



Assessing the King's Speech

2024



Contents

1. Introduction
2. Delivering Change
3. Driving the Government Machine
4. Summary of Announced Bills
8. Energy
9. Transport
10. Education & Skills
11. Health
12. Financial & Professional Services

Introduction

“My Government’s legislative programme will be mission led and based upon the principles of security, fairness and opportunity for all.”

King Charles III

This was a King's Speech that seeks to reinforce the narrative of a new government that is delivering at pace on the issues that matter to its new voter coalition and to differentiate itself from the previous government.

This brings both risks and opportunities for business. There are large parts of this agenda which will unlock business growth, but there are other areas which could distract government attention or are actively unhelpful.

Our advice is that the starting point should be a thorough understanding of the risks and opportunities this presents for your organisation. Although much of the government's agenda has been well trailed and included in their manifesto, there are critical details missing in many areas. This provides clear opportunities for businesses to input expertise and experience to shape implementation, particularly where unlocking private capital is the urgent priority.

Where proposed legislation presents challenges for you, a clear view of a politically viable alternative is essential. The parliamentary process will present ample opportunity for scrutiny through amendments and opportunities for critics to air their views. To be heard you'll need to thoughtfully marshal compelling evidence and the right advocates, using all the channels available.

Looking to the long term – business has an opportunity to use this legislative agenda to build long term sustainable relationships and brand equity. This is about positioning your organisation as aligned with the government's ambitions, even where you may have a difference of opinion as how to achieve them.

Finally, while this was a hefty King's Speech, there are naturally things missing – some of this will be clarified once the bills are introduced, other areas will now need to be progressed through non-legislative policy and regulatory action. Where manifesto pledges haven't been translated into legislative commitments, creative thinking will be needed to secure progress, and early conversations with officials and advisers to make this a reality will be important.

This report sets out WA's analysis on the programme for government presented today, with detailed sector deep-dives on the implications for businesses in financial and professional services, education and skills, energy, transport and health.

We hope you find this useful and would be delighted to discuss the specific issues impacting your business directly.

Delivering Change

JENNIFER GERBER

Senior Political Advisor and
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Today, with all its pomp and pageantry and nod to tradition, was also a clear marker of how this new Labour government will do things differently. The King's Speech included over 40 bills covering everything from buses and clean energy, to crime and vaping, though what stood out is how determined Labour are to demonstrate competence and delivery from day one.

The research that More in Common released this week confirmed the view that the Tories lost due to sheer incompetence – the public had lost all confidence in their ability to actually govern. This chimes with Labour's election strategy of offering up Keir as a grown-up leader who can get things done. A number of clearly articulated missions and costed policies were used to communicate to the public that Labour understood their concerns and wanted to make their life better. Pragmatism trumped ideology and as Keir oft repeated, country before party.

For some on the left of the party, today's King's Speech reinforces their view that Labour is not bold or ambitious enough and are squandering their majority. However, those around Keir feel pretty relaxed about this sort of criticism, not least because they feel confident that the public want to see real change in areas they care about, not ideological posturing.

It is also fair to say that Labour is clear about prioritising growth alongside their commitment to improving people's life chances and opportunities – pro business and pro worker – and in this King's Speech they feel there is enough for everyone, including businesses as well as trades unions.

There is also clear ambition – GB Energy and GB Railways show that the government aren't afraid of taking on substantial programmes and are serious about real foundational change.

What Labour will find is setting policy and delivering policy are quite different, and Keir will have to lean heavily on his Cabinet, especially his Chancellor who has the task of delivering the growth needed to make the big changes. Key delivery departments will need to demonstrate progress, and Wes Streeting in particular will feel this pressure.

This perhaps explains how key Pat McFadden will be, ensuring that delivery remains the beating heart of the government, and priorities don't get lost in the daily admin of running departments. This is always the biggest challenge for any government and Keir knows that with limited fiscal headroom he can't overpromise but does need to show the difference his government is making – especially as eyes are already looking ahead at guaranteeing a second Labour term.

Driving the Government Machine

SIR PHILIP RUTNAM

Chair of WA's Advisory Board and former Whitehall Permanent Secretary



This is a very ambitious King's Speech – one of the most extensive that I can recall.

Not only has Labour brought forward most of the major bills trailed in their manifesto (employment rights, Great British Energy, rail reform) - they've also chosen to revive lots of measures that were in train at the end of the last Parliament (football governance, "Martyn's Law", and Sunak's own agenda around tobacco sales and vapes). And that's not all: there are other significant measures on audit reform and governance (in draft but very complex), mental health reforms (also long promised), and the so called "Hillsborough Law" on the duty of candour.

Parliament is going to be very busy - and so are the civil servants who have to draft the legislation and work with Ministers to try to get the details thought through.

My prediction is that overall the government machine is going to relish the drive, energy and sense of purpose.

But the risk of error is going to be high and ditto the risk of a new government failing to see round corners and to see political problems coming, let alone all the potential unintended consequences of legislation prepared and enacted quickly.

Expect lots of businesses, third sector organisations and others to have to gear up quickly to review draft provisions: they'll have to be ready to focus on the most important issues and to make their points in a way that engages lots of new Labour and Lib Dem backbenchers, as well as Ministers and officials. The Conservative Party may be the official Opposition but their ability to provide detailed scrutiny seems likely to be hampered for some time.

Summary of Announced Bills

Bill	Lead Department	Affected Sectors	Summary
Arbitration Bill	Business and Trade	Legal services	The Arbitration Bill will support more efficient dispute resolution, attract international legal business, and promote UK economic growth through arbitration law reform.
Armed Forces Commissioner Bill	Defence		Establish an Armed Forces Commissioner to act as an independent representative for the Armed Forces to investigate issues and strengthen parliamentary oversight of them.
Draft Audit Reform and Corporate Governance Bill	Business and Trade	All large corporates; Financial services sector	Improve regulation of corporate accounts as well as accountability for company directors to avoid company failures.
Bank Resolution (Recapitalisation) Bill	HM Treasury	Financial Services	Expand the functions of the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) to improve support for depositors in the event of bank insolvency.
Better Buses Bill	Transport	Transport, particularly bus operators	Support and encourage local authorities to develop bus franchising and remove the ban on publicly owned bus companies.
Border Security, Asylum and Immigration Bill	Home Office		Create of a Border Security Command that will tackle gangs responsible for cross-channel people smuggling and clear the asylum backlog to end hotel use and increase returns.
Budget Responsibility Bill	HM Treasury	All sectors	Enshrine the OBR with greater powers to ensure proper independent assessment of tax and spending changes.
Children's Wellbeing Bill	Education	Education & Skills, Health	Improving statutory support for children, overhaul inspection processes to improve educational attainment and require school truancy registers to be established.
Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and international Committee of the Red Cross	Foreign Affairs		Providing the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) with greater statutory rights and privileges.
Draft Conversion Practices Bill	Education (responsibility for Women and Equalities)		Introduce a full, trans-inclusive ban on conversion practices.
Crime and Policing Bill	Home Office	Crime	Provide police further powers to tackle antisocial behaviour, retail crime, and knife crime by banning lethal blades, and provide a specialist response to violence against women and girls in order to halve serious violence over a decade.

Summary of Announced Bills continued

Bill	Lead Department	Affected Sectors	Summary
The Crown Estate Bill	HM Treasury	Infrastructure sectors, particularly energy and housing	Remove restrictions on The Crown Estate to expand its investment powers, and modernise its operations.
Cyber Security and Resilience Bill	Science, Innovation and Technology	All sectors	Strengthen defences and protect digital services by expanding the remit of existing regulation, putting regulators on a stronger footing, and increasing reporting requirements to build a better picture of cyber threats.
Digital Information and Smart Data Bill	Digital, Culture, Media & Sport	All sectors	Reforming data sharing and standards to support a modern digital government
Employment Rights Bill	Business and Trade; Housing, Communities and Local Government	All sectors, with a particular impact on social care	Implement the Labour Party's 'New Deal for Working People' manifesto commitment, through a ban on zero hours contracts, an end to fire and rehire practices, strengthening the right to statutory sick pay and parental leave, banning zero-hour contracts and establishing a Fair Work Agency to strengthen workplace rights. This will also include sector-specific measures for education and social care.
English Devolution Bill	Housing, Communities & Local Government	All sectors, with a particular impact on those working in education, skills, and transport	Establish a new framework for English devolution, moving power out of Westminster, giving local leaders further powers over strategic planning, local transport networks, skills, and employment support as well as simplify the process to establish new Combined Authorities.
Draft Equality (Race and Disability) Bill	Education (responsibility for Women and Equalities)	All sectors	Enshrine into law the full right to equal pay for ethnic minorities and disabled people, and introducing mandatory ethnicity and disability pay reporting for larger employers to help close existing pay gaps.
Football Governance Bill	Digital, Culture, Media & Sport	Sport	Introduce an Independent Football Regulator to protect football clubs' financial stability and fans' interests, and provide protection for club heritage whilst ensuring responsible owners.
Great British Energy Bill	Energy Security & Net Zero	Energy, particularly generators	Establish GB Energy, a publicly owned clean energy company, which will invest in clean energy technology with the objective of moving towards UK energy independence.

Summary of Announced Bills continued

Bill	Lead Department	Affected Sectors	Summary
High Speed Rail (Crewe to Manchester) Bill	Transport	Transport	Repurposing the original Crewe to Manchester Bill, whilst not reversing Crewe to Manchester HS2 cancellation, to deliver rail infrastructure improvements across the North
Hillsborough Law	Cabinet Office		Create a legal requirement for public representatives and authorities to tell the truth in public hearings to improve transparency and accountability in the public sector, and providing legal aid to victims of disasters or state-related death.
Holocaust Memorial Bill	Cabinet Office		Delivering on the commitment to build the Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre.
House of Lords (Hereditary Peers) Bill	Cabinet Office		Hereditary peers will no longer be able to sit and vote in the House of Lords, and addressing the gender balance in the House of Lords.
Draft Leasehold and Commonhold Reform Bill	Housing, Communities & Local Government	Housing	Provide homeowners with greater rights and protections, ending the injustice of forfeiture and bringing the injustice of 'fleecehold estates' to an end.
Lords Spiritual (Women) Act 2015 (Extension) Bill	Cabinet Office		Extending the current legislation to increase the female representation of Bishops in the Lords
Mental Health Bill	Health and Social Care	Health, particularly providers of mental health support	Reform of the Mental Health Act to improve autonomy, rights and support for patients, emphasising dignity and respect through treatment and providing greater statutory weight to patients' rights
National Wealth Fund Bill	HM Treasury	Financial Services and key infrastructure sectors, primarily transport and energy	Implement Labour's manifesto commitment to set up a National Wealth Fund to increase public investment in key net zero industries (including ports and gigafactories), and align existing investment organisations - the UK Infrastructure Bank and British Business Bank - to create a more coherent investment strategy.
Northern Ireland Legacy Legislation	Northern Ireland Office		Repealing and replacing the Northern Ireland Troubles Act 2023 to provide greater support to families and victims bringing civil claims.
Passenger Railway Services (Public Ownership) Bill	Transport	Transport, particularly rail operators	Amend existing railways legislation so that appointing a public-sector operator is the default position rather than a last resort.

Summary of Announced Bills continued

Bill	Lead Department	Affected Sectors	Summary
Pension Schemes Bill	HM Treasury; Work and Pensions	Financial Services	Support pension savers to get better outcomes from their pension assets.
Planning and Infrastructure Bill	Housing, Communities & Local Government	All infrastructure sectors, particularly energy, transport and housing	Reform of the planning system to speed up the building of more homes and infrastructure projects by modernising and streamlining the planning process.
Product Safety and Metrology Bill	Business and Trade	All sectors	Update EU-inherited product safety frameworks so that it keeps pace with technological developments and ensure future regulatory integrity.
Railways Bill	Transport	Transport, particularly rail operators	Establish Great British Railways as a public body to simplify rail; establish a Passenger Standards Watchdog; simplify ticketing; and promote the growth of rail freight.
Renters' Rights Bill	Housing, Communities & Local Government	Housing	Abolish 'no fault evictions', and strengthening tenant's rights and local councils' enforcement power whilst improving standards of housing and creating a digital database to bring together key information.
Skills England Bill	Education	All sectors, with a particular impact for education and skills providers	Establish public body Skills England to encourage economic growth by coherently assessing and addressing in-demand skills.
Sustainable Aviation Fuel (Revenue Support Mechanism) Bill	Transport	Transport	Support sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) production in the UK by providing revenue certainty to encourage investment in the construction of SAF plants across the UK.
Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill	Home Office		Require public venues and local authorities to risk assess against terror attacks and provide terror attack training to staff.
Tobacco and Vapes Bill	Health and Social Care	Tobacco industry, health and life sciences	Deliver a progressive ban on smoking through a year-on-year increase in the legal age to buy cigarettes and restrictions on the branding and advertising of vape products.
Victims, Courts and Public Protection Bill	Justice; Home Office		Strengthen public protections, reducing delays in criminal courts and ensuring that victims get the support they deserve.
Water (Special Measures) Bill	Environment & Rural Affairs	Water companies	Setting a framework for tackling pollution in rivers and waterways, through stricter accountability and regulatory measures on water companies and mandating real-time sewage monitoring to protect and improve the quality of rivers, lakes, and seas.

Energy: Fundamental market reform through GB Energy, but questions over the missing pieces of the jigsaw

Energy was always going to be at the heart of the new government's first King's Speech, and in many ways, there were few surprises. What is perhaps more interesting is what was missing from this programme for government, and how these gaps get filled in over the coming months.

The Bill to establish Great British Energy had been long anticipated and we can expect it to be taken forward at pace as one of the first to be introduced into parliament. As expected, today's speech gives little further clarity on the detail that will sit behind GB Energy – how it will be structured and governed, it's early priorities for investment (including the specific technologies it will focus on) and how it will work with business. We will get some of this when the Bill is introduced – and in the early stages of parliamentary scrutiny – but there remains a critical window now to shape this detail with practical solutions. It is worth noting that this is perhaps a narrower Bill than some in the sector had anticipated.

While GB Energy will be fundamental for the future shape of the energy sector, tackling what Ed Miliband refers to as the 'four horsemen of the apocalypse' – grid delays, planning delays, supply chain problems and the skills gap – will arguably be more critical for the industry in terms of delivery towards the 2030 clean power target.

A number of pieces of legislation announced today are intended to tackle these:

The Planning and Infrastructure Bill aims to modernise and streamline the planning system by simplifying consenting processes for major infrastructure projects, as well as updating the processes for local planning decisions and increase the capacity of local authority planning departments. This will tackle many of the planning and grid issues. Questions remain as to how quickly this can happen, and how radical the reforms will be – fundamentally, to what extent do they streamline the planning application process and limit grounds for objections?

The introduction of Skills England will have direct impact for the energy sector. How the new organisation works in concert with DESNZ to ensure the right green skills and jobs are delivered, in the right places, in order to support project delivery will be critical. The implementation of the new Growth and Skills Levy will also be critical for industry. The new National Wealth Fund Bill will be critical for addressing supply chains, but we're awaiting detail on how the British Jobs Bonus interacts with this and existing initiatives.

However, what is perhaps most interesting are the gaps. Fundamentally, there is still a need for an overarching strategy and delivery plan to achieve clean power by 2030. These legislative interventions will put in place some of the critical building blocks to enable this, but the sector still needs to understand the government's overarching vision and how it will be delivered: firstly, the overarching governance, including how the ESO and the new Mission Control structures in DESNZ interact; and secondly, the role for different technologies and which will be prioritised when.

The opportunity for industry now is to show how they can support the delivery of the new government's priorities while highlighting the critical steps they need to see to keep 2030 clean power target alive.

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Transport: Taking the Brakes off Britain

Sir Keir Starmer's first legislative programme puts transport at the heart of his vision for growing the economy and bridging regional inequalities.

Legislation to nationalise rail services is the stand-out commitment, but other pledges to create greater local control over bus services and establish UK sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) production are also included across the 40 bills.

The flagship commitments on rail and bus mark clear dividing lines with the former Conservative government and will win support from the Left of the Labour Party, their backers in the trade union movement – and a large swathe of voter-passengers.

But polling shows that the thing passengers really care about is getting a seat at an affordable price and arriving on time. User groups and watchdogs will be keeping a close eye to see if changes in ownership actually improve services.

Rail reform on track

The Passenger Railway Services (Public Ownership) Bill nationalises operations with a promise to create a simplified rail system, where train services are brought into public ownership as contracts expire or they are deemed to have failed. In future, a public-sector operator will be the default position rather than “merely a last resort”. There is already a sense of urgency with the government intending to “bring the first contracts back into public ownership as soon as possible”. Louise Haigh, Transport Secretary, has already initiated a ‘rail performance’ investigation.

Downing Street insists that the change will save millions of pounds a year in management fees and will “end the fragmentation of our railways, establishing a more efficient and reliable rail service for passengers”.

The separate Railways Bill will create a new public body, Great British Railways (GBR), whose remit will be to improve services and secure better value for money. GBR is tasked with providing reliable, affordable, efficient, quality, accessible and safe train travel. It will simplify fares and ticketing and ensure that passengers benefit from automatic compensation, and digital pay-as-you-go and season tickets. Important questions remain over the interaction between GBR, the government and the regulator alongside uncertainties over GBR's powers over timetabling and rolling stock procurement.

All aboard for Better Buses

The Better Buses Bill grants local leaders new powers to “take back control” of bus services by extending franchising powers to all local authorities and lifting restrictions on creating publicly-owned bus operators. Local leaders will gain greater leverage over bus operators, allowing them to safeguard vulnerable routes and ensure connectivity to underserved communities.

Authorities across England will now be free to introduce “better bus networks” to suit the needs of their communities. But with local authority funding under severe pressure and reports of imminent council bankruptcies, funding for these improvements remains unclear.

Successful implementation in London and Manchester provide a blueprint which the government wants replicated across the country. Newly elected Metro Mayors in the Northeast, West Midlands and Cambridge & Peterborough have already signalled their intent.

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Education & Skills: Back at the Heart of Government

The last King's Speech of the previous Conservative government was notable for not having a single piece of proposed legislation being led out of the Department for Education. That is not a criticism that can be levied at the new government, with two substantive bills setting a very distinctive 'Labour' vision for Education and Skills.

Under the banner of the 'Opportunities' mission, the two flagship pieces of legislation will be the Children's Wellbeing Bill and the Skills England Bill.

The 'Children's Wellbeing Bill' promises to be a very broad package of commitments contained in the Breaking Down the Barriers to Opportunities mission document and subsequent Labour manifesto.

It is an eclectic mix of measures – from breakfast clubs to school uniforms to teacher qualifications and the role of Ofsted in relation to multi-academy trusts and independent schools. Indeed, academies will see a series of measures that will begin to limit the freedoms that they have enjoyed since the Michael Gove school reforms under the coalition government.

In terms of the major education reform issues, the King's Speech does allude to a forthcoming review of curriculum and assessment, but it is notable that significant reforms to Ofsted are not mentioned in the speech, which may well upset sector stakeholders campaigning to change the schools' inspector.

Finally, former Conservative MP Flick Drummond will be heartened to see that the private member's bill that she championed to create a 'Children not in School register' has been resurrected by the new government, which will be some crumb of comfort following the loss of her seat at the general election.

The other major education bill is the 'Skills England Bill' which will legislate for Labour's manifesto pledge to simplify and improve the skills system and establish Skills England.

It is a major statement of intent to make skills a central plank of Labour's first legislative programme – also reflected in the surprise decision to bring back former Home Secretary Jacqui Smith to use her deep government and parliamentary experience to drive this agenda forward – and one underpinned by the belief that to deliver on their primary focus of economic growth, a skills system that helps businesses thrive and grow is critical.

While in practical terms the bill will establish Skills England, the intention behind the new body is to be the interface between government businesses and the sector, and to act as the catalyst to spur economic growth by convening employers, unions, education providers, and experts to develop a comprehensive assessment of current and future national and local skills needs.

While there are many aspects still to be defined and agreed, including the shape and structure of the Growth and Skills Levy, this bill will be widely welcomed by businesses, training providers and education institutions.

While there are no surprises or deviations from what Labour pledged in their manifesto, it will be heartening for the sector to see that many of the challenges that they face from early years through to the post-16 landscape are beginning to be addressed by the new government, with plenty of scope to ensure that expert voices can be heard as these legislative intentions begin to take shape.

While other more intractable sector challenges, including the future funding regime for universities, have been left to one side for the time being, and the removal of VAT exemptions on private school fees to fund 6,500 new teachers are set for the Budget statement, the education and skills sector can look forward to the most significant legislative opportunity it has had in many years.

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Health: Moderate health legislation, but radical change may be coming

The 'NHS is broken', stated Wes Streeting immediately on appointment as Health Secretary. Yet, despite this radical language, today's King's Speech was very light when it came to health announcements. This may come as a surprise to voters, with four in 10 adults citing the NHS as their top policy priority according to recent Savanta polling. But it is perhaps less of a surprise when we consider Labour have inherited a health system that has very recently undergone a widescale restructure via the 2022 Health and Care Act.

Among the most significant announcements was the inclusion of a Tobacco and Vapes Bill, progressively increasing the age at which people can buy cigarettes – taking forward Rishi Sunak's ambition to create a 'smoke-free generation' (a centrepiece of last year's King's Speech). This is no big surprise, with Labour having promised to deliver this ahead of the general election, which scuppered the opportunity for the Conservatives to do so themselves.

Also included today is legislation to restrict the advertising of junk food to children; and plans to reform the Mental Health Act, aiming to improve provision for young people and ensure mental health is given the same attention as physical health. Much of the work has already been done, with a draft Mental Health Bill already having been developed under the last government.

These policies align with Labour's pledge to deliver on public health. However, legislation introduced in other sectors also demonstrates a focus on creating a healthier population – including provision of high-quality homes, improving local bus services and strengthening worker rights. This could well signal a move towards delivering against the government's 'health in all policies' ambition, and will require the effective cross-departmental working previously committed to by Labour.

What is notably missing from today's announcements is any mention of social care. Labour's plans to establish a cross-party Royal Commission to create a consensus were reportedly not ready in time for inclusion.

Labour's work to fix the NHS is already underway and focused on assessing the extent of current challenges. It was announced last week that the government had commissioned Lord Ara Darzi to conduct an independent review of NHS performance to help inform the forthcoming 10-year plan to reform the NHS. We can expect a substantial amount of 'things are even worse than we could have imagined', to pave the way for a tougher conversation with the Treasury in time, and to manage expectations about what can be delivered.

Wes Streeting has been clear that he is willing to take bold steps and make the tough decisions to ensure the NHS meets the needs of patients. Currently, Labour is focused on taking a stepwise approach – gathering expert analysis and looking at the set up of the Mission Delivery Boards. The government may hope that this work will help build public support for solutions which could, further down the line, lead to more radical reforms or increased taxes (or both). But for now, the important work continues behind the scenes.

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Financial & Professional Services: Back in the Parliamentary spotlight

Since the completion of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2023 the Parliamentary debate and scrutiny of key issues relevant to the industry has fallen away over the last 12 months. That changed today with the King's Speech!

Labour has been clear that its partnership with financial and professional services (FPS) will be vital to its national growth mission. Three headline Bills focused on driving investment into UK infrastructure and supporting the transition to NetZero – the Pensions Schemes Bill, National Wealth Fund Bill and Great British Energy Bill – will be closely scrutinised by politicians and the industry as they go through their Parliamentary stages.

The draft Audit Reform and Corporate Governance Bill finally sees the light of day, having been delayed, and eventually sidelined by the previous Conservative Government. This is an important Bill focused on strengthening audit, corporate governance, financial reporting and the regulatory framework. It may prove contentious, as the government attempts to balance business reform while avoiding additional layers of bureaucracy and cost.

The King's Speech also sees the introduction of the Digital Information and Smart Data Bill, much to the relief of those hoping to see Labour meet its commitments to unlocking the next phase of Open Banking. Importantly, this bill establishes the setting up of Smart Data Schemes (legislation that did not make it through the last parliamentary session). It also signals the creation of Digital Verification Services, does this point the way to some form of Digital ID?

And on the resilience of the financial services sector, the introduction of the Bank Resolution (Recapitalisation) Bill will give the Bank of England additional powers to require the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) to provide funds to support the resolution of a failing bank; and the Cyber Security and Resilience Bill will improve the UK's defences against cyber attacks with a new framework for reporting.

In addition to these specific legislative measures announced in the King's Speech there are several other important bills relevant to FPS that will need to be tracked and engaged with. These range from the Product Safety and Metrology Bill aimed at making the UK a global leader in product regulation; the Employment Rights Bill to deliver on Labour's promise of a new deal for working people; the Budget Responsibility Bill to ensure significant tax and spending changes are subject to an independent assessment by the Office for Budget Responsibility; and bills on skills, planning reform and leasehold reform.

So we have a new government, a new parliament and now a whole swathe of new legislation.

Financial and Professional Services is central to Keir Starmer's political project of delivering sustained economic growth across the UK.

The industry is back in the political spotlight, and this is the time to make sure its voice is heard.

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Who are WA

WA is a strategic communications consultancy helping organisations achieve policy and reputational outcomes.

We're integrated in approach, bringing together public affairs, corporate communications, digital, research and creative services. We're specialists in sectors where government action, media interest and public impact are often interlinked, including energy, education, financial services, healthcare and transport.

We bring about change for clients and communicate their impact in society – from strengthening involvement of patients in their treatment, to helping to secure free school meals funding, to promoting net-zero public transport.

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The logo consists of a large, bold, white letter 'W' with a small white triangle pointing upwards from the top right corner of the letter.The logo features the text 'KING'S SPEECH' in a bold, white, sans-serif font, stacked above the number '24' in the same style. The text is oriented vertically.