



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 31 January 2018 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:31 P.M., 31 January 2018). 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: Beverage Containers

Catherine West:

[\[122859\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what estimate has been made of the number of hot drink cups that are (a) used each year and (b) sent for recycling by his Department.

Robert Buckland:

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) does not keep records of the use or recycling of hot drinks cups. However, during 2016/17, the CPS recycled or reused 94% of its total waste.

The Serious Fraud Office (SFO) provides recyclable paper cups for the use of visitors and interviewees only. Approximately 2,000 of these are purchased each year. Staff are encouraged to recycle all paper waste, but records are not maintained on the number of cups that are actually recycled.

The Government Legal Department (GLD) currently makes no estimation of the number of cups used annually; however, none of the GLD's waste goes to landfill.

The hot drink cups provided by the Attorney General's Office (AGO) and HMCPIS for use by staff and visitors are ceramic and therefore reused rather than recycled.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Biofuels

Wera Hobhouse:

[\[124693\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to Ofgem's Biomass Sustainability dataset 2015-2016, published on 22 March 2017, what assessment he has made of the effect of UK biomass production on deforestation.

Claire Perry:

Reporting under Ofgem's Biomass Sustainability dataset 2015-2016, published on 22 March 2017, is a requirement on biomass generators to demonstrate compliance with UK biomass sustainability standards. The Department have not made an assessment of the effect of UK biomass production on deforestation.

The "Biomass Feedstock Availability Report", also published in 2017, shows that the large majority of woody biomass fuels in the UK are sourced from agricultural and forestry residues, arboricultural arisings, waste woods and sawmill products.

■ Business: Digital Technology

Stephen Kerr:

[\[124545\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps the Government is taking to improve the rate of adoption of digital technology in everyday business practice; and if he will make a statement.

Andrew Griffiths:

We want the UK to be the best place to start and grow a digital business. As announced in the government's Industrial Strategy, the new Business Basics Programme will trial innovative approaches to drive up the adoption of tried and tested technologies and business practices that can improve businesses' productivity. The programme will test and encourage SMEs to adopt technologies and practices such as new accountancy software or performance management systems.

In addition, more than four million free digital skills training opportunities will be created as part of a Digital Strategy to make Britain the best place in the world to start and grow a digital business and ensure our digital economy works for everyone.

In addition, the Digital Skills Partnership (DSP) will see Government, business, charities and voluntary organisations coming together to make sure people have the right skills for the jobs in their area and are aware of all the digital training opportunities on offer.

The DSP will also build upon the 4 million pledges of free digital skills training opportunities that our corporate partners pledged as part of the Digital Strategy, published in March 2017. More than 2 million of these pledges have already been delivered; DCMS will continue to work with DSP members to develop new opportunities, direct training to areas where need has been identified, and to encourage the sharing and scaling up of best practice in digital skills provision.

The strategy includes new commitments, including a plan by Lloyds Banking Group to give face-to-face digital skills training to 2.5 million individuals, charities and small and medium businesses by 2020.

■ Carillion: Insolvency

Jared O'Mara:

[\[125035\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the effect of the liquidation of Carillion on the viability of small businesses in (a) Yorkshire (b) Sheffield and (c) Sheffield Hallam constituency.

Andrew Griffiths:

We have established a taskforce to support businesses affected by the liquidation of Carillion. The taskforce includes representatives from leading business bodies, the construction sector, unions, banks and government to advise how to mitigate impacts on the supply chain and employees. My rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State and I have held four meetings with them so far and we have already made good progress

in exchange of information and collaborations and to identify key actions that need to be taken.

The Official Receiver, who is independent of Government, is currently gathering information on this with the support of PwC special managers.

■ Conditions of Employment: Telephone Services

Tulip Siddiq:

[124741]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Answer of 22 December 2015 to Question 19825, how many complaints were received by the Pay and Work Rights Helpline regarding employment issues in each of the last five years; and how many of those complaints were from (a) apprentices, (b) interns and (c) self-employed people in that same period.

Andrew Griffiths:

Information on all Acas helpline calls and those that relate to Pay and Works Rights Helpline (PWRH) issues specifically are available below. Information on self-employed status is not collected by Acas.

Table 1: Enquiries made to the Acas helpline by topic and caller type, 2015/16 to 2016/17

Caller Type	2015/16		2016/17	
	All topics	PWRH topics	All topics	PWRH topics
Apprentices	2,540	1,200	2,450	1,090
Interns	130	60	90	40

Source: Acas

Notes

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest ten.
2. 'All topics' covers total calls to the Acas helpline.
3. 'PWRH' covers those who discussed one (or more) topics under the PWRH umbrella which includes: 'Non-payment/deduction of wages', 'NMW/NLW', 'Non-payment of NMW/NLW', 'Agency Worker Regulations', 'Contracts/Terms including non-receipt', 'Entertainment/Model Agencies', 'Gangmasters'.
4. PWRH figures are a subset of 'all topics'.
5. In 2015/16 and 2016/17, 95% of all calls received were captured by the Acas Data Capture System.

The answer given to the hon. Member on 22 December 2015, by the then Minister of State for Skills to Question 19825, reported Pay and Works Right Helpline (PWRH)

data between 2009-10 and 2014-15. The PWRH was replaced by the Acas helpline in April 2015. Acas data is not directly comparable to data collected under the PWRH, as Acas handle a much wider range of enquiries on employment matters. It is not possible to specifically identify the number of calls received by Acas that would have been handled by the previous PWRH.

■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Presidents Club

Jess Phillips: [\[124638\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether any Ministers from his Department attended the Presidents Club Charity Dinner run by the Meller Educational Trust in an official capacity.

Richard Harrington:

There were no Ministers from the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy present at this event.

■ Fuel Poverty: Rural Areas

Dr David Drew: [\[125021\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent steps he has taken to reduce fuel poverty in rural areas.

Dr David Drew: [\[125023\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will take steps to ensure that a greater proportion of ECO funding is made available to rural areas.

Claire Perry:

The current Energy Company Obligation (ECO), which runs until September 2017, has a requirement that suppliers deliver 15% of the Carbon Emissions Reduction Obligation (CERO – a sub-obligation within ECO) to rural areas.

The Warm Home Discount provides a rebate of £140 off the bills of over 2 million low income and vulnerable customers each winter. Rebates are typically deducted from electricity bills as to not disadvantage households who do not have a mains gas supply.

The Department will shortly consult on the ECO scheme that will run from October 2018 until March 2022. We intend to propose focusing the scheme on low income and vulnerable households and will also make proposals with regard to rural delivery.

■ Industry

Chi Onwurah: [\[125073\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 21 December 2017 to Question 120176, how the Department measures and defines a global leadership position.

Richard Harrington:

There is no single measure through which a 'global leadership' position will be determined. To measure the success of the Industrial Strategy, the White Paper announced the creation of the Industrial Strategy Council. This will be formed by a group of independent experts that will develop a series of success measures to help determine the success of the delivery of the strategy against our stated goals.

■ **Plastics: Biodegradability and Compost**

Mrs Anne Main:[\[124542\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much has been spent from the public purse on research and development in the field of biodegradable and compostable plastics in each of the last 15 years.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy sets the overall budgets of the independent Research Councils and Innovate UK, which then allocate funds for individual grants and research organisations in line with the Haldane Principle.

The Research Councils and Innovate UK have spent the following amounts on research and development in the field of biodegradable and compostable plastics in each of the last 15 years. Data older than 10 years may be less reliable. Further information on research and development projects can be found on the RCUK Gateway to Research, see: <http://gtr.rcuk.ac.uk>.

	BIOTECHNOLOGY AND BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES RESEARCH COUNCIL (BBSRC)	ENGINEERING AND PHYSICAL SCIENCES RESEARCH COUNCIL (EPSRC)	INNOVATE UK	TOTAL
2016/17	£210,000	£4,644,293	£104,344	£4,958,637
2015/16	£276,000	£3,663,120	£0	£3,939,120
2014/15	£262,000	£3,352,169	£5,000	£3,619,169
2013/14	£219,000	£2,744,545	£792,827	£3,756,372
2012/13	£110,000	£1,444,270	£0	£1,554,270
2011/12	£0	£1,508,745	£248,045	£1,756,790
2010/11	£233,000	£1,481,377	£0	£1,714,377
2009/10	£394,000	£1,848,298	£0	£2,242,298
2008/9	£514,000	£2,390,929	£0	£2,904,929
2007/8	£463,000	£1,445,324	£0	£1,908,324

	BIOTECHNOLOGY AND BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES RESEARCH COUNCIL (BBSRC)	ENGINEERING AND PHYSICAL SCIENCES RESEARCH COUNCIL (EPSRC)	INNOVATE UK	TOTAL
2006/7	£114,000	£1,011,496	£0	£1,125,496
2005/6	£34,000	£717,932	£0	£715,932
2004/5	£8,000	£476,455	£0	£484,455
2003/4	£67,000	£227,859	£0	£294,859
2002/3	£90,000	£259,863	£0	£349,863
Total	£2,994,000	£27,216,675	£1,150,216	£31,360,891

In the last 15 years, DEFRA has spent approximately £277,000 on a number of research projects in the field of biodegradable and compostable plastics.

■ Research: Expenditure

Norman Lamb:

[\[125201\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much money has been spent in the UK on (a) basic research (b) applied research and (c) experimental development as defined in the Frascati Manual in each of the last 10 years.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) provides gross expenditure on R&D split by basic research, applied research and experimental research for OECD countries, including the UK based on ONS data. The latest data covers the period 2007 and 2014. It shows that the split of funding has been stable over time, at around 17% on basic research, 45% on applied research and 38% on experimental development. Further information can be found at http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=RD_ACTIVITY.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Cohabitation: Children

Tim Loughton:

[\[124918\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate the Government has made of the number of cohabiting opposite-sex couples (a) with and (b) without children, and what the number of children in such arrangements is.

Chloe Smith:

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

Attachments:

1. UKSA Response [PQ124918.pdf]

■ Elections: Disclosure of Information**Cat Smith:**[\[124427\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Government plans to bring forward legislative proposals to require (a) candidates and (b) election agents to publish their home address.

Chloe Smith:

The Government recognises the concerns surrounding the inclusion of home addresses of candidates and election agents on electoral documents which are published. The Government also recognises that the existing requirements in relation to the publication or otherwise of candidates' home addresses vary across different polls. The Government notes the relevant recommendation made by Committee on Standards in Public Life in their report 'Intimidation of Public Life', and will respond in due course.

■ Elections: Finance**Cat Smith:**[\[124438\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 8 January 2018 to Question 121014, on returning officers: pay, what the review of funding of elections will cover; what progress has been made on that review; which bodies are involved in that review; whether the Government plans to conduct a consultation as part of that review; and when the Government plans to complete that review.

Chloe Smith:

The scope of the second phase of the funding review is to consider the cost of national elections and identify ways to improve value for money, including by promoting good practice and consistency of the policies and processes that govern Returning Officers' expenditure. The review will involve a wide range of stakeholders including returning officers, electoral services managers, the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE), the Association of Electoral Administrators (AEA), the Electoral Commission, other government departments, the devolved administrations, the National Audit Office and various suppliers. Stakeholders will be able to provide their input throughout the review process.

■ Electoral Register**Cat Smith:**[\[124594\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Government supports the continued existence of the edited electoral register.

Chloe Smith:

The Government considered the future of the edited (or open) register in 2013 and concluded that it should be retained. The Government concluded that there are wide societal and economic benefits to the edited register. These include allowing businesses to check the identity and address details of people who wish to purchase their goods or services. The Government saw no convincing evidence that the sale of the edited register - from which anyone can quickly and easily opt out - has a negative impact on registration rates.

Cat Smith:[\[124835\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what recent assessment the Government has made of the potential merits of removing the provision of allowing the sale of the edited electoral register.

Chloe Smith:

The Government considered the future of the edited (or open) register in 2013 and concluded that it should be retained. The Government concluded that there are wide societal and economic benefits to the edited register. These include allowing businesses to check the identity and address details of people who wish to purchase their goods or services. The Government saw no convincing evidence that the sale of the edited register - from which anyone can quickly and easily opt out - has a negative impact on registration rates.

Cat Smith:[\[124837\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what proportion of registered voters are listed on the edited register.

Chloe Smith:

The Cabinet Office does not hold this information but it is accessible from the Office for National Statistics' website (www.ons.gov.uk)

■ Polling Stations**Cat Smith:**[\[124449\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many polling stations were open during the 2017 General Election.

Chloe Smith:

The Electoral Commission has published electoral data showing that the number of polling stations in use at the 2017 UK Parliamentary General Election was 40,570.

■ Returning Officers: Pay**Cat Smith:**[\[124441\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what recent assessment the Government has made of the potential merits of ending the right to personal fees for returning officers.

Chloe Smith:

The use of personal fees for Returning Officers will be considered as part of the second phase of the review of elections funding.

TREASURY■ **Apprentices: Taxation****Anneliese Dodds:**[\[124486\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much revenue has been raised for the public purse from the apprenticeship levy paid by multi-academy trusts.

Mel Stride:

The most recent UK wide forecasts of Apprenticeship Levy paid by different sectors is published by the Department for Education, and can be found online at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/545145/Apprenticeships_-_expected_levy_and_total_spend_-_Aug_2016.pdf.

It is not possible to produce a breakdown splitting out Multi Academy Trusts, from HMRC's administrative data.

■ **Children: Day Care****Tracy Brabin:**[\[125132\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many children who were eligible for the 30 funded hours of childcare in the term commencing 1 September 2017 are no longer eligible in the current term, commencing 1 January 2018, because their parents (a) now exceed the earnings limit and (b) now earn below the minimum amount.

Elizabeth Truss:

The information requested is not readily available.

Alex Sobel:[\[125179\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the number of people that did not receive information on the 30 hours free childcare from the Childcare Service website before the reconfirmation deadline date.

Elizabeth Truss:

Parents with an online childcare account are required to reconfirm their eligibility for 30 hours free childcare or Tax-Free Childcare every three months.

All parents who needed to reconfirm for the spring term were sent reminders by the childcare service.

■ Energy: VAT**Clive Lewis:**[\[125204\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what his policy is on the rate of VAT applied to energy saving materials; and what assessment he has made of the effect of the updated EU VAT Action Plan on energy saving materials in the UK.

Mel Stride:

HM Treasury is discussing the subject of VAT and Energy Saving materials with the European Commission following the Court of Justice of the European Union's judgment in 2015.

We welcome the publication of the European Commission's recent Proposal on VAT rates. It is right that Member States have flexibility in applying VAT on different products. The proposal will need to be discussed and unanimously agreed by the Member States.

■ European Investment Bank: North East**Chi Onwurah:**[\[124271\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant the Answer of 6 November 2017 to Question 110943 on European Investment Bank: North East, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the extra due diligence on the timetable for the allocation of funds in the North East.

Robert Jenrick:

HM Treasury has been working closely with both the EIB and the North-East Fund with the aim of seeing the North-East Fund's application progressed as quickly as possible.

Significant, positive progress was made in December 2017 with the EIB Management Committee giving its approval to the application. We are now confident that the North-East Fund's application can move forward quickly. However, the final decision on signature is a commercial decision for the North-East Fund, subject to the standard contract negotiations between themselves and the EIB.

■ Financial Services: Technology**Adam Afriyie:**[\[124821\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what role financial technology plays in promoting financial inclusion; and if he will make a statement.

John Glen:

Financial technology plays an important role in promoting financial inclusion and capability. Banks and fintech firms use new technology to make it easy for consumers to save and invest money, receive better financial advice, and access cheaper, more appropriate loans and overdrafts.

■ Life Sciences: Capital Investment**Chi Onwurah:** [\[124272\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 11 December 2017 to Question 118242, on Life Sciences: Capital Investment, what estimate he has made of the money that will be accrued to the public purse from the investment in the Life Sciences Sector deal.

Robert Jenrick:

The Government and the life sciences sector have agreed a transformative Sector Deal. This draws in substantial investment into the sector from across the world, ensuring that the next wave of breakthrough treatments, innovative medical research and technologies, and highly skilled jobs are created in Britain. The deal announced several specific significant investments in the UK, including MSD opening a new discovery research facility in London, which will support 950 jobs including 150 new high-skilled and high-value research roles. The Sector Deal is expected to generate significant ongoing returns, through increasing life sciences investment in the UK in response to a range of measures to improve the UK environment for the life sciences industry.

■ Minimum Wage: Non-payment**Caroline Lucas:** [\[124289\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 19 January 2018 to Question 122436, on Minimum Wage, how many of the 532 civil actions initiated since 2010 resulted in the recovery of unpaid minimum wage arrears.

Mel Stride:

The Government is clear that everyone who is entitled to the National Minimum and National Living Wage (NMW) should receive it. Anyone who feels they have been underpaid NMW should contact the Acas helpline on 0300 123 1100. HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) review all complaints that are referred to them.

HMRC is unable to provide figures on the civil actions where arrears were recovered, as it does not hold this data in a readily available format.

DEFENCE**■ Carillion****Andrew Gwynne:** [\[124132\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when the most recent assessment took place of Carillion's ability to fulfil its contractual obligations in the defence sector.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 22 January 2018 to Question 123319 to the hon. Member for North Durham, Mr Kevan Jones.

Attachments:

1. Carillion [Hansard Extract 22 January 2018 HOC 123319.docx]

■ Defence: Modernisation**Mr Kevan Jones:**[\[125085\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to his Oral Statement of 25 January 2018, on his Department's Modernising Defence Programme, whether the value of identified savings his Department requires is to be realised as part of current budget assumptions.

Mr Kevan Jones:[\[125092\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to his Oral Statement of 25 January 2018, on his Department's Modernising Defence Programme, whether that programme will be fiscally neutral.

Gavin Williamson:

The Modernising Defence Programme will deliver the right military capability for today's, and future threats, while making sure that Defence is sustainable and affordable.

I have been speaking regularly to the Chancellor since arriving at the Ministry of Defence and will continue to do so as the programme progresses.

Mr Kevan Jones:[\[125087\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to his Oral Statement of 25 January 2018, on his Department's Modernising Defence Programme, if he will provide further information on the work to be undertaken under the strands outlined in that programme.

Gavin Williamson:

The Programme will consist of four strands of work:

- Looking at the Department's Operating Model - delivering a stronger Head Office which has the right leadership.
- Making sure Defence is an efficient Department - so we can assure everyone that every penny goes to the right things, reducing duplication and adopting new approaches to deliver a more modern organisation.
- Recognising the contribution defence industry makes to our nation's economic prosperity - We need to get the most out of our defence industry and promote our commercial interests at home and abroad as we create a global Britain. We will assess how the Ministry of Defence can improve on strategic supplier management and improve its commercial capability.

- And, most importantly, the final strand - making sure our Armed Forces have the right capabilities to tackle the increasing threats we face on the global stage. This will look at the threat picture, and that our Armed Forces have the right equipment, training and workforce and force generation on a sustainable footing.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[125095\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to his Oral Statement of 25 January 2018, on his Department's Modernising Defence Programme, if he will rule out reductions to the army's (a) armoured infantry brigades and (b) army aviation brigades.

Mr Kevan Jones: [\[125106\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to his Oral Statement of 25 January 2018, on his Department's Modernising Defence Programme, whether a reduction in personnel and resources in the Educational and Training Services Branch of the Army's Adjutant General's Corps will form part of that programme.

Gavin Williamson:

The Modernising Defence Programme will deliver the right military capability for today's, and future threats, while making sure that Defence is sustainable and affordable.

We aim to engage widely throughout the process, and to listen to a range of expert views.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ **Broadband**

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[125163\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 22 January 2018 to Question 123265 on Broadband; what estimate his Department has made of the level of access to superfast broadband by (a) households and (b) businesses in the UK premises as at 31 December 2017.

Margot James:

The Department does not distinguish between home and business premises. On 31 December 2017, 95% of premises in the UK had access to superfast broadband.

■ **Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Chief Scientific Advisers**

Norman Lamb: [\[124407\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how many meetings (a) he and (b) his predecessor held with his Department's Chief Scientific Adviser between October 2017 and December 2017.

Tracey Crouch:

There were no meetings between the Chief Scientific Adviser and the Secretary of State between October 2017 and December 2017.

The department is currently piloting the Chief Scientific Adviser (CSA) role. An interim CSA took up the post in October 2017 with a first objective of scoping the role for the department and to provide immediate scientific/technical support to officials ahead of an open recruitment in April.

■ **Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Drinking Water**

Tim Farron: [\[124510\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how much money his Department has spent on bottled water in each year since 2010.

Tracey Crouch:

The information requested is not held centrally, and to obtain it would incur a disproportionate cost.

■ **Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Presidents Club**

Jess Phillips: [\[124633\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether any Ministers from his department attended the Presidents Club Charity Dinner run by the Meller Educational Trust in an official capacity.

Tracey Crouch:

No DCMS Minister attended in any capacity.

■ **Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Social Mobility**

Chris Ruane: [\[120453\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps her Department has taken to improve social mobility in each of the last seven years.

Tracey Crouch:

Our internal efforts on improving social mobility include the appointment of a senior social mobility champion, participation in the Social Mobility Foundation Employer Index and programmes such as the Summer Diversity Internship Programme. We are also working closely with the Cabinet Office on improving social mobility through the Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Strategy which was launched in October 2017.

DCMS has also made significant investments into programmes that help young people develop skills outside school, and participate in their communities. This includes £80 million, invested in partnership with the Big Lottery Fund, into the Youth Investment and #iwill Funds; continuing to back the growth of the National Citizen Service; and securing £90 million of dormant accounts money to support disadvantaged and disengaged young people into employment.

■ Gambling

Meg Hillier:

[\[124651\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department is taking in response to the finding by the Gambling Commission that 2 million people in the UK are addicted to gambling.

Tracey Crouch:

A report from NatCen, published by the Gambling Commission in August 2017, estimated the number of adult problem gamblers in Great Britain as approximately 430,000, 0.8% of the population. The surveys that underpinned this also identified people who are at risk of problems related to their gambling behaviour but who are not classified as problem gamblers. The number of moderate-risk gamblers was 555,000, and the number of low-risk gamblers was approximately 1,430,000. Both headline rates of problem gambling and at-risk rates have been relatively stable for many years.

In October the government published a consultation on Gaming Machines and Social Responsibility across the industry. This closed on 23 January, and we will consider all responses and publish our response and next steps in due course.

■ Gambling: Advertising

Dr David Drew:

[\[124974\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether he has had discussions with both terrestrial and satellite television companies on the number of betting adverts shown during major sporting events; and if he will make a statement.

Tracey Crouch:

Ministers and officials have regular meetings and discussions with broadcasters on a range of issues. Details of Ministerial meetings are published quarterly on gov.uk

The Gaming Machines and Social Responsibility consultation, published on 31st October, looked at issues around advertising and outlined a package of measures to further strengthen protections, including a major responsible gambling advertising campaign, funded by broadcasters and industry. In addition, the Committees of Advertising Practice intend to publish new guidance to protect those at risk of problem gambling as well as children and young people, and the Gambling Commission are consulting on increasing sanctions available where operators breach the codes.

The consultation closed on 23 January and the Department will consider all responses and publish its response and next steps in due course.

Technology: Greater Manchester**Mr Ivan Lewis:**[\[124379\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions he has had with the Mayor of Greater Manchester on promoting Greater Manchester's technology sector.

Margot James:

The Secretary of State, in his previous role as Minister for Digital, wrote to Mayor Andy Burnham on 22nd December 2017, responding to the Mayor's request for more information on the government's investment of £21m in Tech Nation. This funding involves setting up 10 new regional hubs, including in Manchester (which will serve as the base for the North West) to support and promote the needs of the local tech communities. The Secretary of State clarified that Tech nation will work with local partners to connect with and build on the networks and ecosystems that already exist. The Mayor has been introduced to senior Tech Nation staff who are assessing the unique needs of each region.

This letter also offered further discussion with DCMS on how government policy can help to deliver the Greater Manchester Digital Strategy. I also committed to meeting Mr Burnham following our appearance on Question Time on 18th January 2018.

EDUCATION**Academies: Finance****Tulip Siddiq:**[\[124735\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Answer of 8 July 2015 to Question 4879, on academies, how many academies whose funding arrangements were dependent on Qualified Teacher Status requested to amend their funding agreement in (a) 2016 and (b) 2017 and; how many of those requests were rejected.

Nadhim Zahawi:

In 2016 and 2017 the Education and Skills Funding Agency received two specific requests from schools with academy status to amend their funding agreement to enable them to employ teachers without qualified teacher status. One request was received in 2016 and the other in 2017. Both these applications were accepted.

Apprentices: Care Leavers**Steve McCabe:**[\[124430\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 13 November 2017 to Question 111903, on Apprentices: Care Leavers, whether he has plans to collect identifying information for learners who are in care.

Steve McCabe:

[124431]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 13 November 2017 to Question 111900, on Apprentices, if he will collect information on apprentices who have been in care via the National Apprenticeship Service.

Anne Milton:

The Individualised Learner Record (ILR) contains data on apprenticeship learners but does not collect information to identify learners who are in care or have been in care. There are no formal requests or plans to record this information in the ILR in future. The next requirement gathering phase starts in June, where the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) can assess and accept requests for change for the 2019/20 ILR.

This does not affect apprentice eligibility for additional funding because they are a 19-24 year old care leaver. Their training provider gathers this information and makes a funding claim at the discretion of the apprentice.

Information on apprenticeship starts and achievements can be found in the further education and skills statistical first release:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education-and-skills-statistical-first-release-sfr>.

■ Apprentices: Liverpool

Mrs Louise Ellman:

[125180]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to ensure the continuation of apprenticeships in Liverpool that have been affected by the liquidation of Carillion; and will he make a statement.

Anne Milton:

The government's priority is to minimise disruption to the apprentices that have been affected by the liquidation of Carillion, and to find them new employers.

The Construction Industry Training Board has been identified as the best placed alternative training provider. They are on the register of approved apprenticeship training providers, and deliver good quality provision, with a proven track record of delivering the specific frameworks and standards that current Carillion apprentices are studying.

CITB centres are geographically situated between what is anticipated to be a reasonable travel time for the apprentices – and critically, they have the capacity and capability to take on displaced apprentices and study programme learners.

A dedicated team of advisers and assessors in the CITB are working with their established network of college partners to support all affected apprentices and study programme learners to complete their programmes. They are also using their existing employer contacts in the sector to find the apprentices alternative employers to complete their apprenticeships with. CITB has got in touch with 40,000 external contacts.

The Education and Skills Funding Agency has written to all affected apprentices, and the CITB have contacted over 1100. Over 550 apprentices have already been matched to an employer by CITB.

CITB have established a dedicated helpline for apprentices seeking support - carillion.apprenticeshipsupport@citb.co.uk or 0344 994 4010. CITB have also delivered a series of workshops for learners, which provided advice on next steps and 1 to 1 support as required.

CITB have written to all MPs outlining their support offer, including contact information which can then be shared with affected individuals within constituencies.

■ Carillion

Stephanie Peacock: [\[124214\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what information his Department holds on schools in the Barnsley local authority area which hold contracts with Carillion.

Nick Gibb:

Local authorities and academy trusts are responsible for their own contracts. Information available to the Department indicates that the number of schools covered by services contracts with Carillion across England is relatively low, including a small number of schools in the Barnsley local authority area. The Department is working closely with both with the Official Receiver and the local authority to confirm the position.

The Department has worked with local authorities and academy trusts to make sure they have robust contingency plans in place and that these have been actioned, where required. The Department is continuing to monitor developments and provide support where it is needed to help minimise any disruption.

■ Children in Care

Ann Coffey: [\[124531\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Children looked after in England including adoption: 2016 to 2017 statistics published in September 2017, what assessment he has made of the reasons for the number of looked-after children who were removed from their placement at the request of their carer due to their behaviour rose from 940 to 1,370 between March 2016 and March 2017.

Ann Coffey: [\[124544\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the Children looked after in England including adoption: 2016 to 2017 statistics published in September 2017, what assessment he has made of reasons for the increase in the number of looked after children placed in care homes, secure units and hostels who were removed from their placement at the request of the child between March 2016 to March 2017.

Nadhim Zahawi:

Information on the reasons looked after children were removed from their placements is published as experimental statistics in the statistical first release '*Children looked after in England including adoption*'. This information was collected for the first time in 2016 and so comparisons between years should be treated with caution.

The information shows that in 2016, 940 placements in secure units, children's homes and semi-independent living accommodation were identified as changing because the carer requested the change due to the child's behaviour. In 2017, this figure was 1,370 but in the same year we saw a drop in placements of that type which ended due to "other" reasons. Feedback from local authorities has identified improved recording of the reasons for placement changes so that more placements are coded under their correct reason rather than "other". The evidence does not necessarily point to a real increase in the number of placements ending either at the request of the carer due to the child's behaviour or at the request of the child.

Children's Centres**Tulip Siddiq:****[124482]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when his Department plans to launch the consultation on children's centres which was first announced in 2015.

Nadhim Zahawi:

I refer the hon. Member to the answers given by my hon. Friend the former Minister of State for Children and Families (Robert Goodwill) on 12 December 2017 to question 118316 available at: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-questions-answers/?page=1&max=20&questiontype=AllQuestions&house=commons%2clouds&uin=118316> and on 19 December 2017 to question 118701 available at: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-questions-answers/?page=1&max=20&questiontype=AllQuestions&house=commons%2clouds&uin=118701>.

Department for Education: Chief Scientific Advisers**Norman Lamb:****[124405]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many meetings (a) he and (b) his predecessor held with his Department's Chief Scientific Adviser between October 2017 and December 2017.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The Department for Education has not had a Chief Scientific Adviser in post since 30 September 2017. The Department is currently carrying out a review of analysis and we are considering whether the Department requires a Chief Scientific Adviser in addition to a Chief Analyst as part of this review. The Permanent Secretary gave written evidence to the Science and Technology Committee on 23 January, which will

be published in due course and accessible here:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/science-and-technology-committee/inquiries/parliament-2017/research-integrity-17-19/publications/>.

■ **Department for Education: Drinking Water**

Tim Farron:

[124511]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much money his Department has spent on bottled water in each year since 2010.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The department does not purchase bottled water for meetings or water cooler bottles. The water coolers use water which feeds directly from the mains supply.

■ **Department for Education: Voting Rights**

Ms Harriet Harman:

[125118]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department has plans to mark the centenary of women getting the right to vote in 1918.

Nadhim Zahawi:

In the 2017 Autumn Budget, my Rt hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced £5 million for projects to mark the Centenary of the Representation of the People and Parliament (Qualification of Women) Act 1918 - which gave women the right to vote for the first time. This money will support a yearlong programme of activity, some of which will be directed towards young people. Planned projects being delivered by a range of government departments, including the Department for Education, include a resource pack for secondary schools, the creation of Democracy Ambassadors within the 13-16 age group and a resource pack for parliamentarians to use, to shape engagement on democracy with young people.

■ **Faith Schools: Admissions**

Sammy Wilson:

[124913]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans he has to remove the 50 per cent admissions cap on faith schools.

Anne Milton:

The 'Schools that work for everyone' consultation document proposed that we replace the 50% admissions cap on faith free schools with a series of strengthened safeguards to promote inclusivity.

We greatly value the important role faith schools play in our education system and as such, we plan to respond to these proposals regarding the establishment of new faith free schools in due course.

■ Food Technology: GCSE

Justin Tomlinson:

[124357]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many people took a GCSE or equivalent qualification in Food Technology in each of the past 15 years.

Nick Gibb:

The total number of pupils, at the end of key stage 4[1], who entered GCSE (or equivalent) food technology between 2002/3 and 2016/17 is published as part of the Department's key stage 4 statistical first release[2]. The figures are presented in the table below.

Year[3]	Number of pupils (thousands)[4]
2016/17	29.8[5]
2015/16	33.4
2014/15	38.4
2013/14[6]	40.6
2012/13	43.4
2011/12	49.5
2010/11	54.0
2009/10	62.1
2008/09	66.7
2007/08	72.5
2006/07	80.1
2005/06	85.2

2004/05	93.8
2003/04	103.0
2002/03	103.8

[1] Pupils are identified as being at the end of key stage 4 if they were on roll at the school and in year 11 at the time of the January school census for that year. Age is calculated as at 31 August for that year, and the majority of pupils at the end of key stage 4 were age 15 at the start of the academic year. Some pupils may complete this key stage in an earlier or later year group.

[2] <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/gcse-and-equivalent-results-2016-to-2017-provisional> (Subject time series table). Figures for pre 2010 are accessible on the national archives website.

[3] In 2004/05 – 2007/08 an additional table provides a slightly different figure (varying by 1-300 from those provided in this table). This has no meaningful impact on the figures or trend.

[4] Includes pupils who were absent, whose results are pending and results which are ungraded or unclassified.

[5] 2017 figures are based on provisional data. Figures for all other years are final.

[6] In 2013/14, two major reforms were implemented which affect the calculation of key stage 4 performance measures data: 1) Professor Alison Wolf's Review of Vocational Education recommendations which: restrict the qualifications counted; prevent any qualification from counting as larger than one GCSE; and cap the number of non-GCSEs included in performance measures at two per pupil, and 2) an early entry policy to only count a pupil's first attempt at a qualification, in subjects counted in the English Baccalaureate.

■ Foreign Students: Loans

Daniel Kawczynski:

[124507]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of permitting UK students who have been offered a place at a university in an (a) non-UK EU or (b) non-EU country to apply for a student loan.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

Under EU law, UK students have the same access to higher education (HE) as students from the host member states. This means UK students are subject to the same fees, where they are charged, and generally the same loan or support arrangements as nationals of that member state.

Given that financial resources for HE are limited, it is not possible to offer funding for HE study abroad. Funding is focused on eligible students studying within the UK. English domiciled students studying a course at a UK university can receive funding

for placements or study abroad where that study comprises less than half of their course.

■ Foster Care

Steve McCabe:

[\[124432\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 15 December 2017 to Question 117980, on foster care, how many organisations have adopted the foster-family-friendly employer policy since its inception.

Nadhim Zahawi:

In April 2014, the department became the government's first foster-family-friendly employer, as we believe it is right that staff have extra support in balancing their work and caring responsibilities. Other government departments, including the Department for Work and Pensions and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, have since followed the Department for Education's lead and introduced a similar policy.

We do not collect data on which organisations sign up to this commitment, but there is a list of foster-family-friendly employers on pages 21-23 of the 'Combining Fostering and Other Work' report (November 2014, The Fostering Network and the Department for Education).

To ensure even more support for foster carers, the government has recently committed to extending the additional 15 hours childcare allowance to foster carers taking on employment outside of the home by September 2018.

Lisa Nandy:

[\[124549\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to help increase the number of young people who are able to remain living with their foster carer in a staying put arrangement.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The cross-government care leaver strategy 'Keep on Caring' (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/535899/Care-Leaver-Strategy.pdf), which was published in July 2016, reiterated our commitment to Staying Put. It made clear that we want to maximise the number of eligible care leavers who take up the option to Stay Put. This includes continuing to provide funding to local authorities to implement Staying Put, totalling £92.12 million over the period 2016/17 to 2019-20. Through the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the government introduced a requirement for local authorities to publish a 'Local Offer' for care leavers, which should set out care leavers' legal entitlements, and which should include the local authority's policy on Staying Put.

Lisa Nandy:

[\[124551\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many young people were (a) eligible to and (b) did remain with a foster carer in a staying put arrangement in 2016-17.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The number of care leavers who were eligible for, and receiving care leaver support in, a staying put arrangement with a former foster carer was published in table F2 for 19 and 20 year olds. This is published in table F4 for 18 year olds, in the statistical release 'Children looked after in England including adoption: 2016 to 2017' at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoption-2016-to-2017>.

■ Foster Care: Finance**Lisa Nandy:****[124553]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department has assessed the adequacy of National Minimum Fostering Allowance rates since their introduction in 2007.

Lisa Nandy:**[124554]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of extending the national minimum fostering allowance to cover young people in staying put arrangements.

Nadhim Zahawi:

Foster carers and those providing Staying Put arrangements play a vital role in supporting some of our most vulnerable children and young people. It is right that they receive the support they need to meet the needs of those they care for, including financial support.

There has been no assessment of the adequacy of National Minimum Allowances for foster carers or whether it would be appropriate to set minimum allowances for those providing Staying Put arrangements.

However, the National Fostering Stocktake, an independent review of the fostering system in England, has now concluded. I will carefully consider any recommendations made by the review and the Education Select Committee on payments to foster carers and Staying Put carers. The government response will be published in spring 2018.

■ GCSE**Stephanie Peacock:****[124664]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the average GCSE score was for pupils in (a) Barnsley and (b) England in each of the last three years.

Nick Gibb:

[Holding answer 29 January 2018]: The average GCSE attainment of pupils in state-funded schools, at the end of Key Stage 4, in Barnsley and England in each of the last three years[1] can be found in the attached table.

The Attainment 8 point score system was changed in 2016/17 with the introduction of 9 to 1 grades in some GCSEs; this resulted in an expected decrease in scores for

England between 2015/16 and 2016/17 and prevents direct comparisons between the two years for all figures[2].

'Shadow data' was generated for 2015/16 by taking pupil results from 2015/16 and directly matching them to the points that they would have been allocated, if the same pupil took exactly the same subjects and achieved the same marks in 2016/17. For further information, see the 'Key stage 4 shadow measures' ad-hoc release here: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/604312/KS4_shadow_measures_FINAL.pdf. This method produced a comparable 2015/16 average Attainment 8 figure for England of 44.6.

[1] 2016/17 data is revised and all other years are final.

[2] The decrease between 2015/16 and 2016/17 for England is in line with what was expected due to the change in points scores.

Attachments:

1. 124664 Table [124664 Table.docx]

■ **Music: Education**

Alex Sobel:

[\[125145\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether the increased teaching hours on maths and English in primary and secondary schools has led to a reduction in teaching hours for music education.

Nick Gibb:

Information on number of hours taught in each subject is derived from the School Workforce Census. Information is collected from state funded secondary schools only. Information is not collected from primary schools. The attached table shows the percentage of hours spent teaching English, mathematics and music in state funded secondary schools for the years 2010 to 2016.

It is not possible to estimate whether increases in teaching hours in one area of the curriculum have directly caused reductions elsewhere.

Attachments:

1. 125145 attachment [125145 attachment.docx]

■ **Pupils: Health**

Lisa Nandy:

[\[124384\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that the medical conditions policies of schools are checked by Ofsted as part of their regular system of inspections.

Lisa Nandy:

[\[124400\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he has plans to update the statutory guidance on support for pupils with medical conditions to require schools to make their

medical conditions policies readily accessible to parents by publishing them on their websites.

Lisa Nandy:

[\[124404\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department has plans to provide additional guidance to help schools (a) understand and (b) comply with their responsibilities on supporting pupils with medical conditions.

Nadhim Zahawi:

The government knows how important it is that children with medical conditions are supported to enjoy a full education. That is why it has introduced a new duty to require governing boards to make arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions, and have provided statutory guidance outlining schools' responsibilities in this area. This guidance sets out that governing boards should ensure that all schools develop a policy for supporting pupils with medical conditions that is reviewed regularly and is readily accessible to parents and school staff. We keep the guidance under review, including in the context of school awareness, and the role it plays in securing accessibility of school policies

Ofsted's Common Inspection Framework requires inspectors, in making judgements, to pay particular attention to the outcomes of a range of groups of pupils, including those with medical needs. Ofsted included guidance to inspectors on this matter in their March 2017 school inspection update, reminding inspectors that they should consider how schools are meeting the needs of pupils with medical conditions.

The department works with organisations such as the Health Conditions in Schools Alliance to help raise awareness of the duty on schools, and recently promoted the duty through the department's social media channels.

■ Schools: Finance

Ian Austin:

[\[124291\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the 2018-19 local government pay offer on school finances.

Nick Gibb:

Support staff pay is negotiated by local authorities and academies. We are aware of the offer and will continue to support schools in managing their budgets.

The new National Funding Formula, backed by £1.3 billion of additional investment, will allocate, as a minimum, £3,500 per pupil for all primary schools, and £4,800 per pupil for all secondary schools, by 2019-20. As the independent Institute for Fiscal Studies has confirmed, overall schools funding is being protected at a national level in real terms per pupil over the next two years. Alongside this substantial investment, we are committed to helping schools to improve their efficiency, so that they can continue to improve pupil outcomes and promote social mobility.

■ Schools: North West

Jeff Smith:

[124343]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education how much per pupil funding was allocated to schools in (a) Manchester, Withington constituency, (b) Manchester and (c) the North West in each of the last five years.

Nick Gibb:

Funding from the Department is primarily allocated at a local authority level.

The average schools block unit of funding for the Manchester local authority, the North West, and all other local authorities for the last five years can be found at the links below:

2013-14: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dedicated-schools-grant-2013-to-2014>.

2014-15: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dedicated-schools-grant-2014-to-2015>.

2015-16: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dedicated-schools-grant-dsg-2015-to-2016>.

2016-17: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dedicated-schools-grant-dsg-2016-to-2017>.

2017-18: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dedicated-schools-grant-dsg-2017-to-2018>.

Since 2011-12 schools have received the Pupil Premium which targets funding at pupils from the most deprived backgrounds to help them achieve their full potential. In 2011-12, the Premium was allocated for each pupil known to be eligible for Free School Meals, looked after children and children of parents in the armed services. In 2012-13 coverage was expanded to include pupils known to have been eligible for Free School Meals at any point in the last six years. The per pupil amounts for each type of pupil for the last five years are shown in following table in cash terms:

PUPIL PREMIUM PER PUPIL (£)	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018
Free School Meal Pupil Primary	£953	£1323	£1320	£1320	£1320
Free School Meal Pupil Secondary	£900	£935	£935	£935	£935
Service Children	£300	£300	£300	£300	£300
Looked After Children	£900	£1900*	£1900*	£1900*	£1900*

*Also includes children adopted from care

Details of provider level allocations for all schools and academies for the last five years can also be found at the links below. These cover the DSG schools block allocations made by local authorities.

2013-14: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-block-funding-allocations-2013-to-2014>.

2014-15: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-block-funding-allocations-2014-to-2015>.

2015-16: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-block-funding-allocations-2015-to-2016>.

2016-17: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-block-funding-allocations-2016-to-2017>.

2017-18: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-block-funding-allocations-2017-to-2018>.

■ Schools: Pay

Ian Austin:

[\[124292\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent meetings he has held with (a) schools, (b) the Local Government Association and (c) trade unions on school support staff pay.

Nick Gibb:

Support staff pay is negotiated by local authorities and academies themselves. The Department has no remit in this area and as such has not held any recent meetings on support staff pay.

Ian Austin:

[\[124293\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent discussions he has held with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the schools' wage costs.

Nick Gibb:

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Education routinely discusses matters of shared interest with Cabinet colleagues, including my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Department will shortly publish evidence on the affordability of increases to teacher pay as part of the input to the School Teachers' Review Body consideration on teachers' pay for 2018/19.

In July 2017 the Government announced an additional £1.3 billion for schools and high needs across 2018-19 and 2019-20, in addition to the schools budget set at the Spending Review 2015. This means funding per pupil will be maintained in real terms for the next two years. Following the Government's announcement in September 2017, under the national funding formula school funding will be distributed based on the individual needs and characteristics of every school in England.

Ian Austin:

[\[124294\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what research his Department has (a) undertaken and (b) commissioned on the adequacy of the level of school support staff pay.

Nick Gibb:

The Department has not recently undertaken or commissioned any research on school support staff pay, as it is negotiated by local authorities and academies themselves.

In 2011, the Department did publish a topic note on support staff, which is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-support-staff-topic-paper>.

■ Teachers: Training

Justin Tomlinson:

[\[124356\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will make it his policy to increase the minimum number of hours training in physical education required as part of teacher training.

Nick Gibb:

Physical education (PE) is a compulsory subject at all four key stages in the National Curriculum (2014). Through the primary PE and sport premium, the Government has invested over £600 million of ring-fenced funding to primary schools to improve PE and sport since 2013. An independent evaluation report into the premium was published in December 2015. It found that 87% of schools reported that the quality of PE teaching had increased since the introduction of the premium.

Providing the best possible initial teacher training (ITT) is at the heart of the Government's drive to improve teaching standards. All programmes of ITT must prepare teachers to demonstrate that they have met the Teachers' Standards (2011), and demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge. This includes physical education for all primary trainees, and for secondary PE subject specialists.

The amount of time that primary trainees spend in training on each of the subjects of the National Curriculum is not specified by Government. However, ITT providers must ensure that trainees meet all of the relevant standards by the end of their training.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Voting Rights

Ms Harriet Harman:

[\[125119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department has plans to mark the centenary of women getting the right to vote in 1918.

George Eustice:

The Women's Networks across the Defra group will promote a series of activities and events throughout 2018 to celebrate the centenary of women getting the right to vote. These include the creation of a collage made from the images of women in environmental roles; network discussion sessions on equality; monthly 'book clubs'; and the promotion of cross government and external suffrage events to encourage representation from Defra employees. We will use the centenary as the key theme of our International Women's Day celebrations in March and celebrate the men involved in the suffrage movement on International Men's day. Planning is also underway for an event later in the year to celebrate women in the Civil Service including a series of speakers reflecting on the past, present and aspirations for the future.

In addition to this, Defra and the Environment Agency are taking part in the suffrage flag relay and will host the flag in Cornwall, Bristol Warrington and York. We are also considering how we can participate in the cross government building light up in December.

■ Economic Situation: Hampshire**Mr Ranil Jayawardena:**[\[124295\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what his steps his Department is taking to support the rural economy in Hampshire.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Government is committed to strengthening the rural economy, setting the right conditions for businesses to grow and thrive.

The Industrial Strategy, published in November 2017, includes steps that will benefit rural businesses, such as access to finance and improved digital connectivity.

The Rural Productivity Plan, published in 2015, set out a 10-point plan to boost rural economies. As part of this, enterprise zones have been established in rural areas.

Last year, a new enterprise zone was created to help support local growth in Whitehill and Bordon, in particular local start-ups, SMEs, and high-growth businesses. These businesses will be able to benefit from the Bordon innovation centre newly opened in November, as part of the wider TechForest initiative.

The £3.5 billion Rural Development Programme for England supports farmers, foresters and rural businesses and communities. In Hampshire, 41 projects worth a total of £1,296,519 have been agreed to date.

■ Environment Protection**Mrs Anne-Marie Trevelyan:**[\[903547\]](#)

What progress has been made on implementing his Department's 25 Year Environment Plan.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Government is already implementing commitments in the plan. We recently consulted on proposals to ban UK sales of ivory, are bringing into force rules to reduce water pollution from agriculture and are legislating to set limits on air pollutants emitted from medium sized combustion plants. Since the plan's publication, several supermarkets and restaurants have pledged to tackle plastic packaging and single-use plastics.

■ **Environment: Finance****Caroline Lucas:**[\[125026\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to 25 Year Environment Plan, published on 11 January 2018, what additional financial resources have been committed for the financial years (a) 2018-19 and (b) 2019-20 to deliver the commitments made in that document.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Government continues to invest heavily in the environment, including investing £3.5bn in air quality and £5.8bn helping developing countries tackle climate change, reduce deforestation and support cleaner economic growth. We will work with BEIS, Innovate UK, Research Councils and industry to bring forward a bid for the next round of Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund awards later in 2018 to help develop a pipeline of new, more sustainable materials that will have a lower environmental impact. Other Plan commitments include a further £10m to encourage children to engage with nature and £5.7m to develop the Northern Forest.

■ **Food: Hampshire****Mr Ranil Jayawardena:**[\[124296\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the performance of the Great British Food Unit in opening up new markets for food and drink from Hampshire.

George Eustice:

Supporting UK businesses to export more is a top priority for this government. Supporting the exports of companies, such as Marston's Breweries and the 40 food and drink businesses currently being supported by the Department for International Trade (DIT) team in Hampshire, will be an important driver of growth in the food and drink sector, allowing it to become more resilient, competitive and profitable.

However, our work through the Food is GREAT campaign continues to raise the profile and reputation of British food and drink. Delivered in partnership with DIT, VisitBritain and FCO, this Defra led campaign will benefit food and drink exporters from across the UK, including Hampshire, to access new export opportunities.

■ Hunting Act 2004**Mr Jim Cunningham:** [\[125162\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 24 January 2018 to Question 123804 on Hunting Act 2004, whether officials within his Department have been instructed to draft legislative proposals in respect of the Hunting Act 2004 in the last 24 months.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Departmental officials have not been instructed to draft any legislative proposals or changes to the Hunting Act 2004 in the last 24 months.

■ LIFE Programme**Dan Jarvis:** [\[124550\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department plans to replace the funding provided by the EU's LIFE programme after the UK has left the EU.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Joint Report from the negotiators of the EU and the UK Government published on 8 December 2017 stated that UK entities' right to participate in EU Multi-Annual Financial Framework (MFF) programmes 2014-2020 will be unaffected by the UK's withdrawal from the EU. The UK Government has committed to underwrite the funding awarded to UK LIFE projects even where they continue beyond the UK's departure from the EU.

We are considering options beyond 2020. The Government's recently published 25 Year Environment Plan sets out our plans to protect and enhance the environment, including after our departure from the EU. Public funding will continue to play an important role in this.

■ Plastics: Waste**Mrs Anne Main:** [\[123972\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment his Department has made of the effect of the use of plastic straws on the environment.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

We have made no specific assessment of the use of plastic straws on the environment, but are strongly supporting a number of the voluntary initiatives that are being led by the retail and hospitality sector.

Further to the Prime Minister's call to eliminate avoidable plastic waste by 2042 and the Chancellor's budget announcement in November 2017, officials from both Defra and HM Treasury are working closely on a call for evidence to be published shortly. This will seek views on how the tax system or charges could reduce the amount of single use plastics waste including plastic straws.

■ Timber: Recycling**Mrs Anne Main:**[\[124347\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to monitor compliance with regulations at exposed wood-recycling plants.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Businesses managing waste wood, including wood recycling plants, must have an environmental permit issued by the Environment Agency (EA). Smaller and lower risk wood recyclers are exempt from a permit, but must register a T6 waste exemption with the EA.

The EA monitors compliance at the 47 permitted facilities that recycle or handle large quantities of waste wood. All of these sites submit data and information to the EA annually, which is used to help assess their performance. In 2017 the EA made 62 inspections and 10 in-depth audits of these facilities, based on site-specific risk and performance.

There are currently 24,419 registered T6 waste exemptions. Due to their low risk status these sites are not routinely monitored. The EA carried out 127 inspections of these facilities in 2017, after their performance raised concerns.

A current government consultation is seeking views on changes to the T6 waste exemption as there is evidence that it can be abused.

EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION**■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Drinking Water****Tim Farron:**[\[124513\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how much money his Department has spent on bottled water in each year since its establishment.

Mr Steve Baker:

The Department for Exiting the European Union is accommodated in buildings owned by other government departments. The provision of bottled water for meetings is provided by the landlords for each building. There are no specific transactions related to the Department purchasing bottled water detailed in the Department's central financial system.

■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Presidents Club**Jess Phillips:**[\[124639\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether any Ministers in his Department attended the Presidents Club Charity Dinner run by the Meller Educational Trust in an official capacity.

Mr Steve Baker:

No DExEU ministers were in attendance at this event.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE**■ Africa: Politics and Government****Patrick Grady:**[\[124319\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his UN Security Council counterparts on escalating tensions among Eritrea, Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Foreign Secretary most recently discussed this issue with a Security Council colleague when he met the Foreign Minister of Ethiopia at the EU/African Union Summit in November 2017. We continue to monitor the situation closely.

Patrick Grady:[\[124322\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his European counterparts on tensions between Eritrea, Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Foreign Secretary has held no recent discussions with EU counterparts on tensions between Eritrea, Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan. However, we continue to monitor the situation closely.

■ Bangladesh: Corruption**Richard Burden:**[\[124471\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the (a) level of corruption in Bangladesh and (b) effectiveness of attempts to reduce the level of corruption in that country.

Mark Field:

Corruption is a serious problem in Bangladesh. In their latest Corruption Perceptions Index (2016), Transparency International ranked Bangladesh 145 out of 176 countries. Their score has remained consistently poor in recent years. While the Government assesses that Bangladesh's legal framework for addressing corruption is largely in place, enforcement is inadequate. We are working with Bangladesh to strengthen its public financial management and to increase domestic transparency and accountability.

■ Bangladesh: Females**Richard Burden:**[\[124474\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the level of violence against women and girls in Bangladesh.

Mark Field:

Bangladesh still witnesses high levels of violence against women and girls. Over 80% of married Bangladeshi women report suffering abuse – physical, sexual, emotional

or financial – from a partner at least once during their marriage. UK Overseas Development Assistance supports womens' and girls' education, health and economic empowerment. DFID funding in Bangladesh has also supported more than 54,000 female victims of violence get access to medical and/or legal assistance.

■ **Bangladesh: Marriage**

Richard Burden: [\[124473\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of child marriage laws in Bangladesh.

Mark Field:

The Child Marriage Restraint Act 2017 was an important step in legally defining and attempting to prevent child marriage in Bangladesh. However, we remain concerned by a number of special provisions within the law that can lead to child marriage, including in the event of pregnancy.

The High Commission in Dhaka raised our concerns regarding child marriage and the provisions with Government of Bangladesh during the legislation's passage through Bangladesh's parliament, and the UK has consistently called on the Government of Bangladesh to do more to prevent child marriage in the country.

■ **British Overseas Territories: Marine Protected Areas**

Tonia Antoniazzi: [\[124337\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with the Governments of the UK Overseas Territories on creating fully enforced Marine Protected Areas in their waters.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The Government's Blue Belt commitment is ensuring that large scale Marine Protected Areas which have been designated, or are being developed, around the UK Overseas Territories (OTs) are effectively managed, monitored and enforced. We are working with the OTs Governments to implement effective monitoring and cost efficient enforcement strategies to ensure long-term protection against illegal activities. This issue was last discussed at the November Joint Ministerial Council.

■ **Cameroon: Human Rights**

Neil O'Brien: [\[124399\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what support the Government is providing to tackle human rights abuses and violence in Cameroon, and in particular South Cameroon.

Harriett Baldwin:

The UK is monitoring the situation in the Anglophone regions of Cameroon closely. Our High Commission in Yaoundé continues to meet opposition groups, human rights defenders and the Cameroonian authorities to establish an accurate account,

including over allegations of rape. Our High Commissioner in Yaoundé raised our concerns about the situation in the Anglophone regions with President Biya on 19 December. In this and several recent meetings with Prime Minister Philémon Yang and Cameroonian Ministers he called on the Cameroonian Government to adhere to Cameroon's obligations under international law in respect of human rights. The British Government condemns sexual violence in conflict and is working with foreign governments, the United Nations, the African Union and international organisations to end it.

■ **China: Aviation**

Sarah Champion:

[\[124561\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the Government of China on its announcement on 4 January 2018 that it would activate four air routes along its southeast coast close to Taiwan's Flight Information Region.

Mark Field:

In line with our longstanding position, we encourage China and Taiwan to engage in dialogue to resolve this issue.

We understand that the opening of the four new air routes in the Taiwan Strait on 4 January is a cause of concern for the authorities in Taiwan. The Government is assessing whether the introduction of these new northbound flights in the Straits will have any impact on aviation in the region. We regularly discuss cross-Straits issues with the Chinese authorities.

■ **Eritrea and Sudan: Borders**

Patrick Grady:

[\[124323\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effect of the closure of the border between Sudan and Eritrea on the political and economic stability of the wider region.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Sudan-Eritrea border has been closed since 6 January. The Sudanese Foreign Minister has made clear that this is due to an internal weapons collection campaign being conducted throughout Sudan. There are no indications, as yet, that this is impacting the stability of the wider region.

■ **Eritrea: Armed Conflict**

Patrick Grady:

[\[124316\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his Egyptian counterpart on reports that Egyptian troops have been deployed in Asmara, Eritrea.

Alistair Burt:

I have had no recent discussions with Egyptian Ministers regarding this issue. My officials are in regular contact with their Egyptian counterparts on a wide range of issues. We have received no information which substantiates reports of Egyptian troops in Asmara.

■ **Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Chief Scientific Advisers**

Norman Lamb:[\[124389\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many meetings he had with his Department's Chief Scientific Adviser between October and December 2017.

Mark Field:

FCO Ministers have regular meetings with the Department's Chief Scientific Adviser, and his Deputy, most recently on 30 January 2018.

■ **Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Drinking Water**

Tim Farron:[\[124519\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how much money his Department has spent on bottled water in each year since 2010.

Alistair Burt:

No information relating to the question is held centrally for years prior to 2016. The below table highlights the available information held on the number of plastic water cooler bottles used by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) UK in calendar years 2016 and 2017.

YEAR	QUANTITY	SIZE (LTRS)	TOTAL COST
2016	1126	18.9	£8,827.80
2017	973	18.9	£7,628.30

Water cooler bottles are returned to the supplier for re-use.

All requests for water coolers are assessed. They are only provided if there is a business need and it is not possible or cost effective to provide a plumbed-in supply. The provision of water coolers is reviewed on a regular basis.

500ml plastic water bottles are available for staff purchase in the UK from the FCO Catering provider as part of their catering offering, but there is no cost to the FCO. Recycling facilities are provided throughout the FCO to enable staff to recycle these bottles and all other recyclable items.

■ North Korea: Nuclear Weapons

Alan Brown:

[\[124281\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 12 January 2018 to Question 121390, what he and his Russian counterpart concluded were the best ways they could work together to tackle the global security issues in relation to North Korea.

Mark Field:

The Foreign Secretary and Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov agreed to work together on North Korea by consistent bilateral engagement on that issue and by effective use of the UN Security Council to maintain pressure on North Korea. The Government believes that as a neighbour and trading partner of North Korea as well as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, Russia has a special responsibility for preserving international peace and security.

Alan Brown:

[\[124283\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 12 January 2018 to Question 121391 on North Korea: Nuclear Weapons, what the evidential basis is for the statement that the impact of UNSC sanctions on North Korea are increasingly being felt by the Kim regime.

Mark Field:

The measures outlined in UNSCR 2397 are designed to further constrain oil exports, ban additional sectors of trade with the DPRK, and require member states to remove North Korean overseas workers within 24 months, among other measures. The measures target significant income streams used by the DPRK regime to fund their nuclear and ballistic missile programmes.

Sanctions take time to have an effect but there are clear signs they are beginning to have a significant impact. Kim Jong Un himself admitted as much in his New Year's address. We need to allow time for results and continue to press for strong and comprehensive implementation by all UN member states.

■ North Korea: UN Resolutions

Alan Brown:

[\[124282\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 12 January 2018 to Question 121390 on North Korea: Nuclear Weapons, what steps he is taking to ensure the full implementation of UNSCR 2379 on North Korea.

Mark Field:

The UK welcomes the unanimous adoption of UNSCR 2397 following North Korea's illegal launch of an intercontinental missile on 28 November 2017. This builds on the tough measures adopted in UNSCR 2375 in September. The Government plans to submit to the UN 1718 DPRK Sanctions Committee its implementation report for UNSCR 2397 within 90 days of the Resolution's adoption date of 22 December 2017.

The UK, alongside like-minded partners, is actively lobbying for the urgent and comprehensive enforcement of UN sanctions by the international community.

■ Nuclear Disarmament

Nick Thomas-Symonds: [\[124479\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent steps his Department has taken to help achieve multilateral disarmament world-wide.

Sir Alan Duncan:

As a responsible nuclear weapons state, the Government is committed to the long term goal of a world without nuclear weapons. We continue to work with partners across the international community to press for key steps towards multilateral nuclear disarmament, including 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. We continue to play a leading role in disarmament verification and in the Preparatory Committees ahead of the 2020 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference.

■ Proliferation

Nick Thomas-Symonds: [\[124478\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what plans the Government has to help reduce nuclear tensions worldwide.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The UK will attend the next Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in April 2018 where we will engage with a wide range of states on how we can together tackle the challenges that we face on non proliferation and disarmament. The DPRK has yet to signal it is ready to abandon its illegal nuclear and ballistic missile programmes which pose an unacceptable threat to the international community and we are working closely with our international partners to exert maximum political and economic pressure on DPRK to change its direction. We are strong supporters of the Iran nuclear deal, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, which is successfully curtailing Iran's nuclear weapons programme.

■ Sayed Ahmed al-Wadaei

Kate Osamor: [\[124325\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether his Department has discussed with the authorities of the Kingdom of Bahrain, the trial of relatives of UK-based human rights activist Sayed Ahmed al-Wadaei.

Alistair Burt:

We have raised these cases at a senior level. I understand that these individuals were convicted and sentenced to three years in prison on charges of planting a hoax bomb in early 2017.

■ Syria: Armed Conflict

Mohammad Yasin:

[\[124454\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he has made representations to the Turkish Government on recent civilian deaths in Afrin district, northern Syria; and if he will make a statement.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The Foreign Secretary has been in contact with Turkish Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu about the situation in Afrin. We have urged Turkey to avoid any escalation in violence and stressed the need to protect civilians. We have also stressed the importance of ensuring that humanitarian assistance can reach the area. Turkey has a legitimate interest in the security of its borders. It remains in our shared interest to focus on achieving a political settlement that ends the war and suffering, and provides stability for all Syrians and the wider region.

■ Syria: Politics and Government

Dan Carden:

[\[124567\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions she has had with Cabinet colleagues on the forthcoming Syrian National Dialogue Congress following Turkish military action in North West Syria.

Alistair Burt:

The British Government is clear that the Geneva process remains the best forum for reaching a lasting solution to the conflict in Syria. All international efforts, including any Syrian National Dialogue Congress, must be in support of that process. We urge Russia and all parties to support the UN-mediated political process mandated by UN Security Council Resolution 2254 and focus on achieving a political settlement that ends the war and suffering, and provides stability for all Syrians and the wider region.

■ Syria: Religious Freedom

Sammy Wilson:

[\[124548\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment his Department has made of the level of religious freedom in Syria; and what steps the Government is taking to promote and protect the right of freedom of religion in that country.

Alistair Burt:

The ongoing conflict in Syria has increased tensions between the different religious groups in Syria leading to less tolerance, particularly in Daesh controlled areas, and increased sectarian violence. We continue to support non-governmental efforts to promote dialogue between different ethnic and sectarian groups in Syria, as we seek further progress on a political settlement. We have been clear that any future political settlement must include protection for religious rights and freedoms, including for religious minorities.

■ Turkey: Arms Trade**Mohammad Yasin:**[\[124502\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps he is taking to monitor the use of military equipment provided by the UK to Turkey; and what information he holds on whether such military equipment is being used as part of that country's assault on Afrin.

Sir Alan Duncan:

We are closely following the latest developments in Afrin. Arms exports to Turkey, like all other countries, are subject to export controls. Applications are considered on a case-by-case basis against the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria, known as the Consolidated Criteria. Decisions are based on the most up-to-date information and analysis available, including reports from our overseas network and military contacts. The Consolidated Criteria provide a thorough risk assessment framework and require us to consider the impact of providing equipment and its capabilities. We do not issue export licences where, for example, we assess there is a clear risk that the goods might be used for internal repression or used aggressively against another country. We keep our approach to all countries under continual review.

■ Yemen: Guided Weapons**Leo Docherty:****[R]** [\[124904\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to prevent the supply of ballistic missiles to Houthi rebels in Yemen.

Alistair Burt:

The supply of ballistic missiles to Houthi rebels in Yemen is in direct contravention of UN Security Council Resolution 2216. This threatens regional security and prolongs the devastating conflict. The British Government is providing £1.3 million in funding for the UN Inspection and Verification Mechanism (UNVIM) to counter weapons flows into Yemen. We also aim to increase UNVIM capacity through the deployment of additional inspectors to UNVIM's Djibouti Headquarters and to ports around the region. This could increase UNVIM's inspection capacity fivefold.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**■ Carillion: Insolvency****Mrs Louise Ellman:**[\[125124\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what organisations he has had discussions with on the completion of the new Royal Liverpool Hospital following the liquidation of Carillion; and if he will make a statement.

Stephen Barclay:

Officials from NHS Improvement and the Department are working closely with the Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals Trust and their private sector partners to minimise the impact of the Carillion liquidation and any resulting delay to the completion of these buildings.

The Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contract between the Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust and the PFI Project Company is still in place, which means that the Company is still contractually obliged to manage the project and find a construction firm or subcontractor who can continue the building work.

The Royal Liverpool Hospital scheme is very well advanced. The PFI Project Company is currently in discussions with PwC (on behalf of the official receiver), their lenders and with other service and construction companies to assess how best to continue delivering these contracts.

■ Department of Health and Social Care: Chief Scientific Advisers**Norman Lamb:****[124403]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many meetings he had held his Department's Chief Scientific Adviser between October 2017 and December 2017.

Caroline Dinenge:

For the period 1 October 2017 to 31 December 2017 my Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health met with the Department's Chief Scientific Adviser (CSA) twice, the CSA met with other Health ministers on five occasions.

Throughout this period the Department of Health and Social Care's CSA also acted as the Interim Government Chief Scientific Adviser and met with ministers from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and other Government Departments.

■ Department of Health and Social Care: Directors**Chris Ruane:****[124787]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, who the lead non-executive director and other non-executive director board members are in his Department.

Caroline Dinenge:

The Department has six Non-Executive Directors (NEDs).

The Department's lead NED is Kate Lampard. Other Non-Executives appointed are Dame Sue Bailey, Sir Mike Richards, Michael Mire, Gerry Murphy and Sir Ron Kerr.

Further information can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/department-of-health-appoints-new-team-of-non-executive-directors>

■ Diabetes: Kidney Diseases**Julie Elliott:** [\[124426\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State, if he will take steps to ensure that people with diabetes are offered urine and blood tests to check for chronic kidney disease.

Steve Brine:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has published guidance on 'Chronic kidney disease in adults' which sets out best practice for clinicians on the diagnosis, treatment, care, and support of patients with chronic kidney disease (CKD). The guidance also includes recommendations for those at risk of developing CKD, including people with diabetes. NHS England expects commissioners to take account of NICE guidelines when delivering services.

■ Fentanyl**Jeff Smith:** [\[124346\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many hospital admissions caused by Fentanyl misuse there were in (a) 2016 and (b) 2017.

Steve Brine:

Information on how many hospital admissions caused by Fentanyl misuse there were in 2016 and 2017 is not held centrally.

■ In Vitro Fertilisation**Steve McCabe:** [\[124439\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 18 December 2017 to Question 119189, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of his Department's policy on the provision of and access to IVF treatment in England.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

Clinical commissioning groups are responsible for commissioning local health services and ensuring the needs of the local health population are met. NHS England is responsible for oversight of the commissioning system. National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidelines are evidence-based best practice for clinicians but are not mandatory.

■ Kidney Diseases**Julie Elliott:** [\[124425\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that chronic kidney disease is diagnosed in a timely manner.

Steve Brine:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidance Chronic kidney disease in adults: assessment and management, updated in July 2014, sets out best practice for clinicians in the diagnosis and management of chronic kidney disease (CKD). The guidance covers identification and monitoring of patients at risk;

pharmacological management and referral where appropriate, and aims to ensure patients remain healthy and avoid kidney failure, if possible. The guidance can be found at the following link:

www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg182

The NHS Health Check is a national programme (launched in 2009) for everyone between the ages of 40-74 years (not already on a chronic disease register) that assesses people's health and risk of developing certain health problems. At launch it was estimated that the programme could detect each year at least 20,000 cases of diabetes or kidney disease earlier, allowing individuals to be better managed and to improve their quality of life. The first major evaluation of the NHS Health Check, published in 2016 and covering 665 general practitioner practices, demonstrated positive results, estimating that over the first five years it has identified a new case of chronic kidney disease in every 265 appointments. More information on the evaluation and its findings can be found at the following link:

www.gov.uk/government/news/first-national-evaluation-of-nhs-health-check-programme-published

■ Liothyronine

Sir Vince Cable:

[125126]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many reports have been made by prescribers or patients to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency on unlicensed liothyronine.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) have received 124 spontaneous reports of suspected adverse drug reactions (ADRs) via the Yellow Card Scheme from prescribers and patients in association with liothyronine in the United Kingdom as of 28 January 2018. The MHRA have not received any spontaneous cases where the reporter has stated their liothyronine is unlicensed.

Of the 124 reports, six relate to a brand of liothyronine that is not licensed in the UK. However, it is important to note that patients may have been prescribed a medication while in a foreign country; therefore, a report of a foreign brand cannot be assumed as unlicensed use. Furthermore, while reporters are requested to provide as much detail as possible, detail of the medicinal brand or license is not a compulsory reporting criteria. Therefore, this information is not always provided.

Yellow Card data should not be used as an indicator of the frequency of suspected ADRs to medicines. The level of ADR reporting may fluctuate over time due to a variety of reasons such as a medicine being new, stimulated interest/publicity and variations in exposure to the medicine.

Sir Vince Cable:[\[125127\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department has taken under the Health Service Medical Supplies (Costs) Act 2017 to collect information on the Concordia/Amdipharm Mercury Group and liothyronine.

Steve Brine:

The information powers in the Health Service Medical Supplies (Costs) Act 2017 can only be implemented by regulations. At the end of last year the Department consulted on those regulations and we are currently analysing the responses to that consultation.

The Competition and Markets Authority has provisionally found that that Concordia abused its dominant position to overcharge the National Health Service by millions for liothyronine tablets. A provisional decision does not necessarily lead to an infringement decision. Where companies have breached competition law, the Department will seek damages and invest that money back into the NHS.

■ Mental Health Services: Children and Young People**Vicky Foxcroft:**[\[124571\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 22 December 2017 to Question 120088, on Mental Health Services: Children and Young People, what assessment he has made of the effect of changes in the level of local authority funding on the provision of child and adolescent mental health services in (a) Lewisham constituency, (b) Southwark, (c) London and (d) England; and how his Department plans to make good any shortfalls resulting from those changes.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

In England, the Department and NHS England are investing an additional £1.4 billion by 2019/20 to support the implementation of the Future in Mind transformation programme.

Lewisham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Southwark CCG advise that they are working with the local authorities in Lewisham and Southwark to review local service provision jointly, using the transformation funding to improve and develop services.

■ Mental Health Services: Mothers**Gloria De Piero:**[\[124437\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps the Government is taking to ensure new mothers' mental health problems are identified as early as possible.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

This Government is committed to improving perinatal mental health services for women during pregnancy and in the first postnatal year, so that women are able to access the right care at the right time and close to home.

The Department is investing £365 million from 2015/16 to 2020/21 in perinatal mental health services, and NHS England is leading a transformation programme to ensure that by 2020/21 at least 30,000 more women each year are able to access evidence-based specialist mental health care during the perinatal period. This includes access to psychological therapies and specialist community or inpatient care.

A key element of the programme is to increase awareness and skills across the workforce, supporting better identification of perinatal mental illness, early intervention and consequently improved recovery rates. In addition, there are over 570 perinatal mental health visitor champions. Their role is to support health visitors with the identification and management of anxiety, mild to moderate depression and other perinatal mental disorders, and knowing when to refer on.

Meg Hillier:

[\[124647\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what his Department is doing to improve the diagnosis of mothers suffering with post-natal mental health problems.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The Department is investing £365 million from 2015/16 to 2020/21 in perinatal mental health services and NHS England is leading a transformation programme to ensure that by 2020/21 at least 30,000 more women each year are able to access evidence-based specialist mental health care during the perinatal period. This includes access to psychological therapies and specialist community or inpatient care.

A key element of the programme is to increase awareness and skills across the workforce, supporting better identification and diagnosis of perinatal mental illness, early intervention and consequently improved recovery rates. In addition, there are over 570 perinatal mental health visitor champions. Their role is to support health visitors with the identification and management of anxiety, mild to moderate depression and other perinatal mental disorders, and knowing when to refer on.

■ NHS: Reorganisation

Dr David Drew:

[\[124999\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what guidance his Department gives to Sustainability and Transformation Plan teams on better integrating (a) vulnerable and (b) other people in rural communities within their plans.

Stephen Barclay:

Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STPs) bring National Health Service providers, commissioners, local authorities, and other health and care services together to propose how they, at local level, can improve the way that health and care is planned and delivered in a more person-centred and coordinated way. STPs consult on service change to transform health and care in the communities they serve and take into account a number of factors, including patient flow, the location of different organisations in the local health economy, and natural geographies.

NHS England and NHS Improvement continue to provide ongoing support to each STP area. In September 2016, they published the document 'Engaging Local People' which set out how STP areas should reach out to stakeholders, patients and the public in their areas. It is available at the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/engaging-local-people-stps.pdf>

■ Prisoners: Mental Illness

Chris Ruane: [\[125064\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many and what percentage of prisoners who received a custodial sentence suffered from one or more mental health conditions in each of the last seven years.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The information requested is not collected centrally.

■ Public Health

Preet Kaur Gill: [\[124459\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if the Government will widen access to early diagnosis and support services for all developmental neurodiverse conditions as a preventative public health measure.

Caroline Dinenge:

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is the independent body responsible for providing guidance on the prevention and treatment of ill health and the promotion of good health and social care. NICE has published clinical guidelines on the diagnosis and management of autism in adults and children and young people (under the age of 19) and on the diagnosis and management of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in children over three years, young people and adults. These guidelines aim to improve the diagnosis of people with these conditions as well as improving the quality of care and support they receive.

We expect clinical commissioning groups to take account of clinical guidelines published by NICE when commissioning services for their local populations. Whilst clinical guidelines are not mandatory, adherence to them will support improvements in the quality of care and services.

NHS England is developing new mental health pathways for adults, children and young people with mental health diagnoses and co-morbid neurodevelopmental disorders. These could benefit people with autism, ADHD and other neurodevelopmental disorders who have mental health needs by facilitating better and faster diagnosis.

■ Radiography

Steve McCabe:

[\[124434\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 11 December 2017 to Question 117852 on Radiography, what the regional breakdown is of seven-day interventional radiology services.

Caroline Dinenge:

The regional breakdown of seven-day interventional radiology services is as follows:

NHS ENGLAND REGION	NUMBER OF TRUSTS REPORTING SEVEN DAY ACCESS TO INTERVENTIONAL RADIOLOGY	NUMBER OF TRUSTS REPORTING LACK OF SEVEN DAY ACCESS TO INTERVENTIONAL RADIOLOGY	TRUSTS WHERE THIS INTERVENTION IS NOT APPLICABLE (E.G. SOME SPECIALIST TRUSTS)
North	35	15	1
Midlands and East	22	16	1
London	21	2	1
South	29	5	0
Total	107	38	3

Steve McCabe:

[\[124435\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 11 December 2017 to Question 117849 on Image Guided Surgery, what the regional breakdown is of (a) the 148 trusts who responded to the survey and (b) the 109 trusts who stated that IR was available for patients seven days a week.

Caroline Dinenge:

NHS England have advised that in the answer given by the previous Minister of State (Mr Philip Dunne MP) to Question 117849, the number of hospital trusts who stated that interventional radiology (IR) was available for patients seven days a week was incorrectly given as 109. The following table, which shows a regional breakdown for seven day access to IR, provides the actual figure of 107.

We have corrected the official record.

NHS ENGLAND REGION	NUMBER OF TRUSTS REPORTING SEVEN DAY ACCESS TO INTERVENTIONAL RADIOLOGY	NUMBER OF TRUSTS REPORTING LACK OF SEVEN DAY ACCESS TO INTERVENTIONAL RADIOLOGY	TRUSTS WHERE THIS INTERVENTION IS NOT APPLICABLE (E.G. SOME SPECIALIST TRUSTS)
North	35	15	1
Midlands and East	22	16	1
London	21	2	1
South	29	5	0
Total	107	38	3

Source: NHS trusts' responses to the seven Day Hospital Services self-assessment survey, March 2017 (published in October 2017)

Steve McCabe:

[\[124436\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 11 December 2017 to Question 117848 on Image Guided Surgery, what the per 1000 people population ratio is of patients who underwent an interventional radiology procedure in each region in each of the last three years.

Stephen Barclay:

The table attached is a count of finished admission episodes with a main or secondary procedure of interventional radiology by Government office region of treatment per 1,000 people population, for the years 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17.

The data provides a count of the number of interventional radiology procedures, not the number of individual patients as the same person may have multiple procedures.

Attachments:

1. PQ124436 attached table [PQ124436 - Steve McCabe - interventional radiology regional population data NHSD.xlsx]

■ Royal Liverpool Hospital

Mrs Louise Ellman:

[\[125197\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the timetable is for (a) a new contractor to be appointed for the new Royal Liverpool Hospital and (b) that hospital to be completed; and if he will make a statement.

Stephen Barclay:

Carillion is building the new Royal Liverpool Hospital under a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contract. The PFI contract between the Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust and the PFI Project Company is still in place, which means that the Company is still contractually obliged to manage the

project and find a construction firm or subcontractor who can continue the building work. This is important for the Trust and also an incentive for the PFI Project Company to minimise delay. Additionally, the Department and NHS Improvement have been supporting the Trust with contingency planning for this to ensure there is minimal disruption.

The Royal Liverpool Hospital scheme is very well advanced. The PFI Project Company is currently in discussions with PwC (on behalf of the official receiver), their lenders and with other service and construction companies to assess how best to continue delivering these contracts.

■ Sapropterin

Mrs Sharon Hodgson:

[124254]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many pregnant women with phenylketonuria have received Kuvan (sapropterin) treatment since that drug has been licenced for use in the UK; and what is the average duration of the course of that treatment.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The information requested is not held centrally.

In 2013, NHS England published a policy on the use of Sapropterin for the management of Phenylketonuria (PKU) during pregnancy:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/e12-p-a.pdf>

NHS England has now received a Preliminary Policy Proposal for the use of Sapropterin in the management of PKU for adults and children, as new evidence has now been published to support its use. This was considered by the Clinical Panel this month where it was agreed that NHS England will need to further review the evidence. NHS England will be working with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence to agree the best approach to this and whether the policy should subsequently be reviewed. The NHS England process for development of Clinical Policies can be found here:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/specialised-commissioning-service-development-policy-and-process/>

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/methods-national-clinical-policies/>

■ Sexually Transmitted Infections: Screening

Heidi Alexander:

[125120]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether there is a requirement for online sellers of testing kits for sexually transmitted infections to be registered with the Care Quality Commission.

Steve Brine:

There is no requirement for online sellers of testing kits for sexually transmitted infections to be registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) unless the provider is registered with the CQC as a primary care service.

Streptococcus: Pregnancy**Jim Shannon:**[\[124265\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he will take steps to ensure that all pregnant women are provided with the joint Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists and Group B Strep Support patient information leaflet on Group B Streptococcal Disease.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) produces guidelines for good clinical practice in maternity care. Its Green-top guideline: The Prevention of Early –onset Neonatal Group B Streptococcal Disease states, “All pregnant women should be provided with an appropriate information leaflet”.

The Department expects all those involved in commissioning or providing maternity services to implement the recommendations of the RCOG clinical guidance.

Surgery: Waiting Lists**Gill Furniss:**[\[124682\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many elective operations in the NHS have been cancelled in the last 12 months.

Stephen Barclay:

NHS England publishes quarterly performance data on the number of last minute elective operations cancelled for non-clinical reasons. This can be accessed via NHS England’s Statistical work areas webpage at:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/cancelled-elective-operations/cancelled-ops-data/>

Data for cancelled elective operations for Quarter 3 2017-18 will be published on 8 February 2018.

HOME OFFICE**Asylum and Slavery****Carolyn Harris:**[\[124586\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what account her Department is taking of provisions relating to the alignment of basic living costs for victims of modern slavery and asylum seekers under the EU Directive and Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings in developing its reforms of the National Referral Mechanism.

Victoria Atkins:

The subsistence rates for victims of modern slavery are provided to cover the essential living needs of potential victims of modern slavery. When considering the level of these rates, the essential needs of potential victims were assessed to be comparable to the needs of asylum seekers. This is why the tested and established methodology that has been developed to measure the level of subsistence for asylum seekers will be adopted to measure the level of subsistence for potential victims of modern slavery. Where it has been identified that victims of slavery have needs above those of asylum seekers or have additional entitlements under the Council of Europe Convention Against Trafficking in Human Beings, these needs are met within the existing Adult Victims of Modern Slavery Care Contract.

Victims will continue to receive dedicated and expert support, which is tailored to their unique needs as victims of modern slavery. This includes access to legal aid, counselling, [NHS](#) medical and dental services. This will ensure there is a fair and consistent approach for all individuals receiving similar government support. Furthermore, more money is being made available to treble the period of “move on” support, which will help people leaving victim support with their transition to other arrangements. It is essential that we target support to confirmed victims, at the point they need it most.

We are working closely with the Salvation Army and the Independent Anti Slavery Commissioner to ensure that the implementation of this change is as smooth as possible.

■ Domestic Violence: Refuges**Carolyn Harris:**[\[125033\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government on ensuring that safe accommodation is available for women and children escaping domestic violence.

Victoria Atkins:

Home Office Ministers are working very closely with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to find a sustainable future for refuges and other forms of safe accommodation, in order that we meet the specialist needs of all those fleeing domestic abuse.

In addition, the Home Secretary regularly discusses issues relating to all Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) at the VAWG Inter-Ministerial Group.

■ Drugs: Spain**Ronnie Cowan:**[\[125196\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the oral contribution of Under-Secretary of State for the Home Office of 17 January 2018, Official

Report, HC 406WH, what the evidential basis is for the statement that Spain has only one drug consumption room.

Ronnie Cowan: [\[125198\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the accuracy of the finding of the European Monitoring Centre for Drug and Drug Addiction of June 2017 that there are 13 drug consumption rooms in seven cities in Spain.

Victoria Atkins:

The Government views the evidence provided by the European Monitoring Centre for Drug and Drug Addiction as a valuable and reliable source of information on drug misuse in reporting countries.

The report of June 2017 found that there are 78 such facilities across Europe, including 13 in Spain. The Government does not recognise the statement that there is only one drug consumption room in Spain and the Under-Secretary of State for the Home Office made no such claim during the debate on 17 January.

■ Home Office: Directors

Chris Ruane: [\[124789\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, who the lead non-executive director and other non-executive director board members are in her Department.

Victoria Atkins:

A list of non-executive directors can be found on the Home Office website under the 'Our Management' headline here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office>.

■ Home Office: Drinking Water

Tim Farron: [\[124521\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much money her Department has spent on bottled water in each year since 2010.

Victoria Atkins:

The information requested could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

The majority of water cooler units in the department are now plumbed in and fed direct from the mains water. Hospitality for meetings is provided using glass water jugs which are filled using filtered water.

However, we have established that a number of HO sites do purchase bottled water for a range of reasons; such as lack of water supply in some very localised areas. We are working to reduce provision of bottled mineral where possible.

■ Home Office: Public Expenditure

Justin Madders:

[\[124705\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much her Department has spent on (a) art, (b) wine and (c) hospitality in each of the last seven financial years for which figures are available.

Victoria Atkins:

The spend figures on Hospitality are reported in the Home Office published Report and Accounts under 'Travel, Subsistence and Hospitality' for the following financial years.

FY2016/17 page 115:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/627853/ho_annual_report_and_accounts_2016_2017.pdf FY2015/16 - page 132:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/539638/HO_AR_16_gov.pdf FY2014/15 – page 123

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/441282/HO-AR15_web.pdf FY2013/14 – page 109

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/321446/ARA_web_enabled_18_June.pdf FY2012/13 – page 131

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/210660/Annual_Report_and_Accounts_FINAL_updated_logo.pdf FY2011/12 – page 134

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/143619/annual-report-2011-12.pdf FY2010/11 – page 113

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/120048/annual-report-201011.pdf

■ Human Trafficking

Tulip Siddiq:

[\[124739\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Answer of 7 January 2016 to Question 21042, what steps her Department has taken following the conclusion of the pilots in West Yorkshire and the South West of the recommendations of the National Referral Mechanism review.

Victoria Atkins:

The national referral mechanism pilots ran in West Yorkshire and the South West from August 2015 until March 2017. They were fully evaluated. The evaluation was published in October 2017 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/an-evaluation-of-the-national-referral-mechanism-pilot>

This findings of this evaluation were used to inform the reform of the National Referral Mechanism. Details of the reform measures can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/modern-slavery-victims-to-receive-longer-period-of-support>

■ Immigration**Stephen Gethins:** [\[125206\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average time taken is for (a) accepted and (b) declined priority applications to be resolved by UK Visas and Immigration in each of the last 3 years.

Caroline Nokes:

Published data on visa processing times, including the percentage of visas processed within published service standards, is published online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/migration-transparency-data> (then listed by publication date under 'UK Visas & Immigration').

■ Offences against Children**Lucy Allan:** [\[125164\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of reports of child sexual exploitation there have been in (a) Telford constituency and (b) UK in each of the last three years.

Victoria Atkins:

The Home Office began collecting information on Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) offences on a mandatory basis in April 2016. As CSE is not an offence as defined in law, the police will flag an offence if it is related to CSE in their statistical returns to the Home Office.

We are presently working with police forces over the quality of these data ahead of future publication.

■ Psychiatry: Migrant Workers**Barbara Keeley:** [\[125150\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Tier 2 visa applications sponsored by the NHS for NHS psychiatry posts were turned down in the most recent year for which data is available.

Barbara Keeley: [\[125151\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Tier 2 visas sponsored by the NHS were approved for (a) clinical radiology, (b) emergency medicine, (c) old age psychiatry and (d) core trainees in psychiatry in the most recent year for which data is available.

Barbara Keeley: [\[125152\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Tier 2 visa applications for (a) old age psychiatry and (b) core trainee in psychiatry were turned down in the last year for which data is available.

Caroline Nokes:

The information you have requested is not included in statistics published by the Home Office.

Public Spaces Protection Orders**Leo Docherty:**[\[124867\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of Public Spaces Protection Orders.

Victoria Atkins:

We have established an Anti-social Behaviour Advisory Group which provides a forum to discuss the use of anti-social behaviour powers with a range of police officers, local authorities, charities and government departments. We also published refreshed statutory guidance for frontline professionals on the use of these powers on 24 December 2017.

Refugees**Meg Hillier:**[\[124655\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate her Department has made of the number of refugees who will be resettled in the UK under the Gateway Protection Programme in 2018.

Meg Hillier:[\[124659\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate her Department has made of the number of refugees who will be resettled in the UK under the asylum route in 2018.

Caroline Nokes:

The Government's current commitment is to resettle 750 refugees each financial year under the Gateway Protection Programme

We do not resettle people under the asylum route and there is no provision within our Immigration Rules for a person to be allowed to travel to the UK to seek asylum; a person must be in the UK in order to lodge an asylum claim here. All claims for asylum are considered on their individual merits, and where a genuine need for protection or a well founded fear of persecution is established, refugee status will be granted.

Refugees: Eritrea**Alex Sobel:**[\[125189\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether there are plans to create safe and legal routes to the UK for Eritrean refugees.

Caroline Nokes:

We operate four resettlement schemes, working closely with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, to provide safe and legal routes to the UK for the most

vulnerable refugees. Eritrean nationals are potentially eligible under all four resettlement schemes.

The UK supports the principle that those in need of international protection should claim in the first safe country they arrive. Resettlement is complemented by the UK's significant humanitarian aid programme and diplomatic efforts to end international conflict. We believe this approach is the best way to ensure that the UK's help has the greatest impact for the majority of refugees who remain in the region and their host countries, whilst recognising that for some vulnerable people the only solution is to bring them to countries like the UK.

We have a comprehensive framework for refugees and their families to be safely reunited in the UK. Our family reunion policy allows immediate family members of those granted protection here to reunite with them and we have granted over 24,000 family reunion visas over the last five years. The Immigration Rules also provide for relatives with protection in the UK to sponsor children in serious and compelling circumstances. This policy is designed to provide a safe and legal route for close, dependent family members to join their refugee family in the UK, avoiding the need for them to make dangerous journeys to seek protection.

The UK continues to actively support the UN negotiations on the Migration and Refugee Compacts; our aim is to ensure these focus on supporting refugees and migrants closer to home, preventing dangerous journeys, tackling smuggling, as well as encouraging more resettlement globally.

■ Slavery

David Hanson:

[\[124419\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many National Referral Mechanism forms were (a) not completed properly by first responders and (b) missing information in each year since the implementation of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

Victoria Atkins:

The recently announced reform of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), includes measures aimed at improving the identification of potential victims and, decision-making timescales. The digitisation of the NRM and a review of the role of First Responders will address the quality of the initial referrals received by the Competent Authority and better support their decision-making.

Sarah Champion:

[\[124609\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her Department's notice, entitled Expression of interest in providing legal services to victims of trafficking and modern slavery, published on 14 December 2017, what steps her Department plans to take to ensure that those who respond to the expression of interest have expertise on trafficking and modern slavery.

Sarah Champion:

[\[124610\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her Department's notice, entitled Expression of interest in providing legal services to victims of trafficking and modern slavery, published on 14 December 2017, what funding will be made available for (a) legal advice and (b) other associated expenses such as interpreters and expert reports.

Sarah Champion:

[\[124611\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her Department's notice, entitled Expression of interest in providing legal services to victims of trafficking and modern slavery, published on 14 December 2017, whether there will be any cost to victims of trafficking who access the services resulting from that expression of interest.

Sarah Champion:

[\[124612\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her Department's notice, entitled Expression of interest in providing legal services to victims of trafficking and modern slavery, published on 14 December 2017, whether the providers of legal services in response to that expression of interest will be required to continue to advise their client up to a (a) National Referral Mechanism Conclusive Grounds decision and (b) any decision regarding a grant, discretionary leave to remain or appeal.

Victoria Atkins:

The expression of interest in providing legal services to victims of modern slavery on immigration matters will be used to increase awareness amongst support providers under the Adult Victim Care Contract of qualified immigration advisers, accredited by the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner.

Under the Government funded Adult Victim Care Contract, The Salvation Army provides tailored support and assistance to victims in the NRM including assistance to obtain quality legal advice and accessing translation services, and can include support in travelling to appointments if necessary. Responses to the Expression of Interest will be made available to support providers under the Adult Victim Care Contract to ensure they are aware of qualified immigration advisers that those they are supporting may want to obtain advice from. The arrangements between victims and advisors will be dependent on the individual's circumstances and reflect their specific needs.

There is no central funding available for those who express an interest in providing this advice to victims. However, legal aid is available to victims of trafficking and modern slavery in accordance with the provisions of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 (LASPO).

Alex Sobel:

[\[125185\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department plans to give all confirmed victims of slavery in the UK at least one year's leave to remain with recourse to benefits and services.

Caroline Nokes:

Confirmed victims of modern slavery who do not qualify for leave to remain in another immigration route can be considered for a grant of Discretionary Leave to remain in the UK based on the particular circumstances of the individual case.

This can include needing to stay in the UK in order to pursue a claim for compensation against their traffickers, the need to assist with police enquiries or due to personal circumstances. Those granted Discretionary Leave have recourse to public funds and permission to work. Not all victims of modern slavery will wish to remain in the UK and so the Government is also committed to supporting those who wish to return home. The Home Office's Voluntary Returns Service can assist victims of modern slavery to return home.

■ Slavery: Children**Ann Coffey:****[125040]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many children have been accepted into the National Referral Mechanism as victims of criminal exploitation.

Victoria Atkins:

The National Crime Agency publishes statistics on referrals into the National Referral Mechanism on a quarterly basis, which includes the breakdown of referrals for children by exploitation type. Criminal exploitation is recorded as a sub category of labour exploitation and includes exploitation such as county lines and cannabis cultivation.

The latest published statistics can be found at:

<http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/publications/national-referral-mechanism-statistics>

■ Slavery: Vietnam**Andrew Selous:****[124601]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what information her Department holds on the location of Vietnamese victims of modern slavery found in the UK in the last five years; and if she will make a statement.

Victoria Atkins:

Information about the region of exploitation of potential victims of modern slavery referred to the national referral mechanism is collected where known.

This data is published in the UK Annual Report on Modern Slavery 2017

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2017-uk-annual-report-on-modern-slavery> However the published data is not disaggregated by nationality of potential victims.

HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**■ Carillion****John Healey:**[\[125143\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 25 January 2018 to Question 123694, if he will publish a summary of the risk assessments that have been completed with commercially sensitive information redacted.

Rishi Sunak:

Due to the ongoing nature of the situation, there are no plans to publish risk assessments.

Stephanie Peacock:[\[125191\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the additional fees being charged to local authorities by the Official Receiver for Carillion plc to continue providing contracted services; and if he will make a statement.

Rishi Sunak:

In the role as liquidator of Carillion, the Official Receiver is independent of government. They are required to ensure the costs of providing on-going services for Carillion's customers are covered during this interim period before contracts are sold or transferred to new providers

The amounts being charged for on-going provision of services are being forecast on a weekly basis.

Where customers can show that the uplift being charged is not representative of the current cost, the Special Manager will review those charges to ensure that an appropriate amount is charged. This is already occurring in some cases.

■ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government: Written Questions**Anneliese Dodds:**[\[124829\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, when he plans to respond to Question 121771, tabled by the hon. Member for Oxford East on 9 January 2018.

Rishi Sunak:

A response was provided to the Hon Member for Oxford East to Question UIN 121771 on 30 January 2018.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**■ Colombia and Lesotho: Taxation**

Steve McCabe: [\[124954\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what involvement officials of her Department had during the process of negotiation and ratification of the UK's new tax treaties with Lesotho and Columbia.

Harriett Baldwin:

HM Revenue and Customs is the lead department for the negotiation of the UK's tax treaties, reporting to HM Treasury Ministers. HMRC seeks views from a range of interested parties, including DFID, and then decides with which countries to seek to engage. DFID are fully supportive of the approach. DFID and HMRC officials work closely together to deliver technical assistance to build capacity in developing country tax authorities.

■ Department for International Development: Directors

Chris Ruane: [\[124791\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, who lead non-executive director and other non-executive director board members are in her Department.

Harriett Baldwin:

The names of DFID's lead non-executive director and other non-executive director board members are set out in DFID's Annual Report and Accounts 2016/17:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/625548/DFID-Annual-Report-and-Accounts-2016-17.pdf

■ Syria: Disability

Mr Roger Godsiff: [\[124698\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether the Global Disability Summit in July 2018 has on its agenda the needs of disabled people in Syria and the support systems those people require in order to be able to access education and work.

Alistair Burt:

Both education and economic empowerment will feature prominently on the agenda of the UK's Global Disability Summit. The Summit will also consider how these themes apply in supporting people with disabilities in conflicted affected states and humanitarian situations such as in Syria.

■ Syria: Overseas Aid

Mr Roger Godsiff: [\[124697\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what proportion of her Department's funding in response to the Syrian crisis to date was delivered by means of (a) UK organisations, (b) UN agencies, (c) international NGOs and (d) Syrian NGOs.

Alistair Burt:

The UK has pledged £2.46 billion to the Syria crisis, our largest ever response to a single humanitarian crisis. Of this, £2.2 billion has already been allocated by DFID to its partners to provide lifesaving support to millions of Syrians, support refugees to remain in countries in the region, and enable their host communities to accommodate them.

A breakdown of funding allocated to date by agency type is shown in the table below. This excludes projects under the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund.

ORGANISATION TYPE	ALLOCATED
UN agencies	£1,029m
International organisations	£602m
International NGOs	£484m
(of which UK NGOs)	£33m
Other funding	£101m

DFID has not allocated funding directly to Syrian NGOs. As many of our partners work with such groups on the ground, we classify them as downstream partners.

■ Yemen: Overseas Aid

Leo Docherty:[\[124853\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to increase the flow of humanitarian aid into the north of Yemen.

Alistair Burt:

The UK is providing £205 million of UK aid to Yemen in the financial year 2017/18; and also pressing other countries to take steps to increase the flow of aid to Northern Yemen. In Saudi Arabia in December last year, the Secretary of State underscored requests made by the Prime Minister the previous month for unhindered access for imports of commercial and humanitarian food, fuel and medical supplies throughout the country. The Saudi-led Coalition recently extended their window for food and fuel imports into the important ports of Hodeidah and Saleef for another 30 days (until 22 February) and we continue to monitor the situation closely.

In the North of Yemen we are working with UN and NGO delivery partners who are operating under very difficult circumstances to reach the most vulnerable Yemenis. The UK is the 2nd largest donor to the UN Humanitarian Appeal for Yemen, which for 2018/19 is the biggest in the world, with an estimated cost of £2.96 billion intended to reach 22.2 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. This includes 11.3 million in acute need.

■ Zimbabwe: Overseas Aid**Stephen Gethins:** [\[125011\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what discussions she has had with Cabinet colleagues about the provision of aid to Zimbabwe following the house arrest of Robert Mugabe.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Cabinet has been updated on the situation in Zimbabwe and Ministers are following developments closely.

Stephen Gethins: [\[125013\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what representations her Department has received from the Zimbabwean authorities about the provision of aid to that country since the house arrest of Robert Mugabe.

Harriett Baldwin:

Officials meet regularly with the Zimbabwean authorities, other bilateral donors, private sector and civil society partners to ensure the best targeting and prioritisation of development assistance.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE**■ Department for International Trade: Staff****Barry Gardiner:** [\[125207\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if he will publish a hierarchical organisational chart of his Department which lists (a) the title of positions, (b) the reporting lines, (c) the number of direct reports and (d) the number of vacancies for posts of Grade 7 or higher.

Greg Hands:

The Department of International Trade plans to publish its organisational chart in May 2018, in accordance with the guidelines set by the Cabinet Office for the transparency agenda. This will list the title of positions, the reporting lines and the number of direct reports.

■ UK Trade With EU**Barry Gardiner:** [\[125208\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if he will list the EU trade agreements that the Government plans to replicate after the UK leaves the EU; what priority his Department has assigned to each of those agreements; and what methodology the Department uses to prioritise those agreements.

Barry Gardiner: [\[125209\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether his Department plans to replicate all the provisions and obligations of the trade agreements that the UK has as a

member of the EU with (a) Norway, (b) Switzerland and (c) Turkey after the UK has left the EU.

Greg Hands:

As we leave the EU, the Government intends to maintain the effects of existing EU free trade agreements and other EU preferential arrangements. These are listed on the European Commission's website at <http://ec.europa.eu/world/agreements/default.home.do> and include agreements with Switzerland, Turkey and Norway.

We are discussing with our trading partners how continuity is best achieved.

JUSTICE

■ Aiding and Abetting: Prosecutions

Richard Burgon:

[\[125142\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what plans his Department has to collect and publish statistics relating to the number of joint enterprise prosecutions.

Lucy Frazer:

Collecting data on joint enterprise cases is being considered as part of the Common Platform Programme. The Common Platform aims to provide a single case management system that will enable the sharing of evidence and case information across the Criminal Justice System.

■ County Courts: Sunderland

Bridget Phillipson:

[\[125159\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the letter to the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South and the hon. Member for Sunderland Central from the former Minister of State for Courts and Justice on 11 December 2017, what the timetable is for the closure of the Sunderland County Court building.

Lucy Frazer:

Work to integrate Sunderland County Court into Sunderland Magistrates' Court is expected to be completed by the end of May 2018. The Sunderland County Court building will be closed once the integration is complete.

■ Courts: Sunderland

Bridget Phillipson:

[\[125041\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the letter to the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South and the hon. Member for Sunderland Central from the former Minister of State for Courts and Justice of 11 December 2017, what estimate he has made of the cost of the proposals to integrate Sunderland County Court into the Sunderland Magistrates' Court building.

Bridget Phillipson: [\[125042\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the letter to the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South and the hon. Member for Sunderland Central from the former Minister of State for Courts and Justice of 11 December 2017, what the time-scale is for implementation of the proposals to integrate Sunderland County Court into the Sunderland Magistrates' Court building.

Lucy Frazer:

HM Courts & Tribunals Service has estimated that the cost of integrating Sunderland County Court into the Sunderland Magistrates' Court building will be approximately £284,000.

Work to integrate the County Court into the Magistrates' Court is expected to be completed by May 2018.

Bridget Phillipson: [\[125043\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the letter to the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South and the hon. Member for Sunderland Central from the former Minister of State for Courts and Justice of 11 December 2017, what assessment he has made of the effect of the proposals to integrate Sunderland County Court into the Sunderland Magistrates' Court building on the daily business of both courts.

Lucy Frazer:

The effective operation and continuity of court business was a primary consideration in developing plans for the integration of the court buildings. The integration will not interfere with the current criminal sitting pattern determined in October 2017 following a public listing consultation. Measures are being taken to ensure sufficient capacity at the site, with enabling works staggered to avoid disruption to people using the court. Integration of the courts into one building will improve court room utilisation and the operational efficiency of the court estate in Sunderland.

Bridget Phillipson: [\[125044\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the letter to the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South and the hon. Member for Sunderland Central from the former Minister of State for Courts and Justice of 11 December 2017, if he will publish the deliberations of HM Courts and Tribunals Service Property Board that resulted in the approval of proposals to integrate Sunderland County Court into the Sunderland Magistrates' Court building.

Bridget Phillipson: [\[125046\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the letter to the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South and the hon. Member for Sunderland Central from the former Minister of State for Courts and Justice of 11 December 2017, if he will meet the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland and the hon. Member for Sunderland Central to discuss the future of the Sunderland Court Estate.

Lucy Frazer:

HM Courts & Tribunals Service does not publish the minutes of the Property Board.

I will ask my office to make arrangements to schedule a meeting with the Hon. Members for Houghton and Sunderland South and Sunderland Central.

Bridget Phillipson:[\[125045\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the letter to the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South and the hon. Member for Sunderland Central from the former Minister of State for Courts and Justice of 11 December 2017, to what extent HM Courts and Tribunals Service consulted with (a) local residents, (b) the judiciary and (c) Northumbria Police before approving proposals to integrate Sunderland County Court into the Sunderland Magistrates' Court building.

Lucy Frazer:

The proposal to integrate Sunderland County Court into the Sunderland Magistrates' Court building was not subject to public consultation since it did not require the transfer of work outside of the local area.

HM Courts & Tribunals Service engaged with the judiciary at a very early stage in the process and before plans were approved. Members of the local judiciary are members of the Local Implementation Team which will oversee the integration.

The Police do not use the County Court building and were therefore not involved in discussions prior to the plans being approved. They will be notified about the integration in writing along with other magistrates' courts stakeholders in February 2018.

Bridget Phillipson:[\[125160\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the letter to the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South and the hon. Member for Sunderland Central from the former Minister of State for Courts and Justice on 11 December 2017, whether a decision has been made on the future of Sunderland Court Estate.

Lucy Frazer:

HM Courts & Tribunals Service currently has no plans to alter any arrangements regarding the future of the Sunderland court estate.

■ Magistrates' Courts: Sunderland**Bridget Phillipson:**[\[125161\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the letter to the hon. Member for Houghton and Sunderland South and the hon. Member for Sunderland Central from the former Minister of State for Courts and Justice on 11 December 2017, whether he has plans to integrate Social Security and Child Support Tribunal services into the Sunderland Magistrates' Court building.

Lucy Frazer:

Social Security and Child Support Tribunal appeal hearings will be integrated into the Sunderland Magistrates' Court building by the end of March 2018.

Ministry of Justice: Chief Scientific Advisers**Norman Lamb:**[\[124386\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many meetings (a) he and (b) his predecessor had with his Department's Chief Scientific Adviser between October and December 2017.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The previous Secretary of State, David Lidington, did not meet with the Chief Scientific Advisor between October and December 2017.

Ministry of Justice: Drinking Water**Tim Farron:**[\[124524\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how much money his Department has spent on bottled water in each year since 2010.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The information requested could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Prisoners' Release: Males**Sir Vince Cable:**[\[125192\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what proportion of male prisoners serving Indefinite Public Protection sentences were released following (a) a period in Category D open conditions, (b) a period in Category C conditions and (c) directly from a Category A or B prison in each of the last five years.

Sir Vince Cable:[\[125193\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what proportion of female prisoners serving Indefinite Public Protection sentences were released following (a) a period in open conditions, (b) a period in closed conditions and (c) directly from a Category A or restricted status prison in each of the last five years.

Rory Stewart:

The information requested could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Prisoners are categorised based on an individual assessment of risk of escape or abscond, of harm to the public in such an event, and any risk to the security and safety of the prison and those within it.

Progression towards release for those serving Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) sentences can take a number of routes. Open conditions offer a means to test prisoners in conditions closer to those in the community, and IPP prisoners will only be assessed as suitable for location in such prisons following a robust risk

assessment. They can be removed back to closed conditions immediately at any time.

Our priority remains the protection of the public, and this is reflected in the work HM Prison and Probation Service undertake with IPP prisoners prior to and following their release.

No changes have been made to the IPP release test, and the independent Parole Board will continue to rigorously assess all tariff-expired IPP prisoners, in order as to determine they are safe to be released.

■ Prisons: Repairs and Maintenance

Richard Burgon: [\[125140\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether prison governors will be empowered to bring maintenance contracts back in-house.

Rory Stewart:

We have announced the creation of a new government-owned facilities management company that will take over the delivery of the prison Facilities Management services previously provided by Carillion. HM Prison and Probation Service will continue to work with prison Facilities Management providers, including the new company, as well as with prison governors, to secure significant improvements to these services.

■ Terrorism: Hyde Park

Mr Laurence Robertson: [\[124950\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether he has held any discussions with the Legal Aid Agency about the application for legal aid, reference TIP.00288.FUN.LAA, to bring a case in connection with the Hyde Park Bombing.

Lucy Frazer:

Over thirty years later families and friends are still suffering from the horrific consequences of the Hyde Park bombings. I would like to express my deepest sympathies to those affected by this terrorist crime.

All individual case funding decisions are taken by the Legal Aid Agency. Ministers are prevented by law from intervening in this process. It is important that these decisions are, and are seen to be, free from political and Government influence.

This matter is currently ongoing, and as such it would be inappropriate for me to comment further at this time.

■ Trials: Languages

Steve McCabe: [\[124429\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 9 November 2017 to Question 111195 on Trials: Languages, how many defendants were not provided with interpretation and translation services in their first language.

Lucy Frazer:

The information requested is not held centrally.

NORTHERN IRELAND

■ Northern Ireland Office: Drinking Water

Tim Farron:

[\[124525\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how much money her Department has spent on bottled water in each year since 2010.

Mr Shailesh Vara:

In 2016, the Department spent £54.10 on bottled water, and 2017 £89.70. There are no records held for the previous years.

PRIME MINISTER

■ Government Chief Scientific Adviser

Norman Lamb:

[\[124390\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, how many meetings she had with the Government Chief Scientific Adviser between October and December 2017.

Mrs Theresa May:

I have regular meetings with ministerial colleagues, officials and others.

SCOTLAND

■ Scotland Office: Drinking Water

Tim Farron:

[\[124526\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, how much money his Department has spent on bottled water in each year since 2010.

David Mundell:

The Scotland Office does not have any onsite catering or vending facilities. Fresh water supplies are provided directly through fixed water filtration systems which are directly fed from mains water supplies.

We run a number of events, some of which may provide bottled water. However any spend is not recorded separately.

■ Scotland Office: Presidents Club**Jess Phillips:**[\[124625\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, whether any Ministers in his Department attended the Presidents Club Charity Dinner run by the Meller Educational Trust in an official capacity.

David Mundell:

None of the Ministers in my Department were invited to, or attended the dinner.

TRANSPORT**■ Bicycles: Hire Services****Steve McCabe:**[\[124445\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 8 January 2018 to Question 120619, if he will make an assessment of the effect of bike-share schemes on air quality.

Jesse Norman:

The precise impacts of each bike share scheme vary according to location and other factors, making a specific assessment impossible. Cycling can deliver significant air quality and other benefits in general, however, and the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy sets out the various ways in which the Government is supporting it.

Steve McCabe:[\[124446\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 8 January 2018 to Question 120619, how many cities in the UK do not already have a bike-share scheme.

Jesse Norman:

The Department for Transport does not hold this information, but continues to work with local authorities and bike share operators across the country to develop a better understanding of the this rapidly developing area.

Steve McCabe:[\[124448\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 8 January 2018 to Question 120615, what steps he is taking to promote the introduction of bike-share schemes in towns and cities which do not already have such a scheme.

Jesse Norman:

It is for local authorities rather than central Government in the first instance to determine whether, and if so how, to promote bike-share schemes in their areas. The Government's overall plans to increase cycling and walking, together with a summary of the available funding, are set out in the statutory Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy published in April 2017.

Steve McCabe:

[\[124450\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 8 January 2018 to Question 120618, what the outcome was of those discussions with the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on bike-share schemes.

Jesse Norman:

The Department for Transport and the Department for Health and Social Care have agreed to explore opportunities for closer working with Public Health England to support delivery of both the Cycle and Walking Investment Strategy, and Public Health England's Framework Strategy "Everybody active, every day". This should help deliver our shared objectives of increasing levels of walking and cycling.

■ **Bus Services: Modernisation**

Justin Tomlinson:

[\[124362\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what support his Department is providing to bus companies to modernise their fleets.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The Government has introduced a variety of measures to help operators in England modernise their fleets.

As part of a £3.5 billion commitment for air quality and cleaner transport, we awarded over £40 million in 2016 and 2017 to support the purchase of cleaner and less polluting buses under the Low Emission Bus Scheme. We will be launching a further round of this scheme later this year worth an additional £49 million. We have also committed £40 million for retrofitting older buses with pollution-reducing technology under the Clean Bus Technology Fund.

In terms of improvements on-board buses, the Bus Services Act (2017) includes provisions through the Accessible Information Regulations requiring all bus operators of local services across Great Britain to provide audible and visible route and next stop announcements on-board buses.

Whilst the regulations are intended to be technology neutral, the outcome should be a more modern, more accessible and overall better experience for bus passengers across England, Scotland and Wales.

■ **Carillion**

Stephen Doughty:

[\[124920\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether any sub-contractors carrying out work on the South Wales mainline electrification project are currently experiencing arrears in payment as a result of the collapse of Carillion.

Joseph Johnson:

Network Rail is currently working on this issue with PwC. Network Rail has confirmed that sub-contractors to Carillion will be paid by PwC in respect of work relating to NR projects since 15 January 2018 until mid-April 2018.

■ Electric Vehicles: Yorkshire and Humberside

Alex Sobel:

[\[125182\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to increase the number of electric car charging points at motorway service stations in the Yorkshire and Humber region.

Jesse Norman:

Across the UK, almost all Motorway Service Areas already have at least one rapid chargepoint. Highways England has committed £15m to ensure there are chargepoints (rapid where possible) every 20 miles on 95% of the Strategic Road Network by 2020. The Autonomous and Electric Vehicles Bill currently going through Parliament contains new regulatory powers to require the installation of chargepoints at motorway service areas and large fuel retailers if there are insufficient levels of infrastructure at these locations to support growing numbers of electric vehicles. An updated strategy setting out Government's role in this transition to electric motoring will be published in the coming months.

■ Network Rail

Andy McDonald:

[\[125060\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the business risks faced by Network Rail in Control Period 6.

Joseph Johnson:

The Regulatory Periodic Review process (PR18) is ongoing and is designed to consider the appropriate funding, charging and work to be undertaken by Network Rail in Control Period 6. Government continues to input its views into this process, which will consider the risks faced by Network Rail before concluding with a Determination, expected October 2018.

Andy McDonald:

[\[125061\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much Network Rail will be permitted to borrow in Control Period 6.

Joseph Johnson:

The Statement of Funds Available, published 12 October 2017 made clear that, "Network Rail will not take loans or issue bonds from Government or any Third Party to fund the HLOS ("High Level Output Specification" for Control Period 6). In addition, Network Rail must refer to the 'Network Rail Framework Agreement' before entering into any financial transactions which may be classified as borrowing."

■ Railways: Compensation

Tom Brake:

[\[124799\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he will ask (a) Southern and (b) Govia Thameslink Railway to fund a one-month rail refund to annual season ticket holders to compensate those ticket holders for rail disruption.

Joseph Johnson:

I understand the difficulties that passengers have faced and am glad to see that performance has improved over the past year, since the height of industrial action. Govia Thameslink Railway who operate Southern services, have compensation arrangements in place, including the special compensation for past disruption, which saw £13.6 million paid to 58,000 passengers. They were the first company to introduce Delay Repay 15 compensation and under this scheme passengers are entitled to claim compensation for delays of 15 minutes or more on each journey.

■ **Railways: South East****Layla Moran:**[\[124615\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the average journey time between Oxford and London Paddington station is (a) at present and (b) planned to be after the electrification of that route.

Joseph Johnson:

The typical journey time for fast services between Oxford and London Paddington is 57 minutes, with some services with additional stops taking a little longer.

Precise journey times from London Paddington to Oxford will be confirmed as part of the industry's timetable bidding process, later this year.

■ **Roads: Hertfordshire****Bim Afolami:**[\[124607\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much funding has been allocated from the public purse to roads and highways in Hertfordshire since 2010.

Jesse Norman:

The Department for Transport has allocated over £213 million to upgrade and improve local highways in Hertfordshire between 2010/11 and 2017/18 financial years.

■ **South Western Railway: Industrial Disputes****Leo Docherty:**[\[124858\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to prevent future strikes on South Western Railway; and if will he make a statement.

Joseph Johnson:

The RMT's current mandate for strike action on South Western Railway expires in April. During the recent RMT strikes over Christmas and New Year, South Western Railway operated around 70% of their services, keeping passengers on the move. In December the Secretary of State met with Mick Cash to renew his offer of guarantees of employment to people who currently fulfil the role of the second person on the train beyond the length of the franchises. The Secretary of State and I continue to

encourage a dialogue between the parties to resolve the RMT union's dispute and avoid further unnecessary strikes for passengers.

■ **Transport: North of England**

Judith Cummins:

[\[124652\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if the Government will take steps to fund the Transport for the North's Strategic Transport Plan for the North to at least the same level per head of population as is invested in transport in Greater London.

Joseph Johnson:

The Department for Transport makes investment decisions based on a rigorous and fair appraisal process that ensures spending goes to the projects and programmes where it is most needed and delivers greatest value-for-money for both taxpayers and transport users. We do not allocate funding to transport on a 'per head of population' basis.

WALES

■ **Economic Situation: Wales**

Sir Henry Bellingham:

[\[903568\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what recent discussions he has had with the Welsh Government on the effect on the economy of Wales of the UK leaving the EU.

Alun Cairns:

There has been, and will continue to be, constructive engagement with the Welsh Government.

Their own statistics estimate trade to the rest of the UK could account for 80% of all Welsh exports. It's clear that we must work together to support the UK internal market, ensuring that no new barriers to living and doing business in the UK are created as we leave the EU.

■ **Police: Wales**

Sarah Jones:

[\[903572\]](#)

What recent representations he has received from the Police and Crime Commissioners in Wales on the adequacy of (a) the number of police officers and (b) police funding in Wales.

David Hanson:

[\[903573\]](#)

What recent representations he has received from Police and Crime Commissioners in Wales on police funding for Wales in 2018-19.

Stuart Andrew:

Wales Office ministers meet regularly with representatives of the police in Wales to discuss a range of issues.

The Government recently announced the proposed police funding settlement for 2018/19 which would see an additional £450m invested across England and Wales, including around £16m direct to Welsh PCCs.

■ **Tourism: Wales**

Ellie Reeves: [\[903571\]](#)

What recent discussions he has had with the Welsh Government on promoting Wales as a tourist destination.

Stuart Andrew:

Wales is a fantastic tourist destination and we must take every opportunity to highlight its attractions. Since my appointment I have spoken with Visit Britain to discuss how we can work together to promote Wales to the world and I am hoping to meet with the Welsh Government Minister for Tourism in the coming weeks.

■ **Wales Office: Directors**

Chris Ruane: [\[124800\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, who the lead non-executive director and other non-executive director board members are in his Department.

Stuart Andrew:

The Wales Office has two non-executive director board members:

- 1) Isobel Garner – Lead Non-Executive Director Board Member; and
- 2) Tom Jones – Non-Executive Director Board Member

Further information is included in the Wales Office Annual Report:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wales-office-annual-report-2016-17-published>

■ **Wales Office: Drinking Water**

Tim Farron: [\[124602\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, how much his Department has spent on bottled water in each year since 2010.

Stuart Andrew:

The Wales Office provides water dispensers in its London and Cardiff offices, and does not routinely purchase bottled water.

Any bottled water purchased by the department forms part of wider expenditure on catering for receptions and events. We do not hold information on the amount spent solely on bottled water.

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

■ Equality Act 2010

Thelma Walker:

[\[124267\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, whether she plans to review the operation of the Equality Act 2010.

Victoria Atkins:

A post-legislative scrutiny review of the Equality Act 2010 took place in 2015 and is here

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/441838/Memo_to_Women_Equalities.pdf The way that the Act operates is kept under review to ensure that it operates as intended.

■ Government Equalities Office: Directors

Chris Ruane:

[\[124786\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, who the lead non-executive director and other non-executive director board members are in the Government Equalities Office.

Victoria Atkins:

In the Government reshuffle of 9 January, the Prime Minister appointed the Home Secretary, Amber Rudd, as Minister for Women and Equalities. The Government Equalities Office has an ambitious agenda to champion equality and help make Britain a place where everyone can succeed without facing discrimination. This work will continue under the leadership of the Home Secretary

We are in the process of confirming new governance arrangements to reflect this change.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Access to Work Programme

Steve McCabe:

[\[125002\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what evidence she has considered in relation to her Department's plans to introduce a cap on Access to Work grants.

Steve McCabe:

[\[125003\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will stop the implementation of the cap on access to work grants.

Steve McCabe:

[\[125004\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of raising the cap on Access to Work grants.

Sarah Newton:

In March 2015 the former Minister for Disabled People announced a series of reforms to Access to Work, including a cap on high value awards which would be mitigated by transitional protection for existing customers. In May 2015 the DWP published the report 'Equality Analysis for the Future of Access to Work', which laid out the data that had been reviewed in formulating those reforms and the considerations we had taken into account in setting the cap level at 1.5 times the median gross annual earnings for full-time employees (as published annually by the ONS).

In 2017/18, the cap amounted to £42,100 per person per year. In April 2018, the cap will rise to £43,100.

Since the cap came into effect in October 2015, we have monitored the progress of deaf and disabled individuals affected by it, including those who have benefitted from transitional protection. As we made clear in the 2015 equality analysis, we will continue to monitor the effects of capping and, if an adverse impact upon equality is identified, we will consider the case for further flexibilities. Ministers and officials have also conducted extensive engagement with customers and organisations including charities, disabled people's organisations and employers. The most recent engagement was held in January 2018.

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Directors**Chris Ruane:**[\[124801\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, who the lead non-executive director and other non-executive director board members are in her Department.

Kit Malthouse:

The Lead Non-Executive Board Member is Sara Weller CBE.

Other Non-Executive Board Members are:

Andrew Graham CB CBE

Hayley Tatum

Ashley Machin

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Drinking Water**Tim Farron:**[\[124517\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much money her Department has spent on bottled water in each year since 2010.

Kit Malthouse:

The Department introduced a policy several years ago to move away from free standing water chillers with plastic bottles. Instead, where water chillers are required to meet a business need, a plumbed-in supply is normally used.

There remains a very small number of sites where a plumbed-in supply is not practicable, and in these cases, local arrangements may have been made for water chillers. However, no information is held centrally.

Prior to the policy change, bottled water would have been provided for business meetings as part of any wider refreshment cost, and cannot be identified separately. Water now provided for official meetings is no longer supplied in plastic bottles; refillable glass bottles or water jugs are provided.

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Presidents Club

Jess Phillips: [\[124629\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether any Ministers in her Department attended the Presidents Club Charity Dinner run by the Meller Educational Trust in an official capacity.

Kit Malthouse:

No current Minister in her Department has attended the Presidents Club Charity Dinner run by the Meller Educational Trust in their official capacity.

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Staff

Alison Thewliss: [\[124376\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many staff are currently employed in her Department to administer pension credit and carer's allowance claims; and how those figures compare with the number of those employed in January 2017.

Kit Malthouse:

The Department for Work & Pensions employed 252 Pension Credit claims staff and 302 Carer's Allowance claims staff in December 2017. This is the latest information held by the Department. This compares with 287 Pension Credit claims staff and 190 Carer's Allowance claims staff in January 2017.

■ English Language: Education

Tulip Siddiq: [\[124740\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 28 December 2015 to Question 19729, how many jobseekers were referred to English language skills educational providers by jobcentres in (a) 2016 and (b) 2017.

Alok Sharma:

Between January and December 2016, in England and Scotland there were 16,880 referrals of jobseekers to English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) training.

Between January and May 2017, in England and Scotland there were 6,530 referrals of jobseekers to English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) training.

Notes

1. These are the numbers of referrals, rather than the number of jobseekers. A jobseeker could be referred multiple times.
2. Figures are available for England and Scotland only.
3. Figures only include number of referrals to ESOL training under skills conditionality. There may be additional referrals not through skills conditionality, such as if a claimant requests a referral to ESOL training.
4. Data for 2017 is currently only published up until May 2017, with April and May 2017 being considered provisional and subject to change. The next release will include data up until November 2017 and is due for publication on 28th February 2018.

■ Housing Benefit: Personal Savings

Stephen Lloyd:

[\[124461\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what discussions she has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on increasing in line with inflation each year the maximum amount an individual can hold in savings before becoming ineligible for housing benefit.

Kit Malthouse:

No meetings have taken place. Although capital limits are kept under review, they can be increased only when priorities and resources allow. It was never the intention that they should be uprated annually. The cost would be substantial and it is questionable whether increasing the general capital limits, enabling more public money to be paid to people who already have significant resources, would be the best use of the funds available to us.

■ Mortgages: Interest Payments

Angela Crawley:

[\[125094\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether the removal of Support for Mortgage Interest as part of benefit entitlement from April 2018 will affect entitlement to passported benefits such as help with health costs, free school meals, sure start maternity grant and the warm home discount scheme.

Kit Malthouse:

The eligibility for passported benefits is often, but not always, linked to entitlement to income-related benefits such as Income Support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Universal Credit and Pension Credit. The introduction of Support for Mortgage Interest Loans in April 2018 will not change these criteria.

In some instances, claimants who are treated as receiving the income-related based benefit solely due to eligibility for SMI will no longer be automatically entitled to all 'passported' benefits. Many of these claimants will remain eligible to a number of

passported benefits on the grounds of age or low income but will usually need to apply for them directly.

Angela Crawley:

[\[125096\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many face to face explanations of the change to Support for Mortgage Interest loan payments her Department has carried out supplementary to the telephone and online contact with SERCO.

Kit Malthouse:

Department has not carried out any face to face explanations of Support for Mortgage Interest loans.

Angela Crawley:

[\[125098\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate her Department has made of the cost of implementing the change of Support for Mortgage Interest from a benefit to a loan; and the ongoing administration of that loan.

Kit Malthouse:

The Department estimates that the total cost of implementing Support for Mortgage Interest loans will be £20.47m. The ongoing administrative costs are estimated to be £2.20m a year.

■ Occupational Pensions Scheme Review

Bambos Charalambous:

[\[124570\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether the Government plans to respond to the Review of Survivor Benefits in Occupational Pension Schemes, published in June 2014.

Guy Opperman:

The Review provided a lot of important information on the costs and impacts of any changes to the existing system of survivor benefits. This is a complex area and it was to be expected that a thorough consideration of the issue would take time.

No final decisions have been made on these issues. The Government will respond in due course.

■ Pension Wise

Tulip Siddiq:

[\[124737\]](#)

To ask Secretary of State for Work and Pensions with reference to the Answer of 19 October 2015 to Question 10807, how many free guidance sessions with Pension Wise have been held for those with defined contribution pensions in each year since October 2015; and what estimate his Department has made of the number of such sessions which will be held in 2018.

Guy Opperman:

The number of Pension Wise website visits and appointments has grown significantly from a standing start when the service launched in April 2015, and is still rising.

Pension Wise delivered **61,000** face to face and telephone appointments in 2015/16, **66,000** in 2016/17 and is on track to deliver more than **80,000** in 2017/18.

There have been around 6.2 million visits to the pension wise website since launch.

In July 2017 Pension Wise introduced digital appointments, which guide users through their pension options, scams and tax implications online. Digital appointments mirror the content provided in a face to face or telephone appointment. So far, Pension Wise has delivered almost **22,000** digital appointments.

■ **Personal Independence Payment: Complaints**

Alex Sobel:[\[125144\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many complaints ATOS and Capita received on the quality of written medical reports after personal independence payments assessments in 2016-2017.

Sarah Newton:

From January 2016 to December 2017 Independent Assessment Services (formally Atos Healthcare) and Capita completed a combined total of 2.1 million PIP assessments. The total number of complaints relating to the quality of the written assessment reports equates to less than 1% of the total number of completed assessments, as set out in the table below.

YEAR	IAS NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED	CAPITA NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED
2016	1934	522
2017	2750	251
Total	4684	773

■ **Personal Independence Payment: Tribunals**

Hugh Gaffney:[\[124228\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how much was spent by the Government from the public purse in legal fees on seeking to overturn the Upper Tribunal Administrative Appeals Chamber decision of April 2016 on personal independent payments.

Sarah Newton:

There are no Upper Tribunal judgments on Personal Independence Payments dated April 2016 that the Department is currently appealing to the Court of Appeal.

■ Social Security Benefits: Digital Technology

Tonia Antoniazzi:

[\[124528\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans her Department has to digitise the application processes for (a) personal independence payments, (b) attendance allowance and (c) other benefits.

Sarah Newton:

DWP is fully committed to improving the way customers access the support they need in the simplest way possible. A range of online services are already available and we continue to work directly with the users of our services to understand their needs and build services to meet those needs.

Although it remains on our longer-term road map, there are no current plans to digitise the process for Personal Independence Payments although we are introducing improved Digital services for the health assessment.

Similarly, we are not currently planning any digitisation of the Attendance Allowance.

We have introduced Digital services for a number of our other benefits/ services including Universal Credit, Job Seekers Allowance, Carer's Allowance, and to support state pensions. We are continuing to prioritise further digital investment for other benefits where we can see improvements for Citizens.

■ Social Security Benefits: Maladministration

Ged Killen:

[\[125113\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent assessment she has made of errors in benefit payments resulting from claimants moving from one job centre catchment area to another, particularly when one jobcentre operates universal credit and the other does not.

Ged Killen:

[\[125116\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what guidance her Department has issued to jobcentres on processing claimants who have moved from one job centre catchment area to another, particularly when a claimant moves to or from a universal credit full service rollout area to one that does not yet offer universal credit.

Alok Sharma:

Full guidance is made available to all DWP staff on what action is required when a claimant moves to a different area. To assist with this process, claimants are made aware of what steps they need to take to ensure that there are no delays in their payments. Work coaches and colleagues in service centres work hard to ensure that any errors made are kept to a minimum and rectified promptly.

If a claimant moves out of a postcode area where Universal Credit Full Service is delivered into a postcode area where it is not, their Universal Credit Full Service claim will remain open.

Their previous office would retain ownership of their records and, in collaboration with the new site, work with the claimant to move them closer to or into work. The claim would then transfer fully when the new office the claimant is now attending begins to deliver Universal Credit Full Service.

■ Universal Credit

Danielle Rowley: [\[125147\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many claimants have migrated from a legacy benefit to universal credit to date.

Alok Sharma:

The information requested is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

■ Universal Credit: Children

Danielle Rowley: [\[125139\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many households in receipt of universal credit have children.

Danielle Rowley: [\[125146\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many households are in receipt of universal credit in Midlothian.

Alok Sharma:

The available information on the number of households in receipt of Universal Credit by parliamentary constituency, family type and whether the household has received a payment or a nil award is published and can be accessed:

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

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

<https://sw.stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/Getting-Started.html>

■ Universal Credit: Haringey

Mr David Lammy: [\[125304\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many claimants in the (a) London Borough of Haringey and (b) Tottenham constituency were eligible for universal credit on 1 January 2018.

Alok Sharma:

The latest available information on the number of people on Universal Credit by parliamentary constituency and local authority is published and can be accessed at:

<https://stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/>. Guidance on how to extract the information required can be found at:

<https://sw.stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/webapi/online-help/Getting-Started.html>

These statistics count the number of individuals who were eligible for Universal Credit and on an active claim at the time of the count. They include individuals on claims with a nil award but do not include those who are eligible to receive Universal Credit but have not made a claim.

■ **Universal Credit: Midlothian**

Danielle Rowley: [\[125138\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the timescale is for all legacy benefit caseloads in Midlothian to be migrated to universal credit.

Alok Sharma:

The managed migration of legacy benefit claimants to Universal Credit is planned to start in July 2019, completing in March 2022. We are still developing the more detailed plans as to when this will occur in particular geographic areas during this period.

■ **Work Capability Assessment: Parkinson's Disease**

Michelle Donelan: [\[124314\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether her Department plans to involve people with Parkinson's disease in the process of improving the work capability assessment.

Sarah Newton:

We are committed to working with a comprehensive range of external stakeholders including disability charities, academics, people with disabilities and their advocates. As part of this, I am pleased to note that I am scheduling a meeting with representatives of Parkinson's UK.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

ATTORNEY GENERAL

■ Serious Fraud Office (Contingencies Fund Advance)

Solicitor General (Robert Buckland):

[\[HCWS437\]](#)

I would like to inform the House that a cash advance from the Contingencies Fund has been sought for the Serious Fraud Office (SFO).

In line with the current arrangement for SFO funding agreed with HM Treasury, the SFO will be submitting a Reserve claim as part of the Supplementary Estimate process for 2017-18.

The advance is required to meet a current cash requirement on existing services pending Parliamentary approval of the 2017-18 Supplementary Estimate. The Supplementary Estimate will seek an increase in both the Resource Departmental Expenditure Limit and the net cash requirement in order to cover the cost of significant investigations.

Parliamentary approval for additional resources of £9,500,000 will be sought in a Supplementary Estimate for the Serious Fraud Office. Pending that approval, urgent expenditure estimated at £9,500,000 will be met by repayable cash advances from the Contingencies Fund.

The advance will be repaid upon Royal Assent of the Supply and Appropriation (Anticipation and Adjustments) Bill.

TREASURY

■ Protocol to the Double Taxation Convention between the United Kingdom and Uzbekistan

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mel Stride):

[\[HCWS438\]](#)

A Protocol to the Double Taxation Convention with Uzbekistan was signed on 24 January 2018. The text of the Protocol is available on HM Revenue and Customs' pages of the Gov.uk website and will be deposited in the Libraries of both Houses. The text will be scheduled to a draft Order in Council and laid before the House of Commons in due course.

DEFENCE

■ Defence Equipment Plan

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Defence (Guto Bebb):

[\[HCWS436\]](#)

I am pleased to place in the Library of the House this year's financial summary of the Defence Equipment Plan. This is the sixth consecutive annual publication of the equipment plan summary, and demonstrates the Ministry of Defence's investment and

the need to continue progress in driving improvements, reform and efficiency, with a plan to spend £180 billion on equipment and support over the decade out to 2026-27 which will provide our Armed Forces with the capability they need.

The Government remains committed to the Defence Budget increasing by 0.5% above inflation each year and the Department is focusing on where best to invest across the entire Defence programme in order to remain on top of an ever-changing and increasing threat environment. However, it was evident following the 2016 annual planning cycle that both uncertainty and risk had increased in the Equipment Plan. It did not, unfortunately, prove possible to address these issues satisfactorily in the 2017 Annual Budget Cycle (ABC17) as a result of which, the Equipment Plan emerging from ABC17 contains a high level of financial risk and an imbalance between cost and budget.

These risks have informed the Department's work on the National Security Capability Review and associated work in the 2018 Annual Budget Cycle. The Department recently launched the Modernising Defence Programme. We aim to use this work to deliver better military capability and value for money in a sustainable and affordable way, and to ensure that defence capabilities complement other national security capabilities in the most effective way.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Global Estate Update

Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Alistair Burt):
[\[HCWS435\]](#)

I announce today the planned move of the Bangkok Embassy in Thailand. The new embassy building will be based in the AIA Sathorn Tower and will provide a modern, dedicated base from which diplomats can work to promote UK interests in Thailand.

We anticipate moving into the new offices in 2019, until which point we will lease back our existing embassy site to keep disruption to a minimum. Our embassy will continue to provide essential consular services to British holidaymakers and business people, and to work with the Thai authorities on preventing child exploitation, organised crime, money laundering and human trafficking.

Our new and improved embassy will allow us to take this activity to the next level, including by strengthening our trade links, enhancing our strong collaboration on science and innovation, and maintaining our focus on supporting human rights defenders and promoting freedom of expression. The new embassy will demonstrate our long-term commitment to our relationship with Thailand – a key partner for the UK's security and prosperity interests and leading member of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The completion of the sale of the current Bangkok Embassy compound in Thailand is the biggest land deal in Thai history and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's (FCO's) biggest ever sale, raising at least £420 million.

This deal is the result of considerable work by the FCO. The funds released will allow us to begin work on 30 to 40 major long-planned Estates projects, and enable us to continue to update and modernise our global estate so that it meets our aspiration to provide a world-class platform for diplomacy.

HOME OFFICE

■ Police Funding

The Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service (Mr Nick Hurd):

[\[HCWS439\]](#)

My rt hon Friend, the Home Secretary, has today laid before the House, the Police Grant Report (England and Wales) 2018/19 (HC 745) for the approval of the House. The report sets out the Home Secretary's determination for 2018/19 of the aggregate amount of grant that she proposes to pay under section 46(2) of the Police Act 1996.

Before announcing the Government's proposals, I visited or spoke with every police force in England and Wales to better understand the demands they face and how these can best be managed. I saw for myself the exceptional attitude and hard work of police officers and staff around the country. I have also carefully considered the responses to the consultation on the provisional Police Grant Report.

The Government is committed to protecting the public and providing the resources necessary for the police to do their critical work. We have listened to the police and recognised the demands they face. That is why I can confirm that the allocations that have been laid before the House today are the same as those proposed in my Statement of 19 December 2017. These proposals increase total investment in the police system by up to £450m year on year in 2018/19.

In 2018/19, we will provide each Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) with the same amount of core Government grant funding as in 2017/18. Protecting police grant means PCCs retain the full benefit from any additional local Council Tax income.

Alongside this, we are providing flexibility to PCCs in England to increase their Band D precept by up to £12 in 2018/19 without the need to call a local referendum, equivalent to up to £1 per month for a typical Band D household. These changes give PCCs the flexibility to increase their funding by up to around £270m next year. Each PCC who uses this flexibility will be able to increase their direct resource funding by at least an estimated 1.6%, maintaining their funding in real terms. Most PCCs are intending to use the new precept flexibility.

We will also increase investment in national policing priorities such as police technology and Special Grant by around £130m compared to 2017/18. This reflects our commitment to support the police to deliver a modern digitally enabled workforce, and to manage major events such as the Commonwealth Summit and terrorist attacks. We will maintain the size of the Police Transformation Fund at £175 million in order to help drive police reform.

Counter-terrorism police will receive a £50m (7%) increase in like for like funding when compared to 2017/18. This will enable the counter-terrorism budget to increase to at least £757m, including £29m for an uplift in armed policing from the Police Transformation Fund. This is a significant additional investment in the vital work of counter-terrorism police officers across the country. PCCs will be notified of force allocations separately. These will not be made public for security reasons.

In addition to the police funding settlement, the Government is taking decisive action to tackle the increasingly sophisticated cyber threat we face through the National Cyber Security Strategy, which is supported by a £1.9billion programme of transformational investment from 2016 to 2021. The Law Enforcement response to tackling cyber crime is an essential element of our national strategy, with the Home Office investing £30m of National Cyber Security Programme funding in 2017/18 to support and develop the law enforcement response at the national, regional and local level. We will continue to invest in law enforcement capability throughout the lifetime of the programme.

As I set out in my statement of 19 December, the increase in funding to PCCs in 2018/19 must be matched by a serious commitment from PCCs and chief constables to reform by improving productivity and efficiency to deliver a better, more transparent service to the public. Since that statement, I have written to the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners and the National Police Chiefs Council seeking their proposals to deliver further efficiencies. Following these proposals, we will agree appropriate milestones for delivery in 2018. If the police deliver clear and substantial progress against the agreed milestones on productivity and efficiency in 2018, then the Government intends to maintain the protection of a broadly flat police grant in 2019/20 and repeat the same flexibility of the precept, i.e. allowing PCCs to increase their Band D precept by a further up to £12 in 2019/20. This approach gives policing the opportunity to make major improvements in efficiency, and use those gains to improve services to the public.

Since December, the Home Office has continued to work with the police to identify potential procurement savings. We have identified a further £20m of potential procurement savings starting in 2018/19, taking the total to over £120m.

In December I highlighted the opportunity for policing to save up to 1 hour per officer shift through mobile digital working, potentially releasing the equivalent of 11,000 police officers who can be deployed to meet changing demands. Since December I have established a small team who will work with the police through 2018 to audit the level of opportunity from mobile working, identify which approaches work best, highlight best practice, and help forces and the Home Office take the right decisions to maximise the gains from the use of mobile digital working.

We are also today publishing comparable national information on the financial reserves held by PCCs to assist the public in holding PCCs to account. As at March 2017 PCCs held usable resource reserves of over £1.6bn. This compares to £1.4bn in 2011. Current reserves held represent 15% of annual police funding to PCCs. There are wide variations between forces with Gwent for example holding 42% and Northumbria holding close to 7%. This is public money and the public are entitled to more information around police plans for reserves and how those plans will support more effective policing. So I am also

today writing to PCCs setting out new guidance requiring them to publish their reserves strategies in plain English, with a clear justification for each reserve held.

I have set out in a separate document (attached) the tables illustrating how we propose to allocate the police funding settlement between the different funding streams and between Police & Crime Commissioners for 2018/19. These documents are intended to be read together.

Attachments:

1. Police funding settlement tables [Police settlement 2018 to 19 tables.pdf]