

Session 2019-21
No. 91



Wednesday
22 July 2020

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

Written Statements 1

Written Answers..... 6

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

Members who want a printed copy of Written Answers and Written Statements should notify the Printed Paper Office.

This printed edition is a reproduction of the original text of Answers and Statements, which can be found on the internet at <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>.

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

<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
Baroness Evans of Bowes Park	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
Earl Howe	Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
Lord Agnew of Oulton	Minister of State, Cabinet Office and Treasury
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Department for International Development
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Chief Whip
Baroness Barran	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
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
Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist	Whip
Lord Callanan	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Earl of Courtown	Deputy Chief Whip
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 Goldsmith of Richmond Park	Minister of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Department for International Development
Lord Greenhalgh	Minister of State, Home Office and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Lord Grimstone of Boscobel	Minister of State, Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Department for International Trade
Lord Keen of Elie	Advocate-General for Scotland and Ministry of Justice Spokesperson
Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay	Whip
Baroness Penn	Whip
Baroness Scott of Bybrook	Whip
Baroness Stedman-Scott	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
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
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Minister of State, Home Office
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip

© Parliamentary Copyright House of Lords 2020

This publication may be reproduced under the terms of the Open Parliament licence, which is published at www.parliament.uk/site-information/copyright/

Written Statements

Wednesday, 22 July 2020

Consultation on 2025 UK Border Strategy

[HLWS410]

Lord True: My Rt Hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Rt Hon Michael Gove MP), has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

When the Transition Period with the European Union concludes at the end of this year, we will leave the Single Market and Customs Union. As we embark on a new chapter for this country, we have the opportunity to design a future border that delivers maximum benefit to the UK.

Today, the UK Government will publish a public consultation to invite stakeholders to share ideas and evidence to help develop a 2025 UK Border Strategy that will deliver the world's most effective border by 2025. A border that is more streamlined and user-centric, that helps businesses take advantage of new trading relationships around the world, whilst maintaining high-levels of security to protect the public, the environment and public health.

Our goal is to publish a 2025 UK Border Strategy by the end of the year setting out a clear vision and roadmap that the Government and border industry, working together, can deliver.

This announcement follows the launch of the public information campaign, The UK's new start: let's get going, and the publication of the Border Operating Model on Monday 13 July that set out how businesses and industry can prepare for the end of the Transition Period.

Deployment of 5G and Extending Mobile Coverage

[HLWS416]

Baroness Barran: My Honourable Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Digital Infrastructure, Matt Warman MP, has made the following Statement:

Widespread, reliable mobile connectivity is essential for people and businesses. That is why the government has agreed a £1 billion Shared Rural Network deal with the UK's mobile network operators to extend 4G mobile geographical coverage to 95% of the UK by 2025. The Government is also investing £200 million in a programme of 5G testbeds and trials to encourage investment in 5G so that communities and businesses can benefit from this new technology.

It is essential that the planning system continues to support the delivery of the mobile infrastructure that we need. On 27 August 2019, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government published a joint consultation on in-principle proposed reforms to

permitted development rights in England. The consultation ran for 10 weeks, closing on 4 November 2019.

Today I am pleased to inform members that we have published the Government's response to this [consultation](#).

We are satisfied that the proposed reforms are necessary to support the Government's ambitions for the deployment of 5G and extending mobile coverage, particularly in rural areas, where mobile coverage tends to lag behind more urban areas. In taking forward these proposals, we will ensure that the appropriate environmental protections and other safeguards are in place to mitigate the impact of new mobile infrastructure.

Therefore, subject to a technical consultation on the detail of the proposals, including the appropriate environmental protections and other safeguards, we are intending to take forward the proposals consulted on to:

- Enable the deployment of radio equipment housing, such as equipment cabinets, on land without requiring prior approval, up to specified limits and excluding on sites of special scientific interest, to support 5G deployment;
- Strengthen existing masts up to specified limits to enable sites to be upgraded for 5G and for mast sharing without prior approval;
- Enable the deployment of building-based masts nearer to highways to support deployment of 5G and extend mobile coverage, subject to prior approval and specified limits; and,
- Enable higher new masts to deliver better mobile coverage, and mast sharing, subject to prior approval and specified limits.

These changes will benefit communities and businesses and provide greater regulatory certainty to incentivise investment in mobile infrastructure.

The mobile industry has a vital role to play in delivering these improvements and in bringing forward the infrastructure required, and we expect them to commit to further measures and assurances to ensure that the impact of new mobile deployment is minimised.

Making these changes would require amendments to existing planning legislation. Prior to any future legislative changes, we will undertake the technical consultation.

We will now develop the technical consultation, working with mobile industry representatives, relevant regulators including Ofcom, representatives of local planning authorities and those representing protected areas, to ensure that the appropriate environmental protections and other safeguards are in place to mitigate the impact of new mobile infrastructure. This includes strengthening the Code of Best Practice on Mobile Network Development in England, which provides guidance to mobile network operators and local planning authorities.

As planning law is a devolved matter, any future legislative changes will apply to England only, but we

will continue to work closely with the Devolved Administrations to ensure that the planning regime continues to support the deployment of mobile infrastructure.

Hong Kong: British National (Overseas) Visa and Suspension of Extradition Treaty

[HLWS415]

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

The decision of the Chinese Government to impose its national security legislation on Hong Kong is a matter of deep regret to this Government. This legislation and its strict implementation constitutes a clear breach of the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration, undermining the “one country, two systems” framework. It cannot be ignored.

I set out here the Government’s plans for a new Hong Kong British National (Overseas) (BN(O)) Visa and for the suspension of our Extradition Treaty with Hong Kong.

Hong Kong BN(O) Visa

Before the handover of the UK’s responsibilities for Hong Kong, we created the British National (Overseas) (BN(O)) nationality status which was opened to people in Hong Kong, through a registration process, to those who had British Dependent Territories citizenship. This status recognised the special and enduring ties the UK has with those people as a result of our role in Hong Kong before 1997. Now that China through its actions has changed the circumstances that BN(O) citizens find themselves in, it is right that we should change the entitlements which are attached to BN(O) status. I have decided to significantly improve those entitlements, to reassure BN(O) citizens that they have options to live in the UK if they decide that is an appropriate choice for them.

Today I am laying before the House a command paper (CP 280) providing further detail on a new bespoke Hong Kong BN(O) Visa, covering eligibility, conditions and entitlements, the application process, timing, the position for BN(O) citizens in the UK, and arrangements for BN(O) citizens arriving at the border.

BN(O) citizens in Hong Kong are in a unique position, which is why I have designed a policy which is specific to them in the wider immigration system. It will not set a precedent. It is a proportionate response to the situation which has arisen. The UK is entitled to decide on the rights attaching to BN(O) status which it has previously conferred and that is what I am doing with these changes.

My offer to BN(O) citizens is therefore a very generous one. There will be no skills tests or minimum income requirements, economic needs tests or caps on numbers. I am giving BN(O) citizens the opportunity to acquire full British citizenship. They do not need to have a job before coming to the UK - they can look for work once here.

They may bring their immediate dependants, including non-BN(O) citizens.

At the same time, it is not an unconditional offer. BN(O) citizens will need to support themselves independently while living in the UK; they must meet strict criminality checks and stay of good character; they will need to pay visa fees, the Immigration Health Surcharge and, if they subsequently apply for citizenship after they become settled, the fee and meet the criteria. These are reasonable things to ask of BN(O) citizens, and BN(O) citizens will need to ask themselves whether coming to the UK to put down roots here is the right choice for them. It is a choice I am making available and I welcome warmly all those who decide to take it.

We are planning to open the Hong Kong BN(O) Visa for applications from January 2021. BN(O) citizens do not need to hold a BN(O) passport in order to apply for the visa – so there is no need to apply for or renew a BN(O) passport specifically for this purpose. All BN(O) citizens will need a visa to be able to settle in the UK.

We understand there will be cases where the children of BN(O) citizens will not normally be eligible because they were born after 1997 (so are not BN(O) citizens) and are over 18 so they would not normally be considered as a dependant in the UK’s immigration system. Therefore, in compelling and compassionate circumstances, and where applications are made as a family unit, we will use discretion to grant a visa to the children of BN(O) citizens who fall into this category and who are still dependent on the BN(O) citizen.

If the above doesn’t apply then the existing youth mobility scheme is open to people in Hong Kong aged between 18-30, with 1000 places currently available each year. Individuals from Hong Kong will also be able to apply to come to the UK under the terms of the UK’s new Points Based System, which will enable individuals to come to the UK in a wider range of professions and at a lower general salary threshold than in the past.

The Home Office looks forward to receiving applications for this visa.

Extradition

The imposition of new National Security Legislation has significantly changed the assumptions underpinning the 1998 Agreement for the Surrender of Fugitive Offenders, our extradition treaty with Hong Kong. The Government remains especially concerned about Articles 55 to 59 of the law, which could give mainland authorities the ability to assume jurisdiction over certain cases and try those cases in Chinese courts.

The National Security Law provides no legal or judicial safeguards in such cases. The decision can be made by the mainland authorities with no reference to the Hong Kong Government. Other than access to a lawyer there are no legal or judicial safeguards in such cases and mainland systems of investigation, trial and punishment, about which the international community has long standing concerns, would apply. If China applies that legislation extraterritorially, it will pose a risk not only to Hong

Kong residents who travel abroad, but potentially to British and other Nationals travelling into Hong Kong.

The Hong Kong Department of Justice has therefore been notified of our intention to suspend the extradition treaty, immediately and indefinitely, until the UK is sufficiently assured that the new National Security Agency established by China in Hong Kong will not be able to initiate extradition requests to the UK, that extradition requests will not be sent in relation to newly created offences under the National Security Law; and that people extradited from the UK could never be transferred from Hong Kong to mainland China without the UK's explicit consent.

The suspension will protect those resident in the UK, including those who may soon be here by virtue of the new immigration route, from unwarranted pursuit through the provisions of the Extradition Treaty.

Independent Office for Police Conduct: Annual Report and Accounts

[HLWS411]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My hon Friend the Minister of State for Crime, Policing and the Fire Service (Kit Malthouse) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

I am today, along with my Right Honourable Friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, (Jesse Norman), publishing the 2019-20 annual report and accounts for the Independent Office for Police Conduct [HC 511]. This will be laid before the House and published on www.gov.uk. The report will also be available in the Vote Office.

London Croughton Annex

[HLWS413]

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

I informed the House on 20 December that I had instructed my officials to discuss with the United States a revision of the immunity arrangements at the Croughton Annex for US personnel and their families, following the road collision of 27 August 2019 in which Harry Dunn was killed. As I set out previously to the House, the status of US staff under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (VCDR) at the Croughton Annex is the subject of special arrangements between the UK and US governments, captured in exchanges of notes dating back to 1995. Those arrangements contained a waiver of immunity from criminal jurisdiction for US staff outside the course of their duties, but no such waiver for their family members.

I am glad to inform the House today that we have concluded those discussions with the US and agreed a revision of the arrangements. I welcome the constructive engagement of our US allies in these discussions.

First and foremost, the US waiver of immunity from criminal jurisdiction is now expressly extended to the family members of US staff at the Croughton Annex, thus ending the anomaly in the previous arrangements and permitting the criminal prosecution of the family members of those staff, should these tragic circumstances ever arise again.

Second, the waiver from criminal jurisdiction now extends also to all Embassy staff serving at the Croughton Annex in respect of acts outside their official duties, not just Administrative and Technical staff.

Third, the revised arrangements contain a further and new waiver in respect of inviolability. The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations not only provides for immunity from jurisdiction, but also provides for the separate privilege of inviolability, including complete protection from arrest and detention. The earlier Croughton arrangements contained no waiver of inviolability. This is addressed in the revised arrangements.

I am therefore pleased to report to the House that we have secured the agreement of the US so that the Croughton arrangements could not in future be used in the same way as in the tragic case of Harry Dunn. These changes took effect by way of an exchange of notes on 20 July.

Separately, we have continued to press the US on the need to improve road safety at RAF Croughton. I welcome the steps taken by the US base commander to extend mandatory requirements for driving training and instruction for all US staff on the base, and the improvement of road signage within the base and vehicles of staff to remind them to drive on the left.

I welcome the action of local authorities to add extra signage outside the base to remind drivers to drive on the left.

I am pleased to inform the House that my RHF the Secretary of State for Transport has launched a safety review of roads around the 10 US Visiting Forces (USVF) bases in England. This entails working with the Ministry of Defence, Highways England and respective police and local authorities – in the case of Croughton, the Northamptonshire Police and South Northamptonshire Council.

We have the deepest sympathy for Harry Dunn's family. No family should have to experience what they have gone through and I recognise that these changes will not bring Harry back. However, I hope that the knowledge that the Croughton arrangements have been revised and that a family in their position would now see justice done brings some small measure of comfort.

Machinery of Government: Data Use

[HLWS412]

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

Machinery of Government

I am making this statement to bring to the House's attention the following Machinery of Government change.

Government use of data

Responsibility for government use of data has transferred from the Department for Digital Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) to the Cabinet Office. DCMS will retain responsibility for data policy for the economy and society. This change will help ensure that government data is used most effectively to drive policy making and service delivery. The change is effective immediately.

Police and Crime Commissioner Model: Review

[HLWS409]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My hon Friend the Minister of State for Crime, Policing and the Fire Service (Kit Malthouse) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

I wish to set out to the House details of a review into the role of Police and Crime Commissioners.

The Government's manifesto committed to strengthening the accountability of PCCs and expanding their role. Police and Crime Commissioners were introduced in 2012 to give the public a direct say over policing in their area. Since coming into post, they have brought real local accountability to policing and are working to give local communities a stronger voice.

After eight years it is right that we step back and consider how we can continue to evolve the PCC model. It is important that PCCs are strong, visible leaders in the fight against crime and have the legitimacy and tools to hold their police forces to account effectively.

To deliver this commitment, I am today announcing a two-part internal review into the role of PCCs.

Part one will commence in late July and report to the Home Secretary and myself by October 2020. It will be focussed on changes required to strengthen the model which, where possible, can be delivered ahead of the 2021 PCC elections. In particular, it will: consider how to strengthen the accountability, resilience, legitimacy and scrutiny mechanisms of the existing model to drive up standards; identify and share best practice across the sector; and examine the effectiveness of the relationship between PCCs and Chief Constables and the checks and balances currently in place.

We will also use part one of the review to help us map out our longer-term ambition for the expansion of the PCC role. In relation to fire, the Government is clear that further reform of fire and rescue services is required in order to respond to the recommendations from Phase 1 of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and to build on the findings from Sir Tom Winsor's State of Fire and Rescue Report, both of which demonstrate the clear challenges and improvements required in professionalism, people and governance. The review will consider further options and

opportunities to strengthen fire governance and accountability, drawing on the lessons from the first cycle of fire governance transfers to PCCs.

The review will also be fully aligned with the Government's commitment to expand the benefits of devolution across England through the Local Recovery and Devolution White Paper. Mayors of Combined Authorities should be powerful local figures with the ability to drive public safety, as well as economic growth and local recovery. We plan to develop the role of PCCs with that longer-term trajectory in mind, building on the models in London and Greater Manchester.

I would like to be clear that neither Part one or Part two of the review will consider a wholly new governance model for policing or examine the 43 police force model.

An Advisory Group will support part one of the review, comprising senior external stakeholders with expertise in the policing and fire sectors. It will also be important that the public's views on those who represent them in policing are heard and the review team will seek to engage a sample of citizens and local and national victims' groups as appropriate.

Part two of the review will commence after the 2021 elections and will allow us to consider further ways to strengthen and expand the role of PCCs, including the role PCCs play in tackling re-offending to help reduce crime. It will focus on longer-term reforms and the potential for wider efficiencies to be made within the system with a view to implementation ahead of the 2024 elections.

I will place a copy of the Terms of Reference for part one of the review in the Libraries of both Houses.

Public Bodies 2019 and Public Appointments Data Report 2019

[HLWS417]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: I am pleased to announce the publication of Public Bodies 2019 and the Public Appointments Data Report 2019 and will today be placing copies in the library of both Houses.

Public bodies play a vital role in the delivery of public services for all our citizens, covering wide-ranging functions. Well-governed, effective and efficient public bodies enable the government to deliver its priorities.

Public Bodies 2019 is an annual directory that provides a single transparent source of top-level financial and non-financial data on all executive agencies, non-departmental public bodies and non-ministerial departments across government.

The public appointments data report provides a breakdown of the diversity of public appointees who were in roles covered by the Governance Code on public appointments on 31 March 2019 and those appointed to such roles between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019. The latter data is a subset of the information published in the Commissioner for Public Appointments' annual report.

UK Anti-Corruption Strategy: Year 2

[HLWS414]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My rt hon Friend the Minister of State for Security (James Brokenshire) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

Today, I am publishing the second annual Update on the UK Anti-Corruption Strategy 2017-2022. The government is committed to providing an annual written update to parliament on progress.

The UK Anti-Corruption Strategy provides a framework to guide Government anti-corruption policies and actions. This update sets out the significant progress that the UK has made on implementing many of the commitments of the Anti-Corruption Strategy during 2019, whilst recognising that a more challenging global environment has led to some areas of more limited progress. Corruption undermines our national security and prosperity. It corrodes trust in our institutions and threatens our borders. Without strong anti-corruption

measures it is harder for British businesses to compete in the new and emerging markets we are starting to foster.

The Year 2 Update demonstrates that the Government is determined to deliver on its commitment to combat corruption in order to keep our citizens safe, to help secure a more prosperous society and to strengthen trust in our domestic and international institutions. The unprecedented challenge posed by COVID-19 only heightens the relevance and urgency of this activity. The Government will continue to combat corruption and to promote integrity and transparency at home and overseas, working with international allies and through multilateral institutions to address existing and emerging threats, raise standards and promote collective action.

I have written to the Devolved Administrations as the Update is of direct interest to them.

A copy of the Year 2 Update report will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses and also published on GOV.UK.

Written Answers

Wednesday, 22 July 2020

Advertising: Taxation

Asked by *Lord Smith of Finsbury*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to introducing an advertising tax credit as part of their COVID-19 economic recovery package in order (1) to help stimulate consumer spending, and (2) to assist the retention of employment in the advertising industry. [HL6730]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Government has no plans to introduce a new tax credit for business expenditure on advertising. The Chancellor keeps all aspects of the tax system under review, and announces any changes at a fiscal event.

Air Pollution: Ethnic Groups

Asked by *Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the extent to which poor air quality may disproportionately affect BAME communities. [HL6574]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: In 2006 the Government published a report on air quality and social deprivation in the UK. This highlighted that there are inequalities in the distribution of pollutant concentrations.

More recently, as part of the UK Plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), the Government reviewed evidence investigating the inequalities in the distributional impact of poor air quality. The published technical report highlights that air quality inequalities exist mostly in urban areas. Furthermore, the report references research conducted by Fecht et al (2015) that demonstrates that higher concentrations of NO₂ and coarse particulate matter (PM₁₀) have been observed in ethnically diverse neighbourhoods.

The Government is taking a proactive approach to tackling air pollution concentrations through our NO₂ plan and Clean Air Strategy and any actions that focus on reducing the highest concentrations of harmful pollutants will disproportionately benefit ethnically diverse communities if they are located in these areas.

Alzheimer's Disease: Carers

Asked by *Lord Hay of Ballyore*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that those who care for a family member with Alzheimer's disease are fully supported. [HL6473]

Lord Bethell: We recognise the crucial role that unpaid carers play in supporting people with Alzheimer's disease.

The Government published the Carers Action Plan 2018 – 2020: Supporting carers today which sets out a cross-Government programme of targeted work to support all carers in England over two years until the end of this summer.

The Action Plan puts a focus on practical actions to support carers, recognising and supporting unpaid carers to provide care in a way that protects their own health and wellbeing, employment and other life chances. A copy of the Action Plan is attached.

A final report on the Action Plan will be produced later this year and, alongside this report, the Government will consider next steps.

Apprentices: Coronavirus

Asked by *Lord Storey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many apprentices have had their places cancelled during the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL6641]

Baroness Berridge: The information requested is not published by the department. The latest published apprenticeships and levy statistics can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/apprenticeships-and-traineeships-june-2020>.

We want apprentices and employers to continue with their apprenticeships and have introduced a range of flexibilities to make this easier, while maintaining quality. Flexibilities include encouraging providers and assessment organisations to deliver training and assessments remotely. We have also made it possible for furloughed apprentices to continue their apprenticeships and complete their programmes.

Employers can continue to recruit and train apprentices. However, we recognise that employers, at the moment, face increased challenges with hiring new apprentices. My right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, announced on 8 July that we will introduce a new payment of £2,000 to employers in England for each new apprentice they hire aged under 25, and a £1,500 payment for each new apprentice they hire aged 25 and over, from 1 August 2020 to 31 January 2021.

Where redundancies are made, we will endeavour to provide comprehensive and practical support to ensure that apprenticeships can continue. We have launched a new hub for apprentices that offers guidance and information to support apprentices that may be, or are being, made redundant. Our ambition is for any apprentice that is made redundant to be supported to find alternative employment and continue their apprenticeship as quickly as possible and within 12 weeks.

Arts and Culture: Finance

Asked by *Lord Wigley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much of the additional finance recently announced for the arts and

culture sector in England will be (1) by way of grant, and (2) by way of loans. [HL6917]

Baroness Barran: On 5 July, the government announced a major £1.57 billion support package for key cultural organisations to help them through the coronavirus pandemic. This funding will provide targeted support to organisations across a range of sectors, including performing arts and theatres, museums and galleries, heritage sites, live music venues and independent cinemas.

The package will include a £1.15 billion support pot for cultural organisations in England, delivered through a mix of grants and loans. This will be made up of £270 million of repayable finance and £880 million grants.

Asthma: Health Services

Asked by Baroness Masham of Ilton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress has been made on the commitment made in the NHS Long Term Plan to “improve patient pathways to ensure timely assessment and treatment that reduces the risk of death and disability” for severe asthma attacks. [HL5870]

Lord Bethell: The NHS Long Term Plan commitment to reduce death and disability from severe asthma attacks by ensuring timely assessment and treatment has been taken forward within the scope of the Clinical Review of Standards. This was requested by the Prime Minister in June 2018 and is led by Professor Stephen Powis, Medical Director of NHS England.

The review seeks to promote safety and outcomes; drive improvements in patients experience; are clinically meaningful, accurate and practically achievable; ensure the sickest and most urgent patients are given priority; ensure patients get the right service in the right place; are simple and easy to understand for patients and the public; and not worsen inequalities.

An interim report was published in March 2019 and testing at 14 different hospitals began in May 2019. This included a commitment to collect data to examine the feasibility of measuring how fast critically ill or injured patients arriving at accident and emergency receive a package of tests and care developed with clinical experts.

Aviation and Bus Services: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the different requirements in the guidance for social distancing for (1) airlines, and (2) bus operators; whether that assessment demonstrated that the guidance for one is more prescriptive than the other; and if so, why. [HL6686]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Our safer transport guidance and safer aviation guidance provide advice to help transport organisations and the aviation industry

manage the risks of coronavirus. This includes suggested measures for how they can provide safer workplaces and services for workers and passengers, including mitigations where social distancing is not possible or more difficult to manage. The measures suggested are intended as a guide, not as a prescriptive set of requirements. Transport organisations and the aviation industry will need to carry out their own risk assessments.

Both sets of guidance have been developed in collaboration with industry, Public Health England, and relevant health and safety regulators. The risk control measures suggested in both reflect the nature of the settings for which they are intended. Aviation settings differ in several key ways from buses and other modes of public transport, particularly the higher level of control inherent in aviation settings. In comparison, bus and other land transport services operate in less controlled environments with a greater degree of passenger autonomy.

Broadband: Rural Areas

Asked by Lord Stevenson of Balmacara

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on 9 July (HC Deb, col 1099), what plans they have to ensure that the universal rollout of gigabit-capable broadband is completed by 2025. [HL6732]

Baroness Barran: The Government is committed to delivering nationwide coverage of gigabit capable broadband as soon as possible. The latest Ofcom figures demonstrate full fibre coverage has increased to 3.5 million premises (or 12% of the UK), and by 1.5 million premises in the past year. Estimates of gigabit coverage are even higher at over 20% of UK premises, as a result of Virgin Media's upgrades of its existing network.

To help the private sector deploy gigabit capable broadband more quickly and easily, we are removing barriers to deployment. For example, the Telecommunications Infrastructure (Leasehold Property) Bill will make it easier to connect properties with an unresponsive landlord. For harder to reach areas of the UK, we have committed to invest £5 billion in subsidising the deployment of gigabit capable broadband.

Bus Services: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to support the bus and coach industry after the current COVID-19 financial support expires in August; and what discussions they have had with the bus and coach industry to understand that industry's strategic requirements. [HL6683]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Department continues to work closely with transport authorities and operators to understand the risks and ongoing issues in the

bus and coach industry and how these can be addressed, so that public transport services can adapt to any 'new normal' that emerges from the COVID-19 outbreak and work towards a sustainable long-term recovery.

Business: Females

Asked by Baroness Goudie

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they have worked with businesses to increase female representation in senior leadership positions, including executive roles on boards, since February. [HL6627]

Lord Callanan: We are working with businesses and business representative bodies to achieve diverse boardrooms and senior leadership teams for FTSE 350 companies by supporting the independent, business-led diversity reviews that have set targets for these companies: the Hampton-Alexander Review on FTSE Women Leaders and the Parker Review on ethnic diversity in business leadership.

Women hold a higher percentage of senior leadership positions in FTSE 350 companies than ever before. The FTSE100 as a whole has met the Hampton-Alexander Review 33% target for female representation on boards well ahead of the end of the Review period – end of 2020, and the FTSE 250 is currently also on course to reach the target by the end of the year.

Business: Insurance

Asked by Lord Browne of Ladyton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have any plans to use Pool Re's model of terrorism (re)insurance to provide cover for other systemic events that could impact the economy. [HL6762]

Asked by Lord Browne of Ladyton

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Agnew of Oulton on 4 June (HL4757), what plans they have to ensure that there is sufficient provision of business interruption cover for businesses in event of any future pandemic, given that such cover can no longer be purchased in the commercial market. [HL6763]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Ideally all firms would be able to purchase the insurance products they need on a market basis, but the Government recognises that in some exceptional circumstances that may not be possible.

The Government welcomes ideas for how insurance can build resilience and access insurance in future, noting the new risks and challenges from the outbreak of COVID-19. We will be assessing all proposals in due course.

Carbon Emissions

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by advising officials that rail travel should be the preferred option for business trips if the journey is less than six hours; and what assessment they have made of the impact of the introduction of such measures in Switzerland. [HL6609]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: As part of the current Greening Government Commitment targets, the Government as a whole has reduced the number of domestic flights its staff took by 28% in 2018/19 compared with the baseline of 2009/10. This shows good progress towards the target reduction of 30%, which the Government is on course to exceed by the target date of 2020. As part of this commitment, many departments have revisited their travel service arrangements to reduce domestic flights and have introduced initiatives to increase electronic operations. However, we acknowledge that there is still more to be done.

The Government is currently developing an ambitious, updated set of Greening Government Commitment targets for 2021-2025, with travel as an area in which we are looking to improve. We are committed to setting new targets that will be consistent with a trajectory to achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and will continue to look at further measures to encourage lower emissions travel options for Government officials.

Care Homes: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports (1) that care home managers have not followed COVID-19 safety procedures, (2) that care home staff and residents had concerns about exposure to COVID-19 which warranted investigation by the Care Quality Commission, and (3) that care home providers may be subject to compensation claims for alleged negligence of resident and staff safety. [HL6601]

Lord Bethell: Many care homes have been doing an excellent job of keeping people safe.

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) reduced the number of physical inspections it conducted during the crisis in order to limit the number of people going in and out of care homes. It did continue to inspect a small number of settings where serious concerns have been identified. Some of these were linked directly to concerns raised with the CQC from staff and members of the public.

Furthermore, during this crisis, Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspectors have contacted more than

80% of all providers – over 20,000 care providers – to offer support, advice and guidance, including help accessing personal protective equipment and advice on infection control.

Cash Dispensing: Coronavirus

Asked by *Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of COVID-19 on the provision of cash machines; and what plans they have to ensure the availability of cash in vulnerable and remote communities in the future. [HL6829]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Government recognises that widespread access to cash is extremely important to the daily lives of millions of people across the UK. The Government is engaging with the financial regulators, including through the Joint Authorities Cash Strategy Group, to monitor the impact of COVID-19 on the UK's cash infrastructure and remains committed to protecting access to cash for those who need it, while supporting digital payments.

At the March 2020 Budget, the Chancellor announced that the Government will bring forward legislation to protect access to cash. This will ensure that those who continue to rely on cash can continue to do so in the long-term.

The Financial Conduct Authority and Payment Systems Regulator are developing a comprehensive picture of cash access infrastructure across the UK in relation to social economic factors that reflect consumer needs, building upon their mapping work carried out during the COVID-19 crisis.

Colombia: Armed Conflict

Asked by *Baroness Coussins*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made, or plan to make, to the government of Colombia about the prevention of sexual violence reportedly perpetrated by members of that country's armed forces. [HL6768]

Asked by *Baroness Coussins*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what support they are giving to the Special Jurisdiction for Peace in Colombia in respect of cases of sexual violence in conflict. [HL6769]

Baroness Sugg: We are deeply concerned by reports of sexual violence by military actors in Colombia. We expect state authorities to comply fully with their human rights obligations, and are glad that the Colombian authorities have taken swift action to investigate these allegations and hold those responsible to account.

The United Kingdom remains committed to protecting and promoting human rights in Colombia, which the FCO has designated a Human Rights Priority Country. The UK has continued to provide support to help Colombia tackle

the legacy of sexual violence from its long conflict. Since 2016, UK support to a network of survivors of sexual violence has helped document 1200 new cases which are now before the transitional justice system. The UK has also funded work to train rural medical professionals in how to attend cases of sexual violence, including with a view to preserving evidence to facilitate convictions. We are also supporting civil society organisations to work with the Special Jurisdiction for Peace on sexual violence cases through our contribution to the UN Trust Fund.

Colombia: Arms Trade

Asked by *Lord Browne of Ladyton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to recent reports of illegal surveillance by Colombian Military Intelligence on civil society organisations, what steps they have taken to establish whether cryptographic equipment exported by the UK to Colombia has been used in this type of activity. [HL6711]

Baroness Sugg: We are aware of allegations that Colombian state actors have been illegally gathering surveillance on civil society organisations. We expect state authorities to comply fully with their human rights obligations, and the United Kingdom is committed to protecting and promoting human rights in Colombia. We welcome the Colombian authorities' announcement of an investigation into these allegations and their commitment to hold those responsible to account.

The UK Government rigorously examines each export licence application on a case-by-case basis against the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria. Risks around human rights violations or abuses are a key part of our assessment. We do not export equipment and technology where we assess there is a clear risk that it might be used for internal repression.

Coronavirus

Asked by *Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the statements made by Dr. Li-Meng Yan about (1) the origins of COVID-19, and (2) the response of the World Health Organisation. [T] [HL6754]

Lord Bethell: Public Health England has not made an assessment of the statements made by Dr Li-Meng Yan.

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

Asked by *Lord Jones of Cheltenham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether an employer who has served notice on an employee can leave them on furlough for their notice period and continue to claim a grant under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. [HL6718]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, an employer can claim for a

furloughed employee who is serving a statutory notice period; however, grants cannot be used to substitute for redundancy payments. HMRC will continue to monitor businesses after the scheme has closed.

Further guidance on employee rights and the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme can be found on the GOV.UK website.

Coronavirus: Death

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of analysis by the Office for National Statistics which, after comparing death certificates from 2 March to 15 May with data from the 2011 census, found that of all COVID-19 related deaths (1) 30.3 per cent were among people who said their daily activities were "limited a lot" because of a health problem or disability, and (2) 28.9 per cent were among those whose activities were "limited a little"; and what assessment they have made of the implications of those statistics on the future conduct of public policy. [HL6339]

Lord Bethell: We know that many people with long standing, limiting illnesses or health conditions are at higher risk of poorer outcomes from COVID-19.

The Office for National Statistics has undertaken provisional analysis of data comparing the risk of death involving COVID-19 according to a person's disability status, as recorded in the 2011 Census for the period 2 March to 15 May 2020. This data suggests that, after adjusting for region, population density, socio-demographic and household characteristics, the relative difference in mortality rates between those 'limited a lot' by a health condition and those not disabled was 2.4 times higher for females and 1.9 times higher for males.

We continue to review all available evidence regarding the impact of COVID-19 for disabled people and we are commissioning new research to better understand the specific impact. This evidence will inform policy development going forwards.

Coronavirus: Disease Control

Asked by Baroness Quin

To ask Her Majesty's Government when, and for what reason, they decided to merge the North East region and the Yorkshire and Humberside region in their statistics on the incidence of COVID-19 and that virus's reinfection rates. [T] [HL5403]

Lord Bethell: Reporting on COVID-19 is broken down by NHS England's seven regional teams. The North East and Yorkshire is one of the seven regional teams and so the statistics are merged for the North East and Yorkshire and Humber regions.

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the threshold transmission rate for COVID-19 that, if reached, will increase the risk to extremely vulnerable patients to the extent that COVID-19 shielding measures have to be reapplied. [HL6481]

Lord Bethell: We are continuing to monitor the prevalence of COVID-19 in the community. If the R rate or level of COVID-19 in the community start to rise as a result of the recent relaxation of wider lockdown measures or other factors, then it may be necessary to advise that more restrictive measures should be taken again in order for people at highest risk from COVID-19 to keep themselves safe.

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that those who are shielding from COVID-19 receive the correct information for their specific condition to ensure that they are able to live safely throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL6482]

Lord Bethell: The National Health Service has asked service providers, including general practitioners, to undertake a series of actions to support people who have been asked to shield. This includes ensuring every shielding individual has a named care coordinator to help them with their healthcare and any changing or emerging health needs.

Coronavirus: Employment

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of people who are shielding due to COVID-19 who will be (1) working from home, (2) returning to work outside their home, and (3) not able to work due to the nature of their job, on 1 August. [HL6479]

Lord Bethell: Those who have received a shielding patient letter remain in the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable category and should continue to follow the updated guidance for the clinically extremely vulnerable.

If incidence does not rise, from 1 August the Government will further relax advice to those shielding, bringing it in line with the advice to those who are clinically vulnerable. This means that if they are unable to work from home but can work on site, they should do so, provided the business is COVID-safe.

We have made no estimate of the numbers of people shielding who will be working from home, returning to work outside their home, and not able to work due to the nature of their job, on 1 August.

Coronavirus: Ethnic Groups

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessments they have made, if any, of University College London's ongoing Covid-19 Social Study that suggests that levels of depression and anxiety have been higher amongst BAME communities during lockdown. [HL6588]

Lord Bethell: Monitoring and tracking the impact of COVID-19 on people's mental health is a key part of the overall national response to the pandemic. We are taking seriously the findings from the ongoing University College London study, and the Public Health England report on the impact of COVID-19 on black, Asian and minority ethnic communities.

We are working to understand the key drivers of the disparities identified and the relationships between the different risk factors. This includes working with the Race Disparity Unit to help protect our communities from the impact of COVID-19.

Coronavirus: Protective Clothing

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to work with suppliers to increase the production of face masks that could be worn by the public across the UK to slow the spread of COVID-19 after lockdown restrictions are lifted. [HL3725]

Lord Bethell: The public is being strongly urged not to purchase personal protective equipment such as surgical masks or respirators, which are prioritised for healthcare workers working in more high-risk environments where the risk is greatest.

The Government has always been clear that its highest priority in managing this national crisis is protecting the public and the National Health Service. On 15 June, the Government published online guidance on passengers wearing mandatory face coverings when travelling on public transport in England. The Government also announced that from Friday 24 July, members of the public must wear a face covering when visiting a shop or supermarket.

People are encouraged to make their own face coverings for this purpose - a face covering can be as simple as a scarf or bandana that ties behind the head and should cover the mouth and nose while allowing the wearer to breathe comfortably. Guidance on how make these face coverings has been published online and they are also available for purchase.

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have been taking, if any, to ensure that personal protective equipment produced in domestic or non-professional settings meets the standards set by The British Standards Institution. [HL4455]

Lord Bethell: The safety of frontline staff and patients is of paramount importance. All personal protective equipment (PPE) must undergo essential checks to ensure they meet the safety and quality required and we are offering support and advice to all groups that contact us to ensure their products are safe and effective. These specifications for PPE are published online and can be found at GOV.UK.

Coronavirus: Protective clothing

Asked by *Lord Low of Dalston*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, and if so, when, they intend to publish guidance for the use of personal protective equipment in social care settings for people who are deaf or have other communication difficulties. [HL6417]

Lord Bethell: Existing guidance documents include information that may be useful to deaf people or people with other communication difficulties, as the guidance covers adapting communication and following communication plans, where they exist, for people who have a range of communication barriers. These include Personal protective equipment (PPE) – resource for care workers working in care homes during sustained COVID-19 transmission in England and the same section of Personal protective equipment (PPE) – resource for care workers delivering homecare (domiciliary care) during sustained COVID-19 transmission in the UK, which are attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

PPE resource for care workers delivering homecare
[Domiciliary_guidance_v2_15Jun.pdf]

PPE resource for care workers working in carehomes
[How_to_work_safely_in_care_homes_v3_15_Jun.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-07-02/HL6417>

Coronavirus: Quarantine

Asked by *Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what their current policy is on self-isolating during the COVID-19 pandemic; under what circumstances that policy will change; and when that policy will be reviewed. [HL5085]

Lord Bethell: The United Kingdom currently advises that people who have any symptoms of COVID-19 - a high temperature, a new, continuous cough or a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste; are waiting for a COVID-19 test result; have tested positive or someone in their household or support bubble has symptoms; is waiting for a test result; or has tested positive, should self-isolate.

If a person lives alone, they need to self-isolate for at least seven days. If someone in a person's household or

bubble has symptoms, the person will usually need to self-isolate for 14 days.

If someone has been outside the Common Travel Area in a country which is not covered by the travel corridor exemption, within the last 14 days, then, unless they satisfy one of the exemption criteria, they will need to self-isolate for the remainder of the 14-day period, starting from when they arrived in the Common Travel Area.

The Government keeps these arrangements under regular review.

Coronavirus: X-rays

Asked by Lord Strasburger

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to establish an ethics board to oversee the National COVID-19 Chest Imaging Database. [HL6806]

Lord Bethell: The Research and Ethics Committee (REC) at the Health Research Authority granted ethical approval for the National COVID-19 Chest Imaging Database (NCCID) on 16 April 2020. The REC made no recommendation to establish an ethics board to oversee the NCCID. Access to data contained in the NCCID is governed by a committee of independent experts, which includes patient representatives, and is tasked with ensuring that applications comply with high ethical standards.

Asked by Lord Strasburger

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether patients' consent will be required before their data can be collected for the National COVID-19 Chest Imaging Database. [HL6807]

Lord Bethell: The data collected for the National COVID-19 Chest Imaging Database is done so under the Control of Patient Information notices issued by the Secretary of State for Health. Consequently, no patient consent is required to collect the data from National Health Service trusts. No patient identifiable data is shared with developers. Images and clinical data points are anonymised before they are sent from each NHS trust to the Royal Surrey NHS Foundation Trust for collation. The Royal Surrey NHS Foundation Trust further verifies that any identifiable data burnt onto the images is removed. Once this step is completed, the anonymised data is uploaded on a cloud-based repository owned by NHSX, and having NHS England as the data controller.

Debts: Developing Countries

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to raise the issue of debt relief for the world's poorest nations during any forthcoming meetings of the G20. [HL6900]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: HM Government is concerned that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the debt vulnerabilities low-income developing countries, which were already at worrying levels before the crisis.

While the UK cancelled most of our low-income developing country debt under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative, the Chancellor joined his G20 counterparts to commit to a temporary suspension on debt service repayments from the 77 poorest countries under the debt service suspension initiative (DSSI). Through the DSSI, official creditors will provide up to US\$12bn of cash flow relief to help countries respond to the health and economic impacts of COVID-19.

The Chancellor raised the DSSI with his G20 counterparts this month to ensure full and transparent implementation and to announce a UK contribution to the African Legal Service Facility to empower borrowers to engage with their commercial creditors. The DSSI provides the breathing room for countries to respond to the crisis and for the international community to determine what further support may be needed for countries on a case-by-case basis. If debts do require restructuring, the UK will work with the Paris Club of official creditors, IMF, and WBG to support equitable debt reductions and long-term sustainable growth.

Dental Services: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Redfern

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people have accessed the urgent dental centres; and how many centres have been operating during the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL5080]

Lord Bethell: Data is not held on the number of people who have accessed urgent dental centres (UDCs). NHS England and NHS Improvement set up UDCs to meet need for urgent dental treatment while routine treatment was suspended during the peak of the pandemic and to support practice-based care during the gradual restart underway since 8 June. Over 600 UDCs remain open to support dental practices in England.

Asked by Baroness Harris of Richmond

To ask Her Majesty's Government why dental practices in England were only given six working days' notice to resume face to face care on 8 June. [HL5998]

Lord Bethell: NHS England and NHS Improvement announced on 28 May that National Health Service dental services can gradually resume from 8 June. The guidance was clear that the pace of the restart should be only as fast as possible compatible with maximizing safety for patients and dental staff.

Over 600 urgent dental centres remain open across England to assist with the resumption of routine dentistry.

Asked by Baroness Harris of Richmond

To ask Her Majesty's Government why the Standard operating procedure: transition to recovery

guidance document was only published on 4 June, one working day before dental practices in England were required to resume face to face care. [HL5999]

Lord Bethell: NHS England and NHS Improvement announced on 28 May that National Health Service dental services can gradually resume from 8 June. The guidance was clear that the pace of the restart should be only as fast as possible compatible with maximizing safety for patients and dental staff.

Over 600 urgent dental centres remain open across England to assist with the resumption of routine dentistry.

Department of Health and Social Care: Written Questions

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they intend to answer the Written Question (HL4751) tabled by Lord Bradley on 20 May. [HL6116]

Lord Bethell: I replied to the noble Lord's question on 7 July.

Disability: Social Services

Asked by Lord Blunkett

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to make it a commitment that the Social Care Taskforce addresses the care and support needs of working age disabled people. [HL6436]

Lord Bethell: The impact of COVID-19 on people with disabilities and learning difficulties will be one of the focuses for the new Social Sector COVID-19 Support Taskforce.

The Social Care Sector COVID-19 Support Taskforce will ensure the delivery of two packages of support that the Government has put in place for the care sector and will be supported by several advisory groups including one on support for people with learning disabilities and autism.

Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency: Staff

Asked by Lord Shipley

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many staff were employed by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency in each of the past three years to respond to requests for the personal details of motorists by private car park operators. [HL6729]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: It is not possible to say how many staff are employed specifically to process requests from private car park operators. The staff involved deal with these requests as part of their role alongside a variety of other duties.

Electronic Publishing: VAT

Asked by Baroness Rebuck

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the National Literacy Trust Children, young people and audiobooks before and during lockdown, published in June, and its finding that listening to audiobooks can increase children's reading skills and emotional intelligence and wellbeing; and, in the light of these findings, what consideration they have given to exempting audio books from VAT. [HL6860]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: An extension of the zero rate of VAT has been introduced in order to provide consistency in approach between certain physical and digital publications.

Audiobooks are already taxed consistently at the standard rate in both physical and digital format.

There are no current plans to extend the VAT zero rate to audiobooks. However, the Government keeps all taxes under review, including VAT.

Environment Bill: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have received about the potential merits of amending the Environment Bill in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL6575]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The Government is working with a wide range of stakeholders, including businesses and environmental non-governmental organisations (NGOs), on how the Environment Bill can support our goals to build a fairer, greener, more resilient recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. The Secretary of State met with chief executives of six leading environmental NGOs on 11 May, 8 June, and 9 July, to discuss the Government's environmental ambitions including the Environment Bill and the opportunities relating to the recovery from the crisis.

Eritrea: Industrial Health and Safety

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Sugg on 10 June (HL6272) and following the UK Deputy Ambassador to Eritrea's statement on 22 June that health and safety conditions on roadbuilding projects in that country would deteriorate if the UK and EU withdraws support, what assessment they have made of the working conditions of those projects; and what steps they are taking ensure that health and safety standards are maintained. [HL6749]

Baroness Sugg: The UK's support for the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa projects in Eritrea on the main arterial roads was conditional on the EU

working with the UN to monitor the treatment of workers implementing the project. We pressed the EU to ensure enhanced safeguards were in place and they have confirmed that the project implementer (UNOPS) will monitor whether workers are receiving an appropriate salary, and that basic health and safety standards are applied. This is alongside our continuing efforts to encourage reform of the Eritrean national service system.

Financial Services: Females

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Financial Conduct Authority's report Gender diversity in UK financial services, published in November 2019, and its finding that women constitute 17 per cent of FCA-approved individuals. [[HL6908](#)]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The government's aspiration is to see gender balance at all levels across financial services firms. A balanced workforce is good for business – it is good for customers, for profitability and workplace culture. HM Treasury's Women in Finance Charter reflects our ambition to see more women in senior roles in financial services firms. Charter signatories have committed to implement strategic actions to improve their gender balance at a senior level.

Our third annual review of the Women in Finance Charter was published on 23 June 2020 and demonstrated that the majority of signatories (81%) have met or are on track to meet their targets. Almost two thirds of signatories have increased the proportion of women in senior management over that period.

We have noted the findings of the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) report that gender diversity among FCA-approved individuals remains low and continue to use this and other evidence to encourage the industry to go further to improve gender diversity in financial services.

Food Poverty: Coronavirus

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking in response to the briefing by Oxfam The hunger virus: how COVID-19 is fuelling hunger in a hungry world, published on 12 July, on potential deaths from hunger globally caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in Yemen, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Afghanistan. [[HL6895](#)]

Baroness Sugg: The UK is concerned about food security in 2020. At the end of last year, 135 million people were facing acute food insecurity in 55 countries. This is set to increase, driven partly by COVID-19. We are working with international partners to monitor the situation and have adapted our social protection, agriculture and food security programmes, to support the most vulnerable.

In Yemen, food insecurity is increasing, substantially impacted by COVID-19 and ongoing conflict. Food prices have risen by 15% since the start of the year. In response, UK aid is supporting at least 300,000 vulnerable people each month to help buy food and treat 40,000 children for malnutrition.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, people experiencing acute food insecurity has increased from 15.6 million in 2019, to approximately 19.5 million in 2020. We are at the forefront of the humanitarian response, and our £262 million humanitarian programme will have provided lifesaving assistance to over 3 million people over 3 years.

In Afghanistan, an estimated 12.4 million people are facing 'crisis' or 'emergency' levels of food insecurity. DFID is working to provide life-saving support through the Multi-year Humanitarian Response Programme and the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund, to support the COVID-19 response. This will enable responders to implement the most urgent parts of the WHO plan, and provide vital water, sanitation and food assistance.

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Non-governmental Organisations

Asked by Lord Judd

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they are having with international development related non-governmental organisations; and how they plan to incorporate the experience of such organisations into the future policy of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. [[HL6673](#)]

Baroness Sugg: UK and international NGOs play an invaluable role in our fight against poverty. We will continue to engage closely with them as we shape the new Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office, which will unite our development expertise and first-class diplomatic service to make the UK a greater force for good in the world.

Gender-based Violence: Older People

Asked by Lord Collins of Highbury

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking in their role as a co-lead of the Action Coalition on gender-based violence to highlight older women's experiences of gender-based violence; and what plans they have to prioritise collecting data about violence against older women in low- and middle- income countries. [[HL6933](#)]

Baroness Sugg: The UK is committed to working with our Action Coalition co-leads to ensure our joint objectives focus on tackling all forms of violence against women and girls and reaching the most marginalised, including older women.

We recognise that there is a knowledge gap in understanding the different forms, causes, and consequences of violence against older women. To help

fill this gap, DFID is investing £6 million to support the UN Women-led flagship programme initiative on gender data – Making Every Woman and Girl Count – and the joint UN Programme on Violence Against Women and Girls data. These programmes are working to improve the production, availability, accessibility and use of quality data and statistics on gender equality and gender-based violence. This includes developing new global methodologies and standards for capturing older women’s experience of violence, including agreeing a minimum set of questions for women over 50 to be added to existing surveys or modules. We will ensure the Action Coalition draws on this learning from Making Every Woman and Girl Count.

DFID’s Inclusive Data Charter Action Plan (March 2019) also sets out our commitment to improve the quality, quantity and availability of inclusive and disaggregated data, including by age, in DFID and across the global system.

GO Outdoors: Insolvency

Asked by Lord Myners

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what plans they have to investigate the actions of JD Sports in relation to its decision to place its wholly owned subsidiary Go Outdoors into administration and then subsequently to reacquire that company from the administrators in a pre-pack deal without creditor liability. [HL6638]

Lord Callanan: Insolvency Practitioners appointed in an administration must report to the Insolvency Service on the conduct of an insolvent company’s directors within three months of the beginning of the insolvency. Where the Insolvency Service identifies evidence of misconduct an investigation will be undertaken where it is in the public interest to do so. Outcomes may include director disqualification or criminal prosecution where there is evidence of serious wrongdoing.

In a pre-pack administration, the appointed Insolvency Practitioner is under a duty to achieve the best result for the company’s creditors as a whole. There is a regulatory requirement to provide a statement to creditors explaining why a pre-pack sale was undertaken, what marketing was done, what valuations were obtained and any alternative options considered. This statement is also sent to the Insolvency Practitioner’s authorising body which monitors to ensure compliance with the regulatory requirements.

Where creditors are dissatisfied with the actions or decisions of an Insolvency Practitioner in relation to a pre-pack, they can raise the matter directly with the practitioner’s regulatory body.

Health and Social Services: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what plans are in place (1) to acquire, (2) to stock, and (3) to distribute,

gowns, masks, eye protection, gloves and other personal protective equipment, which is sufficiently adequate to protect clinical and care workers in the NHS and care sector in preparation for a potential second wave of COVID-19; and where any such plans are published. [HL6602]

Lord Bethell: We are working to expand the supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) from overseas and improve domestic manufacturing capability. We are expanding and improving the logistics network for delivering to the front line.

Since 25 February we have delivered over 2.2 billion items of PPE across the health and social care system within England, plus tens of millions more will have been distributed by the devolved administrations. Almost 28 billion items of PPE have been ordered from United Kingdom-based manufacturers and international partners to provide a continuous supply in the coming months.

Health and Social Services: Nutrition

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what plans they have, if any, to launch a nutrition skills training programme for community workers, including those from health, social care and third sector organisations, similar to the Nutrition Skills for Life programme by NHS Wales. [HL6607]

Lord Bethell: The United Kingdom Government is represented on Health Education England’s steering group to develop a competency framework for healthier weight. Health Education England’s Healthier Weight framework aims to describe the competencies that health and care staff working in any setting need to equip them to fulfil their role to promote a healthier weight. The Healthier Weight framework is attached.

The emphasis for this framework to help prevention of excess weight gain and can be applied across all groups of health and care staff working in any setting including frontline staff, managers, commissioners and leaders and relevant to charities that provide services around healthier weight. It may be used in other settings such as individual’s homes, care homes, nurseries, children’s centres, schools, colleges and workplaces and with any community or any group within the population.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Healthier Weight Framework [Healthier weight competency framework -Guidance March 2020.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-07-08/HL6607>

High Rise Flats: Insulation

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what assistance they are providing to those living in residential blocks

with prohibited aluminium composite material cladding who wish to sell their property. [HL6616]

Lord Greenhalgh: The Government has committed £1.6 billion to fund the remediation of high rise residential buildings with unsafe cladding. This includes the removal of aluminium composite material (ACM). In these cases the work is guaranteed and leaseholders are protected from costs.

In cases where there is a costed plan, a timetable to deliver and mitigating measures in place in the meantime, there should be little barrier to mortgage valuations and lending.

High Speed 2 Railway Line

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government who are the members of the HS2 land and property acquisition programme review, announced in May; what are the review's terms of reference; and whether external independent inputs will be taken into account as part of the review. [HL6656]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The review commissioned by the Minister for HS2, Andrew Stephenson MP, in May is being undertaken by officials in the Department for Transport supported by their counterparts in High Speed Two Limited. A single external consultant has also provided support to the review.

The terms of reference were intentionally wide-ranging, and required the review team to examine HS2 Ltd's land and property acquisition processes and, where the evidence demonstrates it, associated wider-government policies.

The review team has considered evidence from numerous independent external sources, both written and through stakeholder interviews. Discussions with practitioners in the land and property field possessing direct personal knowledge of HS2 transactions were a particular source of insight for the review.

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they plan to take in response to the report by the Infrastructure and Projects Authority Annual Report on Major Projects 2019–20, published on 9 July, and its finding that in relation to the HS2 programme, the "successful delivery of the project appears to be unachievable". [HL6706]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The IPA's report refers to the status of the HS2 project in September 2019. This was before the project was comprehensively reset in February 2020 with a revised budget and schedule, and provision of adequate contingency. Steps have also been taken to ensure the project is delivered in a more disciplined and transparent manner with, for example, a dedicated HS2 Minister appointed and bi-annual updates to be provided

to Parliament. As a result, we are confident HS2 is being delivered with the strict oversight needed.

Hospitals: Diagnosis

Asked by Lord Warner

To ask Her Majesty's Government to publish the latest waiting times for key NHS hospital diagnostic tests, including (1) MRI, (2) CAT, and (3) ultrasound, scans; and the equivalent figures for (a) six, and (b) 12, months previously. [HL6741]

Lord Bethell: Data for median waiting times for MRI, CT and Non-obstetric Ultrasound tests is provided in the following tables. It should be noted that all data is provisional and subject to review.

Data provided is between the months of May 2020 – May 2019 this is the most recent data available as collection and reporting has a two-month delay.

MRI

Date	Waiting time median (weeks)
May-20	7.7
Apr-20	6.5
Mar-20	3.1
Feb-20	2.1
Jan-20	1.9
Dec-19	2.6
Nov-19	2
Oct-19	2.1
Sep-19	1.9
Aug-19	2.2
Jul-19	2.1
Jun-19	2
May-19	2.2

CT

Date	Waiting time median (weeks)
May-20	4.7
Apr-20	5.3
Mar-20	2.6
Feb-20	1.8
Jan-20	1.6
Dec-19	2.3
Nov-19	1.7
Oct-19	1.8
Sep-19	1.7
Aug-19	1.8

<i>Date</i>	<i>Waiting time median (weeks)</i>
Jul-19	1.8
Jun-19	1.7
May-19	1.9

Non-obstetric ultrasound

<i>Date</i>	<i>Waiting time median (weeks)</i>
May-20	7.8
Apr-20	6.4
Mar-20	3
Feb-20	2
Jan-20	1.8
Dec-19	2.6
Nov-19	1.9
Oct-19	2.1
Sep-19	2
Aug-19	2.3
Jul-19	2.2
Jun-19	2.1
May-19	2.2

House of Lords: Trimble

Asked by Lord Campbell-Savours

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker what was the value of each contract awarded to Trimble Manhattan Space Scheduling by the House of Lords administration in each of the last four years. [HL6622]

Lord Laming: The Senior Deputy Speaker has asked me, as Chair of the Services Committee, to respond on his behalf. Trimble Manhattan Space Scheduling (Trimble) are engaged by Parliament to provide room booking software utilised by the Attendants office in managing meeting and committee rooms.

This contract has been held by the Parliamentary Digital Service (PDS) since 1 August 2012 and to date £95,536 has been spent. It is due to expire on 28 December 2020 and no further spend is expected on this contract.

Spend over the last four years with Trimble:

Financial Year 2016/17 spend - £0;

Financial Year 2017/18 spend - £23,868 (PDS);

Financial Year 2018/19 spend - £11,506 (PDS);

Financial Year 2019/20 spend - £7,956 (PDS)

The only parliamentary contract awarded to Trimble in the last four years is held by the Commons Northern Estate Programme (NEP).

Infrastructure

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by the Infrastructure and Projects Authority Annual Report on Major Projects 2019–20, published on 9 July, which shows that the successful delivery (1) of 32 projects were in doubt and categorised as amber-red risk, and (2) 11 projects appeared to be unachievable and categorised as a red risk, what cross-departmental steps they are taking to improve the (a) performance, (b) delivery, and (c) cost control, of major projects. [HL6707]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA) has a number of cross-departmental measures currently under way to improve the Government's delivery of major projects.

These include a new, more rigorous approach to accreditation for Government project delivery professionals, in order to drive skills in this area at all levels across Government.

The IPA is also strengthening the Government's assurance regime, to ensure that processes are followed with rigour and improve quality across all departments and projects.

Finally, the IPA is working across Government to ensure better estimation of costs and timescales, better benchmarking capability and more consistent application of key principles of cost estimation as part of the Treasury's 'Green Book' methodology.

Jobcentre Plus: Armed Forces

Asked by Lord Tunncliffe

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Jobcentre Plus districts (1) have, and (2) do not have, an Armed Forces lead. [HL6696]

Asked by Lord Tunncliffe

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Armed Forces support posts there are in each Jobcentre Plus district. [HL6697]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: The Department for Work and Pensions secured funding of around £5 million in the Chancellor's September 2019 Spending Round to bolster the role of its Armed Forces Champions. This additional funding means the Department will be able to fund dedicated, full time champion posts for this important work. It will also help to provide a consistent service supporting veterans, serving personnel and their families across the country. Deployment into these posts has been delayed due to the ongoing response to the Coronavirus pandemic; however, we remain committed to the posts.

We currently have part-time Armed Forces Champions in place in 36 of the 37 Jobcentre Plus Districts. One district is currently without a champion but recruitment is under way to fill that post.

All the Department's work coaches provide tailored and personalised support to members of the Armed Forces Community, working in partnership with their district Armed Forces Champion where necessary. In those areas where there are particularly high levels of demand, for example, garrison towns, this will form a significant part of the work done in individual Jobcentres.

Justice 4 Troops

Asked by Baroness Garden of Frognal

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the organisation Justice 4 Troops, established on 5 June to address military grievances. [HL6714]

Baroness Goldie: There is a well-established Service Complaints process for those personnel who wish to raise grievances about any aspect of their Service life. This is underpinned by legislation and independently overseen by the Service Complaints Ombudsman (SCO) for the Armed Forces. Justice 4 Troops is a community interest company incorporated in July 2019. Justice4Troops has no official mandate to intervene in grievances or their handling; this is a role it has self-appointed. Accordingly, no assessment has been made, nor is one appropriate. Representations received from this organisation are not afforded any particular status within the Ministry of Defence, but we do remain concerned to ensure that the individuals who engage with Justice4Troops are provided with unbiased advice to ensure that they do not miss the opportunity to raise any grievance through the official channels.

Local Government Finance

Asked by Baroness Thornhill

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether work has been postponed on (1) plans to introduce 100 per cent business rate retention, and (2) the Fair Funding Review; and what steps they are taking to progress reforms to local government finance. [HL6643]

Lord Greenhalgh: In April the government announced that it would not be implementing the Review of Relative Needs and Resources and the planned increase to the rate of business rates retention in 2021-22. This decision was taken to allow councils to focus on meeting the immediate public health challenges posed by the pandemic. As the local government finance system moves into a more stable position, we will engage with our partners in local government on a suitable timetable for continuing consultation and subsequently implementing a reform package.

Local Government: Ethnic Groups

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made, if any, of research published on 8 July

from the University of Manchester suggesting that BAME communities are underrepresented in local government. [HL6642]

Lord Greenhalgh: The government has read the report with interest. We are keen to promote diversity and make sure that everyone has the chance to succeed. Councils are independent employers and Councillors are democratically-elected. Government rightly has no role in any staffing decisions or electoral processes. However, we would encourage all councils to endeavour to build workforces, and encourage political parties to choose candidates that are diverse, represent the communities they serve and address any under-representations.

We are aware that the LGA want to encourage more people to stand as councillors as part of their 'Be a Councillor' campaign. The LGA agree that we need a numerous and diverse set of candidates and councillors to represent our numerous and diverse local communities, ensuring that local decision making is robust and well-informed.

Mortgages

Asked by Lord Allen of Kensington

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they will take to encourage mortgage lenders to reduce the proof of income burden on applicants who are self-employed. [HL6748]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The proof of income information requirements from lenders for all mortgage applicants, including self-employed individuals, are commercial decisions and the Government does not seek to intervene.

However, the current FCA rules on how firms should assess the affordability of mortgages from applicants are deliberately framed to accommodate both salaried and self-employed borrowers.

New applicants will be asked to provide information on their income and expenditure, but FCA rules allow firms to decide for themselves how best they satisfy themselves regarding income information. FCA rules are not reliant on documents such as payslips, for example lenders could choose to use company accounts or projected business plans.

NHS: Interpreters

Asked by Baroness Coussins

To ask Her Majesty's Government who is responsible for providing personal protective equipment to public service interpreters working on a freelance basis in the NHS. [HL4311]

Lord Bethell: Everybody working on the front line deserves to have the equipment they need to do their job safely and the Government is working around the clock to ensure enough supply is reaching the health and social care sector.

The provision of personal protective equipment to staff is the responsibility of individual hospitals.

Nigeria: Violence

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Sugg on 6 July (HL6060), what representations they have made to the United Nations Security Council about utilising peacekeeping forces to counter violent extremist organisation activity in (1) the North East, and (2) central-belt states, of Nigeria. [HL6770]

Baroness Sugg: Our current assessment is that terrorist activity in Nigeria is limited to North East Nigeria. We continue to support Nigeria and the other states affected by the conflict in the Lake Chad Basin - Niger, Chad and Cameroon - to tackle the terrorist threat and support communities. We work closely with the UN in the region, including through our support to the UN Development Programme stabilisation facility in North East Nigeria and the work of the UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel.

On the Middle Belt, the UK Government has engaged closely with the Federal Government of Nigeria, state governments, international partners and the National Economic Council to help respond to the complex drivers of intercommunal violence and push for solutions.

The UK Government has no plans to make representations to the UN Security Council on the deployment of peacekeeping forces to Nigeria. We do not assess their deployment to be the most effective or appropriate way to tackle the terrorist threat in North East Nigeria or the intercommunal violence in the Middle Belt.

Non-domestic Rates

Asked by Lord Allen of Kensington

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect to issue a call for evidence as part of the fundamental review of business rates, announced on 11 March; and when they anticipate that review to complete. [HL6747]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: On 21 July, HM Treasury published a Call for Evidence for the fundamental review of business rates. The Call for Evidence invites stakeholders to contribute their views on ideas for reform on all elements of the business rates system and on alternative taxes.

As set out in the Call for Evidence, the fundamental review will have an interim report in Autumn 2020, ahead of concluding in Spring 2021.

The Call for Evidence can be found on the gov.uk website.

Nutrition: Costs

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the weekly cost of the Eatwell Guide diet; and whether that cost is affordable (1) for recipients of Universal Credit, (2) for apprentices, and (3) for those on minimum wage, including the minimum wage rates for those under 25. [HL6605]

Lord Bethell: The Eatwell Guide is a tool to demonstrate the different types of foods and drinks, and the proportions in which they should be consumed, that can contribute towards a healthy, balanced diet. There are a number of ways to eat a diet in line with the Eatwell Guide.

A 2016 study looking at the cost of achieving a diet in line with the Eatwell Guide concluded that although achieving this would require large changes to the current average diet, these changes would not lead to significant changes in the price of the diet. A copy of the paper Eatwell Guide: modelling the dietary and cost implications of incorporating new sugar and fibre guidelines is attached.

Public Health England has not assessed the affordability of the Eatwell Guide for particular population groups including recipients of Universal Credit, apprentices and those on minimum wage.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Eatwell Guide [Eatwell Guide_modelling the dietary and cost implications of incorporating new sugar and fibre guidelines.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-07-08/HL6605>

Pet Travel Scheme

Asked by Lord Patten of Barnes

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made in arranging for a new system of pet travel requirements between the UK and the EU after 1 January 2021; and whether they intend to acquire status as a Part 1 listed country of the PETS Travel Scheme. [HL6680]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The Government is working with the European Commission to ensure that pet travel between the UK and EU continues smoothly after January 2021. The UK and Crown Dependencies submitted its application to become a Part 1 listed third country under Annex II of the EU Pet Travel Regulations to the European Commission, and this is our preferred position. It is now for the Commission to consider our application for listed status. The end of the Transition Period opens up new opportunities for managing our own pet travel arrangements, including ensuring that there are robust controls on disease and animal welfare.

Pregnancy: Ethnic Groups

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken, if any, to support pregnant BAME women during the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL6813]

Lord Bethell: On 15 June, the Chief Midwifery Officer, Prof Jacqueline Dunkley-Bent and the National Clinical Director for Maternity and Women's Health, Matthew Jolly, wrote to Local Maternity Systems to ask them to take four specific actions, which should minimise the additional risk of COVID-19 for black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) women and their babies by:

- Co-producing an operational policy to improve support ensuring clinicians have a lower threshold to review, admit and consider multidisciplinary escalation in women from a BAME background;
- Reaching out and reassuring pregnant BAME women with tailored communications. NHS England and NHS Improvement have produced a communications toolkit including, an animation, posters and information leaflets in 11 languages;
- Ensuring maternity staff discuss vitamins, supplements and nutrition in pregnancy; and
- Ensuring accurate recording of ethnicity data.

Prisons: Security

Asked by *Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many prisons are currently using the Security Categorisation Policy Framework; and when they expect all prisons in England and Wales to be using this framework. [HL6604]

Lord Keen of Elie: Nine establishments are using the Security Categorisation Policy Framework, all of which were involved in the live pilot of the revised procedures and use of the Digital Categorisation Service. Implementation of the framework across the adult male and young adult male estates was due to have begun in March but paused due to Covid-19. It is currently expected that implementation will start in the autumn with all male establishments using the framework by spring 2021. There are no immediate plans for implementation in the women's estate.

Property Guardians

Asked by *Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what protections they have put in place for property guardians who do not have a tenancy agreement. [HL6610]

Lord Greenhalgh: Property guardians are typically offered licences to occupy rather than tenancies. Anyone entering into such an arrangement should be aware that their rights may be more limited than on a standard tenancy agreement. We have published a property

guardian factsheet to enable potential or current property guardians to understand their rights.

If a property guardian is concerned about the condition of their property, they should contact their local authority, which has a duty to take action if serious hazards are present.

A local authority can inspect a property even when they haven't been contacted by tenants, if they think that there may be serious risks to the health and safety of those living in a guardian property - whether or not it is let on a tenancy or a licence. The Housing Act 2004 gives local authorities powers of entry in these cases.

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) applies across all tenures; it can be used to assess hazards in all residential premises including those let to property guardians and applies to all parts of a building that are occupied as a dwelling. If a local authority identifies a serious 'category 1' hazard, they have a duty to take action.

In regards to protections during COVID 19, all tenants and licensees who benefit from protection from eviction anyway under the Protection from Eviction Act 1977 will be protected from possession proceedings by the suspension of ongoing proceedings until 23 August 2020. If property guardians do not know whether they have a licence or a tenancy they should seek independent advice.

The Government has put in place an unprecedented support package to help prevent people getting into financial hardship or rent arrears and property guardian licence agreements are a valid proof of housing costs for entitlement to the housing element of Universal Credit.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Tenancy agreement [200720 Private renting for tenants_ tenancy agreements_ Tenancy types - GOV.UK - HL6610.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-07-08/HL6610>

Asked by *Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to prevent the exploitation of (1) property guardians, and (2) all those living in a property under a licensing arrangement. [HL6611]

Lord Greenhalgh: All property guardians, whether they are on a tenancy or licence agreement, should contact their local authority if they are concerned about property conditions, unlawful eviction or harassment. In some cases, property guardians may in fact have a tenancy even when the agreement is labelled as a licence. If property guardians do not know whether they have a licence or a tenancy they should seek independent advice.

If a local authority thinks that there may be serious risks to the health and safety of those living in a guardian property, they can inspect a property even when they haven't been contacted by tenants - whether or not it is let on a tenancy or a licence. The Housing Act 2004 gives local authorities powers of entry in these cases.

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) applies across all tenures; it can be used to assess hazards in all residential premises including those let to property guardians and applies to all parts of a building that are occupied as a dwelling. If a local authority identifies a serious ‘category 1’ hazard, they have a duty to take action.

Local authorities have strong enforcement powers and the Department published consolidated enforcement guidance for local authorities in April 2019 which sets out their duties when dealing with property guardian properties, including those on a licence agreement. This was accompanied by guidance for renters. We have also published a property guardian factsheet to help potential or current property guardians to understand their rights.

Property Guardians: Exploitation

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to pursue organised criminal gangs who exploit (1) property guardians, and (2) all those living in a property under a licensing arrangement. [HL6612]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: We are determined to crack down on the county lines gangs who are exploiting our children and have a devastating impact on our communities.

That is why we are delivering a £25m programme of investment to surge our activity against these ruthless gangs. Our overall package, launched in October last year includes:

- expanding the National County Lines Co-ordination Centre;
- increased disruption on the rail networks by the British Transport Police’s County Lines Taskforce;
- targeted operational activity against high harm lines in the three major exporting force areas (Met Police, Merseyside, West Midlands);
- investment in new technology including Automatic Number Plate Recognition;
- increased support for victims.

In respect of property guardians, local authorities have strong enforcement powers and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) published consolidated enforcement guidance for local authorities in April 2019 which sets out their duties when dealing with property guardian properties, including those on a licence agreement. This was accompanied by guidance for renters. MHCLG has also published a property guardian factsheet to help potential or current property guardians to understand their rights.

Additionally we are aware that Housing Associations are using their local knowledge to spot early signs of abuse and exploitation that could be linked to county lines.

Protective Clothing: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many batches of surgical face masks delivered to care homes and GPs during the COVID-19 pandemic were recalled because they were faulty; what assessment they have made of reports that some of those masks were out of date by seven years but were still used; where any such masks were sourced; and at what cost. [HL6338]

Lord Bethell: Two important customer alerts were issued on 22 May and 26 June regarding a product fault with Type IIR facemasks, sourced from Cardinal Health. The Cardinal Health Type IIR facemasks were subject to a formal shelf life extension process that enabled their shelf life to be extended and so were not out of date. The cost of these masks cannot be released due to commercial sensitivity.

Public Transport: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much they have spent on the COVID-19 communications campaign advising people to avoid using public transport; and what (1) plans they have for, and (2) associated spending they have allocated to, a communications campaign to encourage people to resume using public transport. [HL6685]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Department for Transport launched a campaign in May, with the objective of providing clear communications to avoid public transport unless the journey is essential and no other option (i.e. walking, cycling or driving) is available. The Department worked with operators across the transport network who amplified the message. The cost of the May and June activity, which had a primary message advising people to avoid to public transport, was £245k. This activity alone had reached more than 15 million people by 3 July 2020.

At the start of the campaign, the 2m social distancing rule meant public transport was running at 10% of capacity. To enable key workers to access the network safely, the department encouraged those who could avoid travel altogether, or use an alternative mode, to do so. Overcrowding has remained a risk as lockdown restrictions have been lifted and sectors have reopened, so managing demand to protect those who cannot work from home or travel in another way has remained a priority. The campaign to date has helped to prevent such overcrowding by providing clear and consistent advice to the public.

However, ‘avoid travel’ was just one message in a suite communicated to the public, and shared with our partners to disseminate. The campaign has also informed passengers about the steps they can take to protect themselves and others should they need to use the network. Materials and messages have been updated and

added regularly to reflect the evolving policy and guidance positions, including, for example, the move to mandatory use of face coverings.

The campaign is therefore not clearly split between advising people to avoid public transport and encouraging them to resume using it. It has, and will continue to, communicate a range of messages to different audiences and will shift over time to reflect the latest advice to the public. Our priority must be the safety of passengers, but when we are able to welcome more people back to the network, we will use the same channels and mechanisms utilised to date. This is an ongoing issue and further spending on communications will be a part of that.

Transport was also a key element of the Stay Alert campaign run by Cabinet Office, with an estimated £2.35 million invested up to 12 July 2020, accounting for 19% of Stay Alert investment. Cabinet Office have worked closely with stakeholders such as TfL who have provided free access to poster sites and Network Rail who have provided 30,000 48 sheet and 96 sheet advertising slots per week.

Republic of Ireland: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government on what date they were notified by the government of Ireland that passengers travelling from Great Britain to the Republic of Ireland would be required to quarantine for fourteen days. [HL6669]

Baroness Sugg: I refer the Honourable Lord to the answer I gave to his previous question (PQ HL5655) on 29 June.

School Meals

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to provide a healthy and nutritious school lunch programme for the forthcoming academic year. [HL6606]

Baroness Berridge: We expect that kitchens will be fully open from the start of the autumn term and normal legal requirements will apply about provision of food to all pupils who want it, including for those eligible for benefits-related free school meals or universal infant free school meals.

The Schools Food Standards provide the legislative framework to ensure schools provide children with healthy food and drink options, and to ensure that children get the energy and nutrition they need across the school day.

The standards define the foods and drinks that must be provided, which foods are restricted, and those, which must not be provided. They apply to all food and drink provided to pupils on and off school premises and during an extended school day (up to 6pm), including school

trips, breakfast clubs, tuck shops, mid-morning break, vending and after school clubs.

The department's advice on school food standards is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/standards-for-school-food-in-england>.

A summary of the standards and a practical guide are available from the school food plan website at:

<http://www.schoolfoodplan.com/resources/>.

We believe that the School Food Standards have been transformational in the way schools operate their meal services, but we know we must do more. We will be updating these standards to bring them into line with revised nutritional recommendations on sugar and fibre, and looking at how we can make the standards more consistent across the school day.

Shipping: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the proportion of registered UK seafarers who have been stranded abroad during the COVID-19 pandemic who have been repatriated; and what plans they have to ensure that all seafarers are given assistance to enable them to return to the UK. [HL6687]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Within the cruise sector we have repatriated 1,209 British national seafarers since 16 April. There are 471 British nationals remaining on cruise vessels globally but these are essential staff.

We continue to work with industry and the unions to get better overall data for British seafarers on other types of vessels.

Social Security Benefits: Prisoners on Remand

Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that (1) Housing Benefit, and (2) Universal Credit in respect of rent, is paid to prisoners on remand. [HL6637]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: The Department is routinely notified by Prison Services across England, Wales and Scotland when offenders enter custody, including those on remand. We have specialist teams to identify claimants who are in receipt of either Universal Credit or legacy benefits so that the appropriate action can be taken.

Social Services: Badges

Asked by Lord Rogan

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many CARE badges have been distributed to social care workers following the announcement by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on 15 April that these would

give recipients the same "recognitions and benefits" as NHS staff. [HL6579]

Lord Bethell: Since the Secretary of State's announcement around 15,000 badges have been distributed at no cost to social care providers or members of the workforce.

Additional badges of recognition have been procured and we expect to be able to start distribution of these badges shortly. Details of how they will be distributed to people working in social care who want to wear this badge will be available in due course.

Social Services: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Gale

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they are putting in place to restart safely social care services that stopped because of social distancing measures, including (1) respite care, and (2) day centres; how any such plans are being communicated to users of social care services; and what guidance they have provided to local authorities on the safe restart of those services. [HL6457]

Lord Bethell: We recognise the crucial role that day services and respite care play to provide care, support and respite for carers.

Decisions on the running and re-opening of day services are made on a local basis.

We are working with the Social Care Institute of Excellence, local government and other key sector partners, to publish guidance soon which will support local authorities and providers to restart day services. In addition, Public Health England is developing guidance on the use of personal protective equipment in community settings, which will be applicable to day services.

Local authorities and service providers should have maintained contact with carers and service users throughout the lockdown. They will now be discussing arrangements to reintroduce care packages including where possible respite care and breaks.

Somalia: Politics and Government

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the postponement by the Somalia National independent and Elections Commission of parliamentary and presidential elections from November 2020 to August 2021, what assessment they have made of the current political situation in Somalia. [HL6678]

Baroness Sugg: The UK supports inclusive, one-person-one-vote (OPOV) elections in Somalia in 2021, in line with Somali commitments and mutual goals of building longer-term stability. We have consistently underlined the need for urgent, constructive political dialogue between the Federal Government and the Federal Member States to build consensus, and for

accelerated progress on technical preparations to deliver timely OPOV elections.

Sports: Equality

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had, if any, with (1) Sport England, and (2) UK Sport, about ethnic diversity within elite sports governance. [HL6814]

Baroness Barran: The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport talks regularly to both Sport England and UK Sport about all aspects of diversity, including ethnic diversity. It welcomes the joint announcement made by both organisations on 13 July 2020 announcing a review of the Code for Sports Governance. This will include a substantive review of the elements of the Code that support equality, diversity and inclusion, particularly those that focus on the boards of sporting organisations. The aim will be to ensure the greater representation of people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds, disabled people or people with a long-term health condition, as well as female representation.

Starlings: Pest Control

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many licences have been issued by Natural England for the killing of starlings in each year since 2000; and how many starlings they estimate have been killed under such licences in each year since 2000. [HL6603]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Records show that Natural England (NE) has issued 122 licences for the control of starlings since 2007. Licence returns indicate that 2,918 birds have been killed during this period, although the actual number will be higher as not all licensees have submitted returns. We do not have earlier data since NE was vested in 2006.

The following table presents the licensing information available for each year from 2007. To note, NE underwent a system change in 2013 meaning that return information for that year is not available.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Licences issued</i>	<i>Numbers of starlings killed (Based on return data)</i>
2007	13	190
2008	14	456
2009	8	200
2010	12	393
2011	12	417
2012	17	739
2013	8	No returns received
2014	3	123

Year	Licences issued	Numbers of starlings killed (Based on return data)
2015	6	57
2016	10	152
2017	11	142
2018	4	49
2019	1	Information not yet available
2020	3	Information not yet available

Training: Private Sector

Asked by *The Earl of Shrewsbury*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what funding they intend to make available to enhance the availability of skills training at privately owned and operated skills training centres in the Midlands. [HL6640]

Baroness Berridge: The government previously announced on 31 August 2019 that it will invest an extra £400 million in 16 to 19 education in 2020-21. This is the largest injection of money in a single year since 2010 and represents an increase of 7% in overall 16 to 19 funding. As part of this, the base rate of 16 to 19 funding will increase by 4.7% in academic year 2020/21, from £4,000 to £4,188, for all types of 16 to 19 providers, including privately owned and operated skills training centres.

We are also continuing to invest in education and skills training for adults through the Adult Education Budget (AEB) (£1.34 billion in 2019/20 and 2020/21). From 2019/20 academic year, approximately 50% of the AEB has been devolved to 6 Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs), including the West Midlands, and to the Mayor of London, acting where appropriate through the Greater London Authority (GLA). These authorities are now responsible for the provision of AEB-funded adult education for their residents and allocation of the AEB to providers.

Independent training providers will have a key role to play in delivering the plans announced by my right hon. Friend, the Chancellor, on 8 July including for more apprenticeships, traineeships, and high value courses for school and college leavers. Additional funding is available to deliver these priorities and the way this will be made available will be confirmed shortly.

Any requests for information on the topic of adult provision for residents in a devolved area, such as the West Midlands, should now be directed to the individual MCA. The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) will continue to be responsible for the remaining AEB in non-devolved areas.

Both further education colleges and independent training providers are autonomous organisations and as

such they are free to deliver provision to meet the needs of local learners and labour market.

Transport: Coronavirus

Asked by *Baroness Randerson*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much new COVID-19 funding they have spent to date (1) in total, and (2) per passenger, on (a) roads, (b) rail, (c) bus, (d) coach, (e) light-rail, (f) walking, and (g) cycling. [HL6684]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Government's new spending to date due to COVID-19 is £3.473 billion. This includes funding brought forward from 2020-21. £2.8 billion has been spent on rail franchised operators, £84 million on buses outside London and £42 million on walking and cycling. Light rail has been allocated £29 million. It is important to note that the spend on buses, walking and cycling only reflects spend to date, and significant further sums will be spent as bus services continue to ramp up and local authorities roll out active travel schemes.

Transport for London has received £547 million. Other funding, including roads and coaches, has come from existing budgets. Government does not hold data for COVID-19 funding per passenger.

USA: World Health Organisation

Asked by *The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have sought guarantees that, further to the government of the United States' formal notice of withdrawal from the World Health Organization (WHO) from 2021, that government will meet the conditions for withdrawal set out in the 1948 Joint Resolution Providing for membership and participation by the United States in the WHO; and in particular the stipulation that the financial obligations of that government to the WHO must be met in full for the WHO's current fiscal year. [HL6676]

Lord Bethell: The Department is regularly in discussions with other countries including the United States on a wide range of issues relating to the international response to COVID-19. The United States continues to play an important role on global health, and we will continue to work with the United States and other international partners to tackle the current crisis. The specific conditions of the United States' withdrawal from the World Health Organization are a matter for the United States and the WHO. The United Kingdom has a strong and committed relationship with the WHO and, as the second largest Member State donor, continues to work closely with the WHO. The UK has already contributed £75 million to help the WHO-led international efforts to stop the spread of the virus and end the pandemic and the UK has no plans to stop funding the WHO, which has an

important role to play in leading the global health response to COVID-19.

VAT: Tax Rates and Bands

Asked by Lord Allen of Kensington

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to extend the VAT cut for the hospitality and tourism sector to high street retailers. [[HL6745](#)]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: In light of the COVID-19 outbreak, the Chancellor has introduced a range of measures to help individuals and businesses through the pandemic, including grants, loans and relief from business rates at a cost of more than £300 billion.

The temporary reduced rate of VAT will support the tourism and hospitality sectors and will help over 150,000 businesses and protect over 2.4 million jobs. There are currently no plans to expand the scope of the temporary VAT reduction to include high street retail businesses. However, the Government keeps all taxes under review.

Index to Statements and Answers

Written Statements.....1	
Consultation on 2025 UK Border Strategy.....1	Coronavirus: Protective Clothing 11
Deployment of 5G and Extending Mobile Coverage.....1	Coronavirus: Protective clothing 11
Hong Kong: British National (Overseas) Visa and Suspension of Extradition Treaty2	Coronavirus: Quarantine..... 11
Independent Office for Police Conduct: Annual Report and Accounts3	Coronavirus: X-rays 12
London Croughton Annex.....3	Debts: Developing Countries..... 12
Machinery of Government: Data Use.....3	Dental Services: Coronavirus 12
Police and Crime Commissioner Model: Review 4	Department of Health and Social Care: Written Questions 13
Public Bodies 2019 and Public Appointments Data Report 2019.....4	Disability: Social Services..... 13
UK Anti-Corruption Strategy: Year 25	Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency: Staff..... 13
Written Answers.....6	Electronic Publishing: VAT 13
Advertising: Taxation.....6	Environment Bill: Coronavirus..... 13
Air Pollution: Ethnic Groups.....6	Eritrea: Industrial Health and Safety 13
Alzheimer’s Disease: Carers6	Financial Services: Females 14
Apprentices: Coronavirus.....6	Food Poverty: Coronavirus..... 14
Arts and Culture: Finance.....6	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Non-governmental Organisations..... 14
Asthma: Health Services7	Gender-based Violence: Older People..... 14
Aviation and Bus Services: Coronavirus.....7	GO Outdoors: Insolvency 15
Broadband: Rural Areas7	Health and Social Services: Coronavirus 15
Bus Services: Coronavirus7	Health and Social Services: Nutrition..... 15
Business: Females8	High Rise Flats: Insulation 15
Business: Insurance8	High Speed 2 Railway Line..... 16
Carbon Emissions.....8	Hospitals: Diagnosis 16
Care Homes: Coronavirus8	House of Lords: Trimble 17
Cash Dispensing: Coronavirus9	Infrastructure 17
Colombia: Armed Conflict.....9	Jobcentre Plus: Armed Forces 17
Colombia: Arms Trade9	Justice 4 Troops 18
Coronavirus9	Local Government Finance..... 18
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.....9	Local Government: Ethnic Groups 18
Coronavirus: Death.....10	Mortgages 18
Coronavirus: Disease Control.....10	NHS: Interpreters..... 18
Coronavirus: Employment.....10	Nigeria: Violence..... 19
Coronavirus: Ethnic Groups11	Non-domestic Rates..... 19
	Nutrition: Costs..... 19
	Pet Travel Scheme 19

Index to Statements and Answers

Pregnancy: Ethnic Groups.....	20
Prisons: Security.....	20
Property Guardians.....	20
Property Guardians: Exploitation.....	21
Protective Clothing: Coronavirus.....	21
Public Transport: Coronavirus.....	21
Republic of Ireland: Coronavirus.....	22
School Meals.....	22
Shipping: Coronavirus.....	22
Social Security Benefits: Prisoners on Remand.....	22
Social Services: Badges.....	22
Social Services: Coronavirus.....	23
Somalia: Politics and Government.....	23
Sports: Equality.....	23
Starlings: Pest Control.....	23
Training: Private Sector.....	24
Transport: Coronavirus.....	24
USA: World Health Organisation.....	24
VAT: Tax Rates and Bands.....	25