

# GORDON BROWN: THE MOST SECRETIVE CHANCELLOR IN HISTORY

## Official engagements over a 2-month period

### *Open Departments*

**Mr. Hoban:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if he will list his official engagements from 1 January to 28 February 2007. [125952]

**Barry Gardiner:** The Secretary of State had the following official engagements during January and February.

	<i>Engagement</i>
3 January	Speech, Oxford Farming Conference
10 January	Country Landowners Association to discuss food issues
11 January	Tesco to discuss food labelling
11 January	Climate Change Task Force to discuss climate change issues
16 January	Waste Industry Stakeholders to discuss waste issues
18 January	Marks and Spencer to discuss climate change issues
20 to 24 January	Visit to Sustainable Development Summit in India
29 January	Agriculture and Fish Council, Brussels
30 January	BioRegional to discuss various issues
31 January	Global Cool to discuss climate change
31 January	Lehman Brothers to discuss climate change
1 February	Energy Savings Trust to discuss energy saving
2 February	Visit to Edinburgh on range of environmental issues
20 February	Environment Council, Brussels

21 February	Representatives from a number of supermarkets to discuss various issues
22 February	National Farmers Union to discuss various issues
22 February	GMB Union to discuss climate change
26 February	Speech, National Farmers Union Conference
27 February	Speech, Green Alliance
28 February	ENCAMS to discuss sustainable schools

In addition to the meetings disclosed, he also had a number of other internal meetings with officials.

*(Hansard, 19 Mar 2007; Col. 586W)*

### *Closed Brown*

**Mr. Hoban:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list his official engagements from 1 January to 28 February 2007. [125953]

**John Healey:** The information requested could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

*(Hansard, 13 March 2007; Col. 277W)*

### **Meetings with Trade Unions**

#### *Open Departments*

**Mrs. May:** To ask the Leader of the House how many meetings *(a)* he and *(b)* his deputy held with trade union representatives in 2006. [128754]

**Mr. Straw:** Six

*(Hansard, 21 March 2007; Col. 895W)*

#### *Closed Brown*

**Mrs. May:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many meetings *(a)* he and *(b)* his Department's Ministers held with trade union representatives in 2006. [128753]

**John Healey:** Treasury Ministers and officials have meetings with a wide variety of organisations in the public and private sectors as part of the process of policy development and delivery. As was the case with previous Administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings.

*(Hansard, 21 March 2007; Col. 911W)*

## Taxpayers' cash spent on entertaining Guests

### *Open Departments*

The Prime Minister has published Figures for entertaining at Number 10 Downing Street since 1997 (*Hansard*, 9 February 1999, col. 184W; *Hansard*, 17 January 2000, col. 268W; *Hansard*, 8 May 2001, col. 49W; *Hansard*, 27 January 2003, col. 562W; *Hansard*, 28 April 2004, col. 1087W; *Lords Hansard*, 21 July 2005, col. 262WA).

### *Closed Brown*

**Mr. Francois:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the costs of official entertaining in No. 11 Downing Street were in 2005-06. [104662]

**John Healey:** Figures for official hospitality at No.11 Downing Street are not held separately and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. All expenditure on official entertainment is made in accordance with published departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on the principles set out in "Government Accounting".

(*Hansard*, 8 January 2007; Col. 412W)

## Visitors to Ministerial Residences

### *Open Departments*

The Prime Minister has published a list of those who have been entertained at Chequers; and provided an update to this list in Parliament (*Cabinet Office FOI Release Guests At Chequers*, February 2005, January 2006; *Hansard*, 27 March 2006; Col. 652W).

### *Closed Brown*

**Mr. Hoban:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer who has visited No. 11 Downing Street for events funded from the public purse since 1997. [95133]

**John Healey:** The information requested could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

(*Hansard*, 7 November 2006, Col.1033WA)

## Flights at taxpayers' expense

### *Open Departments*

**Mrs. Spelman:** To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what the (a) destination and (b) purpose was of each overseas visit undertaken by staff in her Department in the last 12 months. [104029]

**Angela E. Smith:** Of the 519 trips overseas undertaken by staff in the last 12 months (covering September 2005 to October 2006 as figures available) on official business the destinations included 479 to Europe; six trips to Africa, 26 trips to North America, one trip to South America and seven trips to Asia (including the middle east).

Communities and Local Government does not hold central records about the purpose of individual overseas trips. All overseas trips require the approval of the appropriate deputy

director, and the general purpose will be to represent the Department and provide expert advice on policy/subject issues.

*(Hansard, 18 December 2006; Col. 1613W)*

### *Closed Brown*

**Mr. Francois:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the (a) destination and (b) purpose was of each overseas visit outside the European Union undertaken by staff in his Department in the last three months. [115384]

**John Healey:** This information is not held centrally by the Treasury and could be provided only at disproportionate cost

*(Hansard, 18 January 2007; Col. 1345W)*

### **Using Email**

#### *Open Departments*

**Mrs. Spelman:** To ask the Prime Minister whether he personally uses an e-mail account in the course of his official duties. [83016]

**The Prime Minister:** Yes.

*(Hansard, 13 July 2006; Col. 1996W)*

### *Closed Brown*

**Mr. Hoban:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he uses email in the course of his official duties. [94471]

**John Healey:** IT is used by ministerial offices in the course of their official duties.

*(Hansard, 24 October 2006; Col. 1830W)*

### **Staff magazine**

#### *Open Departments*

**Mrs. Spelman:** To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government if she will place in the Library copies of the in-house staff magazine of her Department for the last 12 months. [103833]

**Angela E. Smith:** The Department for Communities and Local Government was created on 5 May 2006. A copy of the new Department's staff magazine has been placed in the Library as requested.

*(Hansard, 28 November 2006; Col. 537W)*

### *Closed Brown*

**Mr. Francois:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will place in the Library copies of the last 12 months' editions of his Department's staff magazine. [103561]

**John Healey:** The Treasury staff magazine is mainly written by Treasury staff for the benefit of other staff and it contains the personal data of Treasury staff and their families, and visitors to the Treasury. To obtain the consent of everyone who appears in these editions would incur disproportionate cost.

*(Hansard, 5 February 2007; Col. 737W)*

### **Staff Handbook**

#### *Open Departments*

**Mr. Pickles:** To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster if she will place in the Library a copy of the Cabinet Office staff handbook. [78271]

**Mr. McFadden:** The Cabinet Office no longer publishes a staff handbook. The terms and conditions of service that apply to all Cabinet Office employees are readily available electronically on the Cabinet Office intranet to all staff. The text is updated periodically as necessary. I will arrange for a CD Rom containing the current version as at 15 June 2006 to be placed in the Library.

*(Hansard, 21 June 2006; Col. 1872W)*

### *Closed Brown*

**Mr. Hoban:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 22 February 2007, *Official Report*, column 837W, on the staff handbook, if he will place a CD-Rom of the current version of the handbook in the Library. [126117]

**John Healey:** I refer to the answer given on 22 February 2007, *Official Report*, column 837W. The staff handbook is an internal management tool that is regularly updated, therefore it is not suitable for release.

*(Hansard, 9 March 2007; Col. 2267W)*

### **Staff are working on the Olympics**

#### *Open Departments*

**Mr. Hoban:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many staff in her Department spend the majority of their time on work related to the 2012 Olympics; and what the pay band is of each of these staff members. [106518]

**Mr. Lammy:** 37 full-time equivalent staff in my Department spend all or the majority of their time on work related to the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games. These staff members fall into the Department's pay bands as follows:

	<i>Number of staff (FTE)</i>	<i>Pay band minimum (£)</i>	<i>Pay band maximum (£)</i>

SCS pay band 3	1	98,000	205,000
SCS pay band 2	1	80,000	160,000
SCS pay band 1	3	55,000	116,000
A(U)	3.5	48,000	62,000
A	8.88	41,125	52,025
B	14	26,500	34,675
C	3	20,425	24,550
D	3	16,150	19,885

In addition, there are a further eight individuals in my Department (comprising legal advisers, consultants, agency staff and a specialist adviser) who spend all or the majority of their time on work related to the 2012 games. These individuals do not fall into the Department's pay band structure.

(*Hansard*, 30 November 2006; Col. 809W)

### *Closed Brown*

**Mr. Hoban:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many staff in his Department spend the majority of their time on work related to the 2012 Olympics; and what the pay band is of each of these staff members. [106517]

**Mr. Timms:** A number of Treasury staff at different levels contribute to work on the 2012 Olympics, as required.

(*Hansard*, 4 December 2006; Col. 210W)

## Visits to Military Establishments

### *Open Departments*

**Mr. Harper:** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what official visits (a) he and (b) his Ministers have made in England in the past 12 months. [103359]

**Derek Twigg:** Defence Ministers have made the following visits in England between 1 November 2005 and 1 December 2006:

*Visits by Secretary of State, 1 November 2005 to 1 December 2006*

*Date of visit Place visited*

28 November 2005 Defence Academy, Wiltshire, Wantage

20 January 2006 RAF Headley Court, Epsom, Surrey, Surrey Heath

20 January 2006 Royal Centre for Defence Medicine, Selly Oak, Birmingham, Birmingham Selly Oak

27 January 2006 Salisbury Plain, Wiltshire, Salisbury  
 14 February 2006 Defence Academy, Wiltshire, Wantage  
 19 April 2006 RAF Museum, London, Hendon  
 18 July 2006 Farnborough Air Show, Hampshire, Aldershot  
 19 July 2006 Defence Academy, Wiltshire, Wantage  
 15 August 2006 RAF Headley Court, Epsom, Surrey, Surrey Heath  
 15 August 2006 Royal Centre for Defence Medicine, Selly Oak, Birmingham, Birmingham Selly Oak  
 21 September 2006 Flag Officer Sea Training, Devonport, Devon  
 27 September 2006 Royal Centre for Defence Medicine, Selly Oak, Birmingham, Birmingham Selly Oak  
 11 October 2006 Colchester Garrison, Colchester  
 17 October 2006 RAF High Wycombe, Strike Command, Buckinghamshire., Aylesbury

*Visits by min(AF) 1 November 2005 to 1 December 2006*

<i>Date of visit</i>	<i>Place visited</i>
24 November 2005	HMS Bulwark, Devonport, Devon
30 November 2005	DLO Caversfield, Bicester, Banbury
5 December 2005	RAF Odiham, Surrey, North East Hampshire
20 December 2005	BFPO Mill Hill, Middlesex, Hendon
26 January 2006	Defence Geographic Centre, Feltham, Middlesex, Feltham and Heston
7 February 2006	RAF Odiham, Surrey, North East Hampshire
1 March 2006	Chicksands, Bedfordshire, Mid Bedfordshire
3 July 2006	DPA Abbey Wood, Avon, Bristol North East
3 July 2006	DLO Ensleigh, Somerset, Bath
10 July 2006	RAF Headley Court, Epsom, Surrey, Surrey Heath
25 July 2006	Westdown Camp, Wiltshire, Salisbury
17 August 2006	RAF Flyingdales, North Yorkshire, Ryedale
17 August 2006	RAF Menwith Hill, Harrogate, Skipton and Ripon

18 August 2006 Army Foundation College, Harrogate, Skipton and Ripon  
 31 August 2006 RAF Marham, Norfolk, South West Norfolk  
 21 September 2006 Defence Academy, Wiltshire, Wantage  
 21 September 2006 Portsmouth, Hampshire, Portsmouth South  
 10 October 2006 RAF Cottesmore, Rutland and Melton  
 11 October 2006 Colchester Garrison, Colchester  
 12 October 2006 RAF Fairford, Gloucester, Cotswold  
 12 October 2006 HQ AG, Upavon, Devizes  
 16 October 2006 RAF Molesworth, Cambridge, Huntingdon  
 17 October 2006 DSDA Bicester, Oxon, Banbury  
 15 November 2006 HQ AG, Upavon, Devizes  
 16 November 2006 Royal Marines Poole, Dorset, Poole  
 20 November 2006 PJHQ Northwood, Middlesex, South West Hertfordshire

*Visits by min(dp) 1 November 2005 to 1 December 2006*

<i>Date of visit</i>	<i>Place visited</i>
11 November 2005	DPA Abbey Wood, Avon, Bristol North East
13 November 2005	West Kingsdown, Kent, Sevenoaks
18 November 2005	Royal Centre for Defence Medicine, Selly Oak, Birmingham, Birmingham Selly Oak
2 December 2005	PJHQ Northwood, Middlesex, South West Hertfordshire
13 January 2006	Agusta Westland, Yeovil, Somerset, Yeovil

13 January 2006 SME-5<sup>(th)</sup> Dorset Engineering, Weymouth, Devon, West Dorset  
 21 February 2006 Vosper Thorney, Portsmouth, Hampshire, Portsmouth South  
 23 February 2006 RAF High Wycombe, Strike Command, Buckinghamshire, Aylesbury  
 24 February 2006 RAF Coningsby, Lincolnshire, Louth and Horncastle  
 3 March 2006 DPA Abbey Wood, Avon, Bristol North East  
 10 March 2006 HQ Land Command, Wiltshire, Salisbury  
 5 May 2006 DLO, Ensleigh, Somerset, Bath  
 12 May 2006 DPA Abbey Wood, Avon, Bristol North East  
 3 July 2006 DPA Abbey Wood, Avon, Bristol North East  
 13 July 2006 Swan Hunter, Newcastle upon Tyne East and Wallsend  
 17 to 19 July 2006 Farnborough Air Show, Hampshire, Aldershot  
 27 July 2006 DPA Abbey Wood, Avon, Bristol North East  
 13 September 2006 Warminster Road, Bath  
 14 September 2006 Portsmouth, Hampshire, Portsmouth South  
 21 September 2006 MBDA, Airbus and Rolls Royce, Filton, Bristol North West  
 13 October 2006 BAE Systems, Warton, Preston, Fylde  
 20 October 2006 DPA Abbey Wood, Avon, Bristol North East  
 1 December 2006 DPA Abbey Wood, Avon, Bristol North East

*Visits by US of S I November 2005 to 1 December 2006*

<i>Date of visit</i>	<i>Place visited</i>
8 November 2005	Royal British Legion, Pall Mall, London, Cities of London and Westminster
22 November 2005	MOD Police Headquarters, Wethersfield, Essex, Braintree
15 December 2005	Military Corrective Training Centre, Colchester, Essex, Colchester
26 January 2006	MOD Shoeburyness, Essex, Rochford and Southend East
7 February 2006	Veterans Agency, Blackpool, Lancashire, Lancaster and Wyre
21 February 2006	Commonwealth War Graves, Maidenhead, Berkshire, Maidenhead
21 February 2006	HMS York, Portsmouth, Hampshire, Portsmouth South
22 February 2006	Fleet HQ, Whale Island, Portsmouth, Hampshire, Portsmouth South
22 February 2006	HMS COLLINGWOOD, Portsmouth, Hampshire, Gosport
13 March 2006	HQ School of Infantry, Catterick, North Yorkshire, Richmond Yorkshire
4 April 2006	Defence College of Aeronautical Engineering, Cosford, Wolverhampton, The Wrekin
7 April 2006	PPPA, Bath, Avon, Bath
12 May 2006	West Bromwich, West Bromwich
20 May 2006	MODern Housing Solutions Call Centre, Matchworks, Liverpool, Riverside
2 June 2006	Catterick Garrison, North Yorkshire, Richmond Yorkshire
8 June 2006	Reserves Training and Mobilisation Centre, Chilwell, Nottingham, Broxtowe
16 June 2006	Royal Centre for Defence Medicine, Selly Oak, Birmingham, Birmingham Selly Oak
19 June 2006	RAF Northolt, Middlesex, Ruislip Northwood
7 July 2006	Mariners Park Care Home, Wallasey
7 July 2006	Sea Cadets, Wirral, Wallasey
11 July 2006	SSAFA HQ, London, North Southwark and Bermondsey
24 August 2006	Royal British Legion, Pall Mall, London, Cities of London and Westminster
15 September 2006	PPPA, Cheadle Hulme
15 September 2006	TA Centre, Stockport
6 October 2006	Royal Centre for Defence Medicine, Selly Oak, Birmingham, Birmingham Selly Oak
13 October 2006	Catterick Garrison, North Yorkshire, Richmond Yorkshire
19 October 2006	Castle Point, Benfleet, Essex, Castle Point



20 October 2006 Royal British Legion Poppy Factory, Surrey, Richmond Park  
24 October 2006 Kings College Hospital, London, Cities of London and Westminster  
31 October 2006 RAF Bentley Priory, Middlesex, Harrow East  
10 November 2006 Kirkby, Knowsley North and Sefton East  
14 November 2006 Royal Hospital Chelsea, London, Kensington and Chelsea  
21 November 2006 RAF Headley Court, Epsom, Surrey, Surrey Heath  
24 November 2006 MODern Housing Solutions Call Centre, Matchworks, Liverpool, Riverside

(*Hansard*, 8 January 2007; Col. 95W)

### *Closed Brown*

**Mr. Gerald Howarth:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which (a) military facilities and (b) defence contractors he has visited since he took office in 1997, excluding the Dockyards in Rosyth. [203936]

**Mr. Gordon Brown:** Since 1997 Treasury Ministers have had a number of meetings with defence contractors, visited a number of military facilities and have met the Chiefs of Staff on a number of occasions to discuss defence matters. However to provide the full detailed information requested would incur disproportionate cost.

(*Hansard*, 13 January 2005; Col. 1033WA; 7 November 2006: Col. 1033WA)

### **Meetings with Casino Operators**

#### *Open Departments*

**Mr. Swire:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when (a) he and (b) his officials have held meetings in the last 12 months with casino operators interested in securing licences under the Gambling Act 2005; where each meeting took place; and what was discussed. [83819]

**The Deputy Prime Minister:** I have not had any such meetings with casino operators, and neither have officials in my Office. For information relating to officials' meetings prior to Friday 5 May 2006, I refer the hon. Member to the answer which will be given by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

(*Hansard*, 9 October 2006; Col. 69W)

**Mr. Swire:** To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government when (a) Ministers and (b) officials in the Department and its predecessor have held meetings in the last 12 months with casino operators interested in securing licences under the Gambling Act 2005; where each meeting took place; and what was discussed. [83361]

**Meg Munn:** Under the Gambling Act 2005, local authorities acting in their capacity as licensing authorities will be responsible for issuing the one regional, eight large and eight small new casino licences permitted by the Act. Licensing authorities will be required to run the competitions for these licences in a fair and open way. These competitions are not expected to begin until mid-2007, and the identities of the bidding companies will not be known until then.

There were no ministerial meetings with casino operators. There was one meeting with officials: Mr Brian Lemon of the Casino Operators Association of the UK attended a Stakeholder Workshop in London on 13 October 2005 which discussed a draft paper on Need and Impact

Assessment, which will be a guidance note to accompany Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres

*(Hansard, 6 November 2006; Col. 864W)*

*Closed Brown*

**Mr. Swire:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when (a) Ministers and (b) officials in his Department have held meetings in the last 12 months with casino operators interested in securing licences under the Gambling Act 2005; where each meeting took place; and what was discussed. [83364]

**John Healey:** Treasury Ministers and officials have meetings with a wide range of organisations in the public and private sectors as part of the process of policy analysis, development and delivery. As was the case with previous Administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings.

*(Hansard, 24 July 2006; Col. 1048W)*

# MORE QUESTIONS HE HAS AVOIDED

## TRAVEL AND TRIPS

### What helicopter trips has he taken?

**Mr. Hoban:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the (a) date, (b) purpose and (c) cost was of each helicopter flight he has taken in the last 12 months. [111214]

**John Healey:** In respect of overseas travel by Cabinet Ministers, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. Where non-scheduled aircraft are used this is shown in the list. Information for 2005-06 was published on 24 July 2006. Copies of the lists are available in the Library. Equivalent detail about domestic travel could be provided only at disproportionate cost. All travel by Treasury Ministers and officials is undertaken in accordance with the “Ministerial Code, Travel by Ministers” and the Civil Service Management Code, as appropriate.

*(Hansard, 30 January 2007; Col. 231W)*

**Mr. Francois:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 19 February 2007, *Official Report*, column 475W, what the cost was of each helicopter flight he took within the UK on official business in the last month. [125815]

**John Healey:** I have nothing to add to the answer I gave the hon. Gentlemen on 19 February.

*(Hansard, 9 March 2007; Col. 2267W)*

### How often does he fly within the UK?

**Mr. Hoban:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on how many occasions he has used a non-scheduled flight within the UK on official business in the last 12 months; and what the (a) purpose and (b) cost was of each such flight. [120368]

**John Healey:** In respect of overseas travel by Cabinet Ministers, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. Where non-scheduled aircraft are used this is shown in the list. Information for 2005-06 was published on 24 July 2006. Copies of the lists are available in the Library for the reference of Members. Equivalent detail about domestic travel could be provided only at disproportionate cost. All ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the “Ministerial Code” and “Travel by Ministers”, copies of which are available in the Library for the reference of Members. All official travel is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the “Civil Service Management Code”, a copy of which is also available in the Library for the reference of Members.

*(Hansard, 19 February 2007; Column 476W)*

### How much has he spent on flights within the UK?

**Mr. Francois:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much was spent by (a) his Department and (b) its agencies on flights (i) to Wales, (ii) to Scotland, (iii) to Northern Ireland and (iv) within England in (A) 2005 and (B) 2006. [125745]

**John Healey:** In respect of overseas travel by Cabinet Ministers, since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. Information for 2005-06 was published on 24 July 2006. Copies of the lists are available in the Library for the reference of Members. The accounting system for the Treasury and the Debt Management Office does not record travel by destination, so an analysis the information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost. For the total cost of travel within the UK in 2004-05 and 2005-06 (including rail and road travel) I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave him on 29 November 2006, *Official Report*, column 719W. All ministerial travel is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the 'Ministerial Code' and 'Travel by Ministers', copies of which are available in the Library for the reference of Members. All official travel is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the 'Civil Service Management Code', a copy of which is also available in the Library for the reference of Members

(*Hansard*, 8 March 2007; Col. 2224W)

### What overseas trips have his civil servants taken?

**Mr. Francois:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the (a) destination, (b) purpose and (c) cost was of each overseas visit made by members of the Performance and Efficiency Team in his Department in the last two months. [111884]

**John Healey:** This information is not held centrally.

(*Hansard*, 30 January 2007; Col. 232W)

### What overseas trips have Junior Ministers taken?

**Mr. Francois:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 7 February 2007, *Official Report*, column 1032W, on ministerial visits, for what reason he will not publish the cost of the visit of the Economic Secretary to the Treasury to Israel and the Palestinian Territories on 19 and 20 December 2006; whether this information was recorded by the Department; and if he will make a statement. [123616]

**Ed Balls:** The standard practice since 1999 has been for information relating to the cost of all ministerial travel to be published as soon as possible after the end of the financial year concerned.

(*Hansard*, 1 March 2007; Col. 1494W)

### Does he avoid staying at the British Embassy in Washington and pay for hotels instead?

**Mr. Hoban:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer where he stayed overnight on his official visit to Washington in April 2006. [123002]

**John Healey:** The IMF pay for travel and accommodation costs associated with the chairman of the IMFC.

(*Hansard*, 9 March 2007; Col. 2269W)

**Mr. Hoban:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 9 March 2007, *Official Report*, column 2269W, on Official Visits: USA, whether he stayed at the British embassy on the visit in April 2006. [128898]

**John Healey:** We do not provide details of Ministers' accommodation arrangements.

*(Hansard, 21 March 2007; Col. 921W)*

## LIFE IN THE TREASURY

### How much has the Treasury spent preparing for the Euro?

**Mr. Francois:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his Department's total expenditure on preparations for potential UK entry to the euro was in each year since 1997. [126766]

**Ed Balls:** Since December 1997, the Euro Preparations Unit in the Treasury has worked with stakeholders from across the economy to ensure that euro preparations are at an appropriate level. The costs of the Euro Preparations Unit are met from within the Treasury's departmental expenditure limit.

*(Hansard, 12 March 2007; Col. 98W)*

### When did he last visit a tax credit centre?

**Anne Main:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 12 December 2006, *Official Report*, column 981W, on the Paymaster General, whether he has visited a tax credit (a) contact centre, (b) office and (c) IT development office in the last 18 months; and if he will make a statement. [109897]

**Dawn Primarolo:** Treasury Ministers regularly undertake visits to Government establishments, including offices of HM Revenue and Customs.

*(Hansard, 19 December 2006; Col. 1748W)*

### What complaints have there been from staff about tax credits?

**Mr. Francois:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many complaints from HM Revenue and Customs staff about the tax credits system have been recorded in the last 12 months. [120697]

**Dawn Primarolo:** The information is not available.

*(Hansard, 19 February 2007; Col. 499W)*

### How quickly does his department respond to taxpayers' letters?

**Mr. Francois:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what average time HM Revenue and Customs took to respond to a taxpayer's letter in the latest period for which figures are available. [111599]

**Dawn Primarolo:** The information is not available in the format requested and could be collated and provided only at disproportionate cost.

*(Hansard, 5 February 2007; Col. 738W)*

### How much has he spent on 'media training'?

**Mr. Francois:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much his Department spent on external media trainers in each of the last 12 months, broken down by supplier. [110778]

**John Healey:** Media training is not recorded as a separate category either of expenditure or supplier, so the information on such spending, if any, is not held.

*(Hansard, 5 February 2007; Col. 737W)*

### How much has the taxpayer paid for his press conferences?

**Mr. Francois:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much his Department spent on organising and hosting press conferences in each of the last 24 months. [103546]

**John Healey:** The Treasury's accounting system does not record press conferences as a separate category of expenditure, so the information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

*(Hansard, 29 November 2006; Col. 719W)*

### What small conferences have been held in the Treasury?

**Mr. Hoban:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which conferences with fewer than 100 attendees have been funded in whole or part by his Department in the last 12 months; and what the cost to his Department was of each conference. [106544]

**John Healey:** Information relating to conferences and meetings at which fewer than 100 people participated could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

*(Hansard, 18 December 2006; Col. 1544W)*

### What training does his Department offer employees?

**Mr. Francois:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what (a) seminars, (b) workshops and (c) exhibitions were held by the human resources team in his Department in the last six months. [125756]

**John Healey:** The HR team holds regular meetings in order to fulfil its departmental responsibilities. There is no business requirement to record the details of individual events.

*(Hansard, 21 March 2007; Col. 912W)*

### What conflicts of interest have Ministers declared?

**Mr. Francois:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many instances there have been under Section 5.17 of the Ministerial Code of a Minister in his Department having duties removed to avoid a potential conflict of interest in the last five years. [120695]

**John Healey:** All provisions of the Ministerial Code, including those relating to financial interests, have been observed by Treasury Ministers.

*(Hansard, 27 March 2007; Col. 1507W)*

## Which Ministers attended his Policy Review seminar?

**Mr. Hoban:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which Ministers attended his round table policy review seminar on 22 January 2007. [125955]

**John Healey:** The policy review seminars have been open to all non-Cabinet Ministers able to attend.

*(Hansard, 13 March 2007; Col. 282W)*

## POLITICAL ADVISERS

### Has Gordon Brown been told he has too many Special Advisers?

**Mr. Hoban:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has received representations on the number of special advisers he employs. [126574]

**John Healey:** All advisers are employed in line with the Ministerial Code.

*(Hansard, 14 March 2007; Col. 408W)*

### When did his Council of Economic Advisers last meet?

**Mr. Hoban:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on what date his Council of Economic Advisers last met in full; and how many times it met in full in the last 12 months. [125939]

**John Healey:** Members of the Council of Economic advisers meet regularly during the course of their work.

*(Hansard, 13 March 2007; Col. 281W)*

### How does he recruit to his Council of Economic Advisers?

**Mr. Francois:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many candidates applied for the new position on his Council of Economic Advisers that Gila Sacks now holds; [128370]

(2) what the process is for (a) advertising and recruiting and (b) selecting and interviewing candidates for his Council of Economic Advisers. [128371]

**John Healey:** The appointment of special advisers is conducted in accordance with the Ministerial Code.

*(Hansard, 22 March 2007; Col. 1120W)*

### What papers have the Council produced?

**Mr. Hoban:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the titles were of each of the policy papers prepared by the Council of Economic Advisers in the last six months. [125940]

**John Healey:** As set out in the Treasury press notice of 28 June 2006, the Council of Economic Advisers is made up of individual policy experts who will bring their specialist advice to work alongside individual Treasury teams on the Government's key policy priorities.

*(Hansard, 13 March 2007; Col. 280W)*

## How many times has he met private pollster and Smith Institute Trustee Deborah Mattinson?

**Mr. Stewart Jackson:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many times he has met Ms Deborah Mattinson in an official capacity since 2001; and if he will make a statement. [124444]

**John Healey** [*holding answer 1 March 2007*]: Treasury Ministers and officials have meetings with a wide range of organisations and individuals in the public and private sectors as part of the process of policy development and delivery. As was the case with previous Administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings.

(*Hansard*, 21 March 2007; Col. 910W)

## LABOUR DONORS AND THE SMITH INSTITUTE

### Has he met Labour Donor Lakshmi Mittal?

**Mr. Newmark:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has met Lakshmi Mittal since 1997. [111351]

**John Healey:** Treasury Ministers and officials have meetings with a wide variety of organisations in the public and private sectors as part of the process of policy development and delivery. As was the case with previous Administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings.

(*Hansard*, 21 March 2007; Col. 920W)

### Has he met secret Labour lender Rod Aldridge?

**Mr. Hoban:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he last met Rod Aldridge to discuss the National Youth Volunteering Service. [70753]

**Ed Balls:** I understand that the Chancellor has not met Rod Aldridge.

(*Hansard*, 12 May 2006; Col. 620W)

**Mr. Francois:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the Answer of 12 May 2006, *Official Report*, column 620W, on the National Youth Volunteering Service, what discussions the Economic Secretary to the Treasury had with the Chancellor's private office on that question; and whether there has been any communication between the Chancellor and Rod Aldridge (a) in writing, (b) by telephone and (c) by e-mail. [83492]

**Ed Balls:** Treasury Ministers have regular discussions with a wide range of organisations in the public and private sectors as well as with officials within the department as part of the process of policy analysis, development and delivery. As was the case with previous Administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such discussions.

(*Hansard*, 25 July 2006, Col. 1381-1382W,)

### What Smith Institute events has he attended?

**Mr. Hoban:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what meetings hosted by (a) the Smith Institute and (b) its subsidiary SI Events Ltd which he has attended in the last 12 months. [94525]



**John Healey:** Treasury Ministers and officials have meetings with a wide range of organisations in the public and private sectors as part of the process of policy development and delivery. As was the case with previous Administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings.

*(Hansard, 18 October 2006: Col. 1257WA)*

### **Did Gordon Brown chose his personal pollster to make a presentation to the Cabinet?**

**Mr. Hoban:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his role was in selecting Deborah Mattinson to make a presentation as part of the policy review seminar on 22 January. [125993]

**John Healey:** A range of organisations and individuals have made submissions and presentations to the policy review process.

*(Hansard, 13 March 2007; Col. 277W)*

### **How many Treasury civil servants have attended the Labour Party Conference?**

**Mr. Francois:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on how many occasions civil servants in his Department and its agencies have been given permission to attend the Labour Party conference to carry out departmental business in the last three years. [120698]

**John Healey:** Where officials are required to attend party conferences to carry out essential official business unconnected with the conference, this is done in accordance with section 4.4 of the civil service management code.

*(Hansard, 19 February 2007; Col. 246W)*

### **What meetings has the Labour Party Chair attended in the Treasury?**

**Mr. Hoban:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what meetings in his Department have been attended by the Chair of the Labour Party in the last 12 months. [94535]

**John Healey:** Treasury Ministers and officials have meetings with a wide range of organisations in the public and private sectors as part of the process of policy development and delivery. As was the case with previous administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings.

*(Hansard, 24 October 2006; Col. 1837W)*

### **How many seminars with the Smith Institute has he held and spoken at?**

**Mr. Francois:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many seminars held by the Smith Institute have been attended by Ministers in his Department acting in an official capacity in the last 12 months; [123343] (2) on how many occasions he has spoken in an official capacity at an event organised by (a) the Smith Institute and (b) its subsidiary SI Events Ltd. in the last 12 months. [128367]

**John Healey:** Treasury Ministers and officials attend many seminars and have meetings with a variety of organisations in the public and private sectors. As was the case with previous Administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings.

### Has he favoured the Smith Institute over other charities in its use of facilities?

**Mr. Francois:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 8 February 2007, *Official Report*, column 1134W, on the Smith Institute, which charities applied to hold events at No. 11 Downing street in each year since 1996 but had their request turned down. [123617]

**John Healey:** A list of all the organisations which have applied to use No. 11 Downing street is not available. However, the Treasury tries to accommodate all charities which have applied to do so.

(Hansard, 21 Mar 2007; Col. 922W)

### Has he been lobbied by the EMI Group?

**Mr. Hoban:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on what occasions he has met representatives from EMI Group in the last 12 months; which representatives he met on each occasion; and what the purpose was of each meeting. [111235]

**John Healey:** Treasury Ministers and officials have meetings with a wide variety of organisations in the public and private sectors as part of the process of policy development and delivery. As was the case with previous Administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings.

(Hansard, 30 January 2007; Col. 228W)

**Mr. Hoban:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on what occasions in the last 12 months officials from his Department have met representatives from EMI Group; and what the purpose was of each meeting. [111236]

**John Healey:** Treasury Ministers and officials have meetings with a wide variety of organisations in the public and private sectors as part of the process of policy development and delivery. As was the case with previous Administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings.

(Hansard, 30 January 2007; Col. 229W)

## QUESTIONS IN PARLIAMENT

### How many times has he circulated orders to other departments on answering Parliamentary Questions?

**Mr. Francois:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on how many occasions he has circulated guidance to other Departments in the last 12 months following the tabling of round-robin written parliamentary questions. [110931]

**John Healey:** In its response to the Third Report of Session 2003-04 from the Public Administration Select Committee, the Government made clear that while individual Departments may liaise with each other when they receive the same question, this co-ordination

“does not cut across the line of ministerial accountability which is that it is for individual Ministers to decide on the final content of an answer to a Parliamentary Question”.

The Treasury has provided advice to other Government Departments on this basis.

*(Hansard, 26 March 2007; Col. 1319W)*

### **Has he been told to give clearer answers to Parliament?**

**Mr. Francois:** To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has received representations from the Leader of the House on his Department’s answers to written parliamentary questions. [128803]

**John Healey:** Treasury Ministers and officials discuss a wide variety of issues relating to parliamentary business with their counterparts in other Departments, including the Privy Council Office.

*(Hansard, 21 March 2007; Col. 924W)*

# GORDON BROWN'S RHETORIC ON OPENNESS

Before becoming Chancellor, Gordon Brown promised:

- 'The operation of policy-making within the Treasury must be opened up' (*Speech to Labour Conference*, 27 June 1995).
- 'A Labour Treasury ... will be open rather than secretive' (*Speech to Manchester Business School*, 1 May 1996).

He recently boasted that 'As Chancellor, I have tried to make the office more open' (*GQ Magazine*, March 2007).

## Others' Opinions of Gordon Brown

- 'There has been an absolute ruthlessness with which Gordon has played the denial of information as an instrument of power' (Andrew Turnbull, former Cabinet Secretary, *Financial Times*, 20 March 2007)
- 'I do find Gordon very hard to negotiate with. Every time something is raised he becomes defensive' (David Blunkett, Former Home Secretary, *The Guardian*, 12 October 2006).
- 'It's a controlling thing – [Brown] thinks he has to control everything' (Charles Clarke, former Home Secretary, *The Daily Telegraph*, 9 September 2006).
- 'Getting information about the contents of Brown's Budget was like drawing teeth... The Chancellor's team was far more likely to volunteer the contents of budgets and other announcements to journalists than they were to communicate with their opposite numbers next door' (Derek Scott, former Chief Economic Adviser to Tony Blair, *The Sunday Times*, 12 September 2004).

## Treasury Guidance on Parliamentary Questions

The Treasury's own internal guidance on answering Parliamentary Questions states that:

- "The Government attaches the highest importance to the duty of Ministers and civil servants to provide full and accurate information to Parliament and the public...**every Parliamentary question should be approached with a predisposition to give the information sought fully**....do not omit information sought merely because disclosure could lead to political embarrassment or administrative inconvenience. Where there is a particularly fine balance between openness and non-disclosure, and where the draft answer takes the latter course, this should be explicitly drawn to the Minister's attention" (*Internal Guidance Notes on Parliamentary Questions*, HM Treasury).