

Government response to the Public Services Committee's report
[Fit for the Future? Rethinking the Public Services Workforce](#)

The Government is grateful for the work of the Public Services Committee and their report on the public services workforce.

The Government agrees with all the Committee's recommendations and is committed to ensuring that engagement with service users and people with lived experience is properly resourced and embedded in the design and delivery of services, strategies and workforce planning, and training programmes across all areas of the public sector workforce. The Government also recognises that having efficient and effective technology is essential to the delivery of high quality public services, now and in the future. Improvements to workforce data collection and sharing and investment in preventative services are also at the heart of our strategy.

As outlined in our response, there are several positive areas where progress has already been made. For example:

- The Department for Education introduced the Public Sector Apprenticeship Target to boost apprenticeship starts across the public sector.
- The Government has committed to investing at least £500 million to improve the recruitment, retention, progression and staff wellbeing of the adult social care workforce. A universal Knowledge and Skills Framework will be accompanied by significant Government investment in skills and training for care workers and other staff.
- The Digital and Data Essentials guidance launched in May 2022 outlines future required capabilities for all Senior Civil Servants. The guidance is being used to inform future learning and development and talent planning activities.
- We are investing in preventative services across the public sector, including Supporting Families and reducing reoffending.

The response to the Committee's recommendations are below.

4. The Cabinet Office should work with all Government Departments, and particularly the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to promote best practice on developing and sharing workforce data at a local and national level. (Paragraph 33)

The [Office for National Statistics](#) publishes quarterly estimates of UK and regional public sector employment, made up of central government (including Civil Service), local government and public corporations. The estimates also include a breakdown by industry.

Since the move to the Explore Education Statistics publication platform in 2020, School Workforce data is now published and analysable sub-nationally (at regional, local authority, and school level) across many topic areas. This is available at the following link:

The Ministry of Justice and HM Prison and Probation Service have recently consumer-tested messages about the prison service as a whole, to complement its role-specific messaging, which was also consumer tested and live-tested.

Too often the prison service is overlooked as a career opportunity. By showing the variety, humanity and wide range of work that takes place in a prison, these ‘brand’ (as opposed to roles) communications will position the prison service as a more relevant and interesting place to work, one that is on a par with other uniformed roles. Target audience feedback is positive, on the proviso that messages have to be credible and avoid over-claim and avoid lofty rhetoric about the higher-purpose of the work, emphasising that even seemingly modest actions can make a difference too.

6. The Government should set the clear expectation that engagement with service users and people with lived experience must be embedded in the design and delivery of services, strategies, and workforce planning, and should strongly encourage regional and local bodies to do the same. The Government should outline best practise to ensure that such engagement is meaningful and rewarding for those service users consulted. (Paragraph 47)

The government agrees that User Centred Design should be embedded across its programmes, projects and strategies. This should include a wide range of users with varying lived experiences.

The [Service Standard](#) contains 14 points that new government digital services must meet before release on GOV.UK. Point 1 of the Service Standard sets out the importance of understanding users and their needs throughout the life of the service. The Central Digital and Data Office (CDDO) provides extensive [guidance on meeting user needs](#).

There are many examples of best practice across government of involving users and people with lived experience in design and delivery. For example, the Department for Work and Pensions designed and delivered an online version of the Carer’s Allowance service using user-centred design methodologies. Continuing to do user research and listening to users’ needs has meant that more people were able to succeed first time. The completion rate rose from 61% to 83% in just 6 months. Ineligible claims reduced by 41% with 5 times fewer ineligible claims made via the digital service than the previously existing paper alternative.

We know, however, that we need to go further and do more. In June, CDDO published [‘Transforming for a Digital Future: Government’s 2022-25 Roadmap for Digital and Data’](#), which sets out a bold vision for a transformed, more efficient digital government that provides better outcomes for everyone.

Mission One of the roadmap, ‘Transformed Public Services that Achieve the Right Outcomes,’ sets out our commitment that ‘by 2025, at least 50 of the government’s [top 75 identified services](#) will move to a ‘great’ standard, against a consistent measure of service performance’, meaning that they are efficient to run and easy to use. To deliver on this,

CDDO is working with departments to baseline current service performance across key services using a common framework, including understanding current usability and user pain points. The findings are being collated into a set of recommended focus areas for improvement.

Mission Six of the roadmap, 'A System that Unlocks Digital Transformation', sets out the commitment that 'all departments will, as a minimum, meet the definition of "good" for product-centric organisational structures and agile ways of working'. CDDO is working with the Policy Profession to develop a deeper understanding of how multi-disciplinary teams and product-centric approaches can improve the delivery of services. CDDO is also gathering examples of best practice from across government on involving user experience as part of the policy and service design process.

In addition, the government is committed to increasing its geographic and demographic diversity and believes that this will positively impact the range and depth of user engagement in design and delivery. For example, by 2025, the Places for Growth programme will relocate more than 2,500 civil service roles from Greater London to Manchester. Departments moving roles include the Cabinet Office, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Department for Education and Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

Social care

We know collaboration is vital to achieving the outcomes that we want to see for the adult social workforce. We are working with the sector, including service users and people with lived experience, to co-produce a universal Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) that will be accompanied by hundreds of thousands of training places and qualifications at all levels over the next 3 years, so the workforce can meet individual career goals and the needs of people who draw on care.

Teaching Vacancies

Teaching Vacancies, the Department for Education's free vacancy service for state funded schools in England, continues to improve and iterate the service based on feedback from its users. Teaching Vacancies actively reaches out to hiring staff and jobseekers to understand their experience of using the service. We use this feedback to design and improve features to ensure the service meets the needs of its users.

Initial Teacher Training (ITT)

The department's in-house teacher recruitment journey and associated digital services are designed, integrated, and continuously improved in line with feedback and insight from users.

Post Graduate Teaching Apprenticeship

The DfE is also consulting with the trailblazer group for the level 6 postgraduate teacher apprenticeship (PGTA) as part of its scheduled three-year review to support improvements to delivery. The Department for Education and the Institute for Apprenticeships supported a trailblazer group (made up of school employers) to develop the level three teaching assistant apprenticeship which was approved for delivery from 26 June 2018.

Justice

MoJ People Group now have a user insights function that focuses on service users and their needs that directly feeds into our innovation and technology journeys both from point of inception right through to development and implementation.

Local change champions are represented across business areas and they act as the conduit between the Ministry of Justice Corporate Centre and the business and are a valuable source of feedback as service users, but also embedded in the business to offer valuable feedback on initiatives that will land in a complex and diverse organisation.

Engagement with people with lived experience is embedded throughout the design and delivery of HMPPS services. Our Lived Experience Engagement Network (LEEN) has 96 members from 34 external organisations representing people with lived experience of prison and probation.

Prisoner councils provide regular consultation and feedback to governors, alongside national and local surveys with prisoners and more specialist forums on health, equalities and safety.

Prisoner consultation is a key feature of our Future Prisons Regime Design.

We commission, support and respond to insight from various organisations, including User Voice and the Prison Reform Trust.

Probation has a national plan agreed in January 2020 for engaging people with lived experience in the co-design of services. Over the next three years St Giles Wise are working with all probation regions to develop a culture of engagement. Each probation region now employs an 'Engaging People on Probation Manager' to embed this work locally.

The Ministry of Justice is committed to employing people with lived experience. This includes a commitment to recruiting 130 prison leavers through the Going Forward into Employment (GFIE) scheme by 31 December 2023, and to establish peer mentoring in every probation region from April 2023.

Policing

As part of the Government's response to the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities (CRED) report, the Home Office has committed to developing a national framework to support communities to scrutinise police use of powers.

The principles of the framework are being collaboratively developed with policing stakeholders and key organisations representing diverse communities and those with lived experiences; drawing on best practice models and feedback on what effective community scrutiny should look like.

The framework includes guidance for local communities and forces on the selection and representation of community scrutiny panels. Forces are encouraged to proactively engage with the local community including those disproportionately affected by police powers and those from protected characteristics groups which should help to facilitate a more diverse recruitment of panel members. Where appropriate, local forces and community scrutiny panels are encouraged to involve those with lived or other experience of police encounters, or through the criminal justice system. This will improve meaningful representation, inform the police from those with lived experiences, and provide a safe space for discussion and dialogue.

Across the policing sector, including police forces, the College of Policing and National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), there is a continued drive to ensure officers' guidance and training reflects the needs of both the police and the communities they serve. For example, both the NPCC and the College of Policing have also co-developed, with policing stakeholders, a draft Police Race Action Plan which outlines a series of measures to better support black people, both within policing and the public. As part of the development of the plan, the NPCC and College have engaged with civil society groups and consulted with the public to understand how policing can support their local communities, better protect black people from crime and ensure policing routinely involves black people in its governance.

Earlier this year, in the 'Inclusive Britain: government response to the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities' report, published in March 2022, the Government outlined new actions to improve trust and confidence in the police by strengthening the systems of scrutiny, accountability and transparency. This includes developing a new, national framework for how the use of police powers, including stop and search and use of force, are scrutinised at a local level. This framework will draw on best practice models of police community scrutiny panels in England and Wales, of which, we are aware of a number of forces already demonstrating good practice. This could include, for example, the Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable provide strong leadership, working closely with the community and scrutiny panel to facilitate an effective scrutiny process and proactively ensuring the participation of a diverse range of individuals, including young people, to represent their community and help influence local policing outcomes. Effective scrutiny processes include providing detailed records and body worn video footage, data driven exercises highlighting local issues and ensuring a clear feedback loop to help shape organisational learning or training.

7. The Government should prioritise developing training programmes in partnership with service users and organisations which support service users, to ensure they are preparing the workforce to meet user needs. Service users and people with lived experience should also be involved in the delivery of training. (Paragraph 48)

Civil Service

On 31 May 2022 the Government launched the Digital and Data Essentials guidance which outlines future required capabilities of all Senior Civil Servants. The guidance is being used to inform future learning and development, and talent planning activities. Knowledge of users and their needs/lived experiences and a wider focus on user-centred design principles and processes are part of the Digital and Data Essentials and training providers will be sourced from a broad spectrum of supply routes to maximise the diversity of lived experience in those delivering the training.

The Government Campus via the GDS Academy currently provides training accessible to any public officials entitled "Understanding users and their needs". The Government Campus Curriculum is under continuous review to ensure it meets the needs of end users and to ensure the diversity of its training supply routes.

CDDO, in collaboration with HMRC, ran a series of webinars in July 2022 on the importance of user research aimed at senior civil servants and more events like these are planned for

the Autumn 2022. A key part of these programmes is drawing on the lived experience of HMRC frontline officials and service users through the lens of User Centred Design. Furthermore, CDDO is working with GSCU to deliver a 'Digital Excellence' learning programme to 400 learners as a proof of concept for future development.

The Central Digital and Data Office (CDDO), in collaboration with HMRC, ran a series of webinars in July on the importance of user research aimed at senior civil servants and more events like these are planned for the Autumn 2022. Furthermore CDDO are working with the Government Skills and Curriculum Unit (GSCU) to deliver a 'Digital Excellence' learning programme to 400 learners as a proof of concept for future development.

The Government Campus brings all government training together, whether provided centrally or designed and delivered by others. The introduction of a Government Campus is helping us to share best practices and break down the barriers for civil servants to access learning which is already available elsewhere.

Techniques and practices for engaging service users are included throughout the Government Curriculum, particularly "Strand 2: Working in Government" which provides the specific knowledge which you need to work in government, and "Strand 4: Specialist Skills" which includes specialist development opportunities offered by government professions.

The Leadership College for Government's new Directors Leadership Programme will include a significant focus on users. Participants will attend a series of frontline visits across the UK which will be developed and delivered in partnership with local services. As part of their assessment, participants will be asked to demonstrate how they will work together, across the organisation to apply their new knowledge and skills to help create better services for end users.

Permanent Secretaries and Directors General are invited to attend an annual calendar of Civil Service Leadership Group (CSLG) events which include frontline service visits themed by policy. For example, in October 2022 CSLG members will be visiting the Immigration Enforcements Complex Returns team to learn how the most difficult returns are planned, developed and managed in real time using risk management techniques, commercial know-how, networking, x-government partnerships, detailed operational knowledge and acute geo-political awareness. Complex returns can include everything from families denied asylum to serious offenders being extradited to answer charges in other jurisdictions.

Education

Apprenticeships continue to support employers across the public sector to build the workforces they need to meet both current and future challenges.

Employers are best placed to know the needs of their service users, and the skills their workforces need to support these service users. Our reforms have put employers at the heart of designing new high-quality apprenticeship standards, which equip apprentices with the knowledge, skills, and behaviours needed to be fully occupationally competent. Public sector organisations have supported the development of these new apprenticeship standards, which are available in over 650 occupations, including early years practitioner, nursing associate and operational firefighter.

Teacher Training

The Department for Education offers Graduate Employment based teacher training routes, (allowing trainees to earn a salary whilst they train), which support those with financial and family commitments for whom student finance options are not viable.

National professional qualifications (NPQs) provide training and support for education professionals at all levels and deliver improved outcomes for young people and children. The qualifications were developed in collaboration with the sector and the best available evidence. They can be completed flexibly around existing commitments.

We are also expanding the number of Early Years initial teacher training places over the next two academic years through the Early Years Education Recovery Programme.

As part of this Programme, we are also developing new early years training routes, including a new NPQ in Early Years Leadership.

National Tutoring Programme (NTP)

National Tutoring Programme (NTP) provides training to school-based staff to enable 121 and small group tutoring. The programme also provides recruitment, training and deployment of subsidised Academic Mentors (AMs) to work full time in schools for an academic year.

Justice

The HMP Learning and Development (L&D) restructure has a core delivery principle of user-centred design. HMPPS L&D will provide a mechanism where service users are directly involved in the development of learning at every stage from user testing of ideas and new learning, feeding into lessons learned, evaluation and ultimately as the core customer.

In the development of SCT and the induction package we have consulted with people with lived experience within the Ministry of Justice and externally. Going forward there are opportunities to do this more routinely e.g. through SCT. We should also ensure that people with lived experience are involved in broader work e.g. LAWW as this represents a key opportunity to both gain perspective on the programme and deliver sessions to build learning and awareness across the Ministry of Justice.

Working with external suppliers allows us the flexibility to introduce elements of learning where people with lived experience can get involved in learning delivery. The Unlocked Graduate scheme intersperses core delivery with keynote speakers, with lived experience. There is also an opportunity to use the internal Ministry of Justice panel of colleagues with lived experience to help LT&C to shape leadership products in the future, by keeping them as a key stakeholder.

Local authorities

DLUHC Supporting Families helps level up local authority services to help families combat problems such as domestic abuse, unemployment, and poor mental and physical health. The programme is delivered by 150 top tier authorities, working with their local partners including schools, health organisations, the voluntary and community sector, and others. Supporting Families is committed to driving strong multi-agency partnerships in every local authority and mature local and national data systems, which means investing more in good practice, overcoming barriers to data-sharing, and listening to the views of families when designing and commissioning services. The programme published a refreshed Early Help

System Guide in April 2022. This is a toolkit to assist local strategic partnerships responsible for their local early help and family support systems.

Health

Health Education England (HEE) involves service users and those with lived experiences in the development of training programmes, including e-Learning. HEE's People's Advisory Forum (PAF) provides the voice of users and carers across a number of HEE programmes, including the Blended Learning Nursing Degree Programme, Technology Enhanced Learning programme and the Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training in Learning Disability and Autism programme.

Regulators of healthcare professionals, such as the General Medical Council (GMC), General Dental Council (GDC), Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), as well as the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), set the standards relevant to the education and training of healthcare professionals and quality assure institutions and programmes against these standards. These standards require service users and carers to be involved in the development of training programmes. For example, theme one of the GMC's [Excellence by design](#) requires those developing curricula to ensure they are based on patient and population need.

Policing

In the Government Inclusive Britain strategy, the Home Office will support the College of Policing and the National Police Chiefs' Council by autumn 2024 to review and deliver any necessary improvements to police officer training in de-escalation skills and conflict management in everyday police-citizen encounters, such as use of stop and search and use of force powers.

9. Technology has great potential to ensure the sustainability of the public services. Government departments should conduct horizon scanning exercises to examine how technology can improve forecasting and planning, improve efficiency, and reduce demand for the public services within their portfolio. This must not be limited to short-term cost saving measures but should consider service-user experience and improving public services in the long-term. Horizon scanning should consider digital literacy, inclusion and bias, and basic infrastructure issues, and should bring forward feasible, realistic opportunities for technological innovation. (Paragraph 60)

The government agrees that having efficient and effective technology is essential to the delivery of high quality public services, now and in the future. The evidence is clear that organisations in the public and private sector are more productive and efficient when they have modern technology and great digital services.

The government is already taking a number of steps to improve the technology departments use. CDDO was created to help build an effective digital government by putting the right conditions in place for digital, data and technology transformation at scale.

Mission Four of [Transforming for a Digital Future: Government's 2022-25 Roadmap for Digital and Data](#) is 'Secure, Efficient and Sustainable Technology'. The aim of this mission is to modernise government technology so that civil servants have the tools they need and the

systems departments use can provide high quality services to the public at scale. Mission Four sets out our collectively agreed commitments to address the challenges of legacy IT, strengthen the security and resilience of key systems and promote a joined-up, standardised and simplified approach to building technology.

Mission Four also includes a commitment to systematically identify and capture opportunities arising from emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, blockchain and quantum computing. The government agrees that emerging technologies will play an increasingly important role in public service delivery. CDDO is working with departments through Quarterly Business Reviews, flows of cross-government DDaT performance data and spend controls pipelines to support forecasting and identify where efforts should be focused for improvement. This is supported by cross-government forums for digital leaders and senior technologists to encourage shared learning, ensuring that not just the centre but also departments are closely involved in horizon scanning.

The government also recognises that there are valid concerns about the use of emerging technologies in public service delivery. Accordingly, CDDO has put in place guidance and standards to ensure they are used appropriately. For example, bias present in data sets can be exacerbated by the use of algorithms, which risks unfair or biased services. To pre-empt and combat this potential risk, CDDO has published the Data Ethics Framework, which is a set of principles to guide the design of appropriate data use in the public sector. CDDO and the Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation have created an Algorithmic Transparency Recording Standard due to be operational in Autumn 2022. This will help public sector organisations provide clear information about the algorithmic tools they use and why they're using them. The Standard has been piloted by more than 10 organisations across the public sector and we have gathered and incorporated further feedback through discussion with officials from government departments and public bodies, and an open call for feedback from members of the public. In addition, where departments are proposing to use emerging technology within their pipeline of planned work, CDDO pays close attention to this through the spend controls process to ensure that the proposed solution is the right one and will meet user needs.

Education

We are now keen to learn from what other countries are doing, especially in relation to high stakes assessments, and we plan to work closely with Ofqual as we undertake this exploratory work. The Standards and Testing Agency are exploring the potential for further digital assessment – including both the assessments themselves and in respect of the underpinning delivery mechanisms. In the schools white paper, we announced the introduction of new tests of literacy and numeracy, taken by a sample of children at the end of key stage 3, and we are working on the assumption these will be digital tests wherever possible.

We are also working towards establishing a curriculum arm's length body that builds on the success of Oak National Academy. It will work with thousands of teachers to co-design, create and continually improve packages of optional, free, adaptable digital curriculum resources and video lessons. These optional resources will be available across the UK, helping teachers deliver a high-quality curriculum and will drive the quality of children's learning higher each year, working towards DfE's literacy and numeracy ambitions.

We are also aware of the risks raised by the committee. Technology is best when used as a complement to good teaching practice by excellent teachers. We are taking actions to ensure that all schools have good infrastructure in place to support learning. We invested heavily in technology during the Covid pandemic, and are building on that investment to make sure that all schools have the basics in place to make the most of the opportunities for technology to improve pupil outcomes and reduce teacher workload. We delivered over 1.95 million laptops and tablets to schools, trusts, local authorities and further education providers, to build on the millions of devices that were already in the system. Moving forward, we are working jointly with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to improve school infrastructure by giving every school access to high speed broadband by 2025, and investing up to £150 million to provide wifi to the classroom in priority areas. We are setting out technology standards for schools to ensure leaders know what they need to do to get their technology estate in good shape and cyber secure, and working to build the evidence base so that schools can make good decisions about the best technology for learning.

Justice

The Ministry of Justice is looking at its digital and technology opportunities, including the inception of a new data hub and strategic workforce planning tool with the user experience at the heart of the improvements.

MoJ People Group has developed an innovation hub which allows staff the opportunity to post ideas that will potentially lead to improvements in service delivery and through role augmentation and automation greater efficiencies will be delivered.

MoJ is part of the 3GSS Synergy cluster that is linked to the Governments Shared Service Strategy that will move us onto a modern SaaS based cloud solution for HR, Finance and Commercial with a common operating model and platform, allowing greater alignment across the Civil Service and removing cost. This will include the recompute of our current Shared Services business processes offering and lead to an enhanced service offering underpinned by new technology.

10. The Cabinet Office should update its guidance for local commissioners to ensure that users' voices are heard by making co-production with children and parents a requirement for organisations commissioned to deliver children's and family services.

The voices of children and young adults with relevant experience, and their parents and carers, are crucial if we are to improve outcomes for children. For this reason, co-production with children and families is a cornerstone of policy development in a number of areas.

[Guidance issued by Cabinet Office](#) in 2020 takes into account 'social value' in the award of central government contracts, which also applies in the commissioning of local children and family services. This model includes collaboration with users and communities in the co-design and delivery of contracts as an activity to be considered when awarding contracts for services.

11. At all levels of service design and service and workforce planning, providers should prioritise preventative services. (Paragraph 65)

The Autumn Budget 2021 saw the Supporting Families programme receive £200 million of additional investment, taking total planned funding to £695 million over 3 years (2022-25). The programme will continue to help disadvantaged families with multiple and complex problems - such as unemployment, financial insecurity, risk of homelessness and educational inequality - and will help up to 300,000 families make long-lasting changes for the future.

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities will work closely with the Department for Education in this next phase. Together, we will ensure that by supporting families before they hit crisis point, we can help local authorities to start to rebalance demand away from high-cost statutory services, particularly children's social care, and towards prevention.

The programme is driving real long-term change through widespread transformation in how family services are delivered across local services including police, housing, social care, and Jobcentres, meaning that services and professionals are better connected, coordinated, family-centred and data driven, so that local services are able to identify who might be in need of support and provide targeted interventions to prevent problems escalating. The programme's Early Help System Guide has been updated in April 2022 to help local partnerships take a renewed focus on good practice, family voice and rebalancing the system towards prevention; and clearer guidance on the role of different workforces.

Health

We want to bring NHS prevention services closer to the patient, and we want to help people proactively make healthier, more informed choices – this helps both the individual and the NHS.

Development of a workforce where prevention is at its heart, will only be achieved through effective workforce planning and development. All parts of the health and social care system have a responsibility to improve and protect health with the NHS having an important role in the following workforce areas:

1. Building the capability and capacity of the NHS registered workforce to provide advice to people, make referrals for support, to deliver preventative health services. Equipping staff with the right skills, knowledge, and tools to discuss preventative health measures with patients is an essential part of efforts to improve population health and reducing pressures on NHS touchpoints, including general practice and accident and emergency.
2. Improving data and insights to better determine supply and demand pressures at national, regional, and local level – a key function which will transfer to NHS England from HEE.
3. Through Integrated Care Boards as part of their responsibility to produce a workforce strategy for their place, working with local authorities to ensure workforce plans are integrated across the drivers of ill health. Taking a broad view can help ensure that the widest range of staff are empowered with the right knowledge and skills to support local efforts for better health.

Justice

We know the likelihood of ex-offenders reoffending is significantly decreased if they have a home, a job and access to healthcare, including substance misuse treatment. The Ministry of Justice is investing £200 million a year by 2024/25 to drive down reoffending, get offenders off drugs and into skills training, work and stable accommodation.

13. There is a need for a fundamental shift in how the public sector works with voluntary partners. Voluntary sector bodies should be more fully included in, and flexibility introduced into commissioning to ensure that the work of voluntary partners is not artificially limited by inflexible processes. (Paragraph 75)

The Government has recently introduced a Procurement Bill into the House of Lords, as part of the Transforming Public Procurement programme, which aims to improve the way public procurement is regulated. This will deliver a number of benefits, including;

- Creating a simpler and more flexible, commercial system that better meets our country's needs while remaining compliant with our international obligations
- Opening up public procurement to new entrants such as small businesses and social enterprises so that they can compete for and win more public contracts
- Embedding transparency throughout the commercial lifecycle so that the spending of taxpayers' money can be properly scrutinised.

In addition to the Bill, the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Crown Representative, Claire Dove CBE is based in the Cabinet Office and acts as an intermediary between the Government and the voluntary and social enterprise sectors to champion the Social Value Act and an improvement in commissioning practices. This includes working with industry and sector experts to identify and reduce barriers to VCSE participation in public service markets - including those small and medium sized.

- Via the £70 million Life Chances Fund (LCF) the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) is trialling approaches to flexible VCSE delivery in partnership with local commissioners. By focusing on outcomes, as opposed to prescriptive contractual outputs, social sector providers can adapt services that are relevant to beneficiaries in their local area.
- DCMS is working in partnership with Oxford University's Government Outcomes Lab to evaluate what works in LCF delivery, in addition to a broader research programme that is creating an evidence base on how best to enable and support VCSE delivery of public services.

Prisons

The Third Sector Strategic Partnership Board led by the HMPPS Leadership team co-ordinates HMPPS and the Ministry of Justice's relationship with the third sector and philanthropic funders; creating a strategic approach to the stewardship of the sector in a dynamic landscape.

Approximately 1700 Third Sector organisations are working with offenders and their families, and as of April 2022 the number of staff from the third sector is estimated to be 8000 FTE (full time equivalent).

HMPPS have awarded grants to a diverse range of voluntary organisations for over 15 years. In response to recent recommendations from the voluntary sector, HMPPS has increased the use of grants to commission support for people on probation, launching registration for new grants in July 2022. We continue to work with the voluntary sector to simplify our contracting processes wherever possible.

18. There should be a comprehensive review of how pensions operate across the public services workforce. The goal should not be uniformity but flexibility to enable those coming to—or moving between—public service roles to do so without a financial penalty. (Paragraph 118)

The Government notes the Committee's recommendation. While the objectives set out in the recommendation are appropriate, it is the Government's view that these objectives will be adequately met under the current system of public service pension schemes (PSPS), especially as all accrual of pensions has now moved into modernised 2015 schemes following the 'Hutton' report and implementation of the Public Service Pensions and Judicial Offices Act.

Public service pensions provide an appropriate degree of flexibility for those transferring into, out of, and within the public sector. Where members move on from their public service employer, they can choose to become 'deferred' members of their current pension scheme, which will see their reformed PSPS rights accrued up to this point fully price protected through continuing revaluations up to retirement.

Where they choose to transfer their rights to their new employer's pension scheme, the public service pension schemes and some public body pension schemes have for several decades participated in an arrangement known as the Public Sector Transfer Club (the Club). The Club facilitates the portability of pension rights in the public sector. It provides that a transfer between the participating schemes is carried out on the basis that the member will receive benefits of an equivalent value in the receiving scheme to those that would have been provided if the member had remained in their previous scheme (and disregarding any change in pensionable pay between the employments). This is a more generous basis than non-Club transfers and the policy intent is to aid the transfer of skills and people across the public sector. When a member of a pension scheme changes employment, and their new employer's scheme is not covered by the Public Sector Transfer Club, they are able to transfer their pension into their new employer's scheme (if the employer allows transfers to be made). The Government acknowledges that except for the LGPS, outward transfers are more limited under the Pensions Act 2015 to other DB schemes where members cannot avail themselves of the further pension draw down flexibilities provided for under that Act. This is because most public service schemes are unfunded and draw down would increase upfront taxpayer costs, which would represent an undesirable fiscal cost. For those moving into the public sector from the private sector, it is possible to transfer their existing pension into e.g. the Civil Service or Local Government Pension Schemes.

Although there are smaller PSPS, most public servants are covered by a small number of large pension schemes that allow significant flexibility to move employment within a profession while remaining in the same pension scheme. Following the 2015 reforms and McCloud litigation, the Government plans to consolidate some of the smaller schemes. HMT and CO have been working to ensure that outstanding public sector pension schemes listed in schedule 10 of the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 would gradually fold into the Civil Service Pension Scheme (CSPS), which can now recommence following the McCloud litigation.

The reformed schemes implemented from 2015 also generally make it easier for members to extend their working lives or return to work after taking pension compared to most legacy PSPS. This is achieved for example through the introduction of Late Retirement Factors and the removal of abatement from reformed PSPS.

Justice

Currently, those moving between public service roles and different schemes may seek to transfer their current public service pension into the new public service pension via the Public Service Transfer Club.

Pan-Civil Service pay convergence work led by the Cabinet Office linked to a new Reward Strategy will consider pension reforms that offer far more flexibility and choice for individuals in the future.

19. The Government should encourage public service employers to offer a broad range of flexible working options by default, with this provision being unavailable only if it would have a negative impact on service users. (Paragraph 125)

The right to request flexible working currently supports all employees with 26 weeks continuous service with their employer to make applications to change their working hours, working pattern and/or work location. All statutory requests must be considered by the employer and may only be refused for one of eight prescribed business reasons. ACAS has issued guidance and a statutory [Code of Practice](#) for employers on handling such requests in a reasonable manner.

Last year, between September and December 2021, the Government consulted on a set of specific proposals intended to help ensure that the legislative framework remains fit for purpose. These proposals included:

- making the right to request Flexible Working a day one-right (by removing the existing 26-week qualifying period);
- whether the eight business reasons for refusing a request remain valid;
- requiring the employer to consider alternative arrangements if the initial request is unworkable;
- the administrative process underpinning the right to request Flexible Working (the number of requests an employee can make within a 12-month period and the timeframe within which an employer is required to respond); and

- requesting a temporary flexible working arrangement.

The Government will publish its response to the consultation in due course.

The right to request flexible working is predominantly used to support employees making applications for contractual flexible working arrangements – such as part-time or job-shares. Yet often what people need is ad hoc or informal flexibility that allows them to manage elements of their lives such as attending appointments or managing fluctuations in their health. The Government is interested in understanding more about how this type of flexible working works in practice and will be launching a call for evidence on this subject in due course.

Civil Service

Under the Employment Rights Act 1996 all employees with 26 weeks of service have a right to ask for flexible working. Employers should consider such requests in good faith, but do not have a legal obligation to grant it. ACAS Code of Practice on Flexible Working and related guidance explain practicalities around handling requests and making hybrid working arrangements work for both employees and employers.

The new Employment Bill, anticipated in 2022 and its recent consultation sets out five proposals in this report. Whilst the proposals do not yet codify any new rights or create an automatic right for employees to work flexibly, it is important that employers continue to hold a dialogue with employees about how to balance work responsibilities and individual needs. The Civil Service leads by example and encourages flexible working as it enables departments to operate outside of the standard 9-5, meeting business needs to deliver essential public services (for example in call centres, job centres, and prisons). Extended opening hours of public services is a key example where flexible hours arrangements help staff to undertake early starts, late finishes, or do weekend or shift working, whilst keeping the cost of overtime down and managing the cost of work spaces.

Flexible working offers are part of the total reward package and play a crucial role in attracting and retaining talent. Flexible working patterns can be mutually beneficial by improving employees' work-life balance and wellbeing, particularly in enabling many parents, carers and older workers to remain in the workforce and to contribute effectively whilst increasing productivity and reducing costs.

Flexible working arrangements are made departmentally and locally and are agreed subject to business need, with arrangements being contractual or informal, depending on circumstances.

To avoid an arrangement that is inflexible for both the employer and employee, arrangements across the Civil Service tend to be agreed informally (without a contractual change). They are discretionary and subject to regular review. This allows for changes in business need to be met whilst retaining options for flexible working.

Where flexible working arrangements are granted following a formal request, these will usually be contractual, tying both parties to the agreed arrangement and are subject to periodic review to ensure they remain fit for purpose for the business and the individual.

Flexible working options can include, part-time working, compressed hours, job sharing, part-year working, annualised hours, flexi time and home or remote working.

Obligations under the Equality Act will also be a consideration: some employees will need more certainty over their working arrangements than others. Some of these employees may have protected characteristics which are affected (for example, someone who asks for a particular working pattern in order to accommodate a disability, or a religious need, or caring responsibilities).

Education

Flexible working opportunities in schools can help to recruit, retain and motivate teachers, improve staff wellbeing, promote equality of opportunity and diversity in the workforce.

To support schools to implement flexible working, we have published resources on Gov.UK including [guidance](#) and [case studies](#).

In March 2021 we appointed eight [Flexible Working Ambassador Schools](#) to champion flexible working, and appointed a training provider – Timewise – to offer [training](#) to school leaders in implementing flexible working practices.

Justice

The Ministry of Justice is committed to delivering its business effectively and sustainably through modern and inclusive workplaces that enable smart, flexible and hybrid working, encouraging business areas to make the best use of the range of flexible working options available in the context of the particular roles, work environment and local business requirements.

As an employer the aim is to create the opportunity for our staff to work in the most productive, cost-effective and environmentally-friendly way that the local workplace allows (recognising this will vary between operational and non-operational work settings) to ensure our staff are fully and effectively supported in delivering the services we provide.

21. Teach First has demonstrated the potential of imaginative branding to attract people into public service work. Prior to recruitment campaigns, public sector employers should conduct in-depth research to establish what messages will resonate most with potential candidates. Guidance on developing compelling messaging should be agreed centrally and distributed widely. (Paragraph 138)

Education

Our Teaching marketing campaign provides inspiration and support to explore a career in teaching and directs people to the Get Into Teaching service. Through a new website, prospective candidates can access support and advice through expert one-to-one Teacher Training Advisers, a contact centre and a national programme of events. The Get School Experience digital service brokers school experience placements between prospective candidates and schools. The service is also developing innovative activities to build a pipeline of future interest in teaching, with a focus on shortage subjects, such as teaching internships for maths, physics and computing undergraduates.

Justice

The Ministry of Justice/HMPPS have recently consumer-tested messages about the prison service as a whole, to complement its role-specific messaging, which was also consumer tested and live-tested.

Too often the prison service is overlooked as a career opportunity. By showing the variety, humanity and wide range of work that takes place in a prison, these 'brand' (as opposed to roles) communications will position the prison service as a more relevant and interesting place to work, one that is on a par with other uniformed roles. Target audience feedback is positive, on the proviso that messages have to be credible and avoid over-claim and avoid lofty rhetoric about the higher purpose of the work, emphasising that even seemingly modest actions can make a difference too.

23. The Public Sector Apprenticeship Target and associated reporting requirements should be reinstated. Further consideration should be given to additional funding for apprentice salaries. (Paragraph 156)

Apprenticeships

We introduced the public sector apprenticeship target to boost apprenticeship starts across the public sector and we are encouraged to see the positive effect the target has had. There have been over 220,000 apprenticeship starts in the public sector over the initial four-year target period, with apprenticeships now firmly ingrained in public sector recruitment and workforce development plans. Apprenticeship starts by new and existing employees now represent around one-tenth of the volume of all employment starts in the public sector (12.9% in 2020-21).

Although we do not currently have plans to reinstate the target, we are asking the public sector to continue to report annually on new apprenticeship starts, total number of apprentices and organisational headcount. We will publish this data to support transparency, external accountability, and show how the public sector is continuing to support and benefit from apprenticeships.

As with all other employees, employers are responsible for the salary costs of apprentices. We are increasing Government funding for apprenticeships to £2.7 billion by 2024-25, and we continue to offer £1,000 payments for employers and providers who take on apprentices aged 16 to 18 and eligible 19 to 24 year olds.

Teacher Workforce Directorate

Schools offering the School Direct (salaried) or Postgraduate Teaching Apprenticeship routes will continue to be able to access funding equivalent to the bursary amount.

The Department has developed a Level 3 Teaching Assistant apprenticeship which was approved for delivery from 26 June 2018. This gives teaching assistants the opportunity to upskill and work towards an industry-recognised qualification.

24. Local authorities should invest significant resources in developing local talent pools to support people with lived experience of using local services to enter public sector careers. These would create diverse pipelines of talented staff to deliver public services they have themselves experienced. (Paragraph 163)

The Government agrees that people with lived experience of local services can bring valuable insights to the local government workforce. Local authorities are independent employers with the freedom and flexibility to manage their resources to meet local need and are best placed to understand what they need to deliver local priorities, skills, and employment opportunities in the local market. Although local authorities face workforce challenges, they have shown many innovative examples of how they use this flexibility, including establishing local talent pools.

We know that local authorities are facing workforce pressures. DLUHC funds a local government sector support programme, delivered by the Local Government Association

(LGA), which helps and encourages local authorities to improve their workforce capability and capacity. DLUHC regularly explores how the sector support programme can best support local authorities and we will work with the LGA and the sector in reviewing workforce support activity as part of that.

The Ministry of Justice is developing a network of SCS Location Champions for its primary Places for Growth locations (Brighton, Jarrow, Liverpool, Cardiff, Leeds, Nottingham, Ipswich). SCS Location Champions will represent the Ministry of Justice in cross-government engagement on local issues, such as building communities, growing local talent and creating sustainable career paths for civil servants

The Ministry of Justice is feeding into central Cabinet Office initiatives for locations such as supporting Heads of Place (SCS Leads for regions), Local Delivery Plans (Places for Growth Baseline and Advanced plans for locations) and Project Closer to Home (Cabinet Office location recruitment campaigns).

25. The Government should impose a duty on all public sector employers to set ambitious targets for recruitment timeframes. (Paragraph 166)

Improving the pace of recruitment is an important priority for the Civil Service, because departments need the right resources in place at the right time and candidates tell us they are frustrated by how long recruitment takes. However, due to the huge breadth and diversity of campaigns we would exercise caution in setting a "target" for all recruitment.

Recruitment is essentially made up of three activities which contribute to the overall time taken:

- gaining approval to recruit
- advertising, assessing and selecting
- pre-employment checks and onboarding.

In terms of the time taken to recruit, there is a distinction between unavoidable or positive constraints (which could be thought of as “time invested” in the recruitment), and avoidable or improvable time detractors (which could be thought of as “time lost”).

Time invested includes the period for advertising and search, additional steps to improve the diversity of the shortlist, and undertaking additional security checks for more sensitive roles.

Time wasted includes delays with departments approving the recruitment to start, panels taking time to make selection decisions and record candidate feedback, and administrative bottlenecks.

We would recommend placing a requirement upon public bodies to set out their plans for improving the time taken to recruit, and the quality of recruitment outcomes; and to show how this improvement will be measured and tracked. The Government Recruitment Service is doing this as part of a wider recruitment transformation programme, and is well-placed to provide sector leadership in this area if desired.

The Teacher Workforce Model estimates the future national teacher demand in England. The Department uses the model to assist in the setting of workforce related targets, workforce planning, and the design of new policies. The model considers the impact of a wide range of factors upon both future demand and supply including (and not limited to) pupil number projections, economic impacts, secondary school curriculum, retirements, and teacher demographics. We principally use the Teacher Workforce Model to estimate future teacher demand and using this, estimate our postgraduate initial teacher trainee recruitment targets. Our latest targets publication is available here:

[Postgraduate initial teacher training targets: 2022 to 2023](#)

Justice

Jo Farrar, Second Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Justice, took an action from the Departmental Board in early July to consider the end-to-end prison officer recruitment time to hire. She also undertook to engage with the then Prisons Minister Victoria Atkins and Shirley Cooper, MoJ Non-Executive Director, to identify any further process efficiencies that might be achieved.

For prison officer recruitment purposes, recruitment analysts try to predict a hiring need before it occurs using a series of predictive analytics based on several assumptions. The aim is to ensure the new officer is employed, inducted and ready to start training as the serving officer leaves, often referred to as the ‘boots on the ground’ model.

Time to hire task and finish group established to review end to end recruitment process and identify efficiencies to improve Time to hire.

Since March 2022, we have begun to streamline the recruitment process and we are starting to see Average time to hire and average time to training fall month on month.

Prison Officer Time to hire is now a formal monthly KPI.

29. To boost retention and support staff to progress into more senior roles, the Government should work with regulators to develop straightforward and practicable ways to recognise, assess, and record prior learning and experience using a competency approach. Competencies should be set nationally and quality assured across different employers. They should be truly portable. (Paragraph 196)

Education

Our reforms to apprenticeships included the introduction of industry-designed apprenticeship standards which are designed to be transferable. Apprenticeship standards, agreed by groups of employers, ensure that apprentices are fully competent in their occupation, and that on completion can carry out the role in any size of employer across any relevant sector.

Apprenticeships take into account an individual's relevant prior learning and experience so that apprentices do not have to repeat training they have covered previously. This reduces the cost of training for the employer and supports apprentices to become competent more quickly.

Public sector employers can use apprenticeships to support staff progress into more senior roles within their occupational routes. For example, employers in the NHS have developed an apprenticeship progression pathway from level 2 healthcare support worker right through to a level 6 registered nurse. This is helping the NHS to build the diverse talent pipeline it needs whilst providing opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to progress.

Initial Teacher Training (ITT)

Within teaching, we are exploring how to support teaching support staff to progress career opportunities and development through apprenticeships.

Policing

The College of Policing is independent from Government and its role is clear: setting high professional standards sharing what works best; acting as the national voice of policing; and ensuring police training and ethics is of the highest possible quality.

To ensure that competencies can be set nationally and assessed consistently across the 43 police forces, the College developed the Competency and Values Framework (CVF). The framework, launched in 2016, provides a local and national foundation for all levels of policing, from constables through to chief officers and police staff.

The College has also created "professional profiles" to define the expectations and accountabilities of all for police officers and police specific staff roles. These profiles articulate the skills and professional standards, competencies and behaviours for policing on a national basis. They also include suggested continuous professional development for each role profile ranging from literature around evolving crime types to legislative developments in countering said crimes.

Although training standards and the national policing curriculum are set by the College of Policing, forces provide local training and development at several different levels ranging from initial entry to leadership and ongoing development.

The College has developed entry routes which take into account recognised prior learning in other sectors and education in policing entry routes. In addition, there are now several ways

in which existing staff and officers can gain nationally recognised qualifications from Level 3 to Level 6, including elements of recognised prior learning, which are portable between sectors.

30. The Government should prioritise, encourage, and resource the development of more imaginative training, including joint training between services. (Paragraph 197)

To achieve our ambitions for the country, to emerge from the pandemic stronger and more resilient, we must have the best people leading and working in government. To deliver the Government's priorities, public servants must be technically competent, bold, and imaginative; and they must have both specialist and generalist knowledge, skills, and networks. The Government published its plan for creating a Government Campus and new curriculum for all civil servants: [Better Training, Skills and Networks](#) in January 2021.

The Leadership College for Government works with partner organisations across public services. It has provided training, support, and networks for senior public sector leaders at CEO and deputy CEO level.

Education

One of our top priorities is to ensure that we continue to attract, retain and develop the highly-skilled teachers we need to inspire the next generation – as set out in our published Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategy in 2019.

At the heart of the Schools White Paper's (Opportunity for all: strong schools with great teachers for your child, 2022) vision to boost literacy and numeracy outcomes is the need for an excellent teacher for every child. This is why we are taking action to ensure teacher quality and therefore improve pupil outcomes by transforming the training and support we provide for teachers; and attracting more people to teaching and enabling them to succeed.

We will deliver 500,000 teacher training and development opportunities by 2024, giving all teachers and school leaders access to world-class, evidence-based training and professional development at every stage of their career.

Teacher quality is the most important in-school determinant of pupil outcomes. DfE is creating an entitlement to at least three years of structured training, support and professional development for all new teachers, to bring teaching into line with other prestigious professions such as law, accountancy and medicine. Underpinning this is the new Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Core Content Framework and the Early Career Framework (ECF): together, these ensure that new teachers will benefit from at least three years of evidence-based training, across ITT and into their induction.

Beyond the first few years of teaching, our priority is to help all teachers and school leaders to continuously develop their expertise throughout their careers so every child in every classroom in every school gets the best start in life.

We have launched a new and updated suite of National Professional Qualifications for teachers and school leaders at all levels, from those who want to develop expertise in high-quality teaching practice to those leading multiple schools across trusts. Since autumn 2021, eligible teachers and leaders have been able to access scholarships to undertake

fully-funded NPQs. We will deliver specialist training to drive better literacy through new NPQs for Leading Literacy and for Early Years Leadership.

These measures will create a golden thread running from Initial Teacher Training through to school leadership, rooting teacher and leader development in the best available evidence.

Justice

Traverse Leadership Development Programme for talented deputy governors includes an 8-week work placement in another organisation. This included other governor departments and other public sector organisations.

31. We encourage the Department for Health and Social Care to build upon the ambitious approach taken with medical degree apprenticeships and to develop further training and development opportunities to better support progression in the social care workforce. (Paragraph 198)

In our White Paper *People at the Heart of Care*, the Government committed to investing at least £500 million to improve the recruitment, retention, progression and staff wellbeing of the adult social care workforce. The funding will include significant investment in the upskilling of adult social care staff, with a package of support designed to improve opportunities for learning and development.

As part of this we are working with the sector to co-produce a universal Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) to create an accessible articulation of the requirements for roles at each level, outlining the knowledge, skills, values and behaviours required at each level of the workforce and setting out clear pathways for development and progression, including pathways into the sector.

The KSF will draw on and complement the existing skills offer delivered by colleges and training providers in England including DfE's post 16 skills offer and apprenticeships.

The Department of Health and Social Care is working with DfE and Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education to strengthen entry and progression routes into the social care sector, with the option to signpost to qualifications and apprenticeships from the KSF, alongside supporting a review of the existing apprenticeships standards for adult social care to ensure they meet the needs of learners and the sector.

The KSF will be accompanied by a significant Government investment in skills and training for care workers and other staff, supporting progression along the career pathways outlined in the KSF.

It will provide hundreds of thousands of training places and qualifications at all levels over the next 3 years, so the workforce can meet individual career goals and the needs of people who draw on care.

32. When developing the Leadership College for Government proposed in the Levelling Up White Paper, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities should gather, promote, and cascade best practice on how public services have developed leadership pipelines, such as in education, law enforcement and local authorities. (Paragraph 205)

The Leadership College for Government is embedded in the public sector community, and it works with a wide range of partners and leadership academies on common topics, sharing expertise and feedback. The Leadership College aims to enhance, not duplicate, what is on offer for leaders. It is based in the Cabinet Office to help bring this approach across all central government departments.

Education

We have improved our training support offer to all schools and teachers, to ensure that they receive high quality training and development at every stage of their career – from initial teacher training and the introduction of the Early Career Framework (ECF) reforms through to leadership qualifications. Our recruitment and retention strategy, published in January 2019, set out our plan to better integrate school support through a new architecture comprising curriculum hubs, national professional qualifications and teaching school hubs so it is clear where the sector should look for expertise. The ECF reforms were rolled out nationally in September 2021 entitling all early career teachers (ECT) in England to access high quality professional development at the start of their career.

A suite of National Professional Qualifications is also available to provide training and support for professionals at all levels and deliver improved outcomes for young people. The qualifications enable participants to develop their expertise in specialist areas of teaching practice, such as behaviour management, and in school leadership, ranging from senior leadership to executive headship. The qualifications can be completed flexibly around existing commitments and were developed in collaboration with the sector using the best available evidence.

Justice

The Ministry of Justice has engaged in the NAO Leadership Landscape Review including providing examples of MoJ leadership pathways to feed into wider research and potential join up once recommendations are produced centrally.