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**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN ANSWERS

Written Answers.....1

[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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<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
Baroness Evans of Bowes Park	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
Earl Howe	Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
Lord Agnew of Oulton	Minister of State, Cabinet Office and Treasury
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Minister of State, Foreign, 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 Answers

Tuesday, 27 October 2020

Asylum: Legal Opinion

Asked by *Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they take to ensure that asylum seekers in temporary accommodation have access to free legal advice. [HL9149]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Advice, Issue Reporting and Eligibility (AIRE) service, operated by Migrant Help is a single integrated and national service for asylum seekers.

The AIRE service will provide advice and guidance to service users on the asylum process, their rights and signposting different services.

It will also provide asylum seekers with a single point of contact, independent from the accommodation providers and the Home Office, to report issues.

AIRE are contracted to provide information on the availability of legal advice and representation and signposting of Service User's to the Legal Aid Agency, where appropriate upon induction into temporary accommodation.

Autonomy: Audit

Asked by *Lord Sikka*

To ask Her Majesty's Government who were the ultimate beneficial recipients of (1) the £15 million fine and £5,635,014 costs levied by the Financial Reporting Council on Deloitte on 17 September in respect of audit failures at Autonomy Corporation Plc, and (2) the £500,000 and £250,000 fines levied upon two Deloitte partners. [HL9155]

Lord Callanan: The three fines in the enforcement case relating to Autonomy Corporation plc were imposed under the Financial Reporting Council's (FRC's) Accountancy Scheme. Since 2016, a new Audit Enforcement Procedure has been implemented under the Statutory Auditors and Third Country Auditors Regulations 2016 for investigations of possible breaches of relevant requirements by statutory auditors under those Regulations.

The investigation into Autonomy Corporation plc started before those regulations came into force. Under the Accountancy Scheme the fines must be passed to the participating body which is required to fund the legal costs of the case. Additionally, any costs awarded by the tribunal in recognition of the costs funded by the participating body must also be paid to that body. In this case the participating body was the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

Fines imposed by the FRC under the Audit Enforcement Procedure must be paid to the Secretary of State and the Exchequer. Any costs awarded to the FRC in recognition of the costs funded by one of the recognised audit supervisory bodies must continue to be paid to that body.

Business: Coronavirus

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to remove barriers to COVID-19 financial support for BAME run businesses. [HL9159]

Lord Callanan: A diverse and inclusive ecosystem is good for entrepreneurs, companies, investors, and society as a whole and HMG are committed to ensuring people from all backgrounds and regions benefit from the Government's access to business finance schemes.

All the Government's finance schemes, including the Future Fund, that were launched to provide support for those affected by Covid-19 are open to eligible businesses run by entrepreneurs from all regions and backgrounds, including Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) businesses. Government will continue to monitor the implementation and take up of the schemes, working with lenders, the British Business Bank (BBB) and across industry.

The BBB published diversity data for the Future Fund on 22 September 2020, which showed that £427.1m worth of Convertible Loan Agreements have been approved to companies with BAME-only and mixed ethnicity management teams.

The Start Up Loans programme, also operated by the BBB, delivered nearly 77,000 loans overall in the UK, supporting nearly £650m of funding since the programme's launch in 2012 to the end of September this year. 25% of the total number of these loans was made to BAME-led businesses in the UK.

The Department's Ministerial team is actively engaging with entrepreneurs from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic business communities and has undertaken 10 engagements since March 2020.

Business: Insolvency

Asked by *Lord Sikka*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the number of business liquidations which remain incomplete after (1) 5 years, (2) 10 years, and (3) 15 years or more, after their commencement. [HL9154]

Lord Callanan: These figures are made up of private limited, public limited and unlimited companies. Companies House does not register details of sole traders etc and cannot provide information about them.

The number of private limited, public limited and unlimited company liquidations which remain incomplete

after (1) 5 years (2) 10 years, and 3 (15) years is as follows:

<i>Between 5 and 9 Years</i>	<i>Between 10 and 14 Years</i>	<i>15 Years and More</i>
7,962	3,642	14,328

Business: Training

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Employer Skills Survey 2019, published on 14 October, what steps, if any, they plan to take to encourage businesses to increase the amount of training provided to staff. [HL9199]

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Association of Colleges survey Colleges Week SME Leader Survey, published on 16 October; and what steps they are taking to ensure that SMEs have the resources to reskill their workforces. [HL9329]

Baroness Berridge: The government offers a variety of programmes and resources that businesses of all sizes can utilise in order to train their staff, in addition to the in-house training programmes that employers provide.

Adult skills are key in supporting the economy and tackling disadvantage and so we are continuing to invest in education and skills training for adults through the Adult Education Budget (AEB) (£1.34bn in the 2020/21 financial year). The principal purpose of the AEB is to engage adults and provide the skills and learning they need to equip them for work, an apprenticeship or further learning. This includes fully funded courses in English and maths, for adults who need to improve their literacy and numeracy, fully funded first full level 2 and/or level 3 for learners aged 19 to 23 and from 1 August 2020, fully funded specified digital skills qualifications for adults with no/low digital skills. The AEB also funds learning in the workplace, where a learner has a statutory entitlement to full funding.

Employers can offer apprenticeships to both new recruits and existing staff, supporting the creation of new jobs as well as opportunities to upskill. They can choose between more than 580 apprenticeship standards that have been designed by employers to deliver the skills they need.

The government is also providing £2.5 billion (£3 billion when including Barnett funding for devolved administrations), for the National Skills Fund.

The fund aims to boost productivity and ensure more people and places can share in the rewards that improved productivity can bring. It also presents a great opportunity to create a more coherent and simpler system that learners, providers, local areas and employers can more easily understand and navigate.

My right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister, recently announced that for adults who do not currently have a level 3 qualification, the government will be fully funding their first full level 3 through the National Skills Fund. We will target this level 3 entitlement at subjects and qualifications with economic value and the strongest alignment with government priorities, to ensure the best possible returns for individuals, employers and the nation.

The Prime Minister also announced the launch of our new digital bootcamps, in 6 areas, to support local regions and employers to fill in-demand vacancies. The bootcamp training courses will provide valuable skills based on employer demand and will offer a fast track to a job interview on completion. Pending the success of the initial bootcamps, we are planning to expand the digital bootcamps to more of the country from Spring 2021 and we also want to extend this model to include other technical skills training.

Further plans for the National Skills Fund will be communicated in due course.

Cabinet Office: Consultants

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much was spent on consultancy services by the Cabinet Office and its related agencies in the 2019/20 financial year; and what was the (1) cost of, and (2) reason for, each such contract. [HL9014]

Lord True: As set out on page 57, section 2.10 of the Cabinet Office Annual Account (2019-2020) and available on gov.uk, expenditure on consultancy reduced from £43.647 million in 2018-19 to £35.380 million in 2019-20.

Cabinet Office publishes all contracts over £10,000. Details of all consultancy contracts can be found on Contracts Finder.

Coronavirus

Asked by Baroness Kennedy of Cradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of WHO Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus' statement on 9 July that "the greatest threat we face now is not the [COVID-19] virus itself, rather it is the lack of leadership and solidarity at the global and national levels". [HL9136]

Lord True: The UK takes a strong global leadership role in collaborating with other countries in efforts towards the development and distribution of a successful vaccine for COVID-19 and we encourage other countries to do the same.

COVAX is an international initiative to support the discovery, manufacture and fair distribution of COVID-19 vaccines for one billion people by the end of 2021.

The UK is actively engaging with the World Health Organisation, which has an important role to play in

leading the global health response. The UK is committed to supporting the WHO as well as multilateral and international partners, such as Gavi and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

Coronavirus: Death

Asked by **Lord Robathan**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many deaths from COVID-19 there were among patients in hospital aged under 60 with no pre-existing medical conditions; and what assessment they have made of these deaths. [HL8682]

Lord True: The information requested falls under the remit of the UK Statistics Authority. I have therefore asked the Authority to respond.

Dear Lord Robathan,

As National Statistician and Chief Executive of the UK Statistics Authority, I am responding to your Parliamentary Question asking how many deaths from COVID-19 there were among patients in hospital aged under 60 with no pre-existing medical conditions (HL8682).

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) publishes statistics on deaths in England and Wales and produces a monthly report[1] on provisional deaths involving COVID-19. Mortality statistics are compiled from information supplied when deaths are certified and registered as part of civil registration. In England and Wales, deaths should ideally be registered within 5 days of the death occurring, but there are some situations that result in the registration of the death being delayed[2].

National Records for Scotland[3] and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency[4] are responsible for publishing statistics on deaths registered in Scotland and Northern Ireland respectively.

Information on pre-existing health conditions is available based on the conditions mentioned on the death certificate. Our reports on deaths involving COVID-19 contained analysis of pre-existing conditions, most recently based on death occurrences between 2 March and 30 June 2020 that were registered up until 4 July 2020. Our data on pre-existing conditions does not include a place of death breakdown so data has been provided separately instead for deaths involving COVID-19 by place of death.

Table 1 below shows the number of deaths involving COVID-19 that did not have a pre-existing condition, and all deaths involving COVID-19, for persons aged under 60 years, occurring in England and Wales between 2 March and 30 June 2020. Table 2 shows the number of deaths involving COVID-19 by place of death, for persons of all ages, registered in England and Wales between 28 December 2019 and 25 September 2020.

Yours sincerely,
Professor Sir Ian Diamond

Table 1: Number of deaths involving coronavirus (COVID-19) that had no pre-existing conditions, and all deaths involving COVID-19, persons aged under 60 years, occurring between 2 March and 30 June 2020 and registered by 4 July, England and Wales[5][6][7][8]

Age group	Deaths involving COVID-19 with no pre-existing conditions	Deaths involving COVID-19
0-59	542	3299

Source: ONS

Table 2: Number of deaths involving coronavirus (COVID-19) by place of death, persons, all ages, registered between 28 December 2019 and 25 September 2020, England and Wales[9][10][11][12]

Place of death	Deaths involving COVID-19
Home	2,513
Hospital (acute or community, not psychiatric)	33,556
Hospice	756
Care Home	15,601
Other communal establishment	226
Elsewhere	204

Source: ONS

[1]

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/bulletins/deathsinvolvingcovid19englandandwales/deathsoccurringinjune2020>

[2]

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/articles/impactofregistrationdelaysonmortalitystatisticsinenglandandwales/2018>

[3] <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/>

[4] <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/>

[5] These figures represent death occurrences rather than death registrations.

[6] All figures for 2020 are provisional.

[7] Includes deaths where COVID-19 (ICD-10 codes U07.1 and U07.2) was mentioned anywhere on the death certificate including as the underlying cause of death.

[8] Includes deaths of non-residents.

[9] These figures represent death occurrences rather than death registrations.

[10] All figures for 2020 are provisional.

[11] Includes deaths where COVID-19 (ICD-10 codes U07.1 and U07.2) was mentioned anywhere on the death certificate including as the underlying cause of death.

[12] Includes deaths of non-residents.

Coronavirus: Disease Control

Asked by **Lord Sikka**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is (1) the number, and (2) the value, of COVID-19-related contracts awarded to (a) KPMG, (b) PricewaterhouseCoopers, (c) Deloitte, (d) Ernst & Young, (e) G4S, and (f) Serco. [HL9153]

Lord True: Central Government departments have drawn on the expertise and resources of a number of public and private sector partners to support the response to Covid-19. Details of central government contracts above £10,000 are published on Contracts Finder at <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Search>.

Customs: ICT

Asked by **Lord Berkeley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what new customs IT systems have been identified by the Border and Protocol Delivery Group as being required from the end of the Brexit transition period; and if any such systems are required, (1) how many of those systems they expect to be fully operational and tested (a) now, (b) from 1 January 2021, and (c) after 1 January 2021; (2) when these systems will be available to businesses for training purposes, and (3) what contingency arrangements they have put in place to deal with any delays in the roll out of those systems. [HL9018]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The following systems are expected to be fully operational and tested (a) now, (b) from 1 January 2021, and (c) after 1 January 2021

New IT System	Fully Operational and Tested Now	To Be Fully Operational against the January requirements, and Tested From Jan 2021	
		To Be Fully Operational After Jan 2021	To Be Fully Operational and Tested
NCTS	Y		Y
GB S&S (ICS 2.0)	Y		Y
GVMS			Y

It is expected that businesses will be fully operational for testing purposes to the time scales set out below:

IT System	Date Operational for Testing Purposes?DD/MM
NCTS	02/12/20
GB S&S (ICS 2.0)	26/10/20
GVMS	12/12/20

These systems will be fully operational against the January requirements.

The Government is ensuring that it is able to operate a model that fulfils its obligations and is working through

contingency or fallback solutions in case of non-delivery of systems and lack of external readiness.

Data Protection

Asked by **Lord Allan of Hallam**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the likelihood of legal challenges from privacy advocates against transfers of personal data between businesses in the EU and the UK after 31 December. [HL9344]

Baroness Barran: At the end of the transition period, UK domestic law will treat EU (and wider EEA) states and institutions as adequate on a transitional basis for the purposes of the UK GDPR, so personal data can continue to flow from the UK to the EEA without further safeguards needing to be implemented.

In order for the free flow of personal data from the EEA to the UK to continue at the end of the transition period, we are seeking an adequacy decision from the EU under the GDPR. Our view is that the UK more than meets the 'essentially equivalent' adequacy test. However, if the EU has not made an adequacy decision in respect of the UK before the end of the transition period, there are alternative mechanisms which organisations in the EU/EEA can use to lawfully continue to send personal data to the UK from 1 January 2021. Standard Contractual Clauses (SCCs) are the most common legal safeguard and will be the relevant mitigation for most organisations.

These measures should address any potential risk of challenge from privacy advocates.

Debts: Developing Countries

Asked by **Baroness Kennedy of Cradley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of calls for debt relief from emerging economies to help manage (1) the healthcare, and (2) the economic, consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL9135]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Government is concerned with the rising debt vulnerabilities in low-income and emerging economies. In April 2020, G20 Finance Ministers agreed to pause debt repayments from the most vulnerable countries in 2020. On 14 October, the Chancellor met with his G20 counterparts where they agreed an extension of this initiative by 6 months, with the possibility of a further six month extension to be reviewed in 2021. The G20 focused on these countries as they are particularly vulnerable to the economic pressures of the pandemic.

On 14 October, G20 Finance Ministers also agreed, in principle, to a "Common Framework for Future Debt Treatments beyond the DSSI". This historic achievement marks the first time creditors from the G20 and Paris Club of official creditors have agreed to participate in coordinated debt restructurings. The Common Framework

will initially apply to countries eligible for the DSSI. The UK will continue to push for strengthened coordination on emerging economy debt issues.

Deloitte: Tax Avoidance

Asked by Lord Sikka

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the judgment in *Travel Document Service & Anor v Revenue & Customs* (Corporation tax – tax avoidance scheme) UKUT 45 (TCC) by the Upper Tribunal (Tax and Chancery Chamber) on 7 February 2017, whether they have (1) investigated, (2) fined, or (3) prosecuted, Deloitte for any role it had in unlawful tax avoidance schemes. [HL9158]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: It is not possible for HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) to provide details of any action taken in connection with this organisation.

HMRC challenge scheme promoters and other enablers in the marketed avoidance supply chain in order to disrupt their business. On 19 March 2020, HMRC published their strategy for tackling promoters of mass-marketed tax avoidance schemes and those who facilitate the use of these schemes. The strategy sets out HMRC's work to date and outlines how HMRC and Government will continue to take robust action against promoters of tax avoidance. The Promoter Strategy is available on GOV.UK.

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Senior Civil Servants

Asked by Baroness Kramer

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many BAME civil servants there are at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs at (1) SCS1, (2) SCS2, (3) SCS3, and (4) SCS4, grade. [HL9141]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: I refer to the published diversity and inclusion data for the Civil Service: www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-service-diversity-inclusion-dashboard/civil-service-diversity-and-inclusion-dashboard.

The Civil Service is committed to diversity and inclusion and to reflecting the country that we serve, and is taking targeted action to tackle underrepresentation, especially in the Senior Civil Service (SCS). Our workforce data shows that the Civil Service as a whole is broadly representative of the UK's working population, but there is more to be done to ensure that this diversity is reflected at all levels across departments and professions. Our diversity and inclusion dashboard provides details of the percentage of SCS from an ethnic minority background, but this data does not differentiate the SCS grades (SCS1,2,3,4). Defra is unable to provide the breakdown by SCS grades due to the risk of identifying individuals.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

PQ HL9141 Diversity and Inclusion Data [PQ HL9141 Diversity and Inclusion Data.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-10-13/HL9141>

Department of Transport: Senior Civil Servants

Asked by Baroness Kramer

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many BAME civil servants there are at the Department for Transport at (1) SCS1, (2) SCS2, (3) SCS3, and (4) SCS4, grade. [HL9138]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Department for Transport and its Executive Agencies employ the following numbers of BAME Civil Servants at the grades listed:

SCS1: 6

SCS2: 2

SCS3: 0

SCS4: 0

These figures only include individuals who have self-identified as being of a BAME background; there are other individuals who have either not made a declaration or have indicated that they prefer not to disclose this information.

Diplomatic Service: Training

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Coventry

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to provide atrocity prevention training to UK embassy and diplomatic personnel based in fragile states. [HL9121]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Atrocity prevention training is available to all staff at all grades in the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office through the International Academy. It is available to staff based in the UK and in our missions overseas. Staff in fragile states are encouraged to complete the relevant training. Her Majesty's Government will also pay for additional external atrocity prevention training where appropriate. We will continue to look for opportunities to enhance the existing training we provide our staff to identify the risks of atrocities and conflict, and the continued development and use of early warning mechanisms.

Divorce: Counselling and Mediation

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Carlisle

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the passing of the Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Act 2020 on 25 June, what information and guidance they plan to provide online about the availability of counselling and mediation services for couples going through the procedure of divorce. [HL9117]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: As part of implementing the Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Act, the Government is committed to ensuring that appropriate support services are clearly signposted from gov.uk webpages for those contemplating divorce. We are also committed to providing appropriate signposting as part of the legal process of divorce through an updated online divorce service. While precise details are yet to be finalised, these services would likely include mediation and marriage and relationship support services.

Electric Scooters

Asked by Baroness Kennedy of Cradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment have they made of (1) the dangers of the use of electric scooters on public highways, and (2) any safety measures which may be required as a result. [HL9134]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: E-scooters are a new vehicle type and evidence around their associated benefits and risks is limited. However, a recent report by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) concluded that the risks of using a bicycle or e-scooter are broadly comparable.

We are using on-road trials of rental e-scooters to further understand the benefits, risks and wider impacts of e-scooters. Vehicles used in the trials must all meet a set of safety standards, and their speed, power and weight are all limited to constrain how an e-scooter can be used. Users receive a form of training before using the vehicle for the first time and are being actively encouraged to wear a protective helmet.

Equal Pay: Ethnic Groups

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with (1) local authorities in London, and (2) the Greater London Authority, about the ethnicity pay gap in London. [HL9162]

Lord Callanan: In 2018/19, the Government consulted on options for exploring possibilities for employer-level ethnicity pay reporting. Following the consultation, Government met with businesses and representative organisations to understand the barriers to reporting and explore what information could be published to allow for meaningful action to be taken. It is essential that any reporting is reliable and robust, and that is why last year we also ran a voluntary methodology testing exercise with a broad range of businesses to better understand the complexities outlined in the consultation using real payroll data. The Greater London Authority and Local Government Association were both invited and took part in the methodology testing.

Free School Meals

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the analysis by the Food Foundation, published on 12 October, which found that 900,000 more children have been registered for free school meals. [HL9160]

Baroness Berridge: The provision of free school meals, to children from out-of-work families or those on low incomes, is of the utmost importance to this government. The overall number and proportion of students who qualify for free school meals is published in the 'Schools, pupils and their characteristics' publication and its underlying data files. The most recent publication shows that there are around 1.4 million children eligible for and claiming a free nutritious school meal, saving families more than £400 per year. The 2020 publication is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2020>.

Take-up may currently be higher due to the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak and the economic circumstances. Additionally, we have provided a temporary extension to free school meal eligibility to include some children of groups who have no recourse to public funds (NRPF). Guidance on the NRPF extension is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance/guidance-for-the-temporary-extension-of-free-school-meals-eligibility-to-nrpf-groups>.

We want to make sure as many eligible pupils as possible are claiming their free school meals, and to make it as simple as possible for schools and local authorities to determine eligibility. To support this we provide an Eligibility Checking System, to make the checking process as quick and straightforward as possible for schools and local authorities, and we have developed a model registration form to help schools encourage parents to sign up for free school meals. We also provide guidance to Jobcentre Plus advisers so that they can make Universal Credit recipients aware that they may also be entitled to wider benefits, including free school meals.

We are grateful for the hard work that school staff undertake throughout the school year to deliver this provision locally for the families that are eligible for free school meals. During the COVID-19 outbreak, we are especially appreciative of the actions schools have taken to continue free school meal provision in challenging circumstances.

Fungi: Environmental Impact Assessment

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether environmental impact assessments take adequate account of fungi. [HL9108]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: No assessment of the adequacy of Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) for fungi has been made.

The EIA process takes account of many important habitat types for fungi, such as the habitats of principal importance listed under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 as well as important fungi or species assemblages where impacts would result in a likely significant effect. Specific consideration is given to SSSIs notified for the fungi they support.

Gaza Strip: Children

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of military violence in Gaza on the mental health of children living there. [HL9163]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are deeply concerned by the situation in Gaza, including the effects of military violence on the health of the population, particularly for children. We have publicly and privately expressed our longstanding concerns about the use of live ammunition and excessive force by the Israel Defense Forces and we call on Israel to adhere to the principles of necessity and proportionality when defending its legitimate security interest. We continue to call upon Hamas and other terrorist groups to permanently end their incitement and rocket fire against Israel. We encourage actors to put forward long-term sustainable proposals, to resolve the threat posed to Israel's security by Hamas, PIJ and other militants in Gaza. Hamas' misrule has terrible consequences for the people of Gaza and Israel. Officials from our Embassy in Tel Aviv and our Consulate-General in Jerusalem will continue to urge the Israeli and Palestinian authorities to take steps to improve conditions in Gaza.

Global Navigation Satellite Systems: Finance

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made in developing a UK position navigation and timing satellite and earth observation system; how much they have spent on developing this project to date; and how much funding they plan to invest in this in each of the next four years. [HL9244]

Lord Callanan: The 18-month UK Global Navigation Satellite System Programme successfully concluded its work to develop outline proposals for a conventional satellite navigation system in September. £92m was originally allocated for the UK GNSS Programme and work has concluded successfully under budget.

Work completed by the UK Space Agency so far has developed cutting edge British expertise in areas such as spacecraft and antenna design, satellite and ground

control systems, systems engineering and simulation, which have wider applications across the space sector, in addition to supporting specialist UK jobs and industrial GNSS capability. The new Space Based PNT Programme will build on this work to consider newer, more innovative ideas of delivering global 'sat nav' and secure satellite services to meet public, government, and industry needs. SBPP will be funded from existing budgets, UKSA are feeding into the Comprehensive Spending Review, which is currently running across government.

Separately, the UK Space Agency has begun to consider plans for a national Earth Observation capability, whilst we continue to negotiate for participation in the EU's Copernicus Earth Observation System.

High Rise Flats: Insulation

Asked by Baroness Finlay of Llandaff

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the maximum level of fine they can impose on freeholders of flat blocks where dangerous cladding has not been removed; and how many such fines have been imposed since the Grenfell Tower Inquiry started. [HL9184]

Lord Greenhalgh: Government itself cannot impose fines but where building owners are failing to make acceptable progress in removing unsafe cladding then they should expect enforcement action by local authorities or Fire and Rescue Authorities. We have established a Joint Inspection Team to support local authorities in taking enforcement action where building owners are refusing to remediate high-rise buildings with unsafe cladding or are not making acceptable progress. Local authorities have a duty to take enforcement action under the Housing Act 2004 if they find the most serious 'category 1' hazards on residential premises and failure to comply with this can result in a financial penalty of up to £30,000 or prosecution in the Magistrates' Court, which may result in an unlimited fine on conviction.

The Fire Safety Bill will also clarify that the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (the 'Fire Safety Order') applies to external wall systems and will put beyond doubt that Fire and Rescue Authorities can enforce against and where necessary, pursue prosecution if Responsible Persons or those otherwise responsible under the Fire Safety Order fail to take appropriate fire safety measures with regards to unsafe cladding in multi-occupied residential buildings. The highest financial penalty that can be imposed for non-compliance with the Fire Safety Order is an unlimited fine. It is for the Court to decide on a case-by-case basis what financial penalty should be allocated. Details of enforcement action taken or being taken by local authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities in regard to the buildings with unsafe Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) cladding can be found on the Building Safety Programme Monthly Data Release which is available (attached) at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/aluminium-composite-material-cladding#acm-remediation-data>.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Building Safety Monthly Data [201016
Building_Safety_Data_Release_September_2020 - HL9184.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-10-14/HL9184>

Homelessness: Coronavirus

Asked by **Lord Wigley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to ensure that the health needs of people with no fixed abode (1) are considered, and (2) are facilitated, during the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL9258]

Lord Bethell: Homeless people and people who experience rough sleeping are at increased vulnerability to severe illness from COVID-19. The Department, Public Health England (PHE) and NHS England and NHS Improvement have been working closely since the start of the pandemic to provide leadership and support to local authority public health teams and the National Health Service around homelessness and COVID-19 related priorities. This has included advice and guidance to the system on responding to the multiple health needs (substance misuse, mental and physical health) of the population during the 'Everyone In' phase, advice on testing of asymptomatic homeless people as part of their accommodation move on plans and access to the right care and support including registering with a general practitioner, access to mental health and substance misuse services. The Department, PHE and NHS England and NHS Improvement are continuing to prioritise a joined-up health response for this population.

Honours

Asked by **Lord Blunkett**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people received a CBE or higher honour in the Queen's Birthday Honours List, published on 9 October, in each of (1) the regions in England, and (2) the nations of the UK. [HL9112]

Asked by **Lord Blunkett**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many of each category of honours were awarded in the Queen's Birthday Honours List, published on 9 October, to people in (1) Wales, (2) Scotland, (3) Northern Ireland, and (4) each of the regions of England, as a (a) number, and (b) percentage, of that country or region's population. [HL9113]

Asked by **Lord Blunkett**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many honours were awarded in the Queen's Birthday Honours List, published on 9 October, to people in (1) London, and (2) each English city region that has a mayor, per head of population of that city or region. [HL9114]

Asked by **Lord Blunkett**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Orders of Merit or Companions of Honour have been awarded in the last 25 years to those resident at the time in (1) London, and (2) Yorkshire. [HL9115]

Lord True: Statistical information held in relation to the regional breakdown of recipients at all levels on the Queen's Birthday Honours List 2020 can be found below. Percentages are rounded to 1 decimal point. Data for CBE and higher levels has been aggregated and included in the same table below. Data reflects the correspondence address provided by recipients.

Data is collected using county and aggregated into regional figures. Information on the number of nominations by mayoral region is not captured, as we are not able to break down the data in that way.

Honours are bestowed on merit. A key aim of the honours system is to make it more equitable and better representative of the whole of the UK.

In the last 25 years (since October 1995) there have been 83 recipients of the Companion of Honour. We do not collect the information requested, nor do we collect information on recipients of Order of Merit, as this is within the personal gift of The Sovereign.

Region	BEM	BEM%	MBE	MBE %	OBE	OBE %	CBE and Higher	CBE and Higher %	Total	Population %
East	39	7.30%	48	8.60%	24	9.40%	5	3.60%	116	9.30%
East Midlands	15	2.80%	19	3.40%	5	1.90%	1	0.70%	40	7.20%
London	45	8.40%	103	18.30%	61	23.90%	56	40.90%	264	12.90%
North East	23	4.30%	13	2.30%	2	0.80%	1	0.70%	39	4.10%
North West	59	11.00%	46	8.20%	22	8.60%	9	6.60%	136	11.20%
South East	61	11.40%	76	13.50%	47	18.40%	25	18.20%	211	13.70%
South West	44	8.20%	47	8.40%	13	5.10%	5	3.60%	109	8.40%
West Midlands	40	7.40%	38	6.80%	17	6.70%	7	5.10%	102	13.70%

<i>Region</i>	<i>BEM</i>	<i>BEM%</i>	<i>MBE</i>	<i>MBE %</i>	<i>OBE</i>	<i>OBE %</i>	<i>CBE and Higher</i>	<i>CBE and Higher %</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Population %</i>
Yorkshire and Humberside	40	7.40%	29	5.20%	20	7.80%	11	8.00%	100	8.40%
Northern Ireland	63	11.70%	39	6.90%	12	4.70%	2	1.50%	115	2.90%
Scotland	64	11.90%	58	10.30%	21	8.20%	7	5.10%	151	8.40%
Wales	43	8.00%	43	7.70%	9	3.50%	7	5.10%	103	4.80%
Living Abroad	1	0.20%	2	0.40%	2	0.80%	1	0.70%	11	-
Total	537		561		255		102		1495	

Housing: Construction

Asked by Lord Moylan

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps Homes England is taking (1) to encourage, and (2) to create, opportunities for small and new-entry builders in the housing construction sector; and what plans they have, if any, to reflect these steps in the specification for the forthcoming tender for Homes England's Delivery Partner Panel 4. [HL9306]

Lord Greenhalgh: Homes England's strategic objectives include helping small builders grow into medium builders and to encourage new entrants into the market. The Home Building Fund specifically focuses on supporting SME builders who are unable to access suitable finance in the marketplace. It does this by providing development finance direct, as well as through lender frameworks designed to encourage and enhance the supply of liquidity in the market to the SME builder.

In addition, Homes England looks to ensure SMEs can access land through its Land Hub, and the agency's standard building lease sets out a legal obligation for a proportion of homes to be built out by SMEs or Registered Providers.

Work to replace the current Delivery Partner Panel (DPP3) is focused on diversifying the housing market and increasing SME access to public land opportunities, in line with the agency's strategic objectives.

Housing: Insulation

Asked by Baroness Grender

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of some mortgage providers requiring an External Wall Survey 1 certificate before lending to homeowners wishing to re-mortgage or sell their properties; and what steps they are taking to support those homeowners. [HL9126]

Lord Greenhalgh: The EWS1 form was introduced by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) to assist in valuation of high-rise residential buildings for mortgage purposes. Each lender has their own policies regarding valuation requirements. Some do not require an

EWS1 form, and others seek them for a greater range of buildings than the process was designed for. Where requested the EWS1 assessments are commissioned by individual building owners and so the department does not hold data on their use. The Department is working to estimate the potential impact of these requests on leaseholders and sales, and is urging a pragmatic approach by lenders and valuers, especially for lower rise blocks where the Department does not support the blanket use of EWS1.

Human Rights

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Coventry

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of existing international capabilities to meet any global increase in identity-based violence; and what plans they have to appoint a Minister to act as a Special Envoy on Genocide. [HL9122]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: There are currently no plans to appoint a Minister to act as a Special Envoy on Genocide. As Minister with responsibility for Human Rights policy and matters relating to the UN as well as the Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, I also have oversight of our atrocity prevention policy. The creation of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) presents us with an opportunity to identify where we can strengthen our international efforts on reducing conflict and instability, including atrocity prevention, in order to maximise our impact abroad. The UK Government has consulted widely as part of the Integrated Security, Defence and Foreign Policy Review which will propose fresh ideas to shape the objectives and systems of the FCDO, reflecting a drive towards a more effective and more joined-up foreign policy.

Indonesia: Protest

Asked by Lord Lexden

To ask Her Majesty's Government further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 13 October (HL8595), what was the reply given by the government of Indonesia to Heather Wheeler's

representations about West Papua at their meeting in January 2020. [HL9195]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We do not usually publish records of conversations - doing so may set a precedent whereby Her Majesty's Government is pressured to publish further conversations.

Investment Income: Monitoring

Asked by Lord Sikka

To ask Her Majesty's Government which body is responsible for monitoring payments of possible illegal dividends; and how many cases that body has examined in the last five years. [HL9157]

Lord Callanan: Several bodies have powers in certain circumstances to investigate and take action if illegal dividends have been paid, including the Insolvency Service, HM Revenue and Customs and some sector regulators.

Members: Allowances

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker, following the example of the government of New Zealand and to reflect the economic costs of the COVID-19 pandemic being felt by the general public, whether there are plans to reduce the allowances paid to Members by 10 per cent. [HL9133]

Lord McFall of Alcluth: On 6 May the House agreed that a reduced daily allowance, at 50% of the usual rate, would be paid for virtual and physical attendance. This change was retrospective and applied to attendances from 20 April. On 22 July the House agreed to a revised allowance scheme. This reinstated the full daily rate for physical attendance in the Chamber or Grand Committee, while retaining the reduced 50% rate for virtual attendance in both fora. The House of Lords Commission will continue to keep the situation under review.

Members: Correspondence

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they intend to respond to the letter relating to skeleton bills and skeleton provision sent to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office and the Leader of the House of Commons by the Chairs of the Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee, the Constitution Committee and the Delegated Powers and Regulatory Reform Committee on 25 September. [HL9002]

Lord True: I can confirm to the noble Lord that a response to this letter was sent from the Leader of the House of Commons on 20 October 2020.

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government: Senior Civil Servants

Asked by Baroness Kramer

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many BAME civil servants there are at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government at (1) SCS1, (2) SCS2, (3) SCS3, and (4) SCS4, grade. [HL9140]

Lord Greenhalgh: The Department collects this information from employees who declare their ethnicity on a voluntary basis. Due to the number of SCS declaring and the data protection risk this creates, we are unable to breakdown this information by SCS grade from 1 to 4, as requested.

Published Annual Civil Service statistics include BAME representation by Department and can be found (attached) here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/civil-service-statistics-2020>

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Civil Service statistics [201027 Statistical_bulletin_-_Civil_Service_Statistics_2020 - HL9140.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-10-13/HL9140>

Ministry of Justice: Senior Civil Servants

Asked by Baroness Kramer

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many BAME civil servants there are at the Ministry of Justice at (1) SCS1, (2) SCS2, (3) SCS3, and (4) SCS4, grade. [HL9142]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: At the end of June 2020, 17 SCS PB1 employees in the Ministry of Justice and its executive agencies had declared their ethnicity as BAME. The number of declared BAME employees in the other SCS grades is too small to disclose in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

The Ministry of Justice is taking action to increase the diversity of staff recruited to the Senior Civil Service. This has included a comprehensive review of SCS recruitment, looking at every aspect of the delivery model to encourage interest and ensure fairness, consistency and transparency for prospective candidates. This covers, but is not limited to: team resource and systems; inclusive recruitment guidance; marketing and attraction; job analysis; diversity data reporting; the assessment process; and panel composition and training.

Civil Service wide diversity data is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-service-diversity-inclusion-dashboard/civil-service-diversity-and-inclusion-dashboard>.

Multinational Companies: Conditions of Employment

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they, if any, have to compel major transnational companies to improve working conditions in the UK. [HL9161]

Lord Callanan: This Government has a proud history of protecting and enhancing workers' rights.

As announced in the Queen's Speech, we will be bringing forward an Employment Bill to implement a range of Manifesto commitments.

This legislation will make workplaces fairer, by providing better support for working families, new protections for those in low-paid work and the gig economy, and by encouraging flexible working.

Myanmar: Refugees

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Coventry

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to provide (1) funding for, and (2) technical assistance, to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' Trust Fund for Humanitarian Relief Efforts to promote regional cooperation for states addressing irregular migration from Myanmar. [HL9119]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Government does not provide direct support to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' (ASEAN) Trust Fund for Humanitarian Relief Efforts. We do however provide broader technical assistance to the ASEAN humanitarian co-ordination centre to increase humanitarian capacity and co-ordination across ASEAN member states.

Naeemuddin Khattak

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to respond to the representations made to the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office by the All Party Parliamentary Group for the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community about the murder of Professor Naeem Ud Din Khattak; and what representations they intend to make, if any, to the Pakistan High Commissioner to seek regular updates of the investigation into that murder. [HL9104]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are concerned and saddened by the murder of Dr Naeemuddin Khattak on 5 October in Peshawar. The British High Commission in Islamabad will continue to monitor the case closely. The UK remains deeply concerned by reports of discrimination and violence against religious communities in Pakistan, including against the Ahmadiyya Muslim community. I spoke at the launch event of the APPG for the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community's Report on the 21 July. I expressed the UK's deep concern regarding discrimination and violence against Ahmadi Muslims in

Pakistan. We engage at a senior level with the Government of Pakistan on the mistreatment of religious and ethnic groups, including from the Ahmadiyya Muslim community.

On 27 August, I raised our concerns regarding Freedom of Religion or Belief and the protection of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community in Pakistan with Pakistan's Minister for Human Rights, Dr Shireen Mazari. I also raised Freedom of Religion or Belief concerns with the Governor of Punjab, Chaudhry Muhammad Sarwar, on 8 September and with Pakistan's High Commissioner to the UK, Moazzam Ahmad Khan, on 8 October.

Nagorno Karabakh: Armed Conflict

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the State Department of the United States about reports that that Department is drawing up a revised draft sanctions list for the government of Turkey should that government continue to encourage and promote conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh region, Armenia and Azerbaijan; if they have not had any such discussions, whether they plan to do so; and what plans they have, if any, to introduce similar such sanctions. [HL9180]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The FCDO remains in close contact with the U.S. and other partners regarding the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh region. We urge all external parties and friends of both states to redouble their efforts in support of an end to hostilities and to refrain from taking actions that risk exacerbating the crisis. A comprehensive resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is overdue. That can only be delivered through a negotiated settlement and not through military action. All parties must urgently return to the negotiating table to work toward this aim without preconditions.

Non-domestic Rating (Public Lavatories) Bill

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure that money saved by local authorities is spent on improving (1) the standard, and (2) the availability, of public lavatories should the Non-Domestic Rating (Public Lavatories) Bill be passed by Parliament. [HL9147]

Lord Greenhalgh: The Government recognises the importance of public lavatories. The Non-Domestic Rating (Public Lavatories) Bill would provide a 100% business rates relief to properties that consist wholly or mainly of public lavatories. This would reduce running costs and help keep these valuable public amenities open. The Government recognises that local authorities are best placed to make decisions on spending based on local needs and priorities and has a long-standing policy of not ring-fencing funding.

OneWeb

Asked by *Baroness Randerson*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they proceeded with their announced investment of £400 million in the company OneWeb; and what additional capability they planned to acquire through any such investment. [HL9243]

Lord Callanan: The Government (announced 3 July) led a successful bid to acquire OneWeb, which develops cutting-edge satellite technology in the UK and in the US.

OneWeb has the potential to operate a global network of small satellites, known as a mega constellation, which can connect the world to broadband, and other services from space.

OneWeb aims to provide broadband to millions of people, particularly those otherwise without connectivity otherwise in remote and rural locations.

We will be able to provide more detail on how OneWeb will support the UK once Chapter 11 proceedings have been completed.

Owner Occupation: Coronavirus

Asked by *Lord Hay of Ballyore*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what additional support they plan to provide to homeowners after the mortgage payment holiday scheme ends. [HL9036]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Following the Coronavirus outbreak, the Government worked quickly with lenders and financial regulators to give people access to payment holidays on their mortgages. This gives customers a much-needed respite period, where no repayments on these products are due. It was necessary to bring this temporary measure in, in order to give customers time to smooth out their finances that may have taken a hit by the pandemic. As borrowers still requiring assistance after 31 October could be in serious financial distress the FCA believe it is right that lenders are able to understand their financial position in order to lend responsibly.

The FCA published guidance on mortgage payment holidays on 14 September setting out that firms should continue to provide support through tailored forbearance options for those borrowers that are facing ongoing financial difficulties. This could include granting new mortgage payment holidays. As part of this guidance any forbearance granted beyond 31 October will be reflected on the consumer's credit file in the usual manner.

The Government also has support in place for qualifying borrowers that cannot afford their mortgage interest. Support for Mortgage Interest (SMI) provides financial help to homeowners who qualify for an income related benefit. Claimants must be in receipt of Universal Credit for nine assessment periods (nine months), before receiving support through the SMI scheme. The loan is then repayable upon sale of the property. The primary

purpose of SMI is to enable people to stay in their homes without fear of repossession.

Police and Crime Commissioners: Reviews

Asked by *Lord Lexden*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the outcome of part one of their review into the role of Police and Crime Commissioners which was due to have reported to the Home Secretary by October. [HL9143]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: On 22 July, the Government announced a two part review into the role of Police and Crime Commissioners. Part one of the review, which is internal, is underway and is focused on strengthening the accountability of PCCs in line with the Government's manifesto commitment. The review will report to the Home Secretary later this month.

Ports: Ynys Môn

Asked by *Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps, if any, they are taking to prepare for potential delays in Anglesey, and at or near other ports in the UK, after 31 December. [HL9188]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Ports policy in Wales is devolved and is a matter for the Welsh Government. The Department for Transport is working closely with and supporting the Cabinet Office's Border and Protocol Delivery Group (BPDG) on delivering the required preparations for the end of the transition period. In July 2020, the government committed to spending £470 million on new border infrastructure to support ports in building extra capacity to meet the new control requirements where there is space to do so, and, if necessary, to build additional inland sites across the country where checks can take place.

The Port Infrastructure Fund (PIF) will support ports in preparing for any potential disruptions that may occur at the end of the transition period. The PIF has been open for applications from 2 October and industry is encouraged to utilize the fund where applicable.

HMG is also working with Welsh and Scottish Governments to confirm the infrastructure requirements for Wales and Scotland. This includes sites which will be required to be in place to support both Holyhead in Anglesey and specific ports in South West Wales.

DfT officials are working closely with English Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) with high volume EU facing Roll-on Roll-off ports in their areas, ensuring that these LRFs have the required information and analysis to enable them to put in place appropriate traffic management plans in case of traffic disruption following the end of the EU Transition Period.

Prime Minister's Office and Cabinet Office: Senior Civil Servants

Asked by *Baroness Kramer*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many BAME civil servants there are at the Cabinet Office at (1) SCS1, (2) SCS2, (3) SCS3, and (4) SCS4, grade. [HL8861]

Asked by *Baroness Kramer*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many BAME civil servants there are in the Prime Minister's Office at (1) SCS1, (2) SCS2, (3) SCS3, and (4) SCS4, grade. [HL8866]

Lord True: The Prime Minister's Office is an integral part of the Cabinet Office.

Cross civil service information can be found at the Diversity and Inclusion dashboard at: <https://public.tableau.com/profile/cabinet.office.diversity.and.inclusion#!/vizhome/CivilServiceDiversityandInclusionDashboard/Introduction?publish=yes>.

As the dashboard's data tables show 7% of Cabinet Office Senior Civil Servants declared that they were from an ethnic minority.

18% of Cabinet Office overall civil servants declare that they are from an ethnic minority. Details of individual grades will not be disclosed to avoid identifying individuals.

Prisoners: Gender Recognition

Asked by *Lord Blencathra*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of compliance with the Equality Act 2010 of decisions to move male prisoners who are gender transitioning to female prison units. [HL9110]

Asked by *Lord Blencathra*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what criteria they use to assess decisions to move biologically male prisoners with a Gender Recognition Certificate into a female prison unit when the prison in question has a transgender unit. [HL9111]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: We are committed to ensuring that transgender offenders are treated fairly, lawfully and decently, with their rights and safety properly respected. Regardless of where a transgender individual is being held, we expect that they will be respected and addressed in the gender with which they identify.

In 2019 the Ministry of Justice conducted a review into the care and management of individuals who are transgender and this led to the publication of a revised Policy Framework which strengthened the risk and safeguarding process. The Framework was developed in consultation with a range of internal and external stakeholders, and comprehensive consideration was given

to HMPPS's responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 throughout the process. The Framework emphasises the requirement to protect both the welfare and rights of the individual, and the welfare and rights of others around them. This includes staff and other prisoners. All decisions made on the location of transgender individuals are made in line with this policy, and decisions to locate an individual in the opposite side of the estate to their legal gender can only be made by a Complex Case Board (CCB), chaired by a senior prison manager, following a full assessment of all known risks posed both to, and from, the individual.

Under the Gender Recognition Act 2004, once an individual obtains a GRC, their acquired gender becomes legally recognised and they are entitled to the rights appropriate to anyone else of that gender. This means that a transgender female with a GRC entering the prison estate would be placed in a women's prison, unless there were exceptional circumstances. Where such circumstances are identified, a referral is made to the CCB to consider all available evidence relating to an individual's care and management, including risks posed both to and from the individual, before making a decision on an individual's location.

Further information can be found on the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-care-and-management-of-individuals-who-are-transgender>.

Public Lavatories: Large Goods Vehicles

Asked by *Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the case for more toilets in Kent for lorry drivers due to potential congestion post-Brexit, and whether they have assessed how many lorries could be caught up in any such delays. [HL9187]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: We published our revised reasonable worst-case scenario planning assumptions on 23 September for the end of the Transition Period. Such a scenario could lead to queues of up to 7,000 HGVs in Kent. We are working with the Kent Resilience Forum to maintain traffic flow and to mitigate the effects of any disruption that occurs. This includes additional holding capacity for HGVs in Kent.

The Kent Resilience Forum's preparations include a Driver Welfare plan that will provide reasonable and proportionate distribution of welfare to both passenger and freight traffic during significant congestion. It covers the deployment of food, water, medicine, warmth and sanitation. This can be adjusted to respond to different levels of congestion. This will benefit from the Forum's experience of previous incidents where there has been congestion in Kent as a result of delays in crossings of the Short Straits.

Our delivery plans ensure that all Inland Border Facilities will have adequate toilet facilities for drivers and any driver companions to use, including accessible and children toilets.

Public Sector: Internet

Asked by *Lord Shinkwin*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of public sector bodies' compliance with the Public Sector (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018, now that the 23 September 2020 deadline has passed. [HL9070]

Lord True: The Government Digital Service (GDS) is testing websites in accordance with the Accessibility Regulations.

GDS will periodically publish information about their monitoring. GDS will also, on behalf of the Minister for the Cabinet Office, publish a list of websites with non-compliant accessibility statements.

GDS encourages organisations to engage with them to increase the accessibility of their websites for users.

Refugees: Mental Health Services

Asked by *Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what mental health services they make available to refugees housed at repurposed barracks in (1) Penally, and (2) Folkestone. [HL9148]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: We take the welfare of the asylum seekers we accommodate very seriously. The people who we accommodate in Penally and Folkestone can call on an onsite nurse for assistance, we also work closely with our service providers, local health teams and the voluntary sector to ensure that support is provided to vulnerable asylum seekers.

Additionally, asylum seekers are able to contact Advice, Issue Reporting and Eligibility service, operated by Migrant Help 24 hours a day, 365 days a year if they need help, advice or guidance, that includes raising issues relating to safeguarding.

Rivers: Wales

Asked by *Lord Berkeley of Knighton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what assessment they have made of river pollution caused by existing chicken farms; and what discussions they have had with the Welsh Government about possible river pollution from chicken farms which have planning permission pending. [HL9109]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Agriculture is recorded as the industry most responsible for Water Framework Directive 'Reasons for Not Achieving Good' (RNAG) status in England. The sector accounts for a third of all reasons, the majority coming from nutrients in livestock manure when it is inadequately applied to land. When fertiliser, including from chicken farming, is spread

at the wrong time and in the wrong place it can run off to water courses during rainfall events.

We are unable to attribute the contribution by livestock sector. Whist poultry will contribute to this, other sectors, such as dairy, beef and pigs, are more intensive. They create larger quantities of manure and slurry and are likely to have a higher influence on overall pollution incidents.

We devolve environmental policy to the other UK administrations. England's approach differs from that in Wales by using a designation process to determine the location of Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs). These at-risk areas require landowners to follow rules for storing and applying organic manure. In 2018 Defra introduced the Farming Rules for Water which standardise good farming practices and offer a new, modern approach to regulation whereby farmers and land managers can determine which approach is best for their land. Under these rules, farmers must consider the soil and crop needs of their farm before applying manure.

Both England and Wales use the Environmental Permitting Regulations for intensive poultry farming (above 40,000 poultry places). Permitted poultry farms are obliged to control manure and other pollution risks. A new development will need to have both planning permission and an environmental permit before it can operate.

My department has not held discussions with the Welsh Government about possible river pollution from chicken farms which have planning permission pending. The responsibility for Town and Country Planning in Wales is a devolved matter for the Welsh Government. Guidance to local planning authorities in Wales is provided by Welsh Ministers, according to planning policies for Wales.

Schools: Coronavirus

Asked by *Lord Lexden*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the reciprocal benefits that independent schools and schools maintained by their local authority have derived from working together during the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL9194]

Baroness Berridge: The department continues to encourage and support new partnerships between independent and state-funded schools, in line with the department's joint understanding with the Independent Schools Council. The department wants to see more schools forming impactful and mutually beneficial collaborations across the areas of curriculum development, teaching quality, governance and leadership, and other targeted forms of school improvement. As we move forward from the disruption caused by the COVID-19 outbreak, we hope that more schools will see the opportunity to work together to find solutions to common problems and to build a more collaborative system.

Sex and Relationship Education

Asked by Baroness Benjamin

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many (1) primary, and (2) secondary, schools have delayed the introduction of Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education until summer 2021 due to complaints from parents and pressure groups; and what assessment they have made of the impact of complaints made following the publication of the Plan your relationships, sex and health curriculum guidance on 24 September on those schools' decision to delay that introduction. [HL9171]

Asked by Baroness Benjamin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what support they have provided to schools to assist with the provision of Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education, in particular with the provision of lessons that include teaching on LGBT relationships. [HL9172]

Asked by Baroness Benjamin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what support they are providing to schools who consulted parents about the provision of Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education but have since experienced complaints from parents and pressure groups which have resulted in delays to the introduction of those subjects to the curriculum. [HL9173]

Asked by Baroness Benjamin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support schools which have experienced complaints and pressure from parents about the provision of teaching about LGBT relationships on the curriculum; and what discussions they have had with such schools about ensuring the delivery of Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education. [HL9174]

Asked by Baroness Benjamin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what support and assistance they have provided to schools which have received communications threatening legal action from parents and pressure groups that seek to prevent the teaching of any form of relationship and sex education, including on LGBT relationships. [HL9175]

Asked by Baroness Benjamin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to reassure schools that they are not at risk of legal action for providing Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education on the curriculum. [HL9176]

Baroness Berridge: We want to support all young people to be happy, healthy and safe. That is why we made relationships education compulsory for primary school pupils, relationships and sex education compulsory

for secondary school pupils, and health education compulsory for pupils in all state-funded schools.

The Department remains committed to supporting all schools in their preparations to deliver the content of these subjects. We are aware that there are many resources in circulation to support schools to deliver these subjects and that not all of them are of good quality and some are inappropriate. On 24 September, the Department published the 'Plan your relationships, sex and health curriculum' implementation guidance to support schools to choose appropriate resources.

Our new Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) guidance and training resources equip all schools to provide comprehensive teaching in these areas in an age-appropriate way. These materials should give schools the confidence to construct a curriculum that reflects diversity of views and backgrounds, whilst fostering all pupils' respect for others, understanding of healthy relationships, and ability to look after their own wellbeing. We will be issuing further training resources throughout the year.

The statutory guidance contains information on what schools should do and sets out the legal duties with which schools must comply when teaching Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education. The guidance also sets out clear advice on choosing resources. It states that schools should assess each resource that they propose to use to ensure it is appropriate for the age and maturity of their pupils and sensitive to their needs, where relevant.

It is important that schools consider guidance from the Department and parents should feel able to discuss with schools if their approach seems to diverge from Government guidance. The regulations introducing the new subjects made it a requirement for schools to consult parents on their relationships and sex education policy. This is because it is right that parents are able to express their views on how these subjects are taught, and this process enables schools to understand the views and needs of their school community. Good quality parental engagement and effective subject design and delivery by schools will ensure that the positive benefits of teaching we know can come from these subjects are realised, which is why we have provided this support to schools.

We have worked with the National Association of Head Teachers, the National Governance Association, and the Association of School and College Leaders to issue joint guidance to support schools to engage parents on these subjects, published in October 2019 and available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/engaging-parents-with-relationships-education-policy>.

We have also released a guide for parents to support understanding of the subjects, available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationship-s-sex-and-health-education-guides-for-schools>.

In light of the circumstances caused by the COVID-19 outbreak, and following engagement with the sector, the Department is reassuring schools that although the

subjects became compulsory from 1 September 2020, schools have flexibility over how they discharge their duty within the first year of compulsory teaching. We have made it clear that schools that are ready to teach these subjects and have met the requirements set out in the statutory guidance, including those relating to engagement with parents and carers, are encouraged to begin delivering teaching from 1 September 2020, or whenever is practicable at the beginning of the new school year.

For schools that are not ready to teach these subjects or unable to adequately meet the requirements because of the challenging circumstances presented by COVID-19, they should aim to start preparations to deliver the new curriculum and commence teaching the new content by at least the start of the summer term 2021. Where implementation has therefore been delayed in some schools, this is because proper engagement with parents and time to develop the curriculum has not yet been possible, not because of parental complaints. The Department does not hold information on how many schools have delayed implementation of the subjects.

We have issued advice to local authorities and regional school's commissioners on managing disruption to primary schools related to these subjects. We continue to monitor implementation across the country and work closely with schools and local authorities, where necessary.

South East Asia: Refugees

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Coventry

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the governments of (1) Indonesia, (2) Malaysia, and (3) Thailand, (a) to permit entry to additional refugees from, and (b) to refrain from repatriating refugees to, Myanmar. [HL9120]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is committed to protecting the Rohingya community and encourage a regional response to the refugee crisis. We have made official representations to the Governments of Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and other Association of Southeast Asian Nations member states on the Rohingya, including at Ministerial level. We are clear that Rohingya refugees should be granted the appropriate protection status and humanitarian assistance within these countries.

South East Asia: Rohingya

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Coventry

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to work with the governments of (1) Indonesia, (2) Malaysia, and (3) Thailand, and appropriate UN agencies, to provide (a) financial assistance, and (b) humanitarian support, for Rohingya communities in those countries. [HL9118]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK co-hosted a virtual donor conference on "Sustaining Support for the Rohingya Refugee Response" on 22 October, in conjunction with the US, EU and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR). The conference brought together governments from across the world, including Association of South East Asian Nations member states, to support the humanitarian response for Rohingya displaced across the region. In total, countries announced \$600 million in new and existing funding. The UK pledged £47.5 million of new funding at the conference, which included £10 million of support for Bangladesh to help the country respond to coronavirus and natural disasters.

Terrorism: Northern Ireland

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made in bringing forward legislative proposals to address legacy issues in Northern Ireland. [HL9437]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The Government has been clear that we will introduce legislation to address the legacy of the Troubles in Northern Ireland in a way that focuses on reconciliation, delivers for victims from all communities, and ends the cycle of re-investigations that has failed victims and veterans alike.

While progress on this has, like other priorities, been affected by the challenging wider circumstances presented by the ongoing Covid-19 situation, we remain committed to making progress as quickly as possible, and to working with all parts of the community in Northern Ireland as part of this process.

Theatres: Cheltenham

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government why the Cheltenham Playhouse was not included in their recent award of support for arts venues. [HL9131]

Baroness Barran: The Culture Recovery Fund is an unprecedented investment, but the scale of the crisis we are facing means that it will still not be able to support everyone.

We know that this means some organisations will be disappointed with the decision they have received, but we are confident Arts Council have scrutinised all organisations against the strict criteria set for this fund by Government. We can't discuss specific details of why a particular organisation has or hasn't been awarded funding.

Although we can't comment on individual applications, there are a number of reasons why an organisation may have been unsuccessful – for example they may not have been able to show that they were at risk of no longer being financially viable this year, or they may not have sufficiently demonstrated that their work is culturally significant. As well as the funding criteria, the balance of organisations supported were considered, taking into

account geographical areas, range of artform and disciplines and size and type of organisations.

For all revenue grant applications of £1m or less, DCMS asked its Arm's Length Bodies (Arts Council England, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Historic England and the British Film Institute) to make decisions on whether organisations were successful. Any applicant who is concerned about the way their application was handled, or the service they received, should consult the Complaints Procedure published by the relevant body.

We will continue to do all we can to support creativity and culture in England. Unsuccessful organisations can still apply to other funding programmes, including Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants, which has a budget of £77.9million until March 2021.

Trade: Commonwealth

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many civil servants are working on initiatives aimed at increasing intra-Commonwealth trade. [HL9098]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: The Department for International Trade (DIT)'s Trade Policy Group (TPG) has a strong core of trade policy officials, with a headcount as of end September 2020 of 676 civil servants. Within TPG there are dedicated teams in charge of bilateral trade relations with Commonwealth members, including Australia, New Zealand, and India, as well as multilateral and regional teams, such as the World Trade Organisation and Africa teams.

In addition, DIT's overseas network of posts (Global Trade and Investment Overseas) is responsible for supporting UK exports and investment across the world. It is formed of nine regions, each reporting to a trade commissioner, known as Her Majesty's Trade Commissioner (HMTC), seven of whom cover Commonwealth countries as part of their trade responsibilities. As of September 2020, there are 151 UK-based civil servants – supported by 1,320 locally engaged staff – working in all HMTC regions.

Workstreams aimed at increasing intra-Commonwealth trade are progressed by teams of varying sizes, depending on their complexity, and DIT officials also work in close co-operation with civil servants across government, including the Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (FCDO), the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS), as well as in diplomatic and consular posts across the Commonwealth.

The workforce data only includes civil servants employed by DIT working in the UK and on DIT payroll, and UK based civil servants and locally employed staff working overseas paid via FCDO payroll who are currently engaged in delivering DIT objectives. It does not include staff on loan to DIT from other government departments who remain on their home departments payroll, contractors, military staff, people on secondment

from other organisations, those who are on loan or secondment out of DIT, those on unpaid special leave or a career break, and people working in UK Export Finance (UKEF).

Trials: Kent

Asked by Lord Wasserman

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of trials that are waiting to be heard at (1) Maidstone Crown Court, and (2) Canterbury Crown Court; and when they estimate that the present backlogs will be cleared at each of these Courts. [HL9164]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: The outstanding trial volume at Maidstone, as of Q2 (Apr-Jun) 2020, was 604 cases. This is 12% above the pre-COVID baseline of 538 cases in Q1 (Jan-Mar).

The outstanding trial volume at Canterbury, as of Q2 (Apr-Jun) 2020, was 377 cases. This is 10% above the pre-COVID baseline of 343 cases in Q1 (Jan-Mar).

Case receipts, finalisations and outstanding data is provided in the quarterly Criminal Court statistics published online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/criminal-court-statistics>

In line with the Criminal Courts Recovery Plan, published in September 2020, HMCTS is increasing capacity to maximise the number of hearings that can be carried out in the context of social distancing. It is not possible at this stage to give a date for when the backlogs at Maidstone and Canterbury will return to pre-COVID levels, as it is dependent on the volume of receipts received, and the number of cases which can be dealt with within social distancing constraints.

The coronavirus pandemic has impacted HMCTS' ability to list trials. Jury trials resumed at Maidstone and Canterbury Crown Courts on 29th June 2020. Currently, Canterbury can hear jury trials in three of its five courtrooms and Maidstone in six of its eight courtrooms, to ensure adherence to social distancing measures.

UN Human Rights Council: Membership

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the election of China, Cuba and Pakistan to the United Nations General Assembly's Human Rights Council in view of the human rights records of those countries; and what steps they intend to take to ensure that the right to freedom of religion or belief and other human rights are protected and promoted at that Council. [HL9169]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: As I said in my statement on 13 October following the election results, as a founding member of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC), the UK has been a strong advocate of its vital

work since its inception, and we are honoured to be elected for a fifth term. We note the election of China, Cuba and Pakistan; we are clear that all members of the Council should uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights and cooperate fully with the HRC. We will continue to use our voice to help strengthen the Council, and to support countries working to improve their human rights record. We will also continue to hold all those responsible for the worst violations and abuses to account through the Council. We did so most recently at the 45th session of the UN HRC on 25 September when I raised serious concerns about the human rights situations in Xinjiang, and called for China to release all those who are arbitrarily detained.

The UK is committed to defending Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) for all. We actively promote the right to FoRB through our diplomatic activity both directly with countries, and through multilateral fora including the UN where we call out countries that violate this human right. Defending Freedom of Religion or Belief was a core pledge in our campaign to be re-elected to the UN HRC, and we will continue to use our position to stand up for individuals who are persecuted for their faith, belief, or because they have no religious belief. Over recent months, Ministers and diplomats have raised issues relating to FoRB in many countries including China and Pakistan. I raised FoRB issues including inclusive and tolerant education with Pakistan's Minister for Education, Mr Shafqat Mahmood, on 1 October.

United Kingdom Internal Market Bill

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer from Baroness Scott of Bybrook on 30 September (HL8064), what penalty they expect to incur if the UK Internal Market Bill is enacted unamended. [HL8674]

Lord True: Under the Withdrawal Agreement the European Commission can bring infringement proceedings against the UK within the transition period, where it considers that the UK has not met its obligations under the Agreement. The infringement procedure is a frequently used and common mechanism.

The Commission has sent a preliminary letter under this procedure concerning the United Kingdom Internal Market Bill. We are considering the letter.

We are committed to working through the Joint Committee process under the Agreement to find a satisfactory outcome for both sides.

Unpaid Taxes

Asked by Baroness Kramer

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to their announcement on 7 October that they intend to legislate

to change the language and presentation of information in debt letters, what changes they plan to make to letters and notices from HMRC to taxpayers deemed to be in default on tax payments. [HL9137]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The changes referred to in the legislation apply to lenders in the credit industry, rather than Government departments. HMRC's letters are always being reviewed and improved to follow best practice in debt collection. At the start of the pandemic, HMRC reviewed and amended the majority of their debt collection letters so they were tailored to taxpayers' changing circumstances and to promote the support available to them.

Wales Office: Senior Civil Servants

Asked by Baroness Kramer

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many BAME civil servants there are in the Office of the Secretary of State for Wales at (1) SCS1, (2) SCS2, (3) SCS3, and (4) SCS4, grade. [HL9426]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: The Civil Service publishes details of the percentage of senior civil servants from an ethnic minority background in the diversity and inclusion dashboard, which can be viewed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-service-diversity-inclusion-dashboard/civil-service-diversity-and-inclusion-dashboard>.

The Office of the Secretary of State for Wales has no staff at SCS3 or SCS4. The number of staff in SCS1 and SCS2 is five or fewer. We are unable therefore to confirm the number of BAME staff to prevent potential identification of individuals.

Zhang Zhan

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the case, and (2) the health and well-being, of Zhang Zhan who is reportedly on hunger strike whilst detained in China; and what representations they have made to the government of China about her detention. [HL9105]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have not raised Zhang Zhan's case with the Chinese authorities. We are concerned by her case, but do not have information on her health or well-being. A free press and the free flow of information are vital for good governance. We have consistently raised our concerns about media freedoms in China and will continue to do so.

Index to Answers

Written Answers.....	1	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government: Senior Civil Servants	2
Asylum: Legal Opinion	1	Ministry of Justice: Senior Civil Servants	2
Autonomy: Audit.....	1	Multinational Companies: Conditions of Employment.....	3
Business: Coronavirus	1	Myanmar: Refugees.....	3
Business: Insolvency	1	Naeemuddin Khattak	3
Business: Training	2	Nagorno Karabakh: Armed Conflict	3
Cabinet Office: Consultants	2	Non-domestic Rating (Public Lavatories) Bill	3
Coronavirus	2	OneWeb	4
Coronavirus: Death.....	3	Owner Occupation: Coronavirus	4
Coronavirus: Disease Control.....	4	Police and Crime Commissioners: Reviews.....	4
Customs: ICT	4	Ports: Ynys Môn.....	4
Data Protection	4	Prime Minister’s Office and Cabinet Office: Senior Civil Servants	5
Debts: Developing Countries	4	Prisoners: Gender Recognition	5
Deloitte: Tax Avoidance.....	5	Public Lavatories: Large Goods Vehicles	5
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Senior Civil Servants	5	Public Sector: Internet	6
Department of Transport: Senior Civil Servants ..	5	Refugees: Mental Health Services.....	6
Diplomatic Service: Training	5	Rivers: Wales.....	6
Divorce: Counselling and Mediation.....	5	Schools: Coronavirus.....	6
Electric Scooters.....	6	Sex and Relationship Education	7
Equal Pay: Ethnic Groups	6	South East Asia: Refugees.....	8
Free School Meals	6	South East Asia: Rohingya	8
Fungi: Environmental Impact Assessment.....	6	Terrorism: Northern Ireland	8
Gaza Strip: Children	7	Theatres: Cheltenham	8
Global Navigation Satellite Systems: Finance	7	Trade: Commonwealth	9
High Rise Flats: Insulation	7	Trials: Kent	9
Homelessness: Coronavirus.....	8	UN Human Rights Council: Membership	9
Honours	8	United Kingdom Internal Market Bill	10
Housing: Construction.....	1	Unpaid Taxes.....	10
Housing: Insulation	1	Wales Office: Senior Civil Servants.....	10
Human Rights.....	1	Zhang Zhan.....	10
Indonesia: Protest	1		
Investment Income: Monitoring	2		
Members: Allowances	2		
Members: Correspondence.....	2		