

That's it folks, 2017 is nearly over. What a year it has been. For some it has been horrendous with the loss of jobs and loved ones and I am sure they cannot wait for it to end. For others it has been has been the same old stuff that busily takes them away from homes and families.

It did of course also include an unexpected election and one that ended up taking a twist in the middle. Much of the year for us in Westminster has been focused on Brexit with its varying ebbs and flows culminating in significant and lengthy debates and votes throughout November and December.

So into 2018 we go and what will we see? Who knows. I have given up making both predictions and resolutions for I will either be wrong or weak thus removing the pressure of failure. Yet I can say with some belief that with major sporting events coming up here in the UK and across the world, we wish them well for individual and team success.

The winter Olympics and Paralympics, the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games, and the Football World Cup in Russia are just three major events we shall be competing in but we also have the privilege of hosting the Women's Hockey World Cup this summer, building on the success of our Gold medal Olympic success. All these events inspire many people into sport, either for the first time or to pick up again, and the benefit of that is far wider than just the individual.

I am sure like these athletes will all face our own personal and professional challenges in 2018 but I hope that like them we will be able to overcome them with the strength of mind that in turn inspires others. I wish you a happy healthy 2018.