

[Yasmin Quereshi responds to Government consultation announcement into HM Courts & Tribunals Service estate](#)

Yasmin

Qureshi MP, Labour's Shadow Justice Minister, responding to the Government's announcement of a consultation into the HM Courts and Tribunals Service estate, said:

"This consultation should not be a smokescreen for yet more court closures and staff losses which would further undermine local access to our justice system.

"Tory cuts have already led to the closure of hundreds of courts and the axing of thousands of court staff.

"There are obvious fears that this consultation is just part of the Government's plan to cut hundreds of millions of pounds more from the Ministry of Justice budget by 2020.

"The Government should not proceed with any further court closures until its promised Courts Bill is published and its reforms can be subjected to full parliamentary scrutiny."

Ends

[HMP Liverpool report raises more very serious questions about the outsourcing of Government contracts – Richard Burgon](#)

Richard

Burgon MP, Labour's Shadow Justice Secretary, responding to the report into HMP Liverpool by the Chief Inspector of Prisons, said:

"After Carillion's collapse, this report raises more very serious questions about the outsourcing of Government contracts.

"Private contractor Amey has failed to complete thousands of maintenance jobs at HMP Liverpool and the Government must explain why it is continuing to receive public money when the work simply isn't being done.

"The conditions at HMP Liverpool with rat infestations, leaking toilets, damp and squalor are the worst ever seen by inspectors. This is a new low in the long list of damning evidence that shows Tory outsourcing and cuts to the prison service are fuelling a crisis in our prisons.

"Labour in government would look at bringing prison maintenance contracts back in house. The Government must now do the same."

Ends

[Justice Secretary needs to take urgent action to sort out this crisis at HMP Nottingham](#)

Imran Hussain MP, Labour's Shadow Justice Minister, responding to the urgent notification issued at HMP Nottingham, said:

"This is yet more evidence of the deep crisis across our prison system.

"Tory cuts to staff and budgets have fuelled an epidemic of violence that has seen assaults and self-harm at record levels.

"The Justice Secretary needs to take urgent action to sort out this crisis at HMP Nottingham and ensure that the whole of our prisons system is safe for prisoners and staff alike."

[The Government's Customs Bill is another attempt to run roughshod over the House of Commons – Peter Dowd](#)

Peter

Dowd MP, Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury, commenting on the Lords Delegated Power and Regulatory Reform Committee report on the Taxation (Cross Border Trade) Bill said:

“The House of Lords report gives a damning verdict on the Government’s Customs Bill, which hands vast sets of Henry VIII powers to the Treasury instead of to Parliament.

“The Bill is yet another attempt by the Government to run roughshod over the democratically elected House of Commons. Taken with the EU Withdrawal Bill and the Trade Bill, this is a centralisation of control not seen since the Second World War.

“The Prime Minister has no mandate to award her Government these powers.”

[Owen Smith comment on announcement of new Northern Ireland talks](#)

Owen Smith MP, Labour’s Shadow Northern Ireland Secretary, commenting on the announcement that new talks aimed at restoring devolution in Northern Ireland will begin next week, said:

“Despite the new name over the door of the Northern Ireland Office, it sounds like more of the same in the talks planned for next week. Twelve months of secretive discussions between Sinn Fein and the DUP has failed and there is widespread scepticism that another round will break the deadlock.

“Karen Bradley must show that she has a clear plan to rebuild trust between the parties and restore power-sharing. This should start with enlisting an independent chair to help address concerns that she cannot be neutral given the Conservative Government is being propped up by the DUP.”