



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 21 July 2016 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:33 P.M., 21 July 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

Margaret Ferrier: [\[906011\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the UK leaving the EU on the rate of criminal prosecutions.

Jeremy Wright:

It is not possible to make any such assessment, as the answer will depend on the terms of the agreement reached on the UK's future relationship with the EU.

We will now need to negotiate the best deal we can with Europe, and part of that process will focus on tools and mechanisms for cooperation that can help keep Britain's citizens secure.

■ Rape: Convictions

Mr David Hanson: [\[906012\]](#)

To ask the Attorney General, what assessment he has made of the reasons for variations across police force areas in conviction rates for rape offences.

Robert Buckland:

There are a number of factors at various stages that are likely to have an impact on conviction rates for rape, but the Crown Prosecution Service is committed to improving the conviction rate for rape by working closely with partners in all police force areas.

In order to provide consistency of approach, the CPS has also established networks of Violence against Women and Girls co-ordinators.

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Conditions of Employment

Jonathan Reynolds: [\[43273\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department will be responsible for family-friendly employment policy and the right to request flexible working and shared parental leave.

Margot James:

Ministers, and therefore Departments' portfolio of policy responsibilities, are being agreed and will be announced in due course.

■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Public Expenditure

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[43020\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what estimate he has made of his Department's total budget in each of the next five years; and if he will make a statement.

Margot James:

Following the Machinery of Government changes, budgets will be formally agreed and approved by Parliament through the relevant Supply Estimate process. The next Estimate will be published in early 2017. The Department is working through the budgetary implications of the recent MOG announcements in advance of this.

■ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Staff

Mr Jim Cunningham: [\[43021\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many Civil Servants employed by the Department for Energy and Climate Change he expects to move to employment in his Department; and if he will make a statement.

Margot James:

All the Civil Servants previously employed by the Department for Energy and Climate Change have moved to the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. All of its functions, along with the business, industrial strategy, science and innovation functions of the former Department for Business, Innovation and Skills have come together to form the new Department.

Details of staff numbers at the former Department for Energy and Climate Change were published in its Annual Report and Accounts 2015/16 on 13 July 2016

■ Digital Technology

Chi Onwurah: [\[43222\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether responsibility for digital consumer rights sits within his Department.

Jesse Norman:

Responsibility for digital consumer rights sits with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. Protecting consumer rights is an important issue and will remain a priority for the department.

Chi Onwurah: [\[43223\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether responsibility for the Digital Single Market and the digital economy sits within his Department.

Jesse Norman:

Responsibility for the Digital Single Market sits with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, and responsibility for the Digital Economy sits with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

■ Engineering and Science

Calum Kerr:

[\[42300\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with reference to the outcome of the referendum on UK membership of the EU, if he will take steps to help the UK retain its leading scientists and engineers.

Joseph Johnson:

The UK has a long established system that supports, and therefore attracts, the brightest minds, at all stages of their careers. We fund excellent research wherever it is found, and ensure there is the freedom to tackle important scientific questions. The Government is committed to maintaining and enhancing the strength of our research base, which is why at the Spending Review we committed to protect the science budget in real terms from its 2015/16 level of £4.7 billion per annum.

The Government has said that there will be no immediate changes in circumstances for EU citizens working or studying in the UK - this includes scientists and engineers.

■ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

Ms Harriet Harman:

[\[43210\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether, following the recent machinery of government changes, the National Contact Point for the OECD Guidelines is still based in his Department.

Greg Hands:

I have been asked to reply on behalf of the Department for International Trade.

Under the machinery of government changes announced recently the UK NCP will now be located in the Department for International Trade.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Cabinet Office: Ministerial Policy Advisers

Tom Watson:

[\[43227\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether any pay rises were awarded to special advisers in the Cabinet Office since 17 December 2015.

Ben Gummer:

No pay rises have been awarded to Special Advisers in the Cabinet Office since 17 December 2015.

■ Cabinet Office: Pay

Tom Watson: [\[43022\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, pursuant to the Answer of 18 July 2016 to Question 42517, how many members of staff who are in receipt of a private secretary allowance are Senior Civil Servants.

Ben Gummer:

There are currently 11 members of the Senior Civil Service who are in receipt of a private secretary allowance. Staff at Band B2 or above who currently work in the Private Office of a Director General, Permanent Secretary or Minister are entitled to receive the Private Office allowance. The authorisation process is robustly enforced within the department, with accountability resting with the Head of Private Office Group.

■ Civil Servants: EU Nationals

Gareth Thomas: [\[42964\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Government plans to introduce further restrictions on the posts that EU nationals are able to (a) work in and (b) apply for within the Civil Service; and if he will make a statement.

Mr David Davis:

As yet, no consideration has been given, or decisions taken, about the laws or policies relevant to EU nationals applying for, or being employed in civil service posts.

■ Economic and Domestic Affairs Secretariat: Freedom of Information

Tom Watson: [\[43013\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how much the Economic and Domestic Affairs secretariat spent on legal advice relating to Freedom of Information cases in the last 12 months.

Tom Watson: [\[43014\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how much the Propriety and Ethics Unit spent on legal advice relating to Freedom of Information cases in the last 12 months.

Ben Gummer:

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

■ Extended Ministerial Offices

Tom Watson: [\[42978\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many extended Ministerial offices have been shut down since 13 July 2016.

Ben Gummer:

There have been a number of Ministerial and government appointments announced recently. Administrative support for those appointments has yet to be concluded.

TREASURY■ **Blood: Contamination****Nia Griffith:**[\[43230\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he plans to make additional funding available to the Welsh Health Service as a result of the decision to offer increased annual payments to victims of contaminated blood.

Mr David Gauke:

Health functions have been devolved to Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. This means responsibility for the infected blood payment schemes is a matter for those devolved administrations. The proposals for reform, set out in the government's consultation response document published July 13, are for England only.

■ **Business: Loans****Drew Hendry:**[\[42897\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of the means of complaint and recourse available for customers when commercial loan books are sold to overseas operators.

Simon Kirby:

Customers whose loans are sold to or administered by overseas operators retain their ability to complain to the firm in the first instance, and then through the Financial Ombudsman Service for covered complaints or through the Courts.

■ **EU Grants and Loans****Dan Jarvis:**[\[43233\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether the Government plans to maintain the level of funding currently delivered through the European Regional Development Fund and European Social Fund.

Mr David Gauke:

The people of the UK have voted to leave the EU. It would not be appropriate to commit, without due consideration, to continuing to spend money over a long period as if we had not voted to leave the EU. But the Government remains committed to encouraging economic growth across the regions and nations of the UK. The Government is therefore carefully considering the use of these funds and will make an announcement on EU funding in due course.

■ **EU Grants and Loans: Northern Ireland****Ms Margaret Ritchie:**[\[42991\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, which (a) completed, (b) in progress and (c) scheduled projects in Northern Ireland have received or are scheduled to receive EU funding; what assessment he has made of the potential effect on that funding of the vote to leave

the EU; and whether any resulting shortfall in funding will be met by his Department or the Northern Ireland Office.

Mr David Gauke:

Details on individual projects which fall under devolved areas of responsibility are a matter for the devolved administration in Northern Ireland. In light of the UK's vote to leave the EU, the Government is carefully considering the options for the future of EU-related funding.

■ Financial Services: Equal Pay

Chi Onwurah: [\[43106\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will encourage companies to sign up to the Women in Finance Charter.

Simon Kirby:

The government launched the HM Treasury Women in Finance Charter to take forward Jayne-Anne Gadhia's recommendations following her review into the representation of senior women in financial services.

Firms that have signed the Charter are committed to implementing four key industry actions to improve gender diversity in financial services. On 11 July the government announced that 72 firms have signed the Charter. Together these firms employ over 530,000 people in the UK, with headquarters across the UK, USA, Europe and Asia.

Harnessing the talents of women in financial services is one of the government's key priorities and we are committed to encouraging as many financial services firms as possible to sign the Women in Finance Charter.

■ Public Expenditure: Wales

Nia Griffith: [\[43229\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he plans to make additional funding available to Wales after the UK's exit from the European Union.

Mr David Gauke:

The people of the UK have voted to leave the EU. It would not be appropriate to commit, without due consideration, to continuing to spend money over a long period as if we had not voted to leave the EU. But the Government remains committed to encouraging economic growth across the regions and nations of the UK. The Government is therefore carefully considering the use of these funds and will make an announcement on EU funding in due course.

■ VAT: Scotland

Deidre Brock: [\[43166\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to devolve the setting of VAT rates to the Scottish Parliament after the withdrawal of the UK from the EU.

Mr David Gauke:

In line with the all-party Smith Commission, the UK and Scottish Governments have agreed that receipts from the first 10p of the standard rate of VAT and the first 2.5p of the reduced rate of VAT in Scotland will be assigned to the Scottish Government from 2019-20. The UK Government is getting on with implementing that agreement.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**■ Councillors****Justin Tomlinson:**[\[43276\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to encourage high quality candidates with (a) public and (b) private sector experience to become councillors.

Mr Marcus Jones:

Local councillors play a vital role in providing leadership, a voice for local communities and in overseeing key public services. So it is important that political parties and the local government sector encourage high calibre candidates from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences to put themselves forward to become local councillor candidates. The Local Government Association runs a programme to increase the diverse pool of talent from which councillors are elected to serve in local government.

■ Local Government Executive: Training**Justin Tomlinson:**[\[43238\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what steps his Department is taking to improve the training offered to (a) the leaders of local authorities and (b) local authority cabinet members.

Mr Marcus Jones:

Through DCLG grant funding, the Local Government Association (LGA) provides broad support to the local government sector, including training and support for members and officers, and policy briefings. This includes one-to-one mentoring for elected leaders and cabinet members by other member peers, members attending LGA Leadership Academy programmes, and corporate peer challenges. Corporate peer challenges involve a team of senior members and officers from other areas spending time in a council to review and challenge an aspect of its activity.

■ Planning**Mr Gary Streeter:**[\[42707\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, whether the conclusions of his Department's consultation on proposed changes to National Planning Policy will be published before the summer recess.

Mr Gary Streeter:

[\[42708\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, whether the Government's response to the Communities and Local Government Select Committee's report on national planning policy will be published before the summer recess.

Gavin Barwell:

We are carefully considering the 1,100 responses to the consultation, and expect to publish the response to the consultation and to the Communities and Local Government Select Committee report in the Autumn.

■ Public Houses: Ribble Valley

Mr Nigel Evans:

[\[43269\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how many pubs have closed down in the Ribble Valley in the last three years.

Mr Marcus Jones:

The Government does not collect data relating to pub closures. However, it recognises the clear social and economic value of our pubs, including many of those in the Ribble Valley, not least the award-winning Swan with Two Necks at Pendleton, and is supporting them through a range of measures. These include helping communities to buy their locals through the new £3.62 million 'More than a Pub' programme; giving communities reasonable time to bid to buy their pub should it be put up for sale by listing it as an Asset of Community Value with their local authority; and freezing beer duty at Budget 2016, which followed an unprecedented cut in duty in each of the preceding three budgets, and the scrapping of the beer escalator at Budget 2013.

■ Rent Repayment Orders

Mary Glendon:

[\[42976\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what plans he has to monitor the use of extended Rent Repayment Orders.

Gavin Barwell:

The Housing & Planning Act 2016 extended the grounds for seeking a Rent Repayment Order to include illegal eviction, breach of a banning order or failure to comply with a statutory notice. It is envisaged that each of these will also be banning order offences. Where a person or organisation has been convicted of a banning order offence, local authorities will be encouraged to record that information in the database of rogue landlords and property agents. This will enable government to monitor how frequently Rent Repayment Orders are used.

■ Sleeping Rough: Redcar and Cleveland

Anna Turley:

[42966]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what estimate he has made of the number of people rough sleeping in Redcar and Cleveland in each year since 2010.

Mr Marcus Jones:

One person without a home is one too many and we are committed to doing all we can to prevent homelessness. That is why we have increased central investment to tackle homelessness over the next four years to £139 million. This includes a new £10 million fund to support innovative ways to prevent and reduce rough sleeping, and a new £10 million Social Impact Bond to support rough sleepers with the most complex needs. We also announced at Budget £100 million of funding for low-cost move-on accommodation, including for rough sleepers leaving hostels.

DCLG publishes annual statistics on the number of people seen sleeping rough on a single night by local authority. These are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics>

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Arts: Royalties

Nigel Adams:

[42569]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills on artistic remuneration for online content.

Matt Hancock:

Ministers and Officials from both Departments meet regularly to discuss a range of issues.

■ Charities

Tom Watson:

[42581]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps the Government is taking to improve public trust and confidence in charities.

Mr Rob Wilson:

The Government has taken a number of steps to improve public trust and confidence in charities in England and Wales

The Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016 gives the Charity Commission new and enhanced powers to tackle serious abuses of charitable status. The Charity Commission is already taking a more robust approach to tackling abuse and mismanagement and has also simplified and updated guidance for trustees to remind them of their duties.

Following scandals in 2015 that highlighted unacceptable charitable fundraising practices, a new Fundraising Regulator has been established. Chaired by Lord Grade of Yarmouth, this independent regulator is tasked to set high standards of fundraising practice and to deal with public complaints when these have been breached. It has a range of sanctions and can refer serious non-compliance or abuse to the relevant statutory regulator. The Fundraising Regulator will also develop a Fundraising Preference Service to enable people who feel inundated with targeted fundraising requests to put a stop to them if they wish.

The Office for Civil Society and Innovation is further working with charities to explore the challenges facing the leadership of the voluntary and community sector. One of the four themes that has been identified as part of this work is 'responding to decline in trust and confidence'. A dedicated working group has been convened to explore this issue and identify potential solutions.

Tom Watson: [\[42777\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what representations she has (a) made to and (b) received from charities since the outcome of the EU referendum.

Mr Rob Wilson:

Since the outcome of the EU referendum, I have received representations from the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), the network of charity chief executives Acevo and the Charity Finance Group.

We will continue to work closely with charities to understand the potential impact of the UK's decision to leave the EU.

Tom Watson: [\[42778\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if she will take steps to provide assurances to the charity sector on the future (a) funding and (b) operations of charities following the decision of the UK to leave the EU; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Rob Wilson:

Supporting a modern and resilient charity sector has been a priority for the Government. Over this and the last parliament we have worked together with charities to create greater financial sustainability, grow the social economy and support robust governance. This places charities in a strong position to respond to any changes resulting from the decision of the UK to leave the EU. We will continue to work closely with charities to understand the potential impact on their funding and operations which will depend on the specific arrangements agreed for exiting the EU.

■ Charities: Finance

Tom Watson: [\[42600\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the potential effect on funding for charities of the outcome of the EU referendum.

Tom Watson: [\[42601\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the potential effects on charities of the outcome of the EU referendum.

Mr Rob Wilson:

The UK has a strong and diverse charitable sector. It is too early at this stage to make a full assessment of the potential effects for charities resulting from the outcome of the EU referendum. We will continue working with charities and their representative bodies to understand the potential effects on charities and the potential impact on funding for charities. These will depend on the arrangements agreed for exiting the EU, and different types of charity are likely to be affected in different ways.

■ Charities: ICT

Tom Watson: [\[42580\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps she plans to take to help charities improve their digital capabilities.

Mr Rob Wilson:

Government is committed to supporting the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector address its organisational needs. Through the £20m Local Sustainability Fund, Government is supporting 265 small to medium sized organisation deliver change to secure and enhance their services.

Government is also actively tackling digital exclusion by working with partners to increase basic digital skills and Internet use for individuals and organisations.

Within the Office for Civil Society, officials are working with independent VCSE sector funders and influencers to build stronger leadership and governance. Part of this work will focus on preparing the sector for the future, which we expect to include building an understanding of the importance of developing digital skills and capability.

■ Culture, Practices and Ethics of the Press Inquiry

Helen Goodman: [\[42542\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions he has had with victims of press intrusion on the Leveson 2 inquiry.

Matt Hancock:

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport met victims of press intrusion in March 2016 to discuss the Leveson Inquiry. Criminal proceedings connected to the subject matter of the Leveson Inquiry, including the appeals process, have not yet completed. We have always been clear that these cases must conclude before we consider Part 2 of the Inquiry.

■ Digital Technology: Data Protection

Chi Onwurah: [\[43221\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of tracking of digital devices through Wi-Fi and Bluetooth on consumer rights and privacy.

Matt Hancock:

The Government takes both the protection of personal data and the right to privacy extremely seriously. Under the Data Protection Act owners should be informed how their data will be handled.

The independent regulator for information rights, the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), has produced guidance on privacy on mobile apps, which is available at; <https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1596/privacy-in-mobile-apps-dp-guidance.pdf>

■ Digital Technology: South Wales

Chris Elmore: [\[42468\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he has made to promote digital inclusion in the South Wales Valleys.

Matt Hancock:

Ministers from both Departments meet regularly to discuss a range of issues.

■ Gyms

Jim Shannon: [\[42605\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if she will hold discussions with representatives of gyms on ensuring that the fitness levels of new members is assessed before they use such gyms.

Tracey Crouch:

I meet regularly with ukactive, an organisation with members and partners across the UK active lifestyle sector, and others in the gym and physical activity sector. Whilst arrangements made for new members are for leisure providers to determine, our Sport Strategy, Sporting Future, published last December, highlighted the importance of giving those getting involved in sport, particularly for the first time, the best possible experience.

In addition, ukactive's Code of Practice - which is designed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of health and fitness operators and customers - also stipulates that providers must offer all facility users an exercise induction, and many physical activity, fitness and leisure operators require all new members to sign a 'Health Commitment Statement'.

■ S4C

Chris Elmore:

[\[42462\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what recent steps his Department has taken to ensure the long-term future of S4C.

Matt Hancock:

We are strong supporters of S4C and Welsh language broadcasting . We have committed to a comprehensive review of S4C in 2017 which will look at a range of issues including funding arrangements, remit, accountability and governance.

In order for S4C to continue to provide a first-class service and have a sustainable future, we announced (on Wednesday 3rd February) an extra £400,000 funding for 2016/17.

As set out in the BBC White Paper, the BBC will maintain a commitment to Welsh language broadcasting services - we expect the BBC to continue its partnership with S4C to deliver TV services in Wales during the next Charter period.

■ Voluntary Work: Bury St Edmunds

Jo Churchill:

[\[43255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, how many young people in Bury St Edmunds constituency participated in the National Citizen Service in each of the last two years.

Mr Rob Wilson:

I am pleased to report that over 1,000 young people in Suffolk have participated in NCS in the past two years. The NCS Trust does not collect data at a constituency level. Therefore, the figures below are for the local authority area of Suffolk.

2014 – 328 participants

2015 – 710 participants

■ Voluntary Work: Young People

Tom Watson:

[\[42579\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the cost-effectiveness of the National Citizen Service programme compared with other youth social action programmes.

Mr Rob Wilson:

National Citizen Service (NCS) is a unique programme for young people focused around adventure, discovery and giving back to communities. Robust, independent evaluations show that NCS delivers positive impacts for young people and value for money. For every £1 spent, it generates up to £3.98 of social benefits.

Government has evaluated the impact of investment in a range of youth social action opportunities as part of Step Up To Serve's #iwill campaign. Funding has also been provided to the Centre for Youth Impact to develop the youth sector's capability to design, deliver and commission cost-effective services for young people.

Tom Watson: [\[42582\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the effect of broader changes to funding of youth services on the objectives of the National Citizen Service programme.

Mr Rob Wilson:

National Citizen Service (NCS) delivers positive outcomes for young people and supports the wider youth sector. NCS is delivered by a supply chain of over 200 youth service providers from the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector and from local authorities. Cabinet Office has also pledged to support the #iwill campaign to increase participation in youth social action by continuing to invest in youth social action and share evidence and best practice.

Local authorities have a statutory duty to secure sufficient services and activities to improve the wellbeing of young people and are best placed to decide how to do so according to local need and resources.

Tom Watson: [\[42583\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, whether she plans to establish a non-departmental public body as part of the process of placing the National Citizen Service on a permanent statutory footing.

Mr Rob Wilson:

The National Citizen Service (NCS) Bill will place NCS on a statutory footing and describe its means of delivery. Classification is a subject for the Office for National Statistics in the first stage.

DEFENCE

■ Defence Business Services

Mary Glendon: [\[42971\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he plans to announce the award date for the Defence Business Services corporate services integration and innovation provider contract; and if he will make a statement.

Mark Lancaster:

The Ministry of Defence is currently examining options for the future of Defence Business Services (DBS) as part of the Future DBS Programme. No final decisions have been taken on whether any elements of DBS' current operations will be outsourced. Timescales will be confirmed in the event of a decision to outsource. If deemed necessary a statement will be made at the appropriate time.

Mary Glendon: [\[42972\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether he plans to postpone issuing a formal contract notice in the Official Journal of the European Union for the outsourcing of Defence

Business Services as a result of the potential implications of the outcome of the EU referendum on the tendering process for that contract.

Mark Lancaster:

The Ministry of Defence is currently examining options for the future of Defence Business Services (DBS) as part of the Future DBS Programme (FDBS). No final decisions have been taken on whether any elements of DBS' current operations will be outsourced. In the event of a decision to outsource, the competition will be advertised in accordance with regulations prevailing at the time.

■ **Libya: Military Intervention**

Tom Brake:

[\[43265\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many RAF flights over Libya have taken place each month between January and June 2016; what the purpose was of such flights; and what the type of aircraft used was for those flights.

Mike Penning:

Part of our support to the political process in Libya has included the provision of military advisers and RAF flights to transport them. I am withholding information on the details of these flights as disclosure would, or would be likely to prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the Armed Forces.

■ **Military Aircraft: Kingston upon Hull**

Diana Johnson:

[\[43214\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will make it his policy to reduce the number of military planes flying over Hull particularly at night.

Diana Johnson:

[\[43246\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what procedures his Department has to minimise the (a) number of military flights over urban areas and (b) noise pollution such flights cause.

Mark Lancaster:

The Ministry of Defence takes its responsibilities to the general public very seriously indeed and would prefer not to cause any disturbance to the general public, including to those in Hull. However, there are no uninhabited areas of the UK large enough to cater for essential training needs.

Flying operations in the UK Military Low Flying System are avoided within major built-up areas (generally those with a population of over 10,000), although it is not always possible to avoid flying over the outskirts of towns and villages. A range of measures are in place to provide a balance between military training requirements and the need to avoid excessive noise on the ground. These include restrictions placed on the height, speeds and operating procedures of military aircraft in the UK Military Low Flying System.

Realistic training at night is essential to ensure aircrew are proficient in the necessary skills and to exploit our technological edge. The amount of night low flying remains proportional to the operational requirement.

■ Yemen: Military Intervention

Dr Lisa Cameron: [\[42675\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, if he will respond to the findings of the Human Rights Watch report, Saudi Coalition Airstrikes Target Civilian Factories in Yemen, on remnants of UK-manufactured weapons found at three strike sites in that country.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Ministry of Defence analyses allegations of International Humanitarian Law violations arising from air strikes in Yemen conducted by the Saudi-led Coalition. Allegations are identified from a range of sources, including reports published by Non-Governmental Organisations such as Human Rights Watch.

EDUCATION

■ Academies: Accountability

Stephen Timms: [\[43237\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she has taken to ensure the accountability of academies to their local community; and if she will make a statement.

Nick Gibb:

Performance data for all maintained schools, including academies, is published on the school performance tables website[1]. This provides information that local communities and parents can use to hold schools to account.

Academies are also subject to independent inspection by Ofsted, which provides an important source of information for local communities and parents.

The Education white paper, 'Educational Excellence Everywhere', set out the Government's plans to publish performance information for multi-academy trusts in addition to the continued publication of performance data at individual school level. On Thursday 7 July, we published a statistical working paper[2], using our developing approach, showing the performance of multi-academy trusts at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 using 2015 results.

[1] <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/>

[2] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/535604/SFR32_2016_text.pdf

■ Academies: National Curriculum Tests

Stephen Timms: [\[42728\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will make it her policy to publish Key Stage 2, 3 and 4 results for all multi-academy trusts.

Nick Gibb:

The Department for Education already publishes Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 results for schools, including those in multi-academy trusts. Assessment at Key Stage 3 is a matter for schools and, as such, there is no statutory national test at the end of Key Stage 3.

The Education White Paper 'Educational Excellence Everywhere' set out the Government plans to publish performance information for multi-academy trusts in addition to the continued publication of performance data at individual school level. On Thursday 7 July, we published a statistical working paper, using our developing approach, showing the performance of multi-academy trusts at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 using 2015 results.

■ Academies: Sex and Relationship Education

William Wragg: [\[42646\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many primary and secondary academies and free schools teach sex and relationships education.

Edward Timpson:

The Department does not hold this information.

Sex and relationship education is compulsory in maintained secondary schools. Academies and free schools do not have to teach sex and relationship education but many choose to do so as part of their statutory duty to provide a broad and balanced curriculum. When academies do teach sex and relationship education they are required through their funding agreement to have regard to the Secretary of State's Sex and Relationship Education Guidance. The guidance can be accessed at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/sex-and-relationship-education

■ Apprentices

Stephen Timms: [\[43219\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of differential rates of apprenticeship completion by sector; and if she will make a statement.

Robert Halfon:

Apprenticeship achievement rates by sector subject area vary from 60.4% (Science and Maths) to 78.9% (Information and Communication Technology). With the exceptions of Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care, Arts, Media and Publishing and Science and Mathematics, the achievement rate for all Sector Subject Areas increased between the 2013/14 and 2014/15 academic years.

Our reforms are improving the quality of all apprenticeships. We have insisted that they must all be paid jobs with substantial training, develop transferable skills and have a

minimum 12 months' duration. Ensuring that, at the end of their apprenticeship, apprentices have transferable skills and can progress their career will all help encourage people to complete their apprenticeship.

■ Class Sizes

Gloria De Piero: [42783]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, in which local authority areas there have been class sizes of more than 30 in the last three years.

Nick Gibb:

Information on primary class sizes by local authority can be found in table 11 of the 'schools, pupils and their characteristics' statistics, which is available for each of the last three years[1]. Information on secondary class sizes is provided at a national level in table 6b of these statistics.

[1] <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-school-and-pupil-numbers>

■ Foreign Students: EU Countries

Mr David Lammy: [42584]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment her Department has made of the potential effect of leaving the EU on the number of UK students studying overseas at universities in EU member states.

Joseph Johnson:

There are no immediate changes following the EU Referendum, including in the circumstances of British citizens studying, or planning to study, in the EU. Future arrangements for studying abroad will need to be considered as part of wider discussions about the UK's relationship with the EU.

■ National Curriculum Tests

Christian Matheson: [42332]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what proportion of key stage 2 tests in 2016 have required remarking.

Christian Matheson: [42333]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many primary schools have raised concerns with her Department on the marking of the key stage 2 reading assessment in 2016.

Nick Gibb:

If a school believes that there is a discrepancy between how questions have been marked and the published mark scheme for Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests, they had until 15 July 2016 to apply for a marking review. Statistics related to marking reviews will be published in November 2016.

■ National Curriculum Tests: Reading

Christian Matheson: [42377]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the (a) provisional overall pass rate was for key stage 2 reading in 2016 and (b) overall pass rate for key stage 2 reading was in each of the preceding four years.

Nick Gibb:

The percentage of pupils who achieved the expected standard (a scaled score of 100 or above) in reading at Key Stage 2 (KS2) in 2016 is 66%. This is published as part of the "National curriculum assessments at KS2 in England, 2016 (interim)" [1] statistical first release (SFR).

Children sitting KS2 tests in 2016 were the first to be taught and assessed under the new National Curriculum, tests and teacher assessments. The expected standard has also been raised. The Head of Profession for Statistics has made clear that due to these changes the expected standard this year is not comparable with the expected standard used in previous years' statistics; it would be incorrect and misleading to make direct comparisons showing changes over time.

The expected standard under the previous system was the percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above. Performance against this standard for previous years is published in table 1 of the "National curriculum assessments: key stage 2, 2015 (revised)" [2] SFR.

[1]

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/534573/SFR30_2016_text.pdf

[2] <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-curriculum-assessments-at-key-stage-2-2015-revised>

■ Overseas Students: EU Nationals

Mr Nigel Evans: [42736]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment she has made of the effect of the outcome of the EU referendum on EU students wishing to study in UK universities.

Joseph Johnson:

The UK has a long established higher education system that supports, and therefore attracts, the brightest minds, at all stages of their careers. Existing rules on EU and other EEA students remain in force. Future arrangements for EU students wishing to study in the UK will need to be considered as part of wider discussions about the UK's relationship with the EU.

■ Primary Education: Free School Meals

Jess Phillips: [42504]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the total cost to the public purse was of the Small Schools Taskforce report on free school meals.

Jess Phillips: [42505]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when she plans to publish the Small Schools Taskforce report on free school meals.

Nick Gibb:

The small schools taskforce was made up of a number of local authority and private sector caterers and manufacturers who were unpaid but could claim expenses. The total value of the contract to deliver action arising from the School Food Plan was £204,000. We are able to directly attribute around £10,000 of this to the work of the Small Schools Taskforce; in addition there would have been small amounts claimed in expenses for the other taskforce members.

The majority of the findings from the Small Schools Taskforce report are already in the public domain following the publication of the toolkit for small schools, which is available at: <http://www.thegreatschoolslunch.co.uk/media/169570/CFT-SmallSchoolToolkit.pdf>

■ Schools: Nottinghamshire

Gloria De Piero: [42981]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the reduction in General Annual Grant for (a) secondary and (b) primary schools in Nottinghamshire is from academic year 2015-16 to academic year 2016-17.

Nick Gibb:

Maintained schools and academies are paid by reference to different financial years, which are not contiguous with academic years for maintained schools. Consequently funding figures for the academic year 2016/17 are not published. The table below shows that funding increased for Nottinghamshire primary schools and academies by £7.03m, and for secondary schools and academies by £0.62m between financial years 2015-16 and 2016-17.

	2015-16 FY (£)	2016-17 FY (£)	YoY CHANGE (£)
a) Secondary	185,506,841	186,130,700	623,859
b) Primary	240,790,943	247,822,567	7,031,624

Note: There is also a single 'All Through' provider that is not included in these figures.

■ Secondary Education: Finance

Gloria De Piero: [43005]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether she plans for the Year 7 catch-up grant for secondary schools to continue after academic year 2016-17.

Gloria De Piero: [43006]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what the average funding will be for each secondary school pupil from the Year 7 catch-up grant in academic year 2016-17.

Nick Gibb:

Since 2012 we have provided £500 per pupil funding to secondary schools for year 7 pupils who did not meet the expected standard in reading or mathematics at primary school. This funding enables schools to deliver additional support, such as individual tuition or intensive support in small groups, for those pupils that most need it.

While this funding applied for the period of the spending review, to 2015-16, on 7 July 2016 we announced that schools will receive catch-up funding in 2016-17. Schools will receive the same total amount of funding they received in 2015-16 adjusted to reflect the percentage change in the size of their year 7 cohort. We will not know the final amount for each pupil in 2016-17 until the allocations have been determined based on data from the autumn 2016 schools census.

We will make an announcement about the future of the year 7 catch-up premium in due course.

■ Secondary Education: Nottinghamshire

Gloria De Piero: [42980]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how much her Department has given from the public purse to each Nottinghamshire secondary school through the Year 7 catch-up grant in each of the last three academic years.

Nick Gibb:

The Department publishes details online of individual school Year 7 Catch-up Premium allocations for each financial year. Details of the past three years allocations for all schools by local authority can be found here:

2015-16: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/year-7-catch-up-premium-2015-to-2016-allocations>

2014-15: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/year-7-catch-up-premium-2014-to-2015-allocations>

2013-14: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/year-7-catch-up-premium-2013-to-2014-final-allocations>

■ Teachers: Bureaucracy

Nic Dakin: [43103]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what representations her Department has received on the recommendations of the Report of the Independent Teacher Workload Review Group entitled Eliminating unnecessary workload associated with Data Management published in March 2016; and from whom those representations were received.

Nick Gibb:

We established three independent review groups to tackle workload related to data management, marking and lesson planning. Members of the review groups included serving teachers and head teachers, teaching unions and Ofsted.

No formal representations have been received on the recommendations in the data management report although all three reports have been well received by the profession and ongoing discussions are taking place with teachers and their representatives to help embed their principles and implement the recommendations.

■ Universities

Mr Jim Cunningham: [42372]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what representations she has (a) made to and (b) received from universities on the implications of the outcome of the referendum on the UK's membership of the EU.

Joseph Johnson:

The Government has met a number of stakeholders since the referendum for meetings that included discussion of EU issues. The Government continues to work closely with the higher education sector^[1] and to listen to their feedback on the implications of the referendum outcome. The Government will continue to engage with the whole HE sector on these important issues and welcome their valuable input.

[1] <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/statement-on-higher-education-and-research-following-the-eu-referendum>

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS**■ Alternative Fuels: Excise Duties**

Royston Smith: [42861]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment her Department has made of the effect of the Alternative Fuels Framework on implementation of the Government's Clean Air Zone initiative.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Clean Air Zones are part of a range of measures to improve air quality as set out in the revised national air quality plan for nitrogen dioxide, published in December 2015.

The national air quality plan for nitrogen dioxide sets out a comprehensive approach to improving air quality and reducing impacts on health. It recognises the use of alternative fuels such as liquefied petroleum gas and liquefied and compressed natural gas and where appropriate it presents opportunities to improve emissions from vehicles. The plan sets out some of the measures we are taking to support innovation in this area.

The Government continues to review evidence concerning the environmental impact of alternative fuels, with any changes to the tax treatment of alternative fuels announced at fiscal events.

■ Ash Dieback Disease

Oliver Colvile:

[\[42845\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what funding her Department is making available to replace trees that die of ash dieback disease.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Forestry Commission provides advice to woodland managers about how best to manage and adapt to ash dieback, for example by planting a variety of tree species as diversity brings resilience to pests and diseases.

Support is available for some landowners for the replacement of infected ash trees with alternative species in woodland situations under the Countryside Stewardship scheme, subject to grant conditions being met.

The Government is not encouraging felling of large infected ash trees as they can survive dieback for many years. They continue to provide recreational and biodiversity benefits as well as a vital role in protecting our environment through use in flood control measures.

■ Bakery Products: Prices

Rachael Maskell:

[\[42986\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of the effect of price trends in the baked goods market on (a) the pay and conditions of employees in that sector, (b) public health and (c) the commercial viability of producers.

George Eustice:

The Government monitors overall food prices using the Consumer Prices Index (CPI). In the year to June 2016 food prices had reduced year-on-year by 2.9% and are over 7% lower than the peak in 2014.

The Government's new National Living Wage became law on 1st April 2016. Workers aged 25 and over, and not in the first year of an apprenticeship are legally entitled to at least £7.20 per hour, an increase of fifty pence per hour.

The Eatwell Guide sets out Government's recommendations on eating healthily and achieving a balanced diet.

Two new Apprenticeship Trailblazer Standards, "Baker" and "Advanced Bakery", have been created by industry. The Secretary of State is attending the launch of these new Industry Approved Apprenticeship Standards at a reception at the Houses of Parliament this week.

■ Dangerous Dogs: Lancashire

Mr Nigel Evans: [\[43271\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many attacks on humans by dangerous dogs have been reported in Lancashire in the last five years.

George Eustice:

We do not hold such information. Reports of dog attacks on people will be held by the Lancashire police force. However, the table below provides information on numbers of prosecutions and convictions for each of the last five years where figures are available, which provides some indication of the number of such incidents.

DEFENDANTS PROCEEDED AGAINST AT MAGISTRATES COURTS AND FOUND GUILTY AT ALL COURTS OF ALL OFFENCES UNDER THE DANGEROUS DOGS ACT 1991, LANCASHIRE, 2010 TO 2014 ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾

Outcome	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Proceeded against	45	38	50	21	42
Found guilty	32	28	37	18	31

(1) The figures given in the table relate to persons for whom these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with. When a defendant has been found guilty of two or more offences it is the offence for which the heaviest penalty is imposed. Where the same disposal is imposed for two or more offences, the offence selected is the offence for which the statutory maximum penalty is the most severe.

(2) Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that these data have been extracted from large administrative data systems generated by the courts and police forces. As a consequence, care should be taken to ensure data collection processes and their inevitable limitations are taken into account when those data are used.

NB: This table reflects cases where the initial proceeding took place in a magistrates court in Lancashire, irrespective of where the offence or arrest occurred, or where any subsequent Crown Court hearing took place.

Source: Justice Statistics Analytical Services - Ministry of Justice.

■ Environment Protection

Dan Jarvis:

[\[43235\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she plans to take during the negotiations to leave the EU to ensure that UK environmental policies continue to match EU standards.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

In the EU, the UK has worked tirelessly to seek to agree the right environmental policies. Until we leave the EU, EU law continues to apply so current arrangements for farming, food and drink and our environment remain in place.

Defra will continue to ensure the right policies are in place for a cleaner, healthier environment for everyone. It is also vital that British farming is profitable and remains competitive – it is the bedrock of the food and drink industry, Britain's largest manufacturing sector.

We are now preparing to negotiate our exit. Defra will be working with the Department for Exiting the EU on the UK's withdrawal and future relationship, liaising closely with other key departments on future support for farmers, the food and drink industry and the environment. The Government will work with industry and the public to develop these new arrangements.

■ Environment Protection: EU Law

Dan Jarvis:

[\[43186\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans her Department has to ensure that environmental standards currently enforced by the EU are written into UK law.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

I refer the hon. Member to the reply previously given on 21 July 2016 to PQ UIN 43235.

■ Environment Protection: Plastics

Rachael Maskell:

[\[43107\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans she has to bring forward legislative proposals on banning microbeads and microplastics in all personal care products, washing powders, household cleaners and industrial blast media.

George Eustice:

The UK and all other EU Member States have called for the European Commission to come up with proposals to ban microbeads in cosmetics at EU level, as part of the EU Circular Economy Action Plan. These proposals, which we expect to be developed as part of the 2017 Plastics Strategy, will inform the UK's approach to introducing a ban on microbeads in cosmetics and personal care products. However, we are also open to the possibility of the UK acting unilaterally if necessary.

In addition, the UK, in association with neighbouring countries in the Oslo and Paris Convention for the Protection of the North East Atlantic (OSPAR), has developed a Regional Action Plan (RAP) on marine litter. This RAP includes an action to evaluate all products and processes that include primary microplastics (including microbeads) and act, if appropriate, to reduce their impact on the marine environment. This programme of work will help to inform the UK's approach to other sources of microplastics, such as washing powders, household cleaners and industrial blast media.

■ Food Standards Agency

Tim Farron: [\[43012\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many food inspectors the Food Standards Agency (a) employed in each of the last five years and (b) plans to employ in (i) 2016-17, (ii) 2017-18, (iii) 2018-19 and (iv) 2019-20.

George Eustice:

The Food Standards Agency is a non-ministerial government department of the Government of the United Kingdom and does not employ food inspectors. Trading Standards and Environmental Health Officers are employed by local authorities. The Food Standards Agency is responsible for meat inspection duties in approved meat premises in England, Scotland and Wales and currently employs 439 Meat Hygiene Inspectors for the purposes of official control inspection activities. Further detail regarding the number of inspectors employed is a matter for the FSA.

■ Pets: Sales

Rachael Maskell: [\[43002\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether she plans to bring forward legislative proposals on the breeding and selling of pet animals.

George Eustice:

Defra is currently reviewing the laws on the breeding and selling of pet animals. Earlier this year we held a consultation on a number of proposals for improving the legislation in this area. Later this year we will be publishing a summary of the responses and will then work towards drafting regulations to replace the existing laws.

■ Poultry: Animal Welfare

Rachael Maskell: [\[43097\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if she will bring forward legislative proposals to ban the culling of chicks in the poultry industry.

George Eustice:

The alternatives to culling chicks at one-day old are currently being explored. Research is well underway at the University of Leipzig in Germany, who are developing a new method for in-ovo gender identification, so that eggs identified as male can be sorted and used for purposes other than hatching. I also raised this issue at the G7 in Japan in

April, and gave my support to the development of this new technology. We will look carefully at the results of this work and how it can be applied.

In the UK, all four of the laying hen hatcheries use argon and CO2 gas techniques as a method of euthanising chicks and not maceration.

EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION

■ Department for Exiting the European Union: Public Expenditure

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[43017\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, what estimate he has made of the total budget for his Department in each of the next five years; and if he will make a statement.

Mr David Davis:

The new Department for Exiting the European Union is taking the necessary steps to equip itself to oversee negotiations to leave the EU and establish the future relationship between the UK and EU. The overall size and scope of the new department, including staffing and budget, are now being considered.

■ Office of UK Permanent Representative to EU: Staff

Stephen Gethins:

[\[43450\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, how many additional members of staff will be posted at UKRep during the period of negotiations for UK withdrawal from the EU.

Mr David Davis:

The UK's Permanent Representation to the EU will play an important part in negotiating the UK's withdrawal from the EU, as part of the Department for Exiting the European Union. The overall size and scope of the department, including staffing and budget, are being considered.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ Kashmir: British Nationals Abroad

Naz Shah:

[\[43104\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has made to the Indian government to ensure the welfare and safe return of British citizens affected by the curfew in Kashmir.

Alok Sharma:

Our High Commission in Delhi is monitoring the situation closely. We have updated our travel advice and encourage British nationals in Kashmir to monitor it. We have not made any representations to the government of India on this issue.

■ Kashmir: Military Intervention

Naz Shah: [\[43275\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations the Government is making to the government of India on the Indian Armed Forces (Jammu and Kashmir) Special Powers Act 1990 and scrutiny of Indian military intervention in Kashmir.

Alok Sharma:

The UK Government has not made any recent representations to the Government of India on the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) or on Indian military intervention in Kashmir. We are aware of the concerns regarding allegations of immunity from prosecution for Indian armed forces personnel under the AFSPA. We continue to follow developments on this issue. The Indian Government have an established mechanism through which people can request that cases of concern be investigated. In November 2015, Indian Prime Minister Modi assured the former Prime Minister, my Rt hon. Friend the Member for Witney (Mr Cameron) of his commitment to and respect for India's core values of tolerance and freedom.

■ Kashmir: Politics and Government

Naz Shah: [\[43267\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent representations he has made to the Indian government on civilians killed and injured in Kashmir since the death of Burhan Wani.

Alok Sharma:

I was deeply saddened by reports of unrest in Kashmir earlier this month and offer my condolences to the victims and their families. Our High Commission in Delhi is monitoring the situation closely and we have updated our travel advice. We have not made any representations to the government of India on this issue.

■ Kashmir: Press Freedom

Julie Cooper: [\[42988\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has made to the Indian government on suppression of the press in Kashmir and Jammu.

Alok Sharma:

The UK Government has not made any representation to the Government of India on freedom of press in Jammu and Kashmir. We recognise that there are broader human rights concerns in Kashmir. In November 2015, Indian Prime Minister Modi assured the former Prime Minister, my Rt hon. Friend the Member for Witney (Mr Cameron) of his commitment to and respect for India's core values of tolerance and freedom.

■ Kuwait: Minority Groups

Diana Johnson: [\[43213\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, when he and his Department have discussed the position of the bedoon community with the Kuwaiti government.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We regularly raise the issue of the Bidoon at the highest levels of Kuwait's Government. Human rights, including the status of the Bidoon, are also discussed bilaterally at the biannual UK-Kuwait Joint Steering Group meetings, the most recent of which was held in London at the end of May.

Diana Johnson: [\[43215\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what his policy is on the bedoon community in Kuwait; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The UK continues to follow with concern the situation of the Bidoon in Kuwait. We recognise that their ambiguous status has a significant impact on this marginalised community. We encourage the Kuwaiti Government to meet its commitments to regularise the status of Bidoon, and to swiftly naturalise those who have a legitimate claim to citizenship.

■ South Sudan: Security

Mr Andrew Smith: [\[42475\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent reports he has received on the security situation in Juba, South Sudan.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We have been kept regularly updated on the security situation in Juba. Senior officials and the former Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Hon. Friend the Member for Rochford and Southend East (James Duddridge), have been in touch with leaders in the region and joined the United Nations and the African Union in calling on President Kiir and First Vice President Riek Machar to immediately end all violence and protect all South Sudanese civilians. The ceasefire announced on 11 July is currently holding.

■ UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara

Alan Brown: [\[42995\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what information his Department holds on how many (a) Saharawi and (b) Moroccan people are employed by MINURSO in Western Sahara.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office holds no information on the ethnicity or origin of United Nations staff.

Mr Mark Williams:

[\[43007\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations at the meeting of the UN Security Council on 26 July 2016 that MINURSO must be enabled to fulfil its original mandate.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We continue to make clear our expectation that MINURSO be returned to full functionality in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 2285.

■ Western Sahara: Natural Resources

Alan Brown:

[\[42994\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will call for an end to the extraction of natural resources from Western Sahara through agreements that disregard the interests and wishes of the indigenous Saharawi people.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

UK policy on commercial activity in Western Sahara is clear and longstanding and follows the legal opinion sought by the UN in 2002: that such activity is not in itself in violation of international legal principles unless it proceeds without respect to the interests and wishes of the people of Western Sahara. We continue to urge any commercial entity considering investing in Western Sahara to follow this advice and seek their own legal advice.

■ Western Sahara: Politics and Government

Alan Brown:

[\[42996\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make representations to the UN Security Council on setting a date for a free and fair referendum in Western Sahara with an option for independence on the ballot paper.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

It is for the parties to the dispute to agree a resolution of the final status of Western Sahara. The UK encourages both sides to cooperate with the United Nations process to reach a mutually acceptable solution that provides for the self-determination for the people of Western Sahara.

HEALTH

■ Accident and Emergency Departments

Mr Virendra Sharma:

[\[43137\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many accident and emergency visits there were for minor ailments in each clinical commissioning group in each year since 2012-13.

Mr Virendra Sharma:

[\[43140\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what proportion of visits to accident and emergency departments were for minor ailments in (a) England and (b) former strategic health authority areas in each year since 2006.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The information is not available in the format requested. Such information as is available is attached.

NHS England publishes information on the number of attendances at all types of accident and emergency department. A type 3 accident and emergency department is one that treats minor injuries and illnesses (sprains for example) and can be routinely accessed without an appointment. In this context, minor ailments have been interpreted as a type 3 accident and emergency attendance.

Data are reported to NHS England by all organisations providing National Health Service funded emergency care services and averaging more than 200 attendees per month. It is not possible to aggregate these data to clinical commissioning group, and the 10 strategic health authorities were abolished in March 2013. Published data for type 3 attendances are only available from 2011-12 onwards. These data are presented by 13 commissioning sub-regions, which are not legal entities but are sub-divisions of NHS England.

Attachments:

1. PQ43137 PQ43137 data [PQ43137 - DATA.xlsx]

■ **Ambulance Services**

Mr Virendra Sharma:

[\[43135\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what proportion of ambulance call-outs were for minor ailments in each (a) former strategic health authority area and (b) clinical commissioning group in each year since 2006.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The information requested is not collected centrally.

Lower acuity calls, such as minor ailments, are called "green calls". Response times for these are set locally by commissioners and providers.

■ **Autism**

Mrs Cheryl Gillan:

[\[43004\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to his Department's evaluation of the autism awareness project, what measures his Department plans to use to demonstrate (a) how many more people understand autism as a result of that project and (b) its overall value for money.

David Mowat:

After a public tendering process, the Autism Alliance UK were successful in receiving funding from the Department for their Connect to Autism project. This project has focused on improving awareness and understanding of autism in the general population by working with local and national providers of services in the private, public and voluntary sectors. A tendering process to evaluate the project will be undertaken shortly, with the evaluation aiming to identify, amongst other outcomes, how many people the awareness project has reached and its overall value for money.

Justin Madders:[\[43063\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions his Department has had since the last meeting of the National Autism Programme Board on increasing accountability for improving outcomes for autistic people within NHS England and on creating a new role of National Clinical Director for autism.

Corri Wilson:[\[43087\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what key priorities have been agreed by the National Autism Programme Board on improving data and information collected on autism to support the effective commissioning of services for autistic people.

David Mowat:

Since the meeting of the cross government Autism Programme Board on 16 June 2016, discussions with NHS England have focused on taking forward the actions agreed to improve diagnostic waiting times and outcomes for people with autism. The National Autistic Society and the report of the Westminster Commission on Autism have both suggested that NHS England create a new role of National Clinical Director for autism, and this is a matter for NHS England to consider.

The Autism Programme Board at its last meeting also considered current and possible future sources of autism data. The Board asked that further consideration be given to this issue and for the Department to report back to them before their autumn meeting. This work is on-going.

■ Blood: Contamination**Nia Griffith:**[\[43228\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent discussions he has had with the Welsh Government about financial support for victims of contaminated blood.

Nicola Blackwood:

The then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Jane Ellison) wrote to Vaughan Gething on 13 July 2016 to inform him of the publication of the Government Response to the Consultation on Reform of Financial and Other Support for those infected and affected by NHS supplied blood, and offered to arrange a call to discuss this further.

Officials from the Department and the Welsh Government have been working together over the past few months on the issue of scheme reform, including a workshop in

London in March to consider the themes emerging from the England consultation, and regular phone conferences.

■ Breast Cancer: Drugs

Jim Shannon:

[42619]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions he has had with his EU counterparts on co-operation on developing and making available new drugs to treat breast cancer.

Nicola Blackwood:

Many new medicines in Europe, including medicines to treat breast cancer, are licensed by the European Medicines Agency (EMA). The EMA brings together scientific experts from across Europe by working closely with the national regulatory authorities, in a partnership known as the [European medicines regulatory network](#). The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency is an active participant in this network and its discussions.

■ Cancer: Males

Jim Shannon:

[42613]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has had made of the effect of the introduction of the HPV vaccination on reducing the incidence of head and neck cancer among men who have sex with men.

Nicola Blackwood:

In November 2015 the Joint Committee for Vaccination and Immunisation advised that a human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination programme should be introduced for men who have sex with men (MSM) attending genito-urinary medicine clinics. In preparing this advice, the Committee took into account mathematical models that considered the likely effect of the vaccination programme on anal, penile and oropharyngeal (including tonsillar) cancers. The models suggested that introduction of HPV vaccination for MSM is likely to decrease the incidence of oropharyngeal cancers in the long term.

■ Cancer: Medical Treatments

Mr Virendra Sharma:

[43175]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether NHS England published all of the recommendations made in June 2016 by its Clinical Priorities Advisory Group relating to the medical interventions in the Cancer Programme of Care listed in Appendix 3 of NHS England's paper on Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)-HIV Prevention, published in May 2016.

David Mowat:

NHS England has published all of the recommendations made by the Clinical Priorities Advisory Group (CPAG) which relate to interventions in the Cancer Programme of Care, listed in Appendix 3 of NHS England's paper on *Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)-HIV Prevention*.

The majority of recommendations were published in June 2016, except those that CPAG had already considered (as in-year service developments) in early 2016. This includes policies relating to chemotherapy drugs and everolimus to treat angiomyolipomas, which were included in the PrEP paper in error.

Jim Shannon:

[43184]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent estimate his Department has made of the proportion of women undergoing chemotherapy who experience side effects of that treatment.

David Mowat:

The Department has made no such estimate. Chemotherapy involves the use of powerful cancer killing drugs and side effects are common. The severity and nature of the side effects will vary from patient to patient, and will also depend to the type of drug being used and the duration of the treatment.

■ Cancer: Mortality Rates

Craig Whittaker:

[43084]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what research his Department has conducted on variations in cancer survival rates between different (a) parts of the UK and (b) socio-economic groups.

David Mowat:

Public Health England's National Cancer Registration and Analysis Service has published data on variation in cancer survival linked with deprivation as part of its Routes to Diagnosis project. This covers 55 different cancers and shows that, on the whole, survival is poorer in more deprived populations. Full results are available at the following link:

www.ncin.org.uk/publications/routes_to_diagnosis

■ Care Homes: Nurses

Helen Hayes:

[42955]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the effect of the timing of the announcement on the rate for NHS-funded nursing care for residents of care homes in 2016-17 on the management of those care homes.

Helen Hayes:

[42956]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when he plans to announce the rate for NHS-funded nursing care for residents of care homes for 2017-18.

David Mowat:

The Department appreciates the importance of timely communication of the rate of National Health Service-funded Nursing Care for care homes.

The new rate will be paid on an interim basis whilst further work is done to review the element of the rate for agency nursing staff (which could lead to a reduction to the rate from 1 January 2017) and to consult on introducing regional variation from April 2017.

The rate for 2017/18 will be published following completion of work which is being done by the Department.

■ Chronic Illnesses: Children

Valerie Vaz:

[\[42766\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the Answer of 2 March 2016 to Question 28759, whether the mental health needs of children with epilepsy and other long-term conditions will be considered by the expert group convened by his Department and the Department for Education.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Expert Working Group announced in the Department for Education and the Department of Health's oral evidence to the Education Committee on 3 February 2016 as part of their Inquiry into the Mental Health and Wellbeing of Looked After Children will not be considering the mental health needs of children with epilepsy and other long-term conditions. The Working Group will look specifically at the mental health needs of looked after children and young people, adopted children and care leavers. The aim of the Group is to develop care pathways for children in these particular circumstances, including any who might also have long term conditions or disabilities. Further work will be carried out during the implementation of the Five Year Forward View and of the transformation programme for children and young people's mental health which is set out in *Future In Mind* which will lead to improvements for all children and young people experiencing mental health problems.

■ Clinical Commissioning Groups: Pay

Rosie Cooper:

[\[43277\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what level of pension benefit payments has been awarded to each part-time chair of clinical commissioning group governing bodies in each of the last five years.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Chairs that are either employed directly by the clinical commissioning group or are general practitioners performing that role on a fee basis alongside their National Health Service practice duties can participate in the NHS Pension Scheme. As the employer, the clinical commissioning group contributes towards the cost of an individual's pension benefits. The value of pension related benefit payments made each year in respect of their chairs is recorded by clinical commissioning groups in their annual report. The level of pension benefits that are payable to an individual upon retirement varies based on length of NHS service and will be calculated in accordance with the accrual rate and rules of the relevant pension scheme.

■ Clinical Psychologists: Training

Gareth Thomas: [\[43299\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans he has to require clinical psychologists to contribute to their training costs either through (a) direct payment and (b) reduction in salary; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Philip Dunne:

There are currently no national plans in place to change the existing funding system for higher education training in clinical psychology.

■ Dentistry: Training

Sir Paul Beresford: [R] [\[43096\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the funding provided by Health Education England for dental foundation training to facilitate access to the dental performers list; and if he will make a statement.

Mr Philip Dunne:

All graduates of United Kingdom dental schools secured a place on the dental foundation training scheme in 2014 and 2015. Information for 2016 will be made available by Health Education England once confirmed. Foundation Training requires selection on merit but this year, as in the last two years, the scheme rules prioritise applicants who have graduated from UK dental schools.

■ Drugs: Prices

Dawn Butler: [\[43392\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when his Department plans to respond to its consultation on changes to the statutory scheme to control the prices of branded health service medicines.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Department is developing its response to the consultation.

■ Food: Advertising

Patrick Grady: [\[42265\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of television advertising of junk food before the 9pm watershed on the health of children and young people.

Nicola Blackwood:

Our forthcoming Childhood Obesity Strategy will look at everything that contributes to a child becoming overweight and obese. The Prime Minister and the Cabinet will be working over the coming days and weeks to establish their priorities and how we deliver on these commitments.

■ Health Professions: Training

Luciana Berger:

[\[43207\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 1 July 2016 to Question 40562, if his Department will publish details of which stakeholders it plans to engage with before publishing its response to the consultation on healthcare student funding.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The healthcare education funding reforms is a transformative policy with cross-cutting implications for both health and education sectors. Through agreed governance arrangements, the Department of Health, the Department for Education and HM Treasury have worked with health and education partners ahead of publishing the Government response.

A list of respondents to the public consultation is included in the Government response published on 21 July 2016.

■ Health Services: Staff

Luciana Berger:

[\[43067\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if his Department will consult professional bodies to determine workforce requirements prior to the publication of Health Education England's Workforce Plan for England.

Mr Philip Dunne:

It is for Health Education England (HEE) to determine how it consults with partners in the development of its workforce plan. The Care Act 2014 requires HEE to obtain advice on the delivery of its functions from a wide range of people, including those involved in the delivery of education and training. In developing its previous workforce plans, HEE has consulted with professional bodies and other stakeholders and has considered the evidence that they have made available.

■ Medical Equipment

Paula Sherriff:

[\[43128\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what information his Department holds on the number of occasions on which bailiffs have seized operational equipment from private providers of NHS services; what the details are of each such occasion; and what steps his Department takes to prevent this happening.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Department does not hold this information. The National Health Service body commissioning a service from the private sector should ensure that adequate safeguards are in place to ensure access to essential operational equipment in the event of one of its suppliers getting into financial difficulties.

■ Medical Records: Databases

Valerie Vaz: [\[42965\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of the cancellation of the care.data scheme; and what plans he has for the deletion of all constituent information under that scheme.

Nicola Blackwood:

NHS England and the Health and Social Care Information Centre are not in a position to provide a final statement of expenditure at the present time. No data has been extracted from general practitioner practices under the care.data programme.

However, NHS England has been clear that the evidence and groundwork from the care.data programme will be incorporated into the health and care system's Paperless 2020 programme on technology and improving patient care, as overseen by the National Information Board, in close collaboration with the primary care community, in order to retain public confidence and drive better care for patients.

■ Mental Health Services

Rosie Cooper: [\[43099\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the average annual financial cost incurred by mental health trusts as a result of unavailability of beds on mental health wards requiring patients to be placed into care homes; and which body bears the costs of such cases.

Nicola Blackwood:

The information is not collected centrally.

■ Miscarriage

Jim Shannon: [\[43176\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many women in each of the last five years had a miscarriage.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) provide information on the number of miscarriages. The table shows the number of miscarriages from 2010/11 to 2014/15 where there was a hospital admission.

YEAR	NUMBER OF MISCARRIAGES
2010-11	43,005
2011-12	42,538
2012-13	39,800

YEAR	NUMBER OF MISCARRIAGES
2013-14	38,869
2014-15	38,377

Activity in English National Health Service hospitals and English NHS commissioned activity in the independent sector

Source: HES, Health and Social Care Information Centre

■ NHS: Contracts

Rosie Cooper: [\[43010\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how NHS England assesses bids for contracts where some of the bidding organisations have not provided a similar service previously or have not provided a similar service which has been subject to NHS quality measures or inspection.

David Mowat:

As commissioners, clinical commissioning groups and NHS England use predetermined questions to establish the credentials and capabilities of potential providers. This includes the assessment of evidence of delivery that providers are required to submit as part of the tender exercise. If evidence of ability to provide such a service is not assessed as sufficient, then the potential provider may be disqualified from the process following further clarifications and lack of additional reassurance to meet the service specification requirements.

NHS England only assesses bids for contracts for services which NHS England itself commissions in accordance with its statutory functions and which are put out to tender.

■ NHS: Finance

Mr David Anderson: [\[43034\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, with reference to the oral contribution of the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health, House of Lords, 9 July 2015, Official Report, column 286, what his policy is on part funding of the NHS through insurance and co-payments.

John Mann: [\[43154\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether his Department has any plans to move away from a tax-funded NHS towards one funded by insurance and co-payments.

Mr Philip Dunne:

There is no plan to change the way that the National Health Service is funded nor any consideration of changes. The Government remains committed to the principles of the NHS, enshrined in the NHS Constitution, that access to NHS services is based on clinical need, not the ability to pay.

The Government is also committed to working with the NHS in implementing its own plan for the future of the NHS – the Five Year Forward View – backed up by the commitment made in the Spending Review to provide an additional £10 billion in real terms by 2020-21 compared to 2014-15. This fully funds the plan.

■ NHS: Negligence

Nusrat Ghani:

[\[43153\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the financial cost of incidences of human error within the NHS; and what steps his Department has taken to reduce the likelihood of such errors.

Mr Philip Dunne:

According to a report prepared for the Department and published by Frontier Economics in October 2014, unsafe care can cost the National Health Service between £1 billion and £2.5 billion a year.

In order to improve the safety of patients, we have established various initiatives including:

- The Sign up to Safety Campaign officially launched in June 2014. More than 390 organisations have signed up thus far, and we are aware of more than 670 projects to reduce avoidable harm. Organisations that sign up must outline what they will do to strengthen patient safety, including a response to five key pledges and a safety improvement plan that demonstrates how they intend to save lives/reduce harm over the next three years. The campaign aims to help member organisations listen to patients, carers and staff, learn from what they say when things go wrong and take action to improve patient's safety, helping to ensure patients get harm free care every time, everywhere;
- The Patient Safety Collaboratives, a programme to improve the safety of patients and ensure that continual patient safety learning sits at the heart of healthcare in England; and
- The NHS Safety Thermometer, a measurement tool for a programme of work to support patient safety improvement.

■ NHS: Procurement

Rosie Cooper:

[\[43008\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether the NHS requires organisations bidding for out of area contracts to have been inspected and rated by the Care Quality Commission before bidding.

David Mowat:

Non-primary care services must be commissioned by clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) or NHS England using the NHS Standard Contract. The NHS Standard Contract requires any provider to comply with the registration requirements of Care Quality Commission (CQC) where applicable. When this is the case the production of evidence

of registration with the CQC will be a precondition of the commencement of service delivery.

We would expect commissioners to require evidence of registration (if legally required) with the CQC as part of the tendering process for a new contract. In the case of delivery of services from a new premises or a newly-established provider, registration may not be in place at time the provider submits its bid, but should be before services commence.

■ NHS: Staff

Luciana Berger:

[43180]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the devolution of NHS workforce planning.

Mr Philip Dunne:

For the first time, there is now a publication of a national workforce plan for England setting out the investment that will be made in the education and training of the workforce. In developing the plan, Health Education England (HEE) has worked closely with local National Health Service providers, commissioners and other partners to ensure that it reflects the future workforce that is needed to deliver health services.

HEE has published three workforce plans to date, in December 2013, December 2014 and most recently in May 2016. The latest plan sets out the education commissions that HEE will make in 2016/17. The latest Workforce plan can be found at:

https://www.hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/documents/HEE%20Workforce%20Plan%20for%20England%202016%20180516_0.pdf

HEE is working with partners to strengthen local arrangements for workforce planning for example, it is establishing Local Workforce Action Boards which will be aligned to Sustainability and Transformation Plan geographies, thereby ensuring that workforce will be at the heart of decision making and implementation of future service transformation.

■ NHS: Standards

Rosie Cooper:

[43009]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how (a) residents, (b) patients, (c) clinical commissioning groups and (d) NHS England can assess the standard and quality of care offered by an NHS body that has not yet received a Care Quality Commission inspection rating.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health and adult social care providers in England. All providers of regulated activities, including National Health Service and independent providers, have to register with the CQC and follow a set of fundamental standards of safety and quality below which care should never fall. The CQC monitor, inspect and regulate services to make sure they meet fundamental standards. This gives patients and the public a fair, balanced and easy to understand assessment of the performance of a provider.

During 2014, the CQC progressively introduced a new inspection regime for all providers. Since the CQC introduced its new inspection regime in 2014 it has issued ratings for the majority of providers. All remaining NHS hospitals and general practitioner providers will be inspected by March 2017.

Some of the providers that do not have ratings have already been inspected within the new inspection regime but at a time when ratings were not completed. For all providers that were inspected in this way, the CQC has published an assessment of care quality that has been designed to be helpful to patients and the public.

Other sources of information on care quality include the MyNHS website, NHS Choices, quality accounts, specialised services dashboards published by NHS England, and the National Clinical Audit and Patient Outcomes Programme.

■ Obesity: Lancashire

Mr Nigel Evans: [\[43268\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the obesity rate is in Lancashire.

Nicola Blackwood:

Obesity is commonly presented as prevalence. The most recent data available from the Active People Survey shows that between 2012 and 2014 24.0% of adults in Lancashire were obese. This is the same as the average for England.

Data from the National Child Measurement Programme show that for the academic year 2014/15 in Lancashire 9.4% of children in Reception aged 4-5 years were obese; similar to the English average (9.1%). For children aged 10-11 year in Year 6, 18.4% were obese; similar to the value for England (19.1%). Data for 2015/16 is not available.

■ Ovarian Cancer: Surgery

Jim Shannon: [\[43044\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many women had their ovaries and fallopian tubes removed to prevent cancer in each of the last five years.

David Mowat:

The following table provides the number of finished consultant episodes (FCEs) with a primary or secondary diagnosis identifying that prophylactic surgery has been performed due to a family or personal history of cancer and a main or secondary procedure of salpingo-oophorectomy (removal of ovaries and fallopian tubes) in each of the last five years.

	FCEs
2010-11	1,194
2011-12	1,348
2012-13	1,252

	FCEs
2013-14	1,362
2014-15	1,504

Notes:

- Source: Hospital Episode Statistics, Health and Social Care Information Centre.
- Activity in English National Health Service Hospitals and English NHS commissioned activity in the independent sector.
- An FCE is a continuous period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. FCEs should not be considered a count of different patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within the same stay in hospital or in different stays in the same year.
- The following OPCS classification of interventions and procedures codes were used to identify a salpingo-oophorectomy:
 - Q22.1 – Bilateral salpingo-oophorectomy (removal of both ovaries and fallopian tubes)
 - Q23.1 – Unilateral salpingo-oophorectomy (removal of one ovary and fallopian tube)
 - Q23.2 - Salpingo-oophorectomy of remaining solitary fallopian tube and ovary
 - Q24.1 - Salpingo-oophorectomy NEC (not elsewhere classified)

■ **Patients: Transport**

Paula Sherriff: [\[42969\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the implications of VM Langfords entering administration for the provision of patient transport services in Sussex.

Paula Sherriff: [\[43129\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what discussions Ministers in his Department have had with Sussex clinical commissioning groups about patient transport service provider Langfords going into administration.

Mr Philip Dunne:

This is a matter for local commissioners.

NHS England has confirmed that Coperforma, holder of the non-emergency Patient Transport Service (PTS) contract for Sussex, informed High Weald Lewes Havens Clinical Commissioning Group (HWLH CCG) on 16 June 2016 that a receiver had been appointed for VM Langfords - transport provider sub-contracted to deliver PTS in East and West Sussex. A number of South East Coast Ambulance Services (SECamb) staff had been transferred to VM Langfords employment.

HWLH CCG met with Coperforma on 17 June 2016 and was assured that a plan was already in place for additional transport capacity to mitigate any loss of capacity that this situation may cause.

HWLH CCG is working closely with Coperforma and the unions (Unison and GMB) to work through the implications for ex SECamb staff, to ensure the processes followed are in keeping with employment legislation and good practice and that the impacts on service delivery are kept to a minimum.

There have been no discussions between Ministers in the Department and Sussex CCGs about PTS provider VM Langfords going into administration.

Paula Sherriff: [\[42970\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, which (a) patient transport service and (b) other contracts Coproforma holds with the NHS; and what the value is of each such contract.

Paula Sherriff: [\[42973\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many (a) direct NHS contracts, (b) contracts sub-contracted from direct NHS contractors and (c) patient transport service contracts VM Langfords held before entering into administration.

David Mowat:

Patient Transport Services are normally commissioned at clinical commissioning group (CCG) level. CCGs control their own budgets and hold their own contracts. Information on individual CCG contracts is not collected centrally.

The contracts with Coperforma are held by the relevant CCG as is the value of the contract. There are no central records.

Paula Sherriff: [\[43127\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what procedures are in place to safeguard patient transport services if a private provider of such a service goes into administration.

Paula Sherriff: [\[43130\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the effect on NHS services of private providers of those services entering into administration or suffering serious financial difficulty; and what contingency provisions he has put in place to mitigate such effects.

Mr Philip Dunne:

It is the primary responsibility of commissioners to ensure continuity of commissioned services through contracting and contingency planning. Where a provider is considered hard to replace in the event of failure, its services can be designated as Commissioner Requested Services. This requires the provider to obtain a provider licence, if not otherwise required to hold a licence, and places the provider in NHS Improvement's financial oversight regime for private providers of essential NHS services.

Paula Sherriff:

[\[43132\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many companies that provide patient transport services within the NHS have gone bankrupt or into administration while providing that service in each of the last five years.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Department does not hold this information.

■ Pharmacy

Michael Dugher:

[\[42983\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 14 July 2016 to Question 42405, on what date his Department commenced work on the impact assessment on changes to the budget for community pharmacy in 2016-17.

David Mowat:

Officials have been undertaking impact analyses to inform the final impact assessment both prior to, and during, the consultation period which ran from 17 December 2015 to 24 May 2016. The Department remains committed to publishing the full and final impact assessment alongside any Drug Tariff determination.

■ Sepsis

Mrs Cheryl Gillan:

[\[43224\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether he plans to support the Department of International and European Affairs of the German Ministry of Health's draft resolution on sepsis for the World Health Assembly General Assembly meeting in 2017.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Department is committed to improving diagnosis and management of sepsis and has a wide programme of work underway. We will consider the German Ministry of Health's draft resolution to the World Health Assembly in due course.

■ South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust

Sir Nicholas Soames:

[\[43025\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when the failures identified by the Care Quality Commission in the South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust were first drawn to his Department's attention.

Sir Nicholas Soames:

[\[43026\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will instigate an inquiry into the past management of the South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Department's attention was first drawn to issues in relation to South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECAMB) NHS Foundation Trust's NHS 111 service in autumn 2015.

In March 2015, NHS England convened a risk summit meeting involving all partners following the suspension by SECAMB of their unofficial call-handling project. NHS England commissioned an external investigation which was published on 5 November 2015, while an initial report was shared with families involved with the SECAMB's project in September 2015.

Monitor, the then independent regulator of NHS Foundation Trusts (now part of NHS Improvement), announced on 28 October 2015 that it was taking action against SECAMB. Monitor's requirements included the development of three reviews. The first; a forensic review of the project itself undertaken by Deloitte was published on 15 March 2016. Second, the Trust has commissioned an independent expert to lead a patient impact review following the call-handling project, which will be finalised shortly. Third, the Trust is required to undertake a full governance review and this will take place once the substantive board is in place.

In the meantime NHS Improvement are working closely with the Trust to support it in addressing known governance, operational and quality issues.

The Government has no plans to set up an inquiry.

■ Tobacco

Mr Virendra Sharma: [\[42889\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to ensure different regulatory regimes for heated tobacco devices and other new tobacco-based products, electronic vaping products and other proven reduced risk alternatives that do not contain tobacco.

Mr Virendra Sharma: [\[42927\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to ensure tobacco-based products such as factory-made cigarettes and heated tobacco are subject to identical regulatory obligations.

Mr Virendra Sharma: [\[42928\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that regulatory obligations and excise rates will be applied to tobacco rolls sold in the UK.

Nicola Blackwood:

The Government introduced the Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016 in April this year. These Regulations strengthen the regulation of tobacco products in relation to their manufacture, production and presentation and include a new regulatory framework for electronic cigarettes and herbal products for smoking.

The Government will consult on the duty treatment of heated tobacco products later in 2016.

■ Transplant Surgery: China

Jim Shannon: [\[43182\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many British citizens in each of the last five years travelled from the UK to China for organ transplant operations.

Nicola Blackwood:

This information is not collected centrally. NHS Blood and Transplant co-ordinates the matching, allocation and retrieval of organs for transplantation carried out in the United Kingdom only.

■ Travellers: Health

Grant Shapps: [\[42958\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the implications are for his Department's guidance to local authorities on Gypsy and Traveller Assessments of the recommendations of the report by the Traveller Movement, Impact of insecure accommodation and the living environment on Gypsies' and Travellers' health, published in January 2016.

Nicola Blackwood:

This report was commissioned by the Department to inform the work of the inclusion health programme and the local and national bodies which address the health needs of Gypsies and Travellers, and it provides support to the Department for Communities and Local Government guidance on local Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs assessment.

■ West Cumberland Hospital

Mr Jamie Reed: [\[42982\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 5 July 2016 to Question 41907, for what reasons the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State did not visit West Cumberland Hospital on 14 July 2016; and if he will visit that hospital as a matter of urgency.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State's visit to Cumbria on 14 July 2016 was cancelled due to changes in Government. The Department continues to champion the Success Regime and my private office will be in touch in due course, as I look forward to visiting West Cumberland Hospital.

■ West Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group: Pay

Rosie Cooper: [\[43242\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the level of remuneration was for the chair of NHS West Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group in 2015-16; and what assessment he has made of his performance in that role.

David Mowat:

Information on the remuneration of chairs is held by individual clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) and not collected centrally. West Lancashire CCG has published its chair's level of remuneration in its Annual Report and Accounts which can be found online at:

http://www.westlancashireccg.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/AnnualReport_2016_v11.pdf

No such assessment has been made by the Department. NHS England has a statutory duty to conduct an annual performance assessment of each CCG. For 2015/16 and previous years it did this through an assurance process. For 2016/17 NHS England has introduced a CCG improvement and assessment framework which supersedes the assurance process. The new system is aligned to delivery of the Five Year Forward View, NHS Planning Guidance and Sustainability and Transformation Plans for each area.

HOME OFFICE**■ Asylum: Families****Mr David Burrowes:**[\[42992\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many requests have been made by (a) France, (b) Greece and (c) Italy for the UK to take charge of an asylum application under the family reunification articles of the Dublin III Regulation in the last six months.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

[Holding answer 21 July 2016]: Whilst all asylum claims including those accepted under Dublin III are registered on the Home Office Case Information Database (CID), this data is not currently held in a way that allows it to be reported on automatically and is therefore not currently available.

Mr David Burrowes:[\[43003\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to reduce the time taken to process applications related to refugee family reunion.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Customer service is a key priority for UK Visas and Immigration, and the efficiency and effectiveness of the visa application process is kept under regular review, including by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration. The published service standard for resolving refugee family reunion applications is within 12 weeks, or 60 working days.

Where an application is complex and likely to take longer than the advertised processing times, UKVI will contact the applicant to inform them of this.

■ Asylum: Religious Freedom

Jim Shannon:

[42622]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what representations she has received on reforming the questions asked on asylum applications related to persecution related to religious beliefs.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

In June 2016 The Home Office received the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for International Freedom of Religion's report, 'Fleeing persecution: Asylum claims in the UK on religious freedom grounds'. We are carefully considering the report and its recommendations and will provide a response in due course, including whether we will consider whether any changes to the way we handle religious-based claims are appropriate.

The report acknowledges the progress made by the Home Office with regards to guidance and training provided to its staff but highlighted the Group's view that there were some discrepancies between the Home Office policy and practice.

The Home Office carefully considers all asylum claims on their individual merits and grants protection for those who genuinely need it, in accordance with our international obligations under the Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). In every asylum case the particular circumstances of the individual are considered in light of published country information, which includes issues relating specifically to religious freedoms.

Published guidance on the interviewing and consideration of religious claims is regularly reviewed and takes into consideration the views of religious groups and other stakeholders.

■ Immigrants: Detainees

Patrick Grady:

[43225]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will introduce a maximum limit on the length of time an individual can be detained under immigration powers.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Government does not believe that it is appropriate for there to be a formal time limit on immigration detention.

■ Immigration Controls: Channel Ferries

Mr Christopher Chope:

[42843]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reasons the UK Border Agency did not carry out any checks on vehicles crossing from Poole to Cherbourg on the ferry Barfleur on 23 June 2016.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

[Holding answer 19 July 2016]: On June 23rd all necessary checks were completed on the departure of the Barfleur from Poole.

■ Members: Correspondence

Mr Andrew Smith:

[\[42717\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of the correspondence her Department has received from hon. Members has related to matters about visas in the last 12 months.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Published data between April 2015 and March 2016 shows UKVI received a total of 32095 enquiries from hon. Members. Of these, management information shows that approximately 18% related to visas.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

■ Africa: Food

Chi Onwurah:

[\[43105\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what support her Department has provided for food production projects in Africa in each of the last five years; and what involvement UK companies have had in such projects.

James Wharton:

In the last five calendar years, DFID spending in Africa on agriculture, fishing and forestry is set out below. Funds are spent through a range of delivery channels including private sector projects, challenge funds, funding through multilateral agencies and funding through African Governments.

£ THOUSANDS

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	£33,327	£48,426	£45,354	£44,748	£61,350

The private sector is vital for boosting food production in Africa. UK companies can participate in our projects to improve agricultural markets in a number of ways. The African Agriculture Development Fund (AgDevCo), which is a not for profit UK based company, invests debt and equity in African agribusinesses to create jobs, boost food security and increase prosperity. DFID is a principal funder of AgDevCo. UK companies are also implementers of our agriculture projects after winning competitive tenders. We share information with companies active in African agricultural markets either as buyers or investors. UK companies can be part of proposals to DFID funded challenge funds,

such as the Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund, but only through their links to partner companies based in Africa rather than as direct beneficiaries.

■ Developing Countries: Education

Gavin Newlands:

[\[42924\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to increase access to education for children who are missing out on education because of conflict, natural disaster and other emergencies.

James Wharton:

The UK is committed to increasing access to education to ensure children and young people are able to access a quality education in emergencies and crises. A key example is the Syria region. Through the No Lost Generation Initiative, DFID has announced a further £240million for education in Jordan and Lebanon over the next four years, on top of the £115million already provided to give every child in the region access to education. The recent London Syria conference has resulted in international pledges to get every refugee and vulnerable child in the host countries bordering Syria, into quality education by the 2016/17 school year.

The UK has also played a leading role in the development of the Education Cannot Wait fund, which is designed to attract multi-year additional funding for education in emergencies and protracted crises. The UK pledged £30 million to Education Cannot Wait at its launch at the World Humanitarian Summit in May, which will contribute towards over 4.5million children receiving a better education over the next two years.

■ Ethiopia: Droughts

Ms Margaret Ritchie:

[\[43148\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to support local faith and church networks in Ethiopia in their efforts to assist people affected by the current drought.

James Wharton:

DFID has not provided direct financial support to local faith and church networks responding to the drought in Ethiopia. However, DFID has contributed £70.1 million over three years (2014-16) to the Ethiopia Humanitarian Response Fund (HRF), a pooled donor fund responding to the most urgent drought needs. DFID is the largest donor to the HRF (74% of current funding), which is administered by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

In 2016 alone, the HRF has granted £40 million to 48 projects run by organizations, including World Vision and Catholic Relief Services, to bring food, water and emergency healthcare to over half a million of the most drought affected men, women and children in Ethiopia.

■ Ethiopia: Food Supply

Stephen Gethins: [\[43190\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what recent assessment she has made of the effects of the food crisis in Ethiopia on people in that country.

James Wharton:

Ethiopia is in the midst of its worst drought for 30 years, with 18.2 million people, approximately 20% of the population, in need of humanitarian assistance at the peak of the crisis. There has been a strong effort by the Government of Ethiopia and humanitarian partners to help save lives and safeguard livelihoods through provision of food, water and other essential supplies.

The UK Government has responded quickly and decisively since the onset of the drought in July 2015. So far, the UK Government has committed £145 million overall, making us the second largest donor to the response. This has included a commitment of £40 million to provide food aid to 3.8 million people in 2016 alone.

As Ethiopia moves into the traditional hungry period of July-September, the Government of Ethiopia and United Nations will revise their funding appeal, which is currently over a billion pounds and 70 % funded. The UK Government will continue to provide support and leadership to the humanitarian response in the coming months.

■ Overseas Aid

Stephen Twigg: [\[43015\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, if she will consider extending current programme partnership arrangements until a replacement mechanism is introduced.

Stephen Twigg: [\[43016\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what plans her Department has to replace programme partnership arrangements.

Priti Patel:

I am currently considering the outcomes of my Department's Civil Society Partnership Review, and will aim to publish it shortly.

In July 2015, the then Secretary of State for International Development announced a 9 month extension of all PPA financing, providing 18 months-notice that all current PPA financing would come to an end in December 2016.

■ Syria: Humanitarian Aid

Stuart C. McDonald: [\[42977\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps the Government is taking to ensure that humanitarian assistance reaches children and families in besieged towns in Syria.

Rory Stewart:

The UK is at the forefront of the humanitarian response to the Syria crisis. We have pledged over £2.3 billion, our largest ever response to a humanitarian crisis.

The UN estimates that, of 13.5 million people in need of humanitarian assistance inside Syria, 4.6 million are living in areas where humanitarian access is extremely restricted, including 592,700 people living under siege. It is unacceptable and illegal to use starvation as a weapon of war.

We are doing all we can to open up humanitarian access. We have supported the UN and international NGOs since the start of the conflict to deliver aid to UN-designated hard-to-reach and besieged areas. UK co-sponsored UN Security Council Resolutions have enabled over 300 convoys of aid to reach vulnerable people in hard-to-reach areas without the consent of the Syrian regime. We will continue to use our position in the UN Security Council and International Syria Support Group to push for unrestricted and unfettered humanitarian access, whilst maintaining the pressure for a political settlement to bring the suffering of the Syrian people to an end.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE**■ Department for International Trade: Public Expenditure**

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[43018\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what estimate he has made of his Department's total budget in each of the next five years; and if he will make a statement.

Greg Hands:

The Department for International Trade is currently being established. This requires machinery of government changes which are ongoing.

Parliamentary budget delegations will be amended in due course.

■ Department for International Trade: Staff

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[43019\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many trade specialists are currently employed by his Department; and if he will make a statement.

Greg Hands:

There are currently in excess of 50 civil servants in my Department primarily working on trade policy. They are assisted by officials in other Government Departments, notably the Department for Exiting the EU, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, the Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, as well as by other officials within my Department for whom trade policy is not their primary responsibility.

■ Developing Countries: Exports

Holly Lynch: [\[43101\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he is taking to ensure that the UK's future trade agreements take into account their potential effect on exports from the least developed countries to the UK.

Greg Hands:

The UK Government is committed to ensuring developing countries can reduce poverty through trading opportunities. As the UK prepares to leave the EU there will be no initial change in the way we trade with developing countries. The UK has a unique opportunity to shape a bright future for the UK and its trading relationship with developing countries.

■ Developing Countries: Poverty

Holly Lynch: [\[43100\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether UK trade negotiators will be instructed to consider the risks and opportunities for poverty reduction in the least developed countries during future negotiations of trade deals.

Greg Hands:

The UK Government is committed to ensuring developing countries can reduce poverty through trading opportunities. Trading arrangements that do not involve developing countries can still have an impact on them. Such impacts will be taken into account as the UK develops its international trade policy.

■ Exports

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[43108\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether he plans to maintain the target set by the last Government to raise the level of British exports to £1 trillion by 2020.

Mark Garnier:

The Government is continuing to drive progress against its manifesto commitments of having 100,000 more UK companies exporting in 2020 than in 2010 and reaching £1 trillion exports in 2020. To support these efforts, the Prime Minister created the Department for International Trade, which will develop, coordinate and deliver trade and investment policy to promote UK business across the globe.

■ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

Ms Harriet Harman: [\[43211\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many full-time equivalent officials in (a) his Department and (b) other government departments work in the National Contact Point for the OECD Guidelines; and what the grades are of those officials.

Greg Hands:

(a) The current allocation for staff in the UK National Contact Point is half a Grade 7, one full-time Senior executive officer and one full-time Higher executive officer.

(b) None in other Departments.

■ Trade Agreements

Mr David Lammy:

[\[42585\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what estimate his Department has made of the length of time it will take to negotiate trade agreements with the UK's major trading partners outside of the EU when the UK leaves the EU.

Greg Hands:

My hon Friend the Prime Minister has established the Department for International Trade to promote British trade across the world and ensure the UK takes advantage of the huge opportunities open to us. The pace of trade negotiations will vary country to country. The Prime Minister has also established a Department for Exiting the European Union for overseeing negotiations to leave the EU and establishing the future relationship between the UK and EU. However, until we leave, the UK will remain a full member of the EU, with all of the rights and obligations.

JUSTICE

■ Bill of Rights

Ms Harriet Harman:

[\[43209\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, when she expects to bring forward proposals for a British Bill of Rights.

Sir Oliver Heald:

We will set out our proposals for a Bill of Rights in due course. We will consult fully on our proposals.

■ Euthanasia

Rosie Cooper:

[\[43278\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if she will make an assessment of the implications for her policy of the Belgian court ruling that a nursing home did not have the right to refuse euthanasia on the grounds of conscientious objection.

Sir Oliver Heald:

In England and Wales, euthanasia constitutes murder at common law (unless a partial defence applies to reduce the offence to manslaughter); and under section 2(1) of the Suicide Act 1961 it is an offence to do an act capable of encouraging or assisting the suicide or attempted suicide of another person, with the intention so to encourage or assist. Because euthanasia is illegal, the issue of a right to refuse euthanasia does not arise.

■ Internet: Bullying

Anna Turley: [\[42962\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if she will bring forward plans to consolidate existing legislation on online abuse and malicious communication.

Sir Oliver Heald:

Legislation that can be used to prosecute online abuse and related offences includes the Protection from Harassment Act 1997; the Malicious Communications Act 1988; and the Communications Act 2003. The Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015 made changes to the relevant offences in these last two Acts which aim to ensure that people who commit them are prosecuted and properly punished.

The Government believes that current legislation is sufficient and does not intend to consolidate existing legislation relating to online abuse and malicious communication.

PRIME MINISTER**■ 10 Downing Street: Repairs and Maintenance**

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[43199\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, whether she plans to refurbish, extend or renovate 10 Downing Street.

Mrs Theresa May:

10 Downing Street is a Grade 1 and Grade 2 listed building and is maintained to the appropriate standard.

■ Government Departments: Recruitment

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[43195\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, how many new civil servants will be recruited to staff the Departments for (a) International Trade, (b) Exiting the European Union and (c) Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[43196\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, when she expects the new Departments for (a) International Trade, (b) Exiting the European Union and (c) Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to be fully staffed and functioning.

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[43201\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, what estimate she has made of the cost of the changes to the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills and the Department for Energy and Climate Change as a result of recent machinery of government changes.

Mrs Theresa May:

I refer the hon. Member to the Written Statement I made about Machinery of Government Changes on 18 July 2016, HCWS94.

■ Legislation

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[43109\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, whether she plans to fulfil all the legislative commitments made in the Queen's Speech on 18 May 2016.

Mrs Theresa May:

I set out my priorities for government in my first statement as Prime Minister in Downing Street on 13 July 2016.

■ Ministers: Pay

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[43198\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, which Ministers in the Government are unpaid.

Mrs Theresa May:

The full list of Ministerial appointments has been published on the gov.uk website.

■ Ministers: Resignations

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[43200\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, whether she held exit interviews with Ministers leaving the Government.

Mrs Theresa May:

Ministerial reshuffles are handled in the same way as previous administrations.

■ Prime Minister: Ministerial Policy Advisers

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[43111\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, what appointments she has made as her new special advisers since taking up her post.

Mrs Theresa May:

A list will be published in due course.

■ Prime Minister: Staff

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[43110\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, whether she has plans to change the number of staff employed by 10 Downing Street.

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[43197\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, what changes have been made to the staff structure at 10 Downing Street since 13 July 2016.

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[43243\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, who she has appointed to the Number 10 Policy Unit.

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[43245\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, how many people have (a) resigned and (b) been dismissed from the Number 10 Policy Unit since 13 July 2016.

Mrs Theresa May:

Information relating to the number of staff employed at Downing Street and their salaries is published as part of the Cabinet Office Staff and Salary Data, and is available on the gov.uk website.

■ Prime Ministers Policy Unit

Jonathan Ashworth: [\[43217\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, who the director of the Number 10 Policy Unit is.

Mrs Theresa May:

I refer the hon. Member to the press release issued by my office on 14 July 2016. This is available on the gov.uk website.

TRANSPORT

■ Crossrail 2 Line

Stephen Timms: [\[43240\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 13 June 2016 to Question 39611, when he plans to consider whether there is a good business case and funding available for the eastern branch of Crossrail 2.

Andrew Jones:

The business case for the core scheme is being revised for March 2017. Until this work is complete, we are not in a position to plan any further work on any potential eastern branch.

Transport for London is undertaking a study with the eastern boroughs, including Newham, on the future transport needs of the area in the context of already planned improvements.

■ Heathrow Airport

Judith Cummins: [\[43029\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential economic benefit to Bradford of any expansion of Heathrow.

Andrew Jones:

Our global connections are crucial for British business and benefit the whole country. The economic benefits to the UK as a whole, not just London and the South East, will be taken into consideration when making a decision on a preferred scheme for airport expansion, alongside a range of other relevant evidence.

■ High Speed 2 Railway Line

Mrs Cheryl Gillan: [\[42979\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the official distances between London and Birmingham are for the (a) shortest journey by road, (b) shortest existing journey by rail and (c) projected High Speed 2 line.

Andrew Jones:

(a) Highways England do not collect shortest road journey information, however information available via online route planning tools shows that a journey from London Charing Cross to Birmingham Town Hall, via the A40, M40, M42 and A34 requires a journey of 118 miles (b) 113 miles between London Euston and Birmingham New Street. The distance between the principal Birmingham station and nearest London terminal and (c) approximately 109 miles to the nearest mile.

Mrs Cheryl Gillan: [\[43023\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, which fees (a) have been paid and (b) are due to be paid to Tim Mould QC for work relating to High Speed 2.

Andrew Jones:

The Department has appointed a team of solicitors, Parliamentary Agents and barristers to support the HS2 project. Tim Mould QC is primarily employed to support the HS2 hybrid Bill process which gives those affected by HS2 an opportunity to present their concerns in Parliament. Since 2013 the Department for Transport has paid £679,567.10 to Tim Mould QC to support the HS2 project on Bill related matters. This figure is correct to 19 July 2016 and is exclusive of VAT.

In addition, since approximately 2010, the Department has also instructed a number of barristers, including Tim Mould QC, on other HS2 related matters, primarily litigation. These barristers will have been remunerated at government hourly rates agreed with the Attorney General, but it would involve disproportionate cost for the Department to provide precise figures.

The use of barristers to support the HS2 project is demand led and so it is not possible to forecast the fees that may be paid to Tim Mould QC in the future.

■ London City Airport

Mr Nigel Evans: [\[43272\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, when a decision will be made on the expansion of London City Airport.

Andrew Jones:

Government has published a target date for issuing this decision of 28 September. However we aim to reach all planning decisions ahead of target dates where possible.

■ M62: West Yorkshire**Craig Whittaker:** [\[43118\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential economic effect on the West Yorkshire area of an additional junction on the M62 between junctions 24 and 25.

Mr John Hayes:

This Government is committing investment to improve the M62 by upgrading to Smart Motorway between Junction 20 and 25. Additional funding was also announced at the Budget (2016) to bring forward the start of works to mid 2019-2020.

Proposals to improve the M62 from post-2020 will be considered as we prepare the second Road Investment Strategy – announced at Budget 2016. As part of the evidence-gathering process, Highways England is revisiting its Route Strategies to examine issues right across England's motorways and major trunk roads. MPs and stakeholders are encouraged to engage with Highways England throughout this process.

■ Motor Vehicles: Exhaust Emissions**Royston Smith:** [\[42937\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what comparative assessment he has made of the effect on the environment of vehicles using (a) diesel and (b) liquefied petroleum gas.

Mr John Hayes:

The Department for Transport assesses a number of different fuels in terms of a range of environmental impacts including air quality and greenhouse gas emissions. A number of initiatives are underway to encourage cleaner, lower carbon fuels.

The Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation was amended to increase rewards for suppliers of biopropane from April 2015, following a consultation which considered the potential benefits of alternative fuels, including biopropane, in delivering greenhouse gas savings. Biopropane is the term commonly used to describe liquid petroleum gas (LPG) derived from production processes that use biomass as the feedstock.

The Department for Transport and Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership also established a Transport Energy Task Force which considered the potential of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) in meeting our greenhouse gas reduction targets, alongside other alternative fuels, last year.

While no formal assessment of the air quality impact of LPG has been made, DfT and Defra officials met with representatives of the LPG industry during the consultation on the UK Air Quality Plans in 2015. Industry data shows that retrofitting older diesel cars and vans to run on LPG can reduce emissions of NO_x (oxides of nitrogen) and particulate matter whilst producing CO₂ (carbon dioxide) emissions between those of equivalent diesel and petrol engines.

Birmingham City Council were awarded £500,000 to enable the conversion of older black cabs from diesel to LPG as part of the 2014 Clean Vehicle Technology Fund (CVTF)

grant scheme. As part of this funding, emissions will be measured before and after conversion.

As part of the Department's Heavy Goods Vehicle emissions testing programme, the Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership is testing a dual fuel (diesel / LPG) retrofit conversion to a Euro VI truck, as well as gas and diesel comparators. Vehicle tests are currently underway and we expect to publish the results later this year. On 30th June, the Department launched an HGV accreditation scheme for retrofit technology to enable equipment manufacturers or vehicle operators to conduct robust, repeatable and reliable tests to validate the impact on fuel consumption and emissions under a range of operating conditions.

■ **Railway Stations: Disability**

James Cartlidge:

[\[43142\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what progress he has made on providing a further round of accessibility funding for (a) lifts and (b) other accessibility devices at mainline railway stations; and if he will make a statement.

Paul Maynard:

The Access for All programme has delivered accessible step-free routes at over 150 stations since 2006, with smaller scale access improvements at more than 1,500 stations. To build on this success, we made a further £160m available to extend the programme, providing step-free routes at a further 68 stations. This is in addition to access improvements delivered as part of other major projects, such as Crossrail which will deliver step-free routes at another 40 stations. No decision has been made on the overall rail funding package, including funding for accessibility improvements, for Control Period 6 (2019-2024).

■ **Road Traffic: Bury St Edmunds**

Jo Churchill:

[\[43191\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many traffic surveys and counts his Department has conducted in Bury St Edmunds constituency since 2010.

Andrew Jones:

The Department for Transport (DfT) has conducted the following numbers of manual traffic counts within the area covered by Bury St Edmunds constituency in each year since 2010.

2010 17 counts

2011 16 counts

2012 16 counts

2013 16 counts

2014 16 counts

2015 13 counts

These counts are carried out for the purpose of producing DfT's statistics on traffic. They are conducted by observing traffic unobtrusively at designated locations and consequently have no impact on the traffic flows.

■ **Roads: West Yorkshire**

Craig Whittaker: [\[43119\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential economic effect on the West Yorkshire area of improvement of the road network between Huddersfield and Bradford.

Andrew Jones:

Determining which local road improvement schemes will offer the greatest benefit to the local economy is a matter for the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and the five constituent Local Authorities.

As part of the Roads Investment Strategy, Highways England's Delivery Plan for the Strategic Road Network includes a number of improvements which will improve connectivity between Huddersfield and Bradford. As well as providing additional capacity, these improvements will also present the opportunity to release additional land along the corridor for development, which will support economic growth in West Yorkshire.

■ **Southern: Standards**

Helen Hayes: [\[42865\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, in which reporting periods Southern Railway's performance met the specified benchmarks set out in the franchise agreement since that agreement was signed.

Paul Maynard:

Performance benchmarks were set for the entire Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) franchise, not by constituent business groups, e.g. Southern. Since Rail Industry period 7 in financial year 2015/16 (ending mid October 2015), GTR exceeded the breach level for the Cancellations benchmark. Last year the then Secretary of State issued GTR with a Remedial Plan Notice requiring them to set out the measures they will take in order to improve their performance. The then Secretary of State has published the Remedial Plan and it includes benchmarks against which GTR are measured for the duration of the Plan.

Helen Hayes: [\[42957\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether the performance of Southern Railway Limited for the period 11 to 18 July 2016 met the specified benchmarks in the Remedial Plan.

Paul Maynard:

Actual performance against the performance benchmarks are calculated each four-weekly railway period, not on a weekly basis. Therefore, the Department does not have the information requested for the period 11 to 18 July 2016.

■ **Speed Limits: Cameras**

Jim Fitzpatrick:

[\[43095\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent research his Department has conducted on (a) the merits of static speed cameras and (b) the effect of conspicuously marking such cameras on their effectiveness.

Andrew Jones:

The Department published "The national safety camera programme: Four-year evaluation report" in December 2005. The Road Safety Observatory, of which the Department is a member, published "Effectiveness Of Speed Cameras In Preventing Road Traffic Collisions And Related Casualties: Systematic Review" in March 2013. No research has been carried out of the effect of conspicuously marking cameras.

■ **Thameslink Railway Line: Rolling Stock**

Lilian Greenwood:

[\[43011\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 17 June 2016 to Question 40332, on Thameslink railway line: rolling stock, whether his Department has received any representations from trade unions on the potential safety implications of operating Class 700 trains under Driver Only Operation or Driver Controlled Operation.

Paul Maynard:

My Department has not received any such representations.

■ **Transport: Suffolk**

Jo Churchill:

[\[43248\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much his Department spent on transport infrastructure projects in (a) Bury St Edmunds constituency and (b) Suffolk in each year from 2010-11 to 2015-16.

Andrew Jones:

Details on spend for transport infrastructure projects are not available at constituency level nor is there an annual breakdown at county level. However, Suffolk has benefitted from significant Government investment in transport projects over the period 2010-11 to 2015-16.

The Ipswich Chord is a £59m rail link connecting the Port of Felixstowe to the Great Eastern Main Line. The project was completed in 2014. A further £24m has been invested in improvements at Ipswich freight yard, which were completed in 2015. This forms part of a wider portfolio of improvements to rail freight services between the Port

of Felixstowe and the West Coast Main Line which will help reduce congestion on the A14.

The A11 widening scheme is a £105m improvement to the A11 between Thetford and Fiveways roundabout, which opened in December 2014. Suffolk CC received a £18.3m Government contribution towards their £21.6m Travel Ipswich scheme in September 2015, an integrated package of sustainable transport measures. In 2011 Suffolk CC also received £5m of Local Sustainable Transport Funding (LSTF) for the Lowestoft Local Links project that will deliver a range of sustainable transport benefits in the town, including cycling & walking and in 2013/14 Suffolk CC was awarded £1.5m via the Cycle Safety Fund.

As part of the July 2014 Local Growth Fund allocation, the New Anglia LEP secured Government funding of £5.7m for the Bury St. Edmunds Eastern Relief Road and £2m for the Beccles Southern Relief Road in Suffolk. In addition, Government provided £4.6m towards the £6.6m Lowestoft Northern Spine Road, completed in March 2015.

Looking to the future, this Government continues to invest in transport infrastructure in Suffolk - at Budget 2016, a £73.4m Government contribution was announced towards the Lowestoft Third Crossing plus £77.5m for the Ipswich Wet Dock Crossing.

WALES

■ UK Withdrawal from EU: Wales

Nia Griffith: [\[43231\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Wales, what role the Welsh Government will have in negotiating the terms of the UK's exit from the EU.

Alun Cairns:

As My Rt hon Friend the Prime Minister made clear during her meeting with the First Minister on Monday, the Welsh Government and other devolved administrations will be fully involved in preparations for a negotiation to leave the EU to ensure that the interests of all parts of the United Kingdom are protected and advanced.

WOMEN AND EQUALITIES

■ Agriculture: Females

Rachael Maskell: [\[42987\]](#)

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, if she will take steps to ensure that women in the agricultural sector receive equal pay to men.

Caroline Dinenage:

The Equality Act 2010 ensures that employers must pay women the same as men, irrespective of economic sector, where they are employed to do like work, work rated as equivalent or equal value work. As well as pay, these "equality of terms" provisions also

require other contractual terms, such as bonuses and access to opportunities, to be offered on equal terms to men and women.

Where an employer allegedly breaches the equality of terms provisions in the 2010 Act, an employee can enforce their rights by making a claim in an Employment Tribunal within 6 months of the alleged breach. An employer found in breach may be liable to pay compensation and/or costs.

Prior to considering legal action, employees who feel that their employer has breached the equality of terms provisions in the 2010 Act can seek advice from the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas). Acas provides free authoritative and impartial advice to employees and employers via their website (www.acas.org.uk) and via its telephone helpline (08457 47 47 47). Advice can also be sought from the Equality Advisory and Support Service (EASS), which provides free bespoke advice and support to individuals with discrimination enquiries. The EASS can be contacted via its website (<http://www.equalityadvisoryservice.com/>), or via telephone (0808 8000082, textphone users can call 0808 8000084).

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has published extensive equal pay guidance for both employers and employees on its website at:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-work/equal-pay>

■ Employment: Equality

Justin Madders:

[[906002](#)]

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what discussions she has had with his Cabinet colleagues on the potential effect of the UK leaving the EU on the legal framework for equal treatment in employment.

Caroline Dinenage:

My cabinet colleagues and I have not yet had such discussions. We remain a full member of the EU until negotiations are concluded, and must continue to meet our obligations as a member of the EU, including the existing directives.

■ Equality and Human Rights Commission: Finance

Neil Coyle:

[[43266](#)]

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what the Equality and Human Rights Commission's budget will be for (a) 2016-17, (b) 2017-18, (c) 2018-19 and (d) 2019-20.

Caroline Dinenage:

As a result of the spending review 2015, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has been allocated a budget of £21.435m for 2016-17.

Budgets for the years 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20 are being finalised by the Department for Education in consultation with the EHRC, and are consistent with the spending review settlement provided to the Department. We hope to be in a position to confirm budgets for these years shortly.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Children: Maintenance

Mary Glendon: [\[42974\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether a public consultation will form part of the 30-month review of the introduction of child maintenance service changes.

Caroline Nokes:

There are no plans to conduct a public consultation as part of the 30 month review. The Review will draw on information from externally commissioned qualitative and quantitative surveys conducted with those who use the Child Maintenance Service, as well as analysis of national data on separated families, including those who have chosen not to make maintenance arrangements through the statutory systems. We have also engaged with a number of relevant external stakeholder organisations who have been invited to provide a written response to a series of questions on charging.

Jo Churchill: [\[43249\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many families accessed support from the Child Support Agency in (a) Bury St Edmunds constituency, (b) the East of England and (c) England and Wales in each of the last five years.

Caroline Nokes:

We do not have information on the number of families who accessed support. Information has been provided in the table on the caseload at the end of the year, which will differ from the number of families supported as multiple cases may be linked to the same family.

	DEC-11	DEC-12	DEC-13	DEC-14	DEC-15
Bury St Edmunds	1,580	1,690	2,090	1,980	1,850
East of England	94,800	94,600	115,700	111,400	104,900
England and Wales	1,035,500	1,010,600	1,231,900	1,185,200	1,111,500

Notes:

1. Figures rounded to the nearest 10 for Bury St Edmunds constituency and nearest 100 for the East of England, England and Wales.
2. Figures are the number of live and assessed cases.
3. Figures are as at December 2011 and 2012.
4. The methodology for estimating the overall caseload changed in December 2013 and information after this date will not be comparable.

■ Employment: Young People

Craig Whittaker:

[43120]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps he is taking to support young people with (a) disabilities and (b) long-term health conditions to find permanent employment.

Penny Mordaunt:

We are committed to halving the disability employment gap between disabled and non disabled people and have introduced a number of measures to further the support available to young people with disabilities, and long-term health conditions.

A Taskforce, led by Paul Maynard MP, has been looking at issues around apprenticeships for people with learning difficulties or disabilities. On 11 July the Department for Work and Pensions, the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills and the Department for Education published their response to the task force accepting all their recommendations including adjustments in English and maths requirements for those with learning disabilities. The publication can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeships-improving-access-for-people-with-learning-disabilities>.

This Department has also developed a portal for young people with disabilities and health conditions to signpost them to available support. This can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/help-and-support-for-young-disabled-people-to-find-and-stay-in-work/help-and-support-for-young-disabled-people-to-find-and-stay-in-work>.

Young disabled people and those with health conditions may also be supported by DWP's specialist disability employment programmes such as Work Programme, Work Choice, Specialist Employment Support and Access to Work, subject to meeting eligibility criteria. Access to Work can provide support for young people participating on Traineeships or Supported Internships as well as those in work including apprenticeships. In 2015/16 Access to Work supported 2,830 young people aged 16-24, An increase of 12.7% over the previous year and the highest number since 2007/08 (beginning of our current records).

In addition, we have expanded Access to Work's Mental Health Support Service to conduct a two-year trial of targeted support for apprentices with mental health conditions.

■ Jobcentre Plus: Training

Margaret Greenwood:

[43098]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the minimum requirements set by his Department are for Jobcentre Plus to ensure that it is not neglectful in its duty of care towards a claimant who has (a) been attending a psychiatric unit, (b) has a known history of mental illness or (c) has a social worker designated to them; and what guidance his Department provides to Jobcentre Plus on providing such duty of care.

Damian Hinds:

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) demonstrates a duty of care throughout all its customer services and which it expects its staff to follow through instructions and learning.

The Department has an established approach to identifying and providing an appropriate level of support to all its customers who are vulnerable, including those with mental health conditions. DWP identifies any "individual who is identified as having complex needs and/or requires additional support to enable them to access DWP benefits and use our services" as being vulnerable. This definition ensures that we have consistency and continuity in the type and level of service which is being offered and that it supports the customer appropriately whatever their needs.

DWP's approach for dealing specifically with customers experiencing mental health conditions has been developed in consultation with its Work Psychologists to ensure that staff are able to develop a thorough understanding of the various different mental health conditions which exist, including hidden impairments and how they impact on an individual. This knowledge is reflected in both DWP instructions and in its learning and development.

Where DWP staff are satisfied that a customer faces clear and significant risks to their welfare or safety, then those staff are explicitly empowered by DWP to take any reasonable steps which are felt necessary, including liaising with relevant organisations, in order to address these risks without undue delay.

■ Personal Independence Payment: Appeals

Caroline Lucas:

[\[43074\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what his policy is on backdating payments for personal independence payment applicants who receive an uprating as a result of a tribunal ruling; and if he will make a statement.

Penny Mordaunt:

The general rule is that a tribunal's decision will take effect from the same date as that of the decision under appeal – as determined by the Secretary of State. However, as a tribunal considers all appealed decisions afresh, it may decide that a different date is more appropriate.

■ Personal Independence Payment: Mental Illness

Margaret Greenwood:

[\[42575\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will publish the internal guidance that his Department issues to staff on the safeguards that those staff must observe when consideration is being given to (a) suspend or withhold payment, (b) make a substantial change to the level of entitlement or (c) terminate a claim in the case of a claimant of personal independence payment who has a mental health condition.

Margaret Greenwood:

[\[42576\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will publish the internal guidance that his Department issues to staff on the safeguards that those staff must observe when consideration is being given to (a) suspend or withhold payment, (b) impose a sanction or (c) terminate a claim in the case of a claimant of jobseeker's allowance who has a mental health condition.

Margaret Greenwood:

[\[42577\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will publish the internal guidance that his Department issues to staff on the safeguards that those staff must observe when consideration is being given to (a) suspend or withhold payment, (b) impose a sanction or (c) terminate a claim in the case of a claimant of employment and support allowance who has a mental health condition.

Margaret Greenwood:

[\[42578\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will publish the internal guidance that his Department issues to staff on the safeguards that those staff must observe when consideration is being given to (a) suspend or withhold payment, (b) impose a sanction or (c) terminate a claim in the case of a claimant of universal credit who has a mental health condition.

Damian Hinds:

There is no intention to publish the internal guidance as it is for Department use only.

■ Refugees: Disability

Diana Johnson:

[\[43212\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will make it his policy to make financial support available to refugees and people in Britain with humanitarian protection status who are disabled.

Penny Mordaunt:

Refugees and people in Great Britain with humanitarian protection status who are disabled and in need of financial support are entitled to claim Jobseeker's Allowance, Employment Support Allowance or Universal Credit, and Personal Independence Payment, providing they meet all the necessary conditions of entitlement set out in regulations.

■ Social Security Benefits: Electronic Government

Frank Field:

[\[42985\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what progress his Department has made on introducing a secure online portal through which new claimants of working-age benefits can submit supporting evidence and documents.

Damian Hinds:

Allowing claimants to upload evidence and supporting documentation safely and securely is a crucial element as we build and develop the full online Universal Credit Service; for example, claimants can already upload CVs and covering letters for their work coach to review, and this facility will be expanded to include other documents as the service rolls out.

■ **Social Security Benefits: Refugees**

Diana Johnson: [43216]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether people resident in Britain with (a) refugee or (b) humanitarian protection status can claim (i) personal independence payments and (ii) employment and support allowance.

Penny Mordaunt:

Refugees and people in Great Britain with humanitarian protection status who are disabled and in need of financial support are entitled to claim Jobseeker's Allowance, Employment Support Allowance or Universal Credit, and Personal Independence Payment, providing they meet all the necessary conditions of entitlement set out in regulations.

■ **Universal Credit: Bury St Edmunds**

Jo Churchill: [43031]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many universal credit claimants there were in Bury St Edmunds constituency in (a) June 2015, (b) December 2015 and (c) the latest month for which figures are available.

Damian Hinds:

The information requested is available in the official Universal Credit statistics: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/universal-credit-statistics>.

■ **Work Capability Assessment**

Dr Lisa Cameron: [42660]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will publish the evidence base for the choice of descriptors used in work capability assessments.

Dr Lisa Cameron: [42709]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, which agents external to his Department (a) supplied and (b) analysed the evidence that his Department used to decide on the descriptors used for the work capability assessment.

Penny Mordaunt:

Details of the evidence base and consultative group members involved in the development of the Work Capability Assessment can be found in the Transformation of the Personal Capability assessment reports of September 2006, February 2007 and November 2007.

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20090605153301/http://www.workandpensions.gov.uk/welfarereform/pca.asp>

MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Digital Technology: South Wales

Chris Elmore: [\[42468\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he has made to promote digital inclusion in the South Wales Valleys.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 20 July 2016. The correct answer should have been:

Matt Hancock:

Ministers from both Departments meet regularly to discuss a range of issues. **The Department for Culture, Media & Sport has responsibility for digital engagement policy in England. The Welsh Government is responsible for this policy in Wales, where it is referred to as digital inclusion. The Welsh Government's "Digital Communities Wales" programme aims to help digitally excluded people engage with technology and support organisations which work with those individuals.**

The UK government and devolved administrations collaborate and share good practice around digital engagement. The Department for Culture, Media & Sport also works with partners to develop products such as the "Digital Inclusion Outcomes Framework" for all to use.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Post-Council Written Ministerial Statement-Informal Competitiveness Council 18-19 July

Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Greg Clark):
[[HCWS103](#)]

My noble Friend the Minister of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Baroness Neville-Rolfe) has today made the following statement.

The Informal Competitiveness Council, chaired by the Slovak Presidency, took place in Bratislava on 18–19 July 2016. Baroness Neville-Rolfe represented the UK on day one (internal market and industry) with David Wilson, Deputy Director, International Knowledge and Innovation Directorate, on day two (research). There were major contributions from Günther Oettinger, Commissioner for the Digital Economy and Society on the digital economy, and by Peter Ziga, the Slovak Economy Minister on the priorities of the Slovak Presidency, including the Digital Single Market and principles of better regulation. In a break out session on digital skills, the UK highlighted the importance of working on digital skills in schools, in the workplace and in society, and of bridging the gap on expert skills. The UK confirmed that it would continue to play a full and constructive role in the Council while it remained a member of the EU.

On the second day, Member States supported the general principles of the declaration to support young researchers. The UK underlined the value of increased cooperation, but also the need to respect the autonomy of national education systems. Collaboration and regulatory simplification were among the issues that were strongly supported in creating an ecosystem to support innovative SMEs. The UK joined a number of member states in emphasising the importance of further simplification of support programmes and following up on existing commitment to create a more innovation friendly environment.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Conflict Stability and Security Fund 2015 /16 and settlement for 2016 /17

Minister for the Cabinet Office and Paymaster General (Ben Gummer):
[[HCWS123](#)]

1. I wish to update the House on how the Government has been supporting our national security interests through conflict prevention, peace building, stabilisation, peacekeeping and conflict resolution using the Conflict Stability and Security Fund (CSSF).
2. The CSSF replaced the Conflict Pool in April 2015, as part of a new, more strategic approach to enhancing the delivery of our national security interests. The CSSF is one of two funding instruments overseen by the National Security Adviser. My Rt. Hon

friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury will be providing a parallel update to Parliament today on the Prosperity Fund, which operates on a similar cross-Government basis.

3. Last year the Government laid a statement before the House announcing the creation of the CSSF. As announced last November in the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR), for the current financial year CSSF funding has increased to £1.127 billion and it will increase by a further 19% over this spending review period, reaching £1.322 billion a year by 2019. The CSSF is now one of the world's largest mechanisms for addressing conflict and instability. Its programmes deliver against over 40 cross Government strategies set by the National Security Council. Together, these activities help to secure the UK, promote peace and stability overseas and contribute directly to the SDSR's objectives. The CSSF is designed as a flexible resource. It is supporting the peace processes including that in Colombia, tackling organised crime in the Caribbean, helping Ukraine to build its resilience to withstand external threats, funding a doubling of British UN peacekeepers, and has supported reforming the police and militaries in some of the world's most challenging environments. Without the CSSF the UK and our international partners would be less secure.
4. Parliamentary accountability for taxpayers' money spent via the CSSF is provided primarily through the Joint Committee for the National Security Strategy. Each autumn, the NSC agrees overall annual allocations for the CSSF, though these may change during the year in response to crises. The NSC reviews strategies in the spring. Regional Boards on which all NSC departments are represented are responsible for overseeing delivery of programmes against these strategies. A joint unit – the NSS Joint Programme Hub – provides the secretariat, advises the NSC on funding and delivery against the strategies, and advises the Regional Boards and programme teams on financial management and monitoring and evaluation.
5. The Government has used the CSSF to mitigate the spill-over of the Syrian conflict into Jordan and Lebanon. We have supported Jordan's security agencies to maintain its stability in the context of an influx of refugees equivalent to 10% of its population. We have also established community police stations in Syrian refugee camps and trained Jordanian community police. This programme (funded initially by the Conflict Pool and now the CSSF) has had a tangible impact: security incidents in the camps dropped by two-thirds between 2013 and 2014. We continue to assist the Lebanese military in securing their border with Syria to prevent Daesh's attempts to infiltrate Lebanon. We have trained 5,782 troops and enabled Lebanon to secure 75% of the border. In Africa we are helping to tackle terrorist groups, including training the Africa Union peacekeepers in Somalia and capacity-building for the Somali military. We have also ensured women's participation in building Somalia's future through its state-building processes. In Nigeria we have used CSSF funds to work with the Nigerian armed forces in tackling Boko Haram.
6. The Government is using CSSF funds to promote a political process and save lives in Syria. This includes training and equipping over 2700 volunteers across northern Syria

to carry out search & rescue, fire-fighting and first aid. These 'White Helmets' have saved over 50,000 lives since March 2013.

7. Gender equality is embedded throughout the delivery of the CSSF. Last year the CSSF spent £26m explicitly on activities addressing gender equality and a further £159m on programmes with elements which addressed gender equality.
8. CSSF funding is strengthening the multilateral system, supporting the UN and other international organisations, to develop more effective multilateral responses to instability. The CSSF funds our contributions to the UN peacekeeping budget. We are the sixth biggest contributor, spending over £300 million in 2015. We are also using CSSF funds to help reform the UN and UN peacekeeping, coordinating outreach to Member States to secure pledges of personnel for peace operations and to assist with the transition from pledges to deployments.
9. The SDSR announced that the CSSF will incorporate additional programmes from 2016/17. These include the Good Governance Fund for the Eastern Neighbourhood and Western Balkans, the North Africa Good Governance Fund, a Migration Fund and a programme for the Overseas Territories.

Conflict Stability and Security Fund resources, FY16/17

CSSF	2016/17 (MILLIONS)
Peacekeeping & Multilateral	385.7
Regional/Country Strategies	577.8
Security & Defence	150
Delivery Support, including the Stabilisation Unit & National School of Government International	13.5
TOTAL	1127

Attachments:

1. CSSF [WMS - CSSF.docx]

■ English Language Requirement

Minister for the Cabinet Office and Paymaster General (Ben Gummer):
[\[HCWS112\]](#)

The Government believes that the public should expect that all those with whom they interact, within the sphere of public services, have the language abilities required to respond to their needs.

A clear commitment in our Manifesto was to ensure that all public sector workers in customer-facing roles can speak fluent English. I am delighted to announce that this manifesto commitment has now been fulfilled, with the Immigration Act 2016 receiving Royal Assent on 12th May 2016.

Part 7 of the Immigration Act 2016 places a duty on all public authorities in scope to ensure that their customer-facing staff can speak fluent English, or in Wales fluent English or Welsh. This will assure citizens that there is not a language barrier that might prevent them from contacting or using public services or inadvertently put them at risk.

It is a clear priority for the Government to ensure public services are delivered to a high standard in spoken English, or in Wales in English or Welsh.

In support of this aim, the Government is today publishing:

- A draft Statutory Code of Practice which is intended to support public sector employers in complying with this new duty, whilst ensuring minimal burden. It provides principles and examples for public authorities to consider when fulfilling their legal duties and obligations. It will also be available in Welsh.
- A final Impact Assessment is available, which evaluates the impact of this duty. It details the problem under consideration, the rationale for intervention and the policy objective. It also evaluates the monetised and non-monetised costs and benefits of the preferred option, as well as considering risks and possible wider impacts of the policy.

The Government has worked with relevant employers throughout the development of the draft Code of Practice and will continue to do so to ensure that the duty is implemented in a way which ensures a positive impact for employees and service users in front line organisations.

The Code will be laid before Parliament and issued in October but the early publication of the document is intended to support organisations to be ready to adhere to the statutory duty once it comes into force.

All publications will be available on [GOV.UK](http://gov.uk).

Attachments:

1. WMS - English Language Requirement [WMS - English Language Requirement.docx]

■ **Handling Members' Correspondence in 2015**

Minister for the Cabinet Office and Paymaster General (Ben Gummer):
[\[HCWS118\]](#)

I am today publishing a report on the performance of Departments and Agencies on handling correspondence from Members and Peers during the calendar year 2015. Details are set out in the table below. Correspondence statistics for 2014 can be found on 3 June 2015, *Official Report*, column 15WS.

Departmental figures are based on substantive replies unless otherwise indicated. The footnotes to the table provide general background information on how the figures have been compiled.

Attachments:

1. Handling Members' Correspondence in 2015 [Correspondence Table.doc]

■ **UK Presidency of the Council of the European Union**

Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union (Mr David Davis): [\[HCWS119\]](#)

The UK had been scheduled to host the rotating Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the second half of 2017. On Tuesday 19 July the Prime Minister confirmed to President of the European Council Donald Tusk that the UK would be relinquishing the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, noting that we would be prioritising the negotiations to leave the EU.

President Tusk welcomed the Prime Minister's swift decision which would allow the Council to put alternative arrangements in place. The Council Secretariat will now put in motion the arrangements to allocate the Presidency to an alternative Member State.

The Prime Minister and President Tusk concluded by looking forward to a strong working relationship.

Attachments:

1. UK Presidency of the Council of the European Union [WMS UK Presidency .doc]

TREASURY

■ **Cross Government Prosperity Fund**

The Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Mr David Gauke): [\[HCWS104\]](#)

In the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) the Prime Minister announced the creation of a new £1.3bn Cross-Government Prosperity Fund. I am pleased to announce the publication on GOV.UK of a short paper that details how the Fund is operating. This paper can be found at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/cross-government-prosperity-fund-programme/cross-government-prosperity-fund-update

The Prosperity Fund is a key part of our aid strategy. Using primarily Official Development Assistance (ODA) resources the Fund will promote economic reform in developing countries contributing to a reduction in poverty.

The Fund supports global and UK prosperity by removing barriers to trade, building prosperity partnerships, and supporting UK business in seizing new opportunities. It enables the UK to deepen relationships in countries across the globe.

Thematic, country and regional priorities for the Prosperity Fund are determined by a careful design and economic diagnosis process. Project design, management and evaluation ensures a strong focus on results and value for money. The Fund is investing in areas with the

highest potential for inclusive growth, strengthening the golden thread of robust institutions, good governance and reduced corruption.

The Fund is accountable to the National Security Council (NSC) and to a Ministerial Board made up of relevant UK government departments. The Fund supports a fully joined up approach to prosperity delivery across departments and through the government's overseas network.

All ODA projects and programmes under the Prosperity Fund comply with the International Development Act, meet the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) ODA criteria, are untied, and meet the UK government transparency commitments on ODA spend.

The Prosperity Fund is one of two cross government funding instruments overseen by the National Security Advisor, Sir Mark Lyall Grant. An update to Parliament on the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) will be provided in parallel.

■ ECOFIN: 12 July 2016

The Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Mr David Gauke): [\[HCWS102\]](#)

I attended this meeting in my capacity as the Financial Secretary to the Treasury. A meeting of the Economic and Financial Affairs Council was held in Brussels on 12 July 2016. EU Finance Ministers discussed the following items:

Anti-Money Laundering

The Commission presented their proposals to amend parts of the Fourth Anti-Money Laundering Directive (4AMLD), on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purposes of money laundering or terrorist financing, followed by an exchange of views.

Communication on further measures to enhance transparency and the fight against tax evasion and avoidance

ECOFIN heard a presentation from the Commission on further measures to enhance transparency and the fight against tax evasion and avoidance. This was followed by an exchange of views.

Presentation of the work programme of the Slovak Presidency

The Presidency presented their work programme, this was followed by an exchange of views.

Implementation of the Banking Union

The Commission gave an update on the transposition of several dossiers linked to the Banking Union: the Single Resolution Fund, the Bank Recovery and Resolution Directive and the Deposit Guarantee Scheme Directive.

European Semester – Country-Specific Recommendations

The Council adopted the 2016 Country-Specific recommendations as part of the European Semester process.

Implementation of the Stability and Growth Pact

The Council endorsed the draft decisions regarding the performance of Spain and Portugal under the Excessive Deficit Procedure (EDP), based on recommendations by the Commission. The Council agreed with the Commission's recommendation that Spain and Portugal have not taken effective action against their current targets. As these decisions cover euro area Member States, the UK did not have a vote.

Third pillar of the Investment Plan for Europe - thematic discussions on investment barriers

The Commission presented on the Third Pillar Investment Plan, this was followed by an exchange of views.

Preparation of the G20 Finance Ministers meeting in Chengdu on 23-24 July 2016

The EU Terms of Reference (ToR) were presented to ECOFIN Finance Ministers for endorsement.

Convergence Reports from the Commission and the European Central Bank

There was an exchange of views on the convergence reports which concluded that none of the seven EU member states who are obligated to join the euro fulfil the conditions for adopting the euro.

State of play on finalising the Basel Committee's post-crisis banking reform agenda

Council conclusions were adopted on the Basel Committee's post-crisis banking reform agenda.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ First World War Centenary Repairs Fund: outcome of successful bids

Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (Karen Bradley): [\[HCWS122\]](#)

I am today publishing the list of successful bidders to the First World War Centenary Cathedral Repairs Fund.

Cathedrals are powerful symbols of Britain's shared history and are important not only for their architecture, history and religious learning but also as a place for local communities to come together. This fund is helping to ensure that they are in a good state of repair and preserved for future generations.

Decisions on funding allocations are taken by an expert panel, which considers the grant applications against the published criteria for the scheme and decides which cathedrals should receive funding. The panel is chaired by Sir Paul Ruddock and includes senior figures from English Heritage, the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Church of England and the Catholic Church, as well as church architects, architectural historians and grant giving experts.

I am pleased to confirm that the panel has today decided to allocate funding of almost £14.5million to 39 cathedrals. These are as follows

Results of the meeting of the Expert Panel, 23 June 2016

CATHEDRAL	DENOMINATION	PROJECT	AWARD
Bradford	CofE	Heating system & asbestos removal	£127,000
Canterbury	CofE	Library corridor roof	£250,000
Carlisle	CofE	Nave and nave aisle roof	£400,000
Chester	CofE	Repairs to flooring and emergency lighting	£120,000
Chichester	CofE	Cloister repairs	£160,000
Clifton	RC	Internal repairs and infrastructure	£700,000
Coventry	CofE	Chapel of Unity exterior slate	£870,000
Derby	CofE	Nave roof repair	£750,000
Durham	CofE	Belfry repairs	£599,000
Ely	CofE	Emergency rewiring	£150,000
Exeter	CofE	N side drainage and W front apron	£170,000
Gloucester	CofE	High level repairs	£486,000
Guildford	CofE	Quire/presbytery roof, repointing, asbestos removal	£499,000
Hereford	CofE	North aisle roofs	£420,000
Leicester	CofE	South face stonework	£300,000
Lichfield	CofE	Chapter House stonework and roof	£690,000
Lincoln	CofE	Triforium roof and NW Transept	£480,000
Liverpool	CofE	Nave roof phase 2	£460,000
Liverpool Met	RC	Repairs to approaches and main entrance	£369,000
Newcastle	CofE	Crypt and east end damp investigation	£25,000

CATHEDRAL	DENOMINATION	PROJECT	AWARD
Norwich	CofE	Electrical infrastructure	£190,000
Nottingham	RC	Phase 2 drainage	£115,000
Peterborough	CofE	Repairs to four windows	£15,000
Plymouth	RC	Stonework and window repairs	£644,000
Portsmouth	CofE	North side windows and other works	£240,000
Ripon	CofE	Presbytery stonework repairs	£398,000
Rochester	CofE	Eastern roof repairs	£460,000
Salford	RC	High level repairs and access	£373,000
Salisbury	CofE	Trinity Chapel stonework	£500,000
Sheffield	CofE	Nave, South and North aisle roofs	£480,000
Sheffield	RC	Spire repairs - phase 2	£189,000
Southwell	CofE	South quire aisle roof	£291,000
St Albans	CofE	External stonework	£230,000
St Pauls	CofE	Stone Gallery repairs	£200,000
Wakefield	CofE	Nave windows	£456,000
Westminster	RC	Organ chamber roofs	£300,000
Winchester	CofE	Repair and conservation of major windows	£500,000
Worcester	CofE	Great West Window repairs	£390,000
York Minster	CofE	Quire south side and Lady Chapel stone repairs	£500,000

Total £14,496,000

The panel will meet again on 17 October 2016 to take decisions on applications to the final round of the First World War Centenary Cathedral repairs fund.

DEFENCE

■ Armed Forces' Pay Review Body Appointments

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Ministry of Defence) (Mark Lancaster):
[\[HCWS109\]](#)

I am pleased to announce that I have invited Tim Flesher CB and Vilma Patterson MBE to continue to serve as Members of the Armed Forces' Pay Review Body, for a further three year term of office commencing on 1 March 2017. This appointment has been conducted in accordance with the guidance of the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

■ Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association External Scrutiny Team Report 2016

Secretary of State for Defence (Michael Fallon): [\[HCWS107\]](#)

I have today placed in the Library of the House a copy of a report into the condition of the Reserves and delivery of the Future Reserves 2020 programme compiled by the Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association External Scrutiny Team. This is the second report to be published under the statutory obligation imposed by the Defence Reform Act 2014.

I am most grateful for the work of Lt Gen Brims and the other members of the Team. I will take some short time to consider the report's findings and recommendations and will provide a full response to the Team in due course.

EDUCATION

■ Higher Education Student Finance

The Minister of State for Universities and Science (Joseph Johnson): [\[HCWS117\]](#)

I am today announcing student finance arrangements for higher education students undertaking a course of study in the 2017/18 academic year beginning in August 2017.

Teaching Excellence Framework.

As stated in the Government's White Paper "Success as a Knowledge Economy: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice", published on 16 May 2016, from 2016/17 the Government is introducing a Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) to provide clear information to students about where the best provision can be found and to drive up the standard of teaching in all higher education providers.

In Year One of TEF (2016/17), all higher education providers who have met the eligibility criteria set out in the Government's White Paper will receive a rating of Meets Expectations. This TEF award will carry financial incentives, as detailed below, for 2017/18 which will last for one year only. A provisional list of providers achieving this rating in Year One was published on 07 July 2016 on Gov.uk[1].

The following sections provide details on the maximum tuition fee and fee loan caps in 2017/18 for higher education courses at providers that have been awarded a rating of Meets Expectations in TEF Year One (2016/17).

Tuition fees and fee loans for full-time higher education courses.

For all new students and eligible continuing students who started their full-time courses on or after 1 September 2012 and are undertaking courses at publicly funded higher education providers that have achieved a TEF rating of Meets Expectations, maximum tuition fee caps will be increased by forecast inflation (2.8%) in 2017/18. For publicly funded providers that have achieved a TEF rating of Meets Expectations and have an access agreement with the Office for Fair Access (OFFA), the maximum tuition fee cap for full-time courses will be £9,250 in 2017/18. For publicly funded providers that have achieved a TEF rating of Meets Expectations but do not have an access agreement with OFFA, the maximum tuition fee cap for full-time courses will be £6,165 in 2017/18. For publicly funded providers that have not achieved a TEF rating of Meets Expectations, maximum tuition fee caps for full-time courses in 2017/18 will be £9,000 and £6,000, the same as in 2016/17.

Maximum fee loans for all new students and eligible continuing students who started their full-time courses at publicly funded providers on or after 1 September 2012 will be increased by forecast inflation (2.8%) to £9,250.

Maximum tuition fee and fee loan caps for students undertaking a work placement year of a Sandwich course either in the UK or abroad will remain at 20% of the maximum applicable full-time fee and fee loan caps in 2017/18. Maximum tuition fee and fee loan caps for students undertaking an Erasmus study or work placement year or a period of study at an overseas provider that is not an Erasmus year will remain at 15% of the maximum applicable full-time fee and fee loans in 2017/18.

For continuing students who started their full-time courses before September 2012, maximum tuition fee and fee loan caps at publicly funded providers in 2017/18 will be £3,465, the same as in 2016/17.

Tuition fees and fee loans for part-time higher education courses.

For all new students and eligible continuing students who started their part-time courses on or after 1 September 2012 and are undertaking courses at publicly funded higher education providers that have achieved a TEF rating of Meets Expectations, maximum tuition fee caps will be increased by forecast inflation (2.8%) in 2017/18. For publicly funded providers that have achieved a TEF rating of Meets Expectations and have an access agreement with OFFA, the maximum part-time tuition fee cap will be £6,935 in 2017/18. For publicly funded providers that have achieved a TEF rating of Meets Expectations, but do not have an access agreement with OFFA, the maximum part-time tuition fee cap will be £4,625 in 2017/18. For publicly funded providers that have not achieved a TEF rating of Meets Expectations, the maximum tuition fee caps for part-time courses in 2017/18 will be £6,750 and £4,500, the same as in 2016/17.

Maximum fee loans for all new students and eligible continuing students who started their part-time courses at publicly funded providers on or after 1 September 2012 will be increased by forecast inflation (2.8%) to £6,935.

Tuition fee loans for higher education courses at private providers.

For all new students and eligible continuing students who started their full-time courses on or after 1 September 2012 and are undertaking courses at private higher education providers that have achieved a TEF rating of Meets Expectations, the maximum fee loan will be increased by forecast inflation (2.8%) to £6,165 in 2017/18. For private providers that have not achieved a TEF rating of Meets Expectations, the maximum fee loan for full-time courses will be £6,000, the same as in 2016/17.

For all new students and eligible continuing students who started their part-time courses on or after 1 September 2012 and are undertaking courses at private providers that have achieved a rating of Meets Expectations, the maximum fee loan will be increased by forecast inflation (2.8%) to £4,625 in 2017/18. For private providers that have not achieved a TEF rating of Meets Expectations, the maximum fee loan for part-time courses in 2017/18 will be £4,500, the same as in 2016/17.

Loans for living costs for new full-time students and continuing full-time students starting their courses on or after 1 August 2016.

Maximum loans for living costs for new full-time students and eligible continuing full-time students starting their courses on or after 1 August 2016 will be increased by forecast inflation (2.8%) in 2017/18.

For students living away from home and studying outside London, the maximum loan for living costs for 2017/18 will be £8,430. I can confirm that the equivalent loan rates for students living away from home and studying in London will be £11,002; for those living in the parental home during their studies, £7,097; and for those studying overseas as part of their UK course, £9,654.

Loans for living costs for new full-time students and continuing full-time students starting their courses on or after 1 August 2016 who are entitled to certain benefits.

Maximum loans for living costs for new full-time students and eligible continuing full-time students starting their courses on or after 1 August 2016 and who are entitled to benefits will be increased by forecast inflation (2.8%) in 2017/18.

For students who are entitled to benefits who are living away from home and studying outside London, the maximum loan for living costs for 2017/18 will be £9,609. I can confirm that the equivalent loan rates for students who qualify for benefits who are living away from home and studying in London will be £11,998; for those living in the parental home during their studies, £8,372; and for those studying overseas as part of their UK course, £10,746.

Loans for living costs for new full-time students and continuing full-time students starting their courses on or after 1 August 2016 who are age 60 or over at the start of their course.

The maximum loan for living costs in 2017/18 for new full-time students and eligible continuing full-time students starting their courses on or after 1 August 2016 who are age

60 or over on the first day of the first academic year of their course, will be increased by forecast inflation (2.8%) to £3,566.

Maintenance grants and special support grants for full-time students who started their courses before 1 August 2016.

The maximum maintenance grant and special support grant for eligible continuing full-time students who started their courses on or after 1 September 2012 but before 1 August 2016, will be increased by forecast inflation (2.8%) in 2017/18 to £3,482.

The maximum maintenance grant and special support grant for eligible continuing full-time students who started their courses before 1 September 2012, will be increased by forecast inflation (2.8%) in 2017/18 to £3,197.

Loans for living costs for full-time students who started their courses before 1 August 2016.

Maximum loans for living costs for eligible students who started their courses on or after 1 September 2012 but before 1 August 2016, will be increased by forecast inflation (2.8%) in 2017/18.

For students who are living away from home and studying outside London, the maximum loan for living costs will be £6,043. I can confirm that the equivalent loan rates for students living away from home and studying in London will be £8,432; for those living in the parental home during their studies, £4,806; and for those studying overseas as part of their UK course, £7,180.

Maximum loans for living costs for eligible students who started their courses before 1 September 2012 will be increased by forecast inflation (2.8%) in 2017/18.

For students who started their courses before 1 September 2012 and are living away from home while studying outside London, the maximum loan for living costs will be £5,440. I can confirm that the equivalent loan rates for students living away from home and studying in London will be £7,611; for those living in the parental home during their studies, £4,217; and for those studying overseas as part of their UK course, £6,475.

Long Courses Loans.

The maximum long courses (living costs) loans for new and continuing students who are attending full-time courses that are longer than 30 weeks and 3 days during the academic year will be increased by forecast inflation (2.8%) in 2017/18.

Dependants' grants.

Maximum amounts for dependants' grants (adult dependants' grant, childcare grant and parents' learning allowance) will be increased by forecast inflation (2.8%) in 2017/18 for all new and continuing full-time students.

The maximum adult dependants' grant payable in 2017/18 will be increased to £2,834. The maximum childcare grant payable in 2017/18, which covers 85% of actual childcare costs up to a specified limit, will be increased to £159.59 per week for one child only and £273.60 per week for two or more children. The maximum parents' learning allowance payable in 2017/18 will be increased to £1,617.

Part-time grants and loans.

For those students who started part-time and full-time distance learning courses before 1 September 2012 and who are continuing their courses in 2017/18, maximum fee and course grants will be increased by forecast inflation (2.8%) in 2017/18. Maximum fee grants will be increased to £879, £1,054 or £1,321, depending on the intensity of study of the course. Maximum course grants will be increased to £288.

Disabled Students' Allowance.

Maximum grants for full-time and part-time undergraduate and postgraduate students with disabilities will be increased by forecast inflation (2.8%) in 2017/18.

Student support for part-time students starting a second degree course in STEM subjects.

Most students who hold a higher education qualification are currently not entitled to apply for additional fee loan for a second course if that course leads to a qualification that is equivalent or lower in level (ELQ) than their previous Higher Education qualification.

The Government has previously relaxed ELQ rules in order to help people who already hold an honours degree qualification but who wish to retrain in some science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects. Students studying second degree courses on a part-time basis can already apply for fee loans for part-time second degree courses in engineering, technology or computer science.

I can confirm today that ELQ rules are being further relaxed to allow students wishing to start a second honours degree course on a part-time basis from 1 August 2017 onwards to apply for fee loans towards degree courses in the following additional STEM subjects: subjects allied to medicine; biological sciences; veterinary sciences, agriculture and related subjects; physical sciences and mathematical sciences.

Student support for new students starting courses in nursing, midwifery and the allied health professions on or after 1 August 2017.

I can confirm today that from 1 August 2017, all new undergraduate nursing, midwifery and allied health professional students on pre-registration courses will receive support for fee loans and living costs through the standard student support system, rather than through course fees and NHS bursaries for living costs paid by Health Education England (HEE). These students will therefore be subject to the same general student finance arrangements that apply to other undergraduate students in 2017/18.

I can also confirm today that students already holding an honours degree who want to start a second honours degree course in nursing, midwifery and the allied health professions from 1 August 2017 onwards will be able to apply for fee loans and living costs support for their course.

Further details on the undergraduate student package and support arrangements for postgraduate pre-registration nursing, midwifery and allied health professional students from

1 August 2017 onwards will be set out in the Government's consultation response which is being published in due course.

These changes will enable universities to provide up to 10,000 additional nursing, midwifery and allied health training places by 2020, giving more applicants the opportunity to become a health professional.

Student support for armed forces personnel serving overseas and their families.

Students who are undertaking a full-time or part-time distance learning course with a UK provider qualify for loans, and where applicable, disabled students' allowance if they were undertaking their courses in England on the first day of the first academic year of their course and are living in the UK. Students do not qualify for support for a distance learning course if they are undertaking their course outside the UK. This rule currently places armed forces personnel serving overseas and their families who wish to undertake a higher education course by distance learning at a disadvantage as a result of their service.

I can confirm today, that from 1 August 2017, UK armed forces personnel serving overseas, and family members living with them will, for the first time, qualify for fee loans for full-time and part-time undergraduate distance learning courses with UK providers. They will also qualify for postgraduate master's loans for full-time and part-time master's degree distance learning courses with UK providers. Those students with disabilities will qualify for disabled students' allowance. This change will apply to students starting or continuing distance learning courses in 2017/18.

I expect to lay regulations implementing changes to student finance for undergraduates and postgraduates for 2017/18 later this year which will be subject to Parliamentary scrutiny. More details of the 2017/18 fees and student support package will be published by my Department in due course.

[1] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-excellence-framework-year-1-list-of-eligible-providers>

■ **Schools Funding**

The Secretary of State for Education (Justine Greening):

[\[HCWS98\]](#)

The Government is firmly committed to introducing fairer funding for schools, high needs and early years. This is an important reform, which will fairly and transparently allocate funding on the basis of schools' and children's actual needs, rather than simply on historic levels of funding tied to out of date local information. Along with the record levels of funding for schools announced at the spending review, and our commitment to the pupil premium for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, a fairer funding system will set a common foundation that will enable schools – no longer held back by a funding system that is arbitrary, out of date and unfair – to maximise the potential of every child. It will provide a crucial underpinning for the education system to act as a motor for social mobility and social justice.

The first stage consultations on national funding formulae for schools and high needs, which were published in March, have been met with an overwhelmingly positive response from headteachers, teachers, governors and parents.

There is also a strong sense in the response to the first stage of the consultation that this is a once in a generation opportunity for an historic change and that we must get our approach right. I will therefore publish the government's full response to the first stage of the schools and high needs consultations and set out my proposals for the second stage once Parliament returns in the autumn. We will run a full consultation, and make final decisions early in the new year. Given the importance of consulting widely and fully with the sector and getting implementation right, the new system will apply from 2018-19. I will set out our full plans for a national funding formula for early years shortly.

In the meantime, I understand the need for local authorities to have sufficient information to begin to plan their schools and high needs funding arrangements for 2017 to 2018. Many of those who responded to the first stage national funding formula consultations emphasised that schools and local authorities need stability, and where there are changes need early notice, as well as a fair system.

In that context, I am confirming that in 2017-18 no local authority will see a reduction from their 2016-17 funding (adjusted to reflect authorities' most recent spending patterns) on the schools block of the dedicated schools grant (per pupil funding) or the high needs block (cash amount). As usual, we will apply an uplift for high needs later in the year. I am also publishing today detailed funding tables so that authorities can see exactly how this funding has been calculated.

Final allocations for schools and high needs blocks will follow in December on the basis of pupil numbers recorded in the October census.

I am setting this out now so that local authorities can begin the process of setting the budgets of schools in their area and that this can be concluded in time for the start of the coming financial year.

I am also confirming that, for 2017-18, we will retain the current minimum funding guarantee for schools, so that no school can face a funding reduction of more than 1.5% per pupil next year in what it receives through the local authority funding formula. To ensure that local authorities can start planning their budgets for next year with certainty, I do not intend to proceed, for 2017-18, with proposals to create a new central schools block, allow local flexibility on the minimum funding guarantee or to ring-fence the schools block within the dedicated schools grant. These will be covered, for 2018-19 and beyond, in my response to the first stage consultation in the autumn.

I will shortly publish the Education Funding Agency's operational guide to schools funding in 2017-18, and send the draft Authority Proforma Tool to authorities.

■ Update on the UK Commission for Employment and Skills

The Minister of State for Education (Robert Halfon):

[\[HCWS121\]](#)

As announced in the 2015 Spending Review, in order to prioritise funding to allow the core adult skills participation budgets to be protected in cash terms, Whitehall Departments will be withdrawing their funding for the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) during 2016-17.

UKCES' work over the last parliament has helped in setting the skills agenda for the future and their activities have created the conditions to move to the next phase of more devolution, greater employer ownership and the apprenticeship levy. It is important that we now have new structures to move onto that next phase and we have announced the establishment in England of a new Institute for Apprenticeships.

As a result of these decisions, Whitehall departments have been working with the UK Commission to agree a way forward.

National Occupational Standards (NOS) will be managed by the Devolved Administrations and transferred to another public sector organisation. Decisions on the detail of how NOS will be managed are the responsibility of the Devolved Administrations who are currently considering next steps. The contents of the NOS database will remain publicly available and employers throughout the UK can continue to use NOS if they so choose although they are not a mandatory requirement in England for either qualifications or apprenticeships.

The management of the Employer Skills Survey, the Employer Perspectives Survey and the LMI (Labour Market Information) for All Portal will be moved into the Department for Education. The Investors in People function will continue and the Government is looking at arrangements to secure its future and growth.

All operational activities of UKCES will be concluded by the end of 2016 and it is expected the organisation will be wound up in line with the end of its financial year, 2016-17.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ Alleged Serious and Significant Offences (Diplomatic Immunity): 2015

The Secretary for State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Boris Johnson):

[\[HCWS106\]](#)

In 2015, 11 serious and significant offences allegedly committed by people entitled to diplomatic immunity in the United Kingdom were drawn to the attention of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office by Parliamentary and Diplomatic Protection of the Metropolitan Police, or other law enforcement agencies. Six of these were driving-related. We define serious offences as those which could, in certain circumstances, carry a penalty of 12 months' imprisonment or more. Also included are drink-driving and driving without insurance.

Around 22,500 people are entitled to diplomatic immunity in the United Kingdom and the majority of diplomats abide by UK law. The number of alleged serious crimes committed by members of the diplomatic community in the UK is proportionately low.

Under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations 1961, those entitled to immunity are expected to obey the law. The FCO does not tolerate foreign diplomats breaking the law.

We take all allegations of illegal activity seriously. When instances of alleged criminal conduct are brought to our attention by the police, we ask the relevant foreign government to waive diplomatic immunity where appropriate. For the most serious offences, and when a relevant waiver has not been granted, we seek the immediate withdrawal of the diplomat.

Alleged serious and significant offences reported to the FCO in 2015 are listed below.

2015

DRIVING WITHOUT INSURANCE

The Commonwealth Secretariat	1
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Causing or permitting the driving of a vehicle without insurance

St Lucia	1
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Driving a vehicle without insurance or a MOT

Nigeria	1
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Driving under the influence of alcohol

USA	1
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Kazakhstan	1
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China	1
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Actual bodily harm

Gabon	1
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Human Trafficking into the UK for the purposes of exploitation, specifically domestic servitude

Saudi Arabia	1
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Human trafficking; Slavery or Servitude/Forced or Compulsory Labour

Saudi Arabia	1
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Taking an indecent photograph/pseudo-photograph of a child; and using threatening /abusive/insulting words or behaviour to cause harassment/alarm/distress

Mexico	1
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Causing a child aged 13 to 15 to watch/look at an image of sexual activity

DRIVING WITHOUT INSURANCE

Mexico

1

Figures for previous years are available in the Secretary for State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs' written statement to the House on 16 July 2015, *Official Report*, column 36WS (HCWS128).

■ **Annual Update to Parliament on UK Support and Funding for International Criminal Justice**

The Secretary for State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Boris Johnson):
[[HCWS111](#)]

Due to the complexity of the answer, the link below is to the web version of the answer:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2016-07-21/HCWS111/>

■ **British Council Annual Report**

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary for State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Alok Sharma): [[HCWS99](#)]

Copies of the British Council's Annual Report and Accounts for the 2015-16 financial year have been placed in the libraries of both Houses. The Report can also be found at the British Council's website www.britishcouncil.org

During the period the British Council received £161,650 Grant-in-Aid from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office.

■ **Corrections to Parliamentary Questions and Westminster Hall Debates**

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr Tobias Ellwood): [[HCWS125](#)]

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has recently reviewed all correspondence and parliamentary proceedings on the subject of allegations of breaches of international humanitarian law (IHL) in Yemen by the Saudi-led Coalition. During this exercise it became clear that the drafting of answers to four written questions and two responses given in debates relating to allegations of breaches of IHL did not fully reflect HMG's policy as set out in numerous other written questions and debates on this topic. I would like to clarify these.

The responses given on 12 February to Question 24770 (<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2016-01-28/24770/>) and on 15 February to Questions 24769 (<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2016-01-28/24769/>)

[answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2016-01-28/24769/](http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2016-01-28/24769/)) and 24771 (<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2016-01-28/24771/>) stated “we have assessed that there has not been a breach of IHL by the coalition”. However, these should have stated, as in previous PQs such as 27085 answered on 24 February, “we have not assessed that there has been a breach of IHL by the coalition”.

The response given on 4 January to Question 15523 (<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2015-11-09/15523/>) stated “I regularly review the situation with my own advisers and have discussed it on numerous occasions with my Saudi counterpart. Our judgement is that there is no evidence that IHL has been breached, but we shall continue to review the situation regularly”. However, this should have stated “I regularly review the situation with my own advisers and have discussed it on numerous occasions with my Saudi counterpart. Looking at all the information available to us, we have been unable to assess that there has been a breach of IHL by the Saudi-led Coalition. The situation is kept under careful and continual review” .

During the Westminster Hall debate on Human Rights and Arms Sales to Saudi Arabia on 8 June (HC Deb, col WH138), the former Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Aylesbury (Mr Lidington) said, “In respect of the allegations about breaches of international humanitarian law, the Ministry of Defence makes assessments of how the Saudis are acting and whether the coalition is observing international human rights obligations. The MOD assessment is that the Saudi-led coalition is not targeting civilians that Saudi processes and procedures have been put in place to ensure respect for the principles of international humanitarian law; and that the Saudis both have been and continue to be genuinely committed to compliance with international humanitarian law.” This should have said, “In respect of the allegations about breaches of international humanitarian law, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) analyses how the Saudis are acting and whether the coalition is observing international humanitarian law. The MOD has not assessed that the Saudi-led coalition is targeting civilians. We have assessed that Saudi processes and procedures have been put in place to ensure respect for the principles of international humanitarian law; and that the Saudis both have been and continue to be genuinely committed to compliance with international humanitarian law.”

During the Westminster Hall debate on War in Yemen: First Anniversary from 22 March (HC Deb, col WH518), I stated that, “we make it clear that we are doing our own assessments to understand whether the equipment we sell has any participation in that and indeed whether the breaches are by the Houthis or the Saudi Arabians.” This should have stated “we make it clear that we are doing our own analysis. We encourage the Saudis to conduct their own investigations to understand whether the equipment we sell has any participation in that and indeed whether the breaches are by the Houthis or the Saudi Arabians.”

These corrections ensure the answers given in all written questions and debates now accurately reflect HMG policy in this area and consistent with other statements and questions answered.

The MOD monitors incidents of alleged IHL violations using available information. This is used to form an overall view on the approach and attitude of Saudi Arabia to IHL. This, in turn, informs the risk assessment made under the Consolidated Criteria (i.e. whether there is a clear risk that it might be used in the commission of a serious violation of IHL). We are not acting to determine whether a sovereign state has or has not acted in breach of IHL, but instead - as Criterion 2(c) requires – we are acting to make an overall judgement.

It is important to make clear that neither the MOD nor the FCO reaches a conclusion as to whether or not an IHL violation has taken place in relation to each and every incident of potential concern that comes to its attention. This would simply not be possible in conflicts to which the UK is not a party, as is the case in Yemen.

We regularly encourage Saudi Arabia to investigate any allegations of breaches of IHL which are attributed to them; and for their investigations to be thorough and conclusive. Saudi Arabia has publicly stated that it is investigating reports of alleged violations, and that any lessons learned will be acted upon. We continue to believe that they have the best insight into their own military procedures, allowing them to understand what went wrong and apply the lessons learnt in the best possible way, if required. This is the standard we set ourselves and our allies. For example, when allegations have been made against us in Afghanistan and Iraq we have investigated these claims ourselves. We did not expect other states to do this and form judgements on our behalf.

■ Diplomatic Missions and International Organisations in the United Kingdom with unpaid London Congestion Charge Bills and Fines: 2015

The Secretary for State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Boris Johnson):
[[HCWS101](#)]

The value of unpaid Congestion Charge debt incurred by diplomatic missions and international organisations in London since its introduction in February 2003 until 31 December 2015 as advised by Transport for London was £95,811,650. The table below shows those diplomatic missions and international organisations with outstanding fines of £100,000 or more.

COUNTRY	NUMBER OF FINES	TOTAL OUTSTANDING
Embassy of the United States of America	89,308	£10,626,970
Embassy of Japan	59,533	£7,072,020
High Commission of the Federal Republic of Nigeria	50,952	£6,045,440
Embassy of the Russian Federation	46,894	£5,485,360
Office of the High Commissioner for India	36,984	£4,489,825

COUNTRY	NUMBER OF FINES	TOTAL OUTSTANDING
Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany	35,706	£4,147,600
Embassy of the Republic of Poland	29,304	£3,533,290
Office of the High Commissioner for Ghana	26,482	£3,186,530
Embassy of the People's Republic of China	24,002	£3,016,760
Embassy of the Republic of Sudan	24,466	£2,830,520
Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan	21,849	£2,665,255
Kenya High Commission	19,497	£2,276,815
Embassy of France	16,639	£1,970,090
Embassy of Spain	15,246	£1,811,520
High Commission for the United Republic of Tanzania	15,020	£1,744,075
High Commission for the Islamic Republic of Pakistan	14,204	£1, 740,700
Embassy of the Republic of Korea	13,418	£1,631,700
Embassy of Romania	12,812	£1,511,410
Embassy of Greece	11,820	£1,396,627
Embassy of the Republic of Cuba	11,435	£1,387,155
People's Democratic Republic of Algeria	11,659	£1,366,765
Embassy of Ukraine	11,503	£1,346,455
South African High Commission	11,556	£1,345,310
Sierra Leone High Commission	11,081	£1,283,745
Embassy of Hungary	8,680	£1,033,295

COUNTRY	NUMBER OF FINES	TOTAL OUTSTANDING
High Commission for the Republic of Cyprus	8,247	£986,445
Embassy of the Republic of Yemen	7,032	£831,735
High Commission for the Republic of Zambia	7,069	£828,520
Embassy of the Republic of Bulgaria	6,667	£772,275
Embassy of the Republic of Belarus	5,646	£661,180
High Commission for the Republic of Cameroon	5,594	£649,760
Embassy of the Slovak Republic	5,394	£629,100
High Commission of the Republic of Malawi	5,220	£617,700
Botswana High Commission	5,070	£609,330
Embassy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia	4,900	£565,310
High Commission for the Republic of Namibia	4,886	£564,620
High Commission for the Republic of Mozambique	4,713	£553,885
Kingdom of Swaziland High Commission	4,739	£545,395
Embassy of the Republic of Zimbabwe	4,816	£539,290
Embassy of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire	4,254	£500,510
Embassy of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea	4,204	£489,065
Malta High Commission	4,050	£486,065
Embassy of Austria	4,021	£479,410

COUNTRY	NUMBER OF FINES	TOTAL OUTSTANDING
Embassy of the Republic of Lithuania	3,832	£468,765
Mauritius High Commission	3,971	£462,535
Uganda High Commission	3,707	£441,615
High Commission of the Kingdom of Lesotho	3,754	£436,210
Embassy of the Republic of Turkey	3,411	£415,035
Embassy of the Republic of Liberia	3,396	£410,100
Embassy of Belgium	3,430	£408,035
Embassy of the Czech Republic	3,432	£396,385
Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam	3,140	£368,420
Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan	3,072	£366,690
Embassy of the Republic of Guinea	2,994	£345,870
Royal Danish Embassy	2,890	£344,395
Jamaican High Commission	2,700	£319,485
Embassy of the Democratic Republic of the Congo	2,559	£315,380
Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco	2,164	£274,320
High Commission of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka	2,102	£263,795
Embassy of Portugal	2,139	£260,900
Embassy of the Republic of Latvia	2,111	£253,710
Embassy of the Republic of	1,962	£252,535

COUNTRY	NUMBER OF FINES	TOTAL OUTSTANDING
South Sudan		
Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia	2,037	£252,368
Embassy of Finland	2,095	£250,300
Embassy of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea	2,130	£243,340
Embassy of Tunisia	1,953	£240,380
Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt	2,281	£240,320
Embassy of Luxembourg	1,909	£228,575
High Commission for Antigua & Barbuda	1,770	£210,385
Embassy of the Republic of Iraq	1,579	£199,490
Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia	1,727	£188,250
Embassy of Estonia	1,342	£164,755
Belize High Commission	1,201	£149,420
Embassy of the Dominican Republic	1,139	£135,315
Embassy of the State of Eritrea	1,120	£131,710
High Commission for Guyana	1,010	£118,035

Figures for previous years are available in the Secretary for State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs' written statement to the House on 16 July 2015, *Official Report*, column 39WS (HCWS134).

■ Diplomatic Missions and International Organisations in the United Kingdom with Unpaid Parking Fines over £1,000: 2015

The Secretary for State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Boris Johnson):
[\[HCWS108\]](#)

In 2015, 4,858 parking fines incurred by diplomatic missions and international organisations in London were brought to our attention by local councils, Transport for London and the City of London. These totalled £477,499.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has held meetings with a number of missions about outstanding parking fine debt. In addition, in May this year we wrote to diplomatic missions and international organisations concerned giving them the opportunity to either pay their outstanding fines or appeal against them if they considered that the fines had been issued incorrectly.

Subsequent payments (including amounts waived by the above authorities) totalled £161,328. There remains a total of £316,171 in unpaid fines for 2015.

The table below details those Diplomatic Missions and International Organisations that have outstanding fines from 2015 totalling £1,000 or more, as of 21 June 2016.

DIPLOMATIC MISSION/INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION	AMOUNT OF OUTSTANDING FINES (EXCLUDING CONGESTION CHARGE) £
Embassy of the Republic of South Sudan	£53,708
High Commission for the Federal Republic of Nigeria	£41,531
Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia	£20,692
High Commission for the Republic of Zambia	£18,212
Embassy of the Republic of Liberia	£13,795
Embassy of the Republic of the Sudan	£13,429
Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan	£11,885
Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan	£10,950
Embassy of the United Arab Emirates	£8,425
Embassy of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire	£7,421
Embassy of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea	£7,305
High Commission for the Islamic Republic of Pakistan	£6,292
Embassy of Tunisia	£6,020
Embassy of the Republic of Angola	£5,775
Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman	£5,415
Embassy of Georgia	£4,871
Malaysian High Commission	£3,705

DIPLOMATIC MISSION/INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION	AMOUNT OF OUTSTANDING FINES (EXCLUDING CONGESTION CHARGE) £
Embassy of France	£3,669
Embassy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia	£3,352
Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan	£3,255
Sierra Leone High Commission	£3,091
People's Democratic Republic of Algeria	£2,935
High Commission of the United Republic of Tanzania	£2,460
Embassy of Libya	£2,457
Embassy of the Republic of Bulgaria	£2,095
Embassy of the State of Qatar	£2,065
High Commission of the Republic of South Africa	£2,062
Embassy of the Democratic Republic of the Congo	£1,965
Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco	£1,944
Embassy of the Republic of Iraq	£1,929
Embassy of the Republic of Yemen	£1,920
Embassy of the Gabonese Republic	£1,910
Embassy of the Russian Federation	£1,887
Embassy of Brazil	£1,827
Kenya High Commission	£1,822
Embassy of the People's Republic of China	£1,490
Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam	£1,255
Embassy of Greece	£1,250
Commonwealth Secretariat	£1,235
Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt	£1,150

DIPLOMATIC MISSION/INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION	AMOUNT OF OUTSTANDING FINES (EXCLUDING CONGESTION CHARGE) £
Embassy of the Republic of Uzbekistan	£1,142
Embassy of the Republic of Guinea	£1,020

Figures for previous years are available in the Secretary for State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs' written statement to the House on 16 July 2015, *Official Report*, column 42WS (HCWS131).

■ **Diplomatic Missions and International Organisations with an outstanding National Non-Domestic Rates Bill over £10,000: as at 31 December 2015**

The Secretary for State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Boris Johnson):
[[HCWS100](#)]

The majority of diplomatic missions in the United Kingdom pay the National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) due from them. Diplomatic missions are obliged to pay only 6% of the total NNDR value of their offices. This represents payment for specific services received such as street cleaning and street lighting.

Representations by Protocol Directorate of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to missions in 2016 led to the settlement of outstanding debts by a number of missions.

As at 27 June 2016, the total amount of outstanding NNDR payments, due before 31 December 2015, owed by foreign diplomatic missions as advised by the Valuation Office Agency is £907,976, an increase of 22% over the 2014 figure, as reported in the 2015 WMS (£743,858). However, £40,838 of this outstanding debt is owed by Syria – which is not currently represented in the UK and we have therefore been unable to pursue this debt. A further £87,020 is owed by Iran, the majority of which was accrued during its Embassy's closure between 2011 and 2015. The Iranian Embassy has now reopened and the FCO will be requesting payment of what is owed. Four missions are responsible for just over a third of the remainder. We shall continue to urge those with NNDR debt to pay their dues.

Missions listed below owed over £10,000 in respect of NNDR.

HIGH COMMISSION FOR THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH	£100,762
Embassy of the Republic of the Sudan	£81,419
Sierra Leone High Commission	£62,478
Embassy of the Republic of Zimbabwe	£57,636
Uganda High Commission	£36,885
Embassy of the People's Democratic Republic of	£35,257

HIGH COMMISSION FOR THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH	£100,762
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Algeria

High Commission for the Islamic Republic of Pakistan	£30,154
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Embassy of the Republic of Liberia	£27,170
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Malaysian High Commission	£26,917
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High Commission for the Republic of Zambia	£25,886
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Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia	£22,924
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Embassy of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia	£22,688
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Kenya High Commission	£21,352
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Embassy of the Republic of Albania	£21,258
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High Commission for the Republic of Cameroon	£19,281
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High Commission of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka	£15,765
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Embassy of Ukraine	£15,675
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Embassy of the Republic of Angola	£12,719
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Embassy of the Gambia	£12,210
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Embassy of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire	£11,987
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Figures for previous years are available in the Secretary for State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs' written statement to the House on 16 July 2015, *Official Report*, column 43WS (HCWS133).

■ Foreign Affairs Council – 18 July 2016

The Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Sir Alan Duncan):
[\[HCWS115\]](#)

My Right Honourable Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs attended the Foreign Affairs Council on 18 July. The Foreign Affairs Council was chaired by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini. The meeting was held in Brussels.

Foreign Affairs Council

A provisional report of the meeting and Conclusions adopted can be found at:

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/fac/2016/07/18/>

The Foreign Secretary made clear to his counterparts that while the UK is leaving the EU, we have no intention of turning our back on Europe and will not in any way be abandoning our leading role in European cooperation.

In the aftermath of the attack in Nice, Ministers discussed the fight against terrorism. They observed a minute of silence at 12:00 to pay tribute. The agenda for the Council was adjusted to allow time for Ministers to discuss counter-terrorism in the aftermath of the Nice attack and recent events in Turkey.

Fight against Terrorism

Ministers expressed their condolences following the Nice attack and underlined their determination to tackle terrorist threats and their readiness to continue supporting France. The Foreign Secretary emphasised his solidarity with France and made the argument for terrorism to be tackled at source across the globe. He confirmed that the UK would consider what further support could be offered in response to French requests.

Turkey

Ministers discussed the recent events in Turkey. The Council adopted Conclusions.

EU Global Strategy

Ministers discussed the EU Global Strategy which was presented by HRVP at the European Council on 29 June. The Foreign Secretary set out the Government's view that the strategy correctly identifies a number of important priorities, including the central role of NATO in providing European security. Ms Mogherini confirmed that the EU External Action Service would produce a written proposal on the implementation of the strategy. Options would be presented to Member States in the autumn.

China

Ministers discussed the EU's strategy towards China following the recent EU-China Summit; and adopted Council Conclusions. The Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, Mr Johannes Hahn, reported that the EU had conveyed clear messages to China on over-capacity and the need to improve access to the Chinese market for EU companies. The Chinese side had raised Market Economy Status. Member States welcomed the strategy.

Latin America

Ministers discussed EU relations with Latin America, focusing on Venezuela, Colombia and Cuba. Ms Mogherini underlined the importance of the forthcoming EU-Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) Foreign Ministers meeting that will take place in the Dominican Republic on 25 – 26 October. She also welcomed the finalisation of the EU-Cuba Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement (PDCA). The Council also took note of recent positive developments in the Colombian peace process. Council Conclusions were adopted on Venezuela.

Migration

Due to time constraints, Ms. Mogherini informed Ministers that she would provide an update in writing on the implementation of the migration partnerships envisaged in the Conclusions of the June European Council.

Ministers agreed without discussion a number of measures:

- The Council adopted Conclusions on Somalia.
- The Council adopted Conclusions on Afghanistan.
- The Council adopted Conclusions on Pakistan.
- The Council adopted Conclusions on the recent outbreak of violence in South Sudan.
- The Council adopted the agenda for the EU-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Joint Council and Ministerial Meeting, held after the Foreign Affairs Council.
- The Council approved two decisions on the conclusion of a protocol to the EU-Lebanon Euro-Mediterranean agreement to take account of the accession of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Romania.
- The Council adopted a decision on the conclusion of a protocol to the EU-Lebanon Euro-Mediterranean agreement which enables Lebanon to participate in EU programmes.
- The Council adopted a common position in view of the eighth meeting of the Stabilisation and Association Council with Albania, to take place in Brussels on 8 September 2016.
- The Council adopted a decision on the conclusion of a protocol which enables Azerbaijan to participate in EU programmes such as Creative Europe and Horizon 2020.
- The Council adopted EU priorities for the 71 st United Nations General Assembly (September 2016 – September 2017).
- The Council adopted amending legal acts which transpose into EU law the recent UN Security Council Resolution renewing UN sanctions on the Democratic Republic of Congo until 1 July 2017.
- The Council extended the mandate of European Conference on Antennas and Propagation (EUCAP) Sahel Niger until 15 July 2018 and agreed a budget of €26.3 million for the period 16 July 2016 to 15 July 2017.
- The Council adopted a decision on the EU position on the EU-Central America Association Council.
- The Council adopted a code of conduct and discipline for EU civilian CSDP missions.
- The Council adopted a decision concerning the staff regulations of the European Union Institute for Security Studies.

- The Council approved a decision for a temporary relaxation of the rules of origin under the EU-Jordan-Euro-Mediterranean agreement so as to enhance Jordan's exports to the Union and create additional employment opportunities, especially for Syrian refugees.
- The Council approved a decision on the signing and provisional application of a protocol to the EU-Egypt Euro-Mediterranean agreement to take account of the accession of Croatia to the EU.
- The Council adopted the EU and its Member States' position for the Ministerial Conference of the Union for the Mediterranean on Employment and Labour, which will take place in Jordan on 27 September.

HEALTH

■ Annual Assessment of NHS England

Secretary of State for Health (Mr Jeremy Hunt):

[\[HCWS105\]](#)

Today, I am laying before Parliament my annual assessment of the NHS Commissioning Board (known as NHS England) for 2015-16. I am also laying NHS England's annual report and accounts for 2015-16 (*HC311*). Copies of both documents will be available from the Vote Office and the Printed Paper Office.

NHS England's annual report and accounts includes a self-assessment of performance which describes an organisation that has experienced a year of both progress and challenge. NHS England continues to deliver high quality care as it progresses with implementing the vision set out in the Five Year Forward View delivering constancy of direction, consistency of leadership and effectiveness of delivery.

In response, my annual assessment welcomes the good progress that NHS England has made against many of its objectives including managing the commissioning system. Additionally it has continued to deliver the specialised services and primary care commissioning systems and improved the operation and management of the NHS. There does, however, remain much to do in order to achieve our agreed goals by 2020. In particular, I have drawn attention to the need to address year-round performance against the standards reflected within the NHS Constitution, many of which have been routinely missed this year, as well as the need to make further progress on achieving parity of esteem between physical and mental health.

Although NHS England met its objective to deliver financial balance in the commissioning system this year, the provider sector remains financially challenged. To achieve its financial objective in 2016/17, NHS England must work with its system partners and the Department of Health to jointly deliver a balanced budget across the NHS as well as delivering its share of the productivity and efficiency savings identified in the NHS Five Year Forward View.

Overall NHS England has made progress during 2015-16 but there remains much more to do. The extra real-terms investment of £8.4bn agreed as part of the 2015 Spending Review is evidence of this Government's continuing commitment to the NHS. My Department and I will continue to work with NHS England and its partners to ensure that this investment is

used to build on the good work seen so far and to deliver an NHS that provides safe, compassionate and reliable care for those who need it whilst living within its means.

Attachments:

1. HC311 [Annual Assessment of NHS England.pdf]

■ **Healthcare Education**

Minister of State (Mr Philip Dunne):

[\[HCWS126\]](#)

I am publishing today, following a twelve week public consultation, a government response on how we will implement the healthcare education funding reforms. A copy is attached.

The reforms, which are for England only, will mean that from 1 August 2017, all new undergraduate nursing, midwifery and allied health professional students on pre-registration courses will receive their student support through the standard student support system for fee loans and living costs support, rather than course fees and NHS bursaries for living costs paid by Health Education England. These students will therefore be subject to the same general student finance arrangements that apply to other undergraduate students in 2017/18.

Overall, the government response will set out that the majority of these students, including those with children, will have access to more funds under the student loans system while at university; they will have access to at least 25% more living cost support and we are making additional offers on childcare, travel, dual accommodation and provision, in appropriate circumstances, for exceptional hardship funding.

The government response also sets out transitional arrangements for pre-registration part time students, pre-registration postgraduate courses and dental hygiene and therapy courses applicable for new students commencing their studies in the academic year 2017/18.

The changes will mean we are able to accept more applicants for pre-registration nursing, midwifery and allied health degree courses who get the right grades than we have in the past. Currently two thirds of people who apply to university to become a nurse are not offered a place for training.

We have responded to feedback from key stakeholders, who took part in a constructive consultation, by providing extra funding to help cover additional expenses like travel and more support for students with children. We will work with nursing bodies, universities, hospitals and other partners in taking this forward.

These changes are only part of our plan to expand the NHS workforce – we are also opening up new routes into nursing support roles through apprenticeships for example, the new Nursing Associate role to widen access further to these professions. The Government is determined to ensure the NHS can adapt to the changing needs of our population, train more nurses in England and reduce the reliance on agency and overseas staff

Attachments:

1. Government Response [Govt Response - Reforming healthcare education funding.pdf]

■ NHS Shared Business Services**Secretary of State for Health (Mr Jeremy Hunt):**[\[HCWS120\]](#)

NHS Shared Business Services (SBS) has today published the attached statement regarding an issue with a mail redirection service which was formerly provided by NHS SBS on behalf of NHS England as part of the Primary Care Support Service.

This matter is also referred to in my Department's Annual Report and Accounts, published today, copies of which are available in the Vote Office and Printed Paper Office. I will of course keep the House updated in future as investigations are carried out by NHS England and Shared Business Services and as they seek to determine the effect of this issue.

Attachments:

1. SBS Statement [NHS SBS Statement (WMS Attachment).pdf]

HOME OFFICE**■ Cedars pre-departure accommodation****The Minister of State for Immigration (Mr Robert Goodwill):**[\[HCWS114\]](#)

I am today announcing the Government's decision to close Cedars pre-departure accommodation, and replace it with new pre-departure accommodation near Gatwick Airport, as a discrete unit at Tinsley House immigration removal centre. This will maintain the required legal safeguards and focus on welfare for families with children whose return is to be ensured under the family returns process. The new pre-departure accommodation will be operated in line with the statutory framework established by the Immigration Act 2014, specifically in relation to the statutory time limit on stays at the facility and the requirement for the Independent Family Returns Panel to be consulted in advance in each case where it is proposed that a family should be placed there.

The Government met its commitment to end the routine detention of children for immigration purposes by fundamentally changing the way in which it deals with families that have no lawful basis of stay in the UK, and limiting the detention of unaccompanied children for removal. The new family returns model introduced in 2011 placed the welfare of the child at the heart of the process. Key parts of the family returns process, including the separate statutory status of pre-departure accommodation, were enshrined in the Immigration Act 2014. The new pre-departure accommodation will operate in line with both the statutory requirements and the wider family returns process, which will remain unchanged.

The low level of use of Cedars pre-departure accommodation over the last few years is a testament to the overall success of the family returns process and, in particular, to the fact that more families are accepting voluntary assistance to leave the UK when they no longer have a lawful basis to stay here. Cedars has from the outset only been intended to be used

as a last resort, after all voluntary or other return options have failed, and following the advice of a panel of independent child safeguarding experts.

Stephen Shaw's Review into the welfare of vulnerable people in detention, while recognising that Cedars was an exceptional facility, recommended on value for money grounds that the Home Office should draw up plans either to close Cedars or to change its use as a matter of urgency. The Government accepted this recommendation, and has reviewed the most cost-effective way of providing the necessary component of pre-departure accommodation for the family returns process, while ensuring that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children involved remain a key priority.

The Government is committed to safeguarding the health and wellbeing of those detained in its care, some of whom may be vulnerable. It is very grateful to Barnardo's for all its valuable work with families at Cedars and for working with us to ensuring that the new facility continues to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and builds on the learning and experience of Cedars.

■ Countering Terrorism

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Amber Rudd): [\[HCWS116\]](#)

Keeping our people and interests safe – both here and overseas – is the primary duty of Government. The horrific attack in Nice last week was the latest terrible reminder that the threat from terrorism is more acute and more complex than ever before.

Today I have published the annual report for the Government's counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST (Cm 9310). It covers developments in the terrorist threat and progress made in our counter-terrorism work in 2015. Copies of the report will be made available in the Vote Office.

The threat from terrorism to the UK and our interests continues to be driven by the situation in Syria and Iraq, and, in particular, by Daesh, which has a dedicated external operations structure in Syria. The attacks in Paris in November, in which 130 people were killed, including one British national, demonstrated its ability to coordinate and direct complex mass-casualty attacks. The attack on tourists in Tunisia last June led to the death of 30 British nationals, the largest single loss of British life to terrorism since the London bombings in 2005. In March this year, 31 people were killed in the attacks in Brussels, including one British national. There have been further attacks in other parts of the world, including in Bangladesh, Egypt, Kuwait, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia and Turkey.

Daesh continues to use propaganda to encourage individuals from around the world to travel to the conflict area, including approximately 850 individuals of national security concern who have travelled from the UK. Daesh is not the only terrorist threat we face: the Al Qa'ida grouping in Afghanistan and Pakistan and affiliate groups elsewhere continue to aspire to attack Western interests.

The police and the security and intelligence agencies successfully disrupted six terrorist plots to attack Great Britain in 2015 due to their hard work and commitment to keep us safe. We have continued to ensure they have the powers and capabilities they need to disrupt terrorist

threats, through the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, and increased investigative and intelligence resources announced in the Strategic Defence and Security Review.

The success of our counter-terrorism effort also depends on a much broader range of domestic and international activity. Through our Prevent and intervention programmes we have worked to safeguard people at risk and challenge the twisted narratives that support terrorism. We have made borders and civil aviation more secure. We have strengthened our existing response to marauding terrorist firearms attacks.

The nature of terrorism in 2015 has underlined the need to look beyond solely domestic solutions. We have worked to ensure that international collaboration on counter-terrorism is matched with coordinated action which has lasting impact.

The CONTEST strategy has proven to be successful over a number of years. But our approach must continue to evolve to deal with the changing threat from terrorism. That is why we are currently reviewing CONTEST – to ensure the highest priorities are given the right resources and that government departments and agencies have a unified approach. We will publish an updated strategy later this year.

■ **Government consultation on reporting and acting on child abuse and neglect**

The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Home Office (Sarah Newton):
[\[HCWS110\]](#)

My hon Friend Edward Timpson, Minister of State at the Department for Education, and I have today launched a public consultation which considers whether statutory measures focused on reporting and acting on child abuse and neglect should be introduced in addition to our wide-ranging reforms.

Social workers, teachers, police officers, doctors and countless others across the country work together every day to protect our children, making difficult judgements under challenging circumstances. The Government is undertaking a comprehensive programme of reform to deliver better outcomes for children in the children's social care system. We are improving the quality of front line practice so that professionals such as police and social workers can respond effectively to the needs of individual children – and we are legislating through the Children and Social Work Bill to strengthen multi agency arrangements for the protection of children following a review by Alan Wood CBE. We continue to consider what more can be done to protect children from abuse and neglect and the launch of this consultation exercise fulfils the commitments made during the passage of the last year's Serious Crime Act and in the Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation report published in March 2015.

The consultation will run for the statutory maximum of twelve weeks and ends on 13 October 2016. We are seeking responses from anyone with a view on these important issues, from children and families to practitioners, academics and voluntary sector partners.

Copies of the consultation document have been placed in the House Library and are available on the Government's website, at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments%5B%5D=home-office&publication_filter_option=consultations

■ **Publication of HMIC Reports: Re-inspection of the National Crime Agency and Inspection of the UK International Crime Bureau**

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Amber Rudd): [\[HCWS113\]](#)

The NCA was established to lead the fight to cut serious and organised crime, and to focus on the relentless disruption of serious and organised criminals. It has the power to task other law enforcement and a capability that reaches from local to international serious and organised crime impacting on the UK.

HMIC have conducted two inspections; the first, a re-inspection of the NCA following its 2014 inspection whereby HMIC carried out a review into the efficiency and effectiveness of the National Crime Agency. The second report focuses on the work of UK's International Crime Bureau (UKICB) and its activities relating to identifying fugitives and extradition.

I have placed a copy of both reports in the Library of the House. I have asked HMIC to publish both reports on my behalf. They are available online at www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk.

HMIC find in relation to its re-inspection of the NCA, that the NCA's approach to prioritising, supervising and managing investigations is rigorous, but that they could support their officers better by investing in more sophisticated equipment. They found that the NCA had an effective leadership approach to build systems and processes, and that while strategic governance arrangements for threats are at an early stage of development, there is a clear commitment from the NCA and its partners to work together on shared priorities.

HMIC's second report examines the work of UKICB and its activities relating to identifying fugitives and extradition. This inspection, conducted between September and November last year and, picks up on themes from the last NCA report, focusing on the management of risks and the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the UKICB. Overall the report is very positive. HMIC find that UKICB are well led, that risks are assessed in a timely and prioritised manner, there are appropriate measures to mitigate the identified risks, and there is good and improving efficiency and effectiveness in the unit.

HMIC note that the work of UKICB is dependent on interactions with a wide range of stakeholders and that some matters are out their direct control. However, the report identifies a series of recommendations, many of which are in regard to better information gathering/sharing and building on improving/changing relationships with stakeholders all of which should lead to better risk management and efficiencies in the extradition process.

Both reports note a number of areas for improvement (where the NCA already has action underway to improve its capabilities and effectiveness) and makes several recommendations. It is for the Director General to respond to these recommendations, in line with the requirements of the Crime and Courts Act 2013.

PRIME MINISTER**■ Machinery of Government Change****Prime Minister (Mrs Theresa May):**[\[HCWS124\]](#)

This written ministerial statement confirms the following Machinery of Government change.

The functions of the Office for Civil Society (OCS) have been transferred from the Cabinet Office to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). The transfer will include responsibility for youth policy and the National Citizen Service. It will integrate OCS's work to grow a stronger civil society with DCMS's existing work to enrich lives. It will also simplify sponsorship responsibilities for the lottery providers.

OCS will continue its cross-government work in support of the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector and their important contribution to public services and the social economy; and its work to promote social and community action, social investment, mission-led business and mutuals.

OCS's functions relating to policy innovation (the Policy Lab) will remain in the Cabinet Office.

A Cabinet Office note setting out further detail on this change has been placed in the Library of both Houses.

Attachments:

1. OCS Explanatory Note [OCS Explanatory Note.pdf]

WORK AND PENSIONS**■ Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Councils 16 June 2016, Luxembourg, and 14-15 July 2016, Bratislava****Minister for Employment (Damian Hinds):**[\[HCWS97\]](#)

The Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council met on 16 June 2016 in Luxembourg where Lord Freud, The Minister of State, Department for Work and Pensions, represented the UK.

Ministers approved this year's Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs) under the European Semester and endorsed the joint Social Protection Committee and Employment Committee opinion. In discussion all Member States welcomed the better focus of the CSRs and argued that fewer but more specific CSRs were helpful. The UK welcomed the more focused approach, the importance given to employment policies as well as the recognition that unemployment can be a structural rather than cyclical problem.

Ministers noted progress reports on amending the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive and the revision of the Posting of Workers Directive. The Commission (Thyssen) confirmed its intention to respond to the yellow card on the Posting of Workers Directive during July.

Ministers adopted Council Conclusions on 'Combating Poverty and Social Inclusion: An Integrated Approach', and on 'A New Start for a Strong Social Dialogue' without discussion.

Ministers also adopted a package of Council Conclusions on gender and LGBTI equality. While there was some disappointment that the text was not stronger from a number of Member States, the Council's adoption of LGBTI conclusions for the first time was particularly welcomed by the UK amongst others.

The European Commission presented its new Skills Agenda followed by updates on the outcomes of this year's UN Commission on the Status of Women meeting, and on international meetings related to the international dimension of social and employment policies.

The incoming Slovak Presidency gave an outline of its work programme. Progress reports on the Anti-Discrimination Directive; the European Accessibility Act; and the Social Partner Agreement on the ILO Work in Fishing Convention were all noted without discussion. Italy also introduced its proposal for a migration compact. Over lunch Ministers discussed social protection for the self-employed.

The Informal Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council then met on 14-15 July in Bratislava. Lindsay Fullarton, Deputy Head of EU and International Affairs at the Department for Work and Pensions, represented the UK on the first day. Baroness Neville-Rolfe, Minister of State at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, represented the UK on the second day.

The Slovak Presidency used the meeting to discuss the social and technological challenges in the future world of work.

The first day involved a plenary session on ageing of populations and the challenges this creates for labour markets and social security systems. The focus of most Member State interventions was on migration, demographics and the scope of social protection systems. There was a strong consensus on the need for life-long learning, flexibility in labour markets and recognition of new patterns of work. There were differing views on whether highly skilled migrants were needed and how new ways of working would be covered by labour law, health and safety and social protection.

The second day involved a plenary session on how to address the impact of technological development on the quality of jobs and future skill needs. The UK intervened to highlight the importance of improving digital skills at all levels and the need for policies to address the difficulties of those left behind in society. Baroness Neville Rolfe explained that the UK's flexible labour market aimed to not exclude these people and ensure their rights regardless of hours worked. Baroness Neville Rolfe's intervention was echoed and supported by many Ministers who also noted that more needed to be done to ensure that new ways of working had full social, health and safety and labour law protection.