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**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

# **HOUSE OF LORDS**

## **WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS**

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

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<b>Lord Agnew of Oulton</b>	Minister of State, Cabinet Office and Treasury
<b>Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon</b>	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
<b>Lord Ashton of Hyde</b>	Chief Whip
<b>Baroness Barran</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
<b>Baroness Berridge</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education and Department for International Trade
<b>Lord Bethell</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care and Whip
<b>Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist</b>	Whip
<b>Lord Callanan</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
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<b>Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Penn</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Scott of Bybrook</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Stedman-Scott</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
<b>Baroness Sugg</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
<b>Lord True</b>	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
<b>Baroness Vere of Norbiton</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
<b>Baroness Williams of Trafford</b>	Minister of State, Home Office
<b>Viscount Younger of Leckie</b>	Whip

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# Written Statements

Wednesday, 30 September 2020

## Boundary Commission for Wales: Appointments

[HLWS476]

**Lord True:** My hon. Friend, the Minister of State for the Constitution and Devolution (Chloe Smith), has today made the following Written Statement:

I should like to inform the House that my Rt Hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office (Michael Gove), has made the following appointments under Schedule 1 to the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 following a competition run in accordance with the Governance Code on Public Appointments:

- Huw Vaughan Thomas, appointed as a Member of the Boundary Commission for Wales, effective from 5 October 2020 until 4 October 2025; and
- Sam Hartley, appointed as a Member of the Boundary Commission for Wales, effective from 5 October 2020 until 4 October 2025.

## Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Obligations of Undertakings) (Amendment) (England) Regulations

[HLWS474]

**Lord Callanan:** My Honourable friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Business and Industry) Nadhim Zahawi has today made the following statement:

On 26 March 2020, the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020 came into force, imposing restrictions on people's movements and gatherings, and requiring the closure of certain retail and public premises, in the interest of public health in light of the coronavirus pandemic. A review of these Regulations must take place at least every 28 days to ensure the restrictions remain necessary. Those Regulations are now referred to as the No.2 Regulations, given amendments made. They were last amended on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020. Separately, BEIS' regulations: the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Obligations of Hospitality Undertakings) (England) Regulations 2020 came into force on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> September, where hospitality sector business had placed on them obligations which had previously only featured in HMG guidance.

Taking into account scientific advice, and taking into consideration the Government's assessment, we now require further amendments to the Regulations to give effect to changes as announced by the Prime Minister on 23 September 2020 to take effect at midnight on Sunday evening/Monday morning 28 September 2020.

The changes coming into effect are:

- That where relevant premises are identified by the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Wearing of Face Coverings in a Relevant Place) (England) Regulations 2020, that businesses will have to display signage or use other means to remind people of their legal obligation to wear face coverings;
- That in cafés, restaurants, bars and public houses, that singing, dancing and loud music are not permitted, save for specific exceptions being permitted;
- That provisions which were included in BEIS original coronavirus regulations regarding respecting the rule of six in relation to taking bookings, admitting parties or allowing mingling of groups, this has been extended beyond hospitality as it was originally drafted, to mirror the scope of the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Collection of Contact Details etc and Related Requirements) Regulations 2020.

These Regulations should come into force after midnight on 28 September 2020. The hope was to have laid before Parliament on 25 September 2020 but we were timed out as Parliament rose at 15 00hrs.

These Regulations follow the made affirmative procedure. These changes are being made under the emergency procedure, approved by Parliament, because it is necessary for government to respond quickly to the reduced rate of transmission and our assessment of the current situation. While any restrictions and requirements imposed by law place a significant burden on business, the rising R number in England, and other more restrictive measures elsewhere, mean that it is incumbent on government to act swiftly to prevent more onerous restrictions or closures being required.

The provisions outlined in these new regulations are necessary to prevent, protect against, control or provide a public health response to the incidence or spread of infection in England with the coronavirus. These additional restrictions offer an opportunity for business to operate with restrictions, rather than close. These amendments have been prepared urgently. In order to provide urgent clarity and certainty to the public and businesses of the changes being made and what activity is and is not allowed, I have decided that it is necessary for these Regulations to come into force on 28 September 2020 and to then be laid before Parliament forthwith.

Under section 45R of the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984, the relevant instrument may be made without a draft having been laid and approved by Parliament if it contains a declaration that the person making it is of the opinion that, by reason of urgency, it is necessary to make it without a draft being so laid and approved.

I have included such a declaration in these amending regulations.

I hope you understand why we proceeded in this way, and stand ready, as ever, to answer any questions you may have.

Publicly available Government guidance on Gov.uk is being updated to ensure it fully corresponds with the

amended Regulations. These remain strict measures, but they are measures that we must take in order to protect our NHS and to save lives.

## Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry

[HLWS472]

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

I am today announcing final Terms of Reference for the Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry. The Inquiry follows the conclusion of the group litigation involving postmasters and Post Office Limited (Post Office Ltd) in December 2019, the Prime Minister's commitment on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2020 and my Written Ministerial Statement of 10th June 2020.

The Horizon dispute and court case has been ongoing for many years and has had a hugely negative impact on affected postmasters and their families. In his judgments in the "Common Issues" and "Horizon Issues" trials, Mr Justice Fraser identified significant failings at Post Office Ltd and with the Horizon IT system over a number of years.

The Government has formed this Inquiry to fully understand these events, gather available evidence and ensure lessons have been learnt so that this cannot occur again. Having listened to affected postmasters, the Government has expanded the scope of the Inquiry to ensure it gets answers to questions that postmasters and others are seeking. The Secretary of State for the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has therefore invited Sir Wyn Williams FLSW to conduct an Inquiry following the judgments of Mr Justice Fraser in the Bates v Post Office Group Litigation into Post Office Ltd's Horizon IT system and other related issues arising from the findings of Justice Fraser and the settlement reached following this trial.

To reflect the additional focus of Sir Wyn's work to that announced in June, it will be called an Inquiry, rather than a Review. Following commitments from both Post Office Ltd and Fujitsu UK to cooperate with the Inquiry, the Inquiry will be run on a non-statutory basis and have the following Terms of Reference:

Government wants to be fully assured that through the Inquiry there is a public summary of the failings that occurred, which were associated with Post Office Ltd's Horizon IT system. The Inquiry will draw on the findings made by Mr Justice Fraser from the Bates v Post Office Group Litigation (in particular Judgment (No3) "Common Issues" and Judgment (No 6) "Horizon issues") and other evidence, listen to those that have been most affected, understand what went wrong, and assess whether lessons have been learned and concrete changes have taken place or are underway at Post Office Ltd.

The Inquiry shall:

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

B: Build upon the findings of Mr Justice Fraser, by obtaining all available relevant evidence from Post Office Ltd, Fujitsu and BEIS to establish a clear account of the implementation and failings of Horizon over its lifecycle;

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

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

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

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

The Inquiry will consider only those matters set out in the preceding sections A–F. Post Office Ltd's prosecution function, matters of criminal law, the Horizon group damages settlement, the conduct of current or future litigation relating to Horizon and/or the engagement or findings of any other supervisory or complaints mechanisms, including in the public sector, are outside the Inquiry's scope.

The Inquiry will be led by Sir Wyn Williams FLSW, as the Chair of the Inquiry. He will be supported by up to four Independent Advisers. These Independent Advisers will support Sir Wyn Williams by providing advice on the sources, content and interpretation of evidence received as appropriate. They may also provide independent scrutiny and challenge in relation to emerging findings and recommendations.

The Inquiry should make any recommendations it sees fit, including actions that may, in its view, be appropriate as a result of its findings. The Inquiry will aim to submit its findings to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy at the latest by Summer 2021. The

final report will be published by the Secretary of State and the Government will respond in due course.

In order to understand the range of issues fully and provide constructive challenge, the Inquiry will undertake engagement with significant stakeholder groups, including current and former postmasters, Post Office Ltd, Fujitsu UK, BEIS and other third parties to identify information that is relevant to and within the scope of the Inquiry.

### **Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act: Section 46 Report**

[HLWS473]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Section 57(3) of the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018 (“the Act”) provides that, if any report required by the Act is not laid before Parliament at the relevant time, the appropriate Minister must publish a written statement explaining the reasons.

On 11 April 2019 the Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office laid before Parliament the Sanctions (EU Exit) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2019 (S.I. 2019/843) (“the correction regulations”) to correct minor errors in a number of sanctions regulations that had been made under the Act during March 2019.

In making the correction regulations, the Minister was required by section 45(2)(b) of the Act to consider in respect of each discretionary purpose (i.e. a purpose which is not in compliance with a UN or any other international obligation) of the sanctions regulations being amended by the correction regulations:

- a) that carrying out that purpose would meet one or more of the conditions in paragraphs (a) to (i) of section 1(2) of the Act,
- b) that there are good reasons to pursue that purpose, and
- c) that the imposition of sanctions is a reasonable course of action for that purpose.

The Minister was further required by section 46(2) of the Act to lay a report before Parliament at the same time as the correction regulations explaining why he was of that opinion that the discretionary purposes had been met.

In this case, the Minister reached the conclusions in respect of section 45(2)(b) for substantially the same reasons as set out in the statutory reports that the Minister had laid before Parliament, in the preceding month, alongside the following Statutory Instruments:

- on 7 March in respect of the Iran (Sanctions) (Nuclear) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (S.I. 2019/461) (available at:

[https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2019/461/pdfs/ukxi\\_od\\_20190461\\_en.pdf](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2019/461/pdfs/ukxi_od_20190461_en.pdf));

- on 8 March in respect of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (Sanctions) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (S.I. 2019/411) (available at:

[https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2019/411/pdfs/ukxi\\_od\\_20190411\\_en.pdf](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2019/411/pdfs/ukxi_od_20190411_en.pdf));

- on 15 March in respect of the Counter-Terrorism (International Sanctions) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (S.I. 2019/573) (available at:

[https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2019/573/pdfs/ukxi\\_od\\_20190573\\_en.pdf](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2019/573/pdfs/ukxi_od_20190573_en.pdf)).

However, due to a regrettable administrative oversight in the department, the report required by section 46(2) of the Sanctions Act was not laid before Parliament. The responsible department has amended its practices to ensure that all statutory reports are laid before Parliament as required.

### **Windrush Lessons Learned Review Response**

[HLWS475]

**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:

Today we are publishing the Home Office’s Comprehensive Improvement Plan, in response to the Windrush Lessons Learned Review. We have worked closely with community leaders and the Cross-Government Windrush Working Group to get this important work right, and I am pleased to have the backing of co-chair Bishop Derek Webley on the steps we are taking. I am also grateful to independent reviewer Wendy Williams for the help she has given in shaping our approach.

The Windrush Lessons Learned Review, published in March, exposed unacceptable failings in the Home Office over many years and an ‘institutional ignorance and thoughtlessness towards the issue of race and the history of the Windrush Generation’. I have already accepted Wendy Williams’ important findings and repeated my heartfelt apology for the suffering that members of the Windrush Generation endured.

The Comprehensive Improvement Plan sets out the action we are taking to put this right and to ensure the mistakes of the past can never be repeated.

It details the work taking place across the Department under the five themes I previously laid out.

#### *Righting the Wrongs and Learning from the Past*

We are determined to ensure the Windrush Generation have the full help and support they deserve. More than £2.5 million has now been offered through the Windrush Compensation Scheme and over 13,300 documents have been provided to over 11,500 individuals confirming their status or British citizenship. We are doing more to reach those affected and encourage them to come forward, via a new national communications campaign.

Every member of Home Office staff will also undertake mandatory training on the history of migration and race in the UK so that they better understand the impact of departmental decisions, including when developing and applying immigration policy.

### *An Inclusive Workforce*

We have relaunched our Race Action Plan to help improve the diversity of staff in senior roles and ensure the Home Office reflects the diverse communities it serves. The Permanent Secretary has commissioned an overhaul of how performance is managed to better support Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues. To provide robust challenge to our plans to make the Home Office more diverse, external experts will also be invited to join the refreshed strategic advisory board we have established.

### *Openness to Scrutiny*

I have directed my officials to engage with community leaders, civil society and the public throughout the policymaking process to understand real-life impacts. It is crucial that the department is receptive to outside challenge, so I am creating a new Community and Stakeholder Engagement Hub at the centre of the Home Office. This will draw on best practice to build knowledge and skills across the department.

We recognise the particular circumstances of those who travel to this country to work and live and so we are consulting with the Cross-Government Windrush Working Group to recommend how best to engage with migrant communities directly and facilitate their feedback into our policy development and operational activity.

In addition, we are overhauling the department's risk management framework to ensure all staff have the knowledge and responsibility to act upon risks that are identified.

### *Inclusive and Robust Policy Making*

We are improving how we assess the effect of our policies on people from different backgrounds, including by carrying out more training for staff on how to do this well. We have worked with the Equality and Human Rights Commission on its investigation into how the department fulfilled its Public Sector Equality Duty on policies affecting the Windrush Generation. Following the publication of their report, we will work with them to

ensure this important duty is fully considered in all our work.

We are also putting in place a set of policy tests to ensure the key findings from the Windrush Lessons Learned Review are applied as new policy is developed.

### *A More Compassionate Approach – People Not Cases*

This theme is the crux of the cultural change the Permanent Secretary and I want to see. The Home Office must embrace the human impact of its work and empower staff throughout the department to do the same. To support this, I have launched a new mandatory 'Face Behind the Case' training course for all UK Visa and Immigration staff, with plans to expand this to other areas. A Young People's Board is being established to gain crucial insight from those who have recently experienced the immigration system. We are also making rapid progress on the new vision for the Home Office, consulting staff on the core values we all want to embody.

I have already committed to a full review and evaluation of the compliant environment. Whilst it is right that the department acts against those who are in the UK illegally, we continue to look closely at how innocent people were wrongly caught up in policies designed to target law breakers. The system must be strong, but it also must be just, so if problems are found, I will fix them.

The Comprehensive Improvement Plan will help transform the Home Office and deliver the lasting and meaningful change the Windrush Generation deserve. We will monitor our progress and welcome Wendy Williams' return in September 2021 where I'm confident she will see the start of a genuine culture shift.

More detail is available in the Comprehensive Improvement Plan, which has been laid before Parliament (CP 293), available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/windrush-lessons-learned-review-response-comprehensive-improvement-plan>

Copies are also available from the Vote Office.

## Written Answers

Wednesday, 30 September 2020

### Armed Forces: Commonwealth

Asked by *Lord Touhig*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans, if any, they have to help armed forces personnel from Commonwealth countries to settle in the UK. [HL8214]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The Government highly values the service of all members of HM Forces, including Commonwealth nationals.

It is for these reasons we explicitly provide for non-UK veterans discharged from HM Forces to obtain settlement in the UK after having served for four years or more or having been discharged for medical reasons due to their service.

The Ministry of Defence make clear to foreign and Commonwealth recruits into the Forces the process by which they and their families can attain settlement in the UK and the costs involved.

### Aviation: Coronavirus

Asked by *Baroness McGregor-Smith*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much financial support they plan to provide to the aviation industry in the UK to support that industry during the COVID-19 pandemic; and how they calculated the amount of such support required. [HL8192]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The aviation sector is crucial to the UK's economy and businesses across the industry are able to draw on the unprecedented package of economic measures we have put in place during this time. This includes a Bank of England Covid Corporate Financing Facility scheme and the job retention scheme, both of which have been used by the aviation sector.

In exceptional circumstances, where a viable company has exhausted all options and its failure would disproportionately harm the economy, the Chancellor has made clear, the Government may consider bespoke support on a 'last resort' basis. We will notify Parliament of the spend incurred as a result of any deal.

### Carbon Emissions

Asked by *Lord Browne of Ladyton*

To ask the Leader of the House what plans she has to arrange a debate on the report by the Committee on Climate Change Reducing UK emissions: 2020 Progress report to Parliament, published on 25 June. [HL8236]

**Baroness Evans of Bowes Park:** My Noble Friend the Government Chief Whip does not intend to schedule such a debate in Government time. Members who wish to

initiate a debate of their own are able to do so by tabling a question for short debate. Subject to the progress of legislative business, it is expected that questions for short debate will be re-introduced during October.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

B Evans signed [Scan\_Isabelle Tombs\_20200930-132706\_2708\_001.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:  
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-09-17/HL8236>

### China and Hong Kong: Travel Information

Asked by *Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the advisory warning issued by the government of the United States on 14 September against travel to mainland China and Hong Kong; what assessment they have made of the risk to UK citizens travelling to those destinations of the government of China imposing "arbitrary detention and exit bans" (1) to compel cooperation with investigations, (2) to pressure family members to return to China from abroad, (3) to influence civil disputes, and (4) to "gain bargaining leverage over foreign governments". [HL8107]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We have taken note of the advisory warning to US citizens issued by the US Government on 14 September.

On 11 September, the FCDO amended the travel advice for mainland China to highlight the risk of arbitrary detention, including for British nationals. China's authorities have under certain circumstances detained foreigners citing 'endangering national security'. The advice explains that National Security is interpreted broadly and you may be detained without having intended to break the law. This change did not raise the level of our advice, but was made in order to clearly and factually reflect recent incidents.

FCDO Travel Advice also highlights the possibility of travel bans being imposed in mainland China on those suspected of committing a crime. If an individual is subject to detention or a travel ban, the level of assistance the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office can provide is set out in our publically available guidance 'Support for British nationals abroad'. This includes raising individual cases with the Chinese authorities.

The FCDO travel advice for Hong Kong details the risks under the new National Security Law of mainland authorities detaining individuals under the terms of the law, with the maximum penalty of life imprisonment.

### Confucius Institutes

Asked by *Lord Goodlad*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have received regarding the

activities of (1) Confucius Institutes in universities, and (2) Confucius Classrooms in schools; and what their response has been. [HL8119]

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** A number of UK higher education providers host Confucius Institutes and are responsible for ensuring their partnerships are managed appropriately with the right due diligence in place.

The government has received queries regarding Confucius Institutes and Confucius Classrooms, and it takes seriously any concerns regarding the operation of international organisations at UK schools and universities. The government will continue to support the higher education sector and other related bodies to promote mutually beneficial international partnerships and UK values.

We encourage providers (including schools), if they have any concerns, to contact the Department for Education with any queries regarding their international collaborations.

### Crown Court

*Asked by Baroness Morgan of Huyton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many courtrooms in the Crown Court of England and Wales are currently set aside for the exclusive use of members of the public and press to observe (1) jury trials, and (2) hearings other than trials, such as sentences. [HL8194]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** The information requested is not held centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost. Public hearings, including those that are partly remote hearings, continue to take place in open court rooms, and access to observe these is via the public gallery. Special arrangements have been put in place to ensure physical access to jury trials for the media and members of the public, who have been able to attend court throughout the pandemic, if safe to do so. In order to allow appropriate social distancing to be maintained at all times, a second courtroom linked by closed circuit TV may be provided to enable the media and others to watch proceedings.

### Crown Court: Video Conferencing

*Asked by Baroness Morgan of Huyton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to enable Crown Court proceedings to be viewed remotely from outside the court estate. [HL8195]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** Open justice is a fundamental principle in our courts and tribunals system and will continue to be so as we increase the use of audio and video technology.

Since the introduction of the Coronavirus Act, any hearing participant or member of the public may, with the permission of the judge, join a hearing remotely from

outside the court estate, using an internet enabled device to access the Cloud Video Platform.

### Disease Control

*Asked by The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what urgent action they are taking, together with international partners, to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on global efforts to address (1) HIV and AIDS, (2) tuberculosis, and (3) malaria. [HL8191]

**Baroness Sugg:** COVID-19 threatens to reverse hard-won gains in HIV, TB and malaria. This Government is working hard with international partners to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on global efforts to address these diseases.

Many of our partners are taking urgent action on all three diseases, including the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. The UK is the second biggest donor to the Global Fund's fifth and sixth replenishments. To date, the Global Fund has provided up to US \$1 billion to help countries adapt HIV, TB and malaria programmes in the face of COVID-19, ensuring essential services such as testing, treatment and access to medicines can continue and also to strengthen health systems more broadly.

The UK is also supporting marginalised groups at risk of HIV - such as LGBT+ people, sex workers, mothers and young children - to advocate for their needs and rights in the pandemic. And we continue to invest in research and product development, working with partners to provide tools that are urgently needed to fight all three diseases. For example, UK support to Unitaid is enabling developing countries to access pioneering technology for HIV, TB and malaria.

### Domestic Abuse: Coronavirus

*Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the level of domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic in the UK. [HL8207]

*Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with groups supporting victims of domestic violence in the UK during the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL8208]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** During this unprecedented time we have had regular and frequent discussions with domestic abuse organisations, the Domestic Abuse and Victims' Commissioners, law enforcement and other Government Departments to monitor and assess the impact of COVID-19 on victims of domestic abuse.

We are aware that domestic abuse helplines have reported significant increases in calls during lockdown, some of which may be due to increased awareness or enquiries from friends or families. The police have also



reported an increase in reported domestic abuse incidents based on provisional data (a 6% increase in the four weeks up to 5 July compared to the same period last year). What is critical is that victims are able to reach out for advice or support if they need to do so.

That is why the Government has ensured the availability of information on domestic abuse and sources of advice and support including through the #YouAreNotAlone campaign, and provided funding to ensure that vital support services continue to be available.

In May, the Government announced £76 million of the £750 million package of support for charities would go towards groups supporting survivors of domestic abuse, sexual violence and modern slavery as well as to ensure that vulnerable children and young people continue to get the help they need.

In addition, the Home Office has provided £1.2 million of funding to domestic abuse organisations to help bolster helplines and online services to ensure that these remain available to victims.

### Education: Finance

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to provide financial support (1) to further education, and (2) to sixth form, colleges. [HL8212]

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

In addition, through the 16-19 Tuition Fund we are providing funding of up to £96 million for the 2020-21 academic year. This will enable sixth form colleges, general further education (FE) colleges and other 16-19 providers to provide small group tuition for disadvantaged students whose learning has been disrupted as a result of COVID-19.

We are also continuing to invest in education and skills training for adults through the Adult Education Budget (AEB) (£1.34 billion in the 2020-21 academic year).

We have introduced a change to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) AEB Funding Rules for the 2020-21 academic year, to enable providers to use their Learner Support funds to purchase IT devices and meet learners' IT connectivity costs.

We have also funded professional development support for staff to improve their skills and confidence in delivering online learning through funding the Education and Training Foundation and the EdTech Demonstrator Programme which delivers free training for FE providers.

The ESFA will continue to pay grant funded providers their scheduled monthly profiled payments for the 2020-

21 academic year. Where applicable, providers were able to apply for the ESFA Post 16 and European Social Fund provider relief schemes for support. For colleges in significant financial difficulties the existing support arrangements remain in place, including short-term emergency funding.

My right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has announced an extensive and unprecedented package of support measures for businesses and employees - FE providers can apply to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme for non-grant-funded employees, which has been extended until the end of October 2020.

In addition, we are funding 7 College Collaboration Fund projects to develop new high-quality digital curriculum content which will begin to be available for use by the sector from the Autumn.

In March this year, my right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that we are going to transform FE colleges across the country, investing £1.5 billion in upgrading the FE college estate by 2025-6. On 29 June my right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister announced that £200 million of this capital funding would be brought forward to this year. This funding has now been provided to FE colleges and they are taking forward projects to improve the condition of their estate, providing a welcome boost to the economy.

We are looking carefully at all elements of FE funding in preparation for the forthcoming Spending Review.

### Hatun Tash

*Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether Hatun Tash was detained by the police on 13 September; if so, on what grounds; whether there are any restrictions in place on Hatun Tash's ability to speak (1) at Speaker's Corner, or (2) publicly elsewhere; and if so, why any such restrictions are in place. [HL8201]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** We do not comment on individual cases.

### Marriage: Humanism

*Asked by Baroness Whitaker*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to allow commercial wedding celebrants to perform legally recognised marriages without being precluded from carrying on a business of solemnising marriages for the purpose of profit or gain. [HL8001]

*Asked by Baroness Whitaker*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to consider extending legal recognition of humanist marriages since 2013; and what further plans they have to do so. [HL8002]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** Reform to fundamental marriage law in England and Wales needs to be wholesale

and not undertaken on a piecemeal basis. That is why we invited the Law Commission last year to review the law on how and where couples may marry. As part of that review, the Law Commission will make recommendations about how marriage by humanists and other non-religious belief organisations could be incorporated into a revised or new scheme for all marriages that is simple, fair and consistent.

The Law Commission's consultation on weddings also considers how the law could allow independent celebrants to solemnize legal weddings. The Government will decide on provision on the basis of the Law Commission's recommendations.

The Law Commission published its consultation paper on 3 September and will welcome contributions from all stakeholders.

### Marriage: Reform

*Asked by Baroness Blackstone*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 3 August (HL7029) and by Lord Keen of Elie on 4 August (HL7031), what is the timetable for (1) their proposed interim reform of the law governing approved premises for marriages and civil partnerships, (2) the proposed limited reform and non-legislative options relating to religious weddings, and (3) the implementation of the provisions in the Civil Partnership, Marriages and Deaths (Registration Etc) Act 2019 for the introduction of an electronic system of marriage registration and the update of the marriage entry to include the names of both sets of parents of a couple. [HL8046]

*Asked by Baroness Blackstone*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 3 August (HL7029) and by Lord Keen of Elie on 4 August (HL7031), why they are pursuing reforms of marriage law separately to the ongoing Law Commission review; whether they plan to bring forward legal recognition of humanist marriages before the conclusion of that review; and if not, (1) why not, and (2) what consideration they have given to doing so on an interim basis. [HL8047]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** The Government announced in June 2019 that the Law Commission will conduct a fundamental review of the law on how and where people can legally marry in England and Wales. This is an important and complex social policy reform and requires careful thought and consideration. As part of the review, the Government invited the Law Commission to make recommendations about how marriage by humanist and other non-religious belief organisations could be incorporated into a revised or new scheme for all marriages that is simple, fair and consistent.

The Law Commission has published its consultation paper and the Government, following the final report, will

decide on provision on the basis of the Law Commission's recommendations.

In parallel, the Government made clear when it announced the Law Commission project that it would also, as an interim measure, undertake work to allow more civil weddings and civil partnerships to take place outdoors through secondary legislation.

Alongside the Law Commission project, the independent Sharia review recommended an offence apply to religious celebrants marrying in a ceremony that is outside the ambit of the Marriage Acts. Any legislative proposal, including such an offence, must be thoroughly assessed for its fairness to all religious groups and for how far it could achieve the change of practice intended. That is why it is with the greatest care that the Government is continuing the exploration of both limited reform and non-legislative options that it began in detail last year.

On the question of timing the Government will make its intentions clear in due course.

And in regard to the implementation of the provisions in the Civil Partnership, Marriages and Deaths (Registration Etc) Act 2019, the Home Office is currently working on the secondary legislation, which will need to be debated in Parliament, to enable these changes to be introduced and an implementation date will be announced in due course.

### Ministry of Defence: Consultants

*Asked by Lord Touhig*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much was spent by the Ministry of Defence on consultancy fees in each year since 2010. [HL8256]

**Baroness Goldie:** The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The Ministry of Defence publishes spend over £25,000 on a monthly basis as part of its transparency data routine publication which is accessible at the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-finance-transparency-dataset>.

Additionally, the Ministry of Defence publishes annual accounts. The latest of which can be found at the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-annual-reports>.

### Motor Vehicles: Excise Duties

*Asked by Baroness Kennedy of Cradley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their latest assessment of the level of road tax evasion. [HL8459]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Department for Transport carries out a roadside survey every two years.

The survey estimates the rate of vehicle excise duty evasion among vehicles seen on UK roads. The latest survey, conducted in June 2019 and published in November 2019, estimated the rate of on road evasion to be 1.6%. The results confirmed that this is statistically significantly lower than in the previous survey carried out in 2017, which measured the level of evasion at 1.8%.

### National Skills Fund

*Asked by Lord Watson of Invergowrie*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the written answer by Baroness Berridge on 30 March (HL2644), when they expect to launch a consultation on the National Skills Fund. [HL8220]

**Baroness Berridge:** The government remains committed to consulting widely on the National Skills Fund to ensure that we develop a fund that helps adults learn valuable skills and prepare for the economy of the future. We are providing £2.5 billion (£3 billion when including Barnett funding for devolved administrations), for the National Skills Fund.

The department is continuing to review the ongoing implications of COVID-19 and we are considering the most appropriate time and approach we can take to launch the consultation, ensuring we have meaningful discussions with employers, providers and users.

In the meantime, we will engage closely with stakeholders as we continue to develop detailed plans for the National Skills Fund, including considering what role the fund could play in meeting more immediate needs in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

### Nature Conservation

*Asked by The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the conclusions of the report by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds A lost decade for nature, published on 14 September; and what steps they are taking to address the conclusion that "the UK will need to show precisely how it plans to fill the gap between rhetoric and reality in its own backyard". [HL8190]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** In 2019, the UK Government published its assessment of progress with the goals and targets set under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). In common with the RSPB's assessment, this highlighted ongoing declines in biodiversity in the UK, and despite progress, a clear need to do more. Both reports point to success stories on which we can build, and the UK Government is determined to do just that.

Domestic biodiversity is a devolved matter in the UK. In England, our 25 Year Environment Plan marked a step change in ambition for wildlife and the natural environment. We are already taking steps to meet this

ambition in our own backyard and in support of wider global efforts.

We have brought forward the first Environment Bill in over 20 years with ambitious measures to address the biggest environmental priorities of our age, including restoring and enhancing nature. The Bill will set the framework for establishing long-term, legally-binding environmental targets, for air quality, for water, for waste and at least one target on biodiversity. We are investing in restoring nature, for example through our £640m Nature for Climate fund to restore peatland and plant new woodland. We are developing a new Environmental Land Management scheme that will reward farmers and land managers for delivering environmental public goods. The UK is also at the forefront of marine protection with 357 Marine Protected Areas protecting 25% of UK waters, and we are examining ways to pilot Highly Protected Marine Areas.

Biodiversity loss is a global problem that requires a global solution. Our international spending on biodiversity has been growing and was over £200 million per year as of 2017/18. We are playing a leading role in developing an ambitious post-2020 global framework under the CBD and putting nature at the heart of our COP26 Presidency, paving the way for transformative action to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss holistically.

### Offences against Children

*Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will publish their paper on group-based child sexual exploitation; and who externally has been appointed to review the paper prior to its publication. [HL8203]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The Home Secretary announced on 19<sup>th</sup> May that the Government intends to publish a paper on group-based child sexual exploitation. This work is currently ongoing, and we will publish the Paper by the end of this year.

We are working closely with an External Reference Group to provide feedback on the Paper as it develops.

Membership for the External Reference Group was chosen to allow for a variety of expertise that may provide constructive challenge on this issue. The group has a broad membership that reflects a range of experience, including academia, criminal justice, the voluntary and community sector and representatives of victims and survivors.

Details of the membership to the External Reference Group will be made public in due course.

### Parliament: Coronavirus

*Asked by Lord Greaves*

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker what plans there are to provide COVID-19 testing facilities within the Palace of Westminster or the Parliamentary Estate; and

if there are any such plans, what advice will be provided to members in the House of Lords on the frequency with which they should, or must, be tested. [[HL7772](#)]

**Lord Laming:** The Senior Deputy Speaker has asked me, as Chair of the Services Committee, to respond on his behalf. We have sought advice from Public Health England in developing a policy on testing. Our policy remains that we adhere to applicable Government and PHE guidance, which is that anyone who is symptomatic should seek a test. That guidance also suggests testing of key workers who are self-isolating or whose household contains someone exhibiting the three main COVID-19 symptoms. The Parliamentary authorities have put in place a limited capacity for delivery of these tests. The testing is in order to maintain the resilience of the operation of the Chamber and committees. As testing is only available in these limited circumstances, there is no advice on the frequency of testing. No one should come onto the Estate if they have symptoms, for any reason.

### **Pedestrian Areas: Greater Manchester**

*Asked by **Baroness Northover***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the guidance about smoke-free pavement licences to Manchester City Council from the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government was agreed with the Department of Health and Social Care. [[HL8199](#)]

*Asked by **Baroness Northover***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the guidance from the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to Manchester City Council regarding smoke-free pavement licences, whether they will publish their evidence for the assertion that businesses will close if councils implement these licences. [[HL8534](#)]

*Asked by **Baroness Northover***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the guidance from the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to Manchester City Council regarding smoke-free pavement licences, which organisations and individuals they (1) consulted with, or (2) received representations from, on the economic impact of such licences. [[HL8535](#)]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** The Government is committed to protecting hospitality businesses impacted by the pandemic. It was for this reason that we introduced the Pavement Licence provisions in the Business and Planning Act 2020, supporting businesses by removing red tape and making it easier, faster and cheaper to serve customers outdoors. The Pavement Licence Guidance that was published on 22nd July alongside the Act was cleared with the Department of Health and Social Care. This guidance has not changed. It sets out detail on how local authorities can issue pavement licences to support

businesses, including those in the hard hit hospitality sector, to return to work safely and continue serving their local communities.

### **Private Rented Housing: Coronavirus**

*Asked by **Baroness Greder***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Civil Procedure (Amendment No. 4) (Coronavirus) Rules 2020 prevent a possession notice where the notice was served to private rented sector tenants between 26 March and 28 August. [[HL7857](#)]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** The Government has recently announced that the stay on possession proceedings will end on 20 September 2020. Once cases resume, the provisions in Civil Procedure (Amendment No. 4) (Coronavirus) Rules 2020, together with a new temporary Practice Direction, will put in place procedures to manage possession proceedings. Under those arrangements, any possession notice served during the full period of the stay from 27 March, when the suspension began, to 20 September may be reactivated upon the landlord's application. Following reactivation these cases may be referred to a judge for directions or listed for disposal.

### **Rivers**

*Asked by **The Marquess of Lothian***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what percentage of rivers in England are considered to be in good ecological condition; whether this figure has declined since (1) 2015, and (2) 2010; if so, what are the reasons for such a decline; what active monitoring of the condition of such rivers they undertake; how regulatory oversight of those rivers is conducted; when the next Environment Agency report on the state of the environment in terms of water resources will be published; and what is the reason for any delay in its publication. [[HL8186](#)]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** The 2019 data classifies 551 river water bodies out of 3767 as achieving good or better ecological status or potential. This represents 14.6% of all rivers in England. In 2015, 554 rivers were classed as achieving good or better ecological status or potential, representing 14.7% of all rivers in England. Headline national figures for water quality have remained static over this time period. The results in 2010 were that 22% of all rivers in England were meeting good or better ecological status or potential, but the methods for assessing rivers changed significantly after 2010 which mean this is not a comparable figure.

The Environment Agency (EA) undertakes targeted monitoring to provide the evidence it needs for its planning, regulatory and protection work. The law in England establishes wide-ranging regulatory requirements. For example, abstractions and discharges are permitted under the Environmental Permitting

Regulations (2016), and the EA set a total of 4623 water quality permits in 2019.

The EA reports on the state of the environment in a number of different ways, including releasing data and analysis to meet specific statutory requirements and producing State of Environment (SoE) reports to provide a balanced picture of environmental state in England that go beyond these specific statutory requirements. A Water Quality report (Feb 2018) and a Water Resources report (May 2018) were produced as part of a rolling programme of SoE reports. These and other SoE reports will be updated at an appropriate time. There is currently no date set, or specific requirement for, an updated Water Resources or Water Quality report.

The Government recognises that more needs to be done and is committed to improving the water environment as set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan. We are tackling pollution from poor farming practice with regulation, financial incentives and educational schemes for farmers. Our Environmental Land Management Scheme, rewarding farmers for public goods, will be a key part of that. In addition to government investment in many local improvement schemes, water company investment is being scaled up to £4.6 billion in the next five-year, price review period. The Government is working with water companies to consider how best to address the problem of sewage discharge from storm overflows and our new chemicals strategy will build on a robust statutory regime to ensure chemicals are managed and handled safely.

### Rule of Law

*Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to produce a list of laws which can be broken in a specific and limited way without penalty; and if so, when such a list would be available. [HL8064]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** There will be no such list.

### Russia: Pipelines

*Asked by Lord Campbell of Pittenweem*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Germany about the future of the Nord Stream 2 pipeline since the poisoning of Alexei Navalny. [HL8178]

**Baroness Sugg:** We are working closely with Germany, and other international partners to demonstrate that there are consequences for using banned chemical weapons anywhere in the world.

The UK remains concerned about the impact Nord Stream 2 will have on European energy security and on the interests of Ukraine. We continue to be supportive of initiatives that strengthen and diversify the supply of gas and competition across the European market. We engage regularly with our close allies and partners, including Germany, to keep them abreast of our position on the Nord Stream 2 pipeline and to discuss European energy security more broadly.

### Terrorism: Religion

*Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the role of religion in participation in terrorism. [HL8204]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The legal definition of terrorism, in section 1 of the Terrorism Act 2000, identifies that a religious cause may be the motivation for committing or threatening terrorism. However, this is alongside political, racial or ideological causes, all equally seen as evidence of terrorism. This is in line with Government's wider understanding of radicalisation in that there is no single pathway and the motivation of each individual may vary.

### Zara Mohammadi

*Asked by Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Iran about the case of Zara Mohammadi; and what response they have received. [HL8416]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We are aware of reports concerning the detention of Zara Mohammadi and are monitoring her case closely. Iran's Kurdish population face significant and ongoing discrimination and harassment. A substantial proportion of Iran's political prisoners are Kurdish. Iran's human rights record remains of serious and longstanding concern to the UK and we regularly raise human rights with the Iranians at all levels.

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