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**Tuesday
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**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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Lord Bethell	Whip
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Lord Gardiner of Kimble	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Baroness Goldie	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence
Lord Keen of Elie	Advocate-General for Scotland and Ministry of Justice Spokesperson
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Baroness Sugg	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for International Development
Baroness Vere of Norbiton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Minister of State, Home Office
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

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Written Statements

Tuesday, 7 January 2020

Armed Forces Covenant Annual Report

[HLWS2]

Baroness Goldie: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence (The Rt Hon Ben Wallace MP) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

Today, I am laying before Parliament the Armed Forces Covenant Annual Report 2019. Our Armed Forces protect our nation with unwavering honour, courage and commitment. We owe them a vast debt of gratitude and have a duty to ensure that those who serve, or who have served in our Armed Forces, and their families, suffer no disadvantage in comparison to other citizens as a result of their service to our country. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given the most such as the injured or the bereaved. This is what the Covenant sets out to do.

It is my honour to present this report to Parliament, describing what the Government together with its delivery partners have done to uphold the principles of the Covenant. The report provides progress on the delivery by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust and what has been achieved on healthcare, education, accommodation, inquest and judicial engagement, family life, transition and through life support, and business in the community from October 2018 to September 2019.

Highlights of this year's report include: the creation of the first Office for Veterans' Affairs to pull together all functions of Government in order to ensure this nation's life-long duty to those who have served, building on the Strategy for our Veterans; putting Flexible Service into law, allowing Regular Service personnel to ask to temporarily work part-time and/or restrict their separation from their home base; the launch of the Future Accommodation Model pilot in September for approximately three years; the extension of the Forces Help to Buy scheme until December 2022; reaching over 4,000 signatories of the Armed Forces Covenant, with over 1,000 new signings this year; the inclusion of the 'Service Child' 'Flag Indicator' on school censuses in England, Wales and Scotland for the first time; £23.1 million of Service Pupil Premium funding is being distributed to over 10,000 schools across England in 2019-20; the Department for Work and Pensions secured funding to bolster the role of its Armed Forces Champions across the country; the NHS, together with the MOD, launched the Integrated Personal Commissioning for Veterans Framework for Armed Forces personnel in transition; and the Northern Ireland Legacy Inquest team was set up to deal with the extensive Northern Ireland Legacy Inquest programme.

But while progress has clearly been made, both this year and in the eight years since the Covenant came into being, more still needs to be done. The Government, working closely with its delivery partners across all levels

of Government in the UK, Service charities and the private sector, will continue to mitigate disadvantage wherever it is found within the Armed Forces community, and will be bold in seeking special considerations where appropriate. As outlined in the Conservative Party manifesto and Queens Speech we will seek to further incorporate the Armed Forces Covenant into law and over the course of this Parliament will continue to remove disadvantage faced by our Armed Forces Personnel and Veterans.

This report is a collaborative effort with input from service providers and professionals from a diverse array of backgrounds. I would like to thank colleagues across central Government, the Devolved Administrations, stakeholders in Northern Ireland and Local Authorities, and those at every level and from every sector who are continuing to drive forward the work of the Covenant in support of our Armed Forces community. I am also grateful to the external members of the Covenant Reference Group who were consulted throughout the process and provided their independent observations.

Dedicated Schools Grant: 2020-21

[HLWS5]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: My right honourable friend the Minister of State for School Standards (Nick Gibb) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

Today I am confirming school and early years revenue funding allocations for 2020-21 through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), published yesterday. This follows a statement by the Secretary of State for Education on 3 September, which confirmed to Parliament that the funding for schools and high needs will, compared to 2019-20, rise by £2.6 billion for 2020-21, £4.8 billion for 2021-22, and £7.1 billion for 2022-23. That is on top of £1.5 billion we are providing each year to fund additional pensions costs for teachers, bringing the total schools budget to £52.2 billion in 2022-23.

The distribution of the DSG is set out in four blocks for each local authority: a schools block, a high needs block, an early years block, and a central school services block. In October 2019, I informed Parliament of the publication of primary and secondary units of funding for the schools block, and provisional allocations for the high needs block and central school services block. In the DSG, these have now been updated with the latest pupil numbers to show how much each local authority will receive in 2020-21. Today's publication also provides initial 2020-21 allocations for the early years block, following the early years national funding formula rates for 3- and 4-year-olds I confirmed in October.

Finally, I am confirming the government's commitment to level up school funding by ensuring that every secondary school receives at least £5,000 per pupil, and every primary school at least £3,750 per pupil in 2020-21. The DSG allocations provide for this additional funding, and today the government has published its response to a consultation which finalises the arrangements local

authorities must follow in delivering mandatory minimum per pupil levels to the relevant schools in their local area, thus delivering one of the key pledges given by the Prime Minister during the General Election.

As well as supporting the lowest funded schools, this change marks an important first step in our plans to implement a 'hard' National Funding Formula, whereby schools receive what they attract through the national formula, rather than through different local authority funding formulae. We will consult on the further steps needed to deliver those plans in due course, and will work closely with local authorities and other stakeholders in making the transition carefully and smoothly.

Energy Emergencies Executive Committee Report

[HLWS13]

Lord Duncan of Springbank: My Rt hon friend the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Andrea Leadsom) has today made the following statement:

On Friday 9th August 2019, over 1 million customers were affected by a major power disruption that occurred across England and Wales and some parts of Scotland. The power outage was due to the loss of a mix of generation including a gas fired power station and an offshore wind farm.

Though the power disruption itself was relatively short lived – all customers were restored within 45 minutes – the knock-on impacts to other services were significant. This is especially true for rail services which experienced major delays that extended into Sunday 11th August. The wider disruptions were caused by automatic safety systems under the control of individual service providers, which reacted to frequency and voltage fluctuations, or problems with their back-up power supplies.

Given the severity of the incident, I commissioned the Energy Emergency Executive Committee (E3C) to conduct a review to identify lessons learnt and put in place a robust action plan to improve the reliability and integrity of our power network. The Committee's final report was published on Friday 3rd January. This follows the publication of their interim report on 4th October. The final report sets out 10 clear actions and these will be implemented in full, to help prevent and manage future power disruption events.

Alongside the E3C report, Ofgem also published the conclusions of its own investigations into the incident. This set out a series of cross-industry actions for maintaining the resilience of the electricity system, as well as announcing voluntary payments totalling £10.5 million for companies involved in the power outages.

GB Power Disruption: E3C Lessons Learnt and Actions

Following a lightning strike on an overhead transmission line, there was a near simultaneous generation loss at two transmission-connection

generators; and a significant number of smaller embedded generators connected to the distribution network.

The two transmission-connected generators experienced technical issues near-simultaneously. Both generators have acknowledged the role they played in the incident and since implemented technical fixes to ensure that their systems can withstand similar incidents in the future. The E3C will share the lessons identified with generators across the UK.

The loss of smaller embedded generation on the day was greater than expected. The E3C report sets out a series of actions to assess the need for improvements to the governance, monitoring and enforcement processes for large and smaller generators.

On the 9th August, the cumulative loss of generation exceeded the amount of back-up generation on hold. This triggered the first stage a demand disconnection protection system, which is the last line of defence when the system is out of balance. This resulted in over 1 million customers being disconnected from the network.

Given the events on the 9th August, the E3C report recommends a review of how much back-up generation the Electricity System Operator should be required to hold. As this is funded through consumer bills, the review will include a cost benefit analysis of increasing the amount of reserves.

Although the demand disconnection protection system worked broadly as intended, the review identified some discrepancies in its operation; therefore, the report recommends further analysis of the schemes performance in order to develop options for short- and long-term improvements. This includes considering whether Distribution Network Operators should afford particular types of customers any form of protection, especially during the early stages of an incident.

In addition to the direct impacts of customers being disconnected from the electricity network, wider disruptions on the day were caused by the automatic safety systems owned and operated by individual service providers reacting unexpectedly to the frequency and voltage fluctuations on the electricity network; or problems with their own back-up power supplies.

The E3C will consider what more can be done to support essential services owners and operators with advice and guidance to put in place more robust business continuity plans.

Effective communication is a vital part of any emergency response. Unfortunately, industry communications on the day fell below the standard expected, with infrequent and disjointed updates to the general public.

The E3C will develop and roll out new communications processes to ensure the general public receives regular updates during any future disruptions. There will also be a review of operational protocols to make sure they are fit for purpose.

Where appropriate, the E3C and Ofgem reports contain jointly agreed actions and recommendations. The E3C will take the actions set out both reports to drive forward changes across the sector. The Committee will provide quarterly updates to my Department and Ofgem.

The UK leads the world by working to eradicate its contribution to climate change by 2050, the actions I have outlined here today will form part of a wider package of work already underway across government and industry to ensure the UK's energy system remains resilient as we transition to clean and affordable energy.

Future Nuclear Deterrent Annual Update

[HLWS1]

Baroness Goldie: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence (The Rt Hon Ben Wallace MP) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

On 18 May 2011, the then Secretary of State for Defence, the Right Hon. Member for North Somerset (Dr Liam Fox) made an oral statement to the House (Official Report column 351) announcing the approval of the Initial Gate investment stage for the procurement of the successor to the VANGUARD Class ballistic missile submarines. He also placed in the Library of the House a report "The United Kingdom's Future Nuclear Deterrent: The Submarine Initial Gate Parliamentary Report".

As confirmed in the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review, this Government has committed to publishing an annual report on the programme. I am today publishing the eighth report, "The United Kingdom's Future Nuclear Deterrent: 2019 Update to Parliament". A copy has been placed in the Library of the House.

General Affairs Council

[HLWS8]

Lord Callanan: The UK did not attend the General Affairs Council (GAC) in Brussels on 19 November 2019.

The UK Government has decided that from 1 September until exit day, UK Ministers and officials will only attend EU meetings where the UK has a significant national interest in the outcome of the discussions.

General Affairs Council, December 2019

Sir Tim Barrow, the UK's Permanent Representative to the EU, attended the General Affairs Council in Brussels on 10 December 2019 to represent the UK. A provisional report of the meeting and the conclusions adopted can be found on the Council of the European Union's website at:

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/gac/2019/12/10/#>

Values of the Union in Hungary / Article 7 (1) TEU Reasoned Proposal

As part of the Article 7(1) TEU procedure, the Council held a second hearing on Hungary, following the first hearing on 16 September. This hearing focused largely on

the independence of the judiciary, freedom of expression and academic freedom in Hungary.

Rule of Law in Poland / Article 7(1) TEU Reasoned Proposal

The Council discussed the rule of law in Poland. The Commission provided an update to ministers on the latest developments, including the recent judgments of the European Court of Justice concerning Polish rules on the retirement age of judges and public prosecutor, and the new Disciplinary Chamber of the Polish Supreme Court.

Preparation of the European Council on 12-13 December 2019 and European Council follow-up

Ministers continued preparations for the European Council on 12-13 December, and discussed draft Conclusions. Sir Tim Barrow intervened to express the UK's long-standing support for the EU's ambition of climate neutrality by 2050. We welcomed the balanced conclusions that demonstrated the importance of EU climate leadership in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, promoting green growth, and in ensuring a just transition to a low emission economy. Sir Tim Barrow also reiterated the UK's continual support in finding an agreed solution to the current paralysis of the WTO's mechanism for settling disputes, stressing the importance of language in respect to the WTO, and reinforcing that it was central to trade policy.

Multiannual Financial Framework

The Council held a policy debate on the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF). Ministers discussed the Finnish Presidency's negotiating box, ahead of the 12-13 December European Council. The Presidency agreed to a 25% target of the EU budget to support climate change initiatives.

European Semester 2020 - Roadmap

As part of the preparation for the next European Semester, the Croatian Presidency presented the 2020 European Semester roadmap. The roadmap's objective is to ensure that all relevant Councils work in a coordinated manner, with the General Affairs Council designated as the forum for overseeing the process.

Legislative programming - Commission's Work Programme for 2020 and multiannual programming

Ministers exchanged views on priorities for upcoming legislative work under the new Commission. The aim of the discussion was to provide comments to the Commission for the preparation of its 2020 work programme.

Conclusions on complementary efforts to enhance resilience and counter hybrid threats

The Council adopted, without discussion, European Council conclusions which set priorities and guidelines for EU cooperation of countering hybrid threats and enhancing resilience. The conclusions outline the need for a comprehensive approach to these threats, working across all relevant policy sectors to ensure alignment.

AOB: Enlargement

Under any other business, the Commission confirmed to Member States that it would present its proposals on enlargement in January, under the new Presidency.

Government Transparency and Accountability

[HLWS15]

The Earl of Courtown: My Hon. Friend the Minister for the Constitution (Chloe Smith) made the following statement to the House of Commons:

The Government is today publishing a number of documents as part of its ongoing commitment to transparency and accountability:

- The List of Ministers' Interests, reflecting the Government as it stood on 5 November 2019, immediately before the dissolution of Parliament. Under the terms of the Ministerial Code, Ministers must ensure that no conflict arises, or could reasonably be perceived to arise, between their Ministerial position and their private interests, financial or otherwise. The List captures those interests relevant to Ministers' Ministerial responsibilities, and should be read alongside the two Parliamentary Registers. In line with the commitment in the Ministerial Code, a further list reflecting ministerial appointments made since the General Election will be published next year.
- The Annual Report of the Prime Minister's Independent Adviser on Interests, Sir Alex Allan, which accompanies the List of Ministers' Interests.
- The Annual Report on Special Advisers 2019, in conformance with Section 16(1) of the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010.

Copies of the List of Ministerial Interests, the Annual Report of the Prime Minister's Independent Adviser on Interests and the Annual Report on Special Advisers will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses and will be published on GOV.UK.

Further transparency publications will be published in the New Year, in the usual way.

Government's Legislative Programme

[HLWS17]

Baroness Evans of Bowes Park: My Rt Hon. Friend the Leader of the House of Commons has made the following statement to the House of Commons:

Following Thursday's State Opening of Parliament, and for the convenience of the House, I am listing the bills which were announced:

- Agriculture Bill
- Air Traffic Management and Unmanned Aircraft Bill
- Armed Forces (Legal Protections) Bill
- Birmingham Commonwealth Games Bill
- Building Safety Bill

- Counter Terrorism (Sentencing and Release) Bill
- Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Bill
- Domestic Abuse Bill
- Employment Bill
- Environment Bill
- European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill
- Extradition (Provisional Arrest) Bill
- Fire Safety Bill
- Fisheries Bill
- Financial Services Bill
- Health Service Safety Investigations Bill
- High Speed Rail 2 (West Midlands - Crewe) Bill
- Immigration and Social Security Co-ordination (European Union Withdrawal) Bill
- Medicines and Medical Devices Bill
- National Security and Investment Bill
- NHS Funding Bill
- NHS Long Term Plan Bill
- Online Harms Bill
- Pension Schemes Bill
- Police Powers and Protections Bill
- Prisoners (Disclosure of Information About Victims) Bill
- Private International Law (Implementation of Agreements) Bill
- Renters' Reform Bill
- Sentencing (Pre-consolidation Amendments) Bill
- Sentencing Bill
- Serious Violence Bill
- Telecommunications Infrastructure (Leasehold Property) Bill
- Telecommunications (Connectivity) Bill
- Thomas Cook Compensation Bill
- Trade Bill
- Windrush (Compensation Scheme) Bill

The programme will also include Finance Bills to implement budget policy decisions.

Detailed information about each of these bills can be accessed from the Gov.uk website at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/853886/Queen_s_Speech_December_2019_-_background_briefing_notes.pdf

Government's Legislative Programme (Northern Ireland)

[HLWS6]

Lord Duncan of Springbank: My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Julian Smith) has today made the following statement:

The Government's legislative programme for the first Session was outlined by Her Majesty on Thursday 19 December. This statement provides a summary of the programme and its application to Northern Ireland. It does not include draft bills, Law Commission bills or Finance Bills.

The Government is committed to delivering for all its citizens, wherever they live - the nations of the United Kingdom are safer, stronger and more prosperous when working together. The legislative programme therefore contains important reforms to domestic issues that will benefit people across the Union, as well as legislation that will allow the United Kingdom to seize the opportunities afforded by the exit from the European Union.

The Government's priority in Northern Ireland is the restoration of the Executive at the earliest opportunity. Northern Ireland has now been without devolved government since January 2017. In that time, we have seen hospital waiting lists get longer, public services deteriorate, and frustration in Northern Ireland grow at the lack of an Executive. Talks to restore the institutions of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement resumed on Monday 16 December. The talks are being held in accordance with the well-established three-stranded principle. This is the overriding priority for both the UK Government and the Irish Government. So the UK Government, working closely with the Irish Government in the normal way, will continue to intensify our efforts to put forward compromise solutions to the parties.

In the absence of an Executive, the Government is committed to taking action to ensure good governance in Northern Ireland, including, where necessary, through legislative measures.

The following Bills contained in the programme are likely to extend to Northern Ireland:

- Agriculture Bill
- Air Traffic Management and Unmanned Aircraft Bill
- Armed Forces (Legal Protections) Bill
- Birmingham Commonwealth Games Bill
- Building Safety Bill
- Counter Terrorism (Sentencing and Release) Bill
- Domestic Abuse Bill
- Employment Bill
- Environment Bill
- European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill
- Extradition (Provisional Arrest) Bill
- Fisheries Bill
- Financial Services Bill
- Health Service Safety Investigations Bill
- Immigration and Social Security Co-ordination (European Union Withdrawal) Bill
- Online Harms Bill
- Medicines and Medical Devices Bill
- National Security and Investment Bill

- Pension Schemes Bill
- Private International Law (Implementation of Agreements) Bill
- Sentencing (Pre-consolidation Amendments) Bill
- Telecommunications Infrastructure (Leasehold Property) Bill
- Telecommunications (Connectivity) Bill
- Thomas Cook Compensation Bill
- Trade Bill
- Windrush (Compensation Scheme) Bill

In the absence of a devolved Assembly and Executive, we will continue to work constructively with Northern Ireland Departments to deliver legislation which has effect in Northern Ireland. Should the devolved be restored then, in line with the Sewel Convention and associated practices, the Government will work constructively with the Northern Ireland Executive to secure the legislative consent of the Northern Ireland Assembly where appropriate.

Government's Legislative Programme (Scotland)

[HLWS3]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Scotland (Mr Alister Jack) has today made the following statement:

The legislative programme for the First Session was outlined by Her Majesty on Thursday 19 December. This statement provides a summary of the programme and its application to Scotland. It does not include draft bills, Law Commission bills or Finance Bills.

This Government will finally get Brexit done. We have introduced the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill to implement the fantastic deal agreed by the Prime Minister and ensure our exit from the EU on 31 January. We will end the uncertainty and leave as one United Kingdom, allowing us to move on and unleash the potential of all four nations. Together, Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland are safer, stronger and more prosperous, and as such the Government remains committed to strengthening the Union.

The legislative programme for this session will deliver on the opportunities Brexit brings for the whole of the United Kingdom. For example, the Fisheries Bill will create powers to build a sustainable, profitable UK fishing industry as we leave the Common Fisheries Policy and become an independent coastal state. The Immigration and Social Security Co-ordination (EU Withdrawal) Bill will provide the legal framework for our future immigration system, so that we can decide who comes to this country on the basis of skills they have and the contribution they can make – not where they come from.

Getting Brexit done will allow us to focus on delivering important reforms to domestic issues through our legislative programme. The Government is at the forefront of tackling climate change, as the first major

economy to legislate to end our contribution to global warming by setting a target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Next year we will introduce the Environment Bill to guarantee the protection and restoration of our natural environment, putting these issues at the centre of policy making. On top of this, we are bringing world leaders to Glasgow for the United Nations 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26) climate conference next year.

The following bills would apply to Scotland (either in full or in part).

- Agriculture Bill
- Air Traffic Management and Unmanned Aircraft Bill
- Armed Forces (Legal Protections) Bill
- Birmingham Commonwealth Games Bill
- Building Safety Bill
- Counter Terrorism (Sentencing and Release) Bill
- Domestic Abuse Bill
- Employment Bill
- Environment Bill
- European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill
- Extradition (Provisional Arrest) Bill
- Fisheries Bill
- Financial Services Bill
- Health Service Safety Investigations Bill
- High Speed Rail 2 (West Midlands - Crewe) Bill
- Immigration and Social Security Co-ordination (EU Withdrawal) Bill
- Online Harms Bill
- Medicines and Medical Devices Bill
- National Security and Investment Bill
- Pension Schemes Bill
- Police Powers and Protections Bill
- Private International Law (Implementation of Agreements) Bill
- Sentencing (Pre-consolidation Amendments) Bill
- Telecommunications Infrastructure (Leasehold Property) Bill
- Telecommunications (Connectivity) Bill
- Thomas Cook Compensation Bill
- Trade Bill
- Windrush (Compensation Scheme) Bill

In line with the Sewel Convention and associated practices, the Government will continue to work constructively with the Scottish Government to secure the legislative consent of the Scottish Parliament where appropriate.

Government's Legislative Programme (Wales)

[HLWS10]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Wales (Simon Hart) has today made the following statement:

The legislative programme for the First Session was outlined by Her Majesty on Thursday 19 December. This statement provides a summary of the programme and its application to Wales. It does not include draft bills, Law Commission bills or Finance Bills.

This Government will get Brexit done. We have introduced the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill to implement the deal agreed by the Prime Minister, which will ensure our exit from the EU on 31 January. We will end the uncertainty and leave as one United Kingdom, allowing us to move on and unleash the potential of all four nations. Together, England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are safer, stronger and more prosperous, and as such the Government remains committed to strengthening the Union.

The legislative programme for this session will deliver on the opportunities Brexit brings for the whole of the United Kingdom. The Government expects that the return of powers from the EU will lead to a significant increase in the decision-making powers of the Devolved Administrations. It will mean that decisions and powers sit in the right place and closer to people than ever before.

Getting Brexit done will allow us to focus on delivering important domestic reform delivering benefits in Wales and across the United Kingdom. The programme includes an ambitious set of measures to support citizens across all nations of the UK.

The following bills would apply to Wales (either in full or in part).

- Agriculture Bill
- Air Traffic Management and Unmanned Aircraft Bill
- Armed Forces (Legal Protections) Bill
- Birmingham Commonwealth Games Bill
- Building Safety Bill
- Counter Terrorism (Sentencing and Release) Bill
- Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Bill
- Domestic Abuse Bill
- Employment Bill
- Environment Bill
- European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill
- Extradition (Provisional Arrest) Bill
- Fisheries Bill
- Financial Services Bill
- Health Service Safety Investigations Bill
- High Speed Rail 2 (West Midlands - Crewe) Bill

- Immigration and Social Security Co-ordination (European Union Withdrawal) Bill
- Online Harms Bill
- Medicines and Medical Devices Bill
- National Security and Investment Bill
- Pension Schemes Bill
- Police Powers and Protections Bill
- Prisoners (Disclosure of Information About Victims) Bill
- Private International Law (Implementation of Agreements) Bill
- Sentencing (Pre-consolidation Amendments) Bill
- Sentencing Bill
- Serious Violence Bill
- Telecommunications Infrastructure (Leasehold Property) Bill
- Telecommunications (Connectivity) Bill
- Thomas Cook Compensation Bill
- Trade Bill
- Windrush (Compensation Scheme) Bill

The Government will continue to work constructively with the Welsh Government to secure the legislative consent of the National Assembly for Wales where appropriate.

Kensington and Chelsea College

[HLWS4]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: My right honourable friend the Secretary of State for Education (Gavin Williamson) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

It is the normal practice when a government department proposed to make a gift of a value exceeding £300,000, for the department concerned to present to the House of Commons a minute giving particulars of the gift and explaining the circumstances; and to refrain from making the gift until fourteen parliamentary sitting days after the issue of the minute, except in cases of special urgency.

Given wider exceptional circumstances, the Department for Education intends to purchase the Kensington Centre (Wornington Road, London) and provide a 125-year lease to a Further Education institute formed by merger between Kensington and Chelsea College (KCC) and Morley College (but with the Secretary of State for Housing Communities, and Local Government to be the named freeholder/lessor in each instance). The purchase price of £10,000,000 is below market value and KCC will additionally contribute £6,000,000 towards the cost of the acquisition of the site.

The lease of the site is valued at £1,100,000 per annum and will be subject to a peppercorn lease of only £1 per year. The peppercorn lease will contain a break clause after 25 years. The lease therefore represents a gift to the

merged college worth £18,764,000 which is discounted at a rate of 3.5%. The Treasury has approved the proposal in principle.

This investment represents a unique and pivotal opportunity to rebuild trust and contribute towards the education and skills components of the Grenfell Recovery Strategy. KCC's only campus in North Kensington is on Wornington Road, close to Grenfell Tower. The college has an important role in providing Londoners, and in particular the North Kensington Community, with the skills for the future.

Within this unique context, through strong partnership working, Government, the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea and KCC, will achieve good value for money in securing and refurbishing the Wornington Road site. This will help create a sustainable college to maintain and grow a wide-ranging further education offer, benefiting the local community and honouring the Government's commitment to the Grenfell community.

Local Government Update

[HLWS9]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: My Rt Hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (Robert Jenrick) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

Introduction

Today I have published the provisional local government finance settlement for 2020-21. The proposals set out in this consultation will give local authorities a 4.4% real-terms increase in their Core Spending Power, which will rise from £46.2 billion in 2019-20 to £49.1 billion in 2020-21. It is a strong and well-balanced package, that delivers significant extra resources to the priority areas of adult and children's social care, while offering protection to other key service areas.

In October of this year we launched a technical consultation, within which we invited views on the proposed package for 2020-21. I would like to thank all colleagues in local government for their responses to the October consultation and thank them in advance for comments on this next consultation. I have now taken the responses to the technical consultation into account and, following this, I am now publishing our proposals for the provisional local government finance settlement for 2020-21:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/provisional-local-government-finance-settlement-england-2020-to-2021>.

Extra social care resources

We recognise the importance of addressing the challenges in our social care system. This is why we want to build the same level of cross-party consensus on social care as we have with the NHS, to make far-reaching changes to the way these services are financed and delivered.

In the meantime, we will do all we can to support local authorities. The proposals I have published today will allow local authorities to access an additional £1.5 billion for social care. This comprises £1 billion of additional grant – for both adult and children’s social care – and a proposed 2% council tax precept for adult social care, which will enable councils to access a further £500 million. £150 million of the additional grant will be used to equalise the distributional impact of the council tax adult social care precept.

These additional resources sit on top of the existing social care package, which will continue at 2019-20 levels, and mean that local authorities will have access to over £5.5 billion of dedicated funding across adult and children’s social care in 2020-21.

Core settlement resources

The provisional settlement also provides protection for vital services by increasing core settlement resources, which includes Revenue Support Grant and business rates baseline funding levels, in line with inflation, and by continuing other key grants from 2019-20.

Council tax

The proposed referendum principles strike a balance between giving local authorities the flexibility to address service pressures, without overburdening council tax payers with excessive increases. Local authorities will therefore be able to increase council tax in 2020-21 by a core principle of up to 2%, without holding a local referendum, with a bespoke council tax referendum principle of 2% or £5, whichever is higher, for shire district councils. In addition, councils with adult social care responsibilities will be able to increase their council tax by a further 2%, on top of the core principle, to be spent exclusively on adult social care. If confirmed, this package will mean that the expected average council tax increase for 2020-21 will be the lowest since 2016-17.

New Homes Bonus

To reward local authorities for house building in their area, I can confirm that we will make a new round of allocations of the New Homes Bonus for 2020-21 amounting to £907 million. As part of this, I am committing an additional £7 million to maintain the growth baseline for payments at 0.4%. We will make no legacy payments on these new allocations, but the Government will make legacy payments on allocations made in earlier years which are due to be paid in 2020-21.

It is not clear that the New Homes Bonus in its current form is focussed on incentivising homes where they are needed most. I am therefore announcing that the Government will consult on the future of the housing incentive in the Spring. This will include moving to a new, more targeted approach that rewards local authorities where they are ambitious in delivering the homes we need and which is aligned with other measures around planning performance.

Rural Services Delivery Grant

We will continue to recognise the extra costs of delivering services in rural areas and propose to maintain last year’s Rural Services Delivery Grant of £81 million, which is the joint-highest paid to date. It will be distributed using the same methodology as in 2019-20, which allocated funding to the top quartile of local authorities on the ‘super-sparsity’ indicator.

Independent Living Fund and Schools

Following the closure of the Independent Living Fund (ILF) in June 2015, the Government agreed to continue funding pre-existing ILF arrangements until the end of 2019-20, through the Former ILF Recipient Grant.

We can confirm that the Former ILF Recipient Grant will continue to be paid to local authorities in 2020-21. The total value of the grant in 2020-21 will be maintained at the 2019-20 value of £160.6 million, with the same approach to individual local authority allocations. Details will be published shortly.

We recognise that the settlement is just one source of funding that local authorities need to know about. Government has now also confirmed Dedicated Schools Grant allocations for 2020-21.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2019-12-20/HCWS2/>

Conclusion

Local government have asked us for certainty and stability from the settlement for 2020-21. This provisional settlement delivers on this, building on Spending Round 2019 and our recent technical consultation. It provides certainty for 2020-21 for those planning vital front-line services and provides significant extra resources where they are needed most.

London Croughton Annex

[HLWS12]

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

I told the House on 21 October that, following the tragic case of Harry Dunn, I had commissioned a review of the immunity arrangements at the Croughton Annex for US personnel and their families who hold privileges and immunities under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, following the 27 August road collision in which Harry Dunn was killed. I committed to completing the Review by the end of the year.

The Croughton Review has now concluded. It considered the anomaly that family members of US officers serving at the Annex at RAF Croughton have, under current arrangements between the UK and the US, greater protection from UK criminal jurisdiction than the officers themselves. On the basis of the Review, I have

instructed my officials to begin discussions with the US on the most effective way to address this anomaly.

National Living Wage and National Minimum Wage

[HLWS14]

Lord Duncan of Springbank: My hon friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Small Business, Consumers and Corporate Responsibility (Kelly Tolhurst) has today made the following statement:

I am writing to inform the House that the Government is pleased to accept all of the Low Pay Commission's recommendations for the new National Living Wage and National Minimum Wage rates, which will come into force in April 2020.

The Low Pay Commission is an internationally renowned independent and expert body which conducts extensive analysis and stakeholder research to make its recommendations.

The Low Pay Commission has recommended that:

- The National Living Wage (for workers aged 25 and over) should increase from £8.21 to £8.72;
 - The rate for 21 to 24-year-olds should increase from £7.70 to £8.20;
 - The rate for 18 to 20-year-olds should increase from £6.15 to £6.45;
 - The rate for 16 to 17-year-olds should increase from £4.35 to £4.55; and
 - The apprentice rate (for apprentices aged under 19 or in the first year of their apprenticeship) should increase from £3.90 to £4.15.
- The Low Pay Commission has also recommended that the accommodation offset increases from the current rate of £7.55 to £8.20 from 1 April 2020.

We welcome the Low Pay Commission's recommendation of an increase to the National Living Wage rate such that it meets the Government's objective of reaching 60% of median earnings by 2020.

The new National Living Wage rate of £8.72 will be the highest ever UK minimum wage and benefit over two million workers. From April 2020, a full-time worker on the National Living Wage will see their earnings increase by nearly £4,000 over the course of the year, compared to when the National Living Wage was introduced. This increase in the National Living Wage is the first step in meeting our commitment to raise the NLW to two-thirds of median earnings, provided economic conditions allow, within the next five years.

The Low Pay Commission's recommendations for increasing the National Minimum Wage youth rates, by between 4.6% and 6.5%, are well ahead of forecast inflation.

These increases are due to come into effect from 1 April 2020, subject to parliamentary approval. The

Government intends to lay implementing regulations before Parliament in due course.

A copy of the response will be available from the BEIS website at www.beis.gov.uk

NATO Leaders Meeting

[HLWS11]

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

On 3-4 December, NATO Leaders met in London to mark 70 successful years of the Alliance, in a valuable opportunity to reaffirm British leadership. These events demonstrated a strong sense of NATO's unity and purpose, progressed the largest reinforcement of collective defence since the end of the Cold War and agreed ways to ensure NATO will continue to meet future threats. I have placed a copy of the NATO London Declaration, capturing these commitments, in the libraries of both Houses.

In order to maintain our Alliance, defend our interests, and fulfil our commitments, NATO Allies must all pay their fair share. So I was pleased that the meeting highlighted significant progress on burden sharing, with the NATO Secretary General announcing an increase in non-US defence investment of \$130bn from 2016-2020, expected to rise to \$400bn by 2024. The UK remains one of nine Allies meeting its 2% defence spending commitment, including a 20% investment in new capabilities. I will continue to urge other NATO Allies to make progress in implementing our 2024 defence investment commitment.

In a session of the North Atlantic Council chaired by the Secretary General, Leaders reaffirmed NATO's purpose and noted decisions taken to prevent conflict and preserve peace. These included addressing both state and non-state threats, a collective response to Russia's deployment of Treaty-violating intermediate range missiles, a refreshed Counter Terrorism Action Plan, stronger policies to counter hybrid threats, and work to increase the resilience of Allies' critical national infrastructure.

Allies also committed forces to NATO's Readiness Initiative - ensuring that the Alliance can deploy 30 ships, 30 battalions and 30 air squadrons at 30 days' notice. The UK has provided the single largest commitment, offering three battlegroups, two air squadrons, and six warships, including an aircraft carrier, to ensure that NATO retains its ability to deploy quickly and at strength.

Allies also discussed plans to enable this great Alliance to adapt to future challenges, and ensure that it continues to deliver peace and security for one billion people.

Allies agreed a roadmap for NATO's response to Emerging and Disruptive Technologies (including artificial intelligence and quantum computing), initiated work to address the opportunities and challenges of

China's growing influence and declared Space an operational domain. NATO is also stepping up its role in human security, including through a new (anti) sexual exploitation and abuse policy.

Alongside the formal meetings, Her Majesty The Queen hosted the NATO Secretary General and 29 other Heads of State and Government from NATO countries and North Macedonia on 3 December. The Prime Minister undertook a range of bilateral meetings, including with the leaders of France, Germany and Turkey where they discussed the situation in Syria and agreed on the importance of humanitarian access and protection of civilians. I hosted Foreign Ministers from NATO Allies - and NATO Partners Ukraine and Georgia - on 3 December. NATO also held a major outreach event under the banner of "NATO Engages", with a diverse, predominately young audience of more than 1000 attendees. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office also hosted 100 university students for a 'Model NATO' exercise, and visited more than 1000 students in 15 universities across the UK in the weeks leading up to the Leaders' Meeting.

I look forward to working with all NATO Allies and Partners in implementing the outcomes from the Leaders' Meeting and in welcoming North Macedonia as the thirtieth member of our Alliance in the coming months. When we stand together, decide together, act together – we are stronger and safer. These steps will further strengthen the purpose and unity of an Alliance that continues to be the cornerstone of our security, and post-Brexit we will continue to reinforce its importance.

Oversight of Investigatory Powers

[HLWS16]

Baroness Evans of Bowes Park: My Rt Hon. Friend the Prime Minister has made the following statement to the House of Commons:

On 18 July 2019, the Government published new guidance titled "The Principles relating to the detention and interviewing of detainees overseas and the passing and receipt of intelligence relating to detainees". This will replace the existing "Consolidated Guidance" with effect from 1 January 2020. The new guidance is being extended to include the National Crime Agency and S015 Metropolitan Police Service and will provide clear direction for UK personnel on their interaction with detainees held by others overseas and the handling of intelligence derived from them.

The Investigatory Powers Commissioner will continue to oversee and report on the application of The Principles and to enable this, I have today issued a Direction to the Commissioner to keep under review compliance with the guidance by UK personnel so far as they are engaged in intelligence activities. In accordance with my obligation to publish such directions under Section 230 of the Investigatory Powers Act 2016, I am now depositing in the Libraries a copy of the Direction.

Post EU Energy Council Update

[HLWS7]

Lord Duncan of Springbank: My Right Honourable Friend, the Minister of State for Business, Energy and Clean Growth (Kwasi Kwarteng MP) has today made the following statement:

The UK did not attend the EU Energy Council in Brussels on 4 December 2019.

The UK Government has decided that from 1 September until exit day, UK Ministers and officials will only attend EU meetings where the UK has a significant national interest in the outcome of the discussions.

Written Answers

Tuesday, 7 January 2020

Abellio Greater Anglia: Standards

Asked by **Baroness Scott of Needham Market**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with Abellio Greater Anglia about the service disruptions to rural routes within their franchise area. [HL77]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Department has been in regular and frequent contact with both Greater Anglia and Network Rail since the start of the disruption on the rural routes within the Greater Anglia franchise area. Signalling problems on those routes caused cancellations and disruption for passengers whilst additional safety checks took place and the issue was investigated. We have raised with the rail industry the need to resolve this matter as swiftly as possible.

Africa: Climate Change

Asked by **The Earl of Sandwich**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what research they have conducted into the effects of climate change on pastoral communities in Africa. [HL76]

Baroness Sugg: DFID has conducted a series of research studies on pastoralism, including on the effects of climate change and environmental stresses. Papers and reports from this research are published here: <https://www.gov.uk/dfid-research-outputs?keywords=pastoralism+and+climate+change>.

DFID has recently announced a new programme the "Supporting Pastoralism & Agriculture in Recurrent & Protracted Crises (SPARC)" programme (2020 - 2026) which aims to assist poor and vulnerable people to better cope with and build their resilience to climate change and recurring shocks, delivering evidence which will improve DFID programmes and policies supporting pastoral communities. The programme builds on a number of previous programmes which have focused on improving the resilience of pastoralist communities, including the Karamoja Resilience programme in Northern Uganda, and the Building Resilience and Adapting to Climate Extremes and Disasters (BRACED) programme in the Sahel.

Agricultural Products: Trade Agreements

Asked by **The Lord Bishop of St Albans**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to exclude agriculture from future trade deals. [HL71]

The Earl of Courtown: In negotiating free trade agreements after the UK leaves the EU, the Government

will pursue an agenda that will deliver prosperity for the whole of the UK. Mandates for future negotiations are still under consideration and the Government will publish its negotiating objectives in due course. The Government has committed that the NHS will not be on the table in any trade agreement.

Agriculture

Asked by **The Lord Bishop of St Albans**

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the Agriculture Bill will be introduced to Parliament. [HL70]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: A new Agriculture Bill was announced alongside the Queen's Speech and will be introduced shortly.

Air Pollution: Health Hazards

Asked by **Lord Taylor of Warwick**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of air pollution on the NHS, particularly in the winter. [HL87]

Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford: Public Health England published a cost analysis tool in 2018 for estimating the health burden and costs to the National Health Service and social care system arising due to diseases related to air pollution. Figures are available at the national and local levels including future cost estimates. No specific estimations made by season are available. The tool to help local authorities estimate the burden of air pollution on the health care system, *Estimation of costs to the NHS and social care due to the health impacts of air pollution*, is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Costs to NHS and Social Care Estimation Report

[[Estimation_of_costs_to_the_NHS_and_social_care_due_to_the_health_impacts_of_air_pollutionfinal.pdf](#)]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-12-19/HL87>

Air Pollution: Mental Health

Asked by **Lord Taylor of Warwick**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the research by Environmental Health Perspectives, published on 18 December, which links air pollution with higher rates of mental health issues. [HL86]

Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford: No assessment has been made of this research published by Environmental Health Perspectives.

Public Health England is currently supporting the Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants on reviewing the available evidence on the impact of air

pollution on cognitive decline. A report is due to be published in spring 2020.

Ayrton Fund

*Asked by **The Earl of Sandwich***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many least developed countries are benefiting, or will benefit, from the Ayrton Fund, announced at the UN General Assembly in September; and what forms of climate change in those countries will be addressed. [HL75]

Lord Duncan of Springbank: The Ayrton Fund is a commitment that the UK Government has made to spend £1bn on Official Development Assistance (ODA)-funded research, development and demonstration (RD&D) in clean energy technology and business models for developing countries over five years from April 2021. The commitment will address development challenges in low-carbon energy (supply), low-carbon societies (demand), and smart and flexible energy delivery and storage to meet a range of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), such as Goals 7 and 13. Tangible examples of areas that the Ayrton commitment will seek to impact include:

- providing affordable access to electricity for some of the 1 billion people in ODA-eligible countries who are still off the grid, including through innovative solar technology for their homes
- enhancing large-scale energy technology to replace polluting diesel generators and ensure clean energy can be stored and not lost
- designing clean stoves like electric pressure cookers for some of the 2.7 billion people who still rely on firewood – with the smoke damaging their health as well as the environment
- working with energy-intensive industries and governments to achieve industrial decarbonisation
- supporting the development of technologies and business models for sustainable cooling – residential air conditioning alone is expected to raise global temperatures by 0.5°C in the years ahead
- designing low-emission and electric vehicles to cut pollution and make transport systems cleaner and greener.

The Ayrton Fund will be delivered through a series of expanded and new programmes and platforms, which will be available to all ODA-eligible countries, depending on the specific programme. Since some of these programmes and platforms are still to be developed, and since many will use open competitions to allocate the support, it is not possible to state at this stage exactly how many least developed countries will benefit (although they will all be potentially eligible).

British Nationality: Children

*Asked by **Lord Alton of Liverpool***

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they intend to remove the fee charged by the Home Office to register children as British citizens; and whether they intend to refund those who paid such fees before the High Court ruling on 19 December. [HL1]

*Asked by **Lord Alton of Liverpool***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the ruling of the High Court on 19 December in the case brought by the Project for the Registration of Children as British Citizens that there is a “mass of evidence” that the fee charged to children registering for British citizenship prevents many such children from registering British citizenship, leaving them feeling “alienated, excluded, ‘second-best’, insecure and not fully assimilated into the culture and social fabric of the UK.” [HL2]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The judgment was handed down on 19 December, and we are carefully considering its implications, and next steps.

Bronzefield Prison: Maternity Services

*Asked by **Lord Beecham***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken following the disclosure of incidents involving pregnant women prisoners and their children at HMP Bronzefield. [HL10]

Lord Keen of Elie: The recent incident at HMP Bronzefield is tragic. As there are a number of ongoing investigations, including an investigation by the police, it is not appropriate to comment further on the specific details of the incident.

We are currently undertaking a fundamental review of the Mother and Baby Unit policy and the policy on managing pregnant women in custody. This will conclude in 2020.

In the meantime, all pregnant women are seen by a professional midwife at least fortnightly, or more frequently if required. Healthcare in prisons is provided by specially trained medics and nurses. Medical emergencies are dealt with by 999 calls and prisoners have access to an emergency bell to alert staff at night. Women in prison have access to the same range of services as they would in the community.

Following the events at HMP Bronzefield, we have introduced hourly checks throughout the night for all heavily pregnant women, and fortnightly pregnancy review boards are being held for them, involving a multidisciplinary team, in addition to existing support provisions.

Buildings: Floods*Asked by Lord Patten*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the case for ensuring that flood proofing is included in the designs for new domestic and commercial buildings. [HL67]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The Government's National Design Guide makes clear that well-designed places should identify measures for flood alleviation and climate change adaptation from the outset of the process. National planning policy is also clear that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided. Where development is necessary, it should be made safe and resilient – and without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

Cheltenham Hospital: Accident and Emergency Department*Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what factors led to their consideration of removing the consultant-led Accident and Emergency service at Cheltenham General Hospital. [HL49]

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to retain a consultant-led Accident and Emergency service throughout the day at Cheltenham General Hospital; and if so, for how long. [HL50]

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to include the option of retaining a consultant-led Accident and Emergency department at Cheltenham General Hospital in their forthcoming consultation. [HL51]

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with (1) the Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, and (2) the Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group, about the consultant-led Accident and Emergency service at Cheltenham General Hospital; and what was the outcome of any such discussions. [HL52]

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the option of removing Accident and Emergency consultants from Cheltenham General Hospital during the day will be included as part of their forthcoming consultation. [HL53]

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to reinstate a 24-hours a day, seven days a week consultant-led Accident and Emergency at Cheltenham General Hospital; and if so, when. [HL54]

Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford: There are no plans to close Cheltenham General Hospital's (CGH) accident and emergency (A&E) and NHS England and NHS Improvement is clear that any potential solution developed as part of One Gloucestershire's Fit for the Future public engagement programme will not include any such plans.

NHS England and NHS Improvement envisages the same workforce in the department and this includes a consultant-led service at Cheltenham's A&E department.

Options for public consultation have not been drawn up at this stage. There are no formal proposals developed which include removing the consultant-led A&E service at Cheltenham.

Discussions have taken place between the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and the Chief Executive of Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. Following these discussions, the Secretary of State confirmed on 23 October 2019 that no proposals to close Cheltenham A&E would be included in the forthcoming consultation.

CGH's A&E department is consultant-led from 8am–8pm and overnight (8pm – 8am) the service is led by specialist emergency nurse practitioners. This arrangement, which has been in place since 2013, was in response to a lack of middle grade doctors and has preserved and ensured the continuation of high-quality care for patients in Gloucestershire 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Options for public consultation have not yet been drawn up due to the pre-consultation engagement phase, which is ongoing.

China: Uighurs*Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the statement delivered by the UK Permanent Representative to the UN at the Third Committee session on the Committee for the elimination of racial discrimination and the conclusions of the United Nations on the treatment of Uyghurs in Xinjiang. [HL72]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: On 29 October at the UN Third Committee, the UK read out a joint statement signed by 22 others drawing attention to the human rights violations and abuses in Xinjiang and called on China to uphold its obligations to respect human rights. We assess that it is important to regularly raise the human rights situation in Xinjiang at multilateral fora and privately with China, and have made clear to China that we will continue to do so until our concerns have been addressed.

Constitution, Democracy and Rights Commission

Asked by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to include election funding within the scope of the proposed Constitution, Democracy and Rights Commission. [HL36]

Earl Howe: As set out in the Queen's Speech, the Commission will examine the broader aspects of the constitution in depth and develop proposals to restore trust in our institutions and in how our democracy operates. We are carefully considering the composition and focus of the Commission.

I am unable to offer further detail at the moment, as the precise scope of the Commission's remit and programme has not yet been decided. Further announcements will be made in due course and I would be happy to provide further information at that time.

Data Protection

Asked by Lord Freyberg

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to amend the Data Protection Act 2018, following the introduction of the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill. [HL30]

Baroness Barran: The Government is committed to ensuring that the UK's data protection and rights framework remains fit for purpose and can continue to operate in a fast-changing landscape. The Government and the Information Commissioner's Office keep legislation under constant review to ensure it keeps pace with technical and societal changes. There are powers in the Data Protection Act 2018, overseen by Parliament, to make changes using secondary legislation where appropriate.

Asked by Lord Freyberg

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to ask the Information Commissioner's Office to issue further guidance on the scope of exemptions to the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation in relation to (1) research and development, and (2) science and innovation; and what plans they have, if any, to introduce statutory instruments on those matters. [HL31]

Baroness Barran: The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is an independent regulator and has the power to issue guidance under the UK's data protection legislation. The ICO has stated that it is working on guidance for Data Sharing, Direct Marketing and Journalism. They can produce their own guidance should they have concerns on a specific area of the law.

Asked by Lord Freyberg

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to transfer responsibility for data protection from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to another Government Department. [HL32]

Baroness Barran: Questions about the machinery of Government are not made at Departmental level, but the Government attaches great importance to the issue of data protection and the role it plays in building a strong and trusted data economy.

Asked by Lord Freyberg

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Court of Appeal judgment in *Lloyd v Google*; and what action, if any, they intend to take as a result. [HL33]

Baroness Barran: The Government is considering the implications of the judgment and will monitor any actions that may follow it, including any further stages in the legal process.

Asked by Lord Freyberg

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to replicate the provisions in the Republic of India's Data Protection Bill in relation to the state's right to access, control and process personal data obtained by private enterprises. [HL34]

Baroness Barran: The Government has no plans to amend the UK's Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) to replicate those provisions contained in the Republic of India's Personal Data Protection Bill.

The Government takes the protection of personal data and the right to privacy seriously. The DPA sets standards for protecting personal data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and ensures that our laws are fit for the digital age in which an ever increasing amount of data is being processed.

The DPA has various exemptions that disapply a number of obligations on data controllers in certain circumstances, for example, the information required to be disclosed in connection with legal proceedings, crime and taxation. These exemptions do not oblige an organisation to disclose personal information.

All data controllers, including public authorities, are required to comply with the DPA. Organisations that collect and use personal data must do so with an appropriate legal basis and apply exemptions to the rules on a case by case basis.

Asked by Lord Freyberg

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the data localisation restrictions on sensitive personal and biometric data in place in India and China; and what plans they have, if any, to introduce similar restrictions in the UK. [HL35]

Baroness Barran: The Government considers that in the UK, data localisation should be limited to cases that are specific and well-justified.

Developing Countries: Health Services

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much bilateral expenditure the Department for International Development spent directly targeting reproductive health in (1) 2016–17, and (2) 2017–18. [HL91]

Baroness Sugg: DFID spent the following directly targeting reproductive health under the OECD Development codes 13021 (Reproductive Health Care) and 13081 (Personnel Development for Population and Reproductive Health):

2016/17: £ 72.5 million

2017/18: £ 72.5 million

This does not include direct bilateral expenditure on family planning, which is reported separately.

Data for all sector codes and spend are available on the Statistics for International Development website, which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-on-international-development-uk-gross-public-expenditure-gpex>.

Developing Countries: HIV Infection

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much bilateral expenditure the Department for International Development spent directly targeting HIV and AIDS in (1) 2016–17, and (2) 2017–18. [HL90]

Baroness Sugg: DFID spent the following directly targeting HIV and AIDS under the two relevant OECD Development codes, 13041 and 13042:

2016/17 = £ 27.1 million

2017/18 = £ 12.3 million

These data do not capture spend on related programming on comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights, including research and health systems strengthening.

Given their greater reach and scale, the majority of our investments to the HIV response are now directed through organisations such as UNITAID, UNAIDS and the Global Funds to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria. The UK contributed £15 million per year in core contributions to UNAIDS in 2016/17 and in 2017/18.

The UK made a £1.4 billion pledge to the Global Funds to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria for the 6th replenishment covering 2020 to 2023. This will support the firm commitment to end the AIDS epidemic as a public health threat by 2030.

Data for all sector codes and spend are available on the Statistics on International Development website, which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-on-international-development-uk-gross-public-expenditure-gpex>.

Development Aid

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the actual Overseas Development Assistance from Development Assistance Committee donors in (1) 2018, and (2) 2019. [HL93]

Baroness Sugg: The table in the attached gives details of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) from Development Assistance Committee (DAC) donors in 2018. These data are collected by the DAC and are provisional.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

ODA from DAC 2018 [ODA from DAC 2018.PNG]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-12-19/HL93>

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the actual net Overseas Development Assistance and gross national income ratios from Development Assistance Committee donors from (1) 2018, and (2) 2019. [HL94]

Baroness Sugg: The table in the attached provides details of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) and ODA: Gross National Income (ODA:GNI) ratios from Development Assistance Committee (DAC) donors for 2018. These data are collected by the DAC and are provisional.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

DAC Donor ODA 2018 [DAC Donor ODA 2018.PNG]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-12-19/HL94>

Educational Institutions: Fire Prevention

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress has been made in removing cladding made from Aluminium Composite Material from educational buildings. [HL15]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: Information on progress to remove Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding from student accommodation and publicly-owned schools can be found in the Building Safety

Programme monthly data release. This can be found (attached) at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/building-safety-programme-monthly-data-release-november-2019>

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Building Safety programme monthly data [191223 Building Safety Data Release November 2019 - HL15.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-12-19/HL15>

Employment: Disability

Asked by Lord Shinkwin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to make the framework for voluntary reporting on disability, mental health and wellbeing a mandatory requirement for Disability Confident Leaders. [HL78]

Asked by Lord Shinkwin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to extend the voluntary reporting on disability, mental health and wellbeing framework to include the number or proportion of disabled employees in each pay quartile. [HL79]

Asked by Lord Shinkwin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to require large employers to publish data on the (1) number, and (2) pay, of disabled employees. [HL80]

Asked by Lord Shinkwin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to amend the wording in the framework for voluntary reporting on disability, mental health and wellbeing so that it matches the definition of disability in the Equality Act 2010 and the Government Statistical Service's disability disclosure question. [HL81]

Asked by Lord Shinkwin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to introduce targets for closing the disability employment gap; and if so, what dates they plan to set to meet those targets. [HL82]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: We announced on 2 November that new Disability Confident (DC) Leaders (Level 3) and Disability Confident Leaders applying for re-accreditation will need to use the voluntary reporting framework (VRF) to publicly report on disability employment. A copy of which is attached. Although there is flexibility in how employers can use the VRF, we expect that most DC Leaders would choose to combine it with their annual report and accounts.

We developed the voluntary reporting framework with a group of employers and disability stakeholders. It is deliberately designed to be flexible, recognising that different employers start in different places. It does not require reporting on pay and we have no current plans to require pay reporting.

Disability Confident leaders are now required to publicly report using the voluntary reporting framework and one of the measures the framework encourages is the number of disabled people employed.

The definition of disability in the voluntary reporting framework is self-declared, asking employees if they 'consider' themselves to have a disability. The framework is both voluntary and flexible, designed based on feedback from employers and other stakeholders. If we choose to go further in future, we will look at the case for alignment with the definition of disability in the Equality Act 2010.

We are committed to reducing the disability employment gap, and will report on progress regularly. We will consider the case for a target as part of our work on the new National Disability Strategy which we have committed to publish by the end of 2020.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Voluntary Reporting Framework [voluntary-reporting-on-disability-mental-health-and-wellbeing.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-12-19/HL78>

Asked by Lord Shinkwin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what evaluation, if any, they are undertaking into the Disability Confident scheme, including how the scheme is viewed by disabled people. [HL83]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: The Department for Work and Pensions commissioned Ipsos MORI to conduct research with Disability Confident employers to understand the effect that signing up to the Disability Confident scheme has had on their attitudes and practices with regards to disabled people. We published the results of this research on 13 November 2018. The survey suggested the scheme has had a significant impact on disability employment practices, with half of those employers surveyed saying it had led to them taking on at least one disabled member of staff.

The Disability Confident Business Leaders Group is constantly reviewing the scheme to ensure it remains effective in helping employers recruit, retain and develop disabled people. We also receive regular representations from the Disability Charities Consortium and other disabled people's organisations. These reviews and representations have led to recently announced improvements, including requiring Disability Confident Leader (Level 3) employers to use the Voluntary Reporting Framework to publicly report on their disability employment.

Exchange Rates

Asked by Lord Birt

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to require that all currency conversion rates should be expressed as a percentage mark-up on the interbank rate applying at the time of the conversion after Brexit. [HL12]

The Earl of Courtown: HM Treasury does not publish or set the format for the presentation of exchange rate data.

Freezing of Assets: Libya

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the total amount of tax collected from frozen Libyan assets held in the UK since the UN Security Council Resolution 1973 (2011) S/RES/1973(2011). [HL27]

The Earl of Courtown: Identifying tax receipts on frozen assets is complex, requiring entities on the sanctions list to be validated and matched against HMRC's tax records. HMRC will do this as quickly as they can. The Treasury shall write to the Noble Lord shortly and place a copy of the letter in the Library of both Houses.

Game: Birds

Asked by Lord Birt

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to commission an independent review into the economic, environmental and wildlife impacts of driven grouse shooting. [HL13]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The Government will consider the findings of the recently released Werritty Review which addresses these issues in Scotland. We will continue to work to ensure a sustainable, mutually beneficial relationship between shooting and conservation.

Hate Crime: Public Transport

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking to tackle hate crime on public transport. [HL16]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government is clear that all forms of hate crime are unacceptable. The Government's Hate Crime Action Plan 2016, and the refresh in 2018, contains a number of commitments to tackle hate crime on public transport. These include:

- The Department for Transport committing, in the July 2018 Inclusive Transport Strategy, to run a public awareness raising campaign to increase disability awareness amongst all transport passengers; and

- Working with local transport providers to ensure that bus drivers across England and Wales are fully equipped to challenge hate, including new guidance to support them.

The 2018 Hate Crime Action Plan refresh also includes a number of broader actions addressing all forms of hate crime, including hate crime on public transport. These include:

- A review by the Law Commission into the coverage and approach of current hate crime legislation; and
- A wide-ranging national hate crime communications campaign to publicly address hate crime and make clear that it is unacceptable to target people on the basis of their identity.

More widely, the British Transport Police (BTP) provides a policing service that meets the needs of all passengers and people who use or work on the railways. BTP has a firm commitment to responding to all reports of hate crime and it actively works with train operating companies and Network Rail to improve awareness, vigilance and reporting of information on hate crime incidents.

Health Professions: Training

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the announcement that nursing bursaries are to be reintroduced, what plans they have to support nurses, midwives and other healthcare professionals with any debt incurred before the reintroduction to support their study and training. [HL11]

Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford: We have committed to 50,000 more nurses in the National Health Service by 2025 and our new financial support package is crucial to delivering this.

Eligible pre-registration students on nursing, midwifery and many allied health students' courses at English universities from September 2020 will benefit from additional support of at least £5,000 of non-repayable funding, with up to £3,000 additional funding for some students, who choose to study in regions or specialisms struggling to recruit, or to help with childcare costs, which they will not have to pay back.

The Government has no plans to introduce a scheme that will backdate the offer for students who completed courses in earlier years.

Health Services: British Nationals Abroad

Asked by Baroness Quinn

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking, if any, to ensure continued access for British citizens to health services in the EU after Brexit, including continued access to the benefits of the European Health Insurance Card. [HL68]

Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford: The agreement we have reached with the European Union is that until 31 December 2020 there will be no changes to reciprocal healthcare access for pensioners, workers, students, tourists and other visitors, the European Health Insurance Card scheme, or planned treatment.

People who have settled in the EU or United Kingdom before 31 December 2020, will continue to have life-long reciprocal healthcare rights provided they remain covered under the terms of the Withdrawal Agreement. This means existing healthcare arrangements will not change for those UK nationals who are resident in the EU and EU citizens in the UK before 31 December 2020, for as long as they are living in that country and covered by the agreement.

We want to continue discussing the future of reciprocal healthcare arrangements with the EU as part of the future relationship discussions.

Higher Education: Admissions

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government what analysis, if any, they have conducted into whether there is any relationship between increases in the number of university students in the UK and levels of productivity over the last 20 years; and what were the results of any such analysis. [\[HL66\]](#)

Lord Duncan of Springbank: The Office of National Statistics estimates that around a fifth of the rise in productivity between 1994 and 2019 can be attributed to improvements in the quality of the workforce. This is largely as a result of an increase in the share of overall hours worked by people with higher education qualifications. That is to say: more graduates in the labour market has led to an increase in productivity. This is consistent with other studies

Productivity is the main driver of long-run economic growth, and a key determinant of standards of living; in the long-run, the UK's ability to improve living standards is almost entirely dependent on its ability to raise productivity. The Government's Industrial Strategy sets out a long-term plan to boost productivity by backing businesses to create good jobs and increase the earning power of people throughout the UK with investment in skills, industries and infrastructure. The Government recently published the Business Productivity Review in response to the Industrial Strategy's core priority of addressing the UK's productivity issue.

The Government is investing £406 million in STEM and technical education and an additional £400 million in further education; the Government is also considering the recommendations of the Post 18 education funding review panel chaired by Sir Phillip Augar. This looked at how the post 18 education system can help deliver the skills the economy needs and improve UK productivity.

Homelessness

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans, if any, they have to combat the rise in homelessness. [\[HL85\]](#)

Viscount Younger of Leckie: This Government is clear that no one should be without a roof over their head. That is why we have committed to end rough sleeping by the end of this Parliament and to enforce the Homelessness Reduction Act.

The Government has already taken important steps to prevent and reduce homelessness and rough sleeping. This includes implementing the most ambitious legislative reform in this area in decades, the Homelessness Reduction Act, which is transforming the culture of homelessness service delivery and actively prevents homelessness, meaning people will get the help they need quicker.

The Government has already committed over £1.2 billion to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping over the spending review period to April 2020. In 2020/2021 we are providing a further £422 million to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping. This marks a £54 million increase on what Government provided in 2019/20 and will go towards funding important programmes such as the Rapid Rehousing Pathway, the Rough Sleeping Initiative and the Flexible Homelessness Support Grant. In 2020/2021 we are providing a further £422 million to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping.

Hong Kong: Health Professions

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the description of the arrests of medical personnel during a confrontation at Hong Kong's Polytechnic University on 17 November, by Dr Darren Mann, and his call for an international inquiry into breaches of international humanitarian norms and human rights law. [\[HL3\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK was seriously concerned by the escalation in violence between protesters and the authorities at Hong Kong's Polytechnic University. At the time, we made clear it was vital that those who were injured were able to receive appropriate medical treatment, and that safe passage was provided to those who wished to leave the area. We take the allegations set out by Dr Mann relating to the arrest of medical personnel at Hong Kong Polytechnic University extremely seriously. We expect the Hong Kong authorities to abide by international humanitarian laws and practices. We have called consistently for a robust, independent inquiry into recent events.

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the treatment of medical professionals in Hong Kong; and what representations

they intend to make to the government of China about such treatment. [HL4]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We take allegations of the mistreatment of medical personnel in Hong Kong extremely seriously. We expect the Hong Kong authorities to abide by international humanitarian laws and practices. It is vital that those who are injured are able to receive appropriate medical treatment.

The Foreign Secretary summoned the Chinese Ambassador on 19 November and set out his concerns about the situation in Hong Kong. The leadership in China and Hong Kong is in no doubt about the strength of UK concern over the current situation, and our commitment to seeing the rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Joint Declaration upheld. We will continue to raise our concerns with the Hong Kong SAR Government and the authorities in Beijing.

Housing: Construction

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they take, and intend to take, to encourage private housebuilders to preserve existing trees and plants in English cities during construction. [HL65]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: National planning policy makes clear that development should minimise its impacts on, and seek net gains for, biodiversity, including trees. Local authorities should impose Tree Preservation Orders on trees of special value, and use planning conditions to ensure that valued trees are not harmed by construction. The Environment Bill will give communities a greater say in the retention of local trees; empower local authorities to make net gain for biodiversity mandatory in certain circumstances; and give new impetus to the provision of trees, green space and other green infrastructure in our cities.

Independent Office for Police Conduct

Asked by Baroness Cavendish of Little Venice

To ask Her Majesty's Government what qualifications and professional experience they consider should be required of staff, apart from administrators, who work for the Independent Office for Police Conduct. [HL19]

Asked by Baroness Cavendish of Little Venice

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the performance of the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC); what plans they have, if any, to improve the performance of the IOPC; and to what timescale any such improvements will be made. [HL20]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) is an independent organisation. Operational decisions, including the qualifications and professional experience needed by staff to carry out investigations, are a matter for them.

Since the reforms introduced by the Government to create the IOPC in January 2018, the organisation has seen substantial improvement in their operational performance. A summary of their performance for 2018/19 (the last full year for which figures are available) can be found in their Annual Report & Accounts. https://www.policeconduct.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Documents/Who-we-are/accountability-performance/IOPC_annual_report_and_accounts_2018-19.pdf

Furthermore, the IOPC's business plan https://www.policeconduct.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Documents/Who-we-are/accountability-performance/IOPC_Business_plan_2019-20.pdf sets out how they plan to build on these improvements in 2019/20.

The IOPC's performance is scrutinised by their unitary Board and the organisation is accountable to Parliament.

Iraq: Islamic State

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they intend to respond to statements by victims of ISIS genocide in Mosul and Sinjar provided by Lord Alton of Liverpool; whether any victims of such crimes have been approached for witness statements; and what progress is being made in collecting evidence and bringing those responsible for genocide and crimes against humanity to justice. [HL5]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Government has not, to date, received the statements in question.

The British Government has not directly approached survivors of Daesh crimes for statements. However, we continue to support the UN Investigative Team for the Accountability of Daesh (UNITAD) and announced an additional £1 million in funding in July to exhume mass graves across Northern Iraq and to collect witness testimony. UNITAD have facilitated the provision of witness testimony directly into domestic court proceedings in Finland via video-link. UNITAD continues to support cases in other countries too.

Libya: Freezing of Assets

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the current value of Libyan assets frozen in the UK as a result of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973 (2011) S/RES/1973 (2011). [HL28]

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that Libyan assets frozen in the UK have sustained a significant drop in value. [HL29]

The Earl of Courtown: At close of business on Friday 28 September 2018 the approximate total value of frozen Libyan assets in the UK reported to the Office of

Financial Sanctions Implementation (OFSI) in the Treasury was £11.2 billion. The figures for 2019 are being finalised. OFSI undertakes an annual frozen asset review requiring all persons or institutions that hold or control frozen assets in the UK to report to OFSI, from which this figure is taken.

HM Government does not own or hold frozen assets as a result of UN and EU sanctions on Libya. It is the responsibility of individuals and entities (e.g. Financial Institutions) to ensure they comply with their asset freezing obligations under the relevant sanction's regime.

In 2019, OFSI identified an inconsistent figure relating to Libyan frozen funds reported by a financial institution when conducting the 2018 review, and contacted the institution for an explanation of the figure. The financial institution stated that an incorrect figure had been submitted in the previous year as part of its submission. This artificially inflated the figure reported to HMT for the 2017 review and therefore the overall level of frozen assets recorded for 2017.

An incorrect submission to the Treasury does not represent a loss of frozen funds. There is currently no evidence to suggest that frozen funds have been depleted or moved.

OFSI is currently investigating the discrepancy, but I cannot comment on ongoing cases and the financial institution cannot be named for legal reasons.

Marriage

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made on their commitment in the Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper to "explore the legal and practical challenges of limited reform relating to the law on marriage and religious weddings." [HL23]

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to amend the Marriage Act 1949 to make it a legal requirement for couples to civilly register their marriage before, or at the same time as, their religious ceremony. [HL25]

Lord Keen of Elie: The law has long made provision for couples, including Muslim couples, to marry in their place of worship in a way that gives them legal rights and protections. The Government shares the concern that some people may nonetheless marry in a way that does not, and without appreciating the consequences.

The independent Sharia review has recommended an offence apply to religious celebrants marrying in a ceremony that is outside the ambit of the Marriage Acts.. Any legislative proposal, including such an offence, must be thoroughly assessed for its fairness to all religious groups and for how far it could achieve the change of practice intended. That is why it is with the greatest care that the Government is continuing the exploration of both

limited reform and non-legislative options that it began in detail in the spring.

Separately from this exploration, the Law Commission has begun its weddings project. It will make recommendations for how the wider law on getting married in England and Wales can be systematically reformed in a way that is simple, fair and consistent.

Mediterranean Sea: Offshore Drilling

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the reported agreement between Turkey and Libya concerning undersea resources in the Mediterranean; and what plans they have to propose that any such agreement is submitted for international arbitration. [HL47]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are aware that Turkey and Libya signed a Memorandum of Understanding in late November on the "delimitation of maritime jurisdictional areas in the Mediterranean". It has been our consistent position that maritime boundary disputes should be resolved in accordance with international law as reflected in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Metropolitan Police Service's Handling of Non-recent Sexual Offence Investigations Alleged against Persons of Public Prominence Independent Review

Asked by Baroness Cavendish of Little Venice

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by Sir Richard Henriques, An Independent Review of the Metropolitan Police Service's handling of non-recent sexual offence investigations alleged against persons of public prominence, published on 4 October, whether they consider the Independent Office for Police Conduct to be fit-for-purpose; and if so, why. [HL17]

Asked by Baroness Cavendish of Little Venice

To ask Her Majesty's Government why the Independent Office for Police Conduct took 20 months to contact Sir Richard Henriques following his recommendation for an independent inquiry. [HL18]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Following Sir Richard Henriques' review in 2016 of the handling of Operation Midland, the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) referred a number of allegations to the then Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC).

On 7 October 2019, the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) published the report of its investigation into three of the officers involved in Operation Midland. This report includes learning recommendations for a number of bodies, including the IOPC itself.

Having an effective police watchdog to investigate allegations of wrongdoing is crucial to public confidence.

The Government welcomes recent improvements by IOPC and further plans to improve. The Government will also introduce major reforms in early 2020, aimed at increasing the effectiveness, accountability and proportionality of the police complaints and discipline systems.

At the Home Secretary's request, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) are carrying out an inspection of the MPS to ensure learning from Sir Richard's report and the IOPC's investigation has been taken on board. The Government will decide whether any further steps are necessary following publication of HMICFRS' report.

National Holocaust Memorial Centre and Learning Service: Planning Permission

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following their decision to call in the planning application for a UK Holocaust Memorial, whether all the evidence submitted to Westminster City Council will be fully considered. [\[HL46\]](#)

Viscount Younger of Leckie: Following the decision to call in the planning application for the UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre, the case will now proceed to a public inquiry overseen by an independent planning Inspector. The inquiry will consider evidence including that submitted to Westminster City Council, and is currently scheduled to begin on 27 May 2020.

NHS: Amazon

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what safeguards to protect (1) patient confidentiality, (2) intellectual property, (3) data, and (4) other materials, from inappropriate use have been built into the agreement to share NHS health data with Amazon. [\[HL40\]](#)

Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford: No patient data is being shared with Amazon as part of this agreement. The collaboration with Amazon simply connects people to information that is already freely available through the National Health Service website. Use of Amazon Alexa is an alternative mechanism for accessing that information. Patients already use Alexa and other devices to search for information on a range of health issues. This agreement ensures that the information they receive from Alexa is medically verified by the NHS instead of from a range of other sources, such as non-United Kingdom websites.

This agreement is not exclusive. There are over 2,000 other organisations that are accessing and using information from the NHS website in a similar way.

The agreement signed between the Department and Amazon is clear that none of the data generated through voice search using Alexa will be shared with third parties; that it will not be used for selling products or making

product recommendations to Amazon users; nor is it building any form of health profiles on Amazon customers.

All information is treated with high confidentiality and Amazon use multi-factor authentication to restrict access, service encryption, and audits of our control environment to protect it. The information that Amazon collects is only used to train its speech recognition software and natural language understanding systems, so Alexa can better understand the requests of users and ensure the service works well for everyone. No Amazon employee has direct access to information that can identify the person or account, and Amazon have the appropriate measures in place to ensure General Data Protection Regulation compliance.

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what income they have received as a result of the agreement to share NHS data with Amazon. [\[HL41\]](#)

Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford: The service provided by Amazon connects people to medical information that is already freely available through the National Health Service website. Patients already use Alexa and other devices to search for information on a range of health issues. This agreement ensures that the information they receive from Alexa is medically verified by the NHS instead of from a range of other sources, such as non-United Kingdom websites.

The agreement signed between the Department and Amazon is designed to enable greater numbers of people to access information accredited by the NHS, helping to put people in control of their own healthcare. This agreement is not exclusive. There are over 2,000 other organisations that are accessing and using information from the NHS website in a similar way.

There is no cost to the taxpayer, nor have we received any income as a result of the agreement to share this freely available information from the NHS website with Amazon. This new service through Alexa will enable a greater number of people to access it and help them to manage their own healthcare.

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what monitoring arrangements in relation to (1) patient confidentiality, (2) intellectual property, and (3) other data, have been built into the agreement to share NHS health data with Amazon. [\[HL42\]](#)

Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford: The agreement between the Department and Amazon is clear that none of the data generated will be shared with third parties; that it will not be used for selling products or making product recommendations to Amazon users; nor is it building any form of health profiles on Amazon customers.

NHS Digital are working closely with Amazon to assess the effectiveness of the service. The algorithm used

by Amazon is still learning and will be updated continuously to learn how people are asking questions about health conditions.

All information is treated with high confidentiality and Amazon use multi-factor authentication to restrict access, service encryption, and audits of our control environment to protect it. No Amazon employee has direct access to information that can identify the person or account, and Amazon have the appropriate measures in place to ensure General Data Protection Regulation compliance.

Patients already use Alexa and other devices to search for health information on a range of health issues. This agreement ensures that the information they receive from Alexa is medically verified by the National Health Service instead of from a range of other sources, such as non-United Kingdom websites.

This agreement is not exclusive. There are over 2,000 other organisations that are accessing and using information from the NHS website in a similar way.

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government why several sections of the contract to share NHS data with Amazon were redacted when placed in the public domain. [HL43]

Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford: The agreement between the Department and Amazon is about using content from the National Health Service website to provide reliable and informative answers to basic health questions asked to Amazon's virtual assistant voice service, Alexa. This content is already freely available on the NHS website. Patients already use Alexa and other devices to search for information on a range of health issues. This agreement ensures that the information they receive from Alexa is medically verified by the NHS instead of from a range of other sources, such as American websites.

This agreement is not exclusive. There are over 2,000 other organisations that are accessing and using information from the NHS website in a similar way.

A limited number of clauses have been redacted due to being exempt under Section 43(2) of the Freedom Of Information Agreement, which exempts information where the release would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any entity, including the public authority holding the information.

In this case, we consider that the release of the redacted clauses would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of Amazon on the basis that it would make public the non-standard terms that Amazon has been willing to enter into in respect of this agreement. Disclosure of the redacted clauses has potential to prejudice existing agreements between Amazon and other parties, which could result in other parties challenging Amazon over the terms and conditions of their agreements.

In addition, certain personal information has been redacted in the agreement. This information is exempt

from disclosure under Section 40(2) of Freedom Of Information Agreement as disclosure of this personal information would breach the data protection principles. In particular, we consider that the disclosure of this personal information would be unfair and breach the first data principle.

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the contract with Amazon to share health data from the NHS was put out to competitive tender. [HL44]

Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford: The agreement with Amazon is non-exclusive and we want to work with other organisations to arrange for the content to be provided on other home devices. There are currently over 2,000 other organisations using content from the National Health Service website.

This is a mutually beneficial collaboration that will enable greater numbers of people to access health information accredited by the NHS, helping to put people in control of their own healthcare. The information being provided to users of Alexa devices asking questions is already freely available through the NHS website. This is an alternative mechanism for delivering that information. Patients already use Alexa and other devices to search for information on a range of health issues. This agreement ensures that the information they receive from Alexa is medically verified by the NHS instead of from a range of other sources, such as non-United Kingdom websites.

NHS Digital and NHSX have built an interface (known technically as an API, or Application Programming Interface) to content on the NHS website so that other organisations can use it to make NHS information available through their own sites. It is freely available.

The service available through Alexa enables a greater number of people to access certified NHS information from a trusted source, instead of potentially misleading information from a range of worldwide websites where the information may not have been clinically assessed.

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they gave any consideration to the potential development of an NHS app to provide the service that has now been contracted to Amazon to share health data from the NHS. [HL45]

Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford: There is already an app, called the NHS App, which provides the same information as the National Health Service website on a range of conditions, their symptoms and their treatments.

More modes to access medically verified NHS information will give United Kingdom citizens a better understanding of different medical conditions. The agreement with Amazon is convenient for those who rely on voice-activated technology, in particular blind and visually impaired people.

This is a mutually beneficial collaboration that will enable greater numbers of people to access information accredited by the NHS, helping to put people in control of their own healthcare. The information being provided to users of Alexa devices asking questions is already freely available through the NHS website. This is an alternative mechanism for delivering that information. Patients already use Alexa and other devices to search for information on a range of health issues. This agreement ensures that the information they receive from Alexa is medically verified by the NHS instead of from a range of other sources, such as non-UK websites.

Nigeria: Violence

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Nigeria about reports of multiple attacks, by Fulani militia in Northern and Central Belt states, of torture, murder and the destruction of homes, churches and villages. [HL22]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We remain concerned by intercommunal violence in Nigeria and the devastating impact it has had on affected communities including heavy loss of life. We continue to push for a solution that meets the needs of all communities affected. We regularly raise our concerns with the Government of Nigeria at the highest levels. The Secretary of State for International Development raised the issue with the Nigerian Vice President and the Governor of Kaduna during his visit in July. He highlighted how factors including ethnicity, religion and climate change are driving intercommunal violence across Nigeria. The UK, including the British High Commission in Abuja, will continue to engage closely with the federal government, state government, international partners and the National Economic Council to help address the underlying issues that cause conflict.

Overseas Aid

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what contribution the Department for International Development made to (1) core, and (2) non-core, funding in (a) 2017–18, and (b) 2018–19, to the (i) United Nations Population Fund, (ii) World Health Organization, (iii) UNICEF, (iv) Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, (v) International Planned Parenthood Federation, (vi) Women and Children First UK, (vii) Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and (viii) UN Women. [HL89]

Baroness Sugg: Department for International Development's Official Development Assistance funding to selected multilateral institutions by (1) core and (2) non-core for 2017 and 2018 calendar years.

	2017		2018	
	Core (£m)	Non-core (£m)	Core (£m)	Non-core (£m)
United Nations Population Fund	20.0	120.5	20.0	147.7
World Health Organisation	19.5	105.5	29.5	133.0
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	48.0	390.1	48.0	391.5
Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS	15.0	0	15.0	0
International Planned Parenthood Federation	0	0	0	0
Women and Children First UK	0	0	0	0
Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria	317.1	0	360.0	0
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women	12.5	6.2	12.5	4.3

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the actual UK Official Development Assistance level from 1989 to 2019 inclusive. [HL92]

Baroness Sugg: The table in the attached gives details of UK Official Development Assistance from 1989 to 2018. Provisional figures for 2019 will be published in the spring of 2020, with final figures published in the Autumn.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

UK ODA from 1989 to 2018 [UK ODA from 1989 to 2018.PNG]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2019-12-19/HL92>

Asked by Lord Harries of Pentregarth

To ask Her Majesty's Government what proportion of overseas aid is delivered through (1) non-governmental

organisations, (2) government departments, and (3) other agencies. [HL95]

Baroness Sugg: UK Official Development Assistance (ODA) is provided by official bodies only. In 2018, Department for International Development accounted for 74.9% of UK total ODA, other Government Departments and agencies for 20.4% and non-departmental ODA (such as Scottish and Welsh Government) for 4.8%.

UK official bodies can deliver ODA programmes using non-government agencies such as charities, and agencies such as the UN.

Persecution of Christians across the Globe Independent Review

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government how, and when, they intend to fully implement all of the recommendations in the Bishop of Truro's Independent Review for the Foreign Secretary of FCO Support for Persecuted Christians, published in July. [HL6]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The British Government is committed to implementing the recommendations from the Bishop of Truro's Review in a way that will bring real improvements to the lives of those persecuted because of their faith or belief. The recommendations have been divided into short, medium and longer term priorities and we have already implemented a good number of them. This includes recently appointing a Director General level champion for Freedom of Religion or Belief and marking Red Wednesday in support of persecuted Christians and members of other minority groups. Some of the recommendations will take longer to implement and many will require an ongoing effort to embed into the working practices of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and other departments.

Pet Travel Scheme

Asked by Baroness Quin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking, if any, to ensure continued access for British citizens to the EU pet passport scheme after Brexit. [HL69]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The non-commercial movement of cats, dogs and ferrets is covered by the EU Pet Travel Scheme which has three categorisations of third country: unlisted, Part 1 listed and Part 2 listed. Third countries can apply to the European Commission to be listed under the EU Pet Travel Scheme.

The UK submitted its application to allow the UK to become a Part 1 listed third country under Annex II of the EU Pet Travel Regulations to the European Commission in January 2019. Should the UK become a Part 1 listed country, there would be little change to the current arrangements, with only minor changes needed for documentation and, in most cases, no change for owners from what they currently need to do in terms of their

animal's health preparation. It is now for the Commission to consider our application for listed status.

Physiotherapy

Asked by Lord Luce

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many physiotherapists are required by the NHS. [HL57]

Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford: Following publication of the interim People Plan on 3 June 2019, a full NHS People Plan is in development. This will set out the workforce implications for all staff groups, including physiotherapists, in delivering the NHS Long Term Plan priorities.

Asked by Lord Luce

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many physiotherapists are employed by the NHS. [HL58]

Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford: NHS Digital publishes Hospital and Community Health Services workforce statistics for England. These include staff working in hospital trusts and clinical commissioning groups (CCGs), but not staff working in primary care, local authorities or other providers.

As at September 2019, the latest available data, there were 19,977 full time equivalent physiotherapists employed in National Health Service trusts and CCGs.

Asked by Lord Luce

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the target waiting time for an appointment with an NHS physiotherapist. [HL59]

Asked by Lord Luce

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the average waiting time for patients to see a NHS physiotherapist. [HL60]

Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford: Physiotherapy services are commissioned locally by clinical commissioning groups. This includes agreeing and monitoring the waiting time to access services rather than this being set nationally.

A count of first outpatient attendances and the average (mean and median) waiting time in days, where the treatment specialty is physiotherapy, is shown in the following table. Data is for the 2018-19 financial year.

Year	First attendances	Mean waiting time (days)	Median waiting time (days)
2018-19	1,404,639	36.7	25

Source: Hospital Episode Statistics (NHS Digital)

Physiotherapy: Private Sector

Asked by Lord Luce

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of physiotherapists employed in the private sector. [HL61]

Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford: NHS Digital publishes data biannually on staff in some independent sector healthcare organisations in England, mainly data from large organisations. The latest available data as at March 2019, shows that there are 2,270 full time equivalent (FTE) physiotherapists in 56 independent sector organisations which provided data. The data presented for the independent healthcare provider workforce does not represent the entire workforce employed across the whole of this sector and does not only show the staff providing National Health Service-commissioned services. These statistics relate to the workforce directly employed in a range of independent healthcare provider organisations in England and may include staff on maternity leave and career breaks.

Independent healthcare provider workforce: qualified staff working within the care setting 'physiotherapy' as at 31 March 2019, experimental statistics.

All qualified staff working within the care setting 'physiotherapy'	2,270
Consultant therapist/scientist in physiotherapy	-
Manager in physiotherapy	178
Therapist in physiotherapy	2,080
Instructor/teacher in physiotherapy	9
Tutor in physiotherapy	3

Public Expenditure: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord Hennessy of Nympsfield

To ask Her Majesty's Government what proportion of the funds allocated to Northern Ireland in support of the Confidence and Supply Agreement of June 2017 have been drawn down, broken down by category; what, if any, sums remain to be drawn down, broken down by category; and what is the schedule for the drawing down of any remaining funds, broken down by category. [HL39]

Lord Duncan of Springbank: The financial annex to the Confidence and Supply Agreement sets out the allocation of the £1 billion made available to Northern Ireland. This is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/conservative-and-dup-agreement-and-uk-government-financial-support-for-northern-ireland>

£763 million of this funding has to date been allocated to the Northern Ireland Civil Service. Allocations by category are tabulated below.

Category	C&S commitment	Allocated
Infrastructure	400	400
Broadband	150	3
Severe Deprivation	100	40

Category	C&S commitment	Allocated
Immediate pressures health and education	100	100
Health Transformation	200	200
Mental Health	50	20
Total (£m)	1000	763

Railways: North of England

Asked by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect to receive the consultant's report into the proposed freight line between Liverpool Docks and Yorkshire, via a reinstated Colne-Skipton line; when they expect to publish it; and what the next steps for the project will be. [HL37]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Work is advancing well. We expect to receive the outputs of the further feasibility work on the Colne-Skipton reinstatement soon, complementing the initial Strategic Outline Business Case completed in December 2018. These will inform the Government's decision as to whether a reinstatement scheme should progress to the 'develop' stage of the Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline. The results of the feasibility work will be published at that point.

This is part of our new approach to rail enhancements to ensure we address the needs of passengers and freight, and that funding commitments appropriately reflect the stage of development of schemes.

Asked by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they intend to publish the report produced by Steer on the proposed freight line from Liverpool to Yorkshire, via the reinstated Colne-Skipton line. [HL38]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: We will publish the reports on the feasibility work into the reinstatement of the Colne-Skipton line, including the initial Strategic Outline Business Case prepared by Steer in 2018, once the work is complete and we understand the full picture.

My officials continue to engage with key stakeholders, including the local SELRAP campaign group, on this feasibility work and the findings of the Steer report, which has been shared with the group.

Railways: Strikes

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ban strikes on the railways. [HL63]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Government will introduce legislation to guarantee that, in times of strike action on rail, a pre-agreed minimum level of train services is provided. The purpose of this is to ensure that

in future, the rights of those wishing to take strike action are balanced with the rights of those who need to travel and who rely upon the railway to go about their daily lives.

Russia: Ukraine

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Paris negotiations between Russia and Ukraine; how they reached any such assessment; and what consideration they have given to modifying the Minsk guidelines to support such negotiations. [HL48]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The United Kingdom welcomes the commitments made at the Normandy Summit on 9 December. These commitments, which include comprehensive implementation of the ceasefire and prisoner exchange, are key to securing a diplomatic solution to the conflict in eastern Ukraine. We fully support France and Germany in their efforts towards securing the implementation by all parties of the Minsk Agreements. In this regard, we applaud President Zelenskyy's clear commitment and determined actions to end the conflict and repeat our call on Russia to fulfil its obligations.

Sales Promotions: Internet

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans, if any, they have to introduce further regulation in regard to the online promotion of products by celebrities. [HL84]

Baroness Barran: Last year the government announced its intention to review how online advertising is regulated in the UK, looking at how well the current regime is equipped to tackle the challenges posed by developments in online advertising. The interim report can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/cma-lifts-the-lid-on-digital-giants>.

Currently, advertising in the UK is overseen by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA), the industry's independent regulator, which for online advertising enforces the Code of Non-broadcast Advertising and Direct & Promotional Marketing (CAP Code) through a system of self-regulation. The CAP Code incorporates all relevant legislation, including consumer protection legislation, and sets standards for accuracy and honesty to which advertisers must adhere. This system operates independently of government.

The remit of the ASA extends to the online promotion of products by celebrities, if the celebrity has been paid (including payment in kind) by an advertiser, and the advertiser exerts some form of editorial control over the resulting content. To guarantee compliance with the CAP Code in such cases, advertisers must ensure that

endorsements are genuine, claims are accurate and advertising is clearly identified as such. The products themselves must also adhere to relevant regulation and standards.

If the advertiser does not exert some form of editorial control over the resulting content, consumer protection legislation still applies and is enforced instead by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA). The CMA works closely with the ASA in this area, and expects such content to clearly identify any commercial relationship and to have regard to the CAP Code.

The Competition and Markets Authority recently investigated social media endorsements by influencers / celebrities to ensure that they were being clear to their followers, resulting in influencers / celebrities changing their practices. They also published a guide to help influencers and those working with them to understand how to comply with UK consumer protection law.

Social Security Benefits: Children

Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was their total spending, in constant prices, on (1) child benefit, and (2) income-related benefits, for children for each year since 2000. [HL55]

The Earl of Courtown:

1) Child Benefit

Total Child Benefit payments, in real terms at 2019/20 prices, since 2000 can be found in the *Benefit expenditure and caseload tables 2019* published by the Department for Work and Pensions. This information has been presented below (Table 1) for the years for which outturn data is available.

Table 1 - Child Benefit expenditure, real terms (2019/20 prices),

	£billions
2000-01	12.6
2001-02	12.6
2002-03	12.5
2003-04	12.9
2004-05	12.8
2005-06	12.7
2006-07	12.8
2007-08	13.1
2008-09	13.5
2009-10	14
2010-11	14.1
2011-12	14
2012-13	13.7

	£billions
2013-14	12.6
2014-15	12.6
2015-16	12.6
2016-17	12.3
2017-18	12

Notes:

- Real terms, 2019/20 prices
- Figures presented are based on outturn data

Source:

- Benefit-expenditure-and-caseload-tables-2019

2) *Income-related benefits*

The information requested relating to Universal Credit is not held and can only be made available at a disproportionate cost.

Expenditure in real terms is available in respect of Income Support and income-based Jobseeker's Allowance on child elements in DWP Benefit expenditure and caseload tables. Again, to be helpful, this information has been presented below (Table 2) for the years for which outturn data is available.

Table 2 - Income Support and income-based Jobseeker's Allowance on child elements, real terms (2019-20 prices),

	Income Support (£millions)	Jobseeker's Allowance (£millions)
2000-01	4,270	442
2001-02	4,774	408
2002-03	5,121	406
2003-04*	5,151	351
2004-05	4,381	191
2005-06	3,290	31
2006-07	2,593	15
2007-08	2,144	-
2008-09	1,749	-
2009-10	1,039	-
2010-11	737	-
2011-12	518	-
2012-13	329	-
2013-14	190	-
2014-15	130	-
2015-16	87	-
2016-17	63	-
2017-18	44	-

Notes:

- Real terms, 2019/20 prices
- Figures presented are based on outturn data
- *since Apr 2004, financial support for children is normally provided through Child Tax Credit

Source:

- Benefit-expenditure-and-caseload-tables-2019

Annual expenditure on tax credits cannot be broken down between Child Tax Credits and Working Tax Credits. However, this breakdown is available for the closely related measure of annual tax credits entitlement, and provided in Table 3 below. The main difference between tax credits entitlement and tax credits payments is that entitlement figures are based on the amounts households are entitled to once awards have been finalised, whereas payments are based on provisional awards which may differ from final awards, and can include payments and repayments in respect of earlier years.

Table 3 - Annual entitlement to Child Tax Credit (introduced 2003-04), real terms (2019-20 prices),

	£millions
2003-04	n/a
2004-05	18,128
2005-06	18,255
2006-07	18,874
2007-08	19,351
2008-09	21,653
2009-10	23,336
2010-11	23,815
2011-12	24,648
2012-13	24,405
2013-14	23,902
2014-15	23,519
2015-16	23,112
2016-17	21,935
2017-18	20,494

Notes:

- Figures for 2003-04 are not readily available and can only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Source:

- Nominal figures taken from Table 1.1 of HMRC's Child and Working Tax Credits Statistics
- Real terms 2019-20 prices. To convert the nominal figures into real terms, the GDP deflators published in March 2019 were used.

- The estimates for 2016-17 and 2017-18 are affected by the introduction of Universal Credit.

- This table does not include entitlement to Working Tax Credit or Working Families Tax Credit as they are not considered income related benefits for children, although they do contain some child related elements.

South Sudan: Politics and Government

*Asked by **The Earl of Sandwich***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to encourage opposition factions in South Sudan led by Riek Machar to form and maintain a unity government; and what protection is provided to such factions by the international community alongside the government of Salva Kiir. [HL74]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK continues to urge all parties to the September 2018 'Revitalised Agreement on the Conflict in South Sudan' to make the progress necessary for a government of national unity to form and to uphold the associated ceasefire. The DFID/FCO Minister for Africa (Andrew Stephenson) wrote to both parties in November to urge them to make such progress for the sake of the people of South Sudan. Following agreement by the parties to extend the 'pre-transitional' phase to February 2020 we have welcomed meetings in Juba between President Kiir and opposition leader Dr Machar but call for further dialogue to deliver progress so that a government of national unity can form and for implementation of the next phase of the peace agreement to begin. This messaging was reinforced at the recent UN Security Council on 18 December 2019. Security in Juba and elsewhere in South Sudan is an important part of building the confidence for opposition parties to participate in a government of national unity. Most recently alongside Troika partners (US and Norway) we issued a statement on 2 January urging the parties to engage in a spirit of compromise on outstanding tasks. As a member of the UN Security Council the UK supports the UN Mission In South Sudan (UNMISS), including through the deployment of UK troops. UNMISS plays a crucial role in supporting the peace process and protection of civilians. Security for political figures to participate in government in Juba is critical but part of the wider peace agreement implementation and for the parties to progress.

South Western Railway: Strikes

*Asked by **Lord Patten***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the (1) social, and (2) economic, effects of the South Western Railways strikes which began on 2 December. [HL62]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The RMT's decision to take industrial action is completely disproportionate. Every single train which did not run as a result of these totally unnecessary strikes affected thousands of

passengers during an incredibly busy period for the railway. The impact is on not only commuters, but also on a whole range of people who rely on the railway – children travelling to school, outpatients travelling to hospital appointments and small businesses that count on the railway bringing in customers and suppliers.

Sports: Racial Discrimination

*Asked by **Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking to promote anti-racism in sport. [HL14]

Baroness Barran: The Government is clear that racism has no place in sport or society at large, in line with the sport and physical activity strategy 'Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation', which has diversity and inclusion at its heart. Government remains supportive of a number of anti-racism initiatives that work with sports bodies from grassroots to the elite, including Show Racism the Red Card and Kick it Out. With Kick It Out stats demonstrating that racism constitutes 65 per cent of reports made via them in the 18/19 season, government will continue to call governing bodies to account for actions in this space.

Over the past year the Government has led debates in the House of Commons on tackling racism in sport (on 22nd May 2019 and 12th July 2019), and hosted an Anti-Racism Summit in February 2019. This led to clear commitments to tackle racism in football stadia from the three main English football organisations in July 2019. Ministers and officials continue to speak to the FA and relevant football bodies to explore what more can be done. Grassroots sport clubs also receive support in tackling racism from our national sport council, Sport England, who provide free support and learning in running a club through its "Club Matters" programme.

Syria: Chemical Weapons

*Asked by **Baroness Cox***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that evidence gathered by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons Fact Finding Mission was suppressed or distorted. [HL24]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK has full confidence in the expertise of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Fact Finding Mission (FFM) and its work investigating allegations of chemical weapons use in Syria. The Director-General confirmed that the OPCW Technical Secretariat took all views and evidence into account in reaching its conclusions in the FFM's most recent report on the incident in Douma, 7 April 2018. The UK stands by its own assessment that the Syrian regime was responsible for a chlorine attack in Douma on that date.

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that chlorine levels found in Douma, Syria, were equivalent to those found in common household cleaning products. [HL26]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK assesses that the Syrian regime was responsible for a chlorine attack in Douma in April 2018. The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Fact Finding Mission (FFM) produced a thorough and clearly evidenced report, which concluded that an attack using chlorine took place. The use of chlorine as a chemical weapon is a breach of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We have confidence in the conclusion and the OPCW's methodology. The OPCW Director-General confirmed that the OPCW Technical Secretariat took all views and evidence into account in reaching its conclusions on this incident.

Syria: Sanctions

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 8 October (HL17990), what further steps they have taken to minimise the impact on civilians of sanctions imposed on Syria. [HL21]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We remain at the forefront of the humanitarian response to the crisis in Syria, and have committed £2.81 billion to support Syrian civilians since 2012.

Sanctions remain a key lever in pressing the regime to engage seriously with the political process and to bring about a peaceful end to the Syrian conflict.

We actively seek to minimise the impact of sanctions on ordinary Syrians. The EU regularly considers the wider impact of Syria sanctions, most recently ahead of an EU annual review of the Syria sanctions regime which concluded in June. The EU Syria sanctions regime also has a number of exemptions in place in order to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid.

Syria: Terrorism

Asked by The Earl of Sandwich

To ask Her Majesty's Government what humanitarian resources they have committed, bilaterally and multilaterally, to victims of terrorism in northern Syria since the withdrawal of the United States from that territory. [HL73]

Baroness Sugg: The UK remains committed to providing vital humanitarian support to the victims of conflict and terrorism in Northern Syria. To date, the UK has committed £40 million in humanitarian aid to North East Syria and another £40 million to North West Syria for financial year 2019/20. This forms part of an overall UK commitment of £400 million to the regional Syria

crisis this financial year. This funding includes £72 million spent by DFID in humanitarian projects inside Syria between January and June 2019, which has provided: 26,676 food rations, each covering the food needs of one individual for one month; 144,745 people with clean drinking water; 1,177,930 vaccines; 352,598 people benefitted from relief packages; 7,993 people benefitted from cash-for-work activities and 27,960 people benefitted from psychosocial support.

UK support to Northern Syria is provided on the basis of humanitarian need and delivered through United Nations agencies and non-governmental organisations. It focusses on providing life-saving supplies such as food, water, shelter, mental health services and healthcare, as well as helping communities recover from life under Daesh rule, for example by supporting farmers and local businesses. In consultation with partners, my Department keeps under constant review what additional support might be needed to support those affected by recent fighting.

Trees: Urban Areas

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the benefit of trees in English cities; and what steps they intend to take to prevent any large-scale felling of such trees. [HL64]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The Government recognises the value of urban trees in creating healthy communities and liveable places for people and wildlife. In our manifesto we pledged to plant more trees in towns and cities, and will expect all new streets to be lined with trees.

The public care deeply about this issue, and the Environment Bill, which returns to Parliament in January, will include measures to increase the transparency of decisions over street trees. The proposed duty to consult will encourage authorities to consider concerns raised by the public, and have regard to these when making decisions – giving the public a say in the management of these important natural assets.

UK-Africa Investment Summit

Asked by Baroness Anelay of St Johns

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are their priorities for the UK–Africa Investment Summit being hosted by the UK in January 2020. [HL8]

Baroness Sugg: The UK-Africa Investment Summit will create new lasting partnerships that will deliver more investment, jobs and growth. This will benefit people and businesses across Africa and in the UK. The IMF estimates that Africa is home to eight of the world's 15 fastest growing economies. By 2050, over 2 billion people will live in Africa and 1 in 4 global consumers will be African. But African countries receive less than 4% of foreign direct investment and around 20 million jobs a

year must be created to keep pace with population growth. Hosted by the Prime Minister, the Summit will bring together UK and African business representatives, African leaders and delegations from 21 countries, international institutions and young entrepreneurs. As we strengthen our place in the world, we want the UK to be the investment partner of choice for African nations. We have world-leading expertise on tech and innovation, the City of London is the number one global exchange for African businesses, and we are committed to green growth.

*Asked by **Baroness Anelay of St Johns***

To ask Her Majesty's Government which (1) governments, (2) international organisations, and (3) businesses, have been invited to attend the UK–Africa Investment Summit being hosted by the UK in January 2020. [HL9]

Baroness Sugg: The Summit will bring together African leaders and delegations from 21 countries who have been invited: Algeria, Angola, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tunisia, Uganda.

6 multilateral organisations and international financial institutions have also been invited: African Development Bank, African Union, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, International Monetary Fund, United Nations, World Bank.

We have invited hundreds of UK and African business representatives and representatives from Civil Society Organisations.

Universities: Admissions

*Asked by **Lord Taylor of Warwick***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with UK universities about combating the student wealth divide in those applying to university. [HL88]

Baroness Berridge: This government believes that a university education should be available to everyone who has the potential to benefit from it, and that higher education providers must continue to take steps to level the playing field for those from disadvantaged backgrounds and other under-represented groups. All providers wishing to charge tuition fees above the basic

fee level must have an access and participation plan agreed by the higher education regulator, the Office for Students. Through these plans, providers set out the targets and their planned activity to support improved access and successful participation for students from disadvantaged backgrounds and under-represented groups.

The current student finance system removes financial barriers for those hoping to study and is backed by the taxpayer. The government provides maintenance loans and supplementary grants to help with the costs of living, targeting the most support at those from the lowest income families. Living costs support increased by 10.3% for eligible students on the lowest incomes in 2016/17 compared to the previous system. Further inflationary increases in living costs support have been made in each academic year since with a further increase of 2.9% announced for the 2020/21 academic year taking the support available for the lowest income students to record levels.

Student loan repayments are linked to income, not to interest rates or the amount borrowed. The repayment system is designed to be progressive and borrowers on lower incomes are not obliged to repay their loans, with outstanding debt written off after 30 years.

Weapons

*Asked by **Baroness Anelay of St Johns***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of Humanity International's call for the development of an international political declaration to end the use of explosive weapons with wide area effects in populated areas and to ensure support for the victims of these weapons. [HL7]

Baroness Goldie: The UK is at the forefront of international discussions on the use of explosive weapons with wide area effects in populated areas. Officials contributed extensively to the Vienna Conference on Protection of Civilians in Urban Warfare in October 2019, in which steps towards a political declaration were taken. The next round of negotiations will take place in Geneva in February 2020 and we will take an active role in those discussions in order to ensure humanitarian concerns are balanced against operational realities. In the UK's experience, support and assistance to victims of conflict is best provided through integrated social and economic development programmes in affected countries.

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