

**Daily Report****Monday, 3 July 2017**

This report shows written answers and statements provided on 3 July 2017 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:41 P.M., 03 July 2017). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

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

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

ANSWERS

ATTORNEY GENERAL

■ Prosecutions

Liz Saville Roberts:

[\[1157\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many people opted to review decisions made by the Crown Prosecution Service not to prosecute their cases in the financial year 2016-17.

Jeremy Wright:

In 2016/17, the CPS received 1,988 Victims Right to Review (VRR) appeals.

■ Tobacco: Smuggling

Chris Ruane:

[\[511\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many prosecutions for the sale of illegal tobacco have taken place in each police authority area in each of the last 10 years.

Robert Buckland:

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) does not maintain a central record of the number of people who have been charged with, and prosecuted for, selling illegal tobacco. This information could only be obtained by examining CPS case files, which would incur disproportionate cost.

The Tobacco Products Duty Act 1979 relates to the excise duty on tobacco products. Section 8G(4) and 8H(6) of the act was inserted by the Finance Act 2000 and creates the offences of (a) possess, transport or display unmarked tobacco products otherwise than as described and (b) selling, offering to sell or otherwise deals in unmarked tobacco products; or suffers premises to be used for the sale of unmarked tobacco products. In these sections unmarked products mean tobacco products that are subject to fiscal marking but do not carry compliant duty-paid fiscal mark.

Although it is not possible to identify the number of people charged with particular offences, records are held showing the overall number of offences in which a prosecution commenced in the Magistrates' courts. The table below shows the number of offences, rather than defendants, charged by way of the Tobacco Products Duty Act 1979. A single defendant may be charged with more than one offence. Data are only available since 2011-12. Prior to this date, prosecutions under this legislation were carried out by the Revenue and Customs Prosecution Office (RCPO).

-	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Tobacco Products Duty Act 1979 { 8G(4)(a) and (6) }	0	1	11	2	16	22
Tobacco Products Duty Act 1979 { 8G(4)(b) and (6) }	2	2	8	4	20	16
Total Tobacco Products Duty Act 1979	2	3	19	6	36	38
Total	4	6	38	12	72	76

The Customs and Excise Management Act 1979 relates to the collection and management of the revenues of custom and excise. Prosecutions under section 170(1)(b) for being knowingly concerned in 'carrying, removing, depositing, harbouring, keeping or concealing or in any manner dealing' with excise goods and the offence of fraudulent evasion of duty under s170(2) can include offences involving tobacco products but also other products.

CPS data does not dis-aggregate the overall number of these offences in which a prosecution commenced in the Magistrates' courts. This information could only be obtained by examining CPS case files, which would incur disproportionate cost.

Some offences in relation to the unlawful sale of tobacco products are prosecuted by trading standards departments and would not be recorded in CPS data.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Bereavement Benefits: Carers and Parents

Catherine McKinnell:

[\[1138\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department plans to consider the potential merits of introducing bereavement leave for parents and carers after the death of a child.

Margot James:

We are exploring options for supporting bereaved parents in employment. We would expect employers to be compassionate and flexible at such a difficult time, however we understand this is not always the case. So we are looking at ways to enable parents to take time away from work to grieve.

■ British Business Bank: Northern Ireland**Mr Gregory Campbell:****[1864]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent steps have been taken by the British Business Bank to help small businesses in Northern Ireland access finance.

Margot James:

As of the end of December 2016, the British Business Bank is supporting £26m of finance to almost 1,100 SMEs in Northern Ireland. This includes £4m of Start-Up Loans to support 644 small businesses

Alongside designing and delivering programmes through its partners, the British Business Bank works to promote the provision of better information in the market to increase smaller businesses' understanding of the finance options available to them. The Business Finance Guide (<http://www.thebusinessfinanceguide.co.uk/bbb>) sets out the different sources of finance available to businesses – from start-ups to SMEs and growing mid-sized companies.

■ Climate Change Convention: USA**Dan Jarvis:****[1685]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the effect of the US withdrawing from the Paris Climate Change Agreement on the global effort to combat climate change.

Claire Perry:

The UK played a major role in securing the Paris Agreement and we remain committed to it.

The Paris Agreement is the framework by which countries set out their plans to meet their emissions reduction targets. It is then the individual country's domestic policy frameworks and market forces which determine how those targets will be achieved in practice.

I am pleased to see renewed international, state and city level commitments to tackling climate change and statements in support of the Paris Agreement. The UK will continue to work with the US and other international partners to promote the transition to a low carbon economy.

■ Consumers: Protection

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[1325\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if his Department will publish a Green Paper examining markets that are not working fairly for consumers; and if he will make a statement.

Margot James:

The Government will in due course publish a Green Paper that will examine markets which are not working fairly for consumers.

■ Debt Relief Orders

Chi Onwurah: [\[1328\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps the Government is taking to make people aware of debt relief orders and to assist people to understand and access them.

Margot James:

The Insolvency Service GOV.UK web page provides guidance on debt relief options, including debt relief orders. This includes an interactive tool explaining some of the debt relief options and a specific guide to getting a debt relief order. The Insolvency Service works in partnership with the debt advice sector in delivering debt relief orders which are accessed through an authorised debt advisor who will complete the application with the individual applicant.

■ Electricity Generation

John McNally: [\[1536\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the Government plans to work with Ofgem to address any market distortion created by the exemption of electricity imported from the continent from transmission network access charges.

Richard Harrington:

Interconnection benefits UK consumers through the access of cheaper power from other countries when we need it, which enables greater competition between generators in both markets and improves price efficiency. In the same way that UK generators are charged to access our transmission network, continental generators exporting power to the UK will be subject to a range of charges and taxes in their own countries. UK generators can also benefit from exporting without paying for access to networks in other countries. Levying further charges on the power imported via an interconnector would reduce the benefits of accessing lower priced power from markets in other countries.

■ Energy

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[1298\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department plans to publish a clean growth plan; and if he will make a statement.

Claire Perry:

We want the Clean Growth Plan to be an ambitious, robust and clear blueprint for Britain's low carbon future, and are working with colleagues across Government to ensure it meets these criteria.

We will publish the Clean Growth Plan when Parliament sits again after summer recess.

■ Energy: Prices

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[1424\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to page 78 of the background document to the Queen's Speech 2017, published on 21 June 2016, how his Department will extend price protection for those on the poorest value tariffs; and if he will make a statement.

Richard Harrington:

The Government is committed to extending price protection currently in place for some vulnerable customers to more customers on the poorest value tariffs.

My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State has written to the Chief Executive Officer of Ofgem to ask for advice on what action the regulator might take to safeguard customers on these tariffs. This Department will consider how to proceed in light of his response.

■ EU Institutions: Linlithgow and East Falkirk

Martyn Day:

[\[1375\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the UK leaving the (a) European Chemicals Agency and (b) European Maritime Agency on (i) businesses and (ii) public safety in Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency.

Claire Perry:

We want to achieve the best possible outcome and the strongest possible partnership - one that works for the UK and the EU. As part of the exit negotiations the Government will discuss with the EU and member states how best to continue cooperation in the maritime sector and in the chemical sector in the best interests of both the UK and EU.

■ EURATOM

Mr Edward Vaizey: [\[1512\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the future of nuclear cooperation with Europe after the UK's withdrawal from Euratom; and if he will make a statement.

Richard Harrington:

The EU negotiating directives agreed by the European Council on 22nd May set out priority issues that have been identified by the EU as necessary for an orderly withdrawal of the UK.

Our aim throughout these negotiations will be to maintain our mutually successful civil nuclear cooperation with Euratom and the rest of the world. In line with this aim, on 27 June the Government announced an underwrite of the UK's share of the EU Joint European Torus fusion project, demonstrating our commitment to continued nuclear Research & Development collaboration.

■ Google

Chi Onwurah: [\[1896\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment the Government has made of the potential effects of the EU's anti-trust ruling against Google of 27 June 2017.

Margot James:

Competition law is enforced independently and individual cases are a matter for the European Commission at an EU-level and the Competition and Markets Authority in the UK.

■ Iron and Steel: China

Jim Shannon: [\[1500\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with his counterparts in China on the level of imports of steel from China.

Claire Perry:

We recognise the problems caused by dumped steel imports which are a direct result of chronic global overcapacity, particularly in the Chinese steel industry. We are actively working with our G20 partners – including China - through the Global Forum on Steel Excess Capacity, which was established to tackle this problem at the G20 Leaders' Summit in Hangzhou. This important issue was also discussed at the last G7 summit on 26-27 May 2017 in Italy, and is on the agenda of the next G20 summit in Hamburg on 7-8 July 2017.

■ Living Wage: Young People

Dan Jarvis:

[\[1493\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans he has to extend the national living wage to include those aged 18 to 24.

Margot James:

The National Living Wage is limited to those aged 25 and over in order to protect younger workers, who are more vulnerable to being unemployed than older workers.

The Government is setting minimum thresholds only and we recognise and commend those employers who seek to set higher rates of pay.

The current national minimum wage rates per hour for those who are not apprentices and under 18 years old is £4.05; 18 – 20 years old is £5.60; 21 – 24 years old is £7.05 and 25 years old or older is £7.50.

■ Low Pay

Lyn Brown:

[\[1120\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to page 149 of the report UK Poverty: Causes and Solutions, published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation on 6 September 2016, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of implementing the Low Pay Commission's compliance and operational proposals in full.

Margot James:

The Government carefully considers all Low Pay Commission recommendations. We continue to strengthen our enforcement of the National Minimum Wage, including the three areas identified in the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's report.

For example, we have increased resources available for enforcement – to £20 million in 2016/17, increasing to £25.3m for 2017/18.

Last year, HMRC identified a record £10.9 million in arrears for 98,000 workers.

Tougher penalties for non-compliance were introduced in April 2016 – underpayments occurring since then are subject to a penalty of 200% the value of the arrears, capped at £20,000 per worker.

■ National Grid: Fees and Charges

Martyn Day:

[\[1119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the National Grid system transmission charging regime; and what changes he plans to make to transmission charges to incentivise renewable energy projects.

Richard Harrington:

The transmission charging regime is the responsibility of Ofgem as the independent regulator. Ofgem's 'Project Transmit' review represented a detailed assessment of

the transmission charging arrangements, and its results were implemented in April 2016. The current regime seeks to ensure that the electricity transmission system develops in the most efficient and cost-effective way for consumers, and the evidence indicates that it does not disincentivise renewable energy projects. For example, in Scotland alone, over 12 Giga Watts of renewable energy projects are contracted to connect to the transmission system over the next eight years.

■ **Nestlé: Employment**

Bill Esterson: [\[1825\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the Oral Answer of 27 June 2017, Official Report, column 453, what plans he has to meet Nestle representatives to discuss securing jobs in the UK.

Claire Perry:

My Rt the Secretary of State has discussed Nestlé's UK jobs and investment outlook with the company's management as recently as April 2017.

Further to Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Oral questions in the House on 27 June, there will also be a meeting with the Hon Member for York Central to discuss related issues.

■ **Nuclear Power Stations: Computer Software**

Louise Haigh: [\[1773\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether any of the (a) operating and (b) decommissioned nuclear power plants use (i) Windows XP or (ii) an earlier version of Windows for any of the operating systems.

Richard Harrington:

For security purposes the Department does not publicly confirm what specific systems are being used across the sector.

Controls are put in place that build defence in depth and mitigate risks, and therefore do not result in cyber security and resilience vulnerabilities.

■ **PetroChina**

Alan Brown: [\[1741\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what meetings Energy Ministers of his Department have had with Petrochina in each year since 2010.

Richard Harrington:

Ministers meet regularly with a range of stakeholders to inform policy development on a wide range of topics, including the fuel resilience of the UK.

Baroness Neville-Rolfe met with PetroChina in July, August, October and December 2016. Jesse Norman also met with PetroChina in February 2017.

Historic ministerial meetings with external organisations on departmental business are published in the Department's Quarterly Transparency returns, which are made publicly available on GOV.UK.

■ **Power Failures: Scotland**

Philip Davies:

[\[1074\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to improve Scotland's black start capability; and if he will make a statement.

Richard Harrington:

National Grid, under its Transmission License, is responsible for maintaining an effective and efficient level of Black Start capability for Great Britain. The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is working with National Grid, Ofgem and Electricity Network operators to ensure that the Black Start strategy remains resilient and cost effective.

■ **Tidal Power**

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[\[1193\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to support the UK's tidal energy industry.

Richard Harrington:

Tidal stream technologies are currently eligible to compete for support in the Contracts for Difference (CFD) allocation round process. CFDs provide efficient long-term support for, and incentivise investment in, low carbon electricity generation. The Government is currently assessing the recommendations of the Hendry Review and will publish a response in due course.

■ **Tidal Power: Capital Investment**

Martyn Day:

[\[1117\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he plans to take to incentivise investment in domestic tidal energy and wave power.

Richard Harrington:

Wave and tidal stream technologies are currently eligible to compete for support in the Contracts for Difference (CFD) allocation round process. CFDs provide efficient long-term support for, and incentivise investment in, low carbon electricity generation. The Government is currently assessing the recommendations of the Hendry Review into tidal lagoons and will publish a response in due course.

■ Tidal Power: Territorial Waters

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[1195]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the amount of tidal energy recoverable from UK and British Crown Dependency territorial waters.

Richard Harrington:

The Crown Estate UK Wave and Tidal Key Resource Areas study (2012)^[1] assessed the UK's theoretical maximum resource for tidal stream, barrage and lagoon resource at 95 TWh/year (32 GW), 96 TWh/year (45 GW) and 25 TWh/year (14 GW) respectively. The Department's Technology Innovation Needs Assessment ^[2] (TINA) published in 2012 estimated that tidal stream energy could practically deliver up to 20-30 TWh/year around 2050.

[\[1\]http://www.thecrownestate.co.uk/media/5476/uk-wave-and-tidal-key-resource-areas-project.pdf](http://www.thecrownestate.co.uk/media/5476/uk-wave-and-tidal-key-resource-areas-project.pdf)

[\[2\]http://www.lowcarboninnovation.co.uk/working_together/technology_focus_areas/marine/](http://www.lowcarboninnovation.co.uk/working_together/technology_focus_areas/marine/)

CABINET OFFICE

■ Constituencies

Dan Jarvis:

[1466]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Government discussed the 2018 boundary review during recent negotiations with the Democratic Unionist Party.

Damian Green:

The terms of the deal between the Conservative party and the DUP have been set out in the agreement.

The Government's manifesto re-affirms the commitment to deliver equal and updated boundaries and reduce the size of the House of Commons.

■ Cybercrime

Louise Haigh:

[1758]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate he has made of the number of cyber security incidents dealt with by (a) GCHQ and (b) the National Cyber Security Centre in each year since 2010.

Caroline Nokes:

There have been 480 incidents requiring NCSC coordination since October 2016.

The NCSC was established to simplify existing structures, bringing together the cyber security operations and information assurance arms of GCHQ, CERT-UK, the cyber

elements of the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure (CPNI) and the Centre for Cyber Assessment. Prior to NCSC formation, cyber incidents were recorded via differing means and to a variety of thresholds, and as such, previous figures are not available for comparison.

■ Electoral Register

Martyn Day: [\[1118\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of options to introduce an automatic system of electoral registration for all eligible citizens; and if he will make a statement.

Chris Skidmore:

There are no plans to introduce automatic registration, as it contradicts the principles underpinning Individual Electoral Registration. Making an application to register to vote is the right of individuals and can be done easily online, in as little as three minutes, as well as using the traditional paper form, if people prefer. The 2017 UK parliamentary general election was fought on the largest ever register, according to initial estimates.

The Government has a wide-ranging programme of work with electoral administrators to maximise the benefits of IER. This includes looking at innovative ways of using local datasets to simplify registration. Some of these are already being trialled as part of the 2017 annual canvass.

Martyn Day: [\[1169\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many eligible electors were not registered to vote at UK general elections in (a) 2015 and (b) 2017; and if he will make a statement.

Chris Skidmore:

There are no specific estimates of the number of potential electors not registered to vote ahead of the 2015 or 2017 UK general elections. Estimates of the 'completeness' of the parliamentary electoral registers (the percentage of eligible people who are registered at their current address) are produced by the Electoral Commission (EC) from time to time, with reference to a published December register. The latest full EC report published in July 2016 relating to the December 2015 register indicated that the register was 85 per cent complete.

Tommy Sheppard: [\[1478\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what plans he has to introduce measures to require voter ID in the 2017-2019 Parliamentary session.

Chris Skidmore:

The Government intends to legislate to ensure that a form of identification must be presented before voting. It is intended that this requirement be tested through pilot schemes at the May 2018 elections. Pilots will help to identify how and when it would be best to introduce this new requirement more widely.

Stephen Timms:**[1878]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps he is taking to increase voter registration.

Chris Skidmore:

The Government is committed to working with the electoral community to maximise electoral registration to ensure everyone who is eligible to vote in polls is able to do so. It is widely recognised that the introduction of online registration has transformed democratic engagement, making it easier, simpler and faster for people to register to vote. For the recent General Election, nearly 3 million applications to register to vote were received between the announcement of the General Election on April 18 and the registration deadline on May 22. Informal indications are that the parliamentary registers used for the general election were the largest ever.

Stephen Timms:**[1888]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many voters were on the electoral register on 1 January in each of the last 10 years.

Chris Skidmore:

Information regarding the total number of registered electors is not held centrally by the Government as each local authority maintains their own local register. Full register totals can be found on the Office for National Statistics website, where annual electoral statistic reports are located. You can find these at goo.gl/uXB4aK

■ Electoral Register: Internet

Martyn Day:**[1170]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will introduce a process to enable people to check their electoral registration status online.

Chris Skidmore:

At present, citizens can contact their local Electoral Registration Officer to determine whether they are on the register. The Government recognises that duplicate applications pose an administrative challenge. For this reason, we are currently gathering information about the scale of the challenge and working with administrators to understand the impact it has on their work. In the light of the evidence gained we will then consider the best way forward.

■ Electorate: Proof of Identity

Martyn Day:**[963]**

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what plans he has to introduce voter identity requirements at future elections; and if he will make a statement.

Chris Skidmore:

The Government intends to legislate to ensure that a form of identification must be presented before voting. It is intended that this requirement be tested through pilot

schemes at the May 2018 elections. Pilots will help to identify how and when it would be best to introduce this new requirement more widely.

■ EU Nationals

Catherine McKinnell:

[\[1748\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what recent estimate he has made of the number of non-UK EU nationals living in (a) the UK, (b) the North East and (c) Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Chris Skidmore:

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

Attachments:

1. UKSA Response to PQ1748 [PQ1748 v0.7.pdf]

■ Government Departments: Cybercrime

Louise Haigh:

[\[1759\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate he has made of the number of data breaches across central Government Departments in (a) 2015-16 and (b) 2016-17.

Caroline Nokes:

The Cabinet Office does not require Central Government Departments to report their personal data breaches and so does not hold this information centrally. Each department is accountable to Parliament for the protection of data that they hold. Departments formally report data breaches to the Information Commissioner's Office where appropriate and record these breaches in their Annual Reports.

■ House of Lords: Reform

Martyn Day:

[\[1165\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what plans he has to reform the House of Lords in the current Parliament.

Chris Skidmore:

As set out in the Conservative manifesto, although comprehensive reform is not a priority, we are committed to ensure that the House of Lords continues to fulfil its constitutional role as a revising and scrutinising chamber which respects the primacy of the House of Commons. We will continue to work to ensure the work of the House of Lords remains relevant and effective by addressing issues such as its size.

■ Voting Rights: EU Nationals

Catherine McKinnell:

[\[1687\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether EU nationals with settled status will be able to vote in (a) local elections and (b) parliamentary elections after the UK has left the EU.

Chris Skidmore:

The Government recently published its proposal on settled status citizens here www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-government-publishes-proposals-on-rights-of-eu-citizens

The UK does not permit citizens of other EU countries to vote in its national elections, with the exception of Irish and qualifying Commonwealth citizens resident in the UK. The UK looks forward to discussing the matter of voting rights for EU citizens, at negotiations with the EU.

■ **Voting Rights: Young People**

Stephen Timms: [1885]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of lowering the voting age to 16.

Chris Skidmore:

I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to the hon. Member for Easington on Wednesday 28 June 2017 to written question 358.

TREASURY■ **Contingencies Fund**

Rachel Reeves: [1295]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if the Government will release funds from the Treasury Contingencies Fund to provide local authorities and housing associations with funding to make sure all high-rise buildings are safe.

Elizabeth Truss:

All social landlords have been instructed to carry out fire safety checks on tower blocks and ensure the appropriate safety and response measures are in place. This is being done in co-operation with local fire and rescue services. We are testing cladding in all relevant tower blocks. It is the landlord's responsibility to ensure that people are safe through funding fire safety improvements. Where works are necessary to ensure the fire safety of a building, we will ensure that lack of financial resources will not prevent them going ahead.

Rachel Reeves: [1296]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much the Treasury Contingencies Fund contains.

Elizabeth Truss:

The Treasury may authorise issues out of the Fund subject to the limit set on the capital of the Fund by the Contingencies Fund Act 1974. The methodology for calculation can be found at the following link to the Act:

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/18/pdfs/ukpga_19740018_en.pdf

■ Listed Buildings: VAT

Alex Chalk:

[886]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the Government has assessed the potential merits of adopting a reduced VAT rate for goods and services required for the essential repair and maintenance of listed buildings.

Mel Stride:

EU VAT rules do not allow the introduction of a reduced rate of VAT for goods and services required for the repair and maintenance of listed buildings. While the UK remains a member of the EU, we will continue to abide by our rights and obligations.

■ Public Sector: Pay

Colleen Fletcher:

[1676]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has any plans to end the public sector pay cap.

Elizabeth Truss:

I refer the honourable member to the comments made by the Chancellor regarding the public sector pay cap during the debate on the Queen's speech on 29 June. Link to those exchanges is available at <http://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2017-06-29/debates/D199DEF4-2B92-4D43-BF7D-01F7D98591A3/EconomyAndJobs>

■ Taxation: Self-employed

Justin Madders:

[934]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of lost revenue resulting from incorrect classification of individuals as self employed in each of the last three years.

Mel Stride:

The government has not produced an estimate of the cost to the Exchequer of lost revenue as a result of false self-employment.

The Chancellor, in a response to a question from the Shadow Chancellor during the Budget debate on 15 March 2017, said he recognised 'that there is a problem of bogus self-employment. There is a problem of employers who are refusing to employ people, requiring them to be "self-employed". There is a problem of individuals being advised by high street accountants that they can save tax by restructuring the way they work. We do believe that people should have choices, and we do believe that there should be a diversity of ways of working in the economy—we just do not believe that that should be driven by unfair tax advantages.'

HM Revenue and Customs is aware that false self-employment presents a risk and is deploying compliance resources to address that risk. It will take appropriate action where false self-employment is identified.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**■ Change of Use**

Sir Vince Cable: [242]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will review the rules governing permitted development for change of use from commercial and industrial to residential; and what estimate he has made of changes in use by borough in each year from 2010 to 2015.

Mr Marcus Jones:

[Holding answer 28 June 2017]: We continue to keep permitted development rights, and the contribution they make to national housing delivery, under review.

The Department publishes data on permitted development rights[1] and the number of homes delivered under the rights for each local authority[2]. Separate data is also published on planning decisions for the change of use by local authority area.[3]

[1] Table PDR 1: District planning authorities - applications for prior approvals for permitted developments, by local planning authority

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-planning-application-statistics>

[2] Table 123 Housing Supply; net additional dwellings, component flows of, by local authority district, England: 2012-13 to 2015-16

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

[3] Table 124A District planning authorities- planning decisions by development type and local planning authority (yearly) <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-planning-application-statistics>

Jim McMahon: [572]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will review the suitability of commercial to residential conversions through permitted development.

Mr Marcus Jones:

We continue to keep permitted development rights, and the contribution they make to national housing delivery, under review.

■ Derelict Land

Grahame Morris: [366]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to give local authorities the power to (a) take over or (b) mandate owners to develop, sell or clear blight and derelict sites suitable for commercial or residential development.

Mr Marcus Jones:

Local authorities already have a range of compulsory purchase powers to acquire and develop land that is derelict, neglected or unsightly provided there is a compelling case in the public interest for the authority's redevelopment scheme.

In addition other powers available to a local authority to act include section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, to serve a notice requiring owners to clean up land and buildings where their condition adversely affects the amenity of the area; Section 79 – 81 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to serve an abatement notice to carry out works on any premises where its condition is such as to be prejudicial to health, or, amounts to a nuisance; Section 29 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 to secure any unoccupied building against unauthorised entry and undertake works to prevent it becoming a danger to public health; and Section 76 of the Building Act 1984 to require property owners to remedy defective buildings that are in such a condition as to be prejudicial to health or amount to a nuisance.

There are no other powers to require owners to sell or develop their land.

■ Empty Property**Caroline Lucas:****[993]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will list the current number of homes that have been empty for one year in each local authority in England.

Mr Marcus Jones:

The number of homes vacant for more than six months is now at its lowest level since records began, with over 116,000 long term empty properties brought back in to use since 2009.

Information is not collected on homes that have been empty for one year. Annual summary data are available, however, on the total dwellings classed as vacant for council tax purposes and, of those, the number that have been vacant for more than 6 months.

Local authority level data as at 3 October 2016 can be found at the following link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/587691/LA_Drop_down_-_revised_Jan.xlsx

The Government is committed to bringing empty properties into use - that is why we have given local authorities the powers to charge up to 100 per cent council tax on empty homes. In addition, a premium of up to 50 per cent extra council tax may be charged on properties that have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for two years or more. These powers form part of a wider package of initiatives and measures to tackle empty homes.

■ Fire Prevention

Tulip Siddiq: [\[1430\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, with reference to his oral statement of 26 June 2017, Official Report, column 347, what the membership is of the independent panel of experts on fire safety.

Alok Sharma:

The Panel is made up of a range of building and fire safety experts, and is chaired by Sir Ken Knight, former London Fire Commissioner and former Government Chief Fire and Rescue Adviser.

Other core members of the panel are Dr Peter Bonfield, Chief Executive of the Building Research Establishment, Roy Wilsher, Chair of the National Fire Chiefs Council and Amanda Clack, President of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and a Partner at EY. The panel have a wealth of experience in fire and building safety, including testing processes. They will also draw in wider technical expertise as necessary to inform their advice to the Communities Secretary

■ High Rise Flats: Fire Prevention

Diana Johnson: [\[753\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, whether the investigations into councils' residential tower blocks will assess the (a) flammability and poisonous elements contained in wall insulation and furniture, (b) operability of fire alarms and (c) whether central stairwells in towers are protected from fire and smoke.

Alok Sharma:

The tests currently being carried out are focussed on the combustibility of material in cladding made from Aluminium Composite Material. Where those materials have failed that test, housing providers have had instructions to review all fire safety arrangements in the relevant property, and to check insulation and other materials in the wall construction.

■ Local Economic Partnerships

Stephen McPartland: [\[1306\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what plans he has to make local economic partnerships more accountable to local people; and if he will make a statement.

Jake Berry:

Local enterprise partnerships (LEP) are independent bodies, supported by an appointed local authority, which acts as an accountable body. The LEP is responsible for the probity of local investment and spending decisions, while the accountable body must ensure proper, transparent decisions that deliver value for money and has the overall responsibility for the government funding allocated to LEPs.

Democratic accountability for LEP decisions is provided through local authority leader representation, with business community representation coming from the business leaders on each LEP board.

Government ensures uniform standards are met through the National LEP Assurance Framework. We have set out an enhanced role for LEPs, including leading on the development of local industrial strategies. As part of that we will be looking at all issues pertaining to their function, including their accountability.

■ **Non-domestic Rates**

Tim Farron:

[\[1482\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how much has been paid to businesses from the £300 million business rates relief fund.

Mr Marcus Jones:

In April the Government confirmed how much each local authority would receive under the £300 million discretionary relief fund. It is now for local authorities to design and implement their own local schemes and to ensure that support for their local business goes where it is needed.

The Government has been clear that it expects local authorities to make rapid progress in finalising their schemes, identifying eligible businesses and adjusting bills to provide this support, as soon as possible.

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[1880\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will set out the timetable for the completion of the policy to allow local governments to retain 100 per cent of business rates.

Mr Marcus Jones:

The Government has a manifesto commitment to continue to give local government greater control over the money they raise locally. We intend to continue to collaborate closely with local government over the coming months on how we achieve this. 97 per cent of local authorities have an agreed funding deal until 2019/20, giving them financial certainty.

■ **Private Rented Housing: Fire Prevention**

Rachel Reeves:

[\[612\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that recommended fire safety standards are met in private sector housing.

Mr Marcus Jones:

All homes should be of a reasonable standard and all tenants should have a safe place to live. Under the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, landlords have a general obligation to ensure that they keep in repair the structure and exterior of any property they rent out. Local authorities have strong and effective powers to deal with poor

quality unsafe accommodation and we expect them to use those powers. Under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, local authorities can issue an Improvement Notice or a Hazard Awareness Notice if they find a defect in the property. In extreme circumstances, the local authority may decide to make repairs themselves, or to prohibit that property from being rented out.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 places a duty on housing providers to undertake a fire risk assessment of the common parts of their properties and to put in place and maintain adequate fire precautions to manage the risk that lives could be lost in a fire. The Order is enforced by fire and rescue authorities.

■ Social Rented Housing: Fire Prevention

Liz Saville Roberts:

[727]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will make it his Department's policy that all social housing is fitted with one hour fire doors.

Alok Sharma:

The Building Regulations and the supporting guidance already make it a requirement to have appropriate fire doors in new buildings that have shared access and corridors.

Housing providers, including social housing providers, are expected to carry out and regularly review a fire risk assessment for the common parts of their buildings and put in place the measures identified in those risk assessments, which could include provision in relation to fire doors. Further detail on what is required is set out in the guidance – www.local.gov.uk/fire-safety-purpose-built-flats.

■ Social Services: Finance

Catherine McKinnell:

[1312]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the size of the funding gap by 2020 in (a) adult and (b) children's social care; what the effect of that gap will be on the provision of that funding; and what steps he is taking to reduce the scale of that gap.

Mr Marcus Jones:

The Government periodically assesses resourcing requirements for local government as part of each Spending Review. In addition to the package announced at the 2015 Spending Review and the 2017-18 local Government Finance Settlement, the 2017 Spring Budget provided £2 billion of new funding to support social care. As a result of measures introduced by the Government since 2015, councils had access of up to £9.25 billion more dedicated funding for social care in the 3 years to 2019-20.

■ Temporary Accommodation: Emergencies

Liz Saville Roberts: [132]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what plans his Department has to require local councils to rehouse social tenants displaced due to disaster within their local area.

Alok Sharma:

There are already safeguards in place to protect social tenants who lose their homes in a disaster. We would expect local authorities or housing associations to take steps to rehouse any existing social tenants whose existing home is destroyed or made uninhabitable in a fire or other disaster.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Arts Council: Grants

John Mann: [1309]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how much was paid in grants from the Arts Council in each parliamentary constituency in (a) 2015 and (b) 2016.

John Glen:

Information regarding Arts Council England's grant payments can be found at: <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk>.

■ Cultural Heritage: Repairs and Maintenance

Kevin Brennan: [1288]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions she has had with representatives from the heritage sector on continuing access to imported specialist materials for restoration work after the UK leaves the EU.

John Glen:

Government fully recognises the value of our heritage, which makes an important contribution to our economy and well being. The Secretary of State and the Minister for Heritage have held round tables with sector representatives to assess the impact of leaving the EU on the heritage sector. The Department remains committed to working with the UK heritage sector to ensure that its needs and views are understood.

■ Culture, Practices and Ethics of the Press Inquiry

Tom Watson: [1657]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what plans she has to proceed with the second stage of the Leveson inquiry.

Matt Hancock:

The government is currently considering over 140,000 responses to the consultation on this issue.

■ **Film and Television****Kevin Brennan:**[\[1688\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions she has had with European agencies and counterparts on retaining reciprocal market access for distributing film and television productions between the UK and other EU countries after the UK leaves the EU.

Matt Hancock:

The UK has a vibrant and successful film and television production sector. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport is working to ensure that the UK continues to be a world leader for film and television production after we leave the EU.

■ **Film: North East****Chi Onwurah:**[\[1744\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps she is taking to support the film industry in the North East.

Matt Hancock:

Supported by the Government's highly successful Film Tax Relief, the UK film industry contributes over £4 billion a year to the economy and nearly 70,000 full time jobs. Between 2012 and 2017, the BFI invested approximately £3.6 million of public funding for festivals, skills development, and filmmaking in the North East. The extracurricular club 'Into Film' reaches nearly 150,000 children of school age in the region, nurturing the next generation of talent and audiences.

■ **Museums and Galleries: Exhibitions****Kevin Brennan:**[\[1682\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what recent steps she has taken to ensure the continued freedom of movement for touring exhibitions after the UK leaves the EU.

John Glen:

Touring exhibitions are an important aspect of our museums' international activity, allowing them to share world-class collections and research with audiences all over Europe and the world. We are working with Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, Border Force, and museums which regularly transport cultural objects to fully understand the current operating environment and what systems may need to be maintained or introduced to ensure exhibitions can continue to tour as smoothly as possible after the UK leaves the EU.

■ Music: Planning

Thangam Debbonaire:

[\[1313\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions her Department has had with the Department for Communities and Local Government on adopting the agent of change principle in planning regulations to help protect live music venues.

Matt Hancock:

We are committed to supporting and promoting a thriving live music industry and grassroots music venues are an important part of this. DCMS is working closely with DCLG on the agent of change and other issues to help ensure the continued survival and growth of this vital and vibrant sector.

■ Music: Tourism

Kevin Brennan:

[\[1683\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the importance of live music venues to music tourism in the UK.

Matt Hancock:

The UK live music industry welcomed nearly 28 million fans in 2015 with music tourism contributing £3.7 billion to the UK economy. We recognise the great success our live music concerts and festivals have in attracting people from across the UK and from overseas and the significant benefit this has to local economies. My department works closely with UK Music and I look forward to welcoming their new report on the contribution of live music to the UK economy within the next few weeks.

■ Olympic Games

Tom Watson:

[\[1652\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 26 June 2017 to Question 229, whether anyone from her Department has had discussions with the British Olympic Association on a name change for the Olympic team from Team GB to Team UK.

Tracey Crouch:

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has had no discussions with the British Olympic Association (BOA), an independent organisation, about a name change for the Olympic team from TeamGB to Team UK.

■ Public Libraries: Digital Technology

Darren Jones:

[\[916\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether the Government plans to increase funding for public libraries to enable more libraries to become digital community hubs.

John Glen:

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has provided support for library authorities throughout England to deliver library services that are accessible, modern and meets local needs. This included funding a £2.6 million programme to support the installation or upgrade of wifi in public libraries in England; benefitting around 1,000 libraries, and enabling over 99% of public libraries to offer free wifi. In addition, DCMS financed the £3.9m Libraries: Opportunities for Everyone fund to support innovative library service activity to benefit disadvantaged people and places in England. Around 60% of the successful local authority applicants are using digital means to support delivery of their projects. The Government will continue to encourage local authorities to invest in libraries to ensure that they remain relevant and meet the needs of the community.

■ **Youth Social Action Review**

Jess Phillips: [190]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to the Answer of 8 March 2017 to Question 66308, what progress her Department has made on the Youth Full-Time Social Action review.

Jess Phillips: [203]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether it is planned that the Youth Full-Time Social Action review will publish its findings and recommendations by October 2017.

Tracey Crouch:

My predecessor as Minister for Civil Society appointed Steve Holliday as the Chair of the independent review of full-time social action by young people on 13 March 2017.

Progress with the review was delayed for six weeks due to Purdah, and we will agree a revised process and timetable with the Chair in the coming weeks. We anticipate that the review will be completed by December 2017.

DEFENCE■ **Armed Forces: Compensation**

Mrs Madeleine Moon: [1458]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the Answer of 21 March 2017 to Question 67947, on armed forces: compensation, what the timetable is for the publication of the findings of the consultation on Better Combat Compensation; and if he will make a statement.

Mark Lancaster:

We will look to publish the Government's response in due course.

■ Army

Andrew Rosindell:

[1231]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what total savings his Department has made as a result of reducing British Army personnel since the Strategic Defence and Security Review 2010.

Mark Lancaster:

The projected total savings as a result of the Strategic Defence and Security Review 2010 and work undertaken in 2011 to reduce the number of Regular Army personnel was £10.6 billion between 2011-12 and 2021-22.

Stephen Doughty:

[1321]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the Department remains committed to maintain (a) the Royal Welsh (1st and 3rd battalions), (b) the Welsh Guards and (c) the Queen's Dragoon Guards at their current levels of personnel and resource beyond 2020.

Mark Lancaster:

Under current Army plans there is no intent to significantly change the personnel and resource level of the units in question.

■ Army: Staff

Stephen Doughty:

[1322]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what number of army personnel are serving as (a) regulars and (b) reserves as of today's date.

Mark Lancaster:

Regular and Reserve Army personnel figures are published as official statistics on a monthly basis. The latest publication of 'United Kingdom Armed Forces Monthly Service Personnel Statistics' can be found on the gov.uk website, at the following link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/618747/20170501_-_SPS.pdf

■ Army: Young People

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[1459]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the Answer of 14 March 2017 to Question 67005, on army: young people, when he plans to publish the findings of the Army's Junior Entry Review; and if he will make a statement.

Mark Lancaster:

The Army review into Junior Entry will report initial findings to the Executive Committee of the Army Board (ECAB) this summer. At that point the ECAB will finalise the timetable for completing and publicising the review later in the year.

■ HMS Queen Elizabeth**Mr Gregory Campbell:**[\[1867\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many civilians were employed during the construction of the recently launched HMS Queen Elizabeth aircraft carrier.

Harriett Baldwin:

Around 10,000 jobs have been sustained in designing and constructing the Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers. This includes 7,000 to 8,000 workers at shipyards around the UK plus a further 2,000 to 3,000 across the UK supply chain.

■ Iraq and Syria: Military Intervention**Lucy Powell:**[\[1911\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to the Answer of 29 March 2017 to Question 69107, on how many occasions analysts have highlighted a possible indication of civilian casualties or collateral damage caused by UK airstrikes in Iraq and Syria.

Mark Lancaster:

During the Ministry of Defence's own internal review of each strike, military experts assess not only its effectiveness but also the potential for it to have caused civilian casualties, by reference to the recorded data. Airwars provides regular sets of information about civilian casualties potentially caused by Coalition airstrikes. These are examined in detail - again in comparison with our records, which include photographs and video. In all of these detailed assessments so far, there has been no evidence that any UK airstrike has caused civilian casualties.

■ National Security: Climate Change**Sir Nicholas Soames:**[\[1481\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment his Department has made of the extent to which climate change is a threat to national security.

Mark Lancaster:

The National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review (NSS/SDSR) 2015 noted that climate change is "increasingly a risk to the UK, with the full effects on UK national security more likely to be seen after 2035." This assessment was derived from the accompanying National Security Risk Assessment (NSRA) 2015, which identified a number of national risks related to climate change, including but not limited to 'Environmental and Weather Hazards' and 'Resource Insecurity'.

In composing both the NSS/SDSR and the NSRA 2015, Government officials drew on evidence from Global Strategic Trends (GST) 5, a document produced by the Ministry of Defence's Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre. GST5 looks out to 2045, and attempts to identify the long-term threats and opportunities that may materialise in the defence and security context. It includes a chapter on the

environment, which makes frequent reference to the issue of climate change, including its implications for defence and security. GST5 can be found at the following link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/348164/20140821_DCDC_GST_5_Web_Secured.pdf

EDUCATION

■ Academies: Sports

John Mann:

[208]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, which 16 to 19 year old sports academies were established in 2015 and 2016; and which of these remain open.

Anne Milton:

The Department for Education funds sports provision for 16 to 19 year olds in a wide range of schools, colleges and other providers. However, the Department does not directly fund any sport academies, although the Department does fund League Football Education and the FA Premier League Limited for delivery of education and training in association with football clubs. Some education and training linked to sporting organisations is also delivered through sub-contracting arrangements with funded institutions.

The Department publishes annually details of the funding allocations to 16 to 19 institutions – the latest information is here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/16-to-19-allocation-data-2016-to-2017-academic-year>.

■ Apprentices

Angela Rayner:

[490]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what her policy is on allowing large firms to place apprentices within their supply chains.

Anne Milton:

From April 2018, we plan to allow levy-paying employers to transfer up to 10% of the annual value of funds entering their apprenticeship service accounts to another employer or apprenticeship training agency.

Angela Rayner:

[533]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many apprenticeship starts there were by 18 to 24 year olds in (a) 2015-16 and (b) 2016-17.

Anne Milton:

This data can be found in Tables 7 and 22 of the main tables of the further education and skills statistical first release:

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

More granular breakdowns of starts by age can be found in the apprenticeships FE data library under the demographics data tool:

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

Angela Rayner: [538]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of young people starting apprenticeships in (a) 2010-11, (b) 2011-12, (c) 2012-13, (d) 2013-14, (e) 2014-15, (f) 2015-16 and (g) 2016-17 went on to complete them.

Anne Milton:

We publish annual apprenticeship qualification achievement rates that show the proportion of learners who started an apprenticeship and went on to complete and successfully achieve in a given academic year.

This data can be found in Table 14 of the main tables of the further education and skills statistical first release:

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

■ Apprentices: Taxation

Angela Rayner: [543]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will take steps to guarantee apprenticeship funding for non-levy paying employers in (a) 2018-19, (b) 2019-20, (c) 2020-21 and (d) 2021-22.

Anne Milton:

A new procurement for services to non-levy paying employers will be launched at the end of July 2017, this will set out how much funding we are making available for non-levy employers.

Decisions on future years' funding will be made on the basis of ongoing monitoring of employer demand, performance and budgets.

■ Breakfast Clubs

Wes Streeting: [629]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what funding her Department provides for primary school breakfast provision; and how many (a) pupils and (b) schools receive such funding.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

We are reflecting on our programmes in relation to school meals and will come forward with proposals in due course.

Wes Streeting: [\[632\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate her Department has made of the cost of free school breakfast provision in every primary school in England.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

We are reflecting on our programmes in relation to school meals and will come forward with proposals in due course.

Mr William Wragg: [\[715\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if the Government will introduce universal free breakfasts for primary school children.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

We are reflecting on our programmes in relation to school meals and will come forward with proposals in due course.

■ Children: Poverty**Frank Field:** [\[37\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will respond to the recommendations contained within the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Hunger report, Hungry Holidays, published in April 2017.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

We want all children to be well nourished and to develop healthy eating habits, and good nutrition is essential to children's health, development and their ability to fulfil their potential in life. We already recognise the benefits of providing a healthy school meal to the most disadvantaged children during term time.

We will review and consider the findings of the Hungry Holidays report and I would be happy to write back to you separately in due course.

■ Classroom Assistants: Apprentices**Angela Rayner:** [\[496\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what her policy is on teaching assistants becoming qualified teachers through a degree apprenticeship.

Anne Milton:

The Government is committed to building a stronger and more prosperous Britain for all. Developing an appropriate degree apprenticeship, that protects the professional status of teaching, will be an effective way of upskilling those individuals with a passion for teaching, such as teaching assistants. We will work with the sector in progressing this work, with employers at the heart of the route's development.

■ Digital Technology: Lifelong Education**Angela Rayner:** [\[675\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she plans to take to deliver lifelong learning in digital skills.

Anne Milton:

The digital skills entitlement will ensure that adults who lack core digital skills can access specified basic digital skills training free of charge where it is made available as part of the publicly funded adult education offer. We will set out the plans to support the implementation of this entitlement in due course.

■ Education: Finance**Jim McMahon:** [\[749\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans the Government has to increase funding for (a) primary, (b) secondary and (c) further education in each of the next three years.

Nick Gibb:

This Government will continue to work to ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to attend a good school and that all schools are fairly funded. The core schools budget has been protected in real terms since 2010 and is set to rise from £41 billion in 2017-18 to over £42 billion in 2019-20 with increasing pupil numbers.

With regard to further education, the Chancellor announced, in the 2017 spring budget, a substantial investment in technical education for 16-19 year olds, rising eventually to an additional £500 million a year. At the same time, we will continue to protect the national funding rate for full time 16 and 17-year-olds in all types of institutions at £4,000. Schools and colleges also receive additional funding to reflect increased costs, including for disadvantaged students, higher cost technical courses, and large academic programmes.

■ Education: Warrington North**Helen Jones:** [\[1699\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of the proposed school funding formula on (a) the number of teaching posts and (b) changes to school hours in Warrington North; and if she will make a statement.

Nick Gibb:

We want to ensure every school has the resources it needs to deliver a high quality education for every child and that all schools are fairly funded. We are considering the more than 25,000 responses we received to the National Funding Formula consultation, and will publish our response in due course.

■ Educational Institutions: Technology

Angela Rayner: [567]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many new institutes of technology her Department plans to provide in (a) 2017-18, (b) 2018-19, (c) 2019-20, (d) 2020-21 and (e) 2021-22.

Angela Rayner: [802]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many new institutes of technology her Department plans to provide in each of the next five years.

Anne Milton:

As part of our Industrial Strategy, we will launch a call for proposals to establish new Institutes of Technology later this year. The number of new institutions we approve will depend on the quality and number of bids we receive.

Angela Rayner: [670]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much capital funding her Department plans to allocated to deliver new institutes of technology in (a) 2017-18, (b) 2018-19, (c) 2019-20, (d) 2020-21 and (e) 2021-22.

Anne Milton:

We have £170M of capital funding allocated to deliver new Institutes of Technology by 2021. A call for proposals will be launched later this year.

■ Free Schools: Construction

Angela Rayner: [453]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what her policy is on the number of free schools to be built each year.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Delivering enough school places is one of the government's top priorities and the free schools programme is part of delivering this. Thanks to our reforms there are 1.8 million more children in schools rated good or outstanding than in 2010. Over 50 new schools are expected to open in September 2017. There are currently over 350 further schools in the pipeline that will create over 150,000 places when the schools reach capacity.

We have already committed £5.8bn for local authorities up to 2020 to deliver new school places, on top of our investment in the free schools programme.

■ Further Education: Capital Investment

Angela Rayner: [485]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what her policy is on future investments in further education colleges.

Angela Rayner:

[529]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether she plans to invest in further education colleges involve additional (a) revenue and (b) capital funding.

Anne Milton:

My Department wants to make sure that English technical education rivals the best in the world and is looking at policy options for investment in further education colleges to make sure they have world-class equipment and facilities.

In the March Budget, the Government committed to increasing the number of programme hours of training for 16-19 year olds on technical routes by more than 50% to over 900 hours a year on average, including the completion of a high quality industry work placement during the programme. To ensure the routes are well designed, and colleges properly prepared, funding will be increased in line with this roll out, with over £500 million of additional funding invested per year once routes are fully implemented.

The Government's aim is to encourage students to continue their training at high quality institutions such as National Colleges or Institutes of Technology to develop the high level skills employers demand. From 2019-20, the government will provide maintenance loans, like those available to university students to students on technical education courses at levels 4 to 6 in National Colleges and Institutes of Technology.

My Department is committed wants to make sure that English technical education rivals the best in the world and is looking at policy options for investment in further education colleges to make sure they have world-class equipment and facilities.

■ Further Education: Disadvantaged

Dan Jarvis:

[1468]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of increasing university tuition fees to over £9,000 a year on the number of young adults from deprived backgrounds attending university.

Joseph Johnson:

The Department for Education published an equality analysis in May 2016, to cover the reforms set out in the *Success as a Knowledge Economy* White Paper, that were subsequently taken forward through the Higher Education and Research Act (2017).

This included an assessment of the impact of allowing institutions who were successful in the Teaching Excellence Framework assessment process to increase their fees up to inflation.

The Department also published in December 2016 an Equality Analysis for the 2017/18 student finance package, which covered both the increase in fees and accompanying loan support.

These assessments concluded that this change was unlikely to significantly alter participation decisions. Tuition fees will not increase in real terms and Higher Education and publicly funded institutions will remain free at the point of access for

those who are eligible, as tuition fee loans will increase to cover increased tuition fees.

A copy of the Equality Analysis – Higher Education and Research Bill (published May 2016) is available here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/524226/bis-16-281-he-research-bill-equality-analysis.pdf

A copy of the Equality Analysis for the Student Support and Fee Regulations (published December 2016) is available here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/577420/Equality_Analysis_for_Student_Support_Regulations_2016.pdf

■ Grammar Schools

Lucy Powell:

[1675]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to her Department's publication, *Schools that work for everyone*, published in September 2016, what steps she plans to take to increase the number of children from low-income backgrounds attending grammar schools.

Justine Greening:

We were encouraged by the number of selective schools that came forward voluntarily to improve their admissions arrangements in response to the *Schools that work for everyone* consultation. We will continue to work with our partners in the sector to ensure that more children from low-income backgrounds are able to access grammar schools.

■ Grammar Schools: Finance

Mr William Wragg:

[1285]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether she plans to provide funds for a further increase in the number of grammar schools.

Justine Greening:

There was no education bill in the Queen's Speech, and therefore the ban on opening new grammar schools will remain in place.

■ Headteachers: Vacancies

Helen Jones:

[1701]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many head teacher posts are vacant in (a) primary and (b) secondary schools in (i) England and (ii) the North West.

Nick Gibb:

In November 2016 there were 23 vacancies for full time primary head teachers in England – of which two were in the North West region. For secondary schools there were seven vacancies in England. None of these were in the North West region.

These figures offer the latest position and were published on 22 June 2017 in the 'School Workforce in England: November 2016' statistical release, available at the following web link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/school-workforce-in-england-november-2016>

■ Kingsway Academy

Ms Angela Eagle: [1751]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when the Government first became aware of Northern Schools Trust's intention to close Kingsway Academy; and what steps her Department is taking to provide new school places for that Academy's pupils in the event of closure.

Ms Angela Eagle: [1752]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions she has had with Northern Schools Trust on the potential closure of Kingsway Academy in Wallasey; and if she will make a statement.

Ms Angela Eagle: [1892]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions she had with Northern Schools Trust on the future use of Kingsway Academy's school site prior to her decision to allow that school to close.

Ms Angela Eagle: [1893]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she will take to ensure that the school site for Kingsway Academy remains in public hands in the event of the closure of that school.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Department has discussed the viability of The Kingsway Academy with the Local Authority (LA) and the Northern Schools Trust (NST) on several occasions since October 2016. The Secretary of State has agreed the school should close by the end of 2017/18 and the Department is working closely with the LA and NST to plan the transition for pupils. The school site will remain in LA ownership and the Department will work with the LA on options for its future use.

■ Pre-school Education

Lucy Powell: [1777]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate she has made of the number of disadvantaged (a) two, (b) three and (c) four-year olds who receive a discretionary full-time 30 hours early education and care place from their local authority who are expected to lose that place in September 2017 as a result of the extension to 30 hours free childcare for three and four-year olds with parents in work.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Under our new Early Years National Funding Formula (EYNFF) arrangements, local authorities are required to pass 93% of their Government funding to early years providers in 2017-18, so that they can deliver the national early years entitlements on a fair and sustainable basis.

The Government response to the EYNFF consultation recognised that this might cause difficulties for some local authorities who have chosen to offer discretionary hours, above the core statutory entitlement, to disadvantaged children. That is why we set out a disapplication process, whereby local authorities can request some flexibility around the 93% requirement.

Five local authorities have been granted such a disapplication in 2017-18. We do not therefore expect any local authorities to have to stop funding these discretionary hours in September 2017 as a result of our funding reforms.

■ Pre-school Education: Finance**Lucy Powell:****[1778]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much funding each local authority area will be allocated for transitional protection for maintained nursery schools in each year that such funding is available.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

We are providing supplementary funding to Maintained Nursery Schools so that they can maintain their 2016-17 funding levels until 2019-20. Illustrative allocations for supplementary funding in 2017-18, which totalled approximately £55m, were announced on 1 December 2016. Individual authority allocations can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-national-funding-formula-allocations-and-guidance>.

Allocations for 2018-19 and 2019-20 will be announced in due course.

■ Pupils: Sanitary Products**Mr Mark Hendrick:****[82]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what research has been conducted into the number of school days missed by female pupils who live in households unable to afford female sanitary products; and what guidance her Department has issued on the provision of such products.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Department has not conducted any research about the number of school days missed by female pupils who live in households unable to afford sanitary products.

Paragraph 2.8 of the current guidance to schools on Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) encourages schools to make adequate and sensitive arrangements to help girls cope with menstruation and with requests for sanitary protection.

Schools: Finance**Stephen McPartland:** [1648]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will (a) introduce legislation and (b) issue guidance requiring schools to publish details of their annual budgets on their websites.

Nick Gibb:

The Department publishes the schools block allocations for individual maintained schools and academies in November each year. Details of the allocations for 2016 to 2017 are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-block-funding-allocations-2016-to-2017>.

Information on income and expenditure in local authority maintained schools (for financial years of April to March) is published in December each year and can be found on the school performance website at: <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/download-data>.

Information on income and expenditure in academy schools (for academic/financial years of September to August) is published in July each year and can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-local-authority-school-finance-data>.

Mike Kane: [1774]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how the funding will be allocated that was pledged to new grammar schools in the 2015-2017 Parliament.

Justine Greening:

There was no education bill in Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, and therefore the ban on opening new grammar schools will remain in place. I will confirm spending plans within the education budget in due course.

Stephen Timms: [1879]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether she has plans to review the consultation on a national funding formula for schools.

Nick Gibb:

We will continue to work to ensure that every child has the opportunity to attend a good school and that all schools are fairly funded. We are considering the more than 25,000 responses we received to the National Funding Formula consultation, and will publish our response in due course.

Schools: Food**Mrs Sharon Hodgson:** [626]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, which Minister in her Department will have responsibility for school food.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

As announced on 03 July 2017, I am the minister with responsibility for school food.

■ **Schools: Oxfordshire**

Mr Edward Vaizey:

[1355]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent representations she has received on funding for schools in Oxfordshire; and if she will make a statement.

Nick Gibb:

Ministers and officials from the Department have met with a range of stakeholders from across the country to discuss school funding, as part of our consultation on a schools and high needs national formulae. They have engaged with members from across the house, as well as representatives from local authorities.

We received over 25,000 responses to the consultation, which we are analysing in detail. We are grateful to all those who expressed their views on school funding and the proposed formula as part of this process. We will publish the response to the consultation in due course.

■ **Schools: Staff**

Stephen McPartland:

[634]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans she has to publish school leaders' remuneration on school websites; and if she will make a statement.

Nick Gibb:

Schools are autonomous institutions, run by the head teacher, under the control of the governing body which has responsibility for staffing matters within the school. Therefore, publishing school leaders' remuneration on school websites is a matter for individual schools.

The current School Workforce Statistical First Release (published by the Department on 22 June), however, gives the numbers of teachers, including leadership teachers and heads, who fall into salary bands and the average salary. The publication can be found [here](#).

■ **Schools: Vacancies**

Imran Hussain:

[1008]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether her Department collects and publishes figures on the number of vacant positions at (a) local authority and (b) regional level.

Nick Gibb:

As part of the annual School Workforce Census, the Department collects the number of full time teaching posts that have been advertised and are still vacant on census day. This information is supplied by schools and is published for each school, local authority and region. This information is available from 2010 to 2016 and the latest

information was published on 22 June 2017 in the underlying data file of the 'School Workforce in England: November 2016' statistical release, available at the following web link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/school-workforce-in-england-november-2016>

■ Sex and Relationship Education

Catherine West: [1130]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether her Department will consult with LGBT groups when reviewing the curriculum for sex and relationships education.

Catherine West: [1300]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether the Government's plans for sex and relationship education include LGBT issues.

Nick Gibb:

The Department for Education will be conducting a thorough engagement process on the scope and content of relationships education and relationships and sex education, involving a wide range of interested stakeholders. The engagement process will seek evidence from schools and teachers; parents and pupils; experts in safeguarding and child wellbeing; subject experts; voluntary organisations and other interested parties; and other Government Departments and public sector bodies.

We expect schools to ensure that all pupils, whatever their developing sexuality or gender identity, feel that relationships and sex education is relevant to them and sensitive to their needs. As part of our engagement programme, we will consider ways to ensure that our guidance and regulations are inclusive of LGBT issues. We plan to work closely with organisations such as Stonewall and the Terrence Higgins Trust, amongst others, to ensure that all views are represented.

We will set out more details shortly about the engagement process and the work to consider age appropriate subject content.

■ Teachers

Imran Hussain: [1005]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many teachers by subject were employed in (a) Bradford, (b) Yorkshire and the Humber and (c) England in each year from 2008.

Nick Gibb:

The information is not available in the format requested.

The latest statistics on the number of teachers in state funded secondary schools in England teaching each subject is in Table 11 of the 'School Workforce in England: November 2016' statistical release which was published on 22 June 2017 and is available at the following web link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/school-workforce-in-england-november-2016>

The statistics published are for England only and are estimates based on a large sample of secondary school teachers. Local authority and regional data are not available. Statistics on the number of teachers teaching each subject in primary schools are not collected by the Department.

■ **Teachers: Labour Turnover**

Imran Hussain: [1007]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the effect of changes to the schools funding formula on teacher recruitment and retention in deprived areas.

Imran Hussain: [1009]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the effect of changes in the school funding formula on teachers' salaries.

Nick Gibb:

We want to ensure every school has the resources it needs to deliver a high quality education for every pupil. We will continue to work to ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to attend a good school and that all schools are fairly funded. We will reflect on the message that people sent at the election about the funding of our schools, and are considering the more than 25,000 responses we received to the National Funding Formula consultation. We will publish our response in due course.

All schools need access to high quality teachers, throughout England. We are recruiting the teachers we need at the national level, despite the challenges caused by an improving economy and rising pupil numbers. We know, however, that some schools are facing significant challenges. We are working with key stakeholders to ensure greater support for pupils in deprived areas, which will include supporting schools to ensure teacher recruitment and retention challenges are addressed.

■ **Teachers: North West**

Helen Jones: [1702]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many teaching posts are vacant in (a) primary and (b) secondary schools in (i) the North-West and (ii) Warrington.

Nick Gibb:

In November 2016 there were 35 vacancies for full time primary teachers in the North West region and one in the Warrington Local Authority area. The figures for secondary were 40 in the North West region. None of these were in the Warrington Local Authority area.

This information is available from 2010 to 2016 and is for state funded schools. The latest figures were published on 22 June 2017 in the 'School Workforce in England: November 2016' statistical release, available at the following web link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/school-workforce-in-england-november-2016>

■ Teachers: Pay

Lyn Brown: [1078]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to page 125 of the report, UK Poverty: Causes and Solutions, published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation on 6 September 2016; if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of the recommendation to pilot a teacher pay premium to incentivise high-performing teachers to move to challenging schools.

Nick Gibb:

Teachers' pay and conditions in local authority maintained schools are determined on the basis of recommendations made by the independent body, the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB), who consider a wide range of factors. In academies, we know that the majority also choose to mirror these national arrangements.

The reforms to teachers' pay introduced in September 2013 give schools the flexibility to exercise their judgement as to how they reward their staff and to more closely align pay and performance. Pay flexibilities, including the use of recruitment and retention allowances, have given schools greater freedom to develop local offers which enable them to attract and retain the good teachers they need, and reflect local circumstances.

We know that while we are recruiting the teachers we need at the national level, despite the challenges caused by an improving economy and rising pupil numbers, some schools are facing significant challenges. We are working with key stakeholders to ensure greater support for pupils in deprived areas, which will include supporting schools to ensure teacher recruitment and retention challenges are addressed.

We are continuing to allocate additional funding to schools through the pupil premium to help them improve the progress and attainment of their disadvantaged pupils. Schools have flexibility over how they use the funding to benefit those pupils for whom it is intended – and this can include putting financial incentives in place to attract and retain high-performing teachers.

■ Teachers: Recruitment

Neil Coyle: [1673]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when her Department plans to launch its own webpage to match schools and teachers and save the recruitment costs that schools incur.

Nick Gibb:

We are creating a new national teacher vacancy service that will make it easier for schools to advertise vacancies and for teachers to find jobs quickly and easily. We will provide further details of the service in due course.

■ Teachers: Resignations

Imran Hussain:

[1006]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many teachers by subject left employment in (a) Bradford, (b) Yorkshire and the Humber and (c) England in each year from 2008.

Nick Gibb:

The information requested is not available.

Information, for 2011 to 2015, is available showing the percentage of teachers leaving service from state funded primary and separately for state funded secondary by region in England. This information is contained in section 2 of the 'Local analysis of teacher workforce: 2010 to 2015' statistical release available at the following web link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-analysis-of-teacher-workforce-2010-to-2015>.

Information, for 2011 and 2015, is also available showing the percentage of teachers leaving service by subject from state funded secondary in England. This information is contained in table 2.1 of the 'Teachers Analysis Compendium 2017' statistical release available at the following web link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/teachers-analysis-compendium-2017>.

Statistics on the number of teachers leaving by subject are not available.

■ Teachers: Training

Angela Rayner:

[672]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much (a) revenue and (b) capital funding her Department plans to allocate for the national retraining scheme in (a) 2017-18, (b) 2018-19, (c) 2019-20, (d) 2020-21 and (e) 2021-22.

Angela Rayner:

[674]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether she has made an assessment of the further education provision that will be required to deliver a national retraining scheme.

Anne Milton:

The Government wants to test ambitious new approaches to career learning, as announced at the Budget. Detailed proposals for implementing a national retraining scheme will be set out in due course.

■ Teachers: Vacancies

Teresa Pearce:

[1742]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many teacher vacancies there are in each local authority area.

Nick Gibb:

The number of teacher vacancies in state funded schools in each local authority area was published on 22 June 2017 in the underlying data file of the 'School Workforce in England: November 2016' statistical release, available at the following web link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/school-workforce-in-england-november-2016>

■ Teachers: Working Hours

Angela Rayner: [484]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what her policy is on the number of teaching hours per year.

Angela Rayner: [667]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what additional funding her Department will make available to increase the number of teaching hours to an average of 900 hours a year in (a) 2017-18, (b) 2018-19, (c) 2019-20, (d) 2020-21 and (e) 2021-22.

Anne Milton:

In study programmes for 16 and 17 year old students there is a requirement for a minimum of 540 planned hours per year for a programme to qualify as full time. However, the expectation on providers is to deliver programmes of 600 hours per year and the funding rate is set on that basis. The Department for Education plans to make additional funding available to support the introduction of new technical education routes, T levels. In the March budget we announced that we anticipate the number of programme hours for students on those routes will increase to over 900 a year on average, including the completion of a high quality work placement. We are currently working through the detail of our proposals for implementing the technical education reforms and the actual amounts that will be made available are still to be determined, but will be from the additional resources announced in the March Budget for 16-19 technical education to implement the Sainsbury reforms: the first line in Table 2.1 in the Budget report. See

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/spring-budget-2017-documents>.

■ Vocational Education

Angela Rayner: [483]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what her policy is on replacing existing technical qualifications with new qualifications.

Anne Milton:

The Government is committed to radically reforming technical education provision and the wider skills system in England in line with the recommendations of Lord Sainsbury's Independent Panel on Technical Education. These were accepted in the Post-16 Skills Plan, published on 8 July 2016. Copies of both documents have been placed in the libraries of both Houses.

The reforms will tackle longstanding issues which have affected our nation's productivity and international competitiveness over many years. They will replace the confusing patchwork of thousands of qualifications of variable quality with fifteen routes to skilled employment. The new routes will include far fewer but consistently better qualifications. These will be shaped by industry professionals and will provide stretching technical content, delivered to industry standards.

We plan to fund the new technical qualifications once they have been approved, and over time we expect to cease funding similar qualifications. We will not withdraw funding for students who are partway through their courses. We are currently working through the detail of our proposals and expect to publish further information in due course.

■ **Workshop Town Football Academy**

John Mann:

[209]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, on which dates between September 2015 and March 2016 spot inspections took place at the Workshop Town football academy; and at which location these inspections were carried out.

Anne Milton:

16-19 provision at the Workshop Town football academy was funded by the Department in 2015/16 through a sub-contracting arrangement managed by the College of West Anglia. A spot visit was made by quality assessors from the College of West Anglia to the Workshop site on 17 March 2016.

John Mann:

[212]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much was paid to West Anglia College for the 2015-16 Workshop Town football academy; how many students from that academy received passes in maths and English; and how many students from that academy progressed to further or higher education.

Anne Milton:

16-19 college funding is calculated using a funding formula based on lagged student numbers, and so there is no specific breakdown of how that funding relates to individual students or provision. The Department does not hold student information at the level of detail that would allow a response to the second and third elements of the question.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS**■ Agriculture**

Rachael Maskell: [\[919\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when he plans to publish the 25 year plan for food and farming.

George Eustice:

With the UK's vote to leave the European Union, the context for the UK's food and farming industries has changed significantly since the announcement of a 25 Year Plan for Food and Farming in 2015. We are focusing on the immediate and critical issues for these industries. As the Queen's Speech set out, we will be bringing forward an Agriculture Bill to set the framework for the future of the farming industry. We are already engaging extensively as we draw up our future plans and will continue to do so. There are no plans for a separate 25 year plan.

■ Agriculture: Subsidies

Jim Shannon: [\[172\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans he has to ensure that subsidy payments to farmers are maintained after the UK leaves the EU.

George Eustice:

We will provide stability to farmers as we leave the EU and we will continue to commit the same cash total in funds for farm support until the end of the parliament.

Mr Barry Sheerman: [\[265\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if his Department will take steps to ensure agricultural subsidies for farmers and landowners are used to enhance access to places the public can walk in.

George Eustice:

We will listen to the views of everyone who has an interest in the future of the farming industry as we prepare new approaches to supporting food production and stewardship of the countryside.

■ Agriculture: Trade Unions

Jim Shannon: [\[171\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that the National and Ulster Farmers Unions and other key stakeholders are involved in discussions on negotiations on the UK leaving the EU.

George Eustice:

Defra is working closely with the devolved administrations and stakeholders as we develop our approach to leaving the EU. I spoke at the Northern Ireland Food & Drink Association Dinner on 18th October 2016 with a range of organisations in attendance, and met the Association again on 21st March 2017. The Secretary of State intends to

visit Northern Ireland and meet stakeholders including the Ulster Farmers' Unions in short order.

■ **Air Pollution**

Rachael Maskell: [959]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what level of funding will be made available for the revised Air Quality Plan.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The revised Air Quality Plan will be published by 31 July 2017 following consideration of consultation responses.

It is not possible to provide funding details before the plan is finalised and published.

■ **Air Pollution: Schools**

Rachael Maskell: [960]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will make it his policy to monitor air quality outside all schools as part of the revised Air Quality Plan.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Government has recently consulted on a draft Air Quality Plan setting out our approach to reducing levels of nitrogen dioxide. The responses to the consultation are currently being considered. The final plan, including details on monitoring, will be published by 31 July.

■ **Common Agricultural Policy**

John Mann: [1317]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the (a) names of and (b) amounts paid to the 200 highest-receiving recipients of Common Agricultural Policy basic payments were in 2016.

George Eustice:

CAP payment data held for the 2016 European Commission financial year (16 October 2015 – 15 October 2016) is published on the UK CAP payments website.

The link is <http://cap-payments.defra.gov.uk/Search.aspx>.

■ **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: EU Law**

Mr Jim Cunningham: [1762]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate his Department has made of the number of EU-derived regulations which apply to his Department's responsibilities; and if he will make a statement.

George Eustice:

All Government Departments are currently reviewing the EU laws that apply in their policy areas and how our withdrawal from the EU will affect the operation of those

laws. Defra has a significant challenge in handling the return of legislative competence in the EU. Over 1200 core pieces of directly applicable EU legislation and national implementing legislation have been identified as Defra-owned.

Where laws need to be fixed, the Government will ensure this is done. There are decades of EU law to consider, and we must ensure our statute book works on exit and that we provide the maximum possible certainty for individuals and businesses as we leave the EU.

■ Environment

Rachael Maskell: [920]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when he plans to publish the 25 year plan for the environment.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Work on the 25 Year Environment Plan is ongoing and timings will be announced in due course.

■ Farms: Migrant Workers

John Mann: [1314]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many foreign workers were brought into the UK to work on farms through Government-approved labour schemes in (a) 2016 and (b) 2017 to date.

George Eustice:

The Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS) was established to bring foreign workers into the UK to work on farms. SAWS was closed in 2013 when transitional restrictions on nationals of Bulgaria and Romania were lifted, enabling free movement of all EU workers. There were no Government-approved labour schemes in the UK for farm workers in 2016 or in 2017.

■ Fisheries: Falkland Islands

Jim Shannon: [273]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to develop the fishery sector in the Falkland Islands in line with similar developments in the UK fishing sector.

George Eustice:

Defra is not directly involved in developing the fishery sector in the Falkland Islands, as responsibility for fisheries management has been devolved to the Falkland Islands Government. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) is the lead department for matters relating to the Falkland Islands and Defra works closely with the FCO on wider matters relating to fisheries that are relevant to the UK Government.

The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) has an officer based on the Falkland Islands, part funded by Defra, who works closely with the Falklands fishing

industry to help deliver commitments to reduce fisheries bycatch under the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP).

■ Fisheries: Treaties

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[1766\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many full-time equivalent staff of his Department are working on the withdrawal from the London Fisheries Convention; and if he will make a statement.

George Eustice:

There is no team dedicated purely to withdrawing from the London Fisheries Convention. Staff in the European Union Exit Directorate and the Marine and Fisheries Directorate have worked on the London Fisheries Convention in the course of their regular duties. The Secretary of State made a Written Ministerial Statement on the London Fisheries Convention on Monday 3 July.

■ Food: Waste

Kerry McCarthy:

[\[1490\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what representations the Government has made on proposals from the European Parliament to set a mandatory target to halve EU food waste by 2030 and to introduce a food waste hierarchy as part of trialogue discussions between the European Commission, the European Parliament and European Council on the Circular Economy package.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The UK has been actively engaged in the European Council's discussions on the EU Circular Economy Package at both Ministerial and official level. In May, the Presidency of the Council started trilogue discussions with the European Parliament.

■ Giant Hogweed

Mr Laurence Robertson:

[\[1479\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what responsibility landowners have for controlling Hogweed growth on their land; and if he will make a statement.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Common hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*) is native to the UK; however, giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) is a non-native species with established populations in the UK. Landowners are under no specific obligation to remove giant hogweed from their land; however, it is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to plant or otherwise cause giant hogweed to grow in the wild.

In certain circumstances, local authorities have powers to deal with giant hogweed where it is, or is likely to be, prejudicial to health. Authorities can also issue community protection notices, under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing

Act 2014, against individuals, businesses or organisations who are acting unreasonably and who persistently or continually act in a way that has a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality. This power can be used for invasive non-native species like giant hogweed. Landowners are also encouraged to work with local action groups in their area, which map, prioritise and tackle this and other non-native species.

■ Horticulture: Seasonal Workers

Chris Law: [1290]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effect of closure of the seasonal agricultural workers scheme on the economic output of the horticultural industry of (a) the UK and (b) Scotland since 2014.

George Eustice:

The Seasonal Agricultural workers scheme was closed in 2013, on the advice of the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC).

Defra has been monitoring the economic output of the horticultural industry and there has been an increase in output in real terms between 2014 and 2016 (latest available data) for both the UK and Scotland.

According to Agriculture UK 2016[1], output of vegetables and horticultural products in the UK saw an increase of £128 million in real terms between 2014 and 2016.

Output of fruit in the UK saw an increase of £68 million from 2014-2015 with a subsequent decrease of £34 million in 2016 in real terms.

Output of the horticultural industry in Scotland increased between 2014 and 2015 by £25.1 million in total. These figures have been taken from the Scottish Government website.[2]

[1]

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/615965/AUK-2016-25may17i.pdf

[2] <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/01/1031>

■ Hunting

Catherine West: [943]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what his Department's policy is on fox hunting; and whether he plans to review that policy.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The government's manifesto includes a free vote on the Hunting Act 2004, but we are not planning to bring forward a free vote in this session.

■ Refrigerators: Waste Disposal

John Mann:

[\[1891\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the level of potential risk posed by granulated refrigerator foam on abandoned waste sites in the UK; and how many sites are affected by such potential risks.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Environment Agency recognises that polyurethane foam could cause a risk to health if it catches fire. That is why, in the Bassetlaw constituency, the Environment Agency, county and district councils have set funds aside and are making plans to remove this foam as soon as possible.

The Environment Agency is aware of two further sites where this material has been abandoned.

■ Seasonal Agricultural Workers' Scheme

Chris Law:

[\[1291\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what representations he has received since 23 June 2016 from the agricultural sector on reopening the seasonal agricultural scheme.

Chris Law:

[\[1292\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with representatives of the agricultural sector on a new seasonal agricultural scheme.

George Eustice:

Ministers meet regularly with the agricultural sector. Most recently, the Secretary of State met with industry representatives at the Royal Norfolk Show on 28 June. The impact of any restrictions on seasonal workers was also raised at an industry round table held at the Royal Highland Show on 22 June.

■ Slaughterhouses: CCTV

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[1764\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate his Department has made of the total cost of installing CCTV across all slaughterhouses; and if he will make a statement.

George Eustice:

We will consult on proposals to implement our manifesto commitment to make CCTV recording in slaughterhouses mandatory. This consultation will invite views on the costs of installing CCTV in all slaughterhouses and estimated costs will be published at that point. . Many slaughterhouses have already installed CCTV.

EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION**■ Architecture: Qualifications****Hilary Benn:****[1310]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether he has made an assessment of the effect of ceasing mutual recognition of architects qualifications as a result of the UK leaving the EU.

Mr Robin Walker:

The Department, working with officials across government, continues to undertake a wide range of analysis to support our negotiations, covering the entirety of the UK economy. The Government is also continuing to discuss the implications of leaving the EU with a broad range of stakeholders from across the professional and business services sector. The UK will continue to welcome those with the skills, the drive and the expertise to make a positive contribution.

As set out in the Government's publication, 'Safeguarding the position of EU citizens living in the UK and UK nationals living in the EU', the UK will seek to ensure that professional qualifications obtained prior to the date of the UK's withdrawal from the EU continue to be recognised after the UK's exit from the EU. The UK will also give due regard to these professionals' ability to practise without unfair detriment or discrimination.

■ Borders: Northern Ireland**Catherine West:****[322]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what discussions he has had with the Democratic Unionist Party leader, Arlene Foster, on the land border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

Mr Robin Walker:

The Secretary of State has had a number of discussions on EU exit with Arlene Foster and other Northern Ireland Ministers under the previous Northern Ireland Executive, including through the Joint Ministerial Committee. There is a very strong commitment from the UK Government, Irish Government and Northern Ireland parties to find a practical solution that recognises the unique circumstances of the land border between Northern Ireland and Ireland. We welcome the clear commitment from the European Council and European Commission to work on flexible and imaginative solutions to aim to avoid a return to a hard border.

■ Brexit**Colleen Fletcher:****[1677]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what steps the Government plans to take on a cross-departmental basis to protect and extend (a) workers' rights, (b) environmental protections, (c) human rights, (d) consumer rights and (e) financial regulation during and after the negotiations on the UK leaving the EU.

Mr Robin Walker:

The Prime Minister has firmly committed not to roll back workers' and consumers' rights. The Repeal Bill will ensure that those rights that derive from EU law will continue to be available in domestic law, giving certainty and continuity to employees and employers alike, and creating stability in which the UK can grow and thrive. We do not need to be part of the EU, nor bound by EU legislation, to have strong protections for workers.

The decision to leave the EU means we now have a unique opportunity to design a set of policies to drive environmental improvement, tailored to the needs of our country that has a powerful and permanent impact – ensuring a healthy environment and strong economy – and delivering on our commitment to leave the environment in a better state than we found it.

We will be seeking a bold and ambitious free trade agreement between the United Kingdom and the European Union. This should be of greater scope and ambition than any such agreement before it so that it covers sectors crucial to our linked economies such as financial services. This will require detailed technical talks, but - as the UK is an existing EU Member State - both sides start with aligned regulatory frameworks and standards.

■ Conditions of Employment**Dan Jarvis:**[\[1689\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what the Government's policy is on guaranteeing that workers will retain the same workers' rights after the UK leaves the EU.

Mr Robin Walker:

As the Prime Minister has said, this government will protect workers' rights, and ensure that they keep pace with the changing labour market.

The Repeal Bill will ensure that workers' rights that derive from EU law will continue to be available in domestic law. This will give certainty and continuity to employees and employers alike, creating stability in which the UK can grow and thrive.

We do not need to be part of the EU to have strong protections for workers' rights. The UK already goes beyond EU minimum standards in a number of areas, such as entitlement to annual leave and provisions for shared parental leave and flexible working.

■ Data Protection**Hilary Benn:**[\[1311\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether he has had discussions with EU negotiators on the need for a data adequacy decision in respect of the UK at the point that the UK leaves the EU; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Robin Walker:

As negotiations commence our future data sharing relationship with the EU will be one of a wide range of issues we need to discuss with the EU.

The government is clear that the ability to collect, share and process personal data is crucial for the economy, and also for our wider ability to cooperate across borders, including on law enforcement and security issues. As part of plans for the UK's exit from the EU, we are considering how best to maintain our ability to share, receive and protect EU data with EU member states.

Incorporating the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) into UK law will be the foundation of our data protection legislative framework. We will continue to provide a very high standard of data protection rules once we leave the EU.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE**■ Africa: Refugees****Mr Mark Hendrick:****[83]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how much assistance his Department (a) has and (b) plans to provide to charities and other non-governmental organisations assisting refugees from African countries residing in Israel following the implementation of the so-called deposit law amendment to the Prevention of Infiltration (Offences and Jurisdiction) Law, 5714-1954 on 1 May 2017.

Alistair Burt:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has not provided any assistance in the past or plans to provide any assistance in the future to charities and other non-governmental organisations assisting refugees from African countries residing in Israel.

■ Ascension Island: Aviation**Mr Andrew Mitchell:****[1739]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what the timetable is for the commencement and conclusion of maintenance to the Wideawake Airfield on Ascension Island; and what the reasons are for that repair not having begun.

Sir Alan Duncan:

The two mile runway at Wideawake Airfield requires a full-depth resurfacing. The runway is owned and operated by the US Air Force under the Bahamas Agreement. Therefore, they are responsible for the design, management and delivery of the resurfacing project. The design phase is already underway but Ascension's isolated location and the complexity of these repairs mean works are not expected to be completed until 2020.

■ Bahrain: Police

Tom Brake:

[\[1877\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the Government has provided (a) training, (b) workshops, (c) study tours and (d) other assistance to (i) the Director of Muharraq Police Station and (ii) staff of the Muharraq Police Directorate of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Alistair Burt:

The UK has been providing a range of technical and practical assistance to the Government of Bahrain since 2012, in support of its reform programme. Training is provided to the Police Service as a whole rather than to specific Police Directorates. Any training provided by or on behalf of the government complies with our domestic and international human rights obligations.

The technical assistance we have been providing to Bahrain supports the building of effective and accountable institutions, strengthening the rule of law, and police and justice reform. It has included work with the National Institution of Human Rights, the Ministry of Interior Ombudsman, and the Prisoners' and Detainees' Rights Commission.

■ China: Air Pollution

Jim Shannon:

[\[1530\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions his Department has had with the Government of China on reducing levels of smog in that country.

Mark Field:

UK-China cooperation on climate change and energy is a key pillar of the bilateral relationship: our work includes policy, technology, commercial and research collaboration. The UK's Natural Environment Research Council and the National Natural Science Foundation of China are working together to monitor concentrations and varieties of airborne particles and volatile gases in the atmosphere, and their potential impact on human health. The UK continues to provide strong support for the development of China's national emissions trading scheme which will cover 10% of global emissions. Since 2015, the UK's Climate Change Committee and their counterparts, China's Expert Committee on Climate Change, have been collaborating to identify the key risks posed by dangerous climate change to areas such as food security, human health, infrastructure and global supply chains.

■ China: Education

Jim Shannon:

[\[1529\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions his Department has had with the Government of China on improving education for girls.

Mark Field:

During the UK-China 'People-to-People' Dialogue in December 2016, my Rt Hon. Friends the Secretaries of State for Health (Mr Hunt) and Education (Ms Greening) discussed gender equality, women's empowerment, and female education and employment rights with Chinese ministerial counterparts. Women's empowerment will continue to be a key theme for this year's 'People to People' Dialogue. Our Ambassador in Beijing, Dame Barbara Woodward, is a patron of 'Inspiring Women China', and launched a series of events in schools across China in March this year. Planned UK projects in China have girls' empowerment as a key outcome.

■ **China: Political Prisoners****Catherine West:**[\[1769\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has made to his Chinese counterpart on providing adequate medical care for political dissidents in prison in that country.

Mark Field:

We frequently raise cases of specific concern of human rights activists with the Chinese, including those individuals detained with medical conditions. For example, during the most recent UK-China Human Rights Dialogue on 27 June, we urged the Chinese to ensure Nobel Prize winner Liu Xiaobo had access to his choice of medical treatment.

■ **Hezbollah: Weapons****Paul Masterton:**[\[557\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent reports he has received on the size of Hezbollah's weapons arsenal.

Alistair Burt:

We are aware of reports that Hizballah continues to amass an arsenal of weapons in direct contravention of UN Security Council Resolution 1559. Hizballah's arsenal has been increasing since the 2006 war with Israel and we remain concerned about Hizballah's involvement in the Syria conflict where they have provided essential support to the Syrian Armed forces.

■ **Inner Mongolia: Human Rights****Jim Shannon:**[\[1452\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what support his Department has provided to China to improve human rights in Inner Mongolia.

Mark Field:

The Government pays close attention to the developing human rights situation in China. We have not provided any direct support for human rights in the inner Mongolian Autonomous region. However, we did raise several cases of concern from

Inner Mongolia directly with the Chinese authorities at the latest round of the UK-China Human Rights Dialogue, which took place on 27 June in Beijing.

■ **Liu Xiaobo**

Catherine West:

[\[1767\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to his Chinese counterpart on ensuring that Liu Xiaobo has access to (a) adequate medical care and (b) his family.

Mark Field:

We raised the case of Liu Xiaobo at the UK-China Human Rights Dialogue which was held in Beijing on 27 June. We urged the Chinese authorities both to ensure Liu Xiaobo has access to his choice of medical treatment and also to lift all restrictions on him and his wife Liu Xia.

Catherine West:

[\[1768\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions Ministers of his Department have had with their Chinese counterparts on the transfer of Lui Xiaobo to hospital.

Mark Field:

We raised the case of Liu Xiaobo at the UK-China Human Rights Dialogue which was held in Beijing on 27 June. We urged the Chinese authorities to ensure Liu Xiaobo has access to his choice of medical treatment and to lift all restrictions on him and his wife Liu Xia.

■ **Pakistan: Christianity**

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[\[1866\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations to the Government of Pakistan on the recent case of a sewage cleaner who was a Christian, who died after becoming unconscious at work, and whose medical treatment was allegedly delayed as a result of the religious beliefs of doctors during Ramadan.

Mark Field:

We are concerned about continuing reports of abuses against Christians (and other religious minorities) in Pakistan. The British Government strongly condemns the targeting of innocent people based on their religion or beliefs.

We regularly raise our concerns about the protection of minority communities, including religious minorities, with the Pakistani Government at a senior level. The Foreign Secretary discussed the importance we attach to safeguarding the rights of all Pakistan's citizens during his visit to Pakistan in November 2016.

In January 2017, my predecessor, my hon. Friend the Member for Reading West (Mr Sharma), raised the protection of religious minorities with Kamran Michael, Pakistani

Minister for Human Rights, and Barrister Zafarullah Khan, the Pakistani Prime Minister's Special Assistant for Human Rights.

We continue to urge Pakistan to honour in practice its human rights obligations, including those related to religious freedom, and to uphold the rule of law.

■ **Portugal: British Nationals Abroad**

David T. C. Davies: [1593]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what information his Department holds on the number of British subjects being held in pre-trial detention in Portugal.

Sir Alan Duncan:

Of the 19 British nationals currently in prison in Portugal, 8 are being held in pre-trial detention.

David T. C. Davies: [1661]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what information his Department holds on the number of British nationals being held in prison in Portugal.

Sir Alan Duncan:

We are providing assistance to 19 British Nationals currently detained in Portugal.

■ **State Visits: USA**

Catherine West: [944]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions the Government has with the US Administration on President Trump's planned state visit to the UK.

Sir Alan Duncan:

Our Embassy in Washington, on behalf of the Government, remains in close contact with the White House on a range of issues, including the State Visit.

■ **Turkey: Politics and Government**

Kevin Brennan: [1681]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his Turkish counterparts on ensuring the safety and freedom of speech of political dissidents.

Sir Alan Duncan:

I, and UK Ministers, have frequent discussions with our Turkish counterparts on the issue of fundamental rights, including freedom of expression. We will continue to engage the Turkish Government on these issues and to urge respect for freedom of media and speech, which are essential to the long-term health of Turkish democracy.

HEALTH**■ Abortion: Northern Ireland****Stella Creasy:**[\[1439\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, on which dates his Department consulted (a) the Northern Ireland Assembly and (b) representatives of Northern Irish political parties on the duties of the NHS in providing access to abortion services in England and Wales for women normally resident in Northern Ireland.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

There have been no consultations with the Northern Irish Assembly or the representatives of Northern Irish political parties on the provision of abortion services in England and Wales for women ordinarily resident in Northern Ireland.

The Supreme Court has recently confirmed that the Government has no duty to fund abortions for these women, given the devolved nature of the health system. However, the Government announced on 29 June that it would exercise its discretion in this area and fund abortions for women travelling from Northern Ireland to make use of services in England.

■ Action on Smoking and Health**Mr Philip Hollobone:**[\[1592\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether he has agreed to a request for funding for the financial year 2017-18 from Action on Smoking and Health; and if he will make a statement.

Steve Brine:

The Department has received no request for funding for the financial year 2017-18 from the charity Action on Smoking and Health. Any grant funding awards agreed in this financial year will be made on a competitive basis in line with Government guidelines.

■ Autism**Mr Roger Godsiff:**[\[1455\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of steps to improve provision for the investigation and treatment of autism-related medical conditions.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

Clinical commissioning groups have a responsibility to commission services that best meet the needs of their populations including those with autism. In doing so, they may take account of clinical guidelines published by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). Whilst NICE's clinical guidelines are not mandatory, adherence to them will support improvements in the quality of care and services.

■ Children: Disability

Steve McCabe:

[1650]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether he welcomes the Disabled Children's Partnership's campaign, Secret Life of Us, which was launched on 28 June 2017; and if he will meet the Partnership to discuss how the Government can work with it to address the challenges disabled children and their families encounter.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The Government is committed to achieving good outcomes and life chances for all children and young people. Health and care services play an integral part in achieving this.

We welcome work to increase awareness of the challenges disabled children, young people and their families face and to ensure that they receive the care and support they need. As the minister responsible for children's disabilities, I would be happy to meet with the Partnership to discuss these matters.

■ Clinical Psychologists: Training

Luciana Berger:

[1475]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much his Department plans to allocate to fund trainee clinical psychologists in each year to 2020.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Health Education England's budget is set annually by the Department. The funding allocated for trainee clinical psychologists in 2017/18 is £88.8 million.

■ Family Nurse Partnership Programme

Frank Field:

[1343]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the effect of the Family Nurse Partnership on children's long-term outcomes.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

There has been one completed randomised control trial (RCT) to evaluate this programme, and another one is in process.

The Building Blocks RCT published in 2015 evaluated the effectiveness of implementing Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) in England on four primary short-term outcomes relating to the mother. The evaluation report is available to view here:

http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0009/504729/Building-Blocks-Full-Study-Report.pdf

The current Building Blocks 2-6 Study will evaluate the long-term effectiveness, and the cost and consequences of the FNP parenting support programme in reducing maltreatment in young children by following up the same mothers and their children for a further four years until the child is six years old, therefore this study will measure whether the FNP programme reduces child maltreatment in the longer-term. The

study is expected to report in summer 2018. Further information on the study is available to view here:

<http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/centre-for-trials-research/research/studies-and-trials/view/building-blocks-26>

■ General Practitioners: Recruitment

Mr Philip Hollobone:

[1659]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will encourage NHS England to recruit more GPs for (a) the Borough of Kettering and (b) England.

Steve Brine:

We have committed to an extra 5,000 doctors in general practice by 2020. NHS England and Health Education England (HEE) are working together with the profession to increase the general practitioner (GP) workforce across the country. This involves efforts to boost both recruitment and retention of GPs.

In 2016 HEE recruited the highest number of GP trainees ever, and is working with NHS England on additional measures to encourage GPs to return to practice, and address the reasons why experienced GPs are leaving the profession.

Both Northamptonshire clinical commissioning groups, Nene and Corby, are working with NHS England to address local challenges relating to GP recruitment and retention. For example, GPs in the Nene/Corby area are participating in the local GP Retainer Scheme.

■ Health Services: Dudley

Ian Austin:

[1667]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will publish the risk register drawn up in planning the contract proposed by Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group for a multi-speciality community provider.

Ian Austin:

[1668]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what provision the Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group has made for the continuing professional development of staff employed by Dudley's multi-speciality community provider over the 15 year lifetime of the contract.

Ian Austin:

[1669]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment has been made of the effect of the development of new healthcare technologies, drugs or techniques on the delivery of healthcare over the 15 year lifetime of the Dudley Multi-Speciality Community Provider contract.

Ian Austin:

[1670]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what elements of healthcare provision the new contract proposed by Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group for a multi-speciality community provider will deliver which cannot be delivered under current arrangements.

Ian Austin:

[1671]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate has been made of drawing up and tendering the new contract proposed by Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group for a multi-speciality community provider in (a) management time, (b) legal fees, (c) consultancy fees and (d) other fees and costs; and what assessment has been made of the value for money of this financial provision.

Steve Brine:

Decisions about local services should be made as close to patients as possible. General practitioners, as part of clinical commissioning groups (CCGs), are best placed to co-ordinate the commissioning of high quality care for their patients. They ensure that commissioning decisions are underpinned by clinical insight and knowledge of local health care needs.

The Department expects CCGs to assure themselves that they have satisfied their legal duties. As part of this, we would expect that commissioners have had due regard for staff development, innovations in treatment and advances in medical technologies, and the administrative costs of procurement exercises.

Commissioners have the freedom and autonomy to take responsibility for meeting the needs of local patients and the public by working closely with secondary care, other health and care professionals and with community partners to design joined up services. The CCG has a budget of £250,000 for external advice and support to help them do this.

In designing this contract, the CCG has conducted its own modelling and this has been referenced in the procurement notice. The ongoing partnership between the CCG and the Multispeciality Community Provider (MCP) will involve joint "horizon scanning" to identify emergent issues and agree how these will be managed.

The services covered by the proposed scope of the MCP contract are all services currently contained within existing separate contracts, or other agreements, between the CCG and service providers or Dudley Council with service providers.

A MCP removes artificial barriers between these existing providers, bringing them together to overcome fragmentation in the National Health Service and provide joined up care that is preventative, high quality and efficient. This will ensure it can deliver the coordinated care that is needed to the complex needs of a growing frail elderly population which do not fall neatly into discrete packages.

Much of the MCP care model can be delivered in current contractual frameworks through closer working. However, there is an opportunity to make sure that contracting in a new way supports this integration and delivery of the care model. By awarding an MCP Contract, commissioners can ensure that the integrated working

and aligned incentives that providers have built through the model are sustainable and that organisational siloes are truly

dissolved. The Whole Population Budget, a key tool for integration, can only be given to the MCP provider if they hold an MCP Contract.

Within the MCP, the continuing professional development of the staff will be the responsibility of the MCP itself, as the provider and contract holder, not the CCG as the commissioner. The CCG has set out in its prospectus and in the questions it will use during the “dialogue” phase of the procurement its expectations of the MCP as a good employer and these will be tested out with bidders. The MCP contract moves from an adversarial style contract to a partnership based contract. As part of the developing relationship between the CCG and the MCP it may be appropriate for the CCG and the MCP to consider how the organisational development of the MCP is supported jointly.

The CCG are also including staff representatives in the evaluation of the procurement bids.

NHS England is responsible for assuring the performance of CCGs. If it believes that a CCG is failing or at risk of failing its statutory duties, it has powers to intervene.

In November 2016 NHS England and NHS Improvement published details of a new Integrated Support and Assurance Process (ISAP). The dual purpose of the ISAP is to guide the work of local commissioners and providers in creating successful and safe schemes and provide a means of assurance that this has happened.

The ISAP process will test whether the contract will deliver value for money over the full duration of that contract, including an assessment of how the break clauses will work.

The risk register is a live document which is held by Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group's MCP Procurement Project Board. The Department does not keep a risk register for proposals made by individual CCGs.

■ Health Services: Foreign Nationals

John Mann: [\[1315\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much was claimed back by each hospital trust for healthcare of foreign nationals in the UK in 2016.

John Mann: [\[1316\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much was claimed back from each overseas country in 2016 for medical treatment in the UK.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Department on behalf of the United Kingdom Government reimburses other European Economic Area (EEA) countries and Switzerland for the cost of providing treatment to people we are responsible for under European Union law, irrespective of nationality. In the same way, other EEA countries and Switzerland reimburse the UK

for the cost of the National Health Service providing treatment to people they are responsible for under European Union law, including UK nationals insured in another EEA country or Switzerland.

The requested data regarding individual trusts is not held centrally.

Due to the complexities associated with collecting and aggregating information on costs and treatment, claims for EEA medical costs are typically submitted by EEA member states (including the UK) up to three, and sometimes more, years in arrears. Therefore, claims for any 12 month period do not necessarily reflect treatment provided in that period.

The attached table provides information about how much was paid to the UK nearest to the pound, for NHS provided treatments for 2015-16, the latest year available, broken down by country of destination.

Attachments:

1. PQ1315 attached table [PQ1315 attached tables.docx]

John Mann:

[973]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much was recharged to (a) EU and (b) non-EU countries for health treatment by the NHS in 2016.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Department on behalf of the United Kingdom Government reimburses other European Economic Area (EEA) countries and Switzerland for the cost of providing treatment to people we are responsible for under European Union law, irrespective of nationality. In the same way, other EEA countries and Switzerland reimburse the UK for the cost of the National Health Service providing treatment to people they are responsible for under European Union law, including UK nationals insured in another EEA country or Switzerland.

Due to the complexities associated with collecting and aggregating information on costs and treatment, claims for EEA medical costs are typically submitted by EEA member states (including the UK) up to three, and sometimes more, years in arrears. Therefore, claims for any 12 month period do not necessarily reflect treatment provided in that period.

The attached table provides information about how much was paid to the UK, nearest to the pound, for NHS provided treatments for 2015-16 broken down by country of destination.

For non-EEA countries without a reciprocal agreement in place with the UK, it would be for the individual to pay for any healthcare needed and for that reason appropriate travel and medical insurance is highly advisable. Similarly, for those non-EEA countries with whom the UK does have a reciprocal healthcare agreement, no money changes hands between the parties to the agreement. The basis of these

agreements is reciprocity – that is, necessary healthcare is provided in most cases free of charge to the visitor and the associated costs are absorbed by either side.

Attachments:

1. PQ973 attached table [PQ973 attached table.docx]

■ **Health Visitors**

Frank Field:

[1890]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to improve the rates of coverage and activity for health visitors in (a) the Wirral and (b) England.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

From 1 October 2015, local authorities (LAs) took over responsibility for commissioning public health services for children aged 0-5 from NHS England. Whilst Public Health England (PHE) collects data on coverage, LAs are responsible for local delivery which includes coverage and activity.

In 2010 the Government committed to growing the health visitor workforce and transforming health visiting services to improve health outcomes and reduce inequalities. Since 2010, around 7,500 health visitor training places have been commissioned representing a fivefold increase in the number of health visitor trainees starting training and allowing greater access to services and support for families.

The Department and PHE have produced guidance to support both commissioners and local providers including Guidance to support the commissioning of the Healthy Child Programme 0-19: Health Visiting and School Nursing services. The materials are based on evidence and good practice. PHE and the Department continue to work with the Local Government Association, professional bodies, and locally through PHE Centres to share evidence and guidance that allows LAs to make the best decisions to meet local needs.

■ **Hospitals: Parking**

Tracy Brabin:

[1747]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent discussions he has had with NHS trusts on car parking costs in relation to blue badge holders.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Decisions on car parking provision and charging are taken locally by each trust.

The Department published clear guidelines (the car parking principles) for National Health Service organisations that they are expected to follow. Hospitals should put concessions in place for those who most need help including disabled people, carers and staff who work shifts. The NHS itself is responsible for ensuring that charges are fairly applied. Patients, visitors and staff who have problems with car parking should therefore contact the NHS organisation which runs the car park.

The Department published NHS patient, visitor and staff car parking principles on 23 August 2014, which were subsequently updated in October 2015:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nhs-patient-visitor-and-staff-car-parking-principles/nhs-patient-visitor-and-staff-car-parking-principles>

On concessions, the principles make clear that concessions, including free or reduced charges or caps, should be available for the following groups:

- disabled people, including people with temporary disabilities as well as Blue Badge holders;
- frequent outpatient attenders;
- visitors with relatives who are gravely ill, or carers of such people;
- visitors to relatives who have an extended stay in hospital, or carers of such people;
- carers of people in the above groups where appropriate; and
- staff working shifts that mean public transport cannot be used.

■ Medical Records: Digital Technology

Sir Nicholas Soames:

[1753]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what progress has been made on the digitalisation of health records; and if he will make a statement.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

Most general practitioner (GP) practices have been using digital records for about 10 years. All GP practices in England now use computerised records.

All secondary care providers of acute, mental health, community and ambulance services are making progress in digitising their records. This has been achieved through a combination of local and national investment. The 2015/16 digital maturity assessment shows that most progress has been made in digitising patient records, transfers of information between care settings and the ordering/reporting of diagnostic tests.

The Government is investing £4.2 billion to support wider adoption of digital technology over five years - including delivery of interoperable electronic patient records in the National Health Service - by 2020.

■ Mental Health Act 1983

Luciana Berger:

[1735]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when he plans to consult on reforming the Mental Health Act 1983.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The Queen's Speech confirmed the Government's intention to reform mental health legislation. Details will be published in due course.

■ Mental Health Act 2007

Luciana Berger: [\[1287\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when he plans to publish recommendations on reforming the Mental Health Act 1983, as outlined in the Queen's Speech.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The Queen's Speech confirmed the Government's intention to reform mental health legislation. Details will be published in due course.

■ Mental Health Services

Luciana Berger: [\[1737\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many times (a) a representative from Public Health England and (b) the Chief Executive of Public Health England has attended meetings of the Mental Health Policy Group since 1 February 2016; and on which date each such meeting was held.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

Public Health England regularly engages with the charities and third sector bodies that make up the Mental Health Policy Group, plus others in the national mental health sector, all of whom are independent from government.

Barbara Keeley: [\[1776\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps (a) his Department and (b) NHS England are taking to reduce the practice of sending patients with severe mental problems to hospitals out of the patient's area.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

Inappropriate out of area placements are unacceptable and the Government has committed to eliminate these in non-specialist, acute mental health care by 2020/21.

To support the delivery of this ambition, in October 2016 the Government put in place the first data collection to secure much-needed national transparency on this issue.

Clinical commissioning groups also have the opportunity to gain a financial Quality Premium if they successfully reduce their out of area bed days by 33% during 2017/18. This will also be available in 2018/19.

■ Mental Health Services: EU Nationals

Barbara Keeley: [\[1440\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many non-UK EU nationals were working in mental health services in each NHS trust and clinical commissioning group in each of the last five years.

Mr Philip Dunne:

NHS Digital publishes data on the nationality of staff working in the National Health Service in England. Nationality is self-reported within the NHS human resources and payroll system, the electronic staff record.

The March 2017 data is the most recent data available, therefore to account for seasonality data is shown as at each March for the previous years requested.

Nationals working in mental health services are defined as those working in mental health NHS trusts. Data presented representing the organisational structure at the time.

The information is shown in the attached table.

Attachments:

1. PQ1440 attached table [PQ1440 attached document.xlsx]

Barbara Keeley:

[1441]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many non-UK EU national mental health care workers there were in the NHS in each of the last five years.

Mr Philip Dunne:

NHS Digital publishes data on the nationality of staff working in the National Health Service in England. Nationality is self-reported within the NHS human resources and payroll system, the electronic staff record.

The March 2017 data is the most recent data available, therefore to account for seasonality data is shown as at each March for the previous years requested.

Information does not separately identify mental health care workers. The information in the table below covers all care workers in the area of psychiatry, psychology and learning disability.

NHS Hospital and Community Health Services (HCHS): All specified care workers in England who declared their nationality as European Union nationals as at 31 March each specified year, full-time equivalent (FTE).

FTE	MARCH-2013	MARCH-2014	MARCH-2015	MARCH-2016	MARCH-2017
Specified care workers, non-United Kingdom, European Union nationals	2,525	2,687	2,830	3,000	3,157

Source: NHS Digital, NHS HCHS workforce statistics.

All specified care workers include: Qualified nursing and health visiting staff (Community Psychiatry, Other Psychiatry, Community Learning Disabilities and Other Learning Disabilities). Qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff (STPT) (includes Clinical psychology and Psychotherapy), Support to doctors and nursing staff (includes Community Psychiatry, Other Psychiatry, Community Learning

Disabilities and Other Learning Disabilities), Support to ST&T staff (includes Clinical psychology and Psychotherapy)

■ **Mental Health Services: Hospital Beds**

Barbara Keeley: [\[1775\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate his Department has made of the number of NHS trusts where there are no NHS beds available for female patients in need of intensive psychiatric care.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The information is not collected centrally.

■ **Mental Health Services: Nurses**

Catherine West: [\[942\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans his Department has to increase the number of mental health nurses.

Mr Philip Dunne:

A five year workforce plan to deliver the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health is currently being finalised by Health Education England and will be published in due course.

■ **Mental Health Services: Private Sector**

Luciana Berger: [\[1736\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much the NHS has paid private healthcare companies for the provision of (a) eating disorder and (b) mental health services in each year since 2010.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The information is not held in the format requested.

■ **Mental Health Services: Staff**

Frank Field: [\[1749\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the number and adequacy of staffing levels for child and adolescent mental health services in (a) the Wirral and (b) England.

Mr Philip Dunne:

NHS Digital publish NHS Hospital and Community Health Services data which shows that as at 31 March 2017, latest available data, there are 161 (full time equivalent) staff providing child and adolescent mental health services in the Wirral and 8,398 (fte) in England.

All staff working in child and adolescent mental health services include medical staff working in the specialty of child and adolescent psychiatry and non-medical staff with a secondary area of work of child and adolescent psychiatry.

The Wirral includes Cheshire and Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, NHS Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group, North West Ambulance Service NHS Trust, Wirral Community NHS Foundation Trust and Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

In terms of staffing levels in mental health, we are working with Health Education England to develop a plan for publication this year. The scope of this will include growing the workforce and expanding the skills of the existing workforce, both for adult mental health services, and to address the workforce recommendations for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services set out in Future in Mind available at the link:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/414024/Childrens_Mental_Health.pdf

■ **Mental Health Services: Standards**

Frank Field: [1750]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the effect of the waiting time to access child and adolescent mental health services on the wellbeing of (a) looked-after children and (b) children leaving care in (i) the Wirral and (ii) England.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

There is an expert reference group jointly commissioned by Department for Education and the Department of Health, which regularly meets and oversees these topics. The Department has made no such assessment.

■ **Mental Health: Employment**

Dan Jarvis: [1686]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when the Government plans to publish its review of mental health practices in the workplace.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

Lord Dennis Stevenson and Paul Farmer are progressing their independent review on how employers can better support all employees, including those with mental ill-health or poor well-being, to remain and thrive in work. The review is due to report later this year.

■ **NHS Shared Business Services**

Tracy Brabin: [1882]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to his oral contribution of 27 June 2017, Urgent Question, column 472, on NHS Shared Business Service, how much has been provided to GP surgeries to cover additional administrative costs; what the total amount to be made available to GP surgeries is; and what the number of GP surgeries that have received such funding is in (a) Batley and Spen constituency, (b) West Yorkshire and (c) the UK.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

As set out in the National Audit Office Report (Investigation: clinical correspondence handling at NHS Shared Business Services, 27th June 2017):

“NHS England has made payments to 7,330 GP practices totalling £2.5 million to compensate them for the time spent assessing the potential for patient harm due to the delay in the correspondence, and for reporting the outcome of their assessments to NHS England.”

Information by parliamentary constituency is not available.

■ NHS Shared Business Services: Correspondence**Joan Ryan:**[\[1754\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many patients in Enfield North constituency have been affected by NHS Shared Business Services' (SBS) backlog of patient correspondence; of the 1,788 cases of potential harm identified by the National Audit Office (NAO) as being caused by the SBS backlog of correspondence, how many affected Enfield North constituency residents; and of the 2,508 items of correspondence identified by the NAO as high risk, how many affected patients in Enfield North constituency.

Joan Ryan:[\[1757\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many patients in Enfield North constituency affected by NHS Shared Business Services' backlog of correspondence have yet to have their files assessed by a GP.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

All documentation has been sent on to the relevant general practitioner surgery.

Information by parliamentary constituency is not available.

■ NHS Trusts: Loans**Stella Creasy:**[\[1421\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the interest rate is for 2015-16 (a) revolving and (b) rolling maturity interim revenue support loans to each NHS hospital trust; and what that interest rate was at the start of each of those loans.

Stella Creasy:[\[1422\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much was (a) drawn and (b) repaid in year in 2016-17 by each NHS hospital trust for outstanding 2016-17 (i) revolving and (ii) rolling maturity interim revenue support loans; and what the (A) loan term and (B) interest rate charged was for each of those loans.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Details of loans issued in 2016/17 will be available once the audit of the Department's accounts has been concluded. Full details of all finance issued by the Department is published alongside the accounts.

The interest rate for any Revolving Working Capital Facility or Revenue Support Loan made by the Department to each National Health Service trust in 2015/16 is shown in the attached table. This data includes both interim and normal course of business loans made. Normal course of business loans are financing arrangement available to all NHS trusts and foundation trusts based on their ability to service the debt requested. Interim loans represent financial support to providers in order to meet their liabilities.

The Department does not issue variable rate loans. The interest rate is fixed for the full term of the loan.

In assessing the impact of the interest rate, consideration must be given to the consequential impact of the debt of the payment of the public dividend capital.

Attachments:

1. PQ1421 attached table [PQ1422 attached table.xlsx]

■ **NHS: Cybercrime**

Justin Madders:

[1052]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of the recent cyber attack on the NHS.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

The identifiable cost of emergency measures put in place to specifically address the National Health Service ransomware attack on 12 May 2017 was approximately £180,000. These costs were borne by NHS Digital and NHS England from internal budgets. Information relating to any expenditure incurred by individual local NHS trusts or other NHS organisations is not collected centrally.

■ **NHS: Drugs**

Tim Farron:

[1319]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what contingency plans are in place in the event of a licensed medicine becoming unavailable owing to temporary shortage.

Steve Brine:

There is a team within the Department which deals specifically with medicine supply problems, both in the community and hospitals. It works closely with the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), the pharmaceutical industry, NHS England and others operating in the supply chain to help prevent shortages and to ensure that the risks to patients are minimised when they do arise.

This work is underpinned by joint Departmental/pharmaceutical industry best practice guidelines which give advice to companies on what to do in the event of a shortage. In the event of a shortage, the Department will explore the available options for continued supply, which might include: investigating alternative supplies, expediting regulatory decisions, commissioning clinical advice and ensuring that appropriate communications channels are in place to alert health care professionals. Many

potential shortages are resolved before they can have an impact on pharmacies or patients.

The Department also holds an Essential Medicines Buffer Stockpile, which is in place to make the supply chain more robust for key medicines in the event of a pandemic or other emergency.

■ NHS: Finance

Joan Ryan:

[1756]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of the capped expenditure process on the quality of care delivered by the NHS.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Local organisations are taking action to secure high quality care within their fair share of the National Health Service budget.

The NHS is required to meet its operational standards as set out in the mandate and ensure access to appropriate care for all, in line with the NHS Constitution. It is right that the NHS should consider efficiency savings such as reducing delayed transfers of care, reducing running costs, or reviewing treatments that are of low clinical effectiveness – because this improves patient care overall.

Justin Madders:

[997]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether he approved in person proposals for those areas affected by the capped expenditure process.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The National Health Service and wider health system has examined how to sustain and improve care – which produced the NHS Five Year Forward View. The Government committed to providing an additional £10 billion in real terms by 2020-21 to back the NHS's plan, enabling it to deliver key priorities like seven day care, improved access to cancer treatments and better mental health services.

All public services, local NHS areas need to live within the budget agreed – otherwise they effectively take up resources that could be spent on general practitioners, mental health care, and cancer treatment. As part of their financial planning, NHS England and NHS Improvement have been running a process to look at how a small number of areas could do more to balance their financial plans, as many already have.

■ NHS: Fire Prevention

Diana Johnson:

[1431]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many full-time equivalent officials with responsibility for fire safety arrangements were employed by (a) NHS trusts and (b) other NHS providers in each year since 2009-10.

Diana Johnson: [1432]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, (a) how many and (b) what proportion of hospitals had completed fire safety checks in all their inpatient accommodation between the afternoon of 24 June 2017 and the end of 25 June 2017; and how many of those checks identified defects in fire safety procedures.

Diana Johnson: [1435]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, (a) how much and (b) what proportion of his Department's capital budget was spent on fire safety improvements in NHS premises in each year since 2009-10.

Diana Johnson: [1436]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many full-time equivalent inspectors with responsibility for fire safety arrangements were employed by (a) NHS Improvement and (b) his Department in each year since 2009-10.

Diana Johnson: [1437]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether each (a) Fire and Rescue Service and (b) national fire service head was consulted by officials of his Department before the decision was taken to order fire safety checks on all inpatient NHS accommodation on 24 June 2017.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The National Health Service estate encompasses a huge, varied and complex set of buildings and facilities. Currently annual running costs of the NHS estates are over £8 billion, and NHS providers also spend some £3 billion annually on capital investment, in particular on maintaining and improving their estates and infrastructure. The use of resources to find and remedy fire safety issues remains an absolute priority.

NHS trusts decide locally how best to fulfil their fire safety obligations within appropriate legislation and guidance. This includes decisions about use of resources for health and safety, including fire safety work. NHS trusts are not required to give detailed breakdowns of their expenditure and staff deployed in this area, and the Department therefore does not hold this information.

The Department collects data on backlog maintenance (the capital investment needed to bring the estate and facilities up to an appropriate standard for quality and safety) annually from NHS trusts through its Estates Returns Information Collection. The data collected has not been amended centrally and its accuracy always remains the responsibility of the contributing NHS organisations. It can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/559126/est-ret-info-col-2015-2016-Report.pdf

As part of the response to the tragic events at the Grenfell Tower, actions have been implemented across the NHS to assess the risks of similar issues and ensure that the NHS estate is safe. Fire safety checks of NHS facilities are regularly undertaken in line with legislation and guidance. Hospitals are well prepared – each one has a

tailored fire safety plan. But nothing is more important than the safety of patients and staff, so on a precautionary basis we have asked all hospitals to conduct additional checks.

Jim Mackey, Chief Executive of NHS Improvement instigated inspections by local fire and rescue services on 24 June 2017. Since then, the programme of inspections has continued across the NHS.

In addition, the CQC ensure healthcare organisations comply with the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014, in particular Regulation 15 of the Act which includes provisions for ensuring that Trusts have appropriate Fire Safety systems in place.

The Department is working closely with colleagues across government on fire safety, and NHS Improvement, as the lead arm's length body, is similarly co-operating with its fire and rescue service counterparts both nationally and locally.

The Department, NHS Improvement, and its predecessor bodies have no operational role in managing fire safety in the NHS estate, and therefore do not directly employ officials with any such responsibility for fire safety inspection. At an operational level the Trust Director with fire safety responsibility should ensure, through senior management and line management structures, that full staff participation in fire training and fire evacuation drills is maintained.

Diana Johnson:

[\[1690\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many NHS fire safety officers were members of the (a) Institute of Fire Prevention Officers, (b) Institute of Fire Safety Managers and (c) National Association of Healthcare Fire Officers in each year since 2009-10.

Diana Johnson:

[\[1691\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many and what proportion of NHS premises have been audited for fire safety in each year since 2009-10; and how many of those premises have (a) passed and (b) failed those audits.

Mr Philip Dunne:

This information is not held centrally.

However, since the tragic events at the Grenfell Tower, all 238 trusts have now confirmed that they have undertaken a fire risk assessment in the last twelve months.

■ **NHS: Reorganisation**

Norman Lamb:

[\[1484\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what role the National Clinical Director for Mental Health has in the overview, scrutiny and implementation of sustainability and transformation plans.

Steve Brine:

NHS England's National Clinical Director for Mental Health and her team conduct regular assessments of the clinical aspects of delivery within Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STPs), alongside policy experts for specific areas of the STPs' plans. This ensures national senior clinical engagement to support quality improvement across the STPs.

Norman Lamb:[\[1486\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of whether proposals in each sustainability and transformation plan will improve access to, and the quality of, support for people with mental health conditions, learning disabilities and autism.

Norman Lamb:[\[1488\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to ensure that each sustainability and transformation plan area improves community-based support for people with mental health conditions, learning disabilities and autism.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

NHS England's national mental health team and regional teams are working closely with Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) footprints to deliver the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health commitments, based on the trajectories published in Implementing the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health.

As part of NHS England's delivery approach, national and regional mental health leads are working together to track progress across the mental health programme in STPs, and areas are being offered targeted support to build leadership and improve commissioning and quality.

Through this and careful tracking of progress and investment, NHS England will ensure implementation of recommendations to improve community-based support for people with mental health conditions.

Plans to improve community-based support for people with learning disabilities and autism with behaviour that challenges are detailed in Transforming Care Plans (TCPs), which are closely linked to STPs. Each area of England has produced a TCP demonstrating a reduction in the number of inpatient beds and strengthening the community services in their area for people with learning disability and autism. The plans have detailed milestones to support delivery, and are scrutinised at regional and at national level.

Local authorities and National Health Service commissioners are required to take account of the 2009 Autism Act. The autism strategy, Think Autism, published in 2014, and its statutory guidance supports the effective development of local strategies to design and deliver services for meeting the needs of adults with autism.

Norman Lamb:

[1487]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the likely success of each sustainability and transformation plan.

Steve Brine:

NHS England and NHS Improvement have been clear that they see Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STPs) as the key means to deliver the goals set out in the Five Year Forward View.

As a result, they have been working with each area to improve proposals and turn these into plans, and continue to work with STPs in turning plans into partnerships.

Each STP will be formally assessed in relation to its performance across a series of priority metrics. An STP dashboard, setting out this assessment, will be published shortly.

■ **North Middlesex University Hospital**

Joan Ryan:

[1755]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions (a) he and (b) officials of his Department have had with (i) NHS England and (ii) NHS Improvement on potential NHS service consolidation at North Middlesex University Hospital.

Mr Philip Dunne:

No specific meetings have been recorded. However, both Ministers and officials are in regular communication with colleagues at arms length bodies, including NHS England and NHS Improvement, on many issues affecting the National Health Service.

■ **Nurses: Migrant Workers**

Barbara Keeley:

[1491]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many non-UK EU national nurses were working in mental health in the NHS in each of the last five years.

Mr Philip Dunne:

NHS Digital publishes data on the nationality of staff working in the National Health Service in England. Nationality is self-reported within the NHS human resources and payroll system, the electronic staff record.

The March 2017 data is the most recent data available, therefore to account for seasonality data is shown as at each March for the previous years requested.

The information is shown in the following table.

NHS Hospital and Community Health Service (HCHS) workforce statistics: Nursing staff in Mental Health by Nationality Group in NHS trusts and clinical commissioning groups in England, 31 March 2013 to 31 March 2017, full time equivalent (FTE)

	MARCH- 2013	MARCH- 2014	MARCH- 2015	MARCH- 2016	MARCH- 2017
FTE					
Mental health staff, non-United Kingdom, European Union nationals	941	917	955	957	1,004

Source: NHS Digital, Provisional NHS HCHS monthly workforce statistics

Mental Health staff within this table include nurses working within the care settings of Community Psychiatry, Other Psychiatry, Community Learning Disabilities and Other Learning Disabilities.

■ Nurses: Recruitment

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[\[1472\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment the Government has made of the effect on the ability of the NHS to hire sufficient nursing staff of the (a) 23 per cent decrease in applications to study nursing following the ending of bursaries and (b) 96 per cent decrease in nurses from the EU registering to work in the UK.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Government remains committed to reforming nursing, midwifery and allied health pre-registration education and increasing the number of places available for students so that two in three nursing applicants are no longer turned down for a place; at the same time ensuring these students have more cash available to them while they study.

Data published by the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service on the number of applicants that applied for courses up to March 2017, showed that nursing and midwifery applications had fallen by approximately 22% in England compared to the same point in 2016.

However, the data also show that up to March 2017 there had been around two applicants per available training place. Health Education England is confident that the required 22,500 student training places the National Health Service needs will be filled; assuming students meet the entry requirements of their offer from their course provider.

It should also be noted that students will continue to apply for courses up to September and through clearing.

We are aware of a reduction in the number of nurses who trained in the European Economic Area applying to register with the Nursing and Midwifery Council following July 2016. We are monitoring the impact of this on the NHS. Between June 2016 and March 2017, the number of nurses with a European nationality working in the NHS increased by more than 400.

Mr Laurence Robertson:

[1476]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to increase the number of nurses employed in the NHS; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Nursing continues to be a priority area for investment.

Since May 2010, there have been record numbers of nurses working in the National Health Service in England and there are now almost 13,100 more nurses on our wards.

With over 51,000 nurses currently in training, anticipated increases in training places through the education funding reforms and return to practice numbers increasing annually we are working to ensure we have enough nurses in the NHS and care sector.

Developing new routes into nursing is a priority for the Department. That is why we have developed the new Nursing Associate role and the Nursing Degree Apprenticeship.

■ **Nurses: Training**

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[1471]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, for what reason the Government decided not to provide an additional 10,000 nursing degree places.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Government remains committed to reforming nursing, midwifery and allied health pre-registration education and increasing the number of places available for students so that two in three nursing applicants are no longer turned down for a place; at the same time ensuring these students have more cash available to them while they study.

Universities and Colleges Admissions Service data show that up to March 2017 there had been around two applicants per available training place. Health Education England is confident that the National Health Service will have the required number of students it needs starting courses this year and will continue to work with the education sector to deliver these reforms successfully for the longer term.

It should also be noted that students will continue to apply for courses up to September and through clearing.

Arrangements confirming the future clinical placement commission model will be published in due course.

Gill Furniss:

[1684]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether the Government still plans to provide 10,000 new nursing degree places.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Government remains committed to reforming nursing, midwifery and allied health pre-registration education and increasing the number of places available for students; at the same time ensuring these students have more cash available to them while they study.

Health Education England is confident that the National Health Service will have the required number of students it needs starting courses this year and will continue to work with the education sector to successfully deliver these reforms for the longer term.

Arrangements confirming the future clinical placement commissioning model will be published in due course.

Justin Madders: [884]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what representations he has received on the number of applications to study nursing at degree level in the 2017-18 academic year.

Mr Philip Dunne:

A search of the Department's Ministerial correspondence database has identified 34 items of correspondence received since 1 January 2017 about the number of applications to study nursing at degree level in the 2017-18 academic year. This figure represents correspondence received by the Department's Ministerial correspondence unit only.

Rachael Maskell: [921]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many mental health nurses graduated in each year since 2007.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Department does not collect this information.

The Higher Education Statistics Agency collects and publishes statistics on students enrolled and qualifying from United Kingdom Higher Education Institutions. Latest statistics refer to the academic year 2015/16 and can be found at the following link:

<https://www.hesa.ac.uk/news/12-01-2017/sfr242-student-enrolments-and-qualifications>

■ Nurses: Vacancies**Helen Jones:** [1700]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many nursing posts are vacant in (a) hospital and (b) community trusts in England.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The information is not available in the format requested.

Health Education England (HEE) provide estimates of staff shortages in the National Health Service Trusts as part of their Workforce Plan for England publication. The latest figures are available at the following link.

<https://hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Workforce%20Plan%20for%20England%202016-17.pdf>

HEE plan to publish the Workforce Plan for England 2017/18 in due course.

■ **Pregnancy: Streptococcus**

Sir Nicholas Soames:

[1494]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether he expects the trial to compare universal screening for Group B Strep carriage in late pregnancy with usual risk-based care to be completed in advance of UK National Screening Committee's guidance review on Group B Strep in 2019-20.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The trial to compare universal screening for Group B Streptococcus (GBS) carriage in late pregnancy with usual risk-based care is not expected to be complete until the end of 2021 at the earliest. We anticipate that the UK National Screening Committee's scheduled tri-annual review on GBS will not commence until the findings of the trial are known.

■ **Prescriptions: Fees and Charges**

Mr Mark Hendrick:

[81]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate has been made of the number of transplant operations failing due to patients not being able to afford to pay for prescriptions; and if he will bring forward free prescriptions for people who have had transplants.

Jackie Doyle-Price:

NHS England does not have information to suggest that there are failures of transplanted organs associated with patients being unable to afford prescription charges.

The Department has no current plans to amend prescription charge exemption arrangements. 90% of prescription items are dispensed free of charge and to support those with greatest need who do not qualify for an exemption, prescription prepayment certificates are available. A holder of a 12 month certificate can get all the prescriptions they need for £2 per week.

■ **Psychiatry: Migrant Workers**

Barbara Keeley:

[1492]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many non-UK EU psychiatrists were working in the NHS in each of the last five years.

Mr Philip Dunne:

NHS Digital publishes data on the nationality of staff working in the National Health Service in England. Nationality is self-reported within the NHS human resources and payroll system, the electronic staff record.

The March 2017 data is the most recent data available, therefore to account for seasonality data is shown as at each March for the previous years requested.

The information is shown in the following table.

NHS Hospital & Community Health Service (HCHS) workforce statistics: HCHS Doctors in the Psychiatry Group by Nationality Group in NHS Trusts and CCGs in England, 31 March 2013 to 31 March 2017, full time equivalent (fte)

	MARCH 2013	MARCH 2014	MARCH 2015	MARCH 2016	MARCH 2017
fte					
Psychiatrists, non-UK, EU nationals	804	820	855	854	854

Source: NHS Digital, Provisional NHS Hospital & Community Health Service (HCHS) monthly workforce statistics.

■ **Valium: Prescriptions**

Luciana Berger: [\[1734\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many prescriptions for valium have been issued in each year since 2010.

Steve Brine:

There have been no prescriptions for Valium issued since 2010. Valium is a brand name for the drug diazepam and the brand is not allowed to be prescribed in National Health Service primary care.

HOME OFFICE■ **Asylum: Syria**

Sir Edward Leigh: [\[900116\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what progress the Government has made in placing vulnerable Syrian families in the UK.

Brandon Lewis:

The resettlement programme is on track to deliver the commitment to resettle 20,000 vulnerable Syrians by the year 2020. Between the start of October 2015 and the end of March 2017, 7,055 people have been resettled under the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme across 235 different local authorities.

■ Counter-terrorism: Police

Jack Dromey:

[1743]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the budget is for the Counter Terrorism Policing and Protective Security Grant in 2017-18.

Mr Ben Wallace:

We have allocated £633 million resource and £42 million capital funding to support counter-terrorism policing in 2017-18, this includes funding for protective security.

In addition a further £32 million is being provided from the police transformation fund to support the uplift in armed policing capability and capacity.

■ Forced Labour: Care Homes

Tim Farron:

[1651]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people working in social care establishments have been found to be subjected to forced labour by her Department since 2010.

Sarah Newton:

In 2016, a total of 2,004 potential victims of labour exploitation and domestic servitude were referred to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). Industry-specific information is not recorded. The NRM statistics for 2012-2016 can be viewed on the National Crime Agency website:

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

The Government is committed to tackling worker exploitation and that is why through the Immigration Act 2016, we reformed the Gangmasters Licensing Authority into the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority in April, giving it stronger powers under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 to investigate serious cases of worker exploitation across the entire economy.

■ Hezbollah

Mr Philip Hollobone:

[1658]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will proscribe the political wing of Hezbollah.

Mr Ben Wallace:

I refer my Hon. Friend to the answer given to the Hon. Member for East Renfrewshire on 28 June 2017, UIN 556.

■ Human Trafficking

Paul Blomfield: [1480]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she expects the National Crime Agency's annual strategic assessment of the Nature and Scale of Human Trafficking to be published.

Sarah Newton:

The National Crime Agency published the 2017 National Strategic Assessment on the 29th June 2017. This is their annual public analysis of serious and organised crime affecting the UK and includes an assessment of the nature and scale modern slavery and human trafficking.

■ Places of Worship Security Funding Scheme

Rachael Maskell: [917]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will set out those places of worship which will be able to access grants through the places of worship: security funding scheme.

Sarah Newton:

The second round of the current places of worship funding scheme closed on 29 May 2017. Places of worship able to access grant funding under the current scheme include temples, mosques, gurdwaras and churches. The scheme excludes the Jewish community who are funded under a separate scheme.

On the 22 June the Home Secretary announced that an additional £1m will be made available for the protection of vulnerable faith institutions. Details of how to apply for this additional funding are available on www.gov.uk

Rachael Maskell: [918]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the maximum grant will be for individual places of worship under the places of worship: security funding scheme.

Sarah Newton:

There is no upper limit on individual grants within the existing places of worship funding scheme.

On the 22 June the Home Secretary announced an additional £1 million worth of funding for vulnerable faith institutions. Details of how to apply for this additional funding are available on www.gov.uk but there will be no upper limit on individual grants.

■ Police: Mobile Phones

Mr Mark Hendrick: [84]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on how many occasions Vodafone and other mobile phone networks have failed to provide mobile phone

coverage for police during disaster recovery situations in the last 12 months; and what steps she plans to take to remedy this.

Mr Nick Hurd:

The police and other emergency services in Britain use the Airwave network for operational communications in both routine and emergency situations. Airwave is a dedicated private cellular radio network. The performance of Airwave is constantly monitored and we can confirm that the service has been available in all serious emergencies the police have dealt with in the last 12 months.

Individual police forces do have contracts with mobile network operators, such as Vodafone and other providers, however we do not hold information regarding their coverage availability for individual police forces in emergency situations.

■ **Radicalism: Internet**

Stephen Doughty:

[\[900136\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with social media and technology companies on tackling online extremism.

Mr Ben Wallace:

This Government has been clear there should be no safe space online for terrorists and their supporters to radicalise, recruit, incite, or inspire. We continue to work closely with industry to come up with new innovative ways for tackling terrorist use of the internet. Working with international partners we continue to push industry to take a more proactive approach to terrorist and extremist content on their platforms.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

■ **Andargachew Tsege**

Tom Brake:

[\[1144\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether she discussed the case of Andargachew Tsege with the Foreign Secretary prior to the announcement of a £30 million aid package for Ethiopia.

Tom Brake:

[\[1145\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether she discussed the case of Andargachew Tsege with her Ethiopian counterparts prior to the announcement of a £30 million aid package for that country.

Tom Brake:

[\[1146\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether she raised the case of Andargachew Tsege during her recent visit to Ethiopia.

Rory Stewart:

The Secretary of State for International Development regularly meets with the Foreign Secretary and has been briefed by him on Andargachew Tsege's consular

case. The case was discussed with Ethiopian counterparts during the visits of both the Secretary of State and the Foreign Secretary to Ethiopia earlier this year. In addition, the Prime Minister raised Mr Tsege's case with Ethiopia's Prime Minister and Foreign Minister on 11 May.

The UK's recently announced support for the drought in Ethiopia will provide emergency food support for 1.5 million people, life-saving nutritional support to more than 154,000 starving children and pregnant and breastfeeding women, safe drinking water for 100,000 people and livestock support for 500,000 people.

■ **Brazil: Children**

Mr Gregory Campbell:

[\[1865\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent assistance the Government has offered to the Government of Brazil and relief agencies based in Brazil to help street children without accommodation and sanitation.

Alistair Burt:

Foreign and Commonwealth Office staff in Brazil have provided light-touch institutional and administrative support to two UK-based NGOs with operations aimed at helping street children in Brazil, Street Child United, and Revive International.

■ **Department for Exiting the European Union: Secondment**

Stephen Doughty:

[\[1483\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many full-time equivalent officials in her Department have been seconded to the Department for Exiting the European Union; and what the grades are of each of those officials.

Rory Stewart:

DFID has loaned one Grade 6 and one Senior Executive Officer to the Department for Exiting the European Union.

■ **Department for International Development: Procurement**

Jon Trickett:

[\[1256\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many contracts put out to tender by her Department were awarded to (a) charities and (b) social enterprises in each year since 2010.

Rory Stewart:

Spend through contracts is approximately 15% (FY 16/17) of DFID's annual spend with all partners. Between 10% and 20% of contracts awarded each year are to not for profit organisations. The majority of DFID's spend through not for profit organisations is via accountable grants rather than contracts.

DFID routinely publishes information on contracts awarded through our central Procurement and Commercial Department (PCD) on the [Contracts Finder](#) website.

All DFID published contracts can be searched and filtered by various factors such as successful suppliers.

■ **Department for International Development: Public Expenditure**

David T. C. Davies:

[1653]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, if she will publish a list of all companies, charities or other organisations which have received funding of more than £1 million from her Department in the last three financial years.

Rory Stewart:

In line with UK government commitments to increase transparency, DFID publishes details of payments over £500 on a monthly basis. This information can be accessed via the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/monthly-spend-over-500-in-the-department-for-international-development>

■ **Department for International Trade: Secondment**

Stephen Doughty:

[1463]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many full-time equivalent staff of her Department, at what grades, have been seconded to the Department for International Trade.

Rory Stewart:

DFID has loaned five staff to the Department for International Trade. Grades are shown in the table below:

GRADE	NUMBER
Senior Civil Service	3
Grade 7	1
Senior Executive Officer	1

■ **Developing Countries: Agriculture**

Gareth Thomas:

[1665]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps she is taking to encourage and support agricultural co-operatives in developing countries; and if she will make a statement.

Alistair Burt:

The Department for International Development has supported and worked with co-operatives across sectors for many years. We recognise the benefits and opportunities that co-operatives can offer for small scale farmers, for example as a

way to collectively negotiate better prices, increase productivity and access financial services. Co-operatives can also aggregate farmer produce to increase their selling power to the market or set up their own processing, trading or financing facilities. DfID programmes promote co-operatives as one way to support farmers to strengthen their links to markets and promote sustainable and inclusive economic development.

■ Fairtrade Initiative

Catherine McKinnell: [\[1428\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent assessment she has made of the benefits of Fairtrade certification for producers in developing countries.

Alistair Burt:

DFID is long standing supporter of Fairtrade. Fairtrade plays an important role in helping producers around the world improve their lives in a sustainable way; ensuring farmers receive fair prices for their products, workers receive better wages and by making agricultural practices more sustainable. Fairtrade provides a minimum price for sales, as well as a premium, and certifies smallholder and plantation supply chains, as well as extractives such as gold. Producers received an estimated £123 million premium as a result of being part of a Fairtrade supply chain in 2015.

■ Fairtrade Initiative: Supermarkets

Catherine McKinnell: [\[1427\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent discussions she has had with UK supermarkets on the effect of Fairtrade certification on producers in developing countries; and if she will make a statement.

Alistair Burt:

DFID's Economic Development Strategy sets out the importance of growth and jobs for sustainable poverty reduction. Fair and ethical trade standards have an important contribution to make to this especially in combatting modern slavery and child labour. Officials are engaging with a wide range of stakeholders including business, standards organisations and NGOs on these issues. DFID has been a long term partner of Fairtrade and is currently supporting innovative new work under the Fairtrade initiative. This is a technology-based supply chain mapping programme that will help increase transparency of supply chains.

■ Overseas Aid

Martyn Day: [\[1115\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what estimate she has made of the proportion of UK overseas aid funding which met the internationally-recognised Development Assistance Criteria in each of the last five years.

Rory Stewart:

All UK aid meets the internationally agreed OECD Development Assistance Committee definition of Official Development Assistance (ODA).

Statistics on UK ODA spend is published in the national statistics publication Statistics on International Development, which can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statistics-on-international-development-2016>

■ Sainsburys: Fairtrade Initiative**Gareth Thomas:****[1664]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what discussions she has had with Sainsbury's on its decision to withdraw from the Fairtrade scheme; and if she will make a statement.

Alistair Burt:

Fair and ethical trade standards used by private sector firms can play an important role in creating and sustaining quality jobs in developing countries. DFID has been a long standing supporter of Fairtrade as well as other standards organisations that fall under the International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling (ISEAL) Alliance umbrella. Officials are engaging with a wide range of stakeholders including business, standards organisations and NGOs and will monitor developments.

■ Somaliland: Droughts**Stephen Doughty:****[1323]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what funding has been provided from all Government sources to support drought relief in Somaliland in the last 12 months.

Rory Stewart:

The UK government, through DFID, has provided £38.7m between July and December 2016 and a further £107m to date since January 2017 to support drought relief in Somalia, including Somaliland. A further £63m for drought relief in Somalia is currently being allocated. Sub-national allocations are not recorded for our aid to Somalia, but our humanitarian assistance is allocated on the basis of need, ensuring that Somaliland gets its fair share.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE**■ Foreign Investment in UK: Linlithgow and East Falkirk****Martyn Day:****[958]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what estimate he has made of the level of foreign direct investment in Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituency as a result of

expenditure by (a) his Department and (b) the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills in (i) 2013, (ii) 2014 and (iii) 2015.

Mark Garnier:

The Department for International Trade (DIT) publishes figures at UK regional level. For Scotland, DIT recorded the following number of projects in each financial year 2013/14 – 2015/16.

YEAR	NUMBER OF PROJECTS
2015/16	108
2014/15	119
2013/14	122

■ **Japan: EU External Trade**

Kerry McCarthy:

[\[1868\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if he will make representations during the EU-Japan trade negotiations on including environmental and animal welfare safeguards in any future EU-Japan trade deal.

Greg Hands:

The UK has been one of the strongest supporters of the EU-Japan Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and we welcome the close involvement of the leaders from both sides to make progress on the deal. The UK, as a member of the European Union, will continue to engage on the EU-Japan FTA as it develops. The consolidated text of the draft agreement includes environmental and animal welfare provisions in-line with EU standards.

Kerry McCarthy:

[\[1903\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment the Government has made of the potential effect of the latest draft of the EU-Japan trade deal in (a) maintaining environmental and animal welfare standards and (b) enforcing environmental laws on (i) EU standards in timber to prevent illegal logging and (ii) the international ban on whaling.

Greg Hands:

The UK has been one of the strongest supporters of the EU-Japan Free Trade Agreement which upholds existing EU commitments to the environment and animal welfare. The UK government is committed to tackling illegal logging and associated trade, and to working with other consumer countries to meet this aim. The UK government strongly supports the global moratorium on commercial whaling and will continue to give appropriate consideration to the implications of the EU-Japan trade deal as it develops.

■ Trade Agreements

Kerry McCarthy:

[\[1902\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if he will make it Government policy that future trade deals concluded after the UK leaves the EU include provisions to (a) assess the effect of trade liberalisation on the environment and (b) enforce the highest standards on (i) environmental protections, (ii) workers' rights, (iii) animal welfare and (iv) health and safety standards.

Greg Hands:

The UK has long supported the promotion of our values globally and this will continue as we leave the EU. We will explore all options in the design of future bilateral trade and investment agreements, including, where relevant, social, labour, animal welfare and environmental provisions within these. We want to ensure economic growth, development and environmental protection go hand-in-hand.

■ Trade Agreements: Developing Countries

Gareth Thomas:

[\[1666\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what plans he has for the form of any future trading relationship between Britain and developing countries to replace the Economic Partnership Agreements between the EU and ACP countries; and if he will make a statement.

Greg Hands:

On 25 June the Government announced that as we leave the EU, we will secure existing duty-free access for the world's Least Developed Countries (LDCs), but also that we are exploring options to maintain existing trading agreements with other non-LDC developing countries. We recognise the need for a smooth transition which minimises disruption to our trading relationships, including with developing countries.

■ Trade Agreements: United Arab Emirates

Mr Alistair Carmichael:

[\[1889\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, which industries are to be included under the agreement between the UK and the UAE on increased bilateral trade; and if he will make a statement.

Mark Garnier:

The UK has a strong trade relationship with the UAE, in 2015 the UAE was the UK's 4th largest export market outside of Europe and bilateral trade was £12.4bn.

The Department for International Trade (DIT) has identified high value campaigns for the UAE in infrastructure, healthcare, education, creative industries, financial services, aerospace, nuclear and defence and security. DIT also provides considerable support to British companies operating in the UAE in other sectors like oil and gas, life sciences, food and drink and retail.

■ Trade Promotion: North East

Chi Onwurah:

[1894]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many trade delegations (a) to and (b) from the North East his Department has organised since his appointment as Secretary of State for International Trade; and if he will make a statement.

Greg Hands:

There have been 18 trade missions since July 2016 that the North East has been involved in organising either as stand-alone North East missions or as part of the wider Northern Powerhouse. We encourage North East businesses to take part in all trade missions that the Department organises.

North East region led missions (1)

Boston, USA (Digital focus) - 29th Nov to 2nd Dec 2016

Northern Powerhouse missions led by the North East region (4)

Mumbai, Bangalore and Pune, India (Chemicals sector focus) - 7th to 15th Feb 2017

Seoul, South Korea (Creative focus) - 19th to 24th Feb 2017

Copenhagen, Denmark (Taster visit) - 20th to 22nd Mar 2017

Dusseldorf, Germany (Taster visit) - 21st to 23rd Mar 2017

Northern Powerhouse missions led by either the North West or Yorkshire and the Humber regions (13), open to North East businesses and with promotion and support from North East International Trade Advisers (ITAs)

Los Angeles, USA (Creative focus) - 2nd to 9th Nov 2016

San Francisco, USA (Winter Fancy Foods) - 20th to 24th Jan 2017

Dubai, UAE (Arab Health) - 29th Jan to 2nd Feb 2017

Frankfurt, Germany (Ambiente 2017 Consumer Goods) - 10th to 14th Feb 2017

Dubai, UAE (Gulfoods) - 26th Feb to 2nd Mar 2017

Boston, USA (Life sciences focus) - 7th to 10th Mar 2017

Texas, USA (South by South West SXSW) - 10th to 19th Mar 17

Stockholm, Sweden (Nordics Financial & Professional Services) - 20th to 22nd Mar 2017

Dubai, UAE (Dihad Dubai) - 21st to 23rd Mar 2017

Le Havre, France (Seaenergy 2017) - 21st to 23rd Mar 2017

Dublin, Ireland (Taster visit) - 8th to 9th Feb 2017

Den Haag, Netherlands (Taster visit) - 14th to 17th Mar 2017

Tallin, Estonia (Taster visit) - 21st to 23rd Mar 2017

JUSTICE

■ **Legal Aid Scheme: Grenfell Tower****Jess Phillips:**[\[1535\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Prime Minister's oral contribution of 22 June 2017, Official Report, column 168, on legal aid being available to families affected by the Grenfell Tower fire, how that aid will be distributed; and what steps his Department is taking to ensure that those people affected understand the legal aid process and have fair and independent access to legal representation.

Dominic Raab:

The Government has announced that it will meet the costs of providing victims with legal representation at the inquiry into the Grenfell Tower fire. There is provision for providing such funding under section 40 of the Inquiries Act 2005. This is not Legal Aid. Details of the funding and how victims can access it will be announced by the inquiry in due course.

In addition, Legal Aid may be available to cover certain legal costs that victims may face outside the inquiry, such as advice about being re-housed.

■ **Prisoners: Suicide****Luciana Berger:**[\[1473\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average amount of time was that the Prison and Probation Ombudsman spent on an investigation into a self-inflicted death in each year since 2010.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

The PPO is able to quantify the time spent on an investigation into self-inflicted deaths by looking at the time it takes to issue an initial report. For self-inflicted death investigations, there is a timeliness target of 26 (working) weeks from the point of notification until when the initial report is issued.

The following table presents, for each calendar year, the average number of working weeks that a self-inflicted case took from the start of the investigation to the initial report being issued.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Working weeks	46.2	40.8	38.1	28.9	25.7	24.1	24.5
Number of initial reports issued	72	57	83	66	92	84	103

LEADER OF THE HOUSE■ **Democratic Unionist Party: Finance**

Tom Watson: [\[1655\]](#)

To ask the Leader of the House, what the allocation of Short Money to the Democratic Unionist Party is.

Andrea Leadsom:

I have been informed by the Clerk of the House as Accounting Officer that the Democratic Unionist Party does qualify for Short money as an opposition party under the terms of the Resolution of the House of 26 May 1999.

Following the General Election of 8 June 2017, the full year Short Money allocation for the Democratic Unionist Party is:

Main Budget: £222,305.00

Travel Budget: £4,925.14

There is no Ministerial responsibility for Short money, which comes under the auspices of the Members Estimate Committee, for which I act as spokesperson.

PRIME MINISTER■ **Radicalism**

Caroline Lucas: [\[1467\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, pursuant to the Answer of 26 June 2017 to Question 219, if she will place in the Library a copy of the report of the review into foreign funding of extremism and radicalisation in the UK that was commissioned by her predecessor.

Mrs Theresa May:

The review into the funding of Islamist extremism has improved the Government's understanding of the nature, scale and sources of funding for Islamist extremism in the UK. Ministers are considering advice on what is able to be published and will report to Parliament with an update in due course.

SCOTLAND■ **PetroChina**

Alan Brown: [\[1740\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what meetings Ministers of his Department have had with Petrochina in each year since 2010.

David Mundell:

Details of Ministerial meetings with external organisations on departmental business are published in the Department's Quarterly Transparency returns, which are made publicly available on GOV.UK.

Public Expenditure**Hilary Benn:**[\[1327\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what assessment he has made of the Barnett formula consequentials of the financial support the Government plans to make available to Northern Ireland as a result of discussions with the Democratic Unionist Party.

David Mundell:

The UK Government has followed procedures set out in the Statement of Funding Policy, which in no way prevent the UK Government taking discretionary action to provide funding outside of the Barnett system.

The Barnett formula determines changes to block grant funding allocated to the devolved administrations by the UK government in relation to departmental spending within Departmental Expenditure Limits. As there has been no change in UK government Department Expenditure Limits, it follows that no Barnett Consequentials are generated.

Public Expenditure: Scotland**David Linden:**[\[1293\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, on what date he was informed that any funding arrangements associated with the confidence and supply agreement between the Government and the Democratic Unionist Party would not have Barnett formula consequentials for Scotland.

David Mundell:

I have regular discussions with cabinet colleagues on matters of importance to Scotland and the UK.

Like previous Northern Ireland support packages, and City Deals in Scotland and Wales, this funding is a targeted intervention to address a specific set of unique challenges. As was the case for those previous interventions, this is exceptional funding and will therefore be made outside of the normal, ongoing, Barnett funding system and will not attract Barnett consequentials. This will be allocated as an addition to Northern Ireland Executive's regular block grant.

Ian Murray:[\[1745\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what discussions he has had with the Prime Minister on the agreement between the Government and the Democratic Unionist Party; and what assessment he has made of the potential benefits to Scotland as a result of that agreement.

David Mundell:

I have regular discussions with the Prime Minister and Cabinet colleagues on matters of importance to Scotland and the UK.

This agreement will enable us to work together in the interest of the whole United Kingdom, give us the certainty we require as we embark on our departure from the European Union, and help us build a stronger and fairer society at home.

Scotland and Wales will continue to receive direct investment from the UK Government to support growth. Since 2014, the UK Government has committed over £1bn of investment in Scotland and Wales through City Deals, and the government is committed to further City Deals in both nations. As you are aware, funding for City Deals is provided in addition to the block grant and does not attract Barnett consequential for other parts of the UK.

■ Scotland Office: Public Relations**Tommy Sheppard:**[\[1746\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what the cost was of his Department's communications team in 2016-17; and what the projected costs are for 2017-18.

David Mundell:

The communications team in the Scotland Office is resourced to enable effective engagement and communication with the public on matters relating to the UK Government. This includes supporting communications and engagement from the Secretary of State for Scotland and Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State on Scotland's constitutional arrangements, including the delivery and implementation of significant new tax and welfare powers associated with the Scotland Act 2016. More recently, the Department has undertaken significant engagement on the UK Government's approach to EU Exit, meeting and feeding information directly to the UK negotiating team from a large number of businesses and organisations across a wide variety of sectors. The team also supports all UK Government departments in their communications activities in Scotland. The cost of the communications team at the Scotland Office was £686,166.29 in 2016-17. In 2017-8 we expect the cost to be £774,567.

TRANSPORT**■ Air Traffic Control: Computer Software****Louise Haigh:**[\[1760\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will list the airports which use (a) Windows XP and (b) earlier versions of Windows on any aspect of their air traffic control systems.

Mr John Hayes:

The UK aviation industry is operated almost entirely within the private sector. The nature and capability of information technology in use at airports is therefore a commercial and operational matter for individual airport operators, groups and air navigation service providers. Use of legacy operating systems does not in itself result in cyber vulnerabilities, providing appropriate controls are in place. The Department for Transport has an active cyber security programme, working in partnership with the NCSC and closely with the aviation industry to ensure that operators take an appropriate and proportionate approach to managing their cyber security risks and that they are supported with advice on mitigating any identified vulnerabilities.

■ Aviation: EU Law**Hilary Benn:**[\[1331\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will list all the bilateral agreements between the UK and EU member states relating to air travel which predate the current EU air travel regime and which were current when that regime was adopted; and if he will make a statement.

Mr John Hayes:

Prior to the current EU air travel regime coming into effect, the UK had bilateral air services arrangements with all Member States of the European Union.

■ Aviation: Safety**Lilian Greenwood:**[\[1289\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) on the recent review and survey of safety oversight commissioned by the CCA safety director, Mark Swan.

Mr John Hayes:

During the three years since this review was conducted there have been regular meetings between the CAA and the Department for Transport (DfT), including at Ministerial level. These meetings allow the DfT and CAA to liaise on all aspects of the regulator's functions, including its safety responsibilities.

■ Buses: Exhaust Emissions**Rachael Maskell:**[\[961\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans he has to extend the availability of the Clean Bus Technology Fund to all buses; and whether his Department has a timetable for the retrofitting of all buses to reduce nitrogen dioxide and other particulate emission.

Jesse Norman:

In the 2016 Autumn Statement, the Government committed a further £150 million in support for low emission buses and taxis, which includes support for retrofitting buses. As outlined in the draft UK Air Quality Plan for tackling nitrogen dioxide

published for consultation in May 2017, we will publish further information on scheme design and timings later in 2017.

■ Diesel Vehicles

Lilian Greenwood: [\[1533\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make it his policy to establish a diesel car scrappage scheme.

Jesse Norman:

In May, the Government published a consultation on the draft UK Air Quality Plan for tackling nitrogen dioxide. Through this consultation, the Government is seeking to explore how best to support local authorities to mitigate the impacts of certain measures on business, residents and road users. A range of potential mitigation measures were identified in the consultation including the introduction of a car scrappage scheme.

We are considering responses to the consultation. The final plan is due to be published by the 31 July 2017.

■ Driving: Licensing

Luciana Berger: [\[1474\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many people had their driving licence revoked due to mental illness in each year since 2010.

Jesse Norman:

This information is not available as the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) does not categorise driving licence revocations under broad terms such as 'mental illness'. Revocation information is recorded on the basis of specific medical conditions.

■ Electric Vehicles

Lilian Greenwood: [\[1537\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to pages 3 and 4 of the minutes of the Gas and Electricity Markets Authority meeting held on 13 April 2017, what the proposed electric vehicle scheme is for which his Department has requested the assistance of E-serve.

Jesse Norman:

At the end of 2016 the Government consulted on proposed amendments to the Motor Fuel (Road Vehicle and Mobile Machinery) Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reporting Regulations. These included proposals to enable licensed electricity suppliers to contribute to our greenhouse gas reduction targets, and to receive Greenhouse Gas credits.

We have consulted E-serve and other key stakeholders on the proposals and their implementation, and will be publishing a government response in due course.

■ Great Western Railway Line: Electrification

Stephen Doughty:

[1320]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what is the expected date of completion of electrification of the Great Western mainline to Cardiff Central.

Paul Maynard:

Network Rail is delivering the Great Western Electrification Programme to the dates set out in the latest publication of their Enhancement Delivery plan. This includes completing electrification of the Great Western Mainline to Cardiff Central by December 2018.

Lilian Greenwood:

[1539]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent revisions have been made to his Department's Intercity Express Programme contract with Agility Trains West; and what estimate has been made of Network Rail's total expenditure to date on the Great Western Main Line electrification programme.

Paul Maynard:

The only deed of variation so far this year to the Great Western Mainline (GWML) Intercity Express Contract with Agility Trains West Ltd relates to stabling requirements at the North Pole depot.

Network Rail publishes annual updates of their expenditure on schemes in Statement 3 (Analysis of Enhancement Capital Expenditure) of their regulatory financial statements. The relevant information for the Great Western Main Line can be found at page 27 of their 2016/2017 statement at the following link

<https://www.networkrail.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/nril-regulatory-financial-statements-for-the-year-ended-31st-march-2016.pdf>

Lilian Greenwood:

[1874]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions he has had with the Welsh Assembly on progress on electrifying the Great Western Main Line to Cardiff and Swansea; and whether the £125 million of public funds allocated to electrification of the Valley Lines is contingent on the completion of main line electrification to Cardiff.

Paul Maynard:

The Department gave evidence to the Economy, Infrastructure and Skills committee's inquiry into the Wales and Border Franchise and Metro delivery in April 2017. The link to the transcript can be found at;

<http://senedd.assembly.wales/documents/s61986/6%20April%202017.pdf>

The UK Government's contribution of £125m towards the costs of the Valley Lines Electrification (VLE) is not contingent on the completion of main line electrification to Cardiff.

■ Lawrence Hill Station: Disability**Thangam Debbonaire:****[1003]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when the work at Lawrence Hill Station in Bristol to make that station accessible for people with mobility disabilities will be completed.

Paul Maynard:

There is no set date for the completion of works at Lawrence Hill Station.

Network Rail are re-profiling the infrastructure works in and around Bristol, including Lawrence Hill Station.

No work has yet begun to make Lawrence Hill step free, however, Network Rail will be scheduling sessions later this year to develop options and to look at how best to progress this work as a choice for Government.

■ Ports: Computer Software**Louise Haigh:****[1765]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, which sea ports use (a) Windows XP and (b) earlier versions of Windows for any of their operating systems.

Mr John Hayes:

The UK port industry is operated almost entirely within the private sector. The nature and capability of information technology in use by ports is therefore a commercial and operational matter for individual port operators or groups. Use of legacy operating systems does not in itself result in cyber vulnerabilities, providing appropriate controls are in place. The Department for Transport has an active cyber security programme, working in partnership with the NCSC and closely with the maritime industry to ensure that operators take an appropriate and proportionate approach to managing their cyber security risks and that they are supported with advice on mitigating any identified vulnerabilities.

■ Ports: Freight**Lilian Greenwood:****[1875]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to UK Port Freight Statistics: January to March 2017 Quarter 1, published on 14 June 2017, what assessment his Department has made of the cause of the recent decline in freight tonnage handled by UK ports.

Jesse Norman:

These are provisional statistics that provide an indication of high level trends. Further analysis and in depth commentary, including trends broken down by cargo category, will be published alongside the final annual statistics.

■ Railway Stations: Finance

Jessica Morden:

[1423]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when he expects the current round of the New Stations Fund to announce successful applicants.

Paul Maynard:

Assessment of the New Stations Fund bids is now complete and I hope to announce the successful projects shortly.

■ Railways: Electrification

Diana Johnson:

[1883]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Answer of 19 December 2016 to Question 57210, how many miles of electrified track will cover lines in (a) northern England and (b) elsewhere in the UK.

Paul Maynard:

Network Rail's Railway Upgrade Plan for 2017-2018 breaks down work they will be completing, including electrification works, in areas across England.

The upgrade plan can be found at the following link:

<https://16cbgt3sbwr8204sf92da3xxc5m-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Railway-Upgrade-Plan-Update-2017-18.pdf>

The Office for Rail and Road's rail infrastructure, assets and environmental Annual Statistical Releases also provide data on the extent of rail electrification. Their 2015/16 report can be found at this link:

http://www.orr.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0014/23045/rail-infrastructure-assets-environmental-2015-16.pdf

The ORR will publish its next annual statistical release in October 2017.

■ Railways: Fares

Lilian Greenwood:

[1538]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether it is his policy to raise the cost of regulated rail fares by the Retail Price Index rate of the preceding July plus zero per cent in each year of the current Parliament.

Paul Maynard:

The Government recognises that the cost of travelling for rail passengers can seem high – this is why since 2014 we have taken action and capped the regulated rail fares at RPI+0%. Train fare revenue is crucial to funding day-to-day railway operations and delivering the investment and massive upgrade programme currently underway, all of which passengers demand and expect.

■ Railways: Standards**Lilian Greenwood:** [\[1532\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the minutes of the rail National Task Force meeting on 10 May 2017, whether the rail industry performance plan referred to in those minutes has been approved.

Paul Maynard:

The Industry Performance Plan (IPP) was discussed further by the National Task Force at its subsequent meeting on 7 June. The IPP framework was supported but has not yet been formally approved, pending further development of certain workstreams. A fully populated IPP is expected soon.

Stephen McPartland: [\[1649\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will introduce a consumer satisfaction threshold for rail franchises; and if he will make a statement.

Paul Maynard:

My Department is committed to driving improvements in the passenger's experience. That is why we are including challenging customer satisfaction targets in Franchise Agreements which are based on the results of the National Rail Passenger Survey. Where the targets are not met, train companies are required to make financial investments to make sure that passengers get the standards of service that they rightly deserve. We are also continuing to review our policies in this area to ensure that passengers are placed at the heart of our franchise objectives and incentives.

■ Selby-Hull Railway Line: Electrification**Diana Johnson:** [\[1770\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he has had with Transport for the North ahead of his Department's proposals to electrify the Hull-to-Selby railway line.

Paul Maynard:

The Department has no current plans to electrify the line. The Government intends later this year to set out its priorities for investment in train services and infrastructure in the next Control Period from 2019. This will be informed by advice from the rail industry, Transport for the North and other stakeholders.

The Government is committed to ensuring that every part of Britain benefits from our investment in the railways. Improvements in rail services can be delivered by new trains, electrification or other infrastructure improvements – and passengers on the Hull to Selby railway line will benefit from new trains. The Government keeps under close review what options will ensure the maximum value to taxpayers, passengers and freight users.

Diana Johnson:

[\[1772\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether an assessment was carried out of (a) the costs and benefits of the electrification of the Hull-to-Selby railway beyond 2023 and (b) whether electrification would be a necessary precursor to future Northern Powerhouse rail improvements before the decision was reached not to proceed with plans to electrify that railway line.

Paul Maynard:

The assessment of the costs and benefits of the First Hull Trains proposal to electrify the route between Hull and Selby applied the standard appraisal period of 60 years for infrastructure projects. The Department is working closely with Transport for the North to consider options for Northern Powerhouse Rail across different corridors to assess the costs and benefits – including between Leeds and Hull. A wide range of interventions are being considered to achieve this and as such does not necessarily require electrification as a precursor.

■ Severn River Crossing

Jessica Morden:

[\[1425\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions he is having with Severn River Crossings PLC on its staff and the transition of both Severn Bridges into public ownership.

Jesse Norman:

The Severn River Crossings are due to come back into public ownership in late 2017/early 2018. A date for the handover of these assets is still being determined. Highways England are holding discussions on the Secretary of State's behalf with Severn River Crossing Plc regarding the handover of the Bridges and transition of staff.

Jessica Morden:

[\[1429\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, on what date the Severn Bridges will (a) return to public ownership and (b) no longer incur a cost to all bridge users.

Jesse Norman:

The Severn River Crossings are due to come back into public ownership in late 2017/early 2018; a final date is still to be determined. The Government consulted on future tolls at the Severn Bridges from January to March this year. We have listened carefully and will announce next steps in due course.

■ Thameslink Railway Line

Lilian Greenwood:

[\[1884\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment he has made of the effect of the planned 2018 Thameslink timetable on intercity Midland Main Line services in respect of (a) journey times and (b) recovery during periods of perturbation.

Paul Maynard:

Network Rail and the train operators are currently undertaking the detailed work to develop the 2018 timetable for the Midland Main Line and the industry is working together to minimise any impact that Thameslink may have on other services. This work will include identifying opportunities to improve current services. It will also involve the development of perturbation plans for the 2018 Midland Main Line timetable.

■ **Traffic Officers****Lilian Greenwood:**[\[1876\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Answer of 18 April 2016 to Question 33760, on Highways England: staff, how many Highways England Traffic Officers were employed on 15 March 2017.

Jesse Norman:

The number of traffic officers employed by Highways England on 15 March 2017 was 1395.

■ **Transport: Construction****Lilian Greenwood:**[\[1881\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he has taken to prevent the blacklisting of (a) workers and (b) sub-contracted workers employed on major construction contracts managed by his Department.

Mr John Hayes:

We would expect all companies regardless of whether they are working for Government or not to abide by the law including compliance with the Employment Relations Act 1999 (Blacklists) Regulations 2010.

WALES■ **Brexit: Wales****Paul Flynn:**[\[976\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what his policy is on the need for legislative consent from the National Assembly for Wales in relation to the Repeal Bill announced in the Queen's Speech 2017.

Alun Cairns:

The Repeal Bill affects the powers of the devolved institutions in Wales and legislates in devolved areas. The Government will therefore seek the consent of the National Assembly for Wales. We would like everyone to come together in support of this legislation which is crucial to delivering the referendum outcome.

Paul Flynn: [\[982\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, whether any additional legislative competencies will be devolved to the National Assembly for Wales as a consequence of Britain leaving the EU.

Alun Cairns:

The Government expects that there will be a significant increase in the powers devolved to the National Assembly for Wales as a consequence of the UK leaving the EU.

Paul Flynn: [\[991\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the proposals on the UK leaving the EU in the Welsh Government's paper *Securing Wales' Future*.

Alun Cairns:

The Welsh Government's white paper *Securing Wales' Future* was discussed by UK Government and Welsh Government Ministers at the February meeting of the Joint Ministerial Committee (European Negotiations) and official level discussions followed that.

The Welsh Government and the UK Government share many common aims, including securing the freest possible trade access to the EU and ensuring that our immigration system continues to allow us to recruit the brightest and the best from around the world. We remain committed to positive and productive engagement with the Welsh Government to deliver an EU exit that works for Wales.

Paul Flynn: [\[992\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what discussions he has had with Ministerial colleagues to ensure that matters relating to Wales are included in the negotiations to leave the EU.

Paul Flynn: [\[999\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what steps he is taking to ensure that Wales gets the best possible deal when the UK leaves the EU.

Alun Cairns:

The Wales Office is working closely with the Department for Exiting the European Union and other government departments as well as with the Welsh Government and stakeholders in Wales to ensure we deliver the best EU exit deal for Wales and for the rest of the United Kingdom.

■ General Election 2017: Wales

Paul Flynn: [\[975\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what assessment he has made of the effect on Wales of the confidence and supply agreement with the Democratic Unionist Party.

Alun Cairns:

The agreement is about delivering for the whole of the United Kingdom so we can get on with our plan to get the best Brexit deal for our country and create an economy that works for everyone.

It is part of the Government's commitment to support growth across all parts of the UK which includes commitments to investment in City Deals in Wales and the introduction of a Barnett floor to provide Welsh Government with a fair level funding for the long term.

■ **MOD St Athan****Mrs Madeleine Moon:**[\[274\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, with reference to the Answer of 25 April 2017 to Question 70837, what plans are in place for officials or Ministers in his Department to visit the 4 School of Technical Training at MOD St Athan in 2017; and if he will make a statement.

Alun Cairns:

I visited the MOD St Athan site earlier this year and intend to do so again soon. My officials are in regular contact with MOD and Welsh Government officials on the relocation of the No. 4 School of Technical Training.

■ **Public Expenditure****Paul Flynn:**[\[1286\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, whether any Barnett consequential will arise from the confidence and supply agreement between the Government and the Democratic Unionist Party.

Alun Cairns:

Like previous Northern Ireland support packages, and City Deals in Wales and Scotland, this funding is a targeted intervention to address a specific set of unique challenges.

And as was the case for those previous interventions, this exceptional funding will be made outside of the normal, ongoing, Barnett funding system. It will therefore not attract Barnett consequentials. It will be allocated as an addition to the Northern Ireland Executive's regular block grant.

This is not unprecedented and Wales will continue to receive direct investment from the UK Government to support growth. Since 2014, the UK Government has committed over £600m of investment in Wales through City Deals and the government is committed to further City Deals. In addition, the government has also committed to £50m for the Compound Semi-Conductor Applications Catapult Centre in South Wales.

■ Trade Agreements: Wales

Paul Flynn:

[1000]

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what steps he is taking to ensure that Wales is not adversely affected by trade deals negotiated when the UK leaves the EU.

Alun Cairns:

The Welsh economy approaches its departure from the EU in a strong position. Such strength is demonstrated in Wales's ability to attract globally recognised brands such as Aston Martin and Qatar Airways.

As we leave the EU we are seeking to take advantage of all opportunities available to us. We want to ensure that Britain becomes a global leader in free trade, and Ministers and officials in DIT are working with counterparts in a range of markets to promote the UK, including Wales as a great place to do business and with which to trade.

The UK Government is developing a trade policy that will work for every part of the United Kingdom, and will continue to champion the interests of companies and citizens across the UK, including in Wales.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Benefits Rules

Frank Field:

[882]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what progress his Department has made on rolling out the reformed welfare contract being piloted at Birkenhead Jobcentre Plus.

Damian Hinds:

This initiative brings together information from energy suppliers and is aimed at helping those who are vulnerable or facing difficulties in meeting energy costs.

Birkenhead Jobcentre continues to offer the information leaflet, which details available support to claimants at appropriate stages of their benefit claim, when they meet with their Work Coach. The leaflet is also on display and available at various points within the Jobcentre. The information is made available to claimants across the full range of unemployment related benefits including Universal Credit.

We are not able to confirm precise numbers of leaflets offered and taken up; nor on numbers of claimants availing themselves of the support. We can say, however, that claimants give positive feedback to staff.

Following this successful trial the leaflet will be distributed across the wider Jobcentre Plus network.

■ Jobcentres: Batley**Tracy Brabin:** [\[1887\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 27 June 2017 to Question 772, on Jobcentres: Batley, of he will set out how his Department calculated the journey time of 19 minutes.

Damian Hinds:

Throughout our planning we calculated distances and journey times for Batley Jobcentre using a variety of methods to ensure accuracy, including online tools and timetables, information collected on local public transport routes, and input and scrutiny from local DWP staff and management.

■ Jobseeker's Allowance**Justin Madders:** [\[1064\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what proportion of jobseekers' allowance applicants did not have personal access to the internet in the last period for which figures are available.

Damian Hinds:

The information requested is not available.

■ Personal Independence Payment**Mrs Madeleine Moon:** [\[1357\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Answer of 26 April 2017 to Question 71635, on personal independence payment, when he plans to respond to the Second independent review of the personal independence payment assessment by Paul Gray, published on 30 March 2017; and if he will make a statement.

Penny Mordaunt:

Our position has not changed since the Answer of 26 April 2017 to Question 71635 and planning to respond later this year.

■ Personal Independence Payment: Appeals**Mrs Madeleine Moon:** [\[1356\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Answer of 27 April 2017 to Question 71691, on personal independence payment: appeals, what recent discussions he has had with the Tribunals Service on establishing detailed and regular feedback on personal independence payment appeal tribunal decisions; and if he will make a statement.

Penny Mordaunt:

The department continues to have regular meetings with the Tribunals Service where all aspects of the appeals process, including feedback, are discussed. In this regard, and although they are still developing into the role, the feedback from the Presenting

Officers in PIP and ESA appeals, referred to in my previous reply, is proving informative.

■ **Personal Independence Payment: Mental Illness**

Luciana Berger:

[1738]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many and what proportion of people in receipt of personal independence payments have a mental illness.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Department publishes a range of Official Statistics on PIP here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/personal-independence-payment-statistics>

These include data tables showing a breakdown of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) claims in payment by their main disabling condition.

■ **Sick Pay: Fraud**

Jim Shannon:

[1453]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps he is taking to reduce the number of false claims for sickness absence.

Penny Mordaunt:

Sickness absence policies are a matter for employers. However, the Government supports employers in managing sickness absence through Fit for Work, which provides an occupational health assessment for those suffering from long term sickness absence; and general health and work advice to employees, employers and GPs. It is free to use for all.

Where an employee may be eligible for statutory sick pay when on sick leave, the employer has responsibility for determining whether they accept that their employee is incapable of work. Guidance is available at <https://www.gov.uk/employers-sick-pay/overview>

■ **Social Security Benefits**

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[1469]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when the target of upholding the original decision in 80 per cent of mandatory reconsideration requests was introduced; who made the decision to introduce that target; and for what reasons that target was introduced.

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[1470]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, to which benefits in the target of upholding the original decision in 80 per cent of mandatory reconsideration requests applies.

Penny Mordaunt:

The department does not have a Mandatory Reconsideration target for upholding original decisions. The 80 per cent figure, which was used in the answer to a recent Freedom of Information request, is used to assess the accuracy of benefit decisions. In order to ensure we have consistently accurate decisions we track and monitor Mandatory Reconsiderations to assess the quality of our initial decision making and to help understand and improve our processes.

Marion Fellows:[\[1771\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the cost was to the public purse of legal fees in relation to defending the benefit cap in the High Court; and how much his Department estimates the cost of appealing the High Court's decision on that case will be.

Caroline Dinenage:

Legal fees of defending the case in the High Court are £67,690. This figure includes VAT where payable (for example on Counsel's fees) and disbursements but does not include costs attributable to time spent by Government advisory lawyers, as time spent by such advisory lawyers is not recorded in a manner that allows it to be attributable to individual court cases.

DWP has also paid £125,000 (plus VAT) towards the Claimants' costs.

DWP's legal costs for appealing the case in the Court of Appeal are estimated to be between £25,000 and £40,000 (this includes our best estimate of external Counsel fees).

■ Social Security Benefits: Children**Mr Roger Godsiff:**[\[1151\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Answer of 27 April 2017 to Question 71554, which experts on how to deal sensitively with women who have conceived a child as a result of rape he plans to make available to advise officials of his Department on applying the two-child limit policy.

Damian Hinds:

It's important to note that a claimant will never be questioned about any such incident by a member of DWP staff. Part of the rationale for the third party model is that a claimant who has given birth to a child as a result of rape will, normally apply for an exception through engaging with an approved third party before attending the Jobcentre.

If a work coach were to need expert support, they are trained to be aware of the specialist help available within their area to support vulnerable claimants.

■ Social Security Benefits: Disability

Mr Roger Godsiff:

[1197]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what guidance his Department provides to contractors who carry out disability benefits assessments on how to raise the issue of suicidal thoughts with claimants without causing distress.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Department issues guidance on how to conduct face to face assessments and interview skills. Contracted assessment providers then provide more detailed guidance to healthcare professionals carrying out assessments on how to raise issues on suicidal thoughts during the assessment.

Alongside this guidance, healthcare professionals are given specific training in assessing individuals with mental health conditions. If there is any indication that a claimant has suicidal thoughts or intentions, healthcare professionals are trained to explore the person's circumstances carefully. The Department also issues guidance that explains if the assessment provider has concerns that a claimant is at risk with regard to self-harm or suicide, they have a responsibility to act in order to safeguard the claimant's welfare.

■ State Retirement Pensions: Females

Colleen Fletcher:

[1557]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent estimate he has made of the number of women in (a) Coventry North East constituency, (b) Coventry local authority area, (c) the West Midlands and (d) England who will be affected by changes to the state pension age for women born in the 1950s.

Guy Opperman:

Women born between 6 April 1950 and 5 April 1953 were affected by State Pension age equalisation under the Pensions Act 1995.

The Pensions Act 2011 accelerated the equalisation of State Pension age, and included transitional arrangements limiting State Pension age delays, affecting women born between 6 April 1953 and 5 December 1953. It also brought forward the increase in State Pension age from 65 to 66 which affected women born between 6 December 1953 and 5 April 1960.

Information on the numbers affected by constituent country, parliamentary constituency or local authority is not held by the Department for Work and Pensions. However, the most recent population breakdowns for England and its parliamentary constituencies by age can be found here:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/parliamentaryconstituencymidyearpopulationestimates>

Population breakdowns by local authority, region and country can be found here:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationestimatesforukenglandandwalesandscotlandandnothernireland>

The House of Commons library have produced a paper estimating the number of women affected by the Pensions Act 2011 (those born between 6 April 1953 and 5 December 1953) by constituency, which can be found here:

<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7405/CBP-07405constituencyestimates.xlsx>

Colleen Fletcher:

[1678]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on implementing pension transitional protection arrangements for women born in the 1950s.

Guy Opperman:

The Secretary of State has regular discussions with Cabinet colleagues including the Chancellor of the Exchequer on a range of issues.

The Government will not be revisiting the State Pension age arrangements for women affected by the Pensions Act 1995 and Pensions Act 2011. These women will receive their State Pension either at the same age as men or earlier as we remove the current inequality.

■ State Retirement Pensions: Uprating

Catherine West:

[971]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what his Department's policy is on the state pensions triple lock; and whether he intends to review that policy.

Guy Opperman:

The Government is committed to ensuring economic security for people at every stage of their life, including when they reach retirement. The Government is also clear that fairness between the generations must be maintained. We are committed to the Triple Lock for the remainder of this Parliament.

■ Universal Credit

Justin Madders:

[1063]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the average length of time is between universal credit applicants making their initial application and receiving their first payment since the introduction of that policy.

Damian Hinds:

The information requested is currently not available.

Justin Madders:

[\[1065\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what proportion of universal credit applicants did not have personal access to the internet in the last period for which figures are available.

Damian Hinds:

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

99 per cent of Universal Credit claims are made online.

All jobcentres across the country have Wi-Fi and computers available for claimants to access the internet. Claimants who are unable to manage their claim online can receive telephone and face to face support.

Lyn Brown:

[\[1079\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to page 104 of the report, UK Poverty: Causes and Solutions, published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation on 6 September 2016; if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of the recommendation to reverse cuts to universal credit for young parents so that children receive the same level of support regardless of the age of their parents.

Lyn Brown:

[\[1080\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to page 104 of the report, UK Poverty: Causes and Solutions, published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation on 6 September 2016, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of the recommendation to review changes to Universal Credit to ensure that lone-parent family incomes continue to move them out of poverty.

Damian Hinds:

The Prime Minister is clear that we need to build a country where no one and no community is left behind.

We know that work is the best route out of poverty, and Universal Credit is designed to strengthen incentives for parents to move into and progress in work.

The Government now provides more support than ever before to help parents with the costs of childcare, including providing 15 hours a week of free childcare in England for all 3 and 4 year olds and disadvantaged 2 year olds, doubling free childcare available for working parents of 3 and 4 year olds to 30 hours a week and enabling parents to reclaim up to 85% of their childcare costs which is expected to help 500,000 additional families at a cost of around £350m/year.

■ Winter Fuel Payments

Catherine West:

[\[923\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the Government's policy is on winter fuel payments.

Guy Opperman:

There will be no change to the universal nature of the Winter Fuel Payment for the length of the Parliament.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ **Post-Council Statement on the Energy Council 26 June**

Minister for Energy and Industry (Richard Harrington):

[\[HCWS20\]](#)

The second Energy Council of the Maltese Presidency took place in Luxembourg on 26 June. I represented the UK.

The Council began with the Commission (Vice President Šefčovič) presenting the recommendation for a mandate to commence negotiations with the Russian Federation on the Nord Stream 2 pipeline. It reiterated its commitment to ensuring energy supply routes to the EU complied with the rules of the Third Energy Package, including diversification and security of supply, which was supported by the Member States that intervened. The Presidency noted the legal and political concerns raised by the Council.

The Council then discussed the Energy Efficiency Directive on which the main outstanding issues were whether the EU-level energy efficiency target should be binding or indicative, and whether early efforts generating long term savings could be counted towards the 2030 energy-saving obligation. Some Member States supported maximum ambition; others called for more flexibility so that ambitious targets could be met.

The Presidency made further efforts to find a compromise that could command a sufficient majority but texts which might have been acceptable to the UK were blocked by a group of Member States demanding a more ambitious target yet less flexibility for Member States to be able to meet them. Ultimately a General Approach was adopted that included a higher EU level energy efficiency target of 30% and some limited flexibilities for Member States to achieve their binding national energy savings target. Eight Member States voted against the proposal, on the basis that it ran counter to the position of the European Council in 2014. Although the balance of the proposal would have been acceptable to the UK, we were unable to support the text because the Commission refused to confirm the joint understanding reached with the UK in 2013 on what could be counted towards our 2020 binding national energy savings target. This could materially impact on our ability to meet our 2020 target.

Next, the Presidency presented its compromise proposal on the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, emphasising the uptake of electric vehicle charging points as the centrepiece of the revisions, and the increased flexibility for Member States compared to the Commission's initial proposal. The Commission (Commissioner Cañete) highlighted what it saw as a loss of ambition. Member States supported the balance of the Presidency's proposal and the Council agreed on a General Approach, although some Member States, including the UK, noted the need for measures to be economically and technically feasible.

The Council then discussed energy interconnectors at the request of Spain and Portugal, who sought binding targets for interconnection and funding for the required infrastructure.

The Commission reiterated its commitment to the 2015 Madrid declaration on developing interconnectors, and highlighted the future discussion of this issue at the High Level Group in September.

Finally, the Presidency noted the intention of working groups to move forward on the six remaining legislative files that comprise the Clean Energy Package; the Commission updated Council on a number of external energy relations issues over the past six months, including discussions on energy cooperation with China, Japan, Africa and Iran, and the development of the Eastern Mediterranean as a gas supplier, in order further to improve diversification of supply. The Estonian delegation presented the priorities for its upcoming Presidency, which focused on Electricity Market Design but also included negotiations on other elements of the Clean Energy Package and the mandate for Nord Stream 2.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ DCMS - Digital

Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (Karen Bradley):
[\[HCWS22\]](#)

With agreement of the Prime Minister, we can confirm an addition to the department name. DCMS will change from Department for Culture, Media and Sport to Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. The Secretary of State's full title will be the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. All responsibilities and portfolios within the department remain the same. The department will still be referred to as DCMS.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ FISHERIES

Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Michael Gove):
[\[HCWS21\]](#)

As part of the wider process of becoming an independent Coastal State, the UK will be withdrawing from the London Fisheries Convention. My Rt Hon friend the Foreign Secretary will today formally give notice under the Convention.

This is the first step towards taking back control of our fishing waters and creating a policy that leads to a more competitive, profitable and sustainable fisheries industry for the whole of the UK.

We are committed to acting as a responsible Coastal State. We look forward to working closely with the EU and other Coastal States to ensure the sustainable management of fish stocks in accordance with our rights and obligations under international law including the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the UN Fish Stocks Agreement (UNFSA).

HOME OFFICE

■ Resettlement

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Amber Rudd): [\[HCWS23\]](#)

As the Syria crisis enters its seventh year, civilians continue to bear the brunt of a conflict marked by unparalleled suffering, destruction and disregard for human life. This crisis, and wider instability across the world, is driving thousands of refugees and migrants towards Europe's borders.

The UK has been at the forefront of the international response and has pledged £2.46 billion to help address the humanitarian crisis, complemented by continued diplomatic efforts in the region to end the conflict. Our direct support has reached hundreds of thousands of people in Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq and Egypt. By meeting basic humanitarian needs and helping to create new opportunities we aim to help Syrians to build a life in neighbouring countries.

As part of our comprehensive approach to the Syria crisis, the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS) was launched in January 2014 and expanded in September 2015. In 2016 the UK resettled more refugees from outside Europe than any other EU member state. The scheme, to date, has focused on Syrian nationals because they formed an easily identifiable cohort of vulnerable refugees who have fled the conflict and whose needs are clearly evident. This focus has enabled us to provide a quick and effective response to the crisis.

The scheme sees us working closely with the UNHCR to identify individuals who are most at risk in the region and whose particular needs can only be met in countries like the UK. Up to the end of March 2017, 7,307 Syrian nationals had been resettled across the UK under the Syrian VPRS, half of whom are children, and we are on track to meet our commitment of resettling 20,000 refugees by 2020. This is in addition to our Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme launched last year, which will see us resettle up to 3,000 of the most vulnerable children and their families from the Middle East and North Africa region by 2020. We remain committed to resettling the overall number of refugees previously announced on both schemes.

However, whilst the Syrian VPRS is aimed at the most vulnerable Syrians, there are additional groups in the region who have fled Syria and are also extremely vulnerable but who may not be able to access one of our resettlement schemes. UNHCR's advice is that a diversified resettlement quota is needed in order to address the needs of the most vulnerable refugees from all refugee populations in the region.

In light of this, with immediate effect, I am amending the scope of the Syrian Vulnerable Person's Resettlement Scheme (VPRS) to enable UNHCR to refer the most vulnerable refugees in the MENA region who have fled the Syrian conflict and cannot safely return to their country of origin, whatever their nationality.

This Government is committed to an effective response in the affected regions and to resettling the most vulnerable; this includes those who had sought refuge within Syria prior to the conflict and been recognised as refugees. We will continue to rely on UNHCR

to identify and refer the most vulnerable refugees but will no longer limit the scheme solely to those with Syrian nationality. UNHCR will only refer to us those who are genuine refugees, in that they cannot seek the protection of their home country.

This change will also mean that mixed family groups are eligible for resettlement under the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme. This change might also open up the Scheme to other groups, such as Iraqi minorities who sought refuge in Syria, but had to flee again as a result of the Syria conflict.

This remains within the overall spirit of the then Prime Minister's 2015 commitment while recognising that other nationalities who had resided in Syria have been impacted by the same conflict. This decision demonstrates the UK remains fully committed to playing its part in the global migration crisis. We continue with our approach of taking refugees from the region - from Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and Egypt - as well as providing life-saving humanitarian assistance such as the £2.5m Migration Emergency Response Fund in response to the Mediterranean migration crisis. Our approach is rightly based on targeting our support so that it delivers the most impact, helps those who need it the most, and avoids unintended consequences.

This provides refugees with a more direct and safe route to the UK, rather than risking the hazardous journey to Europe which has tragically cost so many lives. Local authorities and partners play a vital role in helping those arriving here to settle into a new life in the UK. I am grateful for the way in which over 235 local authorities across the UK have stepped up to provide places for those arriving under the resettlement schemes.

We can be proud of the contribution the UK is making to support refugees, including the support and generosity from the British public, and I believe that this policy change will help us to continue to support the most vulnerable refugees fleeing Syria.