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Wednesday 10 June 2020

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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Baroness Berridge	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education and Department for International Trade
Lord Bethell	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care and Whip
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Baroness Sugg	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Department for International Development
Lord True	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
Baroness Vere of Norbiton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip

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Written Statements

Wednesday, 10 June 2020

Coronavirus: Funding for Local Authorities

[HLWS277]

Lord Bethell: My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (Matt Hancock) has made the following written statement:

On 22 May the Government announced £300m additional funding for local authorities to support them to develop and action their plans to reduce the spread of the virus in their area as part of the launch of the wider NHS Test and Trace Service. This funding will enable local authorities to develop and implement tailored local COVID-19 outbreak plans through for example funding the recruitment of additional staff where required.

Today we are updating the house on the detailed allocation of these monies which has been made on the basis of the 2020/21 Public Health Grant allocations. This allocation formula has been chosen as that which best reflects the public health needs in local authorities.

This funding is for local authorities in England only. This means an additional $\pounds 57$ million will be provided by HMT via the Barnett formula for the devolved administrations ($\pounds 29$ million for the Scottish Government, $\pounds 18$ million for the Welsh Government, and $\pounds 10$ million for the Northern Ireland Executive).

Authorities to which grant is to be paid	Amount of grant to be paid
Barking and Dagenham	£1,566,647
Barnet	£1,599,177
Barnsley	£1,568,553
Bath and North East Somerset	£849,159
Bedford	£806,281
Bexley	£902,348
Birmingham	£8,438,988
Blackburn with Darwen	£1,366,942
Blackpool	£1,693,874
Bolton	£1,997,675
Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole	£1,808,624
Bracknell Forest	£385,454
Bradford	£3,870,360
Brent	£1,993,129
Brighton and Hove	£1,862,524
Bristol, City of	£3,032,572
Bromley	£1,369,923
Buckinghamshire	£1,954,838
Bury	£1,080,413

Authorities to which grant is to be paid	Amount of grant to be paid
Calderdale	£1,233,390
Cambridgeshire	£2,493,304
Camden	£2,460,643
Central Bedfordshire	£1,156,291
Cheshire East	£1,533,331
Cheshire West and Chester	£1,513,306
City of London	£146,484
Cornwall	£2,387,297
County Durham	£4,498,138
Coventry	£2,041,190
Croydon	£1,998,175
Cumbria	£1,717,862
Darlington	£778,834
Derby	£1,807,712
Derbyshire	£3,859,136
Devon	£2,618,508
Doncaster	£2,233,745
Dorset	£1,287,650
Dudley	£1,941,764
Ealing	£2,261,924
East Riding of Yorkshire	£1,024,000
East Sussex	£2,534,832
Enfield	£1,582,042
Essex	£5,783,212
Gateshead	£1,513,527
Gloucestershire	£2,221,773
Greenwich	£2,159,691
Hackney	£3,100,891
Halton	£948,538
Hammersmith and Fulham	£2,020,099
Hampshire	£4,789,993
Haringey	£1,862,362
Harrow	£1,020,258
Hartlepool	£825,809
Havering	£1,022,848
Herefordshire, County of	£845,091
Hertfordshire	£4,506,303
Hillingdon	£1,629,656
Hounslow	£1,467,891
Isle of Wight	£700,230
Isles of Scilly	£11,935

Authorities to which grant is to be paid	Amount of grant to be paid	Authorities to which grant is to be paid	Amount of grant to be paid
Islington	£2,430,588	Richmond upon Thames	£858,104
Kensington and Chelsea	£1,932,848	Rochdale	£1,591,757
Kent	£6,311,401	Rotherham	£1,518,012
Kingston upon Hull, City of	£2,235,503	Rutland	£120,148
Kingston upon Thames	£940,711	Salford	£1,975,758
Kirklees	£2,381,215	Sandwell	£2,276,836
Knowsley	£1,595,940	Sefton	£1,995,065
Lambeth	£2,919,086	Sheffield	£3,101,989
Lancashire	£6,367,420	Shropshire	£1,126,797
Leeds	£4,141,249	Slough	£689,507
Leicester	£2,489,071	Solihull	£1,040,717
Leicestershire	£2,309,000	Somerset	£1,925,972
Lewisham	£2,267,070	South Gloucestershire	£863,029
Lincolnshire	£3,069,554	South Tyneside	£1,250,300
Liverpool	£4,088,731	Southampton	£1,571,231
Luton	£1,425,693	Southend-on-Sea	£887,492
Manchester	£4,836,535	Southwark	£2,521,368
Medway	£1,592,918	St. Helens	£1,328,09
Merton	£964,982	Staffordshire	£3,634,365
Middlesbrough	£1,566,024	Stockport	£1,473,704
Milton Keynes	£1,065,306	Stockton-on-Tees	£1,310,997
Newcastle upon Tyne	£2,185,756	Stoke-on-Trent	£2,084,370
Newham	£2,843,060	Suffolk	£2,789,363
Norfolk	£3,717,780	Sunderland	£2,219,966
North East Lincolnshire	£1,049,417	Surrey	£3,477,690
North Lincolnshire	£855,156	Sutton	£920,329
North Somerset	£868,716	Swindon	£930,733
North Tyneside	£1,140,250	Tameside	£1,419,817
North Yorkshire	£2,022,805	Telford and Wrekin	£1,162,281
Northamptonshire	£3,270,065	Thurrock	£1,050,883
Northumberland	£1,528,975	Torbay	£886,457
Nottingham	£3,126,717	Tower Hamlets	£3,220,464
Nottinghamshire	£3,802,915	Trafford	£1,156,759
Oldham	£1,560,230	Wakefield	£2,247,805
Oxfordshire	£2,858,487	Walsall	£1,650,559
Peterborough	£1,017,883	Waltham Forest	£1,478,904
Plymouth	£1,402,003	Wandsworth	£2,541,671
Portsmouth	£1,637,748	Warrington	£1,136,884
Reading	£901,002	Warwickshire	£2,137,78
Redbridge	£1,279,157	West Berkshire	£540,34
Redcar and Cleveland	£1,076,223	West Sussex	£3,178,71

Authorities to which grant is to be paid	Amount of grant to be paid
Westminster	£2,890,797
Wigan	£2,392,101
Wiltshire	£1,586,902
Windsor and Maidenhead	£435,650
Wirral	£2,733,018
Wokingham	£499,857
Wolverhampton	£1,920,236
Worcestershire	£2,752,192
York	£733,896
Total	£300,000,000

Post Office Horizon IT System: Independent Review

[HLWS276]

Lord Callanan: My Honourable friend the Minister for London and Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Labour Markets) (Paul Scully) has today made the following statement:

I am today announcing the scope of the Independent Review into the Post Office Horizon IT System and Trials which the Prime Minister committed to on 26^{th} February 2020. This followed Post Office Ltd reaching a settlement, in December 2019, of £57.75m to conclude a long-running case brought against it by a group of postmasters over issues related to Post Office's Horizon IT system.

The longstanding dispute and subsequent trials relating to the Post Office Horizon IT system have had a hugely negative impact on affected postmasters and their families. These events have deeply affected postmasters' lives: their livelihoods, their financial situation, their reputations and, for some, also their physical and mental health. In his judgments in the "Common Issues" and "Horizon Issues" trials, Mr Justice Fraser identified significant failings within Post Office Ltd over nearly two decades, particularly in relation to the treatment of postmasters and in its management culture.

Under its new CEO, Nick Read, Post Office Ltd has admitted it got things wrong in relation to the Horizon case and has apologised. It has also started to take steps to reset the relationship with postmasters. These are important moves in the right direction. However, given the very serious impacts this case has had on many individual postmasters, more needs to be done.

Government wants to be fully assured that through the review there is a public summary of the failings that occurred at Post Office Ltd, drawing on the judgments from the Horizon case and by listening to those that have been most affected; that lessons have genuinely been learned; and that concrete changes have taken place at Post Office Ltd to ensure that this situation will never be repeated. For these reasons Government has decided to establish an Independent Review.

The Independent Review shall:

• Understand and acknowledge what went wrong in relation to Horizon, leading to the Group Litigation Order, by drawing on evidence from the Horizon judgments and affected postmasters' experiences and identify what key lessons must be learned for the future;

• Assess whether the Post Office Ltd has learned the lessons from the criticisms made by Mr Justice Fraser in the "Common Issues" and "Horizon Issues" trials and those identified by affected postmasters and has delivered or made good progress on the organisational and cultural changes necessary to ensure a similar case does not happen in the future;

• Assess whether the commitments made by Post Office Ltd within the mediation settlement – including the historical shortfall scheme – have been properly delivered;

• Assess whether the processes and information provided by Post Office Ltd to postmasters are sufficient to i) enable both parties to meet their contractual obligations; and ii) to enable postmasters to run their businesses. This includes assessing whether Post Office Ltd's related processes such as recording and resolving postmaster queries, dispute handling, suspension and termination are fit for purpose. In addition, determine whether the quality of the service offer for postmasters and their relationship with Post Office Ltd has materially improved since the conclusions by Mr Justice Fraser; and

• Examine the governance and whistleblowing controls now in place at Post Office Ltd and whether they are sufficient to ensure that the failings that led to the Horizon case issues do not happen again.

The Review will be led by an independent chair who will be announced in due course alongside final timings and terms of reference for the Review.

The Review shall set out Post Office Ltd's actions in response to the findings of Mr Justice Fraser. While avoiding a re-examination of the findings made by Mr Justice Fraser through the lengthy court proceedings, it must use these and the experiences of affected postmasters as the basis for its work. The Review should not encroach on the work of the Criminal Case Review Commission and the Court of Appeal. The Review should make any recommendations it sees fit, including actions that may, in its view, be appropriate as a result of its findings. The final report will be laid in the Libraries of both Houses upon completion of the review.

Written Answers

Wednesday, 10 June 2020

Anaesthetics: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Finlay of Llandaff

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the survey by the Royal College of Anaesthetists survey which shows low confidence by medical staff in their ability to access necessary testing, personal protective equipment, and anaesthetic drugs; and what steps they are taking to restore the confidence of such staff to resume elective surgery. [HL4961]

Lord Bethell: Medical staff continue to put themselves at risk every day to care for those affected by the virus. The Government has been clear that those on the frontline will get all the support they need. We will continue to give the National Health Service everything it needs to tackle this outbreak and have central stockpiles of a range of medical products to help ensure the supply to the NHS and care sector.

We continue to work closely with our industry partners, the health and care system and others in the supply chain to ensure these medical products are delivered to the frontline, maintaining confidence and helping minimise any risks to patients and staff.

Cancer: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the treatment of those diagnosed with cancer during the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL4698]

Lord Bethell: The situation is being closely monitored by the Department and NHS England and NHS Improvement.

The National Health Service is adapting how it runs its cancer services to ensure the safety of both patients and staff – this includes establishing dedicated cancer hubs for urgent treatment and diagnosis.

Essential and urgent cancer treatments are continuing. Cancer specialists are discussing with their patients the potential risks to them, either through undergoing or to delay treatment at this time.

Medical staff will always have the safety of patients at the centre of any decisions they make.

Care Homes: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Thornton

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many COVID-19 home tests they have (1) delivered to care homes, and (2) processed, each day since they began to distribute such tests. [HL3909]

Lord Bethell: Public Health England's Health Protection Teams have, from the outset, been testing residents when an outbreak is reported at a particular care home. More than 41,000 residents have been tested through this route. On 15 April, the Government extended testing to essential workers, including symptomatic care home staff. Since then, the Care Quality Commission has referred over 34,000 care workers for testing. We are now prioritising up to 30,000 tests per day for staff and residents at care homes in England that look after over 65s.

Charities: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the alert published by the Charity Commission on 17 April Coronavirus (COVID-19): increased risk of fraud and cybercrime against charities, what discussions they have had with charities to improve the security of their IT infrastructure. [HL5091]

Baroness Barran: The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) continues to work closely alongside the Charity Commission, and sector representative bodies in supporting the charity sector to enhance their cyber resilience. During this period of increased online reliance and activity, the NCSC has produced sector neutral guidance for organisations on remote working, and has briefed the Charities Against Fraud Group, hosted by the Charity Commission, on the current threat landscape and support available.

The Charity Commission updated its alert in May to include advice from the NCSC on how to report suspicious emails and how to use video conferencing safely, as well as a recorded webinar with The Fraud Advisory Panel and sector partners, including the City of London Police, to help charities spot Covid-19 related fraud. The Charity Commission has supported the Digital Code for Charities Steering Group which has developed a COVID-19 digital checklist for charity trustees and leaders to help them make the right decisions about digital during the crisis, which has been published online: https://charitydigitalcode.org/covid19/trustees-checklistcovid19/.

In conjunction with Small Charities week (15-19th June) NCSC will be hosting a series of cyber security workshops to help charities understand what steps they can take to protect their IT infrastructure.

Chemical and Biological Warfare

Asked by Lord Campbell of Pittenweem

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress has been made in the transfer of the lead in Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Defence from the Royal Air Force to the Army. [HL5168] **Baroness Goldie:** The transfer of Defence's Counter CBRN capability from the Royal Air Force to the British Army is a three-year programme which started on 1 April 2019 and is expected to be completed by April 2022.

The Army now has command of this specialist capability, including the Defence CBRN Centre at Winterbourne Gunner and management of future programmes. Ahead of schedule, all specialist equipment has been handed over to the Army who are also responsible for its in-service maintenance. 28 Engineer Regiment (C-CBRN) has been formed and continues to develop and increase its specialist skills, supported by 27 Squadron, RAF Regiment who continue to have elements at readiness.

Children: Poverty

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the rate of child poverty in Luton; and what plans they have to provide additional financial support to the Luton Borough Council to help it address that rate. [T] [HL4300]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: The national and regional statistics on the number and proportion of people in low income as set out in the annual 'Households Below Average Income' publication are not available at local authority level due to limitations around the survey sample.

New experimental data on Children in Low Income families was published on 26 March 2020 and is available at Local Authority level. For the Luton Local Authority area, 23 per cent of children were in families with absolute low income in 2018/19 compared with 25 per cent in 2014/15.

Our current focus is on helping vulnerable families cope with the financial hardships brought about by COVID-19. We have increased Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit by $\pounds 1,000$ from 6 April 2020 for one year, benefiting over four million of the most vulnerable households, and increased Local Housing Allowance rates - putting an average of $\pounds 600$ into people's pockets.

In addition, Local Authorities in England will now be able to use the £500 million Hardship Fund announced at the Spring Budget to help working people on Local Council Tax Support to provide additional help to vulnerable people locally through arrangements such as Local Welfare Schemes.

This Government's long-term ambition remains to build an economy that will support work, and ensure that everyone has opportunities to enter work and progress, while being supported by the welfare system in their time of need. This is based on clear evidence of the important role of work in reducing child poverty. In 2018/19, only three per cent of children in households where both parents work full time were in absolute poverty (before housing costs) compared to 47 per cent in households where one or more parent was in part-time work.

Chorley and South Ribble Hospital: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Hoyle

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the pathology laboratory at Chorley and South Ribble Hospital is being used for testing COVID-19 for NHS staff; and if not, why not. [HL3601]

Lord Bethell: NHS England can confirm that Chorley and South Ribble Hospital is being used for COVID-19 testing.

Contact Tracing: Computer Software

Asked by Baroness Jolly

To ask Her Majesty's Government what role the NHS COVID-19 App is expected to play in the test and trace system. [HL5004]

Lord Bethell: The National Health Service COVID-19 app is new technology to assist with the well-established technique of contact tracing, including online and local public experts, supplemented by 25,000 dedicated contact tracing staff.

The test and trace system aims to reduce transmission of the virus by alerting people who may have been exposed to the virus so they can take action to protect themselves, the people they care about and the NHS.

Asked by Lord Strasburger

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether insights from the use of the NHSX contact tracing app will be stored in NHS England's datastore; and, if so, how they will ensure that fair benefits are secured for data subjects where third-party access to the data results in commercial products and services being developed. [HL5246]

Lord Bethell: There are currently no plans for data from the NHSX COVID-19 app to be held in the NHS Data Store. The data a user chooses to submit will be held on a separate database, held to the highest security standards and will remain under the control of the Department and the National Health Service throughout.

Asked by Lord Strasburger

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether NHS England will require confirmation of any agreements that their academic partners might have entered into with corporate sponsors such that any resultant intellectual property rights generated from the NHSX contact tracing app would rest with the corporate sponsor rather than the applicant or their host institution. [HL5247]

Lord Bethell: NHSX requires all academic partners working on the National Health Service COVID-19 app to complete a conflict of interest declaration as part of the onboarding process. The Nuffield Department of Medicine at the University of Oxford has worked with NHSX in an advisory capacity during the crisis and has confirmed that no IP rests with corporate sponsors from the app programme.

Coronavirus: Disease Control

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the advice from the World Health Organisation that evidence shows that patients who have recovered from COVID-19 are not necessarily immune from reinfection; and what impact that advice will have on their policy regarding easing the lockdown in the UK. [HL3607]

Lord Bethell: The Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) is responsible for ensuring that timely and coordinated scientific advice is made available to decision-makers, to support United Kingdom cross-Government decisions. In fulfilling this role, SAGE considers a wide range scientific evidence, including from the World Health Organization. Our approach has been, and will continue to be, guided by the evidence and latest advice from medical experts.

The Government has been clear throughout the pandemic that it is vital to take the right steps at the right time. Decisions on when to adjust lockdown measures are guided by scientific advice and based on the following five tests that need to be met:

- The National Health Service is able to provide sufficient care, facilities and treatment across the United Kingdom to meet demand;

- A sustained fall in the death rate;

- The rate of infection has decreased across all settings;

- Confidence that operational challenges, such as increasing our testing capacity and having enough personal protective equipment, are in hand; and

- Confidence that any changes will not lead to a significant second peak of infections.

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the risk of COVID-19 related public health instructions not being adhered to; and what assessment they have made of the impact of any such non-adherence. [HL3869]

Lord Bethell: The positive reaction and adherence to social distancing measures from the public has meant that the rate of infection (R rate) has been slowly falling. After assessment of the figures and following scientific advice, the Government will slowly start to lift some of the restrictions that have been in place since 23 March. This will be completed through a phased approach and only if the R rate stays below 1.

Additionally, to try to ensure that we work together to achieve this, the Government has increased the fines for

the those who break the rules, starting at $\pounds 100$ but doubling with each infringement up to $\pounds 3,600$.

Asked by Baroness Kennedy of Cradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what work is taking place with the devolved institutions in the United Kingdom, as lockdown restrictions are lifted, to keep any changes as simple as possible for the general public to receive and understand, and to avoid any unnecessary confusion. [HL4411]

Lord Bethell: The United Kingdom Government is working closely with the devolved administrations on decisions and guidance related to the current measures, coordinating and sharing information as appropriate to ensure all four nations can respond to the challenges presented by COVID-19. This includes taking opportunities to adopt common elements, where it makes sense to do so.

Where a matter is devolved, the UK Government's guidance available online on GOV.UK is clear that measures apply in England only and should be considered alongside local public health requirements, guidance and legislation in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to use available data on individuals to develop individualised risk assessments as they lift blanket restrictions in the next phase of the COVID-19 lockdown. [HL4416]

Lord Bethell: The Government has carefully considered risks to groups as part of the process for determining what measures to include in The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020 and at each review point, in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty requirement for public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

There is currently no plan to use data on individuals to develop individualised risk assessments.

Asked by Lord Strasburger

To ask Her Majesty's Government why they decided to create a new centralised team of human contact tracers for COVID-19 rather than local teams under the management of local public health directors, as were used during previous epidemics. [HL4450]

Lord Bethell: The Government launched its new NHS Test and Trace service on 28 May 2020. This includes enhanced contact tracing.

Public Health England's local health protection teams and local authority public health teams remain an integral part of the contact tracing system. These teams will be supported by around 25,000 additional contact tracers, a mix of call handlers and health professionals to provide an enhanced, larger scale service to reduce the rate of transmission as lockdown measures start to be eased.

To support the rollout of Test and Trace, all councils have been asked to produce dedicated Local Outbreak Plans by the end of June. $\pounds 300$ million new dedicated funding has been provided to councils to support this.

Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether COVID-19 will be (1) endemic, or (2) eliminated. [HL4470]

Lord Bethell: Total eradication of COVID-19 globally is unlikely (unless there is some unexpected biological change in the virus). Elimination nationally (i.e. bringing the number of locally acquired cases to zero) may be possible transiently but is highly unlikely to be possible permanently. Though other countries appear to have eliminated the virus locally, it is still early in the epidemic and the virus is very likely to reappear in these countries. Instead of eradication/elimination, a realistic public health goal would be to have very good control of transmission so that the number of new cases, and therefore the disease burden, is very low.

Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the risks of secondary outbreaks of COVID-19; and what guidance they have (1) prepared, and (2) provided to local authorities, about the steps to be taken should such secondary outbreaks occur. [HL4472]

Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in view of the delay between the transmission of COVID-19 and the appearance of symptoms, what estimate they have made of the minimum response time between the occurrence and detection of any secondary outbreak of COVID-19. [HL4473]

Lord Bethell: The incubation period for COVID-19 is one–14 days (the median incubation period is five days). As set out by the First Secretary of State (Rt. Hon. Dominic Raab MP) on 16 April, there are five tests which underpin Government decisions on adjusting measures to control the virus. These include confidence that changes will not lead to a second peak of infections. As the Government adjusts the lockdown measures, it will closely monitor key indicators, including the rate of infection and local outbreaks, and will react accordingly.

Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to introduce (1) regional, and (2) local, differences in the restrictions in place to address the COVID-19 pandemic; and if they have any such plans, what will be the maximum level of difference permitted. [HL4474]

Lord Bethell: We are currently considering multiple options for addressing the COVID-19 pandemic in the

mid- to long-term, including the implementation of tailoring Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions to the regional and local level. Any decisions on how to approach the mid- to long-term strategy to address the pandemic will be led by the science and build on the Government's track and trace strategy.

Asked by Lord Strasburger

To ask Her Majesty's Government what data they use to calculate R, the reproduction index for the COVID-19 virus; and what algorithm is used to perform the calculation. [HL5114]

Lord Bethell: The process for formulating the R number is a complex one. The Scientific Pandemic Influenza Group on Modelling (SPI-M), which convenes once a week, builds a consensus on the value of R based on expert scientific advice from multiple academic groups. The Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies then reviews this and provides advice to the Government on the latest R figure.

Asked by Baroness Thornton

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bethell on 1 June (HL4872), why they will not publish the reproduction index for the COVID-19 virus for each region of the UK on a weekly basis, alongside the United Kingdom-wide range. [HL5126]

Lord Bethell: R is an average number and so can be highly uncertain if based on small quantities of data. R should be considered alongside the number of new cases. The Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies' view is that it is unhelpful to use estimates of R rates to monitor the epidemic in different regions.

Coronavirus: Protective Clothing

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they took part in EU joint procurement programmes for personal protection equipment; and if not, why not. [HL4864]

Lord Bethell: The United Kingdom is not participating in the first four European Union Joint Procurements in response to COVID-19, including those related to personal protective equipment (PPE). Owing to an initial communication problem, the UK did not receive an invitation in time to take part. However, participating in those four initial joint procurement schemes would not have allowed us to do anything that we have not been able to do ourselves.

We are working round the clock to secure the National Health Service and the social care sector the PPE and medical equipment they need. Since the start of the outbreak, we have delivered over 1.63 billion items of PPE to the front line.

The UK has discussed Joint Procurement bilaterally with the Commission and will consider participating in

other future PPE schemes based on public health requirements.

Coronavirus: Screening

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many COVID-19 tests are currently taking place each day; what estimate they have made of the number of daily tests that would need to occur before an end to lockdown may be safely considered; and what measures they are putting in place to increase capacity and training of those capable of undertaking and evaluating the tests. [HL2999]

Lord Bethell: The Government is rapidly scaling up the national effort to boost testing capacity for COVID-19 to protect the vulnerable, support the National Health Service, and ultimately save lives. Further details of this work can be found in the Government's Testing Strategy titled *Coronavirus (COVID-19): scaling up our testing programmes*, published on 4 April, which is attached.

There are a number of factors to consider in relation to easing of the present restrictions, with testing being just one. Consequently, the Department has not set a threshold on the number of tests necessary to end the current restrictions. The Government will continue to review advice on how testing, along with other efforts, can inform future measures to tackle the virus and how we can ease restrictions whilst keeping people safer.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Coronavirus testing strategy [coronavirus-covid-19-testingstrategy.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at: http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questionsanswers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-04-22/HL2999

Death: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Pinnock

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of people who have died unexpectedly alone at home from COVID-19 or suspected COVID-19; and what preventative measures they are taking in response. [HL3429]

Lord Bethell: Figures published by the Office for National Statistics show that 1,876 deaths involving COVID-19 took place in a private home in England and Wales in 2020, by the week ending 15 May. This figure is less than 3% of total deaths or 65,002. Therefore, whilst it is not known how many of these deaths were people living alone, it will be a small proportion of total deaths.

Even if relatively small, this figure should not be ignored, and measures are in place to attempt to prevent deaths at home. The National Health Service has published guidance on what people, including those living alone, should do if their COVID-19 symptoms worsen. Using the 111 and 999 helplines as well as networks of local volunteers, should enable those living alone be able to seek help if needed.

Asked by Lord Maginnis of Drumglass

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the most recent figures for the percentage of the population who have died from COVID-19 in (1) England, (2) Scotland, (3) Wales and (4) Northern Ireland; and in which of those regions is the rate of infections decreasing the fastest. [HL3794]

Lord Bethell: The Office for National Statistics publishes the weekly numbers of deaths registered in England and Wales, and National Records Scotland and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency are responsible for publishing the number of deaths registered in Scotland and Northern Ireland respectively. The number of deaths from COVID-19 are published rather than the percentage of the population who have died from COVID-19, as this is a more useful an accurate way of keeping a consistent record of death data.

Public Health England are currently undertaking work on changes to the regional rate of infection.

Disease Control: Protective Clothing

Asked by Lord Beecham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that directors of social care in England issued warnings two years ago about the need for better supply plans for personal protective equipment in the event of a pandemic. [HL4476]

Lord Bethell: We have been developing pandemic response plans for many years working closely with our national and sector partners, including adult social care. Since the start of this outbreak we have continued to work with the adult social care sector and public health experts to put in place support for social care, including around personal protective equipment (PPE).

In mid-March, social care providers across England received an emergency drop of over seven million PPE items from the pandemic flu stockpile.

As of 29 May, we have released 127 million items of PPE to designated wholesalers for onward sale to social care providers. Between 6 April and 31 May we have authorised the release of over 124 million items of PPE to local resilience forums to help them respond to urgent local spikes in need across the adult social care system We have also mobilised a National Supply Disruption Response system to respond to emergency PPE requests, including for the social care sector.

We have developed a parallel supply chain with almost 3,000 providers to support the normal supply chain before the national roll out. This is a dedicated channel for critical PPE and core PPE products for Covid-19 are flowing through this. As of 15 May, over a million items have been delivered via the portal, which is now rolling

out nationally to general practitioners and small residential and domiciliary care providers.

Ethnic Groups

Asked by Baroness Kennedy of Cradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the risk that COVID-19 poses to BAME individuals; and how that compares to other ethnic groups. [HL3779]

Lord Bethell: Public Health England (PHE) has been asked by the Chief Medical Officer to review the potential that some ethnic minority groups are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. As part of this review, PHE is matching laboratory records of COVID-19 cases to other health records to draw down accurate data on ethnicity, age, sex and geographical region. The first results were published on 2 June.

Exercise

Asked by Lord Addington

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to make a range of physical activities, including dance and sport, available for all age groups in society. [HL5269]

Baroness Barran: Physical activity is crucial to the health and wellbeing of the nation and, as we set out in Government's sports strategy Sporting Future, it is important for people of all ages to be active. The national sports council Sport England is responsible for supporting sport and physical activity organisations to promote health and fitness, including dance.

The latest example of this has been the Join the Movement campaign, which has provided tips, advice and guidance on how people can get or stay active in and around the home during lockdown. Sport England have also worked with Public Health England to develop the Active At Home booklet to help older adults without access to the internet keep up their activity levels while isolating.

Sport England have previously developed the We Are Undefeatable campaign, which encourages people with a range of long term health conditions to get active, and the This Girl Can campaign which encourages women to get active regardless of their shape, size and ability.

Sport England's funding programmes such as their Active Ageing Fund and their Families Fund are helping more people to play sport and take part in physical activity.

Football: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the (1) Football Association, (2) Premier League, and (3) English Football League, to ensure the provision of a police presence at venues where closed football matches are due to take place to discourage the congregation of fans and to enforce social distancing outside such venues. [HL5275]

Baroness Barran: The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport is having regular discussions with sector and industry bodies to understand the impact of COVID-19 on sport and how we can provide support. This includes the Minister for Sport, Tourism and Heritage chairing a fortnightly meeting with over 25 sporting organisations. Sport is also represented on the department's Cultural Renewal Taskforce, which is looking at ways to get sectors across the department back up and running.

Government has already published three stages of guidance for the return of elite sporting competition, and guidance for the return of outdoor grassroots sport and recreation. These are available on GOV.UK: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus -covid-19-guidance-on-phased-return-of-sport-andrecreation

Further guidance will be published in due course to help sporting organisations understand how they can operate safely as lockdown restrictions are further eased in the future.

This is in addition to financial support that has been made available to the sector. The Chancellor announced a host of measures to help businesses, with £330 billion worth of government backed and guaranteed loans to support businesses across the UK. In addition, Sport England, has also announced £210 million of funding to help sport and physical activity organisations deal with the short and long term effects of the pandemic.

Holiday Accommodation: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what support is available for small businesses in the holiday lets sector who have been unable to continue their businesses due to the restrictions in place to address the COVID-19 pandemic on customers (1) travelling to, or (2) hiring, accommodation and who (a) have lost income from hire charges for holiday lets, or (b) need to return deposits in order to comply with the advice from the Competition and Markets Authority. [HL4910]

Baroness Barran: We recognise that COVID-19 has significantly impacted many holiday accommodation businesses. We continue to engage with holiday rentals stakeholders to assess how we can most effectively support the sector through this crisis.

Holiday lets businesses can access the Government's comprehensive economic support package. This includes the recently extended the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme, VAT payment deferrals for firms and various loan schemes. In particular, the Bounce Back Loan Scheme helps small businesses access loans of up to £50,000, with a 100% government-backed guarantee for lenders.

We have also allocated additional funding to Local Authorities in England in the form of a discretionary grant fund of up to $\pounds 617m$. This is aimed at certain small businesses who were not eligible for the existing business grants fund schemes.

We understand the significant disruption and personal impact that results from the cancellation of holiday and travel bookings and we will continue working with businesses, consumers and everyone concerned.

Local Broadcasting: Radio

Asked by Lord Kirkhope of Harrogate

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to review Ofcom's requirements for local commercial radio stations on (1) offering a local news and information element in their programming, and (2) remaining independent and distinctive from other commonly owned radio stations. [HL5022]

Baroness Barran: The Government acknowledges and values the role that local commercial radio stations play in the provision of local news and information, and in offering a distinctive service to their listeners. However, it is for Ofcom, as the independent regulator, to set programming and content requirements, in accordance with its statutory duty under section 314 of the Communications Act 2003 to ensure that holders of local radio licences carry locally relevant content and that a suitable proportion of local content is made locally. We have no plans to review these requirements.

Ofcom is required under section 314 of the Communications Act 2003 to publish and keep under review guidance for commercial radio licensees setting out the detailed local programming requirements that they consider it to be appropriate for local stations to carry, including the minimum amount of locally made news. The relevant guidelines are published on Ofcom's website.

Ofcom's consultation in 2018 on proposed changes to the localness guidance and impact assessment covered the potential impacts on radio listeners and the industry.

Asked by Lord Storey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the decision by Bauer Media to fold local radio stations into a national radio network. [HL5242]

Baroness Barran: The local programming and content requirements for holders of local analogue commercial radio licenses are set by Ofcom under the relevant legislative framework – primarily the Broadcasting Act 1990 and the Communications Act 2003.

In particular, Ofcom is required under section 314 of the Communications Act 2003 to publish and keep under review guidance for commercial radio licensees setting out the detailed local programming requirements that they consider it to be appropriate for local stations to carry. The relevant guidelines were updated by Ofcom in 2018 to give local FM licensees greater flexibility in how and where local stations produce their programmes, while ensuring that listeners' expectations for high quality local news and other content continue to be met. These guidelines are published on Ofcom's website, and it will be for Bauer to make decisions about how to organise their services while still meeting their regulatory requirements.

The Government has long-term plans to legislate to reduce other burdens on commercial radio while maintaining protections for the provision on local news and extending these requirements to digital radio, where there are currently no such protections in place. We consulted on changes in 2017, and will bring forward legislation when Parliamentary time is available.

Asked by Lord Storey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact on (1) local people, and (2) the level of local content, of Bauer Media's decision (a) to fold local radio stations into a national radio network, and (b) to replace locally produced content with syndicated programme content made in London. [HL5243]

Baroness Barran: We have made no such assessment. The local programming and content requirements for holders of local analogue commercial radio licenses are set by Ofcom under the relevant legislative framework – primarily the Broadcasting Act 1990 and the Communications Act 2003. These are matters for Ofcom.

In particular, Ofcom is required under section 314 of the Communications Act 2003 to publish and keep under review guidance for commercial radio licensees setting out the detailed local programming requirements that they consider it to be appropriate for local stations to carry.

The relevant guidelines were updated by Ofcom in 2018 to give local FM licensees greater flexibility in how and where local stations produce their programmes, while ensuring that listeners' expectations for high quality local news and other content continue to be met. In drawing up the current guidance, Ofcom took account of the changing patterns of radio and audio listening and the views of radio listeners. The revised guidelines are published on Ofcom's website, and it will be for Bauer to make decisions about how to organise their services while still meeting their regulatory requirements in particular the requirements to produce local news and news programming.

The Government has long-term plans to legislate to reduce other burdens on commercial radio while maintaining protections for the provision on local news and extending these requirements to digital radio, where there are currently no such protections in place. We consulted on changes in 2017, and will bring forward legislation when Parliamentary time is available.

NHS: Computer Software

Asked by Lord Strasburger

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bethell on 13 May (HL4448), whether they will publish the data sharing agreements held with all entities (1) working on, or (2) which will have access to data generated by, (a) the NHS COVID-19 contact tracing app, and (b) human contact tracers; and if so, when. [HL4868]

Lord Bethell: Where data are processed by commercial organisations and those data include personally identifiable information, the data processing agreements are included within the contract and published online at 'Contract Finder' on GOV.UK. We have published nine of these contracts so far and will continue to publish contracts when they become available. Data processing agreements are not included in contracts where personally identifiable information is not included.

Outdoor Education: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in developing their COVID-19 recovery strategy, what assessment they have made of the risks of cross-infection through outdoor education activities compared to activities delivered by the rest of the hospitality sector; and what assessment they have made of whether the outdoor education sector should be reopened as part of phase two of the recovery strategy. [HL4944]

Baroness Barran: We will look at opening outdoor education activities along with the wider hospitality sector in Step 3 of the government's recovery strategy, currently planned for 4 July. This will be subject to the further scientific advice and the latest risk assessment at the time.

My Department has launched the Cultural Renewal Taskforce to help our sectors' businesses prepare to reopen when it is safe to do so. Within this taskforce, we have set up a Visitor Economy Working Group to specifically focus on the practicalities and guidelines for restarting tourism activity during the recovery period. We remain in regular contact with outdoor hospitality stakeholders.

The Department for Education is currently advising that professional outdoor education and adventure holiday providers that would usually offer activities for schools and/or summer holiday activities to children should remain closed for the time being.

Palantir: Data Protection

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they intend to ensure that all personal data provided to Palantir Technologies UK (1) is, and (2) continues to be, anonymised; and what assessment they have made of research by Imperial College London and others that suggests that such data cannot be effectively anonymised. [HL4778]

Lord Bethell: Data is de-identified by National Health Service staff before it is inputted into the NHS Data Store.

NHS England is the data controller for data processed in the NHS Data Store. Palantir Technology UK is engaged by NHS England under contract as a data processor. As a data processor, the organisation does have access to the data but can only process it under instruction from NHS England.

Private Education: Regulation

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government whey they suspended the Regulating Independent Educational Institutions consultation, rather than extending the timeframe for submissions; and what steps they are taking to ensure the (1) safety, and (2) education, of pupils who attend these institutions. [HL5005]

Baroness Berridge: It is an important principle that consultations take account of the groups being consulted and are conducted in a way that enables interested parties to express their view. We were concerned that completing the consultation while many stakeholders had their operation disrupted by the COVID-19 outbreak may not fairly provide all stakeholders with an opportunity to respond as they would like, undermining the value of the consultation. The department therefore suspended the consultation before it was due to end. The department intends to reopen the consultation when stakeholders are less likely to be significantly affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. Responses received to date will be combined with responses received after the consultation reopens and fully reviewed after the consultation finally closes.

It is not yet appropriate to set a date for reopening the consultation as the situation in relation to the COVID-19 outbreak continues to change. Similarly, the consultation was not extended because it was not clear what date would be reasonable to conclude the consultation at this stage.

Ofsted continues to investigate potential illegal schools including consideration of new intelligence. Where appropriate, Ofsted have liaised with local authorities and other statutory bodies to consider whether there is appropriate action that should be taken, for example, to close settings where people are gathering illegally during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Protective Clothing: Procurement

Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what contractual arrangements are in place for personal protective equipment procurement for (1) the NHS, and (2) care services, in the event of national emergencies. [HL3357]

Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether there are preferred provider arrangements in place for the procurement of personal protective equipment for (1) the NHS, and (2) care services. [HL3358]

Lord Bethell: The Department is leading the sourcing of personal protective equipment (PPE) for the National Health Service, social care and the wider public sector from both existing and new suppliers. We have set up a cross-Government PPE sourcing unit to secure new supply lines from across the world and published rigorous standards against which we will buy.

Radio: Licensing

Asked by Lord Storey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the current requirements for commercial radio stations to be awarded a radio broadcast licence. [HL5329]

Baroness Barran: There are two separate regimes for the licensing of commercial radio stations. National and local analogue stations, carried on FM or AM, are licensed by Ofcom under the Broadcasting Act 1990. Digital radio stations, carried on digital multiplexes, are licensed by Ofcom under the Broadcasting Act 1996. Analogue licences are issued for a fixed period; however, an analogue licence holder who also provides a digital radio service may apply for an automatic renewal.

Ofcom does from time to time advertise analogue licences to prospective bidders where an existing commercial frequency is vacated or where a commercial station chooses not to renew. However, since 2007, Ofcom has prioritised new services for the development of community radio when advertising these frequencies. There are around 300 community services currently operating across the UK and the sector is likely to expand further with the start of small-scale DAB multiplex licensing by Ofcom later this year.

New services seeking to obtain an analogue sound programme licence or digital sound programme licence from Ofcom must be based in the UK and must satisfy Ofcom that the applicant is a fit and proper person to hold such a licence. Local analogue sound programme licence holders' services must also meet the character of service set out in the station's licence application, and satisfy the requirements for local news and production as set out in guidance published by Ofcom under s314 of the Communications Act. There are no equivalent requirements on digital radio services, which have always been subject to a lighter touch regime.

Sentinel Aircraft

Asked by Lord Craig of Radley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to extend the use of the Sentinel aircraft system beyond 2021 for ongoing operations in (1) the Middle East, and (2) elsewhere. [HL4948] **Baroness Goldie:** The Out of Service Date for Sentinel was set at March 2021 in Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015, this remains the case.

Sports: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to developing a post-COVID-19 recovery strategy for (1) elite, and (2) grass roots, level sports. [HL5276]

Baroness Barran: The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport is having regular discussions with sector and industry bodies to understand the impact of COVID-19 on sport and how we can provide support. This includes the Minister for Sport, Tourism and Heritage chairing a fortnightly meeting with over 25 sporting organisations. Sport is also represented on the department's Cultural Renewal Taskforce, which is looking at ways to get sectors across the department back up and running.

Government has already published three stages of guidance for the return of elite sporting competition, and guidance for the return of outdoor grassroots sport and recreation. These are available on GOV.UK: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus -covid-19-guidance-on-phased-return-of-sport-andrecreation

Further guidance will be published in due course to help sporting organisations understand how they can operate safely as lockdown restrictions are further eased in the future.

This is in addition to financial support that has been made available to the sector. The Chancellor announced a host of measures to help businesses, with £330 billion worth of government backed and guaranteed loans to support businesses across the UK. In addition, Sport England, has also announced £210 million of funding to help sport and physical activity organisations deal with the short and long term effects of the pandemic.

Terrorism: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord Butler of Brockwell

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Supreme Court judgement in R v Adams (Appellant) (Northern Ireland) on 13 May, how many other temporary detention Orders under Article 4(1) of the Detention of Terrorists (Northern Ireland) Order 1972 were signed by a Minister of State or Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State. [T] [HL4925]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The Government is considering the implications of the Supreme Court judgment, central to which is the issue of Interim Custody Orders which were considered and signed by Ministers during periods of internment in Northern Ireland. It would not be appropriate to comment further at this time.

Travellers: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Whitaker

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have any plans to set up a task force to address the risks to health faced by Gypsies and Travellers living in caravans in camps without amenities such as running water and sanitation during the COVID-19 pandemic, on the lines of the task force for rough sleepers. [HL5145]

Lord Bethell: We currently have no plans to set up such a task force.

We have been in close contact with Gypsy and Traveller voluntary and community sector organisations and are working hard to support these communities through the pandemic.

Ministers have written to councils and caravan and campsite owners about the particular needs of some Gypsy and Traveller communities at this time but it is our view that local authorities are best placed to determine how to support vulnerable groups, in line with their public health responsibilities.

World Health Organisation: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the case for reform of the World Health Organisation; and what steps they intend to take to ensure the organisation commissions an independent inquiry into the genesis of COVID-19. [HL4667]

Lord Bethell: We believe the World Health Organization has an important role to play in leading the global health response. The United Kingdom has long been an advocate of reform in the WHO to ensure it is flexible and responsive, and we will continue to be so. We also want to see the WHO continue to learn lessons on how to improve its response to global health emergencies and as such would expect a full review of all elements of their response once they are out of response mode, as has occurred after previous Public Health Emergencies of International Concern. The Secretary of State raised this point in the United Kingdom national address for the World Health Assembly on 18 May 2020 and we were pleased to co-sponsor the COVID-19 resolution, which was an important step forward on the review as well as other areas of collaboration. The UK intends to engage constructively with a future review, including working with other Governments.

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