

There seems to have been a revolving door between CH2M and HS2 which must be investigated – Andy McDonald

Andy

McDonald, Labour's Shadow Transport Secretary, commenting on reports that engineering firm CH2M has pulled out of a deal to provide rail lines for phase 2b of HS2, said:

"It's remarkable the Department of Transport failed to do proper due diligence on this multi-million pound bid.

"How could ministers not realise giving CH2M a £170m contract when HS2'S new chief executive and his predecessor both worked for the firm was a massive conflict of interest?

"There seems to have been a revolving door between CH2M and HS2 which must be investigated. This is just as big a mess as the Department of Transport's mishandling of the West Coast franchise bid.

"Chris Grayling must come to the House of Commons at the earliest opportunity to explain how this bidding process was allowed to derail. They chose to bury the bad news on Article 50 day. There must now be an inquiry into the serious errors surrounding this bid and the Government must get the construction of HS2, which Labour supports, back on track."

Cat Smith responds to Association of Young People's Health 2017 report

Cat

Smith MP, Labour's Shadow Minister for Voter Engagement and Youth Affairs, commenting on the Association of Young People's Health 2017 report, said:

"Labour welcomes this report showing positive downward trends in teenage pregnancy and

substance use.

“However, the Tories are short-changing young people when it comes to their mental health. It is completely unacceptable that only 0.7 per cent of NHS funding is spent on young people’s mental health while 11 per cent of the NHS budget is spent on mental health services overall.

“I urge this Government to end their distorted austerity agenda, which is hitting young people disproportionately, and start promoting youth-friendly health services.”

[Instead of deflecting and ducking the Justice Secretary should accept that she failed her first test in the job and apologise – Richard Burgon](#)

Richard

Burgon MP, Labour’s Shadow Justice Secretary, responding to recent comments from Lords Neuberger and Thomas before the Lords Constitution Committee, said:

“Liz Truss encouraged the judiciary to speak out and now two of them have – both to criticise her failure to defend the job they do. Instead of deflecting and ducking, the Justice Secretary should accept that she failed her first test in the job and apologise.”

[Teresa Pearce responds to NAO report on 100 per cent business rate](#)

retention scheme

Teresa Pearce, Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, responding to the National Audit Office report on the 100 per cent business rate retention scheme, said:

“Today’s report confirms what we have long suspected: the Government is playing dangerous games with local government finances, and in turn, is putting our vital public services in jeopardy.

“The NAO have stated that implementing 100 per cent business rates retention before the Government’s Fair Funding Review has been published will result in an untested and potentially unfair system being imposed on already struggling councils. In the context of seven years of brutal and relentless cuts to local government, that is a risk that councils cannot afford. That is why Labour has continually called for 100 per cent business rate retention to be delayed until after the Fair Funding Review is complete.

“The report also finds that the research has not been done into whether business rate retention is genuinely driving economic growth, and the resources do not exist to do so sufficiently. As it stands, this scheme is ideologically-driven but lacks any solid evidence base.

“Local government is facing a £5.8billion funding gap by 2020. There is a national crisis in social care with 1.2million frail elderly people and one in five vulnerable disabled people being left lonely and isolated. Libraries, youth centres and Sure Start centres have closed. Child protection services are creaking, and homelessness is rising. Public services provided by local councils are the lifeblood of our communities and the Government must think more carefully before implementing these potentially catastrophic changes.”

The Government should tackle ‘burning injustices’ many young people face &

get on with helping young people find a job – Debbie Abrahams

Debbie

Abrahams MP, Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary, commenting on the Work and Pensions Select Committee's report on the youth obligation, said:

"The current headline employment figures mask shocking barriers faced by some groups in our society trying to find a job. Sadly there is even evidence of direct discrimination."

"The Government's own statistics show a wide gap in employment between different regions, and the evidence points to major disadvantages faced by women, BME groups and disabled people."

"The Government should stop patting themselves on the back, fix their broken Universal Credit roll out, tackle the 'burning injustices' many young people face and get on with helping young people find a job."