

# POLICY INFORM: TRANSFORMATION AND RESOURCES

---

## Directorate Policy: September 2015

The Directorate Policy briefings will provide an overview of key political events, ongoing and recent national legislation, and emerging policies. The Directorate Policy briefing will be produced specifically to inform Portfolio Holders and Elected Members and will be taken to Policy & Performance Committees for discussion.

---

# Contents

---

	<b>Page Number</b>
Introduction	p.1
Chancellors Statement- 8 <sup>th</sup> July 2015	p.2
Queens Speech 2015- Designation to Policy and Performance Committees	p.4
Queens Speech 2015- Developments and Implications	p.6
Draft Public Service Ombudsman Bill	p.6
National Insurance and Finance Bill	p.7
Policing and Criminal Justice Bill	p.8
High Speed Rail Bill	p.10
Trade Union Bill	p.11
Welfare Reform and Work Bill	p.12
Policy Development	p.15
Useful Sources	p.18

# Introduction

---

The policy briefing paper is intended to provide Members of the Policy and Performance Committee with the latest position on emerging policy and legislative developments to support the committees work programme and future scrutiny work.

The following table outlines the timetable for the preparation and reporting of policy briefing papers:

<b>Policy &amp; Performance Committee Briefings</b>	
<b>July 2015</b>	The first policy briefing will focus predominately on the Queen's Speech, which will establish the Government's legislative programme for the parliamentary year ahead.
<b>September 2015</b>	The second policy briefing will be produced in September and will focus on the Chancellor's July 2015 Budget Statement. The policy briefing will provide an update on policy and legislation and will consider relevant implications for Wirral.
<b>January 2016</b>	The third policy briefing will focus on the Autumn Statement and the local government finance settlement which informs the annual determination of funding to local government. The policy briefing will provide an update on policy and legislation and will consider relevant implications for Wirral.
<b>March 2016</b>	The fourth policy briefing will focus upon the 2016 Chancellor of Exchequers Budget. The policy briefing will provide an update on policy and legislation and will consider relevant implications for Wirral.

The September policy briefing outlines the key features of the Chancellor of Exchequers Budget Statement, which was announced on the 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015. The policy briefing also alludes to any potential implications that have been highlighted by relevant Officers for Wirral Council, and elaborates on any legislation or policy updates that have been implemented or developed since the last policy briefing in July.

The Committee may wish to identify specific policy areas to focus upon which are in line with the Committee's work programme. Detailed briefing papers can be prepared for these subject matters at the request of the Committee which would be in addition to the regular policy briefing papers outlined above.

# Chancellors Statement- 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015

---

On 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015, the Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne gave his Budget statement to the House of Commons. The budget set out £17bn of savings and deferred announcements on another £20bn to the autumn's Spending Review. The key announcements outlined in the statement have been divided into themes and are displayed below:

## Social Housing

- The budget details plans to legislate to freeze working-age benefits, including tax credits and the Local Housing Allowances, for 4 years from 2016-17 to 2019-20. This is forecast to save £4 billion a year by 2019-20.
- Rents in social housing in England will be reduced by 1% a year for 4 years.

## Welfare

- Working-age benefits, including tax credits and Local Housing Allowance, will be frozen for 4 years from 2016-17 (this doesn't include Maternity Allowance, maternity pay, paternity pay and sick pay).
- The household benefit cap will be reduced to £20,000 (£23,000 in London).
- Support through Child Tax Credit will be limited to 2 children for children born from April 2017.
- Those aged 18 to 21 who are on Universal Credit will have to apply for an apprenticeship or traineeship, gain work-based skills, or go on a work placement 6 months after the start of their claim.
- From April 2017 the Budget will remove the automatic entitlement to housing support for new claims in Universal Credit from 18-21 year olds who are out of work.

## Housing

- Rents for social housing will be reduced by 1% a year for 4 years.
- £800 million of funding is designated for Discretionary Housing Payments over the next 5 years.
- Social housing tenants with household incomes of £40,000 and above in London, and £30,000 and above in the rest of England, will be required to "Pay to Stay", by paying a market or near market rent for their accommodation.

## Children and Education

- From the 2016-17 academic year, cash support for new students will increase by £766 to £8,200 a year. New maintenance loan support will replace student grants. Loans will be paid back only when graduates earn above £21,000 a year.
- From September 2017, the free childcare entitlement will be doubled from 15 hours to 30 hours a week for working parents of 3 and 4 year olds.
- Parents with a youngest child aged 3 or older (including lone parents) who are able to work will be expected to look for work if they are claiming Universal Credit.
- £30 million will be provided to further speed up the adoption process while paving the way for the introduction of regional adoption agencies.

## Pay

- From April 2016, a new National Living Wage of £7.20 an hour for the over 25s will be introduced. This will rise to over £9 an hour by 2020.
- Public sector pay will increase by 1% a year for 4 years from 2016-17.
- The budget details plans to increase the National Insurance contributions (NICs) Employment Allowance from £2,000 to £3,000 a year.

## Efficiency

- The budget supports plans to continue to pursue more efficient ways of working and further reform to public services. The government will provide funding for the Cabinet Office to explore a number of cross-cutting savings proposals. The Treasury, working with Cabinet Office, will develop specific proposals to inform the Spending Review.

## Devolution

- The budget commits to transport devolution in all of the country's city regions that elect a Mayor, as well as the country's counties. This includes the rollout of Oyster-style smart and integrated ticketing systems.
- The government is working towards further devolution deals with the Sheffield City Region, Liverpool City Region, and Leeds, West Yorkshire and partner authorities, to be agreed in parallel with the Spending Review. The Budget notes that agreement will be reached based on combined authorities agreeing to an elected mayor working with local leaders to oversee any new powers devolved from ministers.
- The Budget announces further devolution of powers to Manchester, including devolving Fire Services under the control of the new directly-elected Mayor, establishing a Greater Manchester Land Commission and granting the city region more powers over planning subject to the agreement of the Cabinet member representing the district in which the power is used.
- The Budget states that it will be offering towns and counties the opportunity to agree devolution deals.

## Economic Development

- The government is inviting bids for a new round of Enterprise Zones. The existing Enterprise Zones have supported the creation of over 15,000 jobs throughout England.
- To ensure that local areas have a greater say over their own economies, the government will consult on devolving powers on Sunday trading to city mayors and local authorities.
- The budget details plans to invest £23m in 6 Next Generation Digital Economy Centres over 6 sites (London, Swansea, Newcastle, Nottingham, York and Bath), leveraging £22 million of additional funding, and partnering with LEPs, regional councils, and local SMEs. These centres will exploit opportunities across sectors of the digital economy including the creative industries, finance, healthcare and education.

# Queen's Speech 2015- Designation to Policy and Performance Committees

On Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2015, the Queen unveiled the Government's legislative plans for the year ahead. Below is a list of each individual Bill which will have implications for local government that were announced during the speech. The list identifies the Policy and Performance committee with whose remit the legislation most closely aligns:

Legislative Plans	Policy and Performance Committee
National Insurance Contributions Bill/ Finance Bill	Transformation and Resources
Full Employment and Welfare Benefits Bill	All Policy and Performance Committees
Trade Unions Bill	Transformation and Resources
Housing Bill	Regeneration and Environment
Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill	Regeneration and Environment
Buses Bill	Regeneration and Environment
High Speed Rail Bill	Regeneration and Environment
Childcare Bill	Families and Wellbeing
Energy Bill	Regeneration and Environment
Education and Adoption Bill	Families and Wellbeing
Enterprise Bill	Regeneration and Environment
Policing and Criminal Justice Bill	Families and Wellbeing Transformation and Resources
Draft Public Service Ombudsman Bill	Transformation and Resources
Psychoactive Substances Bill	Families and Wellbeing

Additional bills that have been announced are outlined below. These will be monitored in relation to any emerging implications for Local Government and reported to the relevant Policy and Performance Committee as appropriate.

Additional Legislative Plans
EU Referendum Bill
Scotland Bill
Immigration Bill
Extremism Bill
Investigatory Powers Bill
Charities Bill
Armed Forces Bill
Bank of England Bill
Northern Ireland (Stormont House Agreement) Bill

Wales Bill
Votes for Life Bill

The bills relevant to the Families and Wellbeing Committee are discussed in further detail below. The information provided has been sourced predominately from the LGiU, as well as SOLACE and the LGC and therefore solely represents a fact-based introduction to the bills.

# Queen's Speech 2015- Developments and Implications

---

## Draft Public Service Ombudsman Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### **Synopsis:**

- The aim of this Bill is to reform and modernise the Public Service Ombudsman sector to provide "a more effective and accessible final tier of complaints redress within the public sector". It would absorb the functions of the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the Health Ombudsman, and the Local Government Ombudsman and potentially the Housing Ombudsman

#### **Key Points:**

- Allow the Public Service Ombudsman to absorb the functions of the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the Health Ombudsman, the Local Government Ombudsman and potentially The Housing Ombudsman.
- Ensure a robust process for accountability and reporting. The new Ombudsman will be independent of Government and directly accountable to Parliament
- Establish the relevant powers for a modern ombudsman organisation

### Further Developments:

- There are no further developments at this time. The Draft Public Service Ombudsman Bill will be kept under review and developments will be outlined in future Policy Inform briefings.

### Wirral Implications:

- There are no immediate issues arising. The impact of the Bill will be procedural rather than financial or increasing duties and responsibilities on the Council.

## National Insurance and Finance Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### **Synopsis:**

- The bill is designed to enact a series of pledges made by the Conservatives during the general election campaign.

#### **Key Points:**

- No rises in income tax rates
- No VAT or national insurance before 2020
- No one working 30 hours on the minimum wage pays any income tax
- Enacts a commitment to raise the threshold before which people pay income tax to £12,500- A move Ministers say will benefit 30 million people.

### Further Developments:

- There are no further developments at this time. The National Insurance and Finance Bill will be kept under review and developments will be outlined in future Policy Inform briefings.

### Wirral Implications:

- There are no direct implications for Wirral arising from this bill. This bill is mainly concerned with Income and Corporate taxation which does not apply to local authorities. There are changes to Employers National Insurance contributions, coming into effect in April 2016, which will have a significant effect upon Wirral as an employer. These changes have already been legislated for and built into budget forecasts.

## Policing and Criminal Justice Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### **Synopsis:**

- This legislation is intended to continue the reform of policing with the aim of enhancing protections for vulnerable people

#### **Key Points:**

- The Bill would ensure 17 years olds who are detained in police custody are treated as children for all purposes under PACE.
- In particular, the amendments to the provisions of PACE concerning 17 year olds include:
  - Ensuring an appropriate adult is present for drug sample taking;
  - Ensuring appropriate consent is granted by both the 17 year old and parent/ legal guardian for a range of interventions, including intimate searches; and
  - The ability to impose conditional bail to ensure the welfare and interests of the 17 year old.
- Reforming legislation in relation to the detention of people under sections 135 and 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983 to ensure better outcomes for those experiencing a mental health crisis.
  - Prohibiting the use of police cells as places of safety for those under 18 years of age and further reducing their use in the case of adults;
  - Reducing the current 72 hour maximum period of detention; and
  - Extending the power to detain under section 136 to any place other than a private residence.

### Further Developments:

- There are no further developments at this time. The Policing and Criminal Bill will be kept under review and developments will be outlined in future Policy Inform briefings.

### Wirral Implications:

- **Appropriate Adult Provision-** The Youth Offending service is in support of this change and we have been anticipating it for over a year. For many years 17 year olds have not been treated as Youths in the Police custody suite / Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) arena, which is inconsistent with other youth justice parameters. Therefore this change supports and recognises 17 years olds as still being youths and not adults during PACE interviews, processing and charging stages of detention.

Our **Appropriate Adult** (AA) services are already in place and will accommodate this wider age group. YOS provides this service by day and EDT by night. This may involve an increase in workload, however some 17 year olds who are detained in custody can be deemed to be Vulnerable Adults and the existing AA service covers youths and vulnerable adults anyway, so the increased workload may not be large.

We will monitor any increase in use of AA in respect of 17 years olds but this extension of age group now represents the same 10-18 year age group YOS and the youth courts accommodate, so this is more in line and consistent with other such youth justice services.

### Wirral Implications Continued:

• **Identification of Accommodation for those Young People detained-** The Merseyside Criminal Justice Board **Youth Detention Protocol** may also need to include 17 year olds and this may have an impact on the requirements for Local Authorities to find accommodation for 17 year olds who have been refused Police Bail and the LA has a duty to accommodate them. The compliance of this protocol is monitored by the Police Crime Commissioner and the existing Policy may change to include 17 years olds, and this would then have an impact on CYPS Specialist Services and demands to accommodate 17 year olds at short notice who have been refused Bail. I have attached the existing protocol as this currently only covers 10-16 year olds but maybe amended.

## High Speed Rail Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### **Synopsis:**

- The aim of this Bill is to provide the Government with the legal powers to construct and operate phase 1 of the High Speed 2 (HS2) railway.

#### **Key Points:**

- Give the Government deemed planning permission for the railway between London and the West Midlands.
- Give the Government compulsory purchase powers and the power to temporarily take possession of land required to construct and operate the railway.
- Help rebalance the UK economy and free up space on the UK rail network, improving connections between London, the Midlands, the North and Scotland

### Further Developments:

- On 2 July 2015, the Government published their response to the House of Lords' Economic Affairs Committee report on 'The Economics of High Speed 2'. Their overall conclusion is that there is a convincing and compelling case for investing in HS2. In response to the Committee's concerns about the final cost of HS2 being even higher than the £50.1 billion currently estimated, the Government says that they aim to deliver HS2 below this figure and that there are strong controls in place to ensure they remain within budget.
- The members of the current HS2 Hybrid Bill Select Committee were appointed on 8 June 2015. On 4 June 2015, the Secretary of State for Transport as promoter of the Hybrid Bill for the first stage of HS2, published his response to the 'First Special Report' (PDF document) which was published by the Bill Committee in March. Many of the Committee's recommendations related to specific local areas or concerns about the compensation arrangements for those whose properties are affected by construction of the line and much of the response focuses on how these issues will be addressed.
- The Government announced in June 2015, that it was instructing the HS2 Bill Committee to consider more than 120 amendments it wishes to make to the Bill. These amendments have resulted from discussions between HS2 Ltd and communities on phase 1 of the route. They include changes to the route near Lichfield which will avoid the need for two crossings over the Trent and Mersey Canal; altering the proposals for the relocation of the existing Heathrow Express depot at Old Oak Common to Langley near Slough; and the construction of sidings to the west of the Old Oak Common station, which could facilitate a future connection between Crossrail and the West Coast Main Line, if needed. These amendments were debated and agreed by the House of Commons without a vote on 23 June and will now be subject to a consultation which is expected to run from mid-July to late August. Anyone affected by the changes will also be able to petition the Bill Committee about them.

### Wirral Implications:

- The passing of this Bill confirms the start of the construction of Phase 1 of HS2. The significant investment in infrastructure should unlock growth but ensuring that these benefits are fully realised within the city region will require the progression of HS3 linking the key cities across the north including Liverpool.

## Trade Union Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### **Synopsis:**

- The aim of this bill is to bring forward legislation to reform trade unions to ensure hardworking people are not disrupted by little-supported strike action and to pursue the Government's ambition to become the most prosperous major economy in the world by 2030.

#### **Key Points:**

- Introduction of a 50% voting threshold for union ballots turnouts (and retain the requirement for there to be a simple majority of votes in favour).
- In addition to the 50% minimum voting turnout threshold, introduction of a requirement that 40% of those entitled to vote must vote in favour of industrial action in certain essential public services (health, education, fire, transport).
- Tackling intimidation of non-striking workers during a strike.
- Introduction of a transparent opt-in process for the political fund element of trade unions subscriptions. This will reflect the existing practice in Northern Ireland.
- Introduction of time limits on a mandate following a ballot for industrial action.
- Making changes to the role of the Certification Officer

### Further Developments:

- There are no further developments at this time. The National Insurance and Finance Bill will be kept under review and developments will be outlined in future Policy Inform briefings.

### Wirral Implications:

- No implication for the Council as an employer directly. The legislation places requirements on trade unions to meet certain conditions before industrial action is taken.

## Welfare Reform and Work Bill

### Synopsis and Key Points:

#### **Synopsis:**

- The overriding aim of the Bill is to reduce expenditure and “help to achieve a more sustainable welfare system.” A related aim is to support efforts to increase employment and “support the policy of rewarding hard work while increasing fairness with working households.”

#### **Key Points:**

- It is essentially a Bill of three parts. First, it will introduce a duty to report to Parliament on:
  - Progress towards achieving full employment.
  - Progress towards achieving 3 million apprenticeships in England.
  - Progress with the Troubled Families programme (England).
- Second, it will repeal almost all of the Child Poverty Act 2010 and introduce a new duty for the Secretary of State to report annually on “life chances”: children living in workless households and educational attainment at age 16, in England.
- Finally, the Bill allows for the introduction of extensive changes to welfare benefits, tax credits and social housing rent levels. These will account for around 70% of the £12-13 billion in welfare savings identified in the Summer Budget 2015. The welfare/housing measures include:
  - Lowering the benefit cap threshold and varying it between London and the rest of the UK.
  - A four year benefits freeze.
  - Limiting support through Child Tax Credits/Universal Credit.
  - The abolition of Employment and Support Allowance Work-Related Activity Component.
  - Changes to conditionality for responsible carers under Universal Credit.
  - Replacing Support for Mortgage Interest with Loans for Mortgage Interest.
  - Reducing social housing rent levels by 1% in each year for four years from 2016-17.

### Further Developments:

- The Welfare Reform and Work Bill was presented on 9 July 2015. The Bill passed its second reading on 20 July 2015. MPs also agreed a programme motion which schedules the Bill to be considered in a public bill committee. Proceedings in the public bill committee are scheduled to conclude by Thursday 15 October 2015, but could finish earlier.

### Wirral Implications:

- **Freeze Working Age Benefits** - This will impact on household disposable income, not previously frozen albeit uprating was nominal in 2014/15. This will potentially increase the strain on Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) Local Welfare Allowance (LWA) with consequential harder to collect charges. This will affect all Revenues areas such as Personal Finance Unit charges, Benefits overpayments and Council Tax. Rent arrears locally will increase as with all cuts and will continue as (social) landlords maintain rent levels and annual increases.

## Wirral Implications Continued:

- **Freeze Working Age Benefits Continued** - This will increase pressure on LA Housing Benefit services from Social Landlords which is evident already via the rent shortfall in Bedroom Tax and insufficient DHP. In the private sector it may see a freezing of Local Housing Allowance rates which will give Private Sector landlords further issue with taking on tenants who rely on HB. This is likely to have a consequential impact on the levels of people being threatened with homelessness in the Borough.
- **Cutting Household Benefit Cap** – This will certainly impact locally, regrettably we cannot identify how many within present caseload will be affected, nor by how much in monetary terms on a weekly basis, as DWP consider circumstances of household and benefits in payment that LA are unable to identify from records held. The LA's HB service administers the Cap not the DWP who advise us of each situation. There are currently 72 cases live (but cases go on and off and DWP projected our numbers would be 130). The change would bring more case with a consequential impact on resources, both front and back of house. Those affected would have an increased reliance on other means of support, financial, Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP - annual cash limited budget) or the Local Welfare Assistance potentially (LWA - finite residual budget as scheme no longer nationally funded). Likely impact will see increased problems for those in temporary accommodation with large families and again, for LA, placing the homeless or those at risk etc., then reliance on the limited discretionary schemes (DHP).
- **General Issues for Wirral/Benefits Service** - As a consequence of these changes there will be a need to revise local schemes and policies with an increased reliance on any discretion the authority can, within its local policies and resources, exercise (again for example its LWA/DHP funds). The definition of 'vulnerable' will need review given the ratio of those reasonably deemed to be vulnerable which are those financially at risk, including dispossession. This will impact on key grant limited local schemes such as Council Tax Support Scheme which currently awards £27m pa. This will provide a significant challenge for officers reviewing the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2016/2017 onwards and will see collection issues increase as more people face difficulty paying, ultimately having their national benefits reduced at source to pay Council Tax. Broadly we can expect from these changes increased contact to services, both front facing public contact and back of house processing and decision making services with an increased need and reliance on knowledgeable, experienced, skilled resource, ensuring accessibility.
- **Remove Housing Benefit from Young People** 18-21 year olds, this will see more remain at home where it may not be appropriate to do so which will see issues for householder with Housing Benefit non dependant charges being applied and more rent to pay (as adult is meant to contribute as resident). These cases which will increase already provide issues for the LA with collection of information and provision of evidence of household occupants.
- **Troubled Families Programme-** It is expected that approximately 450 of the 600 families Wirral will work with this year, through the Troubled Families Programme (Family Intervention), will be affected by the Welfare Reform and Work Bill through changes to benefits and the implementation of Universal Credit. To support these families Wirral's provision of Advisors from JCP (Job Centre Plus) has increased from 1FTE (full time equivalent) to 2FTE. These staff will work specifically with

### Wirral Implications Continued:

- those affected by the changes. They will also provide the wider Family Intervention workforce with updates and training about the roll out of universal credit and enable them to support their families better. A Manager has been appointed from JCP to oversee all work with Troubled Families across Merseyside and he will be joining Wirral's Troubled Families Board to provide quarterly updates on the progress of moving Troubled Families into employment.
- Wirral will continue to report to the DCLG on progress into employment for Troubled Families and to submit the cost benefit analysis for each of those families.
- At this stage it is hard to predict what the specific implications for families might be. This could be: more reliance on food banks, more families moving out of social housing into private housing, more families unable to secure tenancies, more applications for discretionary payments.
- Reports will be provided outlining the implications as time progresses.

# Policy Developments

---

## Briefing: The first 100 days: impact on local government

August 14th 2015 marked 100 days since the election of the new government. As per tradition, this milestone provides an opportunity to review government actions during this period and assess the impact on local government.

Key areas of development have been in relation to devolution; social care and housing and planning.

### **Devolution and local government**

- Publication of 'Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill' about to go into the Commons from Lords.
- Cornwall is the first county to have negotiated a deal and groups of authorities are pressing ahead with new deals.

### **Health and Social Care**

- Postponement of cap on social care costs until 2020
- Councils affected by proposed £200m cut in 2015-2016 public health grant.
- Progress on improving mental health services.

### **Housing and Planning**

- Plans to extend the Right to Buy to 1.3m housing association tenants has been confirmed in the Queen's speech and forms part of the housing bill to be published in Autumn.
- A commitment to increase the housing supply by 200,000 homes
- Faster planning application processing

Significant developments have been the momentum behind the devolution bill; however, controversy and concern remain in areas such as Social care and the Environment.

**Source:** [Janet Sillett, Briefing: The first 100 days: impact on local government, 19<sup>th</sup> August 2015](#)

---

## Briefing: Managing the challenges of localised Council Tax Support

'Managing the challenges of localised council tax support' was commissioned by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and based on research conducted by the New Policy Institute (NPI) and explores the various Council Tax Support schemes brought in across England since April 2013.

In the report, Council Tax Support schemes are classified by their impact on council finances and on claimants. Examples are given for what makes a good Council Tax Support scheme, how it can be delivered effectively, and what are the major challenges facing councils. The report also highlights various implications in relation to Council Tax Support working alongside Universal Credit.

**Source:** [Andrew Jones, Briefing: Managing the challenges of localised Council Tax Support, 21<sup>st</sup> July 2015](#)

---

### **Briefing: Financial sustainability of police forces in England and Wales – NAO report by the National Audit Office**

This report by the NAO looks at the risk of reducing police funding 2010-11 to 2015-16.

It describes reductions in police funding over the last five years, examines the impact of the reductions and the changing nature of policing and assesses the current oversight and accountability regime.

Government has stated it has a preference for ‘service transformation’ rather than further efficiency savings.

The key finding of the report is that there is a lack of understanding about the impact of funding cuts on police service levels and the latest cuts could mean that some police forces are unable to meet the demand for their services.

Gaining a comprehensive understanding of police performance and efficiency across all police forces is clearly a major challenge, but the report indicates that some progress is being made by police forces along with the College and HMIC. This should aid the Home Office in make judgements about future funding levels and interventions.

**Source:** [Tom Simon, Briefing: Financial sustainability of police forces in England and Wales – NAO report by the National Audit Office, 6<sup>th</sup> August 2015](#)

---

### **Briefing: Understanding age and the labour market**

In response to the ageing population the state has introduced measures to extend working life, such as increasing the pension age and introducing legislation to allow people to work longer, as well as measures to protect older workers against age discrimination. But little work has been done to understand the employment experience of older workers and the way generation, age and life-stage impacts on employment opportunities.

The report used data from the Labour Force Survey to examine the experience of workers of the same age in 1993, 2003 and 2013.

The report concludes that policy initiatives should focus low-skilled workers, improving the quality of flexible jobs and the range, relevance and quality of training.

This is an important report for local government, both because it employs significant numbers of people directly and indirectly through contracted-out services, but also because councils are pushing for greater involvement in employment and training provision such as the Work Programme as part of devolution deals.

The report makes the following recommendations:

- Councils must work with schools, colleges and employers to ensure that vocational training for young people is of high quality to prevent them being trapped in low-paid, low skilled jobs for life.
- Local Authorities must ensure that employees and contracted staff who work flexibly are not disadvantaged by it.

**Source:** [Rachel Salmon, Briefing: Understanding age and the labour market, 11<sup>th</sup> August 2015](#)

# Useful Sources

---

## Chancellors Budget Statement

[Chancellor George Osborne's Summer Budget 2015 Speech, Government website, 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015](#) - Full speech

[Andrew Jones, July 2015 Budget Analysis, LGiU, 14<sup>th</sup> July 2015](#) - Brief analysis and key points emerging from the Chancellor Budget Statement

## Draft Public Service Ombudsman Bill

There are no further developments at this time. The Draft Public Service Ombudsman Bill will be kept under review and developments will be outlined in future Policy Inform briefings.

## National Insurance and Finance Bill

There are no further developments at this time. The National Insurance and Finance Bill will be kept under review and developments will be outlined in future Policy Inform briefings.

## Policing and Criminal Justice Bill

There are no further developments at this time. The Policing and Criminal Justice Bill will be kept under review and developments will be outlined in future Policy Inform briefings.

## High Speed Rail Bill

[High Speed Rail Bill, Parliamentary Website](#) - Brief analysis of the High Speed Rail Bill

[Ruth Bradshaw, High Speed Rail Update: Summer 2015, LGiU, 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2015](#) – Update on key developments and other related proposals since April 2015.

## Welfare Reform and Work Bill

[House of Commons, Briefing Paper- Welfare Reform and Work Bill, 16<sup>th</sup> July 2015](#) – Brief analysis of the Welfare Reform and Work Bill

[Welfare Reform and Work Bill, Parliamentary website](#) - Previous debates on all stages of the Childcare Bill and any latest updates

[Andrew Jones, The Welfare Reform and Work Bill: Welfare Reform Update, 20<sup>th</sup> August 2015](#) – Brief overview of the Bill and any latest updates