

## Weekly Political Report

20<sup>th</sup> June 2016

---

The consultations section is at the end of this document.

For further information on any of the parliamentary terms used in this document, please click [here](#).

### **Employment**

*Click on link for source*

Item	Summary
<b><u>Written question on the effectiveness of Access to Work for people with hearing loss</u></b>	<p>Stephen Timms MP (Lab, East Ham) has asked the Department for Work and Pensions what recent assessment it has made of the effectiveness of the Access to Work programme for young deaf people.</p> <p>In response the Minister for Disabled People, Justin Tomlinson MP (Con, Swindon North) said that Access to Work continues to support deaf people and people with hearing loss. He added that Access to Work has specialist teams including a dedicated team for deaf people and those with hearing loss to help customers and their employers with advice on adjustments, technological support and personal budgets which are currently being trialled.</p>
<b><u>Written question on the creation of a dedicated Deaf and Disability Careers Advisory Service</u></b>	<p>Charlotte Leslie MP (Con, Bristol North West) has asked the Department for Work and Pensions if it will make an assessment of the potential merits of establishing a dedicated Deaf and Disability Careers Advisory Service.</p> <p>In response the Minister for Disabled People, Justin Tomlinson MP (Con, Swindon North), said:</p> <p><i>“The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills have responsibility for the National Careers service, which provides free, up to date, impartial information and advice and guidance on careers, skills and the labour market in England. It is delivered by around 1,400 careers advisers trained and qualified to level 3 and above in providing tailored careers information, advice and guidance.</i></p> <p><i>“DWP is also committed to supporting deaf and disabled people into employment. For example, we are spending more on Access to Work to extend it to more people. 5,580 people whose primary medical condition is listed as ‘Deaf and hard of hearing’ were helped by Access to Work in the period 2014/15. We are also increasing the number of Disability Employment Advisors in Jobcentres by over 60 per cent to provide specialist and local expertise. Moreover, we will be investing £330m over 2017-2021</i></p>

	<i>in providing additional employment support for individuals in the Work-Related Activity Group of employment support allowance.”</i>
<b><u>Written question on the Disability Employment Gap</u></b>	<p>Shadow Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Owen Smith MP (Lab, Pontypridd) has asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what progress has been made towards halving the disability gap.</p> <p>The Minister for Disabled People, Justin Tomlinson MP (Con, Swindon North) said that in the last two years, the number of disabled people in work has increased by 365,000. He added that the Government recognise that the gap between the employment rates of disabled people and non-disabled people remains too large.</p> <p>He added that closing the disability employment gap was a key part of the Government’s commitment to delivering full employment and that the annual report on progress towards full employment will include an update on the Government’s progress towards halving the disability employment gap.</p> <p>Justin Tomlinson concluded his answer by saying that ‘<i>We plan to produce a Green Paper later this year that starts to reframe the discussion with disabled people and their representative organisations and points towards long-term reform</i>’.</p>

## **Transport**

[Click on Link for Source](#)

<b>Item</b>	<b>Summary</b>
<b><u>Written question on public spending on audio-visual display units on buses</u></b>	<p>Jim Cunningham MP (Lab, Coventry South) has asked how much the Department of Transport has spent on audio-visual systems intended for buses in the last three years.</p> <p>In response Transport Minister Andrew Jones MP (Con, Harrogate and Knaresborough) said that the Department has not funded audio/visual equipment on buses. He said however that the Government ‘<i>understand the importance of accessible on-board information to many passengers, including those who are visually impaired, and have supported initiatives to develop innovative and low-cost approaches for delivering it</i>’.</p> <p>Jim Cunningham <u>also asked</u> what assessment has been made of the adequacy of existing public transport infrastructure for people with sight and hearing loss.</p> <p>Andrew Jones responded saying that Accessible public transport is vital in enabling people who are visually or hearing impaired, as well as other disabled people, to live and work with independence and dignity. The Department has committed to publishing an accessibility action plan to improve access to public transport and contribute to halving the employment gap</p>

	between non-disabled and disabled people. He added that the Department works closely with the Disabled Person's Transport Advisory Committee in order to better understand the barriers faced.
--	--

## **Charities**

*Click on Link for Source*

<b>Item</b>	<b>Summary</b>
<b><u>Written question on charity fundraising</u></b>	<p>Michelle Donelan (Con, Chippenham) has asked the Cabinet Office what progress it has made in tackling aggressive fundraising activities by charities.</p> <p>In response the Minister for Civil Society, Rob Wilson MP (Con, Reading East) said:</p> <p><i>“Last year the Government accepted the recommendations made in a sector-led review of fundraising regulation to support the setup of a new independent regulator with stronger sanctions and control of the code of practice.</i></p> <p><i>“Since then there have been several positive changes. The Code of Fundraising Practice has already been strengthened in several areas. The law has been changed in the Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016 to better protect vulnerable individuals and encourage greater accountability. The Charity Commission has published updated fundraising guidance that emphasises trustees’ role in over-seeing fundraising. Many charities and their representative bodies are already taking their own steps to improve fundraising practices.</i></p> <p><i>“The new Fundraising Regulator is due to open in July and will proactively ensure that charities fundraise to the high standards the public expect.”</i></p>

## Parliamentary terms

### Early Day Motion (EDM)

Early Day Motions are formal motions for debate submitted by MPs in the House of Commons. There is usually no time available to actually debate an EDM, but they are useful for drawing attention to specific events or campaigns and demonstrating the extent of parliamentary support for a particular cause or point of view. MPs register their support by signing individual motions.

### Oral Parliamentary Question (OPQ) and Written Parliamentary Question (WPQ)

Parliamentary Questions are used by both MPs and Peers to question Ministers in the House of Commons and the House of Lords. They are used to seek information, and Ministers are obliged to explain and defend the work, policy, decisions and actions of their departments, oral questions can also be used to make political points. Parliamentary questions are a vital tool in holding the Government to account. The Prime Minister answers oral questions from the House of Commons every Wednesday at midday.

### Debates

Both the House of Commons and the House of Lords hold debates in which Members discuss government policy, proposed new laws and current issues. All debates are recorded in a publication called 'Hansard' which is available online or in print.

### All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG)

All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) are informal groups composed of politicians from all political parties. They provide an opportunity for cross-party discussion and co-operation on particular issues. All-party groups sometimes act as useful pressure groups for specific causes helping to keep the Government, the opposition and MPs informed of parliamentary and outside opinion.

### Select Committees

House of Commons Select Committees exist to scrutinise the work of government departments. Most committees have about 11 members and reflect the relative size of each party in the Commons. They conduct enquiries on a specific issue, and gather evidence from expert witnesses. Findings are reported to the Commons, printed, and published on the Parliament website. The Government then usually has 60 days to reply to the committee's recommendations.

### Written ministerial statements

Government ministers can make written statements to announce:

- The publication of reports by government agencies
- Findings of reviews and inquiries and the government's response
- Financial and statistical information
- Procedure and policy initiatives of government departments

### Private Members' Bills

Private Members' Bills allow backbench MPs or Peers to introduce their own legislation. There are three types of Private Members' Bills introduced into the House of Commons:

- **Ballot Bills:** A ballot is held at the beginning of each parliamentary year the 20 MPs whose names come out top are allowed to introduce legislation on a subject of their choice.
- **Ten Minute Rule Bills:** The sponsoring MP is given a slot in which they may make a speech lasting up to 10 minutes in support of his or her bill
- **Presentation Bill:** a Member is not able to speak in support of it and it stands almost no chance of becoming law