

# REFORM MANIFESTO

## Programme for Government

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#ReformPfG



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# The Government should...

*“After three and a half years of parliamentary gridlock, the 2019 general election has returned a Conservative government with a clear majority. The Prime Minister must use his political capital wisely.*

*Britain faces urgent challenges, from inadequate infrastructure to stagnating social mobility, housing and social care crises, to an NHS buckling under poorly managed demand. Injections of cash, while necessary, will not be sufficient. Extra spending must be matched with genuine and deep reform. It is time for an ambitious programme of public service transformation.*

*Mr Prime Minister, here are our recommendations for your programme for government.”*

Charlotte Pickles, Director



## Programme:

- ✓ A prison system that protects the public
- ✓ Education that works for everyone
- ✓ A healthcare system fit for the future
- ✓ Housing for low-income families
- ✓ Delivering digital public services
- ✓ Reforming public procurement

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# A prison system that protects the public

## The Government should:

1. Publish a consultation paper on using evidence-led sentencing policies to reduce reoffending.
2. Fund the creation of a fit-for-purpose, well-maintained prison estate.
3. Invest in rehabilitation to reduce reoffending and protect the public.

Prisons are too often the hidden frontline against crime, managing risk to the public and working to prevent reoffending. They play an essential role in keeping the public safe.

Working in safe, well-maintained prisons, prison staff can focus on addressing prisoner behaviour to prepare them for a return to society. Yet standards have deteriorated over the past decade. Levels of violence, self-harm and drug use have increased, and many prisons are dilapidated.<sup>1</sup> Short prison sentences are used heavily, exacerbating overcrowding, despite having a reoffending rate of over 60 per cent.<sup>2</sup>

The new Government must address these deteriorating standards and ensure that prison sentences are being used proportionately.

## Pursue evidence-led sentencing policies

Short custodial sentences are often the default response to petty and repeat crime, but provide little opportunity to address offending behaviours in custody. Offenders imprisoned for only a few weeks can lose access to work, accommodation, and networks of support in their communities. Evidence from the Ministry of Justice shows that, on average, community sentences are more effective at reducing reoffending than custodial sentences.<sup>3</sup> They are also far cheaper to administer.<sup>4</sup>

However, the use of these sentences has declined significantly in the last decade. Many magistrates, and the public, do not trust that a community order is effective,<sup>5</sup> in part because the quality of probation supervision is poor.<sup>6</sup> The Government should consult on how to reverse this decline to pursue more effective, cheaper alternatives to custody.

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<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Justice, Prison Safety and Reform, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Justice, Proven Reoffending Statistics Quarterly Bulletin, July 2017 to September 2017, 2019.

<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Justice, The Impact of Short Custodial Sentences, Community Orders and Suspended Sentence Orders on Reoffending, 2019.

<sup>4</sup> Revolving Doors Agency, Reducing the Use of Short Prison Sentences in Favour of a Smarter Approach, 2019.

<sup>5</sup> CREST, Where Did It All Go Wrong? A Study into the Use of Community Sentences in England and Wales, 2017.

<sup>6</sup> HM Inspectorate of Probation, Report of the Chief Inspector of Probation, 2019.

## Address the condition of the prison estate

The backlog of maintenance for the prison estate has grown year-on-year and is now estimated to be £900 million.<sup>7</sup> Dilapidated cells, facilities and communal areas are bad for prisoners and staff, and 62 per cent of prisons are overcrowded.<sup>8</sup> For too long, money for the prison estate has been siphoned off to other areas, and what has been provided falls far short of what is needed.<sup>9</sup> The Government must deliver new, modern prison places, and, where possible, close inefficient and unfit prisons. It should provide a multi-year funding settlement for prison maintenance to address the growing backlog.

## Show commitment to rehabilitation

Three-quarters of all crime is reoffending.<sup>10</sup> Ensuring that the police arrest criminals and that serious offenders are locked up is only one aspect of public protection. Almost all prisoners will be released, and without the right support they are very likely to reoffend.

Evidence shows that factors such as accommodation, employment, family relationships, and addiction treatment can reduce a person's chances of returning to crime.<sup>11</sup> Resettlement services that deliver personalised support can prevent further offending. Yet ex-prisoners face a cliff-edge in support when they are released.<sup>12</sup> The new Government should review arrangements for resettlement services to ensure that they can meet the aspirations for a truly "through the gate" service.



*“The new Government faces a challenge to address declining safety in prisons, poor performance by probation services, and continually high levels of reoffending. To keep the public safe we need sustained, evidence-led investment in prisons and sentencing that reduces reoffending.”*

Aidan Shilson-Thomas, Researcher

<sup>7</sup> House of Commons Justice Committee, Prison Governance, First Report of Session 2019-20, HC 191 (Place: The Stationery Office, 2019).

<sup>8</sup> Georgiana Sturge, Briefing Paper: UK Prison Population Statistics, CBP-04334 (House of Commons Library, 2019).

<sup>9</sup> House of Commons, 'Oral Evidence: HMP Birmingham, HC 1674/Prison Population 2022, Planning for the Future, HC 483', Webpage, 11 December 2018, 32.

<sup>10</sup> 'Smarter Sentences, Safer Streets: David Gauke Speech', Webpage, 18 July 2019.

<sup>11</sup> Social Exclusion Unit, Reducing Re-Offending by Ex-Prisoners, 2002; Ministry of Justice, Transforming Rehabilitation: A Summary of Evidence on Reducing Reoffending., 2014.

<sup>12</sup> Criminal Justice Joint Inspection, An Inspection of Through the Gate Resettlement Services for Short-Term Prisoners, 2016.

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# Education that works for everyone

## The Government should:

1. Target additional education spending at schools in most financial need.
2. Focus on retaining teachers by implementing phased bursaries for teacher training in all subjects.
3. Mandate the adoption of contextualised admissions in universities failing to improve access for disadvantaged students.

High-quality education is key to ensuring young people have the opportunity to achieve their potential. It is a cornerstone of social mobility, ensuring that a child's socio-economic circumstances do not determine their life chances.

An effective school system must be financially sustainable, and able to attract and retain high-quality teachers. Post-school, vocational qualifications must be fit for purpose and students from disadvantaged backgrounds must be able to access top universities. Implementing reforms to achieve this will not only ensure a fairer system, but also strengthen the UK's ability to compete in the global economy.

## Creating financially sustainable schools

Over the past decade, schools across England have been under financial pressure. From 2009-10 to 2018-19, total school spending per pupil fell by around 8 per cent,<sup>13</sup> leading to all political parties pledging universal increases in school spending.

The finances of maintained schools, however, reveal a mixed picture. In 2018-19, while nearly 30 per cent of secondary schools and 8 per cent of primary schools were in deficit, a significant proportion of schools reported healthy revenue reserves (36 per cent of secondary and 42 per cent of primary schools had "excessive" surpluses).<sup>14</sup> In total, the surplus across all maintained schools in England amounted to £1.5 billion – eclipsing the total deficit of £195 million. However, of the maintained schools in surplus just under 10 per cent could have their reserves wiped out next year if their in-year balances remain the same. The Government should be smart in their spending by targeting additional funding where it is most needed.

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<sup>13</sup> Christine Farquharson and Luke Sibieta, *2019 Annual Report on Education Spending in England: Schools* (Institute for Fiscal Studies, 2019), 3.

<sup>14</sup> Department for Education, *Expenditure on Education, Children and Young People's Services by Local Authorities and Schools in England: 2017 to 2018* (Department for Education, 2018), 8. This is calculated as revenue balances that are 5 per cent above income for secondary schools and 8 per cent above income for all other types of schools.

## Retaining teachers

Schools in England face a teacher shortage. Class sizes are continuing to grow, and the rate of recruitment is failing to keep pace.<sup>15</sup>

In 2018, teaching applications fell 5 per cent on the previous year. Worryingly, the problem is most acute in disadvantaged areas. For example, only 17 per cent of physics teachers have a relevant degree in deprived areas outside of London, compared to over 50 per cent in London.<sup>16</sup>

Yet recruitment is only half the problem. It is also essential that schools retain teachers. In 2017, over 15 per cent of newly qualified teachers left after just one year. Time-phased bursaries would be one way of ensuring that newly qualified teachers are incentivised to stay in the profession. The Government has already set out its plan to introduce staggered bursaries for certain subjects, and should extend this to all subjects.<sup>17</sup>

## Advancing social mobility

Access to a top university is one of the best ways to advance social mobility.<sup>18</sup> Although progress is being made, advantaged students are more than six times more likely than their disadvantaged peers to attend the most competitive universities.<sup>19</sup>

Contextualised admissions, which ensure universities consider an individual's circumstances during the admissions process, is one of the most impactful ways of improving access for disadvantaged pupils. When universities are failing to make enough progress in widening access, the Office for Students should have the power to mandate the use of contextual measures.



*“High-quality education and training are the bedrock of social mobility. Smart spending to ensure schools are financially healthy and disadvantaged students are getting the best teaching is key. As is taking a tougher approach to universities failing to widen access to poorer students.”*

Dr Luke Heselwood, Senior Researcher

For more information on these policy proposals:

More money, fewer problems?

[Access for all? The participation of disadvantaged students at elite universities](#)

<sup>15</sup> David Foster, *Teacher Recruitment and Retention in England*, HC 7222 (London: Stationery Office, 2019).

<sup>16</sup> Luke Sibieta, *The Teacher Labour Market in England: Shortages, Subject Expertise and Incentives* (Education Policy Institute, 2018), 6.

<sup>17</sup> Department for Education, ‘Up to £35k Bursary and Early Career Payments for New Teachers’, Press Release, GOV.UK, 5 October 2019.

<sup>18</sup> Social Mobility Commission, *State of the Nation 2018-19: Social Mobility in Great Britain*, 2019, 91.

<sup>19</sup> UCAS, *End of Cycle Report 2018: Patterns of Applicant Characteristics*, 2018, 4.

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# A healthcare system fit for the future

## The Government should:

1. Deliver a long-term solution to fund the social care system by introducing a Later Life Care fund.
2. Facilitate the shift towards integrated care in the community by rebalancing investment towards primary care.
3. Deliver an NHS estate that is fit for the future.

The healthcare system is facing multiple challenges. A growing and ageing population is driving up demand, patients' needs are increasingly complex, and technological advancements are reshaping expectations. There is widespread consensus that delivering 21<sup>st</sup> century care will require a radical rethink.

The NHS has embarked on an ambitious programme of reform, based on the NHS Long Term Plan. Yet meaningful reform is being hampered by lack of funding and resource in key parts of the system. Social care is at crisis point. Too much of the healthcare estate is unfit for purpose and ill-equipped to deliver integrated care. In addition, widening workforce and skills shortages across the NHS are putting increased pressure on the system, threatening the long-term sustainability of the Service.

## A long-term funding solution for social care

Social care funding relies on direct taxation, with the revenues raised from today's taxpayers used to support those in need of care. With a rapidly ageing population, this is unsustainable and intergenerationally unfair.

Radical reform is needed. The Government should introduce a compulsory insurance scheme into which working-age people contribute a percentage of their income. Employers would also make a contribution into this state-backed, but private sector managed, Later Life Care Fund. This is a long-term and generationally fair fix. To avoid 'double taxation' while the reserves build up, over-generous universal benefits, such as the Winter Fuel Allowance and Triple Lock, should be scrapped, and the savings used for social care. Asset-rich pensioners should also be expected to unlock the equity in their homes to contribute towards their care costs.

## Delivering integrated care in the community

Primary care services are often the first port of call for patients, and crucial for delivering treatment away from hospital. However, in the last decade spending on primary care

services in England has experienced a real-terms reduction.<sup>20</sup> Patients are increasingly struggling to access services, with waiting times for GP appointments on the rise.<sup>21</sup> There are also marked differences across England, with patients in poorer areas finding it harder to find a GP appointment than those living in more affluent areas.<sup>22</sup>

To improve access to primary care services and alleviate pressure on hospitals, the Government must channel greater investment into community services. While increasing the number of appointments is important, effort must also be put into expanding the types of provision available to patients, including out-of-hours consultations and same-day appointments. Crucially, this must be underpinned by a comprehensive workforce strategy that prioritises the posts and skills needed to deliver integrated care in the community.

## Delivering an NHS estate that is fit for the future

Poor infrastructure and high maintenance backlogs are a common feature across the NHS estate, but particularly prevalent in primary care. Half of GP surgeries in England are considered by professionals to be unfit for purpose.<sup>23</sup> Yet government investment has largely focused on hospitals, with just 6 per cent of the £1.8 billion recently announced for the NHS estate earmarked to support the primary care estate.<sup>24</sup>

To deliver care closer to home the Government must prioritise investing in the primary care estate. This must recognise that the capital requirements of the NHS estate will not be delivered through public sector funding alone. A comprehensive plan should consider alternative financing mechanisms for attracting infrastructure investment, including selling NHS land and setting up strategic estate partnerships with the private sector.



*“If the Government is serious about delivering on the ambitions of the Long-Term Plan it must truly commit to reforming the system. Without a solution for funding social care, good primary care services and modern infrastructure, the Service will continue to lurch from crisis to crisis.”*

Claudia Martinez, Research Manager

For more information on these policy proposals:

[A design diagnosis: Reinvigorating the primary care estate](#)

[Social Care: A prefunded solution](#)

[Getting into shape: Delivering a workforce for integrated care](#)

<sup>20</sup> Anita Charlesworth and Paul Johnson, *Securing the Future: Funding Health and Social Care to the 2030s* (Institute for Fiscal Studies and The Health Foundation, 2018).

<sup>21</sup> Sophie Barnes, 'GP Waiting Time Breaches Two Weeks for First Time, as New Housing Developments Blamed for Pressure on Surgeries', *The Telegraph*, 12 August 2019.

<sup>22</sup> Sarah Neville, 'England's Poor Have Worse Access to GP Services than the Rich', *Financial Times*, 30 December 2018.

<sup>23</sup> British Medical Association, 'Half of GP Practice Buildings Not Fit for Purpose: BMA Survey Reveals', Webpage, February 2019.

<sup>24</sup> Department of Health and Social Care et al., 'PM Announces Extra £1.8 Billion for NHS Frontline Services', 5 August 2019.

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# Housing for low-income families

## The Government should:

1. Reverse the increasing dependency on the private rental sector by building more social housing and scrapping Right to Buy. In addition, end Help to Buy and invest the funds earmarked for the programme into social housing.
2. Restore the connection between housing benefit rates and the cost of rent to ensure low-income families can afford a home.
3. Provide long-term grant funding to local authorities to develop sustainable strategies to prevent homelessness.

Ensuring families can afford a roof over their head is a fundamental part of Britain's welfare state – it is a basic need that any safety net must meet. It is, however, an expensive need, and government must therefore provide support in the most cost-effective way.

To reduce the burgeoning housing benefit bill, support for housing costs has been eroded over the past eight years, leaving too many families to make impossible choices between paying rent or buying food and other essentials – or worse ending up homeless. At the same time, the savings made have largely been short-term gains, not sustainable cost reductions.

A long-term approach that prioritises the provision of low-cost social housing, reversing the decades-long shift towards paying housing benefit for private rents, is essential.

## Replenishing the social housing stock

The housing benefit bill has increased 180 per cent in real terms over the past three decades.<sup>25</sup> This has not happened because the rates have become more generous. The main driver behind this increase has been successive governments' shift away from supporting low-income renters in social housing to subsidising the cost of renting in the private rental market. It is 23 per cent more expensive to house someone in the private rental sector compared to social housing.<sup>26</sup>

The number of social homes in England has dropped by 26 per cent since 1981, and social housing now accounts for just 17 per cent of all housing – half the proportion in 1981.<sup>27</sup> Right to Buy has contributed to this erosion, with almost two million homes sold since 1980-81. In just the six years to 2017-18, 70,695 homes were sold off via Right to Buy, with just 18,791 – or 27 per cent – replaced using the funds raised through sales.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Department for Work and Pensions, Benefit Expenditure and Caseload Tables 2019 (GOV.UK, 2019).

<sup>26</sup> Department for Work and Pensions, Housing Benefit Caseload Statistics, 2018.

<sup>27</sup> Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government, 'Live Tables on Social Housing Sales, Table 682', Webpage, 2019.

<sup>28</sup> Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government, 'Live Tables on Social Housing Sales, Table 691-693', Webpage, 2019.

The cost of subsidising those sales is estimated to have been £4.18 billion.<sup>29</sup>

The most cost-effective way to reduce spending on housing benefit is for the Government to invest in a major build programme. They should also scrap Right to Buy and Help to Buy (which has been heavily criticised for providing financial support to those who do not need it) and invest the billions allocated to those schemes in replenishing the social housing stock.

## Relinking housing benefit rates and the cost of rent

The necessary shift towards social housing will take time, but low-income families need support now. Almost a quarter of local authorities (23 per cent) have shortfalls in their Local Housing Allowance rates which exceed £100 each month, leaving many low-income families to make the stark choice between falling into arrears or cutting back on essentials like food, bills and clothing.<sup>30</sup> To ensure that Local Housing Allowance remains a reliable safety net, the Government should restore entitlement to the cheapest third of local rents.

## Sustainable strategies to tackle homelessness

Rough sleeping has increased by 169 per cent since 2010, with 4,677 people estimated to be sleeping rough on any given night.<sup>31</sup> The use of temporary accommodation – crisis housing – has increased 60 per cent since 2012, with local authorities spending estimated to exceed £1 billion this year.<sup>32</sup>

Replenishing the social housing stock and tackling LHA shortfalls will both help to reduce homelessness, but local authorities also need greater clarity in funding to develop sustainable homelessness prevention strategies. Longer-term, ring-fenced funding should replace short-term grants.



*“The housing benefit system is failing low-income families. As rents have soared, more and more people are struggling to make ends meet, yet the housing benefit bill has skyrocketed. The Government must prioritise investment in social housing.”*

Imogen Farhan, Researcher

For more information on these policy proposals:

[A False Economy: How to reduce the housing benefit bill](#)

[Preventing youth homelessness: An assessment of local approaches](#)

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Crisis, Cover the Cost: Restoring Local Housing Allowance Rates to Prevent Homelessness, 2019; Imogen Farhan, A False Economy: How to Reduce the Housing Benefit Bill, 2019.

<sup>31</sup> Suzanne Fitzpatrick et al., The Homelessness Monitor: England 2019 (Crisis, 2019).

<sup>32</sup> National Audit Office, Homelessness, 2017.

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# Delivering digital public services

## The Government should:

1. Harness the power of data by strengthening the proposed National Data Strategy for the public sector and establishing a framework for fair commercial partnerships using citizen data.
2. Build citizens's confidence in public sector data processing by establishing auditable registers of use.
3. Prevent bias and discrimination by creating a public sector data quality 'kitemark' and service to provide bespoke reports on data quality to organisations wishing to use public-sector data.
4. Mitigate against digital exclusion by mandating the use of accessibility guidelines during the design phase for digital services.

Data is one of the most valuable assets the public sector holds. It can transform the delivery of services – enabling better outcomes at lower cost – drive innovation, and even potentially raise revenue for the Exchequer.

The potential of high-quality data to transform services is well understood. Predictive insights can help police forces prevent crime, or doctors to act early to diagnose disease.<sup>33</sup> Data-driven analytics can help transport bodies manage demand and capacity, or the justice system understand which interventions work best to prevent reoffending. The NHS holds a treasure-trove of data that with the right public-private partnerships can deliver better outcomes for patients and revenue for the Service.<sup>34</sup>

But for these benefits to be realised, the right infrastructure and standards must be in place

## Strengthening the National Data Strategy

Strengthening the proposed National Data Strategy for the public sector would enable government to build a smart data infrastructure with agreed data standards, driving increased interoperability and transparency. This Strategy should be appropriately costed to build data models across the public sector that allow interoperability. It should also ensure that the public sector can optimise the value of the data it holds when it is accessed for commercial purposes. The new Government should consult with all stakeholders including industry, citizens and other public sector organisations on the right governance structures that should be created to ensure that there is a fair apportioning of value.

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<sup>33</sup> G. O. Mohler et al., 'Randomized Controlled Field Trials of Predictive Policing', *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 110, no. 512 (October 2015); Candace Imison et al., *Delivering the Benefits of Digital Health Care* (Nuffield Trust, 2016).

<sup>34</sup> Philip Aldrick, 'NHS Set to Be Offered a "Fair Share" of Data Profits', *The Times*, 5 September 2018; Philip Aldrick, 'If NHS Patient Data Is Worth £10 Billion, Put It on the Balance Sheet and Save Lives Too', *The Times*, 15 June 2018; Jessamy Bagenal and Annemarie Naylor, 'Harnessing the Value of NHS Patient Data', *The Lancet* 392, no. 10163 (2018).

## Build confidence in data use

Ensuring all government departments develop audit trails which track how data is used would build public confidence that every interaction with personal data is auditable, transparent and secure. The new Government should ensure that all departments have a register of data-sharing agreements between the public sector and commercial organisations, including the types of data being shared and the type of partnership model being used. This would improve transparency and facilitate public scrutiny.

## Prevent bias and discrimination

Government should set up a team in the Department for Digital Culture, Media and Sport to create a kitemark, similar to the O'Neil Risk Consulting & Algorithmic Auditing (ORCAA), which could be applied to datasets that meet data quality standards, including accounting for biases.<sup>35</sup> Each government department should create a 'Data Quality Service', with a tiered-fee system, for companies seeking to use public sector data. They should provide bespoke reports on data quality at the early stages of a partnership discussion between public sector organisations and industry, improving transparency, market efficiency and raising revenue.

## Ensure digital inclusion

All public services delivered online or via an app should adhere to clear accessibility guidelines, such as the ones provided by NHS Digital. By mandating accessibility standards, including user testing, government would minimise the risk of vulnerable or disadvantaged people being unable to access services online.



*“If the new Government wants to harness the power of data and create modern public services that are easy for citizens to use, then it will need to get the basics right and invest in developing the appropriate data infrastructure. Without this, digital commitments are just empty promises.”*

Ele Harwich, Director of Research

For more information on these policy proposals:

[Sharing the benefits: how to use data effectively in the public sector](#)

[Making NHS data work for everyone](#)

[Inclusive by default](#)

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<sup>35</sup> ORCAA, 'O'Neil Risk Consulting & Algorithmic Auditing', Webpage, 2018.

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# Reforming public procurement

## The Government should:

1. Commission an independent, comprehensive review of public service markets, public procurement, and outsourcing.
2. Subject to the review findings, introduce an independent regulator, the Office for Public Procurement (Ofpro), to improve the state of government outsourcing.
3. Mandate all public sector bodies responsible for commissioning public services adopt a 'Statement of Responsibility' regime and responsibility maps.

In the wake of Carillion's collapse in January 2018, many improvements have been made in how government procures goods and services from external suppliers, not least through the Government Commercial Function and the Outsourcing Playbook.

Yet there is still room for improvement, particularly around the regulation of major failures and the enforcement of existing legislation – analysis by *Reform* of official investigations into procurement failures conducted between June 2016 and July 2019 revealed £14.3 billion of extra costs incurred. Preventing future failure must be a priority for the new Government.

## An independent review

A comprehensive review of public procurement is urgently needed in order to identify gaps and overlaps in the existing regulatory landscape. Healthcare, for instance, has repeatedly been identified as having too many regulators and statutory bodies with overlapping or over-complicated aims.

The review should examine the effectiveness and appropriateness of existing regulators or organisations with regulatory obligations, and highlight where reforms are needed to underperforming bodies. This should be part of a concerted effort by the new Government to address the significant confusion over existing regulation (as per the government's Better Regulation Executive unit's 'regulatory reform agenda'.)<sup>36</sup>

## The case for an independent regulator

Subject to the review findings, the Government should consider whether an independent regulator, the Office for Public Procurement (Ofpro), is needed.<sup>37</sup> A new regulator could

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<sup>36</sup> Dawn Oliver, Tony Prosser, and Richard Rawlings, *The Regulatory State: Constitutional Implications* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

<sup>37</sup> Joshua Pritchard, *The Price of Poor Procurement: The Argument for an Independent Regulator* (Reform, 2019).

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provide a focal point for scrutinising and overseeing procurement in government, bringing together various teams scattered throughout departments (such as the Single Source Regulations Office). Ofpro should regulate markets, ensure adherence to existing legislation and guidance, and hold to account those responsible for poor procurement.

The aim is not to impose new regulations, stifle new entrants, or intervene in markets unnecessarily. Failure is a part of any market system, as is innovation, competition, and choice. However, the nature of public procurement, where taxpayer money is being used to deliver goods and services for citizens, makes minimising the potential impact of those failures a crucial goal for any government.

## Increasing accountability and transparency

As a more general improvement to accountability in public procurement, the new Government should apply 'Statements of Responsibilities' (SoR) and responsibility maps to public service commissioning. As used by the Financial Conduct Authority, both mechanisms are a useful tool to ensure all managers along the supply chain are clear on their responsibilities and what they are accountable for in the case of failure.<sup>38</sup>

The SoR is completed by Senior Managers in an organisation to indicate what they are responsible for, what other managers are accountable for, how their remits can be distinguished, and the reason for these decisions.<sup>39</sup> The 'responsibilities map' applies the same principle to the organisation as a whole, including management and governance and is designed to be clear for all readers, including regulators.<sup>40</sup>



*“While often considered a last resort, clearer regulation would enable better oversight of how government spends its money with external suppliers, thereby saving the taxpayer from expensive and avoidable bills.”*

Dr Joshua Pritchard, Senior Researcher

For more information on these policy proposals:

[The Price of Poor Procurement](#)

[Please Procure Responsibly: The state of public service commissioning](#)

[Faulty by design: The state of public-service commissioning](#)

<sup>38</sup> Financial Conduct Authority, The Senior Managers and Certification Regime: Guide for FCA Solo-Regulated Firms (Financial Conduct Authority, 2018).

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 7.

## About

*Reform* is established as the leading Westminster think tank for public service reform. We are dedicated to achieving better and smarter public services. Our mission is to set out ideas that will improve public services for all and deliver value for money.

We work on core sectors such as health and social care, education, home affairs and justice, and work and pensions. Our work also covers issues that cut across these sectors, including public service design and delivery and digital public services.

We are determinedly independent and strictly non-party in our approach.

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