

Today's IMF report is yet another blow for the Government and its continued austerity agenda – McDonnell

John McDonnell MP, Labour's Shadow

Chancellor, responding

to the IMF downgrade of UK growth forecasts, said:

"Today's report from the IMF is yet another blow for the Government and its continued austerity agenda that is holding our country back.

"It further reveals that this government has no real plan for Brexit and no real plan to deal with the problem of earnings not keeping up with prices, which is undermining growth and risking living standards.

"Only a Labour government will end austerity and provide the vital programme of investment to boost growth in our economy, underpinned by our Fiscal Credibility Rule, which our country desperately needs.

The Government's promise of battery technology investment is a re-announcement of funding – Long-Bailey

Rebecca

Long-Bailey MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, commenting

on the Government's industrial strategy announcement, said:

"Today's 'announcement' is something of a damp squib. The Government's promise of investment in battery technology is simply a re-announcement of funding promised back in April as part of the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund, and their record of supporting emerging green industries is abysmal.

"Labour's plans for energy market reform would see consumers' bills slashed by £120 and our industrial strategy to create one million good jobs and ensure that we

find

60 per cent of our energy from renewable sources by 2030 has real teeth, backed up our £250 billion National Transformation Fund.

“This

scale of vision and investment is what is needed to transform the UK economy, not a re-announcement of the same small pot of funding.”

Over seven million people will lose out by £10,000 each under Government's plans for state pension age change

New analysis by the House of Commons Library has revealed that 7.6 million people will lose out by nearly £10,000 each under the Government's plans to bring forward changes to the state pension age.

The change will affect all men and women currently between the age of 39 and 47, who will be forced to work a year longer before they can access their state pension entitlement.

The Government's announcement of their plans to bring forward the state pension age last Thursday came more than two months after their legal deadline, 7 May 2017, evading debate on the issue leading up to the General Election.

The announcement was heavily criticised, as it followed evidence from the renowned expert on life expectancy, Professor Sir Michael Marmot, who just days before had described how a century-long rise in life expectancy was “pretty close to having ground to a halt.” Professor Marmot pointed to 2010 as the turning point, when the Government began its austerity programme.

Just over a week ago, the Government's own advisory body, Public Health England, had published data showing significant disparities in Healthy Life Expectancy. For example, it showed how on average a man living in Nottingham would be only be expected to live in good health until the age of 57, a full eleven years earlier than the Government's newly timetabled state pension age increase to 68.

A Director of Public Health England described how the average pensioner will now have to deal with a “toxic cocktail” of ill health

throughout their whole retirement, and for some years before.

Debbie Abrahams MP, Labour's Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary, said:

"This is a disgraceful and unjustified attack on the state pension by this Government, who are asking millions of people to work longer to pay for their failing austerity plans.

"The latest research on life expectancy, published days ago, shows that there is no evidential basis for bringing the state pension age further forward.

"That's why Labour want to take a measured approach, leaving the state pension age at 66 while we review the evidence emerging around life expectancy and healthy life expectancy, considering how we can best protect those doing demanding jobs and the contributions they have already made."

This is a slap in the face for commuters and businesses in the north-McDonald

Andy McDonald MP, Labour's Shadow Transport

Secretary, commenting on Chris Grayling's comments that the full electrification of the Leeds to Manchester train line won't go ahead, said:

"This is a slap in the face for commuters and businesses in the North.

"Just six weeks ago the Tories promised the electrification of the Trans-Pennine route as an integral part of the government's 'Northern Powerhouse'.

"For years the Tories have promised electrification for the North, delivering faster, greener and more reliable services along with the significant economic benefits brought about by improved connectivity.

"The Tories have gone from Northern Powerhouse to Northern Powercut! Another broken promise from a Government that's hit the buffers.

"Chris Grayling had to be forced to come to

parliament to give his HS2 statement and has sneaked this out in an interview after the Commons has risen.

"Voters won't be fooled by Grayling's claim that the same benefits will be realised without electrification.

"With our commitment to deliver a Crossrail for the North, it's clear only Labour has the ambition to transform the economies of the North of England for the many not the few."

Ends

Richard Burgon congratulates Lady Hale on her appointment as President of the UK Supreme Court

Richard Burgon MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Justice, following the appointment of Lady Hale as President of the UK Supreme Court, said:

"I congratulate Lady Hale on her appointment. It is a welcome step forward to have the first female president of the Supreme Court.

"Such positive change is far too slow across the judiciary. Labour will review the judicial appointments process to ensure a judiciary that's more representative of society."