

Speech: Minister for Implementation's speech at the CBI: 20 February 2019

Thank you for that kind welcome. It is a pleasure to be here at the CBI and to see so many familiar faces. I've certainly made it a priority to engage around this agenda and there is a lot of work we can do together, particularly around innovation and the transformation of public services, which is another interest of mine.

This morning I am here to detail how this government is working alongside industry leaders like yourselves to ensure citizens are benefitting from the delivery of better, smarter and more efficient public services.

Now, as you all know, the collapse of Carillion just over a year ago affected the public's trust in government's ability to deliver services. As a result, it is right that we reflected on whether our service delivery model was fit for the complexities of modern society.

And over the last eight months the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, David Lidington, and myself have announced reforms to ensure that the way we outsource services is fit for the future.

This model rightly includes putting social values at the heart of what we do.

And the public would expect nothing less.

Since David last spoke on this issue in November 2018, the Government Commercial Function has worked jointly with industry and senior officials across government, as well as engaging with charities, social enterprises, unions and has finalised the review of our outsourcing processes.

And crucially, this review has concluded that we are not seeking to abandon our approach to using the private sector to deliver services to government.

Outsourcing, done well, I firmly believe, can deliver significant benefits.

It provides greater opportunity, better value and more innovative public services.

Economies of scale mean services can be provided more efficiently, at lower cost and can provide better value for the taxpayer.

For example, pensions administration for nearly two million teachers has been outsourced since the 1990s – with administrative costs less than half those of other comparable schemes.

So the evidence is out there in terms of individual outsourcing programmes but also in terms of the macro picture.

Research commissioned by the previous government has shown that outsourcing

delivers savings of some twenty to thirty per cent compared with bringing services in-house.

Critics baulk at the idea of a government that reaches out beyond SW1 to harness the talent of firms up and down the country.

But we are not so naive to think that government is best placed to deliver every public service, nor do we think that we alone have all the solutions to society's complex challenges.

While government has considerable resources at its disposal, it cannot do everything by itself. Different government projects require different skills and expertise.

It is true that collectively we need to work together to make those changes, but we must be bringing in that wider range of skills and expertise.

So we are making changes to enable our services to be delivered by private and social enterprises, small businesses, charities, mutuals and cooperatives. And as announced last June, the government is committed to putting social values at the heart of service delivery.

We are also making changes to ensure that critical services continue in the event of a corporate failure – and the work we have done over the past year provides that resilience.

We previously announced that in early 2019 we would be publishing guidance for officials that would help government to work smarter with industry, set up contracts for success and build a more diverse supplier base.

As promised, today we have published the Financial Distress Guidance to provide staff with the information they needed in the event of a supplier failure.

We have also published the [Outsourcing Playbook](#), which we pledged back in June 2018 and which will apply to all government departments.

You may already be aware of some of the Playbook's contents that we announced in November. But today I want to detail a further seven new measures that have been developed.

Taken together this means that from today, will be demanding more of government departments.

We will expect them to conduct more robust financial assessments and monitoring of high value, complex, high-risk suppliers.

New financial ratios will need to be considered when assessing the financial and economic standing of bidders during the procurement phase and through the life of a contract.

All complex outsourcing projects also will be required to undergo a central Project Validation Review (PVR) before any public commitment is made.

This step-change means that by undergoing an independent peer assessment ahead of the transition from policy to delivery, complex outsourcing projects will benefit from more cross-government expertise to help assure deliverability, affordability and value for money.

Departments will also be expected to conduct a more thorough, evidence-based 'Make or Buy' assessment before services are outsourced.

We will now expect a detailed analysis of the costs and benefits of each option supported by the possible consequences of outsourcing and a comprehensive evaluation of risks.

And I am well aware that how government approaches risk allocation has caused some disquiet within the industry.

I can today provide reassurance that the Playbook makes explicit that when designing contracts departments must seek to mitigate, reduce and then allocate risks to the party best able to manage it.

A more considered approach to risk allocation makes government a smarter, more attractive client to do business with.

At the end of the day, you all run businesses, and my colleagues and I are constantly working to balance the needs of everyone in society, from firm owners and investors to families struggling to make ends meet.

So it is important that in this spirit the Playbook also outlines new guidance on the Pricing and Payment Mechanisms that complements the new balanced approach to risk allocation. It is designed to incentivise the behaviours and outcomes that government wants to achieve from its suppliers and contracts.

The Playbook also specifies that Departments will now regularly Publish Commercial Pipelines looking at least 18 months ahead.

This change will help us move forward by helping you gain a better understanding of the government's demand for services and allow you to better respond to contract opportunities.

Finally, the Playbook will re-emphasise the need for departments to engage early and thoroughly with the Market and will ask them to produce a market health and capability assessment.

And these assessments will be kept under review throughout the life of a contract not filed away to gather dust in a digital desk drawer.

Taken together the eleven key policies that underpin the Playbook are a significant change in the way government undertakes outsourcing decisions and will enable us to make smarter outsourcing decisions that will achieve better value for money.

But to stress – the future of government outsourcing relies on a new model of reciprocity.

We are changing to ensure we make smarter outsourcing decisions, but we also need industry to change too.

In order to put the needs of service users at the heart of public service delivery I want to see suppliers and government working in partnership to ensure that contracts continue to meet the diverse needs of citizens.

So today I am publishing a revision to the Supplier Code of Conduct which sets out the behaviours taxpayers expect of central government's suppliers but also what suppliers should expect of government. The Code is designed to build trusting and transparent relationships between government and suppliers.

The updated code highlights the importance of government departments creating the right conditions for innovation and the right conditions for building collaborative and constructive relationships.

I want to highlight three key aspects:

Firstly, the Code requires prime contractors to ensure that they do not pass on risk inappropriately to subcontractors, who are often small businesses unable to manage these risks.

Secondly, we want to ensure that suppliers across the public sector supply chain are paid promptly – this is so important, particularly for small suppliers. I announced in November that we expect suppliers to pay subcontractors within 30 days on public sector contracts and comply with the standards set out in the Prompt Payment Code on all other contracts. Failure of companies to demonstrate their prompt payment to suppliers could result in them being prevented from winning government contracts.

The government has a long-standing target of paying 80% of undisputed and valid invoices within five days, with the remainder paid within 30 days. And just last autumn, I announced our ambition to pay 90% of undisputed invoices within five days.

Thirdly, because we know the importance of robust data from government during procurements we will ensure that we provide data that captures the full scope of the services being procured or build in added flexibility to allow for subsequent validation of data, particularly where new services are being provided.

The Code is clear that we also expect incumbent suppliers to be forthcoming and prompt with information required for the re-tendering process.

Finally, I would like to update you on the government's Strategic Supplier Risk Management Policy. Experience from the past year has demonstrated to us that how we manage risk with suppliers to government needs to be reviewed. A fact also recommended by the Public Accounts Committee.

Our previous high-risk designation process was designed to deal with poor performance but it proved less appropriate when managing the financial distress of firms who were delivering critical public services.

So today, I would like to announce that we will be changing our approach.

We will be introducing a Memorandum of Understanding between the Cabinet Office and Strategic Suppliers.

This new approach will provide flexibility to government on how it manages risk across its supplier base through the improvement of current tools, and this will be in partnership with industry.

Better risk management will increase accountability for our suppliers and enhance current departmental relationships.

Government relies on its suppliers for the delivery of many important public services and while this is underpinned by a contractual relationship, these reliances need to be based on a relationship of trust between government, suppliers and the public.

Healthy and competitive markets support our ability to achieve value for money for taxpayers and deliver sustainable economic growth.

And the collaboration with the private sector will continue to live at the heart of how this government delivers public services and prosperity.

In keeping with best practice in policy-making we will continue to review and refine our approach.

From the new financial year we will begin an 18 month implementation phase to ensure these new reforms are embedded across government departments.

I would like to thank you for your engagement and collaboration over the past year.

Between us, we have collectively contributed over 1,400 hours of our time.

And as we move into this next phase of work, we will continue to call on you both as partners and critical friends.

Because only in continuing to work together, and changing “poor” practices of the past, will we be able to achieve our collective goal of delivering world-class public services for all of our citizens.

Speech: Who cares for our NHS carers?

I want to talk today about Lauren Phillips.

Lauren wasn't always going to be doctor.

She was a talented violinist. She had been invited to join the Bristol

Symphony Orchestra. She had huge talents and amazing opportunities. She had choices.

She also had a powerful vocation. She came from an NHS family. Her father is a doctor. Her uncle and aunt are doctors. Her mother works for the NHS.

Lauren's father, Jonathan, said: "She chose medicine over music because she had a strong sense of social justice and felt she could help people and give something back to society."

So that vocation, plus her remarkable talents, led her to becoming a doctor at Southmead Hospital in Bristol, a hospital that I know well.

But the job took its toll. The hours. The work-life balance. The pressures.

It wore her down. Gradually, Lauren became more withdrawn, and then one day she didn't turn up for work.

Her car was found a 100 miles away on a beach in Devon. Her body has never been found.

Lauren's father said:

During the short time she worked for it the NHS succeeded in sapping Lauren's strength. Undermining her self-confidence. Attacking her professionalism. And devaluing her commitment.

It was not there to give her the help and support she needed to stay alive.

He's right. And I want to apologise. As Secretary of State, and on behalf of the entire leadership of the NHS, I'm sorry.

I want to say sorry to Lauren's parents, and the families of every other member of the NHS family, who we didn't do enough to help when they needed us most.

We can never know all the reasons why someone decides to take their own life. But, hand on heart, it's impossible to say we did enough to care for Lauren.

Across the NHS, we don't do enough to care for our carers. And for that I am sorry.

Now, I don't want anyone to point fingers and blame people.

That's not what Lauren's father wants either. He knows first-hand the unique difficulties of being on the NHS frontline. But he also believes, as I believe, that "you can't look after your patients, unless you look after your own wellbeing".

Instead, there is something else I want us to take from this tragedy. I want us to take resolve to make the changes needed so we can care for our carers,

not just in pockets, but throughout the NHS.

So I welcome [today's report from Health Education England](#). And I look forward to working with the NHS to put the recommendations into practice.

There's no silver bullet. But just because there's no one solution, let's not fall into thinking there's no solution.

There are 3 things in particular from the report I want to draw out.

First, something that Lauren's father said has really stuck in my head.

Jonathan believes just being able to play the violin with an orchestra would have made an enormous difference to her mental and emotional wellbeing. But Lauren couldn't commit to a few hours a week for rehearsals because she never knew what hours she was going to be working.

I felt that was shocking, and desperately sad. Rota practices like these are antediluvian.

I have doctors in my family who sometimes can't make an incredibly important event, not because they're unexpectedly stuck caring for a patient whose life is on the line – that happens and is an important part of the job – but because the 'rota says no'.

Now, we've changed the rules at a national level to allow for modern, smart rotas. Well-led trusts have embraced those changes, but they haven't been rolled out everywhere. And that has got to change.

Second, the report makes it clear that we need to place as much importance on the care of the carers as the patients.

I firmly believe this is the right thing to do.

Adam Kay recently said that working in the NHS: "You're forced to build an emotional forcefield because no one is caring for the carers."

He's right. I pay tribute to the work Adam has done to highlight some of these problems, using humour to make people listen. I was actually reading Adam's book when I became Health Secretary, and it's shaped how I think of things.

But I didn't reach the last chapter until after I was in this job. And the anguish and the pain in that last chapter hit me like a kick in the stomach.

So thank you Adam. Keep fighting the good fight. Because no one should have to build an emotional forcefield around themselves. And no one can do their job properly if they do.

And the third thing I want to draw out is that, to recruit and retain more staff, we need to change the culture of the NHS.

Why is it that when 1.3 million people have devoted their lives to caring for

others, the collective system is uncaring to some? We need to change a culture of carrying on regardless, not asking for help, not looking for signs of burn-out among our colleagues, thinking everything's OK as long as someone turns up for work and does their job.

That isn't good enough.

No one, no government, no party owns the NHS. We're merely custodians, looking after it, to pass it on, fit for the future, to the next generation.

I feel that duty every morning when I awake. Because I care. I care deeply about the NHS.

It's been there for me, and my children. It was there for my grandparents.

Staff at Southmead Hospital, where Lauren worked, saved the life of my sister.

The tragedy of what happened to Lauren has a personal poignancy for me, because Lauren could have been one of the A&E doctors when my sister was brought in with a serious head injury. And my whole family owe a huge debt of gratitude to Lauren's colleagues.

It horrifies me that those brave doctors and nurses, who face trauma every day, could be going through what Lauren went through.

So, throughout the NHS we must act, and I promise you, I will do all I can to protect and pass on this great British institution to future generations in a better condition than I found it.

And the only way we can do that is by caring better for our carers.

By looking after the people who look after us.

By making sure that when somebody needs help, there's someone they can turn to, someone they can talk to.

By valuing our NHS staff.

By building a just, caring culture.

Apologising when we get it wrong, and learning from our mistakes.

Because the NHS isn't run by people, the NHS is people.

And I will do everything in my power to give you the support you deserve.

News story: RAF Engineer becomes first ever UK female military three-star Commander

The RAF has today announced that it has appointed its first ever female three-star officer. Sue Gray, a Royal Air Force engineer, has been promoted to the rank of Air Marshal, making her the most senior female military officer in the British Armed Forces, and once more proving that gender is no obstacle for a career in the military.

Air Marshal Gray will shortly take up the role of Director General of the Defence Safety Authority. Here she will lead the way in overseeing the independent organisation, empowered by charter from the Defence Secretary, to undertake the roles of regulator, accident investigation and Defence Authority for safety.

56-year old Air Marshal Gray joined the Royal Air Force in August 1985 and has worked in a variety of roles within the RAF including: engineering on VC10 Transport aircraft, an extensive period with the Joint Helicopter Force during which time she deployed on both Gulf Wars, tours within the Defence Equipment & Support (DE&S) organisation, leading the Combat Clothing Project Team and more recently leading the department delivering engineering and logistics support for fighter, training and Remotely Piloted aircraft for all of the Armed Services.

In June 2016, she was appointed Air Officer Commanding Number 38 Group with responsibility for circa 3,000 personnel, across multiple disciplines (including Engineering, Logistics, Aviation Medicine & Catering). Air Marshal Gray takes up her new appointment in March.

Air Marshal Sue Gray said:

I am incredibly proud to be the most senior female military officer in the British Armed Forces. Throughout my career I have been fortunate to have a job that was more of a way of life, working with likeminded people in an exciting and rewarding environment. As an Engineer Officer in the Royal Air Force I am part of a team, who succeed together. I have been privileged to lead highly successful teams, military and civil service, through some challenging situations on operations and back at home.

She added:

As the RAF's Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths champion, I have a lot of contact with the younger generation – who never fail to impress me and fill me with confidence for the future.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

This is an historic moment as we see the most senior female appointment in the British military. Air Marshal Gray's career shows that with hard work, skill and determination, gender is no obstacle to achieving the top ranks in the Armed Forces.

Having served in Iraq as the Chief Engineer for the Joint Helicopter Force, I hope that young girls will look up to Air Marshal Gray and see that a career in the Armed Forces will offer them every opportunity to succeed, irrespective of their gender and background.

Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier said:

I offer my most sincere personal congratulations to Air Marshal Gray on her promotion and I wish her every success in her important new role leading the Defence Safety Authority. Her promotion is proper recognition of her outstanding contribution to the RAF and Defence, as an engineer, as a leader and as a superb role model.

News story: Call for evidence: An inspection of the handling of complaints by the Home Office's Borders, Immigration and Citizenship System (BICS)

My statutory remit includes monitoring and making recommendations for improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of the Home Office's handling of complaints about its performance of its asylum, immigration, nationality and customs functions, and I have just begun an inspection on this topic.

I am now inviting anyone with relevant knowledge and experience to write to me by 6 March 2019 with their evidence.

How well a public body handles complaint about the service it provides, and about the conduct of its staff, is rightly regarded as a key performance measure, and has a significant impact on public perceptions of its work. Good complaint handling means being customer-focused, being open and accountable,

acting fairly and proportionately, and putting things right, and I am keen to hear to whether its 'customers' believe the Home Office is achieving these standards.

Please note that I am not empowered to investigate individual complaints or to intervene with the Home Office on behalf of complainants. There are other avenues for this, such as the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman. However, I am interested in individual cases to the extent that they illustrate or point to systemic problems.

Please email the Chief Inspector: chiefinspector@icibi.gov.uk

or write to:

ICIBI
5th Floor
Globe House
89 Eccleston Square
London SW1V 1PN

Please note that submissions may be cited in the final report.

[Press release: Government urges businesses to prepare for changes to animal imports and exports in a no-deal Brexit](#)

New guidance has been published today to ensure import and export trade in animals, animal products, fish, food and feed can continue in the event that the UK leaves the EU without a deal.

This guidance will help to minimise disruption for users and allow the continued movement of goods, while helping to maintain our biosecurity, food safety and high standards of animal welfare.

In the event of no deal, to continue to export to the EU we will need to be listed by the EU as a third country. Negotiations are under way to secure this listing and we are confident it will be in place before we leave the EU.

In a no-deal exit the process for exporting and importing the products above but will change in the following ways:

- As we've said previously, businesses exporting all animals, animal products and fish to the EU will now need to apply for an Export Health Certificate (EHC) before they export. This will make them the same as businesses who export these goods to the rest of the world who already have to apply for EHCs. They will also need to make sure their trade route passes through a Border Inspection Posts when entering Europe as well as being aware of wider customs requirements. The [guidance](#) and certificates are available for download from today ahead of use on exit day.
- For those businesses importing to the UK, there will not be any new checks or requirements but importers will need to notify authorities using a new process. Businesses will need to use a new system called [the Import of Products, Animals, Food and Feed System' \(IPAFFS\)](#). This will help to minimise disruption for users, allow the continued movement of goods and help to maintain our biosecurity and food safety.
- Businesses importing animals and animal products from within the EU will need to use a separate interim system until the summer.

Food and Animal Welfare Minister David Rutley said:

Our top priority remains delivering a negotiated deal, but it is the job of a responsible Government to ensure we are prepared for all scenarios, including no deal.

If you or your business export or import animals and animal products or imports high risk food and feed you will need to prepare for a number of changes in the event of a no-deal Brexit. Our new guidance pages on gov.uk make clear what you need to do to be ready to continue to trade after we leave the EU.

To summarise the [guidance published today](#), those who export animals, animal products, fish, should:

- Download [EHC certificates](#);
- Arrange inspections by an authorised signatory for the EHC, such as an Official Veterinarian (OV), in advance of exports;
- Familiarise themselves with a new [helpful tool](#) to find authorised signatories in England, Scotland and Wales
- Review the current list of EU Border Inspection Posts on [GOV.UK](#) to help plan their journeys; and
- If exporting most fish and fish products between the UK and EU you will need a catch certificate. Guidance is available at [exporting and importing fish if there's no Brexit deal](#).

Those who import animals, animal products, fish, food and feed should:

- Read [the guidance](#) about how to import when the UK leaves the EU;
- If importing high-risk food and feed not of animal origin, ensure that those consignments enter the UK at a Designated Point of Entry (DPE) which are available on the [Food Standards Agency's website](#);
- If importing from the rest of the world via the EU, make sure that those consignments enter the UK at a Border Inspection Post (BIP) or a Designated Point of Entry (DPE); and
- If importing most fish and fish products between the UK and EU you will need a catch certificate Guidance is available at [exporting and importing fish if there's no Brexit deal](#).

The IPAFFS system, which will replicate the EU Trade Control and Expert System (TRACES) process currently used by importers to notify authorities of imports of animal products, and high-risk food and feed from non-EU countries, will be operational for businesses importing from outside the EU on Day 1. Businesses importing animals and animal products from within the EU will need to use a separate interim system until the summer.