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**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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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, Commonwealth and Development Office
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 and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
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 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, Commonwealth and Development Office
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

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Written Statements

Wednesday, 7 October 2020

Covid-19: International Travel

[HLWS490]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: My Right Honourable friend, the Secretary of State for Transport (Grant Shapps), has made the following Ministerial Statement.

I committed to keep the House updated on proposals for testing international arrivals to safely reduce the 14-day self-isolation period in my statement on 7 September; this statement provides an update on next steps.

The introduction of Travel Corridors in July was a major step forward in safely re-starting international travel whilst retaining the Government's ability to act quickly if public health was at risk, with international passenger numbers handled at UK airports up by around 400% between June and July to 3.1m passengers.

However, many of our major markets remain or have become high risk, and therefore are not eligible for our Travel Corridor list. A potential solution that has been widely debated is the use of testing to reduce or replace the need for self-isolation.

As I made clear in my statement to the House on 7 September, based on scientific evidence, the Government does not support the use of a single test on arrival as an alternative to self-isolation. However, a combination of self-isolation and testing is promising.

Since then, my department and the Department of Health and Social Care have been working extensively with clinicians, health experts and the private testing sector on the practicalities of such a regime. My Ministerial colleagues and I have agreed that a regime, based on a single test, provided by the private sector and at the cost of the passenger after a period of self-isolation, could achieve our objectives.

The next step is to further develop how this approach could be implemented. Therefore, I am pleased to announce that, at the request of the Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and I are standing up the Global Travel Taskforce.

The overall aim of the Taskforce will be to consider what steps the Government can take, both domestically and on the international stage, to enable the safe and sustainable recovery of international travel. To do this, the Taskforce will work at pace to consider:

- How a testing regime for international arrivals could be implemented to boost safe travel to and from the UK;
- What steps we can take to facilitate business and tourist travel on a bilateral and global basis, through innovative testing models and other non-testing means; and

- More broadly, what steps we can take to increase consumer confidence and reduce the barriers to a safe and sustainable recovery of international travel.

The Taskforce will further consider what day that testing should be taken on, informed by public health analysis of when this would be effective, but taking into account economic and other factors, as well as finalising a delivery plan. However, testing is not the only solution and so the Taskforce will also consider steps to support the recovery of international travel more broadly, including non-testing based interventions.

Facilitating safe international travel is not a task that can be undertaken by the Government alone, so this Taskforce will operate in collaboration with the transport industry, the tourism and local business sectors and the private testing sector. It will also engage with partners from governments across the globe, including on the development of bilateral testing pilots.

Each country has understandably implemented its own measures, but these are confusing and complex for the consumer and for operators, so we will show global leadership by developing a framework for international travel to provide that global consistency, while protecting public health.

The Taskforce will be chaired by myself and the and Secretary of State for Health and Social Care. It will include collaboration between officials from departments across government, and will liaise with the travel sector in order to work on the operationalisation of testing approaches designed to safely reduce self-isolation.

The Taskforce will operate at pace for a time limited period, and will formally report back to the Prime Minister no later than early November. I will update the House on its conclusions and outputs. I have published Terms of Reference alongside this statement on gov.uk and will place a copy in the libraries of both Houses.

Freeports Consultation Response

[HLWS487]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: My right honourable friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Steve Barclay) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

On 7 October, the Government responded to the recently closed public consultation on Freeports.

A Freeport is a place to carry out business inside a country's land border but where different customs rules apply. A firm can import goods into a Freeport without paying tariffs, process them into a final good and then either pay a tariff on goods sold into the domestic market, or export the final goods without paying UK tariffs. They also allow goods to be temporarily stored without paying duties. Countries around the world have successfully used Freeports to drive investment and prosperity.

The creation of Freeports across the UK will be a cornerstone of the Government's plan to level up opportunity across the country. Freeports will be national hubs for trade, innovation and commerce, regenerating

communities across the UK. They can attract new businesses, spreading jobs, investment and opportunity to towns and cities up and down the country.

Our published response confirms our intent to deliver Freeports and sets out how our proposals will be achieved. At the centre of our new Freeports policy is an ambitious new customs model which will improve upon both the UK's existing customs facilitations and the Freeports the UK previously had. Our model also introduces a package of tax incentives for businesses to invest in Freeports to level up some of our most deprived communities. We are introducing new measures to speed up planning processes to accelerate development in and around Freeports and new initiatives to encourage innovators to generate new ideas to create additional economic growth and jobs.

Freeports will be selected through a fair, transparent and competitive process, and will be expected to collaborate closely with key partners across the public and private sectors.

We want all the nations of the UK to share in the benefits of Freeports. As such, we are working constructively and collaboratively with the devolved administrations to seek to establish at least one Freeport in each nation of the UK.

The "*Freeports Response to the Consultation*" CP302 has been laid in Parliament. Copies are available in the Vote Office and Printed Paper Office, and also at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/freeports-consultation>.

High Speed 2: Phase 2b Western Leg

[HLWS488]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: My Honourable Friend, the Minister of State for Transport (Andrew Stephenson), has made the following Ministerial Statement.

I have today published new information on the development of the Western Leg of HS2 Phase 2b, running between Crewe and Manchester with a link to the West Coast Main Line. This includes:

- A Government consultation on four proposed changes to the design;
- A response to Western Leg changes included in the 2019 Design Refinement Consultation;
- A route-wide update, which sets out how the route has developed, including changes in response to feedback from affected communities; and
- Updated Safeguarding Directions for the Western Leg.

The Government has accepted the findings in the review by Douglas Oakervee that Phase 2b should be delivered in smaller sections with legislation brought forward as it is ready. Therefore, HS2 Ltd has taken forward work to develop legislation for the Western Leg of HS2 Phase 2b.

The Government has also accepted the Oakervee recommendation that plans for HS2 and other major

schemes need to be brought together in an Integrated Rail Plan (IRP) for the North and Midlands.

The IRP will set out the form, scope and phasing of the Phase 2b route, across the Western and Eastern legs, and the Government will therefore consider responses to this consultation alongside the IRP outcomes. If the IRP favours any major changes, further redesign will need to take place. This consultation seeks to ensure that unnecessary delay is avoided in the event that the IRP does not support change.

Work on HS2 Phase One from London to Birmingham is already well underway at over 250 active sites, stimulating the economy and providing jobs through the approximately £10 billion worth of contracts already announced, two thirds of which will go to small and medium sized enterprises.

Legislation for Phase 2a, from Birmingham to Crewe, is currently being considered by Parliament.

The proposals I am putting forward today are the next step in developing the design and legislation for the Western Leg of Phase 2b, following the 2019 Design Refinement Consultation. Phase 2b of HS2 is key to delivering Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR) and the consultation includes proposals to integrate the designs at a series of "touchpoints", which are pieces of infrastructure to enable future connections between NPR and HS2. These proposals have been developed in partnership with Transport for the North and will reduce the amount of infrastructure required to deliver NPR in the future.

This consultation deals with four technical refinements to the Western Leg of Phase 2b: a new Crewe Northern Connection, which would also support the vision for a Crewe Hub; changes to the already proposed rolling stock depot at Crewe; expansions to the stations at Manchester Piccadilly and Manchester Airport; and a newly proposed facility for stabling rolling stock at Annandale in Scotland.

Changes at Manchester Piccadilly to facilitate Metrolink and Manchester Airport High Speed station are subject to the agreement of local funding contributions. We continue to collaborate positively with Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Manchester Airports Group and other Greater Manchester delivery partners on this matter. Greater Manchester partners have confirmed that they are prepared to prioritise the funding of the local proposals for Metrolink underground at Piccadilly in future funding rounds. This will form part of the shared programme between DfT and Greater Manchester in implementing the Manchester HS2 Growth Strategy. In the 2020 budget, Government made £4.2bn of funding available to eight city regions for intra-city transport initiatives over the period 2022/23 to 2026/27.

In addition to today's consultation, I am publishing my response to the proposed Western Leg changes included in the June 2019 Phase 2b Design Refinement Consultation. The Government has decided to proceed with these changes subject to the outcome of the IRP.

I have also published a route-wide update which sets out wider developments to the route. The Safeguarding Directions for the Phase 2b Western Leg route have also been updated to reflect the project's updated land requirements.

Engagement with affected communities is at the heart of our plans for HS2 and it is our commitment to ensure we listen to those affected by these proposals. Restrictions put in place in response to the COVID-19 pandemic mean that we will not be able to hold local information events in the same way that we usually would as part of our formal consultation process. HS2 Ltd will deliver information events via digital platforms instead. These digital events will allow those affected the same opportunities to understand what refinements are being proposed and to ask any questions that they may have to our representatives. Where owners of land or property are newly affected by the proposals, they will be contacted directly by HS2 Ltd to arrange online or telephone appointments.

Copies of the consultation Command Paper and Safeguarding Directions will be placed in the House of Commons and House of Lords libraries.

Powers over the Office for Nuclear Regulation: Annual Report

[HLWS489]

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

Later today, the annual report to Parliament setting out the use of the Secretary of State's powers exercised to the Office for Nuclear Regulation during the year, will be published.

This is in accordance with Section 108(1) of the Energy Act 2013.

Written Answers

Wednesday, 7 October 2020

Armed Forces: Coronavirus

Asked by *Lord Tunnicliffe*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Armed Forces personnel are currently isolating due to COVID-19. [HL8653]

Baroness Goldie: As at Thursday 24 September 2020, 6,142 UK Armed Forces personnel were reported as isolating due to COVID-19.

Armed Forces: Training

Asked by *Lord Hay of Ballyore*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what percentage of recruits to the Armed Forces who take sick leave return to complete their training. [HL8629]

Baroness Goldie: Whilst the Ministry of Defence records the medical employability and deployability of Service personnel, more specific information about the level of sickness absence in the Armed Forces is not held centrally. As at 1 June 2020, medical employability for the trained UK Armed Forces was 98 per cent.

Asylum: Employment

Asked by *Baroness Cox*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by the Lift the Ban coalition *Lift the Ban: Why giving people seeking asylum the right to work is common sense*, published on 30 July, what assessment they have made of the potential economic benefit of giving asylum seekers the right to work in the UK. [HL8410]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Asylum seekers can work in the UK if their claim has been outstanding for 12 months, through no fault of their own. Those allowed to work are restricted to jobs on the Shortage Occupation List, which is published by the Home Office and based on expert advice from the Migration Advisory Committee.

It is important to distinguish between those who need protection and those seeking to work here, who can apply for a work visa under the Immigration Rules. Our wider policy could be undermined if migrants bypassed work visa Rules by lodging unfounded asylum claims here.

The Home Office is currently reviewing policy on right to work.

As part of the plans to speed up Asylum decision making, over the last 18 months, UK Visas and Immigration have increased the number of Asylum decision makers and support staff as part of a rolling recruitment campaign and mobilised a transformation

programme that seeks to simplify, streamline and digitise processes.

Belarus: Military Exercises

Asked by *Lord Browne of Ladyton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the risks associated with any increase in (1) the duration, (2) the proximity, and (3) the intensity, of military exercising undertaken by (a) NATO, (b) Russia, and (c) Belarus, in and around Belarus; and what steps are being taken to reduce those risks. [HL8622]

Baroness Goldie: The Ministry of Defence monitors all military exercising taking place in and around Belarus. Any increase in duration, proximity and intensity of military exercising in or near Belarus only serves to increase regional tensions. The UK and NATO take the appropriate steps to reduce any risks when conducting military exercises near Belarus and where necessary, alter training due to the associated risks.

The UK and Belarus maintain a cooperative relationship; particularly in the areas of arms control and the de-escalation of tensions in the Eastern Neighbourhood. This policy of transparency helps to build confidence and reduce risks associated with any increases in duration, proximity or intensity of military exercises. Though the UK has suspended Defence Engagement with Belarus we still maintain dialogue in order to reduce risks from all sides.

British Nationality

Asked by *Lord Anderson of Ipswich*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made towards arranging for the report into citizenship removal resulting in statelessness over the three-year period to 29 July 2018 that is required by section 40B of the British Nationality Act 1981. [HL8400]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The report required by Section 40B of the British Nationality Act 1981 relates to the Secretary of State's use of the power to deprive an individual of British citizenship under section 40A(4A), which to date has not been used.

The next review of the power will be commissioned once a suitable person has been identified to undertake the review.

Cancer: Death

Asked by *Lord Balfe*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to give the same, or higher priority, to deaths resulting from cancer as those related to COVID-19. [HL7589]

Lord Bethell: Cancer is a priority for this Government and survival rates are at a record high. Over the past decade, rates of survival from cancer have increased year-on-year.

In October 2018 the Government announced a package of measures that will be rolled out across the country with the aim of seeing three quarters of all cancers detected at an early stage by 2028 (currently just over half). This is part of the NHS Long Term Plan, which also included commitments on radiotherapy, personalised care interventions and screening, among others.

During the COVID-19 crisis, urgent and essential cancer treatments continued. Some cancer diagnostics and treatments were rescheduled to protect vulnerable patients from having to attend hospitals. These were all clinical decisions made with the patient and the recovery and restoration of cancer services to pre-pandemic levels is well underway.

Cancer: Health Services

Asked by Lord Porter of Spalding

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure that cancer survival rates are not adversely impacted by the cancellation or delay in cancer screening, diagnostic testing, and cancer treatments. [HL7988]

Lord Bethell: Although some appointments for cancer screening, diagnostics and treatments have been rescheduled during the COVID-19 pandemic to protect vulnerable patients, NHS England and NHS Improvement have taken a robust approach to ensuring that people at highest risk are seen as a matter of priority. NHS England and NHS Improvement have minimised the impact on those most at risk of dying of cancer by ensuring that urgent and essential cancer treatments continue throughout the pandemic.

Restoring full operation of all cancer services is a key commitment and is well underway, as set out in NHS England's letters dated 10 June and 31 July 2020. The number of people waiting in screening pathways is reducing and there is a continued focus on sending out invites for routine screening appointments that were previously delayed.

Care Homes: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect the residents and staff of every care home in England to receive regular testing for COVID-19. [HL7777]

Lord Bethell: We have met our 7 September target - we have provided testing kits to all care homes for older people and people with dementia who have registered for regular retesting kits. We are also contacting the small number of remaining care homes who have not registered to encourage them to do so.

All other adult care homes have been able to place orders for test kits from 31 August. Over 2,000 specialist homes have registered for retesting.

We have the capacity to send out over 100,000 test kits to care homes each day across the country, prioritising high priority outbreak areas and areas of concern.

Care Homes: Inspections

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether Care Quality Commission staff are required to undertake a COVID-19 test before entering a care home to inspect it. [HL7930]

Lord Bethell: There are no current plans to make Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspectors/staff eligible for regular asymptomatic testing as they do not meet the definition for the pilots that we are rolling out in Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

The definition of those eligible states "An individual who visits care homes two or more times each week and where carrying out their role requires them to be within one metre of residents."

The CQC's inspectors/staff are not considered eligible for the testing pilot as they do not need to be within one metre of residents to carry out their role.

Our testing policy is based on clinical advice on relative priorities and available testing capacity and our testing policies continue to be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Care Homes: Mortality Rates

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that the Care Quality Commission discloses mortality rates for individual care homes. [HL7776]

Lord Bethell: The Care Quality Commission's (CQC) mission to keep people safe is always at the heart of its decisions. The CQC has taken the decision not to publish location level death data without context, since this would not provide an assessment of quality or safety of individual homes currently facing an unprecedented challenge. Where the CQC has concerns about quality or safety, it will inspect the service and publish their findings. It has recently written to all adult social care providers to remind them that they have a duty to be transparent and share appropriate information with families about outbreaks and deaths. The CQC is keeping its current position not to disclose provider-level deaths data under review.

Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Masham of Ilton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking (1) to formally recognise people experiencing

long-term effects of COVID-19, and (2) to expand research into the condition. [HL8193]

Lord Bethell: The National Health Service and the wider scientific community are currently working to better understand the disease course of COVID-19 infection, including the prevalence, severity and duration of symptoms, and how best to support recovery. The Department invests £1 billion per year in health research through the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). Together with UK Research and Innovation, the NIHR has invested £8.4 million in the Post-HOSPitalisation COVID-19 study (PHOSP-COVID), led by the University of Leicester. The Government is currently considering options for future work in this area.

The research currently underway will continue to help define the long-term effects of COVID-19, which will support the formal recognition of people who are experiencing the long-term effects.

Coronavirus: Disease Control

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether the timely identification of lessons to be learnt from their approach to the COVID-19 pandemic which do not assign blame would help in better addressing a possible second wave of COVID-19. [HL7043]

Lord Bethell: COVID-19 is the biggest challenge that the United Kingdom, together with nations around the world, has faced in decades. The Government has always been clear that there will be opportunities to look back, analyse and reflect on all aspects of the response to COVID-19. As the Prime Minister has said, this will include an independent inquiry at the appropriate time.

To prepare the National Health Service for winter, the Government is providing an additional £3 billion of funding. This includes funding to allow the NHS to maintain the Nightingale surge capacity and continue to use the extra hospital capacity available within the independent sector.

Effective local management of any outbreaks is the first line of protection against a second wave that might overwhelm the NHS. To support local authorities, we made £300 million available and they already have robust plans in place to respond to outbreaks.

NHS winter preparations include delivering a very significantly expanded seasonal flu vaccination programme for priority groups.

Coronavirus: Ethnic Groups

Asked by Lord Boateng

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the incidence of stress-related illness and suicide amongst Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff working for the NHS (1) before, and (2) after, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic; and what action has

(a) Public Health England, and (b) the NHS, taken to address this. [HL8018]

Lord Bethell: Data on the incidence of stress-related illness and suicide amongst black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) National Health Service staff is not made publicly available due to concerns about misuse.

In April, the Chief People Officer at NHS England and NHS Improvement launched a comprehensive programme to address the impact of COVID-19 on BAME staff in the NHS. This has included work to update the health and wellbeing offer which is available to all staff to specifically address BAME staff.

Public Health England is developing a Real Time Suspected Suicide Surveillance system. The pilot is currently collecting data from local areas in England, as this system is in the pilot stage, data are not yet available. Ethnicity and employment status are specified within the requested minimum dataset, with the option to include occupation as an additional data item.

Coronavirus: Legislation

Asked by Lord Beith

To ask Her Majesty's Government on what date and at what time the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (North East of England) Regulations 2020 (SI 2020/1010) (1) were laid before Parliament, (2) came into force, and (3) were published on the legislation.gov.uk website; and if they were not so published by 8am on 18 September, why not. [HL8263]

Lord Bethell: The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (North East of England) Regulations 2020 (SI 2020/1010) were laid 5:30pm on 17 September 2020, came into force on 18 September 2020 and published online shortly before 5:41pm on 17 September 2020.

These Regulations were subsequently amended by the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Protected Areas) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 (SI 2020/1019), which came into force on 22 September 2020.

Coronavirus: Screening

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the remarks by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on 10 September (HC Deb, col 803) stating that people travel an average of 6.4 miles for a COVID-19 test, what methodology they used to calculate that figure. [HL8159]

Lord Bethell: For each person who successfully registered for a test under Pillar 2 at a Regional Test Site, Local Test Site or Mobile Testing Unit, the distance between their location and their associated testing site was measured as a direct distance. This direct distance is a straight line as the crow flies.

A person's home location is calculated as the approximate centre of their postal district, for example

PO15, provided at the time of booking. These distances are summarised by calculating and reporting the median alongside other percentiles. The figures were calculated using tests registered between 1 to 7 September inclusive, for England only.

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans are in place for the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency to license rapid saliva-based COVID-19 test kits for public and home use. [HL8527]

Lord Bethell: A COVID-19 test may be placed on the market in the United Kingdom if it bears the CE mark. A CE mark is a logo that is placed on medical devices by the manufacturer to show they conform to the requirements in the regulations. It shows that the device is fit for its stated intended purpose and meets legislation relating to safety. The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has a range of investigatory and enforcement powers which we use to ensure the safety and performance of medical devices.

The MHRA is supporting the Department's National Testing Programme and manufacturers seeking to bring new tests to market by publishing target product profiles or performance criteria for new tests, providing expert review of performance and research study protocols and offering regulatory flexibilities such as Exceptional Use Authorisations which allow promising, but as yet non-CE marked tests to be put into use where there is clear clinical need.

Coronavirus: Travel

Asked by Baroness McGregor-Smith

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the level of compliance with the quarantine periods for international arrivals. [HL8130]

Lord Bethell: On arrival Border Force conduct spot checks on passenger forms which include contact details, passport number and address while in the United Kingdom.

Further compliance checks are carried out by Public Health England's Isolation Assurance Service (IAS) who attempt to contact randomly sampled arriving passengers to ensure that they are self-isolating.

Data for the period 8 June to 7 September 2020 show that the IAS successfully made contact with 66,773 passengers and confirmed compliance with self-isolation for 64,800 passengers.

Coronavirus: Wales

Asked by Lord Wigley

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many times people resident in England have been sent to testing centres in Wales for COVID-19 tests because of inadequate capacity in England. [HL7836]

Lord Bethell: The Government does not publish this data in the format requested. We have always had an agreement with the devolved administrations that allows people to cross borders if it is more convenient for them in their circumstances.

We are increasing our number of testing sites to 500 by the end of October; improving our service so no one will be sent further than 75 miles, and introducing clear messaging that testing is for those who have symptoms, or have been told to get a test by a clinician or local authority.

Defence: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Moonie

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many advance payments have been made to defence contractors during the COVID-19 pandemic by (1) total value, and (2) number of recipients. [HL8676]

Baroness Goldie: The Ministry of Defence (MOD) has been working closely with its suppliers during the Covid-19 pandemic to support them at this difficult time. In accordance with Government procurement guidance, the MOD has to date approved interim payments of £124 million to ensure that critical defence outputs can continue uninterrupted. £86 million of this was to 31 UK suppliers. The remainder have been made under Foreign Military Sales arrangements.

The MOD has also engaged directly with more than 600 of its critical suppliers to enhance our understanding of supply chain resilience.

European Arrest Warrants

Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch

To ask Her Majesty's Government, how many UK citizens have been extradited from the UK under the European Arrest Warrant; how long, on average, those citizens spend in custody before trial; how many such citizens were found to be not guilty; how much compensation has been paid to those found not guilty; and in each case, who paid that compensation. [HL8423]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office does not hold the information requested.

However, some statistics on the European Arrest Warrant are published by the National Crime Agency each year. These figures include a breakdown of the numbers of UK citizens extradited from the UK.

These figures are published at:

<https://nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/what-we-do/how-we-work/providing-specialist-capabilities-for-law-enforcement/fugitives-and-international-crime/european-arrest-warrants>

Compensation is not paid to individuals who have stood trial for a criminal offence and have been found not guilty.

Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether a UK citizen could be extradited under the European Arrest Warrant after the end of the transition period; and if so, why. [HL8424]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office does not hold the information requested.

However, some statistics on the European Arrest Warrant are published by the National Crime Agency each year. These figures include a breakdown of the numbers of UK citizens extradited from the UK.

These figures are published at:

<https://nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/what-we-do/how-we-work/providing-specialist-capabilities-for-law-enforcement/fugitives-and-international-crime/european-arrest-warrants>.

Compensation is not paid to individuals who have stood trial for a criminal offence and have been found not guilty.

Gaza: Water*Asked by Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 16 September (HL7733), what assessment they have made of the impact of bombing by the Israel Defence Forces on (1) the construction of pipelines and reservoirs, and (2) any other infrastructure projects, funded by international projects in Gaza. [HL8340]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have not made an assessment of this. The UK fully supports Israel's right to self-defence and to defend its citizens from acts of terror. In doing so, it is vital that all actions are proportionate, in line with International Humanitarian Law, and are calibrated to avoid civilian casualties. To address water shortages the UK is funding the construction of pipelines and reservoirs that will carry water from the planned Gaza Central Desalination Plant to households across the strip.

Genito-urinary Medicine*Asked by Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what self-care intervention sexual and reproductive health and rights services they support in the UK. [HL8393]

Lord Bethell: Local authorities in England are mandated to provide comprehensive open access sexual health services including sexually transmitted infection testing and treatment, notification of sexual partners of infected persons and access to the full range of contraception methods free from prescription charge. It is for local authorities to decide how these services are delivered.

Gynaecology: Medical Treatments*Asked by Lord Balfe*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the European Medicines Agency's Pharmacovigilance Risk Assessment Committee's recommendation to revoke the marketing authorisation of ulipristal acetate as a treatment for uterine fibroids; and whether they intend to implement the same revocation in the UK. [HL8363]

Lord Bethell: Medicines containing ulipristal acetate for the treatment of uterine fibroids were recalled from the United Kingdom market in March 2020 and no woman should have been treated with these medicines since then.

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has assessed the data underpinning the European Union Pharmacovigilance Risk Assessment Committee's (PRAC) recommendation to revoke the marketing authorisations for ulipristal acetate 5mg for uterine fibroids. Independent advice was sought from the Commission on Human Medicines Expert Advisory Group on Medicines for Women's Health in May 2020 and UK comments on the EU assessment reports were fed into the EU review.

The EU review for ulipristal acetate 5mg is ongoing pending a final opinion expected in October 2020 from the European Medicines Agency's Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use on the PRAC's recommendation, and a decision from the European Commission within three months of the Committee for Medicinal Products Opinion. The MHRA intends to act in accordance with the outcome of the EU review.

H2O Asset Management*Asked by Lord Myners*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they, or the Financial Conduct Authority, have reviewed (1) the accuracy, and (2) the regulatory completeness, of the statements issued by H2O Asset Management on 16 September and 22 September in connection to illiquid investments held in open-ended funds; and whether they (1) have investigated, or (2) plan to investigate, whether the transactions disclosed with related parties were in the best interests of all fund investors [HL8466]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: This is a matter for the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), which is operationally independent from Government. The question has been passed on to the FCA. The FCA will reply directly to the noble Lord by letter. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Heathrow Airport*Asked by Lord Berkeley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the investment required to ensure

that an increase in the number of air passenger numbers at Heathrow Airport following the COVID-19 pandemic does not correspond with a rise in (1) road congestion, (2) excessive carbon emissions, and (3) falling local air quality. [HL8407]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Government's clear focus at this time is responding to COVID-19 and working with the aviation industry to support recovery of the sector. Heathrow Airport will need to comply with existing air quality, carbon and other environmental requirements as passenger numbers recover. DfT is working with transport operators to ensure that public transport facilities will be available as passenger numbers return to normal. We expect environmental considerations to be a key element of the recovery. The new Jet Zero Council jointly chaired with the Secretary of State was created as a partnership between UK industry and government to drive high ambition in the delivery of new technologies and innovative ways to cut aviation emissions. It has been set up to develop new ways to tackle zero emission aviation from multiple perspectives with bold, new thinking.

Hospitality Industry: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Doocey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to compensate pubs, restaurants and bars for any revenue lost as a result of the introduction of a 10pm closing time. [HL8412]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Government recognises that the necessary restrictions on opening hours for hospitality venues will be disruptive for businesses in this sector.

We recognise that the sector is a vital source of employment across the country, and that is why – in addition to the CJRS, tax deferrals and loans – we have prioritised support for hospitality businesses. This has included:

- A 12-month business rates holiday for all eligible retail, leisure and hospitality businesses in England
- The Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund
- The Eat Out to Help Out Scheme, which subsidised 100 million meals through August
- A temporary reduction in the VAT rate from 20% to 5% on most tourism and hospitality-related activities.

On 24 September the Chancellor set out the next phase of our plan to support the economy, following announcement of measures to control the spread of COVID-19. This is a targeted package of measures to support jobs and business through the winter months, including a new Job Support Scheme, an extension of the reduction in VAT (5%) for the tourism and hospitality sector to 31 March 2021, and changes to the existing government backed loan schemes to help business access the finance they need and plan their cashflow.

The Government is continuing to collect evidence on the impact of the pandemic on the hospitality sector and to work with businesses and representative groups to inform our efforts to support this sector.

Hospitals

Asked by Lord Wills

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of spare capacity between 1 April and 1 September in hospitals operated by the Independent Healthcare Providers Network under their partnership agreement with the NHS. [HL8398]

Asked by Lord Wills

To ask Her Majesty's Government what procedures they put in place to ensure the maximum use of capacity between 1 April and 1 September in hospitals operated by the Independent Healthcare Providers Network under their partnership agreement with the NHS. [HL8399]

Lord Bethell: A national agreement is in place between NHS England and NHS Improvement in collaboration with the Independent Healthcare Providers Network and Independent Sector providers to ensure National Health Service patients benefit from an unprecedented partnership with private hospitals as we battle the COVID-19 outbreak. The Department and NHS England and NHS Improvement have worked with the independent sector to secure all appropriate inpatient capacity and other resource across England.

The addition of around 6,500 additional beds has increased NHS capacity and ensured that facilities are available for patients diagnosed with COVID-19 whilst ensuring continuity of service for non-COVID patients requiring elective activity, including cancer and other urgent treatment. Latest collected information shows that over 215,000 patient contacts had taken place under the contract.

Hygiene: Standards

Asked by Baroness Masham of Ilton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have (1) to review their guidance on hand sanitisers, and (2) to adopt the British Standards Institution kitemark for hand sanitiser. [HL8075]

Asked by Baroness Masham of Ilton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to develop a kitemark of minimum standards for all hand sanitisers, benchmarked against alcohol. [HL8076]

Lord Bethell: The British Standards Institution Kitemark is a quality scheme that is available for certain industries and sectors where there is a market for it. Products marked with the Kitemark are assessed against a particular standard. The Government has no plans to

develop a kitemark of minimum standards for hand sanitisers.

Hand sanitiser for use in clinical settings is treated as personal protective equipment and is therefore regulated by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

As HSE guidance for the general public states, and in line with the World Health Organization (WHO) guidance, alcohol does not have to be 'active ingredients' to be effective in hand sanitiser. The WHO recommends that hand sanitiser should contain a minimum of 60% alcohol, but non-alcohol based sanitisers can also be effective when combined with other social distancing measures.

Immigration: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Birt

To ask Her Majesty's Government what percentage of e-mails received by the Home Office Coronavirus Immigration Help Centre in August were answered within the usual reply period of five working days. [HL8409]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Asylum seekers can work in the UK if their claim has been outstanding for 12 months, through no fault of their own. Those allowed to work are restricted to jobs on the Shortage Occupation List, which is published by the Home Office and based on expert advice from the Migration Advisory Committee.

It is important to distinguish between those who need protection and those seeking to work here, who can apply for a work visa under the Immigration Rules. Our wider policy could be undermined if migrants bypassed work visa Rules by lodging unfounded asylum claims here.

The Home Office is currently reviewing policy on right to work.

As part of the plans to speed up Asylum decision making, over the last 18 months, UK Visas and Immigration have increased the number of Asylum decision makers and support staff as part of a rolling recruitment campaign and mobilised a transformation programme that seeks to simplify, streamline and digitise processes.

Licensed Premises: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Thornhill

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to amend the Licensing Act 2003 to allow local authorities to take action against premises that are not complying with COVID-19 guidelines. [HL8433]

Asked by Baroness Thornhill

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to encourage local authorities to use the powers available to them under the Licensing Act 2003 to take action based on public health grounds during the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL8434]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government believes that the best approach is to take action against all businesses that fail to operate in a COVID-secure way, not just those that are licensed.

A licensing authority must carry out its functions under the Licensing Act 2003 with a view to promoting four licensing objectives, which are the prevention of crime and disorder, the prevention of public nuisance, public safety and the protection of children. Public health is not one of the four objectives and the Government cannot encourage licensing authorities to take action on those grounds.

Lithium

Asked by Lord Balfe

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that, following its acquisition by a Swiss private equity firm, Essential Pharma has increased the price of one of its branded lithium carbonate tablets from £3.22 to £87.00 a packet, and withdrawn its other brand of lithium carbonate tablet; what estimate they have made of the time it would take to obtain a marketing authorisation for a replacement; and what plans they have to speed up that process. [HL8360]

Lord Bethell: Camcolit 250 tablets - branded lithium 250 milligram (mg) tablets - were discontinued in 2015. The generic list price of lithium carbonate 250 mg tablets manufactured by Essential Pharma has been £87 since 2016. While there are no controls on prices of generic medicines, we rely on competition to drive prices down which has led to some of the lowest prices in Europe. Where we have seen some very large price increases, the Department has brought the issue to the attention of the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA). The CMA is considering the case of lithium pricing.

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) is responsible for licensing of medicines. Its evaluation of a submitted application which meets the necessary standards of quality, safety and efficacy through to determination, would normally be within the statutory time frame of 210 days following receipt of a valid application. This excludes clock-stop periods when time is taken by the applicant to provide further information or generate the necessary data and update their dossier in response to questions raised during the assessment of the application. The MHRA has expedited processes to ensure that marketing authorisation applications are evaluated as rapidly as possible if necessary, to meet a public health need.

Asked by Lord Balfe

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of their relationship with the European Medicines Authority on the time taken to find a new manufacturer for the drug Camcolit; and what plans they have, if any, to change that relationship. [HL8361]

Lord Bethell: No such assessment and no plans have been made. Camcolit (lithium carbonate) is not being discontinued and so work to find a new manufacturer has not been undertaken.

Low Incomes: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the Learning and Working Institute The impact of the coronavirus outbreak on London's low paid workers, published in July. [HL8429]

Lord Callanan: The number of people earning below two-thirds of median hourly pay fell for the sixth consecutive year, falling from 17% of employees in 2018 to 15.5% in 2019, the lowest rate since 1978.

The introduction of the National Living Wage has contributed significantly to this and the Government remains committed to eradicate low pay through the National Living Wage's target, to reach two-thirds of median earnings by 2024, provided economic conditions allow.

In addition to this, we are aware of the potential impacts that Covid-19 may have on low paid workers. Analysis by HM Treasury shows that Government's interventions, such as the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, helped reduce the scale of losses for working households by up to two-thirds.

From the 1 November the Job Support Scheme will open and run for 6 months. It is designed to protect viable jobs in businesses who are facing lower demand over the winter months due to Covid-19, to help their employees attached to the workforce.

Nagorno-Karabakh: Armed Conflict

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they will make to the government of Azerbaijan about the alleged bombardment of civilian targets in Nagorno-Karabakh; what discussions they have had with the OSCE Minsk Group about its work to prevent further violence in the area; and what steps they plan to take to help the governments of Azerbaijan and Armenia to secure a ceasefire and encourage a full peace process. [HL8523]

Baroness Sugg: The Government is deeply concerned by the recent military escalation along the Line of Contact in Nagorno-Karabakh and reported shelling into civilian areas. The Minister for the European Neighbourhood and Americas raised UK concerns over civilian casualties and fatalities with both the Armenian and Azerbaijani Foreign Ministers on 28 September. On 29 September the UK alongside other OSCE Permanent Council members delivered strong statements urging de-escalation and a

resumption of dialogue to reach a peaceful settlement. We will continue to engage with key partners on this issue and continue to support the OSCE Minsk Group in their aims of securing a peaceful settlement to the conflict.

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the situation in the Nagorno-Karabakh region; and what representations they are making, and to whom, in response. [HL8530]

Baroness Sugg: The Government is deeply concerned by the recent military escalation along the Line of Contact in Nagorno-Karabakh, and increasing impact on civilians through reported shelling of cities and the resulting humanitarian situation. The Foreign Secretary and Canadian Foreign Minister have delivered two joint statements calling for urgent de-escalation and a return to dialogue on 28 September and 6 October.

The Minister for European Neighbourhood and the Americas spoke to the Armenian and Azerbaijani Foreign Ministers on 28 September. She raised UK concerns over civilian casualties and fatalities, urged immediate de-escalation and reinforced the importance of engagement with the OSCE Minsk Group. The Prime Minister discussed the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh with Turkish President Erdoğan on 28 September. On 29 September the UK delivered statements at both the OSCE Permanent Council and the UN Security Council calling for immediate de-escalation and resumption of dialogue. We will continue to make representations to both the Armenian and Azerbaijani Governments and international partners.

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to reports that the government of Turkey has sent mercenaries to the Nagorno-Karabakh region, what discussions they have had with that government, either bilaterally or together with international partners, about that government's involvement in the conflict in the region. [HL8640]

Baroness Sugg: The Minister for the European Neighbourhood and the Americas spoke to the Armenian and Azerbaijani Foreign Ministers on 28 September. She raised UK concerns over civilian casualties and fatalities, urged immediate de-escalation and reinforced the importance of returning to negotiations within the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group. The UK continues to engage actively with international partners in support of these objectives. The Prime Minister discussed the situation in Nagorno Karabakh with President Erdogan on 28 September, and Minister Morton raised this with Deputy Foreign Minister Onal on 2 October. And, following a request from the UK and its European partners, the issue was discussed at the UN Security Council on 29 September.

NHS: Recruitment

Asked by **Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they plan to fill staff vacancies in the NHS; and from where they expect to recruit such staff (1) now, and (2) in the future. [HL8124]

Lord Bethell: *We are the NHS: People Plan 2020-2021* sets out actions to expand and develop our workforce by retaining staff for longer and building on the renewed interest in National Health Service careers. A copy is attached. The next phase of the NHS People Plan will focus on workforce growth and ensuring it has the right skills mix in place for a flexible and modern NHS.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

NHS People Plan 2020-21
[We_Are_The_NHS_Action_For_All_Of_Us_FINAL_24_08_20.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-09-15/HL8124>

Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe: Public Appointments

Asked by **Viscount Waverley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the vacant leadership positions at the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) on the operational capability of the OSCE; and what discussions they are having with OSCE participating states about (1) filling those positions promptly, and (2) mediating hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan. [HL8696]

Baroness Sugg: For each of the top four leadership positions at the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), deputies are acting as Officers in Charge and are ensuring their institutions continue to deliver on their mandates. Our mission in Vienna is in regular contact with them and continues to work with like-minded States to provide support when required. The process to appoint new Heads is already underway, led by OSCE Chair-in-Office, Albania. We are engaging with participating States and Albania to support this process and help identify those nominees best qualified for the roles and who share our core values on democracy, rule of law and freedom of media. Appointments are confirmed by consensus of all 57 states, ideally in early December ahead of the OSCE Ministerial Council.

At the 29 September meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council, the UK urged de-escalation of the current hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan and a resumption of dialogue. UK Ministers and officials are engaging actively with partners in support of the OSCE Minsk Group efforts to ensure a negotiated, peaceful settlement to the conflict. The Minister for the European Neighbourhood and Americas raised UK concerns over

civilian casualties and fatalities with both the Armenian and Azerbaijani Foreign Ministers on 28 September, urging both to return to the negotiating table. The Prime Minister spoke to President Erdogan on 28 September.

Parliamentary Estate: Charging Points

Asked by **Lord Storey**

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker what plans there are to provide electric vehicle charging points on the Parliamentary Estate. [HL8428]

Lord Laming: The Senior Deputy Speaker has asked me, as Chair of the Services Committee, to respond on his behalf. There are currently no plans to provide electric vehicle charging points on the Parliamentary Estate. The Services Committee will be considering a paper on the provision of electric vehicle charging points at a future meeting, before the end of the year.

Pharmacovigilance Risk Assessment Committee

Asked by **Lord Balfe**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they intend to cooperate with the European Medicines Agency's Pharmacovigilance Risk Assessment Committee from 1 January 2021; whether this cooperation will include (1) participating in the Committee's reviews, and (2) accepting the Committee's findings; and if so, what level of participation in the decision making process they foresee. [HL8364]

Lord Bethell: The United Kingdom published its approach to the Future Relationship with the European Union in February 2020. The approach set out the UK's commitments to facilitating trade in medicinal products and supporting high levels of patient safety.

After the transition period, we will ensure patients in the UK are not disadvantaged and continue to be able to access the best and most innovative medicines that are safe. We want patients to be reassured that their safety will be protected through the strongest regulatory framework.

From January 2021, the safety issues that are considered by the European Medicines Agency's Pharmacovigilance Risk Assessment Committee (PRAC), and the outcomes of the PRAC discussions, which are made publicly available, will be closely monitored and, where appropriate, we will take into account the decisions of the PRAC with regards to safety measures that are implemented for the UK.

Protective Clothing: Retail Trade

Asked by **Lord Blencathra**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether retail workers have to wear facemasks in the shops in which they are employed; and if not, why not. [HL8270]

Lord Bethell: From 24 September, it will be compulsory for workers in retail, leisure and hospitality settings to wear a face covering in areas which are open to the public and where they either come or are likely to come into contact with members of the public.

This is in addition to existing legal obligations that require businesses to provide a safe working environment, which may include providing face coverings where appropriate, alongside other mitigation measures such as perspex screens to separate workers from the public.

Protective Clothing: Standards

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they check the Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) that is supplied to local resilience forums for quality prior to dispatch; and what (1) standards, and (2) safety, checks they have in place for centrally distributed PPE. [HL8344]

Lord Bethell: Personal protective equipment (PPE) provided must be fit for purpose, meeting the necessary safety standards to ensure it provides the required level of protection. Our requirements and specification are clearly articulated and published in technical specifications.

Certification of PPE is supplied by the manufacturer having had it independently tested. Assurance is checked by the regulators, the Health and Safety Executive and the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency. Evidence of certification is requested for products as part of the due diligence process. Contracts that involve the manufacture of PPE have the appropriate clauses to ensure that testing and certification is undertaken before the goods are accepted.

Our priority is to protect health and social care staff, including making sure they have the equipment they need to do their job safely.

Public Expenditure: Rural Areas

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government what requirements have been placed on departments by Her Majesty's Treasury to 'rural proof' their submissions to the 2020 Comprehensive Spending Review; and how each of those departments have fulfilled these requirements. [HL8549]

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by the Select Committee on the Rural Economy, Time for a Strategy for the rural economy, published on 26 March 2019 (HL Paper 330), what plans they have to ensure that each department's Comprehensive Spending Review settlement will be conditional on ensuring that nobody living in a rural area is unreasonably disadvantaged by where they live. [HL8550]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: As the Chancellor announced in July, a priority of the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) will be levelling up economic opportunity across all nations and regions of the country by investing in infrastructure, innovation and people.

At launch, the Treasury sent official-level guidance and templates setting out its priorities for the CSR and the information required from departments to make assessments of funding needs.

Railways: Heathrow Airport

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken, if any, to develop a process to select a partner for a Southern Railway link to Heathrow Airport following the recommendation in the report by Nichols and Agilia Southern Railway Link to Heathrow: market sounding, published on 19 December 2018; and what plans they have to establish a timescale for this process. [HL8406]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Market Sounding Findings Report was published in December 2018, indicating significant interest for development and financing of Southern Access to Heathrow, the scheme formerly known as Southern Rail Link to Heathrow (SRLtH).

However, the responses to the Market Sounding did not build a feasible case for a Market Led approach to a Southern Access to Heathrow which could progress without government support such as direct subsidy or infrastructure usage guarantees.

Following the publication of this report, Government has undertaken work to fulfil the recommendations set out in the report. The recommendations were that the Department should provide greater detail on minimum requirements and objectives for a SAtH scheme and that the Department should consider an appropriate commercial model for early market involvement.

In November 2019, following extensive stakeholder engagement, the Department published eight Strategic Objectives for SAtH, setting out a narrative and minimum requirements for each.

The Department has also been working alongside external commercial advisers to develop an appropriate 'market involved' commercial model for the delivery of this scheme. We remain committed that a Southern Access to Heathrow should be a 'Pathfinder Project' with increased levels of market involvement and that this approach will likely be in the form of a development partner or development manager.

Following Ministerial approval and alignment to the anticipated HM Treasury Infrastructure Finance Review, the Department intends to provide further guidance regarding the commercial approach for SAtH in early 2021.

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking, if any, to progress the development of a privately financed Southern Railway link to Heathrow Airport. [HL8408]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: This government has committed to building a Britain with world class infrastructure. SAth would be part of the Government's plan to build back better, greener and faster. We remain committed that a Southern Access to Heathrow should be a 'Pathfinder Project' working with the private sector to harness new and innovative ideas while reducing the burden on fare and taxpayers.

The Department has undertaken extensive stakeholder engagement to develop a set of strategic objectives for the Southern Access to Heathrow scheme. Throughout this process the Department has remained 'outcome-focused' and mode-agnostic allowing space for private sector innovation and ideas. It is not a detailed specification for the scheme at this stage.

Since the publication of these Strategic Objectives in November 2019, the Department has worked to finalise a 'Pre-Strategic Outline Business Case', to outline the case for change and need for a scheme such as this, setting out practically how this scheme should be taken forwards.

The Department is developing commercial and financial models for working alongside the private sector to fund, finance, and deliver this scheme.

Following Ministerial approval and alignment to the upcoming HM Treasury Infrastructure Finance Review, the Department intends to provide further guidance regarding the commercial approach in early 2021.

Skin Diseases: Hygiene

Asked by Baroness Masham of Ilton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the adequacy of their guidance on hand sanitiser for people who cannot use alcohol-based hand rubs due (1) to eczema, (2) to dermatitis, and (3) to other skin conditions. [HL8073]

Asked by Baroness Masham of Ilton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the effect of alcohol-based hand sanitisers on people with skin conditions, and (2) the effectiveness of the alternative products available to people who cannot use such hand sanitisers due to (a) skin conditions, or (b) allergies. [HL8074]

Lord Bethell: As Health and Safety Executive guidance for the general public states, which is in line with the World Health Organization (WHO) guidance, alcohol does not have to be 'active ingredients' to be effective in hand sanitizer. The WHO recommends that hand sanitiser should contain a minimum of 60% alcohol, but non-alcohol based sanitisers can also be effective when combined with other social distancing measures.

All healthcare workers have access to occupational health assessment and are referred for assessment and treatment in the event of developing skin complications. Using the guidelines, recommendations made by occupational health are followed by National Health Service providers as part of risk assessment and mitigation for the individual and the patient.

Social Services: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to provide social care professionals with legal training and information on COVID-19 emergency measures. [HL8090]

Lord Bethell: It is the responsibility of local authorities and employers to provide legal training for their staff, if required.

The Department has produced guidance on legal developments resulting from COVID-19 emergency measures, including guidance on the Care Act 2014 easements. This sets out how local authorities can utilise these easements whilst continuing to provide the best possible standards of care, maintaining due regard for the Human Rights Act 1998. The COVID-19 Ethical Framework for Adult Social Care also sets out eight ethical principles that should be considered when local authorities and social care professionals are planning their response to COVID-19.

Vaccination: Children

Asked by Baroness Wylde

To ask Her Majesty's Government what analysis the Department of Health and Social Care has made of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the take-up of routine childhood vaccinations. [HL8101]

Lord Bethell: Preliminary data between weeks 1-17 in 2020 indicates that whilst there was an initial decrease in the number of pre-school vaccinations delivered in primary care during the early weeks of the pandemic compared with the same period of 2019, the situation rapidly stabilised and recovered.

Providers of school aged immunisations, which were impacted by school closures, are now working with NHS England and NHS Improvement commissioners to catch up those vaccinations that have been delayed. Programmes delivered through schools have been rescheduled as schools have re-opened. School-age vaccination programmes are delivered at different times throughout the academic year, and so local variation will be seen in recovery.

Vaccination: Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the COVID-19 pandemic on existing immunisation targets. [HL7704]

Lord Bethell: The impact of COVID-19 on immunisation targets has been variable. Preliminary data suggests that, whilst there was an initial decrease in the number of pre-school vaccinations delivered in primary care during the early weeks of the pandemic compared with the same period in 2019, the situation rapidly stabilised and recovered. In contrast, school-aged immunisation programmes were more impacted as a result of school closures. Providers have been working with schools to catch-up those programmes as schools have re-opened.

Due to the public health advice on social distancing and shielding, general practices were not expected to offer the opportunistic shingles vaccine to those aged 70, unless the patient was already in the general practitioner practice for another reason. Coverage among those turning 70 or 78 during quarter 4 – who were vaccinated up to the end of June 2020 – achieved lower coverage (9.3% and 10.4%, respectively) than among those who turned 70 or 78 after the same eligibility interval in previous quarters.

Visas

Asked by Lord Horam

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many visas have been granted in 2020; and of those, how many were visas for (1) work, (2) family, and (3) study. [HL8414]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office publishes data on visas in the 'Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release':

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/immigration-statistics-quarterly-release>.

Data on grants of visas, by category, are published in table Vis_D02 of the entry clearance detailed datasets <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/managed-migration-datasets#entry-clearance-visas-granted-outside-the-uk> These data show that 512,749 visas have been issued in quarters 1 and 2 (January to June) 2020. Of these, 49,679 were for Work, 46,258 were for Study, and 15,426 were for Family reasons.

Information on how to use the dataset can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook. The latest data relates to year ending June 2020. Data relating to the third quarter of 2020 (July to September) are due for future publication, on 26 November 2020.

Additionally, the Home Office publishes a high-level overview of the data in the entry clearance summary tables:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-june-2020/list-of-tables#entry-clearance-visas>. The 'contents' sheet contains an overview of all available data on entry clearance visas.

Information on future Home Office statistical release dates can be found in the 'Research and statistics calendar':

https://www.gov.uk/search/research-and-statistics?keywords=immigration&content_store_document_type=upcoming_statistics&organisations%5B%5D=home-office&order=relevance.

Walking

Asked by Baroness Kennedy of Cradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of campaigns to encourage people to walk more. [HL8242]

Lord Bethell: The Government supports various campaigns to encourage people to walk more, including the Walk to School programme delivered by Living Streets, and local programmes delivered by local authorities under the Department for Transport's £20 million per annum Access Fund. The effectiveness of these and other campaigns is considered in the first Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy Report to Parliament published in February 2020.

Public Health England's One You campaign launched the free Active 10 brisk walking app designed to encourage adults to undertake more physical activity by simply going for a brisk 10-minute walk. The app was relaunched in December 2019 to align with the new United Kingdom Chief Medical Officers' guidelines that every minute of physical activity counts and provides health benefits.

Decisions on future funding for future campaigns will be a matter for the Spending Review in the autumn.

World Health Organization

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to reassess the UK's relationship with the World Health Organization after the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL8257]

Lord Bethell: The United Kingdom continues to have a strong and committed relationship with the World Health Organization (WHO), who have an important role to play in leading the global health response to coronavirus, and works closely with them at country, regional and global levels. The UK is currently the second largest member state donor to WHO and has already contributed £75 million to help WHO lead the international efforts to stop the spread of the virus. The Prime Minister has now announced at the United Nations General Assembly on 26 September £340 million in new core funding to be given to the organisation over the next four years.

We have long been an advocate of reform in the WHO to ensure it is flexible and responsive, including able to respond as quickly and effectively as possible to global health emergencies, and we will continue to be so.

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