

Press release: Welsh Secretary confident ahead of talks with First Minister

The First Secretary of State Damian Green and the Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns will meet the First Minister of Wales Carwyn Jones for discussions on arrangements under the EU (Withdrawal) Bill for distributing powers returned from the European Union.

The people of Wales want to make Brexit a success and both the Welsh Government and UK Government want the same thing – we want Wales to prosper and we want an agreement for the whole of the UK with the European Union.

The Welsh economy is fundamentally integrated with the rest of the UK so we must bring together the assets of all parts of the UK to win deals and secure trade agreements. Exiting the EU is a time when the nation needs to come together to secure the best deal for every part of the UK.

It is in nobody's interest for there to be gaps in the law at the point where the UK departs the EU. Neither is it in anybody's interest to create any new obstacles or costs inside the UK as we leave the EU. That means that there will be a need for a common UK approach in a number of areas. We have had constructive talks already and will keep talking – I am confident we can reach an agreement that works for all parts of the UK.

Press release: Payroll directors who found rules too taxing both disqualified

Kenneth Macgregor Munn and Richard Jonathan Owen Rees have been disqualified from acting as a director for seven years and four years respectively, after failing to pay over £1.4 million in taxes.

Munn and Rees were directors of Dormco SCP Ltd; S C Personnel Ltd; Cotsen Accountants Ltd; and Cathedral Road Management Ltd. All four companies traded in succession as payroll companies providing services to other companies also controlled by Munn and Rees, who are accountants. The companies went into liquidation in August 2013.

An investigation by the Insolvency Service found that Munn was responsible

for Dormco SCP Ltd failing to file a Corporation Tax return resulting in the payment of an assessed amount of tax which was £168,520 less than the amount which he knew was due, and that Rees was found to have allowed this to happen. Both directors also caused all four companies to fail to pay Pay-As-You-Earn (PAYE) and National Insurance Contributions (NICs) amounting to £1,242,616 when due.

At the date of liquidation, the amount owed to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) amounted to £1,450,995 including additional interest, tax and penalties.

The Secretary of State for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy accepted disqualification undertakings from both on 28 July 2017. The disqualifications commence on 19 July 2017.

Commenting on the disqualification, Sue MacLeod, Chief Investigator at the Insolvency Service, said:

These actions not only gave these companies and others controlled by the directors an unfair advantage over their competitors, but have also left the public purse seriously shortchanged.

If you run a business in a way that is unfairly detrimental to any of its creditors, including by failing to correctly pay tax, the Insolvency Service will seek to remove you from the business environment.

Notes to editors

Dormco SCP Ltd (CR0 0338223) was incorporated on 24 March 1997, SC personnel (CR0 06621779) was incorporated on 17 June 2008; Cotsen Accountants Ltd (CR007111448) was incorporated on 22 December 2009; and Cathedral Road Management Ltd (CR0 03144475) was incorporated on 10 January 1996. Their registered offices were all at 1st Floor, Tudor house, 16 Cathedral Road, Cardiff CF11 9LJ and they traded from the same address.

Kenneth Macgregor Munn is of Cardiff and his date of birth is July 1959.

Jonathan Owen Rees is of Cardiff and his date of birth is October 1969.

A disqualification order has the effect that without specific permission of a court, a person with a disqualification cannot:

- act as a director of a company
- take part, directly or indirectly, in the promotion, formation or management of a company or limited liability partnership
- be a receiver of a company's property

Disqualification undertakings are the administrative equivalent of a disqualification order but do not involve court proceedings.

Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of other restrictions](#).

The Insolvency Service, an executive agency sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), administers the insolvency regime, and aims to deliver and promote a range of investigation and enforcement activities both civil and criminal in nature, to support fair and open markets. We do this by effectively enforcing the statutory company and insolvency regimes, maintaining public confidence in those regimes and reducing the harm caused to victims of fraudulent activity and to the business community, including dealing with the disqualification of directors in corporate failures.

Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).

Contact Press Office

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

[News story: The new robot helping clean up Sellafield](#)

The 'Avexis' will help dislodge and clear waste from the Magnox Swarf Storage Silo.

[Watch the robot enter the plant for the first time](#)

It has been developed by Cumbrian firm Forth Engineering with support from the University of Manchester.

The company was launched in 2000 by former Sellafield apprentice Mark Telford.

The Maryport business is now a global specialist in remote tooling, deployment methods, and sensor systems.

Mr Telford said:

Having Sellafield on our doorstep gives a huge advantage.

It's a testbed where we can develop unique skills and technologies.

The site needs innovative technology to undertake engineering tasks in harsh environments underwater.

Successfully deploying our technology at Sellafield means we can then transfer it to other industries like marine and oil and gas which are looking for similar products.

The Avexis is already generating interest from potential clients overseas.

The Magnox Swarf Storage Silo was built in the 1960s to store waste from the UK's earliest nuclear reactors. It closed in 2000 and has now been prioritised for clean-up by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA).

Rebecca Weston, Strategy and Technical Director for Sellafield Ltd, said: "The Avexis is a great example of the supply chain helping us to reduce the UK's nuclear hazard faster, cheaper and more safely.

"And, on top of that, companies are developing products and skills that can be exported all over the world."

The Avexis offers the ability to 'see' inside the silo via cameras attached to its body.

It can also clear away small bits of waste clinging to the silo wall.

Its key feature is its size – it is small enough to fit through spaces of just 150mm space.

It is the first robot of its kind to go from concept to market within five years. At just £10,000 it is also the cheapest of its kind.

[News story: Education Secretary announces first new T levels](#)

The Education Secretary, Justine Greening, has today (11 October) announced the first three T levels, in Digital, Construction, and Education and Childcare, which will help deliver a generation of home-grown talent post-Brexit.

The first of the new qualifications, with content developed by leading industry professionals from companies including Rolls Royce, Fujitsu and EDF, will be taught from 2020, with the full set of T levels introduced by 2022.

First announced in 2016 and backed by £500million every year in additional funding the qualifications are a key milestone in transforming technical education in the UK and extends the offer for young people to study a technical qualification at level 3 – equivalent to A levels.

Education Secretary, Justine Greening said:

We are transforming technical education in this country, developing our home grown talent so that our young people have the world class skills and knowledge that employers need.

As we prepare to leave the EU, it is more important than ever that we create an outstanding further education and skills system, giving all young people the opportunity to fulfil their potential and deliver a better future for our country.

As part of making sure that the technical education ladder reaches every bit as high as the academic one, I want to see T levels that are as rigorous and respected as A levels.

Each route groups together related occupations which require common knowledge, skills and behaviours. These routes are further broken down into a number of specialisms, clustered together in a straightforward way so that young people can see a clear path to the occupation of their choice.

The content of T levels will be developed by newly appointed panels comprising industry professionals and employers – including EDF, Rolls Royce, Fujitsu, Lloyds, Morgan Sindall, Skanska and Morphy Richards – ensuring that they have real credibility. The Government is today confirming that panels have been launched across all 6 routes for delivery in 2020 and 2021.

All T level programmes will also include a substantial, high quality work placement so that students can apply their learning in a real workplace environment.

Fujitsu's non-executive Chairman, Simon Blagden, said:

I'm delighted to see the progress that the Department for Education is making on the implementation of T levels. The introduction of these technical programmes will provide young people with skill sets that are valuable and relevant to employers, helping to create skilled employment opportunities for school leavers.

In particular, the support being put in place for work placements will be crucial in ensuring that students are able to gain experience of a work environment, helping them move from education to employment in a more seamless manner.

The decision to introduce the new programmes came after an Independent Panel on technical education, chaired by Lord Sainsbury, in 2016 found that the existing system was too complex and included too many qualifications, which did not provide young people with the necessary skills to excel at work

Lord David Sainsbury, chairman of the Independent Panel on Technical Education, whose report led to the reforms said:

I am delighted the government is pressing ahead with these essential reforms to technical education. T levels will increase the life-chances of many thousands of young people, while at the same time helping to ensure British industry remains competitive.

Now that the Government has issued its Action Plan it is essential that everyone involved starts preparing for the introduction of T levels. Government, the education sector, industry, LEPs and Combined Authorities now need to put in the necessary resources and effort, and not wait until the last moment before taking the necessary action.

David Hughes, Chief Executive of the Association of Colleges said:

The publication this week represents a really important step forward for technical and professional skills training and education.

Our future economic and social prosperity rely on more people having higher technical skills and education – both to help improve productivity and to help people realise their talents and ambitions.

The new T levels will need to fight hard to gain recognition and to be valued, but this announcement is a good first step. I look forward to working with the Government on developing the pathways from Level 2 through Levels 3, 4 and 5 which are needed for success.

Neil Carberry, CBI Managing Director for People policy, said:

Businesses will be encouraged by the positive progress on the introduction of T levels, though there is still much for companies and the Government to address together. It's important that these new technical routes are woven into the wider education system from the start, to ensure they are respected and are seen to have the same quality as A levels.

There has never been a more important time to deliver world class training for our young people in every part of the UK. Investment in skills by employers and the Government, working in partnership, is key to giving young people the opportunities they need to succeed.

The successful completion of a T level will equip students with the technical knowledge and practical skills necessary to enter skilled employment.

The full T levels Action Plan is available [here](#)

We can confirm today that the following chairs for T level panels have been appointed:

- Edward Sallis; Education Consultant, Education and Training Foundation's Expert Panel on Professional Standards
- Dayle Bayliss; Dayle Bayliss Associates LLP
- David Matthews; Institute of Domestic Heating and Environmental Engineering
- Julian Weightman; Boardercraft Group
- Julie Oxley; Digital Care Consultancy
- John Meech; Fujitsu
- Anna Withrington; IBM
- Mike Westlake ; Autodesk
- Peter Winebloom; EEF Ltd
- Probash Chowdhury; GlaxoSmithKline
- Jane Hadfield; Health Education England
- Hilary Jeffreys; Consultant
- Weiyen Hung; Bank of England
- Maura Sullivan; Banking, UK International Wealth Management
- Cassie Williams; 39 Park Square

Statement to Parliament: Planning Act 2008: application for the proposed Silvertown Tunnel development consent order

Ministerial statement regarding an extension to the decision deadline for the proposed Silvertown Tunnel.

I have been asked by my Right Honourable Friend, the Secretary of State, to make this written ministerial statement. This statement concerns the application made by Transport for London under the Planning Act 2008 on 29 April 2016 for a proposed development known as Silvertown Tunnel.

The application will allow for the construction of a new twin bore road tunnel to pass under the River Thames, providing a new connection between the A102 Blackwall Tunnel Southern Approach and the Tidal Basin roundabout junction on the A1020 Lower Lea Crossing, London.

Under sub-section 107(1) of the Planning Act 2008, the Secretary of State must make his decision within 3 months of receipt of the examining authority's report unless exercising the power under sub-section 107(3) to extend the deadline and make a statement to the House of Parliament announcing the new deadline. The Secretary of State received the examining authority's report on Silvertown Tunnel on 11 July 2017 and the current deadline for a decision is 11 October 2017.

The deadline for the decision is to be extended to 10 November 2017 (an extension of 1 month). This extension is to enable further consideration of the recent responses to the Secretary of State consultations on the scheme which relate to the updated UK plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations published by government on 26 July 2017.

The decision to set a new deadline is without prejudice to the decision on whether to give development consent.