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**SHADOW CABINET**  
briefing • 14 September 2015

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Jeremy Corbyn has now completed the process of appointing his Shadow Cabinet. Following initial criticism that the senior roles have gone to men, Corbyn supporters are briefing that this is the first Shadow Cabinet of which the majority are women - with 16 women and 15 men members.

As we profile below, the new team is a mixture of old political fixers and new blood. For more information on Labour's new team, please contact our Chief Executive Andy Sawford on [a.sawford@connectpa.co.uk](mailto:a.sawford@connectpa.co.uk) or 020 7592 9490.

### Jeremy Corbyn

Leader of the Opposition and Leader of the Labour Party

Jeremy Corbyn, the outsider of the Labour Leadership contest, won with a decisive majority and a clear mandate to change the Labour Party. Having spent 30 years on the backbenches, he has never held a frontbench position. He is the most rebellious Labour MP in Parliament, having frequently voted against his party whip. Many of his supporters see Corbyn's independent spirit as his greatest attribute. There is no doubt that Corbyn is prepared to stand alone, but now his challenge is to unite first the Labour movement and then a coalition of voters behind him. Corbyn's first big electoral test will come in May 2016 with elections for the Mayor of London, Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly. If he proves that he can increase the Labour vote in the heartlands, he will answer those critics who say he has limited electoral appeal.

### Tom Watson

Deputy Leader of the Labour Party, Party Chair and Shadow Minister for the Cabinet Office

"Teflon Tom" has been organising within the Labour Party for the past three decades. Having held frontbench positions for all of the last three Leaders, he is a political heavyweight who will stamp his authority on the organisation of the Labour Party early. Labour Party Conference in two weeks' time is an opportunity for him to establish himself as a strong Deputy Leader. He has made clear quickly that he is pro-Britain's membership of the EU and NATO, in contrast potentially to his new boss. Corbyn and Watson, already known as "Tom and Jerry" will have to find a way of working together but this may not be a smooth transition. For now, Tom will respect Jerry's mandate, but many people will look to him to keep Corbyn on track.

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### Angela Eagle

Shadow First Secretary of State, Shadow Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills

Rumoured to have been put forward by the more moderate wing of the party as a potential Shadow Chancellor, the elder Eagle twin now finds herself leading Labour's charge against the Trade Union Bill currently going through Parliament. The honorific title of First Secretary of State means that she will, theoretically, substitute for Jeremy Corbyn at PMQs when needed. This is meant to challenge, however successfully, the notion that there are no women in senior Shadow Cabinet positions. She was viewed as a left wing candidate in the Deputy Leadership contest, where she came fourth despite having the backing of Unite and Unison.

### John McDonnell

Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer

John McDonnell's appointment as Shadow Chancellor was no surprise. He is a long-term friend of Corbyn, the two have been close political allies for many years, and having run Corbyn's Leadership campaign team, Corbyn has asserted his 'stamp of authority' by appointing McDonnell. The Leader and their chief economic spokesperson cannot have public disagreements about policy and there is no danger of that happening with McDonnell.

There is plenty of material in McDonnell's past that the press and his opponents will use to attack him with, including controversial comments on the IRA and Margaret Thatcher. The last time McDonnell held a frontline Finance role for Labour was during Ken Livingstone's days running the GLC. McDonnell was sacked by Livingstone for wanting to defy the Tory government over rate capping. A man who in the 1980s was said to be too left-wing even for Ken Livingstone is bound to make some waves now he has become Shadow Chancellor.

### Seema Malhotra

Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury

Seema Malhotra's appointment as deputy to John McDonnell is important, and as a strong supporter of small businesses, she'll be a key voice in his team. Like Corbyn she is against Heathrow expansion (her constituency borders Heathrow) and she'll be a key go-to person if Corbyn wants to position the Shadow Cabinet against airport expansion. But she and Corbyn have had their moments, as chair of the Fabian Women's Network she heavily criticised his suggestion that Labour should consult on women-only train carriages, which was probably the one foot that Corbyn put wrong in his campaign.

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### Andy Burnham

Shadow Home Secretary

Andy Burnham has spent the last five years campaigning to be Leader of the Labour Party. First out of the gates after the general election, he was the early favourite to win the contest, but saw his early popularity fade significantly after Corbyn made it on to the ballot. Burnham is known to put party loyalty ahead of his own personal interests, such as when he toed the party line over controversial welfare cuts recently. This loyalty probably explains his decision to accept the important job of Shadow Home Secretary, despite his disappointment at not winning the top job. Policy and rhetoric on immigration could prove an area of tension between Burnham and Corbyn, although they will try to find common ground.

### Hilary Benn

Shadow Foreign Secretary

Hilary Benn is a highly experienced Shadow Minister and former Secretary of State, who brings continuity to the Corbyn team. He has been MP for Leeds Central since a 1999 by-election and was appointed to a Ministerial role by Tony Blair within two years. In 2003 he became Secretary of State for International Development and in 2007 was appointed Secretary of State for the Environment. Having served under Blair, Brown and Miliband, he is a centrist figure in the Labour movement who famously described himself as a 'Benn but not a Bennite' to distance from the left-wing politics of his father, Tony Benn. Benn was known to be particularly close to Ed Miliband and a key adviser not only on the issues in his previous Shadow Communities brief, but more broadly, including on the controversial vote over Syrian air-strikes. When Douglas Alexander, the previous Shadow Foreign Secretary, lost his Scottish seat in the General Election, Hilary Benn was the obvious choice to step into the role. He is firmly pro the European Union and NATO and within hours of his appointment by Jeremy Corbyn, Benn confirmed Labour's support for Britain remaining in the EU.

### Rosie Winterton

Opposition Chief Whip

Rosie Winterton has just taken on the most difficult job in politics. Whipping a PLP where the majority of MPs did not support Corbyn in the leadership contest is going to be a difficult task. Corbyn's story is one of rebellion; he now needs his MPs to be loyal to have the biggest impact in Parliament as possible. Winterton will have a stabilising effect on the operation, at least in its early months. Winterton has been at the top of the Labour Party for two decades, having worked closely with former Deputy Leader, John Prescott, in opposition, before becoming a Minister in the governments of both Blair and Brown. She served as Chief Whip throughout Miliband's years as Leader and she will now need all her experience to act as a stabilising force in the PLP, bringing Labour MPs on board with the new Corbyn leadership.

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### Heidi Alexander

Shadow Secretary of State for Health

Heidi Alexander has been welcomed as a strong appointment this morning. She has been relatively low profile since she was elected in 2010, but is knowledgeable about health issues, particularly given her role in the Save Lewisham Hospital campaign in her local patch. The local community, supported strongly by Alexander, successfully stopped Jeremy Hunt closing the hospital and she will bring some of the passion she brought to this issue, to her new role. Alexander has had many bruising encounters with Jeremy Hunt in the House of Commons and their despatch box duels are sure to be a hot ticket in Westminster. In the last Parliament, Alexander was a very respected senior member of the Whips Office, she is widely liked in the Parliamentary Labour Party and is close to Chief Whip Rosie Winterton.

### Lucy Powell

Shadow Secretary of State for Education

Elected in a by-election in 2012, Powell was a close ally of Ed Miliband having managed his leadership campaign in 2010. She was the party's Deputy Chair of the General Election campaign in 2015 and often put forward for interviews. She came in for criticism when she said that promises made in the infamous 'Ed Stone' might not be as unbreakable as the metaphor suggested. She tweeted about Corbyn less than a month ago that she had "never, ever met or spoken to him". Despite this inauspicious start to working with the new Leader, Powell is a very smart and energetic politician and her instinct for party loyalty means she will help sure up support for Corbyn.

### Owen Smith

Shadow Secretary of State for Work and Pensions

Owen Smith was talked about as a potential Corbyn Shadow Chancellor, but moves instead to the important position of Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary. This is his first big policy brief, having previously sat on the Welsh Affairs Committee and then as Shadow Secretary of State for Wales. Despite publically saying he wanted to vote against the passing the Welfare Reform and Work Bill, he abstained on the grounds of not wanting to resign his Shadow Cabinet position. Although he backed Andy Burnham for Leader, he has widely been seen as closer to Corbyn's politics. He described Corbyn's election as "a boost" for Labour's declining popularity in Wales, and will likely play a key role in advocating Corbyn's Labour to the Welsh at the National Assembly elections next year.

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### **Maria Eagle**

Shadow Secretary of State for Defence

After rumours of several MPs turning the brief down, Maria Eagle takes on a tricky job under Corbyn. Whether installing the younger Eagle sister, who has always voted in favour of renewing Trident, indicates that the anti-Trident message might be less prominent remains to be seen. One thing is for certain, she will be asked repeatedly by Conservatives and by the media whether she agrees with her new leader's defence views. She has strong ministerial experience, which will serve her well in this challenging brief.

### **Lord Falconer of Thoroton**

Shadow Lord Chancellor, Shadow Secretary of State for Justice

We now know why Charlie Falconer 'just wanted to get to his car' last night as he was offered his old job back as Shadow Lord Chancellor. Along with Rosie Winterton he will be a stabilising force in the new team. Falconer was a mentor to a young Tony Blair early in his career and remains his close friend. Falconer publicly criticised Blair's comments during the leadership campaign, a sign that he is now very much his own person, after a long career under successive Labour leaders.

### **Jon Trickett**

Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Shadow Minister for the Constitutional Convention

A well-known left-winger, Jon Trickett was previously associated with the Bennite wing of the party. He is one of the 35 Labour MPs to nominate Jeremy Corbyn for leader. He surprised many when he accepted a job as Gordon Brown's Parliamentary Private Secretary while he was Prime Minister, despite having a rebellious record on the backbenches.

### **Lisa Nandy**

Shadow Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change

Lisa Nandy is a rising star of the PLP who has been tipped as a future leader. She served in Ed Miliband's team as Shadow Minister for Children and later as Shadow Minister for Civil Society. She is seen as being on the left of the party and will perhaps be more comfortable with the Corbyn leadership than some of her new Shadow Cabinet colleagues.

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### **Chris Bryant**

Shadow Leader of the House of Commons

Chris Bryant's role managing Labour's business in the House of Commons is an important one. Opposing the Conservative government is priority number one for Corbyn, and Bryant will be key in helping secure debates. He's an important figure in the Labour Party in Wales and may take on a leading role in the Welsh Assembly elections next year. As a former lobbyist for the BBC, he will have strong views on the forthcoming battle for the Corporation's future. He is reported to have turned down the Shadow Defence Secretary role which was originally offered by Corbyn, due to policy differences. However he is a strong communicator and is business savvy.

### **Lilian Greenwood**

Shadow Secretary of State for Transport

Lilian Greenwood is a strong appointment at DFT, a brief she knows well. Since her election in 2010 she has been involved in transport policy, starting off in the Transport Select Committee and then serving as Shadow Transport Minister from September 2011. Transport will be a key role over this Parliament, particularly with key votes over HS2 to come. Lilian has previously voted in favour of the new rail line, but Corbyn is a staunch opponent. The other important areas to watch for are the development of Labour's policies for the renationalisation of the rail network.

### **Vernon Coaker**

Shadow Secretary of State for Northern Ireland

Ivan Lewis offered to continue in this role until the crisis in the Northern Ireland Assembly is resolved. But Corbyn wanted Coaker instead and he has returned to the role he held previously for two years. He chaired Yvette Cooper's leadership campaign and held a number of roles in the last Labour government so brings much needed experience. Seen as capable and a likeable character, he will work well with Winterton, Burnham and Falconer.

### **Diane Abbott**

Shadow Secretary of State for International Development

A stalwart of the Labour left, Diane Abbott has just spent the past few months campaigning to be Labour's candidate for Mayor of London where she finished an impressive third. Her appointment to the frontbench in 2010, after she had been the left wing candidate for the Labour Leadership lasted for three years, but she was sacked for publically criticising Labour policy. Her appointment to the Shadow Cabinet again will again mean she has to accept collective responsibility, which may well be easier for her to do with Corbyn than it was for Miliband.

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### **Ian Murray**

Shadow Secretary of State for Scotland

Ian Murray is the only Labour MP in Scotland, making him the obvious choice to continue serving as Labour's spokesperson in Shadow Scotland Secretary. Murray was first elected at the 2010 election with a majority of just 316, making it all the more remarkable that he held his seat in the 2015 SNP landslide across Scotland. His surprise win was the one bright spot for Labour and enhanced his reputation as a rising star. Murray strongly supported the successful campaign by Kezia Dugdale to become the new Leader of Scottish Labour and while both Murray and Dugdale are Labour centrists, they have signalled they will work with Corbyn in the hope that his more left-wing brand of politics will put a dent in the SNPs support in Scotland, where voters are traditionally to the left of voters in England.

### **Nia Griffith**

Shadow Secretary of State for Wales

Nia Griffith deputised for Owen Smith as the Shadow Wales Secretary in the last Parliament so knows the Wales brief well. She brings experience to the new team as a former PPS to both Hilary Benn and Harriet Harman. An Oxford educated former teacher, Nia taught in comprehensive schools for more than 20 years, and also worked as schools inspector.

### **Kerry McCarthy**

Shadow Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

As a committed vegan, and the first MP to deliver a speech advocating veganism in the House of Commons, Kerry McCarthy might seem on the face of it a rather unusual choice as Shadow Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. As a representative of an urban constituency, she is likely to receive a fairly cautious reception from the farming lobby. She is a vice-president of the League Against Cruel Sports and will be a strong opponent of any attempts by the Conservative government to weaken legislation on fox hunting or to extend badger culls.

### **Kate Green**

Shadow Minister for Women and Equalities

Kate Green was first elected to Parliament in 2010 and was one of the first of her intake to be promoted, joining the front bench in 2011 as Shadow Minister for Women and Equalities before being promoted to Shadow Minister for Disabled People. Her move back to shadowing women and equalities may be seen by some as sideways shift from the more policy-heavy role of disabilities spokesperson, but her attendance at Shadow Cabinet suggests Corbyn sees equalities as a key role.

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### **Michael Dugher**

Shadow Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport

Michael Dugher is one of Labour's most prolific generators of news stories. He knows how the media works and can deliver a quality quote. Corbyn and Watson spent significant parts of their acceptance speeches criticising the media. Top of Dugher's in-tray is likely to be defending the BBC, which Corbyn pledged during his leadership campaign to protect from further cuts.

### **Gloria De Piero**

Shadow Minister for Young People and Voter Registration

Gloria De Piero was a rapidly rising star under Ed Miliband but having backed Liz Kendall in the Leadership election, she has surprised many by agreeing to serving in the Corbyn Shadow Cabinet. She will be highlighted by Corbyn and his team as an example of the Shadow Cabinet unity and diversity.

### **Luciana Berger**

Shadow Minister for Mental Health

Luciana Berger held the mental health brief in the last Parliament and was seen as a strong performer in the Commons and the media. She was a high-profile backer of her old boss Andy Burnham in the leadership campaign. She is a former Director of Labour Friends of Israel.

### **Baroness Smith of Basildon**

Shadow Leader of the House of Lords

Angela Smith (not to be confused with Angela Smith MP, who resigned from the frontbench yesterday) was an MP for thirteen years before she was elected by her fellow peers as Leader of Labour in the Lords earlier this year, succeeding Jan Royall. Corbyn supports a fully elected upper house, so it will be interesting to see how he manages his relations with the peers in the first few weeks of his leadership.

### **Lord Bassam of Brighton**

Lords Chief Whip

Steve Bassam is a long-serving Lords Chief Whip and, like Angela Smith, is elected by his fellow in the Lords. He is a senior party player in Brighton and Hove.

### **Catherine McKinnell**

Shadow Attorney General

Cat McKinnell was elected in 2010 and becomes the most senior North East heartland representative in the Shadow Cabinet. A former lawyer, she is an experienced choice as Shadow Attorney General – traditionally a non-political role.

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### Jon Ashworth

Shadow Minister without Portfolio

The role of Shadow Minister without Portfolio is usually given to an attack dog. In John Ashworth this trend certainly continues. Ashworth knows how to use the media effectively and will secure Labour some good headlines. He will also be a key internal figure within the party, you can expect him to stay as a full member of the ruling National Executive Committee which will be crucial if Corbyn is to make changes to selection (and deselection) rules.

### John Healey

Shadow Minister for Housing and Planning

John Healey is a highly regarded former Housing Minister, who brings significant experience to this role. Although he has been away from the frontbench since 2011, he has stayed very much involved in housing policy and has contributed to many debates and publications on the sector as well as an adviser to the Labour frontbench team behind the scenes. That Labour's housing brief now receives full cabinet status demonstrates this is going to be a core issue prioritised by Corbyn, especially as the Conservatives continue to attack housing associations