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# Cabinet Office

## Volume 793: debated on Thursday 19 November 2026

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*The Minister for the Cabinet Office was asked—*

## Public Control Taskforce

**Paul Davies** >

(Colne Valley) (Lab)

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1. How experts for the public control taskforce will be recruited. (Unique identification number 902080 (Unique identification number ))

**The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office** >

(Louise Haigh)

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We are exploring how greater public control can ensure that our essential services—housing, water, energy and transport—run in the interest of those who use them. The taskforce is committed to hearing diverse perspectives. I am driving the taskforce, which is supported by civil servants, drawing on expertise across central, regional and local government, business, civil society and academia, and its work will inform the 10-year plan that will be published next month.

**Paul Davies** >

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I welcome the Government's plans for a taskforce to help deliver public control to essential services such as water. It is vital that key organisations that represent the public's views on the matter are represented on the taskforce. Will the Minister clarify whether campaign organisations, including Windrush Against Sewage Pollution and Ilkley Clean River Group, which have a great deal of knowledge of the sector and have campaigned for many years on the issue, would be involved in the taskforce in any meaningful way?

**Louise Haigh** >

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I am grateful to my hon. Friend for his long-standing campaigning on this issue. I pay tribute to the organisations he mentioned: Windrush Against Sewage Pollution and Ilkley Clean River Group. I know that the Parliamentary Secretary, Cabinet Office, will be happy to meet them to discuss the issues that they campaign on.

## Civil Service Pension Scheme

**Jon Pearce** >
(High Peak) (Lab)

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2. What steps her Department has taken to tackle issues impacting the civil service pension scheme. (Unique identification number 902081 (Unique identification number ))

**Gregory Stafford** >
(Farnham and Bordon) (Con)

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5. What steps her Department plans to take in response to Capita not meeting June and August deadlines for clearing the backlog of civil service pension scheme cases. (Unique identification number 902084 (Unique identification number ))

**David Davis** >
(Goole and Pocklington) (Con)

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10. What steps she is taking to ensure the accountability of Capita for its performance in the administration of the civil service pension scheme. (Unique identification number 902091 (Unique identification number ))

**Mr Will Forster** >
(Woking) (LD)

Share

11. What estimate her Department has made of the length of time for Capita to clear outstanding civil service pension scheme cases. (Unique identification number 902092 (Unique identification number ))

**Siân Berry** >
(Brighton Pavilion) (Green)

Share

12. What steps she is taking to support pensioners impacted by Capita's management of the civil service pension scheme. (Unique identification number 902095 (Unique identification number ))

**Lloyd Hatton** >
(South Dorset) (Lab)

Share

17. What steps she is taking to support civil servants and bereaved family members to access civil service pensions. (Unique identification number 902102 (Unique identification number ))

**The Parliamentary Secretary, Cabinet Office** >

(Sally Jameson)

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Capita's performance on the pension scheme has had unacceptable impacts on people who have dedicated years of their working lives to serving this country and they deserve better. We are using the most stringent commercial levers, including requiring deliverable plans and withholding payments under the contract, which was signed under the last Government.

**Jon Pearce** >

Share

Joseph Cassidy from Buxton in my constituency has given 40 years of public service in the military, police and civil service, yet two days after he took voluntary retirement last year, he was told that the principal civil service pension scheme had somehow miscalculated his lump sum by 30%. Twenty months later, he is still yet to receive an outcome to his complaint or a redundancy payment, leaving his family under immense pressure and without an apology. Will the Minister set out what steps the Department is taking to hold Capita to account and get such long-standing cases resolved, so we can give public servants like Joseph the comfort and security they deserve in retirement?

**Sally Jameson** >

Share

I am very sorry to hear of Mr Cassidy's poor experience. If my hon. Friend writes to me, I will ensure that his case is investigated. Capita is being held to account against the progress of its backlogs, and the access that we now have in the Cabinet Office to Capita's data allows us to challenge its performance in greater detail.

**Gregory Stafford** >

Share

Despite raising these issues with Ministers in the Chamber and in writing, unfortunately I still, on a weekly basis, have constituents who are being let down by Capita: for example, Mrs Gillian Stollery who lost her husband earlier this year, whose bereavement case is still six-months outstanding; or Mr Stephen Hill, who served in the prison service for 20 years and applied for his pension in November last year. Given that Capita has missed at least two deadlines, is it not time for the Government to decide to take alternative arrangements for the administration of the pensions?

**Sally Jameson** >

Share

I share the hon. Member's anger around his constituents' experiences; I have constituents in a similar position as well. We have a new rectification plan, which was implemented after the remedial adviser Grant Thorton went in, and we now have five workstreams. Some progress is being made, but we will continue to hold Capita to account. This is Capita's problem, which it created, and we must make sure that Capita fixes it. As the hon. Member will know, we are looking at arrangements for the future administration of the pension scheme.

**David Davis** >

Share

I have 36 constituents who have been let down by Capita and many of them landed in trouble with His Majesty's Revenue and Customs as a result. The Minister says that action is being taken. On my count, the company is responsible for eight scandalous failures, ranging from the Criminal Records Bureau to NHS primary care support, from Army recruitment to the 2023 cyber-attack and now the disgraceful failure that we see here. It is a company whose primary skill only seems to be employing senior ex-civil servants. When will we stop employing Capita, full stop, on the Government account?

**Sally Jameson** ›

Share

As the right hon. Member will know, the contract was signed under the last Government. The Procurement Act 2023 allows the Government to take poor performance into account when looking at giving out future contracts to any suppliers. As I have said previously, the new rectification plan has five new workstreams, including one for complex cases. I think that some of the ones that he referenced are such cases, and I have seen the correspondence that he has sent to me. If he has any further issues, I ask that he write to me and I will look at them again and make sure that those cases are escalated where necessary.

**Mr Forster** ›

Share

The steps being taken to clear the backlog are clearly not good enough. Otherwise, retired civil servants in Woking would not be contacting me saying that they cannot pay their bills because they are not receiving the civil service pension to which they are entitled. Earlier this year, the Government terminated Capita's contract for administering the Royal Mail pension scheme. When will they finally do the same for Capita and the civil service pension scheme?

**Sally Jameson** ›

Share

It is important that whatever we do with this pension scheme is in the interest of the members, and that they do not face any further disruption. The hon. Gentleman will be aware of our manifesto commitment to the greatest wave of insourcing in a generation, but my priority at the minute is ensuring that Capita fixes the mess that it has created. Cabinet Office officials are working incredibly closely with Capita. We now have access to its data, and we are monitoring every day to ensure that the most urgent cases are being dealt with. The backlog is big, and I appreciate that many cases, including those of my own constituents, still need to be worked through. If he writes to me with any particularly urgent ones, I will ensure that they are escalated.

**Siân Berry** ›

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The Cabinet Office has set up dedicated MP surgeries through Capita. My caseworkers have described them as a waste of time when it comes to helping civil service pensioners—giving no indication of what has been done, what the next steps are or when they might receive their hard-earned pensions. At an August surgery, we were told that a case had been escalated, but three months later, my 71-year-old constituent, who retired six months ago, has heard nothing. Will this finally be taken out of Capita's hands and sorted?

**Sally Jameson** ›

Share

I thank the hon. Member for raising that case, and I am sorry to hear about her constituent's experience. We have held more than 1,000 caseworker surgeries, but it is important to note that caseworkers can only provide updates on the current situation and ensure that the hon. Member's office has all the up-to-date information. If she writes to me with those particular cases, I would be happy to look into them. However, as I said in my previous answer, it is important that we put members first and do not cause any further disruption to the member experience. Capita has been paid to deliver this contract. It will deliver this service to a good standard, and I will be holding it to account every single day until it reaches the standards that were expected in the beginning.

**Mr Speaker** ›

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I call Lloyd Hatton.

**Lloyd Hatton** ›

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Last, but hopefully not least, Mr Speaker. Capita's treatment of many former members of the civil service and their bereaved families has been wholly unacceptable, as we have heard loud and clear in the Chamber today. What I found most frustrating was that one of my constituents, Samantha Vallance, waited five months just to get the initial retirement quote—that is the start of the process—only to find it riddled with errors, sending her back to square one in trying to sort this mess out. How can the Minister reassure my constituent that we will go back to the drawing board with Capita, so that it gets the process right from the beginning, rather than making mistakes from the get-go?

**Sally Jameson** ›

Share

I am sorry to hear of the uncertainty and hardship faced by Samantha and, in fact, so many affected members of the Capita pension scheme. Its performance has been totally unacceptable. We are using all levers at our disposal to ensure that Capita is delivering a good performance at the earliest possible time. As many will know, that includes withholding payments, and we also have a new recovery and rectification plan. The Grant Thornton report was funded by Capita, and we will continue to push Capita to ensure that it is delivered on in full. Capita is very aware of how urgently the Government regard the situation. As I say, every single day, I am holding Capita to account on its progress.

**Chris Vince** ›
(Harlow) (Lab/Co-op)

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You will be aware, Mr Speaker, that Harlow's vicinity to the capital means that more than our fair share of civil servants work in the constituency, and many have raised concerns about the issues with Capita. The Minister is right to say that it was the previous Government that signed the contract with Capita, but will she do everything she possibly can to ensure that civil servants in my constituency are getting the pensions they deserve? May I also reiterate the comments made by the hon. Member for Woking (Mr Forster)? There are the same issues with the teacher pension scheme.

**Sally Jameson** ›

Share

I thank my hon. Friend for raising the concerns of his Harlow constituents. I am absolutely working every single day to ensure that the pension scheme is brought up to the good standard that civil servants expect and deserve. In terms of the future of the pension scheme, we are true, as I have said, to our manifesto commitment to the biggest wave of insourcing in a generation, but I am determined that no member will face further disruption as a result of Capita's performance. We are working every single day to make sure that that is the case.

**Mr Speaker** ›

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I call the shadow Minister.

**Mike Wood** ›
(Kingswinford and South Staffordshire) (Con)

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When the Minister met me and the Liberal Democrat spokesperson, the hon. Member for Hazel Grove (Lisa Smart), the Minister said that she expected the recovery plan to produce visible improvements within the coming weeks. What visible improvements is she able to report to the House today? When can deferred members expect their pensions to be processed?

**Sally Jameson** ›

Share

There have been some small improvements since the hon. Member and I last met—the complex cases are down a small percentage—but I still want to see further progress in November. As I said in my statement to the House and to him and the Liberal Democrat spokesperson as well, I want to monitor progress over the next few weeks and into December, and then I am happy to meet again with the Opposition spokespeople on this matter and to provide them an update.

## El Niño: National Resilience

**Adrian Ramsay** ›

(Waveney Valley) (Green)

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3. What steps she is taking with Cabinet colleagues to prepare for risks to national resilience from El Niño. (Unique identification number 902082 (Unique identification number ))

**Alex Sobel** ›

(Leeds Central and Headingley) (Lab/Co-op)

Share

18. What steps she is taking with Cabinet colleagues to prepare for the potential impact of El Niño on national resilience. (Unique identification number 902103 (Unique identification number ))

**The Minister for Security** ›

(Dan Jarvis)

Share

Government investment is protecting communities from severe weather —£2.65 billion on flood defences since 2024, a further £1.4 billion announced in March, £24 billion invested in road maintenance and £2.6 billion to climate-proof rail infrastructure. Alongside investment, our Be Ready campaign is helping households to prepare for potential disruption.

**Adrian Ramsay** ›

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I welcome the appointment of Dame Madeleine Alessandri as the UK's first special representative for climate security, particularly following her role in the Joint Intelligence Committee's assessment of ecosystem collapse and biodiversity loss. The assessment warned of catastrophic threats to our food and water supplies, to economic stability and to national security. Can the Minister tell me how this role will ensure that these risks are addressed across Government, and will he commit to finally publishing a response to the report, particularly ahead of this year's super El Niño?

**Dan Jarvis** ›

Share

As I think the hon. Gentleman will know and recognise, the Government did publish the nature security assessment—the first globally of its kind—that sets out the importance of ecosystems to the UK's resilience, national security and prosperity. Like him, I welcome the appointment of Dame Madeleine Alessandri. She will be working closely across Government to support the work we are doing on climate adaptation, including £1.4 billion for more than 600 flood schemes this year, £65 million to support farmers through prolonged dry weather, £710 million to climate-proof schools and £104 billion to improve water security. This Government are acting not only to prepare people for the threats that climate change poses but, with our commitment to net zero, to address the threat of climate change as well.

**Alex Sobel** ›

Share

With this year's super El Niño pushing up temperatures at a time when we have already breached 1.5°C in global warming, we can expect extreme weather that could threaten supply chains and cause disruption for millions of people across Britain. What are the Government doing to ensure the nation is resilient against that, both through Government spending and, possibly more importantly, by warning the people of the United Kingdom about the possible effects this winter?

**Dan Jarvis** ›

Share

I am grateful to my hon. Friend for making those points. Let me say to him that we are taking action to make the UK the most resilient country that it can be, including in the face of our changing climate. That includes investing in nine new reservoirs across the country, more than 600 flood defence projects across England and £2.6 billion to climate-proof rail infrastructure and keep the UK moving. All of this makes us more resilient and contributes to our vital role as a dependable ally.

## Cyber-attacks

**Graeme Downie** ›
(Dunfermline and Dollar) (Lab)

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4. What steps she is taking with Cabinet colleagues to improve resilience to cyber-attacks. (Unique identification number 902083 (Unique identification number ))

**Matt Turmaine** ›
(Watford) (Lab)

Share

6. What steps she is taking with Cabinet colleagues to help prevent cyber-attacks affecting food supply chains. (Unique identification number 902085 (Unique identification number ))

**The Minister for Security** ›
(Dan Jarvis)

Share

The Government are taking vital steps to strengthen the UK's cyber-security. At the Budget, £154 million was provided for cyber-defences, including our new national cyber-shield. We have introduced the Cyber Security and Resilience (Network and Information Systems) Bill to raise resilience and protect essential services, and shortly we will publish the national cyber action plan with clear actions for Government and businesses upgrading the UK's responses to cyber-threats.

**Graeme Downie** ›

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This country is already under regular cyber-attack by Russia, costing businesses billions and billions of pounds, with a knock-on effect to the British economy and British taxpayers. The response has to be to co-ordinate an effort across the country and across Government with businesses and civil society. In July, the Government said that the civil resilience forum would be meeting this autumn. Has that forum met? If not, when it will take place?

**Dan Jarvis** ›

Share

My hon. Friend is right to raise the nature of the threat in that way. We are updating local resilience leaders regularly, and I will convene them shortly. National resilience cannot be built in isolation; it requires shared leadership and action across every sector. That is why our Be Ready campaign has been built with more than 500 partners from charities, businesses, emergency services, local

resilience forums and local councils, and it is why we will continue to work closely with all of them to deliver the campaign. I am determined to make us the most resilient country we can be.

**Matt Turmaine** ›

Share

I thank my right hon. Friend for his answer. A

“deliberate attempt to disrupt our food supply chain and undermine consumers’ confidence in it”

is how the EU Food and Agriculture Commissioner described the recent fridge and freezer cyber-attacks in Europe. This attack caused millions of euros-worth of food to need to be thrown away. I sit on the Public Accounts Committee, and last month we looked at the resilience of the food supply chain to disruption here in the UK. Does my right hon. Friend agree with me and the National Audit Office that, while UK food supply chains are generally resilient, the risks affecting them are both complex and more likely?

**Dan Jarvis** ›

Share

I do agree with my hon. Friend. I recently visited Paris, where we discussed our strong and enduring co-operation on matters relating to cyber-security threats. He is right: food security is crucial to our national security. We work very closely with retailers to protect our supply chain, and we will shortly publish the national cyber action plan, with clear actions that businesses can take to make supply chains even more secure.

**Ben Obese-Jecty** ›
(Huntingdon) (Con)

Share

Earlier this month, Major General Mike Fayers, the commander of the Defence Cyber and Electromagnetic Force, expressed public concerns that malware hidden in the military network could go bang in the event of a future conflict. We know that the Ministry of Defence has the largest IT infrastructure of any Department and obviously has that capability too. Given that the commander thinks there might be malware in the system, what confidence do Ministers have that the military network and, indeed, wider Government infrastructure are free of any malware from our adversaries?

**Dan Jarvis** ›

Share

As the hon. and gallant Gentleman will know, we work very closely across Government, including with partners in the Ministry of Defence and other Departments, to ensure that we are as resilient as we can be, given the nature of the threats, including those he describes. This is a matter that I personally take very seriously. That is why we are progressing work on the legislative front through the Cyber Security and Resilience (Network and Information Systems) Bill, and we will publish the national cyber action plan very soon.

**Mr Alistair Carmichael** ›
(Orkney and Shetland) (LD)

Share

If the Security Minister is speaking to his colleagues in the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, could he perhaps suggest to them that cyber-security be part of the long overdue food strategy, which we are still waiting to get from that Department?

**Dan Jarvis** ›

Share

I always listen very carefully to what the right hon. Gentleman says, and I have done so on this occasion. Let me take that away, reflect on it further and discuss it with colleagues in DEFRA.

## Digital Infrastructure Resilience

**Helen Morgan** >
(North Shropshire) (LD)

Share

7. What assessment she has made with Cabinet colleagues of the adequacy of the resilience of the UK's digital infrastructure. (Unique identification number 902086 (Unique identification number ))

**The Minister for Artificial Intelligence** >
(Kanishka Narayan)

Share

The Government are taking decisive steps to assess and improve the resilience of the UK's digital infrastructure. That includes commitments on cyber in the Budget and commitments on AI security, as well as a direction on telecoms with the 2026 statement of strategic priorities for Ofcom. We will continue to work closely across Government and with regulators and industry to identify risks, reduce them, secure networks and maintain digital services.

**Helen Morgan** >

Share

The public switched telephone network will finally be turned off in January, which means everybody will be dependent on their broadband to make a phone call. Twice in the last five years, many of my constituents have been without power for several days following big storms. If the mobile masts go down without power as well, we cannot even make a mobile phone call, and yet the mobile masts are not considered to be a priority when the power is being switched back on. Will the Minister look at that? Many of my constituents and people in other rural areas cannot make a phone call in the event of a power outage, and it is a really serious problem.

**Kanishka Narayan** >

Share

I thank the hon. Member for raising those concerns, which I take very seriously. The fixed telecoms modernisation charter is intended to protect vulnerable individuals during transitions of fixed telecoms infrastructure. I will take her point away and ensure she gets a full response.

**Dame Chi Onwurah** >
(Newcastle upon Tyne Central and West) (Lab)

Share

The Government's AI opportunities action plan is driving increased AI and cloud usage across public services for the right reasons. But following the Ministry of Defence's Afghanistan data breach, my Select Committee highlighted low levels of data hygiene across Government, and our "Rewiring the State" report identified legacy systems as a barrier to successful digital transformation. Has the Minister made an assessment of the resilience of public sector computing infrastructure? Will he confirm whether his Department, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport or no Department is responsible for setting standards for digital resilience in each Government Department?

**Kanishka Narayan** >

Share

I always take my hon. Friend's concerns on this subject very seriously. She will know that the Government have been focused on strengthening their digital resilience through both a new Government cyber unit and a series of commitments on frontier AI hardening, as well as £210 million for the Government cyber action plan, announced at the Budget. The Security Minister, who is sitting next to me, is the lead Minister for cyber across Government, but I know that DCMS, as the lead cyber Department for Government and public services, will also take the concerns seriously.

**Mr Speaker** ›

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I call the shadow Minister.

**Dr Ben Spencer** ›
(Runnymede and Weybridge) (Con)

Share

To ensure resilience, we must be able to trust the services that we rely on. In light of the US decision to ban the use of DeepSeek in Government systems due to security concerns, what is the Government's assessment of the risks of using open-weight Chinese AI in the UK?

**Kanishka Narayan** ›

Share

Open-weight models are used in different areas, both in this country and in the United States. This is a new area of research, and we need to understand the possibility of de-biasing those models and the risks of prompt injections. We continue to lead the world in pursuing that research and securing our public services.

## Cost of Living Taskforce

**Danny Beales** ›
(Uxbridge and South Ruislip) (Lab)

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8. What recent progress the cost of living taskforce has made. (Unique identification number 902087 (Unique identification number ))

**The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office** ›
(Louise Haigh)

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Earning back public trust begins with understanding the pressures facing families at the kitchen table. In the last two months, the cost of living taskforce has delivered interventions ranging from the £100 household energy payment for up to 20 million households to the extension of 0% VAT on electricity bills and energy debt relief—and that is just the start.

**Danny Beales** ›

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I welcome the work of the taskforce to date. For many families in constituencies like Uxbridge and South Ruislip, a car is not a luxury but a necessity to get to work, school and vital appointments. In a cost of living crisis, insurers are taking advantage of that by charging exorbitant annual percentage rates on monthly insurance policies—some as high as 53%, more than a credit card interest rate—costing consumers hundreds of pounds extra a year compared with annual insurance premiums. Will the First Secretary of State bring together colleagues across Government to address this poverty premium and protect consumers from unfair monthly charges?

**Louise Haigh** ›

Share

I congratulate my hon. Friend on the work he is doing to highlight this important issue, particularly the issue of the poverty premium, which is so clear in motor insurance. Car insurance is an essential, not a luxury; it is vital to accessing economic opportunities. That is why, as Transport Secretary, I established the motor insurance taskforce with the Treasury. I welcome continued action to bring down monthly APRs, but there is more to be done, so I have asked the cost of living taskforce to work across Government to explore possible interventions to tackle disproportionately high costs.

**Clive Jones** ›
(Wokingham) (LD)

Share

Families across Wokingham are struggling with rising household costs, while many also face significant care responsibilities. What progress has the taskforce made in easing pressures on unpaid carers and delivering the social care reform needed to reduce financial hardship?

**Louise Haigh** ›

Share

I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman for raising this important issue. Clearly, it is a serious priority for the Prime Minister. He set out in his speech to the Labour party conference in September plans to deliver the national care service; at the heart of that will be the care workforce and the unpaid carers who, day in, day out, deliver an incredible service to their loved ones and our wider society.

**Mr Speaker** ›

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I call the Liberal Democrat spokesperson.

**Lisa Smart** ›
(Hazel Grove) (LD)

Share

Again, this week, I received an email from a constituent—this time in Offerton—who told me they are struggling to make ends meet at the sharp end of the cost of living crisis. We all know that the best way to tackle that is to grow the economy. We also know that the biggest lever the Government could pull is to go beyond Labour's self-imposed red lines and really strengthen our relationship with the EU. The Conservatives' Brexit deal, cheered on by their Reform chums, left a £90 billion hole in the public finances—money that could be used to cut taxes or invest in our communities. Families pay for that at the till. Has the cost of living taskforce assessed what a new growth and defence partnership, including joining the single market and negotiating a new UK-EU customs union, would do to prices in the UK—and if not, will the First Secretary ask it to do so?

**Louise Haigh** ›

Share

That is exactly why my right hon. Friend the Minister responsible for resetting our relationship with the EU, the Prime Minister and most of the Cabinet will be in Brussels this evening and tomorrow to address the issues that the hon. Lady has raised. The terrible Brexit deal that the Conservative Government left us with has increased the cost of living, red tape and friction, and that is exactly why the Prime Minister has prioritised improving it.

# Procurement Policy Note 024

**Euan Stainbank** ›
(Falkirk) (Lab)

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9. What steps she is taking with Cabinet colleagues to prepare for the commencement of procurement policy note 024. (Unique identification number 902090 (Unique identification number ))

**The Parliamentary Secretary, Cabinet Office** ›
(Mark Ferguson)

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This Government are committed to delivering good jobs and the biggest wave of insourcing in a generation. The First Secretary of State recently established an insourcing and market-shaping unit. The unit will identify insourcing opportunities, scrutinise departmental insourcing strategies and be a centre of expertise. We recently announced that 2,700 universal credit case workers will be brought into the Department for Work and Pensions. This Government will turn the tide and drive up insourcing.

**Euan Stainbank** ›

Share

My constituents want taxpayer money spent on the state delivering where possible, not spent needlessly hiving off capacity to private contractors, so I welcome the public interest test and insourcing strategy coming into force from 1 April next year. However, 120 jobs in Scotland at the Student Loans Company are threatened following the workforce being notified last month that their roles are being outsourced to Capgemini by 1 March next year. Where outsourcing decisions appear to have been accelerated prior to PPN 024 coming into force, will my hon. Friend require in-scope bodies, like the Student Loans Company, to evidence that their decisions are compliant with the public interest test?

**Mark Ferguson** ›

Share

I thank my hon. Friend for his engagement on this subject. The insourcing unit is already working across the public sector to support contracting authorities and prepare for the introduction of our public interest test. I declare an interest: I was proud as a trade unionist to have fought for the public interest test, and I am proud as a Minister in this Government to deliver the public interest test. In addition, Departments will set out and publish their five-year insourcing strategies, but that is the start, not the end of our ambition. Delivering that insourcing will benefit those in his Falkirk constituency, my Gateshead Central and Whickham constituency and the constituencies of hon. Members throughout the House. On his specific question, all procurements are subject to a robust set of approvals and we have no evidence that Departments are accelerating any of their decision-making processes.

**Jim Shannon** ›
(Strangford) (DUP)

Share

When considering insourcing, Northern Ireland must be very much part of the process. I hope the Minister will confirm that shortly, but will he ensure that Northern Ireland departments, wherever they may be, can be a part of the policy as we move forward, so that we, as part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, can benefit from the policy?

**Mark Ferguson** ›

Share

On devolved matters, we would encourage the Northern Ireland Assembly to take the same insourcing moves we seek to take as a Government. Where matters are not devolved, of course Northern Ireland will be fully involved in the process.

# National Resilience

**Tessa Munt** >

(Wells and Mendip Hills) (LD)

Share

13. What steps she is taking to improve national resilience. (Unique identification number 902096 (Unique identification number ))

**Douglas McAllister** >

(West Dunbartonshire) (Lab)

Share

16. What steps her Department is taking to improve preparedness for civil emergencies. (Unique identification number 902100 (Unique identification number ))

**The Minister for Security** >

(Dan Jarvis)

Share

The Government are taking decisive steps to strengthen our national resilience. We have launched the home defence programme and overhauled pandemic preparedness plans with a billion pounds in funding. Recently, we launched our Be Ready campaign to help households prepare for everyday emergencies such as flooding, and we are actively co-ordinating resilience planning across Government. I am determined to make our country the most resilient it can be.

**Tessa Munt** >

Share

Food security is national security, so food production is a pillar of that national resilience, and it relies on the very best farmland. As Government pursue energy security through nationally significant infrastructure projects, including huge-scale solar farms, what steps is the Minister taking to ensure that those are limited to and directed towards lower-grade land, so that we strengthen one area of our national security without weakening another?

**Dan Jarvis** >

Share

I recognise the hon. Lady's long-standing interest in these matters. She is right to stress the importance of the food supply chain. We work across Government to ensure that the food supply chain is resilient, supported by a diverse and highly interconnected network of businesses. We work with the National Cyber Security Centre, the Food Standards Agency and industry to support preparedness and strengthen resilience across the sector. I understand why she raised her other point in this forum, but she will understand that it sits within the responsibilities of other Ministers. I will reflect on what she said and come back to her with a more detailed response.

**Douglas McAllister** >

Share

I welcome the Government's recent announcement of their Be Ready campaign, which encourages households to keep enough supplies for three days in the event of emergency, but not everyone has the means to stock up. Can the Minister advise what the Cabinet Office is doing to support the most vulnerable in our communities to work with food banks, charities and other local organisations that would be on the frontline of helping constituents, including those in West Dunbartonshire, during a civil emergency?

**Dan Jarvis** >

Share

My hon. Friend raises an important point. I can assure him that cost of living pressures were absolutely at the forefront of our minds as we designed the campaign, and we have worked very closely with charities such as the Trussell Trust across the country to develop the campaign. We recognise that not everyone can take every step, but if households that can take action do so, it frees up emergency services to help those most in need in a crisis. Many of the steps are free, such as signing up for the priority services register, and we will continue to work with charities such as those in my hon. Friend's constituency as we deliver the campaign.

## Civil Service Pension Scheme

**Shockat Adam** ›
(Leicester South) (Ind)

Share

14. What assessment she has made of the potential merits of insourcing administration of the civil service pension scheme. (Unique identification number 902097 (Unique identification number ))

**The Parliamentary Secretary, Cabinet Office** ›
(Sally Jameson)

Share

The scheme would be a prime candidate for insourcing in the future, and officials are actively evaluating long-term options. I plan to return to the House with a further update once this work is concluded and when it is appropriate, but I am clear that in the here and now, Capita will deliver.

**Shockat Adam** ›

Share

My constituent Inayat Ullah Pathan has served the Ministry of Defence loyally for years. He gave his six months' notice, but sadly he had to retire last month without his pension. We have heard repeatedly that Capita has missed deadline after deadline. The Cabinet Office has already said that it is considering bringing administration in-house, and the Public and Commercial Services Union has put forward a practical plan to start now. Will the Minister confirm whether she will consider the plan and whether she agrees that Capita's time is up?

**Sally Jameson** ›

Share

Terminating the contract immediately could trigger an operational vacuum and jeopardise monthly pension payments for hundreds of thousands of our public servants, and I am not willing to do that. We must put the members first at every single stage. We are evaluating the long-term options, but an alternative delivery structure cannot just be readied overnight, which I am sure the hon. Gentleman will appreciate. Our immediate priority remains forcing operational recovery and holding Capita strictly to account. Simultaneously, my officials are looking at the long-term options for the pension scheme.

## National Security

**Kevin Bonavia** ›
(Stevenage) (Lab)

Share

15. What steps her Department is taking to improve national security. (Unique identification number 902099 (Unique identification number ))

**The Minister for Security** ›
(Dan Jarvis)

Share

National security is our first duty. We are spending £298 billion on defence over the next four years, and we are providing record funding for our intelligence agencies. We have strengthened state threats legislation and launched the home defence programme, and we are establishing the national centre for information defence.

**Kevin Bonavia** >

Share

My constituency of Stevenage has a long and proud history of manufacturing many key tools for our national security, including military communication satellites, which defend and support our excellent armed forces. In light of the risks to secure satellite communications being experienced by Ukraine in its fight for survival, can my right hon. Friend confirm that the Government place a high value on maintaining UK sovereignty in our own satellite communications?

**Dan Jarvis** >

Share

My hon. Friend is right about Stevenage. Space is a domain of growing competition that is critical for our national security. The defence investment plan recognises that fact with new investments to support sovereignty, resilience and control, including £2.3 billion invested in satellite communications by 2029-30. We are determined to deliver the space capabilities needed to meet the challenges that we face.

## Devolution

**Elaine Stewart** >

(Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock) (Lab)

Share

19. What steps her Department is taking to support devolution. (Unique identification number 902104 (Unique identification number ))

**The Parliamentary Secretary, Cabinet Office** >

(Sally Jameson)

Share

The Government's ambition is to deliver growth in every postcode by moving power, funding and decision making closer to people and places. The Cabinet statement on rewiring the state sets out our plans to develop a new approach to devolution that will empower local leaders, strengthen strategic authorities, improve public services and enable stronger local economies across the UK. We are working closely with mayors and local leaders to deliver that.

**Elaine Stewart** >

Share

Communities such as mine in Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock understand local needs and priorities better than anyone. Through decisions made by this Labour Government at the Budget, the Scottish Government received an additional £600 million for Scottish public services. Does the Minister agree that the Scottish Government should show more faith in public service delivery by devolving powers and more resources from Holyrood to local authorities?

**Sally Jameson** >

Share

The Prime Minister was clear in his Motherwell speech and at the National Economic Council that devolution to communities and regions is at the centre of his vision for the whole of the UK. That does not mean swapping power from one Parliament to another; as my hon. Friend says, it means going deeper and putting power down into those regions. The Government will always seek to work collaboratively with the Scottish Government, respecting their devolved competence throughout, to progress this work in Scotland and put people at the centre of the places where they live. We are taking forward the work that has come out of the NEC through our offer of joint work to drive regional empowerment through policy sprints, which is being convened by No. 10 North.

**Mr Speaker** ›

Share

I call the shadow Minister.

**Alex Burghart** ›
(Brentwood and Ongar) (Con)

Share

The last time we met, the Government were in a bit of a state of confusion about what regional mayors would and would not be able to do with the local income tax and business rates that the Chancellor has allowed them to retain. In September, the Government said that mayors would not be able to offer rebates to taxpayers in their areas, but since then, Lord Houchen of Tees Valley has said that the Treasury has told him he will be able to return those taxes to taxpayers. Is that now the case?

**Sally Jameson** ›

Share

The statement the Prime Minister made, and what was set out at the beginning, was that mayors would not be able to offer a rebate. That remains the position. However, we are working with local mayors and strategic authorities across the country to look at how we can devolve further power—the position of this Government is devolution by default. We will set out the “Rewiring the State” delivery plan very shortly. In that plan, people will be able to see the full suite of powers across Government that will be devolved to regions and local leaders, which is where we believe those powers and resources will be best delivered.

**Alex Burghart** ›

Share

That is a bit concerning, because the Treasury appears to be working on something that the Cabinet Office says is impossible. I hope that the hon. Lady will look at this issue, because as I say, Lord Houchen is working with the Treasury on a scheme that would enable him to return such taxes to the taxpayers in his area. Can the Government confirm that mayors will be able to offer those grants or rebates—whatever the Government want to call them—to individual taxpayers in their areas?

**Sally Jameson** ›

Share

Mayors already have the powers to give grants if they want to. As I said, we continue to work with strategic authorities and mayors on the fiscal devolution road map and the “Rewiring the State” delivery plan, which will be set out in the coming months. I suggest that Mayor Ben Houchen works on delivering for his constituents, which he is not doing very well at the minute.

## Topical Questions

**Patrick Spencer** ›
(Central Suffolk and North Ipswich) (Con)

Share

T1. If she will make a statement on her departmental responsibilities. (Unique identification number 902105 (Unique identification number ))

**The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office** ›
(Louise Haigh)

Share

At tomorrow's UK-EU summit, the Prime Minister and I, alongside Cabinet colleagues, will meet our EU counterparts to secure a better deal for Britain. The Brexit deal we inherited has resulted in higher costs for British businesses and higher prices in our shops. We are working to deliver a deal that will add billions of pounds to our economy, boost British businesses, cut needless red tape and create opportunities for young people of all backgrounds. I pay particular tribute to my right hon. Friend the Minister for Intergovernmental Relations and European Relations for his tireless efforts in our national interest.

**Patrick Spencer** ›

Share

Can I get a firm personal commitment from the First Secretary of State that she stands behind the strategic defence review's commitment to increase the nuclear stockpile to 260 warheads, and that she will not let the strategic spending review dilute either that commitment or the commitment to the Astraea programme? Given that before her time in government, she had supported cuts to the Trident programme, a statement today in this House would be a significant statement of intent from this Government.

**Louise Haigh** ›

Share

It was an incredible privilege to bring HMS Vengeance home on Sunday. I attended the submarine with the Defence Secretary, and it was an extraordinary honour to welcome the crew home after their unfortunate record-breaking tour at sea—they have made an incredible sacrifice for the defence of our nation, and indeed the whole of NATO. As the Defence Secretary and the Chancellor have repeatedly set out, we are committed to reaching 3% of GDP on defence spending by 2030 and to all of our NATO commitments.

**Darren Paffey** ›
(Southampton Itchen) (Lab)

Share

T2. Last month, I was proud to join my constituent Ness Abbess as she delivered to No. 10 a letter from bereaved families on the issue of preventable drownings. I welcome the Prime Minister's response to that letter and his support for the *Daily Mirror*'s drowning prevention campaign, but the issue is that water safety sits between four different Government Departments. Will the First Secretary of State use her powers to bring those Departments together? Will she consider appointing a single Minister to drive this work forward, and will she meet me and bereaved families so that we can discuss the vital next steps to save lives? (Unique identification number 902106 (Unique identification number ))

**The Minister for Security** ›
(Dan Jarvis)

Share

I am grateful to my hon. Friend for raising that important point in the way that he has. Like the Prime Minister, I warmly welcome the Save Lives at Sea campaign. I assure him that the Government take water safety very seriously, as was demonstrated by the recent roundtable chaired by the Minister with responsibility for water and flooding, my hon. Friend the Member for Kingston upon Hull West and Haltemprice (Emma Hardy). I have listened carefully to his point about deconflicting across Government Departments. I will reflect on it and come back to him with more detail.

**Mr Speaker** ›

Share

I call the shadow Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.

**Alex Burghart** ›

(Brentwood and Ongar) (Con)

Share

The Government's sanitary and phytosanitary deal with the European Union will require UK farmers to take on thousands upon thousands of EU regulations, even if they do not trade with the EU. Have the Government estimated the dead cost of dynamic alignment for those farmers?

**The Minister for Intergovernmental Relations and European Relations** ›

(Mr Hamish Falconer)

Share

I look forward to discussing the fine detail once we have an agreement over the line in the way that I hope we will tomorrow. On SPS, it is important to recognise that the previous Conservative Government, and indeed our Government, have not diverged a great deal from European food safety standards. Where we have, we have obviously made careful assessments of the impact on farmers.

**Alex Burghart** ›

Share

The right hon. Gentleman will be aware that since we left the EU, it has gone through one of its most profound periods of regulation. There are now tens of thousands of regulations that the UK has never signed up to—that will be an additional burden. If he has done that work on the dead cost, will he publish it so that the House can consider it?

**Mr Falconer** ›

Share

The hon. Gentleman is right to say both that we have assessed where we have chosen to diverge, and of course that there are areas where the EU has changed regulation without our being part of that process of change. I think his question was about farmers. We are, of course, in regular dialogue with farmers about the impact. It is quite difficult to quantify the impact on either precision breeding or the approach to bovine tuberculosis, for example, without the detail. Once the detail is agreed at the summit, we are very happy to come back to this place and talk about the full impacts.

**Josh Dean** ›

(Hertford and Stortford) (Lab)

Share

T3. As work is undertaken across Government to improve national resilience and the public's preparedness for emergencies, what consideration have Ministers given to broadcasting an expert-led national emergency briefing on the climate and nature crisis? (Unique identification number 902107 (Unique identification number ))

**Dan Jarvis** ›

Share

The Government are taking urgent action to tackle the climate crisis and to raise awareness among the public. The Be Ready public awareness campaign provides simple and effective advice on practical steps that individuals, households and communities can take to improve their resilience to a range of risks, including those presented by climate change. Not only are the Government acting to prepare people for the threats that climate change poses, but, through our commitment to net zero, we are acting to address climate change.

**Mr Speaker** ›

Share

I call the Liberal Democrat spokesperson.

**Lisa Smart** ›
(Hazel Grove) (LD)

Share

Back in September, the Government promised a cross-Government task and finish group on mega-donors that would work at pace. However, 11 weeks and several written questions later, we have seen no terms of reference and no start date. No one should be able to buy the keys to No. 10, so will the First Secretary of State tell us how they are getting on with the task and when they expect to finish?

**Louise Haigh** ›

Share

The Representation of the People Bill is still making its way through the other place. We will be considering work through that piece of legislation. I have asked the group to meet the hon. Lady to brief her on their work, as I did for the shadow Minister. I will ensure that that takes place.

**Callum Anderson** ›
(Buckingham and Bletchley) (Lab)

Share

T4. The Government recently delivered almost £16 billion in efficiency savings across Whitehall. However, up to £45 billion more can be found in productivity gains and efficiency savings, so will the Minister ensure that ambitious artificial intelligence and technology adoption plans are at the very heart of next year's spending review? (Unique identification number 902109 (Unique identification number ))

**The Minister for Artificial Intelligence** ›
(Kanishka Narayan)

Share

Both the 10-year plan and the spending review offer us the chance to put into practice my hon. Friend's belief that technology should not be the preserve of a few but, through our public services, the driver of opportunity and dignity for the many.

**Sir Julian Smith** ›
(Skipton and Ripon) (Con)

Share

The Minister was asked earlier about digital resilience. Rural areas across North Yorkshire are stressed and concerned, because communities coming off analogue that do not have a mobile signal are stuffed. The commitments from BT and others, to which the Minister referred, are not worth the paper they are written on. The move to digital is happening in January. I urge the Minister to take a look at it.

**Kanishka Narayan** ›

Share

*rose—*

**Dan Jarvis** ›

Share

*rose—*

**Kanishka Narayan** ›

Share

As the House can see, given the nature of those concerns, which have been raised twice now, there is enthusiasm on the Front Bench to take them deeply seriously. We will do exactly that by responding swifty.

**Jon Pearce** >
(High Peak) (Lab)

Share

T5. Following the devastating wildfires in High Peak and across the UK this summer and the National Resilience Committee's warning this week that Britain is "seriously underprepared" for major emergencies, will the Minister accept the recommendation to put local resilience forums on a statutory footing, with clear responsibilities and accountability, so that partnerships such as the Derbyshire LRF have the authority they need to protect our communities? (Unique identification number 902110 (Unique identification number ))

**Dan Jarvis** >

Share

Let me place on record my profound thanks for the important work that local resilience forums do, not least the vital work they did over the summer and the supporting role they are playing in our Be Ready campaign, including in my hon. Friend's constituency. The Government are currently leading a post-implementation review of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, which is considering the merits of putting local resilience forums on a statutory footing. A decision will be taken through the review, and we will present that to Parliament early next year.

**Josh Babarinde** >
(Eastbourne) (LD)

Share

People do not have to be white to be English, but the census currently disagrees when it asks for their ethnicity, as do the 10,000 different accounts that have sent me racist messages and death threats since I raised this matter in the Chamber last week. [Hon. Members: "Shame!"] Ahead of my meeting with the Prime Minister to discuss it, will the Cabinet Office reaffirm that Englishness cannot be boiled down to ethnicity and that the census must reflect this?

**The Parliamentary Secretary, Cabinet Office** >
(Mark Ferguson)

Share

It was a pleasure to sit on the Front Bench for the introduction of the hon. Member's recent ten-minute rule Bill. I must say that he gave an absolutely tremendous speech and set out his case incredibly well. To be frank, it was one of the better speeches I have heard in this Chamber. I know he looks forward to meeting the Prime Minister, and I will not prejudge that, but I think and hope that we all, from all parts of the House, agree that Englishness is not a matter of race or ethnicity. Englishness is about the shared culture we share together in this country.

**Perran Moon** >
(Camborne and Redruth) (Ind)

Share

T6. Further to the Government's commitment to devolution by default, a month ago Cornish MPs met officials at No. 10 North to discuss the powers we need devolved to Cornwall, including economic development funding, housing, transport, post-14 skills and culture. Since then, Cornwall has been formally designated a single foundation strategic authority. Will the Minister meet Cornish MPs to discuss the progress made since that meeting towards devolution in each of those five specific areas? (Unique identification number 902111 (Unique identification number ))

**The Parliamentary Secretary, Cabinet Office** ›

(Sally Jameson)

Share

I was delighted to see Cornish MPs and leaders attend No. 10 North recently to discuss the deal that they want in Cornwall. We are considering all the points they made in that meeting as part of the “Rewiring the State” delivery plan more widely. That work is still ongoing, but we will keep Cornish Members and, indeed, leaders updated.

**Joe Robertson** ›

(Isle of Wight East) (Con)

Share

Following my exchange with the Prime Minister in this place, No. 10 North wrote to offer a meeting to discuss regulating the Isle of Wight ferries. The offer was for a meeting within weeks, but that was two months ago, and we still have no date in the diary. Will the Minister ensure that I get that meeting with No. 10 North without any further delay?

**Sally Jameson** ›

Share

I will ensure that is looked at and the meeting is arranged, and we look forward to welcoming the hon. Member to No. 10 North.

**Peter Swallow** ›

(Bracknell) (Lab)

Share

T7. I was delighted that, at the Budget, the Government set out their intention to move ahead with a devolution deal for the Thames valley. I am very determined to get this over the line, so that residents in Bracknell Forest and the wider region can enjoy the benefits that devolution will bring. Will my hon. Friend commit to continuing to work with local MPs and leaders to unlock devolution in the Thames valley? (Unique identification number 902112 (Unique identification number ))

**Sally Jameson** ›

Share

I agree with my hon. Friend that the opportunities for the Thames valley will be fantastic. Devolution will mean greater powers and funding to maximise economic opportunities across the whole area, including, but not limited to, the measures announced in the fiscal devolution road map as well as those in the forthcoming delivery plan. We are considering all the responses and thoughts given to us so far. The delivery plan will be coming soon, and I look forward to sharing it with Members in this House, people across the country and, most importantly for my hon. Friend, those in the Thames valley.

**Mr Lee Dillon** ›

(Newbury) (LD)

Share

The removal of peerages Bill was in the King’s Speech. When will it be introduced?

**Mr Falconer** ›

Share

We will provide a further update to the House on our plans in due course.

**Danny Beales** ›

(Uxbridge and South Ruislip) (Lab)

Share

T8. The Government's fiscal devolution road map recognises that London has a unique governance arrangement. It is the oldest mayoral model and is out of step with newer combined authority models. If new powers are to work for all of London, which is such a large city, we need decision making to tie directly to local borough delivery. As part of the rewiring the state plans, will the Minister consider reviewing London's historic devolution powers and ensuring that strategic decision making is fully linked to local delivery? (Unique identification number 902113 (Unique identification number ))

**Sally Jameson** ›

Share

The delivery plan will not include changes to the London governance structure. I am happy to meet my hon. Friend and other London MPs to discuss their concerns and what change they would perhaps like to see in London, but it will not be included in the delivery plan itself.

**Shockat Adam** ›
(Leicester South) (Ind)

Share

Leicester is one of the most vulnerable cities in Britain and is projected to rise fast up the ranking. This summer saw record-breaking heat, and thousands of people up and down the country died. London has its own heat resilience strategy, but Leicester does not. Will the Minister publish a national heat resilience strategy and put adequate funding behind it?

**Dan Jarvis** ›

Share

I visited Leicestershire over the summer to engage with local communities and the local resilience forum. Let me look more closely at what the hon. Gentleman has said and I will write to him.

**Deirdre Costigan** ›
(Ealing Southall) (Lab)

Share

T9. The Minister will be aware that by 2028, London will be the only mayoral authority in the country that is not a combined authority. That means that, unlike Greater Manchester for example, there is no requirement for the Mayor of London to work with the councils that actually deliver services. Will the Minister tell us how she will ensure London is not left behind in the Government's very welcome drive to devolve power from Whitehall? (Unique identification number 902114 (Unique identification number ))

**Sally Jameson** ›

Share

As my hon. Friend will know, London has one of the longest standing devolution settlements. The mayor is accountable to voters in every borough. He is scrutinised by the London Assembly and works in partnership with boroughs where responsibilities might overlap. As I said in a previous answer, I am happy to meet London MPs to discuss their thoughts about this issue further. Through "Rewiring the State", we will work with London partners so that the settlement keeps pace with the changes we are making and, of course, London's role as a global city, building on the package agreed at the Budget.

**Tessa Munt** ›
(Wells and Mendip Hills) (LD)

Share

The Government have asked the public to prepare for a black sky event. Many people with very severe ME— myalgic encephalomyelitis—are bedbound and rely on electric pumps for nutrition. If we experience a prolonged national or even regional power outage, they would be at very grave risk. What specific provision is in place for them? Will the Minister ensure that national resilience planning fully accounts for people who are dependent on powered medical equipment?

**Dan Jarvis** >

Share

I think the hon. Lady is referring to the recent Be Ready campaign that we launched. This is about raising awareness of simple steps that households can take in their everyday lives to prepare for everyday emergencies. It is part of a process by which we ensure that our country is as resilient as possible, because we cannot have national resilience and national security without resilience at the most localised levels.

These are issues that the Government take incredibly seriously. That is why we invested £1 billion in pandemic preparedness and launched the home defence programme. We are doing work in Government now that we have not been doing for almost 25 years. We are determined to ensure that our country is as resilient as it can be, given the nature of the world we are living in.

**Euan Stainbank** >
(Falkirk) (Lab)

Share

I support the calls for a reversal of the Tory and coalition-era outsourcing of the civil service pension scheme. The Minister committed to me last month that she would look at publishing a smaller version of the remedial adviser's report, which I believe would help Members to scrutinise progress of the new rectification plan on behalf of our many constituents affected by Capita's significant failures. What progress has my hon. Friend made in determining whether that can be published?

**Sally Jameson** >

Share

I thank my hon. Friend for his question and for the tireless championing and campaigning he does for his constituents on the issue of the Capita civil service pension scheme. On the remedial adviser's report, my officials are working with the Clerks of the Public Accounts Committee and the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee on sharing a copy with them. There are a number of market-sensitive issues that need to be considered, but that work is ongoing and hopefully will be resolved soon.

**Jim Shannon** >
(Strangford) (DUP)

Share

Northern Ireland has an international reputation as a region of expertise and knowledge in tech development. World-leading tech companies such as Fujitsu, WhiteHat Security and Microsoft have chosen to establish their operations in Northern Ireland in recognition of the talent and innovation we hold. What steps will the Minister take to use Northern Ireland-based firms to support the strengthening of the UK's digital infrastructure?

**Kanishka Narayan** >

Share

I have personally witnessed the strength of Northern Ireland's digital and technology sectors on multiple visits to Belfast. I will take the hon. Member's points to heart and ensure that we make the most of that strength in the opportunities for digital resilience.

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