

News story: UK steps up commitment to a modernised NATO

Mr Williamson signalled that the UK will meet its commitments, including an uplift of around one hundred personnel in our contribution to NATO's modernised Command Structure – the precise numbers will be determined through further work between now and the Summit. This will help to ensure that NATO can meet the security challenges of today and tomorrow.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

NATO is the cornerstone of our defence but we live in an uncertain world, with the confrontation and conflict we face shifting and evolving. NATO must modernise at the same pace, so we can respond better and faster to deter those that threaten our safety and way of life.

NATO will today discuss a range of issues including burden sharing, cooperation with the European Union, and efforts to modernise the Alliance. A key element of modernising NATO will be the adaptation of the Alliance's Command Structure. Defence Ministers will decide whether to implement a design which includes proposals for a new Command for the Atlantic and a Command to improve the movement of military forces across Europe.

The proposed Command Structure, which has been influenced by senior British staff, represents a key aspect of the UK's priority to modernise and strengthen NATO so it remains able to command and control its missions and operations wherever they are required.

Over the two-day Ministerial, Defence leaders will discuss efforts to strengthen NATO's deterrence and defence posture. Britain's Armed Forces have taken a leading role in NATO's enhanced Forward Presence, providing the Framework battlegroup in Estonia and a providing a company to the US-led enhanced Forward Presence battlegroup in Poland. The Defence Secretary welcomed the arrival of Danish forces in Estonia and the announcement that France will return in 2019 to support the UK-led force. NATO's role in the fight against terrorism was also discussed with the Defence Secretary welcoming the progress that has been made.

NATO remains the cornerstone of UK defence and, as one of the largest contributors, is one of only a few NATO countries pledging at least 2% of their GDP to defence.

[Press release: Motorists receive millions of pounds in automatic refunds for vehicle tax](#)

When you tell DVLA that you've sold your car, you're eligible for a refund of vehicle tax for any unused months.

While the quickest and simplest way to tell DVLA that a vehicle has been sold is online, the latest figures from DVLA show that more than 60% do not use the service. This means they will be waiting longer for their refund.

The online service only takes a few minutes to complete, the seller will get confirmation instantly that they are no longer the vehicle keeper and the refund will arrive within 3 to 5 working days. Further information is available in the following video.

[Tell DVLA about a sale of a vehicle online.](#)

DVLA Vehicles Service Manager Rohan Gye said:

While some of our digital services have over 90% take-up there are still millions of motorists who tell us they've sold their vehicle by post. This means that they will have to wait longer for their automatic refund of any unused tax. My advice is the next time you sell your car – tell us online.

Motorists can also go online to put a personalised registration on a vehicle or to take one off – this service is proving popular with the majority (more than 85%) choosing the online route rather than posting paperwork to DVLA.

Notes to editors

The [online service](#) is available on GOV.UK seven days a week from 7am to 7pm.

Since it was launched the service has been used over 12 million times.

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[Sheltered Housing Shoppers' Bus](#) [#dundeewestend](#)



The City Council now operates the sheltered housing shoppers' bus service that takes residents direct from their sheltered housing complex to a supermarket and then back to the complex after around an hour for shopping.

The West End routes are as follows :

Tuesday Timetable :

Tullideph Place 1150
Logie Avenue/Gardens 1205
TESCO RIVERSIDE – arrive 1225
TESCO RIVERSIDE – depart 1325

Thursday Timetable :

Corso Street 1000
Pennycook Lane 1005
Muirlands 1010
Patons Lane 1015
TESCO RIVERSIDE – arrive 1015
TESCO RIVERSIDE – depart 1125

I have requested that the Morven Terrace Sheltered Housing is included in future (I've discussed this previously with the tenants) and have been advised by the council's Travel Care Officer that :

"I have spoken with the driver and I think there is time to accommodate a pick up at Morven Terrace on Tuesday – around midday. The bus will take the shoppers to Tesco Riverside. ... we will count the number of passengers travelling from Tullideph Place and Logie Avenue/Gardens to ensure there is sufficient space for any additional passengers from Morven Terrace. Once I have an answer I will liaise with the warden."

The IMF would not win an election in the UK

The IMF was one of several international bodies and opinion formers who wanted the UK to stay in the EU. They misjudged that call, misunderstanding UK voters. Now they have issued an update report telling us that we have to take strong policy action to succeed. Their remedy is to abolish the regular increases in the state retirement pension which they think is too generous, and to put through a series of tax increases. They want to hike VAT on heating fuel from 5% to 20%, and to put up taxes on the self employed.

What a bizarre and negative mix. Why do they recommend this? Because they say our state debt to GDP is too high, yet it is very similar to the USA and below the levels in Japan, France, Austria, Italy and some other advanced countries. They fail to recognise that the state has bought in a substantial part of the debt they claim to be worried about.

It is difficult to see how taxing the self employed more would help innovation and economic flexibility. It would hit one of the flourishing areas of UK growth. Nor is it easy to see why pushing more people on low incomes into fuel poverty through a massive tax hike on domestic fuel would be a good idea. Nor does removing spending power from pensioners help promote a faster growing economy. This ticket would never win a UK election, and proves again UK voters are more sensible than the IMF.

The IMF does not even seem to be good at forecasting the UK economy. They were too gloomy about the likely short term impact of the vote. They now make much of the slightly slower rate of growth in 2017 compared to 2016, and blame Brexit. If they analysed the figures better they would see growth speeded up a bit after the Brexit vote, and started to slow in 2017 thanks to action to slow the economy taken by their friends at the Bank of England! The Bank has put up rates, sought to tighten car loans and consumer credit, stopped QE and is now withdrawing special lines of credit to the commercial banks. At the same time the European Central Bank has kept interest rates at zero, has printed a lot more money and has not restrained bank credit.

So could we have a bit more analysis and a bit less policy prescription? Oh, and they do condemn UK educational standards at the same time. No mention of the world class universities in the global top ten.

PM to visit Arunachal Pradesh tomorrow

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, will visit Arunachal Pradesh tomorrow. At a function in Itanagar, he will inaugurate the Dorjee Khandu State Convention Centre. This Convention Centre has an auditorium, conference halls and an exhibition hall.

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