

Today's Queen's Speech sets out the Government's legislative agenda. It outlines 26 Bills, including those returning from the period prior to prorogation, and other measures requiring changes to existing legislation. Whilst the proposed programme covers a wide range of matters, it is heavily weighted to post-Brexit and a renewed focus on law and order.

This briefing highlights proposals of most direct relevance to the South East and to public services in England. It has also been announced today that the Budget will be announced on 6 December 2019.

Brexit and Beyond

More than a third of the planned new laws relate to new arrangements following departure from the EU. The Queen stressed that the Government's priority "has always been to secure the United Kingdom's departure from the European Union on 31 October" adding that the Government wants a new partnership with the EU based on free trade.

An **Immigration Bill** ending free movement will lay the foundation for a fair, modern and global immigration system. UK-resident European citizens will have the right to remain. The Bill will:

- end free movement in UK law, to ensure that the Government can deliver a single points-based immigration system based on people's skills from 2021.
- make EU citizens arriving after January 2021 subject to the same UK immigration controls as non-EU citizens.
- clarify the immigration status of Irish citizens once free movement ends. Irish citizens will generally not require leave to enter or remain in the UK.
- enable the Government to better coordinate social security policy.

Foreign affairs. The Government intends to continue playing a leading role in global affairs, defending UK interests and promoting UK values. The Government aims to be at the forefront of efforts to solve international security issues. It will champion global free trade and work with international partners to solve pressing global challenges. It will prioritise tackling climate change and ensuring that all girls have access to twelve years of quality education.

An **Agriculture Bill.** The Government will work to implement new regimes for fisheries, agriculture and trade, seizing opportunities that arise from leaving the European Union. An Agriculture Bill will reform agriculture policy to put the interests of farmers and land managers, the environment and taxpayers at its core. It will replace the current subsidies with rewards for the work by farmers to enhance the environment and produce high quality food in a more sustainable way. It will also set out a framework for an Environmental Land Management scheme, underpinned by the payment of public money for public goods.

A **Fisheries Bill** will deliver more sustainable fisheries, building on the 25 Year Environment Plan and the Fisheries White Paper. It will enshrine the powers to control access to UK waters and more effectively manage fisheries in the longer term.

A **Trade Bill** will seek to make the most of opportunities from having an independent trade policy after Brexit. It will: roll over trade agreements with third parties; ensure access to procurement opportunities under the Government Procurement Agreement; and protect businesses and consumers from unfair trade practices or unforeseen surges in imports.

A **Financial Services Bill.** The Government will take steps to provide certainty, stability and new opportunities for the financial services and legal sectors. The Bill will aim to ensure that the UK maintains its world-leading regulatory standards and remains open to international markets after Brexit.

A **Private International Law Bill** will maintain and strengthen the UK's role as a world leader in delivering justice across borders on civil and family justice issues. It will also make it easier for UK individuals and families who become involved in international legal disputes to access justice.

Supporting the NHS

The NHS published, in September, 2019, recommendations for legislative changes to enable the NHS to go faster and further in realising the ambitions of the 10-year Long Term Plan to improve integration, reduce bureaucracy and promote collaboration. The Government is considering those recommendations and will publish draft legislation to accelerate the Long-Term Plan, transforming patient care and future-proof the NHS.

A **Health Service Safety Investigations Bill** will bring forward legislation to establish an independent body to investigate serious healthcare incidents. The aim is to establish the world's first independent body to investigate patient safety concerns and share recommendations to prevent incidents occurring. The intention is to amend the Coroners and Justice Act 2009, to give English NHS bodies the power to appoint medical examiners.

A **Medicines and Medical Devices Bill** will seek to ensure that the UK remains at the forefront of the global life sciences industry after Brexit, giving patients faster access to innovative medicines and supporting the growth of the domestic sector. It will also allow the UK to take a lead role in global research to find cures for rare diseases and improve treatments for patients around the world. This would have implications for pharma research and development activities in the wider South East.

Adult social care. The Government will bring forward proposals to reform adult social care in England to ensure dignity in old age. Recent announcements have provided short-term funding for adult social care. The Government will consult on a 2% precept that will enable strategic authorities to access a further £500m for adult social care. The Government will bring forward substantive proposals to fix the crisis in social care; this will include setting out legislative requirements.

Mental health reform. The Government will continue work to reform the Mental Health Act. This will build on the findings of the independent review of the Act. A White Paper will be published by the end of this year, paving the way for reforming the Act and tackling issues highlighted by the review.

Tackling Violent Crime and Strengthening the Criminal Justice System

A **Serious Violence Bill** will create a new duty on a range of specified agencies across different sectors, such as local government, education, social services, youth offending, and health and probation, to work collaboratively, share data and information, and put in place plans to prevent serious violence.

The **Crime and Disorder Act 1998** will be amended to ensure that serious violence is an explicit priority for Community Safety Partnerships, which include local police, fire and probation services, as well as local authorities and wider public services.

A **Sentencing Bill** will ensure that the most serious violent and sexual offenders spend more time in prison to match the severity of their crimes and tackle repeat and prolific offenders through robust community orders. Community orders will address offenders' behaviour, answer their mental health and alcohol or drug misuse needs, or provide reparation for the benefit of the wider community.

There will be a **Foreign National Offenders Bill**, a **Police Protections Bill**, an **Extradition (Provisional Arrest) Bill** and a **Sentencing (Pre-consolidation Amendments) Bill**.

Ensuring Fairness and Protection for Individuals and Families

The **Domestic Abuse Bill** will better protect victims and their children, ensuring they have the support they need and that offenders are brought to justice, including creating a statutory definition of domestic abuse, a Domestic Abuse Commissioner to monitor the response of justice system/local authorities and other key partners, and provide for a new Domestic Abuse Protection Notice and Domestic Abuse Protection Order.

A **Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Bill** will be brought forward to remove issues that create conflict within the divorce process and introduce a minimum timeframe before the court makes a conditional divorce order.

Online harms. The Government will publish draft legislation for pre-legislative scrutiny to progress the April 2019 Online Harms White Paper.

An **Employment (Allocation of Tips) Bill** will promote fairness for workers by creating legal obligations on employers to pass on all tips to workers in full.

Employment reform, introducing measures that will support those working hard, building on commitments set out in the Government's Good Work Plan (2018). The Chancellor has also announced the intention to increase the National Living Wage to two-thirds of median hourly earnings and to lower the age threshold for those who qualify from 25 to 21 within the next 5 years - further details expected at the next Budget.

Through a **Pension Schemes Bill** measures will be brought forward to provide simpler oversight of pensions savings, and to protect people's savings for later life including new laws which will provide greater powers to tackle irresponsible management of private pension schemes. It will also provide more options for employers to support their employees, including saving collectively and sharing investment and mortality risk; and enhanced Pensions Regulator's powers to respond earlier when employers do not take their pension responsibilities seriously.

National security and investment legislation will to strengthen Government's powers to scrutinise and intervene in takeovers and mergers to protect national security.

A **Windrush Compensation Scheme (Expenditure) Bill** will ensure the Scheme is underpinned by the necessary parliamentary authority.

Building safety standards legislation will be put in place to regulate regimes for building safety and construction products, ensuring residents have a stronger voice in the system, learning the lessons from the Grenfell Tower fire; and developing a new system to oversee the whole built environment, with local enforcement agencies and national regulators working together to ensure that the safety of all buildings is improved, and requiring new build home developers must belong to a New Homes Ombudsman.

'Levelling up' Opportunity through Better Infrastructure, Education and Science

Education funding, including actions to help all young people access excellent education. Includes investing £14bn more in schools over three years; levelling-up minimum per-pupil funding for primary schools to £4,000 and secondary schools to £5,000, and ensuring per-pupil funding for all schools can rise at least with inflation; moving towards delivering this funding directly to schools, through a single national formula; and continuing to expand the free schools programme. The Government will also ensure post-16 education system is well funded/organised, including an extra £400m for 16-19 year-old education next year; and additional investment in T-Levels with delivery from September 2020.

The **National infrastructure strategy**, due to be published later in the autumn, will set out plans to deliver a step change in infrastructure investment across the whole of the UK including transport, local growth, decarbonisation, digital infrastructure, infrastructure finance and delivery. It will aim to help close the productivity gap between London and other parts of the country, and address challenges posed by climate change and build on the UK's commitment to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

Broadband, including new legislation to roll out gigabyte-capable broadband across the UK, and ensure all new homes are built with reliable and fast internet speeds.

An **Air Traffic Management and Unmanned Aircraft Bill** will maintain the UK's position as a world-leader in aviation, ensuring that regulations keep pace with new technology to support sustainable growth, and ensure that the police are able to tackle effectively the unlawful use of unmanned aircraft.

Airline insolvency legislation will protect passengers in the event of an airline going bust by reforming the insolvency process, balancing strong consumer protection with the interests of the taxpayer.

Railway reform. The Government will publish, in a White Paper, the Williams Review's recommendations this autumn, addressing reform of the rail industry and the franchising model. The Government will start implementing reforms from 2020, prioritising improvements for passengers. SESL has informed the Rail Review.

On **English devolution** the Government wants to make further progress to boost investment and growth across England. A White Paper is expected, including plans for institutions, spending priorities, local economic plans and local growth funding; it will provide further information on the Government's offer for devolution across England, levelling up the powers between Mayoral Combined Authorities and increasing the number of mayors and doing more devolution deals; and will include information on structural and institutional reform to support devolution and growth, in step with further funding.

For **science, space and infrastructure**, increased investment in science will be complemented by the development of a new funding agency/National Space Council, a more open visa system, and an ambitious UK Space Strategy to establish the UK as a world-leader in scientific capability and space technology.

The **High-Speed Rail 2 (West Midlands - Crewe) Bill** will provide the powers to build and operate the next stage of the High Speed Two network.

Protecting the Environment and Improving Animal Welfare

An **Environment Bill** will mean that "for the first time, environmental principles will be enshrined in law". Measures will be introduced to improve air and water quality including increasing local powers to tackle sources of air pollution. There will be measures to extend producer responsibility, ensure a consistent approach to recycling, introduce deposit return schemes and reduce plastic pollution including charges for single use plastics. Legislation will also create new legally binding environmental improvement targets. A new, world-leading independent regulator (the Office for Environmental Protection) will be established to scrutinise environmental policy and law, investigate complaints and take enforcement action. This will clearly have an impact on the role of the Environment Agency.

Biodiversity will be improved through work with developers. There will be powers to direct water companies to work together to meet current and future demand.

An **Animal Welfare Bill** will increase protection, increase sentences, and ensure that animals are recognised in domestic law as sentient beings, and that their welfare is taken into consideration in relevant Government policymaking. There will be consultation on banning imports from trophy hunting.

Other Legislative Measures

On **Electoral Integrity** the main measures are to:

- Tackle electoral fraud and protect democracy, whether people are casting their votes at the polling station or elsewhere. Voters will be required to show an approved form of photographic ID in order to vote at a polling station in a UK parliamentary election in Great Britain and local election in England.
- Require people to re-register every three years for a postal vote, ban campaigners from handling postal votes, limit the number of people an individual may act as a proxy for or hand in papers for.
- There will be consultation on implementing an imprints regime for digital election material and strengthening elections from foreign interference.
- Implement measures to make it easier for disabled people to vote at polling stations.