HM Treasury

Treasury Minutes

Government Response to the Committee of Public Accounts on the Ninth and Thirteenth to the Sixteenth reports from Session 2022-23

CP 745

September 2022

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by the Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury
by Command of His Majesty

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Government Response to the Committee of Public Accounts Session 2022-23

Ninth Report of Session 2022-23

Department for Work and Pensions

Child Maintenance

Introduction from the Committee

There are an estimated 3.6 million children from 2.4 million separated families in Great Britain. Child maintenance is an arrangement between the parents of separated families to cover how the child's living costs will be paid for when one of the parents does not live with them. The Department for Work & Pensions (the Department) is responsible for child maintenance policy and operates a statutory Child Maintenance Service (CMS) scheme, administered by its Child Maintenance Group (CMG) for those that need it. The Department introduced the CMS scheme in 2012 to replace the failed 1993 and 2003 Child Support Agency (CSA) schemes. The new scheme was part of wider reforms to the child maintenance system aimed at reducing reliance on statutory schemes, encouraging greater use of family-based arrangements, and reducing costs to the taxpayer. A minority (18%) of separated families have a statutory arrangement; 38% have set up their own family-based arrangements and 44% have no arrangement in place.

The Department provides two services through its statutory CMS scheme: 'Direct Pay', where the Department performs the initial maintenance calculation and then maintenance is paid directly between parents; and 'Collect and Pay', where the Department charges to collect maintenance from the paying parent and gives this to the receiving parent. Non-resident parents paid an estimated £1 billion of child maintenance through these arrangements in 2020–21. Collecting this maintenance cost the taxpayer £322 million in administration costs. The Department plans to use its digital transformation, which runs until 2024–25, to achieve cost savings, collect additional maintenance and deliver wider service improvements.

Based on a report by the National Audit Office, the Committee took evidence on Wednesday 16 March 2022 from the Department for Work and Pensions. The Committee published its report on 22 June 2022. This is the government's response to the Committee's report.

Relevant reports

- NAO report: Child Maintenance – Session 2021-22 (HC 1139)
- PAC report: Child Maintenance - Session 2022-23 (HC 255)

Government response to the Committee

1. PAC conclusion: By failing to show leadership in integrating child maintenance with other public services, the Department has failed children who should have benefited from maintenance they will likely never receive.

1. PAC recommendation: The Department should:

- ***As part of its Treasury Minute response, outline how it will adopt a more active, visible leadership of child maintenance and separated families policy, and establish clear cross-government governance arrangements to ensure better integration of child maintenance with other public services. As part of this, it should ensure meaningful measurement of progress, including of the ongoing number of effective child maintenance arrangements across society; and***

- ***within one year, undertake a detailed review of how the child maintenance system interacts with the wider welfare and separated families environment, including whether further action to implement reforms or legislative changes are required.***

1.1 The government disagrees with the Committee's recommendation.

1.2 The Department for Work and Pensions (the department) has a clear interest in how child maintenance is integrated into wider government policy, and it intends to continue to discharge this working with other government departments.

1.3 The department recognises the importance of working with other departments and across boundaries to tackle cross-cutting issues. For example, the department leads a cross-government forum to coordinate work on reducing parental conflict, which aims to improve outcomes for children by supporting parents to improve their relationship. In addition, the department's ministers are working across government and meet regularly to discuss childcare issues and the department is in the process of facilitating linkages with child maintenance related issues.

1.4 As part of ongoing policy development, the department is already engaged in broader cross government work on families. This includes the department's ongoing involvement in the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Supporting Families Programme, and joint work between Reducing Parental Conflict and Department for Education (DfE) Family Hubs. Further activity includes support for Ministry of Justice's (MOJ) work on alternative dispute resolution and embedding information about child maintenance into key touchpoints during the separated family journey.

1.5 Individual circumstances for separated parents are often extremely complex. Other government departments such as DfE, MoJ and DLUHC lead on various programmes to support separated families.

1.6 The department already publishes an annual measure of the proportion of families with a child maintenance arrangement and will continue to do so.

2. PAC conclusion: The Department has displayed insufficient curiosity around the needs of some of the most vulnerable separated families and their children.

2a. PAC Recommendation: The Department should:

- ***within one year, develop a clear action plan to assess, tackle and monitor the 'take-up gap' between the number of separated parents that would benefit from using its statutory CMS scheme (and other relevant support services) and those that actually use them***

2.1 The government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Recommendation implemented

2.2 A new digital service Get Help Arranging Child Maintenance was introduced in November 2021. Since its introduction, applications to the Child Maintenance Service (CMS) have increased by 38% in the first quarter to March 2022 - Child Maintenance Service Statistics, data to March 2022 - with further increases expected following the full roll out in April 2022. Rather than a specific action plan, we regularly assess the impact on the composition of our caseload and the individual characteristics of the increasing number of applicants for the Child Maintenance Service as more people use the digital service.

2.3 Ongoing policy work involves the development of referral processes within the Universal Credit (UC) programme. A timetable for referrals will be confirmed once the UC Programme has completed its schedule for migrating customers from legacy benefits.

2.4 Child maintenance can be a significant help to meet the cost of living and the department is developing a communication programme to promote its benefits.

2b. PAC Recommendation: The Department should:

- ***to support this, undertake more inclusive research to understand its customers and users of its service. It should ensure people who do not communicate in English are included in its research and establish why under-represented groups, such as some minority ethnic groups, seem less likely to use the CMS scheme***

2.5 The government disagrees with the recommendation.

2.6 Improvements have already been made to the collection of diversity information via the online application process. Customer surveys can be undertaken in languages other than English, and the department will explore how it can improve diversity information via monitoring of customer characteristics and exploiting existing survey and administrative data.

2.7 In regard to recommendation 2b, the department produces annual statistics on separated families including proportions with statutory and non-statutory arrangements.

2.8 Given the increase in demand for the CMS, the department does not see the need for new research at this time. It will undertake further internal analysis if demand stabilises or subsides.

3. PAC conclusion: The Department's system of child maintenance is not designed to protect those subject to domestic abuse or coercive control.

3. PAC recommendation: The Department should, as part of its Treasury Minute response, outline how it will identify cases which potentially involve domestic abuse or coercive control and adapt its services and communications in response.

It should build into its transformation plans: clearer routes for parents to flag and communicate domestic abuse and coercive abuse; better integration with wider support services for victims of domestic abuse and coercive control; early identification and intervention for Direct Pay arrangements that are not working; and routine follow-up for cases that close or move from Collect & Pay onto Direct Pay.

3.1 The government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Recommendation implemented

3.2 The department already has robust processes in place for identifying victims of domestic abuse and ensuring they receive the right support. The department has call scripts that ask directly about domestic abuse; mandatory domestic abuse training for all CMS staff; a Complex Needs Toolkit and a Domestic Abuse Plan to guide caseworker responses to domestic abuse victims and survivors.

3.3 The department also commissioned an independent review of CMS domestic abuse processes in Autumn 2021, which has now completed. The government is currently assessing its recommendations.

3.4 Furthermore, the department will assess the forthcoming Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance, once published by the Home Office, to assess implications for ways in which coercive control can be best identified and for best practice with regards to service delivery and communications for domestic abuse survivors.

3.5 The department is in the process of adapting its Transformation Programme to incorporate further support and communications with domestic abuse survivors into CMS organisational design and throughout the customer journey, which will continue throughout 2023.

3.6 More comprehensive conversations are being considered to ensure customers are closing cases for the right reasons and are aware they can return to our service. Although the department will not be able to routinely follow-up on closed cases, once cases move from Collect & Pay to Direct Pay parents are given clear communications about what to do if the arrangement is not working through mobile text messages, letters at each annual review and there are prompts on ‘My Child Maintenance Case’.

4. PAC conclusion: The Department has not taken responsibility for detecting child maintenance fraud, instead shifting this responsibility onto its customers.

4. PAC recommendation: The Department should take responsibility for managing the overall level of fraud and error in statutory child maintenance payments. It should:

- ***Assess the risk of fraud and error within child maintenance on an ongoing basis;***
- ***Strengthen its controls proportionately in response to issues identified in its assessment of the risk of fraud and error; Make better use of available data to strengthen existing controls, for example from departments outside of HMRC; and***
- ***Publish, as part of its annual report on accounts for the Child Maintenance scheme, an annual fraud and error estimate, and target rate, to enable Parliament and the public to monitor its performance***

4.1 The government disagrees with the Committee’s recommendation.

4.2 The department already has proportionate and cost-effective controls, such as:

- a dedicated Financial Investigation Unit
- use of verified income from HMRC and benefit systems
- use of child benefit systems to verify qualifying child(ren)
- procedures and policy to request additional verification
- a robust mandatory consideration and appeals process.

4.3 The department recognises the potential for different types of fraud to be committed within CMS and therefore has a fraud strategy in place. Annex 4.9 of Managing Public Money and the Cabinet Office Government Functional Standard for Counter Fraud applies to misreporting of income on CMS. This underpins CMS’ strategy to preventing fraud, which focuses on developing and promoting an anti-fraud culture.

4.4 The department continually reviews its fraud strategy to ensure proportionate controls are maintained. Enhancements are currently being made; it has already consulted on legislative changes to enable the child maintenance calculation to automatically include unearned income, which further reduces risks relating to those who commit fraud by not disclosing their real level of earnings. The department will use risk profiling and threat scanning to target fraud as it enters the child maintenance system, alongside responding to customer instigated investigations.

4.5 The CMS' main objective is securing maintenance for children between parents. Intrusive investigation or sanction to a paying parent can result in the complete breakdown of maintenance payments, impacting the welfare of the child(ren).

5. PAC conclusion: The Department is too willing to blame low levels of customer satisfaction on CMS customers being difficult to please, despite its own systemic customer service failings.

5a. PAC recommendation: The Department should use its digital transformation to develop performance indicators that enable it to fully understand why customer satisfaction is so low, and target improvement where data suggests there may be an underlying service issue, for example: where high numbers of complaints are upheld.

5.1 The government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Recommendation implemented

5.2 The department remains committed to continually improving the service it provides to its customers. The CMS sought independent evaluation of its customer service practices and is now in its third year of achieving the Cabinet Office Customer Service Excellence accreditation.

5.3 The department commenced a Transformation Programme in Autumn 2020 to improve outcomes for children, by enabling parents to put in place and manage sustainable child maintenance arrangements in a more efficient manner. So far, it has stream-lined and automated processes, introduced a live chat functionality, and launched a new on-line service: Get Help Arranging Child Maintenance. By 2024, when the programme completes, it will introduce further improvements that make it easier for customers to interact with the department, including increased automation to enable support that is tailored to customers' needs.

5.4 The department is building on the development of its Customer Service strategy which will objectively analyse upheld complaints and review current measures. It will develop user research focussed on customer perception and introduce a programme allowing real time gathering of customer feedback through the introduction of "Voice of the Customer". This programme will translate feedback into insight and help the department understand what customers are experiencing. This shares learning from customer contact and is part of an individual's training and consolidation.

5b. PAC recommendation: The Department should also, within one year, review Child Maintenance cases where the Independent Case Examiner has upheld a complaint and report to us its analysis of the key themes and lessons to be learned from this, and how it plans to act on them.

5.5 The government disagrees with the Committee's recommendation.

5.6 The department's Customer Experience Directorate actively invests in reviewing cases upheld by the Independent Case Examiner (ICE) to identify and implement service improvements. The department will continue to utilise existing ICE publications to inform lessons learned.

6. PAC conclusion: The Department is too slow to take effective enforcement action, leaving children without maintenance for too long and allowing child maintenance arrears to grow.

6. PAC recommendation: The Department should, within one year:

- ***conduct operational and user research to better understand how customers progress through its collection and enforcement process, to identify any operational or legislative barriers to reducing the overall time to getting payments; and***
- ***in consultation with stakeholders, develop a strategy to tackle rising unpaid maintenance debt on its 2012 scheme, drawing on lessons learned from its experience of reducing CSA arrears, considering key barriers to compliance, such as affordability, and whether a write-off of uncollectable debt would be appropriate.***

6.1 The government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Recommendation implemented

6.2 The department continues to complete extensive operational insight and analysis and utilises its existing user research. This provides insight into any barriers to compliance enabling the department to identify further opportunities for improvements for customers.

6.3 As reported by the National Audit Office, the department has improved its collection and enforcement activities and the amount it collects through Collect & Pay enforcing payments has increased. The department recognises the challenges it faces in removing some of the barriers to compliance and therefore continually reviews and evolves its compliance strategy.

6.4 Through its Transformation Programme the department will be developing its use of risk and intelligence within its business processes. This will involve improving the quality and the use of data to develop and deploy both tactical solutions for improving and accelerating day to day compliance and in helping to inform and develop a more efficient organisational and process design. This will link closely with embedding sustainable arrangements that take a balanced account of the customer's circumstances.

6.5 The department is aware that the effectiveness of its compliance strategy is heavily influenced by existing legal processes and the current dependency on third parties (such as MoJ and Bailiffs). It is currently reviewing these dependencies and will provide an implementation approach for any changes by Summer 2023.

6.6 Through its Transformation Programme, the department is reviewing its internal processes and current organisational design structure to ensure cases can be transitioned through the customer journey more efficiently.

6.7 In addition, current policy work relating to 'Transformation' includes the drafting of regulations to extinguish low level debt (where appropriate) and expanding the list of organisations required to comply with requests from CMS for information or evidence.

7. PAC conclusion: The Department's ability to collect child maintenance is limited by the affordability of payments and the system risks creating a poverty trap for some Paying Parents.

7. PAC recommendation: As part of its Treasury Minute response, the Department should set out its plans to review the affordability of Child Maintenance Payments and the appropriateness of the current award calculations, including the earning thresholds.

7.1 The government disagrees with the Committee's recommendation.

7.2 As referenced in paragraph 6.5 of HMT guidance, Parliamentary scrutiny of public spending, the department cannot set out its plans to review the affordability of liabilities in its response to the Committee as this relies upon a policy decision.

7.3 However, the department is considering its plans to review the affordability of Child Maintenance Payments and will update the Work and Pensions Committee in due course.

8. PAC conclusion: Department has repeatedly failed to achieve savings targets for the child maintenance scheme over the past decade and again risks overpromising on the benefits of its current transformation programme.

8. PAC recommendation: As part of its Treasury Minute response, the Department should set out new cost-effectiveness and wider value for money targets against which it can be held to account.

8.1 The government disagrees with the Committee's recommendation.

8.2 The department's Transformation Programme introduces a range of changes that improve the efficiency of key activities, including the automation of high-volume changes, improving the online offering to enable customers to self-serve their query or report their change without needing to call CMS. It has also launched a new on-line service and live chat replacing a £3.3 million per annum outsourced contract.

8.3 The increased levels of automation mean higher levels of customer interactions are processed without caseworker intervention, reducing unit costs.

8.4 The department reports on its performance in its Annual Report and Accounts. The most recent DWP accounts for financial year 2021-22 were laid on 7 July 2022 . The department regularly reviews its services and programmes to ensure it is delivering value for money.

Thirteenth Report of Session 2022-23

The Ministry of Justice

Secure training centres and secure schools

Introduction from the Committee

In England and Wales, children aged between 10 and 17 can be held criminally responsible for their actions. In April 2022, there were 432 children in custody, the latest monthly figure. Some groups of children are increasingly over-represented in custody, such as those from ethnic minority backgrounds and those with mental health or learning disabilities. Children are held in three types of setting: secure children's homes (SCHs) designed to accommodate the youngest and most vulnerable children in small establishments with high staff-to-child ratios; young offender institutions (YOIs), which are bigger establishments for older and less vulnerable children; and secure training centres (STCs), which were intended for children aged 12–14 who did not need an SCH but were too vulnerable for YOIs. In the year ending March 2021, almost three quarters (73%) of all children in custody were in YOIs. In response to the 2016 Taylor review, the Ministry has also committed to creating a new type of custodial establishment, secure schools – defined as "schools with security" rather than "prisons with education".

The Ministry of Justice (the Ministry) is responsible for overseeing the youth justice system and for commissioning youth custody services. The Youth Custody Service, part of HMPPS—an executive agency of the Ministry—is also responsible for commissioning youth custody services alongside managing the youth estate.

Based on a report by the National Audit Office, the Committee took evidence on 25 May 2022 from the Ministry of Justice. The Committee published its report on 15 July 2022. This is the government's response to the Committee's report.

Relevant reports

- NAO report: Children in custody: secure training centres and secure schools – Session 2021-22 (HC 1257)
- PAC report: Secure training centres and secure schools – Session 2022-23 (HC 30)

Government response to the Committee

1. PAC conclusion: Current youth custody provision is inadequate for many vulnerable children's needs, with particular concern over STCs.

1. PAC recommendation: In its Treasury Minute response, the Ministry and HMPPS should set out how they will monitor and measure whether it is meeting the diverse needs of vulnerable children in its estate, including – girls, children with disabilities and special educational needs, and children with other protected characteristics.

1.1 The government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Recommendation implemented

1.2 The Youth Custody Service (YCS) records protected characteristic information to provide a detailed understanding of the children in its care.

1.3 YCS has a Diversity and Inequality (D&I) workstream focused on priority improvements, monitoring and the development of effective practice. This workstream oversees activity including:

- identification and monitoring of disproportionate custodial experiences of Black/Mixed Black Heritage children and measuring improvements of focused initiatives to drive change,
- measuring operational practise improvements across Young Offender Institutions (YOIs) through formulation and execution of D&I focused action plans and supporting data analysis,
- a focus on girls within the estate through developing effective practise, oversight and improvement activity for the Keppel Unit within HMPYOI Wetherby, and preparing Oakhill Secure Training Centre in readiness to take girls,
- launching the Strategic Youth Advisory Board, comprised of individuals from diverse backgrounds aged 17-25 years, who have involvement with YCS and will be part of policy discussions with opportunities to influence decisions,
- the launch of a CHAT (Comprehensive Health Assessment Tool) Summary from National Health Service (NHS) Systems that will facilitate the monitoring of children's health needs (including disabilities) to better inform operational practise, and
- recording special educational needs detail, and work to improve the capture and monitoring of that information will start later in 2022-23.

1.4 YCS works closely with NHS England and NHS Improvement with co-representation across meetings and decision-making fora, and through close consultation on YCS policy.

2. PAC conclusion: The Ministry and HMPPS do not have a coherent strategy for improving outcomes for children in custody or to meet the expected increase in demand for places.

2. PAC recommendation: The Ministry should set out clearly its strategy to improve outcomes for children through early intervention and improvements to the youth custodial estate.

2.1 The government agrees with the Committee's recommendation**.**

Recommendation implemented

2.2 The government is driving and delivering improvements across the youth justice system, from early intervention to custody.

2.3 In May 2022, the government announced a substantial investment in early intervention and community-based support. The Ministry of Justice provided a 9.8% uplift in funding to Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) in 2022-23 to provide them with the resources and capacity to work with children and address the underlying causes of their offending behaviour. This involves working across other parts of local support services to address issues related to mental health, exclusion from school, an unstable home life or any of the other challenges that can lead to children entering the youth justice system.

2.4 The government also announced a new 'Turnaround' programme designed to work with children on the cusp of offending, before they would normally get support from YOTs.

2.5 These steps and other interventions are aimed to reduce the number of children in the youth justice system, particularly in custody.

2.6 The first secure school at Medway, run by Oasis, will be an innovative new model of youth custody that embeds education and health at its heart. This approach is designed to improve outcomes for children in custody and to protect the public by reducing the likelihood of reoffending. This model will be carefully evaluated to ensure that the structure of the future custodial estate best reflects the evidence available. Preliminary scoping work on a potential second secure school will commence in Autumn 2022.

2.7 But ahead of this, the government is seeking to improve all parts of the youth custodial estate by:

- embedding 'SECURE STAIRS' (a trauma-informed approach to care, co-designed with NHS England) to all establishments and staff training,
- making the workforce even more skilled in working with children (as of May 2022, 239 had completed a foundation degree in youth justice),
- using smaller units with higher staff-to-child ratios to provide more tailored and 1-2-1 support, and
- piloting new approaches to the resettlement of children leaving custody.

2.8 The government considers that, put together, these steps and this strategy should deliver a step-change in the performance of the youth justice and youth custodial estate.

3. PAC conclusion: We are concerned that too many children are being held many miles away from home.

3. PAC recommendation: The Ministry / HMPPS should set out how they will provide an appropriate level of properly managed capacity in the system, to ensure that children can be placed in the right type of provision closer to home than is currently possible.

3.1 The government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Recommendation implemented

3.2 The youth custody population (including 18-year-olds in the youth estate) fell substantially from 3,208 in 2007-08 to 855 in 2019-20, driven by changes in police targets and a movement away from imposing custodial sentences on children for minor offences. The population fell to historical lows during the COVID-19 pandemic, standing at 502 in June 2022. Forecasts suggest that it will increase in future years, though there is high uncertainty around forecasting the youth custody population. Given the population has not yet shown signs of increasing as originally predicted, it is unlikely these forecasts will materialise as quickly as previously estimated. The youth estate currently has a maximum capacity of 1,037 places (852 Young Offender Institution places, 80 Secure Training Centre places, 105 Secure Children Home places) and as such, HMPPS considers there will be sufficient capacity across the estate.

3.3 In the year ending March 2022, data presenting the average distance from home (where home address was recorded) in the children and young people's secure estate show that 60% were placed less than 50 miles from home. YCS placement guidance states that children will be placed into the most appropriate available establishment to meet their needs, which may not necessarily be the closest to their home area or court catchment, however, this will always be considered where availability allows. The YCS closely monitors the numbers of children and young people in custody and are confident that there will be continued sufficient overall capacity, whilst considering options to ensure the ability to appropriately place all children in line with their needs, as and when the population increases.

4. PAC conclusion: The first secure school has not yet opened, more than six years after it was recommended, and costs have spiralled.

4. PAC recommendation: The Ministry and HMPPS should provide assurance that they now have firm control over the remaining timetable and costs to delivering the first secure school. They should also provide an update to the Committee on progress against the timetable in six months' time.

4.1 The government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: January 2023

4.2 Arrangements are in place to exert firm control over the timetable and costs for opening the first secure school. The full business case, which has received all necessary approvals, set out the revised funding profile (including risk contingency and optimism bias elements) and opening date range for the secure school. As with all major projects, the Ministry and HMPPS have in place formal governance structures to ensure the project remains on track to deliver within these parameters. Layers of assurance and guidance are also in place in relation to the operating model to ensure progress is maintained and is informed by best practice.

4.3 The project reports to Oasis Restore Project Board, the YCS Transformation Board (chaired by the Senior Responsible Owner for the Project – the Executive Director of the YCS), and the Ministry's Investment Committee (chaired by the Chief Operating Officer), with a focus on ensuring delivery within time and cost tolerances.

4.4 The government commits to providing the Committee with an update on progress against the timetable in January 2023.

5. PAC conclusion: The Ministry and HMPPS are relying on a provider to deliver the new secure school model, but the approach they are taking is untested and there are insufficient safeguards in place.

5. PAC recommendation: The Ministry / HMPPS should set out how the Funding Agreement will incentivise the secure school provider to deliver high-quality care for all children in custody, including how they would manage underperformance or children being refused a place.

5.1 The government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: December 2022

5.2 The Funding Agreement (the legal contracting vehicle between the Ministry and secure school providers) will be supplemented by handbooks on finance, governance and assurance (setting out requirements and expectations on the secure school provider, including performance). The Funding Agreement package is being completed and will detail performance reporting and issue management. It will adapt the 'ladders of intervention' approach from the Department for Education to drive improvements, escalating through formal directions and termination where required.

5.3 In addition to these arrangements, the secure school will be accountable to its governing trust. There will be independent monitoring of the quality of care in place per Regulation 44 of the Children's Home Regulations 2015 and Ofsted will have comprehensive regulatory powers under the Care Standards Act 2000 when the secure school opens.

5.4 As a registered children's home, the secure school will have a statutory right to refuse a placement if it believes the child cannot be safely or properly accommodated or, when accommodating, it would have a detrimental impact on other children at the school. Clauses within the Funding Agreement will ensure the school is committed to providing a 49-bed service suitable for the full range of the custody cohort, and that the statutory right to refuse is exercised appropriately.

5.5 The secure school provider has a legal obligation (per Section 10 of the Academies Act 2010) to consult the local community on whether it should enter into the Funding Agreement. This consultation must be concluded, and the findings considered prior to the Funding Agreement being signed.

6. PAC conclusion: The Ministry and HMPPS do not know what works in terms of early intervention and custodial provision for children.

6. PAC recommendation: The Ministry and HMPPS should set out their evaluation strategy for youth custodial provision, including their specific evaluation plans for the Keppel Unit at HMYOI Wetherby and the first secure school.

6.1 The government agrees with the Committee’s recommendation.

Target implementation date: June 2023

6.2 An internal review of the Keppel Unit has been conducted based on HM Inspectorate of Prisons inspection of the Keppel Unit (March to August 2022). The review seeks to consider the model of care for the Keppel Unit and how this meets the needs of the children on the unit as well as the wider YCS estate. The review has included a needs analysis across the YCS and specifically in Keppel. The final report will be submitted to the YCS in August 2022. The findings of the Keppel review will inform the ongoing operation of the unit and its future in the context of the needs of the wider population and current and future provision.

6.3 An evaluation team is currently being recruited to develop an evaluation strategy for secure schools which will consider the potential approaches to monitoring and evaluation. This will include a process evaluation of the implementation and delivery of the secure school, as well as determining options for assessing the impact of the school on key outcome measures such as reducing reoffending. This evaluation strategy will be in place at least six months before opening. Other outcomes assessed will include safety in custody and the indicators that contribute to reduced reoffending, for example, progress in education, intervention delivery and the quality of staff-student relationships.

6.4 The initial findings of these assessments will be used to inform delivery plans for the potential second secure school.

Fourteenth Report of Session 2022-23

Financial Conduct Authority

Investigation into the British Steel Pension Scheme

Introduction from the Committee

There are two main types of workplace pension, a defined benefit (DB) scheme, which provides a guaranteed income to members in retirement based on how many years they have worked and the salary they have earned, and a defined contribution (DC) scheme, which relies on contributions and investment choices made by each member. The British Steel Pension Scheme (BSPS) was a large DB pension scheme, sponsored by Tata Steel UK, with assets worth approximately £13.3 billion. The scheme was restructured in 2017 and 7,834 members chose to transfer out into a DC scheme. Almost all (95%) of these decisions were informed by independent financial advisers, and at least 46% of the advice provided was found to be unsuitable, causing significant financial detriment. The Financial Conduct Authority regulates over 50,000 financial services firms and is responsible for supervising independent financial advisers, including the estimated 369 firms who advised BSPS members. The FCA also oversees the redress process for consumers when things go wrong, through which the Financial Ombudsman Service resolves complaints between financial services firms and their consumers, and the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) pays compensation to consumers in cases where firms have entered insolvency:

Based on a report by the National Audit Office, the Committee took evidence on 27 April 2022 from the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), the Financial Ombudsman Services (FOS) and the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS). The Committee published its report on 21 July 2022. This is the FCA's response to the Committee's report.

Relevant reports

- NAO report: Investigation into the British Steel Pension Scheme – Session 2021-22 (HC 1145)
- PAC report: Investigation into the British Steel Pension Scheme – Session 2022-23 (HC 251)

FCA's response to the Committee

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) thanks the Committee for their report and accepts there are lessons to learn, both for how we operate as a regulator, and for how the wider pensions regulatory system serves to protect consumers. However, the FCA is concerned the report does not fully acknowledge the ways the FCA has responded since 2017, acting against poorly performing firms and improving the wider defined benefit pension transfer market. For example, in the case of BSPS over £20 million of redress has been paid out by firms due to the action the FCA has taken.

Further updates in line with the Committee's recommendations and a response to some of the wider conclusions of the report is set out in a letter from the Chief Executive of the FCA to the Chair of the Committee, dated 22 September 2022.

1: PAC conclusion: The regulatory system left British Steel Pension Scheme members open to being manipulated and taken advantage of by unscrupulous financial advisers who personally profited from giving bad advice

1: PAC recommendation: The FCA should provide the committee with an update on:

- ***the extent and impact of unsuitable advice on BSPS members; and***
- ***what it has done to prevent a similar case from occurring again, and in particular, changes to its approach to regulating small advice firms***

1.1 The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Recommendation Implemented

1.2 An update in line with this recommendation is contained within the letter from the Chief Executive of the FCA to the Chair of the Committee, dated 28 September 2022.

1.3 The FCA shares the significant concerns of steelworkers, MPs and other stakeholders about the levels of unsuitable advice and recognises the harm that this has caused to steelworkers and communities. Over the past year, the FCA has met with over 400 steelworkers, providing support and listening to their concerns. The FCA has also carried out significant work to date to analyse both the extent and the impact of unsuitable advice on steelworkers. This is set out in the FCA's consultation paper (CP 22/6 published in March 2022). Should we go ahead with a redress scheme, the FCA will be happy to update the committee with final unsuitability rates once the scheme closes.

1.4 The Joint Protocol, currently operating between the FCA, the Pensions Regulator (tPR), the Pension Protection Fund (PPF) and the Money and Pensions Service (MaPS), sets a framework for increased communication and information sharing. Since its inception in January 2019, it has facilitated greater joint working and early intervention to address the risk of concentrated and/or significant numbers of members receiving unsuitable advice on DB transfers and/or any associated risks of pension scams or mis-selling that consumers may face. Actions have included issuing joint proactive statements, setting out the concerns and action each organisation will take, as exemplified by the statements associated with the Rolls Royce pension scheme and the P&O pension scheme.

1.5 The FCA's regular data return (discussed under recommendation 2 below) also enables the regulator to proactively monitor trends and engage with firms which are active in the DB market.

2: PAC conclusion: The Financial Conduct Authority has consistently been behind the curve in responding to the catastrophic impact on British Steel Pension Scheme members.

2: PAC recommendation: The FCA should examine what can be done to improve the data and insight that they need to inform a more proactive approach to regulation, and what lessons can be learnt from its response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.1 The FCA agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Recommendation Implemented

2.2 From 2018, the FCA has been collecting more DB pension transfer data from advisory firms across the market to improve its market intelligence and identify individual firms that may be posing a risk to consumers. The FCA's current rules (effective from October 2020) require firms with permission to advise on pension transfers to report a range of key data metrics to the FCA on a half-yearly basis. Risk indicators are triggered from the data entered, which includes detail in relation to volume of business conversion rate, resource levels, income levels and DB business trends. Supervisory review and action is taken where risk indicators are triggered.

2.3 More widely, the FCA has carried out extensive work to implement the recommendations and lessons from the Independent Investigation into the Financial Conduct Authority's Regulation of London Capital & Finance plc (the Gloster Report) and the Independent Review into the FSA and FCA's handling of the Connaught Income Fund Series 1 and connected companies (the Parker Report), as set out in FCA's update to the Treasury Select Committee of December 2021. This includes changes to reinforce the FCA's data capability to get better insights, enabling more effective supervision and enforcement.

2.4 The FCA's work in this area builds on its investment in data capabilities of over £120m over three years from 2019. This has involved creating core data platforms, tools to support data management and advanced analytics, evolving the frontline divisions, and enabling cultural change that underpins transformation, by ensuring ways of working evolve appropriately. For the financial year 2021 to 2022, the FCA's data and technology spend includes further updating and maintaining the FCA's technology infrastructure to ensure the organisation remains operationally resilient and implementing tooling to improve how it collects, stores, and manages data. This also supports the FCA's regulatory goals in relation to authorising and supervising firms. In addition, this funding enables the delivery of longer-term transformational change, such as upgrading the FCA's Financial Services Register over a five-year programme to improve user experience, ensure data quality and prevent harm.

2.5 The FCA will continue to build on the lessons learned from its response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The FCA's Transformation Programme includes reforms to its decision-making and governance so the organisation can respond more quickly to prevent or stop consumer harm. This is exemplified by the actions taken following the FCA's review of the Regulatory Decisions Committee (RDC), including moving some decision making from the RDC to the FCA's senior managers.

2.6 However, the FCA is satisfied that the sort of rapid response used in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic is not viable when seeking to impose a redress scheme on a particular sector, pursuant to the powers we have in section 404 of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (FSMA). The FCA's power in this section is a specific rule-making power which is subject to the FCA being satisfied that the tests provided by Parliament are met before it can make rules. These include the FCA having regard to the approach which would be taken by a court to determine whether firms have committed regulatory breaches, as well as determining whether the losses suffered by consumers are of a type that could be recovered by consumers in legal proceedings. In addition, assuming the section 404 tests are met, Parliament has imposed a duty on the FCA to consult on its proposals for a redress scheme with all relevant stakeholders and to publish its cost-benefit analysis, as the FCA has done in CP 22/6.

3: PAC conclusion: The Financial Conduct Authority has not been sufficiently proactive or timely in using its enforcement powers

3a: PAC recommendation: The FCA should report to the committee on the progress being made on its 30 active enforcement cases, how it is updating its approach to make a clearer distinction about how it enforces against poor conduct and rogue advisers, and how it signals the outcome of its actions to the wider market. The FCA should review whether it has sufficient enforcement powers to deal with bad actors in the financial industry. The Treasury should consider how to address concerns about activity relevant to, but not within, the FCA's remit, for example the actions of introducers in cases such as the BSPS.

3.1 The FCA is able to provide a high-level update on enforcement activity as set out below.

3.2 Enforcement activity related to BSPS is a high priority for the FCA. The FCA currently has c.30 ongoing investigations into firms and individuals relating wholly or partly to BSPS advice. Those investigations are at an advanced stage and five of them have entered either Stage 1 settlement discussions (i.e. a 28 day period within which the subject may agree to the FCA's findings to resolve matters) or the Regulatory Decisions Committee (i.e. a Committee of the FCA Board which takes contested enforcement decisions on behalf of the FCA and operates separately from the rest of the organisation). If a matter is resolved in Stage 1, the FCA can proceed to publish information about it. If, following Stage 1, the subject contests the matter it moves into the Regulatory Decisions Committee or Upper Tribunal process. The timing of those processes is determined by those respective bodies.

3.3 Intervention work carried out by the FCA has also led to 48 firms withdrawing from the defined benefit pension transfer advice market. Interventions made by the FCA have required firms to cease all regulated activities relating to DB pension transfers and have stopped firms providing DB pension transfer advice to BSPS customers.

3.4 The FCA undertakes enforcement investigations where there is evidence that firms or individuals have engaged in serious misconduct. Under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (FSMA), the FCA has an extensive range of disciplinary, criminal and civil powers to take action against those who have failed to meet the required standards. The FCA also keeps an open mind to the misconduct under investigation and, in addition to suitability of advice. Where the FCA sees evidence of other issues like asset stripping, it will take action where appropriate.

3.5 Each of the 30 investigations is complex and has required the analysis of significant volumes of evidence, compelled interviews with key witnesses and the review of customer files. The FCA recognises that the time it takes to properly review evidence and decide whether this provides the legal basis for further action is an understandable source of frustration for those affected, who expect to see action taken.

3.6 It is vital that the FCA investigates thoroughly and looks at all of the available evidence before making conclusions about what, if any, misconduct may have taken place, who is responsible and what sanction is appropriate.

3.7 It is also important for both legal and practical reasons that the FCA's investigations remain confidential until complete. This is so we do not prejudice their outcome, which could make imposing sanctions far more difficult.

3.8 Further information on cases before the Upper Tribunal and Courts, and the FCA's wider enforcement work are set out in a letter from the Chief Executive of the FCA to the Chair of the Committee, dated 28 September 2022.

3b: PAC recommendation: The Treasury should consider how to address concerns about activity relevant to, but not within, the FCA's remit, for example the actions of introducers in cases such as the BSPS.

3.9 The government disagrees with the Committee's recommendation.

3.10 It does, however, recognise the importance of the recommendation and welcomes the Committee's view on the need for effective mechanisms to consider and, where appropriate, address concerns about activity that is not within the FCA's regulatory perimeter. The government has concluded that, on balance, the key mechanisms that currently exist are appropriate to address the types of concern highlighted by the Committee. These mechanisms are described below.

3.11 The FCA's remit, also known as the regulatory perimeter, is the boundary between what the FCA does and does not regulate. Where the Treasury considers that an activity should be regulated, it will typically engage with the FCA to bring those activities within the perimeter. The costs and benefits of bringing activities into the regulatory perimeter can be finely balanced, which is why the government is committed to regulating only where there is a clear case for doing so.

3.12 To support consumers' understanding of the perimeter and explain the work being undertaken to address perimeter issues, the FCA has published an Annual Perimeter Report since 2019. Where there are concerns about activities which are relevant to, but not within the FCA's remit, there are existing arrangements for engagement between the Treasury and the FCA on these issues, including an Annual Perimeter Meeting between the FCA CEO and the relevant Treasury minister.

3.13 Firms that are authorised to conduct regulated activities may also conduct unregulated activities. Whilst being an introducer does not require FCA-authorisation, many introducers in the case of BSPS were authorised and regulated by the FCA to conduct other regulated activities. Regulated introducers tend to be financial advisers and other regulated firms that do not have the necessary FCA permission to give DB transfer advice. These firms need to "refer" their clients to a firm with the appropriate DB transfer permissions should their clients want advice on their DB scheme. Unregulated introducers are firms that are not authorised by the FCA.

3.14 Where authorised firms are performing unregulated activities alongside their regulated activities, the FCA already has the ability to take action in relation to those unregulated activities. This is because certain FCA rules, including its Principles for Businesses, apply to an authorised firm's business as a whole, not just its regulated activities. In relation to the concerns raised by the Committee, this means the FCA is already able to take action against regulated introducers, even though being an introducer is not a regulated activity.

3.15 The FCA has recently taken steps to enhance its approach to unregulated activities performed by authorised firms. Further details are available in its response to Dame Elizabeth Gloster's Report of the Independent Investigation into the FCA's Regulation of London Capital & Finance plc.

4: PAC conclusion: The way that compensation has been provided in the British Steel Pension Scheme case has been slow and unfair.

4a: PAC recommendation: In considering the implementation of a consumer redress scheme for BSPS members the FCA should consider how further redress mechanisms can be implemented more quickly and provide fair compensation.

4.1 The FCA has considered how further redress mechanisms can be implemented more quickly and provide fair compensation.

4.2 The FCA Business Plan for 2022/23 sets out its plans to improve the redress framework, including carrying out redress exercises with firms where appropriate, so they can quickly remedy harm. There are several ways for firms or the FCA to deliver redress to consumers, including a complaints-led approach, voluntary firm-led approaches, or a more formal redress scheme imposed by the FCA on a statutory basis (such as section 404 multi-firm redress schemes and single firm redress schemes). Some of the more formal approaches may take more time to implement than others, but redress should be consistent and fair regardless of which approach is chosen.

4.3 There are a number of factors that can affect how quickly consumers can access redress including consumer engagement and firms' willingness to co-operate. The FCA understands that many consumers who transferred out of BSPS are not considering making a complaint about the advice they were given. Some of these consumers have vulnerable characteristics and need help to identify whether the advice they were given was unsuitable. The FCA took this into account when considering whether a section 404 scheme was desirable compared to alternative options to ensure consumers receive redress.

4.4 The power in section 404 of the FSMA is a rule-making power (see paragraph 2.5). Before consulting on a consumer redress scheme, the FCA must carefully consider whether the relevant legal tests set out in FSMA are met. Prior to consulting on a scheme, the FCA will actively seek to engage in discussions with the industry and consumer groups about the issue. This process will assist in the consideration of all the available options and, if it is ultimately decided to pursue a scheme in order to address the issue, will ensure the FCA has a clear understanding of the issues that will need to be addressed in the formal consultation.

4.5 Rules made by the FCA under this power will be subject to a formal public consultation, including a cost benefit analysis. The FCA must also allow a reasonable amount of time for consultees (including financial services businesses) to submit their views, and for the FCA to give these responses due consideration. Where the FCA's proposals are more complex and/or have a greater impact on firms, as will often be true in the case of a section 404 scheme, the evidence base the FCA needs to collate will necessarily be more comprehensive, and the consultation time period may need to be longer. In the case of CP 22/6, the consultation was open for three months.

4b: PAC recommendation: It should also consider how to resolve differences in the levels of compensation received by BSPS members to date, and how this compares to the amount that other members will receive from the proposed FCA redress scheme.

4.6 The FCA will consider the feedback from the Committee as part of its wider response to the BSPS redress consultation and broader feedback statement on compensation as set out below.

4.7 The redress calculation methodology is designed to respond to changes in financial markets by taking account of the market's expectations of economic variables such as inflation and investment returns. When carried out correctly, redress calculations should produce an appropriate redress figure at the point at which the redress is calculated. This is because the calculated figure is based on a best estimate of the economic circumstances to which the consumer is likely to be exposed from that time. The methodology is designed to put consumers back in the position they should be in by estimating the amount they will need at retirement to purchase an annuity that would replicate the DB pension benefits they would have received. That amount is then discounted to determine the amount needed in today's terms. The redress amount is then the difference between the amount needed in today's terms and the current DC pension pot. Paragraph 4.8 explains how changes in the amount of compensation a consumer receives does not mean they are not receiving the right amount of redress.

4.8 The FCA considers it most likely that changes in economic circumstances between calculations explain why consumers in apparently similar positions (eg age, length of service etc) receive different levels of compensation. Paragraph 4.7 explains that the redress calculation is a 'point in time' calculation. Irrespective of when during a given quarter a redress calculation is carried out, firms are expected to calculate redress 'as at' the start of the quarter using assumptions that relate to economic circumstances at that date. Economic circumstances can change between quarters, but, as the methodology is designed to take account of these changes, these differences do not mean there are times at which it is more or less favourable to have redress calculated. The methodology works in a way that means calculations undertaken at different points in time always target an amount which aims to put a consumer back in the position they should have been in, by providing enough to purchase the same benefits via an annuity.

4.9 The Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) compensation limits were last reviewed between 2016 and 2018. In light of feedback received, the FCA increased the limit from £50,000 to £85,000 for certain categories of claim for firms declared in default by the FSCS from April 2019 onwards. This limit was considered to represent an appropriate balance between consumer protection and the cost to industry levy payers, which is ultimately passed to consumers.

4.10 In December 2021, the FCA published the Compensation Framework Review discussion paper. In this paper, the FCA explained that it thought that current compensation limits are set at an adequate level to cover a reasonable proportion of customers' claims but that it is interested in hearing views from stakeholders on whether changes should be made. The FCA is currently considering next steps, including whether it might be appropriate to reconsider whether the current limits continue to provide an appropriate level of consumer protection. The FCA will publish a Feedback Statement later in 2022.

4.11 In September 2022, the FCA published further information for consumers on how firms work out how much redress a consumer may be due if they received unsuitable DB pension transfer advice. This also provided further explanation on how the FCA's redress calculation methodology is impacted by changes in the economy, and the potential changes to calculations following the FCA's consultation.

5: PAC conclusion: Seven years after the Pensions Schemes Act, regulated bodies are still not clear on the Financial Conduct Authority's expectations for consumer protection.

5a: PAC recommendation: The FCA should be more proactive and consumer-focused in its engagement with stakeholders. It should have a better mechanism for responding to consumer harms and collect more evidence on a regular basis to pick up on issues that are being raised, especially from emerging risks in financial markets.

5.1 The FCA agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

First part of the recommendation: Implemented

5.2 The FCA's Business Plan sets out its commitments for tackling conduct that can cause serious harm and how the organisation is joining up its tools to act efficiently, effectively, and consistently. This is exemplified by how the regulator is responding to the digitisation of financial services.

5.3 On BSPS, working in partnership with the FOS and the FSCS, the FCA has engaged extensively with former BSPS members over a significant period of time. The FCA sent direct mailings in 2018, 2019 and 2020, ran local events in 2019 and 2021, and communicated through trusted intermediaries (including steelworkers, MPs and unions), to raise awareness of their right to complain/claim. It has also provided tools, such as the FCA's advice checker, to make it easier to do so. This engagement has been constructive. For example, 272 former BSPS members attended face-to-face events in South Wales and Scunthorpe in late 2021. 86% of attendees surveyed said they were now clearer about their next steps and following the events there was an uplift in FOS complaints. In the summer of 2022, the FCA has discussed its redress consultation directly with over 50 former BSPS members and over 200 firms.

5.4 The FCA regularly engages with industry to understand developments across the financial services industry and any emerging risks. It values its relationships with trade bodies, firms, consultants, consumer organisations and other stakeholders, who provide market insights and help us identify potential problems. We also monitor a wide range of data sources that provide insights on firms and consumer behavior, helping in our identification of emerging risks and themes. Subsequently these risks are triaged, prioritised, and fed in to forward looking work plans. The significant investment the FCA is making to become a data-led regulator set out above will assist its detection of and response to emerging risk across all financial markets.

5.5 On consumer engagement, the FCA uses a range of methods to engage with consumers and understand their experience of financial services, their needs and the potential for harm within the wider economic context. For example, the FCA's consumer partnerships network draws in insight which informs its policy development and builds relationships and understanding with consumer groups. The FCA's consumer market research, including the Financial Lives Survey (a nationally representative survey of UK consumers) also helps the FCA to identify harms and improve consumer outcomes. Financial Lives provides data on the characteristics of vulnerability including poor health, a life events, low resilience or low capability.

5.6 Further information on how this recommendation has been implemented is contained within letter from the Chief Executive of the FCA to the Chair of the Committee, dated 28 September 2022.

5b: PAC recommendation: The FCA must also review how effective the Financial Services Consumer Panel is at consumer protection and how it influences policy debates within the FCA from a consumer angle.

5.7 The FCA considers this recommendation is best addressed through the Treasury's work on the Future Regulatory Framework and the work of the panels is considered in the legislation now before Parliament.

5.8 The FCA would like to refer the Committee to our letter of 18 May 2022, which explains the remit of the Consumer Panel. The Panel's role is advisory and focused on matters of policy or supervision at the general level. Statute does not provide grounds for the Panel to act on behalf of individuals with a complaint, either against the FCA or a firm it regulates, or those pressing for compensation or redress.

5.9 Following the announcement of Pension Freedoms, the Panel responded to HM Treasury's consultation, the Work and Pensions Committee and the FCA's consultation paper CP 15/30 on pension reforms. The Panel provided extensive input and challenge at each stage of the Retirement Outcomes Review, and subsequently identified a range of regulatory remedies to protect consumers from poor outcomes, improve consumer engagement and promote competition.

5.10 On DB pension transfer advice, the Panel provided responses to various FCA consultations and advocated for and supported a ban on the practice of contingent charging. The Panel has also had discussions more recently with the FCA about the proposed redress scheme and to understand and comment on more fully the nature of the issues with BSPS.

6. PAC conclusion: The current compensation arrangements do not always protect consumers, can create wider costs to firms and may not have the capacity to cope with future risks in the advice market.

6a: PAC recommendation: The FCA, FOS and FSCS should write to the committee in 6 months to explain what they are doing to manage risks in the redress system for financial service.

6.1 The FCA, FOS and FSCS will write to the committee on 21 January 2023 to explain what they are doing to manage risks in the redress system for financial service.

6b: PAC recommendation: The FCA's handling of the wider DB pension market should be reviewed as there could be thousands more cases of mis-selling which may be eligible for financial redress, given the significant amount of unsuitable advice seen across the sector. The review should include consideration of solutions in circumstances in which an industry-wide levy is insufficient to pay out compensation to those who are eligible.

6.2 The FCA disagrees with the Committee's recommendation and does not consider that a review of how it is handling the wider DB transfer market should be undertaken.

6.3 Based on the evidence the FCA holds and the extensive work it has undertaken in this market, the FCA considers the harm associated with BSPS is unique and not replicated elsewhere. Our evidence suggests 46% of BSPS transfer advice was unsuitable compared to 17% in higher-risk firms in non-BSPS pension transfer cases.

6.4 The FSCS is funded by the collection of two levies from the financial services industry, the compensation costs levy and a management expenses levy covering operational costs. Compensation costs can vary significantly from year to year, depending on the number of firms that fail and the extent of any liabilities that they leave behind.

6.5 The current funding model includes a number of mechanisms to ensure that there is sufficient funding to compensate claimants who are entitled to receive compensation. Each FSCS funding class has a levy limit or 'threshold'. This is the maximum amount of costs which can be allocated to that particular class in a financial year. If compensation costs in a funding class are so high that the threshold is breached, firms in other classes are called upon for contributions via the retail pool. In highly exceptional circumstances where all classes breach their thresholds and the retail pool is maxed out (if the annual compensation costs exceed £1,225,000,000), the FSCS can apply for funding from the National Loans Fund.

Fifteenth Report of Session 2022-23

The Home Office

The Police Uplift Programme

Introduction from the Committee

In mid-2019 the Department created the Police Uplift Programme (the Programme) to deliver the government's manifesto pledge to recruit an additional 20,000 police officers by March 2023To deliver the Programme, the Department, in conjunction with the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and the College of Policing (CoP), created a joint team comprised of staff from each organisation and police forces. Police forces began recruiting the additional officers in September 2019, with the first new officers commencing training a month later. The Department has committed £3.6 billion over the three years of the Programme (2019–20 to 2023) to recruit the 20,000 additional officers by 31 March 2023. Over the next 10 years, the Programme is expected to cost £18.5 billion, which includes costs to the wider criminal justice system.

Based on a report by the National Audit Office, the Committee took evidence on Monday 25 April from the Home Office. The Committee published its report on 22 July 2022. This is the government's response to the Committee's report.

Relevant reports

- NAO report: The Police Uplift Programme – Session 2021-22 (HC 1147)
- PAC report Police uplift programme - Reports, special reports and government responses – Session 2022-23 (HC 261)

Government response to the Committee

1. PAC conclusion: The Department has so far successfully met its objectives for the Programme.

1. PAC recommendation: The Department should systematically capture and disseminate lessons from what has worked with this programme to benefit its major programme portfolio and policing more widely. It should summarise and publish these lessons by April 2023 to support learning across government.

1.1 The government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: August 2023

1.2 As is good practice under the government project delivery framework, the Police Uplift Programme captures lessons following key activity and periodically. Some of these lessons have already been shared across policing, the Home Office and with other government departments. As the programme plans for closure it is preparing documentation that captures the lessons as part of closure reporting.

1.3 The sharing of lessons and what has worked well has been recognised by the Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA), recommending that the programme produce a 'best practice' document that can be shared with the IPA and across government. The Home Office, with the programme, will produce a lessons learned report and a best practice document for the Home Office, other parts of government and policing, as recommended by the committee and that of the IPA.

1.4 In order to capture the lessons and best practice and to include programme closure, the document will be shared in August 2023, rather than recommended April 2023 date.

2. PAC conclusion: The Programme has demonstrated the value of standardising recruitment practices across police forces

2. PAC recommendation: The Department and the NPCC should identify and pursue other opportunities for standardisation across policing (for example procurement and IT) to achieve better value for money while respecting operational autonomy. It should outline in its Treasury Minute response which other areas of policing have the potential to benefit from a more joined up approach across forces, and how and by when this could be achieved.

2.1 The government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: Autumn 2023

2.2 The Home Secretary has asked the National Police Chiefs' Council to lead a review of operational productivity in policing. This review will improve the department's understanding of effectiveness and productivity in policing, identifying the barriers and the most efficient operating models.

2.3 The review will also look at the scope for using new technology or streamlining processes and removing bureaucracy to drive efficiency and better outcomes.

2.4 The review will be led by Sir Stephen House, supported by an advisory board including Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS), the chief executive of the College of Policing and Association of Police and Crime Commissioners (APCC). Terms of reference will be published in due course, following agreement by the advisory board and Home Office. It is expected to report within 12 months and with interim findings in spring 2023.

2.5 The Home Office is working with BlueLight Commercial Ltd, the Police Digital Service, and Forensic Capabilities Network to identify further opportunities for efficiencies and coordination across procurement.

2.6 BlueLight Commercial are also working with the department to understand the different operating models used to provide corporate functions such as HR and finance across police forces, and the associated costs. A final report is due to be delivered to the Efficiency in Policing Board by the end of 2022, aiming to share good practice and identify opportunities for shared services and other collaboration across the sector.

3. PAC conclusion: We are not yet convinced that the new training routes introduced by the College of Policing best meet the needs of police forces.

3. PAC recommendation: The College of Policing should review the impact of the Police Education and Qualifications Framework to ensure it meets the needs of both new police officers and their forces. It should outline when it will publish the results of this assessment in the Treasury Minute response.

3.1 The government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: Spring 2024

3.2 The College of Policing committed to evaluating the Policing Education Qualifications Framework for new entry routes at the point they were introduced to ensure that they meet the needs of both new officers and forces.

3.3 The evaluation commenced in 2018 and a final report is expected by Spring 2024 to ensure that the first cohort of recruits can be followed through to completion of the programme and into their first year as confirmed police constables. The evaluation is exploring officers' experiences, including wellbeing, perceptions of the new entry routes, as well as views from forces and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Early findings from the evaluation were published in May 2020 and a follow-up report is planned for publication in early 2023.

4. PAC conclusion: We are concerned that the distribution of new officers may not give police forces what they need to respond to the demands they face.

4. PAC recommendation: The Department should set out, as part of its Treasury Minute response, by when it will revise the funding formula and how it will support forces in transitioning to their funding allocation under the new approach

4.1 The government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: Autumn 2022

4.2 The government has acknowledged that the current funding formula is out of date and has publicly committed to reviewing the formula before the next General Election. The technical phase of the Police Funding Formula Review, which will deliver proposals for new funding arrangements, is well underway. This includes engagement with policing sector representatives and relevant experts, who have provided advice on the development of a new formula.

4.3 The government has given assurances that any changes to funding arrangements will be well planned, with effective transition arrangements to allow sound financial management by Police and Crime Commissioners, or their equivalents, and Chief Constables.

4.4 A full public consultation will take place before any new funding arrangements are implemented. Timelines for consultation and implementation are subject to confirmation by Ministers, with consideration of wider priorities and the availability of Census 2021 data to inform a new formula.

5. PAC conclusion: Despite their successes so far, the Department and its partners face a challenging final year to deliver the remainder of the Programme.

5a. PAC recommendation: The Department and its partners should assist forces in monitoring their workforce by including within each statistical release on progress a table setting out the diversity of individual police forces compared to that of their local populations.

5.1 The government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: January 2023

5.2 The government assists police forces in monitoring their workforce by providing, on a monthly basis, force level diversity data compared to local populations. This uses the Office for National Statistics (ONS) census data from 2011 (the most recent data available).

5.3 Police diversity data is published on a quarterly basis in the Police Officer uplift statistics - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) including sex, ethnicity and age. This includes commentary comparing the ethnicity of police officers to the population in England and Wales using the 2011 census. The ONS release of the 2021 census is expected to be published in October 2022. Post publication of the ONS 2021 census, the department will include within each Uplift statistical release a table setting out the diversity of individual police forces compared to their 2021 local populations.

5.4 Police forces are working hard to improve equality and diversity – training has improved and the workforce is more diverse than ever before. The latest figures, as of 30 June 2022, shows the highest proportion of ethnic minority (excluding white minority) and female police officers in policing since records began. The government is committed to supporting efforts to achieve the diverse police workforce that communities need and to ensure progress is accelerated.

5.5 Sharing best practice, engagement with police staff associations, upskilling recruitment teams, enhanced data capture and delivering a campaign designed to reach the most diverse audience possible, are just some of the efforts being made to improve police diversity through the Police Uplift Programme.

5b. PAC recommendation: The Department should also respond to the Home Affairs Select Committee report 'The McPherson report: twenty-two years on', particularly the recommendations relating to targets for the recruitment and retention of officers from ethnic minority groups and staff and ensuring that police forces are representative of the communities they serve.

5.6 The government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Recommendation implemented

5.7 The government agrees with the recommendation to respond to the Macpherson report and the need for police forces to be representative of the communities they serve.

5.8 The government's response to 'The Macpherson Report: twenty-two years on' was published on 26 May 2022.

5.9 Through the Police Uplift Programme, the government has made significant improvements to workforce data, created an inclusive campaign and worked directly with forces on outreach, engagement and sharing best practice. The previous Policing Minister has written to forces, challenging them to fully exploit the opportunity uplift provides to make improvements to force representation levels. These letters compared progress between forces, demonstrating the ministerial drive to make diversity improvements. The data was also reviewed at the National Policing Board in March 2021.

5.10 Diverse recruitment is not an exercise in meeting a quota – it is about making lasting improvements to diversity and inclusion in policing. For this reason, the government does not agree that the setting of diversity recruitment targets is the right lever to support forces recruitment and retention practices however the oversight of progress across all forces is critical. Population demographics vary by force area and each force should be striving to be representative of the communities it serves.

5.11 Forces are maximising the opportunity to increase their representation, Across the service, 8.1% of officers are from ethnic minority groups. Across new intakes since April 2020, 11.7% of new recruits are from ethnic minority groups. Forces will be able to build on the work of the uplift programme beyond its lifetime to continue to grow their representation.

6. PAC conclusion: Government has not yet set what impact the programme will have on forces' ability to tackle crime, the public's trust in policing or the wider Criminal Justice System.

6a. PAC recommendation: The department should:

- ***By April 2023, develop a framework to evaluate the medium to long-term impact of the Programme, so that it can demonstrate that the objectives to reduce crime and improve public confidence in policing have been achieved.***

6.1 The government agrees with the Committee's recommendation

Target implementation date: April 2023

6.2 The Home Office is in the process of developing a medium to long-term evaluation framework. This framework, which is subject to ministerial agreement, will be in place in Autumn 2022, with the evaluation expected to continue for several years. The evaluation will seek to determine where, and to what extent, the increase in workforce capacity has contributed to changes in policing performance and the impact that may have on crime outcomes.

6.3 Alongside the Police Uplift Programme evaluation framework, the Home Office has developed a performance framework to reduce crime and improve public confidence in policing. This framework sets out priority crime types this government wants the police to focus on and is overseen by a governance board which brings together policing partners to discuss progress and delivery issues; this work is underpinned by a new data tool (the Digital Crime and Performance Pack) which provides comparative force level data for each priority crime type, enabling performance assessments. The Home Office is also developing, with policing, a process where support will be offered to forces, via the College of Policing to improve performance.

6.4 Additionally, as set out in recommendation 2 above, the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) led review of operational productivity in policing will look to ensure policing is delivering the best possible value for the public from the significant investment made by this government. Total funding for policing in 2022-23 is nearly £17 billion, the highest for over a decade. By April 2023, the government will have invested over £3.5 billion to increase the operational capacity of policing and specifically recruit an additional 20,000 officers. This police-led review will ensure that this additional capacity is used effectively to reduce crime.

6b PAC recommendation: The department should:

- ***In its Treasury Minute response, set out how it is working with partners in the Criminal Justice System to provide regular and ongoing analysis on the downstream impacts of the new officers to support better planning and demand management.***

6.5 The government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: Spring 2023

6.6 From the outset of the Police Uplift Programme the Home Office has worked closely with partners at the Ministry of Justice and Crown Prosecution Service to understand the downstream impact of new officers, alongside the totality of the workforce, and other factors contributing to demand trajectories. The Home Office shares relevant analysis from the Police Uplift Programme on a regular basis, including projections on the future profile of uplift recruitment and assumptions around the contribution of new officers, all in support of ongoing broader analytical work to predict future criminal justice system (CJS) demand through downstream impact modelling. The Home Office will continue to work closely with partners throughout the Programme and beyond, to understand the impact of new officers both now and as they grow in experience and contribute more in future.

6.7 The Home Office is also developing its own framework to evaluate the medium to long-term impact of the Programme, as outlined in its response to recommendation 6a above. This will include building its understanding on the deployment choices that police forces are making with new officers, particularly in areas such as detective capacity, and how this filters through to downstream impact.

Sixteenth Report of Session 2022-23

Cabinet Office, Department of Health and Social Care and HM Treasury

Managing cross-border travel during the COVID-19 pandemic

Introduction from the Committee

The UK government introduced health measures at the border from 2020 as part of its wider response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which were intended to balance protecting public health with other considerations, such as maintenance of critical supply chains and allowing people to resume international travel. It implemented controls in four main phases, and from early 2021 operated a new 'traffic light system' that broadly remained in place, with modifications, until March 2022, when all government travel measures were removed. The National Audit Office estimates that government spent £486 million on the traffic light system in 2021–22.

Government requirements under the 'traffic light system' varied depending on the country that people had travelled from, with countries placed on red, amber, or green lists depending on their level of assessed risk. These measures included: requirements for people to submit data in Passenger Locator Forms; take tests after entering the UK; and, if entering from high-risk countries, to stay in managed quarantine hotels, provided by the Managed Quarantine Service (MQS), for at least 10 days after arrival. Ministers changed the rules of the traffic light system at least 10 times between February 2021 and January 2022. From 15 February to 15 December 2021, 214,000 people used quarantine hotels provided by the MQS. From February to September 2021, five million people in England started self-isolating at home after travel. The Home Office, the Department of Health & Social Care (DHSC), and the Department for Transport (DfT) were responsible for implementing the main measures, working with the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office which provided travel advice. The Cabinet Office acted as the central coordinator for decision-making.

Based on a report by the National Audit Office, the Committee took evidence on 23 May 2022 from the Cabinet Office, the Department of Health and Social Care, the Home Office, the Department for Transport and Border Force. The Committee published its report on 26 July 2022. This is the government's response to the Committee's report.

Relevant reports

- NAO report: Managing cross-border travel during the COVID-19 pandemic – Session 2021-22 (HC 1148)
- PAC report: Managing cross-border travel during the COVID-19 pandemic – Session 2022-23 (HC 29)

Government response to the Committee

1: PAC conclusion: Government is not learning lessons fast enough from the pandemic and is missing opportunities to react quickly to future emergencies.

1: PAC recommendation: The Cabinet Office, before the start of the public inquiry, should capture and disseminate lessons for operational delivery in a format accessible to future generations, and publish how departments would re-introduce health measures in response to future health threats if needed.

1.1 The government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Recommendation implemented

1.2 Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, departments considered the efficacy of policies implemented, and those lessons learned continue to inform contingency planning and are considered across government, including looking ahead to future public health threats.

1.3 The government retained COVID-19 surveillance such as the Office for National Statistics survey, REACT and Vivaldi to enable early-warning mechanisms and be able to react quickly to potential future Variants of Concern (VoC). The overarching contingency strategy was set out to the House of Commons in March 2022, with the core of the strategy being the use of pharmaceutical interventions such as vaccines, rather than reintroducing restrictions.

1.4 Given the response to any VoC will be informed by the prevailing epidemiological conditions of the day, its intrinsic severity and the impact of pharmaceutical interventions, it is not possible to set out specific plans, but the Living with COVID-19 strategy set out the parameters of an initial response. Governance plans have also been developed with the UK Health Security Agency leading on health security threats such as COVID-19 alongside the Department of Health and Social Care, and the Cabinet Office supporting upstream planning through its resilience functions. In addition to COVID-19 preparations, the government is also due to publish an updated Biological Security Strategy later in 2022 and is developing a wider range of scenarios for future pandemic planning if needed, including respiratory (influenza and non-influenza), contact and vector-borne scenarios.

2: PAC conclusion: Government does not know whether it achieved value for money from the £486 million that it spent implementing measures.

2: PAC recommendation: Cabinet Office, working with HM Treasury, should set out and publish, within six months, how cross-government portfolios should report and track their overall cost, including:

- ***Setting out the expected costs at the outset; and***
- ***A requirement to amend and update assessments as the situation changes, for instance if demand for services diverges from what was expected.***

2.1 The government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: Spring 2023

2.2 The government collates and publishes a wide range of expenditure data, much of which tracks large cross-government portfolios, including:

- spending figures in the Budget and Spending Review documents, which often cover thematic cross-government spend, for example on support for Ukraine.
- the Infrastructure & Projects Authority's (IPA's) Annual Report on major projects, which covers all projects in the Government Major Project Portfolio. Alongside the annual report, the IPA publishes data on major projects – including data on costs, delivery timelines, and delivery confidence assessments.
- standalone reports on areas of significant spend, like the government's Net Zero Strategy which covers cross-government work.
- departmental annual reports and accounts, detailing departmental spend, for example 2019-20 thematic expenditure data on preparations for EU exit.
- Whole of Government Accounts, reporting on all areas of spend across the public sector.

2.3 Through these channels, HM Treasury has central oversight of areas of significant cross-government spend. For example, the Government Major Projects Portfolio, managed by the IPA, tracks the largest, most innovative and highest risk projects and programmes delivered by government – currently 235 projects with total whole life costs of £678 billion.

2.4 HM Treasury will consider what additional guidance should be issued to departments on how cross-government portfolios should report and track their overall cost on an ongoing basis, as part of ongoing work looking at improving joint working across government. HM Treasury will write to the Committee with an update by the target implementation date.

3: PAC conclusion: Government's failure to communicate the reasons for frequent changes to health measures made it hard for the public to understand and adhere to them.

3: PAC recommendation: The Cabinet Office should set out, as part of its report capturing lessons learned, what it has learned about communicating with the public effectively and what it will do differently in the future.

3.1 The government agrees with the Committee's recommendation**.**

Recommendation implemented

3.2 Communication was a critical lever for the government's COVID-19 response. The cross-cutting national and international Public Information Campaign endeavoured to ensure that the public understood and followed the latest guidance, including border health measures in the UK and overseas. Key lessons learned for the future on communicating with the public through cross-channel campaigns include:

- The evolving scientific understanding of the virus and how it spread required an agile approach to the public information campaign.
- All communications were created through research and feedback sessions with the general public and key stakeholders such as local authorities, Directors of Public Health, local MPs and the transport sector.
- Simple language rhyming mnemonics ('Hands, Face, Space') were used to group behaviours into core ideas to achieve greater impact.
- Communications are significantly more effective in changing behaviours when mutually supported by policy advice and regulation.
- A strategic communications and centralised insight programme can deliver regular reporting which avoids duplication, provides a single source of the truth, and valuable insight for policy-making.
- Volume, clarity and timeliness of communications are essential considerations. Clear, simple and actionable messaging backed with evidence can boost public understanding and should be communicated across channels, including accessible formats.
- Paid-for media can give an issue prominence and prime audiences en-masse or in a more targeted way. Creativity in messaging and media planning is crucial in achieving cut-through, particularly when there is audience fatigue.
- Communicating through local, regional and national partners, including the private sector (e.g. transport operators), provides credibility, authenticity and relevance to audiences.

4: PAC conclusion: Government did not strike the right balance between its reliance on the travel industry to implement travel controls and the support it provided.

4: PAC recommendation: The Cabinet Office should set out, as part of its report capturing lessons learned, how it would support industry partners if health measures were reintroduced or required as part of other programmes in future.

4.1 The government agrees with the Committee’s recommendation**.**

Recommendation implemented

4.2 The government recognises the important role that transport operators played in enabling the UK’s COVID-19 border response and the speed they had to adapt their operations to the changing situation. Ministers were always clear that they would not hesitate to act quickly to protect public health but where the government could, operators were provided with as much certainty and clarity as possible, with 11 versions of updated guidance issued to transport operators between February 2021 and March 2022.

4.3 As part of contingency planning for future COVID-19 variants and broader pandemic preparedness, the government is considering all lessons learned, including how departments worked with industry partners. The Department for Transport has engaged with the transport industry to gather views on contingency planning and will continue to work closely with the transport industry over the autumn on this and longer-term resilience. The Home Office also continues to work with the transport industry to improve automation to support international travel in a future health event. Further lessons learned through this engagement will be captured, but some of the lessons learned on supporting industry partners with implementing border health measures include:

- There should be regular engagement to communicate and provide as much certainty as possible on changes to border health measures. This engagement should provide an opportunity for industry members to seek clarity on any guidance and raise any operational impacts.
- Operator and passenger guidance on gov.uk and the government toolkit to support industry communications to passengers should be regularly reviewed and updated.

4.4 As set out in the government’s recent response to the Transport Select Committee, on UK aviation: reform for take-off, there is a very high bar for implementing additional measures to respond to COVID-19 variants and the government’s default approach will be to use the least stringent measures, if appropriate, to minimise the impact on travel as far as possible.

5: PAC conclusion: The Department for Health & Social Care’s failure to properly set up the market for travel tests put the public at risk of fraud and poor quality of service.

5: PAC recommendation: DHSC should set out, as part of its Treasury Minute response, why it did not take on board the CMA’s recommendations on the testing market, and which recommendations it would implement if health measures were re-introduced.

5.1 The government disagrees with the Committee’s recommendation.

5.2 The government disagrees with the Committee’s recommendation as it did take on board many of the Competition and Markets Authority’s (CMA) recommendations.

5.3 When travel testing launched in Spring 2021 there was insufficient capacity in the NHS to provide testing. The government needed to grow a private market to meet this challenge, which involved striking the right balance between development and regulation of a market.

5.4 After the CMA published its report UKHSA held regular engagement with the CMA and took action to improve the service providers were giving.

5.5 UKHSA removed over 340 providers from the travel testing list (Recommendation B), carried out c500 checks into the accuracy of pricing per week (Recommendation E), and helped ensure the test price dropped by c60% between August 2021 and February 2022 by regularly reducing the price of the government-provided tests (Recommendations D and E).

5.6 Specific actions taken:

- All new providers had their prices audited before being added to the approved list.
- Daily spot checks were carried out on all prices under £15 for accuracy and availability, and a sample of those over £15.
- All price change requests were audited before going live on gov.uk.
- Instigated a monitoring system of provider performance to ensure high quality service and removed a significant number of providers who did not meet the minimum requirements (Recommendation A).
- Enhanced the test provider listing on gov.uk by adding new filters to allow customers to make more accurate searches. (Recommendation F).
- Introduced world leading test validation regulations and a three-stage accreditation process to ensure that only high quality, accurate tests could be sold (Recommendation C)

5.7 If health measures were re-introduced, the UKHSA would continue to learn the lessons from previous iterations of travel testing, including the CMA recommendations. The exact measures to implement would depend on the context and circumstances in which the UKHSA were operating.

6: PAC conclusion: DHSC failed to adequately protect the taxpayer from fraud in the Managed Quarantine Service (MQS), and is not pursuing the fraud that it has identified vigorously enough.

6: PAC recommendation: DHSC should write to the Committee as part of its Treasury Minute response setting out:

- ***how much of the fraud and unpaid MQS bills it has recovered, how much it has written off, and how it plans to recover the outstanding amount;***
- ***how much of the outstanding amount is due to fraud, unpaid hardship plans and other reasons;***
- ***how much of the debts arising from the hardship plan are owed by people who self-certified hardship;***
- ***how much it has spent collecting unpaid MQS bills; and***
- ***how many fraud cases it has identified, investigated and successfully prosecuted.***

6.1 The government agrees with the Committee’s recommendation.

Recommendation implemented

6.2 The UK Health Security Agency has already provided the Committee with a quarterly update on chargeback and hardship recoveries. The next letter will be sent to the Committee by the end of September whch will include responses to the recommendations above.

7: PAC conclusion: The Cabinet Office failed to bring together how risks were identified and managed across the portfolio of programmes for implementing health measures at the border.

7: PAC recommendation: The Cabinet Office should produce, within six months, guidance to accompany the Orange Book setting out how cross-government portfolios of programmes should aggregate and manage risks at a portfolio-level so that effective whole-system governance processes are in place.

To the same timescale, it should review whether other cross-government portfolios have effective whole-system governance and risk management processes in place.

7.1 The government agrees with the Committee's recommendation**.**

Target implementation date: January 2023

7.2 The Risk Profession in HM Treasury will work with the Cabinet Office to develop guidance, consistent with the principles-based approach in the Orange Book, on aggregating and managing risks at a portfolio level, and undertake a review of approaches taken on some other cross-government portfolios to understand the types of portfolios where there could be opportunities to use the new guidance. HM Treasury will write to the Committee with an update by the target implementation date.

Treasury Minutes Archive[1]

Treasury Minutes are the government's response to reports from the Committee of Public Accounts. Treasury Minutes are Command Papers laid in Parliament.

Session 2022-23

Committee Recommendations:	89	
Recommendations agreed:	81	(91%)
Recommendations disagreed:	8	

Publication Date	PAC Reports	Ref Number
July 2022	Government response to PAC reports [49-52] 1, 3 & [10]	CP 722
August 2022	Government response to PAC reports 2, 4-8	CP 708
September 2022	Government response to PAC reports 9, 13-16	CP 745

Session 2021-22

Committee Recommendations:	362	
Recommendations agreed:	333	(92%)
Recommendations disagreed:	29	

Publication Date	PAC Reports	Ref Number
August 2021	Government response to PAC reports 1-6	CP 510
September 2021	Government response to PAC reports 8-11	CP 520
November 2021	Government response to PAC reports 7,13-16 (and TM2 BBC)	CP 550
December 2021	Government response to PAC reports 12, 17-21	CP 583
January 2022	Government response to PAC reports 22-26	CP 603
February 2022	Government response to PAC reports 27-31	CP 631
April 2022	Government response to PAC reports 32-35	CP 649
April 2022	Government response to PAC reports 36-42	CP 667
July 2022	Government response to PAC reports 49-52, [1, 3 & 10]	CP 722

Session 2019-21

Committee Recommendations:	233	
Recommendations agreed:	208	(89%)
Recommendations disagreed:	25	

Publication Date	PAC Reports	Ref Number
July 2020	Government responses to PAC reports 1-6	CP 270
September 2020	Government responses to PAC reports 7-13	CP 291
November 2020	Government responses to PAC reports 14-17 and 19	CP 316
January 2021	Government responses to PAC reports 18, 20-24	CP 363
February 2021	Government responses to PAC reports 25-29	CP 376
February 2021	Government responses to PAC reports 30-34	CP 389
March 2021	Government responses to PAC reports 35-39	CP 409
April 2021	Government responses to PAC reports 40- 44	CP 420
May 2021	Government responses to PAC reports 45-51	CP 434
June 2021	Government responses to PAC reports 52-56	CP 456

[1] List of Treasury Minutes responses for Sessions 2010-15 are annexed in the government's response to PAC Report 52

Session 2019

Committee Recommendations: 11
Recommendations agreed: 11 (100%)
Recommendations disagreed: 0

Publication Date	PAC Reports	Ref Number
January 2020	Government response to PAC report [112-119] 1 and 2	CP 210

Session 2017-19

Committee Recommendations: 747
Recommendations agreed: 675 (90%)
Recommendations disagreed: 72 (10%)

Publication Date	PAC Reports	Ref Number
December 2017	Government response to PAC report 1	Cm 9549
January 2018	Government responses to PAC reports 2 and 3	Cm 9565
March 2018	Government responses to PAC reports 4-11	Cm 9575
March 2018	Government responses to PAC reports 12-19	Cm 9596
May 2018	Government responses to PAC reports 20-30	Cm 9618
June 2018	Government responses to PAC reports 31-37	Cm 9643
July 2018	Government responses to PAC reports 38-42	Cm 9667
October 2018	Government responses to PAC reports 43-58	Cm 9702
December 2018	Government responses to PAC reports 59-63	Cm 9740
January 2019	Government responses to PAC reports 64-68	CP 18
March 2019	Government responses to PAC reports 69-71	CP 56
April 2019	Government responses to PAC reports 72-77	CP 79
May 2019	Government responses to PAC reports 78-81 and 83-85	CP 97
June 2019	Government responses to PAC reports 82, 86-92	CP 113
July 2019	Government responses to PAC reports 93-94 and 96-98	CP 151
October 2019	Government responses to PAC reports 95, 99-111	CP 176
January 2020	Government response to PAC reports 112-119 [1 and 2]	CP 210

Session 2016-17

Committee Recommendations: 393
Recommendations agreed: 356 (91%)
Recommendations disagreed: 37 (9%)

Publication Date	PAC Reports	Ref Number
November 2016	Government responses to PAC reports 1-13	Cm 9351
December 2016	Government responses to PAC reports 14-21	Cm 9389
February 2017	Government responses to PAC reports 22-25 and 28	Cm 9413
March 2017	Government responses to PAC reports 26-27 and 29-34	Cm 9429
March 2017	Government responses to PAC reports 35-41	Cm 9433
October 2017	Government responses to PAC reports 42-44 and 46-64	Cm 9505

Session 2015-16

Committee Recommendations: 262
Recommendations agreed: 225 (86%)
Recommendations disagreed: 37 (14%)

Publication Date	PAC Reports	Ref Number
December 2015	Government responses to PAC reports 1 to 3	Cm 9170
January 2016	Government responses to PAC reports 4 to 8	Cm 9190
March 2016	Government responses to PAC reports 9 to 14	Cm 9220
March 2016	Government responses to PAC reports 15-20	Cm 9237
April 2016	Government responses to PAC reports 21-26	Cm 9260
May 2016	Government responses to PAC reports 27-33	Cm 9270
July 2016	Government responses to PAC reports 34-36; 38; and 40-42	Cm 9323
November 2016	Government responses to PAC reports 37 and 39 (part 1)	Cm 9351
December 2016	Government response to PAC report 39 (part 2)	Cm 9389

Treasury Minutes Progress Reports Archive

Treasury Minutes Progress Reports provide updates on the implementation of recommendations from the Committee of Public Accounts. These reports are Command Papers laid in Parliament.

Publication Date	PAC Reports	Ref Number
June 2022	Session 2013-14: updates on 1 PAC report Session 2017-19: updates on 27 PAC reports Session 2019-21: updates on 34 PAC reports Session 2021-22: updates on 30 PAC reports	CP 691
November 2021	Session 2013-14: updates on 1 PAC report Session 2016-17: updates on 3 PAC reports Session 2017-19: updates on 33 PAC reports Session 2019: updates on 2 PAC reports Session 2019-21: updates on 47 PAC reports Session 2021-22: updates on 5 PAC reports	CP 549
May 2021	Session 2010-12: updates on 1 PAC report Session 2013-14: updates on 1 PAC report Session 2015-16: updates on 0 PAC reports Session 2016-17: updates on 4 PAC reports Session 2017-19: updates on 47 PAC reports Session 2019: updates on 2 PAC reports Session 2019-21: updates on 28 PAC reports	CP 424
November 2020	Session 2010-12: updates on 1 PAC report Session 2013-14: updates on 1 PAC report Session 2015-16: updates on 0 PAC reports Session 2016-17: updates on 7 PAC reports Session 2017-19: updates on 73 PAC reports Session 2019: updates on 2 reports	CP 313
February 2020	Session 2010-12: updates on 2 PAC reports Session 2013-14: updates on 1 PAC report Session 2015-16: updates on 3 PAC reports Session 2016-17: updates on 14 PAC reports Session 2017-19: updates on 71 PAC reports	CP 221
March 2019	Session 2010-12: updates on 2 PAC reports Session 2013-14: updates on 4 PAC reports Session 2014-15: updates on 2 PAC reports Session 2015-16: updates on 7 PAC reports Session 2016-17: updates on 22 PAC reports Session 2017-19: updates on 46 PAC reports	CP 70
July 2018	Session 2010-12: updates on 2 PAC reports Session 2013-14: updates on 4 PAC reports Session 2014-15: updates on 2 PAC reports Session 2015-16: updates on 9 PAC reports Session 2016-17: updates on 38 PAC reports Session 2017-19: updates on 17 PAC reports	Cm 9668

Publication Date	PAC Reports	Ref Number
January 2018	Session 2010-12: updates on 2 PAC reports Session 2013-14: updates on 5 PAC reports Session 2014-15: updates on 4 PAC reports Session 2015-16: updates on 14 PAC reports Session 2016-17: updates on 52 PAC reports	Cm 9566
October 2017	Session 2010-12: updates on 3 PAC reports Session 2013-14: updates on 7 PAC reports Session 2014-15: updates on 12 PAC reports Session 2015-16: updates on 26 PAC reports Session 2016-17: updates on 39 PAC reports	Cm 9506
January 2017	Session 2010-12: updates on 1 PAC report Session 2013-14: updates on 5 PAC reports Session 2014-15: updates on 7 PAC reports Session 2015-16: updates on 18 PAC reports	Cm 9407
July 2016	Session 2010-12: updates on 6 PAC reports Session 2012-13: updates on 2 PAC reports Session 2013-14: updates on 15 PAC reports Session 2014-15: updates on 22 PAC reports Session 2015-16: updates on 6 PAC reports	Cm 9320
February 2016	Session 2010-12: updates on 8 PAC reports Session 2012-13: updates on 7 PAC reports Session 2013-14: updates on 22 PAC reports Session 2014-15: updates on 27 PAC reports	Cm 9202
March 2015	Session 2010-12: updates on 26 PAC reports Session 2012-13: updates on 17 PAC reports Session 2013-14: updates on 43 PAC reports	Cm 9034
July 2014	Session 2010-12: updates on 60 PAC reports Session 2012-13: updates on 37 PAC reports	Cm 8899
February 2013	Session 2010-12: updates on 31 PAC reports	Cm 8539

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