



HM Treasury

Treasury Minutes

Government response to the Committee of Public Accounts on the Eighty-Second and the Eighty-Sixth to the Ninety-Second reports from Session 2017-19



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Presented to Parliament
by the Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury
by Command of Her Majesty

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TREASURY MINUTES DATED 10 JUNE 2019 TO THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS ON THE EIGHTY-SECOND AND THE EIGHTY-SIXTH TO THE NINETY-SECOND REPORTS FROM SESSION 2017-19

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Government responses to the Committee of Public Accounts Session 2017-19

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Eighty-Second Report of Session 2017–19

The Home Office

Windrush generation and the Home Office

Introduction from the Committee

The Home Office (The Department) and its agencies (UK Visas and Immigration, Immigration Enforcement and Border Force) manage the UK immigration system: setting immigration policy; deciding who has the right to stay; and encouraging and enforcing the removal of illegal migrants. Between 1948 and 1973, nearly 600,000 Commonwealth citizens came to live and work in the UK with the right to remain indefinitely. But many were not given any documentation to confirm their immigration status, and the Home Office kept no records. In the last ten years, successive governments have introduced the “compliant environment” where the right to live, work and access services including benefits and bank accounts in the UK is only available to people who can demonstrate their eligibility to do so. Towards the end of 2017 the media began to report stories of members of the Windrush generation being denied access to public services, being detained in the UK or at the border, or being removed from, or refused re-entry to, the UK. This has been referred to as the Windrush scandal.

Based on a report by the National Audit Office, the Committee took evidence, on 17 December 2018 from the Home Office. The Committee also took evidence from the Immigration Law Practitioners’ Association, Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, and from Vernon Vanriel and his representative Jon Feld (Mr Vanriel is a member of the Windrush generation who was denied re-entry to the UK after a visit to Jamaica). The Home Office and its agencies (UK Visas and Immigration, Immigration Enforcement and Border Force) manage the UK immigration system, setting immigration policy, deciding who has the right to stay and encouraging and enforcing the removal of illegal migrants. The Committee published its report on 6 March 2019. This is the Government response to the Committee’s report.

Relevant Reports

- NAO report: [Handling of the Windrush situation, Session 2017–19](#) (HC 1622)
- PAC report: [Windrush generation and the Home Office, - Session 2017–19](#) (HC 518)

Government responses to the Committee

1: PAC conclusion: *For many years, the Home Office has failed to protect people’s legal rights to live, work and access services and benefits in the UK.*

1: PAC recommendation: *The Department must protect and prioritise people’s rights to residency or citizenship when designing, delivering and monitoring its immigration policies and systems. It should report back to us in 6 months on how it is putting impact assessments and external consultations at the core of its policy making to identify how new immigration policies could affect people and how to mitigate against the risk of unintended consequences. It should also report back to us on how it is addressing the findings of Wendy Williams’s lessons learned review.*

1.1 The Government agrees with the Committee’s recommendation.

Target implementation date: Autumn 2019

1.2 Consultation documents and impact assessments have been produced for all major policies within the Borders, Immigration and Citizenship System including for controls on access to benefits and services, asylum and for the design of legal migration routes. In addition to these activities, the Department has made use of an extensive array of impact assessment and external consultation measures including the use of panels, mystery shoppers, non-governmental organisation (NGO) and local authority consultations, business round tables and outreach. Further independent assessments of immigration policies are provided by the Migration Advisory Committee.

1.3 The EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) provides a recent example of where these core activities have been supplemented by the use of external consultation. In the design of the EUSS, the Department utilised independent advisory groups formed of employers and vulnerable persons. The EUSS was also tested in a pilot-phase, to help ensure that the scheme is as accessible and easy to use as possible. The design of the Future Borders and Immigration System (FBIS) is a further example of how the Department has demonstrated effective use of external consultation. Proposals for the design of the FBIS were published in a recent White Paper, the design of which was informed by roadshows, events and consultation with key stakeholder groups.

1.4 In addition to the work detailed above, the Department has revised internal processes to strengthen the design, development and implementation of Border, Immigration and Citizenship policy. This is being delivered through the introduction of a policy assurance framework that provides additional assurance when a policy change or new policy is required. By improving our assurance capabilities, we will be better able to ensure our policies are effectively delivering their intent and mitigate their associated risks. We accept the recommendation to report back to the Committee in six months.

1.5 When the lessons learned review has been concluded, we will consider the recommendations and set out our response to the report's recommendations.

1a: PAC recommendation: *It should redesign and test its application processes and systems with applicants and staff to ensure they are accessible and easy to use. It should report back to the Committee in 12 months on the progress it has made, including a description of the testing it has done and how it is identifying and managing risks.*

1.6 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: May 2019

1.7 The Department's new immigration application platform Access UK, which is being rolled out across all application routes, is built using the patterns and standards of the Government Digital Service standard, which in turn ensures compliance with standards on usability and accessibility.

1.8 As part of the development of the platform, extensive testing has taken place with users of the service, observing how they interact with the new online application forms and adapting the design and questions in accordance with feedback uncovered during those testing sessions.

1.9 The service is being developed based on a deep understanding of customer needs and preferences defined through user research. As a result, Access UK has driven positive customer satisfaction ratings, with over 75% of customer rating Access UK 8 out of 10 or over.

1.10 The online application process is still new, and subject to ongoing changes as it rolls out internationally. The customer insight team are monitoring the customer experience. The roll out of the new online application forms should be delivered by May 2019, however these will continue to iterate on an ongoing basis based on customer feedback.

2: PAC conclusion: *The Department is making life-changing decisions on people's rights, based on incorrect data from systems that are not fit for purpose.*

2: PAC recommendation: *In its design and roll-out of Atlas, the Department should prioritise improving the quality of its data. Alongside its Treasury Minute response, the Department should write to us setting out specific plans for data cleansing, migration of the existing case files and controls around the input of new data.*

2.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: March 2020

2.2 The Department agrees to write to the Committee alongside this Treasury Minute response.

2.3 The Department continues to focus strongly on improving data quality. We have introduced online applications across 95% of our application routes. Online applications will improve data quality as they maximise the amount of data entered automatically, meaning that our staff do less manual data entry, which reduces the scope for transcription errors and omissions.

2.4 The new Person Centric Data Platform delivered by the Immigration Platform Technologies (IPT) programme has categorised and ingested all the business information in the Case Information Database (CID) and Central Reference System (CRS) required for the enhanced case working capability that will be delivered by Atlas.

2.5 As part of the migration to Atlas, the department will agree a process for addressing data quality issues as they are identified, which will be in place by the completion of the IPT programme in March 2020. There will be a tail of business users that will need to migrate away from CID following the completion of the last parts of the technical roadmap for Atlas delivery which will take until the end of the IPT programme which is scheduled for March 2020.

2a: PAC recommendation: *In 6 months' time, the Department should write to us with an update on how its system for EU citizens to confirm their status is working, to ensure they do not face the same issues as the Windrush generation.*

2.6 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: November 2019

2.7 The EU Settlement Scheme learns the lessons from Windrush by ensuring that all EU citizens resident in the UK will have an immigration status granted which they can use to demonstrate their right to work, housing and benefits. The application process is streamlined, user-friendly and accessible to all prospective applicants.

2.8 The scheme was launched on 30 March following both private and public testing of the application process which began in August 2018. During the test phases we received over 230,000 applications with 95% of applicants able to use the dedicated mobile application to prove their identity remotely and 88% of applicants able to have their UK residence automatically checked using their national insurance number. The scheme has now received over 600,000 applications. The Department has updated Parliament throughout the process and have committed to provide wider more substantive data sets at agreed intervals in line with its wider transparency agenda.

2.9 The Department have removed the application fee for the scheme so that there is no financial barrier to any EU citizen who wishes to stay. Alongside the opening of the scheme, the Department has launched a new nationwide marketing campaign to encourage EU citizens to apply for the EU Settlement Scheme. The Department will also be awarding up to £9 million of funding to supporting voluntary and community sector organisations who can assist vulnerable EU citizens.

2.10 The Department will write to the committee to provide an update on progress when we publish the transparency data that covers the first six months since the full opening of the scheme.

3: PAC conclusion: *It was a dereliction of duty for the Department not to monitor the impact of its compliant environment policy on vulnerable members of our society.*

3: PAC recommendation: *In its Treasury Minute response to this report the Department should explain its monitoring and evaluation regime for compliant environment measures. It must set out how it intends to incorporate information collected from people affected by the system, not just from those administering it.*

3.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: December 2020

3.2 The Department routinely collects management information for the proactive Compliant Environment sanctions underpinned by data-sharing, and our civil penalty regimes. In part, this information is made public: the Department publishes Transparency Data and the non-compliant employers list and engages regularly at official level with other government departments and public partners to monitor and support the delivery of the measures.

3.3 For reactive measures, officials meet regularly with UK employers operating in high risk sectors for illegal working; and the Immigration Minister and Lord Best co-chair the Right to Rent Consultative Panel which incorporates representatives of the private rented sector, homelessness charities and other interested bodies.

3.4 The Department continues to undertake specific evaluation projects; for example, the evaluation of the first phase of the right to rent scheme in the West Midlands and the NINO proof of concept exercise with HMRC and DWP.

3.5 There is more the Department needs to do to better monitor and evaluate the collective impact of these measures. It is approaching this issue on a phased basis, placing immediate priority on work on the right to rent scheme. It will carry out further research into behaviours in the private rented sector, to incorporate information collected from people affected, in order to understand better the potential for race discrimination. It is also conducting a comprehensive literature review to establish the extent of the current body of knowledge.

3.6 In approaching evaluation and monitoring of the wider system of eligibility checks, it is important to engage properly the wide range of organisations which have a close interest in the operation of these measures to identify the most appropriate approach. This includes considering the recommendations of the Windrush lessons learned review which is due to report this year. The Department needs to complete the process of engagement before it can set out its plans and will set out its proposed new evaluation and monitoring regime in due course.

4: PAC conclusion: *Members of the Windrush Generation have lost jobs, benefits, homes and access to health care. The Department is shirking its responsibility to put right the wrongs suffered by individuals because of its mistakes.*

4a: PAC recommendation: *The Department should take immediate responsibility for meeting the urgent needs of individuals.*

4.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Recommendation implemented.

4.2 The Department has taken responsibility for meeting the urgent needs of individuals. On 16 April 2018, a taskforce was established that made sure eligible people could get the documentation they needed to prove their right to remain in the UK. Once individuals acquire this documentation, public services such as healthcare, benefits and housing become accessible.

4.3 In order to further meet the urgent needs of individuals, an urgent and exceptional payment policy was launched on 17 December 2018, with a very clear purpose to provide support to members of the Windrush cohort who have an urgent and exceptional need, and compelling reasons why this cannot wait for the full compensation scheme.

4.4 The Department launched the Windrush compensation scheme on 3 April 2019, to provide redress to members of the Windrush generation who have suffered a loss due to a lack of appropriate documentation

4b: PAC recommendation: *In the case of housing, it needs to have a better solution and explain how it will secure housing quickly for those in dire need.*

4.5 The Government disagrees with the Committee's recommendation.

4.6 The Department has put in place a dedicated Vulnerable Persons Team (VPT) to provide help and advice where safeguarding and vulnerability issues are identified. By the end of March, the VPT has provided support to 760 individuals with 83 cases ongoing. They continue to receive 10 – 15 new referrals each week. The team have made 313 referrals to the Department for Work and Pensions in relation to fresh claims and reinstatement of benefits, with 198 individuals given advice and support on issues relating to housing.

4.7 The VPT continues to work closely with local authorities and has been successful in securing emergency housing for individuals that have been homeless or are at risk of homelessness without support and assistance. Each local authority will however have their own allocation policies relating to needs of residents, such as medical care, keeping children safe and overcrowding. It is not a simple matter for the Department to affect a Local Authority's decision regarding the residents for whom they have responsibility.

5: PAC conclusion: *The Department has not done enough to identify people, from its own data, that might have been affected. We do not accept that reviewing cases from the wider Commonwealth would be disproportionate.*

5: PAC recommendation: *The Department should extend its historical reviews beyond the Caribbean Commonwealth nationals to include other Commonwealth nations who may have been wrongfully detained, removed or sanctioned under the compliant environment.*

5.1 The Government disagrees with the Committee's recommendation.

5.2 The Government cannot agree with the Committee's recommendation at this time on the basis that the future of the historical cases review remains under consideration.

5.3 The review was established to answer questions from Parliament as to the likely number of Windrush generation individuals who had been removed or detained by the Home Office. The Department extended this review to include individuals subject to proactive compliant environment sanctions. The review was not intended to identify all people affected in all ways by Windrush issues.

5.4 Evidence from the Taskforce shows most ILR/NTL grants made to individuals who came to the UK before 1973 have been to Caribbean Commonwealth nationals. The Department has therefore focused the review on the group of individuals it believes to have been most affected. Over a period of several months, the review has looked at over 11,800 cases from 2002 onwards, the date from which the department's Caseworking Information Database (CID) was used consistently across the immigration system. Extending the review to other nationalities, since the Immigration Act 1971 granted ILR to all nationalities settled in the UK on 1 January 1973, would bring approximately 300,000 additional cases in scope and would take a substantial number of caseworkers around two years to review at a significant cost. Extending in this way would still not identify all people affected in all ways and the department is therefore considering whether this would be the most efficient and effective way of helping those in need. The Department will inform the committee as soon as a decision about the future of the review has been taken.

5.5 The Department recognises, of course, that individuals of other nationalities require help and redress. That is why the primary mechanism by which the Department has sought to right the wrongs experienced by some members of the Windrush generation is the establishment of the Windrush Policy Scheme/Taskforce and the Compensation Scheme which are open to individuals of all nationalities. They are also not limited, as the review is, to those who have been removed, detained or subject to proactive compliant environment sanctions. To raise awareness of both the department has conducted extensive outreach, details of which have been set out in a previous response to the Committee. The Department's future plans and approach to reaching out to affected individuals of all nationalities are set out in the recommendation below.

6: PAC conclusion: *The Department is not doing enough to raise awareness of the help available from the Windrush Scheme to the people who so desperately need it.*

6: PAC recommendation: *The Department should immediately promote the Windrush scheme more proactively, particularly outside of the UK and the Caribbean. It should also clearly communicate the need for people to formalise their immigration status more generally so undocumented residents do not get caught out again. The Department should write to us by the end of March outlining the immediate action it has taken and include an update on the number of people who have engaged with the scheme.*

6.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: Summer 2019

6.2 The Department has started to implement a new phase of engagement and communication activity across the UK and overseas, linked to the Compensation scheme which is open to eligible claimants of all nationalities. 15 compensation scheme events are currently scheduled to be held across the UK, supported by local diaspora media. In addition to these events, the Department has a network of 131 staff volunteers who will be engaging directly with their own faith and community networks to raise awareness of the Taskforce and Compensation Scheme. The Department will also reach out to local stakeholders such as MPs offices, local authorities and community and religious organisations. Press notices have been issued, articles offered to key diaspora publications and social media activity implemented. The Department is also exploring targeted paid media to promote the schemes. To reach people affected overseas, it has been working closely with the Foreign & Commonwealth Office to reach local audiences globally.

6.3 The ongoing development of the Department's engagement and communication activity will be supported by additional analysis to identify potentially affected groups, which pays particular attention to non-Caribbean groups. This will look at data held by the Department, and although this will not be able to identify affected individuals directly, the Department will consider whether it can provide additional evidence which could be used to shape future outreach activity in the UK and overseas. The Department will also commission an independent engagement specialist to provide assurance that its entire outreach programme is effective at reaching potentially affected groups.

6.4 The UK's departure from the EU provides a further opportunity to encourage residents to formalise their immigration status. The Department has already launched a national awareness campaign, is holding monthly meetings with EU citizens' representatives to understand their needs and is planning a range of support for vulnerable groups such as the elderly, children and families, victims of domestic violence and those with limited English language ability. Published staff guidance for the EU Settlement Scheme signposts staff to the Windrush taskforce where an applicant may be eligible for a grant under the Windrush scheme.

6.5 The Department [wrote to the Committee on 10th April](#) with an update as requested.

Eighty-Sixth Report of Session 2017–19

Department for Transport/ CO/ DEFRA

Brexit and the UK border: further progress review

Introduction from the Committee

We examined the government's preparedness for Brexit, particularly should there be no deal with the EU before the end of March, throughout 2018. In our eight reports we expressed concern about the pace of progress and departments' lack of urgency. This remained our key concern when we took evidence in February 2019 from the Department for Transport and the Department for the Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, just 7 weeks before the UK would leave the EU.

The Department for Transport (DfT) is responsible for preparing the transport system for when the UK leaves the EU, including maintaining transport connectivity between the UK and the EU via road, rail, maritime and air. The Department for the Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) is one of the departments most affected by Brexit, with almost all of its areas of responsibility framed by EU legislation, including imports and exports of food, animals and animal products and regulation of the chemical industry. The impact of exiting the EU on the movement of freight at the border forms a key part of preparations within both Departments.

During autumn 2018, the government updated its planning assumptions relating to freight crossing the border should no deal be agreed with the EU. By the end of October, departments agreed a revised worst-case assumption that the normal flow of goods across the short channel crossings could be reduced by up to 87 per cent, with the situation persisting for up to six months. In response to the changed assumptions, DfT developed options to mitigate the risks to freight transport of the UK leaving the EU without a deal. DfT decided to procure additional ferry capacity at ports other than those at the short straits – the Dover to Calais channel crossings. To ensure that services would be in place in time for 29 March 2019, DfT used an unusual exemption to usual procurement processes which allowed it to act outside normal procurement rules on the basis that it was dealing with an emergency. The DfT approached nine companies and after receiving no compliant bids in the first round it opened up bidding the next weekend for 8 days and received three bids. The DfT signed contracts with these three companies. Two of these, Brittany Ferries and DFDS, are long-established ferry companies. The third, Seaborne Freight, is a start-up company which did not operate any services at the time of procurement. Seaborne had not passed normal due diligence. The three contracts were due to provide additional freight capacity equivalent to 11% of the normal flow across the short crossings. On 9 February 2019, DfT announced that it was terminating the contract with Seaborne Freight. The procurement was also subject to a legal challenge from Eurotunnel. On 1 March it was reported that the Department for Transport had come to a £33 million settlement with Eurotunnel in that case. We are seeking information on the costs and implications of the settlement with the Department.

On the basis of a memorandum by the Comptroller and Auditor General, the Committee took evidence, on 13 February 2019, from the Department of Transport (DfT) and the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) about their preparations for Brexit, and particularly the award of contracts for ferry services to provide additional freight capacity. The Committee published its report on 12 March 2019. This is the Government response to the Committee's report.

Relevant reports

- NAO memorandum: [The UK border: preparedness for EU exit update](#)
- PAC report: [Brexit and the UK border: further progress review](#) – Session 2017-19 (HC 1942)

Government responses to the Committee

1: PAC conclusion: *Despite our previous concerns that departments were moving too slowly in preparing for Brexit, planning and action for a no deal scenario has still happened too late in the day.*

2: PAC conclusion: *The Department for Transport and the Department for the Environment, Food & Rural Affairs have been, and remain, over-optimistic in their preparations for a no deal Brexit.*

3: PAC conclusion: *The departments' preparations for Brexit have lacked transparency and stakeholder engagement has been inadequate.*

4: PAC conclusion: *The pace at which the Department for Transport had to procure freight capacity forced it into a rushed and risky approach with significant consequences.*

5: PAC conclusion: *Time has run out for the Department for Transport to procure the level of freight capacity it planned for to help secure the supply of critical goods in a "reasonable worst case" no deal scenario.*

6: PAC conclusion: *We are not convinced that the departments' current plans will be enough to address the practical challenges they would face in the event of no deal.*

7: PAC conclusion: *It is not clear what benefits the department's £33 million settlement with Eurotunnel will secure for the UK.*

8: PAC recommendation: *The Committee commented that Departments have responded to the pressure to prepare for a no-deal Brexit by resorting to taking action which is far from business as usual. Whether a deal is reached with the EU or not, this pressure will eventually ease. The Committee made the following recommendations on the areas where Government should learn from the experience:*

8a: PAC recommendation: *Government must not allow the risky and rushed activity undertaken by departments arising from the pressure to prepare for a no deal Brexit to become business-as-usual.*

8.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: Autumn 2019

8.2 The Government has been preparing for all EU Exit scenarios, and to minimise any disruption in the event of no deal, for over two years. In Autumn 2018, the Government took a decision to intensify and prioritise preparations for a no deal scenario for the then agreed EU Exit date of 29 March 2019.

8.3 Through the efficient and effective delivery of these no deal preparations the Government was able to meet a number of key milestones, while operating under significant uncertainty. Departments, supported by the Centre, were involved in planning at an unprecedented scale, speed and scope to ensure that the risks of no deal could be mitigated as far as possible.

8.4 The Government has now reached an agreement with the EU on an extension of Article 50 to 31 October 2019 at the latest, with the option to leave earlier if a deal is ratified. In light of the extension, Departments will make decisions about the timing and pace for taking their no-deal work forward, while the Government continues to prepare for all EU Exit scenarios.

8b: PAC recommendation: *Government must ensure that the lack of transparency surrounding departments' preparations for Brexit, which impedes proper scrutiny by Parliament and the public, does not continue into the longer term and we believe much of it is unnecessary even in the light of Brexit.*

8.5 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: Autumn 2019.

8.6 The Government takes its obligations around transparency to both Parliament and the wider public seriously. The Government has ensured there has been proportionate and appropriate levels of transparency surrounding departments' preparations for EU Exit, including through the engagement with third parties across government, and in order to enable ongoing scrutiny by Parliament.

8.7 For the next phase the Prime Minister committed, in her statement to Parliament, to being more flexible, open and inclusive in the future in engaging Parliament on the approach to negotiating the future partnership with the European Union.

8.8 It will always be the case that aspects of EU Exit preparations which are subject to continuing policy development or aspects of negotiations with the EU will continue to be sensitive. Whilst some aspects are sufficiently sensitive to require Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs), the use of such agreements by Government is now only by exception. Use of NDAs is scrutinised at a departmental level on an ongoing basis to ensure they remain necessary.

8.9 The Government will continue to provide for ongoing scrutiny by keeping Parliament updated through regular statements, by providing opportunities for debate as well as through supporting the work of select committees and by responding fully to reports. This is in addition to the publication of documents, including from the negotiations themselves. The Government will also continue to work closely with the NAO.

8c: PAC recommendation: *If a deal is reached with the EU, then government should ensure that the time, money and effort which has gone into planning for a potential no deal is used to learn lessons and deliver longer-term improvements to how departments operate.*

8.10 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: Autumn 2019.

8.11 The Government has been preparing to minimise any disruption in the event of no deal. Planning for no deal was necessary to ensure that Departments were fully prepared and risks had been mitigated as far as possible. Given the extension of Article 50 to 31 October 2019, the Government will continue to make all preparations necessary for all scenarios.

8.12 The Government will seek to learn from the work undertaken on no-deal preparations. Departments are looking to identify lessons from the experience of no deal preparations that could be used to enhance the arrangements for the next phase of EU Exit preparations.

8.13 The Government will look to leverage good practice developed. For example, the Government has developed a highly effective partnership model to move resource at pace from departments less impacted by EU Exit to high priority areas, enabling the rapid mobilisation, recruitment and training of people. On borders, the Government will consider how the work done to prepare for no deal can feed into longer term planning for border arrangements post-Exit.

8d: PAC recommendation: *Government needs to be realistic about what freight capacity it will have available for priority supplies and how it would manage that capacity should it be needed. In doing so, it must understand the likely needs of individual departments and the potential users of such capacity, and any interdependencies between them and how it might manage the demand for those priority supplies*

8.14 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Recommendation implemented

8.15 In light of the Article 50 extension, Government has reviewed no deal contingency planning and taken the decision to terminate the contracts with both Brittany Ferries and DFDS. Decisions about the need for Government secured freight capacity for an EU exit date of 31st October will need to be taken as part of wider no deal preparations and in the light of updated planning assumptions.

Eighty-Seventh Report of Session 2017-19

BBC

Renewing the EastEnders set

Introduction from the Committee

EastEnders is broadcast four times a week and had an average audience of 6.6 million in 2017. The EastEnders set, including 'Albert Square', was built in 1984 and the BBC originally planned for it to be used for just two years. It has never been rebuilt and is in poor condition. The BBC is replacing the external set and other core infrastructure at BBC Elstree Centre as part of a project called 'E20', which alongside other objectives, aims to improve audience engagement with EastEnders. A new external set is being built (on the 'Front Lot') using brick structures rather than the current facades that prevent filming in high-definition. The current set has also caused filming delays due to increased health and safety concerns. The BBC also plans to enlarge the site available for filming. The current external set will be demolished to provide new locations (on the 'Back Lot') to better reflect modern East-End London and allow a broader range of storylines. In 2013, the BBC planned E20 would cost £60 million and complete in August 2018. Subsequently, in 2015, it revised the scope of the project — planning for it to finish in October 2020 at the same cost. The BBC now forecasts that E20 will cost £87 million (a 45 per cent increase) and finish in May 2023 — nearly five years later than originally planned.

Based on a report by the National Audit Office, the Committee took evidence on 30 January 2019 from the BBC. The Committee published its report on 20 March 2019.

Relevant Reports

- NAO report: [Renewing the EastEnders set](#) – Session 2017-19 (HC 1782)
- PAC report: [Renewing the EastEnders set](#) - Session 2017-19 (HC 1737)

Government responses to the Committee

The BBC will respond separately to the Committee's recommendations and update, where necessary, progress on implementing accepted recommendations.

Eighty-Eighth Report of Session 2017-19

Department for Education

Transforming Children's Services

Introduction from the Committee

The Department for Education (the Department) has policy responsibility for children's social care services in England, and has the strategic vision that all vulnerable children should have access to high-quality support by 2022. Local authorities in England have statutory responsibility for protecting the welfare of children and delivering children's social care. At 31 March 2018 there were more than 400,000 children in need in England, and more than 75,000 children in care.

Between 2010–11 and 2017–18 the number of referrals to children's social care increased broadly in line with population growth. In contrast, over the same period there was a 77% increase in child protection assessments, and a 26% increase in the number of cases where local authorities considered actual harm or neglect to have been demonstrated. There was also an increase of 15% in the most expensive and serious cases, where children are taken into care. In 2017–18, local authorities spent £8.8 billion on children's social care. Ninety-one per cent of local authorities overspent on their children's social care in 2017–18, leading to a total national overspend of £872 million.

Based on a report by the National Audit Office, the Committee took evidence on 4 February 2019 from the Department of Education (the Department) about pressures on children's social care. On the same day the Committee also took evidence from two local authorities - Oxfordshire County Council and Northumberland County Council - and a children's charity, the Family Rights Group. The Committee published its report on 22 March 2019. This is the Government response to the Committee's report.

Relevant Reports

- NAO report: [Pressures on children's social care](#) – Session 2017-19 (HC 1868)
- PAC report: [Transforming children's services](#) – Session 2017-19 (HC 1741)

Government responses to the Committee

1: PAC conclusion: *The Department cannot explain why there is so much variation between local authorities in the activity and cost of children's social care.*

1a: PAC recommendation: *The Department should set out by December 2019:*

- ***data on the costs and quality of children's social care for each local authority in England, which is easily accessible publicly and enables comparison between authorities;***
- ***the key factors contributing to the variation across local authorities;***
- ***the action it is taking to reduce variation.***

1.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: December 2019

1.2 The Department currently publishes local authority (LA) level data on a range of service measures, including expenditure data. Much of this data is published in the Local Authority Interactive Tool (LAIT). The Department knows some of the drivers of variation in child in need episodes – including deprivation, parental drug and alcohol use. It is currently engaging in four areas of work to improve the accessibility and range of information and data available to improve understanding of variation across local authorities:

- it has commissioned a report by the Rees Centre at the University of Oxford. This will set out findings from research that explores the reasons for variation in the costs of providing children's social care services;

- it is considering the best approach and method for calculating up-to-date statistical neighbours. This will allow LAs to identify a closer, more appropriate LA against whom to compare service performance; and
- it is considering ways to present better data within the LAIT. The recent [adoption scorecards](#) illustrate the potential for making data more easily accessible to LA leaders and practitioners;
- it is also using data to target the delivery of key programmes. For example, the Strengthening Families, Protecting Children programme will provide funding to up to 20 councils funding to help improve their practice, supporting families to stay together wherever appropriate, so that fewer children need to be taken into care and giving them the best chance to succeed in life.

1b: PAC recommendation: *The Department should set out by December 2019 its future targets for limiting the levels of variation between LAs in cost and quality of children's social care. The Department should also set out by December 2019 the thresholds it deems acceptable for (i) rate of children in need episodes, and (ii) amount spent per child in need episode.*

1.3 The Government disagrees with the Committee's recommendation.

1.4 There is a single, national legislative framework for safeguarding and child protection in England. However, a principle enshrined since the Children Act 1989, is that children's social care is delivered locally. LAs are best placed to identify, assess and respond to local priorities, and it is important that they set criteria for accessing services that reflect the needs of children and families in the area. To ensure that thresholds are set appropriately, Ofsted will scrutinise them as part of inspections, and this is factored into their judgements on the quality of local services.

1.5 It would be neither feasible nor productive to set rates centrally. Centrally set targets risk getting in the way of the right decisions for children and families and detracting from the expertise of social workers. The Department believes in giving LAs the freedom to exercise judgement, within the legislative framework, as set out in the 2012 [Munro Review of Child Protection](#). This allows them to respond to new or rising need, such as child sexual and criminal exploitation, in real time, ensuring that children get the support they need.

1.6 While some variation is inevitable, the Department agrees that inconsistency in the quality of services and practice is not. The best way to address these issues is through: improving children's services, and tackling poor performance; improving the quality of social work; and building and spreading evidence of what works.

2: PAC conclusion: *The Department does not possess a comprehensive assessment of the sustainability or resource needs of children's social care services.*

2a: PAC recommendation: *By September 2019, the Department should decide how it will assess and monitor the cost effectiveness of children's social care in inspected local authorities. Based on what it decides, the Department should commit to regular reporting on cost effectiveness, incorporating ratings on how well authorities use resources.*

2.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: December 2019

2.2 The Department agrees with the Committee that it is important to monitor the cost effectiveness as well as the quality of children's social care. Examining cost effectiveness and variation in spend between LAs is a key component of the Department's and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG's) preparations for the next Spending Review. The question of the cost effectiveness of children's social care services is, of course, bound up with wider local Government cost effectiveness which is a matter for individual councils and for MHCLG. As Jonathan Slater, Permanent

Secretary at the Department for Education, said during his oral evidence to the Committee, Ofsted's inspection of the quality of children's social care examines one key determinant of cost effectiveness. The Department will work closely with MHCLG, and other departments, to determine the most effective way to monitor cost effectiveness, aligning this work with MHCLG's plans to expand their approach to oversight of local government accountability, as set out in the *Right Hon James Brokenshire's letters to the Chairs of the HCLG Committee and Local Government Association of 25 March 2019*¹. Given the interconnectedness of the work, the Department will report back to the Committee on progress by December 2019.

2b: PAC recommendation: *By September 2019, the Department should also set out what action it has taken to encourage the take-up of good practice in children's social care across local authorities and how it will assess take-up. This should include progress updates on the work of its What Works Centre for children's social care and its Partners in Practice Programme. It should include specific examples of how this work has benefited vulnerable families and children.*

2.3 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: September 2019

2.4 By September 2019, the Department will set out how it intends to scale and spread the best emerging practice from the children's social care Innovation Programme, subject to the outcomes of any Spending Review. This will include setting out, in more detail, how the Strengthening Families, Protecting Children programme will invest £84 million over the next five years in up to 20 LAs to support further take up of good practice from three of the most promising projects. The What Works Centre (WWC) for Children's Social Care is already building the evidence base by working with 45 LAs on active research projects, ranging from social workers in schools to testing devolved budgets. They are already publishing accessible summaries of their evidence about 'what works' in a free online 'Evidence Store', adding to the bank of evidence from independent evaluations of all of the Innovation Programme projects available on the Innovation Programme website. Their work is also looking at what is the most effective way to access and use the findings to improve frontline practice for children and families.

2.5 The 15 Partners in Practice (PiPs) have been working with over 70 LAs to support improvement in other authorities and are providing intelligence on the key features leading to excellent social work practice and systems. Evaluations are ongoing and by September 2019 the Department will be clearer on how this learning will disseminated more widely in the next Spending Review period.

3: PAC conclusion: *The increasing use, and high cost, of residential care places local authorities under extreme financial pressure.*

3: PAC recommendation: *The Department should set out by December 2019 how it will work with local authorities to manage the supply of high quality and cost-effective residential care and match this to demand.*

3.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: December 2019

3.2 The number of children in care is increasing at a faster rate than the number of care placements. The Department is working with local partners and the Residential Care Leadership Board to gain a better understanding of system capacity, and develop a strategic approach to sufficiency planning and more effective commissioning, underpinned by a better local needs analysis.

¹ <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-committees/communities-and-local-government/2017-19-Correspondence/190326%20SoS%20to%20Chair%20re%20LA%20Oversight.pdf>

3.3 This builds on ongoing work, including the commitments in [Fostering Better Outcomes](#) (2018), which sets out how Government will deliver improvements to the commissioning of fostering placements, for example by providing seed funding to partnerships to increase sufficiency of foster placements.

3.4 Other work already under way includes providing funding through part of our £200 million children's social care Innovation Programme to projects designed to increase capacity and improve commissioning practice, with a focus on residential care. Two of the projects are testing sub-regional approaches to increase placement choice and ensure value for money for local authorities. The third project is setting up an alternative to residential care by providing targeted support to those on the edge of secure care.

3.5 The Department is also working with other departments and agencies to address capacity issues within the children's secure estate. The Department continues to provide capital funding to improve facilities at secure children's homes and build bed capacity. In addition, the Department together with the Ministry of Justice and NHS England is developing new commissioning arrangements for secure children's homes placements to align better supply with demand.

4: PAC conclusion: *There is a lack of evidence on the effectiveness of early interventions in children's social care.*

4a: PAC recommendation: *To reduce variation across local authorities in pre-proceedings support, we concur with the recommendation of The Family Rights Group in their 2018 Care Crisis Review that the Department should set up a working group - with representation from legal and social work practitioners and families - to improve and standardise existing pre-proceedings guidance.*

4.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: December 2019

4.2 There is activity already underway that will deliver this recommendation. Recent work undertaken by the Department has led to the development of a work programme, to be overseen by the national Family Justice Board, which seeks to address local variation in decision-making and practice, including the use of pre-proceedings. Alongside this, the President of the Family Division has convened a Public Law Working Group, which has brought together practitioners from across the sector to look in more detail at particular issues in public law and how practice can be improved, including pre-proceedings practice and guidance. The Public Law Working Group includes representatives from across the family justice system including from Local Authorities, Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass - who represent the interests of children involved in family court proceedings), and the judiciary. The Department is working closely with this group, and, depending on the outcome of this work, will consider whether changes are necessary to the department's statutory guidance.

4b: PAC recommendation: *The Department should set out by September 2019 how the What Works Centre will identify cost-effective early interventions and how it will spread this knowledge through its programme of good practice.*

4.3 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: September 2019

4.4 The What Works Centre (WWC) is in its set up phase and is working closely with the children's social care sector and with children and families to generate, share and demonstrate how best to use evidence to drive improved outcomes. The WWC has launched its "Practice in Need of Evidence" (PINE) programme working with LAs to develop research and evaluation around practice that they have identified as promising. In addition, the Happier, Healthier Professionals programme is working with over 20 LAs on research which will report by September 2019 on the effectiveness of low cost interventions to support social workers.

4.5 The WWC is also in the process of agreeing partnerships with training providers and universities to help disseminate findings from research. An Evidence Store, underpinned by systematic reviews of evidence, will continue to be updated by the WWC as the evidence base grows, providing a trusted starting point into what works. The WWC has adopted the EMMIE framework as their evidence standards, enabling them to present evidence about the effectiveness of a particular intervention and the cost effectiveness.

4.6 The Department, with other government departments, also provides funding to the Early Intervention Foundation (EIF). The EIF has worked with over 50 local areas to provide an evidenced based approach to developing early intervention, with a particular focus on providing information that practitioners and decision-makers can use to implement cost effective services.

5: PAC conclusion: *The Department has not set out what overall improvement it is seeking in children's social care by 2022.*

5: PAC recommendation: *The Department should write to us setting out the quality of children's social care it is seeking to achieve by 2022 and how it will measure this. It should specify a percentage target for how many authorities it is aiming to be rated as "Good" or "Outstanding" by 2022. It should do this in a fuller letter accompanying the Treasury Minute response to our report.*

5.1 The Government disagrees with the Committee's recommendation.

5.2 The Department will write separately to the Committee about this recommendation. Having set out a clear public ambition to reduce the number of LAs rated inadequate to fewer than 10% by 2022, the Department agrees that it should also be aiming to see as many authorities as possible rated good or outstanding by 2022. However, the extent of that ambition will depend on the outcome of the next Spending Review, both in terms of the local government finance settlement and the Department's own programme budget.

6: PAC conclusion: *There is little evidence of strong cross-government collaboration in improving children's social care.*

6: PAC recommendation: *The Department should develop and lead on a cross-government strategy for raising quality in children's social care, with a cross-government approach agreed by December 2019.*

6.1 The Government disagrees with the Committee's recommendation.

6.2 While the Government agrees with the central importance of effective cross-Government working in this space, it does not agree with the recommendation to have a new and separate strategy.

6.3 The Department is committed to working with other government departments on important aspects of children's social care. This includes better supporting those with alcohol-dependent parents, the introduction of landmark legislation for those affected by domestic abuse, preventing young people being drawn into serious violence, and unprecedented investment in early years education and support for children and young people's mental health. The Department is also:

- working with the Ministry of Justice to develop a work plan to be delivered by the national Family Justice Board to bring greater consistency in decision-making and practice that contribute to local variation;
- part of a cross-government group overseeing the implementation of the new arrangements to improve multi agency working, with new duties on police, health and the local authorities;
- in the middle of an intensive programme of work on children's services costs and pressures in advance of this year's Spending Review. It is working closely with MHCLG, HM Treasury and the wider sector to make sure this work is informed by the best available evidence.

- working with the Department of Health and Social Care to creating a joint workforce board. This will provide strategic oversight of workforce issues and co-ordinate implementation of programmes to support trainee social workers, improve initial social work education and develop professional pathways.

6.4 The Department considers the current arrangements are effective and adding further cross-government approaches at this stage would detract from existing work. The Department will be happy to update the Committee on progress in working with other departments by December 2019.

Eighty-Ninth Report of Session 2017-19

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

Public cost of decommissioning oil and gas infrastructure

Introduction from the Committee

The UK's offshore oil and gas reserves are running out. As a result, oil and gas companies are increasingly decommissioning assets that are no longer extracting resources profitably. Decommissioning means plugging and abandoning wells and removing structures, such as platforms, to return the seabed to its natural state as far as possible in accordance with international regulations. Oil and gas companies have spent more than £1 billion on decommissioning in each year since 2014. The OGA expects decommissioning to cost between £45 billion and £77 billion overall, with most expenditure in the next 20 years. HMRC estimates that taxpayers will contribute £24 billion to the cost of decommissioning through tax reliefs. Taxpayers are additionally liable for the cost of decommissioning assets that oil and gas companies cannot afford to decommission themselves. The Department has overall responsibility for the safe, cost-effective and environmentally sensitive decommissioning of offshore oil and gas infrastructure. In 2015, it established the OGA to work with oil and gas companies to reduce the overall cost of decommissioning. The Department also monitors the financial health of oil and gas companies and can require companies to set aside money to pay for future decommissioning if it thinks there is a risk of the bill falling to taxpayers.

Based on a report by the National Audit Office, the Committee took evidence, on 11 February 2019 from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (the Department) and the Oil and Gas Authority (the OGA). The Committee published its report on 27 March 2019. This is the Government response to the Committee's report.

Relevant reports

- NAO report: [Oil and Gas in the UK - Offshore Decommissioning](#) – Session 2017 – 19 (HC 1870)
- PAC report: [Public Cost of decommissioning oil and gas infrastructure](#) – Session 2017-19 (HC 1742)
- Department publication: [Clean Growth Strategy](#) – published in October 2017
- Department publication: [UK Carbon Capture Usage and Storage deployment pathway: an action plan – published in November 2018](#)

Government responses to the Committee

1: PAC conclusion: *There is significant uncertainty over the potential costs to taxpayers of decommissioning offshore oil and gas assets.*

1: PAC recommendation: *As part of its next estimate of decommissioning costs, expected in June 2019, the OGA should set out how it is making its estimate more certain and what the expected impact of new and as-yet uncosted projects could be.*

1.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: July 2019

1.2 The [report](#) by the Committee sets out the scale of North Sea decommissioning work which will be required as UK oil and gas fields come to the end of production. The Oil and Gas Authority's (OGA) Key Performance Indicators include a 35% reduction in forecast total decommissioning costs from the 2017 baseline estimate by the end of 2022, and improving cost certainty so that 90% of operator cost estimates from the OGA's annual Stewardship Survey meet the required specification in our new Stewardship Expectations by the end of 2021.

1.3 This is an ambitious goal, and the OGA has already set out a framework to achieve that by, for example, benchmarking actual costs to assess future estimates, and promoting innovative collaboration between operators. In the OGA's 2019 Decommissioning Cost Estimate Report, the OGA will include an update on the cost estimate certainty and the actions in place to further improve this. In addition, the OGA will ensure that the cost report clearly sets out the impact of currently unsanctioned future projects.

2: PAC conclusion: *It is unclear how actions taken by the Department and the OGA are reducing decommissioning costs for oil and gas companies.*

2: PAC recommendation: *The Department and the OGA should set out by July, and report to Parliament annually thereafter, on: the direct impact it has had on reducing decommissioning costs; and the actual decommissioning costs incurred during the previous year set against what the OGA had forecast.*

2.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: July 2019

2.2 The industry will reduce cost and risk through experience gained during project delivery, improving project cost estimation and developing business and contractual models. The role of the OGA will be critical to ensure all these areas are effectively worked and best practice and lessons learnt are shared.

2.3 The Department will continue to work with the OGA and HMT to review progress in delivering the OGA cost reduction target. In the OGA's 2019 Decommissioning Cost Estimate Report the OGA will provide an analysis of decommissioning actual costs against forecast and set out how the OGA is influencing and impacting cost improvement and will submit this annually to Parliament.

3: PAC conclusion: *The Department does not yet have a clear plan to ensure the UK maximises the benefit of developing exportable decommissioning skills and resources.*

3: PAC recommendation: *The Department should set out by July its strategy for maximising the economic benefit of the development and export of decommissioning skills and resources.*

3.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: Autumn 2019

3.2 The Government shares the views of the Committee in respect of the opportunity for the UK to become a leader in decommissioning skills and technology that can be exported to other oil and gas producing regions of the world. The Department launched the call for evidence on '[Strengthening the UK's offshore oil and gas decommissioning industry](#),' on 13 March 2019 and it is due to close on 8 May 2019.

3.3 The call for evidence seeks views on what the UK's core strengths in decommissioning are currently and which specific capabilities of the decommissioning value chain have the greatest potential for export. The Department's expectation is that responses to this consultation will provide evidence to indicate how the UK can retain and maximise the benefits of these potential exports so that the UK does not lose out to competitors. This evidence will allow government, industry and OGA to assess the relative strengths of the UK decommissioning industry and will contribute to a strategic and coordinated approach to policy, to ensure that UK businesses benefit from the opportunities that are expected to arise. Government will set out a response to the call for evidence in due course.

4: PAC conclusion: *The Department has a worrying lack of understanding of the potential for government liabilities to decommission assets used in fracking.*

4: PAC recommendation: *The Department should write to the Committee by the end of June 2019 explaining the decommissioning arrangements for fracking, including a full and clear explanation of the responsibility for subsequent costs once licences have been returned to the Government, and what it is doing to prevent liabilities falling to taxpayers.*

4.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Recommendation implemented

4.2 The Government will write to the Committee alongside this response to set out the decommissioning arrangements for hydraulic fracturing.

5: PAC conclusion: *Government support for oil and gas may become incompatible with its long-term climate change objectives.*

5: PAC recommendation: *The Department should set out as part of its energy White Paper, expected during 2019, how it will continue to ensure that government support for oil and gas remains compatible with its wider energy objectives.*

5.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: Summer 2019

5.2 While transitioning to a low carbon economy, the Government recognises that there is a need for oil and gas to continue to provide a source of energy for some time to come, particularly for transport and heating. The 2019 Energy White Paper will set out how oil and gas in the country's energy mix is compatible with the government's long-term climate goals as set out in the [Clean Growth Strategy](#).

5.3 The White Paper will cover the Government's support for upstream exploration and production businesses via the strategy to maximise economic recovery from the UK Continental Shelf (UKCS). The UK's oil and gas sector is part of the transition to a low carbon economy, through the diversification of oil and gas producers into clean growth sectors and the application of the knowledge and experience in the supply chain to new technologies such as carbon capture, use and storage and renewables.

6: PAC conclusion: *There is uncertainty over whether carbon capture, usage and storage (CCUS) will become a viable option for reusing oil and gas assets.*

6: PAC recommendation: *The Department should, as part of its Treasury Minute response, set out its expected timetable for CCUS deployment and how this aligns with the latest indications of when oil and gas companies will decommission their assets.*

6.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Recommendation implemented

6.2 In the [Clean Growth Strategy](#), launched in October 2017, the government set out the ambition to have the option to deploy carbon capture usage and storage (CCUS) at scale in the 2030s, subject to costs reducing sufficiently. The [UK Carbon Capture Usage and Storage deployment pathway: an action plan](#), (November 2018), is designed to enable the development of the first CCUS facility in the UK, commissioning from the mid-2020s. This will be a key step towards achieving the ambition set out in the Clean Growth Strategy. The action plan includes an indicative timetable for deploying the first CCUS facility in the UK (Figure 2).

6.3 Decommissioning of assets is, in the main, driven by the associated field ceasing production. For Cessation of Production (CoP) to be approved, owners of infrastructure must satisfy the OGA that all viable options for continued infrastructure use have been suitably explored, including alternative uses. During field late life, operators also liaise with the Department's Offshore Petroleum Regulator for Environment and Decommissioning (OPRED) with regards to their decommissioning plans for the assets. This information is commercially sensitive and is therefore not in the public domain.

6.4 The Government recognises that some oil and gas assets which may be suitable for re-use for CCUS projects could be scheduled for decommissioning during the timeframe outlined in the CCUS deployment timeline. The Action Plan sets out the Department's objectives to work with industry and regulatory stakeholders, including the OGA, to identify existing infrastructure that could be re-used to support CCUS projects and to develop a policy on re-use of infrastructure for the purpose of CCUS.

Ninetieth Report of Session 2017-19

BBC

BBC Engagement with Personal Services

Introduction from the Committee

In 2017–18, around 60,000 freelancers worked for the BBC, including presenters, actors, entertainers and off-air workers. It hired some of these through personal service companies (PSCs), limited companies that usually have a sole director, who owns most or all of the company's shares, and who provide that individual's personal services through a contract between the client, in this case the BBC, and the PSC. During the course of the inquiry we received evidence from some presenters which showed that, despite already being on a staff contract, they had been forced to set up PSCs to retain their jobs. In 2017–18, the BBC had contracts in place with 5,145 PSCs, on which it spent £84 million. We previously examined the BBC's use of PSCs in 2012 as part of our inquiry into off-payroll working in the public sector. In the late 1990s, the government was concerned that some people were using, or were being encouraged to use, intermediaries, such as PSCs, to avoid paying the correct amount of tax. In response, the government introduced legislation in the Finance Act 2000, commonly known as IR35, that aims to ensure that people who do the same job in the same way pay similar amounts of income tax and national insurance, whether they are employed directly or working through a PSC.

Individuals working through a PSC can be treated as employed or self-employed for tax purposes, depending on the nature of their work, and therefore pay different amounts of tax. Prior to April 2017, the PSC was responsible for assessing the employment status of the individual concerned. HMRC told us that between 2000 and 2017 there was a very high rate of non-compliance with PSCs not paying the correct amount of tax. Therefore, in April 2017, the government reformed the system so that public bodies, such as the BBC, became responsible for determining the employment status for tax purposes of the people they hired through PSCs. This meant that the BBC then became responsible for deducting income tax and national insurance from payments from those it engaged through PSCs if it deemed they were employed for tax purposes. Between August 2017 and June 2018, the BBC deemed 92% of its on-air freelancers as employed for tax purposes. HMRC introduced the Check Employment Status for Tax (CEST) tool to help organisations determine the employment status of the PSCs they hire. The BBC criticised the time it had been given to prepare for the changes in its responsibilities and to implement the tool, which was less than the private sector has subsequently been given.

Based on a report by the National Audit Office, the Committee took evidence, on 30 January from the BBC. The Committee published its report on 5 April 2019. This is the Government response to the Committee's report.

Relevant Reports

- NAO report: [Investigation into the BBC's engagement with personal service companies](#) - Session 2017-19 (HC 1677)
- PAC report: [BBC and personal service companies](#) – Session 2017-19 (HC 1522)

BBC responses to the Committee

The BBC will respond directly to the Committee to the recommendations in the report.

Ninety-First Report of Session 2017-19

Department of Health and Social Care

NHS financial sustainability: progress review

Introduction from the Committee

The Department of Health & Social Care (the Department) has overall responsibility for healthcare services. It is accountable to Parliament for ensuring that its spending, as well as spending by NHS England, NHS Improvement, other arm's-length bodies and local NHS bodies, is contained within the overall budget authorised by Parliament. For the NHS to be sustainable, it needs to manage patient demand, the quality and safety of services, and remain within the resources given to it. Most of the funding allocated to the Department is given to NHS England to plan and pay for NHS services. In 2017–18, this amounted to £109.5 billion, with most of this spent by 207 clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) which purchased services from 232 NHS trusts and NHS foundation trusts (trusts).

In June 2018, the Prime Minister announced a long-term funding settlement for the NHS, which will see NHS England's budget rise by an extra £20.5 billion by 2023–24, this equates to an average annual real-terms increase of 3.4%. The Government asked NHS England to produce a 10-year plan that aims to ensure that this additional funding is well spent. The NHS Long Term Plan was published in January 2019 and is designed to show how the NHS aims to achieve several tests and priorities set by the government.

Based on a report by the National Audit Office, the Committee took evidence from the Department of Health and Social Care on Monday 25 February 2019. The Committee published its report on 3rd April 2019. This is the Government response to the Committee's report.

Relevant Reports

- NAO report: [NHS financial sustainability - Session 2017-19 \(HC 1867\)](#)
- PAC report: [NHS financial sustainability: progress review - Session 2017-19 \(HC 1743\)](#)
- Government report: [NHS Long Term Plan](#)

Government responses to the Committee

1: PAC conclusion: *Although the NHS nearly achieved financial balance in 2017–18, this overall picture masks the significant disparities in financial performance of individual trusts and CCGs.*

1: PAC recommendation: *National bodies need to ensure that planning guidance for 2020–21 clarifies the arrangements and timeline for achieving annual financial balance as well as dealing with historic debt, in those organisations with the largest deficits. NHS England should write to us by September 2019 to provide an update on how this guidance is progressing.*

1.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: Spring 2019

1.2 In the *NHS Long Term Plan*, NHS England and NHS Improvement committed to continuing to balance the NHS financial position nationally, returning the provider sector to balance in 2020-21, and returning all NHS organisations to balance by 2023-24. NHS England and NHS Improvement also announced the creation of a new Financial Recovery Fund to support trusts to return to balance, provided they agree financial recovery plans with NHS England and NHS Improvement regional teams.

1.3 NHS England and NHS Improvement will be publishing the *NHS Long Term Plan Implementation Framework* in spring 2019, which will commence the process of four-year system planning on the basis of these financial commitments. Over the following months further financial information will be released to support the development of these plans.

1.4 The Department recognises that the stock of debt in providers has increased in recent years and that interest paid on loans can increase the challenge in some providers. It is important to stress, however, that interest is a circular flow that goes back into the NHS funding envelope - it is not lost to the NHS. The Department has been undertaking a review of its provider financing framework, which includes reviewing options for debt restructuring to support provider financial recovery plans.

2: PAC conclusion: *The NHS will not be able to deliver on the Long Term Plan unless it addresses staffing shortages.*

2: PAC recommendation: *The Department should write to us by July 2019, setting out how issues with the recruitment and retention of NHS staff will be addressed and reflected in the workforce strategy.*

2.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: Spring 2019

2.2 The NHS is developing a People Plan (or workforce strategy), as part of the overall approach to implementing the *NHS Long Term Plan*.

2.3 The People Plan – to be published in two stages – will specifically address recruitment and retention of NHS staff, as well as wider workforce issues. An interim plan is due for publication in spring 2019 and will include a 2019-20 action plan together with a more detailed vision of how the NHS workforce will transform over the next ten years. A full People Plan will follow within two months of the conclusion of the Government's Spending Review.

3: PAC conclusion: *The long-term funding settlement for the NHS was not accompanied by funding announcements for capital, social care, public health and education and training.*

3: PAC recommendation: *When reporting back to us by the end of July 2019, the Department, along with NHS England and NHS Improvement, should clarify the assumptions that sustainability and transformation partnerships and integrated care systems need to be working to in developing their long-term plans. These include the assumptions on capital, social care, education and training, and public health funding.*

3.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: Spring 2019

3.2 NHS England and NHS Improvement will publish the *NHS Long Term Plan Implementation Framework* in spring 2019, which will commence the process of five-year system planning and set out the key assumptions that local systems can make in advance of the Government's Spending Review and decisions are made on social care, capital, education and training and public health.

4: PAC conclusion: *We remain concerned that year-on-year transfers of capital allocations to revenue are having an adverse impact on patient services and care.*

4: PAC recommendation: *By October 2019, the Department should provide a breakdown of its capital budget for 2019–20 and how this is being earmarked against a specific set of investment priorities and risks such as backlog maintenance.*

4.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: Autumn 2019

4.2 The Department's capital budget in 2019-20 is £5.9 billion² around £1.3 billion (30%) higher than it was in 2016-17. This partly reflects significant additional capital funding provided by the Government (£3.9 billion between 2017-18 and 2022-23), and partly reductions in the capital to revenue switch from a peak of £1.2 billion to around £500 million in 2019-20. The Department has made planned and time-limited capital to revenue switches to provide flexibility to meet the overall priorities of the NHS. These switches are then formalised each year as required by HM Treasury. The Government remains committed to phasing out the capital to revenue switches by 2020-21.

4.3 The Department is working with NHS Improvement and NHS England to agree how the 2019-20 NHS capital budget will be prioritised and will provide a breakdown by October 2019. The majority of NHS capital investment is self-funded by individual NHS providers. NHS planning guidance for 2019-20 has been clear that local organisations should set out how their proposed capital investments are consistent with their clinical strategies and how they demonstrate the delivery of safe, productive services that are affordable to the organisation.

4.4 The Department is also working with other arm's-length bodies and delivery partners on elements of the overall capital budget that do not flow through NHS England or NHS provider organisations. Future capital priorities, including to support delivery of the *NHS Long Term Plan*, will be considered as part of the Government's Spending Review, which will set future years capital budgets

5: PAC conclusion: *The rising demand for NHS services is not sufficiently well understood.*

5a: PAC recommendation: *By September 2019, NHS England and NHS Improvement should write to us to set out how they will:*

- ***help local bodies better understand the demand for services, what is driving that demand and how demand could be better met.***

5.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: Autumn 2019

5.2 The *NHS Long Term Plan* sets out plans to transform the way services are delivered and meet the rising demand, reducing reliance on in-hospital provision and developing improved out-of-hospital services, for example primary care networks, community care and mental health services. Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships and Integrated Care Systems will set out how they will transform services to better manage the increasing demand through their five-year plans later in 2019.

5.3 NHS England and NHS Improvement make a range of information about demand available to systems and their providers and commissioners through the Model Hospital tool, Right Care packs, the Population Health Management dashboard and the Future NHS collaboration platform. This provides intelligence about comparative levels of, and growth in, demand and what that is comprised of.

5b: PAC recommendation:

- ***ensure that a better understanding of how demand is reflected in resource allocation; and***

5.4 The Government disagrees with the Committee's recommendation.

² *Central Government Supply Estimates 2019-20: Main Supply Estimates (May 2019)* <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/main-supply-estimates-2019-to-2020>

Target implementation date: Summer 2019

5.5 The resource allocation formulae do not seek to model demand but rather variation in need. As in previous years, NHS England and NHS Improvement will shortly publish detailed technical annexes that update on how the variation in need across England is calculated to inform the allocations formulae. Updates to 2019-20 allocations include new assessments of the need for community care and mental health services. This will set out how need is modelled to vary with factors like age, deprivation and past diagnoses.

5.6 Need weightings differ from demand weightings as they exclude variations such as where areas have historically provided more or less services of a particular type, or have actively or inadvertently encouraged or discouraged activity of particular types. In order to ensure equity, the allocations formulae deliberately exclude these variations in demand that cannot be shown to be related to variations in need.

5c: PAC recommendation:

- ***ensure that activity plans of local bodies are realistic and take account of the needs of patients.***

5.7 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: Autumn 2019

5.8 In response to the *NHS Long Term Plan*, Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STPs) will be required to submit five-year strategic plans, NHS England and NHS Improvement regional teams will be charged with assuring that these plans are realistic and take account of the needs of patients in the STP areas. Each year clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) and providers submit activity plans to NHS England and NHS Improvement, these plans are reviewed by regional teams and an iterative process is entered into with CCGs and providers to refine these plans so that they are realistic, take account of the needs of patients and are affordable.

6: PAC conclusion: *The success of integrated care systems may be impeded because they are not statutory bodies, and so rely on the goodwill and effective relationships of the organisations involved.*

6: PAC recommendation: *The Department, with NHS England and NHS Improvement, should write to us by July 2019 defining the governance arrangements for effective integrated care systems; detail how they will align individual NHS bodies' responsibilities to improve system management including assumptions regarding suggested legislative changes, and how they will support those areas where partnership working is less well developed.*

6.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: Summer 2019

6.2 The *NHS Long Term Plan* (LTP) sets out the governance requirements for Integrated Care Systems (ICSs). NHS England and NHS Improvement have a nationally agreed appointments process for Independent Chairs and STP leads and continue to work with regional teams to agree appropriate arrangements for each ICS and share best practice. However, as outlined in the LTP, NHS England and NHS Improvement's approach to delivery will balance national direction with local autonomy to secure the best outcomes for patients.

6.3 The LTP is focussed on system-wide performance. The ICS Financial Framework incentivises system working and NHS England and NHS Improvement will develop a new performance and improvement framework in 2019-20 that encourages collective accountability. While the NHS can deliver the ambitions in the LTP without legislative changes, NHS England and NHS Improvement have recently published proposals³ for future change, and are currently undertaking a public engagement exercise to understand the views of patients, staff and partner organisations on these proposed changes. After this engagement process, Government will consider these suggestions further and set out the next steps. A decision to bring forward legislation will be made by Government in line with decisions on the allocation of parliamentary time.

6.4 ICSs will cover all of England by April 2021. NHS England and NHS Improvement will continue to support their development through four key activities:

- a system diagnostic that allows systems to self-assess their maturity;
- agreeing key areas of focus as part of systems' five-year plans;
- deploying tailored national support offers; and
- reinforcing system-based behaviours within NHS England and NHS Improvement by evolving the operating model.

³ *Implementing the Long Term Plan - Proposals for possible changes to legislation* <https://www.longtermplan.nhs.uk/publication/implementing-the-nhs-long-term-plan>.

Proposals aim to support joint decision making by commissioners and providers, promote collaboration, increase payment flexibility, achieve better value, allow for integrated care provision, and establish a new shared responsibility for all NHS organisations

Ninety-Second Report of Session 2017-19

Department for Transport

Crossrail: progress review

Introduction from the Committee

Crossrail is a major programme to run new rail services between Reading and Heathrow Airport, through a new underground section beneath central London, to Shenfield in Essex and Abbey Wood in south-east London. The new line, to be called the Elizabeth line, aims to reduce congestion and journey times, increase capacity in London's transport network and support economic growth. This is a much-needed programme for commuters who currently experience over-crowded trains and rail lines which are stretched to capacity. When complete, the new railway will be around 73 miles (118km) long, with around 26 miles (42km) of new tunnels. Ten new stations are being built and a further 31 are being improved. The Department for Transport (the Department) and Transport for London (TfL) are jointly sponsoring the programme. Crossrail Limited is an arm's-length body specifically created to deliver the programme and is wholly-owned by TfL. In Spending Review 2010 the programme sponsors set a total funding package of £14.8 billion for the programme, including contingency but excluding the trains and main depot. Services were scheduled to start running through the central section in December 2018 and a full east-west service from December 2019. Some services are already running on the western and eastern ends of the line, but services have not yet begun through the central section. Now, services are not due to run until 2020, yet there is no guarantee that they will run by this date. Given the major delays and management issues that have so far blighted this programme, we are sceptical that this target date will be met. It is disappointing to us to see a programme that at first seemed so promising unravel so quickly and fall victim to the same project management issues so frequently experienced across Whitehall.

On the basis of a memorandum report by the Comptroller and Auditor General, the committee took evidence, on 6 March 2019, from the Department for Transport (the Department) and Crossrail Ltd about the Crossrail programme. The Department and Transport for London (TfL) are joint sponsors of the programme. Crossrail Ltd is responsible for delivering the programme and is a wholly-owned subsidiary of TfL. The Committee published its report on 3 April 2019. This is the Government response to the Committee's report.

Related Reports

- NAO report: [A memorandum on the Crossrail programme](#) – Session 2017-19 (HC 1924)
- PAC report: [Crossrail: progress review](#) – Session 2017-19 (HC 2004)

Before responding to each of the Committee's recommendations, the Department would like to record that it does not believe the actions taken by the sponsors, as issues and concerns emerged on the project, have been fully reflected in the Committee's report. Joint sponsors have acted promptly to strengthen the leadership of Crossrail Ltd, strengthen governance and put in place a funding and financing plan which has enabled the company to produce a revised delivery plan for the project.

1: PAC conclusion: *The Department for Transport, Transport for London and Crossrail Limited's fixation on a delivery deadline of December 2018 led to warning signs that the programme was in trouble being missed or ignored.*

1: PAC recommendation: *The Department should write to the Committee within six months of this report to explain the steps it is taking to encourage a culture of openness and transparency internally and across its delivery bodies. This should include how it will ensure that project and programme teams reconsider and revisit completion dates for major programmes at key points through the programme lifecycle and engage early with the Department on challenges meeting agreed dates.*

The Department should also commit to updating the Committee at regular intervals and ensure that we are kept up-to-date with all key developments.

1.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: September 2019

1.2 The recent NAO report titled 'Completing Crossrail' concluded that 'Crossrail has been dominated by a fixed completion date of December 2018...which drove much of Crossrail Ltd's decision-making on the programme'.

1.3 This theme is also considered in a "lessons learned" report commissioned by the Department for Transport jointly with the Infrastructure Projects Authority in the wake of the challenges identified on Crossrail in Autumn 2018 and published on 25 April 2019. This report contains 24 practical lessons spanning five key themes across the project lifecycle: clarity of accountability; the importance of behaviours; control of cost, schedule and benefits; systems integration; and entry into service. It includes a recommendation that "evidenced ranges are used instead of a single target date until uncertainty is reduced." Crossrail Ltd have already put this learning into practice and the revised opening window for the central section is a 6-month range of dates with a midpoint of December 2020. That range will narrow as entry-into-service approaches.

1.4 The lessons also highlight the importance of fostering a culture of transparency and early warning to which Sponsors and Crossrail Ltd are firmly committed. Crossrail Ltd Board and Crossrail Sponsor Board minutes are regularly published. Joint sponsors attend at the end of every Crossrail Board meeting, and the joint sponsors' Project Representative has open access to all company information.

1.5 The Department has begun a work programme to fully embed the lessons from the joint DfT/IPA review across its portfolio of ALBs and major projects. John Manzoni, the Chief Executive of the Civil Service, has established an Infrastructure Steering Group to support this work and to consider its application across government. In addition, Ian King, the DfT's lead Non-Executive Director is carrying out further work assess what more can be done to strengthen governance, ensure culture and behaviors encourage trust and transparency, and build capacity and capability.

1.6 The Department will write to the Committee in September to update it in progress on this programme of work. This will be alongside its responses to the Committee's other recommendations which the Department will set out once the Crossrail Board has provided a fully revised estimate of costs, taking account of the revised schedule.

1.7 Separately, Crossrail Ltd will write to the Committee to update it on key developments during the remainder of the project.

2: PAC conclusion: *It is unacceptable that the Department and Crossrail Limited are unable to identify the root causes of the programme unravelling so quickly and so disastrously.*

2: PAC recommendation: *The Department should consider the root causes of cost increases and delays and should write to the Committee by June 2019 setting out how it has taken lessons learned into consideration and what impact this has had on its approach to the project.*

2.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendations.

Target implementation date: September 2019

2.2 The Government disagrees with the conclusion that the Department and Crossrail Ltd are unable to identify the root causes of the issues faced on the Crossrail programme. The NAO report on "Completing Crossrail" and the Government's Lessons Learned report, taken together, provide a detailed perspective of the root causes of delay and cost increase in this project. The NAO report concludes that 'a number of factors' contributed to the underachievement of the project, including 'the compressed schedule, the contractual model, the loss of downward pressure on costs, and the absence of a realistic plan'. The Government's Lessons Learned report highlights a number of issues including the importance of a clear focus on systems integration.

2.3 Transport for London and the Department as joint sponsors have already taken a number of steps to ensure lessons are embedded in its approach to this project, including (as indicated in paragraph 1.4) a number to increase the transparency and openness of reporting. The Department will provide a further update on progress as part of its response to recommendation 1 in September 2019.

3: PAC conclusion: *We are disappointed at the Department's and Crossrail Limited's unacceptably laissez-faire attitude to costs potentially rising by nearly £3 billion.*

3: PAC recommendation: *In response to this report, the Department should set out how it considered the value for money for the taxpayer when agreeing to increased funding for the programme in 2018.*

3.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Recommendation implemented

3.2 The Government does not accept the Committee's conclusion. The NAO's report into the Crossrail Programme, dated 3 May 2019, notes that the project is 'past the point of no return' and that "Crossrail must be completed, and the new Crossrail Ltd management team must be supported in getting that task executed in the most practical and achievable way possible".

3.3 At the point at which the need for additional funding began to emerge in 2018, the project was already over 90% complete. If additional funding had not been provided, there would still have been sunk costs of around £15bn, but no benefits would have been realised. Providing additional funding was the only way to secure the benefits of the programme estimated at £42bn.

3.4 The loan package agreed with TfL and the GLA in December 2018 ensures that London, as the primary beneficiary of the scheme, bears the additional costs via a financing arrangement.

3.5 As the NAO report indicates, it is not possible to complete an assessment of VfM until the project is complete but an indicative analysis of the impacts of the cost increases and delays on the benefit-cost ratio (BCR) for the programme concluded that the project still represents medium to high value for money with a BCR of 1.5 with just transport-related benefits, and 2.05 with wider economic benefits.

4: PAC conclusion: *We are concerned that the value for money of the programme is at risk from further cost increases and delays.*

4: PAC recommendation: *The Department must write to the Committee immediately after reaching agreement with Crossrail Limited to outline how it has assured itself that the revised schedule and cost to completion are robust. The Department should also detail how the £2.8 billion of extra funding should be allocated.*

4.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: September 2019

4.2 On 25 April 2019, the Crossrail Ltd Board announced that it had agreed a plan to complete the outstanding works and bring the Elizabeth line into passenger service at the earliest date possible. Given the risks and uncertainties remaining on the project, Crossrail Ltd has identified a six-month delivery window for opening of the central section with a midpoint at the end of 2020. Crossrail Ltd is continuing its work to gain more certainty on the final cost of the project

4.3 Crossrail Ltd has taken time to fully review and test the programme to establish a robust, accurate and deliverable schedule. The revised schedule will continue to be tested by Crossrail Ltd through risk management and assurance processes, which have recently been enhanced, including close scrutiny from the P-Rep who are providing independent assurance.

4.4 The Department expects the Board to provide a fully revised estimate of costs, taking into account the new schedule, by August 2019 and will update the Committee in the light of that. In the meantime, funds are being drawn down by the GLA on a monthly basis following proof of need by Crossrail Ltd. For each drawdown, Crossrail Ltd must demonstrate how much cash they will need for the following 4-week period. Crossrail Ltd provide a cash forecast, which is approved by their Board and subsequently scrutinised by Sponsors and the project representative. As well as providing a cash forecast, Crossrail Ltd must also confirm the project can be delivered within the available funding before GLA can draw down from the loan. The same process will apply to the TfL 'contingency' loan (if required).

4.5 As of 22 May 2019, £540 million had been drawn down by Crossrail Ltd who currently advise that they expect the additional funding to be sufficient to complete the project.

5: PAC conclusion: *The Department and Crossrail Limited's governance arrangements have been weak and characterised by a catalogue of failures to adequately oversee performance.*

5: PAC recommendation: *By July 2019, the Department must explain how it has changed its contractual relationship with Crossrail so that it can properly exercise oversight and hold Crossrail Limited to account for its performance managing the programme to completion.*

5.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Target implementation date: September 2019

5.2 The Department does not accept the Committee's conclusion but will respond to the Committee in June to fully explain the changes that have been implemented by the Department and TfL, as joint sponsors, following KPMG's governance review, which has been shared with the Committee and has been published on the Transport for London website. The Department is now in the process of formalising these recommendations into the project agreements.

5.3 Changes have already been made to the composition of the Crossrail Ltd Board to increase its effectiveness, including, as the Committee is aware, the appointment a new Chairman and Deputy Chairman. In December 2018, Sponsors wrote to the Senior Independent Non-Executive Director setting out the expectations for the roles and responsibilities of the Chairman for the remainder of the project. As mentioned previously in this memorandum, the Department is also planning changes to Sponsor representation on the Crossrail Ltd Board to ensure that the expertise and skills of the Board are fully reflective of the current stage of the project.

5.4 The Crossrail executive team has been strengthened by appointing a new Chief Executive Officer, deputy Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer.

5.5 The P-Rep has also been strengthened by bringing in an experienced Lead Project Representative and an additional experienced project manager. Sponsors wrote to the new P-Rep leaders in December 2018 setting out their expectations for a revised approach for more proactive and direct oversight of Crossrail Ltd and of their reporting to Sponsors.

6: PAC conclusion: *Despite acknowledging that there were major failings in the programme, the Department and Crossrail Limited have been unwilling to accept their responsibilities for the significant delays and cost overruns of the programme.*

6: PAC recommendation: *The Department should, as a matter of urgency, write to the Committee clearly articulating what it, Transport for London and Crossrail Limited are responsible and accountable for in relation to Crossrail and what the consequences have been for those senior officials in positions of accountability and responsibility for failures on the programme. We expect this letter by the end of April 2019*

6.1 The Government agrees with the Committee's recommendation.

Recommendation Implemented

6.2 The Department [responded directly to the Committee](#) on this recommendation in a letter dated 29 April 2019.

Treasury Minutes Archive⁴

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

Session 2017-19

Committee Recommendations: 565
 Recommendations agreed: 510 (90%)
 Recommendations disagreed: 55 (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 | CP79 |
| May 2019 | Government responses to PAC reports 78-81 and 83-85 | CP97 |
| June 2019 | Government responses to PAC reports 82, 86-92 | CP113 |

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 ⁵ | 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 |

⁴ List of Treasury Minutes responses for Sessions 2010-15 are annexed in the Government's response to PAC Report 52

⁵ Report 32 contains 6 conclusions only.

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 are the Government's response on the implementation of recommendations from the Committee of Public Accounts. Treasury Minutes Progress Reports are Command Papers laid in Parliament.

| Publication Date | PAC Reports | Ref Number |
|------------------|---|------------|
| January 2012 | Session 2010-12: updates on 13 PAC reports | Cm 8271 |
| July 2012 | Session 2010-12: updates on 28 PAC reports | Cm 8387 |
| February 2013 | Session 2010-12: updates on 31 PAC reports | Cm 8539 |
| July 2014 | Session 2010-12: updates on 60 PAC reports Session 2012-13: updates on 37 PAC reports | Cm 8899 |
| 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 |
| 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 |
| 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 |
| 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 |
| 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 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 |
| 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 |
| 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 ⁶ | CP70 |

⁶ Contains updates on Treasury Minutes – Session 2017-19 – up to October 2018

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