

[News story: Fast Track applications coming soon](#)

[unable to retrieve full-text content]The Civil Service Fast Track will be open for applications soon. Find out how to get updates on the next application window [here](#).

[News story: Digital solutions for independent living: apply for funding](#)

People Make Glasgow sign in front of the Technology and Innovation Centre.

[Glasgow's Health and Social Care Partnership](#) has up to £450,000 to invest in the development of a remote digital alarm monitoring system that will help people with complex needs to live independent lives at home.

There is £150,000 to fund a series of feasibility studies into potential solutions, and a further £300,000 that could support the development of the 2 most promising ideas in a second phase.

Supporting independent living in Glasgow

The partnership wants to use technology to help more people live independent lives at home.

Digital technologies, including ambient sensors, GPS trackers and video technology, are already in use in the health sector, but they work in isolation and do not combine with Glasgow's main telecare platform.

Glasgow Health and Social Care Partnership is being supported in this competition by the [Can Do Innovation Challenge Fund](#). It is seeking solutions using the SBRI (Small Business Research Initiative) programme.

System must manage risks in the home

Projects are being asked to develop a remote digital alarm monitoring system that can help with the management of risks in the home and that links into Glasgow's existing telecare platform.

Solutions must:

- be easy to use and understand for people with poor mobility, hearing or

eyesight

- highlight risks consistently and safely
- connect to the existing platform so the user can access the services they need, regardless of supplier
- be cost effective
- be efficient to install and maintain and have a 'plug and play' design

Competition information

- the competition opens on 19 February 2018, and the deadline for registration is at midday on 25 April 2018
- it is open to any organisation that can demonstrate a route to market for its idea
- we expect phase 1 contracts to be worth up to £30,000 and last up to 6 months
- we expect phase 2 contracts to be worth up to £150,000
- successful projects will attract 100% funded development contracts
- a briefing event will be held in Glasgow on 14 March 2018

[Press release: Director disqualified for selling company assets for own benefit](#)

The disqualification order was granted at Perth Sheriff Court following an investigation by the Insolvency Service. The disqualification commenced on 20 December 2017 and is effective until 20 December 2024.

Mr McFarlane's ban relates to his selling off company assets for his own benefit whilst creditors were left unpaid. Gilmour McFarlane (29) was the sole director of Garden Haulage Limited. From 2009 the company hired out plant and machinery in addition to labour and carried out contractual work, primarily for farms. The company went into liquidation on 28 August 2015 with an estimated deficiency to its creditors of £38,670.

The investigation by the Insolvency Service found that at a time when the company was insolvent, Gilmour McFarlane caused it to dispose of plant and machinery to a third party for a sum of £55,000 plus VAT while on the same day Gilmour McFarlane settled a personally guaranteed loan to that party. This transaction was to the detriment of HMRC and other creditors of the company.

The investigation also found that for the period from at least 1 September 2014 to 28 August 2015, Gilmour McFarlane failed to preserve or deliver up adequate accounting records for Garden Haulage Limited as a consequence of

which it has not been possible to establish the true financial position of the company, how other assets were dealt with and whether all sums due to the company were collected in.

Robert Clarke, Group Leader of Insolvent Investigations North at the Insolvency Service said:

The period of this disqualification reflects the fact that when a company fails to keep adequate financial records it is simply not possible to determine whether there has been other, more serious, impropriety in relation to the management of its affairs.

Furthermore, directors who put their own personal financial interests above those of customers and creditors damage confidence in doing business and are corrosive to the health of the local economy.

Gilmour McFarlane's date of birth is April 1988.

Gilmour McFarlane was appointed as director of Garden Haulage Limited (company number SC364384) on 21 August 2009 and remained a director throughout the company's trading. Garden Haulage Limited had a registered office of 66 Tay Street, Perth, PH2 8RP.

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.

BEIS' mission is to build a dynamic and competitive UK economy that works for all, in particular by creating the conditions for business success and promoting an open global economy. The Criminal Investigations and Prosecutions team contributes to this aim by taking action to deter fraud and to regulate the market. They investigate and prosecute a range of offences, primarily relating to personal or company insolvencies.

The agency also authorises and regulates the insolvency profession, assesses and pays statutory entitlement to redundancy payments when an employer cannot or will not pay employees, provides banking and investment services for bankruptcy and liquidation estate funds and advises ministers and other government departments on insolvency law and practice.

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

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 7674 6910 or 020 7596 6187

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

[Press release: New proposals to help vulnerable people benefit from cheaper energy](#)

- government takes further steps to tackle fuel poverty
- government consulting on new powers to make it easier for consumers to be protected from unfair energy bills under the safeguard tariff
- new data-sharing measures means vulnerable consumers would be protected from high energy bills automatically

The government has today (12 February 2018) launched a consultation asking for views on amending the Digital Economy Act to bring in data-sharing measures that could help bring down the bills of those most at risk of fuel poverty.

The consultation will explore the use of powers which would allow the sharing of information between public authorities and energy suppliers so that vulnerable consumers receiving certain benefits would automatically be protected by the safeguard tariff.

The energy regulator, Ofgem, introduced a safeguard tariff cap in April 2017

for 4 million consumers on prepayment meters. This month, it was extended to a further one million who receive the Warm Home Discount. Ofgem consulted on further eligibility for the safeguard tariff cap earlier this year and the powers proposed in this consultation will make identifying and protecting these vulnerable consumers easier while still protecting their data.

The move comes as the government prepares to introduce a Tariff Cap Bill which will put an end to rip-off standard variable tariffs.

Business and Energy Secretary Greg Clark said:

The effects of energy price rises are often felt most by those on the lowest incomes, as they are usually on the highest standard variable tariffs. These people are at risk of being plunged further into fuel poverty if they are left at the mercy of a broken energy market. Enabling energy suppliers to establish who should be on Ofgem's safeguard tariff cap will help these vulnerable consumers.

The government is committed to tackling fuel poverty. We want to make it easier for those vulnerable consumers to bring their energy bills down. And it doesn't stop there. We are working with Ofgem and other partners to ensure that switching is made easier and we'll be introducing an energy price cap bill soon so that we can have an energy market that works for everyone.

The proposed amendments to the Digital Economy Act will allow suppliers to work with government to carefully identify those whose energy bills are high and potentially putting them in financial difficulty. These people can then be placed under Ofgem's safeguard tariff cap, protecting them from high bills and unfair price rises.

We will shortly be introducing our Tariff Cap Bill which will put an end to rip-off standard tariffs. Our Bill, published in the autumn, has been undergoing pre-legislative scrutiny in order to build cross-party consensus. We expect a report from the BEIS Select Committee shortly so that we can begin the process of getting the Bill through the House in order to protect millions of consumers as soon as possible.

National Energy Action (NEA) Chief Executive Adam Scorer said:

Schemes to take people out of fuel poverty have been hamstrung by an inability to target support on those who need it most. Data matching is a necessary part of the answer and NEA welcomes this consultation as an important step to establishing a safe and effective way of bringing help with energy costs to those least able to afford a warm home.

Energy regulator Ofgem announced today its intention to trial its first

'hassle free' switching service as part of a package of reforms aimed at making it easier for people to switch as well as protecting those who don't switch from being overcharged.

The industry body, Energy UK, has also launched a new Commission today as part of its drive to improve customer engagement with a particular focus on vulnerable customers.

Suppliers would not be permitted to use the information they receive for any purpose other than those that are outlined in the Digital Economy Act. In addition to legislative controls and criminal penalties, a code of practice would be put in place alongside detailed contractual arrangements for the handling and protection of the data – see the recent government consultation on [Digital Economy Act, part 5: data sharing codes and regulations](#)

Ofgem recently [consulted on expanding the eligibility criteria for the safeguard tariff](#)

[News story: Defence Secretary hails modern partnership with Australia](#)

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson during a visit to the The Tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier. Crown copyright.

In his first trip to Australia as Secretary of State for Defence, Mr Williamson met his counterpart, Minister for Defence, Marise Payne, in Sydney. They examined how both allies can continue to adapt in the face of cyber-attacks and nuclear threats from North Korea and how best to counter global terrorism.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

Britain and Australia both face intensifying, complex and evolving threats to our way of life. That is why it is so important our two countries stand side-by-side to stay ahead of those who want to harm us.

Two Royal Navy warships, HMS Sutherland and HMS Argyll, are heading to the region to continue the pressure campaign on North Korea, demonstrating Britain's role on the international stage.

We have a long and historic relationship with Australia but today we are modern, equal, and global powers with shared values and a commitment to make the world a safer place.

As part of this modern partnership the UK and Australia:

- Have more than one hundred people from all three services on exchange programmes between our nations, working together and learning from each other;
- Are part of the Five Eyes intelligence-sharing organisation and work together on tackling shared threats;
- Hold annual meetings of foreign and defence ministers (AUKMIN) to coordinate responses to shared threats, such as Daesh;
- Work together on the mission to establish stability in Syria and Afghanistan, to which Australia is the largest non-NATO contributor;
- Combine on humanitarian missions, such as: the two Malaysian airline incidents, Ebola in Sierra Leone and disaster relief in Vanuatu;
- Police the seas as part of the Combined Maritime Forces, to provide security and stability on the seas, including tackling drug and weapon smugglers;
- Work together on science and technology, and defence equipment;
- Additionally, Royal Navy ship HMS Sutherland will visit Australia in February and March, allowing further opportunities for the two naval forces to collaborate.

The UK Defence Secretary also met Minister for Defence Industry, Christopher Pyne, in Canberra today (Monday 12 Feb) to discuss exciting new defence export opportunities as Britain prepares to leave the European Union.

The Type 26 Global Combat Ship is a key example of this and has been shortlisted for Australia's Future Frigate Programme. The cutting-edge warship would not only boost the partnership between the two countries, but would bolster Australia ballistic missile defences and give them an unrivalled anti-submarine warfare capability to face growing underwater threats.

Mr Williamson went on to meet Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel, Michael McCormack, to talk about issues impacting and sharing research on Veterans and the successes of the British Armed Forces Covenant.

Australian forces recently solved a 103-year-old mystery when they discovered His Majesty's Australian Submarine AE1, the first Allied submarine lost in

World War One, off the coast of Papua New Guinea.