

## [Press release: Ministerial appointments: 9 November 2017](#)

The Queen has been pleased to approve the following appointments:

- Penny Mordaunt MP as Secretary of State for International Development.
- Sarah Newton MP as Minister of State at the Department for Work and Pensions.
- Victoria Atkins MP as Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Home Office.
  
- Penny Mordaunt MP was previously Minister of State for Department for Work and Pensions
- Sarah Newton MP was previously Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Home Office.

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## [Speech: 56th Special Session of OPCW Executive Council](#)

Thank you Mr Chair,

The UK supports Estonia's statement on behalf of the EU. Foreign Ministers of the UK, US, France and Germany made a statement last night, we will circulate it today. Others will seek to obfuscate. I am going to be brief because this is important, and it is time to be very clear.

Thanks to the OPCW-UN JIM we know what the Syrians did, and we know what Daesh did. The regime used sarin against its own people at Khan Sheikhoun on 4 April. Daesh used mustard gas in Sept 2016 at Um Hosh.

Today we should also remember what we did. The OPCW Director General set up the Fact Finding Mission in 2014 to investigate chemical weapons use in Syria. The UN Security Council set up the JIM to identify the perpetrators. We took action here last year on the basis of the JIM's report that found the Syria had used chemical weapons on three occasions, and that Daesh had used them once. Why? Because, in the words of the Russian Representative in New York earlier this year, chemical weapons was the last taboo. This was the one Syrian issue on which the US, Russia and the rest of the UNSC was able to agree on, in the autumn of 2013, when it could agree on nothing else.

Since 2013, chemical weapons have been used not once, but many times. Sarin alone has been used to kill on at least three occasions: Ghouta 2013; Khan Sheikhoun in April 2017; and, as confirmed by the Fact Finding Mission last

week, Al Ltamenah in March 2017.

So, let's now look at what the regime and its allies have done.

a) They have failed to comply with the treaty they signed. Syria's Declaration is still incomplete – and clearly Syria has NOT handed over all its chemical weapons stock, as it claimed to in 2014.

b) They have created the most elaborate possible, and ever changing, narrative to explain the Khan Sheikhoun attack. But the samples from Khan Sheikhoun that Syria handed to the Fact Finding Mission contained their own regime sarin signature!

c) Russia vetoed the extension of the JIM mandate, in New York just last month.

So the question for this body is what do we do now?

We should be clear, as the OPCW, that we look to the UNSC to renew the mandate of the JIM. No ifs, no buts, and no skimping on the mandate. It must be able to do its job. The perpetrators of the Al Ltamenah sarin attack must be identified. It looks to us like a horrific pattern of tactical sarin use.

The OPCW's Fact Finding Mission must continue its work to investigate other allegations of chemical weapons use in Syria. The Declaration Assessment Team must continue to address serious outstanding concerns about Syria's declaration. This includes very pertinent questions directly related to sarin and its precursors, and to unaccounted for aerial munitions. So:

i) We – this Executive Council, and all 41 members in it, must condemn the use of chemical weapons, clearly and unequivocally, and those who have used them as identified in the JIM mechanism that was established by unanimity. Again, no ifs, no buts.

ii) We must support further work by the FFM and the JIM, to establish facts, and hold perpetrators to account.

Russia and Iran have given us a different choice today. The text they tabled yesterday seeks to politicise the body that every country in this room is committed to support. It is a thinly veiled attack on the professional integrity of the Director General. It seeks to undermine the technical capability and competence of the Technical Secretariat.

We can, and we must do better than that. We should agree to take action, to condemn perpetrators and support the Convention. And we should do it without delay.

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# News story: RAF continue to strike a retreating Daesh

Already in November UK aircraft have struck Daesh command posts in Al Qaim, supporting the Iraqi Security Forces liberating the city, and eliminated mortar teams and destroyed parts of the terrorist's tunnel network in eastern Syria. As the Defence Secretary joins counterparts in Brussels today for a meeting of the Counter-Daesh Coalition, the UK remains steadfast in its commitment to destroy Daesh militarily and to counter its poisonous propaganda.

Defence Secretary, Gavin Williamson, said:

Our forces are working tirelessly to defeat the evil of our time. Daesh is weakened and in retreat having now lost its last remaining major strongholds in Iraq and Syria.

The battle is not yet over. We will continue to hit the terrorists hard in both Syria and Iraq while supporting efforts to rebuild – only by defeating Daesh for good will we reduce the threat to both our nations at home.

In the fight for the last remaining major strongholds, the UK continued to support coalition partners fighting on the ground. Having received intelligence from a coalition surveillance aircraft on Wednesday 1 November, RAF Tornados launched two Paveways at a command post near Al Qaim destroying the building, the terrorists and their vehicles.

Tornados continued to support Iraqi Security Forces in the battle for Al Qaim the following day, and successfully bombed a Daesh observation post, which was attempting to direct mortar fire against the rapidly advancing Iraqi ground forces.

On Saturday 4 November, two Tornados patrolled the far east of Syria, destroying a mortar team north-east of al Mayadin. The aircraft also bombed the entrance to a Daesh tunnel network nearby. Typhoons flew missions over eastern Syria on Sunday 5 November, eliminating a mortar team near Abu Kamal, as well as striking another tunnel complex near Al Mayadin.

British aircraft have struck Daesh 1348 times in Iraq and 262 times in Syria. In that time the group has lost territory, finances, leaders and fighters as the 73-member coalition liberate its last remaining strongholds in both countries.

But despite military progress in Syria and Iraq, the threat posed by Daesh and their poisonous narrative remains substantial. Their continued ability to

inspire attacks means that we must remain resolute in our work to defeat them in their branches worldwide and counter their propaganda.

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## [Press release: £18 million extra funding for council services](#)

Councils across England are set to receive a further £18 million to help alleviate pressures on local services such as housing, education and health services resulting from recent migration.

The government recognises that local authorities understand their local communities best and can identify specific pressures on services that can result from high, concentrated or short-term migration. Councils receiving these grants have developed specific plans to ease local pressures arising from migration and at the same time providing overall benefits to their wider communities.

Communities Minister Lord Bourne said:

In some places population change in a short space of time has put pressure on local services and we're clear there are things we can do to address these problems.

This new funding will help councils rise to the challenge of reducing the impact of migration on local communities in a variety of ways – whether that's tackling the small minority of landlords who damage neighbourhoods with overcrowded properties, providing English language classes to ensure effective integration.

The grants are the second allocations from the £100 million [Controlling Migration Fund](#), following an initial allocation of £15 million awarded earlier this year.

Many of the projects supported will provide English language lessons to allow new residents to contribute to and feel part of their communities. They will also include education around British values and social norms, breaking down cultural barriers.

The fund is helping to ease pressures on local services but there's still more work to do to bring net migration down further to sustainable levels. That is why government has reformed routes to the UK from outside Europe, and will get control of our borders and negotiate the right deal in the national interest in our Brexit negotiations.

Lord Bourne added:

It's great to see so many projects tackling the problems of poor integration in their communities by, for example, allowing migrants to access the benefits of good English. This will create stronger relationships between neighbours and unlock better services for all.

Boston council in Lincolnshire will receive over £1 million to fund a wide range of integration projects, including additional sport and gym facilities where there is pressure on services, community sport sessions and encouraging volunteering from all communities.

Boston borough council Leader Councillor Michael Cooper said:

We've been awarded this money in recognition of the impact that migration has had locally. Our partnership will focus on doing things that our residents have told us are important to them.

We will extend the availability of advice services, enforcement capacity, community leadership and volunteering opportunities and importantly, we will support the development of English language skills to support people to communicate effectively with public services to help save time and money and increase efficiency and effectiveness.

Peterborough's project will help new residents navigate services and provide additional capacity for the whole community. Citizen's Advice Peterborough is receiving £288,000 to provide advice in a range of locations across the city and help an additional 4,000 clients a year from across the community.

Councillor Irene Walsh, Peterborough City Council Cabinet Member for Communities said:

We are delighted to receive this funding from the Controlling Migration Fund as it will allow even more people to benefit from the valuable service provided by Citizens Advice Peterborough in more locations across the city.

The Controlling Migration Fund is designed to support local areas facing pressures linked to recent immigration. See further details in the [Controlling Migration Fund allocations table](#) (PDF, 37.4KB, 13 pages) .

This funding will supplement local authorities' budgets of £200 billion across the 4 year period up to 2020.

The Fund is available over the 4 years from 2016-17 to 2019-20, and is in 2 parts:

- 'local service impacts' totalling £100 million, led by the Department

for Communities and Local Government, to help local authorities in England and their communities experiencing high and unexpected volumes of immigration to ease pressures on local services

- enforcement, led by Immigration Enforcement, worth £40 million to direct enforcement action to reduce the impact of migration on local communities; Immigration Enforcement are on track to meet their commitments under the Fund, including through supporting Rochdale's Operation Maverick
- the government has been reviewing the available evidence on the main causes of poor integration; in the coming months we will bring forward plans for tackling these issues through a new integration strategy, to help people in more isolated communities, including migrants, to integrate into UK society

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## [Press release: Dragon's Den contestant jailed for child sex offences has term increased](#)

A former Dragon's Den contestant, jailed for 13 child sex offences, including sexual assault has had his jail sentence increased to 7 years 3 months.

Richard Hazell, 48 from Hoddeston, Hertfordshire was arrested when his abuse came to light after the father of one of his victim's made a complaint to social services. His original sentence of 4 years and 9 months was increased by 2 years 9 months following intervention by the Attorney General Jeremy Wright QC MP under the Unduly Lenient Sentence scheme.

Hazell, was convicted earlier this year for sexually assaulting four girls, one as young as 6 and was found to have nearly 3000 indecent images of children on a computer seized by police. He denied the offences in Court and was convicted only after a lengthy trial where it was revealed he had searched 'can you be found guilty for downloading child porn if the files are deleted on your computer' prior to his arrest.

Following the successful appeal the Attorney General said:

"Child sexual offences aren't singular events, they are truly dreadful offences that will stay with victims for the rest of their lives. They take away a child's innocence and diminish their capacity to form relationships.

Refusing to admit his offence, despite overwhelming evidence needlessly prolonged the suffering of the victims. I am pleased that the sentence has been increased."