

Shadow Cabinet appointments

Ian Lavery and Andrew Gwynne are appointed joint National Elections and Campaign Coordinators for the Labour Party.

Jon Trickett is appointed Shadow Minister for the Cabinet Office and will remain Shadow Lord President of the Council.

Ends

An arbitrary cap on the number of children the Government will support is not only cruel, but is bad policy – Abrahams

Debbie

Abrahams MP, Labour's Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary, commenting on a letter from the Social Security Advisory Committee addressing the Government's policy to limit child tax credits to two children, said:

"The Social Security Advisory Committee is right to raise very serious concerns over Tory plans to limit child tax credits to two children.

"An arbitrary cap on the number of children the Government will support is not only cruel, but is bad policy.

"Requiring survivors of rape to justify themselves in this way constitutes an unacceptable extension by the Government into deeply sensitive areas of women's lives.

"That's why Labour is calling on the Tories to scrap this pernicious policy before it takes effect in April."

[The Government must urgently explain this ranking and confirm that jobs, livelihoods, and speedy access to new drugs will be at the centre of its Brexit plans – Blomfield](#)

Paul

Blomfield MP, Labour's Shadow Brexit Minister, commenting on the leaked Government report dividing British industries into high, medium and low priority in the Brexit negotiations, said:

“Hard working people, the back bone of our manufacturing sector, will be the losers in this Tory harsh Brexit.

“Pharmaceuticals is ranked as ‘high priority’ yet the Health Secretary has confirmed we will likely pull out of the European Medicines Agency, threatening access to drugs for patients and thousands of jobs.

“Steel construction is ranked as ‘low priority’ – a shocking indictment of a Government that claims to understand the importance of manufacturing.

“The Government must urgently explain this ranking and confirm that jobs, livelihoods, and speedy access to new drugs will be at the centre of its Brexit plans.”

[Government needs to urgently look at suggestion of abuse of extra time](#)

provision in exams – Rayner

Angela Rayner, Labour's Shadow Education Secretary, commenting on reports that independent school students gain extra time for exams, said:

"Our education system allows children with special educational needs extra time in exams to ensure that they are not unfairly disadvantaged. The suggestion that this could be being abused raises serious questions about the fairness of this arrangement.

"The Government needs to look at this urgently to make sure that no school is abusing the system."

Ends

Hollow words from Jeremy Hunt as the NHS is suffering from the biggest financial squeeze in history – Ashworth

Jonathan Ashworth, Labour's Shadow Health Secretary, commenting on reports that Jeremy Hunt said the problems facing some parts of NHS England are 'completely unacceptable', said:

"These are hollow words from the Secretary of State this morning. On his watch the NHS is suffering from the biggest financial squeeze in history and social care is at tipping point. Jeremy Hunt appears to be finally waking up to the scale of the crisis but he must now accept responsibility. Instead he offers just hand wringing but no solutions.

"This week we have seen more and more statistics revealing that patients are waiting longer, and suffering longer in discomfort.

"Government advisor Lord Carter has extraordinarily called NHS conditions 'warlike' and now Sir Robert Francis says there is an 'existential crisis' for the health

service

warning that another Mid Staffs is 'inevitable.'

"By

making such stark warnings Sir Robert Francis blows apart Jeremy Hunt's rhetoric on putting patient safety first.

"The

Prime Minister can't just put her head in the sand and ignore these astounding warnings. This is clearly not just a 'small number of incidents' as she glibly suggested.

"The Government's mismanagement of the NHS is causing

chaos and misery for patients. We

can't go on like this. They need to listen to the experts and explain fully in the Budget in a few weeks time how they will put the

NHS and social care on sustainable footing. NHS patients and their families should never be put through a winter like this again.

Ends