



HOUSE OF LORDS

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The Rt Hon Chris Skidmore MP
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Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
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Select Committee on Artificial Intelligence

Dear Chris

As you will be aware, the House of Lords Select Committee on Artificial Intelligence produced its report on 16 April 2018 (House of Lords Paper 100, Session 2017–19). The Government response was published on 28 June 2018 and the report was debated by the House of Lords on 19 November 2018.

The Committee was an *ad hoc* select committee and as such ceased to exist on the agreement of its report in 2018. In recent years, the House of Lords Liaison Committee, which is responsible for committee resources, has therefore carried out some follow up work on the recommendations of such *ad hoc* committee reports.

Accordingly, I am writing to you in my capacity as Chair of the Liaison Committee to request that you provide a written update on the status of the recommendations of the Select Committee on Artificial Intelligence. The former Chair of the Committee, Lord Clement-Jones, has been consulted on the terms of this letter.

The Committee made 74 conclusions and recommendations to the Government, focused on the development and adoption of AI more widely across the UK. I would be grateful for an update on the status of each of the Committee's recommendations outlined in the report. In particular, I would be grateful for responses on the points raised below.

Designing artificial intelligence

- What progress has been made on the development of 'data trusts'? What will the governance of such trusts look like, and how will individuals and relevant organisations be consulted and represented?
- What progress has been made by departments in publishing open data, in particular since the Prime Minister's letter of December 2017? What steps have been taken across Government to improve both the quantity and quality of data available?
- What steps has the Government taken to ensure that those developing and deploying AI systems are aware of the risks? What role has the Alan Turing Institute played in any such work?
- What consideration has the Government given to introducing a specific challenge

within the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund to stimulate the creation of authoritative tools and systems for auditing and testing training datasets to ensure they are representative of diverse populations, and to ensure that when used to train AI systems they are unlikely to lead to prejudicial decisions?

- What progress has the Competition and Markets Authority made towards strengthening their ability to keep pace with development? What is the long-term strategy for their new technology team, and the priorities on AI for the recently established position of Chief Data and Digital Insights Officer?

Developing artificial intelligence

- How many levy paying employers have transferred funds to other employers to support new apprenticeships? How many apprenticeships has this established? How are these new apprenticeships being monitored for success? How many SMEs and start-ups have benefitted from this process?
- What are the overall conversion rates from undertaking an apprenticeship in a technology company to full-time employment? What steps, if any, are the Government taking to improve such rates and to ensure that apprentices find full-time employment in a field relevant to their training?
- Has scoping work begun on the creation of a new industrial master's programme for AI? When is such a programme intended to be introduced? What will be its syllabus, and who is involved in its design and delivery?
- What progress has the working group on skills within the AI Council made?
- At the end of February 2019 UKRI announced £200 million to 'create a new generation of artificial intelligence leaders'. How is this money being spent, and what is it intended to achieve? How will such progress be reported to Parliament?

Working with artificial intelligence

- What steps have been taken to improve digital infrastructure in the UK since the publication of the Committee's report? In particular, what role are the National Productivity Investment Fund and the Local Full Fibre Networks programme playing, and what assessment has been made of the impact of the Future Telecoms Infrastructure Review?
- What assessment has been made of the success, or otherwise, of the challenges set by the GovTech Catalyst Fund for technology companies for the use of AI to address public sector challenges? What other challenges are anticipated, when will they be launched, and when will they conclude? How are they being assessed for impact?
- The Secretary of State for DCMS has signed an agreement with the chair of the World Economic Forum to send an official to the Centre for the 4th Industrial Revolution in San Francisco, to conduct research towards a framework for responsible public procurement of AI systems. What role will this research play in the guidance produced for civil servants in the UK?
- In October 2017 the Office for National Statistics published its assessment of the UK's current and future employment prospects, based on a range of indicators, and they continue to review the data to maintain, as far as is possible, an accurate assessment of the changing labour market. When is the next such assessment to be published? Has there been an update since October 2017? If not, why not?

Living with artificial intelligence

- The Department for Education said they “would like to reassure the Committee that measures to improve the teaching of computer science in secondary schools are already underway”. However, no specific details or commitments were provided on ensuring teachers will have time to train for the computing curriculum—can any further clarity be provided on how this will happen? Is thought being given to ensuring that the reforms to the computer curriculum are not at the expense of arts and humanities subjects?
- At the end of September this year the Office for Students announced that they are making more funding available to develop new postgraduate conversion courses in data science and artificial intelligence. When will these courses be available? How many places will be open to students, and what qualifications will be required to undertake them?
- What discussions has the Government had with the Social Mobility Commission about the impact of AI on society? What steps are the Commission taking to consider the recommendations of the Committee’s report?

Healthcare and artificial intelligence

- What progress has been made on the digitisation of NHS practices and records? How has the Digital Transformation Portfolio taken into account the need to digitise such records, and what plans does the programme have to maximise the benefits of AI for the NHS? What safeguards are in place to protect the data rights of patients and to mitigate any risks of the use of AI?
- What consultation has taken place between NHS England and the Department for Health and Social Care and the general public and industry to explore how to maximise the benefits of health and care data for patients and taxpayers? What further consultation is anticipated, and what are the objectives of such work?

Mitigating the risks of artificial intelligence

- What discussions have the Government had with international partners about the definition of an autonomous weapons system, and what representations have they received about the issues presented with their current definition?

Shaping artificial intelligence

- Does the Government believe the UK is a world leader for the development of AI? If so, why? If not, what steps is it taking to ensure it becomes one?
- What assessment has been made of the work of the AI Council? Is the Government happy with its work? Is there a plan to review the work of the Council at any stage? What feedback has industry given to the Government on the work of the Council? How is the Government measuring the impact of the Council?
- What assessment has been made of the work of the Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation?
- What steps have been taken to improve coordination on the development of AI policy in the UK between different Government departments, as well as other bodies such as the AI Council, Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation and Alan Turing Institute?
- What is included in the ATI’s international strategy for AI? What institutions are involved?
- What funding is available to the Institute to pursue its AI work? How long will such

funding last for?

- Does the Ministerial Working Group on Future Regulation, established to scan the horizon and identify the areas where regulation needs to adapt to support emerging technologies such as AI, supported by the Office for AI and the Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation, still exist? What has been its output? What areas has it identified, and what steps are being taken to address such needs?
- Does the Government have any plans to host a global summit in London with all interested nations and governments, industry (large and small), academia, and civil society to develop a common framework for the ethical development and deployment of artificial intelligence systems? Do the Government intend to sign up to an international (e.g. OECD or EU or G20) set of principles?

I would be grateful if you could provide an update on all of these points as well as any additional information relevant to the Committee's report.

Kind Regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John', with a large, sweeping flourish extending upwards and to the right.

The Rt Hon the Lord McFall of Alcluith
Senior Deputy Speaker
Chair of the Liaison Committee