

It is encouraging that the European Commission has recommended sufficient progress in the Brexit negotiations – Keir Starmer

Keir

Starmer MP, Labour's Shadow Brexit Secretary, responding to the European Commission's announcement that sufficient progress has been made in the first phase of the Brexit talks, said:

"Despite being two months later than originally planned, it is encouraging that the European Commission has recommended sufficient progress in the Brexit negotiations.

"The priority for both sides now must be to agree transitional arrangements on the same basic terms as we have now. That means staying in the single market and a customs union for a time-limited period. We will also need to know the political price of the deal struck and the impact any compromise that has been agreed will have on our future relationship with the EU.

"As the talks now move on to a discussion about Britain's future relationship with the European Union, Theresa May must seriously reflect on her approach to the negotiations so far. We cannot have another year of chaos and confusion or the farcical scenes we saw earlier on in the week that put jobs and the economy at risk."

Staggering that Ministers are still refusing to give details of pay rise for NHS staff – Justin Madders

Justin Madders MP, Labour's Shadow Health Minister, responding to the publication of the 2018 to 2019 remit letters to the NHS Pay Review Body and

Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration, said:

"It is staggering that Ministers are still refusing to give details of a pay rise for NHS staff, even six months on from a General Election at which their pay cap was roundly rejected.

"The Government say they want to see workforce reforms made to increase productivity, but they've said nothing about what changes they want made, what level of pay rise staff can expect to see, or whether a pay rise will be applied across the board.

"And while Ministers dither and delay, NHS workforce shortages are getting worse by the month and it is patients who are paying the price. The Government should immediately commit to giving all NHS staff the pay they deserve so they can do the best possible job for their patients."

[Barbara Keeley comment on Government's decision to abandon the care cost cap](#)

Barbara Keeley MP, Labour's Shadow Cabinet Minister for Social Care, commenting on today's Ministerial Statement confirming the Government's abandonment of the care cost cap, said:

"In abandoning their pledge to cap care costs, the Tory Government has left vulnerable people facing catastrophic costs for their care, while wasting £1 million of taxpayers' money on the Dilnot Review.

"The Government continues to ignore the will of the House of Commons by failing to put needed funding into our ailing social care system and they are kicking major reform of social care into the long grass.

"The care system is struggling desperately from Tory cuts, people across the country still face catastrophic costs for social care and unpaid carers who gave up valuable time responding to a consultation have been treated with contempt.

"Labour will consult with carers and experts on how we can move from the current broken system of care to a sustainable service for older people and working age disabled people on the principle of shared risk, so that no-one faces catastrophic care costs as they do now."

There is deep concern about police resources – Abbott

Diane Abbott MP, Labour's Shadow Home Secretary, in response to the latest data on terrorism arrests, said:

"Labour is deeply concerned about the cuts that have been made to police officer numbers. As the recent Anderson report showed, counter-terrorism police and security services want to move towards greater reliance on community policing but that has been undermined by 20,000 police officers being cut under the Tories.

"There has been a record number of terrorism-related arrests but no comparable increase in the number of charges for terrorism offences which suggests problems about the quality of intelligence and a lack of police resources.

"Labour has repeatedly argued that you can't have security on the cheap. Labour will restore 10,000 police officers to make our policing more effective."

Labour reveals "winter of misery" as 20,000 patients stuck in ambulances for over 30 minutes in just two weeks – Ashworth

Labour's analysis of the first two weeks of winter data (20 November to 3 December) released today by NHS England, reveals 20,818 patients were stuck in the back of ambulances for over 30 minutes.

Jonathan Ashworth MP, Labour's Shadow Health Secretary, commenting on Labour's analysis of the first weekly situation reports issued by NHS England, said:

"After an inadequate Budget for the NHS, healthcare leaders warned of an imminent and unprecedented winter crisis. Today's data reveals a stark picture of what

lies

ahead: a winter of misery for patients and unparalleled pressures on our NHS staff.

“Our

new analysis of ambulance diverts reveals the dire impact Tory underfunding is

already having on thousands of patients unable to promptly access A&E Departments right across the country. Some Trusts are already completely full with no spare beds- an extremely worrying indicator of what is still to come particularly after NHS Improvement’s explicit warning that handover delays “should not occur”.

“Astonishingly,

the small pot of winter pressures funding in the Budget has still not been allocated to struggling Trusts. Ministers must urgently explain why this money

has not been forthcoming and be held to account for the reality that when the money does eventually arrive it will come far too late to be used to maximum effect.”