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Tuesday
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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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[I] indicates that the member concerned has a relevant registered interest. The full register of interests can be found at <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/standards-and-interests/register-of-lords-interests/>

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Ministers and others who make Statements or answer Questions are referred to only by name, not their ministerial or other title. The current list of ministerial and other responsibilities is as follows.

<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
Baroness Evans of Bowes Park	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
Earl Howe	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence and Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Baroness Anelay of St Johns	Minister of State, Department for Exiting the European Union
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
Lord Bates	Minister of State, Department for International Development and Treasury Spokesman
Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government, Northern Ireland Office
Baroness Buscombe	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Callanan	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen	Whip
Earl of Courtown	Deputy Chief Whip
Lord Gardiner of Kimble	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Baroness Goldie	Whip
Lord Keen of Elie	Advocate-General for Scotland and Ministry of Justice Spokesperson
Lord Nash	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
Lord O'Shaughnessy	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health, Whip
Lord Price	Minister of State, Department for International Trade
Lord Prior of Brampton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Baroness Sugg	Whip
Lord Taylor of Holbeach	Chief Whip
Baroness Vere of Norbiton	Whip
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Minister of State, Home Office and Women and Equalities Spokesperson
Lord Young of Cookham	Whip
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip and Wales and Scotland Office Spokesperson

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Written Statements

Tuesday, 18 July 2017

Annual Assessment of NHS England

[HLWS69]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: My Rt hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health has made the following written statement:

Today, I am laying before Parliament my annual assessment of the NHS Commissioning Board (known as NHS England) for 2016-17. A copy is attached. This draws on and responds to NHS England's Annual Report and Accounts 2016-17, which were laid earlier today (HC101).

The Government's mandate to NHS England sets out the steps that we expect it to take to help deliver our shared vision for the safest, most compassionate, highest quality health system in the world. We recognise that this can only be achieved through the outstanding contribution that the 1.3 million NHS staff across the country make each and every day in delivering care and support for patients, and I would like to pay tribute to their diligence, professionalism and expertise.

NHS England's annual report sets out the progress made in delivering the mandate. It describes an organisation that continues to ensure that high quality care is delivered in the face of rising public demand and cost pressures across the system, and emphasises the need to deliver the *Next Steps on the Five Year Forward View* to address these challenges. The Government supports the NHS's plan, including the development of clinically-led and locally-supported Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships.

My annual assessment welcomes the good progress that has been made in challenging circumstances, while recognising that there remains a great deal more to do, particularly to improve quality, access and safety whilst maintaining financial sustainability for the future.

NHS England's core aim is to deliver excellence in access and outcomes for patients and, this year, substantial advances have been made across a number of areas, including mental health, maternity care and diabetes prevention. NHS England has also made a significant contribution to overall financial balance in the NHS.

However, continued growth in demand has put pressure on services and the NHS is not meeting core patient access standards. This remains a key priority and, to help address this, in 2017-18 NHS England will need to better manage demand, including by working with local government to ensure patients are transferred to more appropriate care when they are fit to leave hospital. To support this, the Government has provided an extra £2 billion for local authority-funded adult social care over the next three years, with £1bn available in 17/18.

My assessment sets out the Government's expectation that the NHS will make further progress in the year ahead on achieving parity of esteem for mental health. Continuing the constructive joint working with NHS Improvement and Health Education England to better manage the challenges the NHS experiences over winter, as well as continuing progress to retain and increase the workforce, will be key. We will also look to NHS England, working with NHS Improvement, to deliver a balanced NHS budget.

We will continue to work closely with NHS England to address the significant challenges ahead and provide a sustainable and efficient health service with quality, transparency and safety at its heart.

Copies of my annual assessment and NHS England's annual report will be available from the Vote Office and Printed Paper Office.

The Statement includes the following attached material:

Annual Assessment [Annual Assessment of NHS England 2016-17.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2017-07-18/HLWS69/>

Armed Forces' Pay Review Body Report

[HLWS56]

Earl Howe: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence (Sir Michael Fallon) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

The Supplement to the 2017 Report of the Armed Forces' Pay Review Body (AFPRB) making recommendations on the pay of Service Medical and Dental Officers has been published today. I wish to express my thanks to the Chairman and members of the Review Body for their Report.

The AFPRB's recommendations are accepted in full with implementation effective from 1 April 2017. Copies of the AFPRB Supplementary Report are available in the Vote Office.

British Council Annual Report

[HLWS58]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: My right Honourable Friend, the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mark Field), has made the following written Ministerial statement:

Copies of the British Council's Annual Report and Accounts for the 2016-17 financial year have been placed in the libraries of both Houses. The Report can also be found at the British Council's website www.britishcouncil.org

During the period the British Council received £158.3million Grant-in-Aid from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office.

Childcare Services Roll-out

[HLWS68]

Lord Bates: My right honourable friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Elizabeth Truss) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

We know the cost of childcare is an important issue for working families – that’s why we have made childcare more affordable, given parents more choice and raised standards of provision, supporting parents into work and helping them with the costs they face.

In total, the Government will provide over £6 billion of funding per annum in childcare support by 2019-20 to working families and those on low incomes. For parents across the UK, Tax-Free Childcare will cut childcare costs by up to £2,000 per year for each child under 12 years old, or £4,000 per year for disabled children under 17 years old.

We introduced the childcare service on 21 April 2017 by accepting applications from parents of children under 4 years old (born on or after 1st September 2013). On 14 July the government extended the service to a cohort of parents with children born on or after 1 April 2013 to ensure that these parents can access the 30 hours offer for their 4 year old child before the start of the school term in September. This enables even more families to benefit from the government’s childcare offer and helps busy families with children under 5 who want to claim a 30 hours free childcare place for September.

The Childcare Choices website brings together all the government’s childcare schemes in one place for the first time, and eligible parents can apply for Tax-Free Childcare and 30 hours free childcare through a single and simple application.

They can apply for all their children at the same time once their youngest child qualifies, saving time and avoiding the need to provide the same information twice. All eligible parents will be able to apply for Tax-Free Childcare by the end of 2017.

Parents can apply via the childcare service for both 30 hours free childcare and Tax-Free Childcare. The application is straightforward and can be accessed via the childcare choices website: <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>.

To date, over 150,000 parents have successfully applied to the service and over 45,000 childcare providers have signed up.

ECOFIN

[HLWS66]

Lord Bates: My right honourable friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Elizabeth Truss) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

A meeting of The Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN) was held in Brussels on 11 July 2017. The UK was represented by Sir Tim Barrow (Permanent

Representative of the United Kingdom to the European Union). European Finance Ministers discussed the following items:

Early morning session

The Eurogroup President briefed Ministers on the outcomes of the 10 July meeting of the Eurogroup, and Ministers discussed the current economic situation.

Current financial service legislative proposals

The Council Presidency provided an update on current legislative proposals in the field of financial services.

Mandatory disclosure rules

The Commission gave a presentation on the proposal for a Council Directive amending Directive regarding the mandatory automatic exchange of information in the field of taxation in relation to reportable cross-border arrangements.

Presentation of the work programme of the Estonian Presidency

The new Estonian Presidency of the Council of the European Union presented their work programme for the next six months period.

Commission Mid-Term Review of the Capital Markets Union Action Plan

The Council endorsed Council conclusions on the Mid-Term Review of the Capital Markets Union Action Plan.

Non-Performing Loans

ECOFIN held an exchange of views on policy responses to the Non-Performing Loans situation and endorsed Council conclusions.

Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council

[HLWS63]

Lord Ashton of Hyde: My Rt Hon Friend the Minister of State for Digital (Matt Hancock) has made the following Statement:

The Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council took place in Brussels on 22nd and 23rd of May 2017. A separate Ministerial Written Statement is being tabled by the Department for Education concerning the Education Council. The Minister for Digital represented the UK at the Culture section of Council and Katrina Williams, the UK Deputy Permanent Representative to the EU, represented the UK at the Youth and the Sport sections of the Council. As is procedure, this Statement sets out a record of that meeting.

Youth

There were two items adopted at the Youth Council. The first pertained to draft conclusions on the role of Youth Work, which the UK supported, and the second which pertained to EU Youth Strategy, which again the UK supported. In addition there was a Resolution on the Structured Dialogue with Young People, which the UK adopted. Furthermore, the Commission pointed to the publication on 30 May of the proposed European

Solidarity Corps regulation (a priority of President Juncker) which is designed to broaden the narrow focus of helping young people find employment through volunteer placements. In the policy debate on building Europe's future, ministers highlighted the need to deepen involvement of young people through effective dialogue and via long-term commitment to funding Erasmus Plus. Finally, there was information from the incoming Estonian Presidency, which stated that it would focus its work programme on 'smart youth work' via digital means.

Culture

The Council held a minute's silence to commemorate the victims of the Manchester bombing, with all ministers expressing their condolences to the UK, and many noting that the attack had taken place at a cultural event.

The main item at the Council was the Audiovisual Media Services Directive. The Presidency explained why it believed its compromise text to be well-balanced and it was made clear that a general approach would be sought at this Council. The UK was firm that the weakening of the Country of Origin principle remained the main outstanding concern. There was an initial attempt to find a qualified majority with which to support the file, however this failed. As a result, amendments were made to the text on the issues of scope and jurisdiction criteria, and a general approach was agreed, without the support of the UK. This matter will now proceed to trilogue.

In addition, the draft Council conclusions on an EU strategic approach to international cultural relations was also adopted, with the agreement of the UK.

Sport

The Council adopted two conclusions, one regarding Council conclusions on sport as a platform for social inclusion through volunteering, and the other regarding the EU Work Plan for Sport. The UK agreed with the adoption of both sets of Conclusions. In addition, there was feedback from the World Anti-Doping Agency meeting in Montreal and France presented on their candidacy to host the 2024 Olympic Games. There was also a discussion on social inclusion in sport with a presentation from the Premier League. The UK underlined its work to promote inclusion through social media campaigns and major events such as the Paralympics.

Independent Monitor Annual Report

[HLWS60]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My hon Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Crime, Safeguarding and Vulnerability (Sarah Newton) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

The 2015 Annual report from the Independent Monitor is being published today on www.gov.uk. A copy of the report will also be placed in the House Library.

International Criminal Justice: Support and Funding

[HLWS59]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: My right Honourable Friend, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Boris Johnson), has made the following written Ministerial statement:

Monday 17th July marked the Day of International Criminal Justice. This is an opportunity to restate the UK's strong commitment to the principles of international justice and to reflect on our political and financial support to international justice, including through our support for the International Criminal Court (ICC) and international tribunals.

International criminal justice promotes the rule of law and is underpinned by the principle that there should be no impunity for the most serious crimes of international concern such as war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. Over the past year, we have continued to voice our support for these values and taken action to put them into practice.

In 2016, we demonstrated the UK's commitment to international justice by contributing £8.1 million to the ICC; £1.1 million to the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY); £400,000 to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR); and £770,000 to the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (MICT). The UK also contributed £1 million in voluntary funding to the Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL), and smaller amounts to the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC) and the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone (RSCSL). The UK is delivering practical support for the RSCSL with former Liberian president Charles Taylor serving his sentence for war crimes in a British prison. In December, the UK co-sponsored a UN Resolution to establish the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism (IIIM) to investigate crimes in Syria and has contributed £200,000 towards its start-up costs. In September 2016, at the UN General Assembly, the Foreign Secretary, alongside the Foreign Ministers of Iraq and Belgium, launched a campaign to bring Daesh to Justice. This is a critical and global effort to ensure Daesh is held accountable for its crimes.

Our support is designed to enable the fight against impunity and prosecute those responsible for perpetrating genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. The UK believes that achieving justice for victims should be at the heart of the international community's response to mass atrocity violence. To this end, the UK contributed £150,000 to the ICC's Trust Fund for Victims, which provides physical and psychological rehabilitation, material support and reparations to victims and their families.

At the ICC, by the end of 2016, there were ten situations under investigation: Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Darfur, Central African Republic I, Kenya, Cote d'Ivoire, Libya, Central African Republic II,

Mali and Georgia. In addition, there were ten preliminary examinations: Afghanistan, Colombia, Nigeria, Guinea, Iraq, Burundi, Ukraine, Gabon, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and Registered Vessels of Comoros, Greece and Cambodia. In 2016, the Court saw its first convictions on the basis of ‘command responsibility’ for the crime of rape, intentionally attacking historic and religious monuments, and for witness and evidence tampering. The Court also made its first substantive award of individual and collective reparations to compensate victims of the DRC war criminal, Germain Katanga.

At the ICTY, the UN’s first war crimes tribunal prepares to close its doors at the end of the year. Before closing, the Tribunal is expected to deliver key verdicts in the trial of Ratko Mladić, former Army Commander of the Republika Sprska and in the appeal by six senior Croat military and police officers against their convictions. Like Radovan Karadžić who was sentenced to 40 years’ imprisonment in March 2016, Mladić faces charges of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

When the work of the ICTR ended in 2015, the Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals (MICT) took on its remaining functions, ensuring a smooth transition. The MICT will also take on the residual work of the ICTY, including its legacy, at its closure by the end of 2017.

This is the fifth annual update to Parliament on the FCO’s work to support international justice.

Justice and Home Affairs post-Council Statement

[HLWS65]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My rt hon Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Amber Rudd) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

The first meeting of EU Interior and Justice Ministers during the Estonian Presidency took place on 6 and 7 July in Tallinn. I represented the UK for interior day and the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice the rt hon David Lidington MP represented the UK for justice day.

Interior day began with a discussion on migration through the Central Mediterranean following the joint French/German/Italian/Commission declaration on 3 July and subsequent publication of the ‘Action Plan on measures to support Italy, reduce pressure along the Central Mediterranean route and increase solidarity’. The UK agrees work must continue on strengthening the EU’s external borders and I joined other Ministers in expressing support for Italian efforts and for the measures proposed in the Action Plan.

Ministers then discussed possible developments in EU returns policy. I stressed the UK’s commitment to working with the EU and Member States in this area and expressed support for the proposals, presented by the Presidency, to focus efforts on linking asylum and returns

processes, improving the processes for unfounded asylum claims, and ensuring quick returns following quick decisions.

Over lunch, Ministers discussed ways of safeguarding the EU’s internal security through cooperation with neighbours. The focus was on how to coordinate EU and Member State activities in helping Ukraine to fight serious and organised crime, improve integrated border management, and counter hybrid threats in order to mitigate possible negative impacts of the security situation in Ukraine on the EU’s internal security. The UK recognises the concerns arising from Russia’s action in Ukraine and I endorsed proposals to step up action to tackle the threat, noting the Conference being held in London on 6 July to galvanise international support for Ukraine’s reform process.

Interior day ended with a discussion on next steps on data sharing and interoperability of EU information systems, following the final report of a High Level Expert Group on data sharing, June JHA Council Conclusions on this issue, and the latest Security Union update from the Commission. The Government supports the aim of increasing interoperability of IT systems and ensuring better use of existing data. Member States agreed that interoperability should ultimately increase protection of data, not lessen it, but that clear rules on purpose, access and use were required.

Justice day began with an item on data retention. Ministers explored the implications of the Court of Justice of the European Union judgment in the TELE2 / Watson case from December 2016, and the circumstances in which Member States would still be able to require the retention of communications data. The Government has played a leading role in official level discussions on the effects of the judgment. The Justice Secretary led support from Ministers for the continuation of these discussions as a way of carrying out a comprehensive assessment of different options for data retention. The Presidency concluded that work will continue in the Friends of the Presidency group on all possible options.

On sale of goods, the Presidency posed three questions: whether the rules on off-line sales should be aligned with those for on-line; whether the digital content rules agreed under the Maltese Presidency were a suitable model; and how to deal with “smart goods” with embedded digital content. The Justice Secretary said that alignment of rules is desirable for business, except in cases where there would be increased costs and in areas where it would lead to decreased consumer protection in the UK legal system. The Justice Secretary also noted that fragmentation of rules for “smart goods” is undesirable and an evidence based approach is necessary given the novelty of the area. The Presidency noted the apparent agreement of EU Ministers to align the rules on off- and on-line sales, and to do so along the lines of the digital content agreement. The Commission said that, in the interests of speed, it would not issue a new proposal to extend the scope of the measure. Rather, it would accept the changes to that end proposed by the Parliament and Council.

There was a discussion on e-justice over lunch. The Justice Secretary expressed the UK's support for the proposal to entrust the management of e-codex (which allows judicial systems to "talk" to each other on-line) to EU-LISA, the agency which manages other large-scale JHA IT systems (such as SIS II), so long as EU-LISA would not be over-burdened and unable to focus on its existing workload. Robust cyber-security would also be necessary. EU Ministers spoke broadly in favour of the proposal, but the Commission will not propose a legal instrument yet.

The meeting finished with an exchange of views from Member States on the question of whether the instrument on mutual recognition of freezing and confiscation orders should be a regulation or a directive. The UK has opted in to this proposal and is committed to working with other Member States and EU agencies in identifying and recovering criminal assets. The Government is neutral on the question of the choice of instrument, but has no objection in principle to a regulation, as long as that regulation does not adversely impact on domestic processes for issuing such orders. Other Member States remain split. The Justice Secretary, supported by other Member States, also noted specific concerns about a proposed new type of asset freezing order.

R v. Mouncher and Others

[HLWS62]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My rt hon Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Amber Rudd) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

Richard Horwell QC has submitted to me the report of his investigation into the collapse of the R v 'Mouncher and others' 2011 trial (HC 292). I have today laid the report before the House and copies are available from the Vote Office and on www.gov.uk.

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

[HLWS67]

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: My Rt Hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Sajid Javid), has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

On 26 February 2015, the then Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and the then Secretary of State for Education, exercised their intervention powers as Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council was failing to comply with its best value duty. They made this decision having considered the report of the inspection by Dame Louise Casey CB and advice note from Sir Michael Wilshaw (then HM Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills). Due to the extent and the gravity of the failings in the Council, the then Secretaries of State decided that the intervention should be broad and wide ranging. They directed that Commissioners should exercise all executive functions of

the authority, as well as some non-executive ones, including licensing, until the council could exercise them in compliance with its best value duty. A team of Commissioners was appointed to exercise these functions.

On the basis of robust evidence of sustainable improvements and confidence that the Council was able to exercise certain functions in compliance with the best value duty, functions have been returned to the Council on three separate occasions - 11 February 2016, 13 December 2016 and 21 March 2017. I am pleased now to be able to report on further progress made.

In her 18 May 2017 progress report, Lead Commissioner Mary Ney provided robust evidence to support her recommendation for performance management, human resources (HR), community safety, asset management and waste collection to be returned to the Council. She proposed that the Council would be required to follow any written recommendations made by the Commissioners in relation to any Cabinet decision on services related to domestic abuse services and HR appeals. The latter is time limited. In all other areas, the Council must have regard to any formal advice provided to them by the relevant Commissioner, and if the formal advice is not followed, written reasons must be provided.

Today, my officials have written to the Council to say that I am now 'minded to' return these service areas to the Council but will seek representations before making a final decision. I am placing a copy of the documents associated with these announcements in the Library of the House and on my Department's website.

Senior Salaries Review Body Recommendations

[HLWS57]

Lord Young of Cookham: The First Secretary of State and Minister for the Cabinet Office has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

The 39th report of the Senior Salaries Review Body is being published today. This makes recommendations about the pay of the senior civil service, senior military officers, the judiciary, and Executive and Senior Managers in the Department of Health's Arm's Length Bodies.

The Government greatly values the important work that public servants do in delivering essential public services. We understand the need to ensure that we are able to recruit, retain and motivate staff with the right skills and experience. However, there is a trade-off between pay and jobs in many public services, and pay restraint is one of the many difficult choices the Government has had to make to help put the UK's public finances back on track. Senior public sector workers, like everyone else, will have to continue to play their part to ensure we deliver job security for working people across the country. This will help us to strike the right balance between protecting people's jobs, being fair to public sector workers and being fair to those who pay for it.

Senior Military Officers

The Government has accepted the recommendation of a 1 per cent increase to senior military salaries with effect from 1 April 2017. The Government has also accepted the recommendation that there is no change to the current pay differentials for senior medical and dental officers.

Judiciary

The Government accepts the review body's recommendation of a 1 per cent salary increase for the Judiciary.

Senior Civil Service

The Government accepts the recommendation on developing innovative pay and workforce proposals. The Government supports the development of workforce strategies and supporting reward objectives within public sector pay policy. The Government agrees that there is a need to target resources to address any specific recruitment and retention issues that arise and that there should be a greater focus on the total reward package. This will ensure the right balance between ongoing pay restraint and the need to attract and retain people of the right calibre.

The Government accepts the recommendation on using the 1 per cent award in full. Workforce groups will implement the average 1 per cent award in full unless there is a strong rationale to do otherwise.

In line with the SSRB recommendation, the Government will keep under review the evidence for making pension packages more flexible, alongside the fiscal implications.

The Government accepts the recommendation to conduct a review of the Senior Civil Service pay framework. The Government invites the Senior Salaries Review Body to contribute towards the review of the Senior Civil Service pay framework that the Cabinet Office is currently undertaking. The Cabinet Office would welcome any expertise that the Senior Salaries Review Body can provide on this review over the coming months. The intention is that the outcome of this review will underpin fully considered proposals for a more strategic approach to Senior Civil Service pay in the Government's evidence to the SSRB, with the potential that some recommendations could be implemented from April 2018.

Executive and Senior Managers in the Department of Health's Arm's Length Bodies

The Government accepts the recommendation that the 1 per cent available for basic increases this year is used in full for Executive and Senior Managers in the Department of Health's Arm's Length Bodies, unless there is a strong and explicit rationale to do otherwise.

The Government accepts the Senior Salaries Review Body's recommendation that Arm's Length Bodies use the whole available budget for non-consolidated awards for the top 25 per cent performers and that any individual Arm's Length Bodies who decide not use their full allocation must make a formal case to the Department of

Health Remuneration Committee explaining the rationale for their decision.

The Government accepts the SSRB's recommendation to develop a coherent proposition on how best to set the pay of Executive and Senior Managers in the Department of Health's Arm's Length Bodies in the future and agrees with the recommendation that Executive and Senior Managers are removed from the Senior Salaries Review Body remit whilst a scoping exercise is undertaken to consider the inclusion of Very Senior Managers in the wider NHS.

The Government accepts the Senior Salaries Review Body's recommendation to give active consideration to developing innovative pay and workforce proposals that are focussed on maximising outcomes for lowest cost rather than limiting basic pay increases across the board and will consider proposals within public sector pay policy.

The Government accepts the recommendation to closely examine the options for making pension packages more flexible where there is a compelling case to do so.

Copies have been laid in the Vote Office, the Printed Paper Office and the Libraries of both Houses. We are grateful to the chairman and members of the review body for their work on this year's report.

Telecommunications Council

[HLWS64]

Lord Ashton of Hyde: My Rt Hon Friend the Minister of State for Digital (Matt Hancock) has made the following Statement:

The EU Council of Ministers' Telecommunications Council took place in Luxembourg on 9 June 2017. Due to the timing of the general election, the UK's Deputy Permanent Representative to the EU, Katrina Williams, represented the UK at this Council. As is procedure, this Statement sets out a formal record of that meeting.

The first item was a progress report and policy debate on the following two legislative instruments:

- Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Electronic Communications Code (Recast); and
- Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Body of European Regulators for Electronic Communications.

The Council adopted a General Approach on the Regulation on Cross-Border Parcel Delivery Services. There was a qualified majority in favour.

The last main agenda item was the ePrivacy Regulation, on which there was a progress report. There was no substantive debate on this item.

These items were followed by information points on: the Roaming Regulation; internet connectivity in local communities (known as 'WiFi4EU'); the Digital Single Market Strategy; cybersecurity; and the Commission's EU Digital Progress Report.

Finally, the Estonian delegation informed the Council of its priorities for the Estonian Presidency, beginning on 1 July 2017.

Towards a Smokefree Generation - A Tobacco Control Plan for England

[HLWS61]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Steve Brine) has made the following written statement:

The Government has today published the Tobacco Control Plan for England, with a vision to create a smoke free generation. A copy is attached.

The 2017-2022 Tobacco Control Plan for England sets the overarching strategic direction for tobacco policy. The last tobacco control plan ran from 2011-2015. All the ambitions set in the previous plan were exceeded, during a period when the Government successfully introduced a significant amount of legislation, including standardised packaging of tobacco products and a ban on smoking in a car when a young person is present.

The new plan does not introduce new legislation. Instead, it shifts emphasis from action at the national level

such as legislation to focused, local action, supporting smokers, particularly in disadvantaged groups, to quit.

The plan lays down bold ambitions for reducing smoking prevalence in England, en route towards creating a smoke free generation. These are:

- Reduce the prevalence of 15 year olds who regularly smoke from 8% to 3% or less by the end of 2022.
- Reduce smoking prevalence amongst adults in England from 15.5% to 12% or less by the end of 2022
- Reduce the inequality gap in smoking prevalence between those in routine and manual occupations and the general population by the end of 2022.
- Reduce the prevalence of smoking in pregnancy from 10.5% to 6% or less by the end of 2022.

The Statement includes the following attached material:

Equalities Analysis [Towards a Smoke free Generation - A Tobacco Control Plan for England 2017-2022 - Equalities Analysis.pdf]

Tobacco Control Plan [Towards a Smoke free Generation - A Tobacco Control Plan for England 2017-2022.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2017-07-18/HLWS61/>

Written Answers

Tuesday, 18 July 2017

Aircraft: Air Conditioning

Asked by *The Countess of Mar*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether the Health and Safety Executive will send a representative to the International Aircraft Cabin Air Conference at Imperial College, London in September; and if not, why not. [HL636]

Baroness Buscombe: The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) will not be attending the International Aircraft Cabin Air Conference at Imperial College, London in September 2017. HSE works with the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to regulate health and safety at work in the aviation industry. This operates through a memorandum of understanding and associated guidance document CAP 1484 (see documents attached).

CAP 1484 states that by agreement CAA regulates health and safety on board aircraft and advises on the health implications of exposure to hazardous substances on crew and passengers. CAA is the most appropriate regulatory attendee and HSE will seek information and updates on such issues through its regular contacts with CAA.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Associated Guidance Document CAP 1484 [HL636 - Associated Guidance Document CAP 1484 (March 2017).pdf]

HSE CAA Memorandum of Understanding [HL636 - HSE CAA Memorandum of Understanding.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-07-10/HL636>

Ambulance Services: Emergency Calls

Asked by *Lord Pendry*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, how they intend to address findings from the Health Foundation that in the past three years the NHS has failed to meet its target for ambulance response times for those 999 calls where there is an immediate threat to life. [HL526]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: The Secretary of State for Health announced the publication of the University of Sheffield Report on the Ambulance Response Programme and subsequent recommendations by Sir Bruce Keogh, NHS England's National Medical Director, on 13 July 2017. The report evaluates a series of pilots intended to support ambulance services in England to maintain and improve clinical outcomes for patients in the face of unprecedented increases in demand.

Based on the extensive evidence base detailed in the report, NHS England will put in place a new framework of ambulance performance standards and related

operational changes that are focused on patients' clinical needs and will help the service to operate more efficiently. One of the key consequences of the changes is that the ambulance services in England will be able to more consistently and sustainably be able to provide rapid responds to calls where there is an immediate threat to life.

NHS England will now implement the Ambulance Response Programme recommendations in all ambulance services in the England so that patients across the country will benefit from the improvements seen in the pilot ambulance services.

Anxiety

Asked by *Lord Black of Brentwood*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, how many hospital admissions for acute anxiety have been recorded in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [HL496]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: The following table shows the number of finished admission episodes (FAEs) with a primary diagnosis of acute anxiety from 2011/12 to 2015/16.

Year	Sum of FAEs
2011-12	8,662
2012-13	8,680
2013-14	9,293
2014-15	9,874
2015-16	10,199

Source : Hospital Episode Statistics, NHS Digital

- i) A FAE is the first period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider.
- ii) FAEs are counted against the year or month in which the admission episode finishes.
- iii) Admissions do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the period.

Brexit: Females

Asked by *Lord Lester of Herne Hill*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what is the gender composition of the team negotiating Brexit; and what is the level of seniority of women in that team. [HL444]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The Department for Exiting the European Union has released information on the UK's negotiating team which is publicly available on www.gov.uk/government/publications/biographies-of-the-civil-service-representatives-for-the-negotiations-with-the-eu.

This outlines the core negotiating team however departments are also building up their capacity in their own areas of responsibility and DExEU will be working closely with every Government department to ensure that

the full range of opportunities are taken and risks mitigated across every area of Government policy. DExEU is drawing together expertise from a wide range of departments where there is specific relevant knowledge.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

UK Negotiating Team Biographies
[Biographies_of_the_Civil_Service_representatives_for_the_negotiations_with_the_EU_.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-07-04/HL444>

Buildings: Fire Prevention

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what action have they taken since the fire at Grenfell Tower to ensure that landlords who have obligations under Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 are meeting those obligations. [HL373]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office has worked closely with the Department of Communities and Local Government and information and advice to landlords on fire safety is available on the DCLG GOV.UK webpage.

This includes details of the establishment of an expert advisory panel, chaired by Sir Ken Knight, to provide independent advice to the Secretary of State on any immediate measures that may need to put in place to make their buildings safe for residents following the tragedy at Grenfell Tower. The National Fire Chiefs Council is represented on this Panel.

Cancer: Young People

Asked by Lord Pendry

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether they are planning to widen access to specialist care for the 2,500 young people each year who are diagnosed with cancer, in the light of the estimate by the Teenage Cancer Trust that only half those people are currently in receipt of such services. [HL580]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: NHS England, through its Specialised Commissioning team, commissions cancer services for children, teenagers and young people (0-24) on the basis of service specifications. The requirements in the service specification should be delivered by providers to all patients. The service specification outlines the role of different organisations and multidisciplinary teams as follows:

- Patients aged 16 to 18 years should be admitted to a Teenage and Young Adult (TYA) Principal Treatment Centre which should provide age appropriate facilities;
- Patients aged 19 to 24 years should be offered a choice of access to a TYA Principal Treatment Centre with unhindered access to age-appropriate facilities; or

- A hospital designated to provide care for young adults within its adult cancer services.

Clean Air Zones

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether they intend to encourage the introduction of charges in Clean Air Zones, with a view to discouraging the use of diesel cars in those zones. [HL456]

Lord Callanan: The Clean Air Zone Framework, published on 5 May 2017, sets out the principles local authorities should follow when setting up Clean Air Zones in England.

The Government's consultation on the draft Air Quality Plan set out that charging zones should only be used where local authorities are unable to identify equally effective alternatives. It is for local authorities to develop local proposals likely to achieve the air quality limits within the shortest possible time, taking into consideration the effects and impacts on local residents and businesses.

The Government's consultation closed on 15 June and responses to the consultation are currently being considered. The final Plan will be published by 31 July.

Crimes of Violence: Acids

Asked by Baroness Uddin

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of figures released by the MPS showing an increase in the number of acid attacks in London from 261 in 2015 to 454 in 2016, what action they are taking to ensure public safety. [HL470]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government is very concerned about the use of acid and other corrosives in violent attacks. The Government and the National Police Chiefs' Council jointly hosted a meeting on 4 July with medical experts, police officers, retailers, and officials from a number of Government departments and agencies to share understanding about the nature of such attacks and discussed action being taken by the respective agencies. We are currently considering what further action can be taken to ensure public safety.

Curlews: Conservation

Asked by Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what action they have taken to prevent the curlew from becoming extinct since that bird was added to the Birds of Conservation Concern 4: the Red list for Birds, in December 2015. [HL519]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The UK network of 270 classified special protection areas, covering approximately 2.8 million hectares of key habitats,

protects many rare, threatened and vulnerable birds including curlews.

The Government's agri-environment schemes have been designed to encourage habitat management including for curlew conservation in targeted areas, to provide suitable nesting and foraging conditions.

Natural England is working with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds on a recovery programme aimed at providing a coordinated approach to the management of curlew habitats, including predator control to increase breeding numbers. This forms part of an international action plan to address the 'near threatened' status of the curlew, which the UK will support in our role as signatory of the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement.

Department for Exiting the European Union: Staff

Asked by Lord Adonis

To ask Her Majesty's Government, how many staff were employed by, or seconded to, the Department for Exiting the European Union on 1 July. [HL481]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The Department is recruiting the brightest and the best from across the civil service, the wider public sector and the private sector. The Department for Exiting the European Union now has over 450 staff, and is growing fast. We are not in a position to give a final total for particular groups of staff as recruitment is ongoing and numbers are regularly changing.

Developing Countries: Energy

Asked by Lord Judd

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of findings published by CAFOD in its report UK support for energy in developing countries that between 2009 and 2013 43 per cent of UK spending in the energy sector in developing countries was focussed on fossil fuels and 19 per cent on renewable forms of energy, whether they are planning to seek to reverse those proportions; and if so, what action they are taking to achieve that objective. [HL621]

Lord Bates: Between 2011 and 2016, UK Aid provided 12 million people with improved access to clean energy and installed more than 400 MW of clean energy capacity.

The percentages cited in the CAFOD report draw on several sources and appear to include a wide range of funding, including funding which is not classified as Official Development Assistance.

The UK government has committed £5.8bn over the April 2016 and March 2021 period for tackling climate change overseas. This commitment will continue to drive support for developing countries to move to low-carbon economies including renewable energy, as well as

building their resilience and helping them to manage their natural resources more effectively.

The DFID bilateral programme will not support new coal plants or new investments in existing coal-fired power plants. We will only consider supporting proposals for multilateral development banks to finance coal-fired power plants in the world's poorest countries where no other economically feasible alternative exists, the investment is part of a credible low emission development strategy and where there is a clear poverty reduction case.

Diesel Vehicles: Exhaust Emissions

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether they have made an assessment of the potential impact of a diesel scrappage scheme on reducing levels of outdoor air pollution. [HL457]

Lord Callanan: In May, the Government published a consultation on the draft UK Air Quality Plan for tackling nitrogen dioxide. The consultation includes proposals for Clean Air Zones - designated geographical areas that provide a focus in some towns and cities to improve air quality by permitting vehicle access on the basis of emission standards.

A range of potential measures were identified in the consultation including the introduction of a scrappage scheme. We are considering responses to the consultation. The final plan is due to be published by the 31 July 2017.

Ectopic Pregnancy

Asked by Baroness Taylor of Bolton

To ask Her Majesty's Government, how many deaths have occurred as a result of ectopic pregnancies in each of the last 10 years, broken down by NHS regions in England. [HL711]

Lord Young of Cookham: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the Authority to reply and will place a copy of their letter in the house library.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

UKSA response to HL711 [HL711 v.02 (1) (1).pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-07-11/HL711>

Emergencies: Planning

Asked by Lord Jopling

To ask Her Majesty's Government, how many representatives of Kensington and Chelsea Council have attended courses at the Cabinet Office Emergency Planning College at Easingwood in the last ten years; and for each course attended, to provide, (1) the name of the course, (2) a brief summary of advice given on preparedness for major civil or natural emergencies and,

(3) the number of Kensington and Chelsea representatives attending the course. [HL509]

Lord Young of Cookham: Between January 2007 and June 2017 a total of twelve (12) representatives of Kensington and Chelsea Council attended courses at, or run by the Cabinet Office Emergency Planning College.

Of those twelve, ten attended courses relating to the specifics of crowd and public safety management, one attended a course on crisis management in schools and colleges, and one attended a wide-ranging professional development seminar titled 'reflections on resilience'.

The table below disaggregates overall course attendance by course name and date:

<i>Course</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Number of Delegates per event</i>	<i>Total Delegates per course</i>
Temporary Demountable Structures (TDS)	8th Feb 2016	1	1
Working in Safety Advisory Groups (SAG)	2nd April 2014	1	2
	21st May 2012	1	
Crowd Modelling, Management and Movement and Crowd Dynamics	10th March 2014	1	2
	4th March 2013	1	
Local Authority Event Organisers Group (LAEOG) Event	9th October 2012	3	3
Seminar - Reflections on Resilience	04th Dec 2012	1	1
Introduction to Crowd and Public Safety Management	22nd Feb 2012	1	1
Public Safety at Festivals and Mass Gatherings	28th Nov 2011	1	1
Crisis Management in Schools and Colleges	21st Nov 2007	1	1

The table below provides a brief summary of the content of each course that representatives of Kensington and Chelsea Council attended between 2007-2017.

<i>Course</i>	<i>Summary of course content</i>
Temporary Demountable Structures (TDS)	The principal guidance and legislation applying to TDS; risk control in the design, erection and use phases; safety considerations in TDS procurement; the impact of external factors such as site conditions and weather on TDS safety; identification of good practice and lessons

from events and incident case studies. Modelling

Working in Safety Advisory Groups (SAG)	Determination of appropriate terms of reference for SAGs; the roles of members of the SAG; application of the legislation and guidance on licensing and safety certification; application of relevant guidance to determine safe capacities and practices for a range of venues and events.
Local Authority Event Organisers Group (LAEOG) Event	A two day professional development event that focused on the composition and conduct of Safety Advisory Groups, understanding crowd behaviour and guidelines for emergency planning.
Seminar - Reflections on Resilience	A one day professional development event that covered: 'Resilience in an Age of Austerity'; 'The Olympic Spirit - lessons for the resilient practitioner'; 'Interoperability' and 'Health - Threats to lasting resilience'.
Introduction to Crowd and Public Safety Management	A foundation course which introduces the subject of risk management, systematic approaches to the planning process, communications, crowd dynamics and crowd behaviours.
Public Safety at Festivals and Mass Gatherings	Site risk assessment, evaluation of safety features of an event proposal and the benefits of multi-agency co-operation in the planning for event.
Crisis Management in Schools and Colleges	A course for education managers who are responsible for planning and managing the consequences of crisis and emergencies affecting schools, their staff and students, which enables them to meaningfully evaluate their organisation's state of preparedness.
Crowd, Management and Movement, and Crowd Dynamics	Principal guidelines, legislation and regulations for safety and contingency planning for crowds at venues and events; differentiating crowd management and crowd control; the phases and nature of crowds and their psychology; calculation of flow rates and density for people in crowded places; management of potential crowd behaviours in emergency situations.

European Agency for Safety and Health at Work

Asked by Lord Lester of Herne Hill

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what is their assessment of the benefits and costs to the UK of membership of the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work. [HL446]

Baroness Buscombe: The Agency collects and shares good practice information on national and European Union priorities for safety and health at work, working with national contact points in all Member States. Its activities are particularly valuable to recent and proposed EU entrants and those with less well developed health and safety systems.

The European Court of Auditors publishes annual reports on the accounts of the Agency that are automatically deposited with Parliament for scrutiny

purposes. For the latest report (financial position as of 31 December 2015), the budget was €16.9 million and the auditors stated that the Agency's accounts were reliable and transactions were legal and regular.

Our relationship with the European Union's decentralised bodies upon exit, including the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, will be evaluated in light of delivering the twelve objectives outlined by the Prime Minister to achieve a deep and special positive and constructive partnership between the UK and the European Union.

European Defence Agency

Asked by Lord Lester of Herne Hill

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what is their assessment of the benefits and costs to the UK of membership of the European Defence Agency. [HL683]

Earl Howe: The European Defence Agency (EDA) has a key role in facilitating European cooperation on capability development in support of the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy. EDA membership requires a financial contribution towards the Agency's budget; this currently amounts to £3.9 million for the UK. The UK benefits from EDA work through involvement in a range of projects and initiatives, and UK industry has access to EU opportunities and funding, especially in the area of research and technology.

European Environment Agency

Asked by Lord Lester of Herne Hill

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what is their assessment of the benefits and costs to the UK of membership of the European Environment Agency. [HL448]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: Within the European Environment Agency budget[1] it is not possible to identify the membership cost for any individual EU Member State. The European Environment Agency undergoes regular independently-conducted evaluations[2] and the UK Government is fully engaged with the evaluation currently in progress[3]. When published in 2018, this evaluation will enhance our understanding of the benefits of European Environment Agency membership.

In common with other EU agencies, as part of exit negotiations the Government will discuss with the EU (and European Environment Agency Member Countries) any potential future relationship with the European Environment Agency.

[1] <https://www.eea.europa.eu/about-us/documents/eea-budgets/budget-of-the-eea-2017>

[2] <https://www.eea.europa.eu/about-us/governance/eea-evaluations/eea-evaluation-2013>

[3] http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2018_env_002_eea_evaluation_en.pdf

European Medicines Agency

Asked by Lord Lester of Herne Hill

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what is their assessment of the benefits and costs to the UK of membership of the European Medicines Agency. [HL625]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: We recognise the important role that the European Medicines Agency plays in the protection of human and animal health.

In the negotiations, the Government will discuss with the European Union and Member States how best to continue cooperation in the field of medicines regulation in the best interests of both the United Kingdom and the EU. As my Rt. hon. Friends the Secretaries of State for Health and Business said in their 4 July letter in the Financial Times, the UK is fully committed to continuing the close working relationship with our European partners. Our aim is to ensure that patients in the UK and across the EU continue to be able to access the best and most innovative medicines and be assured that their safety is protected through the strongest regulatory framework and sharing of data.

I underlined this message, in particular the value the UK places on ongoing co-operation, at the BioIndustry Association and Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency conference on 14 July.

Exclusive Economic Zone

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what assessment they have made of the benefits, costs and risks of instituting an exclusive economic zone around the UK. [HL467]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: When the UK leaves the EU it will automatically become an independent coastal state. It will have rights to manage access to its waters and to work with other Coastal States, including the EU, to manage shared stocks and agree shares of fishing opportunities. The UK is already responsible for fisheries enforcement matters within its Exclusive Economic Zone.

Fisheries Convention

Asked by Lord Wigley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of their decision unilaterally to withdraw from the London Fisheries Convention, what assessment they have made of the risk that other EU member states may seek to restrict fishing by British vessels in their waters post-Brexit. [HL546]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The UK has notified its intention to withdraw from the London Fisheries Convention ensuring the UK will control access to the 6-12 mile zone of UK waters after we leave the EU. In 2015, EU vessels caught an estimated 10,000 tonnes of

fish, worth around £17 million in the 6-12 mile zone of UK waters. In comparison, UK fishermen caught an estimated 730 tonnes of fish, worth around £1 million in the 6-12 mile zone of other Member States.

Asked by Lord Wigley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of their decision unilaterally to withdraw from the London Fisheries Convention, what is their negotiating position on the right of other states to fish in UK waters post-Brexit. [HL547]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: When the UK leaves the EU it will automatically become an independent state and will be able to control and manage access to UK waters in accordance with international law. We will have taken back control of our waters and be in a position to negotiate access with other countries in the interests of the UK and our fishing industry.

Foetal Alcohol Syndrome

Asked by Lord Campbell-Savours

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what support they are providing for persons whose condition has been described as foetal alcohol spectrum disorder. [HL500]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: It is recognised that Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) can have a significant impact on the early development of children, their behaviours and their life chances. Early intervention services can help reduce some of the effects of FASD and prevent some of the secondary disabilities that result. Responsibility for commissioning these services lies with clinical commissioning groups.

The United Kingdom Chief Medical Officers' low risk drinking guidelines provide the public with the most up to date scientific information to help people make informed decisions about their own drinking. The guideline for women who are pregnant or think they could become pregnant, is that the safest approach is not to drink alcohol at all, to reduce risks to the baby to a minimum.

Foreign Policy

Asked by Lord Judd

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of their commitment to a more outward-looking Global Britain, what steps they are taking to ensure that Government departments refrain from anti-internationalist rhetoric. [HL305]

Lord Young of Cookham: As the Prime Minister said to the UN General Assembly, the United Kingdom has always been an outward-facing, global partner at the heart of international efforts to secure peace and prosperity for all. She also pledged that the UK will be a confident, strong and dependable partner internationally – true to the UN's universal values. Both the rhetoric, but also the policy at the heart of this government's approach, make it clear that our posture must be internationalist as we build

a new, deep and special partnership with our European neighbours and seek to strengthen our global role and relations. This sets a clear tone for all Government departments' approach.

Free Schools

Asked by Lord Kirkhope of Harrogate

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what steps they are taking to preserve, maintain and develop free schools [HL574]

Lord Nash: This Government wants to create a country that works for everyone and education is at the heart of that ambition. As a result of our reforms, there are 1.8 million more children in good or outstanding schools than in 2010 and free schools have played an important part in that success.

Since 2010, we have opened more than 400 new free schools, which will provide over 234,000 places when at capacity. A further 350 free schools have been approved to open in the next few years, with around 50 opening this September.

29 per cent of free schools inspected by Ofsted have been rated outstanding. We will build on this success by continuing to approve new free schools in areas where there is a clear need for more good school places.

Gaza

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what assessment they have made of living conditions in the Gaza strip; and whether they are planning to send a team to investigate and report back. [HL659]

Lord Bates: The UK Government is concerned at the humanitarian situation in Gaza. Urgent improvements in infrastructure, employment, energy and water are essential to improve living conditions. The UK is closely monitoring the situation, including participating in a joint mission with the UN to Gaza on the 10th July. We urge the parties to find a sustainable solution to the current energy crisis that alleviates the suffering of the Gazan people. In Gaza, UK support includes funding for basic service delivery through the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees, support for humanitarian access and Gaza's reconstruction, and economic development programming to help create jobs.

Government Departments: Contracts for Services

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, which companies are currently contracted to provide outsourced services by each Government department and to state, for each company listed, (1) the country in which the company,

or any relevant parent company, is registered and, (2) the renewal date for any contract through which they are engaged. [HL542]

Lord Young of Cookham: Full information on which companies are currently contracted to provide outsourced services to each Government department is not held centrally.

However, a list of those suppliers that departments may engage through the Crown Commercial Service's range of frameworks can be found at:

<http://ccs-agreements.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/suppliers>

Since January 2011, details of central government contracts above the value of £10,000 are published on Contracts Finder. Contracts published prior to 26 February 2015 can be viewed at:

<https://data.gov.uk/data/contracts-finder-archive>

Those published after 26 February 2015 can be viewed at:

<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Search>

Health

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether the Government Equalities Office's Body Confidence Campaign has undertaken any activities since its 2015 progress report; and whether any future activities are planned. [HL451]

Lord Nash: The Government Equalities Office (GEO) continues to address the important issue of body image as part of its work to support young people's media literacy, resilience, healthy relationships and healthy self-image. In 2015, the GEO funded the PSHE Association to develop key standards on teaching about body image in schools, and this resource has been used and valued by many teachers. It has been updated and is still available on the PSHE Association website.

The GEO also funded Media Smart, the advertising industry's educational charity, to develop film-based resources for pupils in Key Stage 2 on the issue of body image in advertising. This resource was launched in 2016 and continues to be used and valued within schools.

The GEO has also addressed concerns about the very low weight of some fashion models. The previous Minister for Women and Equalities, Caroline Dinenage, hosted a roundtable for fashion models to hear their experience and concerns, and met with the British Fashion Council (BFC) to discuss what could be done to support models' health and wellbeing. As a consequence, the BFC developed improved advice for models and agencies which is available on its website. The BFC also runs The Model Zone as a part of London Fashion Week, to support models' wellbeing.

Hepatitis

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government, how much was spent by the NHS on commissioning treatments for hepatitis C in the financial year 2016–17. [HL529]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: The hepatitis C drug treatment bill for 2016-17 was in excess of £200 million.

HIV Infection

Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood

To ask Her Majesty's Government, how many diagnoses of HIV were made as a result of the admission of a patient to a hospital accident and emergency department in each of the last five for which figures are available. [HL497]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: It is not possible to identify HIV in the Hospital Episodes Statistics (HES) accident and emergency (A&E) Diagnosis scheme. A table showing unpublished data collected through the HIV and AIDS Reporting System with Public Health England, is attached due to the size of the data.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

HIV diagnoses in A&E 2011-15 [HL497 table formatted.docx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-07-05/HL497>

Housing: Standards

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether they plan to review the Housing Act 2004 housing health and safety rating system, in particular the hazards classified under category 1 (damp and mould growth) and category 2 (excess cold). [HL371]

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) is kept under regular review. We have been clear that lessons will be learned from the Grenfell fire, and any issues for the HHSRS will be taken into account.

The HHSRS is a risk assessment process which involves a local authority assessing 29 categories of potential housing hazards in a dwelling, such as damp, excess cold and electrical faults. Where a property contains potentially serious risks to the health and safety of the occupants, the local authority must take appropriate action requiring the building owner to reduce or remove the risk. This will frequently involve service of an Improvement Notice. Failure to comply with an Improvement Notice is a criminal offence for which local authorities can impose a financial penalty of up to £30,000 or prosecute in the courts which have the power to impose an unlimited fine. In extreme circumstances, the local authority may decide to make repairs

themselves, or to prohibit the property from being rented out.

Iraq Committee of Inquiry

Asked by Lord Hennessy of Nympsfield

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether there has been any review of the lessons learnt from the Iraq Inquiry; and if so, when they intend to publish that review. [HL353]

Lord Young of Cookham: The Government has received the report of Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee on the Iraq Inquiry, and will be responding in due course, setting out the lessons learned.

Iraq: Refugees

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what estimate they have made of the number of Iraqis that have fled Daesh in Iraq who are now refugees in countries bordering Syria. [HL704]

Lord Bates: As of July, the UN estimates that 257,476 Iraqi refugees who have fled Daesh are hosted in countries in the region such as Turkey and Jordan. Most people who have fled Daesh in Iraq are internally displaced; currently over 3 million Iraqis are internally displaced within Iraq.

Leigh Day

Asked by Lord Blencathra

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of (1) the clearing of Leigh Day and three of its solicitors of all allegations of professional misconduct, and (2) reports of further allegations by a whistle-blower against that firm, concerning claims by Iraqi civilians of abuse by British troops, whether they intend to refer that firm to the National Crime Agency for investigation of any possible criminal conduct. [HL423]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government is aware of the recent media allegations of misconduct by an apparent whistle-blower, but consider it premature to refer the matter to the National Crime Agency. As the NCA would likely investigate only if these allegations have not been examined by the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal, the Government will need to await publication of the Tribunal's full, reasoned decision before deciding whether it is appropriate to refer the matter to the NCA.

London-Exeter Railway Line

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Callanan on 28 June (HL8), on what basis Network Rail has decided that the scheme to double the track between Tisbury and Wilton Junction is not a priority. [HL694]

Lord Callanan: Network Rail's Wessex Route Study, published in August 2015, concluded that the forecast levels of growth between Salisbury and Exeter did not justify the need for addition sections of double track along the route in the period up to 2024.

Mental Health Services

Asked by Lord Pendry

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the statement in the Queen's Speech that they will ensure that mental health is prioritised in the National Health Service, what steps they are taking to (1) end health inequalities faced by people with severe mental illness, and (2) ensure that those people have the same life expectancy as the rest of the population. [HL523]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: This Government was the first to introduce waiting time targets for mental health, has increased funding to £11.6 billion and committed to increasing access to 1 million more people by 2020/21.

Public Health England (PHE) is taking action to reduce premature mortality for people with serious mental illness.

PHE has responsibility for Recommendation 20 in the Five Year Forward View for Mental Health, which focuses on ensuring that people with mental health problems who are at greater risk of poor physical health get access to prevention and screening programmes. This includes primary and secondary prevention through screening and NHS Health Checks, as well as interventions for physical activity, obesity, diabetes, heart disease, cancer and access to 'stop smoking' services.

Asked by Lord Pendry

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what assessment they have made of the recommendation from the charity Rethink Mental Illness in their Manifesto 2017, that Her Majesty's Government, should appoint a cabinet level ministerial post for mental health with responsibility for ensuring a cross-Government plan to address mental inequalities. [HL528]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: Improving mental health in England is a priority for this Government and my Rt. hon. Friend the Secretary of State, who is part of the Prime Minister's Cabinet, is committed to ensuring the transformation of mental health through delivery of the mental health commitments in the Five Year Forward View. This includes addressing mental health inequalities. To ensure the delivery of this transformation programme a robust governance structure has been put in place, which includes ministers across Whitehall.

Navy: Fisheries

Asked by Lord Storey

To ask Her Majesty's Government, how many Fishery Protection ships are patrolling UK waters at any

one time; and what is the total number in the squadron. [HL463]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: We are unable to confirm the position at a UK level as fisheries protection is a devolved matter. However, the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron comprises of 3 offshore patrol vessels of which one is currently tasked to meet the contractual commitment to the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) for the purposes of fisheries enforcement in England.

The number of RN Offshore Patrol Vessels reflects the adoption of a risk based, intelligence led operational model that enables targeted enforcement interventions in the right place at the right time. The requirement for all vessels over 12 metres in length to be fitted with the satellite tracking devices (Vessel Monitoring System) gives a real time picture of where fishing activity is happening enabling the efficient employment of patrol vessels. This information is monitored at the MMO control room in Newcastle.

In addition, when the RN Offshore Patrol Vessels are at sea but conducting other tasks they are still able to provide a presence which has a deterrent effect. This is supplemented by joint working with other agencies such as Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authorities (IFCAs), UK Border Force (UKBF) and the Police to ensure effective and timely intervention where illegal activity is suspected. Radar sweeps can be used by patrol vessels to identify potential targets and the AIS (Automatic Identification System) is also used in fisheries enforcement to detect fishing activity, including where fishing vessels are operating.

North Korea: Guided Weapons

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what assessment they have made of the government of North Korea's claim to have tested a long-range intercontinental missile. [HL420]

Baroness Goldie: North Korea's launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile on 4 July is a clear violation of numerous Security Council resolutions. It is yet another reminder of the grave danger that North Korea poses. As a consequence on 5 July, the North Korean Ambassador was summoned to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The UN Security Council met to condemn the test. We will work with partners on further measures to address the threat to international peace and security posed by North Korea's destabilising and provocative conduct.

Nurses

Asked by Lord Wigley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what plans they have to introduce in England legislation analogous to the Nurse Staffing Levels (Wales) Act 2016 to make

provision for safe nurse staffing levels in hospitals in England. [HL480]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: Appropriate staffing levels are already a core element of the Care Quality Commission's (CQC's) registration regime underpinned by legislation. All providers of regulated activities must be registered with the CQC and meet the registration requirements. The 16 safety and quality requirements set out in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 include a requirement for the deployment of sufficient numbers of suitably qualified, competent, skilled and experienced persons.

In July 2016, the National Quality Board published *Supporting NHS providers to deliver the right staff, with the right skills, in the right place at the right time: Safe, sustainable and productive staffing*. This safe staffing improvement resource provides an updated set of expectations for nursing and midwifery care staffing, to help National Health Service provider boards make local decisions that will support the delivery of high quality care for patients within the available staffing resource.

A copy of *Supporting NHS providers to deliver the right staff, with the right skills, in the right place at the right time: Safe, sustainable and productive staffing* is attached.

We now have 13,100 more nurses on our wards than in 2010.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Supporting NHS providers guidance [nqb-guidance.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-07-04/HL480>

Peers

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Young of Cookham on 11 July (HL 291), why changing the system of courtesy titles for (1) the spouses of women members, and (2) the same sex spouses and civil partners of members, of the House of Lords is not a priority for the current parliamentary session. [HL753]

Lord Young of Cookham: The Government does take the issue of inherent inequalities seriously, however, the Government's priorities for the coming Parliamentary session were set out in The Queen's Speech.

Pension Credit

Asked by Baroness Altmann

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what estimate they have made of the cost of introducing a double lock on Pension Credit uprating from 2018–19 onwards, uprating pensions by the highest of the consumer price index or earnings inflation, (1) over the course of this

Parliament, (2) over the next 10 years, and (3) up to 2050. [HL417]

Baroness Buscombe: No estimate of the cost of introducing a double lock on Pension Credit uprating has been made. The legislative requirement is that the standard minimum guarantee in Pension Credit should increase at least in line with earnings.

Prisoners' Release

Asked by Lord Wigley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, during the last 12 months, how many prisoners sentenced to an indeterminate sentence of Imprisonment for Public Protection were (1) offered places on a training course which could lead to their release, (2) were released following completion of such training courses, and (3) refused to take up a place or dropped out of such courses; and how those figures compare with those for the preceding 12 month period. [HL479]

Lord Keen of Elie: The information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost as central records are not kept for all aspects of the management of prisoners sentenced to an indeterminate sentence of Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP).

HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) and the Parole Board will continue to work together to improve the progression of IPP prisoners. This group continue to achieve release in high numbers, with 576 first time IPP releases in 2016, the highest figure since the sentence was introduced.

HMPPS will continue to invest in interventions to assist prisoners to both reduce their risk and demonstrate such progression to the Parole Board. However, it is important to remember that it is not mandatory for IPPs to complete accredited offending behaviour programmes in order to achieve release. Completing an accredited offending behaviour programme is one way in which IPP prisoners may demonstrate that they have reduced their risk of harm and reoffending; other options may include work and employment, education and one to one work with psychologists or prison offender supervisors.

Pupils: Mental Health

Asked by Lord Cotter

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what action they are taking to ensure that each school in the UK employs a member of staff with specific experience to address mental health issues. [HL553]

Asked by Lord Cotter

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what action they are planning to deal with issues around mental health in schools. [HL554]

Lord Nash: Good mental health is a priority for the Department. It can have a profound impact on the whole of a child's life, not just their attainment. Schools have an important role to play, but teachers are not mental health professionals. They need support from specialist services, which is why we are investing an additional £1.4 billion in children and young people's mental health services to 2020.

The Prime Minister announced earlier in the year that a member of staff in every secondary school in the country would be offered mental health first aid training. This training has now begun. It will equip those undertaking the training with the knowledge needed to identify and make an initial response to mental health concerns, which they can share with colleagues. The Prime Minister also announced a number of pilots to develop practice and evidence about what works in promoting good mental wellbeing, putting peer support schemes in place and developing joint working with specialist mental health services. We are procuring organisations to run these projects and will announce the results as soon as possible.

We have published a blueprint for school counselling services, which provides schools with advice on delivering high quality counselling to all pupils.

We have funded the development of MindEd, a free online resource which allows all those working with children and young people to access training and information on a range of mental health issues.

The Department has also issued advice on behaviour and mental health providing teachers with information and tools to identify pupils who need help, and to provide effective and early support.

We will be considering with the Department of Health how best to build on this work. We will include proposals in a joint children and young people's mental health green paper, to be published by the end of the year.

Radicalism

Asked by Baroness Helic

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Statement by Baroness Williams of Trafford on extremism (HLWS40), with how many countries the UK will be raising specific evidence-based concerns regarding funding originating in those countries being supplied to Islamic organisations in the UK; and what action they will be seeking from the governments of those countries. [HL824]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government laid a Written Ministerial Statement in both Houses on Wednesday 12 July, which conveyed the main findings of the Government's review into the funding for Islamist extremist activity in the UK. The single most important finding was that the most significant source of funding for Islamist extremism in the UK is small, private donations from UK-based individuals. Often these individuals do not appreciate the extremist credentials of those they are donating to. The Government's response prioritises

tackling the domestic sources of extremism but the Government is committed to tackling all sources, including from overseas. The Government will continue to work with its international partners to combat extremism and where necessary will raise issues of concern in our bilateral relationships. The Charity Commission will be introducing a requirement on charities to declare overseas sources of funding to increase transparency in this area.

The Government's Counter-Extremism Strategy sets out its commitment to tackling extremism in all its forms, including engaging internationally to support our efforts to defeat extremism in the UK. This includes countering the flow of extremism to the UK, whether money, people or ideology; building international partnerships with all those opposed to extremism; and disrupting extremists from entering the UK. The Government engages with a wide range of international partners on extremism issues, including through the United Nation's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism and the United Nation's Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

RAF Northolt

Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether they have made any assessment of (1) the environmental impact, and (2) the impact on noise pollution of, raising of the cap on flights each year at RAF Northolt from 7,000 to 12,000. [HL778]

Earl Howe: As the increase in the self-imposed ceiling for the number of civilian aircraft movements remained within NATS Holdings' (formerly National Air Traffic Services) limits of 40 commercial movements per day, no new noise or pollution survey has been conducted.

Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what response they have given to regional airlines, such as Flybe, which have been lobbying for RAF Northolt to be opened up to scheduled commercial flights. [HL780]

Earl Howe: The Department is content to consider requests from commercial operators to use RAF Northolt for Business Aviation flights within the annual 12,000 civilian movements cap. However, it will not consider opening the Station to scheduled commercial flights.

Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether their procedure for changing the flight capacity, commencing building works or runway renovations at RAF Northolt involves consulting local residents who would be affected; and what form the consultation has taken so far. [HL781]

Earl Howe: There are no plans to change the flight capacity at RAF Northolt. However, there will be routine work to resurface the runway and upgrade safety equipment in 2018. The Department continues to liaise

with the Local Council and other stakeholders regarding this work, in relation to the mandatory construction site requirements the project will entail such as workplace safety, environmental protection measures and traffic regulation orders.

Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether there is to be an increase in flights from 3,810 military flights in 2016 to 10,610 commercial civil flights at RAF Northolt; and what assessment they have made of changing the status of the airport from military to civil. [HL779]

Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what is the intended increase in flight capacity at RAF Northolt for each year for the next five years. [HL782]

Earl Howe: There are no plans to change the status of RAF Northolt from a military airbase to a civilian airport. RAF Northolt has for many years accepted business aviation flights but these remain capped at 12,000 movements per year and there are no plans to raise that cap. There is no cap on military movements, which will fluctuate in line with military requirements.

Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what assessment they have made of the conclusions of the 2013 interim Davies Commission report with regard to RAF Northolt, which did not include significantly increased use of Northolt in its short and medium-term recommendations. [HL783]

Earl Howe: The Department cooperated fully with the Davies Commission and it will work closely with NATS Holdings (formerly National Air Traffic Services) and the Civil Aviation Authority, over the airspace changes that a third London runway would require, in order to protect RAF Northolt's vital military aviation needs.

Rented Housing: Fire Prevention

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether they have any plans to review section 10 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, to include fire safety in the list of factors which determine whether a house is unfit for human habitation. [HL369]

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: All homes should be of a reasonable standard and all tenants should have a safe place to live. Under the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, landlords have an obligation to ensure that they keep in repair the structure and exterior of any property they rent out.

Local authorities have strong powers to deal with poor quality, unsafe accommodation and we expect them to use those powers. Under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, local authorities can issue an

Improvement Notice or a Hazard Awareness Notice if they find a defect in the property. Failure to comply with an Improvement Notice is a criminal offence for which local authorities can impose a financial penalty of up to £30,000 or prosecute in the courts which have the power to impose an unlimited fine. In extreme circumstances, the local authority may decide to make repairs themselves, or to prohibit that property from being rented out.

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 places a duty on housing providers to undertake a fire risk assessment of the common parts of their properties and to put in place and maintain adequate fire precautions to manage the risk that lives could be lost in a fire. The Order is enforced by fire and rescue authorities. Failure to comply with the provisions of the Fire Safety Order may lead to prosecution and potentially a significant fine or custodial sentence.

S4C: Finance

Asked by Lord Wigley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what progress has been made on the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DDCMS) review relating to the funding of S4C; for how long the funding commitment will remain frozen; whether any agreement has been reached on the proposed reduction of the DDCMS funding; and what assessment they have made of the impact of that proposed reduction on S4C's financial position. [HL586]

Lord Ashton of Hyde: The department will conduct a review of S4C funding requirements for 2017/18 before the second half of the financial year begins.

Asked by Lord Wigley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what is their response to the approach made by S4C for its remit to be broadened to enable it to extend its activities on digital media platforms. [HL588]

Asked by Lord Wigley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether they intend to establish a new funding formula for S4C. [HL589]

Lord Ashton of Hyde: As set out in the Welsh Conservatives manifesto, the government remains committed to carrying out a review of S4C's remit, governance and funding in 2017. We will announce more details in due course

S4C: Public Appointments

Asked by Lord Wigley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether they propose to nominate new members to the S4C authority to fill current and impending vacancies. [HL587]

Lord Ashton of Hyde: We intend to make appointments to the board of the S4C Authority later this year. Appointments will be made in line with the Governance Code on Public Appointments, and will be regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

Schools: Greater Manchester

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what assessment they have made of the impact of the new school funding formula for each school in the city of Manchester. [HL426]

Lord Nash: We want to ensure every school has the resources it needs to deliver a high quality education for every child and that all schools are fairly funded. We received over 25,000 responses to the consultation. We are grateful to all those who expressed their views on school funding and the proposed formula as part of this process. We will publish the response to the consultation in due course.

Security Industry Authority

Asked by Baroness Henig

To ask Her Majesty's Government, when will the triennial Review of the Security Industry Authority, carried out by Tony Regan and launched on 14 July 2015, and its recommendations, be published. [HL352]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: A review of the Security Industry Authority was announced on 14 July 2015 and carried out in 2016. The review report will be laid before Parliament in due course.

Social Rented Houses: Rents

Asked by Lord Beecham

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what assessment they have made of the cumulative effects of the one per cent reductions in social housing rents instituted under the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016. [HL591]

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: I refer the noble Lord to my previous answers to him on 27 March (PQ HL6120) and 28 March (PQ HL6379).

Social Security Benefits: Dementia

Asked by Lord Pendry

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what action they are taking to support boxers and footballers with dementia pugilistica who currently rely on financial assistance from various charities. [HL525]

Baroness Buscombe: The Industrial Injuries Advisory Council's (IIAC) 2005 review of Dementia in boxers and footballers concluded that there was insufficient evidence to recommend an addition to the list of Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (available to employed earners)

prescribed diseases. In 2014 IIAC sought high quality research evidence about the risks of neurodegenerative diseases in professional sportspersons. The IIAC response in May 2016 concluded that despite the passage of time, epidemiological evidence on risk of dementia pugilistica in boxers relative to other workers remains elusive, and that there was no new important evidence to change the previous appraisal of prescription in respect of soccer players. As in 2005, there remains insufficient evidence to indicate a more than doubled risk of a dementia in boxers.

IIAC has no plans at present to revisit this, but would likely reconsider should new evidence emerge. However the department provides a range of benefits to support with extra costs of disability, which individuals may be entitled to depending on their circumstances.

Students: Fees and Charges

Asked by Lord Adonis

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what advice they, or their agencies, give to universities on the appropriate fee level to set in respect of undergraduate courses. [HL310]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: Fees for English domiciled undergraduate students studying at Higher Education Institutions that are funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) are subject to maximum fees, which are set in legislation. HEFCE funded institutions that have an access agreement in place for widening participation with the Office for Fair Access (OFFA) can charge a higher fee than those that do not. In addition, HEFCE funded institutions that have demonstrated high quality teaching by achieving a Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) rating can charge up to a higher fee than those that do not.

Tajikistan: Religious Freedom

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Coventry

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what assessment they have made of the government of Tajikistan's commitment to freedom of religion of belief following the decision by the State Committee for Religious Affairs to ban anyone under the age of 40 from participating in the August Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca. [HL430]

Baroness Goldie: The restrictions on freedom of religion in Tajikistan are a growing concern and indicative of Tajikistan's heavy-handed approach to countering extremism. Our Embassy in Dushanbe raises concerns over human rights issues both bilaterally and in collaboration with the EU and like-minded partners.

Teodorin Obiang

Asked by Lord Chidgey

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what support they have offered to the French authorities in their action

against Teodorin Obiang, Vice-President of Equatorial Guinea, in relation to allegations of embezzlement, corruption and extortion in that state. [HL334]

Asked by Lord Chidgey

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether they intend to make early and extensive use of the new Unexplained Wealth Orders, in the light of the Obiang case in France in which the Vice-President of Equatorial Guinea is alleged to have committed embezzlement, corruption and extortion in that state. [HL335]

Asked by Lord Chidgey

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what assessment they have made of the investigation being conducted under the French judicial system that has identified 200 million euros worth of assets held in France belonging to Teodorin Obiang, the Vice-President of Equatorial Guinea, and allegedly acquired with embezzled funds; and what steps, if any, they are taking to ascertain whether Mr Obiang holds any such assets in the UK. [HL336]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: It is government policy to neither confirm nor deny the existence of a mutual legal assistance request.

The UWO provisions in the Criminal Finances Act 2017 are not yet commenced. When commenced, we expect that operational agencies will consider their use in appropriate cases when investigating the assets of individuals held in the UK.

Trees: Urban Areas

Asked by Lord Framlingham

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what plans they have to encourage and support the planting of, and care for, trees in our towns and cities, given the role played by urban trees in controlling air pollution. [HL505]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The Government intends for one million more trees to be planted in our towns and cities and to place new duties on councils to consult when they wish to cut down street trees.

There is evidence that healthy, well-chosen and well-placed urban and peri-urban trees and woodlands can have a small, but beneficial impact on urban air quality.

The Air Quality Expert Group (AQEG) is considering further the evidence around the potential of trees to contribute to improvements in air quality to inform our further policy development. The AQEG is an Expert Committee to Defra that provides independent scientific advice on air quality.

UN High Commissioner for Refugees

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether they have made any representations to the UNHCR

concerning that agency's understanding of vulnerability, with a view to redefining that definition to include religion as one of the criteria used to identify those refugees most in need of assistance. [HL705]

Lord Bates: Our humanitarian aid operates under International Humanitarian Law and is provided based on need. As such it is available to people of all faiths and of none. All our partners carry out comprehensive vulnerability assessments to ensure aid is reaching those most in need, including those from religious minorities as it is already recognised that religion may be a factor in causing vulnerability. DFID and UK missions overseas have regular conversations with UNHCR on these matters.

United Nations: Peacekeeping Operations

Asked by Lord Judd

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what action they will take to strengthen UN peacekeeping, including support for the rapid response capacity; and what role they envisage for the Royal Marines and SAS in this respect. [HL441]

Earl Howe: The UK is providing a leading voice on strengthening UN peacekeeping including through its permanent seat in the UN Security Council.

In September 2016, we hosted the UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial in London, with 74 nations and international organisations, and launched the UN reform agenda based on the '3Ps': better mission planning, increasing the number of meaningful pledges of troops and equipment, and improving the performance on the ground. It was a major peacekeeping conference, which secured 30 new pledges of troops and equipment, including for rapid response, and a reform-focused communiqué signed by 63 countries. The UK continues to drive forward this reform agenda with senior UN officials, Member States, and the UN Security Council.

We are working closely with the Canadian hosts of the 2017 Defence Ministerial, which will maintain a focus on

strengthening UN peacekeeping through reform, matching UN capability needs with pledges, innovation in training, protecting the vulnerable, and improved early warning mechanisms. The UK also seeks to strengthen UN peacekeeping through deploying our own troops on UN peacekeeping missions, and by using our operational experience to inform UN reform policy discussions in New York.

Voting Rights: British Nationals Abroad

Asked by Lord Teverson

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether they intend to give UK citizens living abroad the right to vote in UK elections beyond the current 15 year time limit. [HL713]

Lord Young of Cookham: As outlined in our manifesto, the Government is committed to legislating to scrap the 15-year rule and will do so in time for the next scheduled general election in 2022.

Worldpay

Asked by Lord Myners

To ask Her Majesty's Government, whether they regard the technology and payments company Worldpay to be a strategic national asset, and whether it intends to intervene to order a review of the proposed takeover of the company by a non-British purchaser. [HL522]

Lord Prior of Brampton: Under the Enterprise Act 2002, Ministers have powers to intervene in mergers which raise public interest concerns in relation to national security, financial stability and media plurality. If the Government decides that there are grounds for intervention and that it should exercise its powers under the Enterprise Act in this case, it will make an announcement.

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