

What plans does the Secretary of State have to secure value for money from the additional funds allocated to the NHS for 2022-23?

The Department of Health and Social Care has provided the following answer to your written parliamentary question (119393):

Question:

Rt Hon Sir John Redwood MP (Wokingham) (Con): To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what plans he has to secure value for money from the additional funds allocated to the NHS for 2022-23. (119393)

Tabled on: 07 February 2022

Answer:

Edward Argar, Minister of State:

The new Health and Social Care Levy provides £23.3 billion for the National Health Service over the Spending Review period. We will ensure that this investment is provided for frontline care in England, increasing efficiencies and using reforms to improve productivity. This will include prioritising diagnosis and treatment, transforming the delivery of elective care and providing better information and support to patients.

The answer was submitted on 15 Mar 2022 at 09:50.

I asked this question for a variety of reasons. I think it will prove difficult to switch the money from this tax from the NHS to social care over the course of the next three years as planned. I am concerned that it will lead some people to think £12bn extra on the huge NHS budget or £12 bn in total for social care will handle the needs of each service, when the current totals on public health and government financed social care in the UK is already at £230bn. I am concerned about how the money will be spent, wanting to see more detailed plans of how the money is spent on the extra nurses, doctors, medicines and procedures that are needed to clear the backlists.

There are savings to be banked from the end of the pandemic. The large costs in setting up and rolling out new vaccines and the test and trace system will be behind us, and the high costs of the early intensive care of covid patients will be much reduced now the vaccines cut the numbers and reduce the severity of the disease for most patients. I am also trying to find out how costs will change following the current reorganisation of management structures where presumably efficiency was part of the original plan behind yet another reorganisation.

My contribution in the Dissolution and Calling of Parliament Bill debate

Rt Hon Sir John Redwood MP (Wokingham) (Con): Opposition parties are struggling a bit with this idea of democracy, are they not? Taking back control was to have control by the people and for the people, and offering the people an early general election so that they could choose an effective Government when a Parliament was logjammed, hopeless and not prepared to govern with clarity and passion was the right thing to do. I just cannot understand why Labour and the SNP are still queuing up to defend the indefensible, and to say that because they may well be faced again with a situation in which they do not dare face the electors, they need some kind of legal rigmarole and manipulation of votes in a balanced or damaged Parliament to thwart the popular will yet again. "Never let the people make the decision," they say: it must be contained within Parliament, even when a Parliament has obviously failed, as it did when it could not implement the wishes of the British people over the great Brexit referendum.

I want assurances from the Minister that this new policy will protect the Crown—the Queen—from the difficult business of politics. I think the Minister's version of it is better than the version from the other place. Of course, it must keep the courts out. There is nothing more political than the decision about when we go to an election and when we give the people their power back and the right to make that fundamental choice. It is a choice that now can mean something, because we do not have to keep on accepting a whole load of European laws that we have no great role in making. Again, we need that absolute guarantee that we will have this freedom so that that can happen.

Those who say that they do not want the Prime Minister to have this much power have surely been in the House long enough to know that, while the Prime Minister has considerable power from his or her office, they are also buffeted and challenged every day by a whole series of pressures in this place and outside. If a leader of a party with a majority wanted an early election that their supporters did not want, I suspect that that would get sorted out without an early election. So we are only talking about what happens when a Government have lost their majority and the Prime Minister is doing his or her best to govern as a minority. We get the extraordinary position we got when the whole Opposition wanted to gang up to thwart the public making a choice, but did not want to govern. That was totally unacceptable, and the Opposition should hear the message from the doorsteps in the 2019 election. The public wanted a Parliament with a Government who could govern, so they decided to choose one. Those who sought to block it made themselves more unpopular, and they showed that they do not understand the fundamental point of democracy that, when Parliament lets the people down, the people must be able to choose a new and more effective Parliament.

My intervention to the Minister in the Lords Amendments debate for the Dissolution and Calling of Parliament Bill

Rt Hon Sir John Redwood MP (Wokingham) (Con): Will the Minister confirm that, if we dismiss Lords amendment 1 today, the courts will not have a role in fixing the dates for elections, because, surely, that is matter for us, answerable to the electors?

Michael Ellis, Paymaster General, Minister of State, Cabinet Office: My right hon. Friend is quite right that it is not productive, and, in fact, it would not be in the interests of the judiciary themselves, for the courts to have such a role.

We committed to repealing the Fixed-term Parliaments Act, as it had led to paralysis at a time when the country needed decisive action. In a similar vein, the Labour manifesto said that the 2011 Act

“stifled democracy and propped up weak governments.”

A vote in the Commons could create paralysis in a number of contexts, including minority Governments, coalition Governments, or where our parties, Parliament or even the nation, at some point in the future, were divided.

As a majority on the Joint Committee on the Fixed-term Parliaments Act noted, a Commons vote would have a practical effect only where Parliament were gridlocked. The problem is that if the Government of the day had a comfortable majority, a vote would be unlikely to make any difference; it would have no meaningful effect, beyond causing unnecessary delay and expense. However, when Parliament is gridlocked, a vote could mean denying an election to a Government who were unable to function effectively. We witnessed the consequences of such a vote painfully in 2019, so let us not repeat that mistake by devising a system where those events could happen again. Lords amendment 1 is, therefore, with the greatest possible respect, without merit.

[My intervention regarding the Government's newly launched 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme](#)

Rt Hon Sir John Redwood MP (Wokingham) (Con): With a three-year visa but only six months of guaranteed accommodation, will people have any tenant rights? What is the back-up provision if the sponsor wants to terminate well before the end of the visa?

Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Minister for Intergovernmental Relations: It is our expectation that those who commit to have someone in their home for six months are undertaking quite a significant commitment, but it is already the case that the expressions of interest suggest that there are many people who want to do exactly that. The experience of previous sponsorship schemes has been that those who have undertaken such a commitment have found it a wonderful thing to have done, and the number of those who have dropped out or opted out has been small. However, it is the case—my right hon. Friend is absolutely right—that there may be occasions where relationships break down, and in those circumstances we will be mobilising the support of not only of central Government and local government, but of civil society, to ensure that individuals who are here can move on. The final thing I would want to say is that many of those on the frontline coming here will of course be women and children, but many of those coming here will want to work, to contribute and to be fully part of society. It is the case already that we have had offers from those in the private sector willing to provide training and jobs to people so that they can fully integrate into society for as long as they are here.

[Discussing my latest book, Build Back Green: The Electrifying Shock of the Green Revolution](#)

I recently had a discussion with Mark Littlewood from the Institute of Economic Affairs about my latest book, *Build Back Green: The Electrifying Shock of the Green Revolution*. You can watch it here: