**

No Universal Credit payments have been automatically stopped where the claimant's child has reached 5 years old'

Claimants receiving Universal Credit with a child aged 5 continue to receive their payment. The responsible carer with a youngest child aged 5 will be expected to undertake work preparation, work search and be available for work. This will be tailored and agreed with the work coach, taking into consideration caring responsibilities.

## MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

### CABINET OFFICE

#### ■ Prime Minister: Freedom of Information

**Andrew Gwynne:**

**[68271]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what 10 Downing Street's average response rate was to individual Freedom of Information requests in each month from July 2016 to date.

**An error has been identified in the written answer given on 21 March 2017. The correct answer should have been:**

**Chris Skidmore:**

The Prime Minister's Office is an integral part of the Cabinet Office and is included in this reply.

FOI statistics are Official Statistics and are governed by the standards set out by the UK Statistics Authority (UKSA) in their Code of Practice. To publish information outside of the release timetable would be a breach of Protocol 2 of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

**The latest Freedom of Information statistics were published in December 2016 and are available at:**

**<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/freedom-of-information-statistics-july-to-september-2016--2>**

### TREASURY

#### ■ Treasury: Procurement

**Jon Trickett:**

**[65005]**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many civil servants of his Department oversee contracts which have been awarded to external providers.

**An error has been identified in the written answer given on 2 March 2017. The correct answer should have been:**

**Simon Kirby:**

The number of recorded contract managers is relative to the number of live contracts let across the Department. As at 27 February 2016, there are 896 recorded civil servants with responsibility for managing contracts.

## WRITTEN STATEMENTS

### TREASURY

#### ■ ECOFIN: 21 March 2017

**The Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Mr David Gauke):** [\[HCWS546\]](#)

A meeting of The Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN) will be held in Brussels on 21 March 2017. EU Finance Ministers will discuss the following items:

#### **Early morning session**

The Eurogroup President will brief Ministers on the outcomes of the 20 March meeting of the Eurogroup. Ministers will discuss the current economic situation. The European Commission will present its review of national provisions adopted in compliance with the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union (the Fiscal Compact) conducted in accordance with Article 8 of the Fiscal Compact, followed by an exchange of views by Ministers.

#### **Reduced VAT rate for electronically supplied publications (e-Publications)**

Ministers will discuss political issues in relation to the proposal for a Council Directive regarding rates of value added tax applied to books, newspapers and periodicals. The Proposal would give Member States the ability to apply a reduced or zero VAT rate to e-publications and physical publications.

#### **General Reverse Charge Mechanism**

Ministers will discuss the political issues in relation to the General Reverse Charge Mechanism (GRCM). This is a proposal for an amendment to Council Directive 2006/112/ on the common system of value added tax to allow the temporary application of a GRCM to supplies of goods and services above a certain threshold, with the aim of combatting VAT fraud.

#### **Current financial service legislative proposals**

The Council Presidency will provide an update on current legislative proposals in the field of financial services.

#### **European Semester 2017:**

##### **a) 2017 Country Reports and In-Depth Reviews**

##### **b) Implementation of Country-Specific Recommendations (CSRs)**

Following a presentation by the Commission, Ministers will discuss the Country Reports published by the Commission on 22 February, including the assessment of CSR implementation and, where relevant, the framework of the Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure.

**Follow-up to the G20 Meeting of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors on 17-18 March 2017 in Baden-Baden**



The Presidency and the Commission will inform Ministers on the outcomes of the G20 meeting.

**Any other business**

**a) European Defence Fund**

The Commission will inform Ministers about the Commission's European Defence Action Plan, focusing in particular on the launch of a European Defence Fund. This item was delayed from February ECOFIN.

**b) Status of implementation of financial services legislation**

The Commission will inform Ministers on the status of implementation of financial services legislation.

## COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### ■ ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Sajid Javid):**  
[\[HCWS548\]](#)

In February 2015, the Government appointed five Commissioners to exercise all executive functions and some non-executive functions at Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council. It followed critical reports by Baroness Alexis Jay and Dame Louise Casey, which found significant failings at the Council contributing to child sexual exploitation in Rotherham.

On 9 February 2017, I announced my intention, after careful consideration of the recommendation of the Commissioner team, to return six service areas to Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council – adult social care and the Council's partnership with the NHS, external partnerships, economic growth, town centre, grounds maintenance and audit. On the same day, representations were invited from the Authority regarding this intention. I have now considered the representations, including from the Leader and the Chief Executive, and I am satisfied that the Council is now able to exercise functions relating to these service areas in compliance with the best value duty, and that the people of Rotherham can have confidence that this will be the case.

The Leader and the Chief Executive also made representations for the return of the power to appoint Council representatives to external bodies. The return of this power was also recommended by the Lead Commissioner in his letter of 10 February. I am also satisfied that the Council is able to exercise this function in accordance with the best value duty.

Therefore, today I am exercising my powers under section 15 of the Local Government Act 1999 to return seven functions to the Council. The Education Secretary and I have issued further Directions amending the Directions issued on 13 December 2016 to do so. Handing back these powers increases democratic control and is a significant milestone for the Council, which has demonstrated steady progress in its improvement journey.

With effect from 21 March, Councillors will be responsible for decision making in these seven areas. The Commissioners will continue to provide oversight on these areas as well as the set of functions returned last year and ensure that they are exercised in accordance with the statutory best value duty. Commissioners also continue to retain powers in additional service areas including children's services (including all services relating to child sexual exploitation) as well as the appointment of statutory officers.

Sir Derek Myers, the lead Commissioner, will also be stepping down at the end of this month having overseen the return of three quarters of services areas to the Council over a two year period. I am grateful for the leadership he has shown in taking a failing authority in hand, and steering it through a rapid and wide-ranging improvement journey. As there is now a reduced role for Commissioners, I will not be appointing any additional Commissioners. Commissioner Ney will become Rotherham's Lead Commissioner with effect from 1 April 2017.

## HEALTH

### ■ The Government's mandate to NHS England for 2017-18

**Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (David Mowat):** [\[HCWS547\]](#)

I have laid before Parliament the Government's mandate to NHS England for 2017-18, in accordance with the Health and Social Care Act 2012. This outlines our objectives for NHS England and sets direction for the NHS as a whole. It also confirms NHS England's budget for the coming year, including a 1.4% real terms increase.

NHS England is responsible for arranging the provision of health services in England. Building on the current multi-year mandate, which came into effect on 1 April 2016 and set long term objectives and goals to 2020, the renewed mandate focuses on the same seven high-level objectives:

- to improve local and national health outcomes, and reduce health inequalities, through better commissioning;
- to help create the safest, highest quality health and care service;
- to balance the NHS budget and improve efficiency and productivity;
- to lead a step change in the NHS in preventing ill health and supporting people to live healthier lives;
- to improve and maintain performance against core standards;
- to improve out-of-hospital care; and
- to support research, innovation and growth.

The mandate sets out the key annual deliverables in each area to achieve the 2020 goals.

The Government continues to support the NHS's own Five Year Forward View blueprint for transforming services to respond to the challenges of the future. The Government has

committed to a £10 billion increase, over and above inflation, in NHS funding by 2020-21. In parallel, it is vital that the NHS delivers the productivity and efficiency gains set out in the Five Year Forward View to live within its means and that NHS England ensures financial balance in the NHS, alongside NHS Improvement.

Core to the mandate is delivery of the NHS's A&E turnaround plan to return the majority of Trusts to the 95% standard by the end of the financial year. This will require close working with Local Authorities to reduce delayed discharges from hospital, following the Government's injection of additional funding for social care in the Spring Budget 2017; rolling out new models for urgent and emergency care to ensure patients receive care in the safest and most appropriate setting; and streamlining governance and oversight of A&E across NHS England and NHS Improvement.

The Government is investing more in mental health than ever before to support delivery of the ambitious goal, set out in the mandate, of 1 million more people with mental health conditions to access services by 2020. This includes embedding the first ever access and waiting times standards for talking therapies, eating disorders and early intervention in psychosis; and developing and implementing a five year improvement plan for crisis and acute care.

The Five Year Forward View set an ambitious vision for transforming out of hospital care for patients, including improving access to general practice; greater integration of primary, community and social care to provide personalised care for patients; rolling out new models of care across the population; and achieving early diagnosis, service and improved outcomes for cancer patients.

In the coming weeks, NHS England will set out its plan for delivering the Five Year Forward View, which will summarise progress to date and set out a plan for future delivery, including the next stage of development for Sustainability and Transformation Plan footprints and progress towards establishing Accountable Care Organisations. 2017-18 should be the year in which we see concrete progress on these local Sustainability and Transformation Plans, with NHS England supporting local leaders to drive improvement in outcomes. As part of this effort, the Government has already made £325m of capital funding available for the best STPs over the next three years. In the autumn a further round of local proposals will be considered.

We are also laying before Parliament today a revised mandate for 2016-17 to take account of changes to NHS England's budget, including for primary care transformation funding and the move to market rents by NHS Property Services.

Copies of the 2017-18 mandate and revised 2016-17 mandate are attached.

**Attachments:**

1. NHS Mandate 2016-17 (Revised) [NHSE\_Mandate\_2016-17.pdf]
2. NHS Mandate 2017-18 [NHS Mandate 2017-18 A.PDF]

**TRANSPORT****■ Additional airline security measures on some routes travelling to the UK****Secretary of State for Transport (Chris Grayling):****[[HCWS549](#)]**

Today the government announced there will be changes to aviation security measures for selected inbound flights to the United Kingdom. The House will be aware that the United States Government made a similar announcement earlier today regarding flights to the United States and we have been in close contact with them to fully understand their position.

In conjunction with our international partners and the aviation industry, the UK government keeps aviation security under constant review. The UK has some of the most robust aviation security measures in the world and at all times the safety and security of the public is our primary concern. We will not hesitate to put in place measures we believe are necessary, effective and proportionate.

Under the new arrangements, phones, laptops and tablets larger than; Length: 16.0cm, Width: 9.3cm, Depth: 1.5cm will not be allowed in the cabin on selected flights to the UK from the countries affected. Most smart phones fall within these limits and will continue to be allowed on board. However, devices larger than these dimensions may not be carried in the cabin. This is in addition to other existing security arrangements. This will apply to inbound flights to the UK from the following locations: Turkey, Lebanon, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Tunisia.

Passengers are therefore advised to check online with their airline for further details.

We understand the frustration that these measures may cause and we are working with the aviation industry to minimise any impact. Our top priority will always be to maintain the safety of British nationals. These new measures apply to flights into the UK and we are not currently advising against flying to and from those countries. Those with imminent travel plans should contact their airline for further information. More information can be found on the Department for Transport website and the travelling public should consult the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's travel advice pages on GOV.UK.

I know the House will recognise that we face a constantly evolving threat from terrorism and must respond accordingly to ensure the protection of the public against those who would do us harm. The update we are making to our security measures is an important part of that process.

We remain open for business. People should continue to fly and comply with security procedures.