

**Session 2019-21  
No. 146**



**Monday  
23 November 2020**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

# **HOUSE OF LORDS**

## **WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS**

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<b>Earl Howe</b>	Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
<b>Lord Agnew of Oulton</b>	Minister of State, Cabinet Office and Treasury
<b>Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon</b>	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
<b>Lord Ashton of Hyde</b>	Chief Whip
<b>Baroness Barran</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
<b>Baroness Berridge</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education and Department for International Trade
<b>Lord Bethell</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care and Whip
<b>Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist</b>	Whip
<b>Lord Callanan</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
<b>Earl of Courtown</b>	Deputy Chief Whip
<b>Lord Gardiner of Kimble</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
<b>Baroness Goldie</b>	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence
<b>Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park</b>	Minister of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
<b>Lord Greenhalgh</b>	Minister of State, Home Office and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
<b>Lord Grimstone of Boscobel</b>	Minister of State, Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Department for International Trade
<b>Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay</b>	Whip
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<b>Baroness Scott of Bybrook</b>	Whip
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<b>Lord Stewart of Direleton</b>	Advocate-General for Scotland
<b>Baroness Sugg</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
<b>Lord True</b>	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
<b>Baroness Vere of Norbiton</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
<b>Baroness Williams of Trafford</b>	Minister of State, Home Office
<b>Viscount Younger of Leckie</b>	Whip

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# Written Statements

Monday, 23 November 2020

## Dental Patient Charge Uplift 2020-21

[HLWS585]

**Lord Bethell:** My Hon. Friend, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Prevention, Public Health and Primary Care) (Jo Churchill) has made the following written statement:

The National Health Service (Dental Charges) (Amendment) Regulations 2020 (“the Amendment Regulations”) will be laid before Parliament to increase National Health Service dental patient charges in England from 14th December 2020.

This is the fifth and final year of the Spending Review 2015 commitment to annually uplift dental patient charges by 5% for the duration of the Spending Review period.

Following a six-month freeze, the dental charge payable for a band 1 course of treatment will rise by £1.10, from £22.70 to £23.80. For a band 2 course of treatment will increase by £3.10 from £62.10 to £65.20. A band 3 course of treatment will increase by £13.50 from £269.30 to £282.80.

Details of the revised charges for 2020-21 can be found in the table below:

Band	Description	2020/21 (proposed patient charge)
1	This band includes examination, diagnosis (including radiographs), advice on how to prevent future problems, scale and polish if clinically needed, and preventative care (e.g. applications of fluoride varnish or fissure sealant)	£23.80
2	This band covers everything listed in band 1, plus any further treatment such as fillings, root canal work or extractions	£65.20
3	This band covers everything in bands 1 and 2, plus course of treatment including crowns, dentures, bridges and other laboratory work	£282.80
Urgent	This band covers urgent assessment and specified urgent treatments such as pain relief or a temporary filling or dental appliance repair	£23.80

## Hong Kong: Six-monthly Report

[HLWS584]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** My rt hon Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs (Dominic Raab) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

The latest Six-monthly Report on the implementation of the Sino-British Joint Declaration on Hong Kong was published today, and is attached. It covers the period from 1 January to 30 June 2020. The report has been placed in the Library of the House. A copy is also available on the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office website (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-development-office>). I commend the report to the House.

## Ministerial Code: Home Secretary's Conduct

[HLWS586]

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

I would like to update the House on the outcome of an investigation under the Ministerial Code.

In reaching my decision I took advice from the Independent Adviser, Sir Alex Allan, in relation to the allegations made earlier this year around the Home Secretary's conduct. I take this issue very seriously and recognise that it is always difficult for individuals to come forward and raise concerns. I am grateful to those who have done so. I am also grateful to Sir Alex for his advice and considered his conclusions carefully.

It was clear from Sir Alex's advice that at times there have been difficult working relationships all round. Sir Alex's advice found that the Home Secretary had become – justifiably in many instances – frustrated by the Home Office leadership's lack of responsiveness and the lack of support she felt in DfID three years ago. He also found, however, that the Home Secretary had not always treated her civil servants with the consideration and respect that would be expected, and her approach on occasion has amounted to behaviour that can be described as bullying in terms of the impact felt by individuals.

He went on to advise, therefore, that the Home Secretary had not consistently met the high standards expected of her under the Ministerial Code.

I have noted Sir Alex's advice that many of the concerns now raised were not raised at the time and that the Home Secretary was unaware of the impact that she had. I am reassured that the Home Secretary is sorry for inadvertently upsetting those with whom she was working. I am also reassured that relationships, practices and culture in the Home Office are much improved. As the arbiter of the code, having considered Sir Alex's advice and weighing up all the factors, my judgement is that the Ministerial Code was not breached.

Together with the Cabinet Secretary, I have this morning written to all Ministers and Permanent Secretaries. This letter sets out the paramount importance

of relationships of mutual trust and respect between politicians and their officials. This includes keeping internal conversations private, feeling able to speak freely and honestly about matters of state and to speak constructively about things that are not working so that we can fix them together promptly. I am clear that there is a particular duty on Ministers and Permanent Secretaries to create jointly across government a culture which is professional, respectful, focused and ambitious for change and in which there is no place for bullying.

The Cabinet Secretary and I are enormously grateful to civil servants for the commitment they have shown as we

navigate through these challenging times. We are also immensely proud of the fantastic work that is going on across Government, and know that this work would not have been possible without strong relationships between Ministers and their officials.

I have full confidence in the Home Secretary and consider this matter now closed.

I am placing a copy of Sir Alex Allan's findings in the library of the House. A copy of the letter to Cabinet Ministers and Heads of Department will be made available on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk).

## Written Answers

Monday, 23 November 2020

### Administration of Justice: Finance

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the sustainability of the current funding for the justice system; and what assessment they have made of the Bar Council's recommendation that an additional £2.48 billion of funding for the justice budget is required. [HL10130]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** Government has invested significantly in justice over the last few years which includes an additional £1.3bn in 19/20, and an extra 4.9% real terms increase in the 2020/21 Spending Round settlement. This has put the department's funding on a more sustainable footing.

In addition, further financial support has been announced throughout 2020/21 including an extra £285m in June for improvements to the Courts and Prisons system to maintain priorities through Covid-19. On top of this, to support the increase pressures on Courts and Tribunals, we recently announced additional funding of £80m as well as an extra £51 million for criminal advocates and solicitors in the Legal Aid sector. This funding is a step forward in making improvements and ensuring a better balance across justice functions.

The Ministry continuously seeks to ensure, through any investment, that it improves the sustainability of the system and will continue to push further where necessary and appropriate. The Chancellor will confirm future year funding at conclusion of Spending Review 2020.

### Afghanistan: Islamic State

*Asked by The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their current assessment of the risk to diplomats and foreign non-governmental organisation staff in Afghanistan from IS attacks. [HL10298]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The security situation in Afghanistan remains of serious concern. The FCDO advises against all travel to many parts of Afghanistan. Violence across many parts of the country remains high, principally due to the actions of non-government armed groups, including Daesh-affiliate Islamic State Khorasan Province. Whilst details cannot be provided for operational security reasons, we take necessary measures to mitigate the risks to our service personnel and staff. International NGOs are responsible for their own security provisions, and we make it clear that they must withdraw from any area they cannot operate safely in.

### Air Pollution

*Asked by Baroness Wolf of Dulwich*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Vere of Norbiton on 23 October (HL9101), whether the procedures local authorities should refer to in carrying out Equality Impact Assessment are publicly available; what assessment they have made of the timeframe in which Equality Impact Assessments should be carried out following an experimental road closure; and what steps (1) they, or (2) other affected parties, can take to ensure that such assessments are carried out. [HL10409]

*Asked by Baroness Wolf of Dulwich*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Vere of Norbiton on 23 October (HL9102), what assessment they have made of the consistency of a local authority's decision not to monitor air quality data for road closures funded by the Emergency Active Travel Fund with the Local Air Quality Management framework. [HL10410]

*Asked by Baroness Wolf of Dulwich*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether details of the Local Air Quality Management framework are publicly available; if so, where; what steps they are taking to ensure that local authorities carry out their duties under this framework; and what steps citizens can take to ensure that local authorities are reviewing air quality. [HL10411]

*Asked by Baroness Wolf of Dulwich*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether local authorities are required (1) to consider, and (2) to consult on, traffic displacement in advance of road closures; and whether local authorities are required to monitor congestion in streets adjacent to closed roads. [HL10412]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Equality and Human Rights Commission have published the guidance document "Meeting the Equality Duty in Policy and Decision-Making" which is available to all public authorities. Their guide provides advice on how to assess the potential impact on people with protected characteristics of a public authority's functions, including its policies, practices and decisions.

The Local Air Quality Management Framework is set out in Part IV of the Environment Act 1995. It requires local authorities to review and assess air quality within their boundaries, and to produce an annual report detailing any monitoring results and any air pollution issues they have identified. Where an objective for a specific pollutant is exceeded the local authority must declare an Air Quality Management Area and produce an Air Quality Action Plan to address the exceedance.

Annual reports must be made available to the public and will usually be accessible on the local authority's website. The Department for Environment, Food and

Rural Affairs provides support for local authorities to carry out their statutory duties under the framework via statutory guidance and a dedicated helpline.

Local traffic authorities have a statutory duty, under the Traffic Management Act 2004, to manage their networks with the aim of 'securing the expeditious movement of traffic'. They are responsible for using their knowledge of traffic conditions and the road network in their area to decide on appropriate traffic management policies that balance the needs of local residents, emergency services, local businesses, and those who work in and visit the area. The Department has recently published statutory network management duty guidance for local authorities which emphasises the importance of consultation on road closures and other schemes.

### Ali Hajji

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that Ali Al Hajee is (1) being held in isolation at Dry Dock Detention Centre in Bahrain following the cancellation of a dental operation and (2) is not being provided with clean clothes, hygiene products or medication to treat scabies; and what representations they plan to make to the government of Bahrain to ensure he is (a) provided with the necessary care, and (b) authorised to undergo his dental operation. [HL10113]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We continue to monitor and have raised the case of Ali Al Hajee. Responsibility for the provision of medical care to Ali Al Hajee lies with the government of Bahrain, who have made clear that access to medical care for those in detention is guaranteed by the Constitution of Bahrain. We welcome these assurances from the Government of Bahrain.

### Apprentices

*Asked by Lord Watson of Invergowrie*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of apprenticeship starts in each month of 2020. [HL10141]

**Baroness Berridge:** The number of apprenticeship starts from January to July 2020, reported to date, are shown in the table below:

Month	Apprenticeship starts (reported to date)
Jan-20	32,200
Feb-20	25,800
Mar-20	22,000
Apr-20	10,600
May-20	10,100
Jun-20	13,000
Jul-20	17,900

### Notes

(1) Data source is the Individualised Learner Record (ILR).

(2) Figures are rounded to the nearest 100.

(3) Learners starting more than one apprenticeship will appear more than once.

(4) Apprenticeship starts include all funded and unfunded learners as reported on the ILR.

Finalised figures covering January to July 2020 are due to be published in our next 'Apprenticeships and traineeships' statistics publication, later this month. The exact publication date will be announced on GOV.UK soon. The first available data for the 2020/21 academic year (covering August to October 2020) will not be published until January 2021.

### Apprentices: Taxation

*Asked by Lord Allen of Kensington*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ring-fence an allocation of the apprenticeship levy for the training of people aged between 16 to 24; and if they have such plans, (1) what percentage of the levy they intend to ring-fence, and (2) by when it will be ringfenced. [HL10146]

**Baroness Berridge:** We know that young people are likely to be disproportionately affected by the economic impact of the COVID-19 outbreak. To help businesses offer new apprenticeships, we are providing a payment to employers (in England) of £2,000 if they hire a new apprentice under the age of 25, and £1,500 for apprentices aged 25 or over.

The levy is an important part of our approach to raising apprenticeship quality and supporting employers to make a long-term, sustainable investment in training. The apprenticeship budget funds the cost of training for both levy-paying and non levy-paying employers, as well as apprenticeships that started prior to the reforms. In the 2020-21 financial year, funding available for investment in apprenticeships in England will remain around £2.5 billion, double what was spent in the 2010-11 financial year. It is for employers to choose the apprenticeships they want for their employees, and so funds are not allocated specifically to support training for apprentices of different ages.

We are working closely with the Department for Work and Pensions to develop a programme of work, to engage with Kickstart employers and to support them to move young people onto an apprenticeship in their organisation, where this is appropriate. We have recently amended our funding rules to ensure that employers taking on an apprentice who has previously been on the Kickstart scheme is eligible for the incentive payments.

We are tripling the scale of traineeships, providing an additional 30,000 places in the 2020/21 academic year, to ensure that more young people have access to high-

quality training. We have introduced incentive payments of £1,000 per learner for employers who create new work placements available this academic year. Employers that offer traineeships nationally can claim the new payment for up to 10 learners in each region. For those who are not able to take up a job or work-based learning offer, we will fund up to another year of classroom-based study in high value skill areas to support young people's progression into employment. We will fund extra places for specific high value courses at level 3 and level 2 that are aligned to priority areas for economic recovery.

Careers information, advice and guidance is crucial to help people to achieve the skills and experience that they need and meet the demands of businesses and employers for a skilled and flexible workforce. That is why we are investing an additional £32 million in the National Careers Service up to March 2022. This investment will provide individual careers advice for 270,000 more people whose jobs or learning have been affected by the COVID-19 outbreak.

### **Autism and Disability: Coronavirus**

*Asked by **Baroness Altmann***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to enable young adults who are (1) autistic, or (2) disabled, and who are living in care homes and who do not have any specific risk factors for COVID-19 to be able to visit family at home; and if they have any such plans, what is the timetable to enable such visits. [T] [[HL6394](#)]

**Lord Bethell:** We are aware that limiting visits out of care homes is difficult for many families and residents. The Government recognises that this is a particularly challenging time for many disabled people and we are absolutely committed to ensuring they receive the support they need.

Guidance on visits out of care homes is in development and will be published shortly.

### **Aviation: Repayments**

*Asked by **Baroness Randerson***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to (1) review, and (2) strengthen, the Civil Aviation Authority's powers to issue fines and other penalties against airlines which fail to meet legal requirements in providing refunds to customers in specified time limits. [[HL10090](#)]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The CAA has full powers to legally enforce compliance of the airline obligations to refund customers for cancelled flights. The Government will review the CAA's powers in due course to ensure they are fit for purpose for the sector in the future.

### **Aviation: Unmanned Air Vehicles**

*Asked by **Baroness Stern***

To ask Her Majesty's Government to which companies and organisations the Civil Aviation Authority has granted permission to fly unmanned aerial vehicles Beyond the Visual Line of Sight since January 2019; and which of those permissions are still valid. [[HL10123](#)]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** Since January 2019, the CAA has granted exemptions to 20 different organisations to allow them to fly Unmanned Aircraft Systems beyond visual line of sight, and 14 different organisations hold an exemption that is currently valid.

### **Bahrain: Capital Punishment**

*Asked by **Lord Scriven***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 24 September (HL8054) and by the Minister of State for the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office on 22 September (HC90154), whether they received any assurances that the executions of Mohammed Ramadhan and Husain Moosa would not be carried out imminently. [[HL10111](#)]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We have raised both cases at senior levels with the Government of Bahrain. I raised the cases with the Bahraini Ambassador to the UK on 14 July. During his recent visit to Bahrain, the Minister for the Middle East and North Africa reiterated the UK's opposition to the use of the death penalty, in all circumstances.

### **Bahrain: Overseas Aid**

*Asked by **Lord Scriven***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 16 April 2018, and by the Minister of State for the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office on 23 October (HC106360), when the Integrated Activity Fund was first used to support the government of Bahrain with security matters; and whether that Fund was used to support such work in April 2018. [[HL10110](#)]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We do not disclose information related to individual IAF projects to maintain the confidence and confidentiality of our Gulf partners.

### **Bahrain: Technical Assistance**

*Asked by **Lord Scriven***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that 51 individuals have been convicted in Bahrain in a mass trial and of allegations of due process violations and confessions arising from

torture; whether they plan to reconsider their technical assistance programme to Bahrain; and if not, why not. [HL10114]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We are aware of the trial and conviction of 51 people on terrorism related charges, including possession of explosives, with sentences ranging from 5 years to life in prison. The right to a fair trial is enshrined in the constitution of Bahrain; we continue to encourage the Government of Bahrain to follow due process in all cases and meet its international and domestic human rights commitments. We would encourage those with any concerns about treatment in detention to raise them with the appropriate Bahraini human rights oversight body.

Assistance, which is kept under regular review, is provided in line with international standards, and fully complies with our domestic and international human rights obligations.

### **Banks: Regulation**

*Asked by Lord Sikka*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of UK-registered companies that have the word "bank" in their name but do not have Part 4A permission under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 to carry out regulated banking activities. [HL10120]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** The estimates requested are not held by HM Treasury.

As you may know, a bank is defined as a UK institution that has permission under Part 4A of the Financial Services and Markets Act (FSMA) (2000) to accept deposits and is a credit institution. Financial services, including banks, are regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) or the Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA) which are independent non-governmental bodies, given statutory powers by the FSMA as amended by the Financial Services Act (2012) and financed entirely by the financial services industry.

Although the Treasury sets the legal framework for the regulation of financial services, it does not have investigative or prosecuting powers of its own. The Treasury has no general power of direction over the regulators and therefore cannot intervene in individual cases. You can find a list of FCA and PRA regulated firms on their websites at:

FCA: <https://www.fca.org.uk/firms/financial-services-register>

PRA: <https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/prudential-regulation/authorisations/which-firms-does-the-pra-regulate>

The word 'Bank' is a sensitive word which requires approval of the Secretary of State for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) under section 55 of the

Companies Act 2006 and The Company, Limited Liability Partnership and Business Names (Sensitive Words and Expressions) Regulations 2014. Companies House carries out this function on behalf of the Secretary of State. Anybody wishing to register a company name that includes the word 'Bank' must also first obtain a letter of non-objection from the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) as required by the Regulations. On receipt of the letter on non-objection, Companies House will register the name.

### **Boston Consulting Group**

*Asked by Lord Hain*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what daily rate they pay to senior executives from Boston Consulting Group to work on the COVID-19 testing system. [HL9281]

**Lord Bethell:** We are unable to provide the information requested as it is commercially sensitive. However, the payment rates are as per the Crown Commercial Service Framework rate card with discounts attained depending on value and length of role.

### **Bottles: Recycling**

*Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the financial impact of a bottle deposit scheme for England on local authority budgets, including the impact of the likely removal of polyethylene terephthalate from local waste streams. [HL10041]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** As part of the Government's ambitious commitments to reforming producer responsibility systems across the UK, we have committed to introduce a deposit return scheme (DRS) for drinks containers.

Introducing a DRS for drinks containers will mean that some of the material local authorities currently collect via kerbside will instead be collected through the DRS. It is expected this will have an impact on the amount of waste collected by local authorities and the revenues they receive for selling that material on to waste reprocessors. However, the scheme is also expected to reduce the incidence of littering of the containers in scope of the scheme, and therefore to generate savings to local authorities.

A full new burdens assessment will be carried out once final policy decisions have been taken. Our Resources and Waste Strategy for England committed to fund any new burdens incurred by local authorities.

The costs and benefits of a DRS for drinks containers will be presented in our Impact Assessment published alongside our second consultation on the introduction of a deposit return scheme next year.

## Bounce Back Loan Scheme

*Asked by Lord Mendelsohn*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what percentage of Bounce Back Loans have been paid out to small businesses. [HL10083]

**Lord Callanan:** As of 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020, 1,152,511 of the total 1,157,956 Bounce Back Loans offered (99.5%) had been paid out to small and micro businesses.

*Asked by Lord Mendelsohn*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the rate of defaults on Bounce Back Loans. [HL10084]

**Lord Callanan:** As of 15 November 2020, £42.18 billion of loans have been provided under the Bounce Back Loan Scheme.

The BEIS Annual Report published on 30 September contained information on all debt loan schemes and potential loss estimates.

The initial indicative loss ranges are based on historic losses observed in prior programmes which most closely resemble the current Covid-19 interventions. However, no two programmes (or two economic downturns) are completely alike, and the estimate will be revised as more data becomes available.

*Asked by Lord Mendelsohn*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the proposal by the Association of Accounting Technicians that Bounce Back Loans for all small businesses should be written off. [HL10085]

**Lord Callanan:** We have always been clear that businesses are responsible for repaying any finance they take out. However, we recognise that some borrowers will benefit from flexibility for their repayments. That is why we announced the Pay as you Grow measures.

Pay as You Grow will provide Bounce Back Loan borrowers more time and flexibility over their repayments by giving them the option to:

- Extend the length of the loan from six years to ten.
- Make interest-only payments for six months, with the option to use this up to three times throughout the loan.
- Once six payments have been made, have the option of a six-month repayment holiday.

Businesses will be able to use these options either individually or in combination with each other. In addition they have the option to fully repay their loan early and will face no early repayment charges for doing so.

## Bovine Tuberculosis: Disease Control

*Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask Her Majesty's Government why they took two years to publish the reports by Professor Malcolm

Bennett and Professor Chris Palgrave A study into the prevalence of bTB in found-dead badgers in the southern 'Edge Area' counties of England, SE3054, published June 2018; and what plans they have to respond to the report's conclusions. [HL10044]

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** It is Defra policy to encourage research findings such as these to be published in a peer-reviewed journal. We elected to delay the publication of the final reports on our website to allow the researcher some time to do this without undermining the peer review process.

These data are being used to inform analysis of where there is a reservoir of disease in the Edge area.

## Churches: Community Development

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the calculations of the economic contribution made by churches used for community purposes in the report by the National Churches Trust House of Good, published on 18 October; and what social value they attach to the provision in churches of (1) food banks, (2) youth services, (3) mental health services, (4) addiction support services and (5) other community services during the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated national restrictions. [HL10035]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** I am aware of the 'House of Good' report published recently by the National Churches Trust, on the contribution made by churches.

Churches are a vital community asset as referenced in the Localism Act 2011. Churches and all our places of worship are vital to people's health and wellbeing. Their role in providing pastoral as well as spiritual support is widely recognised, and the part they play in supporting the most vulnerable in our communities has been brought into sharp focus during the pandemic.

I am grateful for all the support they have given to those who are most vulnerable during these difficult times.

## Climate Change Convention: USA

*Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they are having with (1) states, and (2) cities in the United States about participation in COP26. [HL10051]

**Lord Callanan:** We are taking an 'all of society approach' to COP26 and are encouraging real-world action from business, cities, regions, and civil society as well as at national level. We have consistently engaged with a wide range of climate actors in the US, including the US Climate Alliance and the We Are Still In coalition. These alliances include cities and states from across the United States that support climate action to meet goals of the Paris Agreement.

As part of this engagement, COP President Designate, Alok Sharma, has spoken with representatives of the states of New York and California and has written to the Governor of Michigan to congratulate her on that state's recent commitment to a carbon-neutral economy by 2050. In addition, Eric Garcetti, the Mayor of Los Angeles and Chair of C40 Cities is acting as one of the 'Friends of COP'.

*Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had, or plan to have, with President-elect Biden about the participation of the government of the United States in COP26. [HL10052]

**Lord Callanan:** The UK welcomes President-elect Biden's commitment to re-join the Paris Agreement and to put the US on a path to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

As the incoming Presidency of the G7 and COP26, we look forward to working with the new US administration to address the urgent challenge of climate change and to encourage countries across the world to increase their climate ambition.

### Coal: Mining

*Asked by Baroness Randerson*

To ask Her Majesty's Government which organisation, body or individual is responsible for ensuring the safety of coal tips created by operations under the oversight of the National Coal Board. [HL10092]

**Lord Callanan:** There are more than 5,000 colliery tips in the UK and most of these, including most of those created by operations under the oversight of the National Coal Board, are now in either local authority or private ownership. The owner is responsible for ensuring the safety of the tip.

The Coal Authority owns and manages 40 disused colliery tip sites across the UK; information about their location and inspection frequency can be found on the GOV.UK website.

### Contact Tracing: Coronavirus

*Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what information on local support systems is provided to individuals traced through the NHS COVID-19 test, track and trace system to help them to isolate. [HL6148]

**Lord Bethell:** There is a range of support available for individuals who are told to self-isolate by National Health Service Test and Trace, either because they have tested positive for COVID-19 or have recently been in close contact with someone who has tested positive. This includes Statutory Sick Pay, subject to meeting eligibility requirements, and since 28 September a Test and Trace

Support Payment of £500, introduced to support people on low incomes who are unable to work from home if they are told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace and will lose income as a result.

Individuals are informed about local support networks if they need practical, social or emotional support. As part of the information available during the application process for the Test and Trace Support Payment, either on the online form or telephone application, local authorities are also encouraged to reference any other local support that is available for people who are self-isolating, such as food packages.

### Coronavirus: Leicester

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support the BAME community in Leicester during the localised lockdown. [HL6335]

**Lord Bethell:** Where restrictions were imposed in Leicester and in other areas, extra funding was made available to support communication and engagement, including translating material into all locally relevant languages. Over £100,000 was made available to local voluntary and community organisations and faith-based groups that they could bid for. Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities were particularly supported by the fund, ensuring it reached underserved groups and communities and those who have been most significantly impacted by COVID-19 in Leicester.

### Coronavirus: Screening

*Asked by Lord Lucas*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their current estimate for (1) the proportion of polymerase chain reaction tests for COVID-19 that are false positives, and (2) the number of cycles that such tests now go through; and whether they will place details of the research that supports the estimate of false positives and the decision on the number of cycles to be used in the Library of the House. [HL7975]

**Lord Bethell:** The current sensitivity of our polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests for COVID-19 at our lighthouse laboratories is over 99%. It is not possible to provide a precise figure for the number of cycles PCR tests for COVID-19 go through as this will vary from test to test based on a variety of different factors. All manufacturers of PCR tests for COVID-19 must meet the requirements of our validation process to ensure the accuracy of their tests. These requirements, *National technical validation process for manufacturers of SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) tests*, are published online at GOV.UK.

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many staff were processing COVID-19 tests as part of their testing

system at the start of (1) June, (2) July, (3) August, and (4) September. [HL8161]

**Lord Bethell:** We do not publish data in the format requested.

*Asked by The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the cost of a single NHS COVID-19 swab test. [HL8460]

**Lord Bethell:** We are unable to provide the information requested as the costs involved are commercially sensitive, as they vary between supplier. The cost will also vary depending on the cost of the delivery channel used, the logistics involved, and the laboratory that processes the test results.

### Coronavirus: Vaccination

*Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what infrastructure they have place to ensure RNA-based COVID-19 vaccines could remain frozen throughout the supply chain. [HL9905]

**Lord Bethell:** National preparations for storage of COVID-19 vaccines at the required temperatures are being made by Public Health England to support a national COVID-19 vaccination programme. This includes both the central storage of vaccines and distribution capability across the United Kingdom to the National Health Service. The Vaccine Task Force has also conducted supply chain risk assessments and it is working with potential vaccine suppliers to understand the optimal logistics and timings. Plans are tailored by vaccine as the storage requirements are based on different requirements of the individual vaccine and will cover a wide range of timescales.

### Courts: Video Conferencing

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to provide additional training for the judiciary on online court proceedings. [HL10133]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** To preserve the independence of the judiciary, the Lord Chief Justice (LCJ), the Senior President of the Tribunals, and the Chief Coroner have statutory responsibility for judicial training, under the Constitutional Reform Act 2005, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007, and Coroners and Justice Act 2009 respectively. Training responsibilities are exercised through the Judicial College.

The Judicial College works closely with the judiciary and HMCTS to design and deliver appropriate training that supports the judiciary in online court proceedings. To date, a mix of training and guidance materials have been issued to support the use of video technology and online hearings, including both practical use of technology, behaviours and communication styles. The College

continues to review training needs and its programme of activity to best support judges to maintain operations during Covid-19.

### Cycleways: Coronavirus

*Asked by Lord Greaves*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what guidance they have provided to local highways authorities about the retention of pop-up cycle lanes created during the COVID-19 pandemic; and whether the presumption is that such lanes should remain unless there are significant and unsurmountable problems with them. [HL10224]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Active Travel Fund has made £225M available to local authorities in two tranches, to allow them to provide safer walking and cycling measures to support a green recovery in response to Covid-19. Alongside the funding, the Government published additional Network Management Duty guidance. This clearly sets out what the Government expects local authorities to do in making changes to their road layouts to encourage cycling and walking.

The guidance sets out that local authorities should monitor and evaluate any temporary measures they install, such as pop-up cycle lanes, with a view to making them permanent, and embedding a long-term shift to active travel as we move from restart to recovery. This may include adjusting temporary schemes in the light of feedback from stakeholders.

### Data Protection

*Asked by Baroness Kidron*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of accepting transfers made under Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Cross-Border Privacy Rules on (1) the privacy rights of (a) UK citizens, (b) children, and (c) disadvantaged groups, and (2) the enforcement of data protection provisions under Section 123 of the Data Protection Act 2018. [HL10349]

**Baroness Barran:** The UK does not intend for Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) to provide a legal basis, as a matter of domestic law, for the cross border transfer of personal data.

The recently agreed UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), for example, does not provide for the onward transfer of UK citizens' data using the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Cross Border Privacy Rules System (APEC CBPR). It also does not alter the UK's existing protections as enshrined in the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR, including the age-appropriate design code provisions in the DPA.

The UK is committed to working with international partners to remove unnecessary barriers to international data flows. This includes promoting interoperability

between international data protection frameworks, which must ensure personal data is appropriately safeguarded.

### **Detainees: Females**

*Asked by **Baroness Lister of Burtersett***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what strategy they currently have in place on the use of immigration detention for women; and what plans they have (1) to build on the Action Access pilot, and (2) to expand the use of case management-focused alternatives to detention for women. [[HL10076](#)]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** As part of the Department's immigration detention reform programme, we are conducting a series of pilots exploring alternatives to detention, with the first pilot being 'Action Access'.

Now in its second year, Action Access has provided women who would otherwise be detained with a programme of support in the community, including case management support. In June 2020 the Home Office signed a contract with the King's Arms Project in Bedford for the second pilot in the series, the Refugee and Migrant Advisory Service, which is supporting both men and women. The first participants joined this second pilot last month.

We are working with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on these pilots and they have appointed the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) to independently evaluate this work. These evaluations will be published, with the evaluation report of the 'Action Access' pilot scheduled for Summer 2021. We will use the evaluation of these pilots to inform our future approach to case-management focused alternatives to detention.

### **Developing a National Food Strategy Independent Review**

*Asked by **Baroness Mone***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to reports of a link between COVID-19 mortality and obesity, what plans they have to accelerate work on the National Food Strategy. [[HL10086](#)]

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** In 2019, the Government asked Henry Dimbleby to carry out an independent review of the entire food sector. Part One of that review was published in July 2020 with a chapter on health highlighting the link between obesity and Covid-19 mortality. Part Two of the independent review will be published in 2021 and will continue to address the challenges associated with supporting people to eat a healthy diet. The Government has committed to responding to the review and its recommendations in the form of a Food Strategy White Paper within six months of the release of the second and final report.

### **Digital Technology: Cultural Heritage**

*Asked by **Lord Smith of Finsbury***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport is collaborating with UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) on sharing and preserving digital heritage collections. [[HL10391](#)]

**Baroness Barran:** The cornerstone of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and Arts and Humanities Research Council's (AHRC) collaboration to preserve and share digital heritage collections is, 'Towards a National Collection: Opening UK Heritage to the World'. The programme sees DCMS and AHRC work with AHRC's Independent Research Organisations (IROs) and universities with the aim of creating a unified virtual 'national collection'. It is funded via an £18.93 million investment over five years.

The AHRC's IROs include many of the world's pre-eminent museums, galleries and archives, playing a highly significant role in the UK's international prestige and in its multi-billion heritage tourist economy.

Towards a National Collection forges new partnerships between IROs and universities, amplifying and deepening their joint research power. The programme uses new technology to dissolve barriers between different collections – and open UK heritage to new audiences at home and across the world.

The funding for the programme forms part of the Strategic Priorities Fund (SPF), delivered by UK Research & Innovation (UKRI) to drive an increase in high quality multi- and interdisciplinary research and innovation. The SPF ensures that UKRI's investment links up effectively with government research priorities and opportunities.

AHRC and DCMS also collaborated on designing the Capability for Collections Fund (CapCo), an allocation from UKRI's £315m World Class Labs programme, to upgrade and renew conservation, heritage science and digitisation facilities in museums; and provide the underpinning infrastructure required to unlock the creative, economic and innovation potential of the UK's heritage assets.

### **Electronic Voting: WhatsApp**

*Asked by **Lord Myners***

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker what plans there are to use WhatsApp to alert members of the House about votes taking place using the remote voting system. [[HL10181](#)]

**Lord McFall of Alcluith:** The Remote Voting system currently alerts Members of the House of Lords to a Division via text message (if they have opted in and provided a mobile number) and email to their Parliamentary account using Notify, which is a secure government service. Members have the option of adding

an alternative email address. Notify complies with the National Cyber Security Centre's Cloud Security Principles, and is protected with encryption and secure tokens.

There are no plans to accredit any further tools or apps and develop the remote voting system to use them as notification tools. A greater number of elements within the notification system would introduce an undesirable level of complexity and increase the risk of faults.

### **Equality Act 2010**

*Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to amend the Equality Act 2010 as to change the protected characteristic of "sex" to "gender". [[HL10165](#)]

**Baroness Berridge:** The Government has no plans to do this.

### **Ethiopia: Armed Conflict**

*Asked by Lord Pendry*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what humanitarian assistance they have provided to protect civilians displaced by the conflict in the Tigray Region of Ethiopia. [[HL10364](#)]

**Baroness Sugg:** We are concerned by the ongoing violence in the Tigray region and the risks posed to civilian lives. We have called on all involved to ensure the protection of civilians, and to restore and maintain humanitarian access to allow the delivery of humanitarian assistance and essential services. We are in close contact with UK funded humanitarian agencies working in Tigray to understand humanitarian needs and programme adaptations.

In Ethiopia, the UK provides funds to the UN's World Food Programme (WFP), UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) Ethiopian Humanitarian Fund, to provide food assistance, shelter, water and sanitation, health, nutrition and protection support. In Sudan, flexible UK funding to WFP and the UNHCR is already helping new refugees from Ethiopia to receive emergency assistance, including shelter and food. These agencies have proven themselves capable of working in high risk contexts, in Ethiopia and elsewhere, and for managing UK funds adeptly.

### **Europe Asia Pipeline Company**

*Asked by Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made, if any, of the environmental impact of the proposed plan by the Europe Asia Pipeline Company to store and transport oil and distillates from the UAE to Europe. [[HL10138](#)]

**Lord Callanan:** We welcome the normalisation of relations between Israel and the United Arab Emirates. We are aware of the preliminary agreement subsequently announced on 20 October between companies in both countries to collaborate in the storage and transfer of oil and oil products through the Europe Asia Pipeline Company's (EAPC) infrastructure. Her Majesty's Government is not a party to this commercial deal.

### **European Maritime Safety Agency: Unmanned Air Vehicles**

*Asked by Baroness Stern*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether their bid to the European Maritime Safety Agency for remotely piloted air system support during 2020 was successful; if so, (1) between which dates, (2) in which maritime areas, and (3) from which airports, were aircraft flown; and which type of aircraft was used to provide any such support. [[HL10121](#)]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** No bid was submitted to the European Maritime Safety Agency for such systems by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency in 2020.

### **Evictions: Coronavirus**

*Asked by Lord Greaves*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to introduce an embargo on housing evictions during the current period of national restrictions; and, if so whether this will apply (1) to tenants of caravans, and (2) to tenants of caravan pitches on residential caravan sites. [[HL10067](#)]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** To further protect against Coronavirus (COVID-19) transmission, the Government has changed the law to ensure bailiffs do not enforce evictions in England over the period of national restrictions or over the Christmas period. This means that no eviction notices are to be served until 11 January at the earliest and, given the 14-day notice period required, no evictions are expected to be enforced until 25 January 2021 at the earliest.

The only exceptions to this would be in the most serious circumstances such as: illegal occupation, false statement, anti-social behaviour, perpetrators of domestic abuse in social housing, where a property is unoccupied following the death of a tenant and extreme rent arrears equivalent to 9 months' rent with any arrears accrued since 23 March discounted. The Government aims to provide further guidance shortly regarding the operation of these exemptions, following consultation with the judiciary.

This applies in relation to tenants on residential caravan sites as well as in relation to tenants of bricks and mortar properties.

## Film: Labelling

*Asked by Lord Clement-Jones*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to encourage the adoption of British Board of Film Classification and Video Standards Council best practice guidelines on voluntary age labelling; and what plans they have to introduce legislation on age labelling if it is not implemented voluntarily. [HL10057]

**Baroness Barran:** While adoption of the British Board of Film Classification's (BBFC) best practice age ratings by online platforms is currently voluntary, we welcome their adoption by Video on Demand platforms.

For example, Netflix has committed to work towards complete coverage of its content under the BBFC's ratings and support the BBFC's drive to encourage other Video On Demand platforms to follow suit. By doing so, industry will provide consumers with well recognised age ratings and consumer advice.

We will keep the evidence for legislation in this area under review and will continue to engage with industry on the issue.

## Football Association: Ethnic Groups

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the Football Association about how that organisation can improve on issues of racial diversity. [HL10396]

**Baroness Barran:** The Government welcomed the launch of the Football Association's (FA) 'Football Leadership Diversity Code' to ensure English football better represents our modern and diverse society.

Ministers discussed the Code with the FA, as well as other matters including tackling discrimination, in a football roundtable on 17th November 2020.

There is still more to do, however, and the Government will continue to liaise closely with the football authorities to improve diversity in the sport.

## Football: Coronavirus

*Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking (1) to provide financial assistance to Football League clubs that are unable to benefit from the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, and (2) to encourage Premier League clubs to assist such clubs. [HL10232]

**Baroness Barran:** Football clubs are often the bedrock of our local communities and it is vital they are protected. That is why the Government has provided an unprecedented financial support package for businesses, which many football clubs have benefitted from, including the furlough scheme and business rates relief.

The government was pleased to see the welcome announcement of an agreement in principle between the Premier League and EFL for a financial support package for League One and Two clubs. It is clear the money exists within the game for it to support itself: we urge the Premier League and EFL to finalise both this deal and one that protects Championship clubs also.

## Gambling: Football

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the announcement that Burnley FC are working with the Young Gamers and Gamblers Education Trust to educate staff and supporters about the risks of gambling, what representations they have made to the Premier League to encourage clubs to adopt similar initiatives. [HL10378]

**Baroness Barran:** Sporting bodies have a responsibility to consider the welfare of their staff and fans, and we welcome efforts, such as those of Burnley FC and others, to educate their staff and supporters about the risks associated with problem gambling.

The Government works closely with the Premier League on a wide range of issues including those related to social responsibility and community engagement.

## General Practitioners

*Asked by Lord Balfe*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to their letter sent to GPs and Clinical Commissioning Groups on 14 September about the importance of providing face to face appointments, what steps they are taking to ensure that such appointments are made available at GP surgeries. [HL9107]

**Lord Bethell:** Following NHS England and NHS Improvement's letter to general practitioner practices and clinical commissioning groups of the 31 August 2020, it has been working with the seven NHS England and NHS Improvement regions to investigate and resolve reports of poor face to face provision, patient complaints and poor practice communications on accessing services.

NHS England and NHS Improvement regions are also reviewing local readiness for winter plans that include access to general practice services and provision of face to face appointments, so that any local risks are identified early and addressed.

NHS England and NHS Improvement continue national and regional campaigns to urge the public to come forward with any health concerns and to reassure them that the National Health Service is open.

## Hamas: Immigration Controls

*Asked by Baroness Eaton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following reports that senior members of Hamas have been awarded

Turkish citizenship, what plans they have to ensure UK Border Control and Home Office officials are appraised of the identity of any Hamas members recently awarded Turkish citizenship with the right to travel, with a view to preventing their entry into the United Kingdom. [HL10060]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** Those who obtain Turkish citizenship do not have the right to travel freely to the UK, they are subject to the requirement to obtain a visa for travel. We can, and do, refuse visas on grounds on national security and exclude terrorists from obtaining clearance to travel to the UK. This is achieved through a suite of security checks.

100 percent of scheduled passengers arriving at the border are checked against our security systems. The majority of these are checked against our systems before they even travel, through the collection of advanced passenger information (API).

### **Hassan Mushaima**

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to reports of allegations of medical negligence towards Hasan Mushaima by the government of Bahrain, what urgent representations they are making to the government of Bahrain about Hasan Mushaima's (1) right to appropriate medical care, (2) treatment under the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, and (3) release as a prisoner of conscience. [HL10112]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We continue to monitor the case of Hassan Mushaima. Responsibility for the provision of medical care to Hassan Mushaima lies with the government of Bahrain, who have made clear that access to medical care for those in detention is guaranteed by the Constitution of Bahrain. We welcome these assurances from the Government of Bahrain.

### **Help to Buy Scheme**

*Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the case for extending the Help to Buy scheme to properties other than new builds. [HL10156]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** The Help to Buy Equity Loan scheme has dual objectives. It provides an affordable route into Home Ownership by enabling customers to purchase a home with a deposit from as little as 5 per cent, at the same time focusing the scheme on newbuild homes ensures the demand it creates drives up new housing supply. The scheme has been extremely successful in supporting both would-be purchasers and boosting supply.

There are no plans to widen the scheme to include non-newbuilds as this would not deliver the same supply benefits. However the Government does have a range of

other policies that support people into homeownership within the wider housing market, such as the Help to Buy ISA (no longer open but can be used for purchases until 2029), the Lifetime ISA and Help to Buy Shared Ownership.

### **Hikvision**

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Barran on 10 November (HL9675), how many contracts they have issued to Pyronix-Hikvision in (1) 2018, (2) 2019 and (3) 2020 to date; and what was the value of each such contract. [HL10247]

**Lord True:** This information is not held centrally, as individual departments are responsible for their own procurements.

Central Government contracts above £10,000 are published on Contracts Finder at <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Search>.

### **Hikvision: China**

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Barran on 10 November (HL9675), what representations they have made to Pyronix-Hikvision about the use of that company's technology in Uighur detention facilities. [HL10246]

**Lord Grimstone of Boscobel:** We are concerned about the credible reports of human rights violations and abuses in Xinjiang and continue to raise these concerns with the Chinese authorities and Chinese companies as necessary. We also advise UK companies with business operations in Xinjiang to conduct appropriate due diligence to satisfy themselves that their activities do not support, or risk being seen to support, human rights violations or abuses.

Pyronix has stated publicly that neither its equipment nor technology were sold to China after October 2019.

### **Hong Kong: China**

*Asked by Baroness Eaton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to remove any special legal status differentiating Hong Kong from China following the resignation of Hong Kong's opposition lawmakers. [HL10328]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The imposition of new rules to disqualify elected legislators in Hong Kong constitutes a clear breach of the legally binding Sino-British Joint Declaration. We have raised our concerns directly with the Beijing authorities, including by summoning the Chinese Ambassador on 13 November.

On 20 July we extended the arms embargo on China to include Hong Kong and suspended our extradition treaty with Hong Kong indefinitely. This was a necessary and

proportionate response to the imposition of the National Security Law. As a co-signatory to the Joint Declaration, we have a responsibility to uphold the contents, and a duty to speak out when we have concerns. We will continue to respect Hong Kong's separate customs territory as set out in Paragraph 3 of the Joint Declaration, which declares that the 'Hong Kong Special Administrative Region will retain the status of a free port and a separate customs territory'.

## Hong Kong: Politics and Government

*Asked by The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to their declaration that the government of China's decision to disqualify elected Hong Kong legislators constitutes a clear breach of the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration, what immediate steps they are taking to hold that government to its international obligations. [HL10295]

*Asked by The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Prime Minister has discussed the government of China's decision to disqualify elected Hong Kong legislators with the President of China; and if not, when he plans to do so. [HL10296]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The imposition of new rules to disqualify elected legislators in Hong Kong constitutes a clear breach of the legally binding Sino-British Joint Declaration. We have raised our concerns directly with the Beijing authorities, including by summoning the Chinese Ambassador on 13 November. The UK will continue to stand up for the people of Hong Kong, working with our international partners to hold China to the obligations it freely assumed under international law.

## Human Trafficking: Victim Support Schemes

*Asked by Lord McColl of Dulwich*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the data provided in the 2020 UK Annual Report on Modern Slavery about the average length of support requested under the Recovery Needs Assessment (RNA) process, between 27 September 2019 and 30 June 2020, what was the average length of support (1) requested in initial RNAs made after a positive conclusive grounds decision, (2) provided under initial RNAs after a positive conclusive grounds decision, and beyond the 45 days post-NRM move on support, (3) requested in subsequent RNAs following an initial RNA, and (4) provided in subsequent RNAs following an initial RNA. [HL10077]

*Asked by Lord McColl of Dulwich*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the average length of time for a confirmed victim of modern slavery to receive (1) an initial Recovery Needs

Assessment plan, and (2) a decision on a subsequent Recovery Needs Assessment request for ongoing support, between 27 September 2019 and 30 June 2020. [HL10078]

*Asked by Lord McColl of Dulwich*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many individual confirmed victims of modern slavery had more than one Recovery Needs Assessment due to ongoing support needs, between 27 September 2019 to 30 June 2020. [HL10079]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** This Government is committed to stamping out modern slavery and providing victims with the support they need to rebuild their lives.

The information requested on RNA data does not currently form part of the published NRM statistics. The Home Office publishes quarterly statistics regarding the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) which can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-referral-mechanism-statistics>.

The UK Annual Report on Modern Slavery can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2020-uk-annual-report-on-modern-slavery>.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

2020 - UK Annual Report on Modern Slavery [FINAL-  
\_2020\_Modern\_Slavery\_Report\_14-10-20.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:  
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-11-09/HL10077>

*Asked by Lord McColl of Dulwich*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether requests for accommodation under the Recovery Needs Assessment (RNA) process referred to in the 2020 UK Annual Report on Modern Slavery were received from (a) victims already provided with accommodation under the Victim Care Contract (VCC), (b) victims not provided with accommodation under the VCC at the time of the request, or (c) both; and whether victims not currently accommodated by the VCC are eligible to request accommodation under the RNA process. [HL10080]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The Recovery Needs Assessment (RNA) process takes place for all confirmed victims of modern slavery who are receiving support through the Victim Care Contract (VCC), including those in both outreach support and those provided with accommodation through the VCC. The RNA process ensures that support is tailored to the victims' individual recovery needs and informs a tailored move-on plan to help victims transition out of VCC support as appropriate.

Support workers can request any or all three pillars of VCC support – accommodation, financial support and support worker contact – where appropriate for any confirmed victim undergoing the RNA process. VCC accommodation will be provided, or will continue to be

provided, where there is an identified recovery need for it and where alternative accommodation options are not available or suitable. If, for any reason, the recovery needs of a confirmed victim change during the approved move-on plan, a further RNA can be completed by the support worker to reflect this.

*Asked by Lord McColl of Dulwich*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what training on conducting Recovery Needs Assessments (RNA) and approving RNA plans has been provided to staff (1) of the Salvation Army, (2) subcontractors in the Victim Care Contract, and (3) the Single Competent Authority; and what funds have been provided for such training to be carried out. [[HL10081](#)]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** All confirmed victims of Modern Slavery will have their support needs assessed by their support worker as part of the Recovery Needs Assessment (RNA) process, to inform a tailored move-on plan that is personalised to their specific recovery needs. These assessments are quality assured by the prime contractor (The Salvation Army, 'TSA') before being submitted to the Single Competent Authority (SCA) for a decision.

The published RNA guidance provides detailed information for TSA, subcontractors and the SCA on carrying out this process. This document includes guidance on how to complete the RNA form, guidance on when recovery needs arising from modern slavery may require support through the Victim Care Contract (VCC) and where recovery needs may be met by alternative support services. This guidance can be found: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/recovery-needs-assessment-rna-process-guidance>.

Staff training for TSA and its subcontractors, including training on the RNA process, is a matter for TSA as the prime contractor. Training costs are met by funds provided through the Home Office's VCC to deliver these support services.

All new SCA staff working on RNAs receive initial training detailing decision-making practice, the purpose of RNAs, published guidance, legislation, decision types and quality expectations. Following initial training each new Decision Maker (DM) spends a number of weeks shadowing an experienced DM, being shown a variety of decisions being considered and written, and referring back to guidance. This consolidation period allows a new DM to match the theoretical learning with its practical application.

The DM will then be allocated suitable cases of their own to start making decisions for victims. Each DM has a buddy (who is an experienced member of the team) allocated for any support required, and every decision is checked by a Technical Expert for accuracy and quality. The cases assigned increase in variety and complexity, with the buddy system and full checking remaining in place to ensure that every decision is correct and any additional support or learning for the DM is provided. Once the quality and accuracy checking results for a DM

are consistently at the standards required, the DM becomes a "signed off" decision maker and moves into Business As Usual checking arrangements.

## Institute of Commonwealth Studies: Closures

*Asked by The Earl of Sandwich*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action, if any, they (1) have taken, or (2) intend to take, in response to the School of Advanced Study's proposal to close the Institute of Commonwealth Studies; and what assessment they have made of the importance of that institute to students from Commonwealth countries. [[HL10107](#)]

**Lord Callanan:** Universities are independent, autonomous organisations and are therefore responsible for their decisions relating to research priorities and which activities to support. We would expect universities to regularly review and develop their strategic research priorities, and that this may result in some internal restructuring to better support these priorities.

## Jamaica: Floods

*Asked by Lord Pendry*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what aid they have provided to support those who have been affected by the flooding in Jamaica. [[HL10365](#)]

**Baroness Sugg:** The UK works with regional organisations and Governments of the Commonwealth Caribbean, including Jamaica to strengthen disaster preparedness, help with recovery and build resilience. This includes access to rapid funding for disaster surge response through the Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Management Agency; the Caribbean Catastrophic Risk Insurance Facility, an insurance mechanism which makes pay-outs to Caribbean Governments impacted by a disaster; and the UK financed Global Risk Financing Facility which provided £14.85 million to help Jamaica strengthen financial resilience to tropical cyclones, excess rainfall, and earthquake disasters and will enable early action after disasters.

While there has been no request to the UK Government for humanitarian support in Jamaica related to flooding, these funds are available for the Government of Jamaica to draw on if that is required

## Job Support Scheme

*Asked by Lord Stevenson of Balmacara*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much they have spent on (1) developing, and (2) trialling, the Job Support Scheme. [[HL10124](#)]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** HM Treasury, along with other Government departments including HMRC, developed the Job Support Scheme through the usual government processes using a range of Civil Service policy expertise and experience. It is not possible to

determine the cost of developing individual policies. The Chancellor postponed the Job Support Scheme and has announced the extension of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme until the end of March 2021 for all parts of the UK. HMG will review the policy in January to consider whether any changes to the policy are appropriate in light of the economic and health situation at that time.

### Kickstart Scheme

*Asked by Lord Green of Deddington*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Stedman-Scott on 2 November (HL9276), what estimate they have made of the number of young people aged 16 to 24 who will benefit from the Kickstart Scheme. [HL10068]

**Baroness Stedman-Scott:** The Department for Work and Pensions Kickstart Scheme is making £2 billion available to eligible employers and Kickstart gateways. This Government has not set a limit to the number of Kickstart jobs that can be funded.

### Legal Aid Scheme

*Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made towards preventing those needing letters from GPs to access legal aid being charged for such letters. [HL10071]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** We are working with the Department of Health and Social Care to identify what more we can do to help victims of domestic abuse access the help they need.

The Government has committed to reviewing Cross-Government Bureaucracy in General Practice, and will assess as part of this work, amongst other things, who the correct clinicians are to complete such documentation and what charge, if any, should be imposed. The British Medical Association have written to GPs to recommend that they do not charge victims of domestic abuse for the completion and signing of legal aid letters whilst this work is ongoing.

Earlier this year the Ministry of Justice widened the evidence requirements for domestic abuse victims, making it easier for victims to obtain and provide the evidence they need to access legal aid.

### Legal Opinion: Welfare State

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to introduce early access legal advice for social welfare issues. [HL10131]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** We are carefully considering a number of changes across the full breadth of early legal support including for social welfare issues, focusing on what works for the people who need it.

Legal aid is central to access to justice, but it is only one part of a broader picture. We also intend to explore the role technology can play in helping people identify and resolve their legal issues, and will continue to review this as we recover from Covid-19. We want to be as ambitious as possible in this space to enhance further the availability of early support.

We have recently delivered additional investment of over £5m for not for profit organisations who provide specialist legal advice, such as Law Centres, and a number of other charities. In addition, in partnership with the Access to Justice Foundation, we have launched our £3.1m grant to fund services to help litigants in person dealing with a civil or family law matter. The new grant is designed to fund services provided at local, regional and national levels with the aim of understanding more about how they can combine to help people. Over £750,000 has already been awarded to national charities establishing new services that can be accessed across England and Wales, as well as to a number of specialist advice organisations supporting people through the COVID-19 pandemic.

A further £2m is being awarded this autumn to smaller not-for-profit organisations working in partnership at regional and local levels. This new grant is in addition to the more than £9m that the MoJ has invested in support for litigants in person, since 2015, through our existing Litigants in Person Support Strategy.

### Life Sciences

*Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that the life sciences sector is central to the economic recovery. [HL10096]

**Lord Callanan:** The UK has one of the strongest, most productive health and life sciences industries globally. The sector is a major component of the UK economy with a turnover of £80.7 billion, supporting 256,100 jobs.

The life sciences industry provides high quality, highly skilled jobs across all the regions of the UK and is powered by one of the world's best research and science bases, underpinned by top class universities, globally renowned clinical research, and the NHS.

The UK has real advantages in life sciences, and the Government has worked closely with industry, academia, and charities to make rapid progress. In June 2020, the Government released the Life Sciences Recovery Roadmap, which includes a proposed plan for the healthcare system to get back on its feet, and for the sector to emerge from the pandemic in the strongest possible position.

## Local Government: Elections

*Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure that local government elections are held in May 2021; and what social distancing measures they intend to put in place. [HL10099]

**Lord True:** The Government is working with the electoral administrators and Public Health England to identify and resolve challenges involved in delivering the May 2021 elections, including ensuring polling stations are safe and Covid-secure places to vote. People will be able participate in the polls safely, and in a way of their choice, whether by post, proxy or in-person.

This was outlined in the Minister for the Constitution and Devolution's letter to Electoral Returning Officers, which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/letter-from-chloe-smith-mp-to-returning-officers>.

## Mobile Phones: Disadvantaged

*Asked by Lord Watson of Invergowrie*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Power Their Potential scheme run by the mobile phone provider Optus in Australia, which allows customers to donate unused data each month to be distributed to those in digital poverty. [HL10315]

**Baroness Barran:** The government continually assesses varying approaches to promoting digital inclusion when addressing digital exclusion in the UK.

To help support vulnerable consumers with their connectivity and data needs, in March 2020 the Government and Ofcom worked with the UK's major broadband, landline and mobile providers, who cover most of the market, to develop a package of voluntary industry measures. As part of these commitments, communication providers agreed to give their customers new and generous offers on mobile and landline services. This includes some providers who gave effect to this commitment by giving free and low cost data boosts on mobile, and free calling allowances on landline packages. These were offers which were able to reach consumers quickly compared to data donation arrangements.

Ofcom has also recently published a guide to [Treating Vulnerable Consumers Fairly](#), setting out its expectations and good practice on how vulnerable telecoms consumers should be supported. This includes treating those in financial distress fairly, providing them with payment support options, such as payment holidays, and only disconnecting consumers as a last resort option.

## Motorcycles: Training

*Asked by Baroness Randerson*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they intend to allow solo Compulsory Basic Training and other motorcycle rider training to recommence; and what assessment they have made of the impact that the cessation of this training has had on employment prospects for those wishing to find work in the delivery sector. [HL10366]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** To help stop the spread of coronavirus and save lives it is vital that compulsory basic training (CBT) instructors respect the national restrictions in England, reduce day-to-day contact with others, and not carry out rider training until the Government's national restrictions end on Thursday 3 December.

The DVSA estimates that 10,000 – 12,000 learner riders may be affected by the suspension of training during the current national restrictions.

## Music: Coronavirus

*Asked by Lord Aberdare*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken (1) to support live music venues to operate in a COVID-19 secure manner, and (2) to propagate best practice in that industry. [HL10032]

**Baroness Barran:** The Performing Arts guidance was developed in collaboration with the live events sectors to help venues put on live events in a covid secure manner.

The Secretary of State announced an unprecedented £1.57 billion support package for the cultural sector which will benefit the music sector by providing support to venues and many other cultural organisations to stay open and continue operating. So far, over £500 million has been announced from the Culture Recovery Fund for over 2,000 cultural organisations across England, almost a fifth of which has, so far, gone to the music sector. This funding will provide targeted support to organisations including venues, festivals and theatres.

As part of this, £3.36 million was shared between 136 grassroots music venues across England which had successfully applied for emergency support in the face of the coronavirus pandemic. These emergency grants of up to £80,000 enabled venues to cover ongoing running costs incurred during closure, such as rent and utilities but also allowed them the chance to adapt to become covid secure for socially distanced live audiences when permitted.

In order to propagate best practice across the industry, the Entertainment and Events Working Group gathers key industry bodies to help produce detailed guidance and ensure that the latest updates to that guidance are shared with their sectors.

*Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support live music venues to operate in a COVID-19 secure way; and what steps they are taking to share best practice for operating safely within the music industry. [HL10173]

**Baroness Barran:** The Performing Arts guidance was developed in collaboration with the live events sectors to help venues put on live events in a covid secure manner.

The Secretary of State announced an unprecedented £1.57 billion support package for the cultural sector which will benefit the music sector by providing support to venues and many other cultural organisations to stay open and continue operating. So far, over £500 million has been announced from the Culture Recovery Fund for over 2,000 cultural organisations across England, almost a fifth of which has, so far, gone to the music sector. This funding will provide targeted support to organisations including venues, festivals and theatres.

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In order to propagate best practice across the industry, the Entertainment and Events Working Group gathers key industry bodies to help produce detailed guidance and ensure that the latest updates to that guidance are shared with their sectors.

## **Musical Instruments: Northern Ireland**

*Asked by Lord Aberdare*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether UK musicians will need (1) Convention on International Trade In Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora certificates, and (2) Carnets, for instruments being transported from Great Britain to Northern Ireland after 31 December. [HL10029]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** After the Transition Period, controls implementing the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) will apply to the movement of CITES specimens between Great Britain (GB) and Northern Ireland (NI). This is as a result of our international obligations under CITES, and the operation of the Northern Ireland Protocol. If a musical instrument contains CITES-listed species (and is not exempted) then CITES documents will be required for movements from GB to NI after 31 December. ATA Carnets cannot be used as an alternative to CITES documentation.

However, after the Transition period, ATA Carnets will become an option for temporarily moving goods between

the UK, EU and NI. Use of an ATA Carnet is optional, and it is a commercial decision as to whether it is the most cost-effective method in each specific circumstance.

## **Nagorno Karabakh: Cultural Heritage**

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Azerbaijan about (1) the rights of Armenians, and (2) the protection of cultural sites, including monasteries and churches, in the Nagorno-Karabakh region. [HL10377]

**Baroness Sugg:** The Minister for the European Neighbourhood and the Americas spoke to Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Bayramov on 13 November welcoming the news that the Governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan had reached a peace deal. She noted that a peaceful settlement was essential to securing the stability of the region and the rights of all civilians. The protection of cultural heritage affected by conflict and acts of destruction is a priority for this Government. We will continue to raise these issues with Azerbaijan and Armenia. We did so most recently in a 17 November meeting between the British Ambassador to Azerbaijan and representatives of the Presidential Administration.

## **Nature Conservation: Coronavirus**

*Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to promote a green recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL10098]

**Lord Callanan:** My Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister has set out his ambitions Ten Point Plan for a green industrial revolution.

Spanning clean energy, transport, nature and innovative technologies this plan will enable the UK to forge ahead in delivering its target of net zero – ending its contribution to climate change by 2050 – and building back better.

The plan – which is part of the PM's mission to level up across the country – will mobilise £12 billion of government investment to support up to 250,000 highly-skilled green jobs in the UK, and spur up to three times as much private sector investment by 2030. Over the past 30 years, the UK has been at the forefront of the transition to green – demonstrating that economic growth is aligned with protecting the climate and environment, with our GDP growing by 75% whilst emissions have fallen by 43%.

## **North Korea: Coronavirus**

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government (1) what assessment they have made of the humanitarian situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic; (2) what plans

they have to offer humanitarian assistance to the government of North Korea; and (3) what discussions they have had with others in the international community about offering humanitarian assistance. [[HL10034](#)]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** An assessment of the humanitarian situation in North Korea was completed in September 2020. It concluded that North Korea's humanitarian need is likely increasing as a result of the country's border lockdown in response to COVID-19 and abnormally high cumulative rainfall in the monsoon period. The United Kingdom provides multilateral funds to the UN and other international organisations providing humanitarian assistance in North Korea, including the Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP) in response to COVID-19. As a country of concern in the GHRP, North Korea is receiving funds from this global appeal. North Korea is also one of the countries eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccines through the COVAX initiative to which the United Kingdom has committed up to £500 million.

We keep the humanitarian situation in North Korea under constant review, including through ongoing discussions with international organisations operational in country. We continue to make clear to the North Korean government that international support is available, and urge them to restore international access and monitoring for humanitarian assistance. The UK has also repeatedly called on North Korea to prioritise the well-being of its people over the development of illegal weapons programmes, through our bilateral relationship and in multilateral fora.

### Occupational Health: Taxation

*Asked by **Baroness Royall of Blaisdon***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether providing access to applications that support employees' mental health is (1) a taxable payment or (2) a benefit for employees; and, if not, whether they will update the published guidance to reflect this. [[HL10101](#)]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** The provision of access to applications that support employees' mental health can be a taxable benefit in kind in some circumstances. There are statutory tax exemptions for employee support provided as part of recommended medical treatment, or as welfare counselling. If these do not apply, and the cost of providing access does not exceed £50, this may be covered by the exemption for trivial benefits, provided the conditions are met.

Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs have published guidance on the tax treatment of recommended medical treatment, welfare counselling and trivial benefits.

*Asked by **Baroness Royall of Blaisdon***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether providing sanitary products for employees is (1) a taxable payment, or (2) a benefit for employees; and, if not,

whether they will update the published guidance to reflect this. [[HL10102](#)]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** The provision of sanitary products for employees is normally a taxable benefit in kind. Depending on the particular circumstances, the rules on trivial benefits may apply, in which case there would be no tax liability.

Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs have published guidance on the tax treatment of trivial benefits.

### Oil and Natural Gas: Carbon Emissions

*Asked by **Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure their policy on oil and gas is compatible with their commitment towards net zero emissions by 2050. [[HL10094](#)]

**Lord Callanan:** The UK was the first major economy in the world to legislate for net zero and as we move to a low carbon economy, oil and gas will play a smaller role in meeting the demand for energy over time.

The oil and gas sector will play a crucial role in supporting the UK's energy transition. We are working closely with the sector to agree a transformational North Sea Transition Deal, which we have committed to deliver within this Parliament. The focus of this deal will be on ensuring the sector can support the energy transition and anchoring the supply chain across the UK with a focus on new high-quality jobs and opportunities.

We are also conducting a review of policy on the future of the offshore oil and gas licensing regime, to ensure the government has the information needed to plan for future oil and gas production, in a way that is aligned with the government's climate change objectives. Initial findings will be announced alongside the upcoming Energy White Paper.

### Overseas Aid

*Asked by **Lord Scriven***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by the Minister of State for the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (HC106366), when they became aware that 66 per cent of activities funded by the Integrated Activity Fund (IAF) during the 2018/19 financial year were delivered exclusively in one country; whether they intend to provide a list of countries where activities were funded by the IAF; and if not, why not. [[HL10115](#)]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** To clarify the Written Answer the Noble Lord refers to, these activities did occur solely within individual countries but not all within the same country.

In 2018/19 the IAF funded activities in Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

## Pectus Excavatum: Surgery

Asked by **Lord Hunt of Kings Heath**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of access to pectus excavatum surgery for patients treated in the Tees Valley CCG area who have met the criteria set out by NHS England in Clinical Commissioning Policy: Surgery for pectus deformity (all ages), published on 22 February 2019. [HL10163]

Asked by **Lord Hunt of Kings Heath**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that surgery to treat pectus excavatum in patients residing in the Tees Valley CCG area can take place in cases where the patient is likely to have clinical and functional benefits from that surgery. [HL10164]

**Lord Bethell:** The NHS England and NHS Improvement online publication *Clinical Commissioning Policy relating to surgery for pectus deformity (all ages)* sets out the policy position for commissioning surgery for pectus deformity.

NHS England has concluded that there is not sufficient evidence to support the routine commissioning of surgical treatment for pectus deformity.

NHS England is always willing to look at new evidence and, where appropriate, consider revising policy positions. NHS England and NHS Improvement have been working with clinicians and the National Institute for Health Research to identify ways to close the gaps in the current evidence base, for example through formal research.

## Ports: Carbon Emissions

Asked by **Baroness Randerson**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the progress made by the port of Shoreham in switching to environmentally friendly and zero-carbon sources of power; and what steps they plan to take to encourage other ports to switch to low-carbon ways of working. [HL10243]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Department for Transport welcomes the work Shoreham Port is undertaking to deliver both air quality improvements and decarbonisation, as well as the Port's wider work on renewable energy and adoption of ECO Port status. The efforts being made in Shoreham underline that practical steps can be taken to reduce emissions from ports today.

The Department has highlighted the need to decarbonise our ports in line with our Net Zero 2050 commitment in the 2019 Clean Maritime Plan, and we intend to build on this work for both ports and shipping in the forthcoming Transport Decarbonisation Plan, which we expect to publish in Spring 2021.

## Public Appointments

Asked by **Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the letter from the Commissioner for Public Appointments to the Chair of the Committee on Standards of Public Life, dated 7 October. [HL10070]

**Lord True:** Public appointments must adhere to high standards and are regulated by an independent, external process via a Governance Code. The Commissioner for Public Appointments has not found breaches of this Code in respect of the concerns he raises in the letter.

## Public Expenditure

Asked by **Baroness Randerson**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the article by the Institute for Fiscal Studies Up to £10 billion of the Chancellor's 'Plan for Jobs' will be funded by underspends on previously planned projects, published on 16 July, how much money included in the Summer Economic Statement had not already been announced or included in previous economic statements; and what steps they are taking to improve the transparency and accuracy of fiscal announcements and statements. [HL10091]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** Since the start of the pandemic the government has provided support for people, businesses and public services worth more than £200 billion.

The Plan for Jobs in July set out ambitious capital investment plans to accelerate £8.6 billion of decarbonisation, infrastructure and maintenance projects. As set out in the Plan for Jobs document, this included £5.6 billion of infrastructure projects announced by the PM to start many projects sooner than previously planned. The package was to fund additional activity in 2020-21 and 2021-22, both by accelerating planned programmes and funding new projects to help support jobs and improve our infrastructure. It is funded by a mix of additional funding and underspends in 2020-21, with future years coming from the spending envelope announced at Budget. The Chancellor will be setting out further capital investment plans at the Spending Review, with details outlined in the accompanying document.

In the usual way, the Office for Budget Responsibility will provide their independent assessment of the effect of government policy on the economy and public finances when they publish their forecast alongside the Spending Review on 25 November.

## Public Health: Finance

Asked by **Baroness Eaton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government further to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, what plans they have to review the public health allocation formulae for local authorities. [HL9827]

**Lord Bethell:** The public health grant to local authorities is £3.279 billion in 2020-21, delivering real-terms funding growth to every local authority. Funding beyond 2020-21 will be set out following the Spending Review.

## Renewable Energy

*Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what infrastructure they plan to deploy to transmit the electricity generated from renewables both onshore and offshore to the national grid; and whether they plan to exclude the use of overhead powerlines for that purpose. [[HL10082](#)]

**Lord Callanan:** Regulation of the electricity network is a matter for Ofgem as the independent regulator. It is the responsibility of network companies to provide the infrastructure required to transmit electricity generated from renewables and they do this according to the framework set out by Ofgem through the price control. A number of methods can be used to transfer energy to transmission and distribution systems, including overhead powerlines. The choice of which method to use depends on a range of factors, including technical assessments, environmental impacts and costs.

The Offshore Transmission Network Review is currently considering how best to connect offshore renewable energy in the most efficient way, with a view to finding the appropriate balance between environmental, social and economic costs.

*Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to develop the renewable energy sector in the UK. [[HL10093](#)]

**Lord Callanan:** Achieving our 2050 net zero target will require significant increases in renewable electricity generation, and we will continue to encourage deployment and support the UK sector.

The Contracts for Difference scheme has been very successful in delivering large-scale renewable generation whilst reducing costs through competitive allocation rounds. The next round will open in late 2021 and aims to deliver up to double the renewable capacity of last year's successful round, potentially providing enough clean energy for up to 10 million homes. The Smart Export Guarantee, which was introduced in January 2020, gives small-scale generators, such as homes with solar panels, the right to be paid for the renewable electricity they export to the grid.

The UK is a major global market for renewables, and we want to harness the wider benefits of this market-leading position in terms of jobs and investment. We have already announced £160 million of funding for portside manufacturing infrastructure. The government is eager to strengthen how supply chain plans operate, as signalled in my Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister's announcement

on 6 October. A government response and a further consultation on how we propose to strengthen supply chain plan requirements through the next Contracts for Difference allocation round will be published shortly.

## Roads: Closures

*Asked by Baroness Wolf of Dulwich*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Vere of Norbiton on 23 October (HL9102), whether the Local Air Quality Management framework requires that local authorities monitor air quality in streets into which traffic has been displaced by road closures. [[HL10464](#)]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Local Air Quality Management Framework is set out in Part IV of the Environment Act 1995. It requires local authorities to review and assess air quality within their boundaries, and to produce an annual report detailing any monitoring results and any air pollution issues they have identified. This includes assessing impacts of traffic measures which may include monitoring. Where an objective for a specific pollutant is exceeded the local authority must declare an Air Quality Management Area and produce an Air Quality Action Plan to address the exceedance.

Annual reports must be made available to the public and will usually be accessible on the local authority's website. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs provides support for local authorities to carry out their statutory duties under the framework via statutory guidance and a dedicated helpline.

## Rolls-Royce: Barnoldswick

*Asked by Lord Greaves*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the industrial action by employees of Rolls-Royce in Barnoldswick in response to the announcement by the company that they will move some production to Singapore; and what plans they have to meet representatives of the workforce at Barnoldswick to discuss the proposed move. [[HL10066](#)]

**Lord Callanan:** The Government believes that disputes are best handled through negotiation between the parties. Strikes and other forms of industrial action should be regarded as a last resort after attempts to resolve differences through dialogue have been exhausted. The independent Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas), which is funded by the Government, stands ready to assist the parties in reaching an agreement, where they both accept its involvement. We would encourage the parties to avail themselves of Acas' conciliation and mediation services.

The Department has regular bilateral dialogue with Unite and Union representatives involved in the Aerospace Growth Partnership, which is our main method of engaging with the UK aerospace industry.

## Royal Bank of Scotland: Small Businesses

*Asked by Lord Sikka*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the release of the unredacted report RBS Group's treatment of SME customers referred to the Global Restructuring Group by the Treasury Committee on 20 February 2018, how many directors and employees of the Royal Bank of Scotland have been (1) interviewed by the police, (2) charged, (3) convicted, (4) fined, and (5) banned from holding corporate directorships. [HL10119]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** In June 2019, the Financial Conduct Authority released their final report regarding their investigative steps in relation to Royal Bank of Scotland, Global Restructuring Group (GRG).

The outcome of the report states that although GRG fell short of the high standards expected from their customers, the investigation by the FCA concluded that RBS did not treat their customers unfairly. However, in light of the findings, the FCA did provide RBS with clear recommendations to adhere to, which RBS have responded to with a series of actions they will undertake in order to address those concerns.

RBS rightly apologised for these mistakes, and set up a scheme to compensate victims. This scheme has, to date, paid out in excess of £150 million to complainants.

## Ryanair: Coronavirus

*Asked by Baroness Randerson*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with Ryanair about the continuation of flights whilst the national lockdown is in effect; and what steps they are taking to ensure that customers who are unable to fly as a result of the national lockdown receive full and prompt refunds from that airline. [HL10089]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Department engages with a number of airlines on a variety of issues; however whether an airline operates a flight or not is ultimately a commercial decision.

The Government has been clear that where a flight has been cancelled consumers are entitled to a refund and that refund must be paid. The Department and the regulator are working with industry on the policy and practices of airlines with respect to consumer refunds.

## Sir Malcolm Arnold

*Asked by Lord Lexden*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure that the papers of Sir Malcolm Arnold are preserved for future historical study. [HL10435]

**Baroness Barran:** The National Archives and the Ministry of Justice are currently liaising regarding records of the Office of the Public Guardian and the Chancery

Division of the High Court which pertain to Sir Malcolm Arnold which are currently held by the Ministry of Justice. Whilst discussions are ongoing the records are secure within the custody of the Ministry of Justice and are not at imminent risk of destruction.

## Skipton-Colne railway line

*Asked by Lord Greaves*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the answer by Baroness Vere of Norbiton on 21 October (HL Deb, col 1532), whether contracts have been agreed for the work to be undertaken under Stage 2 (Develop) of the Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline (RNEP) relating to the reinstatement of the railway between Colne and Skipton; if so, with which persons or organisation were these contracts awarded to; whether this work has been paused as part of the review of the schemes in the RNEP; if so, when they expect a decision will be made to restart or otherwise; and what is the current status of the Colne-Skipton project. [HL10065]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** I would like to reiterate my sincere apologies for an error made in my response during the debate on 21 October. The correct position of this scheme is that, following advice on the outcome of previous feasibility work, we have asked officials to bring forward specific proposals for approval for initial 'Develop' stage work on this reinstatement. Therefore, no contracts have been agreed yet. Officials are preparing proposals for consideration by Ministers for further work on the possible reinstatement of railway between Skipton and Colne and an announcement will be made shortly.

## Tax Avoidance

*Asked by Lord Sikka*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they have taken against PricewaterhouseCooper for any role played in implementing tax avoidance schemes exposed by the 'Luxembourg leaks'. [HL10117]

*Asked by Lord Sikka*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to publish the number of (1) prosecutions, (2) convictions, and (3) fines, resulting from their investigations into tax avoidance schemes exposed by the 'Luxembourg leaks'. [HL10118]

**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 or any named organisation, for reasons of taxpayer confidentiality.

Should any tax agent be found to be enabling or facilitating tax avoidance then HMRC will use the full range of tools available, which include strict financial penalties, criminal sanctions, and public interest disclosures.

HMRC have reviewed all the documents relating to 142 taxpayers who had documents relating to their tax affairs disclosed by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, which have been referred to as the 'Luxembourg Leaks'.

This work did not reveal a single case of material information where either the detail of the transactions had not already been provided to HMRC, or when examined did any more than confirm HMRC's understanding of particular arrangements that were already known to HMRC.

The Government has taken resolute action since 2010 to clamp down on tax non-compliance and unfair outcomes. It has targeted a broad range of bad practice in order to ensure that everyone, from individuals to large multinationals, is required to pay the right amount at the right time.

### Tax Evasion

*Asked by Lord Sikka*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to publish the number of (1) prosecutions, (2) convictions, and (3) fines, resulting from their investigations into the Panama papers. [[HL10116](#)]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** To date, HMRC's work on the Panama Papers has produced about £190 million in yield. Data from the Panama Papers has been fully brought into HMRC's systems and the data continues to be used as part of their usual risking process.

HMRC regularly publish details of prosecutions, convictions and fines and will look to do the same in relation to their Panama Papers work when it is appropriate to do so.

### Technology

*Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to grow the UK's technology sector. [[HL10097](#)]

**Lord Callanan:** The UK has one of the most vibrant and innovative technology sectors in the world, which has been highly resilient through the pandemic. This Government is fully committed to unleashing innovation and supporting priority technologies.

We are providing a wide range of support to high-tech industry, including through the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund and a £1.25 billion coronavirus package of support for innovative firms – which includes the Future Fund – together with our major commitment to increase public R&D spending to £22 billion by 2024-25.

Furthermore, we support specific priority technologies: combined public and private investment in the National Quantum Technologies Programme over its 10 year lifetime is set to pass £1bn and the Artificial Intelligence Sector Deal represents a £1bn commitment from industry and Government.

In September, my Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport launched the framework UK National Data Strategy to support further action to build the UK's position as a world-leading data economy.

### Television Licences: Fees and Charges

*Asked by Baroness Hoey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to introduce legislation to decriminalise non-payment of the TV licence fee. [[HL10342](#)]

**Baroness Barran:** The government believes that it is right to look again at whether the criminal sanction remains appropriate for TV licence fee evasion given ongoing concerns about whether the criminal sanction is unfair and disproportionate.

In February 2020, we launched a public consultation on decriminalising TV licence evasion.

The consultation closed in April after receiving over 150,000 responses. We will listen carefully to those that have responded before setting out our next steps.

### Thames Water: Sewage

*Asked by Lord Bradshaw*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park on 29 January (HL608), whether the Environment Agency has prosecuted Thames Water in relation to incidents of polluting the River Thames or its tributaries since the beginning of 2020. [[HL10054](#)]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** There have been no prosecutions of Thames Water for pollution to the Thames or its tributaries in 2020.

### Transport: Carbon Emissions

*Asked by Lord Berkeley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that their net zero transport policies are informed by an assessment of the comparable costs of using road and rail, in particular the impact of road user charging. [[HL10420](#)]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Department is developing a bold and ambitious Transport Decarbonisation Plan to achieve net zero emissions across all modes of transport by 2050, including road and rail. As we move forward with the transition away from petrol and diesel cars and vans, the Government will need to ensure that the tax system encourages the uptake of electric vehicles and that revenue from motoring taxes keeps pace with this change, to ensure we can continue to fund the first class public services and infrastructure that people and families across the UK expect.

## Travellers: Coronavirus

*Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assistance they are making available to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities during the period while national restrictions are in place to address the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL10049]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** My Department has been supporting the co-ordination of cross Government work in response to the impact of Covid-19 on Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, to ensure their needs are reflected in response and recovery planning.

I recently wrote to all local authority Chief Executives about support some Gypsy and Traveller families may need during the national restrictions to find a safe place to stop and access basic amenities, including water, sanitation and waste disposal facilities.

Government also published Covid-19 guidance for people living a nomadic lifestyle on traveller sites, in vehicles and canal boats.

Whilst it is for local authorities to determine how best to support vulnerable groups, in line with their public health responsibilities, I intend to continue to work closely with them to ensure that Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities needs are met.

## UK Government Union Capability Independent Review

*Asked by Baroness Bryan of Partick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether The Dunlop Review into UK Government Union capability, announced on 4 July 2019, took evidence from the devolved administrations. [HL10055]

*Asked by Baroness Bryan of Partick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they estimate that they will conclude their consideration of the recommendations of The Dunlop Review into UK Government Union capability, first announced on 4 July 2019; and when they plan to publish (1) that review, and (2) their conclusions. [HL10056]

**Lord True:** The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office gave evidence to the House of Commons Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee on 10 September setting out the Government's intention to publish the Dunlop Review before the end of the year.

We are already in the process of implementing many of Lord Dunlop's recommendations and we will set out more details on this alongside the publication of the report.

Whilst undertaking his Review, Lord Dunlop consulted widely before making his recommendations. This included meeting with politicians, civil servants, academics and others from all the nations of the United Kingdom.

## Unemployment Benefits: Young People

*Asked by Lord Baker of Dorking*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many (1) 16, (2) 17, (3) 18, and (4) 19, year-olds registered for unemployment-related benefits in the months of (a) September, and (b) October. [HL10040]

**Baroness Stedman-Scott:** Numbers of people claiming unemployment-related benefits by single year age band are publicly available through the department's Stat Xplore website.

The table below shows the number of people nationally aged 16, 17, 18 and 19 years old in the Universal Credit (UC) searching for work conditionality group – for people claiming UC whom are closest to the labour market - in September and October 2020.

Age	September 2020	October 2020
16	861	940
17	4630	4563
18	49828	51602
19	70483	71766
Total	125795	128878

The number of people nationally aged 16, 17, 18 and 19 years old and are claiming Jobseekers' Allowance – a legacy unemployment-related benefit - are published quarterly by DWP on Stat Xplore. However, the latest data available is May 2020.

Age	May 2020
16	Negligible or nil number of claimants
17	25
18	452
19	972
Total	1450

## Unemployment: Young People

*Asked by Lord Baker of Dorking*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many 19-year-olds were registered as unemployed in the months of (1) June, (2) July, and (3) August. [HL10039]

**Baroness Stedman-Scott:** The Office for National Statistics classify people as unemployed if, in response to the Labour Force Survey / Annual Population Survey, a person states that they are without a job; have been actively seeking work within the last four weeks and are available to start work within the next two weeks. This is not directly related to being in receipt of unemployment-related benefit.

The ONS do not publish data on the number of 19 year olds whom are unemployed.

**Visas: Peru**

*Asked by Baroness Anelay of St Johns*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the proposed UK and Andean countries trade agreement includes provisions about visa reform for those travelling on business from Peru to the UK. [HL10419]

**Lord Grimstone of Boscobel:** The United Kingdom and Andean Countries agreed in May 2019 to transition the European Union-Andean Countries Free Trade Agreement. The agreement does not include any provisions regarding visa reform.

**Windrush Generation: Compensation**

*Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much compensation has been paid out by the Windrush Compensation Scheme to date; and how much they

estimate will be paid out in total before that Scheme ends. [HL10100]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** Information on the total number of claims paid and the overall amount paid out by the scheme is available to view on GOV.UK at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/windrush-compensation-scheme-data-october-2020>.

In relation to estimated costs these are referred to in the Home Office's Impact Assessment IA No: HO 0329 dated 29/1/20. The Home Office has secured funding from HM Treasury for the scheme, and there is no cap on the amount of compensation an individual can receive.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Windrush Compensation scheme data - Oct 2020  
[Windrush\_Compensation\_Scheme\_September\_-\_Published  
(3).xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-11-09/HL10100>

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