



Dods Monitoring: Queen's Speech 2017 - overview and reaction



June 21 2017

Legislative programme 2017-2019



To find out how this new legislative programme will impact on you and your organisation, Dods Monitoring has provided a full briefing on the speech.

This contains the background, detail and stakeholder reactions to each new Bill and projected legislative timetables. We have considered the potential political challenges and opposition amendments the Bills may face as they go through each House.

Our team will be tracking these Bills in detail as they progress through Parliament— please contact your Political Consultant for more details.

- ◆ [Repeal Bill](#)
- ◆ [Trade Bill](#)
- ◆ [Customs Bill](#)
- ◆ [Immigration Bill](#)
- ◆ [Agriculture Bill](#)
- ◆ [Fisheries Bill](#)
- ◆ [Nuclear Safeguards Bill](#)
- ◆ [International Sanctions Bill](#)
- ◆ [Space Industry Bill](#)
- ◆ [Data Protection Bill](#)
- ◆ [Automated Vehicles Bill](#)
- ◆ [Smart Meters Bill](#)
- ◆ [High Speed Rail](#)
- ◆ [Travel Protection Bill](#)
- ◆ [Courts Bill](#)
- ◆ [Civil Liability Bill](#)
- ◆ [Financial Guidance Bill](#)
- ◆ [Goods Mortgages Bill](#)
- ◆ [Armed Forces Bill](#)
- ◆ [EU Approvals Bill](#)
- ◆ [Draft Patient Safety Bill](#)
- ◆ [Draft Tenants Bill](#)
- ◆ [Draft Domestic Violence Bill](#)

Non-legislative programme 2017-2019

Our team have also considered some of the non-legislative policy commitments included in this year's Speech. An overview can be found below:

- ◆ [Counter Terrorism Review](#)
- ◆ [Commission for Countering Extremism](#)
- ◆ [Public Inquiry into Grenfell Tower](#)
- ◆ [Independent Public Advocate](#)
- ◆ [Mental Health Reform](#)
- ◆ [Social Care](#)
- ◆ [Digital Charter](#)
- ◆ [Public Finances](#)
- ◆ [Foreign Affairs](#)
- ◆ [Schools and Technical Education](#)
- ◆ [Northern Ireland](#)
- ◆ [National Living Wage and Workers' Rights](#)
- ◆ [Gender Pay Gap and Discrimination](#)
- ◆ [Critical National Infrastructure](#)
- ◆ [Housing](#)
- ◆ [Armed Forces](#)
- ◆ [Consumer Market including Energy Market](#)



Manifesto - what's missing?

The general election results which left the Conservatives with a reduced majority has meant that a number of well publicised manifesto commitments were absent or contained less detail than expected from the Queen's speech. This has resulted in a slimmed down version of what might have been expected had the Government achieved the larger majority predicted when drafting.

Please find below a few issues missing from today's programme for Government:

- ◆ No mention of means-tested Winter Fuel Payments included in the manifesto was absent
- ◆ No inclusion of manifesto pledges on fracking
- ◆ No mention of Donald Trump visit despite reference to the Spanish state visit in the speech
- ◆ No reference to triple lock on pensions included in manifesto pledges
- ◆ No mention of fox hunting
- ◆ No mention of new powers for the Pension Regulator to scrutinise and stop mergers, takeovers or financial commitments and no mention of a new criminal offence for company directors who "deliberately" or "recklessly" put at risk the ability of pension schemes to meet its obligations
- ◆ There is no direct reference to corporate governance reform agenda including no legislation to make executive pay packages subject to strict annual votes by shareholders, or of publishing pay ratios
- ◆ No mention of a green paper on the 25 year plan for the environment
- ◆ Following promises to address energy prices for vulnerable customers, despite the speech containing a Consumer Markets Green Paper, there was no specific detail on the commitment to introduce an energy cap
- ◆ Manifesto commitment on removing ban grammar schools not explicitly included
- ◆ Commitment on removing free schools meals not included
- ◆ Despite a green paper on social care, following the well-publicised U-turn there was no detail on the floor or cap on social care payments
- ◆ Commitment on business rates reform or tackling prompt payment also missing from policy programme

Stakeholder responses on absent policy commitments:

Peter Clarke, Chief Inspector, **Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons**, expressed disappointment that a prisons and courts reform bill did not make an appearance in the speech. He stated that HMIP would "continue to report the harsh reality of what we find in our prisons."

Jim Killock, Executive Director, **Open Rights Group**, said he was surprised that the speech did not make any reference to plans to ensure that requests for communications data by the police and other bodies were independently authorised. He said that it was important to ensure that internet companies had as much incentive to fully protect free speech as they did to remove illegal content.

Manifesto - what's missing?

Julian David, Chief Executive, **techUK**, emphasised the need for any Brexit legislation to recognise “the importance of the tech sector to our economic future”. He welcomed measures to support the space industry and electric vehicles, stating that “invention is in the UK’s DNA” and that these plans would “keep the UK at the forefront of innovation” <http://bit.ly/2sUJWq0>

Mark Serwotka, General Secretary, **Public and Commercial Services Union**, commented that the Government was in denial about the crises in living standards, public services and housing and was doing nothing to help. He said that the refusal to end the public sector pay cap showed utter contempt for public servants who were continuing to suffer wage cuts.

Simon Bottery, Director of Policy, **Independent Age**, expressed disappointment at the “passing mention” that social care received in the Queen’s Speech. He urged that the new Government needed to establish a cross-party approach for a “new sustainable settlement for social care”: <http://bit.ly/2sVvv4K>

Giles Meyer, interim CEO, **Carers Trust**, commented that social care was in crisis and that successive Governments have failed to take sufficient action. He commented that the increase in the National Living Wage was an important step towards ensuring paid care support staff were paid more fairly.

Tim Roache, General Secretary, **GMB**, stated that the speech in “no way tackles the challenges we face as a country”. He emphasised pay in the public sector; urging for an end to the pay freeze and the introduction of a “real living wage” of £10 an hour.

Jonathan Carr-West, Chief Executive, **Local Government Information Unit**, said that for local governments, this speech hovered around the edges rather than directly confronting big questions. He said that there were no firm proposals on social care funding reform, no mention of devolution in England and no further detail on the road map towards 100% business rate retention. He finished by saying that local government now finds itself dragged into the uncertainty afflicting Parliament.

Lord Porter, Chairman, **Local Government Association**, stated that it was “hugely concerning” that the Government had not reintroduced the Local Government Finance Bill in the Queen’s Speech. He added that Councils faced an overall £5.8 billion funding gap by 2020 which needed to be addressed.

In reaction to the speech, **Mayor of London** Sadiq Khan supported the Government’s counter extremism policy. However he criticised the Government’s plans to continue with the school funding formula as well as the lack of immediate action to help private renters. He finally pledged to focus on London’s economic interests throughout by pushing for a ‘soft’ Brexit.

Mick Cash, General Secretary, **RMT**, criticized the Queen’s Speech for being a “flimsy piece of work from a minority Government”, before going on to say that the RMT would be “stepping up the fight for decent jobs, pay and working conditions” whilst the Government carries on with the “scandalous neglect of Britain’s shipping industry.” <http://bit.ly/2rCom5E>

Neil Heslop, CEO, **Leonard Cheshire Disability**, said he was deeply concerned by the lack of details on proposed action on the social care crisis and repeated his urgent calls for a long-term, cross party solution to funding social care. However he was pleased that the speech mentioned disability discrimination, and he added that the expansion and reform of the Access to Work scheme was essential.



Manifesto - what's missing?

Peter Dawson, Director, **Prison Reform Trust**, stated that it was “immensely disappointing that the Government has dropped its commitment to a prison reform bill”, highlighting the cross-party support that the potential Bill had. He added that this would put pressure on the Justice Secretary to find new ways to stop the “chronic over-use of prisons”.

The **National Association of Head Teachers** welcomed the Government’s commitment to making school funding fairer, but called for clarity on what a new formula would look like given there were no legislative commitments. General secretary of the union, Russell Hobby, thought it was right that the Queen’s Speech did not contain proposals on expanding selection in schools.

The **Association of School and College Leaders**, the **Association of Teachers and Lecturers**, the **National Association of Head Teachers** and the **National Union of Teachers** said that the Government was not listening to voters. However they welcomed the absence of any mention of expanding selective education as well as the decision to roll back on plans to end universal free school meals for infants.

The **Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers** expressed disappointment that there were no specific announcement business rates reforms, stating that the current “rates regime is rigged against hospitality businesses.”

<http://bit.ly/2rC6zvv>

Xavier Brice, Chief Executive, **Sustrans**, criticised the lack of a Clean Air Bill in the Queen’s Speech as a “missed opportunity to tackle the public health emergency of poor air quality”.

Royal London’s Steve Webb suggested that the Speech left the issue of care costs “in limbo” but was encouraged that a lack of a Government majority could encourage an “opportunity to seek cross party consensus on social care funding.” <http://bit.ly/2rC4bVj>

In their response to the speech, **Children’s Society** Chief Executive Matthew Reed expressed relief at the fact that scrapping free school meals did not feature, emphasising that four million children in the UK were in poverty. He highlighted the fact that “deals made in this parliament will affect the lives of millions of children for years to come” and called for all political parties to put children’s needs first. <http://bit.ly/2sVrY6H>

Mark Atkinson, Chief Executive, **Scope**, showed disappointment at disabled people being “pushed out” of the political debate by being completely left out of the Queen’s speech. He went on to state that the issues of disabled people “cannot be ignored” and that “consultation and action must come quickly”.

Danielle Hamm, Associate Director of Campaigns and Policy, **Rethink Mental Illness**, welcomed the commitment to new mental health legislation as an important first step but wanted to see firmer commitments to a comprehensive review and a clear timeline to this. She said that the Mental Health Act was not working and that the Government would need to work in partnership with people affected by mental illness and professionals in the sector to ensure effective legislation.

Campbell Robb, chief executive of the independent **Joseph Rowntree Foundation** called the Queen’s Speech threadbare. He said that while some action on energy costs and helping renters was encouraging, on their own they fell far short of the bold domestic reforms needed, he said. <http://bit.ly/2rQLhyp>

Which noted that the speech failed to include future plans for the state pension as well as containing no mention of the new system to pay for social care proposed in the Conservative manifesto.

Manifesto - what's missing?

Responding to the Queen's Speech, Stephen Martin, Director General of the **Institute of Directors**, said: "More clarity on future tax measures and on our future trading arrangements would have been useful for businesses to plan for the future, and it is disappointing that corporate governance reform was not explicitly mentioned."

Whilst the **FSB** welcomed the ambition to provide certainty for business, National Chairman Mike Cherry said the "government must knuckle down to tackle issues such as reform of the Business Rates system and changes to Corporate Governance, to stop big companies badly treating their small business suppliers and contractors"

Tim Farron, leader of the **Liberal Democrats**, said that the slimmed down Queen's speech was an indication of a "government on the edge". He highlighted how everything from the dementia tax to fox hunting had been dropped which were originally Conservative manifesto policies. He also mentioned that this speech did not propose any solutions to the NHS, crowded schools or under pressure public services but that the only thing which the Tories remained united on was Brexit.

Caroline Lucas, Co-Leader of the Green Party, said that this was a speech from a hollowed-out Government and lambasted the speech for a "stunning lack of ambition". She criticised the speech for being so focused on Brexit that it failed to propose any plan to deal with climate change, ending the NHS pay cap and the proposed clamp-down on migration. Lucas went on to say that she would table two amendments to the speech including an Environmental Protection Act to strengthen green laws in the Brexit process and the second to immediately protect EU Nationals' rights.

Liz Saville Roberts, Westminster Leader, **Plaid Cymru**, said that the Prime Minister's legislative programme was focussed far more on soundbites than substance. She said that the Government had not provided a legislative programme for all four countries and that despite a vague reference to working with devolved Parliaments to build consensus, there wasn't a single commitment to deliver for Wales. She finished by saying that Plaid Cymru would be placing a series of amendments on topics including on policing, national finances and fuel poverty.

Mark Williams, leader of the **Welsh Liberal Democrats**, said that this was clearly a government with no clue, no direction and no mandate. He criticised the speech for not recognising the needs of the public services and said that Wales needed more than token gestures from the Conservatives.

Christina Rees, **Shadow Welsh Secretary**, said that the Queen's speech showed the disrespect and disregard Theresa May's Tories have for Wales. She said this speech provided no vision and no agenda for Wales. She went on to mention that a Labour manifesto would have provided new energy infrastructure, support for tidal lagoons, more police on the streets and record funding for Wales's most vital services.

Timings and debate

The Queen's speech is voted on by the Commons, but no vote is taken in the Lords. This vote will be particularly pertinent this year given Theresa May's small majority in the Commons. The DUP have already indicated they will support the speech but it will be the first test of her authority in office.

- ◆ On the **penultimate day of debate, an Opposition amendment is considered and voted upon.**
- ◆ On the final day of debate, a further Opposition amendment is considered, although, time permitting, the Speaker has the power to permit a vote on two further amendments.
- ◆ **A vote on the final motion will therefore take place on 29 June** – this is the vote that May needs to pass in order to form a Government.

Themed debates

Following the speech, each House continues the debate over the planned legislative programme for several days, looking at different subject areas.

The first day's debate is general in character and includes speeches proposing and seconding the address, and contributions from the Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition. Remaining days are allocated to thematic discussions determined among the parties through what are known as the 'usual channels'.

The themes for Commons debates are below:

- **Thursday 22 June:** Housing and social security
- **Monday 26 June:** Brexit and foreign affairs
- **Tuesday 27 June:** Education and local services
- **Wednesday 28 June:** Health, social care and security
- **Thursday 29 June:** Economy and jobs

The themes for Lords debates are below:

- **Thursday 22 June:** Foreign affairs, defence, international trade and international development
- **Monday 26 June:** Business, economic affairs, energy, transport, environment and agriculture
- **Tuesday 27 June:** Home affairs, justice, constitutional affairs, devolved affairs, communities and local government
- **Wednesday 28 June:** Exiting the European Union
- **Thursday 29 June:** Education, health, welfare, pensions and culture

The formal introduction of new bills should begin from Thursday 22 June at the Government's discretion.

Repeal Bill

“A Bill will be introduced to repeal the European Communities Act and provide certainty for individuals and businesses”



Background

The [Government's White Paper](#) published in March 2017 provided much of the background. The Bill itself will be the key legislative mechanism by which the country can exit the EU in March 2019 and ensure that European law no longer applies to the UK. Its main purpose will be to repeal the 1972 European Communities Act, which took Britain into the EU and meant that European law took precedence over laws passed in the British Parliament, and will also end the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice.

All existing EU legislation will be copied across into domestic UK law to ensure a smooth transition on the day after Brexit leaving the UK to then amend, repeal or improve the laws as necessary.

The purpose of the Bill

This Bill ends the authority of EU law in the UK and return power from Brussels to the UK

It will provide a functioning statute book on the day we leave the EU and ensure that it is for our Parliament (and where appropriate devolved legislatures) to make any future changes to our laws.

Main elements of the Bill

- ◆ It will repeal the ECA 1972 and covert EU law into UK law as we leave the European Union
- ◆ The Bill will create temporary powers to make secondary legislation, enabling corrections to be made to the laws that do not operate appropriately once the UK has left the EU
- ◆ It will also allow changes to be made to domestic law to reflect the content of any agreement under Article 50.
- ◆ The Bill will also replicate the common UK frameworks created by EU law in UK law and maintain the scope of devolved decision making powers after exiting the EU. There will be a transitional arrangement to provide certainty and allow discussion and consultation with devolved administrations on where lasting common frameworks are needed.

Legislative timetable

The Bill should be published relative shortly as the Government will want to get the process started quickly given the political challenges ahead. It should in practice be a short Bill with only a few Parts, each to implement the changes outlined above. That said, the Bill is likely to be "one of the largest legislative projects ever undertaken in the UK" as large amounts of the statute book will subsequently need to be examined to see how they will work after Brexit. On timings, with the Prime Minister keen to get to the summer recess with a semblance of a 'stable Government' in tact, we could see its Second Reading debate, and the important first vote, left until Parliament returns after recess.

Overall, much of the heavy scrutiny will be done in Autumn-Winter, with the potential that the Public Bill committee stage takes place on the floor of the House, rather than a committee room. Finally, it is understood the Government will be seeking Royal Assent from January/February 2018. From this point on, they will be able to start tabling the secondary legislation required in preparation for Brexit day one.

David Isaac, Chair, **Equality and Human Rights Commission**, welcomed the Government's commitment to ending discrimination of all kinds and improving worker's rights but warned that these rights should not be 'watered down' as the UK left the European Union.

Helen Dickinson OBE, Chief Executive, **British Retail Consortium**, commented that it was reassuring that the Government was attempting to reach out to business and that it was "right to focus on Brexit". She went on to state that it was biggest priority of the retail industry to work alongside the Government to "secure a fair Brexit for consumers".

Nick Dearden, Director, **Global Justice Now**, accused the government of a power grab over its Queen's Speech programme. He said the speech amounted to a power grab and that if the bills passed they would risk undermining the rights and protections of the British people.



Trade Bill

“New bills on trade and customs will help to implement an independent trade policy”



Background

Earlier in the year it was reported that a Trade Bill would be introduced in summer 2017 alongside the negotiations, with the aim of it passing in time for the UK to be able to strike trade deals from March 2019. Whilst European Council president Donald Tusk and other senior EU officials have consistently ruled out parallel talks and the UK has recently agreed to the sequencing of negotiations, the inclusion of Trade Bill in the Speech shows a determination of May’s Government (and particularly her Cabinet Trade Secretary) to keep these plans on track.

The purpose of the Bill

This Bill will support the UK in making a smooth exit from the EU and ensure businesses are able to benefit from trade with the rest of the world. It would also cement the UK’s role as a global trading nation, whilst ensuring UK businesses are protected from unfair trading practices.

Main elements of the Bill

- ◆ It will put in place the essential and necessary legislative framework to allow the UK to operate its own independent trade policy upon exit from the EU.

Legislative timetable

Led by the Department for International Trade, the Bill itself may not be published for a few months as it will inevitably be shaped by the nature of exit negotiations. Whilst its noted the Bill meets a manifesto commitment to introduce a Trade Bill in the next Parliament, we may see the Government publish a Bill in draft or open a consultation with business and exporters ahead of actual parliamentary scrutiny in the 2018/19 session. This would ensure an up to date trade and customs arrangement in statute for the envisaged exit in March 2019.

If press reports are accurate, the current Trade Secretary Liam Fox, a strong Brexiteer, had to challenge attempts to delay a bill amid fears some Cabinet ministers were trying to soften Brexit. Its unlikely therefore he will want it pushed in the long-grass. Indeed, Chancellor Philip Hammond cast doubt on whether Britain would be in a position to strike new trade deals when we left the 2019 but the inclusion of the Bill suggests this still remains a government priority.

Work from the existing department nine working groups with 15 countries will no doubt feed into the approach to progressing the UK’s trade and investment relations in decades to come. Indeed, the department will need to be ready to renegotiate about 40 trade deals that the EU had completed on the UK’s behalf.

Labour response and possible opposition

There has been a degree of confusion over Labour’s key stance on approaching new markets and trade deals in the Brexit context. The party’s trade spokesperson Barry Gardiner created some confusion by claiming the party backed staying in a “reformed” EU single market. However, this came just shortly after the shadow Chancellor John McDonnell ruled out a rethink on single market membership.

Stakeholder responses

The **Fairtrade Foundation** responded to the inclusion of a new Trade Bill in the speech. Tim Aldred, Head of Policy, said that the Bill was an opportunity for the UK to provide example “to other rich countries by making it easier for poor countries to trade their way out of poverty” <http://bit.ly/2rCis4o>

Terry Scuoler, Chief Executive, **EEF**, said that the manufacturing sector needed to hear more from the Prime Minister on tariff-free trade and how to minimise uncertainty over customs and that many questions remained on how to untangle the country from the customs union. He welcomed the commitment to the industrial strategy but wanted to see concrete plans to deliver the strategy as a matter of urgency.

Dr Adam Marshall, Director General, **British Chambers of Commerce**, stated that businesses wanted a workable government going about its day job, and clear signals that the economy is once again front and centre in political life.” He also focused on issues such as the need for further investment in major infrastructure projects and an avoidance of turbulence in relation to Brexit.

The **British Beer & Pub Association** were happy that the speech specifically mentioned the need to support exports and skills during the Brexit process. They insisted, however, that they would continue to campaign on priorities such as a more competitive tax regime: <http://bit.ly/2sVcKyv>

Ian Wright, Director-General, **Food and Drink Federation**, stated that the speech “lays bare the sheer scale of the challenge facing the Government and Parliament”. He highlighted that in relation to Brexit the FDF would focus on four key areas: “access to the EU workforce, a stable regulatory regime, zero-tariff and frictionless trade across borders and recognition of Ireland’s special circumstance.”



Customs Bill

“New bills on trade and customs will help to implement an independent trade policy”



Background

Leaving the EU means leaving the single market and leaving the customs union. So went the argument in the campaign and after a year of back and forth and to and fro on whether this would be the case. It now seems to have been settled with the inclusion of this set piece bill in the speech.

Regardless of the outcome of the negotiations the UK will need to have a framework in place for a customs regime once the UK leaves the EU, and this bill seeks to set that out.

The purpose of the Bill

This Bill will provide new domestic legislation to replace EU customs legislation and modify elements of the indirect taxes system. This will allow the UK to operate standalone customs and indirect taxes regime on exit from the EU, whatever the outcome of the negotiations.

Main elements of the Bill

To provide a framework for the Government to:

- charge customs duties on imported goods and adjust the rates of those duties;
- collect payments on customs duties, administer the customs regimes, and tackle duty evasion;
- control the import and export of goods;
- accommodate potential negotiated arrangements with the EU

Legislative timetable

One of the big Brexit bills to be announced in the speech the Customs Bill will attract plenty of attention. Setting up a new customs regime and the mechanism for setting rates and duties will inevitably be controversial, let alone complicated. There will be calls for plenty of days of debate to scrutinise the Bill, though as with the Trade Bill, due to negotiations the detail may not be available till later in the parliamentary session.

Immigration Bill

“A Bill to establish new national policies on immigration, completed by legislation to ensure that the UK makes a success of Brexit



Background

As he launched the [Great Repeal Bill White Paper](#) in March this year, Brexit Secretary David Davis confirmed there would be a Bill on immigration separate to the Great Repeal Bill, saying it would “create an immigration system that allows us to control numbers and encourage the brightest and the best to come to this country”.

The new factor into this debate is the role of the DUP which has indicated it wants a policy that meets the skills needs of Britain. This may not completely dovetail with May’s commitment to the net migration target. However, earlier in the year, Davis confirmed government would not seek to cap the number of EU migrants working in the UK after Brexit, which led to suggestions that the Government is looking at a system of quotas set by a body such as the Migration Advisory Council.

The purpose of the Bill

The Bill is to allow the Government to end the EU’s rules on free movement of EU nationals in the UK and make the migration of EU nationals and their family members subject to relevant UK law once the UK has left the EU, whilst still allowing the UK to attract the brightest and the best.

The Bill will ensure the UK has the flexibility to create a fair and sustainable immigration system that gives the country control over the numbers of people who come to the UK from the EU

Main elements of the Bill

- ◆ To allow the Government to repeal EU law on immigration, primarily free movement, that will be saved and converted into UK law by the Repeal Bill
- ◆ The introduction of a new Electronic Communications Code as well as the simplification of planning rules to assist with the construction of mobile and superfast broadband infrastructure.

Legislative timetable

The Bill cannot be drawn up and debated until Brexit negotiations talks, which only started on Monday, have significantly progressed. One of the main issues to be agreed to is the future of EU citizens in the UK and vice-versa; European Parliament President Antonio Tajani [has called](#) ensuring the protection of EU citizens’ rights in the UK as a “red line” in negotiations. May has stressed the importance of settling the issue of citizens rights at an early stage of negotiations, and she will also have to sort this issue alongside the ‘divorce bill’ before trade talks can take place so will likely want to make good progress. However, given this is likely to be one of more hotly contested Bills of the double parliament, the Government may wish to test the water with other Brexit-related Bills before taking her Immigration Bill onto the floor of the House. However, Home Secretary Amber Rudd has suggested there will be a consultation over summer on immigration, indicating some progress may be seen in the short term.

Labour response and possible opposition

Labour previously tabled a amendment to the Brexit Bill to give all EU citizens in the UK permanent residency after Britain leaves the club. This was [narrowly defeated](#) by 332 to 290 votes, with three Conservative MPs actually voting for the opposition amendment. It is therefore highly likely that the forthcoming Immigration Bill will be subject to a raft of amendments from Labour, probably alongside the other opposition parties.

Stakeholder responses

The **Federation of Master Builders** focused on the Government's proposed immigration bill. Chief Executive Brian Berry expressed worried that "EU migrants (plug) the industry's chronic skills gap", and said the Government had not yet proposed an adequate replacement of freedom of movement that would address the shortages the industry faces.

Colin Stanbridge, Chief Executive, **London Chamber of Commerce and Industry**, welcomed the Government's "intention to intensify engagement with the business community", with a particular emphasis on the immigration, trade and customs bills.

Ross Murray, President, **Country Land Association** mentioned that the Immigration Bill was a chance for the Government to clarify how the rural economy will have access to the workers it needs.

Sue Ferns, Deputy General Secretary, **Prospect**, said the government should think carefully about the implications of an Immigration Bill on freedom of movement for the science, technology and engineering skills sector. She said that Prospect's own research demonstrated the importance to the UK of employing STEM experts from other EU countries and that these skills were essential for the British economy.

Mark Goldring, **Chief Executive of Oxfam GB**, welcomed the Government's confirmation that Britain will "carry on meeting its promises to the world's poorest people." Responding to announcements on refugees and immigration, he added that the Government should ensure that changes to the immigration system make it easier for refugees to find safety in the UK. He commented that "the UK should show humanity to these families that have been forced to flee devastating violence and persecution."



Agriculture Bill

“A Bill to ensure that the United Kingdom makes a success of Brexit by establishing new national policies on agriculture.”



Background

With the Government having made clear its intention to leave the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), it was expected an agriculture bill would be included in the list of Brexit bills in the 2017 Queen’s Speech.

Farming Minister George Eustice has hinted that a new UK farming system would see cuts in “lavish payments” to large landowners and focus on smaller firms instead. This has been supported by the new Secretary of State who confirmed that any legislation would impose clear protections on the natural environment.

The purpose of the Bill

This bill will help provide stability to farmers as the UK leaves CAP and create a thriving, self reliant farming sector that is more competitive, productive and profitable.

In addition to supporting British farmers on the global market, the bill will seek to protect the natural environment and follow the Conservative manifesto pledge to “leave the environment better than we found it”.

Main elements of the Bill

- ◆ The bill will introduce measures to ensure that after the UK leaves the EU, and therefore the Common Agricultural Policy, there is an effective system in place to support UK farmers and protect the natural environment.

Legislative timetable

The Conservative’s have bought themselves some time when it comes to agriculture, with the manifesto setting out that the UK will maintain EU subsidy payments for farmers till 2022 so there is no need for legislation to be in place immediately. However, British farmers operate on confidence and the longer government inaction continues the more that confidence will drop. So while the Agriculture Bill may not be the first bill out of the blocks this session it will be paramount for the Government to act soon.

Labour response and possible opposition

It will be expected that Labour will push the Government to provide clarity regarding the future of temporary migrant labour having committed to reintroducing the Seasonal Agricultural Scheme in their own manifesto.

It is likely that they will receive support for this by the SNP and Liberal Democrats who will also seek access to the single market and customs union. The bill may also increase tensions between the Tories and their DUP allies, especially in regards to the amount of financial support given to devolved farmers and could prove a challenging test as to the strength of this minority government.

Stakeholder responses

The **National Farmers Union** described the Agriculture Bill as a “once in a generation opportunity to enhance and promote British farming” President Meurig Raymond said: Working closely with the new Secretary of State for Defra and his ministerial team will be essential, and this is already off to a good start. But we’ll also need the support of the whole Parliament if British farming is to have a profitable future in a post-Brexit world.”

Stakeholder responses

Ross Murray, President, **Country Land Association**, reacted to the announcement of an Agriculture Bill by saying that this showed the “extensive list of Brexit Bills” needed to deal with the scale of Brexit and that the CLA would need to work with the government to ensure a smooth transition for the sector. He went on to say that the CLA would press for a Bill to deliver certainty and continuity post-Brexit of the current system of support in place for the sector. He mentioned that the Immigration Bill was a chance for the Government to clarify how the rural economy will have access to the workers it needs.

BASC has welcomed the inclusion of the Agriculture Bill within the Queen’s Speech. Tim Russell, director of conservation, said: “BASC will work to ensure new agri-environment schemes are compatible with shooting wherever appropriate.”



Fisheries Bill

“A Bill to ensure that the United Kingdom makes a success of Brexit by establishing new policies on fisheries.”



Background

With the Government having made clear its intention to leave the Common Fisheries Policy and the London Convention, it was well expected for a fisheries bill to be included in the list of Brexit bills in the 2017 Queen’s Speech.

The Conservative manifesto reinforced this by setting out that they would support coastal communities and reclaim access to UK waters.

The purpose of the Bill

This bill will enable the UK to control access to its waters and set UK fishing quotas once it has left the European Union and ensure prosperity for a new generation of fishermen as well as preserve and increase fish stocks.

Main elements of the Bill

- ◆ The bill will introduce powers to enable the UK to exercise responsibility for access to fisheries and management of its waters.
- ◆ Aspects of the Bill will extend to the UK, as international matters are not devolved.

Legislative timetable

While there has been no firm indication as to the timetable surrounding a Fisheries Bill, it will be closely linked to the ongoing Brexit negotiations with the European Union, so it would be expected for such a bill to progress at a similar pace and be in place upon their conclusion.

Labour response and possible opposition

While there has been no official response from the opposition to this bill, it would be expected that both Labour and the SNP will push the Government on the future of migrant labour and the impact on the fishing industry.

It also remains unclear how the Government will differentiate between British and EU fishing waters, so expect a lot of pressure from Labour on this, who have often accused the Conservatives of presiding over a unsustainable industry facing a collapse in fish stocks.

Stakeholder reaction

WWF called on the Government to use the opportunities of the Fisheries Bill to establish transparent, sustainable, and accountable fisheries. They called for a priority to be given to having sustainable fish stocks that support marine protection and coastal communities.

Whale and Dolphin Conservation were pleased that measures to protect the marine environment were emphasised in relation to Brexit. They highlighted the opportunity that was presented to ensure that bycatch monitoring and mitigation was implemented effectively in UK waters.

Nuclear Safeguards Bill

“A Bill to help ensure the UK makes a success of Brexit by establishing new national policies on... nuclear safeguards”



Background

When the Government published their EU Withdrawal Bill ahead of the triggering of Article 50, they confirmed speculation that leaving the EU also meant leaving the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom). This caused plenty of concern in the industry and amongst parliamentarians across the House with select committees in the Lords and Commons both publishing reports on the subject.

Both committees emphasised the importance of avoiding a “cliff-edge” at the point of exit and posited several potential options and this bill seeks to provide an interim solution.

The purpose of the Bill

The Bill will establish a UK nuclear safeguards regime as the UK leaves the European Union and Euratom. It will ensure the UK continues to meet international obligations for nuclear safeguards. It will also continue the UK’s reputation as a responsible nuclear state by supporting nuclear –non-proliferation and protecting uk electricity supplied by nuclear power.

Main elements of the Bill

- ◆ The Office for Nuclear Regulation will be given powers to take on the role and responsibilities required to meet international safeguards, and non-nuclear proliferation obligations.
- ◆ These safeguards apply to civil nuclear material through the International Atomic Energy Agency

Legislative timetable

As mentioned above, both the industry and parliament have stressed the urgency of providing certainty to the nuclear sector ahead of exit from the EU. Depending on how far advanced work on the Bill is, this could be one the Government seek to get going through parliament fairly quickly.

The decision to leave Euratom however is controversial and some view it as unnecessary. The proposals outlined don’t appear to suggest an alternative form of membership to Euratom, something industry had been calling for. Opposition MPs could be expected to table amendments seeking to keep the UK in Euratom in via alternative arrangements.

Stakeholder reactions

Tom Greatrex, Chief Executive, **Nuclear Industry Association**, thought that the announcement of a Bill on nuclear safeguards may have been a “necessary legislative step”, however the Government “should not be so complacent to assume this alone gets close to resolving the issues they have created.”

Mike Clancy, General Secretary, **Prospect Union**, emphasized the “huge risks” to jobs that getting Brexit wrong would bring and questioned the Office of Nuclear Regulation’s “capacity and resources to oversee our international obligations around nuclear safeguards”.

International Sanctions Bill

“A Bill to ensure the United Kingdom makes a success of Brexit, establishing new national policies on sanctions”



Background

A staple part of international relations, the UK currently implements 34 sanction regimes, including country specific sanction regimes against Russia, North Korea and Syria. The UK currently adheres to EU sanctions policies however Brexit requires legislation which would enable the Government to continue to impose sanctions on foreign states. It is expected the legislation will mirror existing EU legislation, with [a consultation](#) launched on Friday 21st April 2017.

The House of Lords EU Justice Sub-Committee [warned](#) in February 2017 that a failure on the part of the UK to align with EU sanctions post-Brexit could harm the national interest and negatively impact on wider geo-political considerations. The House of Lords EU External Affairs Sub-Committee launched [an inquiry](#) into the matter at the end of March 2017 but this was curtailed by the early election.

The purpose of the Bill

This Bill will enable the UK to continue to impose, update and lift sanctions regimes both to comply with international obligations and to pursue foreign policy and national security objectives after the UK's exit from the EU.

Main elements of the Bill

- ◆ Impose sanctions to ensure compliance with obligations under international law after the UK's exit from the EU. These include asset freezes, travel bans and trade and market restrictions.
- ◆ Ensure individuals and organisations can challenge or request a review of the sanctions imposed on them.
- ◆ Exempt or license certain types of activity, such as payments for food and medicine, which would otherwise be restricted by sanctions.
- ◆ Amend regulations for anti-money laundering and counter terrorist financing and pass new ones after the UK's exit from the EU.

Legislative timetable

It is anticipated the Government would seek to introduce the Bill early in the session given the important compliance it involves. One could feasibly expect it to be published in autumn, to be scrutinised by Parliament in the run up to December.

Labour response and possible opposition

Labour has previously said that sanctions play an important role in the UK's diplomatic arsenal, stating that sanctions should be used to bring states like Russia to the negotiating table. More broadly, they have stated Brexit should lead to a new era of joint UK-EU cooperation and leadership. It seems likely that Labour and the Conservatives are in-sync regarding the importance of a post-Brexit sanctions framework.

Space Industry Bill

“A Bill to ensure the United Kingdom remains a world leader in new industries, including commercial satellites”



Background

One of the key pillars of the Industrial Strategy, the Government [announced](#) a £10m scheme in February 2017 to incentivise the commercial spaceflight market., with the intention of establishing a spaceport by 2020. A Draft Spaceflight Bill was [produced](#) shortly afterwards to establish the regulatory framework for launch-to-orbit and sub-orbital spaceflight activities from UK spaceports. However, Elzbieta Bienkowska, the senior space official at the European Commission, has said the future participation of the UK in the Galileo navigation system and Copernicus environmental network was up for discussion during the Brexit negotiations.

The purpose of the Bill

This Bill will boost the economy, British business, engineering and science by making the UK the most attractive place in Europe for commercial spaceflight.

Main elements of the Bill

- ◆ Use commercial spaceflight to support the Modern Industrial Strategy to deliver a stronger economy by generating jobs and putting British business, engineering and science at the forefront of this technology.
- ◆ Secure continued growth in the UK space sector.
- ◆ Generate new business opportunities in developing local spaceport and spaceflight technology along with training, tourism and supply chain opportunities in more remote areas of the UK.
- ◆ Offer the UK’s world leading small satellite companies new options for low-cost, reliable access to space. Global small satellite launch and servicing could exceed £25bn in revenues over 20 years with an untapped European regional market potentially worth around one third of this.
- ◆ Create new opportunities for the UK’s scientific community to carry out cutting-edge research in a micro-gravity environment by giving British scientists easier access to this unique environment by enabling them to launch from UK soil.

Legislative timetable

Relatively uncontroversial when set against other Bills announced in the legislative programme, there would be no initial issues for the Government by introducing the Bill early in the session. One could feasibly expect it to be published in autumn, to be scrutinised by Parliament in the run up to December.

Stakeholder reaction

Simon Whalley, Head of External Affairs at the **Royal Aeronautical Society**, said “A UK spaceport offering satellite launch capability can strengthen the UK position in small satellite manufacture and offer greater launch flexibility to customers. The capability to provide sub-orbital flights would not only attract part of the growing space tourism market, but also sustain leading-edge scientific research, development and innovation. Above all, the legislation must enable safe and cost-effective access to space that will be flexible enough to accommodate entrepreneurial launch operations from the UK and around the world.”

Data Protection Bill

“A Bill to ensure that the UK retains its world class regime protecting personal data”



Background

The Government had already indicated it would seek to implement the General Data Protection Regulation - new EU data protection rules due to come into force in 2018. It said the new UK bill would ensure the country met its obligations while a member of the EU, and would help the UK maintain its "*ability to share data with other EU members states and internationally after we leave the EU*".

The purpose of the Bill

This Bill is to make the data protection framework suitable for the new digital age, allowing citizens to better control their data.

Main elements of the Bill

- ◆ Establish a new data protection regime for non-law enforcement data processing, replacing the Data Protection Act 1998.
- ◆ New rules will strengthen individuals to have more control over their personal data, including right to be forgotten, provided no legitimate grounds for retaining it.
- ◆ To modernise and update the regime for data processing by law enforcement agencies. Cover both domestic processing and cross-border transfers of personal data.
- ◆ To update the power and sanctions available to the Information Commissioner.

Legislative timetable

Some questions may be raised by those who fear the impact on free speech that major regulation could have. However, the recent global breaches including the NHS in the UK could lead to a degree of consensus across the House. Overall the Bill is unexpected given the Government's commitment to implement the GDRR.

Labour reaction and possible opposition

The proposals for closer scrutiny and regulation of certain activities online, chiefly of extremist material or content that is abusive or harmful to children may concern some tech companies who commentators have suggested tend to shy away from over-arching regulation, along with those civil liberties groups, who will be concerned about the impact on free speech. Labour will probably support the provisions in principle though will scrutinise it closely given the fine line between strengthening protection and over reaching rules that may constrain activities of businesses and citizens.

Automated and Electric Vehicles Bill



“A Bill to ensure the United Kingdom remains a world leader in new industries, including electric cars.”

Background

The Bill essentially stems from the previous Parliament’s Vehicle Technology and Aviation Bill, which was cut short by the dissolution of Parliament having only reached Committee stage in the Commons. Indeed the Vehicle Technology and Aviation Bill originally stemmed from the Modern Transport Bill, that was previously proposed in the 2016’s Queen’s Speech.

The purpose of the Bill

This Bill seeks to iron out some of the purported impediments to the uptake of autonomous vehicles and electric vehicles. The Government seeks to enable the UK to be one of the leading places to research and develop modern transport technologies, and enable electric vehicles to be purchased on a greater scale by consumers, mostly by expanding the amount of electric vehicle infrastructure. The Bill will help the Government meet its environmental target for “almost every car and van to be zero-emission by 2050”.

Main elements of the Bill

- ◆ Extending compulsorily motor vehicle insurance to cover the use of automated vehicles, to ensure that compensation claims continue to be paid quickly, fairly, and easily, in line with longstanding insurance practice.
- ◆ Allowing the Government to require the installation of charge points for electric vehicles at motorway service areas and large fuel retailers, and to require a set of common technical and operation standards. This will ensure that charge points are convenient to access and work seamlessly right across the UK.

Legislative timetable

The Bill is relatively uncontroversial when set against other Bills announced in the legislative programme, there would be no initial issues for the Government were it to introduce the Bill early in the session. There is though no indication when the Bill will be deposited at this stage.

Labour response and possible opposition

There is unlikely to be much opposition to the Bill by the Labour Party, Labour amendments are likely to mirror those they put forward for the Vehicle Technology and Aviation Bill, with them raising technical questions over advanced driver systems, and the classification of what constitutes an “automated” and “autonomous” vehicle.

Stakeholder responses



Smart Meters Bill



Background

There has been plenty of speculation that the smart meter roll-out target of 2020 will not be met. Plenty of industry watchers and insiders just don't believe it is possible. However this Queen's Speech reiterates the Government commitment to this target. This proposed legislation can be traced back to January 2016 when the then Department of Energy and Climate Change published [draft energy legislation](#) which included proposals to extend the Government's powers from 1 November 2018 to 1 November 2023. At the time the Government said this was necessary "to drive the timely completion of the roll out of smart meters and delivery of benefits during early operations once the roll out is complete at the end of 2020."

The Energy and Climate Change Committee [held an inquiry on the legislation](#) during which the big energy suppliers pushed back against the proposals. However the committee concluded the powers probably were necessary but urged parliament to press the Government on ensuring the roll-out was on target.

The purpose of the Bill

This Bill will seek to assist the Government in the continued roll-out of the smart meter programme. It will allow them to oversee the implementation of the programme. The Government say the Bill will help them deliver on the manifesto commitment to roll-out smart meters by the end of 2020. It will also protect the national data and communications service to safeguard smart meter devices.

Main elements of the Bill

- ◆ The bill will extend the Government's ability to make changes to smart meter regulations by five years.
- ◆ The bill will introduce a Special Administration Regime which will provide insurance for the national smart meter infrastructure in the event a company responsible for it became insolvent. This extends 'standard practice' for energy network companies and suppliers.

Legislative timetable

As discussed above the legislation has already been written and scrutinised by a parliamentary committee. In that respect the Government could introduce it early. They already have a deadline to meet—1 November 2018—when the current powers run up, therefore we can expect to see this Bill introduced in the first of this two year parliament.

Labour response and possible opposition

The proposals will help to keep the smart meter roll-out on track – a programme which has cross party support. Possible opposition may come in the form of MPs trying to force the Government to do more to make sure the 2020 target is met – or make them admit it won't be.

Smart Meters Bill

Stakeholder reactions

The [Association of Convenience Stores](#) called on the Government to ensure that “changes to the energy market include both domestic and non-domestic consumers”. Chief Executive James Lowman emphasised that the ACS had campaigned on the issue of the domestic energy market and small businesses, focusing on the need for consumers not to be “forced into expensive energy contracts with unfavourable terms”.

[Energy UK](#) commented on the Government’s proposals for a Smart Meter Bill. Chief Executive Lawrence Slade commented that suppliers remained committed to a rollout which “delivers a positive experience for consumers”. Slade said that the “energy industry stands ready to work with Ministers to shape policies that boost investment and innovation in the UK’s low-carbon transport sector”.

Richard Neudegg, Head of Regulation, [uSwitch](#), commented that the company’s policy of helping consumers save money would not change amid the Government’s pledge to help reduce energy bills.

[Energy UK](#) commented on the Government’s proposals for a Smart Meter Bill. Chief Executive Lawrence Slade commented that suppliers remained committed to a rollout which “delivers a positive experience for consumers”. Slade said that the “energy industry stands ready to work with Ministers to shape policies that boost investment and innovation in the UK’s low-carbon transport sector”.

Emma Pinchbeck, Executive Director, [RenewableUK](#), welcomed the Government’s commitment to a new modern industrial strategy, as well as the need to reduce energy bills for consumers. She added that it was important that the Government reaffirmed its strong support for action on climate change.



High Speed Rail (West Midlands to Crewe) Bill

“A Bill to deliver the next phase of high speed rail from the West Midlands to Crewe”

Background

After the successful passing through Parliament of phase 1 of HS2 in the last Parliament, this next phase of the High Speed Bill covers phase 2a. The proposal to bring this part of the route forward was made by the Government in 2015, and will link the West Midlands to the important rail hub of Crewe.



The purpose of the Bill

The Bill will link phase 1 of HS2, which is due to connect London to the West Midlands, with Crewe and the West Coast Main Line. Crewe acts as an important hub station and provides connections to cities throughout the north west of England, Scotland and north Wales. The proposal came off the back of a report by David Higgins in 2014, which argued for bringing forward the construction of the route to Crewe six years ahead of schedule, the argument being that the benefits of the railway would be felt more quickly for the north of England and Scotland, especially in regard to reducing journey times. The Bill will seek to provide for the construction of the route to Crewe by 2027, and the process of its passing will follow that undertaken by Phase 1.

Main elements of the Bill

- ◆ Powers to compulsorily acquire the land needed for the railway, construct the railway, and operate it.
- ◆ Deemed planning permission to deliver the scheme. The details of planning will be developed on a site-by-site basis in coordination with the local planning authority.
- ◆ To set out the way railway regulation will apply to the railway.

Legislative timetable

The phase 1 HS2 Bill was notoriously onerous, taking a substantial period of time to pass through both houses, this being mainly due to the select committee processes that form part of the hybrid bill process. Phase 2a is likely to be far less controversial, this, along with the shortness of its route, means that there are likely to be fewer petitioners against the Bill, therefore reducing the amount of time the Bill will appear before a committee. Earlier understanding suggested the Bill would be deposited at some point in 2017, seeking to achieve Royal Assent by 2019, though there is little indication thus far as to when it could be deposited.

Labour response and possible opposition

Labour are likely to be strongly in support of the Bill, as it seeks to provide vital connections to many cities in northern England. In terms of opposition, this is likely to be limited. Opposition to phase 1, particularly through areas such as the Buckinghamshire, centred on such areas having little to gain from the railway due to their being no stations, and only dis-benefits. This argument would have less traction in the route to Crewe, with likely to benefit from strong connections to most of the major cities of England.

Travel Protection Bill

“A Bill to improve protection for holidaymakers by updating the UK’s financial protection scheme for holidays.”



Background

The Bill comes off the back of a consultation on ATOL reform back in 2016, that sought views from respondents on how consumer protection could be modernised for the package travel sector.

The purpose of the Bill

The Bill will seek to ensure that the Air Travel Organisers’ Licence travel protection scheme for consumers keeps pace with changes in the online travel market, and that protection is for consumers is in place whether they book online or on the high street. The Bill will also make it easier for UK companies when selling holidays across Europe, as they will be able to trade under the UK’s ATOL scheme as opposed to the regimes in each country they sell to.

Main elements of the Bill

- ◆ To update the ATOL scheme and align it with enhancement to the EU and UK package travel regulations that predate people booking their holidays on the internet.
- ◆ The measure would enable the ATOL scheme to cover new digital business models and modern consumer purchasing behaviour and align protection with that offered across Europe to allow UK established companies to sell more easily across borders.

Legislative timetable

Relatively uncontroversial when set against other Bills announced in the legislative programme, there would be no initial issues for the Government by introducing the Bill early in the session. Though there is no current indication of when the Bill could be deposited.

Courts Bill

“A Bill to modernise the courts system”



Background

The last Queen’s Speech included the Prisons and Courts Bill which proposed changes to make the justice system work better for victims to deliver faster and fairer justice for all citizens. Under Gove, this was done by continuing actions proposed as part of [Transforming Summary Justice](#) and [Better Case Management](#). Proposals included making better use of technology and modernising working practices to speed up case management and reducing cost.

Under Liz Truss as Justice secretary, the Government [confirmed](#) courts reform gives stronger protection for victims and witnesses as part of an [announcement](#) of an ambitious programme of reform to modernise Her Majesty’s Courts & Tribunals Service. This was announced alongside a [consultation](#) on assisted digital facilities; automatic online conviction and statutory standard penalty; and panel composition in tribunals; as well as fees for judges.

The Conservative manifesto then did not include anything on courts, but after ongoing discussions about the costs of the courts, amid heated debates regarding proposals to raise Courts and Tribunal Fees, this Bill seeks to revive the proposals from the Prison reform Bill relating to courts, aiming to cut cost through modernisation.

The purpose of the Bill

This Bill will reform the courts and tribunal system to improve access to justice, making better use of technology and modernising working practices. This should make the system more efficient, and provide straightforward access to justice for people alongside targeted support and care for those who need it.

Main elements of the Bill

- ◆ End direct cross examination of domestic violence victims by their alleged perpetrators in family courts and extend the use of virtual hearings.
- ◆ Enable online systems for less serious charges, to plead guilty, accept a conviction and pay a fixed fine. This will go alongside digital services allowing businesses to pursue their cases quickly, to recover debt.
- ◆ Modernise the courts, providing a better working environment for judges, allowing more leadership positions in the judiciary on a fixed term, and more flexible deployment of judges to improve career progression.

Legislative timetable

These provisions relate one to one to those included in the last Parliament’s Prisons and Court Bill, which was making good progress in the Commons, before it was lost in the wash up leading up to the election.

As much of the legislation is written and known by stakeholders, the Bills could have a quick passage through both Houses, and could feasibly be expected in autumn, to be scrutinised by Parliament and completed by mid 2017.

Labour response and possible opposition

The Prison and Courts Bill has cross party support including from Labour who has been supportive of modernisation, as opposed to the raising of fees for court users. Cross examination in the family courts, while principally supported had been debated in detail to safeguard the rule of law (including protections for the defendant until conviction) to be balanced with protections for alleged victims.

Civil Liability Bill



“A Bill to help reduce motor insurance premiums”

Background

Insurance fraud, and specifically whiplash injury, have been high on the Government's agenda for decades, but in the 2015 Autumn statement it committed to ‘crack down on the fraud and claims culture in motor insurance’. It made good on this promise in the Prison and Courts Bill, introduced in 2016 but which failed to make it to the end of the Parliamentary session due to the snap election being called.

The purpose of the Bill

The Bill will ensure there is a fair, transparent and proportionate system of compensation in place for damages paid to genuinely injured personal injury claimants.

Main elements of the Bill

- ◆ To tackle the rampant compensation culture and reduce the number and cost of whiplash claims by banning offers to settle new claims without the support of medical evidence and introducing a new fixed tariff on compensation for whiplash injuries with a duration of up to two years.

Legislative timetable

It is unclear as to how early in the parliamentary session this Bill would be published for scrutiny.

Labour response and possible opposition

Although reform of soft tissue claims has been on the policy agenda for some time, it remains a contentious issue without a broad base of support across the Houses. The chair of the Transport Committee Louise Elman expressed concerns about the narrow focus of reforming only whiplash claims, and Shadow Justice Secretary Richard Burgon was outspoken on the issue during the Prison and Courts Bill, saying that reform of whiplash claims was "based on a false premise".

Stakeholder reaction

The [Association of British Insurers](#) welcomed Government proposals on insurance as well as unsolicited marketing. James Dalton, Director of General Insurance Policy, stated that “tougher regulation of claims management companies cannot come soon enough for people who are plagued by unsolicited calls and texts”.

Andy Watson, Chief Executive, [Ageas](#), welcomed both the proposed Civil Liability Bill and Financial Advice and Claims Bill stating that showed “continued commitment to reducing the cost and frequency of whiplash claims, and to tackling the nuisance of Claims Management Companies”. He emphasised that the former bill would provide a “legislative vehicle” to deal with issues regarding the Discount Rate.

The **Institute and Faculty of Actuaries** expressed concern that the triple pension lock was not mentioned in the speech given its recent prominence in public debate. They did, however, support the Government’s proposals for a Civil Liability Bill, stating that it will help to achieve an open, accessible and fair insurance market where policyholders making a claim are properly treated.

Civil Liability Bill



Commenting on the decision to press ahead with plans to reform personal injury and whiplash in a Civil Liability Bill, Andrew Twambley, spokesperson for **Access to Justice (A2J)** said: The government's proposals will simply open the door to claims touts and cold callers. There are better ways for MPs to resolve whiplash than simply doing what big insurers tell them to do."

The **Chartered Insurance Institute** welcomes the Government's commitment to a civil liability bill, saying it is "essential that people who suffer from personal injuries get the help and compensation that they need, but it is also important to ensure that motor and liability insurance is affordable. With the cost of living rising faster than wages, it is essential that the Government acts to prevent avoidable increases in the cost of car insurance. The announced measures will deliver savings to motorists and represent a sensible approach to whiplash reform."



Financial Guidance and Claims Bill

“A Bill to establish a new arm’s length Single Financial Guidance Body and strengthen the regulation of Claims Management Companies”

Background

Consolidating financial advice providers has long been on the Government's agenda. An [initial consultation](#) was launched in 2015 to seek views on how publicly funded pensions guidance, debt advice and money guidance (including financial capability) could best be structured to help consumers make effective financial decisions. Following the Financial Conduct Authority [Financial Advice Market Review](#) in 2016, the Government launched a [further consultation](#) on proposed new delivery model for public financial guidance, designed to better complement the financial guidance provided by the third sector and the industry and provide more targeted support for consumers.

A review of Claims Management Company regulation was announced in the Summer Budget 2015, concluding that regulation for the sector should be passed to the Financial Conduct Authority. The Chancellor accepted this recommendation in the Budget 2016, and this legislation is the culmination of input from [the Brady report](#), and the Public Accounts Committee [report looking at financial services mis-selling](#).

The purpose of the Bill

This Bill will help consumers by establishing a new arm’s-length Single Financial Guidance Body that will replace three existing providers of publicly funded financial guidance. This measure aims to improve the UK’s financial capability by providing a more joined-up service to help people make effective financial decisions.

The Bill will also strengthen the regulation of Claims Management Companies by transferring the regulatory responsibility to the Financial Conduct Authority, and ensuring the FCA has the necessary powers to implement a robust regulatory regime, including a duty to cap fees.

Main elements of the Bill

- ◆ To establish a new statutory body, accountable to Parliament, with the responsibility for coordinating the provision of debt advice, money guidance and pension guidance.
- ◆ To enable the body’s activities to be funded through existing levies on pension schemes and the financial services industry.
- ◆ To transfer the regulation of claims management services to the Financial Conduct Authority, and transfer complaints-handling responsibility to the Financial Ombudsman Service.
- ◆ To ensure the FCA has the necessary powers to implement a claims management regulatory regime, including a new power to allow the FCA to cap the fees that Claims Management Companies charge customers as well as a more robust authorisation process for new firms entering the market.

Legislative timetable

Both provisions in the Bill have been on the Government's policy agenda since 2015, and have been consulted upon widely. We can therefore expect to see legislation brought forward early this year.

Labour response and possible opposition

During the Prison and Courts Bill, it was widely lamented that the opportunity to deal with CMC regulation had been missed, and Labour members have frequently asked questions regarding the need for action on aggressive marketing, making this aspect of the Bill in principle uncontroversial. Widely welcomed in the third sector, MPs have not been vocal in voicing opposition to the creation of a single financial guidance body, although have raised concerns that the remit of the new body should encapsulate those of its predecessors. Although a 'breathing space scheme' to help families in debt was promised in the manifesto, this does not appear to factor into this legislation, so we may see this debated during the Bill's passage.

Stakeholder responses

Charles Counsell, Chief Executive, **Money Advice Service**, welcomed the plans to create a single financial guidance body. He emphasised the opportunity it offered for ensuring people "access high quality help with money issues" and stated that MAS looked "forward to working with Government and colleagues at The Pensions Advisory Service and Pension Wise on the formation of the new body."

The **Chartered Insurance Institute** welcomed the decision to put the FCA in charge of regulating claims management companies, saying that "while there are many instances where claims management companies provide valuable support to consumers entitled to compensation, there is a need for tighter enforcement of regulations which will bring significant benefits for consumers. On the new Single Financial Guidance Body, the CII urges the need for a statutory requirement for the body to work in collaboration – not just consultation – with the financial services sector."



Goods Mortgages Bill



Background

Following [recommendations](#) by the Law Commission in September 2016, Economic Secretary to the Treasury Simon Kirby [confirmed planned changes](#) to the law in February 2017.

The purpose of the Bill

The Bill will continue the Government's work to deliver a consumer credit market that functions well and delivers a good deal for consumers by modernising outdated Victorian-era legislation.

Main elements of the Bill

- ◆ To repeal the Victorian-era Bills of Sale Acts and replace them with a Goods Mortgage Act which enables individuals to use their existing goods (such as a vehicle) as security on a loan, whilst retaining possession of the goods.
- ◆ To increase protection for borrowers who get into financial difficulty, by introducing a new requirement for a lender to obtain a court order before seizing goods where a borrower has made significant repayments (where one third of the loan has been paid) and wants to challenge the repossession.
- ◆ Helping borrowers in financial difficulty by giving borrowers the right to voluntary termination by handing over their vehicle or other goods to the lender.
- ◆ Providing protection for innocent third parties who buy a vehicle subject to a logbook loan that may be at risk of repossession, and making it clearer that borrowers who knowingly sell goods with a logbook loan attached could be committing fraud.

Legislative timetable

Policy work has been ongoing for a number of years, and indeed the Law Commission is drafting primary legislation already, so we can expect to see a comprehensive Bill introduced early in the parliamentary calendar

Labour response and possible opposition

The main premise of this bill is supported by charities and the Law Commission, so it's unlikely to be a controversial issue.

Stakeholder reaction

Law Commissioner Stephen Lewis said: "Consumers everywhere should be pleased to see plans for a new Goods Mortgage Bill announced in the Queen's Speech. The current law doesn't give buyers the protection they deserve but this new law – based on our recommendations – will put people back in the driving seat when it comes to logbook loans."

The [Law Commission](#) welcomed plans outlined in today's Queen Speech to close a legal loophole which meant buyers of second-hand vehicles were at risk of having them repossessed due to unfair logbook loans. This would be done via a new Goods Mortgage Bill.

Armed Forces (Flexible Working) Bill

“A Bill to support recruitment and retention in the Armed Forces by enabling flexible working arrangements for regular Service personnel”



Background

In November 2016, the Ministry of Defence initiated the [Flexible Engagement System Project](#), to examine how to improve flexible working opportunities within the Armed Forces. This project was created in the 2015 [Strategic Defence and Security Review](#). In February 2017, details of the Flexible Duties Trial were [leaked](#) to the media, with reports suggesting it would be a 24-month pilot. Under the trial, personnel would be able to “reduce their liability to deploy” for up to two years and be able to take up to 93 days of unpaid leave.

The purpose of the Bill

The Bill will provide the Armed Forces personnel with modern and flexible opportunities to serve, in a way that allows them to better balance their family responsibilities, lifestyle aspirations and circumstances.

The Bill will also ensure that the services are more representative of society, which will be “crucial” in attracting and retaining key skills and diversifying the makeup of the Armed Forces. This will ensure that the Conservative’s manifesto commitment to “attract and retain the best men and women for our armed forces”.

Main elements of the Bill

- ◆ To amend the Armed Forces Act 2006 to enable forms of part-time service and limited geographic employment within the Regular Armed Forces. New flexible working provisions will enable Service personnel returning from special leave including maternity, shared parental and adoption leave to have more options to support an easier transition back into duty.

Legislative timetable

The Government’s [own website](#) outlined that it planned for the changes to be implemented in 2019, and they would require primary legislation.

The Bill is relatively uncontroversial compared to other legislation announced in the Queen’s Speech, although the Government is likely to want to ensure its passage through Parliament quickly before it becomes bogged-down by Brexit.

Labour response and possible opposition

During the election campaign, Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn was criticised for being “soft” on defence issues. However, it is unlikely that he will agree with Col Richard Kemp, who was the commander of British forces in Afghanistan, when he said in February that the changes could “undermine our national defence”, as Labour has traditionally supported measures to ensure flexible working arrangements.

In their manifesto, Labour also committed to examining the recruitment and retention policies of the Armed Forces and ensure that personnel reflect the UK’s diverse society. ([p121](#)) They also criticised the Conservatives for shrinking the size of the Army, and so are likely to support any measures that attract and retain recruits. ([p120](#)).

Draft Patient Safety Bill

“A Bill to establish the framework for the Health Service Safety Investigation Body (HSSIB) in law.”



Background

Following a number of serious incidents and public inquiries such as those in mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust, Southern Health Foundation Trust and Morecambe Bay finding short comings in the NHS on learning from mistakes the Secretary of State for Health, Jeremy Hunt committed to improving safeguards for whistle-blowers and investigations in the NHS.

In 2016 the [Health Services Safety Investigation Branch](#) (HSSIB) was announced and has been in operation since April 2017, it was tasked with independently investigating serious incidents within the NHS. It is understood Hunt had [lobbied the Prime Minister](#) to introduce the legislation in the Queen's Speech with the intention of underpinning the HSSIB's independence in law a view echoed by the sector. It is estimate unsafe care costs between £1bn and 2.5bn each year in remedial action and patient care, litigation and compensation costs. Until now the HSSIB has been functioning as an independent body and following a Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee hearing the Chief Investigator of the HSIB, Keith Conradi told the committee that for the provision of the “safe space” to function, legislation would be required.

The purpose of the Bill

The Bill aims to improve how the NHS investigates and learns from mistakes by establishing an independent Health Service Safety Investigation Body in law to secure its independence as it provides protections to staff and participants giving evidence to investigations.

The body will encourage staff and participants to freely share information with the HSSIB by barring the disclosure of information held in connection with its safety investigations to create a “safe space” for staff and avoid discrimination.

Main elements of the Bill

- ◆ Legislation to establish the Health Service Safety Investigation Body (HSSIB) in statute, providing it with clear powers to conduct independent and impartial investigations into patient safety risks in the NHS in England
- ◆ The Bill will create a prohibition on the disclosure of information held in connection with an investigation conducted by the Health Service Safety Investigation Body, enabling participants to be as candid as possible. The prohibition will not apply where there is an ongoing risk to the safety of patients or evidence of criminal activity, in which case the HSSIB can inform the relevant regulator or the police.

Legislative timetable

One of the Bills most easily predicted in the Queen's speech the contents are relatively uncontroversial and repeatedly called for by the body which it underpins, parties across the House and stakeholders. The body itself is funded by the Department of Health and one might expect the Government want to make progress on legislating for framework which underpins that body as early in the Parliamentary table as possible, given the delay in implementation has been the source of the majority of pressure so far. However, with Brexit Bills and time pressures it remains to be seen when the Government will introduce it.

Draft Patient Safety Bill

Stakeholder responses

Janet Davies, Chief Executive and General Secretary, **Royal College of Nursing**, said that Theresa May missed her opportunity to show that she had listened to public concern over the future of the NHS. She said that by scarcely mentioning its patients and workforce. She said the below-inflation cap on pay should have been scrapped and did nothing to help fill the 40,00 vacant nurse jobs in England. Davies said they would look closely at the announcements on mental health and social care but that any rhetoric would need to be met with cash.

Denise Hatton, Chief Executive of the **National Council for YMCAs in England & Wales**, welcomed the focus of the Queen's Speech on schools and technical education, improved mental health services and additional housing.

Saffron Cordery, Director of Policy and Strategy, **NHS Providers**, welcomed the bill to establish a fully independent Health Service Safety Investigation Body as well as the Government's continued commitment to mental health, with specific proposals to review the ongoing suitability of the Mental Health Act 1983. She did say however that the social care funding crisis needed to move beyond consultation and that action was needed for a realistic and sustainable funding solution for both health and social care.



Draft Tenants' Fees Bill



“A Bill to ban charging tenants ‘letting fees’ to improve transparency, affordability and competition in the private rental market.”

Background

The 2016 Autumn Statement first announced that there would be a ban on letting agent fees, with the intention of improving competition in the private rental market while giving renters greater clarity and control over what they pay. Reiterating the commitment in February’s [Housing White Paper](#), DCLG then launched [an eight week consultation](#) on the issue on 7 April 2017, which closed on 2 June 2017 (with feedback still being analysed). The commitment was further noted in the 2017 Conservative manifesto.

The purpose of the Bill

This Bill is aimed at making renting fairer and more affordable for tenants by reducing upfront costs and improving transparency. Currently letting agent fees are thought to be unclear, meaning tenants are being charged different, and sometimes very high, fees for similar services.

This Bill is also aimed at increasing competition in the private rental sector.

Main elements of the Bill

- ◆ Measures to ban landlords and agents from requiring tenants to pay letting fees as a condition of their tenancy.
- ◆ Measures to enforce the ban with provision for tenants to be able to recover unlawfully charged fees.

Legislative timetable

With the consultation having only closed a few weeks ago, responses are still being analysed and will be used to inform the draft Bill, with the Government responding in “due course”. Although uncontroversial in nature, with Brexit Bills dominating the legislative programme, the draft Bill could well be thrown into the long grass, and it could be mid-2018 before we see its formal introduction on the floor of the House, following a period of pre-legislative scrutiny in the autumn. Indeed, there is no guarantee that the ban will be enshrined in law by the end of the session.

Labour response and possible opposition

Labour has long been in favour of scrapping letting agent fees, so there is unlikely to be much opposition. Indeed, Lib Dem peer Baroness Greener sought to introduce a similar Private Members Bill— the Renters’ Rights Bill—in the last session. Despite prorogation putting a halt to proceedings, the Bill had made it through committee stage having navigated its way through two unopposed readings in the Lords.



Draft Tenants' Fees Bill

Stakeholder responses

Mayor of London Sadiq Khan suggested that promised support for private renters appeared to have been “kicked into the long grass”. Indeed he noted that while draft proposals were being brought forward to ban unfair tenancy fees, the cancellation of next year’s Queen’s Speech meant it “could be years before these proposals become a reality for renters”.

David Cox, Chief Executive, **ARLA Propertymark**, expressed disappointment in relation to the proposed Tenants’ Fees Bill, stating that it was “unlikely the Government had enough time to analyse all of the responses from the consultation”. He warned that a “ban on letting agent fees will cost the sector jobs, make buy-to-let investment even less attractive, and ultimately result in the costs being passed on to tenants” <http://bit.ly/2rCiLfl>

Jon Sparkes, Chief Executive, **Crisis**, welcomed the proposals to build more homes and ban unfair tenant fees but said that to fulfil the Government’s manifesto promise to end rough sleeping there would be a need for more serious and concerted action.

Citizens Advice Chief Executive Gillian Guy praised the speech as going “some way toward tackling some of the biggest challenges facing our clients and consumers”. The organisation welcomed the focus over the next two years on issues such as workers’ rights and the consumer energy market as well as the opportunity a single financial guidance body would provide to “make sure people are getting the independent and impartial guidance they need to plan and manage their finances.” <http://bit.ly/2rCIOEv>

The **Residential Landlords Association** expressed concerns that the Draft Tenant Fee Ban would leave both tenants and landlords in limbo. Instead they suggested that the Government use existing powers to introduce a “fixed menu of fees” to allow tenants to more easily shop around.

Kersten Muller, head of real estate tax, **Grant Thornton UK**, commented on the announcement that tenant fees will be banned and explained that rather than removing the cost from tenants, the cost would be pushed to landlords, who would in turn increase their rents. He added that “the move also seems to decrease the level of transparency in the rental market and is not conducive to tackling the ongoing housing crisis facing the UK.”

Draft Domestic Violence Bill

“A Bill to protect victims of domestic violence and abuse”

Background

In February 2017 the [Prime Minister announced](#) plans to “transform the way we tackle domestic violence and abuse” alongside a £20m fund for services to support women and children and was then included in the Conservative Party manifesto 2017. This Bill follows up on the proposals outlined in the manifesto.

The purpose of the Bill

This Bill will transform the approach to domestic violence and abuse, to ensure that victims have the confidence to come forward and report their experiences. It will ensure the state and justice system support them and their children and pursue the abuser. This would give greater clarity and guidance about the devastating impact of this crime on families.

Main elements of the Bill

The Bill will

- ◆ Establish a Domestic Violence and Abuse Commissioner to raise awareness, stand up to victims and hold the justice system to account. Their function in Wales would be determined in Consultation with the Welsh Government
- ◆ Set out a legal definition of domestic abuse in law to underpin measures in the Bill.
- ◆ Create a consolidated new domestic abuse civil prevention and protection order regime
- ◆ Safeguard children by ensuring sentencing of perpetrators reflects the devastating life long impact of the crime on the child

Legislative timetable

As it is one of the few Bills introduced in draft by the Government, this might hint at the fact that several provisions may need to be consulted on, and scrutinised with several stakeholders in mind, from voluntary sector support centres, law enforcement, to the Courts System. One could feasibly expect it to be published in draft and consulted on in autumn, to be scrutinised by Parliament in the second half of 2017.

Labour response and possible opposition

Labour had shown itself supportive of these measures and as protection for victims is a widely popular issue there should be no issues in bringing it to fruition. During conversations around protections for domestic violence and abuse victims during the Prisons and Courts Bill in the last session, the Labour party was broadly supportive but highlighted some issues around the practicalities for provisions such as digital hearings to avoid cross examination; they further raised issues around legal aid.

Stakeholder responses

Women's Aid among others lobbied for the creation of a Domestic Violence and Abuse Commissioner to as well as to ensure women and children could stay safely in their homes. The announcement for a Bill and safeguarded funding for refuges has also been welcomed by campaigners, who had long highlighted issues with the provision and the commissioning of services. A key focus was further to ban the practice of cross examination by their violent partners in family courts among other things, a proposal included in the Prisons and Courts Bill lost during the last Parliament, and now proposed via the new Courts Bill. <http://bit.ly/2rCkvVY>

Ed Davey, **Liberal Democrat** home affairs spokesperson, commented on plans for a draft Domestic Violence and Abuse Bill, stating that “legislation is only half of the story”, and focused on the need for funding of frontline services. He stated that “until this government is willing to invest in refuges and other frontline services, women and children up and down the country will continue to be let down.”



Non-legislative programme 2017-2019

Counter Terrorism Review

Background

Following the recent domestic terror attacks, notably at London Bridge, Theresa May announced in her “Enough is enough” [speech](#) that a new counter-terrorism strategy would be published, backed up by additional investment of £2.5bn over five years in security and intelligence agencies in the first half of 2017.

May suggested a four point plan including longer prison sentences for terrorist offences; making it easier to deport foreign terrorist suspects; restricting the freedom and movement of terrorist suspects; as well as to regulate cyberspace to prevent extremist and terrorism planning, after the acts had apparently been conducted by home-grown extremists alleged to have been radicalised online.

Further she announced this would include a new Commission for Countering Extremism as a statutory body, and would “consult widely” with police and security chiefs to ask what powers they needed, and if need be, remove the human rights laws which stopped her from tackling terrorism.

Key Commitments and Consultations

- * Review with police and security services what counter –terrorism measures the Governemnt can use,
- * Review if longer prison sentences for terrorist offences are necessary
- * Consider what further steps need to be taken to halt the spread of extremist material and poisonous propaganda online so there are no safe spaces on the internet for terrorists.
- * Working internationally and encouraging tech companies to do more to remove harmful content from their networks.

Comment

With the numbers of “low tech” attacks multiplying in recent months, Theresa May is under pressure to show action soon, however several of the proposed parts of the review will depend on resources available, in particular after it became clear that policing funding had been dramatically cut. She might also face some opposition to longer sentences, without any planned reforms to prisons, which are over capacity already.

Further, any substantial work with tech companies and further afield would take time and would need to be regulated, which might take time.

Finally on resources need for security services, much will depend on the outcome of Brexit to allow an assessment of which international data sharing tools for suspects who might be crossing borders will be available to the UK outside of the EU and Schengen.



Commission for Countering Extremism

Background

Alongside her comments on counter extremism following the London Bridge and the Manchester attacks, Theresa May announced tolerance of extremism had been going on for too long, and action would therefore be taken to regulate the cyberspace to prevent extremist and terrorism planning, alongside identifying and exposing examples of extremism.

Further she announced this would include a new Commission for Countering Extremism as a statutory body, which would further see the appointment of an anti-extremism czar to advise the Government on how to assert 'British, pluralistic values' over extremist ones, which included 'unacceptable cultural norms' such as female genital mutilation.

The proposal to establish the Commission was included in the Conservative manifesto as a way to approach the issue of extremism in similar ways to the way racism had been fought in past years.

Key Commitments and Consultations

- * Establish a Commission for Countering Extremism, which will:
- * Identify examples of extremism and expose them;
- * Help the Government to identify new policies to tackle extremism;
- * Support the public sector and civil society in promoting and defending pluralistic values across communities.

Comment

A Counter-Extremism and Safeguarding Bill had been included in the 2016 Queen's Speech, but allegedly did not come to fruition over issues with finding suitable definitions for "British values" and "extremism".

May would face similar issues here, but in light of several counts where British citizens had been radicalised online and in their local communities, rather than from abroad, she is under pressure to act.

She stressed "Extremism, especially Islamist extremism, strips some people of the freedoms they should enjoy, undermines the cohesion of our society, and can fuel violence," and added it was particularly affecting women, and due to the sensitive nature around cultural practices, and vulnerability associated with FGM alongside the fine line not to infringe on freedoms of religious practice practical policies may take a while to develop.

Finally this may have implications on the Prevent strategy, which had been controversial since it's inception in 2011.

Public inquiry into the Grenfell Tower fire

Background

Following a private visit to the scene of the tragedy, the Prime Minister announced last Thursday that there would be a full public inquiry into the Grenfell Tower fire.

Key Commitments and Consultations

- * Full public inquiry chaired by a judge
- * Residents, the families of the deceased, the Mayor of London and HM Opposition will be consulted on the terms of reference of the inquiry
- * Funding for legal representation will be provided for residents and victim's families
- * The position on Building Regulations will be "assessed"
- * A new strategy for resilience in major disasters will be developed—including a potential Civil Disaster Reaction Taskforce

Comment

Among many other stakeholders, there were strong calls from Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn and the Mayor of London urging the Government to launch a public inquiry in the wake of the disaster. Particularly, Sadiq Khan has urged that an interim report be published this summer at the latest. Whether this transpires or not, the public inquiry will likely get to work immediately, reporting rapidly to ensure that those affected, and the wider public, get the answers they have demanded.



Housing

Background

The Government set out its plans to fix the “dysfunctional” housing market in its Housing White Paper in February this year.

Key Commitments and Consultations

- The Government will consult and “look to take action” to promote transparency and fairness for leaseholders.

Comment

Despite pledging to tackle the housing crisis, there is nothing new in the Queens Speech that hasn’t already been announced in the Housing White Paper. Of course, it is welcome that the Government has reiterated its commitment to implementing these plans but many in the sector are likely to be concerned that the draft Tenant’s Fees Bill is the only decisive legislative action the Government intends on taking in the next two years in relation to housing policy—and even this might not become law before the end of the session. Indeed, shadow secretary of state for housing John Healey has described the speech as “pitiful”, noting that “all Ministers can muster is a re-announcement on letting fees”.

Further still, the Queens Speech offers no mention of the recent Conservative manifesto commitment on social housing, nor the pledge to honour the 2015 commitment to delivering one million homes by 2020, with an additional half a million more by the end of 2022.

On leasehold abuses, Communities Secretary Sajid Javid had expressed his unwillingness to legislate on the issue in the last session, but promised a consultation would be forthcoming—as the Queens Speech document reinforces.



Independent Public Advocate

Background

The proposal to introduce an Independent Public Advocate to support bereaved and victims families after public disasters and support them in subsequent inquests was contained in the Conservative manifesto ([p.44](#))

The manifesto specifically references the Hillsborough tragedy as an example of an event where the victims could benefit from an Independent Public Advocate, and this was an issue that Theresa May worked on during her time as.

Key Commitments and Consultations

- * The Government will introduce an Independent Public Advocate to ensure bereaved and surviving victims of disasters are informed of progress in any relevant investigations, and how can they can best contribute to such investigations.
- * The Advocate will have access to information held by public bodies and be able to report on or share that information with representatives of the victims
- * The Government will consult on proposals to ensure that the role is focussed on those events where the scale and public interest mean investigatory bodies may no longer be able to support victims and the bereaved.
- * The role will apply to England and Wales only, due to the separate jurisdictions for investigation deaths and mass fatalities in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Comment

It is expected that the introduction of the Advocate will be welcomed by opposition parties. A number of Labour MPs have been active in campaigning for better support for the families of the victims of the Hillsborough disaster. It is likely the recent Grenfell Tower fire will also mean more pressure on all politicians to ensure victim's are properly supported, and soon.

In January 2016, former Labour Justice Minister Lord Wills introduced a [Private Member's Bill](#) to introduce a independent public advocate. The Bill was also a product of his role in devising the Hillsborough Independent Panel, and was supported by the Labour peers. Then Justice Minister Lord Faulks [welcomed](#) the Bill's intentions, but argued that there was no need for the specific advocate role that the Bill envisaged at the time.



Armed forces

Background

There has been much discussion over recent months on the extent to which the Government is reaching NATO's two per cent spending target, and so it was not surprising that the pledge was contained within the Conservative manifesto. In February, [a report](#) from the International Institute for Strategic Studies claimed that defence spending had fallen to 1.98 per cent in 2016. However, both the Government and NATO itself [agreed](#) that the UK had met its obligation.

NATO members have also come under pressure from US President Donald Trump to ensure they were meeting the agreed spending levels.

May also [came under criticism](#) from former military chiefs during the election campaign, who in a letter pressed the Prime Minister to increase military spending and accused the Ministry of Defence of "accounting deception" regarding the NATO target.

Key Commitments and Consultations

- * The Government commit to meeting the NATO target to spend at least 2 per cent of GDP on defence until 2022. In addition, they will ensure defence spending is increased by at least half a per cent above inflation every year.
- * The Government deliver on the Armed Forces Covenant across the United Kingdom. The Covenant was enshrined in law in the 2011 Armed Forces Act to ensure current or former Service personnel are treated fairly.

Comment

During the election campaign, Shadow Defence Secretary Nia Griffith reiterated Labour's pledge to match the NATO spending target, and the Labour manifesto criticised the Conservatives spending cuts for putting national security at risk. ([p119](#)). Therefore, they are likely to support any measures that boost defence spending.

The party also committed to seek greater consistency in implementation of the Armed Forces Covenant, and increased participation in the Corporate Covenant. Therefore, it is extremely unlikely they would oppose any measures that would enhance the Covenant in any way.

Mental Health reform

Background

It is no secret the prime minister has long held mental health care as a core tenant of her NHS reform agenda. Indeed in January of this year Theresa May called the lack of support for those with mental health conditions a “burning injustice”. The Mental Health Act 1983 has been challenged by the Government, particularly the rates of police detention under the Act and the Government now seeks to pursue this reform further and they will seek to further challenge the Act during the course of this parliament.

The prime minister trailed introducing new legislation to replace the existing Mental Health Act and this announcement seems to be somewhat of a back track on that commitment, a move which could prove unpopular. The party also campaigned on a commitment to ensure updated health and safety regulations so that employers provide appropriate first aid training and needs assessment for mental health, and widening the Equalities Act protections against discrimination to mental health condition.

Key Commitments and Consultations

- * The Queen Speech sets out a commitment to consider further reform of the Mental Health Act 1983
- * The Government will act upon their review of mental health legislation and publish recommendations on policy to provide greater rights to those with mental health conditions
- * Consider rates of detention and act to improve service responses
- * Review the disproportionate number of individuals from certain ethnic groups, particularly black people, who are detained under the act
- * Examine whether the use of Community Treatment Orders are still fit for purpose
- * Consider the rights of family members to get information about the treatment of their loved ones
- * The party will publish a Green Paper on Children and Young People, as promised in the manifesto

Comment

Overall, the Conservative manifesto commitment to scrap the Mental Health Act 1983 was welcomed by mental health charities but they were keen to stress the care and consideration such reform would need. The Government appear to have heeded these warnings and this seems to be the beginning of a reasonably long journey, although the decision not to explicitly announce new legislation may be controversial. Expect these considerations to get underway quickly but any Act to replace the existing legislation seems further in the distance.

Stakeholder reaction

Danielle Hamm, Associate Director of Campaigns and Policy, **Rethink Mental Illness**, welcomed the commitment to new mental health legislation as an important first step but wanted to see firmer commitments to a comprehensive review and a clear timeline to this. She said that the Mental Health Act was not working and that the Government would need to work in partnership with people affected by mental illness and professionals in the sector to ensure effective legislation.

Paul Farmer, Chief Executive of the mental health charity **Mind**, welcomed proposals to reform mental health legislation and the fact it has accepted all recommendations from the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health adding it was a “mammoth task and needs to be done properly in full consultation” .

Denise Hatton, Chief Executive of the **National Council for YMCA's** in England & Wales, welcomed the focus of the Queen's Speech on schools and technical education, improved mental health services and additional housing.



Social care

Background

Social care was undoubtedly the most scrutinised aspect of the Conservative manifesto during the election campaign. The Government proposed some radical changes to the provision of social care, and this consultation will be their first opportunity to work through the detail that many argued was lacking in their initial proposals. Theresa May confirmed that there would be a cap to the cost of social care, and that the maximum cost of care would be considered in the Green Paper.

Key Commitments and Consultations

- * In addition to the £2bn already committed to stave off short term pressures, the speech makes reference to the need for further reform to ensure the system is prepared to meet the challenges of the changing population
- * The Government commits to working with partners at all levels, including service users and care providers to bring forward proposals for public consultation
- * The consultation will set out options for how to improve the social care system such as financial stability, support for people, families and communities to prepare for old age
- * The consultation will also consider issues of care quality and variation in practice

Comment

The announcement of wholesale reform of the way social care is provided, in theory was welcomed but the means by which this Government proposed to make changes was heavily criticised. Opposition parties labelled the proposals a “dementia tax” and challenged the decision to disregard some suggestions made in the Dilnot report. This policy seemed largely unpopular with the electorate and therefore is likely to face heavy opposition from the likes of Labour and the SNP.

Many charities expressed their dismay over being “muzzled” by 2014 legislation which heavily restricts organisations from intervening on policy during an election, so this consultation will be the first full opportunity for many stakeholders to respond as they wish. This announcement gave no indication of a timeline but the Government have previously suggested the consultation will take place during the summer. While it would be tempting for the Government to avoid this consultation for as long as possible, they will be under intense scrutiny and are therefore likely to get the ball rolling quite quickly.

Stakeholder reaction

Richard Kramer, Deputy CEO, **Sense**, commented that he was pleased to hear the Government making a firm commitment to tackle discrimination as part of today’s Queen’s Speech. He added that the issues facing social care were complex, and said there was a clear need for a long-term strategy to ensure the sector did not face this level of crisis again. Simon Bottery, Director of Policy, **Independent Age**, expressed disappointment at the “passing mention” that social care received in the Queen’s Speech. He urged that the new Government needed to establish a cross-party approach for a “new sustainable settlement for social care”: <http://bit.ly/2sVvv4K>

Giles Meyer, interim CEO, **Carers Trust**, commented that social care was in crisis and that successive Governments have failed to take sufficient action. He commented that the increase in the National Living Wage was an important step towards ensuring paid care support staff were paid more fairly.

Schools and technical education

Background

The topic of schools funding has been fairly salient for a while, and certainly rose higher up the political agenda towards the end of the last parliament; a great number of MPs raised the subject in the Commons chamber and Westminster Hall after the draft formula was published. Over the pre-election period it was [reported in the media](#) that May was facing an “uprising” of her own MPs about the proposed formula. This may have led to the commitment in the Conservative’s manifesto to that no school would have its budget cut as a result of the new formula.

The combination of the three million new apprenticeship starts by 2020 target, repeated reports on the extent of the UK’s skills gap and worries about labour shortages post-Brexit, has led to technical education becoming a more prominent subject in recent years.

Key Commitments and Consultations

- * A commitment to increase the schools budget further
- * A commitment to make school funding fairer
- * A commitment to deliver on new Institutes of Technology as part of the Industrial Strategy

Comment

On the hotly debated subject of selective education, the Queen’s Speech implies that plans to lift the ban on grammar schools in order to create more good school places will only be put to parliament when the Government feels any proposals could “command a majority”. This could be seen as a concession given that the Party’s manifesto pledged to lift the ban on selective schools, however the wording leaves the door open to changes during the course of the two-year parliament.

In line with the ‘Schools that work for everyone’ [consultation](#), the Queen’s Speech makes reference to encouraging more people, schools and institutions to come forward to help to create more school places. This falls short of any legislation to force universities or independent schools to open free schools, as was originally intended.

Stakeholders across the education and business sectors in particular may be disappointed by the lack of legislative commitment to improving careers advice, and especially on technical routes. The Queen’s Speech document references working towards making it easier for young people to take technical and vocational routes so they can make effective choices about future careers and study, but makes no firm commitments.



Digital Charter

Background

Building on measures within the recent Digital Economy and Investigation Powers Acts, the Conservative [manifesto pledged](#) the establishment of a digital charter to “balance freedom with protection for users”. The manifesto claimed the charter would make Britain the best place to start a business whilst also ensuring it was the safest place in the world to be online, this is echoed in the Queen’s Speech.

[Reports of radicalisation increasingly taking place online](#) have partly promoted a increased focus on the role of social media organisations in keeping people safe, and preventing the spread of online abuse and extremist content where possible.

Key Commitments and Consultations

- * To respond to challenges and threats such as to the country’s security, privacy, emotional wellbeing, mental health and child safety.
- * To ensure technology companies do more to protect users and improve online safety
- * To make it easier for companies and consumers to do business online

Comment

When the Conservative manifesto 2017 confirmed the party’s intention to introduce a digital charter the move was welcomed by key stakeholder [techUK](#), who said it was “a political first to have such a significant focus on security and prosperity in the digital age”. Although the digital charter is likely to be broadly welcomed, the balance between creating an open and thriving tech environment and increasing regulation is difficult to strike.

The regulatory framework referred to in the [manifesto](#) will be key in determining the extent to which social media and other companies have to alter their regimes. Although the manifesto commits to establishing this new regulatory framework in law, there is no date or timescale given for this in the Queen’s Speech document, potentially implying a consultation will be introduced.

Of note, there is no mention of the levy on social media companies and communication service providers to support awareness and preventative activity to counter internet harms that was pledged in the Conservative manifesto. Upon the release of the manifesto, the [Telegraph noted](#) that such a proposal was “likely to be deeply unpopular among internet firms”.

Public finances

Following the General Election returning a hung parliament, it has been suspected that the Government may soften its approach to cutting the deficit and take on board public concern, especially regarding public sector pay.

This had been shown by recent television appearances by Government ministers who have indicated a need for them to change tact when discussing the countries public finances.

Key Commitments and Consultations

- * The Government will reduce the structural deficit to less than 2 per cent of GDP and get debt falling as a percentage of GDP by 2020/21.
- * The Government will reflect on the message voters sent at the General Election, while remembering that the books have to be balanced and the deficit eliminated.
- * The Government will reflect on public finance spending at future fiscal events such as this year's Autumn Budget.

Comment

Labour will use public finances as a key criticism of the Government, especially regarding the public sector pay freeze and it will be expected to be one of the key attack lines used by the opposition at the start of this Parliament. Instead the opposition will call for a more balanced approach to cutting the deficit and an increase in spending on public services.

National Living Wage and Workers' Rights

Whilst unemployment figures have fallen substantially, discontent in the labour market is rising, with numerous reports of mal-practice in the ['gig-economy'](#) and [abuse of workers rights](#) on top of a picture of higher inflation and stagnating wages. The Conservatives committed to protecting the interests of those working in the 'gig' economy, as well as planned increases to the National Living Wage to 60 per cent of median earnings by 2020 in its election manifesto, but did not make any further commitments on the shape of future policy on workers rights. The Taylor Review, commissioned by Government and due to report imminently, is likely to make wide-ranging recommendations including on the role of the Low Pay Commission and the need for primary legislation to clarify the distinction between 'worker' and self-employment. In

Key Commitments and Consultations

- * The Government has said it is clear that employers must take their employment law responsibilities seriously, including making sure workers are paid properly and enjoy the rights to which they are legally entitled.
- * Although not specified, a consultation will follow the publication of the Taylor Review and we can expect legislation and regulation to be updated in a number of areas.

Comment

May published a series of plans for workers' rights during the election campaign, including safeguarding the rights of workers after Brexit, which will of course feature heavily on the policy and legislative agenda in the coming months, but hasn't been mentioned here. With broad consensus on the need for enhanced regulation around workers' rights, the contentious issues will be the need to ensure innovation and productivity are not stifled.



Northern Ireland

Background

The collapse of power-sharing in Northern Ireland in January 2017 has been the dominant matter in local politics, with talks so far failing to bring about an agreement between the various parties. Accountability for the botched Renewable Heating Initiative (RHI) which brought down the Assembly, has been the major barrier to compromise between the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and Sinn Fein, along with dealing with the legacy of the Troubles.

Key Commitments and Consultations

- * The overriding priority for the UK Government in Northern Ireland remains the restoration of devolved power-sharing government at Stormont by the statutory deadline of 29th June.
- * The Government remains committed to the Belfast Agreement and its successors, particularly governing in the interests of the whole community and working in partnership with the Irish Government.
- * The re-establishment of the Executive in Northern Ireland will support the full implementation of the Stormont House and Fresh Start Agreements.

Comment

The Government's policy regarding power-sharing in the Province remains unchanged from that prior to the election. Talks are continuing between the relevant parties in Belfast, however, Sinn Fein's insistence that Arlene Foster stands down while an inquiry takes place into the RHI scheme continues to be met with resistance by the DUP.

The possibility of an agreement at Westminster between the DUP and Conservatives has complicated matters and reinforced Republican scepticism about the UK Government's ability to be an "honest broker" in negotiations. Negotiations in Northern Ireland have been known to drag on, however, Secretary of State, James Brokenshire has made it clear that should the June 29th deadline not be met Direct Rule being imposed from London is a real possibility.

Gender pay gap and discrimination

Background

The issue of gender pay reporting was a key feature of the last government's corporate governance agenda with regulations [coming in to force](#) in April 2017. Tackling discrimination and equality issues can also be seen as a facet of the 'social justice' agenda that May stated would be a key theme of her time in office. With the potential partnership with the DUP also expected shortly, the need to assert her government's agenda and commitment across these different areas was something many expected in a revised policy programme.

Key Commitments and Consultations

- * Its noted the race disparity audit would be published later in 2017 and would highlight the difference in outcomes for people of difference backgrounds, in every area from health to education.
- * The Government are continuing to work with Sir John Parker on improving the ethnic diversity of boards by 2021
- * A new integration strategy would be published in the coming months, as a response to the issues raised in Louise Casey's independent review on opportunity and integration (published December 2016)

Comment

Much of the provisions within this non-legislative programme is a reiteration of announcements and funds already made. However, with open consultations on [caste](#) due to close in July and Justine Greening retaining her position as Secretary of State for Education and Minister for Women and Equalities, we can expect a degree of continuity as the minister continues in office. One area to consider and not included in the policy document, may be further work on equality for older workers, particularly in light of potential labour gaps post-Brexit.

In regard to Brexit, the [select committee concluded](#) the Government must include a clause on equality in the Repeal Bill saying that there will be no going backwards on current levels of equality protections. The MPs also suggest government should amend the Equality Act 2010 to empower Parliament and the Courts to declare whether new laws are compatible with equality principles.



Consumer Market including Energy Market

Announced in last year's Queen Speech the "Better Markets Bill" had been seen as a casualty of the change of government with May's tougher rhetoric on "fairer markets" that "work for everyone" potentially causing a rethink of the proposals. The announcement of the Bill in the last Queens Speech was quickly followed by a consultation on [improving the consumer landscape and quicker switching](#) and BEIS officials had indicated the Government's response to this consultation was likely to feed into the Consumer Markets Green Paper.

Since May's elevation to prime minister the focus of this paper has turned towards the energy market culminating in the Conservative's manifesto pledge to protect more vulnerable customers in the market.

However it is important to remember these proposals will extend beyond one sector.

Key Commitments and Consultations

- * The Government will publish a green paper to closely examine markets which are not working fairly for consumers.
- * The paper will look across markets at how help consumers avoid subscription traps, enforce their rights and have use of alternative dispute resolution.
- * The paper will include measures aimed at helping consumers get a better deal in essential markets like telecoms.
- * In the housing market the process of buying a house will be looked at to try and make to more streamlined and less stressful.
- * In the energy market the Government will look at how to extend price protection to more vulnerable customers.

Comment

As mentioned above the focus of 'consumer markets' has very much been the domestic energy market in recent months. After months of increasing rhetoric about "time being up" for the big players it seemed inevitable in some quarters that the Conservative manifesto would include proposal for a cap on prices. Explicitly, this turned out not to be the case.

There was agreement across the manifestos that action needed to be taken on domestic energy bills. Before the election BEIS Secretary Greg Clark suggested to trade press that the proposal would be an "absolute cap", in agreement with one of the CMA panel Martin Cave. However, since then speculation has mounted that the "absolute cap" would be dropped due to pressure from the more free market elements of the Conservative Party. Chair of the CMA inquiry Roger Witcomb has also publicly criticised price control proposals.

One of the strongest parliamentary advocates for action was Conservative MP John Penrose, he favoured a "relative cap" and if May still wanted to act this could be the path she takes. A Conservative source told the Guardian that some form of control on prices had "widespread support in the party".

However the journey from the strong rhetoric pre-election to the relatively weaker line in this document point towards a watered down proposal compared with what may have been expected before. IF that is the case May could face more accusations of u-turning.

Critical National Infrastructure

Background

The Government state that the proposals stem from the need to protect national security by ensuring that foreign ownership of companies controlling important infrastructure does not undermine security or essential services. The Cameron era was one that very much promoted Foreign Direct Investment in the UK, Theresa May appears to follow a different approach.

The Conservatives manifesto contained proposals to reform rules on “takeovers and mergers” speaking of “taking action to protect our critical national infrastructure”. It went on to describe strengthening ministerial scrutiny in respect of nuclear power, and extending this into telecoms, defence and energy. A manifestation of greater ministerial scrutiny in the nuclear sector was evident with the Government delaying its decision regarding Hinckley Point.

The proposals have caused some consternation, especially in the financial services sector, with its detractors describing such measures as protectionist and the contradictory to ministers assertion of Britain being “open for business”.

Key Commitments and Consultations

- * No commitment has been given on timings so far, though as described with Hinckley Point above, the Government had already begun to take a more interventionist approach with the nuclear sector last September.
- * Through the Enterprise Act the Government already has the power to impose public interest tests where deals may threaten financial stability, national security and media plurality. It could seek to use these powers further
- * The inclusion of the proposal into the Conservative manifesto is understood to have come as a surprise to sectors such as telecommunications, with the Government being relatively contrite as to its future steps.

Comment

The proposals are likely to elicit some concern within their own ranks, especially, as stated above, it has caused concern in the financial services sector. Some MPs are likely to be put off by the perception that Britain could be closing its doors to FDI at time when it may most need it most, with Brexit impending. The actions the Government may take appear less clear, though evidence of its greater assertiveness over the likes of Hinckley Point, could manifest with attempts to “step in” with proposed mergers and acquisitions by foreign owners in other sectors.



Foreign Affairs

Background

The Government's policies in regard to foreign affairs reflects a continuity of position. It states that it will seek to ensure a "Global Britain", playing leading roles in global institutions, including the UK meeting its 2 per cent of GDP on defence target, and its UN target of spending 0.7 per cent of gross net income on foreign aid.

In regard to Daesh, they state the UK will continue to play a part in the 71 member coalition fighting to defeat the group. This goes in tandem with providing humanitarian aid and actively seeking an end to the conflict. In the Middle East more generally the Government continues to support a two state solution with regard to Palestine and Israel. In regard to Yemen the Government will provide over £1 million to UN Special Envoy's office to bolster their capacity to facilitate talks. To combat extremism, the Government commits to using collective international action, and building strong partnerships with civil society and industry.

The Government commits to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. The Government also remains committed to achieving the UN's Global Goals and ending extreme poverty by 2030. The Government will seek to embed the principle of "first safe country" to encourage migrants to seek protection in the first safe country they can reach.

Key Commitments and Consultations

* As stated above the Government's position on foreign policy reflects a continuity of their previous position.

Comment

The Government's commitment to foreign aid spending will likely to continue to come under fire from MPs within the Conservative Party. Similarly there have been some calls among Conservative MPs to increase defence spending. On global issues such as the Middle East and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Government will likely continue to work under the broad international consensus.

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