

**Session 2019-21  
No. 147**



**Tuesday  
24 November 2020**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

# **HOUSE OF LORDS**

## **WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS**

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

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<b>Lord Agnew of Oulton</b>	Minister of State, Treasury and Cabinet Office
<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
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<b>Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Penn</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Scott of Bybrook</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Stedman-Scott</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
<b>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

Tuesday, 24 November 2020

## Covid-19: Global Travel Taskforce

[HLWS589]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** My Honourable Friend, the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Transport (Robert Courts) has made the following Ministerial Statement.

On 7 October, at the request of the Prime Minister, the Government announced the launch of our Global Travel Taskforce. Co-chaired by the Secretary of State for Transport and the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, the aim of the Taskforce was to consider steps that Government could take to encourage the safe recovery of domestic and overseas travel and tourism while reducing the risk of imported cases.

The Taskforce was to report back to the Prime Minister in November; a commitment we met last week after a period of constructive consultation with the travel sector.

The message we received during those consultations was clear. The global COVID-19 pandemic remains an existential threat to the aviation and maritime sectors, as for all travel and tourism businesses, and we need to act now to help these industries get back on a trajectory towards strong economic growth.

That is precisely what the Global Travel Taskforce report aims to achieve, making 14 recommendations following three broad principles:

First, to ensure that journeys are safe.

Second, to increase demand for travel without compromising safety.

Third, to position the UK so we can take a leading role in driving the global standards required to support recovery.

The most fundamental priority in all this work is safeguarding public health. That is why we are introducing, as the first initiative resulting from the Global Travel Taskforce's work, a new regime '*Test to Release*' for international arrivals from countries that are not on the Travel Corridor list.

Following extensive work by officials from the Department for Transport and Department of Health and Social Care, this will be rolled out in England from 15 December in time for Christmas.

Travellers will have the option of booking and paying for a test from a list of private sector providers. They can take the test five full days after they left a destination not on the travel corridors list, which for most international arrivals will be after five full days of self-isolation. If the test result is negative, they will be free to go about their daily lives. A test on day five of self-isolation provides a strong level of protection for the UK population from transmission of COVID-19 acquired abroad. It also provides much more freedom for people seeking to travel.

Individuals who opt in will be required to self-isolate until they receive a negative test result. Compliance checks are carried out by Public Health England's Isolation Assurance Service (IAS) who contact randomly sampled international arrivals to ensure that they are self-isolating. Details of those found not to be isolating will be passed to the Home Office, who in turn pass relevant details on to the police for targeted follow-up enforcement activity.

Anyone who does not comply with this requirement could be fined £1,000 for the first offence and up to £10,000 for repeat breaches. Only a negative test result from a provider on the gov.uk list will enable a traveller to cease self-isolating early.

If a traveller tests positive for COVID-19, they will move into the UK's existing system for positive cases, meaning that they will self-isolate for a further 10 days from the day of the test and their contacts will be traced and notified as normal. Minimum standards have been set by clinicians to ensure that the tests give accurate results, but we are not specifying exactly what type of test must be used. This is to allow for innovation in the testing market. Tests will either be taken at a private testing site, or using a privately provided home testing kit, meaning the scheme will be accessible to the widest section of the community and across England.

As we emerge from this latest period of restrictions, the new testing scheme will allow people to see family, go away on business, or book holidays with the option of taking a test to shorten any self-isolation period in the UK and reduce disruption to their lives.

In addition to '*Test to Release for International Travel*', we will of course remain open to new testing technologies and other approaches that help people travel overseas in safety. For example, mass testing may help more people to travel with fewer restrictions in the future. As our knowledge and capacity for testing develops, so will our policy.

However, we have always known that testing alone is not a silver bullet, nor a comprehensive solution to the challenges we face. The Taskforce has made further recommendations, including:

- to advocate the development of a global framework for the validation of tests and vaccination records;
- to assess the feasibility of short stay exemptions for businesses and tour groups;
- to publish the criteria for when cruises can restart and implement a phased return for cruising when the public health advice makes clear it is safe to do so;
- to boost consumer confidence about inbound and outbound travel through targeted communications and marketing campaigns; and
- to provide assurance to passengers, we will work with our world-leading aviation regulator, the CAA, to ensure that the aviation industry is doing everything it can to make air travel as low risk as possible, as well as continuing to work with the maritime sector to ensure

that it operates safely and that industry guidance remains in line with best practice.

As soon as the time is right, we want to encourage people to travel with confidence. That means British people being able to go abroad safely, and welcoming back overseas visitors to our country to do business, and enjoy our hospitality, entertainment and world-famous tourist sites. The recommendations outlined above provide a springboard to ensure the safe and viable recovery of the sector.

However, while the Taskforce's work has concluded, ours does not end here. The collapse of the market this year has not just affected airlines but airports, ground handlers and other airport services too. The Government has already made available an unprecedented package of economic measures to companies across the aviation industry. This includes schemes to raise capital and flexibilities with tax bills, as well as financial support for employees.

We have worked closely with the sector during the course of the pandemic and listened to its concerns. Airports have highlighted specific challenges arising from a lack of passengers, and the relatively high fixed costs they face. Therefore, we will shortly be making available a support scheme providing financial assistance to commercial airports and ground handlers in England to help with business rates.

These businesses will be able to apply from the new year for the equivalent of their business rates costs in this financial year, up to a maximum of £8 million per eligible site, subject to certain conditions which the Department of Transport will take into account when considering applications.

The Government is committed to giving people the freedom to travel with confidence and supporting the wider travel industry. I will publish this statement on GOV.UK and will place a copy in the libraries of both Houses.

## Firearms Safety: Public Consultation

[HLWS588]

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

I have today launched a public consultation to seek views on a range of firearms safety issues.

The firearms laws in this country are among the toughest in the world and the Government keeps them under constant review to ensure they continue to safeguard the public.

While lawful shooting is well regulated and generally safe, there remains a risk of firearms falling into the hands of criminals, or in the case of air weapons, being misused. The Government is therefore consulting on how to reduce these risks in certain areas of firearms control where

concerns have been raised with us by law enforcement and others.

This consultation looks at how we might address the potential threat posed by high muzzle energy rifles through enhanced security arrangements to reduce the risk of them falling into the wrong hands.

We are seeking views on improving the controls on air weapons, including safe storage. This follows on from a Home Office review of the regulation of air weapons initiated after the tragic death of 13-year old Benjamin Wragge, who was killed accidentally with an air weapon in 2016.

Views are also sought on how we might address vulnerabilities presented by the current exemption from licensing that applies to miniature rifle ranges, and whether to make it an offence to possess component parts of ammunition with intent to unlawfully manufacture complete rounds.

The consultation will end on 16 February 2021.

A copy of the consultation paper will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses and is available on the Government's website at gov.uk.

## High Speed Rail (West Midlands to Crewe): Statement of Reasons Command Paper

[HLWS587]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** I am today 24 November 2020 publishing the Statement of Reasons Command Paper for the High Speed Rail (West Midlands to Crewe) Bill. The Command Paper is titled the 'Government overview of the case for HS2 Phase 2a and its environmental impacts – Update for the House of Lords'. This is required by Parliamentary Standing Order 83A(9) to assist the House during the third reading of the High Speed Rail (West Midlands to Crewe) Bill. This document summarises the work that has already been done to assess, control and mitigate the environmental impacts of HS2 Phase 2a, and explains why the government continues to take the view that the HS2 Phase 2a project is worthy of its support.

Copies of the Statement of Reasons will be placed in the libraries of both Houses.

The Statement includes the following attached material:

Command Paper [CP 325 HS2 Phase 2a Lords Statement of Reasons PRINT.PDF]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2020-11-24/HLWS587/>

## Historic England Tailored Review

[HLWS590]

**Baroness Barran:** My Right Honourable friend the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport,

Oliver Dowden CBE MP, has made the following statement:

The Tailored Review of the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (more commonly known as Historic England) is published today.

As a Non-Departmental Public Body, Historic England is required to undergo a Tailored Review at least once in each Parliament. This review also examines the 2015 decision to split Historic England into two separate, though related organisations; one an Arm's Length Body operating under the name 'Historic England', and the second a charity called The English Heritage Trust (trading as 'English Heritage') that manages the National Heritage Collection of historic sites and monuments on behalf of the nation.

The Review received evidence from a public consultation, round table discussions and from in depth interviews with a wide range of Heritage stakeholders. The review concluded that Historic England is a highly regarded and well run organisation with a strong reputation for its heritage and planning expertise and advice. Historic England is seen as one of the leaders in the heritage sector, providing high quality expert advice in England and undertaking world leading conservation research.

The review made 31 separate recommendations that, once implemented, will complement and enhance the high regard that Historic England is currently held.

The Review concluded there are two significant areas in which Historic England can do more. Firstly, in order for it to ensure first class, long-term management of the National Heritage Collection, Historic England must improve its oversight of the English Heritage Trust's performance and make it more publicly accountable.

Secondly, the review identified opportunities for Historic England to strengthen its leadership role within the wider heritage sector, especially in relation to diversity, by making heritage more relatable to wider audiences. This report comes at a time when our shared values are under close scrutiny, with the role of heritage at the forefront of this debate. Embracing the ambition for a more representative and inclusive sector must include reinforcing the primary role of heritage: preserving our history in its place and presenting it properly and accurately in its time and context. Rather than seeking to destroy, we should be enhancing and promoting our shared history so that its complexity can be fully understood. Historic England has a central role in delivering this for us all.

Copies of the Historic England Tailored Review have been sent to the Chair of the DCMS Select Committee and copies are available in the libraries of both Houses of Parliament.

The Statement includes the following attached material:

Tailored Review of Historic England [Tailored Review of Historic England.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2020-11-24/HLWS590/>

## London Capital and Finance: FCA Investigation

[HLWS591]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** My honourable friend the Economic Secretary to the Treasury (John Glen) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

On 23 May 2019, I laid a direction before Parliament using the powers conferred by sections 77(1) and (2) and 78(5) and (6) of the Financial Services Act 2012 ("the Act") and set this out in a Written Ministerial Statement (HCWS1584). I formally directed the Financial Conduct Authority ("the FCA") to launch an independent investigation into the events relating to the regulation of London Capital & Finance plc ("LCF"). Paragraph 3 of the direction required that the investigation focus on whether the FCA discharged its functions properly ("in a manner which enabled it to effectively fulfil its statutory objectives") and with a particular focus on matters listed in the direction. The direction required that the FCA appoint an independent person to undertake the review and that the review should be completed within one year. The FCA appointed Dame Elizabeth Gloster, who has had a distinguished career as a barrister and as a judge on the High Court and the Court of Appeal, to lead the investigation. I also approved this appointment.

The direction also set out that if the Investigator considered that it would not be possible to complete the investigation within one year the FCA must inform the Treasury of the reasons for the delay and set a revised target date for its conclusion. The FCA wrote to me in May setting out that the delivery of the report would have to be delayed to 30 September 2020, and again in August setting out that the target date for conclusion would have to be delayed to the 23 November 2020, which reflected capacity constraints as a result of Covid and delays in the FCA providing key documents to Dame Elizabeth. I also received correspondence from Dame Elizabeth on both occasions. Further information can be found on the government website:

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/independent-investigation-into-the-failure-of-london-capital-and-finance>).

On 23 November 2020, Dame Elizabeth, in accordance with the revised timeline, delivered her final written report to the FCA. In line with the direction, the FCA will now consider the report, the recommendations and any lessons learnt. Section 82 of the Act requires the Government to lay before Parliament the FCA's written response to the investigation which will include the investigator's findings and recommendations.

I recognise that it continues to be a very difficult and uncertain time for all LCF bondholders. I can confirm today that I have asked the FCA to work with the Treasury so that the government can lay before

Parliament (and publish online) Dame Elizabeth's report and the FCA's response before the December recess. This independent investigation is separate to criminal and	regulatory investigations into the failure of LCF by the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) and FCA which are still ongoing.
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## Written Answers

Tuesday, 24 November 2020

### Apprentices: Taxation

Asked by *Lord Allen of Kensington*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, for the most recent year in which figures are available, (1) how many, and (2) what percentage of, companies which pay the apprenticeship levy spent their entire apprenticeship fund in that year. [HL10145]

**Baroness Berridge:** Employers in England who pay the apprenticeship levy can access funds for apprenticeship training by registering for an apprenticeship service account. The funds in employers' accounts reflect the 'English percentage' of an employer's levy contribution and include a 10% top-up from the government. During the 2019-20 financial year, 15% of employer accounts fully utilised the funds entering the levy-payer's account. This is shown in the attached table.

Levy declarations relating to the 2019-20 financial year entered employer accounts between May 2019 and April 2020, as payments enter accounts a month in arrears. Payments relating to the 2019-20 financial year were made between May 2019 and April 2020, also a month in arrears. These payments cover the cost of apprenticeships training only. The cost of any additional payments to employers and/or providers and additional support, such as for English and maths training, is met by the apprenticeship budget and therefore is not deducted from employer's accounts.

Employers have 24 months to spend the funds available to them. It is therefore possible for employers to spend more than they declare in a financial year.

Spending on the apprenticeship programme is demanded and employers can choose which apprenticeships they offer, how many they offer and when they are offered. We do not anticipate that all employers who pay the levy will need or want to use all the funds available to them, but they are able to do so if they wish.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

HL10145\_table

[HL10145\_table\_apprenticeship\_levy\_accounts\_2019\_20.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-11-10/HL10145>

### Aviation: Government Assistance

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to provide additional financial support to the aviation industry. [HL10198]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The aviation sector is crucial to the UK's economy and businesses across the

industry can draw on the unprecedented package of economic measures we have put in place during this time.

This includes a Bank of England scheme for firms to raise capital and the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme which facilitates access to finance for businesses affected by the outbreak. HMRC is also ready to help all businesses and self-employed individuals, experiencing temporary financial difficulties due to coronavirus. Companies can access their "Time to Pay" arrangements, which eases restrictions with tax bills and VAT deferrals.

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) has also been available to support wages during this time. On 5 November, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that workers across the United Kingdom will benefit from increased support with a five-month extension of the CJRS until the end of March 2021, with employees receiving 80% of their current salary for hours not worked.

### Basic Skills: Disadvantaged

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that disadvantaged children do not regress in basic skills and learning during, and after, the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL10199]

**Baroness Berridge:** The government is aware that all pupils, irrespective of their background, have been affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. We are providing schools with the resources and tools to address lost learning so that all pupils may make up lost ground. Our £1 billion COVID-19 catch-up package is providing additional funding to schools to support pupils who have been negatively affected by the outbreak.

The £650 million universal catch-up premium is enabling all schools to identify and prioritise support for pupils to address their needs, including basic skills that have declined during the closure period. This complements the National Tutoring Programme that is targeting £350 million to accelerate the academic progress of disadvantaged pupils by making high quality tutors available to schools in all regions at a greatly reduced rate. The Education Endowment Foundation has published guidance to help schools make the most of these new programmes. This is available here: <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/covid-19-resources/national-tutoring-programme/covid-19-support-guide-for-schools/>.

Schools continue to receive the £2.4 billion pupil premium grant that we provide to enable extra personalised support for disadvantaged pupils. We recognise the particular challenges facing some pupils at the start of their school career, so since 2014 disadvantaged pupils of primary school age have attracted a higher per-head allocation. The Education Endowment Foundation has published effective practice guidance for the pupil premium, so that schools can make a difference

to every pupil's future. The guidance is available here: <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/pupil-premium-guide/>.

### British Nationality

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 10 November (HL9699), whether Tier 4 or Tier 5 visas are classified as a route to settlement. [HL10152]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The Tier 4 route was replaced by the Student route on 5 October. Neither the current Student route, nor the previous Tier 4 route acts as a route to settlement. Neither route leads directly to settlement within the UK. Any time spent studying within the UK on the Student route, does not count towards the time required for an applicant to accrue settlement rights.

Our existing Tier 5 visa arrangements offer a variety of routes and cater for those wishing to enter the UK to undertake work on a temporary basis, rather than being a route to settlement.

To be able to settle within the UK, an applicant must be on a route which leads to settlement, such as Tier 2.

### Cancer: Health Services

*Asked by Lord Goodlad*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress has been made by NHS England in advising on the service specifications for children's cancer services. [HL9830]

**Lord Bethell:** The new children's cancer service specification will be finalised and published in due course, reflecting the recommendations of Professor Sir Mike Richards which were agreed by NHS England and NHS Improvement's Board.

### Contraceptives

*Asked by Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to include contraceptive care within the scope of their women's health strategy. [HL10399]

*Asked by Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Sexual and Reproductive Health *Women's Lives, Women's Rights: Strengthening Access to Contraception Beyond the COVID-19 Pandemic*, published on 10 September, what plans they have to include reviewing current data collection processes for (1) uptake, and (2) provision, of contraception in the national Sexual and Reproductive Health strategy. [HL10400]

**Lord Bethell:** The All Party Parliamentary Group on Sexual and Reproductive Health's report, *Women's Lives,*

*Women's Rights: Strengthening Access to Contraception Beyond the COVID-19 Pandemic*, has raised a number of important issues. The recommendations including those relating to contraception care and data collection processes, will be considered as part of our upcoming work to develop the sexual and reproductive health strategy.

### Contraceptives: Coronavirus

*Asked by Baroness Jenkin of Kennington*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the average waiting time for a woman accessing long-acting reversible contraception. [HL10167]

*Asked by Baroness Jenkin of Kennington*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many (1) GP surgeries, and (2) community sexual health clinics, offering contraceptive services across England have restricted access to long-acting reversible contraception due to the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL10168]

**Lord Bethell:** The average waiting time for a woman accessing long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) is not collected centrally. Data on restricted access to long-acting reversible contraception due to the COVID-19 pandemic in general practitioner surgeries and community sexual health clinics is also not currently available centrally.

The provision of LARC services is particularly challenging currently due to access not being possible remotely.

The Department is working with Public Health England and others to reduce waiting lists and backlogs that have occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Faculty of Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare have also published clinical advice to support ongoing provision of effective contraception which health professionals should work to.

### Coronavirus: Disease Control

*Asked by Baroness Altmann*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the risk posed to the health of (1) individuals, and (2) the general public, of extending restrictions to address the COVID-19 pandemic for specific groups including (a) all over 60s regardless of health, (b) all over 70s regardless of health, (c) all BAME citizens, (d) all male citizens, and (e) all those with a body mass index over 30; how many people in each such group have been admitted to intensive care due to COVID-19; and what proportion of the total population of each group such numbers represent. [T] [HL4017]

**Lord Bethell:** On 2 June Public Health England published *Disparities in the risk and outcomes of COVID-19*. This report was subsequently updated in August 2020. The report finds that among people already diagnosed



with COVID-19, people who were 80 years or older were seventy times more likely to die than those under 40. It also sets out that the risk of dying among those diagnosed with COVID-19 was also higher in males than females; higher in those living in the more deprived areas than those living in the least deprived; and higher in those in black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) groups than in white ethnic groups. The report notes that these inequalities largely replicate existing inequalities in mortality rates in previous years, except for BAME groups, as mortality was previously higher in white ethnic groups. The report's analyses take into account age, sex, deprivation, region and ethnicity, but it does not take into account the existence of co-morbidities, which are strongly associated with the risk of death from COVID-19 and are likely to explain some of the differences. A copy of the report is attached.

On 22 October the Minister for Equalities, (Kemi Badenoch MP) published the first *Quarterly report on progress to address COVID-19 health inequalities* report to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on progress to tackle COVID-19 disparities experienced by individuals from an ethnic minority background, making 13 recommendations. This includes reviewing the effectiveness and impact of current actions being undertaken by relevant Government departments to directly lessen disparities in infection and death rates of COVID-19. As well as taking action to modify existing policy and policy in development to address these disparities, all of which the Prime Minister has accepted. A copy of this quarterly report is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Disparities in the risk and outcomes of COVID-19 [HL4017 - Disparities\_in\_the\_risk\_and\_outcomes\_of\_COVID\_August\_2020\_update.pdf]

Quarterly report on progress to address COVID-19 [HL4017 - First\_Covid\_Disparities\_report\_to\_PM\_Health\_Secretary\_Final\_22-10-20.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-05-05/HL4017>

## Coronavirus: Legislation

*Asked by Lord Forsyth of Drumlean*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Memorandum by the Department of Health submitted to the House of Lords Constitution Committee's inquiry Fast-track Legislation: Constitutional Implications and Safeguards in March 2009 which states, in response to Question 3, "The Government believes that 28 days will allow enough time to arrange a debate in each House even when the requirement specified by emergency regulations is urgent, yet minor in scope and effect"; and whether this undertaking applies to regulations made under the Public Health (Control of Diseases) Act 1984 in response to COVID-19. [HL8626]

*Asked by Lord Forsyth of Drumlean*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the response to Question 2 in the Memorandum by the Department of Health submitted to the House of Lords Constitution Committee's inquiry Fast-track Legislation: Constitutional Implications and Safeguards in March 2009; and whether they are satisfied that there has been suitable evidence to fulfil the four criteria as set out under section 45G of the Public Health (Control of Diseases) Act 1984 for regulations introduced in response to COVID-19 under that Act. [HL8627]

**Lord Bethell:** Section 45R of the Public Health (Control of Diseases) Act 1984 enables Ministers to use the made affirmative procedure, by which an Instrument can be made before it is approved by Parliament. This is possible, provided the Minister makes a declaration that circumstances warrant this approach, in order to tackle a serious and imminent threat to public health. The inherent safeguard is that the Instrument will lapse within 28 days, unless approved by Parliament.

In the Department's Memorandum of March 2009, which dealt with Regulations made under the 1984 Act, including the ones that form a key part of our response to COVID-19, we explained that even if Regulations had to be made in an emergency, taking effect before approval, a debate on an approval motion could take place before the Regulations lapsed. This has been achieved throughout the course of the outbreak. Furthermore, debates on approval motions, in both Houses, took place on the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (No. 4) Regulations 2020 the day after they were made, and before they came into force.

The nature of the COVID-19 pandemic is such that the Government's response has to be agile, in order to respond swiftly and effectively to evolving threats. The pandemic is therefore a serious and imminent threat to public health. In introducing necessary and proportionate measures to tackle its spread, delay can be harmful, and frustrate both the overall response and the specific objectives of particular Instruments. The powers in the 1984 Act are therefore expressly provided in order to support the approach that the Government has been taking.

The criteria referred to in section 2 of the Memorandum and section 45G of the 1984 Act are:

- the individual is or may be infected or contaminated,
- the infection or contamination is one which presents or could present significant harm to human health,
- there is a risk that the individual might infect or contaminate others, and
- it is necessary to make the order to remove or reduce that risk.

These relate to specific orders made by a magistrate and are not required to be considered for the making of Regulations. These underlying principles are certainly applicable to the national response; and the Government's

view is that the Regulations satisfy all of the criteria set out in the Act. In the course of making Regulations under the 1984 Act, Ministers do undertake assessments as to whether the proposed course of action is a necessary and proportionate response; and it is clear that COVID-19 does represent a significant threat.

### **Coronavirus: South Korea**

*Asked by Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the actions taken by the government of South Korea to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic; and what plans they have to use any lessons learned to guide future policy. [[HL7864](#)]

**Lord Bethell:** No specific assessment has been made. However, the Department is regularly in discussions with other countries, including South Korea, on a wide range of issues relating to COVID-19 and has been throughout the pandemic. The Department will continue to work with other countries to defeat the virus.

### **Courts: Video Conferencing**

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to expand the virtual court estate for short or preliminary hearings, and non-complex matters. [[HL10132](#)]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** In response to the COVID19 pandemic, we rapidly expanded audio and video technology capability, enabling judges and magistrates to conduct many more remote hearings. This included rolling out use of the 'Cloud Video Platform' (CVP), which was already in use in some jurisdictions, across all jurisdictions over the spring and summer. This has enabled many cases to be heard that otherwise would have been delayed. We will ensure remote hearings continue to be effectively supported with increased staff support and guidance for users.

The use of remote hearings is subject to judicial discretion and the interests of justice, and usage varies accordingly. Judicial guidance on the use of remote hearings in different case types has been produced by the judiciary and is available on their website. HMCTS has produced national guidance on remote participation in court and tribunal hearings across jurisdictions which is available on the GOV.UK website.

### **Dental Services: Coronavirus**

*Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken in response to the report by the Faculty of Dental Services of the Royal College of Surgeons A resumption of dental services?, published on 2 October. [[HL9039](#)]

**Lord Bethell:** The Department welcomes the report by the Faculty of Dental Service of the Royal College of Surgeons. The main recommendations in the report are in line with actions that have already been taken.

National Health Service dental services will remain open and offering face to face care during this new period of increased restrictions. This is in line with the wider drive to ensure as much healthcare as possible remains available during this period.

A dedicated personal protective equipment (PPE) portal has been developed to deliver PPE, needed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, free of charge to providers of NHS services, including NHS dental contractors. As of 4 November, over 5,100 NHS dental and orthodontic providers in England have registered with the PPE portal and over 36 million items have been delivered.

### **Department for Education: Data Protection**

*Asked by Lord Storey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the findings of the Information Commissioners' Office's audit of the Department for Education, published on 7 October. [[HL10194](#)]

**Baroness Berridge:** The Department has been working closely with the Information Commissioner's Office since the audit was undertaken in February 2020 to address all the recommendations. We will be publishing a formal response in January 2021.

### **Department of Health and Social Care: Written Questions**

*Asked by Lord Forsyth of Drumlean*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to respond to the Questions for Written Answer tabled by Lord Forsyth of Drumlean on (1) 14 September (HL8056), and (2) 30 September (HL8627 and HL8626). [[HL9532](#)]

**Lord Bethell:** I answered the noble Lord's questions on 18 and 24 November respectively.

### **Developing Countries: Health Services**

*Asked by Baroness Sheehan*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to strengthen health system resilience to specific diseases in low and middle income countries. [[HL10386](#)]

*Asked by Baroness Sheehan*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that progress made in strengthening health system resilience is not lost. [[HL10388](#)]

*Asked by **Baroness Sheehan***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) maintaining, and (2) advancing, health system resilience as a precursor to economic development in low and middle income countries. [[HL10389](#)]

**Baroness Sugg:** The UK has a strong track record in investing in global health and health systems to deliver the SDGs, to achieve universal health coverage (UHC), and to end the preventable deaths of mothers, new-borns and children by 2030. To protect global progress in these areas from the impacts of COVID-19, the UK is working with our partners and country governments to respond to the pandemic, and to support resilient health systems for maintaining safe essential health services, including for persisting threats such as malaria, TB, HIV, vaccine preventable diseases and new diseases. The UK has pledged up to £1.4 billion to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, which will support developing countries tackle these three epidemics as well as strengthen national health systems. The Global Fund is also making up to \$1 billion available for countries to respond to COVID-19, to reinforce their health systems, adapt their programmes and reduce the indirect impacts on health services.

The UK recognises that we have a real opportunity to shape a recovery from COVID-19 that delivers cleaner, healthier, more inclusive, and more resilient economies and societies. Better health, together with respect for people's rights, helps everyone, including the poorest and most vulnerable to survive and thrive; boosting human capital; and driving poverty eradication and inclusive economic development.

### **Electricity Generation: Waste**

*Asked by **Baroness McIntosh of Pickering***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that electricity generated by waste-to-energy facilities will be used to the benefit of the local community closest to where the electricity is generated. [[HL10179](#)]

**Lord Callanan:** Local communities are already able to benefit from the sale of electricity from Energy from Waste (EfW) plants in those instances where the local authority has made a provision to retain revenue from the sale when tendering a waste processing contract.

For EfW plants that utilise combined heat and power (CHP) technologies the local area can also benefit from the supply of low carbon heat, either via a heat network to heat homes and commercial premises or by direct connection to an industrial site to help incentivise businesses.

The Government is supporting EfW-based networks through its £320m Heat Network Investment Project and from 2022 an additional £270m will be available through the Green Heat Network Fund.

### **Ethiopia: Armed Conflict**

*Asked by **Lord Oates***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what ministerial-level discussions they have had with the government of Ethiopia about the conflict in Tigray. [[HL10360](#)]

**Baroness Sugg:** The Foreign Secretary spoke to Prime Minister Abiy on 10 November to relay the UK's concerns over the conflict in the Tigray region and the risk it poses to civilians. He stressed the urgent need for political dialogue and a peaceful solution to the conflict, as well as the need to prioritise the protection of civilians and unhindered humanitarian access. On 18 November, Minister Duddridge reinforced this message with the Ethiopian Ambassador to the UK.

*Asked by **Lord Oates***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the Chair of the African Union about (1) the conflict in Ethiopia, and (2) the potential of that conflict to destabilise Ethiopia and the wider region. [[HL10361](#)]

**Baroness Sugg:** The UK welcomes the statement by African Union (AU) Chairperson, Moussa Faki Mahamat, of 9 November about the conflict in Ethiopia in which he appealed for the immediate cessation of hostilities, called on all parties to respect human rights and ensure the protection of civilians, and urged dialogue between the parties. Through our Embassy in Addis Ababa, officials continue to engage with senior counterparts in the AU Commission to discuss the situation in Tigray and its impact on neighbouring countries.

### **Foetal Alcohol Syndrome**

*Asked by **Lord Watson of Invergowrie***

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they estimate that the NICE quality standard on foetal alcohol spectrum disorder will be published. [[HL10313](#)]

**Lord Bethell:** The quality standard on foetal alcohol spectrum disorder was due to be published by the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (NICE) in January 2021. However, its first consultation on the draft quality standard in March 2020 was delayed by COVID-19.

NICE re-ran its consultation in August/September this year and is currently scheduling revised project timelines. The expected month of publication will be available once the revisions are complete. NICE still expects to publish its final quality standard in 2021.

### **Government Securities: Environment Protection**

*Asked by **Baroness McIntosh of Pickering***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to use green gilts to promote (1) waste recovery, and (2) energy generation from waste. [[HL10178](#)]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** On Monday 9 November, The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced the UK's intention is issue its inaugural Sovereign Green Bond (SGB), subject to market conditions, in 2021.

Further details on timings and other aspects of the policy, such as the issuance framework, which will set out the projects that the SGB will help to finance, will be provided in due course.

While it is possible that government expenditures on projects relating to waste recovery and energy generation from waste could be financed with the proceeds of the SGB, such decisions will be made in the coming months following discussions with other government departments, structuring advisors and other stakeholders. The government will provide updates as appropriate.

The government is already taking powers in the Environment Bill to implement Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes which promote waste recovery. These require producers to fund the end of life costs of their products and can deliver higher collection, recycling and recovery rates.

In addition, the Landfill Tax was introduced in 1996 with the aim of diverting waste away from landfill to more environmentally friendly alternatives, such as Energy from Waste. It has been hugely successful in achieving this aim alongside other waste policy – since 2000, Local Authority waste sent to landfill in England has fallen by 87%.

### Housing Benefit

*Asked by **Baroness Greender***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the benefit cap on tenants in the private rented sector. [HL10069]

**Baroness Stedman-Scott:** The Benefit Cap aims to provide fairness for hard-working taxpaying households, whilst providing a reasonable safety net of support for the most vulnerable.

We introduced £9.3bn of welfare measures that benefit those facing the most financial disruption and, in May 2020, less than five per cent of the two million Housing Benefit and Universal Credit claimants living in the private rented sector, 93,830 tenants, had their benefit capped.

From April 2020 Local Housing Allowance rates were increased to cover the lowest 30th percent of local rents. This £1bn investment will benefit over 1 million households with an average increase of £600 this year. This will help alleviate the pressure on Discretionary Housing Payments that claimants can apply for through their Local Authority if they need additional support to meet rental costs.

We have provided £180m in Discretionary Housing Payments to Local Authorities in England and Wales for 2020/21, which includes an additional £40m to help tackle affordability pressures in the private rented sector.

### Housing: Construction

*Asked by **Lord Berkeley***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, (1) what steps they are taking, and (2) what discussions have taken place between Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Department for Transport, to ensure that the Planning for the Future White paper aligns with the Transport Decarbonisation Plan; and what consideration they have given to ensuring that plans for new residential developments minimise car dependence. [HL10154]

**Lord Greenhalgh:** The Government believes in the importance of decarbonisation. That is why the National Planning Policy Framework already promotes sustainable transport and makes clear that priority should be given to pedestrian and cycle movements and to facilitating access to high quality public transport. Alongside this, the Planning for the Future White Paper also made clear that our planning reforms will seek to reduce our reliance on carbon-intensive modes of transport and it acknowledges the need for the wider reform to be set within our drive towards net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Following extensive engagement the consultation closed on 29 October. We are considering the consultation responses received and will publish a response in due course.

### ICT: Secondary Education

*Asked by **Lord Baker of Dorking***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many secondary schools in England teach (1) virtual reality, (2) cyber security, and (3) artificial intelligence, at Key Stage 3. [HL10201]

**Baroness Berridge:** The computing curriculum, introduced in 2014, aims to ensure that all pupils understand the fundamental principles of computer science, information technology and digital literacy.

All local authority-maintained state schools are required to teach the computing curriculum from Key Stages one to four. Other schools, such as academies and free schools, have the freedom to design their own curriculum but are required to offer a broad and balanced curriculum, with many using the computing curriculum as an exemplar. There are a number of schools, including University Technical Colleges, that have specialisms in computing subjects.

The broad set of principles underpinning the curriculum are outlined in the computing programme of study. Relevant information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-computing-programmes-of-study>. The curriculum was deliberately designed to avoid over-prescription, and reduce the risk of the content becoming outdated, given the speed of development of digital skills and technological advance.



Programming, algorithms and the use of information technology are taught to pupils in Key Stage three, which provides the foundation for pupils to acquire further knowledge about virtual reality, cyber security and artificial intelligence. The computing curriculum also covers the principles of e-safety from Key Stages one to four, with progression in content to reflect the different and escalating risks that pupils face. This knowledge is fundamental for teaching pupils about cyber security.

The National Centre for Computing Education, formed in 2019 and backed by £84 million of government funding, has created a 'Teach Computing' curriculum which comprises key resources on cyber security for teachers of Key Stage three pupils. Cyber security also forms part of the Key Stage four curriculum and the computer science GCSE.

The computer science GCSE was sat by over 77,000 pupils in 2019. Additionally, over 48,000 pupils took a level 2 ICT Technical Award in 2019, which is a high quality equivalent to the computer science GCSE and included in school performance tables.

Outside of school, there are extracurricular opportunities for pupils aged 11 and above, such as CyberFirst, which enrich the teaching of cyber security in the curriculum. CyberFirst is the Government's cyber security skills youth programme and a vital part of the National Cyber Security Programme, helping to develop the next generation of cyber security professionals. It is led by the National Cyber Security Centre and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

Over the last four years, CyberFirst has supported and helped to improve the teaching and take-up of computing and cybersecurity in the curriculum. It has been achieved through an online platform, Cyber Discovery, short course, the girls' competition, and discovery days for schools which have engaged over 80,000 pupils in cyber security and careers.

## Immigration and Rented Housing

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have established the Terms of Reference for the review of the Borders, Immigration Citizenship and System complaints procedure; when they expect that review to be completed; what safeguards they plan to put in place to ensure the independence and effectiveness of the proposed Migrants Commissioner role; when they expect to make an appointment to this role; and when they expect to have completed the evaluation of the Right to Rent policy, which was scheduled to be completed by summer 2021. [[HL10153](#)]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The Home Office is working with the Government Internal Audit Agency (GIAA) to develop terms of reference for an independent review of the complaints system and advise on improvements.

As outlined in the Comprehensive Improvement Plan on 30 September 2020, the Home Office will be consulting with the Windrush Cross-Government Working Group on how best to advance this recommendation to ensure the function works independently and effectively.

The Windrush Cross-Government Working Group brings together key stakeholders and community leaders with representatives from a number of government departments.

The Home Office evaluation of the Right to Rent Scheme remains scheduled to be completed by summer 2021.

## Israel: Palestinians

*Asked by Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 2 November (HL9334), whether such training exercises are permissible under international law. [[HL10200](#)]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK remains of the view that Israel's presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territories amounts to an occupation, which is governed by relevant rules of international law. We repeatedly call on Israel to abide by its obligations under international law and have a regular dialogue with Israel on legal issues relating to the occupation, including the Israeli security forces' rules of engagement.

## Ivermectin: Licensing

*Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to license Ivermectin in tablet form for older children and adults, in line with World Health Organisation guidelines for essential drugs. [[HL10269](#)]

**Lord Bethell:** At present, only one ivermectin-containing product is approved in the United Kingdom (Soolantra 10 mg/g cream) but this is not indicated in the treatment of scabies in tablet form. The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) are aware that Stromectol 3mg tablets, containing ivermectin, are approved in France and are used for the treatment of scabies but this is not licensed in the UK.

In order for the MHRA to approve a medicine for use in the UK, a manufacturer has to apply to obtain a marketing authorisation. The MHRA makes its decision to approve a licence for a product based on safety, quality and efficacy criteria, irrespective of the cost. Thus far, the MHRA has not received any application for tablets of ivermectin.

## Legal Aid Scheme: Fees and Charges

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to commission an independent review into legal aid fees. [[HL10197](#)]



**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** The next phase of the Criminal Legal Aid Review will involve an independently led review, which will be ambitious and far reaching in scope. It will assess the criminal legal aid market in its entirety and aim to ensure the market meets demand now and in the future, and provides an efficient service that ensures value for money for the taxpayer, provides defendants with high-quality advice from a diverse range of practitioners, and protects access to justice. The review will consider the general level of fees for Criminal Legal Aid and whether they are broadly appropriate for the work undertaken by providers. We are currently working at pace to appoint the Chair and agree the Terms of Reference for the review and will announce these in due course.

### Legal Profession: Equality

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to improve racial and gender diversity within the legal profession. [[HL10196](#)]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** The legal profession in England and Wales is independent of Government. Statutory responsibility for encouraging an independent, strong, diverse and effective legal profession sits with the approved regulators and the oversight regulator, the Legal Services Board (LSB).

The Ministry of Justice remains committed to encouraging the sector to ensure it properly represents the diverse society it serves.

In 2017 the LSB published guidance for legal services regulators for encouraging a diverse workforce. In January 2020, the LSB produced a summary of progress of regulators against four diversity outcomes, which highlighted important progress but also acknowledged the need for further action.

### Musical Instruments: Customs

*Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether UK musicians will need a CITES permit or an ATA Carnet for musical instruments being transported from Great Britain to Northern Ireland following the end of the transition period for the UK's departure from the EU. [[HL10171](#)]

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

### Nagorno Karabakh: Cultural Heritage

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that the government of Azerbaijan has taken steps to erase its Armenian cultural heritage by destroying churches, cross-stones, and tombstones in Nakhichevan; what assessment they have made of implications of that erasure on the current situation in the Nagorno-Karabakh region; and what representations they intend to make to the government of Azerbaijan about the reported destruction of such cultural and religious sites. [[HL10414](#)]

**Baroness Sugg:** The protection of cultural heritage affected by conflict and the prevention of acts of destruction is a priority for this Government. While we have not made an assessment of allegations relating to Armenian historical structures in Nakhichevan or the implications of this on the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh, we raised the importance of ensuring protection of cultural heritage in a meeting on 17 November between the British Ambassador to Azerbaijan and representatives of the Presidential Administration. We will continue to raise the importance of protecting cultural heritage with the Governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan in the coming months.

### Nagorno Karabakh: Peace Negotiations

*Asked by The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the ceasefire brokered by the government of Russia in the Nagorno-Karabakh region, what steps they are taking, together with international partners, to ensure a sustainable peace agreement is put in place. [[HL10297](#)]

**Baroness Sugg:** The United Kingdom welcomes the fact that the leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan have agreed to end the fighting in and around Nagorno-Karabakh. The Minister for the European Neighbourhood spoke to the Azerbaijani Foreign Minister on 13 November welcoming the news of the ceasefire and urging engagement with the OSCE Minsk Group. The UK Government continues to support the role of the Minsk Group and the Co-Chairs in ensuring a sustainable and peaceful settlement.

## National Tactical Response Group

*Asked by Lord Bradley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many times the National Tactical Response Group was called to each prison in England and Wales in (1) 2019, and (2) 2020 to date. [HL10159]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** The attached table shows the number of incidents the National Tactical Response Group (NTRG) has responded to each prison in 2019 and this year up to, and including, the 5<sup>th</sup> of November. In 2019 NTRG responded to 720 prison incidents and in 2020 to date they have responded to 392 incidents.

The NTRG provides additional resources and support staff to help prisons deal with a variety of incidents, the vast majority of which relate to protesting behaviour, predominantly incidents at height. It follows that most call outs relate to non-violent incidents, including cases where NTRG attend as a precaution to assist local resolution.

We will not tolerate violent or disruptive behaviour in our prisons. Last year we announced £100 million to bolster prison security and crackdown on crime behind bars. This is funding new measures including X-ray body scanners which help to keep drugs and the other illicit items which fuel violence, out of jails.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Table [Copy of 2019-2020 pt.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:  
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-11-10/HL10159>

## NHS and Social Care Coronavirus Life Assurance Scheme 2020

*Asked by Baroness Sherlock*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many payments have been made by the NHS and Social Care Coronavirus Life Assurance Scheme; and what was the total value of those payments. [HL9950]

*Asked by Baroness Sherlock*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many applications have been (1) made to, and (2) accepted by, the NHS and Social Care Coronavirus Life Assurance Scheme. [HL9951]

**Lord Bethell:** As of 4 November, the NHS and Social Care Coronavirus Life Assurance Scheme (England) has received 236 claims. Payment has been made for 96 of those claims. A further 109 have been accepted for payment pending proof of probate from the claimant, and the remainder are going through the stages of being processed and assessed. The total value of accepted claims is £12,300,000.

*Asked by Baroness Sherlock*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether an employer's decision not to certify an application to the NHS and Social Care Coronavirus Life Assurance Scheme concerning a deceased employee can be challenged; and if so, how. [HL9952]

*Asked by Baroness Sherlock*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether any decision by an employer not to certify an application to the NHS and Social Care Coronavirus Life Assurance Scheme concerning a deceased employee falls within the remit of (1) the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, (2) the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, or (3) any other ombudsman or regulator. [HL9953]

**Lord Bethell:** A claim can be made without employer involvement. The NHS Business Services Authority, as the scheme administrator, can assist the next of kin with the claims process. So far, no claims have been received without input from employers.

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care is the decision maker for the scheme. Any complaint regarding a decision would fall within the remit of the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman.

## Northern Cyprus and Taiwan: Sovereignty

*Asked by Lord Maginnis of Drumglass*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Vere of Norbiton on 10 November (HL9658), what assessment they have made of any difference between their policies towards recognising (1) the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, and (2) Taiwan; what are the reasons for any such differences; and what plans they have to treat both territories equally. [HL10352]

**Baroness Sugg:** Taiwan and the northern part of Cyprus are two very different political realities. HMG's position is informed by the particular context of each situation.

A comprehensive settlement to end the division of Cyprus is the best way to resolve the challenges faced by both Cypriot communities, and the UK is encouraging the parties to demonstrate their renewed commitment to that end. In line with the rest of the international community, with the sole exception of Turkey, the UK does not recognise the self-declared "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" as an independent state. Our position respects UN Security Council resolutions on the issue. The UK recognises only one Cypriot state - the Republic of Cyprus - and only one government as the sole legitimate government.

The UK's longstanding policy on Taiwan has not changed: we have no diplomatic relations with Taiwan but a strong, unofficial relationship, based on dynamic commercial, educational and cultural ties. We regularly

lobby in favour of Taiwan's participation in international organisations where statehood is not a prerequisite.

### Numeracy: Young People

*Asked by Lord Allen of Kensington*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the findings in the OECD Adult Skills survey, published in 2012, which found that the UK is the only country where the numeracy skills of 16- to 24-year-olds were lower than the over-55 age group; and what actions they are taking to address this. [[HL10144](#)]

**Baroness Berridge:** We recognise the importance of numeracy skills, both in work and everyday life, as securing good levels of numeracy increases individual productivity and improves earnings and employment opportunities. Our policy is to offer everyone mathematics qualifications and courses which are of high quality and which lead to genuine improvements in skills.

Since the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development survey was published eight years ago, we have taken a number of steps to improve numeracy skills particularly for this age group.

We have introduced a requirement that 16 to 19 year old students on a study programme without GCSE mathematics grade 4 or above must continue to study the subject. We have also ensured mathematics skills are a requirement of apprenticeships and T Levels.

As well as GCSE mathematics, post-16 students can also study Functional Skills mathematics. We have recently reformed these qualifications to improve their rigour and relevance, and to ensure they provide students with the essential skills they need for life and work.

In 2019, 76.2% of 19 year olds held a level 2 qualification in mathematics, an increase of 3.8 percentage points since 2013/2014 (the year before we required students to continue studying English and mathematics).

This is in addition to our continued support for adults, through our statutory entitlement. All adults who are yet to achieve a GCSE grade 4 or above, or an equivalent qualification, in mathematics can access this provision free of charge, regardless of income or employment status.

### Obesity

*Asked by Lord Brooke of Alverthorpe*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions the Department for Health and Social Care has held about the future of Public Health England's remit for (1) obesity prevention, and (2) weight management, services, [[HL10324](#)]

*Asked by Lord Brooke of Alverthorpe*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to their policy paper Tackling obesity: empowering adults and children to live healthier lives, published on 27 July, when they will publish their plans to expand weight management services available through the NHS. [[HL10325](#)]

*Asked by Lord Brooke of Alverthorpe*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the policy paper Tackling obesity: empowering adults and children to live healthier lives, published on 27 July, what steps they are taking to help people with severe and complex obesity maintain a healthy weight following weight loss. [[HL10327](#)]

**Lord Bethell:** Alongside work to establish the National Institute for Health Protection, the Government continues to focus on health improvement and preventing ill-health, including tackling obesity, with support from the expert teams currently located in Public Health England (PHE). We do not envisage any changes to where those responsibilities will sit before spring 2021.

We have established an external stakeholder advisory group to help us develop our thinking on the best future arrangements for prevention, health improvement and delivery of public healthcare services including where PHE's health improvement functions would be best placed in order to support the public health system and improve the public's health. We will be engaging more widely over the coming months.

Through *Tackling obesity: empowering adults and children to live healthier lives* we are delivering a range of measures on weight management, including expanding weight management services to help more people get the support they need and making conversations about weight in primary care the norm. Further details about these measures will be available later in the year.

### Post Offices: ICT

*Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support sub-postmasters affected by the Horizon Post Office accounting software. [[HL10095](#)]

**Lord Callanan:** On 29 September, we announced the Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry. The Inquiry aims to achieve the following:

- build on the findings of Mr Justice Fraser, by obtaining all available relevant evidence from Post Office Ltd, Fujitsu and BEIS to establish a clear account of the implementation and failings of the Horizon IT computer system over its lifetime;
- understand what went wrong in relation to Horizon and the impacts that the Horizon IT system caused;
- acknowledge the personal experiences of those who have worked with the Horizon system and were

affected by it and identify what key lessons must be learned for the future;

- assess whether Post Office has learned the lessons and made good progress on the changes necessary to ensure a similar case does not happen again; and
- provide a public summary of the above through the publication of a report by Summer 2021 which will also make recommendations as the Inquiry chair, Sir Wyn Williams, sees fit.

The Post Office has also committed to a significant programme to fundamentally reform the organisation. Ministers and Officials regularly engage with Post Office management on the progress of this programme to ensure they deliver on their commitments from the settlement.

## Prescriptions

*Asked by Lord Browne of Ladyton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the review announced on 8 December 2018 into overprescribing in the NHS has concluded; and if so, (1) if it has reported, and (2) when the report will be published. [HL10215]

**Lord Bethell:** The work on the review into overprescribing, led by the Chief Pharmaceutical Officer for England, was paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic because the majority of the participants have National Health Service clinical roles which had to take priority. Work has resumed and it is hoped the report will be finalised in the coming weeks for presentation to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care by the end of the year.

## Prison Sentences

*Asked by Lord Bradley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people are currently in prison serving a determinate sentence of 20 years or more, broken down (1) by age, and (2) by gender. [HL10157]

*Asked by Lord Bradley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people were sentenced to serve a continuous period in custody of 10 years or more in each of the last 10 years. [HL10158]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** The information requested is shown in the tables below.

Please note that the figures for offenders serving extended determinate sentences have been excluded. Figures of five and fewer have been suppressed in order to protect the potential identification of individuals.

*Prisoners serving a standard determinate sentence of 20 years or more, by age in England and Wales as of 30 September 2020.*

All	894
15 – 17	*

18 – 20	*
21 – 24	13
25 – 29	49
30 – 39	206
40 – 49	182
50 – 59	181
60 – 69	146
70 and over	116

*Prisoners serving a standard determinate sentence of 20 years or more, by sex in England and Wales as of 30 September 2020.*

All	894
Male	883
Female	11

*Total number of individuals sentenced to custody for 10 years or more 2009 to 2019.*

Year	Individuals
2009	2111
2010	2119
2011	2141
2012	2097
2013	1681
2014	1724
2015	1857
2016	1856
2017	1811
2019	1839
2019	1805

## Prisoners: Suicide

*Asked by Lord Bradley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people in prison are currently managed under the Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork care planning system. [HL10160]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) is used in prisons to support people at risk of suicide and self-harm. We cannot provide live data on the number of people managed by the ACCT process as quality assured data is only available up to March this year. The number of people managed by ACCT fluctuates daily, but data for 2020 has shown that on average of around 2,000 prisoners have been assessed as being at risk and are being supported through ACCT on any given day.



## Protective Clothing: Contracts

*Asked by Lord Strasburger*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to publish details of any contracts for the purchase of personal protective equipment in 2020 (1) that have failed to deliver to specification, and (2) for which delivery is overdue. [\[HL10128\]](#)

**Lord Bethell:** Three hundred and seventy contracts have been awarded by the Department for the supply of personal protective equipment (PPE). All contracts are managed individually and information on the amounts of PPE found not to have been delivered to specification or for which delivery is overdue is not currently collated and held centrally. All contracts have clauses in them that allow the Department to seek redress if the company supplies faulty products or misses delivery dates.

All PPE procured from abroad that arrives at the central PPE distribution warehouse in Daventry is checked. If it is not CE marked then documents are sent to the UK regulators, the Health and Safety Executive and the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, who agree to its release as the Market Surveillance Authorities for PPE and medical devices. Products are only released into the supply chain if the documents show the product is fit for its intended use.

## Protective Clothing: Procurement

*Asked by Lord Strasburger*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to continue to invoke the "extreme urgency" provision of regulation 32(2)(c) of the Public Contract Regulations 2015 for personal protective equipment supplies throughout the winter; and when they intend to revert to normal procurement arrangements, including competitive tender. [\[HL10126\]](#)

**Lord Bethell:** The Department assesses the market conditions for procuring supplies related to any procurement, including those relating to COVID-19, in accordance with procurement guidance and regulations. Where any procurement meets the tests for the use of Regulation 32(2)(c) for the direct award of a contract then that approach will be used. Where it does not, other approaches will be considered.

We have already ordered around 32 billion items of personal protective equipment (PPE), of which over 20 billion is already in the United Kingdom. To ensure we can respond rapidly to demand surges in the future, the Department is building a strategic stockpile of PPE. This month, we will have a four-month stockpile of all COVID-19-critical PPE in place. The demand for PPE and the different factors affecting its supply are though kept constantly under review.

## Renewable Energy: Job Creation

*Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to increase jobs in the marine renewable energy sector. [\[HL10185\]](#)

**Lord Callanan:** The Government has just concluded a call for evidence in September on the potential of marine energy projects in Great Britain. This sought evidence on the scope for innovative marine energy technologies across Great Britain and we are currently considering responses to it.

## Self-determination of States: Shetland

*Asked by Lord Goodlad*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the Shetland Islands Council about terms for those islands' self-determination; and what has been the outcome of those discussions. [\[HL10064\]](#)

**Lord True:** Government has noted the vote by the Shetland Islands Council, which was driven by funding cuts and centralised decision-making by the Scottish Government. This highlights the many problems with the Scottish Government's position on the break up of the UK.

## Syria: Military Intervention

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 9 November (HL9502), what response they have received, if any, to representations made to the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic to request the government of Turkey to launch an investigation on the use of violence against civilian populations; and what assessment they have made of reports that more than 70 export licences have been issued by the UK for military products sold to Turkey containing white phosphorous over the last two decades. [\[HL10150\]](#)

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We have encouraged the UN Commission of Inquiry on Syria (COI) to investigate all alleged violations of International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law in Syria. We have not made specific representations to the COI to request Turkey launch investigations, as the COI had already called for this. We have therefore not received a response. We take our arms exports obligations very seriously and keep all our defence exports under careful and continual review. If licences are no longer consistent with the Consolidated Criteria they will be revoked. We have continued to make clear that any targeting of civilians is against International Humanitarian Law, but white phosphorus is a legitimate obscurant.



## Unemployment: Young People

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the youth unemployment rate on the affected individuals' future pension benefits. [HL10495]

**Baroness Stedman-Scott:** No assessment has been made.

## United Nations: Peace Keeping Operations

*Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they plan to comply with the United Nations Framework on Reparations; and what plans they have to establish an inquiry into reparatory justice. [HL10267]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We are not aware of a "United Nations Framework on Reparations", and can find no reference to such a framework in the UN's document database. There is a framework called: "Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law". As implied by its title, this addresses reparation for individuals for gross or serious violations of human rights law or international humanitarian law. These bodies of law are not retroactive. If a UK citizen's rights are violated, they have recourse to remedy and reparation through the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA), which gives further effect to the European Convention on Human Rights. In particular, section 8 HRA states that "In relation to any act (or proposed act) of a public authority which the court finds is unlawful, may grant such relief or remedy, or make such order within its powers as it considers just and appropriate". There are no plans to establish an inquiry into section 8 HRA.

## Universal Credit: Appeals

*Asked by Baroness Sherlock*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many mandatory reconsiderations for Universal Credit were made in each month of 2020 so far. [HL10188]

*Asked by Baroness Sherlock*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many mandatory reconsiderations for Universal Credit were (1) successful, and (2) unsuccessful, in 2020. [HL10189]

*Asked by Baroness Sherlock*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much, in total, they have paid out following successful mandatory reconsiderations for Universal Credit in 2020. [HL10190]

**Baroness Stedman-Scott:** The information requested on the outcome of UC Mandatory Reconsiderations (MR), that is, where the claimant disagrees with the decision made and disputes it through the MR process, and how much has been paid out following a decision being changed after an MR is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

The number of Universal Credit Mandatory Reconsiderations (MRs) requested and completed in the relevant months are below.

*Table 1 Universal Credit Mandatory Reconsiderations Requested and Completed*

	MRs requested in month	UC MRs completed in this month
Jan-20	16,240	18,100
Feb-20	15,510	17,920
Mar-20	14,630	15,930
Apr-20	9,200	7,400
May-20	11,530	12,260
Jun-20	10,670	18,140
Jul-20	8,850	14,860
Aug-20	6,490	9,750
Sep-20	7,660	8,710
January to September 2020	100,780	123,070

GB only, figures rounded to the nearest 10.

UC MRs completed does not include cancelled or withdrawn MRs.

## UNRWA: Pay

*Asked by Lord Judd*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to reports that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees cannot afford to pay the salaries of its staff, what steps they are taking to support that agency. [HL10176]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK is a long-term supporter of UNRWA, and we recognise UNRWA's unique mandate from the UN General Assembly to protect and provide protection and core services to Palestinian refugees across the Middle East. We are providing £51m to UNRWA in 2020/2021. Reports that UNRWA may not be able to pay the salaries of its staff in full are very worrying. To that end, the UK is working with UNRWA and other donors to improve UNRWA's financial viability. This includes broadening UNRWA's donor base, and encouraging multi-year funding.

## USA: Elections

*Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the electoral process in the United States; and whether they have made representations to the current President of the United States about those processes. [[HL10233](#)]

**Baroness Sugg:** We send our warm congratulations to Joe Biden and Kamala Harris on winning this election, with more votes than any candidate in US history. The US Presidential election was a hard fought campaign, but the turnout of over 150 million American voters shows the strength of US democracy. As the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary have said, it is not the place of foreign governments to tell candidates in a US election how they should react to these results. We have confidence in the checks and balances of the US system to resolve any disputes.

## Vaccination

*Asked by Lord Watson of Invergowrie*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to expand pro-vaccination campaigns to encourage maximum uptake of any vaccines to prevent (1) COVID-19, and (2) other conditions, during the COVID-19 pandemic. [[HL10140](#)]

**Lord Bethell:** The Department is working closely with Public Health England, NHS England and NHS Improvement to promote vaccinations and raise awareness of their benefits and the diseases they prevent.

We are also working with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to help social media platforms identify and take action against incorrect claims about COVID-19 in line with their terms and conditions. This includes anti-vaccination narratives that could endanger people's health. As we get closer to a potential COVID-19 vaccine, we will continue to provide clear information to the public and urge people to seek National Health Service advice, so they have the right information to make an informed choice.

## Visas: Performing Arts

*Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the introduction of Tier 2 and Tier 3 visas for workers in (1) live music venues, (2) theatres, and (3) other live performance venues. [[HL10174](#)]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** Overseas musicians and performers make an important contribution to the UK's creative sector and remain welcome in the United Kingdom.

We have set out plans to introduce a future points-based immigration system, which together with our generous existing routes for visiting artists, entertainers and musicians, will continue to provide both a short-term and long-term route for workers within the creative sector, suited to their individual needs.

The Home Office continues to engage with the creative sector to ensure the future points-based immigration system will enable the UK's cultural life to thrive.

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