



# HOUSE OF COMMONS

## Daily Report

Monday, 27 February 2017

This report shows written answers and statements provided on 27 February 2017 and the information is correct at the time of publication (07:00 P.M., 27 February 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

#### ■ Honour Based Violence

**Nusrat Ghani:**

[\[64191\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, how many cases dealt with by the CPS were flagged as being cases of honour-based violence in the most recent year for which data is available.

**Jeremy Wright:**

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) uses a monitoring flag to collect data to show the number of defendants prosecuted for offences relating to 'so-called' honour-based violence (HBV). The flag is applied where any offence of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse has been carried out in the context of HBV. During the financial year 2015-16 the CPS received 216 HBV referrals from the police, 182 of these were prosecuted.

### BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

#### ■ Cammell Laird: Industrial Disputes

**Ruth Smeeth:**

[\[64262\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if the Government will respond to the request for an apology for actions by the UK Government in relation to industrial action at Cammell Laird in 1984 made by the Committee on Petitions of the European Parliament in December 2014; and if he will make a statement.

**Margot James:**

The treatment of the workers in the Cammell Laird case as a result of the industrial action taken and any possible miscarriage of justice is not a matter for the Department of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy.

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

**Philip Davies:**

[\[64157\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the (a) mean and (b) median pay was for staff in his Department who were (i) male, (ii) female, (iii) white, (iv) from an ethnic minority background, (v) disabled and (vi) non-disabled in the most recent year for which information is available, broken down by (A) full-time and (B) part-time workers.

**Margot James:**

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) was created on 14 July 2016. The Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) and the



Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) were merged to create this new department.

The Civil Service publishes pay information including mean and median pay broken down by various characteristics for each department including DECC and BIS. The latest pay data was published in October last year and can be found on the Office for National Statistics website.

BEIS will contribute to the next release but could only provide the data in the requested format for both departments at disproportionate cost.

## ■ ERASMUS

**Gordon Marsden:**

[\[64930\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the benefits of the Erasmus Plus programme for UK learners from disadvantaged backgrounds.

**Joseph Johnson:**

*[Holding answer 24 February 2017]:* Learners undertaking mobility typically enhance their employability, social skills and linguistic skills, and that is why we place particular importance on ensuring learners from disadvantaged backgrounds have the opportunity to undertake mobility. Such learners who successfully apply to participate in the Erasmus+ mobility schemes receive an additional €100 per month abroad as well as the standard contribution to their mobility. Disabled students can also claim any additional costs required to enable their participation, including the cost of an accompanying carer where necessary.

**Gordon Marsden:**

[\[64931\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent discussions he has had with higher education providers and institutions on continued UK participation in the Erasmus Plus programme (a) in the next two years and (b) when the UK leaves the EU.

**Gordon Marsden:**

[\[64932\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with the British Council on the merits of the continued UK participation in the Erasmus Plus programme (a) in the next two years and (b) after the UK leaves the EU.

**Joseph Johnson:**

*[Holding answer 24 February 2017]:* Stakeholder engagement is a central element of our plan to build a national consensus around our negotiating position; we are listening and talking to as many organisations, companies and institutions as possible.

My Rt Hon Friend the Prime Minister has been clear that Britain will remain truly global – the best friend and neighbour to our European partners, but a country that reaches beyond the borders of Europe too.

We recognise the value of international exchange and collaboration in education and training, as part of our vision for the UK as a global nation.

It is too early to speculate on the UK's future relationship with specific EU programmes, including Erasmus+.

**Gordon Marsden:** [\[64933\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the benefits of the Erasmus Plus programme for UK (a) vocational education staff, (b) vocational students and (c) apprentices.

**Joseph Johnson:**

*[Holding answer 24 February 2017]:* Students and apprentices who participate in Erasmus+ mobility typically enhance their employability and their social skills, and staff their professional development; both typically also enhance their linguistic skills.

**Gordon Marsden:** [\[64934\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what contribution his Department has (a) made and (b) plans to make to discussions with the British Council on the future development of the Erasmus Plus programme in the vocational and technical skills sectors.

**Joseph Johnson:**

*[Holding answer 24 February 2017]:* The Erasmus+ programme is delivered in the UK by the British Council in partnership with Ecorys Ltd., and it is the latter which has responsibility for the vocational education and training sub-programme. Officials in the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy regularly discuss the development of all aspects of the programme with the partnership.

## ■ Industry: Exeter

**Sir Hugo Swire:** [\[63991\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he is taking to ensure that the greater Exeter area contributes to the Government's industrial strategy.

**Margot James:**

The Government published the Industrial Strategy Green Paper on 23 January 2017.

This document outlines how Government intends to build on the diverse strengths of our cities and regions, including Exeter, using record investment in infrastructure, research and innovation and inward investment to ensure higher growth is seen across the UK.

We welcome the views of people, businesses and organisations across the country, which is why ministers from this department are undertaking an extensive regional engagement programme and will be visiting the South-West shortly.

## ■ **Magnox: Pensions**

**Thangam Debbonaire:**

**[65061]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will take steps to protect Magnox workers affected by reforms to final salary pension schemes across the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority Estate.

**Jesse Norman:**

The Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) is undertaking a consultation with its workforce on potential options for pension reform, after which the NDA will take account of the consultation responses and make proposals for the Government to consider. The NDA estate is part of the public sector, as classified by the Office of National Statistics, in that it receives over £2bn of funding from the UK taxpayer every year.

The Government recognises the unique context that Site Licence Companies and their workforces operate in. During the consultation period the NDA have continued to lead discussions with the Trade Unions on the best approach to pension reform; one that balances the legitimate concerns of taxpayers about the present and future costs of pension commitments, with the workforce's concern to maintain levels of retirement income for people who have dedicated their working lives to the nuclear decommissioning industry.

## ■ **Post Offices: Closures**

**Rachael Maskell:**

**[65096]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many Post Office branches were classed as (a) temporarily closed and (b) permanently closed in each year since 2010.

**Margot James:**

The provision of post offices is the responsibility of Post Office Limited.

I have asked Paula Vennells, the Chief Executive of Post Office Limited, to write to the Hon Member on this matter and provide the information requested. A copy of her reply will be placed in the libraries of the House.

## ■ **Prosperity Fund: Energy**

**Mr Nigel Evans:**

**[64938]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what (a) coal, (b) gas, (c) hydro, (d) wind and (e) solar energy projects his Department's Prosperity Fund has invested in during each of the last three years for which information is available.

**Jesse Norman:**

*[Holding answer 24 February 2017]:* The Department has not, to date, invested in any energy projects under the Cross-Whitehall Prosperity Fund, which was announced in the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review and began initial spend in April 2016.

**■ Research: Wales****Lilian Greenwood:** [\[64149\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans the Government has to support the Ser Cymru II programme in Wales after the UK has left the EU.

**Joseph Johnson:**

This Government intends to secure the best possible outcome for the UK research base as we exit the European Union (EU). UK participants should continue to bid for competitive EU funds while we remain a member of the EU and we will work with the Commission to ensure payment when funds are awarded. The Treasury will underwrite the payment of such awards, even when specific projects continue beyond the UK's departure from the EU. Access to apply to the Horizon 2020 Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions scheme and subsequent funding programmes after we leave the EU will be a matter for the negotiations that will follow the triggering of Article 50.

**■ Wind Power: Seas and Oceans****Caroline Lucas:** [\[64820\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of the future asset value of the UK Green Investment Bank's investments in the Galloper and Rampion wind farms upon completion of their construction.

**Mr Nick Hurd:**

*[Holding answer 24 February 2017]:* The Government is undertaking a robust valuation process for the Green Investment Bank, using both market-based assumptions and HM Treasury Green Book methodology, and making use of external advice on valuation from expert financial advisors. In this, the Government is following the National Audit Office's recommendations on asset sales.

**CABINET OFFICE****■ Average Earnings: Glasgow South West****Chris Stephens:** [\[64244\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the average salary for (a) men and (b) women in Glasgow South West constituency was in each year since 2013.

**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 PQ64244 [PQ 64244 v.02.pdf]

## ■ Councillors: EU Nationals

**Hilary Benn:**

[\[65223\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what his policy is on an EU national elected as a local councillor in England being eligible to hold that office after the UK leaves the EU.

**Chris Skidmore:**

Our negotiations to leave the EU have not yet begun and we cannot comment on what the position may be once the UK has left the EU.

We are confident we can get a deal that will be in the best interests of both the UK and the EU.

## ■ Electoral Register

**Cat Smith:**

[\[64728\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people in the UK are registered to vote but are ineligible to do so having been convicted and detained for an offence.

**Chris Skidmore:**

Information on how many people are no longer eligible to vote due to conviction and detainment is not held centrally.

## ■ Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

**Andrew Gwynne:**

[\[65219\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 14 February 2017 to Question 63352, if he or Officials of his Department will meet with the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) to discuss staffing and funding levels in the PHSO offices.

**Chris Skidmore:**

I refer the hon. Member to my Answer of 14 February 2017 to PQ63352. Both I and my officials look forward to meeting the new Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman when he takes up post.

## ■ Population

**Mr David Nuttall:**

[\[63660\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the population of (a) Bury North constituency, (b) the Metropolitan Borough of Bury, (c) the area covered by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and (d) the UK is projected to be in each year until 2035.

**Chris Skidmore:**

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

### **Attachments:**

1. UKSA Letter to Member - Population [(63660) v.03 .pdf]

**■ Prime Minister: Government Contracts****Jon Trickett:** [64401]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the total (a) number and (b) value of Government contracts that have been contracted out by 10 Downing Street was in each year since 2010; what the value of pro bono costs was in each such year; and what estimate he has made of the number of work days contracted out in each such year.

**Ben Gummer:**

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

Since January 2011, details of central government contracts above the value of £10,000 are published on Contracts Finder. Contracts published prior to 26 February 2015 can be viewed at:

<https://data.gov.uk/data/contracts-finder-archive>

Those published after 26 February 2015 can be viewed at:

<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Search>

Details of contracts under £10,000 awarded by Cabinet Office as well as the total value of pro bono costs and the number of work days contracted out are not held centrally.

**■ Prostate Cancer****Mr Gregory Campbell:** [65080]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what estimate he has made of trends in prostate cancer detection rates since the publication of the first Annual Report of the National Prostate Cancer Audit in November 2014.

**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 PQ65080 [PQ65080 v03 (1) (1).pdf]

**■ Temporary Employment: Hemsworth****Jon Trickett:** [63812]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people in each year from 2010 have been on a temporary contract in Hemsworth constituency.

**Jon Trickett:** [63814]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people in each year from 2010 have been in part-time work in Hemsworth constituency.

**Jon Trickett:**

[\[63816\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people in Hemsworth constituency (a) work in social care and (b) work in social care and are paid less than the living wage.

**Chris Skidmore:**

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

**Attachments:**

1. UKSA Letter to Member - Temporary Contract [PQ63812 & 63814 & 63816 v.02.pdf]

■ **Zero Hours Contracts: Hemsworth**

**Jon Trickett:**

[\[63811\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people in each year from 2010 have been employed on zero-hour contracts in Hemsworth constituency.

**Jon Trickett:**

[\[63813\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many people under the age of 24 in each year from 2010 have been employed on a zero-hours contract in Hemsworth constituency.

**Chris Skidmore:**

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

Zero hours contracts only account for 2.9% of all people in work. For many people they offer the right kind of flexibility, with independent research showing that nearly two-thirds of people on such contracts are satisfied with their job.

**Attachments:**

1. UKSA Letter to Member - Zero Hour Contracts [PQ 63811& 63813 v.02.pdf]

## TREASURY

■ **Budgets: Scotland**

**Patrick Grady:**

[\[64961\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions he has had with Ministers of the Scottish Government on delivering the Budget in the Autumn and the effect of that on the Scottish Government and Parliament's annual budget process.

**Mr David Gauke:**

I have regular discussions with Ministers from the Devolved Administrations on a range of issues of mutual interest. At the most recent meeting of the Finance Ministers' Quadrilateral held in Edinburgh on 14 February this year, we discussed the interactions between UK Government budgets and devolved administration budget-setting procedures.

**■ Cash Dispensing**

**Mr Clive Betts:** [\[64270\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what engagement his Department has had with the working group set up by LINK scheme members to consider how to place the LINK system on a sustainable footing.

**Mr Clive Betts:** [\[64271\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions he has had with banks and independent ATM operators on steps being taken to place the LINK system on a sustainable footing.

**Mr Clive Betts:** [\[64272\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions he has had with representatives from the LINK scheme on steps being taken to place the LINK system on a sustainable footing.

**Simon Kirby:**

The Government believes that widespread free access to cash remains extremely important to the day-to-day lives of many consumers in the UK. To this end, the Government is engaging with LINK and its members, including banks and Independent ATM Deployers, to ensure that widespread free access to cash is maintained. The Government is encouraged to hear that LINK's members have committed to further work to find a solution to the dispute.

The Government is also working closely on the issue with the Payment Systems Regulator (PSR), which was established in 2015 to promote competition, innovation and the needs of end users within payment systems. The PSR is in regular contact with LINK, and is monitoring the situation closely.

The PSR has the power to act if LINK or any of its members act in a way that conflicts with any of its objectives.

**Mr Clive Betts:** [\[64273\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions his Department has had with the Competition and Markets Authority on ensuring a sustainable future for the LINK scheme in advance of approval of the sale of Vocalink.

**Simon Kirby:**

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) is responsible for strengthening business competition and preventing and reducing anti-competitive activities. The Payment Systems Regulator, which the Government set up in 2015, is responsible for promoting competition and innovation within the payments market, and ensuring that payment systems are operated and developed in a way that considers and promotes the interests of those that use them.

The CMA is investigating the anticipated acquisition by MasterCard UK Holdco Limited, an affiliate of MasterCard International Incorporated, of VocaLink Holdings Limited. The Government does not involve itself with CMA investigations.



## ■ Income Tax: Landlords

**John Healey:**

[\[64029\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of how many landlords will be (a) affected by, (b) exempted because they are a corporate landlord and (c) exempted because they fall into another exempted group from the restriction on the ability to deduct loan interest and other financial costs as an expense against income from residential property to the basic rate of income tax announced in Summer Budget 2015.

**Jane Ellison:**

The restriction of finance cost relief to the basic rate of income tax will reduce the tax advantage landlords have over homeowners in the property market, and will ensure all individual landlords receive the same rate of tax relief on their finance costs. HM Revenue and Customs estimates that 1 in 5 landlords will pay more tax as a result of this measure.

## ■ Petroleum Revenue Tax: Tax Allowances

**Rebecca Long Bailey:**

[\[63980\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many (a) people and (b) businesses have received Petroleum Revenue Tax relief for unrelieved field loss in (i) 2013-14 and (ii) 2014-15.

**Jane Ellison:**

Only companies are able to claim Petroleum Revenue Tax relief for unrelieved field losses. Fewer than ten companies claimed the relief in each of 2013-14 and 2014-15.

**Rebecca Long Bailey:**

[\[63981\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many (a) people and (b) businesses have received Petroleum Revenue Tax relief for research expenditure in (i) 2013-14 and (ii) 2014-15.

**Jane Ellison:**

Only companies are able to claim Petroleum Revenue Tax relief for research expenditure. Fewer than ten companies claimed the relief in each of 2013-14 and 2014-15.

## ■ Stamp Duty Land Tax: South Thanet

**Craig Mackinlay:**

[\[64001\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how much additional tax revenue his Department has collected as a result of Stamp Duty changes in South Thanet constituency since 1 April 2016.

**Jane Ellison:**

HM Revenue and Customs is planning to publish this information in Autumn 2017, in the Annual Stamp Tax Statistics bulletin.

## ■ Stamp Duty Land Tax: Tax Allowances

**Rebecca Long Bailey:** [\[63976\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many (a) people and (b) businesses have received Stamp Duty Land Tax relief for compulsory purchase facilitating development in (i) 2013-14 and (ii) 2014-15.

**Rebecca Long Bailey:** [\[63977\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many (a) people and (b) businesses have received reconstruction relief from Stamp Duty Land Tax in (i) 2013-14 and (ii) 2014-15.

**Rebecca Long Bailey:** [\[63978\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many (a) people and (b) businesses have received part exchange relief from Stamp Duty Land Tax in (i) 2013-14 and (ii) 2014-15.

**Rebecca Long Bailey:** [\[63979\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many (a) people and (b) businesses have received disadvantaged area relief from Stamp Duty Land Tax in (i) 2013-14 and (ii) 2014-15.

**Jane Ellison:**

The information requested is presented in the table below.

FINANCIAL YEAR		COMPULSORY PURCHASE FACILITATING DEVELOPMENT RELIEF	RECONSTRUCTION RELIEF	PART EXCHANGE RELIEF	DISADVANTAGED AREA RELIEF
2013-14	Individuals	-	-	-	800
	Businesses	100	100	1600*	100
2014-15	Individuals	-	-	-	100
	Businesses	100	100	900*	-

All figures provided are rounded to the nearest hundred.

\* These statistics are upper estimates.

Dashes (“-”) indicate where the information cannot be provided due to the small numbers involved. Providing this information would risk breaching HM Revenue and Customs’ taxpayer confidentiality principles.

## ■ Taxation: Electronic Government

**Stuart C. McDonald:**

**[64201]**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he plans to announce his decision on the Making Tax Digital annual income exemption threshold; and if he will make it his policy to announce that decision before introducing related legislation into Parliament.

**Jane Ellison:**

The level of the initial threshold for the income exemption was explored as part of the Making Tax Digital consultations. Given the range of views expressed, the Government announced on 31 January that it will take more time to consider this issue alongside the fiscal impacts.

A final announcement will be made before legislation is introduced.

## ■ Tobacco: Excise Duties

**Mr Philip Hollobone:**

**[65217]**

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 6 February 2017 to Question 62819, what estimate his Department has made of the effect of each increase of one per cent in excise duty charged on tobacco products on the (a) size and (b) value of the illicit tobacco market; and what the fiscal effect of changes in that market are.

**Jane Ellison:**

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has made no assessment of the market or revenue effects of an increase of one per cent in excise duty charged on tobacco products that is restricted only to the illicit market. Consumers are expected to respond to price increases by reducing their consumption of duty-paid tobacco. They may also switch to lower priced products. Reducing consumption of duty-paid tobacco will include reducing consumption of tobacco as well as switching to the illicit market.

This behavioural response to a rise in prices is captured by the price elasticity of demand. More information on HMRC's long-run estimate of the price elasticity of demand for cigarettes can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/econometric-analysis-of-cigarette-consumption-in-the-uk>.

Information on the size of the illicit market for cigarettes and hand rolling tobacco is available in HM Revenue and Custom's 'Tobacco tax gap estimates 2015-16' publication, which is available to view at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/561322/HMRC-tobacco-tax-gap-estimates-2016.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/561322/HMRC-tobacco-tax-gap-estimates-2016.pdf).

**■ Tobacco: Smuggling**

**Tom Elliott:** [64069]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent estimate his Department has made of the proportion of tobacco used in the UK that is illegally (a) imported and (b) manufactured.

**Tom Elliott:** [64070]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the cost to the public purse of illegal tobacco entering the UK by way of the border with the Republic of Ireland has been in each of the last five years.

**Jane Ellison:**

Estimates of the volume and total revenue losses associated with the tobacco illicit market are published in 'Tobacco Tax Gap Estimates 2015 to 2016'. This is available to view at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/561322/HMRC-tobacco-tax-gap-estimates-2016.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/561322/HMRC-tobacco-tax-gap-estimates-2016.pdf).

The estimate is based on comparing tobacco consumed with returns to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) detailing legitimate manufacture, import and an estimate of cross border shopping. It does not distinguish between imported illicit product and that manufactured in the UK.

The estimates provide a national picture of the illicit tobacco market and are not broken down on a regional basis. Therefore, HMRC does not have an estimate of revenue losses attributable to illicit tobacco entering the UK from the Republic of Ireland.

The methodology for producing the estimates are provided in the 'Measuring Tax Gaps 2016 edition: Methodological Annex':

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/561314/HMRC-measuring-tax-gaps-2016-methodological-annex.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/561314/HMRC-measuring-tax-gaps-2016-methodological-annex.pdf).

**■ Treasury: Brexit**

**Paul Blomfield:** [64553]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what discussions he has had with the Department for Exiting the European Union on the contents of the White Paper entitled The United Kingdom's exit from and new partnership with the European Union, Cm 9417, published in February 2017.

**Simon Kirby:**

The Treasury, with other departments, is working closely with the Department for Exiting the European Union on all aspects of the UK's exit from the EU. We continue to make progress in preparing for the withdrawal process and getting the best deal for the UK.

## ■ Treasury: Equality

**Chris Stephens:**

[R] [\[64452\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many equality impact assessments have been carried out in the last three years on public service reforms which impact on (a) departmental staff and (b) members of the public; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr David Gauke:**

In line with the government's legal responsibilities and policy commitment to promote fairness, the Treasury and other Government departments fully comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), and consider the equality impacts of policy measures on those sharing protected characteristics. When working on policy, including at fiscal events, Ministers are advised of the impact a decision has on protected groups and this is taken into account when a policy decision is made.

However, the legislation does not prescribe how this information needs to be recorded and it is not a statutory requirement in England to prepare or publish information in a particular form, such as an equality impact assessment.

## ■ Treasury: Pay

**Philip Davies:**

[\[64178\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the (a) mean and (b) median pay was for staff in his Department who were (i) male, (ii) female, (iii) white, (iv) from an ethnic minority background, (v) disabled and (vi) non-disabled in the most recent year for which information is available, broken down by (A) full-time and (B) part-time workers.

**Simon Kirby:**

The Office for National Statistics publish annually Mean and Median salary for each Civil Service organization as part of the Civil Service Statistics. This information can be found on the Office for National Statistics website:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/publicsectorpersonnel/datasets/civilservicestatistics>

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/publicsectorpersonnel/bulletins/civilservicestatistics/2016/relateddata>

## ■ Treasury: Recruitment

**Andrew Selous:**

[\[64481\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether his Department operates a ban the box employment policy in respect of ex-offender job applicants with unspent convictions; and how many employees of his Department have unspent convictions.

**Simon Kirby:**

I can confirm that the Treasury operates a ban the box employment policy in respect of ex-offender job applicants with unspent convictions. Although the Treasury does

hold information of unspent convictions, the information requested could only be provided at a disproportionate cost.

## COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### ■ Compulsory Purchase: Greater London

**Dr Andrew Murrison:**

[58195]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what the cost to the public purse has been of compulsory purchase orders in each London borough in each year since 1990.

**Gavin Barwell:**

The Department does not hold the specific information requested. The Secretary of State's role in a compulsory purchase order ends when he issues a decision whether or not to confirm the order. We have no role in the amount of compensation paid.

### ■ Department for Communities and Local Government: Pay

**Philip Davies:**

[64160]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what the (a) mean and (b) median pay was for staff in his Department who were (i) male, (ii) female, (iii) white, (iv) from an ethnic minority background, (v) disabled and (vi) non-disabled in the most recent year for which information is available, broken down by (A) full-time and (B) part-time workers.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

The Office for National Statistics annually publish Civil Service employment statistics which includes a breakdown of the Department's officials split by ethnicity, gender, disability, and full and part time status. This information can be found on the Office for National Statistics website:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/publicsectorpersonnel/datasets/civilservicestatistics>

### ■ Housing: Construction

**Oliver Colvile:**

[908913]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to build and develop more homes.

**Sajid Javid:**

The Government is committed to building the homes our country needs.

Measures in the recent White Paper will ensure more homes are planned for where they are needed most, that homes are built more quickly once they have planning permission, and will diversify the housing market so it works for everyone.

**■ Litter: Fines****Grant Shapps:**[\[64278\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the annual value of fines received by local authorities for litter-related offences.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

Government does not collect this information.

**■ Local Government: Dorset****Mr Christopher Chope:**[\[65073\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, whether Officials of his Department will provide advice and guidance to the Leaders of Christchurch Borough Council, East Dorset District Council and Purbeck District Council in relation to their preparation of an alternative submission for local government reorganisation in Dorset.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

Following a meeting about possible unitary reorganisation which the Dorset leaders had in late 2015 with my Rt Hon Friend Greg Clark, the then Secretary of State, officials have provided information, largely orally, to the 9 Dorset councils as those councils together developed and took forward options for reorganisation. This information focussed on such matters as the process for unitarisation, the issues councils considering making a proposal for reorganisation might need to address, and the type of evidence and information which might need to be included in any such proposal.

**Mr Christopher Chope:**[\[65074\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, with reference to the letter of 9 February 2017 from the six leaders to the Secretary of State, titled Future Dorset: Proposals for the Reorganisation of Local Government, published on his Department's website, what advice and guidance was provided by Paul Rowsell, Ian Barber and Victoria Jones to the Leaders of Bournemouth Borough Council, Dorset County Council, North Dorset District Council, Borough of Poole, West Dorset District Council and Weymouth & Portland District Council on proposals for local government reorganisation in Dorset.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

I refer the Hon Member to my answer today to Question UIN 65073.

**■ Local Government: Procurement****Sir Hugo Swire:**[\[63982\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to encourage innovation in local government procurement practices.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

The Government and the Local Government Association are working together to improve local government procurement.

This work is supported by the Local Government Association's National Procurement Strategy and its National Advisory Group for Local Government Procurement.

The National Advisory Group is looking specifically at how to improve innovation in procurement.

**■ Non-domestic Rates****Steve McCabe:**[\[64310\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 3 February 2017 to Question 62421, how businesses apply for funds from the transitional relief scheme.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

Transitional relief is automatically applied to business rate bills by the relevant billing authority. It is not necessary to apply for transitional relief.

**■ Non-domestic Rates: Public Bodies****Steve McCabe:**[\[64309\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 3 February 2017 to Question 62421, what estimate he has made of the total cost of business rate changes to public bodies in (a) England, (b) the West Midlands and (c) Birmingham; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

My Department does not hold the necessary data to estimate the changes in the costs for all public bodies resulting from the 2017 business rates revaluation.

A £3.6 billion transitional relief scheme will provide support for the minority of properties which face an increase in rates as a result of the 2017 revaluation, and applies equally to public bodies.

My Department is working closely with the Treasury to determine how best to provide further support to businesses facing the steepest increases. We expect to be in a position to make an announcement on this at the Budget, in just two weeks.

**■ Urban Areas: Shops****Mr Gregory Campbell:**[\[65078\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will discuss guidance and assistance to support high street retailers competing with large out of town developments with the devolved legislations.



**Andrew Percy:**

*[Holding answer 27 February 2017]:* The Government is committed to supporting diverse high streets with a broad range of retail and service businesses, and has taken a number of important steps to make it easier for people to start and expand a business.

We announced that the doubling of Small Business Rate Relief would be made permanent at Budget 2016. The thresholds will also be increased. Businesses with a property with a rateable value of £12,000 and below will receive 100 per cent relief. From April, 600,000 small businesses, occupiers of a third of all properties, will pay no business rates at all. The threshold for the standard business rates multiplier will increase to £51,000, taking 250,000 smaller properties out of the higher rate. This is a business rates cut of approximately 2.5 per cent.

In England, we have implemented sensible planning reforms that are benefiting businesses on the high street, including allowing retail and business start-ups to open without planning permission and lifting planning restrictions to increase flexibility of use on high streets. This also supports pop ups or meanwhile use that can give start ups the chance to test out an idea, raise the profile of a product or market test an item.

The Government is also championing, through the annual Great British High Street Awards, the hard work of local businesses and communities around the country who are turning their high streets around. Winners get the chance to share a £100,000 prize pot which includes training from Google and Twitter. Examples of these high streets can be found on the Great British High Street portal at: [www.thegreatbritishhighstreet.co.uk](http://www.thegreatbritishhighstreet.co.uk). This site also contains lots of information and sources of help to help high streets revitalise.

In addition, we are currently developing a package of measures to ensure parking provision supports high streets.

**CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT****■ British Board of Film Classification****Tom Watson:****[63863]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 9 February 2017 to Question 63301, on the British Board of Film Classification (BBFC), for what reason she did not provide in her Answer the dates on which Ministers of her Department met the BBFC.

**Matt Hancock:**

Ministers have met the BBFC on a number of occasions, including as part of the UK Council for Child Internet Safety Executive Board. In addition, David Austin the Chief Exec of the BBFC was a witness at a Digital Economy Bill Committee evidence session on 11 October 2016. The Parliamentary Secretary of the Cabinet Office and I both sat on the Public Bill Committee.

The latest meeting with Ministers took place on 22nd February.

■ **Broadband: Exeter**

**Mr Ben Bradshaw:**

[\[64199\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that Exeter has access to high-speed broadband.

**Matt Hancock:**

Exeter has a strong competitive superfast broadband market from suppliers including BT/Openreach, Virgin Media, and Torbay Telecoms. Third party verification from Think Broadband puts superfast coverage above 97.5%.

Phase 1 of the Devon and Somerset superfast project (Connecting Devon and Somerset) has now covered over 300,000 premises with superfast broadband and further procurements are in train to extend coverage further.

The Universal Service Obligation, which we have enabling powers for in the Digital Economy Bill, will help ensure that everyone can access high speed broadband.

■ **Cybercrime**

**Andrew Gwynne:**

[\[63984\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what security measures are in place to ensure that suppliers compliant with the Cyber Essentials scheme utilise third party services who are also compliant with that scheme.

**Matt Hancock:**

The Cyber Essentials scheme sets out the basic technical controls which all organisations relying on the internet should have in place to prevent common online attacks. The scheme does not require organisations certified under the scheme to use third parties which are also compliant with the scheme, though this is something the Government would recommend where appropriate.

The Government itself requires its suppliers to hold a Cyber Essentials certificate where contracts involve the handling of sensitive data, such as personal and financial information, or the provision of certain ICT products and services. The recently published National Cyber Security Strategy set out a success measure that all Government suppliers will meet appropriate cyber security standards by 2021.

In addition, the Government is working with industry to ensure businesses encourage the firms in their supply chains to adopt Cyber Essentials where necessary and appropriate; for example, organisations could work with their supply chains and discuss the best way to add resilience to the end-to-end delivery of a product or service, which could include a third party adopting Cyber Essentials.

**Andrew Gwynne:**

**[63988]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether the Cyber Essentials scheme includes protections against (a) structured query language injection and (b) other code vulnerabilities.

**Matt Hancock:**

The Cyber Essentials scheme sets out the basic technical controls which all organisations relying on the internet should have in place to prevent common online attacks. The scheme requires software running on computers and network devices to be kept up-to-date and have the latest security patches installed: this is designed to protect against known code vulnerabilities.

Although Cyber Essentials is intended to provide a good basic level of cyber security, it does not represent a full cyber risk management regime, which is something set out in the more comprehensive '10 Steps to Cyber Security' guidance. As part of the regular reviews of all cyber security standards, the Government considers whether Cyber Essentials needs to be updated to reflect other risks. The value of Cyber Essentials lies in its simplicity and it is important to balance this against breadth and depth of controls.

**Andrew Gwynne:**

**[63989]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether the Cyber Essentials scheme includes requirements to educate staff on the risk of (a) phishing attacks through email and (b) other user induced attacks.

**Matt Hancock:**

The Cyber Essentials scheme sets out the basic technical controls which all organisations relying on the internet should have in place to prevent common online attacks. The scheme requires up-to-date malware protection software to be installed on all internet-connected computers: this is designed to detect and disable the malicious software which an organisation might be exposed to via phishing attacks, and prevent users making connections to malicious websites on the internet.

Cyber Essentials is a technical scheme and staff awareness training is therefore out of scope; however other pieces of guidance from the Government do recommend this. For example, the '10 Steps to Cyber Security', the Government's key piece of advice for organisations on managing cyber risk, sets out the importance of user education and awareness.

The Government offers a range of free online cyber security training programmes at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/cyber-security-training-for-business>. In addition, the National Cyber Security Centre recently published a blog about phishing and user training, which explains that phishing is best tackled by implementing good technical defences and combining these with reasonable levels of user awareness, education and training: <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/blog-post/im-gonna-stop-you-little-phishie>

## ■ European City of Culture

**Mr Gregory Campbell:**

**[65079]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps she is taking to promote cooperation between cities that have won UK or European City of Culture competitions to raise cultural awareness across the UK.

**Matt Hancock:**

The UK City of Culture and European Capital of Culture programmes are designed to use culture as a catalyst for economic and social regeneration and to raise the profile of arts and creativity locally, nationally and internationally. Success in these competitions also helps areas to develop a broader high quality arts and culture sector, as well as attract increased business investment and boost tourism. DCMS is using the competitions now running to identify the UK City of Culture 2021 and European Capital of Culture 2023 to highlight these benefits to local areas, including through briefing events that bring together areas that have bid in previous competitions.

## ■ Government Art Collection

**Tom Watson:**

**[65036]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps she is taking to ensure that items from the Government Art Collection are displayed where they can be readily viewed by communities around the country.

**Matt Hancock:**

We are looking at options for increasing public access to the Government Art Collection (GAC). Around two-thirds of the collection's holdings of over 14,000 works of art are already on display in more than 370 buildings at home and abroad promoting the UK and its art. For example, an exhibition from the Collection will be held in Hull during its tenure as the UK City of Culture.

**Tom Watson:**

**[65037]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, in which locations items from the Government Art Collection have been shown in the last 12 months.

**Matt Hancock:**

A list of the locations in which items from the Government Art Collection have been shown in the last 12 months is attached.

**Attachments:**

1. List of locations the GAC has been shown [GAC PQ 65037 list.pdf]

## ■ Innovation

**Andrew Gwynne:**

[\[63990\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what activities the Government Innovation Group (a) undertook during 2016 and (b) has undertaken in 2017.

**Mr Rob Wilson:**

The functions of the Government Innovation Group were transferred to the Office for Civil Society and Innovation (OCSI) and Government Digital Service in 2015. On 21st July 2016 the functions of OCSI transferred from the Cabinet Office to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). Policy Lab and Business Partnerships remain part of the Cabinet Office resulting in a name change for OCSI, which is now called the Office for Civil Society (OCS). Since 1st January 2016 to date OCS has worked to deliver the Government's vision of having a more engaged nation, one in which we take greater responsibility for ourselves and for our neighbours.

## ■ Small Businesses: Cybercrime

**Andrew Gwynne:**

[\[63987\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what (a) financial and (b) other support is provided to small and medium-sized enterprises to support the adoption of the Cyber Essentials scheme.

**Matt Hancock:**

The Cyber Essentials scheme sets out the basic technical controls which all organisations relying on the internet should have in place to prevent common online attacks. The scheme is designed to be low-cost and suitable for implementation by organisations of all sizes, in all sectors. The Government has offered a range of support and advice since the launch of the scheme in 2014, including:

- The Innovation Vouchers Scheme in 2015 and 2016 which offered small and medium-sized enterprises up to £5,000 to improve their cyber security, including adopting Cyber Essentials;
- The Cyber Essentials website which offers clear information on how the scheme works and how to adopt it, and a self-assessment tool to help organisations understand the scheme;
- The Cyber Aware (formerly Cyber Streetwise) campaign which targets small businesses with information and advice about Cyber Essentials; and
- A range of other marketing activity, regional events and industry engagement activities.

The new National Cyber Security Centre, part of the Government's five-year £1.9 billion National Cyber Security Strategy, will engage closely with small businesses to offer support and advice, including support for the adoption of Cyber Essentials. The Government also works closely with industry to ensure Cyber Essentials is

embedded in the advice industry partners, such as trade associations, offer to their members.

## DEFENCE

### ■ Armed Forces Covenant

**Justin Tomlinson:**

[\[65117\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 8 September 2016 to Question 44796, how many companies have signed the Armed Forces Corporate Covenant since 2 September 2016.

**Mark Lancaster:**

Since 2 September 2016 a further 302 companies have signed the Armed Forces Covenant.

### ■ Army Foundation College: Vetting

**Mrs Madeleine Moon:**

[\[64234\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 2 December 2016 to Question 56016, on Army Foundation College vetting; how many permanent staff arriving at Army Foundation College, Harrogate without Disclosure and Barring Service clearance were (a) returned to their previous unit and (b) subject to a supervisory plan; and if he will make a statement.

**Mark Lancaster:**

Since April 2014, 93 military staff due to be employed by Army Foundation College, Harrogate arrived without Disclosure and Barring Service clearance; of these 21 have been subject to a supervisory plan and 72 were returned to their previous unit to await the required clearance. Since August 2015 all those subject to a supervisory plan have not been permitted to be part of a training team.

**Mrs Madeleine Moon:**

[\[64235\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 2 December 2016 to Question 56016, on Army Foundation College vetting, what proportion of Ministry of Defence civil servants employed at Army Foundation College, Harrogate (a) currently hold valid Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance and (b) held valid DBS clearance when they started in post; and if he will make a statement.

**Mark Lancaster:**

All Ministry of Defence Civil Servants currently employed at Army Foundation College hold DBS clearance and since August 2015 all new civilian staff have held clearances before they commenced work at the college.

## ■ Army: Young People

**Mrs Madeleine Moon:**

[\[64193\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 6 February 2017 to Question 62585, when he plans to place the terms of reference of the review of the Junior Entry Policy in the Library; and if he will make a statement.

**Mrs Madeleine Moon:**

[\[64194\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 6 February 2017 to Question 62585, if he will consult with (a) external organisations and (b) the Defence Committee, on the terms of reference of the review of the Junior Entry Policy; and if he will make a statement.

**Mike Penning:**

I have placed the Terms of Reference for the Army's Junior Entry Review in the Library of the House today.

## ■ Autism: Children

**Edward Argar:**

[\[64426\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what support his Department provides for servicemen and women's children who have an autism diagnosis.

**Mark Lancaster:**

Within the UK, responsibility for Service children with an autism diagnosis rests with the statutory authorities. Where appropriate, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) Directorate for Children and Young People provides additional support. This includes detailed information, advice and support to Service parents through the MOD's Children's Education Advisory Service; and the MOD's Education Support Fund has provided additional resources in situations where a Service child with an autism diagnosis might otherwise suffer disadvantage through Service mobility or parental deployment. For those eligible for the MOD's Continuity of Education Allowance, an addition to that allowance is available to those with an autism diagnosis.

For Service families based overseas the MOD acts in lieu of a local authority to provide support. Service families are not assigned to an overseas location without an assessment of whether any significant health, welfare or education needs (including autism) can be properly supported. MOD schools overseas have access to trained individuals (including educational psychologists) and training resources to allow schools to support children with autism; and to provide training to parents where practicable. Additional support is also provided for children returning to the United Kingdom, to assure a smooth transition back to local authority responsibility.



## ■ Defence: Expenditure

**Andrew Rosindell:**

[\[65132\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how he plans to ensure that the Government spends the equivalent of at least two per cent of GDP per year for the rest of this Parliament on defence.

**Sir Michael Fallon:**

As announced in the July 2015 Budget, the Government is committed to spending 2% of GDP on Defence for the rest of this decade. The Defence Budget will rise by 0.5% above inflation each year to 2020-21 and we also have access to up to £1.5 billion per year from the Joint Security Fund. In line with NATO guidelines, we will continue to ensure we capture all spending that supports the defence of the United Kingdom.

## ■ Human Rights: Advocacy

**Tom Brake:**

[\[64847\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps the Government is taking to ensure it provides robust and consistent advocacy on behalf of human rights defenders and in support of civic space in countries where the UK has strategic security and military interests.

**Mike Penning:**

While the Ministry of Defence seeks to respect and uphold human rights throughout its operations, advocacy for human rights activists overseas would not normally be classed as a military task.

Human rights abroad are the responsibility of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

## ■ Iraq: Peacekeeping Operations

**Andrew Rosindell:**

[\[65155\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the total cost of UK military operations in Iraq was in each year between 2010 and 2017.

**Mike Penning:**

Up to 2011, the net additional costs of operations in Iraq were £343 million in 2009-10 and £95 million in 2010-11. From 2014, the UK has supported operations to counter Daesh in Iraq and Syria. The net additional costs of these operations, which we do not separate due to their inter-related nature, were £21.9 million in 2014-15 and £216.9 million in 2015-16. Information for 2016-17 will be reported in the Department's Annual Report and Accounts.

## ■ Military Police

**Sir Nicholas Soames:**

[\[65035\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the Order of Battle of the Royal Military Police is by rank, number and task.



**Mike Penning:**

The Order of Battle for the Royal Military Police, including unit tasks and a breakdown of unit establishment by rank is below:

**1<sup>st</sup> Regiment Royal Military Police.** Task: General military police tasks on operations and in garrison and exercise locations in the UK and abroad.

	REGULAR	RESERVE
Lieutenant Colonel	1	0
Major	3	1
Captain	11	3
Lieutenant	10	3
Warrant Officer Class 1	3	0
Warrant Officer Class 2	7	1
Staff Sergeant	16	3
Sergeant	43	13
Corporal	103	47
Lance Corporal	104	54
Private	2	0

**3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment Royal Military Police.** Task: General military police tasks on operations and in garrison and exercise locations in the UK and abroad.

	REGULAR	RESERVE
Lieutenant Colonel	1	0
Major	4	1
Captain	10	3
Lieutenant	10	3
Warrant Officer Class 1	3	0
Warrant Officer Class 2	7	1
Staff Sergeant	16	3
Sergeant	43	13

	REGULAR	RESERVE
Corporal	103	47
Lance Corporal	104	54
Private	2	0

**4<sup>th</sup> Regiment Royal Military Police.** Task: General military police tasks on operations and in garrison and exercise locations in the UK and abroad.

	REGULAR	RESERVE
Lieutenant Colonel	1	0
Major	3	1
Captain	11	3
Lieutenant	10	3
Warrant Officer Class 1	3	0
Warrant Officer Class 2	7	1
Staff Sergeant	16	3
Sergeant	44	13
Corporal	107	47
Lance Corporal	100	54
Private	2	0

**Special Investigation Branch Regiment.** Task: Specialist, complex and serious criminal investigations on operations and in garrison and exercise locations in the UK and abroad.

	REGULAR	RESERVE
Lieutenant Colonel	1	0
Major	6	0
Captain	14	3
Lieutenant	0	0
Warrant Officer Class 1	10	0

	REGULAR	RESERVE
Warrant Officer Class 2	24	3
Staff Sergeant	51	6
Sergeant	53	18
Corporal	57	0
Lance Corporal	0	0
Private	4	0

**Specialist Operations Regiment.** Tasks: Close protection on operations and delivery of specialist technical services on operations and in garrison and exercise locations in the UK and abroad.

	REGULAR
Lieutenant Colonel	1
Major	3
Captain	10
Lieutenant	0
Warrant Officer Class 1	5
Warrant Officer Class 2	12
Staff Sergeant	28
Sergeant	31
Corporal	57
Lance Corporal	5
Private	0

This response does not include data about Royal Military Police personnel assigned to roles outside of the Order of Battle, such as those in Staff appointments.

#### ■ Ministry of Defence: Brexit

**Paul Blomfield:**

[\[64541\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what discussions he has had with the Department for Exiting the European Union on the contents of the White Paper entitled

The United Kingdom's exit from and new partnership with the European Union, Cm 9417, published in February 2017.

**Mike Penning:**

The Ministry of Defence is working closely with the Department for Exiting the European Union on all aspects of exiting the European Union to ensure there is a detailed understanding of how withdrawal from the European Union will affect Defence.

■ **Ministry of Defence: Information Officers**

**Justin Madders:**

[65102]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many staff in his Department are employed in media relations and communications roles; and how much was spent on the salaries of such staff members in each of the last 10 years.

**Mark Lancaster:**

The Directorate of Defence Communications (DDC) in the Ministry of Defence (MOD) Head Office currently has 89 staff employed in media relations and communications role, 19 of whom are military personnel. These roles include, for example, news, campaigns, strategy and planning, digital, and internal communications. Salaries of those specifically in a media relations or communications role in each of the last ten years are not held centrally.

It is important that the work our Armed Forces do to keep Britain safe is communicated effectively. The number of MOD civilian communications jobs has been cut by more than a quarter since 2010.

■ **Ministry of Defence: Pay**

**Philip Davies:**

[64162]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the (a) mean and (b) median pay was for staff in his Department who were (i) male, (ii) female, (iii) white, (iv) from an ethnic minority background, (v) disabled and (vi) non-disabled in the most recent year for which information is available, broken down by (A) full-time and (B) part-time workers.

**Mark Lancaster:**

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

The Civil Service has been publishing mean and median gender pay gaps for each Department since 2008 as part of the annual release of Civil Service Statistics by the Office for National Statistics. The latest gender pay gap data (published in October 2016) can be found on the Office for National Statistics website at:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/publicsectorpersonnel/bulletins/civilservicestatistics/2016>

To meet the Department's obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty, introduced by the Equality Act 2010, to provide information on its workforce, the

Department publishes Equal Pay Audits, these can be found on the Gov.uk website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-equal-pay-audit-reports-index>

## ■ **Navy: Cadets**

**Mims Davies:**

[\[64774\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he is taking to promote the participation of young people in the Sea Cadets organisation.

**Mark Lancaster:**

The Government and the Royal Navy recognise the positive impact Sea Cadets has on young people, helping them to build resilient futures for themselves and their communities. We support the charity with a Grant in Aid payment in the region of £10 million, providing almost half of the cost of delivering the Sea Cadets. We also second personnel to key positions, offering role models that inspire and guide cadets, as well as providing accommodation, equipment, and some training through related facilities on the Ministry of Defence estate. In addition we support the charity's commitment to deliver 10% of the Cadet Expansion Programme, opening 23 units by 2020 helping to make the Sea Cadets Experience accessible to all.

## ■ **South Sudan: Armed Forces**

**Mr Kevan Jones:**

[\[64492\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many UK armed forces personnel are deployed in South Sudan.

**Mike Penning:**

The UK currently has around 70 Armed Forces personnel deployed in South Sudan. This number will rise to almost 400 in the coming months as an engineering taskforce and medics are deployed to support the United Nations Mission in the country.

## ■ **Unmanned Air Vehicles**

**Lucy Powell:**

[\[65234\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 13 February 2017 to Question 63288, when he expects the Joint Doctrine Publication 0-30.2 Unmanned Aircraft Systems to be published.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

The updated UK Joint Doctrine Publication 0-30.2 Unmanned Aircraft Systems is due to be published in spring 2017.

**EDUCATION**■ **Agency Social Workers: Fees and Charges**

**Margaret Beckett:** [\[64150\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether she has made an assessment of the effect of trends in agency social worker fees on local authority expenditure; and if she will make a statement.

**Margaret Beckett:** [\[64151\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of introducing a national cap on agency social worker fees.

**Margaret Beckett:** [\[64318\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of memoranda of understanding and regional agreements in managing the costs of agency social workers.

**Edward Timpson:**

The Department for Education recognises the costs associated with the use of agency social workers. The department welcomes the efforts made by local authorities through regional memoranda of understanding to improve the deployment, and manage the costs, of agency social workers. The department has not conducted an assessment of their effectiveness or of the effect on local authority expenditure. Similarly, the department has not carried out an assessment of a national cap on agency social worker fees.

■ **Apprentices**

**Mr Gregory Campbell:** [\[65081\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to ensure apprenticeship starts offer opportunities for employment across the UK and not just in the region where the apprenticeships are served.

**Robert Halfon:**

Apprenticeships policy is devolved and it is for each of the UK nations, including Northern Ireland, to decide how they operate their apprenticeship programmes.

The locations and sectors where apprenticeships are available are determined by employers choosing to offer opportunities and recruit apprentices.

Officials are in ongoing discussions with those in the devolved administrations to consider any cross-border issues in relation to apprenticeship programmes.

## ■ Curriculum

**Lilian Greenwood:**

**[64588]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans her Department has to evaluate the effect of the implementation of the new national curriculum on (a) teacher workload, (b) Special and Educational Needs and Disability inclusion and (c) school budgets.

**Nick Gibb:**

As schools embed the new National Curriculum we are monitoring the effect of implementation on teacher workload, pupils with special educational needs and disability and school budgets in a number of ways.

We introduced the Department for Education (DfE) Protocol in 2015 giving schools a minimum lead in time for significant changes to policy in accountability, curriculum and qualifications; to help us manage the impact of reforms on schools.

We will shortly publish the results of the first biennial survey into teacher workload, a commitment from the 2014 Workload Challenge, which will help us track teacher workload so that so that further action can be taken if needed.

Through our careful management of the economy, we have protected the core schools budget in real terms. That means that in 2017-18, schools will have more funding than ever before for children's education, totalling over £40 billion.

We will continue to support schools to improve their financial health and efficiency, to maximise the amount of resources they can direct to improving outcomes for pupils.

The Department regularly collects and publishes data about schools in the Teacher Voice surveys; the most recently published report includes information about the progress of pupils with special educational needs:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/584503/Teacher\\_Voice\\_Summer\\_2016\\_Report\\_Final.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/584503/Teacher_Voice_Summer_2016_Report_Final.pdf).

The National Curriculum framework inclusion statement sets out that lessons should be planned to ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving. In many cases, such planning will mean that pupils with special educational needs and disability will be able to study the full National Curriculum. Where the full National Curriculum is not the most appropriate route to maximising pupils' education, disapplication of all or part of the National Curriculum may be considered for an individual or a group of pupils.

## ■ Cybercrime: Education

**Stephen Timms:**

**[64861]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to promote the awareness of cyber security among school-aged children.

**Nick Gibb:**

The new computing curriculum, introduced from September 2014, introduces pupils to aspects of cyber security from an early age. The curriculum introduces e-safety

from Key Stage 1, reflecting the fact that children are increasingly accessing the internet from a young age, and sets out good practice in staying safe online. At secondary, the content develops to reflect the different and escalating risks that young people face as they get older, including how to protect their online privacy and identity. All maintained schools must follow the National Curriculum and academies and free schools may use it as a benchmark. Building on this knowledge, the Computer Science GCSE requires students to develop knowledge and understanding of cyber security including forms of attack, methods of identifying vulnerabilities and ways of protecting systems.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) recently announced investment of up to £20m in a Cyber Schools Programme, for 14 to 18 year olds, which will develop key skills to help protect businesses against online threats and keep the digital economy secure. The pilot is expected to begin in Autumn 2017 and the programme aims to have at least 5,700 pupils participating by 2021. It is funded under the second National Cyber Security Programme.

#### ■ Department for Education: Pay

**Philip Davies:**

[64163]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the (a) mean and (b) median pay was for staff in her Department who were (i) male, (ii) female, (iii) white, (iv) from an ethnic minority background, (v) disabled and (vi) non-disabled in the most recent year for which information is available, broken down by (A) full-time and (B) part-time workers.

**Caroline Dineneage:**

The Office for National Statistics publish information each year by Civil Service organisation as part of their annual release of Civil Service Statistics. The latest data set from 2016 can be found on the ONS website using data from 31 March 2016. The data can be found here:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/publicsectorpersonnel/bulletins/civilservicestatistics/2016>

The Civil Service is committed to being a place where everyone can thrive, regardless of background with the aim of becoming the most inclusive employer in the UK.

Whilst it is encouraging to see a positive trajectory in terms of diversity representation in the Civil Service, we recognise that there is more to do. That is why in March 2016 the Government published its refreshed Talent Action Plan for the Civil Service, identifying actions to support our staff, increase diversity in the Civil Service and deliver the best possible public services.

#### ■ Faith Schools: Standards

**Mr Roger Godsiff:**

[65088]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the article in The Times of 14 February 2017 in the name of the Minister of State for School Standards, what the



evidential basis is for her statement that there is significant parental demand for good faith schools; and whether she has made an assessment of such demand being for faith schools rather than for good schools.

**Caroline Dineneage:**

In the 2016 secondary school application round non-faith school first preferences to offers ratio was 0.98. For faith schools the ratio was 1.08.

The data, which the Department collects on admissions and school choice, does not enable an assessment to be made as to the specific reason why parents are more likely to make faith schools their first preference.

There are often a range of factors that affect how parents choose a particular school, such as location, type of school, whether a sibling already attends, feeder arrangements, reputation and Ofsted rating. It is therefore not possible to make a precise assessment as to what is the main reason why parents are more likely to make a faith school their first preference.

■ **Pre-school Education**

**Lucy Powell:**

[\[65100\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many full-time equivalent officials of her Department are working on maintained nursery policies.

**Caroline Dineneage:**

Resources for maintained nursery schools are not fixed but are drawn from across the directorate and the wider department and are allocated to reflect demand.

■ **Primary Education: Standards**

**Lilian Greenwood:**

[\[64283\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans her Department has to evaluate the effect of the national curriculum on the teaching and learning of subjects other than English and mathematics in primary school.

**Nick Gibb:**

All state-funded schools are accountable to pupils, their parents and the wider community. They must all teach a broad and balanced curriculum and there is a statutory requirement for maintained schools to teach the National Curriculum. They are required to publish their curriculum provision, content and approach, by academic year and by subject online. Ofsted inspectors will also consider the extent to which the school is providing a broad and balanced curriculum, which helps pupils progress and succeed across the range of subjects.

The National Curriculum, which was introduced in schools in 2014, focuses on the essential knowledge that must be taught, allowing teachers to take greater control over the wider curriculum in schools and how it is taught. Schools have the freedom to organise their lessons as they see fit and to teach any part of the programme of

study for a particular Key Stage at a time they judge suitable for their pupils during that Key Stage.

The Department collects and publishes data about primary schools, including the amount of time a sample of primary school teachers estimate is spent teaching each subject in their school. This can be found at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/584503/Teacher\\_Voice\\_Summer\\_2016\\_Report\\_Final.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/584503/Teacher_Voice_Summer_2016_Report_Final.pdf).

The Standards and Testing Agency also publishes the results of the biennial Key Stage 2 science sampling test which tracks science attainment of primary school pupils.

#### ■ Pupils: Halton

**Derek Twigg:** [65090]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the average funding per pupil has been in each secondary school in Halton in the last 12 months for which figures are available.

**Nick Gibb:**

School-level figures for spending per pupil are published annually. The most recent figures are available at: <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/download-data> (for maintained schools in financial year 2015-16, select: a) the academic year 2015 to 2016; b) data for All of England; and c) Spend per pupil (full dataset)), and at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/income-and-expenditure-in-academies-in-england-2014-to-2015> (for academy schools in academic year 2014/15).

#### ■ Sandymoor School

**Derek Twigg:** [65077]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment she has made of the financial management and educational attainment at Sandymoor Free School in Runcorn.

**Derek Twigg:** [65091]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the pension deficit carried by Sandymoor Free School in Runcorn is.

**Derek Twigg:** [65092]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the level of financial deficit of Sandymoor Free School in Runcorn was for the last year for which financial accounts were submitted.

**Edward Timpson:**

We have no concerns regarding financial management at Sandymoor Free School and the Trust does not have a financial deficit.

On educational attainment, whilst the school received a good judgement from Ofsted in January 2014 it remains an academy of concern. The Progress 8 score in summer 2016 was -1.1 which is significantly below the LA average of 0.19 and the national average of 0. Only 33% of pupils achieved Grade C or above in English & maths (LA: 60.2%, National: 59.3%).

The pension deficit of the Trust for 2015/16 is £295,000.

The latest published financial statements for Sandymoor Free School 2015/16 show a cumulative carry forward surplus of £197,632.

## ■ **School Meals: Standards**

**Mary Glendon:**

[\[64266\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she plans to take to incorporate the March 2016 revisions to the Eatwell Guide into the planned update to the School Food Standards.

**Edward Timpson:**

The new School Food Standards came into force in January 2015 and were informed by an Expert Panel of nutritional experts and industry representatives. The new standards were tested by 31 schools and 24 caterers from across England, overseen by a group of school catering experts and nutritionists, with positive outcomes. Trials showed that the new standards are popular with cooks and the menus were as good as the nutrient-based ones under the previous standards.

As part of the Department's work to tackle childhood obesity, we have committed to reviewing the School Food Standards to align with the latest scientific advice on sugar. We are in the process of scoping out the timelines for this piece of work and further information will be available later in the year.

The revised Eatwell guide is also distributed to schools to use alongside the school food standards and continues to define the government's recommendations on a healthy balanced diet.

## ■ **Schools: Calderdale**

**Holly Lynch:**

[\[64914\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate she has made of the effect of changes of the Schools National Funding Formula on funding for schools in Calderdale.

**Holly Lynch:**

[\[64915\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what advice her Department is providing to schools projected to see reductions in funding under the Schools National Funding Formula on how to balance their budgets.

**Nick Gibb:**

Our proposals for funding reform will mean that schools and local authority areas will, for the first time, receive a consistent and fair share of the schools budget, so that they can give every child the opportunity to reach their full potential.

For Calderdale, the proposals would mean an increase in schools funding of 1.3%, and an increase of 9.7% for high needs funding.

We are also committed to providing support for schools to improve their financial health and efficiency. We have produced a collection of tools, information and guidance, which can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/schools-financial-health-and-efficiency>. The collection includes guidance on workforce planning, financial management, benchmarking, and buying for schools.

**Schools: Closures****Steve McCabe:****[64313]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 1 February 2017 to Question 61838, whether her Department has intervened in a school closure consultation.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Department does not record or hold this information centrally.

Consultation on a proposal to close an academy is not statutory and is dependent upon the individual circumstances of each case.

In cases where a consultation is undertaken, the process is administered locally, either by the local authority or the academy trust, to allow those directly affected by the proposals to provide their comments.

**Schools: Coventry South****Mr Jim Cunningham:****[64821]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate she has made of the potential effect of the new school funding formula on the level of funding for schools in Coventry South constituency in real terms for each of the next three years.

**Nick Gibb:**

Our proposals for funding reform will mean that schools and local authority areas will, for the first time, receive a consistent and fair share of the schools budget, so that they can give every child the opportunity to reach their full potential.

For Coventry local authority, the proposals would mean a reduction in schools funding of 2.4%. Coventry South constituency would see a 2.5% reduction in funding for its schools. On funding for pupils with high needs, Coventry local authority would see a significant increase of 10.7%.

To ensure stability for schools, we have proposed substantial protections to limit reductions to any individual school's budget to manageable levels. No school will face a reduction of more than 1.5% per pupil per year or 3% per pupil overall.

We are also supporting schools to improve their financial health and efficiency. We have produced a collection of tools, information and guidance, which can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/schools-financial-health-and-efficiency>.

This collection includes benchmarking tools and workforce planning guidance to support schools to make savings.

Most recently, we published the Schools' Buying Strategy which will help schools make significant savings, over £1 billion a year by 2019-20, in non-pay and procurement costs.

**Mr Jim Cunningham:**

**[64970]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans she has to visit schools in Coventry South constituency in the next six months.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State regularly visits a wide range of schools across the country. She does not currently have plans to visit a school in Coventry South in the next six months.

## ■ Schools: Finance

**Mr Ivan Lewis:**

**[63994]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the finding of the National Audit Office in its report entitled, Financial Sustainability of Schools, published in December 2016, that schools are ill-equipped to implement the planned £3 billion in savings by the end of the current Parliament.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Government has protected the core schools budget in real terms. That means that in 2017-18 schools will have more funding than ever before for children's education, totalling over £40 billion.

The National Audit Office (NAO) report is clear that it is reasonable to look to schools to make efficiencies, and that – based on variations in spending across schools with similar levels of challenge and achieving similar outcomes – the necessary savings are achievable without affecting educational outcomes.

To support this we have produced tools, information and guidance for schools. Most recently, we published the Schools' Buying Strategy, to help schools make significant savings, over £1bn a year by 2019-20, in non-pay and procurement costs.

We have also launched Workforce Planning Guidance, which contains links to advice and case studies, as well as lists of options and questions for school leaders to consider when reviewing their staff structures.

We will continue to update and improve the package of support we offer to schools.

**Holly Lynch:** [64913]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much additional funding her Department would require in order to ensure that no school saw a cut in its budget for 2017-18 as part of the Schools National Funding Formula.

**Nick Gibb:**

In December 2016 the Department confirmed dedicated schools grant (DSG) funding settlements for 2017-18 to local authorities. For all local authorities, funding has been protected in cash terms per pupil. Further details are available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dedicated-schools-grant-dsg-2017-to-2018>.

In 2017-18, individual schools' funding is decided at a local authority level. The Department allocates funding to each local authority, who then allocate this funding to their schools using their local formulae. The Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) ensures that the maximum any individual school can lose is 1.5% per pupil. Local authorities are now finalising and will shortly be confirming their 2017-18 funding to schools. Further information is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/school-revenue-funding-settlement-for-2017-to-2018>.

We are currently consulting on our proposals for a National Funding Formula, which will come into force in 2018-19. The consultation will run until March 22<sup>nd</sup> and is available at <https://consult.education.gov.uk/funding-policy-unit/schools-national-funding-formula2/>.

**Lilian Greenwood:** [65034]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, which ongoing statutory duties local authorities will be expected to fund from the new central schools services block from 2018-19.

**Nick Gibb:**

The central school services block will fund statutory duties, including some historic duties where applicable, that local authorities carry out for all pupils from 2018-19. These duties are set out in Annex 1 of the consultation document, which is attached below and is also available here:

[https://consult.education.gov.uk/funding-policy-unit/schools-national-funding-formula2/supporting\\_documents/NFF\\_Stage2\\_schools\\_consultationdoc.pdf](https://consult.education.gov.uk/funding-policy-unit/schools-national-funding-formula2/supporting_documents/NFF_Stage2_schools_consultationdoc.pdf).

Further information is available in the central school services block section of the consultation document.

We are currently consulting on the new national funding formula. The consultation will be open until 22 March and is available here:

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/funding-policy-unit/schools-national-funding-formula2/>.

### Shape and content of the central school services block

ALLOCATION ROUTE	PREVIOUSLY FUNDED FROM CENTRALLY RETAINED DSG	PREVIOUSLY FUNDED FROM ESG
CENTRAL SCHOOL SERVICES BLOCK PER PUPIL RATE	SCHOOL ADMISSIONS SERVICING OF SCHOOLS FORUMS FEES TO INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS FOR PUPILS WITHOUT SEN	EDUCATION WELFARE SERVICES ASSET MANAGEMENT STATUTORY AND REGULATORY DUTIES
Central school services block historic commitments funding	Contribution to combined budgets: costs of providing combined education and children's services Termination of employment costs: premature retirement or dismissal costs for maintained school staff Equal pay – back pay: costs of meeting equal pay commitments in schools Capital expenditure from revenue (CERA): where the authority uses revenue funding to meet capital costs Prudential borrowing costs: for repayment of some authority loans Exceptions agreed by the Secretary of State: centrally retained schools budget expenditure that has been approved by application to the Secretary of State	

#### ■ Schools: Sheffield

**Gill Furniss:**

**[65012]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment her Department has made of the effect of changes to school funding on schools in Sheffield.

**Nick Gibb:**

Our proposals for funding reform will mean that schools and local authority areas will, for the first time, receive a consistent and fair share of the schools budget, so that they can give every child the opportunity to reach their full potential.

For Sheffield local authority, the proposals would mean an increase in schools funding of 4.6%. On funding for pupils with high needs, Sheffield local authority would see an increase of 13.0%.

The current consultation is open until 22 March, and we are keen to hear views from as many schools, governors, local authorities and parents as possible. We will publish our response to the consultation, including details of representations received, in due course.

## ■ Schools: Warrington

**Helen Jones:**

[\[64908\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what representations she has received from (a) schools and (b) other bodies on the likely effect of the proposed funding formula on schools in Warrington; and if she will make a statement.

**Nick Gibb:**

Our proposals for funding reform will mean that schools will, for the first time, receive a consistent and fair share of the schools budget, so that they can give every child the opportunity to reach their full potential.

For Warrington, the proposals would mean an overall increase in schools funding of 0.6%. On high needs, Warrington would be protected at current funding levels. Warrington North constituency would see a 0.9% increase in funding for its schools.

The current consultation is open until 22 March, and we are keen to hear views from as many schools, governors, local authorities and parents as possible. We will publish our response to the consultation, including details of representations received, in due course.

## ■ Schools: Warrington North

**Helen Jones:**

[\[65224\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will make an assessment of the effect of (a) rate increases, (b) the apprenticeship levy, (c) increases in national insurance and pension contributions and (d) increases in salaries on school budgets in Warrington North constituency, in each of the next four years.

**Nick Gibb:**

We recognise that schools, as with other public services, are facing cost pressures. These will include salary increases, increases to employers' National Insurance and Teachers' Pension Scheme contributions, the apprenticeship levy and general inflation.

The apprenticeship levy will support schools to train and develop new and existing staff, an integral part of this government's wider plans to improve productivity and provide opportunities for people of all backgrounds and all ages to enter the workplace.



On a per pupil basis, these pressures are estimated at around 8% between 2015-16 and 2019-20. It is important to note that this is not an estimate of pressures still to come – over the next three years, per pupil pressures will average 1.5-1.6%, a year.

In response to this we have produced tools, information and guidance for schools financial health and efficiency, which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/schools-financial-health-and-efficiency>.

We also know there is significant scope for savings in non-pay and procurement costs. We have launched a school buying strategy to support schools to save over £1bn a year by 2019-20 on their non-staff spend. In practice, this means schools can invest more of their resources in the classroom, making even more of a difference to the children that need it most.

Maintained schools and academies are funded for business rates on the basis of their actual rate bills. The National Funding Formula consultation proposes that these arrangements should continue.

## ■ Secondary Education: Finance

**Mr Ivan Lewis:**

**[63986]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to ensure that secondary schools are not in deficit.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Government has protected the core schools budget in real terms. That means that in 2017-18 schools will have more funding than ever before for children's education, totalling over £40 billion.

The most reliable way of looking at schools' financial health is to look at their cumulative deficits. The number of maintained schools reporting cumulative deficits has fallen since 2010-11. Fewer than 4% of academies reported cumulative deficits in their latest financial accounts (2014/15).

To support schools to improve their financial health and efficiency we have produced a collection of tools, information and guidance, including benchmarking tools and workforce planning guidance to support schools to make savings.

Most recently, we published the Schools' Buying Strategy to help schools make significant savings, over £1bn a year by 2019-20, in non-pay and procurement costs.

## ■ Sixth Form Education: Disadvantaged

**Caroline Lucas:**

**[64323]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 19 December 2016 to Question 57356, what proportion of students enrolled at (a) selective and (b) non-selective school and academy sixth forms were eligible for free school meals at academic age 15; and if she will make a statement.

**Edward Timpson:**

Ten percent of academic age 16-18 year olds who studied their highest qualification in 2014/15 at non-selective schools or academy sixth forms were eligible for free school meals at academic age 15. The equivalent figure for selective schools and selective academy sixth forms was 3 per cent.

These figures are based on those where the FSM status at 15 is known and are sourced from the Department for Education's Young Person's Matched Administrative Dataset.

Our recent consultation set out a number of proposals, including removing the ban on creating new selective schools, designed to increase the number and availability of good schools places for all children regardless of their background. As a condition for opening or expanding, we propose that grammar schools will take a proportion of pupils from lower income households.

**■ Students: Loans****Liz McInnes:**[\[64034\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment the Government has made of the effect of the proposed sale of the student loans book on those paying off such loans.

**Joseph Johnson:**

The position of all graduates, including all those whose loans are in scope of the proposed sale, would not change as a result of a sale. Graduates are protected by statute.

The proposed sale would not alter the mechanisms and terms of repayment, and sold loans would continue to be serviced by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and the Student Loans Company (SLC) on the same basis as equivalent unsold loans. Investors would have no right to change any of the current loan arrangements or to contact people with student loans directly.

**Steve McCabe:**[\[65006\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate her Department has made of the effect of the vote to leave the EU on the value of the student loan book; and whether that estimate affected her decision to sell it.

**Joseph Johnson:**

The decision to start the sale process for the student loan book (set out in Written Statement HCWS458) was based on a robust and comprehensive assessment of the market which showed that it has a good prospect of achieving value for money.

An in-depth market testing exercise suggested there was strong interest in this type of long-term, inflation-linked asset. Conditions in the equity and debt markets remain strong.

The Government will continue to monitor market conditions carefully to ensure we get a fair price and secure value for money for taxpayers.

**Steve McCabe:**

[\[65007\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the potential (a) short-term and (b) long-term benefits are of selling the student loan book for (i) the taxpayer, (ii) students with outstanding loans and (iii) current and future students.

**Joseph Johnson:**

The proposed sale of the student loan book, set out in Written Statement HCWS458, gives the Government the capacity to invest in other policies with greater economic or social returns and reduces fiscal pressures.

The position of students and graduates, including those with loans in scope of the sale, will not be affected by the sale.

**Gordon Marsden:**

[\[65152\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when guidance on part-time maintenance loans will be made available to higher education institutions.

**Joseph Johnson:**

The Department will shortly publish its response to the consultation on part-time maintenance loans.

## ■ Teachers

**Helen Jones:**

[\[65033\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment her Department has made of the potential effect on teacher numbers of the proposed school funding formula.

**Nick Gibb:**

The Government has protected the core schools budget in real terms. We are introducing a fair funding formula so children across the country are funded according to their needs, not where they happen to live. We are currently consulting on the proposals and the consultation closes on 22 March. Overall, based on projections of rising pupil numbers, we would expect numbers of teachers to go up.

We recognise that schools will need to make efficiency savings in response to budgetary pressures. We have set a target for savings from better procurement and we have produced tools, information and guidance to support schools to make savings, including workforce planning guidance. This guidance contains links to advice and case studies, as well as lists of options and questions for school leaders to consider when reviewing their staff structures .

## ■ Teachers: Training

**Dr Roberta Blackman-Woods:**

[\[65213\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when her Department plans to publish details of which universities were awarded multi-year initial teacher training allocations and which were awarded single-year allocations.

**Nick Gibb:**

We intend to publish a full list of allocations and three-year allocations for 2017-18 in due course. This will be supported with a methodological and technical guide on how three-year initial teacher training allocations were determined.

**Dr Roberta Blackman-Woods:**[\[65214\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether weightings were applied to the criteria which her Department uses to determine which universities were awarded a multi-year allocation of initial teacher training places and which were awarded a single-year allocation.

**Nick Gibb:**

We did not apply different weightings to the criteria – they all have equal weighting. The criteria on how we determined three-year allocations is outlined on pages 7-8 of the 2017/18 allocations methodology, published September 2016.

**Dr Roberta Blackman-Woods:**[\[65215\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what criteria her Department uses to determine which universities are awarded a multi-year allocation of initial teacher training places and which are awarded a single-year allocation.

**Nick Gibb:**

The criteria used to determine the allocations universities received are set out on pages 7-8 of the 2017/18 allocations methodology, published September 2016.

**■ Welsh Language: Curriculum****Susan Elan Jones:**[\[64655\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether her Department has any plans to introduce the teaching of Welsh as an optional modern language in schools on the England-Wales border.

**Nick Gibb:**

Primary and secondary schools can choose to teach the Welsh language to pupils if there is sufficient demand. It is possible for a pupil in England to take privately a Welsh language GCSE offered in Wales if an examination centre is willing to enter them. This will include a revised Welsh Second Language GCSE which will be available for first teaching from September 2017.

**ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS****■ Agriculture: Antibiotics****Mrs Theresa Villiers:**[\[64565\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to discourage farming methods which lead to the overuse of antibiotics.

**George Eustice:**

The Veterinary Medicines Directorate is working closely with the veterinary profession and livestock sectors to embed responsible use of antibiotics both in stewardship plans and within farm assurance scheme standards and also to set sector-specific targets for reducing antibiotic use by the end of 2017.

Following recommendations made by the Independent Review on AMR, Defra committed to a reduction of 20% in overall antibiotic use in farming by 2018. The most recent data from 2015 show that overall sales of antibiotics for use in livestock dropped by 10%. The government is also considering how future agricultural policy might incentivise high animal health and welfare systems of production.

**■ Air Pollution: EU Law****Tom Brake:**[\[64339\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when she plans for the UK to be compliant with the 2008 Ambient Air Quality Directive.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

The UK is meeting limit values for all pollutants covered by the Ambient Air Quality Directive other than those for nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>). We will continue to do more, especially to reduce levels of NO<sub>2</sub>.

The Government will set out further measures this year, including consulting on a revised air quality plan on NO<sub>2</sub> by 24 April 2017 and publishing a final plan by 31 July 2017. The plan will set out the measures that will ensure the UK is compliant in the shortest time possible.

In parallel, we are working to implement Clean Air Zones as quickly as possible. We are working closely with local authorities on the detailed design of the zones.

**■ Air Pollution: Monitoring****George Kerevan:**[\[908921\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans she has to issue new guidance to local authority air quality monitoring units after the UK exits the EU.

**Martyn Day:**[\[908925\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans she has to issue new guidance to local authority air quality monitoring units after the UK exits the EU.

**Patrick Grady:**[\[908929\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans she has to issue new guidance to local authority air quality monitoring units after the UK exits the EU.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

Defra will continue to provide technical and policy guidance to local authorities to assist them in meeting their air quality management responsibilities, including air quality monitoring. This guidance is kept under review and was last updated last year.

**Common Fisheries Policy**

**Melanie Onn:** [\[65167\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, which elements of the EU Common Fisheries Policy it is her policy to seek to retain after the UK leaves the EU.

**George Eustice:**

We are currently analysing all EU fisheries legislation. No decision has yet been made on the extent to which the EU legislation governing the Common Fisheries Policy will be incorporated into domestic law.

**Melanie Onn:** [\[65168\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, which elements of the EU Common Fisheries Policy it is her policy to replace after the UK leaves the EU.

**George Eustice:**

We are currently analysing all EU fisheries legislation. No decision has yet been made on which elements of EU legislation governing the Common Fisheries Policy will be replaced after the UK leaves the EU.

**Cornelis Vrolijk: Quotas**

**Craig Mackinlay:** [\[64004\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how much and what proportion of England and Wales fishing quotas are accounted for by Cornelis Vrolijk.

**George Eustice:**

The Cornelis Vrolijk holds 457,166 Fixed Quota Allocation units. These units were equivalent to 38,900 tonnes of fishing quota in 2016. This amount was 25% of the total quota for England and Wales, or 7% of the UK quota in 2016.

**Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Procurement**

**Jon Trickett:** [\[64997\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many civil servants of her Department oversee contracts which have been awarded to external providers.

**George Eustice:**

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs employs 14 civil servants to oversee contracts awarded to external providers.

■ **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Telephone Services**

**Justin Madders:** [\[64738\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how much income has been accrued to her Department from premium rate telephone lines in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

**George Eustice:**

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has accrued no income from premium rate telephone lines in the last five years.

■ **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Uber**

**Mr Iain Wright:** [\[64373\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how much her Department has spent on (a) Uber for Business and (b) other Uber transactions since 28 October 2016.

**George Eustice:**

Core Defra did not make any payments to Uber for Business between 28 October 2016 and 21 February 2017.

Staff within Core Defra who claim expenses for taxis used for work-related travel are not required to specify the name of the taxi company they used. The Department's finance system lists only two transactions between 28 October 2016 and 21 February 2017 where the traveller has identified that they used Uber. These transactions total £13.99.

■ **Dog Fighting**

**Mr Barry Sheerman:** [\[64304\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the potential merits of strengthening sentencing provisions for people involved in dog fighting.

**George Eustice:**

Under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 it is an offence to be involved in or promote an animal fight. The maximum penalty for such an offence is six months' imprisonment or an unlimited fine, or both. Offenders can also be banned from keeping or having any influence over the way animals are kept for anything up to life. The Government keeps maximum penalties under review and this includes sentencing trends, and whether there is any evidence that the courts may be finding their sentencing powers inadequate.

■ **Dogs: Animal Breeding**

**Julian Knight:** [\[64919\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she is taking to tackle animal cruelty in puppy farms.

**George Eustice:**

We recently announced that we will modernise the licensing scheme for dog breeding and selling to improve the welfare of dogs, including requiring anyone breeding and selling three or more puppies in a twelve month period to hold a licence; prohibiting the sale of puppies under eight weeks' of age; imposing tougher animal welfare standards on licensed dog breeders and sellers; and requiring all licensed sellers to include their licence number when advertising.

We aim to have the new regulations in place next year.

■ **Environment: Treaties****Mrs Anne Main:**[\[64664\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of which exclusive and mixed international environmental agreements in which the EU currently participates the Government plans to seek to be party to or otherwise maintain the provisions of after the UK leaves the EU; and which of those agreements (a) the Government will have to renegotiate and (b) will remain in force as the UK is a signatory in its own right.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

The UK is a Party to 35 Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) in its own right. These are mixed agreements and we are bound by the obligations they contain; this will not change on exit from the EU.

We are committed to continuing to play an active role internationally and will continue to be bound by the obligations under these MEAs after leaving the EU.

■ **Fish Products****Melanie Onn:**[\[65162\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment she has made of the effect of the UK leaving the EU on the UK's seafood processing sector.

**George Eustice:**

We are carrying out an assessment of the effect that leaving the EU will have on the UK's seafood processing sector. The processing industry is involved in this work.

■ **Fisheries: Conditions of Employment****Thangam Debbonaire:**[\[65013\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she is taking to strengthen the accreditation scheme for fishing vessels to ensure no-one is employed in conditions of slavery.

**George Eustice:**

Seafish, the UK-wide levy-funded Non-Departmental Public Body, launched the Responsible Fishing Scheme (RFS) in January 2016. It is a voluntary vessel-based



programme certifying high standards of crew welfare and responsible catching practices on fishing vessels. The RFS does not currently have the capability to audit, or the legal authority to police serious labour and human rights abuses at sea.

The RFS is overseen by an independent Oversight Board, which decided on 14 February 2017 that the health, safety & welfare elements of the standard should be strengthened and that the “crew voice” should be included in the audit methodology. This proposal will be put to the Seafish Board, as the Standard holder, for a decision at its meeting on 7 March.

If a case of modern slavery is reported or suspected at sea, within UK territorial waters, the police will investigate as they would any other criminal offence. The Modern Slavery Act gave law enforcement agencies, including the police and Border Force, new powers to investigate modern slavery offences at sea, including the power to stop, board, divert, detain and search a vessel, and to make arrests and seize any relevant evidence.

#### ■ Fisheries: Exclusive Economic Zone

**Melanie Onn:** [\[65170\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions she has had with the UK's maritime neighbours on access to the UK Exclusive Economic Zone after the UK leaves the EU.

**Melanie Onn:** [\[65171\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether it is her policy to maintain the principle of equal access to the UK's Exclusive Economic Zone after the UK leaves the EU; and what discussions she has had with her EU counterpart on EU vessels having access to that zone after the UK has left the EU.

**George Eustice:**

We are currently assessing options to determine how the fishing resources within the UK Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) should be managed after we have left the EU.

Discussions on future fisheries management will form part of the Government's negotiations after Article 50 has been triggered.

#### ■ Fisheries: Exports

**Melanie Onn:** [\[65164\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that EU member states do not place restrictions on UK fisheries exports once the UK has left the EU.

**Melanie Onn:** [\[65165\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that EU member states do not place restrictions on UK fisheries exports once the UK has left the EU.

**George Eustice:**

Our new relationship with the EU should aim for the freest possible trade in goods and services between the UK and the EU through a new comprehensive, bold and ambitious free trade agreement. This needs to include trade in fish products, where the UK and EU have a mutual interest in ensuring continued high levels of market access in future.

The PM has made clear that the UK will be seeking a new customs agreement with the EU which allows the freest possible trade in goods and services. This agreement will cover fisheries products.

■ **Fisheries: Quotas****Scott Mann:**[\[64484\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will make it her policy to support an extension of the commercial hook and line fishing moratorium into April, May and June 2017 in areas where there is evidence of spawning among bass stocks.

**George Eustice:**

Union vessels using hook and line methods have a directed fishing provision after February and March if they have a verified track record of catches, but it should be noted that bass catches by UK vessels using that method have tended to peak during the summer months from July to September. The Government does not intend to extend the moratorium period that has been agreed at EU level. However, my Department will of course continue to consider any new scientific advice on the state of the bass stock and the need for appropriate conservation measures.

**Scott Mann:**[\[64485\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she is taking to make commercial fishermen aware of new rules and enforcement measures to deter illegal netting of bass agreed by the Council and set out in Article 9 of Council Resolution (EU) 2017/127.

**George Eustice:**

Guidance was initially published by the Marine Management Organisation on 31 January 2017 to assist industry in understanding their obligations and the various requirements in respect of fishing for bass, as set out in Article 9 of Council Regulation (EU) 2017/127. Letters are being sent to all commercial fishermen within England and Wales who, based on their catch track records, have authorisation to catch bass, and to those who do not have such authorisation.

To ensure compliance, the Marine Management Organisation will continue to engage with industry via regionally based staff to raise awareness of the rules, ensuring they are understood and individuals can access the right information easily. Where these rules are broken a proportionate and appropriate approach to enforcement action will be taken.

## ■ Fisheries: Treaties

**Dr Sarah Wollaston:**

[\[64928\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if the Government will consider invoking Articles 15 and 11 of the 1964 London Fisheries Convention after triggering Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty.

**George Eustice:**

The Government is considering this issue very carefully.

## ■ Forests

**Mims Davies:**

[\[64062\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment her Department has made of the value of ancient woodland to the natural heritage of the UK.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

The government recognises the importance of ancient woodlands as habitats with associated benefits for ecology and biodiversity.

The Government has not made any recent assessment of the value of ancient woodlands to the natural heritage of the UK.

## ■ Genetically Modified Organisms

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[64561\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that GM food products are safe to eat and do not harm the environment.

**George Eustice:**

GM foods and the crops they are derived from are subject to a robust safety assessment and will only be approved for release or marketing if they do not pose a serious risk to human health and the environment. The centralised EU assessment process is overseen by the European Food Safety Authority, with UK Ministers also receiving independent scientific advice on the environmental safety of GM crops from the Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment.

## ■ Horses: Databases

**Edward Argar:**

[\[64423\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what progress has been made on the implementation of the Central Equine Database.

**George Eustice:**

The Central Equine Database has been successfully tested with users. We will be piloting the database with Passport Issuing Organisations in March and expect it to be fully operational by summer 2017.

**Ivory: Sales**

**John Mann:** [\[64259\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, on what date the planned consultation on the domestic ivory ban will open.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

We will be consulting on these plans shortly.

**Livestock: Exports**

**Mrs Theresa Villiers:** [\[64580\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will make it her policy to introduce a ban on the export of live animals for slaughter.

**George Eustice:**

The Government would prefer animals to be slaughtered close to the point of production, however, the unilateral banning of live animal exports would be illegal under EU free trade rules. Once the UK has left the EU, there will be the possibility to consider further measures in this area.

**Microplastics**

**Calum Kerr:** [\[65232\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she is taking to tackle microbeads in products that are not included within the scope of her Department's proposed ban.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

We are currently running a consultation on our proposals to ban microbeads in cosmetics and personal care products. The consultation ends on 28th Feb 2017. The consultation also seeks to gather evidence on the extent of the environmental impacts of microbeads found in other products. This evidence will be used to inform future UK actions to protect the marine environment.

**Andrew Rosindell:** [\[65236\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate she has made of the total reduction in the mass of microbeads released into the environment in the UK as a consequence of the forthcoming ban on microbeads in household products.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

The proposals set out in the current consultation are for a ban on the use of microbeads in cosmetics and personal care products that cause harm to the marine environment. Microbeads from these products are estimated to make up between 0.01% and 4.1% of the total of microplastics entering the marine environment. The estimated use of microbeads associated with skin cleansing products in the UK alone is 680 tonnes per year[1]. Our proposals will ensure that these microbeads and those

contained in other cosmetics and personal care products no longer enter the marine environment.

[1] T Gouin *et al*, *SOFW-Journal*, 2015, **141**(3), 40 ([bit.ly/2fTx5xs](http://bit.ly/2fTx5xs), pdf)

## ■ Microplastics: USA

**Calum Kerr:**

[65233]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of effectiveness the US ban on microbeads on her Department's policy on microbeads.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

Defra is aware of the proposed US ban on microbeads and has considered those proposals in developing the UK approach. In addition our proposals have been informed by information from the cosmetics industry, environmental groups, researchers in marine microplastic pollution and counterparts in neighbouring countries. We are currently running a consultation on our proposals. The consultation ends on 28th February 2017.

## ■ School Milk: EU Grants and Loans

**Mary Glendon:**

[64260]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate her Department has made of the financial support that the UK will receive from the European School Milk Scheme for the academic year 2017-18.

**Mary Glendon:**

[64261]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when her Department plans to launch its consultation on implementation of the post-August 2017 European School Milk Scheme.

**George Eustice:**

Alongside the much larger free nursery milk scheme for infants run by the Department of Health and the Department for Education, the EU School Milk Scheme plays a valuable role in encouraging consumption of dairy products and developing healthy eating habits from an early age.

A revised EU scheme will take effect on 1 August 2017. The UK expects to secure a budget of £3.6 million (€4.2 million) from the European Commission for the 2017-18 school year. This reflects actual scheme expenditure in the UK in recent years and is one of the largest allocations in the EU.

We have already briefed key stakeholders about the new scheme. In practice, there are very few substantive changes. We will consult on the detail of any changes to forms, guidance and scheme administration in the coming weeks.

**■ Supermarkets: British Overseas Territories****Cat Smith:** [\[64345\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will commission research into the operation of zero-waste grocery shops in overseas territories to identify potential benefits that such shops could bring to the UK.

**Dr Thérèse Coffey:**

We do not intend to commission research into this. Manufacturing and retail supply chain food and packaging waste has reduced by 7.4% between 2009 and 2012, and a further 3% by 2015 by signatories under the previous Courtauld agreements. Under Courtauld 2025, we have a target to reduce total UK food waste by a further 20% by 2025.

**■ Total Allowable Catches****Melanie Onn:** [\[65169\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department has taken to determine the total allowable catch of the living resources in the UK's Exclusive Economic Zone after the UK leaves the EU.

**George Eustice:**

Work is being undertaken to determine the Total Allowable Catch of fish in the UK's Exclusive Economic Zone.

**EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION****■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Pay****Philip Davies:** [\[64165\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what the (a) mean and (b) median pay was for staff in his Department who were (i) male, (ii) female, (iii) white, (iv) from an ethnic minority background, (v) disabled and (vi) non-disabled in the most recent year for which information is available, broken down by (A) full-time and (B) part-time workers.

**Mr David Jones:**

The Civil Service is committed to being a place where everyone can thrive, regardless of background- with the aim of becoming the most inclusive employer in the UK

Whilst it is encouraging to see a positive trajectory in terms of diversity representation in the Civil Service, we recognise that there is more to do. That is why in March 2016 the Government published its refreshed Talent Action Plan for the Civil Service, identifying actions to support our staff, increase diversity in the Civil Service and deliver the best possible public services.

The Department for Exiting the European Union does not hold this information, as it did not exist in the 2015-16 financial year. Civil Service has been publishing mean and median gender pay gaps for each department since 2008 as part of the annual release of Civil Service Statistics by the Office for National Statistics. The latest gender pay gap data (published in October last year) can be found on the Office for National Statistics website.

■ **Homeopathy: Licensing**

**Andrew Gwynne:**

[\[65093\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what discussions he has had with representatives of the European Medicines Agency on cooperation on the licensing of homeopathic products after the UK exits the European Union.

**Mr David Jones:**

The Government will discuss with the EU and Member States how best to continue cooperation in the field of medicines regulation in the interests of both the UK and the EU. It would not be appropriate to pre-judge the outcome of the negotiations.

**FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE**

■ **Andargachew Tsege**

**Tom Brake:**

[\[64183\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether Andy Tsege was (a) extradited under an extradition treaty in place between Yemen and Ethiopia or (b) removed from Yemen under a judicial process which the Yemeni authorities did not recognise.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The Ethiopian and Yemeni authorities have both stated that they have a bilateral treaty that permitted Mr Tsege's extradition to Ethiopia. Foreign Office officials have previously requested a copy of the extradition agreement between Yemen and Ethiopia, but we have not been given one by either side.

**Tom Brake:**

[\[64185\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department has taken to ensure Andy Tsege's safety while in prison.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The Ethiopian government are in no doubt over our concern for Mr Tsege and the priority we place upon his wellbeing. Our priorities are Mr Tsege's wellbeing, his access to legal representation, and to ensure that the death sentence is not carried out. In July 2015, as a result of extensive ministerial lobbying, Mr Tsege was moved from solitary detention by the National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) to a Federal prison. Over the course of the past two and a half years Mr Tsege has received 13 consular visits. The most recent visit occurred on 15 December. Our

Ambassador visited Mr Tsege to check on his welfare, discuss his legal access and pass on messages from his family.

The Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Boris Johnson) has personally raised this case on numerous occasions with the Ethiopian government, most recently on 17 February with the Foreign Minister, Dr Workneh. The Secretary of State for International Development, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Witham (Priti Patel), raised the case with the Ethiopian Prime Minister during her visit to Addis Ababa last month. Our Ambassador is heavily engaged and takes every opportunity to raise Mr Tsege's case at the highest levels with the Ethiopian government.

#### ■ **Armed Conflict: Civilians**

**Tom Brake:** [\[64181\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 13 January 2017 to Question 58516, what his Department's definition is of a civilian object.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

Civilian objects are all objects which are not military objectives, as defined in Article 52 of the first Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts of 8 June 1977.

#### ■ **Bahrain: Al Wefaq**

**Tom Brake:** [\[63681\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations the Government has made to the Bahrainian Government on the (a) dissolution of the Al-Wefaq political party and (b) imprisonment of Sheikh Ali Salman.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Mr Johnson), issued a statement expressing concerns on the day of the Bahraini High Administrative Court's decision to dissolve the main Bahraini Shia opposition political society Al Wefaq. We have raised our concerns about the case of Sheikh Ali Salman at Ministerial level, including during the visit of the former Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond), to Bahrain in May 2016. Embassy officials have attended every hearing and we continue to monitor the case closely.

#### ■ **Bahrain: Counter-terrorism**

**Tom Brake:** [\[63680\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of reports that Bahrain's anti-terrorism legislation has been used to target civil society organisations and human rights activists in that country.



**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The Government has regular discussions, including at Ministerial level, on the issue of the operation of civil societies in Bahrain. We continue to encourage Bahrain to develop an enabling atmosphere for participation in society of all its citizens. We are assisting the Ministry of Labour and Social Development and the civil society sector more broadly to help to create a more enabling environment for Non-Government Organisations and civil society.

■ **Bahrain: Journalism****Tom Brake:**[\[63684\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations the Government has made to the Bahrainian Government on licence renewals for journalists.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The UK Government has continued to emphasise to the Bahraini Government the need to respect the rights of all citizens and to act proportionately to protect human rights, including freedom of expression.

■ **Bahrain: Military Aid****Tom Brake:**[\[64202\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what training assistance his Department has given to the Bahrain Police on collecting relevant intelligence prior to demonstrations.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The Government has not provided the Bahrain Police with training on collecting relevant intelligence prior to demonstrations.

The UK continues to support Bahraini-led reform through a package of technical assistance. We believe it is not good enough to criticise countries from the sidelines. Only by working with Bahrain can we bring about the changes we would like to see in the country. Any assistance delivered by or on behalf of the Government complies with our domestic and international human rights obligations.

■ **Bahrain: Third Sector****Tom Brake:**[\[63679\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations the Government has made to the Bahrainian Government on the operation of civil societies.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The Government has regular discussions, including at Ministerial level, on the issue of the operation of civil societies in Bahrain. We continue to encourage Bahrain to develop an enabling atmosphere for participation in society by all of its citizens. We

are assisting the Ministry of Labour and Social Development and the civil society sector more broadly to help to create a more enabling environment for Non-Government Organisations and civil society.

#### ■ Bahrain: Travel Restrictions

**Tom Brake:**

[\[63678\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations the Government has made to the Bahrainian Government on the imposition of travel bans on human rights defenders, trade unionists, lawyers and political activists.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

We have raised the allegations of travel bans at senior levels within the Government of Bahrain, particularly with regard to reports of Human Rights Defenders being prevented from travelling to the Human Rights Council in Geneva last year. We will continue to raise concerns where we have them.

#### ■ Burma: Human Rights

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[64233\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what human rights concerns he raised with the Burmese authorities during his visit to Burma on 20 January 2017; and if he will make representations to the Burmese authorities to allow the United Nations to assist with an independent investigation into the events of 9 October, and 12 and 13 November 2016 in northern Rakhine State.

**Alok Sharma:**

The Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Boris Johnson), raised two areas of human rights concern during his visit to Burma on 20-21 January. On **Rakhine**, he raised concerns about human rights violations with State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi and with military-appointed Government Ministers; he stressed the need for a smarter security approach, full humanitarian access and the importance of ending discrimination against the Rohingyas. On **Kachin and Shan** states, he pressed for the military to de-escalate the fighting and remove barriers to humanitarian access. The Foreign Secretary also raised the case of the two detained **Kachin pastors**, Dumdaw Nawng Lat and Langjaw Gam Seng, in his meeting with the Home Affairs Minister.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has already issued a substantive report on the abuses carried out by the military in Rakhine State since 9 October. The UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Burma is also due to issue a full report in March ahead of the UN Human Rights Council.

In the light of the two reports we will consider, with our EU and international partners, what scope there is for further enhancing scrutiny of the military's actions in Rakhine

We also continue to support the Rakhine Advisory Commission led by former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, which is due to report in the summer. This has the

support of the Burmese Government and the international community, and represents the most realistic prospect for securing progress in Rakhine State.

■ **Central African Republic: Christianity**

**Mr Gregory Campbell:**

**[64801]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations to the Government of the Central African Republic on the recent murder of a pastor with the Eglise du Christ en Centrafrique and destruction of his church's property.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

*[Holding answer 24 February 2017]:* We were deeply concerned to hear about the murder of Pastor Jean-Paul Sankagui; faith leaders play an important role in bringing reconciliation, diffusing tensions and promoting social cohesion in the Central African Republic (CAR).

We remain concerned by the serious violence which has continued throughout CAR since September 2016, leaving thousands displaced and hundreds killed. Our non-resident Ambassador met President Touadera in Bangui earlier this month where he raised the security situation and the destabilising effect armed groups are having on the country.

We will continue to raise our concerns about the security situation, including incidences such as the murder of Pastor Sankagui, in our contacts with the CAR Government. We will also continue to work with and through our international partners, such as the UN peacekeeping mission (MINUSCA) and the EU Training Mission (EUFOR CAR), to bring stability to CAR.

■ **Christine Robinson**

**Mrs Louise Ellman:**

**[65084]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to his South African counterpart on the murder of Christine Robinson at the Rra-Ditau Lodge in 2014; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

I would like to take this opportunity to offer my deepest condolences to the family of Christine Robinson who was tragically murdered in South Africa in 2014. The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Mr Johnson) has not raised this case with his South African counterpart; However Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials in South Africa and London continue to engage regularly with the South African authorities and will provide what support we can to the family at this difficult time. While we cannot interfere in another country's investigation we will ensure that the South African authorities are aware of the family's concerns and our desire to see those guilty brought to justice.

## ■ Cluster Munitions

**Tom Brake:**

[\[64184\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 12 January 2017 to Question 58517, whether providing equipment to facilitate the use of cluster munitions is a violation of (a) the Convention on Cluster Munitions and (b) international humanitarian law.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

The use of cluster munitions is not unlawful under international law provided that they are not used in contravention of international humanitarian law, or contrary to a treaty obligation. As a State Party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, the UK does not “Assist, encourage or induce anyone to engage in any activity prohibited to a State Party” under the Convention.

## ■ Egypt: Human Rights

**Dr Paul Monaghan:**

[\[63918\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has made to the Government of Egypt on alleged human rights abuses in that country.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The Prime Minister raised human rights concerns with Egypt's President Sisi at their meeting in September 2016. Ministers and senior officials regularly raise our concerns with the Egyptian authorities in both London and Cairo.

We are concerned about the decreasing space for civil society to operate in Egypt. I raised our concerns about the arrest of a human rights defender with the Egyptian Ambassador when we met on 8 December and reiterated concerns about a proposed new law on Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

More recently, on 10 February, I made a statement about the closure of the Nadeem Centre, which was a step in the wrong direction.

We have also raised our concerns about human rights at the UN. During the session of the UN's Human Rights Council in September, the UK highlighted restrictions on civil society and legal action against NGOs in Egypt. In the same statement, we raised our concerns about reports of torture, enforced disappearances and police abuses in the country.

We will continue to monitor the human rights situation in Egypt closely, and to urge the Egyptian government to implement the human rights provisions contained in its constitution.

## ■ Eritrea and Sudan: Military Aid

**Patrick Grady:**

[\[64145\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many British personnel have been involved in the training of Sudanese Rapid Support Forces in Sudan and the Eritrean Border Force as part of the UK's involvement in the Valetta Action Plan and the Khartoum Process; and what the cost of that training has been to the public purse.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The UK has not and will not provide support to the Sudanese Rapid Support Forces, either bilaterally or as part of the Valetta Action Plan. Under the Valetta Action Plan and via EU funding, the UK supports programmes designed to address the five key areas for tackling migration together with the Horn of Africa countries, including Eritrea. We have no plans to support the Eritrean Border Force.

**Patrick Grady:**

[\[64146\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps the Government has taken to train Rapid Support Forces in Sudan and the Eritrean Border Force as part of the UK's involvement in the Valetta Action Plan and the Khartoum Process.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The UK has not and will not provide support to the Sudanese Rapid Support Forces, either bilaterally or as part of the Valetta Action Plan. Under the Valetta Action Plan and via EU funding, the UK supports programmes designed to address the five key areas for tackling migration together with the Horn of Africa countries, including Eritrea. We have no plans to support the Eritrean Border Force.

## ■ Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Recruitment

**Andrew Selous:**

[\[64472\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether his Department operates a ban the box employment policy in respect of ex-offender job applicants with unspent convictions; and how many employees of his Department have unspent convictions.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does not ask about the criminal convictions of job applicants at the application stage. Spent and unspent criminal convictions are inspected as part of security clearance checks, which all staff recruited to the FCO undergo. Holding security clearance is a prerequisite for employment with the FCO.

We do not keep data on the number of staff or new entrants who have a criminal record and/or unspent convictions.

**■ Gaza: Health**

**Stephen Gethins:** [\[63584\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with the Israeli authorities on the quality of people's health in Gaza.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

While we have not raised this specific issue, we have consistently called on the Israeli Government to ease movement and access restrictions in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Officials from our Embassy in Tel Aviv most recently did so on 19 January.

**■ Gaza: Water**

**Stephen Gethins:** [\[63583\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with the Palestinian authorities on water quality in Gaza.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

Our Consulate General in Jerusalem frequently raises this issue with the Palestinian Water Authority, a body of the Palestinian Authority. We have serious concerns about the quality of water in Gaza, and note that the World Health Organisation has assessed that 90-95% of water in Gaza is undrinkable. UK technical assistance has aided the feasibility study of a proposed Gaza desalinisation plant.

**■ Ibrahim Sharif**

**Tom Brake:** [\[63682\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations the Government has made to the Bahrainian Government on the case of Ebrahim Sharif.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The Office of the Public Prosecution announced on 23 November 2016 that the case against Ebrahim Sharif had been closed and the charges against him dropped. We welcome the positive outcome on this case.

**■ Isa Qassim**

**Tom Brake:** [\[63683\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations the Government has made to the Bahrainian Government on the case of Sheikh Isa Qassim.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office issued a statement at the time, expressing concern at the revocation of Sheikh Isa Qassim's nationality. We have also raised this at Ministerial level. Sheikh Isa is currently the subject of a separate, ongoing

court case. Embassy officials have attended every hearing in this trial to date and we will continue to monitor the case closely.

## ■ Israel: Peace

**Tommy Sheppard:**

[\[64916\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what diplomatic and development-related steps his Department is taking to support peace groups in Israel.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

*[Holding answer 24 February 2017]:* The UK has regularly supported pro-peace projects run by Israeli Non-Governmental Organisations. We are currently supporting a project to empower young Israeli religious leaders to strengthen support for peace in their communities. The Department for International Development is also developing a programme of support for people-to-people projects in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, which will help Israelis and Palestinians work together to achieve tangible improvements in their lives and build understanding.

## ■ Middle East: Minority Groups

**Michael Tomlinson:**

[\[64125\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to ensure religious minorities in the Middle East have a sustainable future in the region.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The Government supports the right to freedom of religion or belief for all communities in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) by regularly urging governments, at senior levels to uphold the rights of all minorities; building international consensus on freedom of religion or belief; and supporting practical projects. For example, in Iraq we are supporting a project inspiring key leaders in society to become defenders of freedom of religion or belief.

We are also working to implement the results of the 2016 Syria Conference, which aims to create over one million jobs in the MENA region, including refugees from religious minorities. We use the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund Programme Funds to support community cohesion, encourage reconciliation and promote tolerance between communities in Iraq. We regularly engage with faith leaders and faith-based Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) in the UK and the MENA region to discuss the situation of religious communities. We will assist NGOs where we can to carry out their work.

**■ Nabeel Rajab****Caroline Lucas:** [\[64121\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will call on the Government of Bahrain to immediately and unconditionally release prisoner-of-conscience Nabeel Rajab and drop all charges against him.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The British Government has raised concerns over the case of Nabeel Rajab with the Bahraini Government at senior levels. The judicial process is ongoing and we continue to monitor the case closely with officials attending every hearing.

**■ North Carolina: Gender Recognition****Tom Brake:** [\[64020\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the Government has raised the issue of House Bill 2 in North Carolina with that state's authorities since the announcement that a Government office is to be located in Raleigh, North Carolina.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

We made representations on House Bill 2 to the previous State Government in North Carolina. The UK fully supports efforts to prevent discrimination and promote tolerance, diversity and respect. Raleigh was chosen for a new UK trade office because of North Carolina's economic productivity and well-established research and development institutions, which offer opportunities to boost US-UK trade and investment.

**■ Russia: Sanctions****Emily Thornberry:** [\[64016\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has made to the US Administration on its forthcoming annual review of sanctions against Russia.

**Boris Johnson:**

There have been no specific representations made to the US administration on its forthcoming annual review of sanctions against Russia. However, we consistently raise the importance of sanctions as part of a robust approach towards Russia with our US counterparts at all levels.

**■ Sierra Leone: Freedom of Association****Ann Clwyd:** [\[63807\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will initiate a Call to Action by the Community of Democracies' Working Group on Enabling and Protecting Civil Society for an urgent intervention with the government of Sierra Leone to ask that Government to review its draft non-governmental organisation policy regulations



to bring them into line with constitutional and international standards of freedom of association.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The UK regularly works with both the Sierra Leonean government and local civil society actors to emphasise the important role civil society plays in economic and social development. The UK works to protect civil society space and ensure that civil society engages in international processes. Where appropriate, the UK also works with partners at the multilateral level. The UK welcomes the fact that the Government of Sierra Leone is consulting on revising their Non-Governmental Organisation policy guidelines. Officials at the British High Commission in Sierra Leone continue to discuss these revisions with the government, development partners and civil society organisations.

■ **Sierra Leone: Non-governmental Organisations**

**Ann Clwyd:**

[\[64021\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations his Department has made to the Government of Sierra Leone on draft revised NGO policy regulations; and whether those representations included raising the concerns of domestic human rights organisations on those draft regulations.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The UK regularly works with both the Sierra Leonean government and local civil society actors to emphasise the important role civil society plays in economic and social development. The UK welcomes the fact that the Government of Sierra Leone is consulting on revising their Non-Governmental Organisation policy guidelines. Officials at the British High Commission in Sierra Leone continue to discuss these revisions with the government, development partners and civil society organisations.

■ **South Sudan: Security**

**Catherine West:**

[\[64823\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the security situation in South Sudan.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

*[Holding answer 24 February 2017]:* We are deeply concerned at the ongoing substantial fighting and displacement in South Sudan, particularly in such hotspots as Greater Upper Nile, where it is a direct cause of the ongoing famine, and the Equatorias. An estimated 80,000 people have been forced out of their homes due to insecurity in the last month alone, and there are still widespread reports of grave human rights abuses and violations committed by both sides. The UK continues to pursue every opportunity to call on all parties in the conflict in South Sudan to cease hostilities and engage in a genuine dialogue. We are working closely with the UN, African Union, the region and other partners to facilitate an inclusive dialogue in an effort to revive the peace process.

**■ Syria: Politics and Government****Dr Paul Monaghan:****[63975]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his international counterparts on the political situation in Syria.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

We maintain frequent Ministerial contact with international counterparts on Syria. The Foreign Secretary, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Mr Johnson), regularly discusses Syria with his counterparts, including at the monthly EU Foreign Affairs Council. The Foreign Secretary's recent conversations have covered the situation in Aleppo; humanitarian access; support for the Syrian opposition including the Higher Negotiations Committee; the current ceasefire and its implementation; and resumption of the UN-led political process, including the Geneva talks due to start this month.

The Foreign Secretary also discusses Syria bilaterally in meetings in the UK and when he travels. The Prime Minister, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Maidenhead (Mrs May), has discussed the political situation in Syria during a number of recent meetings and overseas visits, including to the US and Turkey.

**■ Turkey: EU Accession****Joan Ryan:****[64061]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with his EU and Turkish counterparts on the potential effect of the UK leaving the EU on the Ankara Agreement.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

The 'Ankara Agreement' is the common name for the 'Agreement Creating an Association Between The Republic of Turkey and the European Economic Community', made in 1963. As the UK prepares to leave the EU, we are considering the implications for it. The UK remains committed to strong cooperation and partnership with Turkey, including on trade and investment.

**■ Ukraine: Corruption****Emily Thornberry:****[64015]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Ukrainian counterpart on the work of that country's Anti-Corruption Bureau.

**Boris Johnson:**

In my conversations with my Ukrainian counterpart I have made clear the British Government's strong support for the country's reform efforts, including the steps it is taking to tackle corruption. The United Kingdom has provided practical support to the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine (NABU), including in the areas of IT and

provision of training, and expert advice to support NABU's development of an effective external communications strategy.

■ **United Arab Emirates: Military Bases**

**Stephen Doughty:**

[\[65150\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with the Governments of (a) Somaliland, (b) UAE and (c) Saudi Arabia on the establishment of a UAE airforce base at Berbera.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

I have not had discussions with the Government of Somaliland, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) or Saudi Arabia on the establishment of an Emirati airforce base at Berbera.

■ **Unmanned Air Vehicles**

**Tom Brake:**

[\[64186\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 12 January 2017 to Question 58534, if the Government will report to the House prior to any multilateral discussions with other signatories of the Joint Declaration for the Export and Subsequent Use of Armed or Strike-Enabled Unmanned Aerial Vehicles taking place to set out any proposals it plans to put forward.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

As yet no date has been set for formal consultations with the signatories of the Joint Declaration. The topic of strike-enabled UAVs comes up in informal contact with likeminded countries, but we do not yet have UK proposals to offer.

■ **USA: Judiciary**

**Catherine West:**

[\[64019\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether he has discussed the importance of an independent judiciary with his US counterpart.

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

The Foreign Secretary met the US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson in Bonn on 16 February. During the meeting they reaffirmed our shared goals and agreed to work together on a range of global issues. The subject of an independent judiciary was not on the agenda.

■ **USA: Travel Restrictions**

**Tom Brake:**

[\[64240\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 10 February 2017 to Question 63225, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential change in the level of security risks to British citizens living in

the countries listed for a potential travel ban to the US as a result of the Executive Order made by President Trump.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office keeps travel advice under close and constant review. Any changes in our assessment of the risks to British nationals will be reflected on our travel advice pages.

■ **Yemen: Military Intervention**

**Tom Brake:**

[\[64182\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether his Department has made an assessment of the accuracy of the Saudi-led Coalition's Joint Incident Assessment Team's investigation into the 8 October 2016 bombing in Sana'a, Yemen.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The UK welcomes the release, on 15 October 2016, by the Joint Incidents Assessment Team of the outcomes of its initial investigation. It is important that the Coalition conducts thorough and conclusive investigations into incidents where it is alleged that International Humanitarian Law has been breached. The UK continues to believe that the Coalition has the best insight into its own military procedures and will be able to conduct the most thorough and conclusive investigations.

## HEALTH

■ **Accident and Emergency Departments: Admissions**

**Andrew Bridgen:**

[\[64242\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will place in the Library the number of A&E admissions for respiratory conditions in each month of financial year (a) 2015-16, (b) 2014-15, (c) 2013-14, (d) 2012-13 and (e) 2011-12.

**David Mowat:**

The following table shows the number of attendances at accident and emergency (A&E) departments with a primary diagnosis of respiratory conditions in each month for the years between 2011-12 and 2015-16.

COUNT OF THE NUMBER OF A&E ATTENDANCES WITH A PRIMARY DIAGNOSIS OF RESPIRATORY CONDITIONS, FOR EACH OF THE YEARS BETWEEN 2011-12 AND 2015-16.

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
April	37,546	43,051	46,535	47,303	48,869
May	33,758	43,899	42,281	46,452	45,873

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
June	31,019	41,083	36,435	40,211	40,971
July	31,026	45,978	35,884	37,353	40,622
August	28,476	32,444	29,760	32,824	37,342
September	33,524	40,523	41,191	40,228	49,217
October	42,256	48,595	47,695	47,952	59,696
November	47,571	53,660	52,254	58,368	66,932
December	58,664	70,923	67,131	87,073	74,350
January	49,206	55,213	51,542	60,793	71,509
February	49,494	49,492	47,364	49,888	65,763
March	48,286	54,158	50,249	54,256	74,935
Total	490,826	579,019	548,321	602,701	676,079

Source : Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), NHS Digital

*Notes:*

1. Note that the recording of the diagnosis field within the A&E data set is not mandatory. It is not known to what extent changes over time are as a result of improvements in recording practice.
2. A&E diagnosis description 2 character level 25 = Respiratory conditions.
3. HES figures are available from 2007-08 onwards. Changes to the figures over time need to be interpreted in the context of improvements in data quality and coverage and changes in National Health Service practice. For example, changes in activity may be due to changes in the provision of care. Note that Hospital Episode Statistics include activity ending in the year in question and run from April to March, e.g. 2012-13 includes activity occurring between 1 April 2012 and 31 March 2013.

## ■ Addiction

**Philip Davies:**

[R] [\[64025\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the number of (a) drug addicts, (b) gambling addicts and (c) alcoholics in each of the last five years.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

There are no centrally collected estimates, as requested.

**Ambulance Services: Dorset**

**Michael Tomlinson:** [\[64123\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the average ambulance response times were in Dorset in the last five years.

**Michael Tomlinson:** [\[64131\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the average ambulance response time was in Dorset in December 2016.

**Michael Tomlinson:** [\[64132\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the average ambulance response time was in Dorset in January 2017.

**Michael Tomlinson:** [\[64133\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the average ambulance response time was in Dorset in November 2016.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

The data requested is not collected centrally.

NHS England publish data on the performance of ambulance trusts in respect of the number of Category A Red One and Red Two calls responded to within eight minutes and the number of Category A calls resulting in an ambulance arriving at the scene of the incident against the 19 minute standard.

This data is published on a monthly basis at both an England national level and at individual ambulance trust level. The South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SWASFT) is the organisation responsible for providing ambulance services for the NHS across South West England, including Dorset. However, as of April 2016, SWASFT commenced the Ambulance Response Programme clinical coding trial and therefore only data up to but not including this date is available for Red 1, Red 2 and Category A calls.

**Ambulance Services: Standards**

**Michael Tomlinson:** [\[64281\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to improve ambulance response times.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

The Department continues to work closely with NHS England and NHS Improvement to monitor and support performance in 2016-17.

NHS England's Urgent and Emergency Care Review will transform ambulance services from a service based on a model of transportation to one of clinical assessment and treatment. We expect NHS England will make recommendations in spring 2017.

## ■ **Blood: Contamination**

**Diana Johnson:**

[\[63993\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will waive the requirement for bereaved partners of people infected with NHS-supplied contaminated blood to prove that they were cohabiting with their former partner at the time of death.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Department considers the requirement to provide evidence of cohabitation in order to claim the £10,000 lump sum payment to bereaved partners or spouses important to be fair to everyone and reflects our intention to provide support to partners or spouses in recognition of their relationship with the registrant/primary beneficiary at time of death.

We recognise this is a sensitive issue and so we have produced a clear policy aimed at ensuring this information can be collected in as sensitive and straightforward a manner possible from bereaved partners or spouses.

**Diana Johnson:**

[\[64120\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what representations he has received on adopting a model similar to the Scottish scheme for the reformed English support scheme for those affected by contaminated blood.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Department has received a number of representations about Scotland's proposals for scheme reform.

However, given health functions are devolved, responsibility for the infected blood payment schemes is a matter for each devolved administration. In England, we have committed up to £125 million to provide additional funding to the reformed scheme. The budget allocation will more than double the Department's annual spend on the scheme to April 2021. This is significantly more than any previous government has been able to provide for those affected by the tragedy.

## ■ **Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust**

**Rosie Cooper:**

[\[65010\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, for what reasons it took the Care Quality Commission seven months to publish its inspection report on Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust; whether that Trust has resolved the issues identified in that report in the period between inspection and publication; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspected Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust between May and June 2016. As Bridgewater is of a particular size and complexity the post inspection and pre-publication processes took longer than the usual set timescale and were not completed until October 2016. The report was published on the CQC website on 6 February 2017 and a quality summit held on

20 February 2017 with representatives from the CQC, NHS England and NHS Improvement. Bridgewater is due to submit an action plan to the CQC for consideration with a follow up engagement meeting planned for April 2017. A re-inspection of the trust will be discussed as part of our regulatory planning process.

**Rosie Cooper:**

[\[65220\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what requirements Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust has to meet in order to access an increased sustainability transformation fund allocation.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

Access to both the general and targeted elements of the Sustainability Transformation Fund provisionally allocated to providers will be unlocked as they meet their financial control totals. At each quarter, 70% of allocated funding will be released upon achievement of the financial control total, with a further 30% released where a provider also meets its agreed trajectories for delivery of operational standards. Trusts should work on the basis that they must achieve all the criteria of the fund, including individual improvement trajectories, in order to receive the funding.

## ■ Cervical Cancer: Screening

**Paula Sherriff:**

[\[64115\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether the planned new database for cervical screening will be in place by November 2017; and if he will make a statement.

**David Mowat:**

NHS England is working with Primary Care Support England to develop a new information system for the NHS Cervical Screening Programme. A key element of this is a database to ensure women are managed accurately and safely through the programme. This will be particularly important when the programme converts from cytology screening to human papilloma virus primary screening by April 2019.

The new database is currently in development and is planned to be introduced from mid-2018. The original timeframe (first – second quarter 2017) was reviewed and revised to ensure the database solution is fit for purpose and implemented safely and effectively, to realise the intended benefits for service users.

## ■ Cystic Fibrosis

**Mr Jim Cunningham:**

[\[64969\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of treatment provisions for people diagnosed with cystic fibrosis.

**David Mowat:**

NHS England is responsible for securing high quality care for patients with cystic fibrosis (CF) as part of its national commissioning responsibilities for specialised services. NHS England has published two CF service specifications, one for adults and one for children, recognising that adults and children with CF have differing



needs and that the services provided should reflect this. These specifications are important in clearly defining what NHS England expects to be in place for providers to offer evidence-based, safe and effective care and they support equity of access to a nationally consistent, high quality service.

Although there is no cure for cystic fibrosis, specialist care and treatment can provide symptom relief, and can also prevent or reduce the long-term damage caused by infections and other complications and improve quality of life. The services commissioned by NHS England ensure patients are cared for by consultant-led multi-disciplinary teams of experienced, specialist healthcare professionals including CF nurse specialists, physiotherapists and psychologists and dieticians. The teams are also responsible for determining when high cost CF drugs should be prescribed. Outreach services also ensure patients can receive support closer to home, and in their home, when it is needed. The specifications are available at the following links:

[www.england.nhs.uk/commissioning/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2015/01/a01-spec-cystic-fibrosis-adlt.pdf](http://www.england.nhs.uk/commissioning/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2015/01/a01-spec-cystic-fibrosis-adlt.pdf)

[www.england.nhs.uk/commissioning/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2015/01/a01-spec-cystic-fibrosis-child.pdf](http://www.england.nhs.uk/commissioning/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2015/01/a01-spec-cystic-fibrosis-child.pdf)

## ■ Department of Health: Pay

**Philip Davies:**

**[64168]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the (a) mean and (b) median pay was for staff in his Department who were (i) male, (ii) female, (iii) white, (iv) from an ethnic minority background, (v) disabled and (vi) non-disabled in the most recent year for which information is available, broken down by (A) full-time and (B) part-time workers.

**David Mowat:**

A breakdown of Departmental staff pay data in respect of gender, ethnicity, disability and employment status is provided in the following table. This data is effective as at 31 January 2017 and is based on those who declared these protected characteristics. The calculation of mean and median pay for part time staff is based on the full time equivalent salary.

CATEGORY	MEAN		MEDIAN	
	FULL TIME	PART TIME	FULL TIME	PART TIME
Male	£46,351	£53,350	£42,269	£50,540
Female	£42,967	£44,441	£38,343	£42,269
White	£46,208	£47,660	£44,985	£47,307

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic	£37,005	£38,338	£31,602	£32,218
Disabled	£44,237	£39,766	£37,316	£35,135
Not Disabled	£44,396	£46,581	£40,469	£46,827

## ■ Doctors: EU Nationals

**Luciana Berger:**

[\[65137\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the number of nationals of other EU countries working in the NHS as doctors; what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the UK leaving the EU on the number of such doctors; and what assessment he has made of the potential effect on NHS productivity of that change in the number of such doctors.

**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.

In November 2016, 10,493 (9.3%) doctors working in NHS trusts and clinical commissioning groups declared their nationality as other European Union nationals, excluding the United Kingdom. This is out of a total headcount of 113,270.

The November data is the most recent data available.

The potential effect on nationals and productivity of leaving the EU will be dependent on the outcome of negotiations. My Rt. hon. Friend the Prime Minister has been clear that she wants to protect the status of EU nationals already living here. It is the Government's aim to get the best settlement for the UK in all areas including the healthcare system.

## ■ Drugs: Misuse

**Craig Mackinlay:**

[\[63997\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many patients have been treated by the NHS for drug abuse in (a) the UK and (b) South Thanet constituency in each of the last five years.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The following table shows the number of individuals, in contact with specialist treatment services citing problematic drug use in England and Kent in each of the last five years.

YEAR	ENGLAND	KENT
2011-12	213,149	3,669
2012-13	209,561	3,316
2013-14	210,293	3,240
2014-15	206,117	3,474
2015-16	203,808	3,448

The commissioning of drug treatment services in England is done by local authorities and the services are provided by a combination of National Health Service or third sector providers.

As health is a devolved matter, figures are for England only. The National Drug Treatment Monitoring System collects data by local authority areas in England; it is not available for parliamentary constituency areas.

#### ■ Exercise

**Christina Rees:**

**[64238]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what proportion of his Department's funding was allocated to reduce physical inactivity in (a) 2014-15, (b) 2015-16 and (c) 2016-17; and what he plans to spend on that in 2017-18.

**Christina Rees:**

**[64239]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many of his Department's officials are solely responsible for (a) reducing physical inactivity and (b) reducing obesity among children and adults.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

It is not possible to provide figures on what proportion of the Department's funding is allocated to reduce physical inactivity because budgets from across the Department and Public Health England (PHE) contribute to this area.

The Department does not have a separate team in which members are working solely full-time on reducing physical inactivity or reducing obesity among children and adults. Officials from across the Department work flexibly and may have a role in these areas. In addition, officials from PHE also contribute to this work.

#### ■ General Practitioners

**Steve McCabe:**

**[64308]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 1 February 2017 to Question 61437, whether the Centre for Workforce Intelligence used patient projections in its 2014 review; and if he will make a statement.

**David Mowat:**

The Centre for Workforce Intelligence review of general practitioners (GPs) in 2014 considered a wide range of factors and drivers of demand. Specifically with regards to patients, general practice activity levels and demand for services were examined as part of developing demand projections. This included, amongst others, the GP workload survey, activity and consultation rate data, trends over time, current and future unmet need, as well as the role of the GP and case complexity.

The review also used a scenario based approach to consider and establish projections for six different challenging yet plausible futures as well as with support from experts quantify how many GPs would be needed to meet healthcare demand by 2030.

The report and details of the above can be found at:

<http://www.cfwi.org.uk/publications/in-depth-review-of-the-gp-workforce>

**Michelle Donelan:****[64321]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to improve access to GPs.

**David Mowat:**

The Government is committed to improving access to general practitioner (GP) services. By 2020, everyone will be able to access routine GP appointments at evenings and weekends.

On 21 April 2016, NHS England published the GP Forward View, a package of support to help get general practice back on its feet, improve patient care and access, and invest in new ways of providing primary care. The GP Forward View sets out that we are investing an extra £2.4 billion a year for general practice services by 2020/21 – this represents a 14% increase in real terms. The overall investment for general practice includes a £500 million national 'turnaround' package to support GP practices.

To implement the Government's commitment to transform GP access, £175 million has been invested in the GP Access Fund to test improved and innovative access to GP services. Across the two waves of the Access Fund, there are 57 schemes covering over 2,500 practices and 18 million patients – a third of the population – have benefited from improved access and transformational change at local level including evening and weekend appointments.

A wide variety of approaches are being tested through the Access Fund, including: opening 8am-8pm on weekdays and weekends; better use of telecare and health apps; more innovative ways to access services by video call, email or telephone; and developing more integrated services with a single point of contact to co-ordinate patient services.

In addition to the GP Access Fund, all GP practices have been given the opportunity to provide extended hours access under the Directed Enhanced Service.

The Government is also committed to having an extra 5,000 doctors working in general practice by 2020/21, as well as 5,000 extra other staff, for example clinical pharmacists and mental health therapists.

**Caroline Lucas:**

[\[64324\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether his Department has taken steps to prevent private patient consultations leading to a potential (a) reduction in service or (b) increase in waiting times for NHS patients where a GP practice runs a private practice at the same facility as its NHS practice; and if he will make a statement.

**David Mowat:**

General practitioners (GPs) provide a comprehensive primary care service to patients through contractual arrangements with NHS England. Strict safeguards exist within these contractual arrangements which prevent GPs making charges to patients for National Health Service care, or of using NHS resources to subsidise any other non NHS services they are involved with. All patients have a right to high quality NHS primary care services, which are free at the point of delivery.

#### ■ **General Practitioners: Attendance**

**Michelle Donelan:**

[\[64322\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the Releasing Time for Patients plans in reducing missed GP appointments.

**David Mowat:**

Practices engaging in the Time for Care development programme (sometimes known as the Releasing Time for Patients programme) choose the areas for improvement that will best meet their specific needs. The majority of practices who have engaged so far in this three year programme are currently selecting their own priorities, with expert support from NHS England. When practices have undertaken their programme of changes, it will be possible to measure the impact. This will include any practices that choose to focus on reducing non-attendance.

#### ■ **General Practitioners: Closures**

**Steve McCabe:**

[\[65097\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the minimum notice period is that clinical commissioning groups are required to give patients when a GP surgery is to close.

**Steve McCabe:**

[\[65098\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether clinical commissioning groups are required to consult patients before closing a GP surgery.

**David Mowat:**

There is no defined statutory requirement for a notice period to patients when a general practitioner surgery is to close.

NHS England's guidance for commissioners, the Primary Medical Care Policy Book, suggests that between nine and 15 months prior to contract end, commissioners should undertake a needs and impact assessment and develop an engagement plan, and between two and 10 months before contract end, the commissioners should commence negotiation for the continuation of or procurement of an alternative Primary Medical Service provider, or the appropriate exit plan (including communication to patients).

Only at contract end would the patient list be dispersed, at which point patients would be notified and informed of their right to choose an alternative provider. Details of other local providers could be provided as part of this communication.

### ■ Health Professions: EU Nationals

**Luciana Berger:**

**[65139]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the number of nationals of other EU countries working in the NHS as oncologists; what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the UK leaving the EU on the number of such oncologists; and what assessment he has made of the potential effect on NHS productivity of that change in the number of such oncologists.

**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 information is available in the following table.

NHS Hospital and Community Health Services (HCHS): HCHS Doctors by selected nationality group, by oncology specialty, in NHS trusts and clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) in England, as at 30 November 2016, headcount.

	ALL NATIONALITIES	OF WHICH EUROPEAN UNION (EXCLUDING UNITED KINGDOM)
HCHS Doctors with an oncology specialty	2,260	224
Clinical oncology	1,319	109
Medical oncology	944	115

*Source:* NHS Digital, NHS Hospital and Community Health Service workforce statistics. *Note:* Headcount totals are unlikely to equal the sum of components.

The November data is the most recent data available.

The potential effect on nationals and productivity of leaving the EU will be dependent on the outcome of negotiations. My Rt. hon. Friend the Prime Minister has been clear that she wants to protect the status of EU nationals already living here. It is the

Government's aim to get the best settlement for the UK in all areas including the healthcare system.

## ■ Health Services: Detention Centres

**Mr Andrew Smith:** [\[64098\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many NGOs will be able to engage with this year's review of the health and wellbeing needs assessment programme in immigration removal centres.

**Mr Andrew Smith:** [\[64099\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the timetable and format is for this year's review of the health and wellbeing needs assessment programme in immigration removal centres.

**Mr Andrew Smith:** [\[64276\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether a review has been commissioned for completion this year to follow the health and wellbeing needs assessment programme in Immigration Removal Centres which reported in 2015.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Health Needs Assessment process is the responsibility of NHS England regional commissioners. They manage the timetable and format for Health Needs Assessments at Immigration Removal Centres (IRCs) in their area. There is an expectation that a full Health Needs Assessment is carried out every three years with an annual refresh which aligns to the NHS England commissioning cycle.

Health Needs Assessments for specific IRCs are put out to tender. A comprehensive Health Needs Assessment would seek input from a variety of organisations and individuals who have experiences of IRCs, usually through a formal stakeholder event, which would include Non-Governmental Organisations.

The 2015 review of the Health Needs Assessment programme established a national baseline for providing services in IRCs. There is no plan to commission a further review.

## ■ Health Services: Local Government

**Mary Glendon:** [\[65222\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether local authorities are required to provide non-mandated public health services such as drug and alcohol services.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Under section 2B of the NHS Act 2006 local authorities (LAs) must take such steps as they consider appropriate for improving the health of the people in their areas. Section 6C of the 2006 Act allows the Secretary of State to make regulations requiring LAs to exercise their public health functions by taking particular steps.

No regulations have been made in respect of drug or alcohol misuse services. However, a condition attached to the public health grant that is paid to LAs under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires them to use the grant with regard to the need to improve the take up of, and outcomes from, their drug and alcohol misuse treatment services. Where steps are not mandated in regulations or grant conditions LAs must make decisions based on their own priorities and assessments of local need, and account for those decisions to their electorates.

## ■ Homeopathy

**Andrew Gwynne:** [\[65095\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions his Department has had with the European Medicines Agency on the licencing of homeopathic products.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency has not had discussions with the European Medicines Agency on the licencing of homeopathic products.

**Andrew Gwynne:** [\[65218\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 22 February 2017 to Question 64041, if he will make it his Department's policy that traditional herbal registration will only be issued to products which exclude all medical use.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Question 64041 refers to homeopathy and this is not relevant in the context of products registered under the traditional herbal registration.

Products registered in the United Kingdom under the traditional herbal registration scheme are required to fulfil the requirements of the Directive on Traditional Herbal Medicinal Products.

Article 16 a 1 (a) of Directive 2004/24 requires that Traditional Herbal Medicinal Products 'have indications exclusively appropriate to traditional herbal medicinal products which, by virtue of their composition and purpose, are intended and designed for use without the supervision of a medical practitioner for diagnostic purposes or for prescription or monitoring of treatment'.

It is therefore a requirement for products registered under the traditional herbal registration scheme to have indications to ensure they are used safely for the correct purpose.

## ■ Medical Records: Data Protection

**Caroline Lucas:** [\[64243\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 8 February 2016 to Question 63026 on medical records, for what reasons his Department did not undertake (a) an impact assessment or (b) a consultation on the Memorandum of Understanding between the Home Office, NHS Digital and his Department.



**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Department considered the potential impact of the arrangements described in the Memorandum of Understanding, for requests to locate illegal migrants who have lost touch with the Home Office, with due regard to the public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equality Act.

The Department did not consult publicly on the Memorandum of Understanding because it was developed as an internal governance assurance document for pre-existing processes between the Home Office, the Department and NHS Digital.

**■ Mental Health Services: Pontefract****Jon Trickett:**[\[64275\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether his Department has carried out an impact assessment of the potential effect of the closure of CAMHS services in Pontefract on people who (a) cannot afford to use public transport and (b) do not have access to a car.

**Jon Trickett:**[\[64332\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether he plans to provide additional financial support to allow the (a) re-opening of CAMHS clinics in Pontefract and (b) opening of new CAMHS facilities in Hemsworth constituency.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Child and Adolescent Mental Health services for Pontefract are commissioned locally by Wakefield Clinical Commissioning Group.

The community Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services within the east Wakefield area are relocating rather than closing. Services will in future be in Castleford.

The service will continue to offer a refund on public transport to those families who meet the criteria of being on income support, income based Job Seekers Allowance, or those with a tax credit exemption certificate or valid HC2/HC3 form regardless of their home address.

**■ NHS: Finance****Steve McCabe:**[\[64314\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 3 February 2017 to Question 62721, whether proposed changes to operational costs relating to NHS properties were taken into account in the spending review which led to the his Department's commitment to £10 billion of real terms growth funding for the NHS by 2020-21.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

The £10 billion of real terms growth by 2020/21 was announced as part of the November 2015 spending review. This supports the funding requirement set out in the National Health Service's own plan, the Five Year Forward View.

The Valuation Office Agency did not publish the new 2017 Rating List assessments in draft until 30 September 2016. This signalled the start of a six month period before these new Rateable Values take effect and in which time any factual errors can be brought to the attention of the Valuation Office and rectified.

Each NHS organisation is responsible for ensuring their current rating assessments and any recent changes thereto are correct and for challenging them if necessary. As with other ratepayers, NHS bodies may be able to seek transitional relief.

## ■ Palliative Care

**Norman Lamb:**

**[64065]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent discussions he has had with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence on extending the end of life criteria for treatments from two years to three years.

**David Mowat:**

My Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health regularly meets with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence to discuss a wide range of policy and delivery issues.

## ■ Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust

**Diana Johnson:**

**[64126]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will publish all correspondence over the last three months between (a) his Department, (b) NHS Protect and (c) NHS England and the Princess Alexandra Hospitals NHS Trust on its former Chief Executive, Phil Morley.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

Based on searches focused on the most likely location of such correspondence, no correspondence over the last three months exists between either the Department or NHS England and Princess Alexandra Hospitals NHS Trust in relation to this matter. NHS Protect is in correspondence with the Princess Alexandra Hospitals NHS Trust in relation to this matter. This correspondence is part of an ongoing investigation and as such may form part of criminal proceedings and cannot be disclosed at this time.

## ■ Private Patients

**Mr Christopher Chope:**

**[65076]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the Government's policy is on voluntary co-payments in the NHS.

**Mr Philip Dunne:**

Co-funding and most forms of co-payment, other than those limited forms permitted by Regulations, such as prescription charges, are contrary to National Health Service policy.

More information on co-payments can be found at the following address:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/cp-12.pdf>

## ■ Radiotherapy

**Mary Glendon:**

[64142]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, on what date details of the process for the Commissioning through Evaluation scheme for Selective Internal Radiation Therapy were first added to the NHS England website; and on what date that process was first communicated to stakeholders.

**David Mowat:**

During 2013, a Steering Group was established to develop a proposal for a commissioning through evaluation (CtE) programme for Selective Internal Radiation Therapy (SIRT). The Steering Group comprised key stakeholders including clinicians, industry representation and NHS England.

An invitation to express an interest in being a participating centre for the SIRT CtE scheme was published via:

- The NHS England website:

[www.england.nhs.uk/2013/09/26/comthrough-eval/](http://www.england.nhs.uk/2013/09/26/comthrough-eval/)

- Supply2Health; and

- Onward distribution to contacts via the SIRT CtE Sub Group.

Applications had to be submitted by 5pm on Friday 11 October and the final selection of centres was undertaken by the four regional Medical Directors, and Providers were notified of the outcome on Friday 15 November.

Successful centres were provided with a copy of the service specification and centres confirmed their commitment to the programme and provided assurance that they would meet the requirements of the service specification in full.

**Mary Glendon:**

[64143]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what clinical evidence available after 2011 was considered by NHS England for inclusion in the evidence summary for Selective Internal Radiation Therapy under the Commissioning through Evaluation scheme.

**David Mowat:**

The journal articles listed below became available after 2011 and were included in the Selective Internal Radiation Therapy evidence review undertaken by NHS England in 2013:

- Moreno-Luna LE, Yang JD, Sanchez W et al. Efficacy and safety of transarterial radioembolization versus chemoembolization in patients with hepatocellular carcinoma. *Cardiovasc Intervent Radiol* 2012 Oct 24; ePub doi: 10.1007/s00270-012-0481-2.

- Iñarrairaegui M, Pardo F, Bilbao JI et al. Response to radioembolization with yttrium-90 resin microspheres may allow surgical treatment with curative intent and prolonged survival in previously unresectable hepatocellular carcinoma. *Eur J Surg Oncol* 2012; 38: 594–601.

- Xie F, Zang J, Guo X et al. Comparison of transcatheter arterial chemoembolization and microsphere embolization for treatment of unresectable hepatocellular carcinoma: a meta-analysis. *J Cancer Res Clin Oncol* 2012; 138: 455–462.
- Sulpice L, Rayar M, Boucher E, Pracht M, Meunier B, Boudjema K. Treatment of recurrent intrahepatic cholangiocarcinoma *Br J Surg.* 2012 Dec;99(12):1711-7.
- Hoffmann RT, Paprottka PM, Schön A et al. Transarterial hepatic yttrium-90 radioembolization in patients with unresectable intrahepatic cholangiocarcinoma: factors associated with prolonged survival. *Cardiovasc Interv Radiol* 2012; 35: 105–116.
- Shaheen M, Hassanain M, Aljiffry M et al. Predictors of response to radio-embolization (TheraSphere®) treatment of neuroendocrine liver metastasis. *HPB* 2012; 14: 60–66.
- Memon K, Lewandowski RJ, Mulcahy MF et al. Radioembolization for neuroendocrine liver metastases: Safety, imaging, and long-term outcomes. *Int J Radiat Oncol Biol Phys* 2012; 83: 887–894.
- Bester L, Meteling B, Pocock N et al. Radioembolization versus standard care of hepatic metastases: Comparative retrospective cohort study of survival outcomes and adverse events in salvage patients. *J Vasc Interv Radiol* 2012; 23: 96–105.

**Mary Glendon:**[\[64280\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, for what reasons a decision has not yet been taken on whether Selective Internal Radiation Therapy should be routinely funded on the NHS following the Commissioning through Evaluation assessment period.

**David Mowat:**

In order for NHS England to consider whether Selective Internal Radiation Therapy (SIRT) should be routinely commissioned, the clinical data collected by each participating centre must be analysed to establish whether, in the absence of clinical trial evidence, there is sufficient evidence of patient benefit. This part of the Commissioning through Evaluation (CtE) process is led by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE).

The analysis phase varies in length, depending on the evaluation measures agreed by clinicians and patients at the start of each scheme. For example, it may be important to test whether the expected benefits of a treatment have been both achieved, and maintained, at 12 and 24 months; or there may be a need to evaluate whether a treatment, such as a novel cancer treatment, has halted the disease process, or improved overall survival, at three and six months.

The evaluation report of the SIRT focussed CtE programme will be submitted to NHS England by NICE and, should the results recommend, a review of the current clinical commissioning policy position will take place. Given the length of the outcome measures in the study, an interim evaluation report is expected to be available in autumn 2017. It is important to note that the national CtE programme operates alongside NHS England's clinical commissioning policy development process, which

remains open to the consideration of new material and published evidence on clinical and/or cost effectiveness at any time.

## ■ Sickle Cell Diseases

**Mr Barry Sheerman:**

[\[64302\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department is taking to broaden understanding in the medical profession and wider society of sickle cell disease.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Government is working to improve the lives of all those affected by rare diseases, including sickle cell disease, through the implementation of the United Kingdom Strategy for Rare Diseases. The Strategy includes specific recommendations related to raising awareness of rare diseases and genomics across the healthcare professions.

Patients with sickle cell are provided with information about the National Congenital Anomaly and Rare Diseases Registration Service (NCARDRS) which is a registry of rare disease patient information. NCARDRS was established by Public Health England part of implementation of the UK Strategy for Rare Diseases and will support research into rare diseases including the provision of longitudinal data.

**Mr Barry Sheerman:**

[\[64303\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if his Department will promote the provision of oxygen at homes and workplaces for those with sickle cell disease.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Individual treatment decisions should be made by clinicians who are best placed to assess the most appropriate course of action for their patients. Patients receiving oxygen treatment are first assessed by an oxygen clinic that will determine if this treatment is suitable and how the oxygen is best supplied.

## ■ Social Services: Competition

**Chi Onwurah:**

[\[65011\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the level of competition in the care sector.

**Chi Onwurah:**

[\[65060\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that provision in the care sector is provided on the basis of criteria other than the lowest possible cost.

**David Mowat:**

The Care Act 2014 placed duties on local authorities in England to facilitate an effective local market to meet the needs of people in their area. This 'market shaping' duty includes understanding changes in local demand and engaging with care providers to encourage appropriate and quality services. The Department has

supported local authorities with their market related duties through a sector-led approach and has recently brought together guidance and support in an online hub available on GOV.UK.

It is up to local authorities how they spend the extra money coming into the system but we would expect the additional resources to help them commission services that are sustainable, diverse and offer sufficient high quality care and support for people in their areas.

In 2014, the Government introduced tougher inspections for home care services and care homes to clamp down on poor services. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) thoroughly inspects each service and has powers to close those that do not improve and take tough action against owners. This inspection regime is playing a key role in driving up the quality of care. As of February 2017 CQC rates 77% of adult social care services as good or outstanding.

## ■ Tobacco

**Mr Charles Walker:**

[\[65039\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 20 January 2017 to Question 60244, what assessment he has made of the capacity of Public Health England to independently verify the existing scientific findings concerning heated tobacco.

**Mr Charles Walker:**

[\[65041\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 20 January 2017 to Question 60244, what assessment he has made of the toxicological data reviewed by the Committee on Toxicity as constituting independent research that could be included in a wider review by Public Health England on heated tobacco innovations.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

It is for Public Health England (PHE) to make any necessary arrangements to conduct such work.

The Government has asked the Committee on Toxicology to look at the data submitted by companies under the notification system and to give an opinion based on this research on the absolute and relative risk of the products concerned, and to indicate the strength of the evidence on which their opinion is based. PHE will consider this opinion and the results of their wider work on novel tobacco products in providing advice to the Government on this issue.

**Mr Charles Walker:**

[\[65040\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 20 January 2017 to Question 60244, what plans he has to review the Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016 ahead of the UK leaving the EU.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

Until the shape of the final exit agreement is known, the potential scope of such a review will not be clear. However, the Government remains committed to completing

a review of the Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016 by 2020, as required by those regulations.

■ **Tobacco: Retail Trade**

**Craig Mackinlay:**

**[63995]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make an assessment of the cumulative effect of tobacco control measures on small retailers over the last 10 years.

**Nicola Blackwood:**

The Department reviews the impact of tobacco control measures on an ongoing basis, including by statutory requirement, as part of its policy development. The impact of individual measures is also assessed in advance of implementation through impact assessments, which are made publically available.

## HOME OFFICE

■ **Asylum**

**Stuart C. McDonald:**

**[63330]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Answer of 15 April 2016 to Question 34251, how many decisions on international protection her Department made from 1 April 2016 to 31 December 2016 with further submissions lodged under rule 353 of the Immigration Rules in respect of (a) grants on protection grounds, (b) grants on non-protection grounds, (c) decisions to treat as a fresh claim and then refused, (d) further submissions refused and (e) further submissions withdrawn before any decision is made.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Home Office releases national statistics on immigration as part of the transparency agenda. Information on asylum claims lodged and the number of outstanding cases forms part of information already released by the Home Office:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-july-to-september-2016/asylum>

■ **Asylum: Accommodation Centres**

**Mrs Anne Main:**

**[64009]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to reduce the length of stay in initial accommodation in the asylum system.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Home Office aims to move asylum seekers from Initial Accommodation to Dispersed Accommodation within 19 days. Some asylum seekers stay in Initial Accommodation for shorter or longer periods depending on their individual needs; the Home Office closely monitors the length of stay. The Home Office is working closely



with it providers to ensure that there is sufficient accommodation to allow asylum seekers to move on from initial accommodation within an appropriate timescale.

## ■ Asylum: Children

**Margaret Ferrier:**

[\[64957\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent discussions she has had with her (a) Italian and (b) Greek counterparts on resettling unaccompanied asylum-seeking children from those countries under the Dubs amendment provisions.

**Margaret Ferrier:**

[\[65023\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many unaccompanied asylum-seeking children through the Dubs amendment provisions (a) have been resettled in the last and (b) will be resettled in the next 12 months from (i) France, (ii) Italy and (iii) Greece.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

On February 8, the Government announced that we will transfer the specified number of 350 children to the UK under section 67 of the Immigration Act following consultation with local authorities on capacity. In 2016 over 900 unaccompanied asylum seeking children were transferred to the UK, of which over 750 have been transferred from France, of which over 200 came under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016. We will announce in due course the basis on which further 150 children will be transferred from Europe to the UK, where it is in their best interests, under section 67 of the Immigration Act.

The Home Secretary and I have both met with our Italian counterparts recently to discuss how we can support them; discussions are ongoing. The Home Secretary has spoken with her Greek colleagues to discuss the Migration crisis. We have seconded an expert to Greece to support these efforts, and are working in conjunction with the Greek authorities, UNHCR and NGOs to identify children whose best interests may be served by a transfer to the UK under section 67 of the Immigration Act, pending the publication of the basis on which the transfers will be made. In Italy, our long-standing secondee is also working closely with the Italian authorities. Our secondees are also working to support the timely and efficient operation of the Dublin Regulation, in order to ensure that children with close family in the UK can be reunited.

## ■ Cannabis: Research

**Dr Poulter:**

[\[64923\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the oral contribution of the then Minister for Policing, Crime and Criminal Justice on 20 January 2016, Official Report, column 1479, what progress her Department has made on the use of cannabis for the purposes of medicinal research.



**Sarah Newton:**

Access to controlled drugs for legitimate medicinal (or exceptionally for industrial purposes) is permitted through the Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001.

There is a clear regime in place, administered by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), to enable medicines (including those containing controlled drugs such as cannabis) to be developed, licensed and made available for medicinal use to patients in the UK. For example, the cannabis-based medicine 'sativex' has been granted Marketing Authorisation in the UK by the MHRA for the treatment of spasticity due to multiple sclerosis. Sativex was rigorously tested for its safety and efficacy before receiving approval for this application.

The MHRA is open to considering marketing approval applications for other medicinal cannabis products should a product be developed. As happened in the case of sativex, the Home Office will consider issuing a licence to enable trials of any new medicine providing it complies with appropriate ethical approvals.

**■ Cleveland Police Authority****Anna Turley:****[64757]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions have taken place between HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and the Chief Constable of Cleveland Police on the terms of reference for Operation Sacristy; and what representations she has received on potential concerns raised by the Chief Constable of Cleveland Police on those terms of reference during those negotiations.

**Anna Turley:****[64760]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of Operation Sacristy in (a) identifying instances of corruption in Cleveland Police and (b) preventing future such corruption.

**Anna Turley:****[64771]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the anti-corruption strategies that Cleveland Police had in place in accordance with the ACPO police integrity model prior to Operation Sacristy.

**Brandon Lewis:**

Operation Sacristy was an investigation that was conducted independently of the Home Office involving a number of organisations and agencies, including the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC). As such we cannot provide specific detail on this operation or its terms of reference.

In 2014 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) reported on the extent to which Cleveland Police Force had put in place arrangements to ensure its workforce acts with integrity as part of its *Police Integrity and Corruption Programme* available at:

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/cleveland-crime-and-integrity.pdf>

HMIC produced further findings as part of its 2016 Legitimacy programme, which included an assessment of how well the force ensures that its workforce behaves ethically and lawfully. The 2016 Cleveland report is available:

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/peel-police-legitimacy-2016-cleveland.pdf>

**Anna Turley:** [64770]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what measures were in place to ensure that members of the Cleveland Police Authority did not benefit financially from any procurement or outsourcing partnership arrangements instigated by Cleveland Police prior to Operation Sacristy.

**Anna Turley:** [64772]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what measures were in place to ensure that members of the Cleveland Police Authority were required to declare any relevant business interests arising from procurement or outsourcing partnership arrangements instigated by Cleveland Police prior to Operation Sacristy.

**Brandon Lewis:**

The responsibilities in respect of financial management of police authorities and, since their creation by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2012, local policing bodies are set out in legislation and financial Codes of Practice.

Prior to the creation of Police and Crime Commissioners, Police Authorities were required to adhere to the Code of Practice on Financial Management for policing, which was issued in October 2000 under Section 39 of the Police Act 1996. This Code set out the requirements and obligations of police authorities and has since been withdrawn.

The Financial Management Code of Practice (FMCP), published in October 2013, provides clarity around the financial governance arrangements within the police in England and Wales. It sets out the responsibilities of the Chief Finance Officer of the PCC and of the Chief Constable who each have a personal fiduciary duty by virtue of their appointment as the person responsible for proper financial administration under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. This includes requirements and formal powers to safeguard lawfulness and propriety in expenditure.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/252720/fm\\_code\\_of\\_practice.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/252720/fm_code_of_practice.pdf)

**Anna Turley:** [65144]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of whether Cleveland Police conducted any surveillance under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 during Operation Sacristy in such a way as to have potentially compromised that investigation.

**Brandon Lewis:**

Operation Sacristy was an investigation that was conducted independently of the Home Office involving a number of organisations and agencies, including the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC). As such we cannot provide specific detail on this operation.

The Office of Surveillance Commissioners oversee the use of surveillance powers by public authorities under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

**■ Cybercrime****Lyn Brown:**[\[63936\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much of the Police Transformation Fund for 2017-18 has been allocated to bids related to improving police forces' capacity to deal with cybercrime.

**Brandon Lewis:**

The allocation of 2017-18 money through the Police Transformation Fund is not yet complete and there will be further opportunities for forces to bid for money. The Government welcomes proposals that transform the police response to the changing nature of crime, including cyber crime, in line with the National Policing Vision 2025. On 1 November 2016 the Government published the National Cyber Security Strategy, underpinned by transformative investment of £1.9 billion over the next 5 years, including to reduce the impact of cyber crime on the UK and its interests.

**■ Deportation: Cameroon****Tom Brake:**[\[64343\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment the Government has made of the risks associated with returning English speaking failed asylum-seeking Cameroonians to Cameroon.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

In accordance with our international obligations, the UK is required to consider asylum and human rights applications carefully on their individual merits. The Government takes its international responsibilities seriously and will grant protection to those in genuine need.

Each individual assessment of an asylum claim is made against the background of the latest available country of origin information and any relevant caselaw. The country of origin information is based on evidence taken from a range of reliable sources, including reputable media outlets; local, national and international organisations, including human rights organisations; and information from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

The Home Office's country of origin information, used in the asylum and other immigration decision making processes, is published on the gov.uk website. It is kept under constant review and updated periodically. Caseworkers also have access to an

information request service for specific enquiries to deal with particular issues raised in individual applications.

### ■ Domestic Appliances: Fires

**Carolyn Harris:**

[64130]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people aged 65 or over have been involved in fires caused by (a) portable electrical fires and (b) electric blankets in each of the last five years.

**Brandon Lewis:**

All of our published information on incidents attended by fire and rescue services (FRSs) can be found on this page - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fire-statistics-data-tables>

Table 0602 on the above page includes information on fires, fatalities and casualties by source of ignition, grouped by broad categories. Fires relating to portable electric heaters are included within the 'Space heating appliances' category and electric blankets are included within the 'Other electrical appliances' category.

### ■ Emergency Services: Mobile Radios

**Lyn Brown:**

[64071]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans she has to extend the Emergency Services Network (a) to the London Underground and (b) other underground elements of the UK's transport infrastructure.

**Brandon Lewis:**

The Emergency Services Mobile Communications Programme (ESMCP) is working with both Transport for London (TFL), Crossrail, and other bodies across Britain to ensure that there is coverage in underground stations, metro systems, back office areas and tunnels that is as good as, or better than, that offered by the current Airwave solution.

### ■ Entry Clearances

**Mr Andrew Smith:**

[64114]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many family visit visa applications to the UK there were in the year ending 8 July (a) 2014, (b) 2015 and (c) 2016, by (i) overall number of decisions made, (ii) number of family visit visa grants, (iii) number of family visit visa refusals, (iv) number of family visit visa applications withdrawn and (v) number of family visit visa applications which lapsed.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The information on total entry clearance visitor visas granted is released quarterly as part of the Home Office's Immigration Statistics, available at the .GOV.UK website.

## ■ Eritrea: Children

**Patrick Grady:**

[\[64148\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps the Government has taken to (a) ensure that Eritrean minors who are returned from the Shagarab Camp in Sudan to Eritrea, as part of the Khartoum Process, are not subjected to imprisonment and abuse by the Eritrean authorities and (b) put in place work to monitor those minors returned.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

We note reports of actions by the Sudanese Government to return migrants to Eritrea. These are not actions under the Khartoum Process.

We have made clear that we continue to work for improved human rights in Eritrea as a priority. We continue to press the government of Eritrea, including at ministerial level, to take concrete steps to improve its respect for human rights.

We are using our increased engagement to make clear the tangible improvements in Eritrea's human rights record we want to see, including: amending its national service system; fully implementing its own constitution; and cooperating with international human rights bodies. Eritrea is listed as a Human Rights Priority Country in the FCO Annual Human Rights Report 2015.

## ■ Eritrea: Fraud

**Patrick Grady:**

[\[64144\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps the Government has taken to increase capacity building in Eritrea to counter the production and use of forged and fraudulent documents; whether such steps include increasing cooperation with Frontex and Europol; how many British personnel are involved in such activity; and what the cost to the public purse is of that activity.

**Mr Ben Wallace:**

The UK government works closely with law enforcement agencies in the Horn of Africa, to tackle the threat from organised immigration crime. However, the UK Government is not currently involved in any specific programmes to build capacity in Eritrea with regard to forged and fraudulent documents.

## ■ Football: Russia

**Gavin Robinson:**

[\[65143\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with the Foreign Secretary and the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport on safeguarding British football fans travelling to Russia for the 2018 World Cup.

**Brandon Lewis:**

The Home Office is working closely with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport about the safety and security preparations for the 2018 Russia World Cup. In the event of one or more Home

Nations qualifying for the 2018 World Cup finals these preparations will include a range of assessments and actions to minimise the risk to travelling fans.

■ **Furs: Smuggling**

**Mrs Anne Main:**

**[64007]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to prevent illegal fur from being imported into the UK.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

Border Force is responsible for enforcing controls at the border on imports of fur products protected by the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES), Council Regulation (EEC) No 3254/91 and Council Regulation (EC) No 1523/2007 which prohibit the import of fur and fur products from certain animals.

A National Co-operation Agreement between Border Force and DEFRA, the Department with lead policy responsibility for controls on furs and fur skin products, provides a clear framework for co-operation to ensure the effective enforcement of legislation governing the import of plants, animals and products of plant and animal origin at the border.

■ **G4S**

**Louise Haigh:**

**[64028]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with whom her Department consulted before introducing the requirement for G4S officers to wear body cameras when visiting asylum seekers in G4S accommodation.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The use of body cameras by G4S welfare officers was a measure introduced by G4S, and not a requirement of the Home Office. The introduction of body-worn cameras was undertaken in accordance with the terms of the contract between the Home Office and G4S.

■ **Higher Education: Standards**

**Christina Rees:**

**[64209]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 7 February 2017 to Question 62976, on higher education standards, (a) how the current immigration rules for study migration differentiate by institution and (b) what criteria are used to define top universities.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The immigration rules for study migration currently differentiate between further education and higher education institutions in respect of the maximum permissible periods of study, whether students are permitted to work and, if so, for how many hours per week during term time and how institutions are allowed to assess the student's competency in English.

## ■ Home Office: Brexit

**Paul Blomfield:**

[64546]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with the Department for Exiting the European Union on the contents of the White Paper entitled The United Kingdom's exit from and new partnership with the European Union, Cm 9417, published in February 2017.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Home Office is working closely with the Department for Exiting the European Union on all aspects of exiting the European Union.

## ■ Home Office: Equality

**Chris Stephens:**

[R] [64447]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many equality impact assessments have been carried out in the last three years on public service reforms which impact on (a) departmental staff and (b) members of the public; and if she will make a statement.

**Sarah Newton:**

Current legislation does not specify how this information needs to be recorded and it is not a statutory requirement in England to prepare or publish information in a particular format.

The Home Office uses Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) and Policy Equality Statements (PES) to detail equality considerations and demonstrate due regard has been paid in the delivery of our services, in line with our obligations under the Public Sector Equality duty.

Home Office directorates are instructed to complete an EIA or a PES whenever;

- There are changes to existing policy, guidance or operational activity
- There are reviews of existing policy, guidance or operational activity
- There are changes to policies that affect staff during restructuring
- 

## ■ Home Office: Pay

**Philip Davies:**

[64169]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the (a) mean and (b) median pay was for staff in her Department who were (i) male, (ii) female, (iii) white, (iv) from an ethnic minority background, (v) disabled and (vi) non-disabled in the most recent year for which information is available, broken down by (A) full-time and (B) part-time workers.

**Sarah Newton:**

The information requested for the Home Office is below:

FULL TIME	MEAN	MEDIAN
Male	£30,294.11	£26,618.00
Female	£29,261.15	£26,618.00
White	£30,111.76	£26,618.00
Ethnic Minority	£28,501.79	£26,759.00
Disabled	£28,917.44	£26,618.00
Non Disabled	£29,868.94	£26,618.00
PART TIME	MEAN	MEDIAN
Male	£25,899.81	£24,143.00
Female	£25,935.05	£24,143.00
White	£25,834.23	£23,320.00
Ethnic Minority	£25,651.86	£24,143.00
Disabled	£25,228.87	£24,143.00
Non Disabled	£25,959.50	£24,143.00

Data Source: Data View - Office for National Statistics compliant monthly snapshot corporate Human Resources data for Home Office.

Period Covered: Figures are as at 31st March 2016.

Extraction Date: 1st April 2016.

Organisational Coverage: Figures include Home Office.

Employee Coverage: Data is based on headcount of all paid civil servants, who were current at the 31st March 2016 and salary data is held.

■ **Home Office: Recruitment**

**Andrew Selous:**[\[64475\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department operates a ban the box employment policy in respect of ex-offender job applicants with unspent convictions; and how many employees of her Department have unspent convictions.



**Sarah Newton:**

The Home Office operates a ban the box policy in line with Cabinet Office guidance and does not ask for information about convictions at the start of the application process. We do not hold central records on how many employees have unspent convictions.

**■ Home Office: Uber****Mr Iain Wright:**[\[64377\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much her Department has spent on (a) Uber for Business and (b) other Uber transactions since 28 October 2016.

**Sarah Newton:**

No transactions have taken place between the Home Office and Uber since 28 October 2016.

**■ Human Trafficking****Sir Edward Garnier:**[\[64701\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people convicted of human trafficking in the UK who returned to their country of origin to serve their sentence have had their assets (a) in the UK or (b) overseas seized to compensate (i) victims of trafficking, (ii) police forces and (iii) HM Treasury; and if she will make a statement.

**Sarah Newton:**

Data on the number of convicted human traffickers returned to their countries of origin to serve the sentence and whose assets (whether in the UK or overseas) have also been seized to compensate victims, police forces and HM Treasury is not collated centrally.

**Sir Edward Garnier:**[\[64829\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to encourage the seizure of assets of human traffickers at the point of arrest, rather than conviction.

**Sarah Newton:**

The Modern Slavery taskforce, chaired by the Prime Minister, is coordinating activity across law enforcement agencies to ensure that powers available to disrupt, deter and prevent human trafficking are used to best effect.

This includes powers under Section 12 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 to detain vehicles, ships and aircraft from those arrested on suspicion of human trafficking offences and wider powers available under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002.

**■ Immigrants: Detainees**

**Tulip Siddiq:** [64464]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the daily cost to the public purse is of detaining an individual in (a) a short-term holding facility and (b) an immigration removal centre.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Home Office publishes, once a quarter, the average cost per day of immigration detention as part of Immigration Statistics. This can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-july-to-september-2016>

The Home Office is not able to calculate the average daily cost of short term holding facilities and immigration removal centres without incurring disproportionate cost.

**Tulip Siddiq:** [64608]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people detained in an immigration removal centre were subsequently removed or deported from the UK in each year from 2013 to 2017.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The number of people leaving detention, by reason is published in tables dt\_05 and dt\_05\_q in 'Immigration Statistics, July - September 2016', available from the Home Office website at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/572384/detention-q3-2016-tables.ods](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/572384/detention-q3-2016-tables.ods)

**■ Immigration Controls: Overseas Students**

**Christina Rees:** [64257]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many representations she has received from whom on placing limitations on UK universities' ability to bring international students to the UK.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Government engages with a wide variety of organisations, bodies and individuals to discuss all aspects of policy on international students

There is no limit to the number of genuine international students. The Government has no plans to change this.

**■ Immigration Controls: Oxford East**

**Mr Andrew Smith:** [64100]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people have been arrested under immigration powers by Immigration Enforcement Teams in Oxford East constituency over the last six-month period for which figures are available.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

Home Office databases show that 16 arrests under immigration powers were made on Immigration enforcement visits in the Oxford East constituency in the six months from 1 August 2016 to 31 January 2017.

**■ Immigration: EU Nationals****Paul Blomfield:****[64102]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many EU nationals who have been rejected for permanent residence have since been asked to leave the UK in the last 12 months.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Immigration Statistics (table ee\_02\_q) include quarterly data on grants, refusals and invalid applications for Documents Certifying Permanent Residence for EEA nationals.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/572387/eea-q3-2016-tables.ods](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/572387/eea-q3-2016-tables.ods)

**■ Independent Anti-slavery Commissioner****Charlotte Leslie:****[64006]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the Independent Anti-Slavery Commission.

**Sarah Newton:**

The Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner laid his first Annual Report before Parliament on 12 October 2016. The report covered his activities during the period 1 August 2015 to 30 September 2016. Home Office Ministers regularly meet the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner to discuss progress made against the five priorities set out in his Strategic Plan for the period 2015-2017.

**■ Migrant Workers****Dr Tania Mathias:****[64683]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department takes to publicise any changes to migrants' rights to work in the UK to people specifically affected by those changes.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

All changes to the Immigration Rules on work routes are laid before Parliament and guidance is published on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) to explain how migrants will be affected by any revisions to our criteria. We also write to key external partners and stakeholders, including immigration advisors, to communicate the details of any changes being made, where appropriate.

## ■ Offensive Weapons: Sales

**Michelle Donelan:**

[\[65070\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps the Government is taking to control the sale of knives and other prohibited bladed items online.

**Sarah Newton:**

There are strict laws on the sales and marketing of knives which apply whether a knife is sold online or in-store. In addition, selling knives to under 18s (with the exception of folding pocket knives with a cutting edge not exceeding 3 inches) is a criminal offence which carries a maximum sentence of six months in prison. It is also an offence to manufacture, import or sell any item listed on the prohibited offensive weapons list.

The Government continues to work with the police and partners, including retailers to ensure we have strong controls in place to prevent sales of knives to under 18s. In March 2016 we agreed a set of commitments with major retailers to prevent the underage sales of knives more generally in their stores and online. The commitments include a requirement to have robust measures in place to ensure age verification for sales, in-store and online.

## ■ Refugees: Children

**Catherine West:**

[\[64026\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Written Statement of 8 February 2017, HCWS467, what consultations she had on what dates prior to the decision to reduce the number of unaccompanied child refugees taken by the UK.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

In accordance with the Immigration Act 2016 the Government conducted a comprehensive consultation with local authorities across the UK in order to assess capacity for the care of unaccompanied children. On the 13 May 2016 the then Immigration Minister wrote to all local authorities to provide an update on the launch of the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) and to encourage local authorities to participate in all schemes designed for children. On 7 June 2016 the then Immigration Minister, the Minister for Vulnerable Children and Families and the then Minister with responsibility for Syrian Refugees attended a national launch event in London which was attended by local authorities from across the UK.

This was followed by regional events in Leicester, Exeter, Middlesbrough, Leeds, Huntingdon, Bedford, Birmingham, Manchester, Llandidrod Wells, Edinburgh and two further events in London. These events outlined how unaccompanied children arriving from Europe would be placed into local authority care through the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) for unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) and were attended by representatives from over 400 local authorities.

Following this nationwide programme of events, in September 2016 I wrote again to all local authorities in England, Wales and Scotland asking them to confirm how many unaccompanied asylum seeking children they could accommodate under the NTS. Home Office officials also maintained an ongoing dialogue with individual local authorities and regional Strategic Migration Partnerships.

We asked local authorities to consider carefully whether they have the infrastructure and support networks needed to ensure the appropriate care of these unaccompanied children before participating in the NTS

Local authorities told us they had capacity for an additional 400 UASC until the end of the 2016/17 financial year. This is in addition to the unaccompanied children already in local authority care. We estimate that at least 50 of the family reunion cases will require a local authority placement in circumstances where the reunion does not work out

It is for individual local authorities to decide the number of children they are able to accommodate but we continue to work with those not currently participating in the National Transfer Scheme to support them to do so at the earliest opportunity.

**Thangam Debbonaire:**

**[64075]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the written statement of 8 February 2017, HCWS467, what estimate she and her counterparts in Europe have made of the number of unaccompanied child asylum seekers in Europe (a) not in care of national authorities, (b) without official protection and (c) otherwise at large; and if she will make a statement.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The European Commission has recently published the ninth report on relocation and resettlement which includes estimates of the number of unaccompanied children currently in Europe. The report can be found here: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/20170208\\_ninth\\_report\\_on\\_relocation\\_and\\_resettlement\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/20170208_ninth_report_on_relocation_and_resettlement_en.pdf)

The Government has a clear strategy for addressing the migration crisis; we invest significantly in upstream interventions and we resettle the most vulnerable directly from the affected regions, including children. We are clear that we do not want to incentivise perilous journeys across Europe, particularly by the most vulnerable children. That is why we have committed to resettle 20,000 Syrian nationals through the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme and 3,000 of the most vulnerable children and family members under the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme over the course of this Parliament.

The UK has established a £10 million Refugee Children's Fund to support the needs of vulnerable refugee and migrant children arriving in Europe.

**Mr David Burrowes:**

**[64078]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which local authorities (a) provided and (b) offered places under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016; and how many places were so provided or offered by each such authority.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

In accordance with the Immigration Act 2016 the Government conducted a comprehensive consultation with local authorities across the UK in order to assess capacity for the care of unaccompanied children. On the 13 May 2016 the then Immigration Minister wrote to all local authorities to provide an update on the launch of the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) and to encourage local authorities to participate in all schemes designed for children. On 7 June 2016 the then Immigration Minister, the Minister for Vulnerable Children and Families and the then Minister with responsibility for Syrian Refugees attended a national launch event in London which was attended by local authorities from across the UK.

This was followed by regional events in Leicester, Exeter, Middlesbrough, Leeds, Huntingdon, Bedford, Birmingham, Manchester, Llandidrod Wells, Edinburgh and two further events in London. These events outlined how unaccompanied children arriving from Europe would be placed into local authority care through the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) for unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) and were attended by representatives from over 400 local authorities.

Following this nationwide programme of events, in September 2016 I wrote again to all local authorities in England, Wales and Scotland asking them to confirm how many unaccompanied asylum seeking children they could accommodate under the NTS. Home Office officials also maintained an ongoing dialogue with individual local authorities and regional Strategic Migration Partnerships.

We asked local authorities to consider carefully whether they have the infrastructure and support networks needed to ensure the appropriate care of these unaccompanied children before participating in the NTS

Local authorities told us they had capacity for an additional 400 UASC until the end of the 2016/17 financial year. This is in addition to the unaccompanied children already in local authority care. We estimate that at least 50 of the family reunion cases will require a local authority placement in circumstances where the reunion does not work out

It is for individual local authorities to decide the number of children they are able to accommodate but we continue to work with those not currently participating in the National Transfer Scheme to support them to do so at the earliest opportunity.

**Tulip Siddiq:**

**[64092]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps the Government has taken to find out from local authorities what capacity they have to accommodate child refugees.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

In accordance with the Immigration Act 2016 the Government conducted a comprehensive consultation with local authorities across the UK in order to assess capacity for the care of unaccompanied children. On the 13 May 2016 the then Immigration Minister wrote to all local authorities to provide an update on the launch of the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) and to encourage local authorities to participate in all schemes designed for children. On 7 June 2016 the then Immigration Minister, the Minister for Vulnerable Children and Families and the then Minister with responsibility for Syrian Refugees attended a national launch event in London which was attended by local authorities from across the UK.

This was followed by regional events in Leicester, Exeter, Middlesbrough, Leeds, Huntingdon, Bedford, Birmingham, Manchester, Llandidrod Wells, Edinburgh and two further events in London. These events outlined how unaccompanied children arriving from Europe would be placed into local authority care through the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) for unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) and were attended by representatives from over 400 local authorities.

Following this nationwide programme of events, in September 2016 I wrote again to all local authorities in England, Wales and Scotland asking them to confirm how many unaccompanied asylum seeking children they could accommodate under the NTS. Home Office officials also maintained an ongoing dialogue with individual local authorities and regional Strategic Migration Partnerships.

We asked local authorities to consider carefully whether they have the infrastructure and support networks needed to ensure the appropriate care of these unaccompanied children before participating in the NTS

Local authorities told us they had capacity for an additional 400 UASC until the end of the 2016/17 financial year. This is in addition to the unaccompanied children already in local authority care. We estimate that at least 50 of the family reunion cases will require a local authority placement in circumstances where the reunion does not work out

It is for individual local authorities to decide the number of children they are able to accommodate but we continue to work with those not currently participating in the National Transfer Scheme to support them to do so at the earliest opportunity.

**Mr Barry Sheerman:****[64122]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that unaccompanied child refugees do not fall victim to human trafficking.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Government takes child trafficking extremely seriously and is determined to continue to take action to combat it. The Government will publish a safeguarding strategy for unaccompanied asylum seeking children by 1 May 2017. This will bring together a number of strands of ongoing work to develop a more holistic and



comprehensive approach to safeguarding unaccompanied asylum seeking and refugee children.

In addition, on 16 February 2017 the Home Secretary announced a range of measures to protect children including unaccompanied asylum seeking children, from the risk of trafficking. These measures included the launch of the Child Trafficking Protection Fund which will provide nearly £2.2m for projects protecting vulnerable children in the UK and overseas who are at risk of trafficking. In addition, the Government made clear its intention to roll out Independent Child Trafficking Advocates (ICTAs) in Wales, Hampshire and Greater Manchester ahead of full national rollout. ICTAs will provide specialist support and act in the best interests of trafficked children.

**Will Quince:**

**[64924]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to proactively identify unaccompanied refugee children and vulnerable families in Greece and Italy who can be brought to join family members in the UK; and what use her Department has made of the discretionary powers under the Dublin III Regulations to take charge of such children and families.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

We are working with the Greek and Italian authorities, UNHCR and non-governmental organisations to identify children from Greece and Italy who may qualify for transfer to the UK. We have seconded an expert to Greece to support these efforts, in addition to our long-standing secondees in Italy. We have established a dedicated Home Office Dublin Regulation team to lead on family reunion cases for unaccompanied children.

We will consider all requests from Member States, including Greece and Italy, to take responsibility for unaccompanied asylum seeking children or other family members where there are grounds to do so under the Dublin Regulation.

## ■ Slavery

**Diana Johnson:**

**[64264]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to paragraph 1.44 of the 2016 Report of the Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group on Modern Slavery, which six police forces recorded no instances of modern slavery crime in 2015-16.

**Sarah Newton:**

Modern slavery was introduced as a separate recording category for police recorded crime data in April 2015, covering all forms of human trafficking, slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour.

At the time of publication of the 2016 report by the Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group on Modern Slavery, six of the 43 territorial police forces had recorded no modern slavery crimes in the year to March 2016: Durham, Dyfed-Powys, Gwent, North Wales, City of London and South Wales. North Wales subsequently submitted



revised data showing that the force had recorded 5 modern slavery crimes during this period.

### ■ **Textiles: Slavery**

**Mr Barry Sheerman:**

[\[64128\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to encourage transparency within supply chains for the textile industry to ensure that workers are not victims of modern slavery.

**Sarah Newton:**

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 includes a ground breaking transparency in supply chains provision, which requires large commercial organisations operating in the UK to set out the steps they have taken to ensure there is no modern slavery in their business or supply chains. This includes large businesses in the textile industry.

### ■ **Visas: Overseas Students**

**John Pugh:**

[\[64851\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the merits of short-term study visas for EU citizens wishing to study in the UK after the UK leaves the EU.

**John Pugh:**

[\[64852\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of this effect of any changes to the short-term study visa system arising from the UK's decision to leave the EU, on the number of foreign nationals seeking to study English.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

We are working across Government to identify and develop options to shape our future immigration system.

Parliament will have an important role to play in this and we will ensure businesses and communities have the opportunity to contribute their views.

## INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### ■ **Churches: Middle East**

**Michael Tomlinson:**

[\[64101\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to fund churches running social action programmes in the Middle East.

**Michael Tomlinson:**

[\[64124\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what progress her Department is making in widening the range of NGOs that support religious minorities in the Middle East.

**Rory Stewart:**

All our support in the Middle East is based on an assessment of need to ensure that vulnerable people are not discriminated against on any grounds, including religion. In the Middle East our support is focused on partners who are operating at significant scale and who have a track record of delivering aid at scale in complex situations. We do not directly fund small organisations such as churches.

Faith-based organisations are eligible to access funding mechanisms to which DFID is a major contributor, such as the Humanitarian Pooled Funds in Iraq and Syria, and we encourage them to do so. We invite a range of NGOs, including Christian organisations, to meet us regularly at DFID to exchange views and discuss the situation in the region.

**■ Department for International Development: Brexit****Paul Blomfield:**[\[64547\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what discussions she has had with the Department for Exiting the European Union on the contents of the White Paper entitled The United Kingdom's exit from and new partnership with the European Union, Cm 9417, published in February 2017.

**James Wharton:**

DFID and other Departments, are working closely with the Department for Exiting the European Union to build a detailed understanding of how withdrawal will affect domestic policies.

**■ Department for International Development: Ministerial Policy Advisers****Stephen Doughty:**[\[65148\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many civil service staff by grade work in her Department's Special Advisers' Office.

**Rory Stewart:**

DFID's Special Advisers' Office is supported by 2 Civil Servants at Grade B2/Executive Officer. These staff members also perform broader roles within the Secretary of State's office and DFID's Top Management Group.

**■ Department for International Development: Pay****Philip Davies:**[\[64170\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what the (a) mean and (b) median pay was for staff in her Department who were (i) male, (ii) female, (iii) white, (iv) from an ethnic minority background, (v) disabled and (vi) non-disabled in the most recent year for which information is available, broken down by (A) full-time and (B) part-time workers.

**Rory Stewart:**

The (a) mean and (b) median pay was for staff in DFID who were (i) male, (ii) female, (iii) white, (iv) from an ethnic minority background, (v) disabled and (vi) non-disabled in the most recent year for which information is available, broken down by (A) full-time and (B) part-time workers is as follows:

	MEAN PAY		MEDIAN PAY	
	Part Time	Full Time	Part Time	Full Time
Male	£51,070	£50,804	£54,250	£53,430
Female	£47,728	£47,060	£54,750	£51,119
White	£47,126	£50,146	£53,430	£52,901
BAME	£48,865	£47,594	£54,250	£52,901
Staff who have recorded that they have a disability	£49,300	£45,594	£42,830	£43,718
Staff who have recorded that they do not have a disability.	£48,535	£49,299	£54,250	£52,901

This information is based on the information we hold about staff in our HR Systems which they record voluntarily.

■ **Department for International Development: Press**

**Stephen Doughty:**[\[65149\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, if she will publish a list of the (a) speeches given outside Parliament, (b) articles published and (c) media interviews given by each Minister of her Department, on her Department's areas of responsibility since the appointment of each of those Ministers.

**Rory Stewart:**

Ministerial speeches are published on [Gov.uk](http://Gov.uk). A list of articles published and media interviews given by each Minister is not available centrally and could only be collated at disproportionate cost.

■ **Department for International Development: Public Expenditure**

**Mrs Anne Main:**[\[64022\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, with reference to the National Audit Office's report entitled, Investigation into the Department's approach to

tackling fraud, published on 9 February 2017, whether her Department plans to change its commitment to spend at least 50 per cent of its budget in fragile states and regions.

**Rory Stewart:**

The Government intends to fulfil its commitment to spend 50% of DFID's budget in fragile states and regions.

This spend is subject to rigorous measures to tackle fraud across DFID's budget, as noted in the National Audit Office's report.

■ **Department for International Development: Recruitment**

**Andrew Selous:**

[\[64476\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether her Department operates a ban the box employment policy in respect of ex-offender job applicants with unspent convictions; and how many employees of her Department have unspent convictions.

**Rory Stewart:**

DFID supports fair chance recruitment practices and uses the Civil Service wide recruitment system to advertise all jobs. This fully complies with the 'Ban the Box' policy.

The Cabinet Office mandated Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) requires all new recruits to declare unspent criminal convictions. Employees have a continued obligation to inform us of any criminal convictions received during employment with DFID.

To comply with our obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998, we do not routinely store this information and are unable to confirm how many employees have unspent convictions.

■ **Department for International Development: Uber**

**Mr Iain Wright:**

[\[64378\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much her Department has spent on (a) Uber for Business and (b) other Uber transactions since 28 October 2016.

**Rory Stewart:**

DFID does not have any contracts with Uber.

■ **Department for International Development: Visits Abroad**

**Stephen Doughty:**

[\[65147\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how many overseas visits to DFID-funded (a) bilateral and (b) multilateral programmes were made by each Minister of her Department in each of the last six years.

**Rory Stewart:**

DFID Ministers have visited a range of countries overseas since their appointment. Information on Ministerial travel and meetings with external organisations is published as part of DFID's quarterly transparency return on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

**■ Developing Countries: Educational Exchanges****Susan Elan Jones:**[\[64654\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what assessment her Department has made of the effectiveness of (a) the Global School Partnership programme and (b) the Connecting Classrooms programme.

**Rory Stewart:**

The Global School Partnerships Programme (2003-12) was externally assessed by the National Foundation for Educational Research in 2011 and found to have a positive impact on the awareness, attitude and response of pupils in the UK towards global issues.

The 2012-15 phase of Connecting Classrooms was judged by an independent evaluation to be a success. Over 5,000 schools in more than 40 countries took part in joint projects and exchange visits and 18,000 teachers around the world benefitted from professional development training.

The current phase of Connecting Classrooms is being assessed annually.

**■ Developing Countries: Electricity****Mr Virendra Sharma:**[\[64236\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 27 January 2017 to Question 61007 on developing countries: electricity, what action she has taken in light of the conclusion of the report by Bloomberg New Energy Finance that new utility-scale wind and solar power are, in most cases, more expensive than coal and gas-fired power in her Department's 28 priority countries.

**Rory Stewart:**

DFID's approach is to look carefully at a range of evidence on energy costs when deciding how to support partner countries with their energy strategies. The Bloomberg New Energy Finance (BNEF) report referred to is one such source of evidence. Other sources include a more recent publication from BNEF as well as World Bank research. This more recent evidence indicates that utility-scale renewables – in particular solar – is increasingly cost-competitive with gas-fired power even in DFID focus countries.

DFID will always help countries to deliver a mixed energy portfolio suited to their needs. DFID's recently launched Economic Development Strategy sets out our approach to energy as part of our overall approach to inclusive economic development.

**Mr Virendra Sharma:**

**[64334]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 17 January 2017 to Question 61007, what the evidential basis is for the conclusion that there has been a rapid reduction in the costs of renewable technologies, especially solar, since 2015; and what the current presumed levelised costs of electricity generation from (a) gas, (b) coal, (c) solar, (d) onshore wind and (e) offshore wind on which her Department's decisions on support for energy projects are currently based are in each of the countries in which such energy projects have been approved.

**Rory Stewart:**

There is clear evidence that the price of renewables, especially solar, generation is falling rapidly. A Bloomberg New Energy Finance (BNEF) study from June 2016 shows that solar generation prices have fallen by 47% over five years. A World Bank-led auction for utility-scale solar generation in Zambia in mid-2016 received winning prices of US\$6c-8c/kWh. This is in many cases comparable with gas-fired power generation.

The levelised cost of electricity (LCOE) from different sources varies significantly by country and over time. When deciding how to support partner governments' energy strategies we look at publicly available estimates of LCOEs for different technologies but also consider environmental costs.

#### ■ **Developing Countries: Non-governmental Organisations**

**Ann Clwyd:**

**[64073]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether her Department tracks the proposal and adoption of legislation in developing countries that may affect the operation of NGOs.

**Rory Stewart:**

In November 2016 DFID published its Civil Society Partnership Review which recognises that civil society is facing unprecedented pressure around the world. It commits to robustly defending the rights of civil society and standing alongside civil society to prevent encroachments to freedom of expression and association.

DFID works closely with the Foreign & Commonwealth Office and other development partners to monitor the human rights situation in its focus countries.

#### ■ **Developing Countries: Older People**

**Kate Osamor:**

**[64203]**

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether the absence of a reference to age in the Bilateral Development Review commitment to Leave No One Behind represents a change of policy to no longer include older people in the Government's implementation of that commitment.

**Priti Patel:**

There has been no change in DFID's policy on older people. In implementing the commitment to Leave No One Behind DFID is focusing on understanding, including and empowering those at risk of being left behind. This includes collecting age disaggregated data to better understand the needs of older people and how DFID programmes are reaching them.

**Fairtrade Initiative****Jim Shannon:**[\[64574\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps the Government is taking to raise public awareness of Fair Trade.

**Rory Stewart:**

The Government is committed to supporting Fairtrade around the world. Over the last six years, the Department for International Development (DfID) has provided £18 million to Fairtrade International to support their work and strengthen the global Fairtrade system. This includes Fairtrade producer and worker organizations that are the drivers of inclusive economic, environmental and social development in their communities around the world. DfID continues to actively engage with Fairtrade on a variety of projects and campaigns, such as the forthcoming Fairtrade Fortnight from 27 February to 12 March. Minister Stewart will be speaking at the All Party Parliamentary Group event marking the launch of Fairtrade Fortnight where he will meet Fairtrade campaigners from the UK and a Fairtrade coffee producer from Tanzania.

**International Assistance****Ronnie Cowan:**[\[63983\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps the Government is taking to increase cash-based approaches to international aid.

**Rory Stewart:**

Decisions about the type and level of support for cash based approaches depend on a number of factors, including the maturity and coverage of cash transfer programmes, our objectives, value for money, burden share with other donors, and current and projected fiscal space of partner governments.

**Occupied Territories: Non-governmental Organisations****Julie Elliott:**[\[64773\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what support her Department is giving to non-governmental organisations promoting human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

**Rory Stewart:**

DFID's bilateral programme in the Occupied Palestinian Territories currently funds human rights NGOs providing legal assistance to Palestinians, through a multi-donor access to justice programme implemented by UN agencies.

**■ Oman: Desalination****Stephen Gethins:**[\[64666\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 25 January 2017 to Question 63588, what assessment her Department has made of the potential merits of providing support to the Middle East Desalination Research Centre in Oman.

**Rory Stewart:**

DFID has not specifically assessed the value of providing support to the Middle East Desalination Research Centre. Desalination is not a focus area for DFID's water, health and sanitation portfolio and given the scale of private sector investment in this area, we do not have a strong comparative advantage that would support our involvement.

**■ Overseas Aid****Mr Roger Godsiff:**[\[64625\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what proportion of the Government's overseas development aid budget is spent on schemes to support economic growth in middle-income countries.

**Rory Stewart:**

Around four per cent of UK official development assistance (ODA) was spent to support economic growth in middle-income countries in 2015.

**Mr Roger Godsiff:**[\[64626\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent steps the Government has taken to ensure that its overseas development aid is targeted at the world's poorest people.

**Rory Stewart:**

The 2015 UK Aid Strategy set out how the Government will strive to eliminate extreme poverty by 2030. This means supporting the world's poorest people to ensure that every person has access to basic needs, including prioritising the rights of girls and women.

The Bilateral Development Review, published on 1 December 2016, set out what DFID will achieve over the next four years to deliver the UK's commitment to reaching the poorest and most excluded people.



## ■ Refugees: Females

**Julie Elliott:**

[\[64258\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to protect women refugees from exploitation and sexual violence.

**Rory Stewart:**

DFID is building on existing work to address new challenges facing female refugees, including a new Women and Girls Protection Fund to protect women and girls on the move in Libya and Europe. The fund will provide over 68,000 refugees, asylum seekers and migrants with psychosocial support, medical care and specialist case-workers for potential victims of gender-based violence and trafficking.

UNHCR leads international action to protect refugees worldwide, and is a signatory to the UK led Call to Action on Preventing Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies.

## ■ Somaliland: Humanitarian Aid

**Stephen Doughty:**

[\[65146\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, how much funding her Department has provided to tackle the drought and food shortages in Somaliland (a) bilaterally and (b) multilaterally, by agency or organisation in the last six months.

**James Wharton:**

The table below provides a breakdown of this funding by implementing partner.

### DFID FUNDING IN SOMALIA FOR JULY – DECEMBER 2016, BY PARTNER AGENCY

Partner	Amount £GBP
<b>Multilaterals</b>	.
World Food Programme (WFP)	£6.1million
UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)	£5.5 million
UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)	£5.5 million
UNICEF	£4.4 million
International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC)	£3 million
Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)	£250,000
<b>Bilateral</b>	.
Norwegian Refugee Council(NRC)	£8.7 million
NRC led NGO consortium (NRC, SCI, IRC, Concern, Cesvi)	£3.2 million

**DFID FUNDING IN SOMALIA FOR JULY – DECEMBER 2016, BY PARTNER AGENCY**

Save the Children(SCI) led NGO consortium (SCI, ACF, Concern)	£1.4 million
Galway Development Services International (GDSI)	£380,000
International NGO Safety Organisation (INSO)	£270,000
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>£38.7 million</b>

**INTERNATIONAL TRADE**■ **Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement****Mr Roger Godsiff:**[\[65089\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 13 January 2017 to Question 59272, whether a date has been set for Parliament to vote on the ratification of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement.

**Greg Hands:**

The UK Government welcomed the vote to approve the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement in the European Parliament on 15 February. Subject to Canadian ratification, this will enable the agreement to be provisionally applied in spring this year. Once the agreement has been provisionally applied, the UK will move towards ratifying the agreement, but the exact timetable has not yet been decided.

■ **Department for International Trade: Security****Jon Trickett:**[\[64317\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 8 February 2017 to Question 62539, how many security passes are issued on behalf of his Department by the Departmental Security teams in the buildings in which they are based to people who are not employees of his Department.

**Greg Hands:**

At present, the Department for International Trade (DIT) operates within shared buildings, in which it does not represent the majority tenant. Therefore, the responsibility for issuing passes does not fall directly to DIT but to the local Departmental Security teams who are responsible for the building.

Passes are issued to contractors, secondees, public sector workers (e.g. from Non-Departmental Public Bodies) or Crown Servants, such as Police or Military forces, as well as to Civil Servants where it is necessary and appropriate to do so. This enables teams to work flexibly and effectively to best support business needs. Use of all

security passes is underpinned by a strong physical security focus, access control procedures and technologies, clear processes and assurance mechanisms that enable an integrated workforce to operate in a secure manner.

DIT does not separate the information between these defined categories. Therefore, we do not record them in this way. Strict processes are followed before a pass is authorised and ultimately revoked.

## ■ **Developing Countries: Poverty**

**Diana Johnson:**

[\[64637\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps his Department is taking to reduce poverty in developing countries through its international trade policy.

**Greg Hands:**

The UK remains committed to ensuring developing countries can reduce poverty through trading opportunities; helping them to leave aid dependency behind and become our trading partners of the future.

The Government is currently reviewing its trade policy as the UK prepares to leave the EU.

The Department for International Trade is working hand in hand with the Department for International Development to ensure that development and global prosperity are at the heart of UK trade policy and shape our future trade arrangements with developing countries.

## ■ **Furs: Smuggling**

**Mrs Anne Main:**

[\[64023\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of regulations to prevent dog and cat fur from entering the UK.

**Greg Hands:**

The import, export and placing on the market of cat and dog fur, and products made from such fur is prohibited under EU legislation (Council Regulation (EC) No 1523/2007). As part of our exit from the EU and through the Great Repeal Bill, these controls will be carried over into UK law.

Border Force will act to enforce the legislation if illegal cat and dog fur products are detected during the course of carrying out other customs import and export checks, or following receipt of specific intelligence. In these cases, samples are taken and forensically examined. Consignments are seized where they are confirmed to contain cat or dog fur.

## ■ Higher Education

**Dr Roberta Blackman-Woods:**

[\[65216\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, if he will make it his policy to prioritise (a) UK higher education and (b) higher education distance learning in the Government's future trade export strategy.

**Mark Garnier:**

The Government recognises the benefit that education exports bring to the UK and continues to support its growth - it is our wish to maximise opportunities for UK providers. We also recognise the valuable contribution universities make to improving lives around the world. We will be doing more to promote the UK higher education offer, particularly in Trans National Education; and the Department for International Trade's dedicated education team has enhanced its focus with the imminent arrival of a secondee from the sector. We will continue to collaborate with the higher education sector to support development of their international business.

## JUSTICE

## ■ Carillion

**Jo Stevens:**

[\[65009\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether her Department carried out an impact assessment in the effect outsourcing repairs and maintenance in prisons to Carillion would have on the amount of work available to prisoners.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

Owing to the variability of work available to prisoners across over 100 individual prison establishments, it was not possible to undertake an impact assessment on the effect on the amount of work available to prisoners prior to the contracts being implemented.

However, we have ensured that the contract with Carillion requires them to maximise the use of prisoner labour, subject to local security strategies agreed with the Governors for individual establishments. The specification for Prisoner Labour and Prison Industries in the contract requires Carillion to utilise as much prisoner labour in the delivery of services as was used prior to the contract coming into force.

Under the maintenance contract Carillion are told how many prisoners are available for work on a daily basis and are required to provide the necessary support and supervision resource to oversee the work of the prisoners.

## ■ Coroners

**Deidre Brock:**

[\[64319\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when the Government plans to publish its response to the post-implementation review of the coroner reforms implemented through the Coroners and Justice Act 2009.

**Dr Phillip Lee:**

The call for evidence and survey elements of the post-implementation review of the 2013 coroner reforms were concluded at the end of 2015. We aim to complete our analysis and publish a report in due course.

**■ Crime: Victims****Jess Phillips:**[\[64619\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether she plans to collect evidence on the effectiveness of the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime.

**Jess Phillips:**[\[64620\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whom her Department plans to consult for the 12 month review of the working of the Code of Practice for the Victims of Crime.

**Dr Phillip Lee:**

We have made positive steps to improve the experience of victims, to reduce unnecessary stress and lessen the emotional turmoil of attending court. But we have been clear that more must be done. That is why we will set out our strategy for victims within 12 months, including bringing forward any appropriate legislation.

We are actively considering how compliance with the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime (Victims' Code) might be improved and monitored. We are also exploring how those responsible for delivery of rights and entitlements might be better held accountable for any failings.

**■ Crimes Against the Person: Bail****Philip Davies:**[\[64139\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what proportion of people charged with common assault have been granted bail before conviction in Magistrates' Courts in each of the last 10 years.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

The proportion of offenders convicted at magistrates' courts for offences of common assault and battery who were bailed prior to their conviction in England and Wales from 2005 to 2015 can be viewed in the table. Pre-conviction remand status information is not available for years prior to 2013.

A breakdown of pre-conviction remand status for offenders convicted at magistrates' courts prior to 2013 cannot be provided without disproportionate cost because the data held centrally for earlier years is estimated and cannot be used to separately identify pre-conviction remand status.

Court proceedings data for 2016 are planned for publication in summer 2017.

**Attachments:**

1. Proportion of offenders convicted - common assault [Copy of Copy of PQ 64139\_FINAL.xlsx]

**■ Dangerous Driving**

**Edward Argar:** [\[64629\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of reviewing the sentencing guidelines applicable to offences involving deaths caused by driving.

**Sir Oliver Heald:**

Sentencing guidelines are issued by the independent Sentencing Council for England and Wales.

As the government are actively considering offences and penalties in this area the Council have postponed their review of sentencing guidelines for causing death by driving.

**■ Domestic Violence: Criminal Proceedings**

**Nusrat Ghani:** [\[64265\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to her speech on criminal justice reform of 13 February 2017 at the Centre for Social Justice, what proportion of domestic abuse victims were cross-examined by their attacker in the most recent year for which data is available.

**Dr Phillip Lee:**

MoJ does not collect data on the number of domestic abuse victims who were cross-examined by their attacker. However, the Government has recently confirmed it will be legislating to prevent abusers from questioning their victims in person in family proceedings.

**■ Domestic Violence: Females**

**Philip Davies:** [\[64141\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what proportion of women convicted of domestic violence-related offences are assessed as being at (a) low, (b) medium and (c) high risk of reoffending.

**Dr Phillip Lee:**

Information on the risk of re-offending for all women convicted of domestic violence related offences is not available as there is no single offence of domestic violence

**■ Insurance: Fees and Charges**

**Yvonne Fovargue:** [\[65094\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what plans she has to require insurers to pass on to consumers the potential savings arising from the proposed reform to whiplash and small claims; and whether she plans to impose penalties on those insurers that do not comply.

**Sir Oliver Heald:**

Leading insurers have already, following publication of the Government's consultation in November, committed to pass on savings from the reforms to consumers through lower premiums.

Motor insurance is intensely competitive and insurance companies will have little choice but to pass on savings or risk being priced out of the market. The Government will monitor the industry's reaction to the reforms announced on 23 February and will consider further action if required.

**Judges: Training****Oliver Dowden:****[64024]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether the Government has plans to train judges to specialise in the protected characteristic of religion or belief.

**Sir Oliver Heald:**

The Ministry of Justice does not oversee judicial training; the Lord Chief Justice does through the Judicial College.

The issue of religion arises as a factor in a range of cases heard across many jurisdictions. Judges make reasoned and independent decisions based on the evidence presented. If religion is an issue in deciding a case, the parties have the opportunity to present evidence about that to the judge.

**Ben Howlett:****[64754]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if she will take steps to ensure that judges in family courts receive training on preventing gender bias.

**Sir Oliver Heald:**

The Ministry of Justice does not oversee judicial training; the Lord Chief Justice does through the Judicial College.

The Judicial College provides awareness training of unconscious bias and the subject has been included in family law training. The Judicial College publishes the Equal Treatment Bench Book, which contains information about protected and other characteristics and includes a section on gender equality. This is publicly available at: <https://www.judiciary.gov.uk/publications/equal-treatment-bench-book/> and enables judges to be sensitive to all issues of equal treatment, and to treat people fairly in proceedings.

**Legal Costs****Mr Barry Sheerman:****[64306]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment her Department has made of the effect of the abolition of the Defence Cost Order on people who have self-funded the cost of their legal defence at trial.

**Sir Oliver Heald:**

In 2012, the Government changed the law to restrict reimbursement of the legal costs of defendants who have been acquitted of a criminal offence. Defendants who were entitled to legal aid (i.e. those facing trial in the Crown Court) but chose to pay privately, were no longer able to recover legal costs. Where legal costs were allowed, e.g. in the magistrates' court, they were limited to the equivalent of legal aid rates. A post-implementation review of the legal aid changes made by the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 will be conducted by April 2018.

**■ Magistrates' Courts: Hammersmith****Andy Slaughter:**[\[64206\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what discussions her Department had with property developers or real estate agents on the Hammersmith Magistrates' Court site between 1 January 2014 and 8 February 2017.

**Sir Oliver Heald:**

HM Courts & Tribunals Service officials have held discussions with real estate agents regarding the Hammersmith Magistrates' Court site for the purpose of understanding its potential to deliver homes and estimated value. No discussions have taken place with property developers.

London has the densest concentration of magistrates' courts in the country and we are confident access to justice can be maintained and significant savings for re-investment in our court reforms can be achieved through this closure.

Hammersmith Magistrates' Court is expected to close by the end of October 2017.

**■ Medway Secure Training Centre****Jo Stevens:**[\[64964\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many children were held at Medway Secure Training Centre by (a) age, (b) gender and (c) ethnicity on the latest date for which figures are available.

**Dr Phillip Lee:**

Tables 1 and 2 below set out the number and proportion of young people held at Medway Secure Training Centre by age and ethnic group on the 30 December 2016.

The majority of young people held at Medway Secure Training Centre on the 30 December 2016 were male. However, the figures have not been presented to minimise the risk of disclosing the identity of these children and young people.

Table 1: The population at Medway Secure Training Centre by age, 30 December 2016



AGE (YEARS)	15 OR UNDER*	16	17	TOTAL
No. of young people	5	6	8	19
% of total	26%	32%	42%	100%

\* The figures for those aged 15 and under have been grouped together to minimise the risk of disclosure.

Table 2: The population at Medway Secure Training Centre by ethnicity, 30 December 2016

ETHNICITY	BAME OR OTHER*	WHITE	TOTAL
No. of young people	8	11	19
% of total	42%	58%	100%

\* The figures for those in the Black, Asian, Mixed and Other ethnic groups have been grouped together to minimise the risk of disclosure.

#### Notes

- These figures are taken from a snapshot of the custodial population in the secure estate for children and young people. This data relates to the snapshot date of 30th December 2016.
- This is monthly snapshot data and is taken on the last Friday of the month or first Friday of the following month, depending on which is nearer to the actual month end.
- These figures are provisional and will be finalised in the Youth Justice Annual Statistics Publication for 2016/17, which is planned to be published in January 2018.

#### Data source

- These figures have been drawn from an administrative IT system called the eAsset database, which is the booking system used by the Youth Justice Board to place young people into custody.
- As with any large scale recording system, the data is subject to possible errors with data entry and processing and figures can be subject to change over time.

#### ■ Medway Secure Training Centre: Staff

**Jo Stevens:**

**[64963]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many staff work at Medway Secure Training Centre; and how many new members of staff have commenced working at that

centre since the National Offender Management Service took over the contract for running that centre from G4S in July 2016.

**Dr Phillip Lee:**

A total of 145 staff currently work at Medway Secure Training Centre. Eight new staff members have commenced working at the centre since National Offender Management took over the running of the centre.

■ **Ministry of Justice: Pay**

**Philip Davies:**

**[64172]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the (a) mean and (b) median pay was for staff in her Department who were (i) male, (ii) female, (iii) white, (iv) from an ethnic minority background, (v) disabled and (vi) non-disabled in the most recent year for which information is available, broken down by (A) full-time and (B) part-time workers.

**Dr Phillip Lee:**

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) publish much of this information by each Civil Service organisation as part of their annual release of Civil Service Statistics. The latest data set from 2016 can be found on the ONS website:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/publicsectorpersonnel/bulletins/civilservicestatistics/2016>

Departmental breakdowns of the ethnicity and disability pay gaps are not published through the ONS and are not publicly available.

■ **Oakhill Secure Training Centre**

**Jo Stevens:**

**[64962]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when she plans to let the contract to run Oakhill Secure Training Centre; and who the preferred bidder is for that contract.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

The Ministry awarded a PFI Contract, for the design, construction, management and financing of a Secure Training Centre at Milton Keynes (Oakhill Secure Training Centre), to STC (Milton Keynes) Ltd in May 2003. This contract is due to complete in June 2029.

STC (Milton Keynes) Ltd has a subcontract with G4S Care and Justice Services (UK) Limited for the operation of the site. G4S are undertaking a process to sell this contract as part of their announcement in February 2016 to withdraw from the children's services market. As per previous answers to the house, the Ministry has been in regular contact with G4S and other relevant bodies. This engagement includes monitoring the progress of the potential sale to ensure it does not jeopardise the delivery of services at the Oakhill Secure Training Centre.

Given this is a G4S commercial undertaking, the stage that their process is at and the identity of any preferred buyer, that may be arrived at through that process, are

covered by contractual confidentiality considerations and the Ministry is unable to share this information.

## ■ **Offenders: Voluntary Work**

**Susan Elan Jones:**

**[64653]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether the Government plans to introduce a volunteering programme for ex-offenders.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

Information and guidance to maximise the use of volunteers, including ex-offenders and serving prisoners, has been commissioned by the Ministry of Justice and was published in July 2016 by Clinks, the umbrella group for voluntary organisations working with offenders and their families. The Department is committed to continuing and increasing the use of volunteers, and encouraging appropriate volunteering opportunities for ex-offenders within rehabilitation services and elsewhere.

## ■ **Personal Independence Payment: Appeals**

**Helen Jones:**

**[65086]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average waiting time is for an appeal against a mandatory reconsideration of a decision on personal independence payments in (a) Warrington, (b) the North West and (c) England.

**Sir Oliver Heald:**

The information requested is set out below.

REGION	AVERAGE WAITING TIME FOR THE DISPOSAL OF PIP[1] APPEALS, FROM RECEIPT TO OUTCOME [2], BETWEEN APRIL AND SEPTEMBER 2016 (THE LATEST PERIOD FOR WHICH FIGURES ARE AVAILABLE).
St Helens[3]	17 weeks
North West	18 weeks
England	15 weeks

Social Security and Child Support (SSCS) data are attributed to the hearing venue nearest to the appellant's home address. If the case goes to an oral hearing, the location of the tribunal hearing venue is normally nearest to the appellant's home address. We cannot retrieve data based on the appellant's actual address, but can produce reports detailing the numbers of cases that were dealt with at one of our regional centres or heard at a specific venue.

<sup>1</sup> Personal Independence Payment (New Claim Appeals) which replaced Disability Living Allowance was introduced on 8 April 2013, also includes Personal Independence Claims (Reassessments)

<sup>2</sup> Outcome: All appeals disposed of includes those appeals disposed of with and without a tribunal hearing.

<sup>3</sup> Covers all appeals heard at the St Helens venue, which is the venue which will contain many of the appellants from the Warrington area, as cases are usually registered to the venue nearest to the appellant's home address.

Although care is taken when processing and analysing the data, the details are subject to inaccuracies inherent in any large-scale case management system and are the best data available.

The data are a subset of official statistics extracted from the case management system on a different date.

#### ■ Personal Independence Payment: Inverclyde

**Ronnie Cowan:**

**[64129]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many successful appeals against Personal Independence Payments awards there were in Inverclyde in (a) 2015 and (b) 2016.

**Sir Oliver Heald:**

Information about the volume and outcomes of appeals to the First-tier Tribunal (Social Security and Child Support) is published on gov.uk and the following table is a further breakdown of that information.

YEAR	NUMBER OF PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE PAYMENT APPEALS IN FAVOUR OF THE APPELLANT IN THE <sup>1</sup> GREENOCK VENUE.
January – December 2015	83
January – September 2016 (the latest period for which figures are available)	114

<sup>1</sup> Greenock venue, includes all cases heard at this venue. Appeals are attributed to the hearing venue nearest to the appellants' home address and for those living in Inverclyde this is the Greenock Venue.

SSCS data are registered to the venue nearest to the appellants' home address. Data based on the appellants' actual address cannot be retrieved but reports can be produced detailing the numbers of cases that were dealt with at one of our Regional centres or venues.

Although care is taken when processing and analysing the data, the details are subject to inaccuracies inherent in any large-scale case management system and are the best data that are available.

## ■ Personal Injury: Compensation

**Kate Green:** [\[64116\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many insurance companies have given assurances to the Government that financial savings will be passed to consumers as a result of her Department's proposed reforms to (a) whiplash claims and (b) the small claims limit.

**Kate Green:** [\[64117\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what analysis the Government has undertaken of evidence provided by the insurance industry on fraudulent whiplash claims.

**Kate Green:** [\[64118\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate the Government has made of the potential savings to the insurance industry following implementation of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 (Part 2).

**Kate Green:** [\[64119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate the Government has made of the potential increase in the number of litigants in person as a result of its proposed reforms to (a) whiplash claims and (b) the small claims limit.

**Sir Oliver Heald:**

Following publication of the Government's consultation in November the Association of British Insurers confirmed that the industry was committed to passing on the savings from the proposed reforms. Leading insurance companies including Aviva, Axa and LV= have also publicly committed to pass on savings.

The impact assessment published at the same time as the consultation document sets out the evidence used to assess the impacts of the Government's proposals. The consultation sought further data from respondents and a revised impact assessment will be published in due course, taking account of the further data submitted and also of changes the Government has made to its original proposals.

The Government published Part One of its consultation response, covering reforms that require primary and secondary legislation, on 23 February. Part Two, dealing with proposals from the Insurance Fraud Taskforce and the 'call for evidence', will follow.

## ■ Prison Officers: Recruitment

**Richard Burgon:** [\[64708\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many (a) Band 3 Prison Officer job offers have been made by HM Prison Service and (b) prison officer entry level training starts have been recorded since 3 November 2016.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

The information requested is available in the NOMS workforce statistics section on gov.uk.

■ **Prison Officers: Vacancies**

**Helen Jones:**

[\[64927\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prison officer posts are currently vacant in each region.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

The information requested is available in the NOMS workforce statistics section on gov.uk.

■ **Prisoners: Disability**

**Mrs Anne Main:**

[\[64328\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that people with learning difficulties or disabilities are accommodated in available prison employment, education or training systems.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

The Government is committed to making prisons work, so that offenders come out of prison better able to find work and support their families, and less likely to reoffend.

We have already taken steps to improve the support available to offenders with learning difficulties. NOMS, in conjunction with Calderstones NHS Trust and a number of other partners, are engaged in a project on learning difficulties and disabilities to improve outcomes for offenders both in custody and in community.

In the Prison Safety and Reform White Paper, we set out our plans to tailor educational input to suit the needs of the offender through a renewed focus on screening those offenders accessing prison education in order to identify learning difficulties or disabilities. Changing the way prisons are run creates an opportunity to refocus on offenders with learning difficulties and disabilities and how best they can be engaged with education in different types of prison environment. We will set out further details in the employment strategy that will be launched later this year.

■ **Prisoners: Rehabilitation**

**Mrs Anne Main:**

[\[64327\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what recent steps her Department has taken to ensure that more prisoners leave prison with an identified employment, education or training outcome.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

The government is committed to ensuring that prisoners gain the skills and qualifications they need so that they come out of prison better able to find work, better able to support their families and ready to turn their lives around.

To ensure prisoners are prepared for life on release, from April 2017 governors will be measured on the rates of sustainable employment, including apprenticeships, and education in the period following release.

To help governors to meet the standards to reform offenders and prepare prisoners for life on release, we are giving them freedom to design their regime to meet local delivery needs and target education, training and work in prisons to match the skills and qualifications prisoners need in the local labour market. Over 2017 and 2018, we will give governors control of the education budget to enable this. Prisoners could also, for example, work shift patterns to deliver new commercial contracts.

Progress made in maths and English will also be measured, starting with qualifications gained from April 2017 and we are introducing testing on entry and exit in the longer term.

In our Employment and Education Strategy, which will be published later this year, we will outline our plans to support prisoners in gaining the skills and experience they need to prepare them for employment on release.

**Mrs Anne Main:**

**[64329]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prisons manage employment, education and training systems; and at what standard those systems are running.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

Education and training is available in all prisons in England. The majority of this is delivered by mainstream providers of further education and training, complemented by some in house delivery.

From April 2017 governors will be measured on the distance travelled in English and maths, as well as rates of sustainable employment, including apprenticeships, and education in the period following release. To meet these new standards governors will at the same time be given the power to deliver change, such as being able to design their regime to meet local delivery needs and target training and work in prisons to match the local labour market. Over 2017 and 2018, we will give governors control of the education budget, so that they can overhaul education and training to match the skills and qualifications prisoners need in the local labour market.

The provision is inspected by Ofsted at the invitation of HMIP, using the same set of standards used to inspect mainstream further education.

**Mrs Anne Main:**

**[64330]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prisoners participate in prison systems of (a) education, (b) employment and (c) training; and what proportion of the prison population finds employment within six months of leaving prison.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

We know that prisoners who are in employment before or after custody are less likely to reoffend, yet many offenders have little or no employment experience or marketable skills. We are currently looking at the work, training and education in

prison to ensure that provision prepares prisoners to enter meaningful employment on release so that they are able to make an effective contribution towards society and break the cycle of re-offending.

In 2015/16, on average 11,000 prisoners and detainees were working in custody at any one time across public sector prisons, contracted-out prisons and Immigration Removal Centres (IRCs). They delivered 16 million hours of work during the course of the year. These figures relate solely to industrial work, which is defined as work carried out in prison workshops (normally on the internal market, commercial work or for other government departments). There are also significant numbers of prisoners in other learning, vocational training or work opportunities within prison on tasks such as cooking, serving meals, maintenance and cleaning which can help them find a job on release and support their rehabilitation. The figures also exclude work placements undertaken by offenders on release from prison on temporary licence.

The latest statistics relating to offender participation in education are published and can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/further-education-and-skills-january-2017>

Further data relating to offender education participation can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-further-education-and-skills>

We currently do not record the proportion of prisoners in employment. As set out in the Prison Safety and Reform White Paper, we will be measuring prisons against the progress made in maths and English as well as the rate of prisoners in employment and apprenticeships on release. We envisage that these measures will be introduced in 2017.

Ensuring that offenders gain the skills and qualifications inside prison to enable them to get jobs outside prison is a key part of our reform plans and we intend to launch an employment strategy later this year.

## ■ Prisons: Drugs

**Yasmin Qureshi:**

**[65231]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many mandatory drug tests have taken place in prisons in each month since May 2015.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

The information requested is planned for routine publication by the Ministry of Justice and will be available in the annual NOMS Digest on GOV.UK.

## ■ Prisons: Mobile Phones

**Mr David Hanson:**

**[64325]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many phones and sim cards were recovered in prisons in each of the last seven years.



**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

The illicit use of mobile phones undermines the safety and security of prison. Which is why we are taking urgent and decisive action.

Under measures introduced in late 2016, we can now apply for Telecommunications Restriction Orders at Court to block specific mobile phones being used in prisons. Since the legislation was introduced in August, we have had more than 150 mobile phones cut off.

In addition, we have announced new measures in the Prison and Courts Bill that will allow the Secretary of State to authorise mobile network operators to block illicit mobile phone signals across entire prison sites. This will allow industry experts to work more creatively and effectively to block signals and means that we won't require a court order to stop the illicit and harmful use of mobile phones in prisons.

Data on confiscated phones has been collated since April 2010 and the data requested for the period April 2010 to December 2014 has been provided in [response to PQ 20343](#), answered on 11 January 2016.

In 2015, there were 16,987 finds in all prisons. One 'find' may constitute a handset containing one SIM card or media card, a handset only, a SIM card only, or a media card or USB only. The figures used to provide this answer were drawn from live administrative data systems. Although care is taken when processing and analysing the returns, the detail collected is subject to the inaccuracies inherent in any large scale recording system. The data are not subject to audit.

An enhanced incident reporting standard was implemented in October 2015 that allowed better recording of the number of mobile phones and SIM cards found as well as other information relevant to the incident. Data reported in IRS are underpinned by a technical note and are subjected to quality assurance, validation and scrutiny making them the most accurate source of data from the point the changes were implemented. For this reason, I have provided 2016 figures from IRS below. These figures are not directly comparable with the figures provided for earlier years due to being recorded differently.

**INCIDENTS OF MOBILE PHONES FINDS IN PRISONS, ENGLAND AND WALES, 2016**

NUMBER OF MOBILE PHONES	NUMBER OF INCIDENTS
1	6,964
2	895
3	300
4	177
5	94

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6	70
7	42
8	35
9	14
10	20
11	13
12	24
13	7
14	4
15	7
16	1
17	0
18	2
19	0
20	6
More than 20	11
Unknown	127
<b>Total Reported Incidents</b>	<b>8,813</b>

#### Incidents of SIM card finds in prisons, England and Wales, 2016

Number of SIM cards	Number of incidents
1	2,983
2	439
3	195
4	106
5	60
6	49
7	24

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8	26
9	8
10	22
11	6
12	16
13	6
14	6
15	8
16	2
17	5
18	1
19	0
20	2
More than 20	18
Unknown	85
<b>Total Reported Incidents</b>	<b>4,067</b>

## ■ Rape: Trials

**Liz Saville Roberts:**

[\[64635\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what information her Department holds on the number of victims of rape who appeared at Crown Courts in England and Wales and were asked about their sexual history by lawyers for the defence.

**Dr Phillip Lee:**

The Attorney General and Justice Secretary are looking at how section 41 of the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 is working in practice. This includes examining the original policy intent of the legislation, its implementation and how it is currently operating.

The Ministry of Justice does not collect data on the number of victims of rape who appeared at Crown Courts in England and Wales and were asked about their sexual history by lawyers for the defence.

**Liz Saville Roberts:**

[\[64670\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether her Department plans to review how section 41 of the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 is working.

**Dr Phillip Lee:**

The Attorney General and Justice Secretary are looking at how section 41 of the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 is working in practice. This includes examining the original policy intent of the legislation, its implementation and how it is currently operating.

This work is being led by officials in the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General's Office who are seeking views from the judiciary, practitioners and victims' groups.

## ■ **Reparation by Offenders**

**Christina Rees:**

[\[61012\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if she plans to extend the use of restorative justice measures for victims in domestic violence cases.

**Mr Sam Gyimah:**

Tackling domestic violence and abuse is a key priority for this Government and we are clear that adult perpetrators of domestic abuse should, wherever possible be prosecuted. Similarly, we are clear that, so called level one street restorative justice, delivered by police as an alternative to prosecution, is not appropriate in these cases.

However, there can be a place for restorative justice in domestic abuse cases alongside prosecution. This is with the strict caveat that it will be carried out with effective and ongoing risk assessment and safeguarding in place and led by experienced and skilled practitioners. In this way restorative justice can help some victims cope and recover.

As my Right Honourable and Learned Friend for North Hertfordshire stated at the recent Westminster Hall Debate on Restorative Justice, we are committed to working with interested parties to produce a paper on the use of restorative justice services for victims in domestic abuse cases.

## ■ **Victims' Panel**

**Jess Phillips:**

[\[64616\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether she plans to extend the membership of her Department's Victims' Panel.

**Dr Phillip Lee:**

We want to make sure the needs of victims and witnesses are at the heart of a modern justice system. That is why it is vital we learn as much as possible from the experience of real life victims and survivors of crime.

We have re-established the Victims' Panel so we can get direct feedback from victims and we are keen to continue and develop their valuable contribution. The Victims' Panel reconvened on the 6 February 2017.

■ **Written Questions: Government Responses**

**Christina Rees:**

[\[64207\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when she plans to answer Question 61012, on reparation by offenders, tabled by the hon. Member for Neath on 20 January 2017.

**Dr Phillip Lee:**

PQ 61012 was answered on Friday 24 February 2017.

■ **Young Offenders: Prisoners' Incentives and Earned Privileges Scheme**

**Jo Stevens:**

[\[64965\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, (a) how many and (b) what proportion of children were on the basic level of the incentive and earned privileges scheme in (i) Feltham Prison, (ii) Werrington Prison, (iii) Cookham Wood Prison, (iv) Wetherby Prison and (v) Parc Prison on the latest date for which figures are available.

**Dr Phillip Lee:**

The information requested is available in the Annual NOMS Digest 2015 to 2016 on Gov.uk.

**LEADER OF THE HOUSE**

■ **Cabinet Office: Pay**

**Philip Davies:**

[\[64173\]](#)

To ask the Leader of the House, what the (a) mean and (b) median pay was for staff in his Office who were (i) male, (ii) female, (iii) white, (iv) from an ethnic minority background, (v) disabled and (vi) non-disabled in the most recent year for which information is available, broken down by (A) full-time and (B) part-time workers.

**Mr David Lidington:**

The Office of the Leader of the House of Commons is an integral part of the Cabinet Office.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by my right hon. Friend the Minister for the Cabinet Office on 24 February 2017, to Question UIN [64159](#).

■ **Leader of the House of Commons: Government Contracts**

**Jon Trickett:**

[\[64399\]](#)

To ask the Leader of the House, what the total (a) number and (b) value of Government contracts that have been contracted out by his Office was in each year since 2010; what

the value of pro bono costs was in each such year; and what estimate he has made of the number of work days contracted out in each such year.

**Mr David Lidington:**

The Office of the Leader of the House of Commons is an integral part of the Cabinet Office.

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him by my right hon. Friend the Minister for the Cabinet Office on 27 February 2017, to Question UIN [64401](#).

## NORTHERN IRELAND

### ■ Belfast Agreement

**Jim Shannon:** [\[64844\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, whether the Republic of Ireland has implemented enhanced employment equality legislation as required by paragraph 9 of the Chapter on rights, safeguards and equality of opportunity in the Belfast Agreement of 1998.

**Jim Shannon:** [\[64845\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, whether the Republic of Ireland has ratified the Council of Europe Framework Convention on National Minorities as required by paragraph 9 of the Chapter on rights, safeguards and equality of opportunity in the Belfast Agreement of 1998.

**Jim Shannon:** [\[64846\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, whether the Republic of Ireland has established a human rights commission with a mandate and remit equivalent to that within Northern Ireland as required by paragraph 9 of the Chapter on rights, safeguards and equality of opportunity in the Belfast Agreement of 1998.

**Kris Hopkins:**

These questions are a matter for the Irish Government.

However, it is my understanding that: since 1998, a number of pieces of legislation have been introduced in the Republic of Ireland including the Employment Equality Acts 1998 and 2004; the Republic of Ireland ratified the Council of Europe Framework Convention on National Minorities in 1999, and; the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, like the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, is a UN 'A status' accredited National Human Rights Institution, structured and operated in accordance with the Paris Principles.

### ■ Northern Ireland Office: Brexit

**Paul Blomfield:** [\[64550\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what discussions he has had with the Department for Exiting the European Union on the contents of the White Paper entitled

The United Kingdom's exit from and new partnership with the European Union, Cm 9417, published in February 2017.

**James Brokenshire:**

I and my officials have regular discussions with colleagues at the Department for Exiting the European Union on the impacts and opportunities for Northern Ireland arising from the decision to exit the European Union.

■ **Northern Ireland Office: Equality**

**Chris Stephens:**

[R] [\[64449\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how many equality impact assessments have been carried out in the last three years on public service reforms which impact on (a) departmental staff and (b) members of the public; and if he will make a statement.

**Kris Hopkins:**

The Northern Ireland Office considers equality issues in exercising its functions, to comply with all relevant equality legislation and to ensure it understands how its activities will affect different people. Although there is no legal requirement to publish equality impact assessments under the public sector equality duty at Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Department must also comply with the requirements of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

In accordance with Schedule 9 4.(2)(d) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Department is required to publish details of all policy screenings or Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) on a six monthly basis and include a summary of all screening reports and EQIAs in its Section 75 Annual Progress Report. The latest reports can be found on the Northern Ireland Office website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments%5B%5D=northern-ireland-office&page=2>

**PRIME MINISTER**

■ **Food Banks**

**Alison Thewliss:**

[\[64053\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, whether she has visited any food banks since becoming Prime Minister; and if she will make a statement.

**Mrs Theresa May:**

Details of Ministerial UK official visits and official meetings with external organisations and individuals are published quarterly and made available on the gov.uk website.

**Judiciary: USA**

**Catherine West:** [\[64018\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, whether she discussed the importance of the independence of the judiciary with the US President on her recent visit to that country.

**Mrs Theresa May:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave her on 31 January 2017, UIN 61889.

**Syria: Military Intervention**

**Lucy Powell:** [\[65235\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, when she expects the redaction of the report of the Intelligence and Security Committee, UK Lethal Drone Strikes in Syria to be complete.

**Mrs Theresa May:**

The Government is following the process as described, under the 2013 Justice and Security Act, in paragraph 37 of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Intelligence and Security Committee.

**PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMISSION****Public Accounts Commission: Procurement**

**Jon Trickett:** [\[65255\]](#)

To ask the Chairman of the Public Accounts Commission, how many civil servants in the Commission oversee contracts which have been awarded to external providers.

**Sir Edward Leigh:**

The Public Accounts Commission does not have any employees (including civil servants) and is not responsible for any contracts. It is a statutory body with a membership of nine Members of the House of Commons. Its role is defined by the National Audit Act 1983 and the Budget Responsibility and National Audit Act 2011. Its principal duties under the Acts are to examine the National Audit Office Estimate and lay it before the House, to consider reports from the appointed auditor of the National Audit Office (NAO), to appoint non-executive members of the NAO Board, and to report from time to time.

**SCOTLAND****Scotland Office: Brexit**

**Paul Blomfield:** [\[64551\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what discussions he has had with the Department for Exiting the European Union on the contents of the White Paper entitled The United Kingdom's exit from and new partnership with the European Union, Cm 9417, published in February 2017.



**David Mundell:**

The Scotland Office, and other Departments, are working closely with the Department for Exiting the European Union on all aspects of exiting the European Union. I have regular discussions with the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union on matters relating to the UK's Exit. In addition, the White Paper was the subject of discussion with the devolved administrations at the Joint Ministerial Committee on EU Negotiations on 8 February. The third chapter of this White Paper explains how, as we leave the EU, we will aim to strengthen the union between the four nations of the United Kingdom. To this end we are working to ensure we get the best possible deal for the whole of the UK.

**■ Scotland Office: Equality****Chris Stephens:****[R] [64450]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, how many equality impact assessments have been carried out in the last three years on public service reforms which impact on (a) departmental staff and (b) members of the public; and if he will make a statement.

**David Mundell:**

Over the last three years the Scotland Office has had and continues to have due regard, as necessary, to the public sector equality duty in exercising its functions. The Equality Act does not require this due regard to take the form of an equality impact assessment, nor does it define an equality impact assessment, and the Scotland Office does not maintain a record of such assessments.

**TRANSPORT****■ Bus Services****Jon Trickett:****[64431]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make it his policy to protect local bus services when such services are discontinued by private bus companies due to concerns over profitability.

**Andrew Jones:**

It is for individual local authorities to decide whether to subsidise bus services that are not commercially viable but which they consider socially necessary, balancing this need against their other funding priorities.

**■ Department for Transport: Pay****Philip Davies:****[64177]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the (a) mean and (b) median pay was for staff in his Department who were (i) male, (ii) female, (iii) white, (iv) from an ethnic minority background, (v) disabled and (vi) non-disabled in the most recent year for which information is available, broken down by (A) full-time and (B) part-time workers.

**Mr John Hayes:**

The Civil Service is committed to being a place where everyone can thrive, regardless of background- with the aim of becoming the most inclusive employer in the UK

Whilst it is encouraging to see a positive trajectory in terms of diversity representation in the Civil Service, we recognise that there is more to do. That is why in March 2016 the Government published its refreshed Talent Action Plan for the Civil Service, identifying actions to support our staff, increase diversity in the Civil Service and deliver the best possible public services.

**■ Driverless Vehicles: Insurance****Jim Shannon:**[\[64568\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he plans to take to ensure that driverless vehicles are not subject to disproportionately high insurance premiums.

**Andrew Jones:**

Assisted driving technologies such as automated emergency braking are already reflected in lower premiums for those vehicles which have them installed. Fully automated vehicles could help further to reduce collisions and accidents on our roads, and we need to make sure we have the right insurance framework in place to facilitate the introduction of new technologies on our roads. That is why we have just introduced the Vehicle Technology and Aviation Bill which will include measures to allow for insurance of automated vehicles, and we will continue to work with the insurance industry to ensure that products meet the needs of customers, insurers and the automotive industry.

**■ Driving: Licensing****Ian Lavery:**[\[64579\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to reduce the time taken by the Driver and Licensing Agency to reissue driving licences which have been withdrawn on medical grounds.

**Andrew Jones:**

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) deals with more than 600,000 medical cases every year. The length of time taken to deal with an application depends on the medical condition and whether further information is required from medical professionals.

The DVLA has made major improvements in this area, including introducing an electronic service which allows drivers to notify the DVLA online about certain medical conditions. The DVLA has recruited 100 extra casework staff as well as more doctors to deal with complex cases. Three nurses have also been employed to help deal with certain cases and further recruitment is underway.

A dedicated team has been put in place which is responsible for continuous improvement of medical driver licensing services and communications. Letters to

customers and medical professionals have been improved, helping to ensure that the DVLA receives the information it needs as quickly as possible.

These changes have produced significant and sustainable improvements. A licensing decision took an average of 37 working days to be made between April and December 2016 for all medical cases. This is down from 53 working days between April 2015 and March 2016.

## ■ Govia Thameslink Railway: Standards

**Helen Hayes:**

[\[64136\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, in which reporting periods GTR's performance has met the specified benchmarks set out in the franchise agreement since that agreement was signed.

**Paul Maynard:**

Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) were compliant with their performance benchmarks until March 2015, when they triggered a Remedial Plan Notice from the Department, culminating in an agreed Remedial Plan. GTR remained compliant with the Remedial Plan benchmarks until industrial relations issues, which commenced in April 2016, caused significant disruption to services meaning performance benchmarks have been exceeded.

However, GTR are entitled to claim Force Majeure against this disruption as per the terms of their Franchise Agreement, which they have done, and this may lead to changes in their position against each benchmark. We are currently discussing the Force Majeure claim with GTR before making our final determination.

**Mr Chuka Umunna:**

[\[65211\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will conduct an independent public inquiry into the management and performance of Govia Thameslink Rail/Southern Rail services and the social, economic and environmental effect of that performance on London and the South East.

**Paul Maynard:**

The Department constantly monitors the performance of the GTR contract and holds the operator to account. Since last April industrial action has impacted passengers daily lives and had wider economic effects across the South East. As recently as last week RMT were taking industrial action and, I urge union leaders to negotiate constructively with the operator, without resorting to inflammatory rhetoric and put the interests of long suffering passengers first.

## ■ High Speed Two: Staff

**Robert Ffello:**

[\[64112\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what due diligence processes his Department and HS2 Ltd carried out on the suitability of the new Chief Executive Officer

(CEO) of HS2 Ltd; and what that CEO's experience is of leading a major UK infrastructure project.

**Andrew Jones:**

HS2 Ltd's search consultants, Heidrick and Struggles, conducted a worldwide search and an advertisement was placed in the Sunday Times. Candidates were interviewed initially by Heidrick and Struggles and a shortlist was developed. The final interview was conducted by a panel of 7, which included the Chair of HS2 Ltd, the Department for Transport (DfT) Permanent Secretary, the Director General for High Speed 2, a senior Treasury Official and non-Executive Directors of HS2 Ltd and DfT. References were taken and the appointment was approved by the Secretary of State for Transport.

Mark Thurston brings a huge array of varied experience across 30 years in the infrastructure sector around Europe, and in UK rail especially. This includes starting out as an apprentice at Transport for London, to major international engineering and infrastructure companies The Nichols Group and CH2M. At CH2M, he was the lead for the Programme Partner joint venture on the Olympics and Crossrail as well as overseeing all of CH2M's European operations.

**Robert Ffello:**

**[64113]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what criteria his Department set out in recruiting the new Chief Executive Officer of HS2 Ltd on a record of successful delivery.

**Andrew Jones:**

HS2 Ltd conducted an extensive global search for the right candidate to take forward one of the largest and most exciting infrastructure programmes in the world. The process was led by Sir David Higgins, supported by Heidrick and Struggles (an international executive search firm) that identified 20 candidates from four continents (including America, Australia, Asia, as well as Europe).

The job specification which set out the skills and experience criteria were published on the HS2 Ltd website.

**Skills**

- ▶ Information analysis - An ability to assimilate complex, ambiguous and often incomplete information, in order to take action providing clear direction and purpose to the organisation and its stakeholders.
- ▶ An ability to understand and focus on detail as needed whilst maintaining the strategic vision and overview to keep the project focused.
- ▶ Public speaking & Ambassadorial skills - to lead innovation within the broader industry, working with technical bodies, trade associations, the supply chain and government.
- ▶ Ability to build, lead and motivate top executive teams and consensus within these teams and the board.

**Knowledge**

- ▶ An ability to assimilate complex, ambiguous and often incomplete information, in order to take action providing clear direction and purpose to the organisation and its stakeholders.
- ▶ Knowledge of best practice approaches to embedding continuous improvement culture as the organisation shifts from concept to delivery and adapts accordingly.
- ▶ Knowledge of inclusive leadership techniques and approaches.
- ▶ *Qualifications* : Applicants will most likely have a strong academic or professional training and have experience of dealing with complex engineering and business issues.

### **Experience**

- ▶ Experience of leading a successful transformation of a large complex commercially-focused delivery organisation, achieving significant improvements in efficiency, effectiveness and customer service.
- ▶ Experience of leading an ingrained Health and Safety culture through personal leadership and commitment.
- ▶ Experience of effective strategic risk management, change control processes and capital allocation on large scale capital intensive projects or within organisations delivering in this environment.
- ▶ Experience of dealing with the procurement of a complex supply chain.

**Robert Flelo:**

[\[64331\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will publish a list of all the rail industry roles and responsibilities previously held by the new Chief Executive Officer of HS2 Ltd.

### **Andrew Jones:**

Mark Thurston brings a huge array of varied experience across 30 years in the infrastructure sector around Europe, and in UK rail especially. This includes starting out as an apprentice at Transport for London, to major international engineering and infrastructure companies The Nichols Group and CH2M. Whilst at CH2M, he was lead for the Programme Partner joint venture on the Olympics and Crossrail as well as overseeing all of CH2M's European operations. He has held roles at Metronet, Railtrack, Brown and Root Engineering and Construction.

## ■ **Railway Stations: Sheffield**

**Louise Haigh:**

[\[64315\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will publish his Department's analysis of the (a) cost and (b) duration of construction of the Sheffield Meadowhall High Speed Rail station.

### **Andrew Jones:**

The construction period for Phase 2b of HS2 is 9 years, from 2024 to 2033. No detailed work has been done to look into the construction planning for stations that

would be served by HS2 trains. During design of the scheme over next two years, and before the hybrid Bill is deposited, HS2 Ltd will make an estimate of the construction timescales for various elements of the programme.

We do not provide cost breakdowns for specific items of the HS2 programme due to commercial sensitivities.

## ■ Railways: Kent

**Craig Mackinlay:**

[\[64002\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much his Department has spent on rail improvements in East Kent in each of the last five years.

**Paul Maynard:**

The Department for Transport does not hold investment data in the format requested and this could only be obtained at disproportionate cost. However, over the last five years, the Government has made significant investment which benefit East Kent. This includes the introduction of several new high speed services (including at Martin Mill station); ongoing work to deliver line speed improvements between Ashford International and Ramsgate and a traction power supply upgrade to facilitate the operation of longer trains. The train operator has committed to making improvements worth more than £70m across the franchise area by 2018.

## ■ Roads: Accidents

**Ian Lavery:**

[\[64578\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on England's roads.

**Andrew Jones:**

The British Road Safety statement sets out the Department for Transport's vision, values and priorities in relation to British road safety. This has led to a significant programme of activity including, providing £175 million to improve England's 50 most dangerous roads, increasing penalties for drivers using hand held mobile phones, consulting on allowing learner drivers on motorways and improving motorcycle training. The statement can be viewed on gov.uk.

## ■ Southern: Compensation

**Helen Hayes:**

[\[64137\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much Southern Railway has (a) paid to passengers in compensation and (b) received in compensation from Network Rail since the start of that franchise.

**Paul Maynard:**

a) The delay repay compensation figures for all Train Operating Companies covering the years 2009-10 to 2014-15 are published on the GOV.UK website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/train-operating-companies-passenger-charter-compensation-between-2009-to-2015>. Figures for the 2015-16 financial year for all Train Operating Companies are expected to be published on the GOV.UK website later this year. Releasing all the figures at the same time will allow everyone to see them together which will provide a clear and consistent publication and help avoid misinterpretation and confusion.

b) Under their track access agreement, compensation for unplanned disruption passes between Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) and Network Rail based upon which party is responsible for each disruptive incident. The Department does not see the breakdown of the compensation paid by each party. The net figures covering the years 2011-12 to 2014-15, are published on Network Rail's website ('Payments for disruption on the railway made under schedule 8') at the following address:

<http://www.networkrail.co.uk/transparency/datasets/>

Payments to train operators, made through the performance regime, are not designed to cover the refund claims which passengers make. They are instead designed to hold train operators financially neutral to the long-term revenue impact as a result of disruption.

#### ■ **Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern Rail Franchise**

**Mr Chuka Umunna:**

**[65210]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the contractual agreements are in the Govia Thameslink Rail/Southern Rail franchise agreement on disability access at train stations and platforms on their network.

**Paul Maynard:**

Train operating companies have responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustment to their services for carriage of disabled passengers and passengers of reduced mobility. Compliance with modern accessibility standards for stations and trains is mandated in the Railways Interoperability Regulations 2011 and the Rail Vehicle Accessibility (Non-Interoperable Systems) Regulations 2010. Both sets of regulations are enforced by the Office of Rail and Road (ORR). Additionally, operators are required to have a Disabled Persons Protection Plan in place. Govia Thameslink Railway have such a plan which is available on their website.

## WALES

#### ■ **Wales Office: Brexit**

**Paul Blomfield:**

**[64554]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what discussions he has had with the Department for Exiting the European Union on the contents of the White Paper entitled The United Kingdom's exit from and new partnership with the European Union, Cm 9417, published in February 2017.



**Alun Cairns:**

The Wales Office and other Departments are working closely with the Department for Exiting the European Union to consider the opportunities arising from the UK exiting the European Union.

■ **Wales Office: Pay****Philip Davies:**[\[64179\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what the (a) mean and (b) median pay was for staff in his Department who were (i) male, (ii) female, (iii) white, (iv) from an ethnic minority background, (v) disabled and (vi) non-disabled in the most recent year for which information is available, broken down by (A) full-time and (B) part-time workers.

**Guto Bebb:**

The Wales Office does not employ staff directly. It is not possible to provide specific pay analysis broken down by representative groups. Some of the representative groups comprise fewer than 5 people, and individuals may become potentially identifiable.

The Office for National Statistics annually publish the highest and median salary for each Civil Service organisation, including the Wales Office, as part of the Civil Service Statistics. This information can be found on the Office for National Statistics website:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/publicsectorpersonnel/datasets/medianpayannexb>

■ **Wales Office: Recruitment****Andrew Selous:**[\[64482\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, whether his Department operates a ban the box employment policy in respect of ex-offender job applicants with unspent convictions; and how many employees of his Department have unspent convictions.

**Guto Bebb:**

The Wales Office is not an employer in its own right and most staff are employed by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ).

I refer the hon Member to the reply given by the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Prisons, Probation, Rehabilitation & Sentencing on 16 February 2017 (UIN 60212).

■ **Wales Office: Uber****Mr Iain Wright:**[\[64385\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, how much his Department has spent on (a) Uber for Business and (b) other Uber transactions since 28 October 2016.

**Guto Bebb:**

Nothing.



## WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

### ■ Gender Recognition: Health Services

**Thangam Debbonaire:**

**[64967]**

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what research has been conducted on the effect of men self-defining as women on (a) women-only services, (b) organisations solely for girls and young women, (c) health commissioning for conditions which are sex-specific and (d) healthcare and other services for people who are transitioning from one sex to another.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

This Government has rightly raised the profile of transgender equality in the past few years as many transgender people still encounter prejudice and discrimination. However, this focus has not been to the detriment to women. The Government is dedicated to promoting the equal rights of women and of transgender individuals.

The Government Equalities Office in November 2015 issued “Providing services for transgender customers: a guide” which sets out guidance and good practice examples on the provision of services to trans individuals. It also aims to help service providers comply with the law.

All public authorities, including NHS England, have to comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty in the development of policy, commissioning and provision of services. This includes paying due regard not only to the needs of men and women but also trans individuals.

While the Government Equalities Office has not commissioned specific research on the access of trans individuals to gender specific services, this will be considered as part of our review into the demedicalising and streamlining of the Gender Recognition Act.

### ■ Government Equalities Office: Pay

**Philip Davies:**

**[64167]**

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what the (a) mean and (b) median pay was for staff in the Government Equalities Office who were (i) male, (ii) female, (iii) white, (iv) from an ethnic minority background, (v) disabled and (vi) non-disabled in the most recent year for which information is available, broken down by (A) full-time and (B) part-time workers.

**Caroline Dinenage:**

The most recent publication of *Civil Service Statistics* was released by the Office for National Statistics in October 2016, using data gathered from departments as of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016. The latest set of data can be found on the ONS website via this weblink:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/publicsectorpersonnel/bulletins/civilservicestatistics/2016>

The Civil Service is committed to being a place where everyone can thrive, regardless of background - with the aim of becoming the most inclusive employer in the UK.

Whilst it is encouraging to see a positive trajectory in terms of diversity representation in the Civil Service, we recognise that there is more to do. That is why in March 2016 the Government published its refreshed Talent Action Plan for the Civil Service, identifying actions to support our staff, increase diversity in the Civil Service and deliver the best possible public services.

## WORK AND PENSIONS

### ■ Access to Work Programme

**Jim Fitzpatrick:**

[64341]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans his Department has to extend the Access to Work programme to incorporate work experience and internships.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The Access to Work scheme has already been extended to support self-arranged work experience and Supported Internships in line with guidance set out in paragraphs 123 – 140 which can be found here:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/541858/access-to-work-staff-guide.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/541858/access-to-work-staff-guide.pdf)

This was announced by the then Minister for Disabled People, Esther McVey on 16 July 2013.

**Jim Fitzpatrick:**

[64342]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department is taking to extend the Access to Work programme so that disabled people have support plans in place before an employment offer.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The Department has published an Access to Work pre-employment eligibility letter for individuals, their employers or potential employers in order to provide an indication of the help that people may be able to receive from the Access to Work scheme. This letter has been updated to include reference to both mental health support and coverage of apprentices, and can be found here.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-work-eligibility-letter-for-employees-and-employers>

We are also promoting Access to Work and producing case studies to illustrate how the scheme can support people in a range of settings and how it makes a positive difference to disabled people's working lives.

## ■ Department for Work and Pensions: Pay

**Philip Davies:**

**[64180]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the (a) mean and (b) median pay was for staff in his Department who were (i) male, (ii) female, (iii) white, (iv) from an ethnic minority background, (v) disabled and (vi) non-disabled in the most recent year for which information is available, broken down by (A) full-time and (B) part-time workers.

**Caroline Nokes:**

The Civil Service is committed to being a place where everyone can thrive, regardless of background- with the aim of becoming the most inclusive employer in the UK

Whilst it is encouraging to see a positive trajectory in terms of diversity representation in the Civil Service, we recognise that there is more to do. That is why in March 2016 the Government published its refreshed Talent Action Plan for the Civil Service, identifying actions to support our staff, increase diversity in the Civil Service and deliver the best possible public services.

The Office for National Statistics provide information on pay for the whole of the Civil Service, using data gathered from departments as of 31st March 2016. The latest set of data can be found here:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/publicsectorpersonnel/bulletins/civilservicestatistics/2016>

## ■ Employment and Support Allowance: Musculoskeletal Disorders

**Rachel Reeves:**

**[64196]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people in (a) England and (b) Leeds are in receipt of employment and support allowance as a result of disability related to a musculoskeletal condition.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The information available for the number of Employment and Support Allowance claimants by disability is published and can be found at:

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/default.asp>

Guidance for users is available at:

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/home/newuser.asp>

## ■ Income Support and Welfare Tax Credits

**Louise Haigh:**

**[64127]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people claimed both income support and any element of tax credits in the most recent year for which information is available.

**Damian Hinds:**

The information requested is not readily available, and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

■ **Jobcentres: Closures****Louise Haigh:****[64208]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate he has made of the number of jobcentres due to close under proposals announced on 30 January 2017 which are not within three miles or 20 minutes by public transport of an existing jobcentre.

**Damian Hinds:**

A total of 30 Jobcentres are outside of the criteria of 3 miles and 20 minutes by public transport of the existing Jobcentre.

The list of Jobcentres subject to public consultation has been published and documentation is available to view at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?keywords=&publication\\_filter\\_option=consultations&topics%5B%5D=all&departments%5B%5D=department-for-work-pensions&official\\_document\\_status=all&world\\_locations%5B%5D=all&from\\_date=&to\\_date=](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?keywords=&publication_filter_option=consultations&topics%5B%5D=all&departments%5B%5D=department-for-work-pensions&official_document_status=all&world_locations%5B%5D=all&from_date=&to_date=)

■ **Jobcentres: Dumbartonshire****Martin Docherty-Hughes:****[64104]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what criteria were used to identify the Alexandria Jobcentre Plus in West Dunbartonshire constituency for closure.

**Damian Hinds:**

The Department has sought, where feasible, to merge sites in close proximity as part of its overall review of estate. Merging the staff and services from Alexandria Jobcentre into Dumbarton Jobcentre optimises use of space, ensures value for money and enables effective delivery of services to the public. Alexandria Jobcentre is 46% underutilised, meaning that we are spending money on rent for space that is unused rather than on services and support.

**Martin Docherty-Hughes:****[64106]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment has been made of the effect on the local economy of moving 15 jobs from Alexandria Jobcentre Plus in West Dunbartonshire constituency.

**Damian Hinds:**

We have considered the wider impacts of the local economy when developing our proposals for Alexandria Jobcentre. The economic impact of employment is dispersed beyond the specific location of a workplace and staff currently based at Alexandria jobcentre already live in the broader area around the site. While we expect the majority of these staff to be relocated, it is unlikely that a significant proportion of them will also move their place of residence.

**Martin Docherty-Hughes:****[64107]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the expected costs are of relocating staff and resources from Alexandria Jobcentre Plus in West Dunbartonshire constituency.

**Damian Hinds:**

We are not yet in a position to share the expected figure due to commercial confidentiality pending completion of legal processes and staff consultations. We expect to make savings for the tax payer from merging offices by reducing running costs and making best use of both office space available.

**Martin Docherty-Hughes:****[64108]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many claimants are currently served by the Alexandria Jobcentre Plus in West Dunbartonshire constituency; and how many of these are (a) disabled people and (b) women.

**Damian Hinds:**

The information requested is not available. However, such information that is available is in the tables and provides the number of Jobseeker's Allowance and Universal Credit (required to seek work) claimants; plus the number of claims to Employment and Support Allowance and Income Support from people who are served by (a) Alexandria Jobcentre and (b) in the West Dunbartonshire constituency.

Table (a) Alexandria Jobcentre

	THE NUMBER OF JOBSEEKER'S ALLOWANCE AND UNIVERSAL CREDIT CLAIMANTS ATTENDING ALEXANDRIA JOBCENTRE	THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE MAKING A NEW CLAIM TO EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPORT ALLOWANCE AND ATTENDING ALEXANDRIA JOBCENTRE	THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE MAKING A NEW CLAIM TO INCOME SUPPORT AND ATTENDING ALEXANDRIA JOBCENTRE
	January 2017	December 2016	December 2016
Female	150	42	5
Male	340		

Table (b) West Dunbartonshire Constituency

	THE NUMBER OF JOBSEEKER'S ALLOWANCE AND UNIVERSAL CREDIT CLAIMANTS IN THE WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE CONSTITUENCY	THE NUMBER OF EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPORT ALLOWANCE CLAIMANTS IN THE WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE CONSTITUENCY	THE NUMBER OF INCOME SUPPORT CLAIMANTS IN THE WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE CONSTITUENCY
	January 2017	August 2016	August 2016

Female	615	3,000	1,210
Male	1,430	3,060	320

**Martin Docherty-Hughes:**

**[64109]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether a public consultation will take place over the proposal to close the Alexandria Jobcentre in West Dunbartonshire constituency.

**Damian Hinds:**

There will be no public consultation on the proposal to close Alexandria Jobcentre as the proposed move to merge with Dumbarton Jobcentre is 3.4 miles away and 18 minutes by public transport. We have committed to a public consultation for offices over three miles and 20 minutes away by public transport.

**Martin Docherty-Hughes:**

**[64110]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when an Equality Impact Assessment will be published on the proposal to close the Alexandria Jobcentre in West Dunbartonshire constituency.

**Damian Hinds:**

Throughout the development of this project, the department has been mindful of its duties under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, and in particular the duty to have regard to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who have a protected characteristic and those who don't. Statistical analysis has informed high-level decision-making. Site-specific information will be reflected in the final decisions.

**Martin Docherty-Hughes:**

**[64111]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether any compulsory redundancies will result from closure of the Alexandria Jobcentre in West Dunbartonshire constituency.

**Damian Hinds:**

The Department for Work and Pensions is now consulting with colleagues in Alexandria Jobcentre. We are seeking to relocate, or offer alternative roles, to all employees affected by the proposed closure.

It is important to stress that this is a proposed closure: we will make a final decision informed by the consultation process with our colleagues. We are not therefore in a position to comment on the potential for redundancy.

## ■ Long Term Unemployed People

**Emma Reynolds:**

[\[65085\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what progress the Government has made in reducing long-term unemployment in areas of high unemployment in the last 12 months.

**Damian Hinds:**

According to the Office for National Statistics' Labour Force Survey, long-term unemployment has fallen nationally by 86,000 (17.5%) over the past 12 months. Equivalent figures are not available below national level due to the limitations of the sample size of the ONS survey.

## ■ Personal Independence Payment: Appeals

**Maria Eagle:**

[\[64657\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many and what proportion of unsuccessful mandatory reconsiderations of personal independence payments were overturned at the appeal stage in the last 12 months for which figures are available.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The table below gives statistics on the number of PIP applications that led to a mandatory reconsideration (MR), appeals being heard and appeals resulting in an increase to the award level in England.

*Table 1 – PIP disputes in England (data is not currently available for GB as a whole)*

	PIP CLAIMS THAT LED TO AN MR	PIP CLAIMS THAT LED TO AN APPEAL THAT WAS HEARD	SUCCESSFUL APPEALS
April 2014- March 2015	66,000	5,100	3,200
April 2015- March 2016	117,900	32,400	20,800

Notes:

- The figures in the table are the result of a complex data match across a number of data sets. They are taken from internal DWP management information and should be viewed as estimates. They may be subject to future revision.
- Appeals that were lodged but not heard are excluded. Appeals 'lapsed' (which is where DWP decided not to contest the appeal) are included in appeals heard.

- For the above reason the appeals heard cannot be represented as a % of the MRS registered.
- Appeal data may differ from that held by Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) for various reasons such as delays in data recording and other methodological differences in collating and preparing statistics..

**Maria Eagle:**

**[64658]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps he is taking to ensure that people appealing unsuccessful mandatory reconsiderations following a reassessment for the enhanced mobility component of personal independence payments do not have their vehicles rescinded before a decision on appeal is reached.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

The Motability charity provides a one-off package of transitional support and advice to support customers who no longer meet the eligibility criteria for the Motability scheme. For the majority of these customers, Motability provides transitional support of £2,000 in order to help support their mobility needs, including those who choose to appeal during this period. If an appeal is successful, PIP arrears are paid in full to the claimant and they can re-join the Motability scheme immediately, if they repay their transitional support money, or else within 6 months of the date they left the scheme.

However, we recognise that the appeals process can be challenging and the current seven-week return period does not fully mitigate this. We are looking at options to support disabled people better, which include on-going discussions with Motability. In addition, we are also looking to improve the quality of our decision making at all stages, and working closely with HM Courts and Tribunals Service to reduce appeals times.

## ■ Sick Leave: Musculoskeletal Disorders

**Rachel Reeves:**

**[64134]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people in (a) England and (b) Leeds have been signed off work permanently as a result of disability related to a musculoskeletal condition in the last three years.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

This information is not available.

**Rachel Reeves:**

**[64195]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many fit notes were issued to people as a result of musculoskeletal conditions in (a) England and (b) Leeds in (i) 2015 and (ii) 2016.

**Penny Mordaunt:**

At present we do not hold any data relating to fit notes so are unable to provide the information requested. We are working with NHS Digital towards making anonymised fit note statistics available. These statistics will include information on the main diagnosed condition (ICD-10) and the location of the Clinical Commissioning Group



which will allow the number of fit notes issued for both England and Leeds to be identified.

■ **Small Businesses: Scotland**

**Douglas Chapman:**

**[64068]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his Department is taking to promote entrepreneurship in disadvantaged communities in Scotland.

**Damian Hinds:**

New Enterprise Allowance is available nationally and has so far supported over 8,600 business startups in Scotland. Support for disadvantaged communities in Scotland is a devolved responsibility.

## MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

### FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

#### ■ Colombia: Embassies

**Rob Marris:**

[\[62342\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, by what date the UK Embassy in Bogota plans to comply with the Colombia Constitutional Court's judgment in the case of Action for protection of fundamental rights initiated by Darwin Ayrton Moreno-Hurtado, against the embassy of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland before the Republic of Colombia, dated 22 July 2015.

**An error has been identified in the written answer given on 6 February 2017. The correct answer should have been:**

**Sir Alan Duncan:**

The British Embassy responded to the Colombia Constitutional Court's judgment on 23 September 2015. No further response is necessary. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the British Embassy in Bogota take their employment responsibilities very seriously and pride in being an equal opportunities employer dedicated to inclusivity, a diverse workforce and valuing difference.

**The UK has complied with its international legal obligations, and the British Embassy responded to the Colombia Constitutional Court's judgment on 23 September 2015. No further response is necessary.**

#### ■ Ukraine: Armed Conflict

**Emily Thornberry:**

[\[63634\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the capacity of the Ukrainian authorities to provide government services to civilians living in districts under separatist control; and what representations he has made to his Ukrainian counterpart on the provision of services to such civilians.

**An error has been identified in the written answer given on 24 February 2017. The correct answer should have been:**

**Boris Johnson:**

The Ukrainian authorities estimate that there are up to 3500 Russian nationals fighting in eastern Ukraine. We are also aware of reports of a relatively small number of other nationals present in eastern Ukraine. The presence of Russian fighters in Ukraine remains a key obstacle to progress in implementing the Minsk peace agreement, which requires the withdrawal of all foreign armed formations, military equipment and mercenaries from the territory of Ukraine. **Given that these territories are not under Government control, there are clear logistical**

limitations to service provision by the Ukrainian Government to civilians living there. Nonetheless, the Ukrainian Government continues to provide water, heating and energy supplies to non-Government held areas. The UK provides close support to the Ministry for Temporarily Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons and we welcome the Ukrainian Government's efforts to pursue further ways to provide support to those in non-Government controlled areas, including by facilitating crossings and the transport of goods across the Line of Contact. However, the best way to secure the provision of services to civilians across the Donbas would be a full and comprehensive ceasefire; ongoing fighting poses a grave threat to vital utilities as well as civilian lives, as seen recently in Avdiivka.

## WRITTEN STATEMENTS

### BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

#### ■ **Post- Council Written Ministerial Statement - Competitiveness Council 20th February**

**Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Margot James):**

[\[HCWS504\]](#)

My noble friend, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Lord Prior) has made the following written ministerial statement:

The Competitiveness Council met recently in Brussels. I represented the UK at the meeting.

Council began with the approval of the legislative and non-legislative 'A' items.

The Council then reached agreement on a general approach for the proposed text on enforcement in the Consumer Protection Cooperation Regulation. Alongside most other Member States, the UK supported the text of the regulation.

The next item was an exchange of views as part of the regular competitiveness check-up on the EU economy. This focussed on investment in intangible assets. The Commission presented evidence to show that the gap between the EU and US on investment in intangible assets is growing, and highlighted its own efforts to help small and medium-sized enterprises. In the following discussion, Member States shared best practice and identified areas where they felt the EU could add value.

The Council next discussed actions to modernise public procurement in the context of the European Semester. The Commission set out its views on the state of public procurement across the EU as published in its Annual Growth Survey 2017. Member States emphasised their efforts to promote environmentally friendly and socially responsible procurement, as well as ensuring access for SMEs.

Over lunch Ministers were joined by two guest speakers Markus Beyrer (Business Europe) and Hariolf Kotmann (Clariant) to debate the competitiveness of European industries. Member States were asked to consider the appropriate balance between pan-European, national and regional initiatives. Issues of investment and innovation capacity were also discussed. I explained the approach we are taking to development of the UK's new industrial strategy and that we are seeking to address the cross-cutting, geographical and horizontal issues which impact businesses, rather than focussing on a purely sectoral approach.

The afternoon session began with a presentation from the Commission on its start-up and scale-up initiative (published last autumn). The Commission emphasised that the key challenge is supporting SMEs to scale up to become larger, job-creating enterprises. In the discussion, measures promoting access to finance received the greatest praise from the Council which perceives this as a key barrier to scaling-up. Some Member States

requested a single EU-wide definition of a “start-up”. Others emphasised that there was a barrier to scaling-up beyond national borders as the single market is not, in fact, a reality.

Next the Presidency gave a progress report on the negotiations of the revised regulations on type approval and market surveillance of motor vehicles. The European Parliament has recently agreed on a text. The Presidency said it hopes that an agreement in Council will be possible at the next Competitiveness Council meeting in May. The Commission reiterated its message that swift progress on this file was imperative in order to respond to the Volkswagen scandal and fix the systematic failures of the type approval system. Most Member States supported the Commission’s proposal, although some had reservations about some of the provisions in the text.

Next the Council took note of information from the Commission on the European Defence Action Plan. In November the Commission adopted the European Defence Action Plan, which is the industrial pillar of the EU defence package. The Commission highlighted the need for more competitive defence technology. It outlined that it does not seek to replace Member State action in this area, but is looking for a dialogue on where support is needed. Several Member States supported the Commission’s plan.

The next item was information from the Presidency on the implementation and entry into operation of the Unitary Patent and the Unified Patent Court (UPC). The Commission echoed calls for signatory states to ratify the agreement without delay, pointing out the barrier to innovation caused by the currently fragmented patent system. I updated the Council on the domestic processes required for entry into force of the UPC in the UK and the progress we are making.

This was followed by information from the Commission on its recent services package. Several Member States, including the UK, welcomed the Commission’s package and called for rapid and ambitious consideration of it by the Council. Other Member States expressed concerns about aspects of the package.

Next the Council discussed a joint paper from nine Member States on the competitiveness of the single market. The group was concerned about potentially burdensome new regulatory measures, particularly on minimum wages, introduced at national-level by some Member States. They feared these measures discriminate against workers and businesses in other member states, reducing their competitiveness. This could lead to single market fragmentation, with the road transport sector particularly affected. The Commission, after taking note of the discussion, stated it would publish its road package later in the year.

Council concluded with an update from the Presidency on the regulation on cross-border portability of online content services. The Presidency expressed delight at having reached a full political agreement on the regulation. This will see subscribers able to take their subscriptions to online content abroad with them when they travel around the EU. The Presidency declared this as an important step towards modernising copyright for the Digital Single Market, removing some of the existing licensing and commercial barriers. The Presidency thanked Member States for their hard work and cooperation.

**JUSTICE**■ **Justice update****The Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (Elizabeth Truss):****[\[HCWS503\]](#)**

Earlier today, I notified the market via the London Stock Exchange group that I would today lay a Statutory Instrument to change the discount rate applicable to personal injury lump sum compensation payments, to minus 0.75%.

Under the Damages Act 1996, I, as Lord Chancellor, have the power to set a discount rate which courts must consider when awarding compensation for future financial losses in the form of a lump sum in personal injury cases.

The current legal framework makes clear that claimants must be treated as risk averse investors, reflecting the fact that they may be financially dependent on this lump sum, often for long periods or the duration of their life.

The discount rate was last set in 2001, when the then-Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg, set the rate at 2.5%. This was based on a three year average of real yields on index-linked gilts. Since 2001, the real yields on index-linked gilts has fallen, so I have decided to take action.

Having completed the process of statutory consultation, I am satisfied that the rate should be based on a three year average of real returns on index-linked gilts. Therefore I am setting it at minus 0.75%. A full statement of reasons, explaining how I have decided upon this rate, will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses. The Statutory Instrument to effect this change has been laid today, and will become effective on 20 March 2017.

There will clearly be significant implications across the public and private sector. The Government has committed to ensuring that the NHS Litigation Authority has appropriate funding to cover changes to hospitals' clinical negligence costs. The Department of Health will also work closely with General Practitioners (GPs) and Medical Defence Organisations to ensure that appropriate funding is available to meet additional costs to GPs, recognising the crucial role they play in the delivery of NHS care.

The Government will review the framework under which I have set the rate today to ensure that it remains fit for purpose in the future. I will bring forward a consultation before Easter that will consider options for reform including: whether the rate should in future be set by an independent body; whether more frequent reviews would improve predictability and certainty for all parties; and whether the methodology – which in effect assumes that claimants would invest only in index-linked gilts – is appropriate for the future. Following the consultation, which will consider whether there is a better or fairer framework for claimants and defendants, the Government will bring forward any necessary legislation at an early stage.

I recognise the impacts this decision will have on the insurance industry. My Rt. Hon. Friend the Chancellor will meet with insurance industry representatives to discuss the situation.