

Press release: Defined benefit green paper to look at the security and sustainability of the sector

Member protection, funding and investment, scheme affordability and consolidation will be reviewed as part of the consultation.

The government will also consider strengthened powers for [The Pensions Regulator](#).

The green paper will be a wide ranging call for evidence from employers, the pensions industry and consumers.

Background

Defined benefit schemes, many of which are also known as 'final salary pensions', are an important pillar of the UK economy and our pensions system. Currently, around 11 million members in the UK will rely on a defined benefit scheme for all or part of their retirement income and defined benefit pensions hold around £1.5 trillion of assets.

Increased life expectancy, changes to working patterns and the economy mean that defined benefit schemes are operating in very different circumstances from when they first became popular.

The purpose of the green paper

The government is committed to a system that works for employers, schemes and the 11 million people who are in a defined benefit scheme.

The green paper will consider the powers of [The Pensions Regulator](#) and encourage a debate about striking the right balance between the needs and aspirations of sponsoring employers, members, the [Pension Protection Fund](#), and the wider economy to ensure that no one group is unfairly disadvantaged.

Minister for Pensions, Richard Harrington, said:

People need to have confidence in their pension and it is vital that they feel that they are secure. With recent high profile cases highlighting the risks inherent in defined benefit pensions, we want to ensure that these important pension schemes remain sustainable for the future and that the right protections are in place for members.

Over the coming months we'll be working closely with the pensions industry, employers and scheme members to see what more can be done to increase confidence in defined benefit pensions.

While there is no evidence of a systematic issue, the government recognises that recent high profile cases have raised concerns regarding pensions and is looking to improve confidence in the sector and hear from a wide range of experts, employers and consumers about what action or support could be put in place.

The green paper looks at a range of issues that have been raised by various stakeholders. In particular it focuses on 4 key areas so that we can start to build consensus on whether we may want to reform the current system. They are:

- funding and investment
- scheme affordability
- member protection
- consolidation.

Media enquiries for this press release – 0203 267 5117

Follow DWP on:

[News story: Commercialisation of quantum technologies: apply for funding](#)

From:

First published:

20 February 2017

Businesses can win a share of £14 million to either develop quantum technology prototypes or establish technical or market feasibility.

Innovate UK and the [Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council](#) (EPSRC) are inviting business to apply for a share of up to £14 million to develop quantum technologies.

Quantum technologies have the potential to significantly improve imaging and

computing. We predict they will have a major impact on the finance, defence, aerospace, energy and telecommunications sectors.

The competition aims to encourage collaborative research and development (CR&D) projects and feasibility studies that will either:

- develop prototype devices and demonstrators of quantum technologies or their component technologies
- improve the understanding of the technical, business or market challenges of taking a new device or service to market

There are 2 streams of the competition to support technologies at different stages of development.

Feasibility studies

This competition strand is seeking collaborative feasibility studies that will improve understanding of the technical or market feasibility of a product or service. Projects can be technical or non-technical projects and focus on understanding the business or market opportunity and challenges. They should last between 6 and 12 months with costs from £50,000 to £500,000.

Collaborative R&D

Projects in the collaborative research and development strand should be challenge-led. We are looking to fund projects that produce prototype devices and demonstrators with a clear commercial application or market need. They should last between 12 and 18 months with costs from £500,000 to £2 million.

- this competition is open and the deadline for registration is midday on Wednesday 29 March 2017
- proposals must be collaborative and a UK-based business must lead the project
- there will be briefing events for potential applicants in Edinburgh (21 February) and Birmingham (2 March)

Green Party: Government must stop pushing costs of social care onto councils and residents



20 February 2017

The Green Party has called on the Government to up spending on councils after it was revealed local services will still face deep cuts despite nearly every

local authority in England planning to raise council taxes [1].

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, said:

“The Government’s failure to invest in councils has put many in a desperate situation, with no choice but to cut valuable community resources like libraries and youth centres. The Government appears intent on starving local services and bringing almost every local authority close to financial breaking point.

“Proper social care for the elderly should be a red line. It should be non-negotiable and centrally funded. Government needs to take responsibility and invest in councils, rather than pushing costs onto residents and creating a postcode lottery of care. Instead of bringing the social care system to its knees, the Government should be facing up to the simple fact that if we want good social care we need to pay for it. The Green Party is the only party proposing that we make the right choice to invest in a secure future for our older people with free social care for the over 65s. ”

Notes:

1. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-38982643>

[Tweet](#)

[Back to main news page](#)

[Let's block ads! \(Why?\)](#)

[News story: Business customers now receive fewer online documents](#)

From:

First published:

20 February 2017

We have changed how we confirm online applications for Land Registry portal and Business Gateway users.

To help customers process their work and save time, we have reduced the number of documents we send to confirm their application.

From today, customers who send an application to us online will receive fewer confirmation documents.

Customers who receive their completed applications through [the Land Registry portal](#) or via [Business Gateway](#) will now receive a single Register Completion Sheet. This will contain important information that used to be on the Title Information Document. The Title Information Document duplicated much of the information in the Register Completion Sheet and contained information that is no longer relevant.

We will send a bilingual Register Completion Sheet when we complete any application against a Welsh title.

In November 2016, [we introduced this change for customers who receive confirmation through the post](#).

We are currently testing an option for customers who use our online services, to choose whether they receive separate completion documents, or whether they receive a single combined PDF. We hope to introduce this option next month.

[Press release: Planned roadworks in West Midlands: weekly summary for Monday 20 February to Sunday 26 February 2017](#)

The following summary of planned new and ongoing road improvements over the coming week is correct as of 17 February 2017 but could be subject to change due to weather conditions or unforeseen circumstances. All our improvement work is carried out with the aim of causing as little disruption as possible.

A38 – Claymills to Wood End Lane: carriageway repairs

Southbound carriageway closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 20 February until 26 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A449 – Gailey Roundabout to Brewood Road: carriageway repairs

South and northbound carriageway closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 20 February until 26 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A45 – A4423 to Church Road: carriageway repairs

Eastbound carriageway closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 20 February until 25 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A45 – Stivichall to Tollbar End: carriageway repairs

Westbound carriageway closed overnight for one night from 8pm 21 February until 6am the following morning (22 February). A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A45 – Stonebridge A45/A46 Stivichall Junction and A45/A46 Tollbar: carriageway repairs

Eastbound carriageway and slip roads closed overnight on 22 and 24 February from 8pm until 6am the following morning. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A46 – Oversley to Shottery: carriageway repairs

Carriageway will be closed in both directions overnight between 8pm and 6am from 20 February until 22 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A46 – Salford Priors to Oversley: carriageway repairs

Northbound carriageway will be closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 20 February until 26 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A46 – Stoneleigh to Stivichall and exit slip road: carriageway repairs

Northbound carriageway and exit slip road closed overnight for one night from 8pm 20 February until 6am the following morning (22 February). A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A46 – Binley Wood to Tollbar: carriageway repairs

Southbound carriageway closed overnight on 23 and 24 February from 8pm until 6am the following morning. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A46 – Stoneleigh to Stivichall: carriageway repairs

Southbound carriageway closed overnight for one night from 8pm 23 February until 6am the following morning (24 February). A diversion route will be

clearly signposted.

A5 – Wall Island to Muckley Corner: carriageway resurfacing

Westbound carriageway closed overnight between 7pm and 6.30am from 20 February until 26 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A5 – Churchbridge to Turf Island: carriageway resurfacing

Eastbound carriageway closed overnight for one night from 9pm 20 February until 6am the following morning (21 February). A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A5 – Chase Road to Rising Sun island: carriageway resurfacing

Westbound carriageway closed overnight for one night from 9pm 22 February until 6am the following morning (23 February). A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A50 – Meir Tunnel to Stanley Matthews Way: carriageway repairs

Westbound carriageway closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 20 February until 26 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A50 – Heron Cross to Stanley Matthews Interchange Burton Road entry slip: carriageway repairs

Westbound carriageway closed 24 hour 7 days a week from 8 Feb ongoing until 7 July. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A50 – Blythe Bridge Entry Slip Road to Meir Tunnel: carriageway repairs

Westbound carriageway closed overnight for one night from 8pm 20 February until 6am the following morning (21 February). A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A50 – Heron Cross exit slip road to Foley Road Interchange: carriageway repairs

Eastbound carriageway and all associated slip roads closed overnight for one night from 8pm 20 February until 6am the following morning (21 February). A

diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A50 – Foley Road exit slip road to Trentham Road: carriageway repairs

Eastbound carriageway and all associated slip roads closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 21 February until 24 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A50 – Heron Cross exit slip road to Meir Tunnel: carriageway repairs

Eastbound carriageway and all associated slip roads closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 24 February until 26 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

A500 – Talke Island including exit slip roads and approaches: carriageway repairs

Eastside of the gyratory including all associated slip roads and approaches closed 24 hours 7 days a week from 11 January ongoing until 30 March. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M42 – junction 5 exit slip road: carriageway works

Northbound exit slip road closed overnight between 10pm and 6am from 20 February until 23 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M42 – M6 junction 4a to M42: carriageway works

Southbound carriageway closed overnight between 10pm and 5am from 20 February until 25 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M42 – junction 3a to junction 5 including junction 4 entry slip: carriageway works

Northbound carriageway including junction 4 entry slip road closed overnight between 10pm and 6am from 20 February until 24 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M42 – junction 1 exit and entry slip road: carriageway works

Entry slip and exit slip roads closed overnight in both directions between 9pm and 5.30am from 20 February until 26 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M42 – junction 4 entry slip road: carriageway works

Southbound entry road closed overnight from 10pm 22 February until 5am the following morning (23 February). A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M42 – junction 5 entry slip to junction 6: carriageway works

Northbound carriageway closed overnight between 10pm and 6am from 23 February until 26 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M42 – junction 6 exit slip road: carriageway works

Northbound exit slip road closed overnight between 10pm and 6am from 23 February until 26 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M42 – junction 5 to junction 6: carriageway works

Northbound carriageway closed overnight between 10pm and 6am from 17 February until 19 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M5 – junction 4a to junction 5: carriageway works

Southbound carriageway closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 20 February to 24 February and then at the same time on 26 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M5 junction 5 to junction 4a: carriageway works

Northbound carriageway including northbound entry slip at junction 5 closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 20 February until 22 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M5 junction 6 to junction 5: carriageway works

Northbound carriageway including junction 6 northbound entry slip closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 20 February until 22 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M5 junction 5 to junction 6: carriageway works

Southbound carriageway including southbound entry slip closed overnight between 8pm and 6am on 23 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M50 – junction 1 to junction 2: major scheme works

Westbound carriageway closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 20 February until 26 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M50 – junction 4 to junction 2: major scheme works

Westbound carriageway closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 20 February until 22 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M54 – junction 5 to junction 6: carriageway repairs

Westbound carriageway closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 20 February until 26 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M54 – junction 5 entry slip road: carriageway repairs

Westbound entry slip road carriageway closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 20 February until 26 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M54 – junction 6 entry slip road: carriageway repairs

Westbound entry slip road carriageway closed overnight between 8pm and 6am from 24 February until 27 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M54 – junction 4 to junction 3: carriageway repairs

Eastbound carriageway closed overnight between 10pm and 6am from 24 February until 27 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M54 – junction 3 to junction 4: carriageway repairs

Westbound carriageway closed overnight between 10pm and 6am from 24 February until 27 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M6 – junction 10 to junction 7 including junction 10 and 9 entry slip roads and link from M5: carriageway works

Southbound carriageway and associated slip roads closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 20 February until 25 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M6 – junction 11 entry slip road to junction 10 exit including M54 junction 1 entry slip road: carriageway works Southbound carriageway and associated slip roads closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 20 February until 25 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M6 – junction 7 to junction 8: carriageway works

Northbound carriageway closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 20 February until 24 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M6 – junction 7 entry slip road: carriageway works

Northbound entry slip road closed 24 hours 7 day days a week from 17 February ongoing until 24 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M6 – junction 7 to junction 10 including junction 9 entry slip and link from M5 northbound: carriageway works

Northbound carriageway and associated slip roads closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 20 February until 25 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M6 – junction 10 entry slip road to junction 11 exit slip road: carriageway works

Northbound carriageway and associated slip roads closed overnight between 9pm and 6am from 20 February until 25 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M6 – junction 7 entry slip road: carriageway works

Northbound entry slip road closed overnight between 9pm and 9am from 24 February until 26 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

M6 – junction 7 to junction 8: carriageway works

Northbound carriageway closed overnight between 9pm and 9am from 24 February until 26 February. A diversion route will be clearly signposted.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.