

Green MEP and QC launch judicial review proceedings against government



7 December 2017

Green MEP Molly Scott Cato and Jolyon Maugham QC of the Good Law Society have today applied for judicial review in the High Court over the Government's refusal to release sectoral studies carried out by DExEU into the impacts of Brexit, and a Treasury study into the effects of leaving the customs union. The application comes a day after Brexit secretary David Davis told the Committee for Leaving the EU that impact studies do not exist [1]. However, for months the government has said sectoral studies do exist [2] and independent experts have asserted specific knowledge of the content of the Treasury study.

Scott Cato said:

"The country has run out of patience with the bluff and bluster of some of our senior Government representatives. We need the cold, clean scalpel of the law to separate fact from fiction and establish exactly what studies have been carried out – and to make them available for us all to see. Mr Davis will now have to explain himself in front of a High Court judge.

"For eight months I have been seeking release of these studies to inform myself and those I represent about the potential impacts of Brexit on our economy. It is frankly astonishing to hear the Brexit secretary now proclaim that these studies, which he has fought so hard to keep hidden from us all, do not in fact exist.

"Withholding information and keeping us all in the dark is a serious dereliction of duty for the man tasked with negotiating a change of such potentially devastating consequences."

Jolyon Maugham QC said:

"Let him throw his smoke bombs. David Davis can't escape from one simple principle: a Government of the people should never hide from the people what it plans to do to the people."

Notes:

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/dec/06/sector-by-sector-brexit-impact-forecasts-do-not-exist-says-david-davis>
2. <https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/staggers/2017/12/many-times-david-davis-talked-about-brexit-analysis-he-says-doesn-t-exist>

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[Caroline Lucas: Government energy policy is a mess](#)



7 December 2017

***Lucas: New nuclear is 'eye-wateringly expensive'**

Caroline Lucas, the co-leader of the Green Party, has responded to the Government's announcement on new nuclear. Ministers have said they will be pushing ahead with both large and small nuclear reactors. In an announcement today [1] the Government has committed further resources to nuclear research, and in a consultation paper [2] listed the proposed sites for larger nuclear power stations.

The proposed sites are Sellafield, Sizewell, Bradwell, Oldbury, Hartlepool and Heysham.

Caroline Lucas, co-leader of the Green Party, said:

"The Government's energy policy is a mess. Ministers are ploughing huge sums of money into supporting overpriced nuclear, while retaining a defacto ban on onshore wind and failing to give solar the support the sector needs. They're sending mixed messages to investors when we desperately need clarity to show that the Government is serious about creating a renewables-based low carbon Britain

"This island nation should be producing its energy from cheaper, renewable clean sources – not diverting even more resources towards new nuclear which is both eye-wateringly expensive and far too slow to get online."

Notes:

1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-to-support-development-of-next-generation-nuclear-technology>
2. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664925/FINAL_NPS_siting_consultation_document.pdf

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[Green MEP responds to David Davis claims that Brexit impact studies do not exist](#)



6 December 2017

Responding to this morning's evidence session of the DExEU committee and David Davis's comment that the Brexit impact studies do not in fact exist [1], Molly Scott Cato, and MEP who is about to launch judicial review proceedings to force the publication of the studies [2], said:

"I have been seeking to know the content of these studies since April and in September Brexit minister Steve Baker responded to my letter demanding release explicitly on behalf of the Secretary of State and acknowledging that the Department had 'conducted analysis of over 50 sectors of the economy' [3]. Now David Davis claims these studies do not in fact exist.

"There are two possibilities. Either the studies do exist, and Davis has lied to the House and must resign. Or the studies do not exist, in which case Davis is guilty of dereliction of duty and must resign. Either way, he cannot maintain the confidence of the House as our Brexit negotiator.

"Together with Jolyon Maugham QC of the Good Law Project I expect to be in a position to launch judicial review proceedings to force the publication of the studies tomorrow. This will give Davis or his representative the opportunity to clarify on oath whether the studies do in fact exist or not."

Notes:

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/blog/live/2017/dec/06/david-davis-questi-oned-by-brexit-committee-about-impact-assessments-politics-live>
2. <http://mollymep.org.uk/2017/11/07/court-action-still-looms-brexit-impact-s-tudies/>
3. http://mollymep.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/SteveBaker_50studies-08.09.17.pdf

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[Greens: Leeds council air pollution plans “woefully inadequate”](#)



5 December 2017

Leeds Green Party has labelled the city council's new air pollution plan [1] “woefully inadequate”.

Launched on the 65th anniversary of the “Great Smog of London” which caused the death of approximately 4,000 people, the party says the council needs to be much bolder, ambitious, and optimistic in its plans for reducing air pollution in Leeds. They say the council should be looking to create a “breathing city” where everyone can breathe clean air, enjoy green spaces, and get about by walking, cycling, or public transport.

Around 700 people die prematurely from air pollution in Leeds every year [2]. The Green Party argues that the council's new strategy won't reduce the amount of Particulate Matter (PM) in the air [3], could cause public transport fees to rise rather than fall, and doesn't contain significant targets for improving cycle or walking infrastructure in Leeds.

Chris Bell, Leeds Green Party Policy Officer said:

“The council's plans are only focussed on reducing NOx emissions with no focus on Particulate Matter. There has been no guarantee that bus and train companies will not raise their fares to compensate for the fines they will face for non-compliance, which does not discourage private car usage. These plans do not go far enough to lower the impact of air pollution on the health of Leeds citizens.”

Notes

[1] New plan will be available here: <http://www.leeds.gov.uk/Pages/Default.aspx>

[2] <https://www.yorkshireeveningpost.co.uk/news/leeds-named-hotspot-for-air-pollution-deaths-as-epidemic-costs-local-nhs-480m-1-7698344>

[3] <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/assets/documents/reports/ageg/pm-summary.pdf>

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Education system has reached a “new low” says Green co-leader



1 December 2017

***Green Co-Leader writes to Education Secretary after revelations that children with additional needs are being sent home from school**

The Green Party's Co-Leader Jonathan Bartley has today written to the Education Secretary Justine Greening over what he describes as a “new low” in the education system.

Bartley appeared on a BBC Breakfast report this morning into SEND children [1]. During the course of the programme a headteacher admitted that his school has often had to ask parents to remove their disabled children, and others with additional needs from his school because they do not have the staff resources to properly support them.

Mr Bartley's letter to Ms Greening asks her to disclose how many schools are facing similar problems and what she intends to do to address it.

Speaking after his appearance on BBC Breakfast, Mr Bartley said:

“This is a new low for the education system which is becoming a hostile environment for disabled children and those with additional needs. It is unacceptable and clearly discriminatory for children to be sent home from school because of a lack of resources.

“As the father of a child with special needs I am no stranger to the challenges and barriers children face in accessing school. But the disclosure from the headteacher I heard from this morning was on another level. It's not just a case that the support in schools for children with additional needs is poor: in some cases it is totally non-existent. Children are now being denied access to education.

“Education is a right for everyone not an optional extra. This is something that urgently needs addressing and that is why I have written to the Secretary of State.”

Notes

[1] <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b09gsfkp>

[2] Full text of letter:

Dear Justine,

Today at a BBC Breakfast event in Manchester the headteacher of a local school told me how, as a result of year-on-year cuts to the education budget, his school often has to ask parents of SEND children to take them home because they do not have the staff in place to support them.

As the father of a son with spina bifida I was heartbroken to hear that story. I can only imagine how demoralising it must be for the parents of the SEND pupils at that headteacher's school to know that their children are routinely missing out on an education. I am in no doubt that the headteacher is doing all he can to support those pupils but of course he can only manage with the resources he has at his disposal.

I'd like to know:

- a) Do you know the extent to which SEND children are missing out on school days because mainstream schools do not have the resources to support them?
- b) Given that this seems to be a not irregular problem, what the government is going to do to address it?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours,

Jonathan Bartley

Co-Leader of the Green Party

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