

[RBS priority should be serving the best interests of UK customers – Reynolds](#)

Jonathan Reynolds MP, Labour's Shadow City Minister, responding to the RBS jobs cuts announcement, said:

"The decision by RBS to close 1 in 4 of its outlets is hugely disappointing. Not only will this result in the potential loss of 1,000 jobs, but many people depend on being able to use bank branch facilities in person. As the taxpayer continues to own 71% of the bank, its priority should be serving the best interests of UK customers.

"We are astounded that the Government has signed off on these proposals and urge them to reconsider such a drastic move which risks serious harm to local communities. Labour will change bank regulations to stop branch closures where there is a clear impact on local communities and businesses."

[Tories fail to meet net migration target yet again – Diane Abbott](#)

Diane Abbott MP, Labour's Shadow Home Secretary, commenting on today's ONS data showing net migration is at 230,000, said:

"This is yet another failure by the Tory government to meet its own unworkable net migration target.

"This isn't a genuine policy, but allows a permanent campaign against migrants and migration.

"The Tories' chaotic mishandling of the Brexit negotiations has already seen many sectors experiencing severe staff shortages, including the NHS and social care.

"It is time to drop this meaningless target. Labour offers fair rules and reasonable management of migration. Our priorities are growth, jobs and prosperity. We make no apologies for putting these aims before bogus

immigration targets.”

[The Government has conceded the need to protect rights in response to Tom Watson’s landmark legal challenge but must go further](#)

Amber

Rudd has today proposed changes to the new Investigatory Powers Act in response to successful legal claim brought by Tom Watson MP but Government proposals do not go far enough and only partially comply with this landmark judgment. Martha Spurrier, Director of Liberty, has described the proposals as “window dressing” which does not provide the robust action needed.

Tom

Watson MP, Deputy Leader of the Labour Party, said:

“The current legislation fails to protect people’s fundamental rights or respect the rule of law. That’s what my legal challenge proved, and I’m glad Amber Rudd is making significant concessions today. But I will be asking the court to go further, because today’s proposals from the Home Office are still flawed.

“Ministers

aren’t above the law – they don’t get to pick and choose which rights violations they address and they can’t haggle with the courts to avoid properly protecting people’s freedom. All of the fundamental safeguards demanded by the court must now be implemented.”

[Nia Griffith responds to Armed Forces Diversity Statistics](#)

Nia Griffith MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary for Defence, responding to today's Armed Forces Biannual Diversity Statistics, said:

"What today's findings show is that progress has been very slow and the proportion of female representation in the UK Regular Forces has risen by less than a percent since October 2012. Although things are slightly better with BAME personnel there is still much more work that needs to be done.

"There needs to be a step change with recruitment and retention if we're to meet the targets of 10% BAME and 15% female personnel in our Armed Forces. We also need to see vast improvements when it comes to getting female and BAME personnel into the highest ranks.

"Our diversity is a great strength to our society and can be to our Armed Forces but more needs to be done. The Government said they would bring forward new strategic equality objectives in Autumn 2017 but nothing has been published.

"If they are serious about their diversity targets, the Government must publish a new diversity strategy as soon as possible".

[Jonathan Ashworth responds to Care Quality Commission's findings](#)

Jonathan Ashworth MP, Labour's Shadow Health Secretary, responding to the Care Quality Commission's findings that many independent clinics that provide residential detoxification are not providing safe or good quality care, said:

"This damning report illustrates a disgraceful failure by the private sector to provide vulnerable drug and alcohol addicts with the safest and best quality treatment available. Helping those with alcohol and drug addiction issues is a personal priority of mine and this report is yet more evidence that we simply aren't doing anywhere near enough to deal with addiction in society.

"The Tories have slashed vital alcohol and drug treatment programmes by £43 million this year, forcing many to turn to the independent sector for help.

"The report also highlights the inadequacies of expecting the private sector to provide the level of service needed and as such we will need to build

capacity in the public sector.

“Labour will reverse these damaging public health cuts to important addiction services and ensure everyone receives the best possible treatment they deserve.”