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Wednesday
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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 Agnew of Oulton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
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
Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and Wales Office
Baroness Buscombe	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Callanan	Minister of State, Department for Exiting the European Union
Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen	Whip
Earl of Courtown	Deputy Chief Whip
Lord Duncan of Springbank	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office and Scotland Office
Baroness Fairhead	Minister of State, Department for International Trade
Lord Gardiner of Kimble	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Baroness Goldie	Whip
Lord Henley	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Lord Keen of Elie	Advocate-General for Scotland and Ministry of Justice Spokesperson
Lord O'Shaughnessy	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
Baroness Stedman-Scott	Whip
Baroness Sugg	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport, Whip
Lord Taylor of Holbeach	Chief Whip
Baroness Vere of Norbiton	Whip
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Minister of State, Home Office
Lord Young of Cookham	Whip
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip

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Written Statements

Wednesday, 21 March 2018

Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

[HLWS554]

Lord Bates: My right honourable friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Philip Hammond) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

In 2015, the UK became a founding member of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). The AIIB supports economic growth in Asia and drives up living standards. The UK's membership deepens economic ties with Asia and creates opportunities for British businesses.

At the ninth UK-China Economic and Financial Dialogue (EFD) in Beijing on 16 December 2017, the Chancellor of the Exchequer signed a Contribution Agreement with the AIIB, formalising the UK's commitment, made at the previous EFD in 2016, to provide US\$50m to the AIIB's Special Fund for Project Preparation. This fund provides grant support to low income developing country members of the AIIB to prepare infrastructure projects for the Bank to finance. China and the Republic of Korea have committed US\$ 50 million and US\$ 8 million, respectively, and the Fund is open for more contributions.

The Contribution Agreement states that the UK will make four equal payments of \$12.5m by the end of March in 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021 respectively. The UK's contribution to the Special Fund will score as 100% Official Development Assistance (ODA) as projects using UK money will only take place in low income countries.

HM Treasury will make these payments, and any future payments to the AIIB, under the powers of the International Development Act (IDA) 2002. The first payment will be made before the end of March.

Housing Investment

[HLWS553]

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: My Rt. Hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government [Sajid Javid] has made the following written ministerial statement today.

Today, the Government announces that we are now working with a further 44 areas across England to develop projects with the remaining £4.1 billion of the £5 billion Housing Infrastructure Fund, with the potential to deliver over 400,000 homes in areas where housing need is greatest. This is in addition to the West Midlands, where Housing Infrastructure Fund funding for co-development was announced as part of a housing package at Spring Statement. These are strategic, long term projects which will deliver housing not just for now, but for generations to come - creating new settlements, growing places and backing local authority ambition for growth and regeneration. They follow on from our announcement made on 1 February 2018 to take forward 133 Marginal

Viability Fund projects worth £866 million from the Housing Infrastructure Fund to provide infrastructure to unlock up to 200,000 homes. This announcement reinforces our continued commitment to fix the broken housing market and support projects that would otherwise struggle to go ahead or take years for work to begin.

We are committed to helping to create a new generation of strong, vibrant communities where people want to live, work and build families. We are supporting the development of 24 new locally-led garden cities, towns and villages, ranging in size from 1,500 new homes to over 40,000 homes. Over half of these settlements will go forward to the next stage of Housing Infrastructure Fund Forward Funding co-development.

We also want to back places with ambitious plans for new homes where they are needed. Today the Government announces housing packages for Greater Manchester, who will commit to deliver 227,000 homes by 2035, and the West of England, to accelerate annual housing delivery to 7500 homes over the next three years. Both of these areas will also go forward to the next stage of Housing Infrastructure Fund Forward Funding co-development. This is in addition to the housing packages agreed with Oxfordshire and the West Midlands. The Forward Funding component of the Housing Infrastructure Fund was available to the uppermost tier of local authorities in England to bid into, with a focus on strategic, high impact infrastructure projects.

The full area breakdown of successful Forward Fund projects we will be working with through co-development can be found on the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government website at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-infrastructure-fund>

As this is still a competitive process, success at this stage is not a guarantee of Housing Infrastructure Fund funding. Shortlisted local authorities will submit their final business cases and successful funded bids will be announced from Autumn 2018 onwards.

The Housing Infrastructure Fund is divided into two streams:

A Marginal Viability Fund – available to all single and lower tier local authorities in England – to provide a piece of infrastructure funding to get additional sites allocated or existing sites unblocked quickly. Bids have a soft cap of £10 million.

- A Forward Fund – available to the uppermost tier of local authorities in England – for a small number of strategic and high-impact infrastructure projects. Bids have a soft cap of £250 million.
- Housing packages are agreements between central and local government, in which local areas agree to build more homes in return for a package of support from government.

Detail on the housing packages for Greater Manchester, West of England and West Midlands can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/housing-deals>.

Justice Update

[HLWS552]

Lord Keen of Elie: My Right Honourable friend the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (David Gauke) has made the following Written Statement.

"The Government is today introducing into the House of Lords legislation through the Civil Liability Bill to make important changes to our system of compensation for personal injury.

As announced in the Queen's Speech on 21 June 2017, the Civil Liability Bill will reform the law relating to whiplash claims. We will introduce a new fixed tariff of compensation for pain, suffering and loss of amenity for whiplash claims with an injury duration of up to two years. The tariff will be set in supporting regulations. We will also introduce a ban on seeking or offering to settle whiplash claims without medical evidence.

The Civil Liability Bill will also make changes to the way in which the personal injury discount rate for England and Wales is set under the Damages Act 1996. The principal changes we are making are that: the discount rate will be set by reference to expected rates of return on a low risk diversified portfolio of investments rather than a return on very low risk investments as under the present law; in setting the rate, the Lord Chancellor will consult an independent expert panel chaired by the Government Actuary, with HM Treasury remaining a statutory consultee; and the discount rate will be reviewed promptly after the legislation comes into force and, thereafter, at least every three years.

I am also publishing today the Government's response to the Justice Committee's report, *Pre-legislative scrutiny: draft personal injury discount rate clause*, published on 30 November 2017.

I am also placing the Delegated Powers memorandum and accompanying impact assessments in the House libraries.

I notified the market of the Civil Liability Bill earlier today through the London Stock Exchange group."

NHS Workforce

[HLWS555]

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

The Government is committed to the delivery of world class public services, and ensuring that public sector workers are fairly remunerated for the vitally important work that they do.

Public sector pay restraint was necessary to tackle the deficit left by the last Government. However, in September last year we ended the 1% pay award policy for public sector workforces, recognising that some flexibility would be required in certain areas, including in return for improvements to public sector productivity. There is still of course a need for fiscal restraint - our debt

is the highest it has been in 50 years, and it is not fair to pass an increasing burden of debt onto future generations.

As a result of constructive dialogue over recent months, I am today announcing that I have agreed to NHS Employers and the NHS Trade Unions going out to consultation on a three year pay agreement for NHS staff employed under the Agenda for Change Pay Agreement. This agreement covers over one million staff employed in the NHS excluding employed doctors and very senior managers and is a good example of where public sector employers and Unions can work together to agree a pay rise in return for wider reform.

The 3-year deal aims to ensure that every pound of the £36bn pay bill delivers value for and is fair to patients, staff and the taxpayer. It targets recruitment, retention and capacity issues to support staff and help them meet demand within the NHS.

The deal will help ensure the NHS can continue to recruit the skilled compassionate workforce it needs by:

- Targeting the greatest pay uplifts at the lowest paid in the NHS, affecting over 100,000 FTE staff, so that the lowest starting salary increases from £15,404 this year to £18,005 in 20/21, through reform.
- Investing in higher starting salaries for staff in every pay band by reforming the pay system to remove overlapping pay points; so a newly qualified nurse will receive starting pay 12.6% (£2,779) higher in 2020/2021 than this year and starting pay for a midwife on moving to Band 6 will increase by 18.1% (£4,800) as a result of pay band reform.

It will support the retention of staff by:

- Guaranteeing fair basic pay awards for the next three years to the 50% of staff who are at the top of pay bands – a cumulative 6.5%.
- Guaranteeing fair basic pay awards and faster progression pay for the next three years to the c.50% of staff that is not yet on the top of their pay band.

Through important reforms to pay progression, the deal will help improve staff engagement and ensure that all staff have the knowledge and skills and support to make the greatest possible contribution to patient care.

- It will put appraisal and personal development at the heart of pay progression - with virtually automatic incremental pay replaced by larger, less frequent pay increases subject to staff meeting the required standards for their role.
- Staff will be supported to develop their skills and competencies and demonstrate that they meet the required standards before moving to the next pay point.
- The system will be underpinned by a commitment from employers to fully utilise an effective appraisal process.

The deal will release capacity for provider organisations:

- The partners commit to working together to improve the health and wellbeing of NHS staff so as to improve levels of attendance in the NHS with the ambition of

matching the best in the public sector. NHS Digital data suggests that latest sickness absence rate for the NHS is 4.13%. For AfC staff, this is estimated at 4.5%. Estimates suggest that a 1% drop in sickness absence could save the NHS £280m.

Finally, the deal will encourage greater consistency and modernisation of terms and conditions:

- New provisions will be agreed to give staff access to consistent Child Bereavement Leave, Enhanced Shared Parental Leave (extension of statutory), and a national framework for buying and selling annual leave.
- Steps will be taken to ensure that, over time, the calculation for sickness absence pay is the same for all staff.
- There will be very modest changes to the value of the higher rates of unsocial hours pay for staff in pay bands 1 to 3, over the period of the multi-year deal to ensure the difference between these staff and all other AfC staff is narrowed over time.

Overall, this pay deal is fair to staff and taxpayers and will help to improve productivity through stronger evidence based appraisal systems and through that, better staff engagement which we know can help improve outcomes for patients.

At the Budget in November my Right Honourable Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that if discussions with health unions on pay structure modernisation for Agenda for Change staff were successful, he would protect frontline services by providing additional funding for such a settlement. I can confirm that through Autumn Budget 2017, we set aside in the reserves £800 million per annum which funds the first year of the Agenda for Change pay deal. If the NHS Trade Unions accept this agreement following consultation with their members, the Government will release this funding. The Chancellor will provide for additional funding required to fulfil his commitment through the 2018 Autumn Budget, and so make available the £4.2 billion over three years needed to fund the deal. This is all part of our balanced approach that keeps debt falling, while investing in our public services and keeping taxes low.

I will also be publishing a draft Equality Statement to meet my Public Sector Equality Duty. A final Equality Statement will be published, when the agreement is implemented.

This agreement will be shared with the independent NHS Pay Review Body and I look forward to their report in due course.

Written Answers

Wednesday, 21 March 2018

Aiding and Abetting

Asked by **Lord Beecham**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of concerns about the application of the principle of joint enterprise in criminal cases; and whether they intend (1) to initiate a review of the state of the law in this area, and (2) to collect and publish statistics of murder and other cases in which that principle has been applied since 2014. [HL6221]

Lord Keen of Elie: This Government does not believe that any changes to the law on joint enterprise are currently needed, but will keep the matter under review. The Supreme Court judgment in *R v Jogee* amended the law in this area and it is for our independent courts to interpret the law, as laid down by the Supreme Court. The Crown Prosecution Service has amended its guidance on secondary liability for prosecutors in line with the *Jogee* judgment, and has consulted on that guidance which aims to provide a clear direction for prosecutors in this area of law.

The Ministry of Justice only collects information on how many defendants are prosecuted and convicted for each offence in any given year. Information is not collated on whether a prosecution or conviction relied on the law of joint enterprise. Such information may be held on court records, but could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Going forward the collection of data on joint enterprise cases is being considered as part of the Common Platform Programme. The Common Platform aims to provide a single case management system that will enable the sharing of evidence and case information across the Criminal Justice System.

Aviation: USA

Asked by **Lord Taylor of Warwick**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to address concerns regarding the UK's capability to secure an open skies treaty with the US. [HL6173]

Baroness Sugg: Discussions are being held with the US about new, bilateral, air services arrangements that will apply after the current EU-US Air Transport Agreement ceases to apply to the UK. Discussions have been positive and we have made significant progress. Both sides want to conclude these discussions soon.

All parties have a shared interest in ensuring that existing rights will continue under the new bilateral arrangements, allowing airlines on both sides of the Atlantic to continue to operate existing services as well as to develop new ones.

Bahrain: Overseas Aid

Asked by **Lord Scriven**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by the Minister of State for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 11 December 2017 (HC116299 and HC116302) regarding the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's £1.52 million funding for overseas aid to Bahrain, with which UK bodies the FCO contracted to implement the technical assistance programme in Bahrain for the 2017–18 financial year. [HL6169]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Government works with a number of implementation partners and beneficiaries to support Bahraini-led reform. These programmes aim to support progress on building effective and accountable institutions, strengthening the rule of law, and justice reform. All of our work is in line with international standards, and aims to share the UK's expertise and experience. Any training provided by, on or behalf of, the British Government fully complies with our domestic and international human rights obligations.

Asked by **Lord Scriven**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by the Minister of State for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 11 December 2017 (HC116299 and HC116302) regarding the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's £1.52 million funding for overseas aid to Bahrain, which Bahraini bodies will benefit from the funding for the 2017–18 financial year. [HL6170]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Government works with a number of implementation partners and beneficiaries to support Bahraini-led reform. These programmes aim to support progress on building effective and accountable institutions, strengthening the rule of law, and justice reform. All of our work is in line with international standards, and aims to share the UK's expertise and experience. Any training provided by, on or behalf of, the British Government fully complies with our domestic and international human rights obligations.

Banks: Company Accounts

Asked by **Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Henley on 5 March (HL5823), why banking solvency would not be a matter for the Financial Reporting Council to deal with as well as a Financial Services Authority matter given that the capital maintenance and dividend distribution regime contained in the Companies Act 2006 applies to all companies incorporated under that Act, whether banks or not. [HL6193]

Lord Henley: As stated in the reply given to the noble Baroness on 5th March 2018 to Question HL5823, the

Financial Reporting Council is not responsible for the prudential regulation of banks.

*Asked by **Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Henley on 5 March (HL5823), in which month and year the Financial Reporting Council (FRC) first became aware of "the contribution that certain features of the International Accounting Standards made to the problem of the capital adequacy of the banks"; when the FRC first informed Parliament; and by what means Parliament was informed. [HL6195]

Lord Henley: The Financial Reporting Council is not responsible for banking supervision.

British Nationals Abroad: Syria

*Asked by **Lord Blencathra***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Keen of Elie on 7 March (HL5766), whether they will set out what they regard as the public interest in prosecuting UK citizens who fought against ISIL forces in Syria, and not prosecuting those who fought against UK-backed forces in Syria. [HL6146]

Lord Keen of Elie: The decision to prosecute UK citizens who fought in Syria is taken independently of Government by the CPS with the permission of the Attorney General as the guardian of the public interest where required by statute. The public interest in prosecuting these cases is considered on a case by case basis taking account of the factors set out in the Code for Crown Prosecutors and the surrounding circumstances. There is no policy of prosecuting those who fought against ISIL forces and not prosecuting those who fought against UK-backed forces.

Carillion: Insolvency

*Asked by **Lord Bassam of Brighton***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Young of Cookham on 27 February (HL4733), whether a minute of the discussion on Carillion's financial position was prepared following that company's meeting with the then Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Ministry of Justice in October 2017; whether, following that meeting, they made any assessment of Carillion's ability to continue with Government contracts; and whether (1) the Secretary of State for Justice, and (2) the Prime Minister, were advised of Carillion's likely failure following that meeting. [HL5972]

*Asked by **Lord Bassam of Brighton***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Young of Cookham on 27 February (HL4733), who attended the meeting between Carillion and the then Parliamentary Under Secretary of

State at the Ministry of Justice in October 2017. [HL5973]

*Asked by **Lord Bassam of Brighton***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Young of Cookham on 27 February (HL4733), whether, following the meeting between Carillion and the then Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Ministry of Justice in October 2017, other Government departments with Carillion contracts were alerted to likely contract failures and the company's precarious financial position. [HL5974]

Lord Keen of Elie: Senior officials from Ministry of Justice and Her Majesty's Prison & Probation Service were present at the meeting between Carillion and the then Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) in October 2017. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the performance of Carillion in delivering facilities management services to 50 prison establishments in the Southern England prison estate.

A note of the meeting was taken, as with all Ministerial meetings. The meeting focussed upon performance, compliance and opportunities for rehabilitation.

The information that was discussed at the meeting was either already known by Government or it was information that was in the wider public domain.

Charities: Freedom of Information

*Asked by **Lord Patten***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the case for extending the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to charities in receipt of public funds. [HL6165]

Lord Young of Cookham: I refer my noble friend to my answer to his question 14 September 2017. [HL1315]

Children: Day Care

*Asked by **Lord Watson of Invergowrie***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of reducing eligibility for Employer Supported Childcare on access to childcare for working parents. [HL6213]

Lord Bates: The eligibility criteria for Employer-Supported Childcare has not been reduced.

We are gradually replacing Employer-Supported Childcare with Tax-Free Childcare which will extend eligibility for childcare support to nearly 1 million more families.

Children: Poverty

*Asked by **Baroness Primarolo***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many children were living in absolute poverty in each year

between 2010 and 2017; and how those figures were calculated. [HL6313]

Baroness Buscombe: National statistics on the number of children in absolute low income for the period 2009/10 to 2015/16 are available in the annual "Households Below Average Income".

Year	Number of children living in absolute low income before housing costs
2009/10	2.5m
2010/11	2.3m
2011/12	2.6m
2012/13	2.5m
2013/14	2.4m
2014/15	2.3m
2015/16	2.3m

m = a million

Figures for 2016/17 are due to be published on 22 March 2018.

Absolute low income is calculated by taking the 60 per cent of median income threshold from 2010/11 and increasing this each year in line with inflation (using variants of the Consumer Price Index). This measure is designed to assess how the number of children in low income families compares with 2010/11 after taking account of inflation.

Asked by Baroness Primarolo

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many children were living in poverty in workless households in each year between 2010 and 2017 (1) before housing costs, and (2) after housing costs. [HL6315]

Baroness Buscombe: National statistics on the number of children living in relative low income, in workless households, before and after housing costs, for the period 2009/10 to 2015/16 have been calculated from figures published in the annual "Households Below Average Income" publication.

Year	Number of children living in relative low income, in workless households	
	Before Housing Costs	After Housing Costs
2009/10	1.2m	1.8m
2010/11	1.0m	1.5m
2011/12	0.8m	1.3m
2012/13	0.9m	1.4m
2013/14	0.8m	1.4m
2014/15	0.9m	1.3m
2015/16	0.9m	1.3m

m = a million

Figures for 2016/17 are due to be published on 22 March 2018.

Company Accounts

Asked by Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Henley on 5 March (HL5822), what assessment they have made of whether the fact that ease of comparison and preparation took precedence over the public safety, creditor protection and solvency position of companies accounts, including those companies that are banks, had the ingredients of regulatory capture by virtue of expedient outcome taking precedence over the public interest. [HL6194]

Lord Henley: No assessment has been made on this. The Government consults extensively on all aspects of company law to ensure that it properly reflects the public interest.

Defence: Finance

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the comments by Rear Admiral Alex Burton, former Commander UK Maritime Forces, that without higher spending on defence as a percentage of GDP, the UK's military credibility and ability to fight and win on the front line will be affected. [HL6305]

Earl Howe: The commitment to spend at least two per cent of GDP on defence came following a thorough examination of threats and risks, after which the Government decided on an appropriate level of funding. This budget will rise by at least 0.5% above inflation every year of this Parliament. Defence is committed to ensuring the British Armed Forces can continue to make their crucial contribution to Britain's status as a global power and to British security and prosperity. The Modernising Defence Programme aims to modernise Defence, to deliver better military capability and value for money. This will involve reviewing the capabilities that we require to address the threats that we are facing, both now and in the future.

Degrees: Standards

Asked by Lord Storey

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the rating of degree courses as gold, silver or bronze will apply to overseas universities established by UK universities. [HL6330]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The delivery of UK ratings or awards to overseas campuses of UK providers is outside the scope of the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF), as set out in the attached TEF specification.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework [HL6330 attachment .pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-03-13/HL6330>

Drugs: Misuse

Asked by Lord Patel of Bradford

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the report *Our Invisible Addicts* by the Royal College of Psychiatrists and the reported rise in the rates of drug related deaths, whether they plan to carry out a national review of the relationship between service users over 40 participating in structured addiction treatment and those users' engagement with primary, community and adult social care services. [HL6163]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: There are no plans to carry out a review into this specific issue. Public Health England (PHE) has already led an inquiry into the rises in drug-related deaths. The inquiry report *Understanding and preventing drug-related deaths: The report of a national expert working group to investigate drug-related death in England* was published on 9 September 2016 and a copy is attached.

PHE continues to support local authorities in delivering tailored, accessible and effective services where people stand the best chance of recovery.

In 2017, PHE published updated clinical guidelines for clinicians treating people with drug use problems, which contains a section addressing the importance of preventing and treating drug use problems in older people. The guidelines were developed by an expert group and are kept under regular review. A copy of the *Drug Misuse and dependence: UK guidelines on clinical management* is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

HL6163-Understanding-preventing-drug-deaths-2016 [HL6163-Understanding-preventing-drug-deaths-2016.pdf]

HL6163-clinical_guidelines_2017 [HL6163-clinical_guidelines_2017.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-03-07/HL6163>

Electoral Register

Asked by Lord Rennard

To ask Her Majesty's Government on what basis the impact assessment for the Representation of the People (Amendment) Regulations 2018 estimated that the number of GPs who will make a charge for attesting to the needs for anonymous registration would be 10 per cent; and what the level of those charges will be. [HL6123]

Lord Young of Cookham: The British Medical Association's guidance recommends GPs charge between £30-£63 for this type of service, and that they consider any ethical implications of their work prior to charging

for it. Given the nature of this service, for the purpose of the impact assessment we assumed a small minority (10%) of GPs to charge for an attestation, and those that do charge will do so at the lower end of the suggested range.

Should an elector experience difficulties with obtaining an attestations from a GP, other avenues remain open for them to seek attestations without charge.

Faith Schools: Admissions

Asked by Lord Taverne

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the poll conducted by Populus showing that 67 per cent of Catholics, 71 per cent of Christians overall, and 60 per cent of the public as a whole, support keeping the 50 per cent cap on faith-based admissions to religious schools, (2) figures set out in the official 2016 schools census showing that Church of England and other Christian free schools subject to that cap take more than three times as many pupils from Asian backgrounds as Church of England and other Christian schools that select all their places on religious grounds, (3) the extent to which Catholic state schools in England select all their places on the basis of religion, and (4) whether new Catholic schools can be opened when that cap is in place; and whether they intend to review their policy of abolishing that cap. [HL6211]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The department will consider a range of evidence, including opinion polls and official statistics, as part of the process for deciding how to take forward the proposals contained in the 'Schools that work for everyone' consultation including in relation to the 50% cap on faith admissions.

The department does not collect information about the level of use of faith oversubscription criteria in any school.

The department is considering proposals on the future of the 50% cap and will respond in due course.

Gibraltar: Navy

Asked by Lord Northbrook

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the future presence and activity of the Royal Navy in the Strait of Gibraltar. [HL6375]

Asked by Lord Northbrook

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Royal Navy visits to Gibraltar have taken place in the last six months. [HL6376]

Asked by Lord Northbrook

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are their proposals for future investment in the Royal Navy base in Gibraltar. [HL6378]

Earl Howe: The Ministry of Defence continually reassesses the Royal Navy's mission in the Strait of Gibraltar, and the assets and people required to deliver it, to ensure that the UK Government's responsibilities can be carried out effectively and can meet evolving threats and future needs. The Royal Navy's Gibraltar Squadron will continue to challenge all incursions into British Gibraltar Territorial Waters. The base infrastructure and the Gibraltar Squadron will continue to be modernised in line with the rest of the Royal Navy.

We have interpreted visits to be those ships proceeding alongside in Gibraltar. Records show that, over the period 1 September 2017 to 1 March 2018, there were 15 occasions where Royal Navy and Royal Fleet Auxiliary ships visited Gibraltar, in addition to the Gibraltar Squadron that is permanently stationed there.

High Speed 2 Railway Line

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Sugg on 6 March (HL5576), whether any of the following items are included in the long-term fund envelope for HS2 phase 1: (1) the associated roadworks necessary for the Birmingham interchange station around the M6, M42 and A45; (2) the people carrier between Birmingham Curzon Street station and adjacent areas; (3) the traction service and maintenance depot at Washwood Heath; (4) the infrastructure maintenance depot at Calvert, with chord to East–West railway; (5) the bridge across East–West railway; (6) the movement and rebuilding of the Heathrow Express depot at Old Oak Common; and (7) the movement and rebuilding of the GWR sleeper maintenance depot from Old Oak Common to Reading and Penzance; and if any of those items are not so included, to which budget the costs are allocated. [HL6145]

Baroness Sugg: All items that are referenced in the question, except item two, form part of the HS2 Phase One scheme which was approved by Parliament in February 2017 and as such are included in the funding envelope for the HS2 project.

HS2 Phase 1 does not include provision for a people carrier between Birmingham Curzon Street and adjacent areas. Birmingham City Council and the West Midlands Combined Authority are progressing plans to expand the tram network including the provision of a metro stop at the HS2 Curzon Street station. A people mover at Birmingham Interchange station linking to the existing International station the NEC and Birmingham Airport is part of the HS2 Phase One project.

Higher Education: Equality

Asked by Baroness Falkner of Margravine

To ask Her Majesty's Government what (1) direction, and (2) guidance, they have given to the Office for

Students on improving gender and ethnic diversity in the leadership of Russell Group higher education institutions. [HL6151]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: Autonomous higher education providers, including Russell Group members, are responsible for their own decisions about leadership appointments. Institutional autonomy is explicitly recognised in the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 and is specifically defined to include the freedom of providers to determine the criteria for selecting, appointing or dismissing academic staff. The Act is clear that both the Office for Students (OfS) (when carrying out its functions) and the Secretary of State (when issuing statutory guidance to the OfS) must have regard to the need to protect this institutional autonomy.

The government and the OfS both remain interested in areas related to equality and diversity in higher education. We consulted on behalf of the OfS on making arrangements for the publication of data on senior staff remuneration, including in relation to gender and ethnicity. The OfS retains the power to require the disclosure of such information through its accounts direction.

The government asked the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), the predecessor of OfS, to remind HEFCE-funded providers of their obligations under the gender pay gap reporting requirements. HEFCE wrote to these providers on 10 January 2018. HEFCE have also jointly commissioned a project that aims to equalise the gender balance and ethnic diversity of higher education governing bodies. This work will include establishing an online exchange to recruit board members.

In addition, we note initiatives across the sector, including at Russell Group institutions, to support women and those from black and minority ethnic groups who aspire to leadership positions in higher education.

Higher Education: Private Education

Asked by Lord Storey

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the rating of degree courses as gold, silver or bronze will also apply to those private colleges offering higher education degrees. [HL6329]

Asked by Lord Storey

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether private colleges that offer higher education degrees will be rated as gold, silver or bronze in the same way as universities. [HL6386]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: Private colleges offering higher education degrees can participate in the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) if they meet the eligibility requirements. From the 2019-20 academic year, TEF will be a condition of registration for providers with more than 500 students on higher education courses. Smaller providers, for whom the cost of participation might be disproportionate, may

participate on a voluntary basis if they meet the eligibility criteria.

Israel: Arabic

Asked by Baroness Whitaker

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel regarding the restoration of Arabic as an official state language. [HL6185]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Arabic is an official language of the State of Israel.

Legal Costs

Asked by Lord Vinson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the cost of litigation; (2) the extent to which this is related to fees charged by lawyers; and (3) the existence of a genuine competitive market to ensure that such fees are set at a level that is fair and reasonable. [HL6178]

Lord Keen of Elie: The Government does not hold data on the legal fees charged by lawyers to their clients, which are private matters. The Government does, however, continue to have concerns about the costs of civil litigation that may be recovered from a losing party. These recoverable costs, if not fixed, are agreed between the parties or determined by the court at the end of the case. We have taken action on these recoverable costs in recent years, largely implementing the recommendations of Sir Rupert Jackson's 'Review of Civil Litigation Costs: Final Report', published in January 2010, including in Part 2 of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012, in April 2013.

Sir Rupert's 'Supplemental Report: Fixed Recoverable Costs', published in July 2017 recommended extending fixing the recoverable costs in all civil cases up to £25,000 damages, and in less complex cases up to £100,000 damages. The Government is considering the report and will set out the way forward in due course.

Lotteries: Regulation

Asked by Lord Stevenson of Balmacara

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to change the regulatory approach to society lotteries such as the People's Postcode Lottery to reduce limits on (1) annual turnover, and (2) size of draw. [HL6208]

Lord Ashton of Hyde: We are carefully considering the issues around society lotteries raised by the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee, including the limits on annual turnover and draw size.

We will continue to take advice from the Gambling Commission as we consider policy options. We hope to

conclude considerations and provide an update in due course.

Mefloquine

Asked by The Countess of Mar

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord O'Shaughnessy on 18 January (HL4484), whether they consider the completed "cases of suicide", listed in the current mefloquine product information leaflet as reported psychiatric adverse reactions to the drug, to be permanent. [HL6161]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: In the context of an adverse reaction to a medicine, suicide is a possible outcome of suicidal ideation, rather than necessarily an adverse reaction to treatment. For mefloquine, the current assessment, as recommended by the European Medicines Agency's Pharmacovigilance Risk Assessment Committee, is that whilst psychiatric side effects, including suicidal ideation, may persist after stopping treatment, current evidence does not support that these may be permanent after stopping treatment.

Najah al-Sheikh

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Bahrain with respect to the alleged torture and sexual assault of female activist Najah al-Sheikh; and what assessment they have made of whether she faces serious charges based on coerced confessions. [HL6171]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK has a continuing dialogue with the Government of Bahrain in which we raise individual cases. Our Embassy in Bahrain monitors this specific case. The UK encourages those with concerns about treatment in detention to report these to the relevant human rights oversight bodies. We urge these bodies to carry out swift and thorough investigations. The UK continues to encourage the Government of Bahrain to deliver on its international and domestic human rights commitments.

Prescription Drugs

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they collect statistics on the numbers of long-term prescribed patients on (1) benzodiazepines and (2) Z-drugs; if so, what those statistics are; and if not, why not. [HL6154]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: This data is not collected centrally. Medicines data collected by NHS Digital does not contain patient related information, so is unable to identify statistics on the numbers of long-term prescribed patients on benzodiazepines and Z-drugs.

The Government is concerned about the impact of long term use of prescription drugs. The Department has commissioned Public Health England (PHE) to undertake an evidence review to better understand the scope of the problem of prescribed drug dependence. As part of this review PHE will attempt to estimate the number of people affected, including through prescription data collected by NHS Business Services Authority.

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what guidance they have issued on the duration of time they consider appropriate in describing "long-term prescribing" in relation to benzodiazepines and Z-drugs. [HL6155]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: The Department has not issued any guidance.

The Department has commissioned Public Health England to undertake an evidence review to better understand the scope of the problem of prescribed drug dependence.

The review will bring together the best available evidence on: prevalence and prescribing; the nature and likely causes of dependence or withdrawal among some people who continue to take these medicines; and effective prevention and treatment responses for each indication.

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to make the 1988 CSM guidelines concerning the prescription of benzodiazepines and Z-drugs of two to four weeks mandatory for future patients prescribed those drugs. [HL6157]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: The guidance from the Committee on Safety of Medicines regarding the recommended duration of use for benzodiazepines and Z-drugs was incorporated into the terms of the licences for these products and reflected in the product information which consists of the Summary of Product Characteristics for healthcare professionals and the patient information leaflet supplied in each package of the medicine.

In making a prescribing decision, clinicians must weigh the potential benefits of the medicine in the condition being treated, against any risks of possible side effects in the individual patient, taking into account all warnings and precautions described in the product information.

Clinicians can use their clinical judgement to prescribe a medicine to patients if they consider it to be in the patient's best interest. This is defined as "off label" prescribing and refers to the use of a medicine outside the terms defined in the product licence. If a clinician decides that in their clinical opinion a patient will benefit from "off label" use of a medicine they are free to prescribe it. However, if a clinician does prescribe in this manner they are responsible for the patient's care and the consequences of the treatment.

Prescription Drugs: Misuse

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many withdrawal centres and aftercare facilities for prescribed drugs dependency to benzodiazepines, Z-drugs, SSRIs and opiate painkillers have been opened within the last ten years. [HL6153]

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have for the NHS to develop dedicated withdrawal centres for the use of iatrogenic-induced addiction and dependent patients. [HL6158]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: Public Health England does not centrally hold information on the numbers of drug treatment centres or aftercare facilities for prescribed drugs dependency to benzodiazepines, Z-drugs, selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors and opiate painkillers which have been opened in the past 10 years.

Plans to develop treatment for any problem with prescribed medicines are the responsibility of local authorities (LAs) and the National Health Service in each area. LAs assess their local need and commission services and interventions to meet that need.

Prescription Drugs: Safety

Asked by Lord Rennard

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the context of the medication and error programme outlined in the Report of the Short Life Working Group on reducing medication-related harm published on 23 February, which indicators will be included in phase one of the medicines safety dashboard being developed by NHS Digital and the NHS Business Services Authority. [HL6166]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: The purpose of the indicators is to highlight prescribing practice that may increase the risk of harm and that is associated with admission to hospital. Phase one includes a total of six indicators; five looking at higher risk prescribing that results in admission to hospital with a gastro-intestinal bleed (four indicators and one composite) and one looking at higher risk prescribing that results in admission associated with acute kidney injury.

Asked by Lord Rennard

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the context of the medication and error programme outlined in the Report of the Short Life Working Group on reducing medication-related harm, when phase one of the medicines safety dashboard being developed by NHS Digital and the NHS Business Services Authority will be published. [HL6167]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: Phase one will be published in spring 2018.

Asked by Lord Rennard

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the context of the medication and error programme outlined in the Report of the Short Life Working Group on reducing medication-related harm, how many additional phases will be developed as part of the medicines safety dashboard being developed by NHS Digital and the NHS Business Services Authority. [HL6168]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: The intention is to develop a second phase of indicators covering other medicines, risks of harm and reasons for admission. At this point the number of indicators is not yet agreed nor timescale for publication, but publication is likely to be before the end of 2018.

Prisoners on Remand: Females

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many women were remanded in custody whilst a psychiatric report was prepared for the court in each of the last five years. [HL6349]

Lord Keen of Elie: This information is not held centrally and can only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Significant information is held on individual court files but is not reported to the MoJ due to its size and complexity. This information would need to be individually inspected to see whether or not remand pending a psychiatric report had taken place in each case.

Russia: Nuclear Weapons

Asked by Lord Judd

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the new Russian nuclear weapons announced in the speech by President Putin to the Russian Federal Assembly on 1 March; and to what degree their introduction alters the strategic military balance in Europe. [HL6301]

Earl Howe: We regret that the Kremlin's focus is not working for strategic stability, but this announcement demonstrates why the UK cannot relax its guard. We remain completely confident in our minimum, credible, independent nuclear deterrent. We will continue to keep our nuclear posture under review in the light of the international security environment and the actions of all potential adversaries.

Trade Agreements

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they plan to facilitate the continuation of existing EU trade agreements with non-EU countries after Brexit; and

what legal provisions they intend to seek to put in place to enable such continuation. [HL6175]

Baroness Fairhead: As a priority, we are currently working with our international partners to achieve continuity of the application of these agreements during the proposed Implementation Period, in order to ensure an orderly transition and provide certainty for businesses and individuals.

The Government has also introduced legislation to Parliament to ensure the legal provisions are in place to support continuity of effect of these agreements once they no longer apply to the UK. The Trade Bill was introduced on 9th November 2017 and creates a power that will ensure we can secure the continuity of EU trade agreements.

Vitamin D

Asked by Baroness Masham of Ilton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of lack of access to prescription-based vitamin D on the long-term bone health of people who have low, or no, exposure to the sun. [HL6162]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: As part of the NHS England consultation *Conditions for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care: A consultation on guidance for CCGs*, NHS England has published a full Equality and Health Inequalities Impact Assessment, *Equality and Health Inequalities – Full Analysis Form – Conditions for which over the counter items should not routinely be prescribed in primary care*, which covers groups protected by the Equality Act 2010. Copies of both documents are attached.

In the summer months most people should be able to get all the vitamin D they need from sunlight on the skin. However, it is also found in some foods – oily fish, red meat, liver, egg yolks and fortified foods, such as most fat spreads and some breakfast cereals.

The Advisory Committee on Borderline Substances states that vitamins and minerals should be prescribed only in the management of actual or potential vitamin or mineral deficiency, and are not to be prescribed as dietary supplements. We understand that NHS England's current consultation is in line with this. Prescribing vitamin D for maintenance would be classed as a treatment for prevention or as a dietary supplement.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Equality and Health Inequalities Impact Assessment [Equality and Health Inequalities Impact Assessment.pdf]

OTC Guidance [otc-guidance-2.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-03-07/HL6162>

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