



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 7 December 2016 and the information is correct at the time of publication (07:03 P.M., 07 December 2016). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

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

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

ANSWERS

ATTORNEY GENERAL

■ Prosecutions

Julie Elliott: [55931]

To ask the Attorney General, what discussions he has had with the Director of Public Prosecution on the potential effect of the UK leaving the EU on the prosecution of criminals.

Robert Buckland:

The Attorney General regularly meets the Director of Prosecutions to discuss a range of issues that affect prosecutions, including the UK's decision to leave the European Union. The Attorney General's Office is working to support the delivery of a successful withdrawal from the EU and a new relationship with Europe, including for our superintended departments.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Biofuels

Dr Paul Monaghan: [55150]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate the Government has made of the projected use of biomass fuels in each of the next 20 years.

Jesse Norman:

The Government does not publish projections of the future use of biomass fuels. Accurate modelling requires knowledge of Government policies beyond this Parliament. In 2011 we published an analysis of the technical potential of various biomass feedstocks which could be available for use in bioenergy. This can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/48059/1464-aea-2010-uk-and-global-bioenergy-report.pdf

■ Biofuels: Subsidies

Dr Paul Monaghan: [55280]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans his Department has to remove subsidies for biomass fuels to discourage their importation.

Jesse Norman:

The Government does not subsidise biomass fuels. The Government supports a range of renewable technologies which can use biomass fuels in generating low carbon energy for electricity, heat and transport. We do not distinguish between domestic and imported biomass fuels but there are standards on sustainability and greenhouse gas savings which apply to all biomass receiving subsidy.

On 9 November 2016 the Department published a call for evidence on renewable fuelled technologies in the Contracts for Difference scheme. The response to this consultation may help inform future policy decisions, including whether the support we currently offer to these technologies through the CFD is right for delivering our objectives on value for money for decarbonisation.

■ **Educational Exchanges: Russia**

Mr Peter Lilley: [55302]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he plans to meet his Russian counterpart to discuss a programme of student exchanges between the UK and Russia.

Joseph Johnson:

The Government has no current plans to meet Russia to discuss student exchange. We remain committed to welcoming the brightest and best students to study at our world class institutions. In 2014/15 there were 4,105 students from Russia enrolled on higher education programmes in the UK.

■ **Energy: Meters**

Tom Blenkinsop: [56001]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department holds information on the number of households using foundation stage meters which have switched energy suppliers in each of the last five years.

Jesse Norman:

The Department does not hold this information.

Tom Blenkinsop: [56002]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what progress his Department has made in improving the interoperability of early smart meters.

Jesse Norman:

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Christchurch, on 21 November 2016 to Question 53430:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2016-11-16/53430/>.

■ **GB Energy**

Phil Boswell: [55328]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with Ofgem on customers of GB Energy Supply who will be given a new energy supplier due to that company ceasing trading.

Jesse Norman:

On 30 November Ofgem appointed Co-operative Energy to take on GB Energy Supply's customers. Co-operative Energy is honouring the current contracts and prices of GB Energy Supply's customers. This applies to customers on fixed deals and on standard variable tariffs. Co-operative Energy will also honour all outstanding credit balances for households who are owed money by GB Energy Supply.

The appointment of Co-operative Energy follows a competitive process run by Ofgem to get the best deal possible for customers. The Government will continue to work closely with Ofgem to ensure that consumers' interests are being protected.

■ Living Wage**Paul Flynn:**[\[55374\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the potential implications for its policies of the recommendations of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in its November 2016 Global Economic Outlook that caution was needed in rolling out increases to the living wage on account of their potential effect on employment.

Margot James:

The Government seeks the advice of the independent and expert Low Pay Commission when making decisions on the rate at which the National Living Wage is set. The Government sets the Low Pay Commission a remit to monitor and evaluate the impact of the National Living Wage. When making recommendations in relation to the National Living Wage the Low Pay Commission is asked to consider the pace of the increase, taking into account evidence relating to the economy, employment and unemployment levels, and any other relevant policy changes. The Government's decisions on setting the National Living Wage will continue to be guided by this analysis and advice.

The Government recently announced that the National Living Wage will increase to £7.50 from April 2017. This was the rate recommended by the Low Pay Commission. Our ambition is that the National Living Wage should continue to increase to reach 60% of median earnings by 2020, subject to sustained economic growth.

■ Members: Correspondence**Fiona Mactaggart:**[\[55418\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, when he plans to answer the letter of 10 August 2016 from the right hon. Member for Slough on assistance in dealing with anti-competitive practices in booking flights in Thailand.

Margot James:

The Department does not have a record of receiving this letter from the Hon Member. I would be pleased to provide a response upon receipt of a copy of the correspondence.

■ Mental Health: Flexible Working

Martyn Day: [\[55303\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of flexible working from the commencement of employment for people with mental health issues.

Margot James:

Flexible working benefits both employees and employers: it can enable people with mental health issues to maximise their contribution at work and help employers to retain and make use of their skills. The Government extended the Right to Request Flexible Working to all employees with 26 weeks qualifying service in 2014, where previously it applied only to employees with children and carers of certain adults. The legislation strikes a balance between giving employees flexibility and giving employers the certainty that they need to plan. Many employers agree flexible working arrangements with employees outside the statutory framework. I would encourage employers to be open to flexible working options when recruiting, and to make this visible when advertising jobs.

Our health and welfare systems need to reflect the benefits that work can bring and offer the opportunity to work for all those who can, help for those who could, and care for those who cannot. Our recent green paper *Work, Health and Disability: Improving Lives* reflects our ambitious approach to work and health.

■ Met Office: Scotland

Richard Arkless: [\[55930\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he plans to devolve the Met Office functions for mountain weather forecasting to Scotland.

Joseph Johnson:

The Met Office delivers a range of safety critical services to the whole of the United Kingdom through the Public Weather Service, including mountain forecasts. The Public Weather Service is overseen by the Public Weather Service Customer Group, which includes an independent chair and representatives from all of the devolved administrations.

■ Minimum Wage

Caroline Lucas: [\[55486\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 16 November 2016 to Question 52385, how many of the 92 employers named by his Department for non-compliance with the national minimum wage on 5 February 2016 identified and paid further arrears, not included in the sum of arrears for which they were named, under the self-correction mechanism introduced by HM Revenue and Customs in 2015; what the combined total was of those further, self-corrected arrears; and to how many workers those further, self-corrected arrears were owed.

Margot James:

Employers who self-correct arrears owed to workers are not named for any additional arrears identified. Due to the small number of cases involved, publishing aggregate self-correction data could allow individual employers to be identified, and would amount to naming them for a second time.

■ Ports: Biofuels**Dr Paul Monaghan:**[\[55279\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what shortfall in capacity UK ports and harbours are expected to identify in regard to managing the importation of biomass fuels in each of the next 20 years.

Jesse Norman:

We are aware that certain ports have an interest in replacing falling coal movements with biomass. However, it is for biomass supply chains and ports to determine the facilities that they require and which are available.

The Government does not publish projections of the future use of biomass fuels. Accurate modelling of future biomass requirements requires, among other things, knowledge of future Government policies which are yet to be decided. However, in 2011 we published an analysis of the technical potential of various biomass feedstocks which could be available for use in bioenergy. This can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/48059/1464-aea-2010-uk-and-global-bioenergy-report.pdf

■ Product Recalls and Safety Working Group**Jim Fitzpatrick:**[\[55610\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what representations his Department is planning to seek from consumer groups on the working group on product recalls and safety; and what representation consumer groups will have on the membership of that group.

Margot James:

The Working Group on Product Recalls and Safety includes representatives from a wide range of experts including the Chief Fire Officers Association, the Association of Chief Trading Standards Officers, Electrical Safety First, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), many of whom represent the interests of individuals and consumers.

I have met with Which? to talk to them about the Working Group and they have been invited to join the Group.

CABINET OFFICE■ **Government Departments: Extended Ministerial Offices**

Nick Herbert: [\[55977\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 2 December 2016 to Question 55310, which extended ministerial offices are in operation as of 1 December 2016, and whether any such offices have been disestablished since 13 July 2016.

Ben Gummer:
I refer the hon. Member to my previous answer.

TREASURY■ **Airports**

Stephen Hammond: [\[55509\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to Table 7.1 of the Final Report of the Airports Commission, published in July 2015, if he will commission an assessment of the effect on the data in that table under the Commission's (a) global growth, (b) relative decline of Europe, (c) low-cost is king and (d) global fragmentation scenarios.

Stephen Hammond: [\[55510\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will instruct the Infrastructure and Projects Authority to reproduce Table 7.1 of the Final Report of the Airports Commission, published in July 2015, using the Commission's (a) global growth, (b) relative decline of Europe, (c) low-cost is king and (d) global fragmentation scenarios.

Stephen Hammond: [\[55511\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will instruct the Infrastructure and Projects Authority to reproduce Table 7.1 of the Final Report of the Airports Commission, published in July 2015, using an appraisal period of (a) 10, (b) 20 and (c) 30 years.

Mr David Gauke:

The Infrastructure and Projects Authority has no plans to produce further analysis on the identification and evaluation of how any need for additional capacity airport should be met.

In October, the Department for Transport published a range of analyses to be read alongside the Airports Commission Final Report as part of the Government's announcement of its preferred scheme for new runway capacity in the South East.

The Government will now lay a draft National Policy Statement for consultation in the New Year, which will be accompanied by an Appraisal of Sustainability that examines the economic, environmental and social impacts of the preferred scheme and reasonable alternatives.

■ Airports: South East

Stephen Hammond:

[\[55472\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the Infrastructure and Projects Authority will assume responsibility for future projects to increase airport capacity in the South East.

Mr David Gauke:

A range of public or private sector organisations are responsible for the delivery of infrastructure projects. The Infrastructure and Projects Authority will continue to provide expertise to a range of projects.

■ Bank Services

Mr Laurence Robertson:

[\[55291\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what information his Department holds on the number of money service businesses which have had their business bank accounts withdrawn by banks in 2014-15 and 2015-16; and if he will make a statement.

Simon Kirby:

The Treasury does not hold any information on the number of money service businesses which have had their business bank accounts withdrawn by banks in 2014-15 and 2015-16.

Whether to withdraw a business bank account is ultimately a commercial decision for a bank. The government continues to work with both banks and money service businesses to promote understanding of their regulatory obligations and to encourage them to take a risk-based approach in their activities, to ensure that the measures they take are effective and proportionate to the risk they face.

■ Coastal Areas

Peter Aldous:

[\[56014\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the measures announced in the Autumn Statement 2016 on coastal communities; and if he will make a statement.

Mr David Gauke:

The investments the government announced at the Autumn Statement will support a country that works for everyone, no matter where they live. We want to drive up the productivity and growth of every region by investing in their infrastructure, developing the skills of their people and supporting their companies.

Coastal communities will continue to benefit from this government's commitment to unlocking barriers to economic growth. Since 2012, we have invested over £125 million in over 200 projects across the UK through the Coastal Communities Fund, and made at least £90 million of new funding available UK-wide over the current parliament to drive future growth in coastal communities.

■ Credit Unions

Diana Johnson: [\[55479\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to paragraph 3.45 of the Autumn Statement 2016, if he will publish details on the working of the expansion of the scheme to encourage credit union membership in areas at risk from loan sharks.

Simon Kirby:

The Government is committed to facilitating sustainable financial services that give consumers greater choice in accessing credit. To help achieve this aim, the Government has fundamentally reformed regulation of the consumer credit market, transferring regulatory responsibility from the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) to the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) on 1 April 2014. The FCA has transposed key elements of the OFT's Irresponsible Lending Guidance into binding rules. The FCA makes clear that a firm should lend responsibly, and takes reasonable steps to assess the customer's ability to meet repayments in a sustainable manner without undue difficulties, and without having to borrow further. Ultimately, money should only be lent to a consumer if they can afford to repay it.

Furthermore, the Government has already introduced several initiatives to support the credit union sector. These include investing £38m in the sector through the Department of Work and Pensions' Credit Union Expansion Project, and providing £500,000 to help armed forces personnel access credit union services.

The scheme referred to at paragraph 3.45 of the Autumn Statement 2016 is undertaken by the England Illegal Money Lending Team. The Team recovers funds from convicted loan sharks under the Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) and currently uses this to fund community education work and a credit union incentive scheme in areas which are vulnerable to loan sharks. The scheme provides cash incentives for new credit union accounts into which consumers make regular savings.

In 2018, governance of the Team, and control of how it uses funds recovered under POCA, will transfer to HM Treasury. In April 2017, the Financial Conduct Authority will introduce a new levy collected from consumer credit firms which will fund the Team's enforcement and education work. This will make it possible to free-up POCA funds currently used for education about loan sharks to expand the credit union scheme.

■ European Investment Bank

Mr Nigel Dodds: [\[55569\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the current value of the UK's share in the capital of the European Investment Bank.

Mr David Gauke:

The total value of the European Investment Bank's subscribed capital is €243.3bn. Of this just under €21.7bn is paid in capital and €221.6bn is callable capital. The breakdown of capital shares by country is set out in the EIB statutes and the EIB publishes annual financial reports.

■ Housing Infrastructure Fund

Diana Johnson: [\[55287\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, from which date local authorities will be able to bid for funding from the Housing Infrastructure Fund; and how the Government plans to assess which areas have the greatest housing need in allocating those funds.

Mr David Gauke:

The £2.3bn Housing Infrastructure Fund will be used to support local authorities in areas of high housing demand to deliver up to 100,000 homes through providing the vital infrastructure needed to make new housing developments possible – whether that is delivering new roads, faster broadband or improvements to gas and water supply.

Money will be competitively allocated to the projects that deliver additional homes in areas of high housing demand. Further details will be set out next year.

■ Housing: Construction

Diana Johnson: [\[55473\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, which NUTS 1 regions of the UK are to receive the £7.2 billion to support the construction of new homes announced in Autumn Statement 2016.

Mr David Gauke:

In early October, the government announced that it would pilot accelerated construction on public sector land, backed by up to £2 billion of funding. To meet this commitment, the government will invest £1.7 billion by 2020-21 through the NPIF to speed up house building on public sector land in England through partnerships with private sector developers. The devolved administrations will receive funding through the Barnett formula in the usual way.

Scott Mann: [\[55482\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether it is his policy that communities which have been proactive in instigating housing growth will gain access to the infrastructure funds announced in the Autumn Statement 2016.

Mr David Gauke:

At the Autumn Statement my RHF the Chancellor announced that the government would invest £5.3bn in housing. This includes a new £2.3bn Housing Infrastructure Fund and £1.4bn additional funding to build 40,000 new affordable homes.

Both affordable housing funding and the Housing Infrastructure Fund will be allocated competitively. The Housing Infrastructure Fund will be used to deliver infrastructure, such as new roads, that will deliver up to 100,000 homes. Money will be competitively allocated to Local Authorities whose bids will deliver additional homes in areas of high housing demand.

■ Infrastructure: Finance

Diana Johnson: [\[55286\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how (a) much funding and (b) many full-time equivalent staff the National Infrastructure Commission has allocated to its projects on (i) London transport, (ii) Transport for the North and (iii) the Cambridge-Milton Keynes- Oxford growth corridor.

Mr David Gauke:

The National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) has its own budget, and under the terms of the Charter for the NIC published in October 2016, it has complete discretion over its work programme and resource allocation. The government does not hold exact figures on the funding and resource allocations for each of the NIC's projects.

■ National Productivity Investment Fund

Peter Aldous: [\[56013\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate his Department has made of the proportion of the National Productivity Investment Fund that is expected to be invested in coastal communities.

Mr David Gauke:

The government has established a National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF) to provide £23bn of additional spending between 2017/18 and 2021/22. Every penny spent by the UK government is explicitly earmarked for areas that are critical to boosting productivity: economic infrastructure (transport and digital communications), Research and Development (R&D), and housing.

Further details about specifically how and where this money will be invested will be set out by the relevant departments and agencies in due course.

Where spending on measures within the NPIF does not extend to Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, the devolved administrations will receive funding through the Barnett formula in the usual way.

■ Pay

Paul Flynn: [\[55371\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the implications for its policies of the Institute for Fiscal Studies' forecast of potential wage stagnation for UK workers.

Simon Kirby:

The independent Office for Budget Responsibility forecast that average earnings growth will slow in the near-term, before rising to over 3% per cent per year from 2019 onwards, and real earnings rise in every year of the forecast. Furthermore, by 2018, increases to the personal allowance announced since the start of this Parliament will have cut income tax for 31 million people and taken 1.3 million of the lowest paid out of income tax altogether.

Looking at real household disposable income (RHDI) per head - a more comprehensive measure of living standards than real earnings - living standards are now at their highest ever level and are forecast to be 2.8% higher by 2021 than they are today.

The government has reaffirmed it will raise the personal allowance to £12,500 by the end of the Parliament, so that people can keep more of what they earn. But there's more to do to build an economy that works for everyone. That's why the Autumn Statement took further steps to increase the supply of affordable housing, ban letting agents' fees, freeze fuel duty, and to raise productivity which is the best way to raise living standards.

Paul Flynn:

[\[55377\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the implications for his policies of the forecast in the Office for Budget Responsibility's Economic and fiscal outlook, published 23 November 2016, of changes in the level of real earnings forecast in March 2016 for 2021.

Simon Kirby:

The independent Office for Budget Responsibility forecast that average earnings growth will slow in the near-term, before rising to over 3% per cent per year from 2019 onwards, and real earnings rise in every year of the forecast. Furthermore, by 2018, increases to the personal allowance announced since the start of this Parliament will have cut income tax for 31 million people and taken 1.3 million of the lowest paid out of income tax altogether.

Looking at real household disposable income (RHDI) per head - a more comprehensive measure of living standards than real earnings - living standards are now at their highest ever level and are forecast to be 2.8% higher by 2021 than they are today.

The government has reaffirmed it will raise the personal allowance to £12,500 by the end of the Parliament, so that people can keep more of what they earn. But there's more to do to build an economy that works for everyone. That's why the Autumn Statement took further steps to increase the supply of affordable housing, ban letting agents' fees, freeze fuel duty, and to raise productivity which is the best way to raise living standards.

■ Public Expenditure

Jim Shannon:

[\[55797\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what his policy is on the geographical distribution of funding previously paid to the EU to regions and constituent parts of the UK after the UK has left the EU.

Mr David Gauke:

We are working closely with the regions and constituent parts of the UK to ensure we get the best possible deal for all parts of the UK as we leave the EU.

There are a range of outcomes on EU exit and it would not be sensible to set out the costs, benefits and consequences of different scenarios in advance of the EU exit

negotiation. But leaving the EU means we will want to take our own decisions about how to deliver policy objectives previously targeted by EU funding.

As we transition to longer-term arrangements we will ensure regions and Devolved Administrations continue to be engaged and local circumstances are taken into account.

■ Social Security Benefits: Children

Alison Thewliss: [\[55878\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with which trade unions representing civil servants on what dates his Department has met to discuss its plans to limit tax credit payments to two children and protections for victims of rape whose third or subsequent child was born as a result of rape.

Mr David Gauke:

Ministers have met with officials and a wide range of stakeholders whilst developing the non-consensual sex exception. The Government has also run a public consultation on all the exceptions which closed 27 November 2016. The Government will publish the consultation response in due course.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Change of Use

Mr Geoffrey Cox: [\[55815\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to amend the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 to allow for the installation of additional floors in converting agricultural buildings for residential use.

Gavin Barwell:

Additional floors can be installed when converting an agricultural building to residential use under Class Q of the General Permitted Development Order, where they are within the permitted development right. We therefore have no plans to amend the legislation in this regard.

■ Flood Control: EU Grants and Loans

Rachael Maskell: [\[56007\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what progress has been made on the Government's application to the EU Solidarity Fund for flood relief.

Andrew Percy:

The Government finalised the UK's application to the EU Solidarity Fund on 22 September 2016. The Government has been in regular contact with the European Commission at working level, and we await their decision on the application.

■ Local Growth Deals

Diana Johnson:

[\[55342\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what the funding allocations are for each of the three Growth Deals through the Local Growth Fund by NUTS 1 region.

Andrew Percy:

A detailed breakdown by NUTS 1 region of the funding awards that Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) received for the first two rounds of Growth Deals is provided in Table A (attached). As LEP geography reflects functional economic areas, a number of LEPs cross NUTS 1 regional boundaries. For example, South East LEP extends across the South East and East of England. In these cases LEPs have been assigned to the geographically dominant region as far as possible.

At Autumn Statement 2016 the Chancellor announced the headline regional awards for the most recent round of Growth Deals, which can be found in Table B (attached). A full set of announcements providing more detailed information about LEPs' individual awards will be made in the coming weeks.

Attachments:

1. Growth Deal Awards table [PQ 55342.docx]

■ Sustainable Development

Mrs Anne Main:

[\[55736\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what definition of sustainable his Department uses in relation to planning, infrastructure and strategic priorities.

Gavin Barwell:

The policies in paragraph 18 to 219 of the National Planning Policy Framework, taken as a whole, constitute the Government's view of what sustainable development in England means in practice for the planning system.

The Framework is clear that local planning authorities should work collaboratively with other bodies to ensure that strategic priorities across local boundaries are properly co-ordinated and clearly reflected in Local Plans. As part of this process, they should consider producing joint planning policies on strategic matters and informal strategies such as joint infrastructure and investment plans.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT■ **Football: Offences against Children**

Mr Gregory Campbell: [\[55484\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if she will hold discussions with the football authorities in (a) England, (b) Scotland, (c) Wales and (d) Northern Ireland on alleged historical child abuse cases.

Tracey Crouch:

We have had discussions with the Chair and Chief Executive of the Football Association, Greg Clarke and Martin Glenn, and the Chief Executive of the Professional Footballers' Association, Gordon Taylor, to ensure that they are working closely with the police and other agencies. Further discussions with the Home Office, police and football authorities in England are planned.

I have also spoken to the Scottish, Welsh and Irish Football Associations. Through the devolved administrations we will continue to engage with the football governing bodies across the United Kingdom to make sure that we work together on this matter.

DEFENCE■ **Military Bases: Staff**

Nia Griffith: [\[55968\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the oral statement of 7 November 2016, Official Report, column 1286, on the Defence Estate, how many (a) military and (b) civilian personnel are based at each of the sites identified to be disposed of by 2040.

Mark Lancaster:

The military and civilian personnel based at each site identified for disposal by 2040 as made in the oral statement of November 2016 are shown in the attached table:

Attachments:

1. Defence Sites [PQN16-17-2016-08245 -11783.docx]

EDUCATION

■ Careers and Enterprise Company

Diana Johnson: [\[55535\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many young people have benefited from money allocated through the Careers and Enterprise Fund in each region of England in each year since 2014-15.

Robert Halfon:

The Careers & Enterprise Company is making excellent progress in transforming the provision of careers, enterprise and employer engagement for young people to inspire them and prepare them for the world of work.

The Company's Careers and Enterprise Fund supports activity across all regions, and greater funding is focused in areas where it is needed most, based on 'cold spots' analysis. Funding awards were made in February 2016 and will benefit 250,000 young people. Further details of successful awards can be found at: www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/map#fund.

The Company's Enterprise Adviser Network is now live in over 1,100 secondary schools and colleges across the country. These senior business volunteers support the Senior Leadership Team of the school with strategic plans for employer engagement, ultimately benefiting all pupils. By the end of the parliament, the offer of this support will have been made to all secondary schools and colleges in the country.

■ Extended Schools

Alex Chalk: [\[55256\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what progress the Government has made on providing additional funding to expand breakfast clubs provision in schools from September 2017 from the soft drinks levy.

Edward Timpson:

Work is ongoing to design the new programme, which will be ready for September 2017. Further details will be announced in due course.

■ Free Schools: Inspections

Shabana Mahmood: [\[55504\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many free schools have been inspected by Ofsted in the (a) first and (b) second year of their operation.

Edward Timpson:

No free schools were inspected in the first year of operation. 169 were inspected during the second year of operation.

■ National Careers Service

Diana Johnson: [\[55534\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many advice sessions the National Careers Service provided in each region of England in each year since 2009-10.

Robert Halfon:

The National Career Service was formed in April 2012. The model for the service changed in October 2014 replacing paid sessional activity with a payment by results system to incentivise better customer outcomes.

The periods 2012-13, 2013- 14 and Apr- Sept 2014 represent the number of paid sessions accessed by customers under the old model.

For Oct 2014-Mar 2015 and 2015-2016 we report the number of adviser sessions that delivered a customer satisfaction outcome under the new model. In the new model the majority of customers will have had more than one session of advice or guidance to achieve an outcome. However, in contrast to the old model these further sessions were unpaid and therefore often unrecorded by contractors.

ADVISER SESSIONS	2012/13	2013/14	2014-15 (APR-SEP)
North East	65,748	71,697	34,790
North West	153,340	181,149	79,294
Yorkshire & Humber	121,813	136,088	63,844
East Midlands	100,787	112,996	53,289
West Midlands	116,487	138,568	69,013
East of England	134,211	152,634	69,000
London	198,628	204,080	86,543
South East	154,990	166,138	66,730
South West	104,474	114,233	28,955
Outcomes	2014/2015 (Oct-Mar)	2015/2016	
North East	18,297	32,382	
North West	37,271	78,884	
Yorkshire & Humber	32,769	59,709	
East Midlands	21,832	40,536	
West Midlands	21,173	54,297	

ADVISER SESSIONS	2012/13	2013/14	2014-15 (APR-SEP)
Central Eastern	24,705	44,464	
London	40,581	82,598	
South East	34,747*	25,895	
South Central	18,012	30,831	
Thames Valley	10,497	20,229	
South West	10,255	25,969	

OCTOBER 2014 - CHANGE IN SERVICE AND FUNDING MODEL

*Adviser session for this provider due to contract differences. The reported regions are not co-terminus with official government office regions. They are informed by a variety of demographic factors that help to shape the delivery and focus of the service. Further information can be found in the table attached.

AREA NAME	GEOGRAPHICAL[1] AREA COVERED	PRISONS[2]
CENTRAL EASTERN FUTURES ADVICE	HERTFORDSHIRE, CAMBRIDGESHIRE, CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE, BEDFORD, BEDFORDSHIRE, LUTON, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE, MILTON KEYNES, SUFFOLK, NORFOLK, CITY OF PETERBOROUGH	HMP BLUNDESTON, HMP BURE, HMP NORWICH*, HMP WAYLAND*, HMP HIGHPOINT NORTH/SOUTH*, HMP HOLLESLEY BAY*, HMP BEDFORD*, HMP LITTLEHEY, HMP THE MOUNT*, HMP WHITEMOOR, HMP WOODHILL*
East Midlands Futures Advice	Derby, Derbyshire, Leicester, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, Rutland	HMP Nottingham*, HMP Ranby*, HMP Sudbury*, HMP Lincoln*, HMP Whatton, HMP North Sea Camp*, HMP Leicester*, HMP Onley*, HMP Stocken, HMP Gartree, HMPYOI Glen Parva, HMP Foston Hall
Greater Manchester, Cheshire/Warrington and Staffordshire Economic Solutions	Staffordshire, City of Stoke on Trent, Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Warrington, Trafford, Stockport, Tameside,	HMP Manchester*, HMP Styal, HMP Risley*, HMP Thorn Cross*, HMP Stafford, HMP Drake Hall, HMPYOI Swinfen

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	Manchester, Salford, Wigan, Bolton, Bury, Rochdale, Oldham	Hall, HMP Buckley Hall
Liverpool City Region, Cumbria and Lancashire Economic Solutions	Cumbria, Lancashire, Blackpool, Blackburn & Darwen, Sefton, Wirral, Liverpool, Knowsley, Halton, St Helens	HMP Garth, HMP Haverigg*, HMP Kirkham*, HMP Lancaster Farms, HMP Preston*, HMP Wymott, HMP Liverpool*, HMP Kennet*
London Prospects Services Ltd	Barking & Dagenham, Barnet, Camden, City of London, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, Havering, Islington, Kensington & Chelsea, Newham, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, Westminster, Bexley, Brent, Bromley, Croydon, Ealing, Greenwich, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Kingston, Lambeth, Lewisham, Merton, Richmond, Southwark, Sutton, Wandsworth	HMP Belmarsh*, HMP Holloway, HMPYOI Feltham, HMP ISIS*, HMP Wormwood Scrubs*, HMP Brixton*, HMP Pentonville*, HMP Wandsworth*, HMP Thameside*
North East CfBT	Northumberland, County Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle upon Tyne, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, Sunderland, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland, Stockton on Tees, Darlington	HMP Durham*, HMP Low Newton, HMP Frankland, HMP Deerbolt, HMP Kirkclevington Grange*, HMP Holme House*, HMP Northumberland*
South Central CfBT	Hampshire, Dorset, Surrey, Bournemouth, Poole, City of Southampton, City of	HMP Downview, HMP Send, HMP Coldingley, HMP Highdown*, HMP Isle of Wight

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	Portsmouth, West Sussex, Isle of Wight, City of Brighton & Hove	(Albany, Parkhurst), HMP Ford*, HMP Guys Marsh*, HMP The Verne, HMP Winchester*, HMP Dorchester*, HMP Portland*
South East CXK	Kent, East Sussex, Thurrock, Medway, Southend-on-Sea, Essex	HMP Sheppy Cluster (HMP Emley*, HMP Swaleside, HMP Stanford Hill*), HMP Rochester*, HMP Blantyre House*, HMP East Sutton Park, HMP Maidstone, HMP Lewes*, HMP Chelmsford*
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Thames Valley Advisa	Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Swindon, Reading, West Berkshire, Slough, Bracknell Forest, Windsor & Maidenhead, Wokingham, Wiltshire	HMP Grendon, HMP Spring Hill*, HMP Huntercombe, HMP Aylesbury, HMP Reading, HMP Bullingdon*, HMP Erlestoke
West Midlands Prospects Services Ltd	Telford & Wrekin, Shropshire, County of Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Warwickshire, Coventry, Birmingham, Sandwell, Dudley, Walsall, Wolverhampton, Solihull	HMPYOI Brinsford, HMP Featherstone*, HMP Oakwood*, HMP Hewell*, HMP Birmingham*, HMP Long Lartin, HMP Stoke Heath*
Yorkshire & Humberside Careers Yorkshire and the	North Yorkshire, York, East Riding of Yorkshire, Doncaster,	HMP Hull*, HMP Everthorpe*, HMPYOI Northallerton, HMP

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Humber (CYH)	City of Kingston upon Hull, Rotherham, Sheffield, Barnsley, Kirklees, Wakefield, Leeds, Bradford, Calderdale, North and North East Lincolnshire.	Full Sutton, HMP Leeds*, HMP Wealstun*, HMP Wakefield, HMP Lindholme, HMP Hatfield, HMP Moorland, HMP Doncaster*, HMP New Hall, HMP Askham Grange, HMP Wolds*

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Liverpool City Region, Cumbria and Lancashire Economic Solutions	Cumbria, Lancashire, Blackpool, Blackburn & Darwen, Sefton, Wirral, Liverpool, Knowsley, Halton, St Helens	HMP Garth, HMP Haverigg*, HMP Kirkham*, HMP Lancaster Farms, HMP Preston*, HMP Wymott, HMP Liverpool*, HMP Kennet*
London Prospects Services Ltd	Barking & Dagenham, Barnet, Camden, City of London, Enfield, Hackney, Haringey, Havering, Islington, Kensington & Chelsea, Newham, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, Westminster, Bexley, Brent, Bromley, Croydon, Ealing, Greenwich, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Kingston, Lambeth, Lewisham, Merton, Richmond, Southwark,	HMP Belmarsh*, HMP Holloway, HMPYOI Feltham, HMP ISIS*, HMP Wormwood Scrubs*, HMP Brixton*, HMP Pentonville*, HMP Wandsworth*, HMP Thameside*

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South Central CfBT	Hampshire, Dorset, Surrey, Bournemouth, Poole, City of Southampton, City of Portsmouth, West Sussex, Isle of Wight, City of Brighton & Hove	HMP Downview, HMP Send, HMP Coldingley, HMP Highdown*, HMP Isle of Wight (Albany, Parkhurst), HMP Ford*, HMP Guys Marsh*, HMP The Verne, HMP Winchester*, HMP Dorchester*, HMP Portland*
South East CXK	Kent, East Sussex, Thurrock, Medway, Southend-on-Sea, Essex	HMP Sheppy Cluster (HMP Emley*, HMP Swaleside, HMP Stanford Hill*), HMP Rochester*, HMP Blantyre House*, HMP East Sutton Park, HMP Maidstone, HMP Lewes*, HMP Chelmsford*
London Prospects Services Ltd	Bath & NE Somerset, Bristol, Cornwall, Devon, Isles of Scilly, North Somerset, Plymouth, Somerset, South Gloucestershire, Torbay	HMP Channings Wood*, HMP Dartmoor, HMP Exeter*, HMP Bristol*, HMP Eastwood Park, HMP Leyhill*
Thames Valley Advisa	Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Swindon, Reading, West Berkshire,	HMP Grendon, HMP Spring Hill*, HMP Huntercombe, HMP Aylesbury, HMP Reading, HMP

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	Slough, Bracknell Forest, Windsor & Maidenhead, Wokingham, Wiltshire	Bullingdon*, HMP Erlestoke
West Midlands Prospects Services Ltd	Telford & Wrekin, Shropshire, County of Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Warwickshire, Coventry, Birmingham, Sandwell, Dudley, Walsall, Wolverhampton, Solihull	HMPYOI Brinsford, HMP Featherstone*, HMP Oakwood*, HMP Hewell*, HMP Birmingham*, HMP Long Lartin, HMP Stoke Heath*
Yorkshire & Humberside Careers Yorkshire and the Humber (CYH)	North Yorkshire, York, East Riding of Yorkshire, Doncaster, City of Kingston upon Hull, Rotherham, Sheffield, Barnsley, Kirklees, Wakefield, Leeds, Bradford, Calderdale, North and North East Lincolnshire.	HMP Hull*, HMP Everthorpe*, HMPYOI Northallerton, HMP Full Sutton, HMP Leeds*, HMP Wealstun*, HMP Wakefield, HMP Lindholme, HMP Hatfield, HMP Moorland, HMP Doncaster*, HMP New Hall, HMP Askham Grange, HMP Wolds*

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[2] Prisons marked with * are resettlement prisons as announced by the Ministry of Justice in August 2013

■ Schools: Sports

Alex Chalk:

[\[55255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what progress the Government has made on providing additional funding to support sport and exercise in primary schools from the soft drinks levy.

Edward Timpson:

We want all pupils to be healthy and active. That is why through the primary PE and sport premium, the Government has invested over £600million of ring-fenced funding to primary schools to improve PE and sport since 2013.

But we know there is more to do, which is why I am pleased that revenue from the soft drinks industry levy will be used to double the primary PE and sport premium to £320million a year from September 2017, enabling schools to further improve the quality and breadth of PE and sport that they offer.

We continue to work with the sector to determine how the funding should be allocated and further details will be announced in due course.

■ Vocational Guidance: North of England

Diana Johnson:

[\[55652\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to fulfil the commitment made in the Northern Powerhouse Strategy, published in November 2016, on ensuring that northern labour market priorities inform the provision of careers advice.

Robert Halfon:

In the three months leading to August 2016, employment in the Northern Powerhouse was 7.1 million, with 429,000 more people in work than in 2010, and 187,000 jobs created in the past year alone.

The provision of careers education, advice and guidance is crucial in supporting young people to make the right choices about their futures. That is why the Government is investing £90million over the course of this Parliament to improve careers and enterprise provision.

The Government will work with the Northern Powerhouse to ensure that local priorities, including labour market priorities, are fed into the provision of careers advice for young people and adults.

As set out in the Northern Powerhouse Strategy, published at the Autumn Statement this year, the Government will work with local partners in the North on the design of careers and enterprise provision for all ages, including collaboration on the work of the Careers and Enterprise Company and the National Careers Service.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS**■ Animal Welfare**

Angela Smith: [\[55734\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to her Department's consultation on the review of animal establishments licensing in England, which closed on 12 March 2016, when she plans to publish draft regulations on the licensing of animal establishments; and if she will make a statement.

George Eustice:

The Government proposes to publish a next steps document shortly which will set out our proposals for the animal establishments licensing review, following analysis of the 1,700 responses to the consultation.

■ Animal Welfare and Domestic Violence

Angela Smith: [\[55405\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether her Department has made an assessment of whether there is a link between trends in the level of offences committed under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and trends in the level of offences of domestic violence in the last 10 years.

Angela Smith: [\[55406\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether her Department has made an assessment of whether there is a link between trends in the level of offences committed under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and trends in the level of aggravated offences against the person in the last 10 years.

George Eustice:

The Government is aware of research that suggests there may be links between trends in different criminal offences such as offences against animals and offences against people, such as the recent research by Malcolm Plant, et al at Teeside University.

■ Animal Welfare: Sentencing

Angela Smith: [\[55401\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether she plans to review the maximum prison sentence available for offences under the Animal Welfare Act 2006.

George Eustice:

The Sentencing Council provide courts with guidelines for imposing appropriate sentences on offenders. It is currently reviewing the existing guidelines, including in relation to animal cruelty cases. The Sentencing Council is working on new guidelines which will be implemented in May 2017.

Angela Smith: [\[55402\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether she plans to review the sentencing available for offences committed under the Animal Welfare Act 2006.

Angela Smith: [\[55404\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when the sentencing available for offences committed under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 was last reviewed.

George Eustice:

Sentencing of those found guilty of a criminal offence is a matter for the courts.

Magistrates' courts use sentencing guidelines published by the Sentencing Council to assist them when deciding the appropriate penalty for a particular offence. The Sentencing Council is currently undertaking a review of the guidelines.

■ Assistance Dogs

Angela Smith: [\[55397\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the maximum permitted penalty is for an attack by a person on an assistance dog in England and Wales.

George Eustice:

The maximum penalty for an attack by a person on an assistance dog is 6 months' imprisonment or an unlimited fine or both.

■ Aviation: Noise

Dr Tania Mathias: [\[56049\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 2 December 2016 to Question 55351, for what reason she does not plan to bring forward proposals to amend part 3 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to make medically unsafe levels of noise from aircraft a statutory nuisance.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Government has no plans to amend the Environmental Protection Act as suggested because it considers that aircraft noise is best managed through aviation policy.

■ Dangerous Dogs

Angela Smith: [\[55409\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what advice or guidance her Department has issued to (a) the Police, (b) local authorities and (c) rescue centres on implementation of section 1 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991.

George Eustice:

Since taking over responsibility for the policy on dangerous dogs Defra has published two guidance documents about the Dangerous Dogs Act. Although this guidance was mainly aimed at the police and local authorities it was available to everyone.

Angela Smith: [\[55770\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment she has made of the effect of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 on the population of types of dog prohibited under section 1 of that Act; and if she will make a statement.

George Eustice:

There are, as of 30 November 2016, 3,275 dogs on the Index of Exempted Dogs (dogs that are legally exempt from the general prohibition on certain types of dogs). If the relevant types of dogs were not prohibited the population of these dogs is likely to be higher

Angela Smith: [\[55771\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 in reducing the number of attacks by dogs on people.

George Eustice:

In 2014, the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 formed part of a wider review into tackling irresponsible ownership of dogs. That review resulted in several changes to the law on dangerous dogs such as the extension of the offence of allowing a dog to be dangerously out of control to all places and increasing the maximum penalties for such an offence. Early intervention action was also made possible through new measures contained within the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime & Policing Act 2014, which came into force in 2015. These provisions have supported the minimisation of dog attacks on people.

■ Dangerous Dogs: Exemptions

Angela Smith: [\[55398\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many dogs have been returned to their owners under the Interim Exemption Scheme through the Dangerous Dogs Exemption Schemes (England and Wales) Order 2015 since that Scheme was introduced.

George Eustice:

The Government does not keep a record of those instances wherein police allow dogs to be retained by their owners pending the outcome of the court's decision. Individual police forces may hold their own records of this information.

Angela Smith: [\[55399\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many dogs are listed on the index of exempted dogs in (a) England, (b) Wales and (c) Scotland.

George Eustice:

The total number of live dogs on the Index of Exempted Dogs as of 30 November 2016 was 3,275. This number constituted of: (a) 3,149 dogs in England; (b) 118 dogs in Wales; and (c) 8 dogs in Scotland.

Angela Smith:

[55408]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many of the dogs listed on the index of exempted dogs have subsequently been deemed dangerously out of control for the purposes of Section 3 of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991.

George Eustice:

The Government does not keep records of dogs that have been found to be dangerously out of control.

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

Tim Farron:

[55431]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what proportion of payments by her Department to small businesses are made on time and in accordance with the prompt payment code.

George Eustice:

Core Defra's finance system does not record whether a supplier is a small business. We are therefore unable to provide prompt payment performance information specifically in relation to such organisations.

Prompt payment information covering payments to all suppliers is published quarterly and is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defra-prompt-payment-performance-report>

■ **Flood Control: Utilities**

Rachael Maskell:

[56006]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what proportion of utility assets she plans will be covered by National Flood Resilience Plan.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The National Flood Resilience Review did not examine individual utility assets, as responsibility for defending these from floods rests with each utility company.

Instead, it asked the telecommunications and water sectors to assess their vulnerable sites and put in place measures to increase the resilience of their services where appropriate.

Companies have delivered on this commitment, and are now in the process of making improvements to resilience, where feasible, ahead of Christmas 2016. This includes purchasing temporary flood defences, increasing redundancy or utilising alternative assets where temporary flood defences are not suitable and working with local emergency responders on broader local flood plans. Utilities companies are also working with government and regulators to ensure appropriate long term flood defence measures are put in place.

■ Flood Control: Yorkshire and the Humber

Rachael Maskell:

[\[56004\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how much has been spent from the public purse on flood (a) defence and (b) prevention schemes in (i) North and (ii) West Yorkshire in each of the last 10 years.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The table below summarises Government capital spend on flood and coastal risk management works in North and West Yorkshire for each year between April 2007 and March 2016. These investments included funding for flood alleviation schemes in Todmorden, completed in 2008 at a cost of £35.1 million, Wakefield, completed in 2013 at a cost of £30.9 million, Selby completed in 2009 at a cost of £17.9 million and Ripon completed in 2012 at a cost of £14.9 million. A flood alleviation scheme in York (Water end) and a coastal erosion scheme at Sandsend were also completed in 2014 and 2015 at a cost of £4.2 million and £7.1 million respectively.

YEAR	GOVERNMENT CAPITAL INVESTMENT FOR NORTH YORKSHIRE (IN £M)	GOVERNMENT CAPITAL INVESTMENT FOR WEST YORKSHIRE (IN £M)
2007/08	4.3	2.1
2008/09	4.2	2.4
2009/10	6.3	4.8
2010/11	11.8	7.4
2011/12	16.7	9.2
2012/13	13.8	8.4
2013/14	7.0	10.7
2014/15	11.1	17.2
2015/16	13.5	10.8

The Environment Agency does not retain historic spend data prior to 2007 which can be split by specific geographic regions consistently. This is due to different financial accounting systems being in place prior to 2007.

■ Ivory: Sales

Rachael Maskell:

[\[56005\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate she has made of the amount of ivory that will no longer be bought and sold in the UK market as a result of the ban of post-1947 ivory sales.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Although the proposed ban on sales of ivory less than 70 years old is expected to have a relatively modest impact on volumes of trade, the global trade for modern ivory is more likely to fuel demand and provide a means of laundering fresh ivory from illegally-killed elephants than trade in older items. We want to send a strong signal, both within the UK and internationally, that ivory is not desirable and that legal domestic trade in ivory should be stopped where it is contributing to poaching and trafficking. Closing the market for UK sales of ivory less than 70 years old will be an important way of doing this.

■ National Flood Resilience Review**Rachael Maskell:**[\[56003\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions her Department had with the devolved administrations in the development of the National Flood Resilience Review.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Following December's floods we established the National Flood Resilience Review, which assessed how the country can be better protected from future flooding and increasingly extreme weather events. The scope of the review was focused on England, but stakeholders in the Devolved Administrations were consulted and updated as appropriate throughout the process

■ Packaging: Waste**Dr Tania Mathias:**[\[55985\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she is taking to encourage businesses to reduce waste by using appropriately-sized packaging for their products.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Under the Packaging (Essential Requirements) Regulations, businesses are required to ensure that all packaging shall not exceed what is needed to make sure that the products are safe, hygienic and acceptable for both the packed product and for the consumer. These Regulations apply to those responsible for packing or filling products into packaging and those importing packed or filled packaging into the UK from elsewhere.

■ Pit Bulldogs**Angela Smith:**[\[55400\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what the population is of pit bull terriers in the UK.

George Eustice:

The total number of live dogs on the Index of Exempted Dogs as of 30 November 2016 was 3,275. This number consisted of: (1) 3,149 dogs in England; (b) 118 dogs in Wales; and (c) 8 dogs in Scotland. the overwhelming number of these dogs are pitbull terriers.

■ **Plants****Mr Andrew Smith:**[\[55811\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment her Department has made of the potential effect on UK science, plant breeding and food production of changes to the regulatory regime for plant breeding techniques after the UK leaves the EU.

George Eustice:

There are two EU regulatory regimes which have a particular bearing on plant breeding in the UK. These are the controls on the marketing of new plant varieties, and the controls on the release of genetically modified organisms. The Government wants to ensure that we have science and evidence-based legislation in place which allows our plant science and breeding sector to thrive in the post-EU environment.

■ **Water Companies: Insolvency****Mr Mark Hendrick:**[\[55793\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what policies and procedures are in place to apply special administration orders for water companies which become insolvent; when those policies and procedures were last reviewed; and who has responsibility for ensuring that all the orders are effectively implemented so there is no interruption to water supply to domestic and other customers.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

A special administration regime is in place to ensure that there is no interruption to supply for customers should a water company get into financial difficulties. A special administration order is made for insolvent water companies when a winding-up petition to put the company into administration is presented to the High Court (e.g. when the company is having problems refinancing its loans with investors). Alternatively, the Secretary of State, or Ofwat, with the consent of the Secretary of State, may apply to the High Court for a special administration order if it is believed that a water company is unable to pay its debts. The Welsh Ministers would make that application if the water company was wholly or mainly in Wales. A special administrator appointed by the High Court is responsible for ensuring that customers do not see any interruption to the services they receive from the water company until new owners can be found.

The processes followed are broadly based on the provisions of the Insolvency Act 1986 before it was amended by the Enterprise Act 2002. The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 provides for improvements to the special administration regime for water companies. These include updating the existing regime so that the processes followed by the High Court will be aligned with those introduced by the Enterprise Act 2002 and

allowing the special administrator to put in place a rescue plan to bring the company back into profitability rather than finding new owners. The Government intends to introduce the required secondary legislation after April 2017, when the new consolidated rules in the Insolvency (England and Wales) Rules 2016 come into force.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ Burma: Rohingya

Kerry McCarthy:

[\[55950\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Burmese counterpart on the statement of 20 June 2016 by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights that patterns of violence against the Rohingya may amount to crimes against humanity; and what steps his Department is taking to protect the Rohingya community.

Alok Sharma:

Neither I nor my Ministerial colleagues have specifically discussed the UN Office for the High Commissioner of Human Rights' report of 20 June with Burmese counterparts. However, the Government has repeatedly raised concerns about the persecution of the Rohingya Muslim minority in Burma. I last raised this when I met the Burmese Minister of Construction on 29 November. The Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my noble Friend, the Rt Hon. the Baroness of Anelay of St Johns raised our concerns when she visited Burma from 9-12 November. The British Government remains one of the largest bilateral aid donors in Rakhine State. In response to the recent escalation of violence in Rakhine, I and other Government Ministers have called on the Government of Burma to resume immediately humanitarian aid and conduct an independent investigation into allegations of human rights violations. The Government of Burma has now committed to do so. We will continue to monitor the situation closely.

■ Democratic Republic of Congo: Homicide

Catherine McKinnell:

[\[55524\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to support investigations into the recent killings of communities in Beni and the North Kivu region of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The British Government is deeply concerned by the reports of mass killings in Beni. We are supporting efforts to investigate these horrific incidents, including through funding an independent researcher to assist the UN peacekeeping mission in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (MONUSCO) in understanding the underlying drivers of such killings. The UK strongly supports the work of MONUSCO as it seeks to defeat armed groups in DRC. During my visit to the DRC in August, I raised the ongoing violence in eastern DRC with Maman Sidikou, Head of the UN Peacekeeping Mission in eastern DRC.

(MONUSCO). In mid-November, my colleague, the Parliamentary Undersecretary of State for International Development, James Wharton MP, raised protection of civilians with the UN Deputy Special Representative for Operations and the Rule of Law, David Gressly.

■ Democratic Republic of Congo: War Crimes

Catherine McKinnell: [\[55813\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his international counterparts on ensuring that people who are responsible for deaths as a result of the civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo are brought to justice in the international courts.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK strongly supports the International Criminal Court's (ICC) mandate and efforts to bring those responsible for deaths as a result of the civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to justice. It welcomes convictions made to date, including that of former vice-president Bemba in June this year, and continues to make clear that those responsible for human rights violations will face individual responsibility for their actions. The UK remains committed to active diplomatic engagement to prevent DRC sliding back into conflict – FCO Minister Mr Ellwood visited DRC in August and DFID Minister Mr Wharton in November to urge all parties to ensure that Presidential elections and a peaceful transfer of power takes place.

■ Golan Heights

Richard Burden: [\[55462\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Israeli counterparts on demolitions, settlement expansion and land appropriation in the Occupied Syrian Golan.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

Whilst we have not raised these specific issues with respect to the Golan Heights, we regard this to be Occupied Territory and we continue to call on Israel, as the Occupying Power, to uphold its obligations under international law. This includes abiding by UN Security Council Resolution 497 (1981). We have been clear that Israel must comply with its obligations under international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Richard Burden: [\[55463\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment his Department has made of the effect of the conflict in Syria on the Occupied Syrian Golan.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The British Government regards the Golan Heights as Occupied Territory. A unilateral decision by Israel to keep the Golan Heights would breach UNSC 497 and international law. The future of these territories should be decided through negotiations between the respective parties. However, the current situation in Syria makes it difficult to pursue those efforts at this time.

■ Israel: Palestinians

Michael Tomlinson:

[\[55458\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent reports he has received on renewed construction by Hamas of cross-border tunnels into Israel.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We are aware of reports of Hamas rebuilding tunnels and we remain deeply concerned by Hamas' attempts to rearm and rebuild infrastructure, including the tunnel network in Gaza. Any Hamas rearmament undermines efforts to improve the situation in Gaza and harms prospects for peace and stability in the Middle East.

■ Libya: Terrorism

Meg Hillier:

[\[56018\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent progress has been made on securing compensation for the victims of Libyan-sponsored IRA bombings.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Foreign Secretary most recently raised the issue of compensation for victims of IRA terrorism during his meeting with Libyan Prime Minister Serraj on 31 October. The Government will continue to press this issue at every opportunity. However, the current instability in Libya means that there is unlikely to be a swift resolution of legacy issues.

Eligible UK victims of terrorism can apply for compensation under the domestic criminal injuries compensation scheme.

■ Pakistan: Counter-terrorism

Jim Shannon:

[\[55335\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions his Department has had with the government of Pakistan on its National Action Plan of December 2014; and what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of that plan's implementation.

Alok Sharma:

The UK and Pakistan have a shared interest in addressing and reducing the threat of terrorism. We are committed to working together to combat the terrorist threat and the extremism that sustains it, in a human rights-compliant manner. This helps reduce the threat to the UK and UK interests. Government Ministers regularly raise this issue with their counterparts in the government of Pakistan. The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Boris Johnson), discussed the National Action Plan with the Government of Pakistan when he visited Islamabad in November. The British Government works with relevant Pakistani authorities to encourage progress on tackling terrorism and to assist Pakistani efforts to implement certain provisions of Pakistan's National Action Plan.

■ Pakistan: Religious Freedom

Jim Shannon:

[\[55337\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with the government of Pakistan on its duties under Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Alok Sharma:

The Government remains firmly committed to promoting and protecting the right to freedom of religion or belief, as set out in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We regularly raise our concerns about human rights, including the right to freedom of religion or belief, with the government of Pakistan at a senior level. During his visit to Pakistan in November, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Uxbridge and South Ruislip (Boris Johnson), raised the importance we attach to guaranteeing the rights of all Pakistani citizens regardless of faith, ethnicity, or belief. Under the Government's Magna Carta Fund for Human Rights and Democracy, the UK is supporting projects in Pakistan to promote greater tolerance and religious freedom. Pakistan remains a priority for UK development assistance, with programmes designed to improve human rights. We will continue to urge Pakistan to honour in practice all its human rights obligations, including those related to religious freedom, and to uphold the rule of law.

■ Taiwan: Climate Change

Mr George Howarth:

[\[55861\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the extent of Taiwan's engagement with UN agencies on that country's progress in tackling climate change.

Alok Sharma:

Though not a UN member, Taiwan engages regularly on an unofficial basis with relevant UN agencies on the issues of climate change, including at The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Taiwan announced its own voluntary Intended Nationally Determined Contribution level before the UN Paris Conference in 2015, committing to a reduction of 20% on the 2005 level of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

HEALTH

■ Ambulance Services: Emergency Calls

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[55662\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what information his Department holds on the performance of each ambulance service in reaching severe patient call-outs within eight minutes; and if he will make a statement.

Andrew Gwynne:

[55670]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many call-outs each ambulance service in the UK received in each month since January 2016; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Philip Dunne:

NHS England publishes the number of Category A Red One and Red Two calls responded to within eight minutes and the number of call-outs that receive a face to face response from the ambulance service. This data is published on a monthly basis at both an England national level and at individual ambulance trust level. Data up to September 2016, *Ambulance System Indicators Time Series to September 2016* is available at the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/ambulance-quality-indicators/>

Ambulance services are facing unprecedented demand for their services. To address this, NHS England is exploring, as part of its Ambulance Response Programme, whether changes to the way that the ambulance service responds to calls could help improve response times to critically ill patients and improve outcomes for all patients who contact the ambulance service. As a result, the data published on ambulance performance is no longer consistent or available for all trusts.

Health is a devolved matter in the rest of the United Kingdom.

■ Blood: Contamination

Karen Lumley:

[55622]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many charitable trusts that specialise in supporting people who have received contaminated blood are solely funded by Government grants.

Nicola Blackwood:

There are currently three charities that support those infected with HIV and hepatitis C infection through National Health Service supplied blood and blood products, namely; the Eileen Trust, the Caxton Foundation and the McFarlane Trust. However, these trusts are funded through allocations directed by annual letters from the Department rather than Government grants.

Karen Lumley:

[55626]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will take steps to ensure that people diagnosed with HIV infection will retain the same standards of care under the new structuring of contaminated blood payment structure as they do at present.

Nicola Blackwood:

Work is ongoing on the detailed design of a new scheme, to secure appropriate support for those infected with HIV and hepatitis C. The standards of care provided by the National Health Service will continue.

■ Blood: Donors

Shabana Mahmood: [\[55503\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department has taken to establish ways to encourage blood donations from people with rare blood types.

Shabana Mahmood: [\[55505\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the difference between the blood donations by people with rare blood types and the demand for such donations.

Nicola Blackwood:

NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) has a number of initiatives to engage with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) donors who have rare blood types including working with a number of local charities; partnering with MOBO for the #Represent campaign and launching a BAME toolkit, which can be used by Members of Parliament to increase blood and organ donors in their constituencies.

NHSBT maintains a regular supply to hospitals of all blood groups and types, including for patients with complex needs and those that require frequent blood transfusions such as sickle cell disease sufferers.

Some rare blood types are only found within BAME communities. Although 14% of the population of England are black or South Asian less than 3% of people who have given blood in the last year are from these communities.

■ Brain Cancer

Andrew Rosindell: [\[55787\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans his Department has to promote funding and research into treatments for diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Government agrees that an increase in the level of research into brain tumours is crucial in order to achieve better outcomes for patients and their families. This year we set up a Department of Health Task and Finish Working Group on Brain Tumour Research bringing together clinicians, charities and officials to discuss how, working together with research funding partners, we can address the need to increase the level and impact of research into brain tumours, including diffuse intrinsic pontine glioma. The group first met in October and the Government anticipates that it will complete its tasks by September 2017. I will be co-chairing the next meeting in January with the Department's chief scientific adviser, Professor Chris Whitty, to make sure that we make the progress needed.

In September, the Government announced the largest ever investment into health research infrastructure - £816 million over five years from April 2017 for 20 National Institute for Health Research Biomedical Research Centres in England. We would expect some of this investment to support brain tumour research.

■ Breast Cancer: Drugs

Mr Nigel Dodds: [\[55717\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has been made of the effectiveness of bisphosphates in the treatment of breast cancer.

Nicola Blackwood:

We have made no such assessment.

In its clinical guideline on the diagnosis and treatment of early and locally advanced breast cancer (CG80), published in February 2009, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recommends that bisphosphonates should be offered to patients for the management of breast cancer treatment-induced bone loss subject to certain criteria.

NICE is currently updating this guidance and the use of adjuvant bisphosphonates is one of the key areas that will be covered in the update which is expected in July 2018.

Derek Thomas: [\[55918\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, who has the duty of commissioning bisphosphonates for the purposes of reducing the risk of breast cancer.

Nicola Blackwood:

I refer the hon. Member to the Answer I gave on 1 December 2016 to Question [55067](#).

■ CJD

Andrea Jenkyns: [\[55416\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of the accuracy of diagnosis of (a) vCJD and (b) vCJD among haemophiliacs.

Nicola Blackwood:

The National CJD Research and Surveillance Unit, based in Edinburgh, funded by the Department and the Scottish Government, leads on case ascertainment of variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (vCJD) in the general population including people with haemophilia. The Department is confident that the United Kingdom system for ascertaining vCJD cases is reliable and accurate. There is no evidence of significant under ascertainment, misdiagnosis or mis-counting of vCJD cases in the UK.

■ Department of Health: Capital Investment

Andrew Gwynne: [\[55666\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what level of capital funding his Department has transferred to current spending for 2016-17.

Mr Philip Dunne:

No capital funding has been transferred to current (revenue) spending for 2016-17. Any such transfer would be reviewed and finalised through the Supplementary Estimate processes.

■ Diabetes

Andrew Gwynne: [55799]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what advice his Department offers to GPs on the aftercare of diabetic patients.

Andrew Gwynne: [55800]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make it his Department's policy to require all GP practices to refer Type 1 and Type 2 diabetic patients (a) to podiatry services, (b) for blood testing and (c) for eye checks; and if he will make a statement.

Andrew Gwynne: [55801]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what advice his Department offers to hospital trusts on the aftercare of diabetic patients.

Nicola Blackwood:

Clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) are primarily responsible for commissioning services to meet the requirements of their population including Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes services. In doing so, CCGs need to ensure that the services they provide are fit for purpose, reflect the needs of the local population and are based on the available evidence and take into account national guidelines.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has published a wealth of guidance on the management and care of people with diabetes including the recently updated guidelines for the management of Type 2 diabetes in adults which are available at:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng28/resources/type-2-diabetes-in-adults-management-1837338615493>

It recommends that all people with diabetes should receive an annual health check to monitor and manage their condition, as well as reduce the risk of associated complications, such as heart, kidney and eye disease and amputations. These annual checks, some of which include blood tests, monitor body mass index, blood pressure, blood glucose, cholesterol and signs of early complications (e.g. surveillance for foot, eye and kidney disease). They provide the cornerstone of routine care for people with diabetes and the majority are incentivised through the Quality and Outcomes Framework which is a voluntary annual reward and incentive programme for all general practitioner surgeries in England, detailing practice achievement results.

The foot check enables health care professional to annually assess the risk of diabetic foot disease in people with diabetes. Guidelines help then to decide when to refer cases to a multidisciplinary foot care service or foot protection service (both of which include a podiatrist) for those identified at moderate or high risk. This is outlined in the NICE Guideline on Diabetic foot problems: prevention and management which can be found at:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng19>

The national diabetic retinopathy screening programme provides an opportunity for all people with Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes to have an annual eye check.

■ Down's Syndrome: Screening

Mr Edward Vaizey:

[\[55835\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the timetable is for the Nuffield Council for BioEthics to report to his Department on the non-invasive pre-natal test for Down's syndrome.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Nuffield Council on Bioethics plans to publish the findings of its project on non-invasive prenatal testing in March 2017.

■ General Practitioners: Home Visits

Andrew Gwynne:

[\[55663\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what guidance his Department has given to GPs on emergency home visits during Winter 2016-17.

David Mowat:

Detailed best practice guidance was made available to local systems to support implementation of the 2016/17 Accident & Emergency (A&E) Improvement plan. This guidance was a collection of best practice models for local systems to identify which would be most effective for them to implement in support of their A&E Improvement Plans, rather than a formal nationally issued piece of guidance for all local systems to adopt in its entirety.

This guidance advises that general practitioners should respond appropriately to requests for home visits. General practices should have processes in place to respond to and prioritise requests for urgent home visits, usually through early telephone assessment and a duty doctor rota. Again, this is for local determination.

■ Health Professions: Training

Diana Johnson:

[\[55608\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many (a) training places and (b) clinical placements have been funded by Health Education England in each year since 2012.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Health Education England (HEE) was established in June 2012 as a special health authority and took on its operational functions from April 2013. The table below shows the total number of full time equivalent pre-registration training places that were funded by HEE in each year from 2013/14 to 2015/16.

HEE FUNDED TRAINING

PLACES	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Medical and dental	36,139	34,189	33,365
Non-medical	78,842	91,963	92,660

Source: Health Education England

The table below shows the total number of clinical placements funded by HEE in 2014/15 and 2015/16. The figures relating to the number of clinical placements funded by HEE in 2013/14 is not held centrally.

CLINICAL PLACEMENT POPULATION	2014/15	2015/16
Medical and dental	22,102	22,684
Non-Medical	50,699	44,415

Source: Health Education England

Diana Johnson:

[\[55609\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much Health Education England has spent on funding training places in each year since 2009; and how many of those training places were provided in the (a) Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust, (b) Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust and (c) Humber NHS Foundation Trust.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Health Education England (HEE) was established in June 2012 as a special health authority and took on its operational functions from April 2013. The table below shows the amount spent annually by HEE on funding training places for pre-registration students from 2013/14 to 2015/16. This includes expenditure on tuition, clinical placements and salary support.

HEE FUNDING FOR TRAINING PLACES	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Medical and dental	£880 million	£882 million	£880 million
Non-medical	£1,571 million	£1,602 million	£1,618 million

Source: Health Education England

The table below shows the number of full time equivalent pre-registration training places funded by HEE at Hull and East Yorkshire Trust, Yorkshire Ambulance Trust and Humber NHS Foundation Trust from 2013/14 to 2015/16.

HEE FUNDED TRAINING PLACES		HULL AND EAST YORKS	YORKS AMBULANCE	HUMBER
2013/14	Medical and Dental	138.5	0	5.9
	Non-medical	267.1	121	100.7
2014/15	Medical and Dental	135.9	0	5.7
	Non-medical	254.6	49	86.7
2015/16	Medical and Dental	123.2	0	5
	Non-medical	256	76	95.7

Source: Health Education England

■ Health Services: Foreign Nationals

Craig Whittaker:

[\[55601\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the amount owed to NHS trusts in Yorkshire and the Humber by non-EU nationals for health care they have received on the NHS.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Department does not have an overall estimate of uncollected fees relating to the use of the National Health Service by patients subject to charge under section 175 of the NHS Act 2006, either by region or nationality of debtor. NHS Trust and NHS Foundation trust annual accounts provide information on provisions and debt that has been written off, however this does not give the total debt picture because some of these amounts will be paid in subsequent years.

■ Hepatitis: Medical Treatments

Norman Lamb:

[\[55967\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate his Department has made of the number of people who are seeking access to NICE-approved hepatitis C therapies but are unable to be initiated onto treatment due to the treatment cap implemented by NHS England.

David Mowat:

NHS England's commitment to treat 10,000 patients in 2016/17, increasing to 12,500 in 2017/18, is in line with the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence's estimate of activity included in the costing tools published to support implementation of the guidance. As a result, there has been no assessment of patients who have been unable to access treatment.

■ Hospital Beds

Andrew Gwynne: [55660]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether his Department has offered guidance to NHS trusts on how to deal with potential black alerts during winter 2016-17.

Mr Philip Dunne:

This is an operational matter for trusts, clinical commissioning groups and their local partners. NHS England and NHS Improvement have provided guidance to all National Health Service organisations to ensure there are robust plans in place for winter which are assured regionally and nationally.

NHS England published the Operational Pressures Escalation Levels Framework in October 2016. This guidance provides best practice around triggers and actions to be taken when considering escalation in response to operational pressures, as well as protocols and standardised terminology to follow.

The guidance is available at the link below:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/operational-pressures-escalation-levels-framework.pdf>

■ Hospitals: Private Sector

Andrew Gwynne: [55661]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what information his Department holds on the number of hospital procedures that have been transferred to private contractors by each NHS Trust in each month in 2016.

Mr Philip Dunne:

This information is not held centrally.

■ Hospitals: Repairs and Maintenance

Andrew Gwynne: [55669]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many hospital sites and accompanying facilities have been placed in special measures as a result of poor building conditions in 2016; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Philip Dunne:

No trust has been placed into special measures in 2016 solely as a consequence of the condition of its estate.

Trusts are placed in special measures by NHS Improvement usually following a recommendation by the Chief Inspector of Hospitals. A decision to recommend quality special measures is based upon the Care Quality Commission's (CQC) comprehensive inspection report for the trust. The CQC inspects the estate of a provider under the 'Safe' key question and is one of many areas that the CQC monitors when conducting an inspection of a provider.

■ Mental Health Services

Luciana Berger:

[[56048](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 25 November 2016 to Question 53611, what information his Department holds on the number of clients assigned to different care clusters in the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies programme.

Nicola Blackwood:

Mental health care cluster codes have been reported for people referred to Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) services since July 2014. Latest data available (August 2016) show 63% of referral records had a valid mental health care cluster recorded. NHS Digital is working to improve data completeness, so that it meets the criteria for routine publication.

Mental health care cluster codes were introduced into the IAPT dataset following a version change on 1 July 2014, records of referrals prior to this date do not contain a record of mental health care cluster.

■ Mental Health Services: Prisons

Luciana Berger:

[[56047](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many full-time equivalent mental health professionals have been employed by trusts providing mental health services in prisons in each year since 2010; and what roles those professionals have undertaken.

Nicola Blackwood:

NHS England commissions mental health services in prisons to a standard service specification. The numbers of staff delivering mental health services in prisons is not held centrally. Most mental health professionals working in prisons also work in community-based mental health services.

Prisoners are entitled to receive an equivalent range and quality of treatment and services from the National Health Service as people in the community, including mental health treatment. All prisons have on-site primary health care teams and prisoners can be referred to in-reach mental health teams to receive treatment according to their clinical need.

■ Mental Health: Social Networking

Chris Elmore:

[[55314](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether he has met representatives of any social media companies to discuss the effect of social media on child and adolescent mental health.

Nicola Blackwood:

My Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health has met with a range of technology companies. These meetings have covered a number of broad issues and have included some discussion around social media. A list of ministerial visits by Ministers from the Department is available [here](#):

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

The internet, keeping children safe online, promoting and protecting their mental health are areas of great concern not just to this Department but across Government as a whole; with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport leading on the policy of social media.

■ Milk: Consumption

Mr George Howarth: [55804]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the effect of the revisions to the Eatwell Guide on levels of milk consumption among children.

Mr George Howarth: [55805]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what analysis Public Health England conducted on the potential effect of the changes to the Eatwell Guide's recommendations on milk consumption on obesity in children.

Nicola Blackwood:

There has been no assessment made directly addressing the effect of the revised Eatwell Guide on milk consumption by children or the effect of the changes on childhood obesity. Government advice continues to encourage consumption of milk and dairy products as part of a healthy, balanced diet for all age groups.

■ NHS: Sustainable Development

Justin Madders: [55422]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of each sustainability and transformation plan on the number of placements available for nursing, midwifery and allied health students.

Mr Philip Dunne:

On behalf of the Secretary of State for Health, Health Education England (HEE) have the responsibility for funding the minimum number of clinical placements for nursing, midwifery and allied health pre-registration courses. To fulfil this duty, HEE consider a range of local and national health economy factors in commissioning sufficient placements; including Sustainability and Transformation Plans.

■ Ophthalmology: Lancashire

Mark Menzies: [55599]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many and what proportion of ophthalmology appointments were cancelled or delayed by hospitals in (a) NHS Blackpool Clinical Commissioning Group and (b) NHS Fylde and Wyre Clinical Commissioning Group in 2015-16.

David Mowat:

Data is not available in the format requested.

Information showing the counts and percentages of outpatient appointments with the treatment specialty 'ophthalmology', broken down by attendance type, for clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) of treatment, NHS Blackpool CCG and NHS Fylde and Wyre CCG, in 2015-16, is shown in the following table.

CCG

NHS Blackpool		NHS Fylde and Wyre		
Attendance Type	Counts	Percentages	Counts	Percentages
Attended	52,532	64.8%	252	66.0%
Cancelled by provider	12,871	15.9%	14	3.7%
Cancelled by patient	10,792	13.3%	42	11.0%
Patient did not attend	4,806	5.9%	74	19.4%
Not known	88	0.1%	-	0.0%
Total	81,089	100.0%	382	100.0%

Source: Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), NHS Digital

Notes:

1. Activity in English National Health Service hospitals and English NHS commissioned activity in the independent sector.
2. Outpatient appointments: The number of booked appointments for outpatients. They are recorded as one row per appointment that was made, whether it was attended or not. A patient's treatment in outpatients can consist of a series of appointments; a distinction between the first in the series and subsequent appointments is commonly reported. 'Counts' are not counts of people as the same person may have had more than one appointment within the same period.
3. Treatment Specialty: The code used to identify ophthalmology treatment specialty is 130 – Ophthalmology.
4. Attendance type: Identifies if the patient attended an appointment, if it was first or subsequent attendance, if the appointment was cancelled or the patient did not attend.
5. CCG of treatment: This indicates the CCG area within which the organisation providing treatment was located. The providers with sites mapped to each CCG of treatment are:

NHS Blackpool CCG:

- Whitegate Health Centre
- Inhealth Diagnostics (Glenroyd Medical Centre)
- Aintree University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust
- Specsavers Hearcare – Lancashire – Blackpool
- Glenroyd Medical Practice
- Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- Virgin Care Blackpool LLP
- Spire Fylde Coast Hospital

NHS Fylde and Wear CCG:

- Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- Specsavers Hearcare – Lancashire - Kirkham
- Specsavers Hearcare – Lancashire - Fleetwood
- Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust
- Specsavers Hearcare – Lancashire – St Anne's
- Specsavers Hearcare – Lancashire - Cleveleys

1. Please note that CCG of treatment is based on the site of treatment, and some hospital providers may have sites in both of the CCGs.
2. The reporting period for 2015-16 is 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016.

■ Paediatrics: Intensive Care

Christian Matheson:

[56059]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many paediatric intensive care beds were free and available for use on 3 and 4 December 2016 in NHS hospitals in England.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Data for available and occupied paediatric critical care beds, for the week ending 4 December 2016, will be published as part of the winter weekly sitreps on NHS England's website on 9 December 2016 at 9.30am.

The data will be available at the link below:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/winter-daily-sitreps/>

■ Pregnancy: Sodium Valproate

Norman Lamb:

[\[55976\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 30 November 2016 to Question 54957, if he will introduce a national compensation fund for people affected by the teratogenic effects of sodium valproate.

Nicola Blackwood:

The current priority of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) is to work to ensure that women taking valproate are fully aware of the risks in pregnancy. Once this is achieved we will look back and see what lessons have been or could be usefully learnt by examining events. There is no current proposal to establish a compensation fund.

Valproate is an effective treatment for epilepsy and bipolar disorder but should only be used in girls and women of childbearing potential if other treatments are ineffective or not tolerated. For some women there may be no other treatment option. Since it was authorised, valproate was known to have risks in pregnancy. Because of ongoing concerns about women's awareness of the risks, the MHRA has worked with professional bodies, voluntary organisations and patient groups to develop a set of materials to aid communication between health professionals and women and girls. The valproate toolkit comprises booklets for healthcare professionals, a reminder card and a guide for women, a checklist for prescribers and clear package labelling carrying a prominent warning about use in pregnancy.

In order to monitor the effectiveness of the valproate toolkit, the MHRA has sought feedback from all stakeholders and will continue to work with the Royal Colleges, professional bodies, patient groups and relevant charities to increase awareness of the toolkit among general practitioners, pharmacists and patients.

■ Self-harm: Mental Health Services

Mrs Madeleine Moon:

[\[55502\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people who presented to hospital after self-harm were offered a psychosocial assessment in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Department does not hold annual breakdown of the information requested.

■ Surgery: Vale of York

Diana Johnson:

[\[55606\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will publish correspondence between NHS England and Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) on the recent review into that CCG's policy of delaying treatment for obese patients and smokers.

David Mowat:

Clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) are responsible for commissioning care to provide the best possible outcomes for their patients, while also effectively managing their resources.

It is for the Vale of York CCG to review the impact of its decisions on patients, while also taking into account the best practice and relevant clinical guidance.

Diana Johnson:

[55646]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with (a) NHS England and (b) NICE on the NHS Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group's plans to delay treatments for obese patients and smokers.

David Mowat:

NHS Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has regular and ongoing discussions with NHS England (Yorkshire and the Humber regional team).

The CCG aims to fully implement National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidance in all its policies, to ensure its plans are clinically appropriate for patients.

HOME OFFICE

■ Child Sexual Abuse Independent Panel Inquiry

Tim Loughton:

[55202]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she expects the Historic Child Abuse Inquiry to publish the review into its proceedings.

Sarah Newton:

The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse is independent of Government. It is for the Inquiry to set out its publication timetable. On 24 November, the Chair of the Inquiry said she would publish her review "in the coming weeks" .

<https://www.iicsa.org.uk/news/inquiry-response-home-affairs-select-committee-report-work-independent-inquiry-child-sexual>

■ Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence

Ian Murray:

[55560]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what process the Government plans to use for the ratification of the Istanbul Convention.

Sarah Newton:

The Coalition Government signed the Istanbul Convention to show its strong commitment to tackling violence against women and girls, and this Government remains committed to ratifying it.

In most respects, the measures already in place in the UK to protect women and girls from violence comply with or go further than the Convention requires.

Further amendments to domestic law, to take extra-territorial jurisdiction over a range of offences, are necessary before the Convention can be ratified. We will seek to legislate when the approach to implementing the extra-territorial jurisdiction requirements in England and Wales is agreed and Parliamentary time allows.

■ Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority

Karl Turner:

[\[55823\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, by what date she expects the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority to be operational; and how many staff she expects that Authority to employ in each year to 2019-20.

Sarah Newton:

The Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) is already operational. The Immigration Act 2016 has extended the GLAA's remit; new powers under the national minimum wage and employment agencies legislation commenced on 25 November 2016.

New police-style powers under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984 are expected to come into force in 2017. It is for the Authority to determine the number of staff to be employed within the available resources.

■ Hate Crime

Paul Flynn:

[\[55370\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what extra funding her Department plans to provide to reflect recent changes in the level of recorded hate crime.

Sarah Newton:

The new Government hate crime action plan published on 26 July included extra funding to tackle hate crime.

This includes £2.4 million over three years to provide protective security measures for places of worship that have been subject to, or are vulnerable to, hate crime and £900,000 over three years for community based projects aimed at tackling hate crime.

■ Home Office: Government Car Service

Mr Mark Hendrick:

[\[55551\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much her Department spent on providing vehicles for each Minister through the Government Car Service in each year from 2011 to 2016 to date.

Sarah Newton:

The Government Car Service stopped providing individual cars in April 2012. Therefore, there is no individual journey data available from 1 April 2012. The Department for Transport, as part of their transparency agenda, publishes information on the costs incurred by each government department through the use of vehicles provided by the Government Car Services.

Information on recent years can be found via the Gov.UK website below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/ministerial-cars>

The information on 2011-2012 financial year can be found via link below:

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2012-12-20/debates/12122056000014/GovernmentCarAndDespatchAgency>

■ Passports

Andrew Rosindell:

[55575]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 9 November 2016 to Question 47644, if she will clarify whether an assessment of the (a) legal and (b) financial obstacles to changing the colour of UK passports informed her decision.

Brandon Lewis:

No decisions have been made and no formal assessments have been made regarding the future of the UK passport. All relevant areas of policy and operational delivery surrounding changes to the UK passport will be considered when appropriate to do so.

Parliament will be informed in due course about any changes to the UK passport.

■ Refugees: Children

Helen Goodman:

[55038]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the Government has made an estimate of the number of refugee children awaiting entry to the UK who have gone missing in refugee camps.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Responsibility for migrant children in other countries and the management of refugee camps sits with the respective Governments and organisations working with those Governments. Therefore we are unable to make an estimate.

We are working closely with France, Italy and Greece on the transfer of unaccompanied refugee children under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016 and we continue to resettle those in need of international protection through our four resettlement schemes. We work closely with organisations such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to ensure the safe transfer of those children to the UK.

■ Social Networking: Bullying

Stewart Malcolm McDonald:

[55847]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to tackle online abuse and harassment on social media networks.

Sarah Newton:

We expect social media companies, and internet platforms, to have robust processes in place and to act promptly when abuse is reported. The Government continues to work

closely with social media companies and other relevant actors and experts to make sure they are committed to protecting those who use their platforms.

The law is clear that what is illegal offline is illegal online. Robust legislation is in place to deal with internet trolls, cyber-stalking and harassment, and perpetrators of grossly offensive, obscene or menacing behaviour.

The Criminal Justice Act 2015 strengthened two existing communications offences: section 1 of the Malicious Communications Act 1988, and section 127 of the Communications Act 2003 which can now be used to prosecute misuse of social media. The police now have longer to investigate either offence, and the maximum penalty for the former has been increased to two years imprisonment.

The Crown Prosecution Service published guidance to prosecutors in October on crimes involving social media. The Home Office has allocated £4.6 million of the Police Transformation Fund specifically to begin the critical work of setting up a comprehensive and joined up programme of digital transformation across policing.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

■ Commonwealth Development Corporation

Stephen Doughty:

[\[55701\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what the total value was of (a) Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC) assets held and (b) financial plans relating to CDC investments in each of the last six years in (i) the Cayman Islands, (ii) Mauritius, (iii) Guernsey, (iv) Jersey, (v) Luxembourg and (vi) Barbados.

Rory Stewart:

CDC only uses offshore financial centres when it is necessary to do so, in situations in which legal and regulatory systems are weak or inadequate, or when investors come from different parts of the world and their funds need to be pooled somewhere neutral that has strong legal systems and stable financial sectors.

a) Total value of assets held

SUM OF VALUATION GBP M

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Cayman Islands	444.6	473.0	480.6	496.5	653.4	575.2
Barbados	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Guernsey	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	18.4	*315.8
Jersey	8.6	10.4	12.3	11.5	10.2	5.2
Luxembourg	14.7	15.9	22.0	35.6	57.5	67.8

SUM OF VALUATION GBP M

Mauritius	434.9	452.7	594.0	629.6	725.8	772.2
Grand Total	902.8	951.9	1,109.0	1,173.3	1,465.2	1,736.2

* Globeleq is registered in Guernsey because CDC needed to have assets in Guernsey as security for the \$1.2bn emergency borrowing facility.

The borrowing facility exists in order for CDC to be able to service new investment commitments in the event of a major liquidity crisis. If CDC ran out of money for instance, it would still be able to pay money into Funds it had made commitments to.

b) financial plans (interpreted as commitments to investments using OFCs by year)

CDC ANNUAL COMMITMENT (USD M)

Year	Cayman Islands	Barbados	Guernsey	Luxembourg	Mauritius	Total portfolio value (at year end)
2010	10.0	0.00	0.00	94.7	164.6	1933.2
2011	15.0	0.00	0.00	20.0	127.5	1913.3
2012	15.0	0.00	30.0	0.00	110.6	2246
2013	0.00	0.00	75.0	63.1	105.4	2504.2
2014	0.00	0.00	40.0	0.00	111.6	2926.3
2015	95.0	0.00	0.0	0.00	170.0	2999.2
Grand Total	135.0	0.00	145.0	177.7	789.8	

■ Democratic Republic of Congo: Politics and Government

Catherine McKinnell:

[\[55523\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps the Government is taking to support the development of a stable government in the Democratic Republic of Congo; and whether that work includes assisting the work of the Catholic Church's Conference of Episcopal Bishops in Congo towards that aim.

James Wharton:

In 2016 there have been three UK ministerial visits, each emphasising to the most senior levels of Congolese government that the current political crisis poses serious risks of instability to the country and region. The UK is a major contributor to the UN peacekeeping mission in DRC, which deploys 19,000 personnel. Our aid programme provides support to the ongoing electoral process as well as other efforts to strengthen

government accountability. We provide £1.5 million in support to the Catholic Church's Episcopal Commission for Justice and Peace (CEJP), which deploys hundreds of long-term electoral observers and tens of thousands of observers in the lead up to election day. The UK has been supportive of the efforts of CENCO (the Catholic Bishops' national commission) to make political dialogue in DRC more inclusive.

■ Drugs: Manufacturing Industries

Dr Alasdair McDonnell:

[\[55953\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether it is her Department's policy to implement the recommendation in the report by the UN High Panel of Access to Medicines, Promoting innovation and access to health technologies, published in September 2016, on improving standards of transparency in the pharmaceutical industry.

James Wharton:

While we support the aims of the UN High Level Panel on Access to Medicines, we note that this panel of experts could not reach consensus. DFID supports improving transparency in the pharmaceutical industry and funds the Access to Medicine Index to increase the transparency of pharmaceutical companies.

■ Medicine: Research

Dr Alasdair McDonnell:

[\[55954\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether it is her Department's policy to implement the recommendation in the report by the UN High Panel of Access to Medicines, Promoting innovation and access to health technologies, published in September 2016, that all publicly funded medical research should (a) prioritise public health over financial gain and (b) be open to the public to allow for further collaboration.

James Wharton:

DFID supports the aims of the recommendation of the UN High Level Panel on Access to Medicines. DFID is a long-term supporter of medical and health research, including research to develop new health technologies (including diagnostics, drugs and vaccines). The research funding is provided to organisations that (a) prioritise public health needs over profit and (b) comply with the Department's open access policy, to enable wide access to findings and allow for further collaboration.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ Department for International Trade : Aerospace Industry

Barry Gardiner:

[\[55461\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 28 November 2016 to Question 54496, if he will provide a list of the representatives from the aerospace sector that officials of his Department have met since July 2016.

Mark Garnier:

Government continues to work closely with the aerospace industry to boost growth and exports, particularly through the Aerospace Growth Partnership where together we have committed £3.9 billion for aerospace research from 2013 to 2026.

This Department does not hold centrally a list of sector representatives met by officials and it could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

■ Department for International Trade: Billing**Tim Farron:**[\[55436\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what proportion of payments by his Department to small businesses are made on time and in accordance with the prompt payment code.

Mark Garnier:

The Department for International Trade (DIT) has been formed out of UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) and has assumed Trade Policy responsibilities previously held by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS). My Rt hon Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade also has responsibility for UK Export Finance (the Export Credits Guarantee Department), which has its own budget. The transfer of functions order established the Secretary of State as a corporation sole on 09/11/2016, prior to this DIT was a unified Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) department for accounting purposes.

DIT aims to pay 80% of undisputed and valid invoices within 5 days and the remainder within 30 days. To support prompt payment, DIT is required to accept unstructured e-invoices (invoices which can be sent in by email).

DIT will publish our overall payment performance data in our annual report and accounts and at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?keywords=&publication_filter_option=transparency-data&topics%5B%5D=all&departments%5B%5D=department-for-international-trade&official_document_status=all&world_locations%5B%5D=all&from_date=&to_date=
[e.](#)

■ Department for International Trade: Defence**Barry Gardiner:**[\[55460\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 28 November 2016 to Question 54496, if he will provide a list of the representatives from the defence sector that officials of his Department have met since July 2016.

Mark Garnier:

Government continues to work closely with the defence industry to boost growth and exports, particularly through the Defence Growth Partnership.

This Department does not hold centrally the information you request and it could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

■ **Department for International Trade: Pharmacy**

Barry Gardiner:

[\[55459\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, pursuant to the Answer of 28 November 2016 to Question 54496, if he will provide a list of the representatives from the pharmaceuticals sector that officials of his Department have met since July 2016.

Mark Garnier:

DIT has regular consultation with representatives from the UK pharmaceuticals sector. In particular a UK/ EU working group was established after the EU referendum to manage a programme of work to inform the transition. The steering group is co-chaired by GSK Chief Executive Sir Andrew Witty and Astra Zeneca Chief Executive Pascal Soriot and is the key forum for discussions between government and the life sciences industry on matters relating to exiting the EU.

In addition a large number of bilateral meetings have been held between DIT and pharmaceutical industry officials.

■ **Exports: Scotland**

Douglas Chapman:

[\[55468\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he is taking to increase the value of exports from Scotland.

Mark Garnier:

This department supports businesses across the whole of the UK. We have identified High Value Campaigns (HVCs) which can generate up to £30bn p.a. of Export contracts in 16/17, which companies all across the U.K. can win business through. We are supporting all companies to grow overseas through the recently launched digital platform GREAT.gov.uk. This platform brings together all commercial and International aspects of Government support for exporting, with innovative new tools to help businesses across the UK to sell online, reach overseas buyers directly, and access hundreds of live exporting opportunities. Scottish companies accessing GREAT.gov.uk and needing further support in their export journey are directed to Scottish Development International.

In addition to this, UK Export Finance (UKEF), the UK's export credit agency, offers finance and insurance to Scottish exporters of all sizes and across all sectors to ensure no viable export fails. So far in 2016/17, UKEF has supported 8 Scottish exporters for contracts worth £190m.

■ Northern Powerhouse Investment Taskforce

Diana Johnson: [55283]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many staff are employed in the Northern Powerhouse Investment Taskforce; and how many meetings that Taskforce has held since it was established.

Mark Garnier:

10 people are currently directly employed in the Northern Powerhouse Taskforce and have mobilised work across many areas of the Department for International Trade and other government departments. Members of the Taskforce have had many meetings with a wide range of partners including: Local Enterprise Partnerships; key businesses; and, institutions.

■ Regional Planning and Development: North of England

Diana Johnson: [55282]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, with reference to page 9 of the Northern Powerhouse Strategy, published in November 2016, how the £15 million for Northern Powerhouse trade missions has been allocated.

Mark Garnier:

The £15 million for Northern Powerhouse Trade Missions has been allocated across four years, 2016–2020. Ten trade missions are planned or have been conducted this year and we expect a similar number in the coming two years.

■ UK Export Finance

Diana Johnson: [55288]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how (a) much funding was allocated to and (b) many full-time equivalent staff were employed by UK Export Finance in each year from 2009-10; and in which NUTS 1 regions such staff were located in each of those years.

Mark Garnier:

UK Export Finance is the operating name of the Export Credits Guarantee Department (ECGD). As a Ministerial department, details of the budget that is allocated to and spent by ECGD can be found in the published Central Government Supply estimates, available on <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmt-main-estimates>

Numbers of full time equivalent staff employed by UK Export Finance in each year from 2009/10, and in which NUTS 1 regions such staff were located have been provided in the table below. Figures are as at 31 March each year except 2016/17 which is as at 30 November.

Full time equivalent staff by NUTS 1 region from 2009-10 to date

NUTS 1	REGION	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
UKC	North East England	0	0	0	1.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	2.00
UKD	North West England	0	0	0	0	1.00	1.00	2.00	2.00
UKE	Yorkshire and the Humber	0	0	0	0	1.00	1.00	0	0
UKF	East Midlands	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
UKG	West Midlands	0	0	0	0	2.00	4.00	4.00	3.00
UKH	East of England	0	0	0	0	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
UKI	Greater London	200.57	190.69	179.33	185.60	199.69	219.31	220.49	229.86
UKJ	South East England	0	0	0	0	3.00	5.00	3.00	3.00
UKK	South West England	0	0	0	0	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
UKL	Wales	3.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	2.00
UKM	Scotland	0	0	0	0	1.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
UKN	Northern Ireland	0	0	0	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
GRAND TOTAL		203.57	192.69	181.33	190.60	216.69	242.31	239.49	246.86

JUSTICE■ **Colin Pitchfork**

Philip Davies: [\[45739\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether representations were (a) sought and (b) received by the Parole Board from the families of the victims of Colin Pitchfork in relation to the recommendation to move him to an open prison.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

Public protection is our priority, and life sentence prisoners may be transferred to open conditions only by a recommendation from the independent Parole Board. Victims who have opted into the statutory National Probation Service Victim Contact Service will be informed of their right to make a victim personal statement (VPS) to the Parole Board. Where a victim has chosen to submit a VPS, the Parole Board will consider it alongside all other relevant information before making its decision.

■ **Compulsorily Detained Mental Patients**

Luciana Berger: [\[56046\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many people who died while detained under section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983 did not have an inquest into their death in each year since 2010; and what the reasons were for the decisions not to undertake those inquests.

Dr Phillip Lee:

The information requested is not held centrally.

■ **Dogs: Drugs**

Richard Burgon: [\[54360\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to her oral contribution of 15 November 2016, Official Report, column 130, on training dogs to detect new psychoactive substances, how many such dogs have (a) been in service and (b) been trained to be in service in each year since 2010.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

There are currently 312 Public Sector Prison dogs in service trained to detect new psychoactive substances. All 312 dogs were trained in 2015. No such dogs were trained before 2015.

■ **Employment Tribunals Service: Fees and Charges**

Catherine McKinnell: [\[55419\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when her Department expects to complete its review into employment tribunal fees.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

We will publish the conclusions of our review of Employment Tribunal fees in due course.

■ **Ministry of Justice: Working Hours**

Tim Farron:

[\[51135\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many officials of her Department have opted out of the EU Working Time Directive.

Sir Oliver Heald:

There is no centrally held record of officials who opted out of the EU working time regulations and this information could only be obtained at disproportionate cost. Our departmental policy is that staff may opt out of the 48-hour working time limit at any time. These staff members are then supported via local line management, who arrange for regular health and safety risk assessments to monitor the impact.

■ **Prisoners' Release**

Mr David Hanson:

[\[55327\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many prisoners have been released on temporary licence in each year since 2010.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

Data on the number of prisoners released on temporary license is published quarterly, and data for each year going back to 2002 is published on gov.uk.

We know that three of the most powerful factors helping to keep ex-offenders from re-offending are a good job, strong family ties and a stable place to live - ROTL makes all of them easier to achieve. Public protection is our top priority and we have no intention of changing the full risk-assessment offenders on ROTL must undergo and any non-compliance will be dealt with robustly.

■ **Prisoners: Education**

Mr David Hanson:

[\[55326\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate she has made of the number of former prisoners who are currently involved in prisoner mentoring.

Mr Sam Gyimah:

This information, including an estimation of the number of mentors that are ex-offenders, could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

NORTHERN IRELAND■ **First Minister****Robert Neill:**[\[907647\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what discussions he has had with the First and Deputy First Ministers on the implications of the UK's decision to leave the EU.

James Brokenshire:

I have held a number of meetings with the First and deputy First Ministers, including at the Joint Ministerial Council (European Negotiations) and British-Irish Council to ensure Northern Ireland's interests are understood and advanced.

■ **Northern Ireland: Republic of Ireland****Tom Brake:**[\[907651\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what discussions he has had with the Irish government on the potential effect of the UK leaving the EU on the relations between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

James Brokenshire:

I refer the honourable Gentleman to the answer I gave to the honourable Member for Cheadle earlier today.

■ **Republic of Ireland****Gareth Johnson:**[\[907652\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, what discussions he has had with the Irish government on the implications of the UK's decision to leave the EU.

James Brokenshire:

I refer the honourable Gentleman to the answer I gave to the honourable Member for Cheadle earlier today.

TRANSPORT■ **Aviation****Robert Neill:**[\[55501\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how his Department plans to meet growth in aviation passenger demand before the completion of a new runway in the South East.

Mr John Hayes:

Whilst Heathrow is operating at capacity today, the Airports Commission recognised that there is still spare capacity in the South East. The Government will be progressing work on a new Aviation Strategy which will consider how we can make best use of existing capacity.

■ Bus Services: Disability

Alex Chalk:

[\[55298\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what guidelines his Department has issued on (a) increasing the number of buses which have room for more than one wheelchair user and (b) other steps to improve disabled access on buses.

Andrew Jones:

The Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations have prompted a step-change in the accessibility of bus services, including ensuring that every vehicle incorporates at least one designated wheelchair space.

The Department has not issued guidelines concerning the provision of more than one wheelchair space, and will not comment further on this issue until the *Paulley vs First Bus* case, currently being heard by the Supreme Court, has concluded.

We are however taking action to improve other aspects of bus service accessibility, including developing best practice guidance on the delivery of disability awareness training in the sector, and introducing an Accessible Information Requirement to provide audible and visible information on upcoming stops on local bus services throughout Great Britain.

We also continue to work with the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency to ensure that existing accessibility standards are adhered to, and that the high levels of accessibility which disabled bus users have come to expect are maintained.

■ Chester-Manchester Railway Line

Graham Evans:

[\[55678\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether the Government has a timetable for the electrification of the Chester to Manchester line.

Paul Maynard:

Chester and Manchester are linked by two rail lines: via Warrington Quay (electrified east of Warrington) and via Stockport (electrified north of Stockport). The Government intends next year to set out its priorities for investment in train services and infrastructure in the next Control Period from 2019. This will be informed by advice from the rail industry, Transport for the North and other stakeholders.

The Government is committed to ensuring that every part of Britain benefits from our investment in the railways. Improvements in rail services can be delivered by new trains, electrification or other infrastructure improvements. The Government keeps under close review what options will ensure the maximum value to taxpayers, passengers and freight users.

■ Department for Transport: Billing**Tim Farron:**[\[55438\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what proportion of payments by his Department to small businesses are made on time and in accordance with the prompt payment code.

Mr John Hayes:

Central Government Departments aim to pay 80% of undisputed and valid invoices within 5 days, with the remainder paid within 30 days.

In 2015-16 the Department for Transport paid 93.9% of such invoices within 5 days, and 99.3% within 30 days.

The Department has published its overall payment performance data at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/565053/dft-prompt-payment-data-2016.csv/preview

To support prompt payment further, since June 2015 all central Government departments have been required to accept unstructured e-invoices - invoices which can be sent in by email. We are also working towards greater use of structured e-invoices - these are invoices that can be processed automatically thereby reducing payment times and errors.

■ High Speed 2 Railway Line**Mr Khalid Mahmood:**[\[55420\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will take steps to ensure that HS2 Ltd takes account of the report by RPS Planning and Development, entitled Acoustics assessment of the effects of HS2, rebuttal evidence, published on 24 November 2016, in any discussions on compensation that it has with Aston Villa Football Club relating to the effect of noise from High Speed 2 on that club's Bodymoor Heath training ground.

Andrew Jones:

HS2 Ltd will take the noise evidence provided by RPS Planning and Development into account in the on-going discussions regarding the effects of noise from HS2 on the Bodymoor Heath training ground.

■ Lighthouses: Northern Ireland**Lady Hermon:**[\[55631\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department plans to take steps to gain jurisdiction over lighthouses on islands off the coast of Northern Ireland after the UK's exit from the EU; and if he will make a statement.

Mr John Hayes:

Arrangements for the provision of lighthouses and other aids to navigation sit outside of European Union regulations under the international convention on Safety of Lives at Sea (SOLAS) managed by the International Maritime Organization.

The provision of all aids to navigation safety for Northern Ireland is the responsibility of the Commissioners of Irish Lights. The Commissioners of Irish Lights have responsibility for aids to navigation for the whole of the island of Ireland and are accountable to the UK Department for Transport for their operations in UK waters. No change to this arrangement is envisaged as a result of the UK's exit from the European Union.

■ London Airports

Stephen Hammond:

[\[55865\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment the Government made of the relative net present values of the potential expansion of Gatwick and Heathrow Airports when making its decision on airport expansion in the South East.

Mr John Hayes:

The government published net present values (NPVs) for all three of the airport expansion options in Chapter 7 of the Further Review and Sensitivities Report.

The NPV is an important metric in the economic analysis, but does not capture all relevant evidence, for example other quantified impacts that are not included, such as the local jobs created and trade benefits, and non-monetised impacts. The economic analysis is part of a wider evidence base, which includes the consideration of commercial, financial, deliverability and strategic issues. Further information can be found in the Airport Commission's Final Report.

■ Network Rail: Procurement

Jo Stevens:

[\[55571\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much Network Rail has spent on the specialist and support services of (a) Amey Rail, (b) Bridgeway Consulting, (c) Carillion Rail, (d) Colas Rail, (e) Coyle Personnel, (f) Exxell, (g) GM Rail Services, (h) GPX Engineering, (i) Infra Safety Services Labour, (j) Keltbray Rail, (k) Linbrooke Services, (l) MECX Group, (m) Renown Railway Services, (n) Resourcing Solutions, (o) SW Global Resourcing, (p) TES2000 and (q) each of those company's subsidiaries in the last year.

Paul Maynard:

Over the last year, Network Rail's spend on labour services with the companies listed breaks down as follows:

(a) £14,668.44

(b) £130,891.51

(c) £39,645.07

(d) £3,073,781.16

(e) £2,665,716.26

(f) £24,073.56

(g) £709,275.45

- (h) £7,739.47
- (i) £86,009.48
- (j) £78,086.50
- (k) £2,750.16
- (l) £925,079.18
- (m) £26,552.88
- (n) £955,316.36
- (o) £149,966.03
- (p) £2,637,498.53
- (q) Network Rail does not hold this information. ^[1]

^[1] Network Rail assumes that all spends with the named contractors are direct.

■ Railway Stations: South Wales

Stephen Doughty: [\[55647\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the oral contribution of the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport on 8 November 2016, Official Report, column 522WH, what discussions his Department has had with Network Rail on the potential for opening new stations in the east of Cardiff at (a) St Mellons, (b) Romney and (c) Splott.

Paul Maynard:

The Department for Transport has had no discussions with Network Rail on the potential for opening new stations at the sites listed. The Department for Transport can confirm that no applications were made by third parties into Network Rail's New Stations Fund for stations at these sites. Applications for the latest round of this funding, which can provide up to 75% of the cost for construction of new stations, closed on 25 November 2016.

■ Railways: Compensation

Grant Shapps: [\[55525\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of increasing the threshold levels of compensation available by the Delay Repay scheme on journeys delayed between 30 and 59 minutes.

Paul Maynard:

On 13 October the Secretary of State for Transport announced an improved compensation scheme for passengers. This will apply if their train is more than 15 minutes late. Delay Repay already provides generous compensation for delays between 30 and 59 minutes of 50% of the fare paid for the affected journey, whatever the cause of the delay, and we have no plans to assess increasing the compensation paid further.

■ Railways: Infrastructure

Jo Stevens:

[\[55537\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he has taken to ensure that employment practices used by companies and organisations working on railway infrastructure are conducive to the safety of the rail network.

Paul Maynard:

Responsibility for ensuring the safety of the railways rests with the operators of trains and managers of infrastructure, who have legal duties in this regard – including a duty to co-operate with each other to ensure the safe operation of the railway system. The Office of Rail and Road (ORR), in its role as health and safety regulator, is responsible for ensuring compliance with the law, for encouraging continuous improvement and for taking enforcement action where necessary to protect the safety of railway workers and the travelling public.

■ Railways: Scotland

Margaret Ferrier:

[\[55465\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of devolving full rail powers to the Scottish Government.

Paul Maynard:

The Scottish Ministers already have substantial devolved powers in relation to the railways in Scotland. These have recently been supplemented through the Government's delivery of the recommendations of the cross-party Smith Commission in full. We have no plans to go beyond this.

■ Railways: Staff

Kelvin Hopkins:

[\[55978\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 17 November 2016 to Question 52837, what statistical evidence he has received from train operators on delays or cancellations caused by the non-availability of conductors or guards.

Paul Maynard:

I am not aware of any statistical evidence having been submitted to the Department by train operators about delays or cancellations so caused.

■ Railways: Standards

Andy McDonald:

[\[55987\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, on what dates (a) his and (b) predecessor departments received force majeure claims from train operating companies since January 1996; and what the outcome was in each such case.

Paul Maynard:

The information requested can only be provided at disproportionate cost.

■ Railways: Tickets

Andy McDonald: [\[55979\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much his Department spent on smart ticketing schemes in the rail industry in each year since 2010-11; and how many smart ticketing projects were completed in that time.

Paul Maynard:

The ITSO on Prestige programme was officially accepted in August 2014. The implementation costs of this programme were £66.3m, and the operational costs of this programme since 2010/11 are as follows:

Operational Expenditure Costs

2012/13 - £2.36m;

2013/14 - £4.8m;

2014/15 - £2.94m;

2015/16 - £2.85m.

The Department has also invested in the South East Flexible Ticketing (SEFT) programme. The spend on this programme since 2010/11 are as follows:

2012/13 - £1.5m;

2013/14 - £8.2m;

2014/15 - £16.5m;

2015/16 – £21.5m.

The SEFT programme has supported smart ticketing deployment for season tickets on Abellio Greater Anglia, C2C, South West Trains, Govia Thameslink Railway and Southeastern.

■ Severn River Crossing

Jessica Morden: [\[55969\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Answer of 17 June 2015 to Question 2244, what the current amount is of outstanding government debt on the Severn Bridges; and what recent estimate his Department has made of the level of that debt by the end of the concession period.

Mr John Hayes:

The most recent estimate of outstanding Government debt on the Severn Crossings, also known as the accumulated deficit, was £101m at 31 March 2015. The latest forecast is that by the end of the concession period this will have reduced to £63m.

■ Severn River Crossing: Public Consultation

Jessica Morden: [\[55970\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 8 November 2016 to Question 51784, when he plans to launch the public consultation on the future of the Severn Bridges.

Mr John Hayes:

The Department will launch a consultation on the Severn Bridge shortly and will confirm further details in due course.

■ Southeastern: Rolling Stock

Heidi Alexander: [\[55718\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what progress has been made by Network Rail in identifying stabling capacity for additional rolling stock on the Southeastern network.

Paul Maynard:

As part of the development of the business case and investment proposal for additional rolling stock on Southeastern, stabling options have been identified and proposed. This will form part of our overall consideration of the business case and investment proposal.

■ Southern: Compensation

Andy McDonald: [\[55986\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many applications for compensation were submitted to Govia Thameslink Railway by passengers using Southern rail services in each month from August 2015 to date.

Paul Maynard:

We do not hold this information as the operator is under no obligation to provide it to us. Govia Thameslink Railway provides an aggregate figure for the cost of Delay Repay (which is published by the Office of Rail and Road annually) but not the number of Southern claimants.

■ Transport: Disability

Daniel Zeichner: [\[55625\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Answer of 18 December 2015 to Question 19401, what progress he has made on the review of his Department's Inclusive Mobility guidance; and whether he plans to complete the review of that guidance in 2016.

Andrew Jones:

The Government is making progress in reviewing the Inclusive Mobility Guidance and continues to work with the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee in developing its specification. We will shortly be going to tender and expect the project to be commissioned in spring 2017.

■ Transport: Renewable Energy

Grant Shapps: [55526]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will make an assessment of the UK transport system's progress towards the 2020 target of having 10 per cent of its energy generated by renewables.

Mr John Hayes:

I refer my Right Honourable Friend to my answer of 30 November 2016 to the Hon Member for East Kilbride, Strathaven and Lesmahagow (Dr Cameron), UIN 54131.

WALES**■ Air Passenger Duty**

Gerald Jones: [55623]

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, if he will publish any representations he has received on the devolution of Air Passenger Duty.

Alun Cairns:

The Government has reviewed options to support regional airports that might be affected by the devolution of Air Passenger Duty and received a number of representations in response to the discussion paper that was published as part of that review. HM Treasury published a summary of those responses here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/570773/air_passenger_duty_devolution_responses_web.pdf

■ Apprentices: Wales

Gerald Jones: [55624]

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, whether he has made an assessment of the potential effect of the UK's decision to leave the EU on apprenticeships in Wales.

Alun Cairns:

Skills and apprenticeships in Wales are devolved to the Welsh Government. The Welsh Government's apprenticeship programme is funded with support from the European Social Fund. Following the decision to leave the European Union, the Chancellor has provided guarantees for EU funding such that where the Welsh Government sign up to structural and investment fund projects under their current EU budget allocation prior to Brexit, the UK Government will ensure they are funded to meet these commitments.

■ Debt Collection: Wales

Gerald Jones: [55655]

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what representations he has received on the potential effect of the revised provisions of the Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007 on aggressive bailiff practices in Wales.

Alun Cairns:

I have not had any such representations.

The Government is clear that aggressive enforcement action is not acceptable.

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

■ Local Government: Equality

Caroline Lucas:

[\[56000\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, with reference to the report, Acting on equalities: are local authorities in England meeting the duties of the Equality Act 2010 and addressing sexual orientation and gender equality, published by the University of Brighton in October 2016, what steps she is taking to address the finding of that report that in 2016 over half of local authorities in England were failing to demonstrate compliance with the specific public sector duties of the Equality Act 2010 and associated Government Equalities Office Guidance.

Caroline Dinenage:

The Equality and Human Rights Commission is the regulator for the public sector equality duty set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The Commission uses a range of levers to ensure local authorities and other public bodies comply with the requirements of the duty, from provision of guidance through to enforcement activity where it considers there to be a strategic benefit.

In light of the Brighton University report highlighted by the Honourable Member, the Commission will be writing to the Local Government Association (LGA) drawing its attention to the findings of the research and of the Commission's evidence of the key equality challenges facing lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, and asking the LGA to remind local authorities of their legal obligations under the public sector equality duty.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Hewden: Pensions

Phil Boswell:

[\[55325\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether his Department has made an assessment of the implications of the company Hewden going into administration for the security of pensions for employees of that company.

Richard Harrington:

This is a matter for the Pension Protection Fund (PPF). The PPF is an independent body established to pay compensation to members of defined benefit occupational pension schemes where the sponsoring employer becomes insolvent and the scheme is unable to cover the accrued pension liabilities. The three sections of the Hewden pension scheme

entered the PPF assessment period on 23 November and there is no further detail available at this early stage of the process.

■ Means-tested Benefits: Preston

Mr Mark Hendrick: [55791]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people who have had their (a) jobseeker's allowance or (b) employment and support allowance payments sanctioned have received hardship payments in Preston constituency since 2015.

Damian Hinds:

The information requested is not readily available and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Mr Mark Hendrick: [55792]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people who have had their universal credit payment sanctioned received hardship payments in Preston constituency in each month from 1 January to 31 October 2016.

Damian Hinds:

This information is not currently available. We are considering our strategy for future publications of hardship statistics alongside our routine prioritisation of our statistical work programme.

We have information available about our strategy for the release of Universal Credit statistics here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-credit-statistics-background-information/universal-credit-statistics-background-information>

The sanctions publication strategy which details the approach being taken by DWP statisticians to improve the sanctions statistics being developed, which include the addition of Universal Credit sanction statistics, can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/benefit-sanction-statistics-publication-strategy>

■ Multiple Sclerosis

Mr Jim Cunningham: [55676]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps is he taking to ensure that people with multiple sclerosis are able to stay in work; and if he will make a statement.

Penny Mordaunt:

Individuals should have the opportunity to work and realise the benefit of stable employment where they can, enabling them to live independently and fulfil their potential. Our health and welfare systems need to reflect this and offer the opportunity to work for all those who can, help for those who could, and care for those who can't; including to support those who want to work for as long as possible and prevent them from failing out of work unnecessarily early.

The Work, Health and Disability Green Paper, *Improving Lives* (published 31st October 2016) reflects our new and ambitious approach to work and health. It sets out the short-term action we intend to take to bring about change. It also asks questions on proposals for longer-term reform over this Parliament and beyond, so that our systems, sectors and social attitudes all work together to help achieve the ambition of halving the disability employment gap. .

We have a range of activity underway that is focused on the evidence gaps we have identified including access to services and levels of support we should offer. This will help us to develop new models of support to help people remain in work when they are managing a long term health condition or disability. We want all employers to be as supportive as possible so that everyone can go as far as their talents will take them. But we know that there is much more that needs to be done, so that everyone who can work is given the right support and opportunities to do so.

■ Pensioners

Royston Smith:

[55425]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate his Department has made of the cost to the public purse of providing free (a) bus passes, (b) television licences, (c) medical prescriptions and (d) other benefits to all pensioners.

Richard Harrington:

Tables showing benefit expenditure and forecasts from Autumn Statement 2016 will be published on 21 December 2016 and will be available at GOV.UK. However, expenditure and forecasts on a Budget 2016 basis for TV licences and other DWP pensioner benefits are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/benefit-expenditure-and-caseload-tables-2016>

The annual cost for the England National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) is around £1 billion.

It is not possible to provide total expenditure figures for the statutory concession in isolation, as data collected on the cost to public authorities of reimbursement and administration includes discretionary local extensions to the scheme, such as free peak-time travel or care-assistant concessions.

The detailed data is published on the GOV.UK website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/bus08-concessionary-travel>

Those aged 60 and over are exempt from NHS prescription charges. We do not hold information about the pensioner status of those claiming this exemption. The Department of Health has estimated that if this exemption was not available, but all other exemptions and the availability of prescription prepayment certificates remained the same, the saving to the public purse would be around £700 million.

■ **Work Capability Assessment: Multiple Sclerosis**

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[55677\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the appropriateness of Work Capability Assessments for people with multiple sclerosis; and if he will make a statement.

Penny Mordaunt:

The Work Capability Assessment (WCA) was been designed to take full account of how fluctuating conditions such as multiple sclerosis, affect a claimant's ability to work. The WCA assesses individuals against a set of functional descriptors not specific conditions, as two people with the same condition can be affected in different ways and gives people the opportunity to explain how their condition varies over time.

The Green Paper published on the 31 October seeks to make a positive change to how we help people with health conditions and disabilities to realise their potential and includes reforms to the WCA.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

CABINET OFFICE

■ Annual Report on the National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review

Home Secretary (Amber Rudd):

[\[HCWS329\]](#)

Today, I am pleased to announce the publication of the 2016 annual report of the National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR). I have placed a copy in the House of Commons Library.

The 2015 National Security Strategy and SDSR set out our vision of a secure and prosperous United Kingdom with global reach and influence. We identified the values and approach we would rely on to deliver our strategy, and set out three overarching National Security Objectives: Protect Our People; Project Our Global Influence; and Promote Our Prosperity. In support of each of these objectives, we committed to specific actions and changes, on which we have instigated a cross-government programme of activity, overseen by a new sub-Committee of the National Security Council (NSC).

In the SDSR, we committed to giving Parliament an annual update on implementation of the strategy. This first Annual Report on the SDSR sets out our progress in delivering on our commitments and shows how the strategy is already helping the United Kingdom face up to the threats and challenges posed by a changing world.

As my Rt Hon friend the Prime Minister says in her foreword to the Annual Report, much has changed since the National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review was published in November of last year – not least the United Kingdom's historic decision to leave the European Union. But the principal threats to our national security remain the same. We are witnessing the resurgence of state-based threats – as displayed most obviously by Russia's actions in Syria and Ukraine; terrorism and extremism threaten our security; cyber attacks are on the increase from both state and non-state actors, and we face renewed challenges to the rules-based international order that provides the bedrock of our security. Some of the great global challenges of our time, such as the phenomenon of mass migration, have become more pronounced in the last 12 months.

We should be confident of the United Kingdom's ability to rise to these challenges, drawing on our great strengths as a nation, and the relevance and strength of our National Security Strategy.

The decision to leave the EU carries significant implications for the UK in many areas of political and economic engagement. In the national security context, however, the threats and challenges to UK national security have not fundamentally changed as a result of the decision to leave. The UK remains fully and strongly committed to Europe's defence and security and we continue to play an active role in security and defence cooperation across Europe. As we leave the European Union, we will be more prominent than ever: an outward-

facing, global partner at the heart of international efforts to secure peace and prosperity for all our people.

In the SDSR, we made 89 principal commitments. We have completed 12, and set in train 38 more which will be ongoing throughout this Parliament. The SDSR pledged to deliver a number of complex major projects and programmes, some with a delivery timescale of a decade or more; progress on these is as we would expect at this early stage. Britain continues to lead the way in responding to global challenges that affect our security and prosperity. The UK is the only country in the G20 to meet both the NATO target of 2% of GDP on defence spending, and 0.7% of GNI on overseas development assistance. British leadership on defence and security issues is supported and reinforced by the strength of our economy and our unique international influence and soft power, enabling us to work with our allies and partners around the world to deliver our National Security Strategy.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Neighbourhood Planning Bill: English Votes for English Laws

Minister of State for Housing and Planning & Minister for London (Gavin Barwell):
[[HCWS330](#)]

I am pleased to announce the publication of analysis of English Votes for English Laws in relation to Government amendments to the Neighbourhood Planning Bill at Commons Committee and Commons Report.

The English Votes for English Laws process applies to public bills in the House of Commons. To support the process, the Government has agreed that it will provide information to assist the Speaker in considering whether to certify the Bill or any of its provisions for the purposes of English Votes for English Laws.

The memorandum provides an assessment of the Government amendments to the Neighbourhood Planning Bill at Commons Committee and Commons Report stage, for the purposes of English Votes for English Laws. The Department's assessment is that the amendments do not change the territorial application of the Bill. This analysis reflects the position should all the Government amendments at Commons Report be accepted.

I have deposited a copy in the Libraries of the House.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Mandatory housing of poultry and other captive birds in England

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Andrea Leadsom):
[[HCWS327](#)]

In recent weeks, there have been several reported cases of a highly pathogenic avian flu subtype H5N8 in Europe. As a result, the Animal and Plant Health Agency has increased the risk to UK wild birds to medium. The risk to poultry remains low, but heightened. No cases have been found in the UK.

Public Health England (PHE) advises that the threat to public health from H5N8 remains very low and there are currently no recorded cases of this strain in humans.

In response to the risk to poultry and other captive birds, the Chief Veterinary Officer yesterday put in place an Avian Influenza Prevention Zone that covers all of England. The purpose of the zone is to require keepers to take additional steps to introduce enhanced biosecurity measures and to protect poultry and other captive birds from contact with wild birds. The zone requires where practicable the immediate and compulsory housing of hens, chicken, turkey and ducks or their complete separation from contact with wild birds. For farmed geese, gamebirds and other captive birds, where housing can be less practical, keepers should take steps to keep these birds separate from wild birds. The additional biosecurity measures are to be taken by all keepers of birds. The zone will remain in place for 30 days. The intention is to give keepers time to put in place other robust biosecurity measures to reduce the risk of avian influenza entering poultry flocks and other captive birds. The requirement to house for 30 days will not affect the free-range status of birds or their eggs.

Defra has also enhanced its surveillance of wild birds, with particular emphasis on those species posing the greatest risk. This process will be kept under review and adjusted as necessary in the light of any changes in circumstances.

I urge bird keepers to adopt the best practice biosecurity advice which my Department has made available on GOV.UK

HOME OFFICE

■ Justice and Home Affairs pre-Council statement

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Amber Rudd): [\[HCWS328\]](#)

The next Justice and Home Affairs Council of the Slovak Presidency will take place on 8 and 9 December in Brussels. The Minister of State for Courts and Justice, Sir Oliver Heald QC MP, and the Minister of State for Policing and Fire, the Rt Hon Brandon Lewis MP, will represent the UK.

The Justice Day (Thursday 8 December) will begin with a discussion about the latest developments on the European Public Prosecutor (EPPO) dossier, which the UK will not participate in.

Next on the agenda will be a progress report on discussions with the European Parliament on a compromise approach to the proposal for a Directive on the fight against fraud to the Union's financial interests by means of criminal law (PIF Directive). The compromise would have the effect of bringing serious VAT fraud within the scope of the Directive. The UK has not opted in to this proposal on the grounds that it would infringe on Member States' competence to control their own taxes.

This will be followed by the first reading of a proposal for a Directive concerning contracts for the supply of digital content. The Council will discuss three elements of the proposal with a view to providing indications of Ministers' preferred approach to ongoing negotiations in

Council Working Group. The UK will continue to promote practicality of application, proportionality, and, where appropriate, consistency with existing law.

The final substantive item of the day will cover criminal justice in cyberspace. The Presidency will provide updates on progress on two linked issues: securing e-evidence for use in criminal justice proceedings; and how to tackle challenges around encrypted data. The UK's legislative position on encryption has recently been clarified with Royal Assent of the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 on 29 November. We support the Presidency's overarching position of continuing to work to find solutions that ensure our law enforcement agencies can access encrypted data in tightly prescribed circumstances, while respecting the role that encryption plays in protecting citizens' data.

The Interior day (Friday 9 December) will begin with an update on negotiations relating to the reform of Common European Asylum System (CEAS). Negotiations are ongoing in relation to the inclusion of arrangements for the large scale relocation of asylum seekers / refugees within the proposed Dublin IV Regulation. The UK has not opted in to these regulations. The Presidency will also present recent revisions to Eurodac proposals, to which we have opted in. Eurodac has the potential to be a powerful tool in the fight against serious crime and terrorism. We welcome the recent changes to the proposal to make law enforcement access easier in order to support wider security and law enforcement objectives.

The next item will focus on proposals to establish an Entry/Exit System (EES) to register the movements (and refusals) of third country nationals, as this is a Schengen area measure the UK will not participate. After this the Commission will present their legislative proposals for enhancing the functionality of the Second Generation Schengen Information System (SIS II). We understand these proposals will be published by the Commission the day before the Council, so are not expecting any substantive discussion.

On the Migration item, discussion will focus on implementation of the EU-Turkey deal and talks on 'effective solidarity' mechanisms for burden sharing around irregular migrant flows. The UK is focused on supporting practical efforts to implement the EU-Turkey deal. The UK will announce an additional package of support to Greece including up to an extra 40 staff over the winter period to support this process and ease congestion on the increasingly overcrowded islands. In particular, we are looking to provide flow management (as recommended by the McKinsey report), case-workers and interpreters (as requested by Greece) and returns expertise (as recommended/ requested by both).

On the Fight Against Terrorism item the Commission will update on ongoing cooperation between the EU, Member States' law enforcement agencies and electronic communication service providers to prevent the spread of extremist content that supports radicalisation. It will also cover policy options for tackling the threat to the European Union from returning foreign fighters. The European Counter Terrorism Coordinator will present a paper addressing the threat picture, information sharing, criminal justice and disengagement amongst other topics, which we expect the Council to endorse without a substantive debate.

Finally there will be a short item on how governments can share best practice in preparing for attacks, drawing lessons from other CT incidents. The UK will outline its approach to preparedness, and encourage EU engagement with information sharing initiatives.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Agenda of the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO) 8th December 2016, Brussels

Minister of State for Employment (Damian Hinds):

[\[HCWS326\]](#)

The Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council will take place on 8th December 2016 in Brussels. I will be representing the UK.

The Council will be invited to reach General Approach on proposals for regulation by the European Parliament and the Council to amend legislation on: the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound), the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA), and a European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP).

The Council will receive progress reports on the proposal for a European Parliament and Council Directive on the posting of workers, the proposal for a European Parliament and Council Directive on the accessibility requirements of products and services, and the proposal for a Council Directive on the equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion, disability, age or sexual orientation.

The European Commission will present the Annual Growth Survey 2017, the draft Joint Employment Report and draft Recommendations on the economic policy of the Eurozone, with Eurozone Members of the Council invited to adopt the Council contribution on the employment and social aspects of the draft recommendation of the economic policy of the euro area. The Chair of the Employment Committee will present a review of Social Partners' involvement at national level in the European Semester.

The Council will be invited to a policy debate on the European Pillar of Social Rights.

The Council will be invited to adopt draft Council Conclusions on the implementation on the Youth Guarantee and the Employment Initiative, Draft Council conclusions on accelerating the process of Roma integration, and Draft Council conclusions on women and poverty.

Under any other business, the Commission will present information on the Youth Initiative. There will be information from the Presidency on: Omnibus Regulation (EaSI, EGF, FEAD), the New Skills Agenda, and the outcome of conferences organised by the Slovak Presidency. There will be information from the Austrian delegation on the Special Olympics World Winter Games, and from the Maltese delegation on the work programme of their upcoming presidency.