

Weekly Political Update

25th January 2016

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

Employment

Click on link for source

Item	Summary
<u>Written question on the work and health programme in relation to disabled people.</u>	<p>Andrew Gwynne, Shadow Minister for Health (Lab, Denton and Reddish) has asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what specialist support will be available for disabled people under the new Work and Health Programme.</p> <p>In response, the Minister of State for Employment, Priti Patel MP (Con, Witham), said that the Department is currently developing the design for the new Work and Health Programme which includes consideration of what support disabled claimants might need to move into work, including specialist support, and how that support might best be delivered within the new programme.</p> <p>Priti Patel added that the Department will publish details of this within the specification for the new programme later this year.</p>

Charities

Click on link for source

Item	Summary
<u>The Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee published report into the 2015 Charity Fundraising Controversy</u>	<p>The House of Commons Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee (PACAC) has published its report ‘<i>The 2015 Charity Fundraising Controversy</i>’ which concludes that the failure of trustees to fulfil their responsibilities lies behind the causes of last summer’s charity fundraising scandals.</p> <p>The report warns that the Etherington proposals represent the “last chance” for self-regulation of charity fundraising. The Committee says if the trustees in the sector fail to put their house in order, statutory regulation must follow.</p> <p>The Committee noted that the responsibility for every aspect of governance and sustainability of charities, including, but not limited to, fundraising, rests with the trustees of a charity. The report comes in the wake of last year’s controversy with the <i>Kids Company</i> charity and its subsequent closure due to the lack of financial management.</p>

Though the Committee welcomes the Government's acceptance of the Etherington review it says that these proposals do not go far enough to provide a solution to the issue. Greater transparency in annual reports on fundraising is "no more than a means to an end". Stronger regulation is no substitute for the required change of attitudes and behaviour from trustees.

Reinstating and maintaining public trust in charity fundraising is critical for the sector, and trustees must start implementing these changes as soon as possible to prevent another case study like *Kids Company*.

Chair of the PACAC, Bernard Jenkin MP, said that:

"Trustees already have all the powers they need: they must have the right skills, information and attitude to prevent this kind of poor and sharp practice happening again. Government must monitor the sector and not hesitate to use its reserve powers if needs be, but it would be a sad and inexcusable failure of charities if statutory regulation becomes necessary."

Commenting on the report, the Chief Executive of NCVO and Chair of the review of fundraising self-regulation, Sir Stuart Etherington, said that:

"I am pleased the committee have backed the proposals we made in the review of fundraising self-regulation. I believe they are a proportionate and effective way to give the public confidence that charities are taking their responsibility to operate to high standards seriously."

He continued saying:

"While the Charity Commission rightly has a role to play in ensuring that charities are well-governed generally, it is important that we do not lose sight of the principle of self-regulation in fundraising on which everyone is agreed. I am not persuaded for this reason that it is appropriate for the Fundraising Regulator to report to a government body. I continue to believe a reporting line to parliament is more fitting for a self-regulator. The Fundraising Regulator will also cover bodies other than charities, such as universities, which are not regulated by the Charity Commission."

On the plans in the forthcoming years he said that:

"The Fundraising Preference Service working group are currently developing operational plans for the service. They will ensure that it works well for charities of all sizes while meeting the public expectation that there is a simple way to deal with a situation where they or a relative feel they receive an unmanageable volume of fundraising requests."

	<p>Among the Committees findings and recommendations they have said that the Commission should act as guarantor of the regulation of fundraising, ensuring that regulators (like the new fundraising regulator and the Information Commissioner) cooperate with each other and that trustees understand their duties.</p> <p>To avoid bad practise in the future, the committee recommends that: trustees, the Commission and the new regulator should assist the sector in developing a more ethical fundraising culture, and to make sure that these bad practices are not tolerated in the future.</p>
<p><u>Fundraising Data Standards Board investigations into the Olive Cooke case finds data Sharing by Charities led to high volume of fundraising approaches</u></p>	<p>The Fundraising Standards Board has published its report into Charity Fundraising Practices instigated because of the death of Mrs Olive Cooke.</p> <p>The report found that the sharing of Mrs Cooke’s personal details by charities she supported led to her receiving ever-growing amounts of fundraising mail and feeling ‘overwhelmed’ by the volume of approaches from charities.</p> <p>The investigation found that Mrs Cooke had been a generous charity supporter, giving to at least 88 charities in her lifetime. Of the 1,442 charities that participated in the FRSB’s investigation, 99 had Mrs Cooke’s details on file – 19 began contacting her prior to the year 2000 and a further 80 charities had begun corresponding with her since then, with 32 charities initiating contact in the past five years.</p> <p>With each charity sending Mrs Cooke an average of around 6 mailings each year, the total number of mailings from the charities in the FRSB’s sample more than trebled from 119 in the year 2000 to a peak of 466 in 2014. The FRSB recognises that the actual amount of mail she is likely to have received from all charities may have been as much as six times higher.</p> <p>24 of the 99 charities had passed on Mrs Cooke’s contact details to another organisation and seven in ten had obtained her contact details from a third party (such as a fellow charity or commercial data supplier/list broker). The FRSB’s investigation found that Mrs Cooke’s details were held on donor lists maintained by 22 separate commercial data suppliers.</p>

Disability

Click on link for source

Item	Summary
<p><u>Oral Question in the House of Lords regarding disabled students in Higher Education</u></p>	<p>Lord Addington, (Lib Dem) asked the Government what action would be taken to ensure that from the start of the 2016–17 academic year all higher education providers fulfilled their obligation to provide non-medical provision for disabled students which was previously covered by the Disabled Students' Allowance.</p> <p>Speaking for the Government Baroness Evans of Bowes Park (Con), a Whip, responded:</p> <p><i>“It is not the Government’s intention that institutions are to be responsible for all non-medical provision, and the disabled students’ allowance will continue to supplement institutional provision where students require a more specialist type of support. Officials are meeting with sector partners including the Higher Education Funding Council for England, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, the Office for Fair Access and the Equality Challenge Unit to discuss how best to monitor equality and inclusivity. This will include considering the provision of reasonable adjustments by HE providers.”</i></p>
<p><u>Work and Pensions Committee - Written Evidence: Disability Benefits Consortium</u></p>	<p>The Disability Benefits Consortium (DBC) has published its written evidence to the Commons Works and Pensions Select Committee inquiry into in-work progression and Universal Credit. The DBC is a national coalition of over 60 different charities committed to working towards a fair benefits system.</p> <p>Their key concerns and recommendations are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The impact and effectiveness of the Claimant Commitment in identifying and supporting the needs of disabled people has not been tested. DBC therefore recommend that the DWP evaluates the effectiveness of the in-work progression pilots in preventing disabled people and those with long-term conditions who are unable to work, or increase their hours, from sanctions as part of the pilot scheme.• DBC are concerned that Work Coaches are not equipped to identify disabled people who are not able to increase their hours (or return to work at all in the near-term) from inappropriate sanctions. They have recommended that the DWP clarifies whether it plans to provide Work Coaches with training and education in disability and its impact on employment.• The DWP should develop a detailed guideline for staff on the appropriate use of the Claimant Commitment and in-work progression conditionality and sanctions on disabled

	<p>people to ensure that conditionality is applied appropriately and consistently by Work Coaches.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DBC recommend that in-work progression should begin with a dialogue with the claimant about the likelihood of returning to work, or increasing their hours of work • There should be an automatic presumption against subjecting people in receipt of income-related ESA to in-work progression conditionality <p>Further information can be found here</p>
<p><u>Early Day Motion tabled calling for the Government to continue funding for the Access to Elected Office Fund</u></p>	<p>Caroline Lucas MP (Green, Brighton Pavilion) has tabled an Early Day Motion (EDM) calling for the Government to re-open the Access to Elected Office Fund in time for disabled candidates standing in local and regional elections in May to benefit.</p> <p>The fund supports disabled candidates standing for elected office at any level of our political system by paying grants to help meet the additional costs of standing at elections cause by their disability. The Fund was closed after the 2015 General Election pending a Government review of the schemes effectiveness. No decision has yet been made on the Funds future.</p> <p>Action on Hearing Loss has contributed to the Government’s review of the Fund and has been in contact with Caroline Lucas’s office to provide evidence on the additional costs people with hearing loss face when standing for election.</p>
<p><u>Oral question on the Accessibility for disabled people in the Palace of Westminster</u></p>	<p>The Chair for the All-Party Group for Disability, Dr Lisa Cameron (SNP, East Kilbride, Strathaven and Lesmahagow) has asked the MP representing the House of Commons Commission, Tom Brake (Lib Dem, Carshalton and Wallington) what accessibility for disabled people will be implemented in the restoration and renewal of the Palace of Westminster.</p> <p>In response Tom Brake said that:</p> <p><i>“I do not want to pre-empt what the Joint Committee will come up with, but I am sure it will carefully consider that matter. I think that every Member of the House will agree that it would be a completely missed opportunity if these works did not also ensure that the Palace is fully accessible to anyone with disabilities.”</i></p>
<p><u>Written Question: Music and Disability: In relation to the Charity ‘Attitude is Everything’</u></p>	<p>George Howarth MP, (Lab, Knowsley) has asked the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate he has made of the number of spaces available for disabled people in music venues.</p> <p>In response, the Minister of State for Culture Media and Sport, Ed Vaizey MP said that:</p>

	<p><i>“We believe that everyone should have equal access to arts and culture - having a disability should not be a barrier to enjoying Britain's awe-inspiring cultural treasures. That is why we are working with venues and organisations representing disabled people to identify barriers to access, while at the same time seeing how we can share examples of best practice and what more cultural venues need to do to be accessible to people with disabilities.”</i></p> <p>He continued saying that:</p> <p><i>“We support the work of Attitude is Everything, which works with audiences, artists and the music industry to improve deaf and disabled people’s access to live events. I also recently held a roundtable meeting with Justin Tomlinson, Minister for Disabled People, to look at access to cultural venues and events for disabled people.”</i></p>
--	---

Hearing Loss

Click on link for source

Item	Summary
<p><u>Direct access to audiology waiting times report November 2015</u></p>	<p>The Direct Access to audiology waiting report for November 2015 shows that the average (median) waiting time was 3.7 weeks, and 97.1% were waiting within 18 weeks.</p> <p>Further information can be found here.</p>

Health and Social Care

Click on Link for Source

Item	Summary
<p><u>Oral Question on the Social Care Precept</u></p>	<p>The Shadow Care Minister, Barbara Keeley MP (Lab, Worsley and Eccles South) raised the issue of social care funding at Treasury questions. She cited the fact that the Conservative leader of Essex County Council, Cllr David Finch, reportedly told Prime Minister that the 2% social care precept will cover only half the council’s increased costs and asked the Chancellor how and when he would act to avoid a further crisis in social care.</p> <p>In response, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Greg Hands MP (Con, Chelsea and Fulham) said that:</p> <p><i>“In advance of the spending review, the Conservative leaders of</i></p>

	<p><i>the Local Government Association came to see me. One of their specific proposals was to introduce the social care precept to help address the shortfall there may otherwise have been. We have also put a lot more money into the better care fund to make sure that local authorities and the NHS working together are able to meet the challenges of social care over the next years.”</i></p>
<p><u>Written Question:</u> <u>Personal Independence Payment: Disability Premium - DWP</u></p>	<p>Helen Goodman MP (Lab, Bishop Auckland) has asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people no longer receive the disability premium following their transfer from receipt of disability living allowance to personal independence payments.</p> <p>The Minister for Disabled People, Justin Tomlinson MP (Con, North Swindon), said that:</p> <p><i>“Disability premium is an extra amount automatically added to Income Support or income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA) for those who qualify.”</i></p> <p>He continued saying:</p> <p><i>“Information on the payment of this premium for those who were also receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and have now transferred to Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.”</i></p>
<p><u>NHS Chief Executive demands political consensus on funding elderly and social care</u></p>	<p>The Chief Executive of the NHS, Simon Stevens, has said that Britain urgently needs a new political consensus on paying for elderly and social care. He also says that the funding debate currently being discussed should consider the value of pensions and homes.</p> <p>In an interview with the Guardian, Mr Stevens asked:</p> <p><i>“Would intergenerational fairness support a further increase in the share of public funding on retirees, at the expense of children and working-age people? Does there need to be more flexibility between current disconnected funding streams for older people, so that at times of need everyone is guaranteed high quality social care?”</i></p> <p>The NHS England’s Chief Executive worries that health services will not be able to continue to cope if the recent decline in help received by older people from social care services, particularly within their own homes, continues to increase demand for medical care as well as the problem of overcrowding in hospitals.</p> <p>By 2018, in conjunction with the 70th anniversary of the NHS, he</p>

aims to reach an agreement with the Government to 'rescue' social care services from funding cuts and increasing unmet need and deciding how this care will be paid for:

"Even more older people would become trapped in hospital despite being fit to leave – a key reason hospitals run out of beds – and more operations would be cancelled unless ministers started seeing social care as a top priority."

A government spokesman has commented but declined to seek cross party agreement, and said that:

"In the spending review we gave local authorities access to up to £3.5bn extra a year by the end of the parliament with the social care precept and additional investment,"

Many believe that this response and the budget in general do not address the problem in full. Labour used Simon Steven's comments to highlight the effects of the cuts and said that the:

"Government's plans for funding social care are completely inadequate."

Heidi Alexander, the Shadow Health Secretary said that the debate on the reform of social services should not just include parliamentarians and should involve the public more in this discourse:

"There is an important debate to be had about how we reform and fund health and care services for the future. However, this debate cannot be left to politicians alone. We need to have a national conversation, with the public, about how we can guarantee the future of health and care services for generations to come."

Although many MPs have said that the rise in costs are inevitable in social care due to the increased number of extra staff needed, The Chief Executive of NHS has said that we cannot think in these terms. Indebted hospitals taking up £1.8bn of the extra £3.8bn the NHS will receive in 2016-17 has meant that less funding will go towards critical primary care and GP services.

In response to Mr Stevens comments, the Chief Executive of Independent Age, Janet Morrison, said that:

"Simon Stevens is right to say we need a national consensus on 'properly resourced and functioning social care services'. These issues are just too important to be left to the usual Westminster party politics."

She continued saying:

	<p><i>“In the face of a rapidly ageing population, ever increasing demand on services and shrinking budgets, we need an honest and frank debate. That is why we support calls for a cross-party commission to consider the health and care system we will need in the future and how we will pay for it.”</i></p>
<p><u>Health service embracing innovation as NHS England announces major trials to improve patient care</u></p>	<p>Older patients and people with long term conditions and mental health problems will be among the first to benefit from a major new drive to modernise how the NHS delivers care.</p> <p>Speaking at the World Economic Forum in Davos last week (Friday 22nd), NHS England Chief Executive Simon Stevens launched the first wave of NHS Innovation ‘Test Beds’. These collaborations between the NHS and innovators – including Verily (formerly Google Life Sciences), IBM and Philips – aim to harness technology to address some of the most complex issues facing patients and the health service.</p>

Consultations

Title: UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research – for consultation (active)

Source: NHS Health Research Authority

Deadline for written evidence: 24/03/2016

The Health Research Authority (HRA) and the devolved administrations are developing a new UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research of ensuring good practice in the management and conduct of health and social care research in the UK.

It will replace the current research governance frameworks published by each of the UK health departments.

Further information can be found [here](#)

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

