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**Tuesday
23 February 2021**

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

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Written Statements

Tuesday, 23 February 2021

Extension to Bailiff Enforcement Regulations

[HLWS788]

Lord Greenhalgh: My Rt. Hon. Friend, the Minister of State for Housing (Christopher Pincher) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

I wish to update the House on the Government's continuing commitment to protecting tenants over the national lockdown period, whilst ensuring landlords can access justice in the most serious cases.

Preventing the enforcement of evictions against residential tenants

The Government laid a Statutory Instrument on 19 February which extends existing protections for renters by continuing to prevent enforcement agents (bailiffs) from attending residential premises to enforce a writ or warrant of possession except in the most serious circumstances. This measure will continue to protect public health by preventing people being evicted from their homes by enforcement agents, at a time when the risk of virus transmission remains high, and to avoid placing additional burdens on the NHS and local authorities.

Exemptions continue to be in place for the most serious cases that present the most strain on landlords and on local communities. These circumstances are illegal occupation, false statement, anti-social behaviour, perpetrators of domestic abuse in the social sector, where a property is unoccupied following death of a tenant and serious rent arrears of 6 months' rent or more. The SI applies to England only and expires at the end of 31 March 2021. Given that 14 days' notice is required before an eviction can take place, no evictions are expected before 14 April except in the most serious circumstances.

Wider Measures

The requirement on landlords to provide tenants with six months' notice before starting formal possession proceedings continues to apply in all but the most serious cases until at least 31 March 2021. This means that most renters served notice today can stay in their homes until August 2021, with time to find alternative support or accommodation. We will keep these measures under review.

Most tenants are continuing to pay their rent as normal. However, we recognise that a small proportion are experiencing trouble paying their rent. The Government has put in place a significant financial package to support them.

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme has offered support for businesses to pay staff salaries, enabling people to continue to pay their rent and has been extended until April 2021. The Self-Employment Income Support Scheme is also available.

In addition, the Government has put in place an unprecedented amount of financial support to ensure tenants can continue to pay their rent. Notably, we have increased the local housing allowance rate (LHA) to the 30th percentile. The increased LHA rates are expected to provide 1.5 million claimants with around £600 per year of housing support more than they would otherwise have received. This measure maintains that significant increase for all rates, by protecting the rates at the current levels in cash terms in 2021/22, even in areas where the 30th percentile of local rents has gone down. This continued investment in LHA will support claimants in the private rented sector to manage housing costs. We have also increased Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit by up to £1,040 for the year. We spend around £30 billion a year on housing benefits – and spend more than any other OECD country as a proportion of GDP on housing support (2018 data).

Guidance

We have updated our guidance to support landlords and tenants in the social and private rented sectors navigate the possessions process, which can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/understanding-the-possession-action-process-guidance-for-landlords-and-tenants>.

We have also recently updated our COVID renting guidance for landlords, tenants and local authorities to ensure it reflects the latest information. It can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-and-renting-guidance-for-landlords-tenants-and-local-authorities/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-landlords-and-tenants>.

Double Taxation Convention: United Kingdom and Sweden

[HLWS787]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: My right honourable friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Jesse Norman) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

A Protocol to the Double Taxation Convention with Sweden was signed on 23 February. The Protocol will give effect to certain OECD/G20 base erosion and profit shifting recommendations that protect tax treaties against avoidance activities, ensuring that the UK's double taxation agreement with Sweden meets the minimum OECD/G20 recommended standards. The text of the Protocol is available on HM Revenue and Customs' pages of the GOV.UK website and will be deposited in the Libraries of both Houses. The text of the Protocol will be scheduled to a draft Order in Council and laid before the House of Commons in due course.

Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom

[HLWS783]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: My Rt. Hon friend The Secretary of State for Education (Gavin Williamson) has made the following statement:

Last week the Department for Education laid the 'Higher education: free speech and academic freedom' Command Paper in Parliament and then published it more widely. This sets out how Government proposes to deliver on its 2019 manifesto commitment to strengthen academic freedom and freedom of speech in universities in England.

This Government has always been clear in its commitment to strengthen academic freedom and ensure that our universities are places where free speech can thrive. Without action to counter attempts to discourage or even silence unpopular views, intellectual life on campus for both staff and students may be unfairly narrowed and diminished.

Despite protections which are currently in place, a body of research has shown evidence of a 'chilling effect' on students and staff, who report feeling unable freely to express their views within the law without fear of repercussion. This is emphasised by a small number of high-profile incidents in which staff or students have been threatened with negative consequences, sometimes successfully, confirming that the fear of repercussion is not always unfounded. The Government therefore considers it necessary to take action, including by amending legislation.

This Command Paper identifies key limitations of the current framework and proposes a clear way forward, to clarify and strengthen the legislation on freedom of speech and academic freedom, and thereby ensure that the aforementioned 'chilling effect' is effectively dealt with. Freedom of speech and academic freedom are fundamental principles of university life, and it is our duty to afford the necessary protections where these are found to be lacking. The Government intends to take action after carefully considering and discussing the options laid out in this paper with stakeholders. We will announce further steps in due course.

I will place copies of the Command Paper in the libraries of both Houses.

Local Government Reorganisation

[HLWS782]

Lord Greenhalgh: My Rt Hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (Robert Jenrick) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

As I told the House on 12 October 2020 [[hyperlink](#)/column reference (HCWS502)] I have issued invitations under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (the 2007 Act) to principal councils in Cumbria, North Yorkshire, and Somerset, including associated existing unitary councils, to submit proposals for moving to unitary local government in those areas.

On 9 December, I received eight locally-led proposals - four from councils in Cumbria, two from councils in North Yorkshire and two from councils in Somerset. In

the case of each area there is a proposal made by the county council for a unitary authority covering the whole area. In the case of North Yorkshire and Somerset there is a proposal from district councils for two unitary authorities in each area. In Cumbria district councils have made three proposals, each of which involve establishing two unitary authorities.

Today I have launched a consultation on all eight proposals. I would welcome views from any interested person, including residents, and I am consulting the councils which made the proposals, other councils affected by the proposals, and councils in neighbouring areas. I am also consulting public service providers, including health providers and the police, Local Enterprise Partnerships, and certain other business, voluntary sector and educational bodies.

The consultation period will run for eight weeks until Monday 19 April. The consultation document is available [here](#) and those responding may do so on the department's online platform 'Citizen Space' or by e-mail or post. The consultation will provide information to help my assessment of the merits of each proposal and I will carefully consider all the representations I receive, along with all other relevant information available to me.

The context of this consultation is that the 2007 Act provides that before any proposal is implemented I must consult any council affected by the proposal that did not make it and any other persons I consider appropriate. Once the consultation is concluded, I will decide, subject to parliamentary approval, which, if any, proposals are to be implemented, with or without modification. In taking these decisions I will have regard to all the representations I have received, including those from the consultation, and all other relevant information available to me, and reach a balanced judgement assessing the proposals against the three criteria - whether they are likely to improve local government and service delivery across the area of the proposal, whether they command a good deal of local support as assessed in the round across the whole area of the proposal, and whether the area of any new unitary council is a credible geography.

I am also announcing today that I intend as soon as practicable to make and lay before Parliament Orders under the Local Government Act 2000 to reschedule the ordinary elections to principal councils in the three areas due to be held on 6 May 2021 for one year to May 2022. The elections for local Police and Crime Commissioners, as well as elections to any town or parish councils, will continue to take place in May 2021.

In deciding to reschedule the 6 May 2021 local elections to principal councils in the three areas, I have carefully considered all the representations I have received including the views expressed by councils. I have also had regard both to the importance of local elections as the foundation of our local democracy and ensuring the accountability of councils to local people, and to the risks of continuing with the May 2021 elections in the areas when consultations are taking place on proposals which could, if implemented, result in the

abolition of those councils. Elections in such circumstances risk confusing voters and would be hard to justify where members could be elected to serve shortened terms.

Accordingly, I have concluded that, irrespective of what my future decisions might be on the restructuring proposals, the right course is to reschedule the May 2021 local elections. If no unitary proposal is implemented in an area, the rescheduled elections will take place in May 2022. If a unitary proposal is implemented the rescheduled elections will be replaced by elections in May 2022 to the new unitary authority or authorities which could be in shadow form or a continuing council taking on the functions of the other councils in the area.

Finally, I would reiterate that the Government will not impose top-down government solutions. We will continue, as I am now currently doing, to follow a locally-led approach where councils can develop proposals which have strong local support. This has been the Government's consistent approach since 2010, when top-down restructuring was stopped through the Local Government Act 2010. When considering reform, those in an area will know what is best – the very essence of localism to which the Government remains committed.

State Immunity Act 1978: Remedial Order

[HLWS784]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: My Honourable Friend, the Minister for Asia (Nigel Adams), has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

In 2017, the Supreme Court judgment in the case of *Benkharbouche v Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs* [2017] UKSC 62 held that certain provisions of the State Immunity Act 1978 were incompatible with Articles 6 and 14 of the European Convention of Human Rights. The incompatibility related to employment claims brought by individuals employed by diplomatic missions in London. The government has considered the Supreme Court's judgment and decided to address the incompatibility by way of a remedial order under section 10 and schedule 2 of the Human Rights Act 1998. The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office will lay the draft remedial order before Parliament in due course.

UK-EU Trade and Co-operation Agreement: Provisional Application

[HLWS785]

Lord True: My Rt Hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office (Michael Gove MP), has today made the following written statement:

Today the UK-EU Partnership Council has agreed to extend the date on which provisional application of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) will cease from 28 February 2021 to 30 April 2021.

The decision was taken by written procedure: the EU co-chair of the Partnership Council, Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič, proposed extension by letter on Friday 19 February, and the current UK co-chair, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, agreed to this proposal today, 23 February. This exchange of letters formalises the adoption of the decision. Copies of the letters and the draft decision have been published on GOV.UK.

Provisionally applying the TCA was not the UK's preferred outcome in the first place, given the uncertainty it creates for businesses, individuals and the Parties. The extension of provisional application prolongs that uncertainty and it is disappointing that the EU did not complete its internal procedures in the timeframe set out in the TCA. We expect the EU to meet the new timeline.

Withdrawal Agreement Joint Committee Meeting

[HLWS786]

Lord True: My Rt Hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office (Michael Gove MP), has today made the following written statement:

The next meeting of the Withdrawal Agreement Joint Committee will take place on 24 February 2021, by video conference, hosted by the UK.

The meeting will be co-chaired by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, and Vice President of the European Commission, Maroš Šefčovič.

The agenda will include four items:

1. *Introduction and opening remarks from co-chairs*
 - 1.1 Stocktake of Specialised Committee activity
2. *Update on Withdrawal Agreement Implementation since the end of the transition period*
 - 2.1 Citizens' Rights
 - 2.2 Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol
3. *AOB*
4. *Concluding remarks*

The UK delegation will include:

- Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
 - The Paymaster General, Rt Hon Penny Mordaunt MP
- Representatives from the Northern Ireland Executive have been invited to form part of the UK delegation.

Written Answers

Tuesday, 23 February 2021

Antisemitism: Universities

Asked by **Baroness Tonge**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the Community Security Trust Campus antisemitism in Britain 2018–2020, published on 17 December 2020; and what discussions they have had with (1) the government of Israel, and (2) the Community Security Trust, about (a) the findings of that report, and (2) the causes of antisemitism in universities in the UK. [HL13213]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have not made any assessment. The UK is committed to combatting the rise of anti-Semitism in all its forms, and we have a regular, frank and open dialogue with international partners on this issue.

Armed Forces: Deployment

Asked by **Lord Grocott**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Goldie on 6 August 2020 (HL7356), how much have the ten largest deployments of UK armed forces overseas increased or decreased over the past five years. [HL13174]

Baroness Goldie: A summary of the ten largest deployments of military personnel over the past five years has been extracted from the annual statistics published on GOV.uk, and captured in the table below:

Year	01-Apr-15	01-Apr-16	01-Apr-17	01-Apr-18	01-Apr-19	01-Apr-20
Total Overseas	15,300	10,560	9,260	9,040	8,220	6,050
Cyprus	2,400	2,250	2,250	2,160	2,150	2,290
United States	610	670	820	920	790	730
Germany	10,020	5,310	3,870	3,580	2,850	540
Belgium	310	290	290	280	290	290
Canada	280	260	290	280	310	260
Kenya	200	260	250	250	260	250
Italy	180	180	180	190	180	180
Gibraltar	160	160	160	170	160	160
Brunei	160	160	170	170	180	160
Saudi Arabia	120	130	120	120	120	130

Annual statistics on the locations of UK Armed Forces across the globe can be accessed using the link below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/location-of-all-uk-regular-service-and-civilian-personnel-annual-statistics-index>

Asylum: Applications

Asked by **Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they aim to have decided on all asylum applications within six months; and how they will ensure that such decisions comply with international law. [HL13178]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: We are fixing a broken asylum system and creating a new one which will be fairer and firmer and compassionate towards those who need our help.

There are a number of factors that contribute to the length of time to process asylum claims but we are determined to clear the backlog, speed up decisions and prevent people becoming stuck in the system for long periods of time.

We are working to streamline cases and have already made significant progress in prioritising cases with acute vulnerability, those in receipt of the greatest level of support including, Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children, and those that require a reconsideration.

Asylum Operations has developed a recovery plan focused on returning interviews and decisions back to pre-COVID-19 levels as soon as possible. We are also seeking to secure temporary resources to assist from within the Home Office and other government departments, along with other potential options.

The Home Office publishes wide-ranging Asylum Instructions and Country Policy Information Notes which provide guidance on how asylum and human rights claims should be handled. All Decision-Making staff undergo comprehensive training and their work is regularly quality-assured to ensure that all decisions comply with International Law.

Asylum: Military Bases

Asked by **Lord Roberts of Llandudno**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many migrants are currently being accommodated in (1) Napier Barracks, and (2) the Penally military training camp, compared to the numbers accommodated in (a) December 2020, and (b) January 2021. [HL13126]

Asked by **Lord Roberts of Llandudno**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many migrants accommodated in (1) Napier Barracks, and (2) the Penally military training camp, have been diagnosed with COVID-19; and whether there have been any COVID-19 related fatalities at these camps. [HL13127]

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what medical facilities are available at (1) Napier Barracks, and (2) the Penally military training camp. [HL13128]

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government how social distancing is observed when transporting migrants (1) to, and (2) from, (a) Napier Barracks, and (b) the Penally military training camp. [HL13129]

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether (1) Napier Barracks, and (2) the Penally military training camp, are (a) adequate, and (b) satisfactory, for the purpose of accommodating migrants. [HL13130]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Due to pressures on the asylum system caused by the pandemic and high intake, the Home Office had to identify available contingency accommodation and put it to use quickly to ensure we could meet our statutory duty to provide accommodation to any asylum seeker who would otherwise be destitute.

Following a review of available government property, the Ministry of Defence agreed to temporarily hand over two of their sites: the Penally Training Camp in Pembrokeshire and the Napier Barracks in Kent. These sites were both suitable and immediately available to be used to house asylum seekers. The accommodation, which until recently was used by the MOD is safe, habitable, fit for purpose and correctly equipped in line with existing asylum accommodation standards contractual requirements.

We have appropriate health care provision at both sites, having worked closely with the Local Health Board in Pembrokeshire and Clinical Commissioning Group in Kent. At Napier Barracks, asylum seekers have access to a prescribing nurse on site, who is linked to the local GP surgery where the asylum seekers are all registered. Transportation is made available, where necessary, to take asylum seekers to any in person medical appointments required.

Our accommodation providers have worked closely with Public Health England and Wales to ensure that all Covid-19 regulations are met and social distancing can be adhered to, including while transporting asylum seekers to and from accommodation sites, this includes the deep cleaning of vehicles and restrictions on the number of people being transported at any one time.

We do not publish figures on the number of asylum seekers accommodated in initial accommodation (including temporary) sites, however the numbers of asylum seekers accommodated in each local authority can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/asylum-and-resettlement-datasets#asylum-support>.

We also do not publish figures on the numbers of asylum seekers who have tested positive for, or have passed away, from Covid-19.

Brain: Tumours

Asked by Lord Crisp

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the progress being made on the (1) prevention, and (2) treatment, of brain tumours. [HL13062]

Lord Bethell: A 2018 review of evidence suggested about 2.5% of brain and central nervous system cancers are attributable to modifiable causes. This equates to approximately 119 cancers that year. The majority of these are attributed to excess weight.

Public Health England supports local authorities and the National Health Service to commission weight management services that are based on and align with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's guidance for weight management. These types of activities may help prevent brain tumours attributable to modifiable causes.

Treatment decisions for brain tumours should always be made by doctors based on a patient's individual clinical needs and preferences. Brain tumours can be treated using a number of treatment modalities, including surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy, as appropriate to the tumour type, size and position. These treatments fall within the scope of NHS England direct commissioning responsibilities for specialised services.

British Overseas Territories: Climate Change

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to provide regular assessments of the risks of climate change to the British Overseas Territories. [HL13187]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The environment is a devolved responsibility for the Overseas Territories (OTs), however the UK Government offers its support to tackle climate change in several ways. The Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF) has funded projects including the Joint Nature Conservation Committee which supported OTs in the Caribbean and Bermuda to assess the value of their natural capital and build resilience against hurricane related flood risks. This will enable them to have a detailed understanding of the risks hurricanes pose to their OT, and develop long term adaptation strategies. Defra have funded a project with the Marine Climate Change Impacts Partnership, focusing on the challenges faced by OTs from marine climate change impacts. This project will engage directly with regional experts across the UKOTs, to provide a consensus view on the key issues, and how OTs are responding to them.

The work will culminate in a series of summaries for decision makers in the UKOTs. Through the UK Government funded Darwin and Darwin Plus Initiatives, the UK continues to support the ability of the OTs to increase their resilience and ability to adapt in the face of climate change by funding individual projects. The UK Government continues to have regular discussions with the OTs about potential climate change risks, to ensure this is adequately monitored.

Broadband: Non-domestic Rates

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to exempt fibre lines from business rates. [HL13211]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Government recognises that internet connectivity is a critical part of modern life and essential to allow businesses to compete and grow in the new digital economy. As announced at Autumn Statement 2016, the Government is providing 100 per cent business rates relief for new full-fibre infrastructure for a five-year period from 1 April 2017.

The fundamental review of business rates will consider all parts of the business rates system, including reliefs and exemptions.

Carbon Emissions

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to meet their net zero carbon emissions target by 2050. [HL13199]

Lord Callanan: We have already made significant progress towards meeting our net zero target. We met our first and second carbon budgets that were established under the Climate Change Act 2008, and we are on track to meet the third.

My Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister's Ten Point Plan is the down-payment on meeting the fourth (2023-27) and fifth (2028-32) carbon budgets. Spanning clean energy, buildings, transport, nature and innovative technologies, the plan will mobilise £12 billion of government investment to unlock three times as much private sector investment by 2030; level up regions across the UK; and support up to 250,000 highly-skilled green jobs. It will also support our efforts to build back greener from the coronavirus, generating jobs and bolstering the economy, whilst continuing to drive down emissions both now and in the future.

Ahead of COP26, we will set out ambitious plans across key sectors of the economy to meet our carbon budgets and net zero. We have already published the Energy White Paper and the first phase of our Transport Decarbonisation Plan, and will publish further strategies, including on Heat and Buildings, in due course.

We will also publish a comprehensive Net Zero Strategy ahead of COP26, setting out the Government's

vision for transitioning to a net zero economy, making the most of new growth and employment opportunities across the UK.

China: Detainees

Asked by Lord Blencathra

To ask Her Majesty's Government what information they have on (1) the number of concentration camps run by the government of China in Xinjiang, and (2) how many people are held in any such camps. [HL13160]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have serious concerns about the human rights situation in Xinjiang including the extra-judicial detention of Uyghur Muslims and other minorities in "political re-education camps". Credible open source reporting indicates that up to 380 suspected detention facilities in Xinjiang have been newly built or expanded since 2017, and that over one million Uyghurs and other minorities have been detained in the camps over a similar period. The data currently available does not allow us to ascertain the number of people detained at any one time.

Coronavirus: Screening

Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton

To ask Her Majesty's Government to set out the relevant background of each of the current office-holders of the key decision-making roles within their COVID-19 testing programme. [HL9908]

Lord Bethell: The following table shows the NHS Test and Trace Executive Committee. The committee is comprised of existing civil servants and the public and private sector.

Dido Harding	Executive Chair
Gareth Williams	Chief Operating Officer
Mark Hewlett	Testing Chief Operating Officer
Steve McManus	Trace Divisional Director
Carolyn Wilkins	Contain Divisional Director
Clare Gardiner	Joint Biosecurity Council Director General
Simon Bolton	Chief Information Officer
Faran Johnson	Chief People Officer
Donald Shepherd	Chief Financial Officer
Ben Dyson	Director of Policy
Susan Hopkins	Chief Medical Adviser
Jacqui Rock	Chief Commercial Officer
Ben Stimson	Chief Customer Officer
Raghuv Bhasin	Chief of Staff
Michael Brodie	Chief Executive, Public Health England
Jonathan Marron	Director General Public Health, Department of Health and Social Care and NHS Test and Trace Senior Sponsor

Coronavirus: Vaccination

Asked by *Lord Mendelsohn*

To ask Her Majesty's Government which research projects UK Research and Innovation are funding into vaccine responses for (1) individuals with inflammatory disorders, (2) high risk cancer patient groups, (3) patients with severe kidney and liver disease, and (4) other immune-suppressed individuals. [HL13195]

Asked by *Lord Mendelsohn*

To ask Her Majesty's Government which projects are funded by UK Research and Innovation to support research on vaccine responses in groups of immune-suppressed individuals; and, in each case, what is (1) the level of funding, and (2) the project timetable. [HL13196]

Lord Callanan: UKRI is currently funding one study of direct relevance to these areas. UKRI has allocated an initial £1.8 million to the OCTAVE study, led by Professor Iain McInnes, University of Glasgow, for a twelve-month period, and is considering a case for additional funding beyond this. OCTAVE is supporting research on vaccine responses in groups of immune-suppressed individuals, including those with inflammatory disorders, high risk cancer patient groups, and patients with severe kidney and liver disease. Cancer patient groups include chronic lymphocytic leukaemia, myeloma, acute leukaemia, and bone marrow transplants. As the OCTAVE study is being managed as a single project it is not possible to give costs for the individual groups.

In addition, there are proposals on vaccine responses in high-risk clinical groups under consideration as part of the UKRI COVID-19 Agile call, with announcements to be made shortly. Furthermore, UKRI continues to accept applications for COVID-19 related research, including on this topic, through its active calls, which can be found on the UKRI website.

Asked by *Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had about the global distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine. [HL13202]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is committed to rapid equitable access to safe and effective vaccines. The UK has committed £548 million to the COVAX Advanced Market Commitment (AMC) - the international initiative to support global equitable access to vaccines, of which the UK is one of the largest bilateral donors. Through match funding, the commitment encouraged other donors to commit \$1 billion by the end of 2020. Our commitment will contribute to the supply of at least 1.3 billion doses of COVID-19 vaccines in 2021 for up to 92 developing countries, with their delivery to start shortly. The Prime Minister has also now confirmed that we will share the majority of any future surplus vaccines from our supply with COVAX.

The UK regularly engages stakeholders on the global distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. The UK participates in COVAX decision making through its governance mechanisms, including the UK's seat on the Gavi Board. The UK is also a founding member of the Access to Covid-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator - a coalition of leading international organisations and partners led by the World Health Organisation (WHO) to accelerate development and access to COVID-19 vaccines, treatments and diagnostics. COVAX is the vaccine pillar of the ACT-Accelerator. The UK attends the ACT-Accelerator Facilitation Council and engages regularly with its partners and stakeholders on its strategic direction.

Energy Performance Certificates

Asked by *Lord Foster of Bath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Callanan on 9 February (HL12590), whether they will clarify what is meant by "as many homes as possible". [HL13260]

Lord Callanan: The Government remains committed to the Clean Growth Strategy aim for as many homes as possible to be EPC Band C by 2035, where practical, cost-effective, and affordable.

The updated Fuel Poverty Strategy, published February 2021, set out the road map to meeting our statutory fuel poverty target of improving as many fuel poor homes as reasonably practicable to energy efficiency rating Band C by the end of 2030, as well as our interim target of Band D by 2025.

There is no set number of homes to be achieved within those targets. However, the Heat & Buildings Strategy, which we plan to publish in due course, will set out how we intend to meet our commitments and set us on a path to decarbonising homes and buildings by 2050.

Environment Protection: Coronavirus

Asked by *Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government further to their Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution, published on 18 November, what plans they have to promote a 'green recovery' from the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL13200]

Lord Callanan: As we rebuild, we must build back better, greener, and faster. This means supporting green jobs, levelling up, accelerating our path to net zero, and creating long-term advantage for the UK. The UK has shown that growing our economy and cutting emissions can be achieved at the same time - growing our economy by 78% while cutting emissions by 43.8% over the past three decades.

Spanning clean energy, buildings, transport, nature and innovative technologies, the Ten Point Plan will mobilise £12 billion of government investment to unlock three times as much private sector investment by 2030. This

will support our efforts to build back greener from the coronavirus, generating jobs and bolstering the economy, whilst continuing to drive down emissions both now and in the future.

Ahead of COP26, we will set out ambitious plans across key sectors of the economy to meet our carbon budgets and net zero. We have already published the Energy White Paper and the first phase of our Transport Decarbonisation Plan, and will publish the Heat and Building Strategy in due course.

We will also publish a comprehensive Net Zero Strategy, setting out the Government's vision for transitioning to a net zero economy, making the most of new growth and employment opportunities across the UK. These will raise ambition as we outline our path to hit our 2050 target.

Fish and Meat: Falkland Islands

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the UK–EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement on the export of fish and meat products from the Falkland Islands to the EU. [HL13182]

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the impact to the Falkland Islands economy of the introduction of tariffs on Falkland Islands exports of fish and meat products to the EU. [HL13183]

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to negotiate with the EU on behalf of the Falkland Islands to remove tariffs on the export of fish and meat products from the Falkland Islands to the EU. [HL13184]

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of permitting the Falkland Islands to negotiate with the EU to seek to remove tariffs on Falkland Islands exports of fish and meat products to the EU [HL13185]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK Government is fully committed to supporting the Overseas Territories, and we will continue to do all we can to protect their interests. During negotiations of the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement, we made clear to the EU from the outset that we were negotiating on behalf of the Overseas Territories. However, the European Commission refused to negotiate a future relationship that included the Overseas Territories. We sought to change the Commission's position, but it declined to engage. As a result, tariffs now apply on exports from the Overseas Territories to the EU, in particular exports from the Falkland Islands. We are working with the Falkland

Islands Government to agree the appropriate actions to mitigate against the impact of tariffs on their exports to the EU.

Fish: UK Trade with EU

Asked by Lord Browne of Belmont

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to ensure that trucks exporting fish to France are not delayed at the UK–France border. [HL13166]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: We are working closely with businesses that export fish to the EU to ensure they understand and are compliant with new export requirements. We are also meeting with authorities from Member States and the EU weekly to address border issues which are a significant cause of delays.

The Government has established a new Scottish Seafood Exports Taskforce to address medium and longer term export issues faced by traders of seafood. The Taskforce held its first meeting on 12 February with the primary aim is to increase confidence in the seafood and aquaculture supply chain by ensuring medium and longer-term issues are resolved. In addition to this, we have opened the £23 million Seafood Disruption Support Scheme for seafood exporting businesses across the UK that have been affected by the challenges of adjusting to new requirements for exporting to the EU. The Government has also committed to providing £100m of investment to rejuvenate the industry and coastal communities across the UK, on top of the £32m that will replace EU funding this year.

Fisheries

Asked by Lord Hay of Ballyore

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to enforce the UK's fishing rights. [HL13175]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: As an independent coastal state, the UK has full responsibility over how it ensures compliance in its fisheries. All fishing vessels in UK waters are required to fish in accordance with UK laws and the conditions of their licences. As control and enforcement is a devolved matter, Defra, the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Northern Irish Executive work together to share information and ensure a coordinated approach to monitoring, compliance and enforcement across UK waters.

In England, the Government has undertaken a significant increase in the number of personnel and surveillance assets relating to fisheries protection with a sizeable increase in personnel, an increase in the number of planes available for aerial surveillance and an increase in the level of at-sea surveillance. This strong presence will deter against fisheries infringements, while also enabling our agencies to take robust action where they may occur. In addition, the Joint Maritime Security Centre has been established to enhance joint working between maritime agencies, increase information sharing

across Government and maximise benefit from surveillance assets. This enables a more efficient, effective and prioritised maritime patrol enforcement.

Fishing Catches: Computer Software

Asked by Lord Browne of Belmont

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to ensure that the fishing catch records service is effective. [HL13167]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: To date, over 80% of invited vessels have registered on the under 10 metre catch recording application and the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) continues to engage with industry and provide support during its roll-out across the fleet.

Before launching the app, significant amounts of user research was undertaken and fishers were directly involved in testing a prototype of the app. This feedback was used to develop the service and its functionality before launching it externally.

The MMO is also committed to continuous improvement and based on feedback from those using the app has already improved its functionality and made additional system improvements. This has included increasing the number of ports available within the app, the ability to record weights of fish lower than 1kg and allowing catch to be landed and then weighed on a stable platform prior to being moved for onward sale.

Green Homes Grant Scheme

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking (1) to ensure that installers of measures under the Green Homes Fund are being paid promptly, and (2) to prevent those installers from (a) laying off staff, or (b) going out of business, due to delays in payment. [HL13155]

Lord Callanan: Installer payment is a four stage process: I refer the noble Baroness to the answer I gave the noble Lord Stunell on 15th February 2021 to Question HL12862. The Scheme Administrator, ICF, will release payment once the process is complete including all required checks. ICF are currently prioritising the payment of installers.

BEIS officials are working with consumers and installers to ensure they are clear on the information and checks required as part of the payment process, so that installers can be paid as quickly as possible. We will continue to work closely with ICF to identify further process improvements, increase the number of vouchers issued, and payments released.

Asked by Lord Stunell

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the projected total spend of the Green Homes Grant fund for the current financial year. [HL13206]

Lord Callanan: As of 8th February, 22,165 vouchers have already been issued with more being issued each day.

The value of these vouchers is currently £94.1 million.

Official scheme statistics will be published in due course.

Asked by Lord Stunell

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Green Home Grant vouchers have been issued to date in each Local Enterprise Partnership area. [HL13207]

Lord Callanan: As of 11 February, 22,953 vouchers have been issued under the scheme. These, given by region, are as follows (reporting 2.55pm, 11th February 2021):

- North East: 979
- Yorkshire and the Humber: 2,879
- North West: 3,455
- East Midlands: 2,273
- West Midlands: 2,736
- London: 2,358
- East of England: 2,845
- South East: 3,149
- South West: 2,239

The overall number of vouchers issued (22,953) and the sum of the total number of vouchers by region above (22,913) differ by 40 vouchers. This is because these vouchers do not list an English region on their application.

Asked by Lord Stunell

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of Green Home Grant vouchers that will be issued in the next financial year; and how will any applications over the total budget be assessed and dealt with. [HL13208]

Lord Callanan: As of 8th February, 22,165 vouchers have already been issued with more being issued each day.

Applications will continue to be processed by the scheme administrator in line with the rules of the scheme. Official scheme statistics will be published in due course.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Asked by Lord Foster of Bath

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Callanan on 2 February (HL12282), what year they estimate net zero could be achieved by spending one per cent of the UK's GDP. [HL13172]

Lord Callanan: In June 2019, following advice from the Climate Change Committee (CCC), the UK Government became the first major economy to set a legally binding target to achieve net zero greenhouse gas

emissions by 2050. When publishing their recommendation for the level of the Sixth Carbon Budget in December 2020, the CCC made clear that Net Zero in 2050 remains the right target for the UK.

Ahead of COP26, we will set out ambitious plans across key sectors of the economy to meet our carbon budgets and net zero. We have already published the Energy White Paper and the first phase of our Transport Decarbonisation Plan, and will publish the Heat and Building Strategy in due course. We will also publish a comprehensive Net Zero Strategy, setting out the Government's vision for transitioning to a net zero economy, making the most of new growth and employment opportunities across the UK. These will raise ambition as we outline our path to hit our 2050 target.

We will build on the strong foundations we have established through our leading progress in decarbonising our economy; our ambitious manifesto commitments; and announcements from my Rt. Hon. Friends the Prime Minister and Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer of measures to cut emissions as we build back better in our economic recovery from COVID-19.

High Speed 2 Railway Line: Jones Hill Wood

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether HS2 has received a bat licence which permits the demolition of trees in Jones Hill Wood, Buckinghamshire; if so, what are the terms of the licence, and whether they will place a copy of it in the Library; and whether they have confirmed that HS2 or its contractors (1) will not demolish any trees in that wood prior to receiving a licence, and (2) will only demolish trees in that wood in compliance with the terms of any licence. [HL13293]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: HS2 Ltd has undertaken surveys of the area of Jones' Hill wood required for clearance and has sought a licence from Natural England to undertake associated works. This licence, and its associated terms, are still the subject of discussion between HS2 Ltd and Natural England. Tree clearance at the woodland area of Jones' Hill Wood required for HS2 construction has not yet commenced but is authorised in accordance to the High Speed Rail (London-West Midlands) Act 2017. Works which are relevant to licenced approvals will only take place when those licenses and permission are in place.

Human Trafficking

Asked by Lord Browne of Belmont

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps the National Crime Agency is taking to address people smuggling. [HL13164]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government remains committed to tackling Organised Immigration Crime (OIC) and disrupting the Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) responsible. The NCA undertakes investigations

into complex and serious OIC offences, arresting offenders in the UK and overseas and bringing them to justice.

The NCA is the operational lead for the OIC Taskforce. The Taskforce is a critical element of the UK government's multi-agency response to tackling people smuggling. It takes a whole of route approach, deploying over 150 multi-agency officers to operate in 17 countries, with Crown Prosecution Service prosecutors placed in key source and transit countries to disrupt OCGs profiting from illegal migration. In these locations the Taskforce works with partner law enforcement and prosecution agencies to gather intelligence, build resources and share expertise to disrupt people-smuggling networks. The NCA are actively engaging bilaterally and multilaterally with partner countries to tackle specific cases of OIC activity.

As part of its Taskforce activities, the NCA also works alongside the Home Office Clandestine Threat Command targeting the small boats threat. Activity includes enhancing the collective understanding of the threat, developing intelligence and executing an effective operational response. The Taskforce has also played a significant role in the investigation in the UK's response to the deaths of 39 Vietnamese migrants in a lorry in Essex in October 2019 which led to the prosecution of the offenders.

Human Trafficking: Children

Asked by Baroness Doocey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to combat child trafficking. [HL13168]

Asked by Baroness Doocey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the types of exploitation experienced by child trafficking victims in the UK; and whether they have identified any change in the types of such exploitation over the past 10 years. [HL13169]

Asked by Baroness Doocey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the reason why some potential child trafficking victims are recorded as having experienced an unknown type of exploitation; and whether that can influence the outcome of any reasonable grounds decision made under the National Referral Mechanism. [HL13170]

Asked by Baroness Doocey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to reduce the number of potential child trafficking victims recorded as facing an unknown type of exploitation under the National Referral Mechanism. [HL13171]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: This Government is committed to tackling the heinous crime of modern

slavery and ensuring that all victims, including children, are provided with the support they need.

The Home Office continues to work with a range of partners to identify and deliver effective prevention activity. This includes awareness raising initiatives such as the Government's 'Hidden in Plain Sight' campaign and the #SlaveryonYourDoorstep campaign led by CrimeStoppers. We also have a dedicated GOV.UK resources page that provides up-to-date information on how to spot the signs of modern slavery and report concerns.

Where children are found to be potential victims of human trafficking or modern slavery their safety and welfare are addressed as a priority. Local authorities are responsible for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children in their area, including child victims of modern slavery. Local children's services will work in close co-operation with the police and other statutory agencies to offer potentially trafficked children the protection and support they require.

With regard to the types of exploitation experienced by child trafficking victims in the UK and any change in the types of exploitation being identified over the past 10 years, the Home Office publishes statistics on National Referral Mechanism (NRM) referrals on a quarterly basis. The NRM statistics for 2012 to 2016 can be found here: <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20170404150655/http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/publications/national-referral-mechanism-statistics>.

The NRM statistics for 2017 to 2018 can be found here: [https://nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/who-we-are/publications?search=&category%5B%5D=3&=%2Fwho-we-are%2Fpublications%3Flimit%3D15%26sort%3Dtitle%26direction%3Dasc&limit=100&tag=](https://nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/who-we-are/publications?search=&category%5B%5D=3&=%2Fwho-we-are%2Fpublications%3Flimit%3D15%26sort%3Dtitle%26direction%3Dasc&limit=100&>tag=).

The 2019 report and Q1-Q3 of 2020 can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-referral-mechanism-statistics>.

With regard to why some potential child trafficking victims are recorded as having experienced an unknown type of exploitation, the Home Office is currently addressing an earlier identified error that occurred in the data processing for the Q1-Q3 of 2020 statistics where some sexual exploitation referrals were miscategorised as 'Not recorded or unknown'. Once this error is rectified, the number of sexual exploitation referrals will be higher than in the current statistical bulletins and the number of 'not recorded or unknown' referrals will be lower. The updated data will be released alongside the Quarter 4 (October to December 2020) statistics which are being prepared and will be released on 18 March 2021.

At the Reasonable Grounds stage of the National Referral Mechanism, the standard of proof is 'suspects but cannot prove'. In Q2 and Q3 of 2020, 96% of Reasonable Grounds decisions made on child cases were positive.

Prior to the NRM digital case working system going live in January 2020, data collection on NRM cases

included an 'unknown' exploitation category for any unknown case exploitation types. Since the new system has been introduced, there is now an 'other exploitation' free-text box that First Responders can fill in on the referral form to explain why they are unable to identify the exploitation type. The information contained within this box is considered by a Decision Maker when making the Reasonable Grounds decision. However, for data reporting purposes, this is classified as 'unknown'.

Reasonable Grounds decisions are made based on the account of exploitation submitted in the form and not specifically on the exploitation type data, which is recorded to enable data analysis rather than to specifically support decision-making.

The Home Office continues to work with First Responders to ensure they understand the indicators of different exploitation types and, in July 2020, we released a new First Responder e-learning module which includes support on this issue.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

National Referral Mechanism Stats [national-referral-mechanism-statistics-uk-quarter-3-2020-july-to-september-hosb3320.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-02-09/HL13168>

Human Trafficking: Convictions

Asked by Lord Browne of Belmont

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many convictions relating to human trafficking were recorded in (1) 2019, and (2) 2020. [HL13163]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: The Ministry of Justice has published information on convictions for offences relating to human trafficking, up to December 2019, available in the 'Principal offence proceedings and outcomes by Home Office offence code' data tool, attached and here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/938554/HO-code-tool-principal-offence-2019.xlsx.

Offences relating to human trafficking and their offence codes, are the following:

- 03608 Arrange or facilitate travel of another person with a view to exploitation,
- 03611 Commit offence of kidnapping or false imprisonment with intention of arranging travel with view to exploitation,
- 03612 Do act prohibited by slavery and trafficking risk or prevention order,
- 07201 Arranging or facilitating arrival of a person into the UK for sexual exploitation (trafficking),
- 07202 Arranging or facilitating travel of a person within the UK for sexual exploitation (trafficking),
- 07203 Arranging or facilitating departure of a person from the UK for sexual exploitation (trafficking),

- 07204 Intentionally arrange / facilitate the arrival in / entry into the UK / another country of a person with a view to their sexual exploitation,
- 07205 Intentionally arrange / facilitate travel of a person within the UK / another country with a view to their sexual exploitation,
- 07206 Intentionally arrange / facilitate the departure of a person from the UK / another country with a view to their sexual exploitation,
- 07819 Trafficking people into the UK for the purpose of exploitation,
- 07820 Trafficking people within the UK for the purpose of exploitation,
- 07821 Trafficking people out of the UK for the purpose of exploitation.

In 2019, there were 25 convictions for offences relating to the above human trafficking.

Data for 2020 is due to be published in May 2021.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Table [23022021Copy of HO-code-tool-principal-offence-2019.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-02-09/HL13163>

Kosovo: Roma

Asked by Baroness Whitaker

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to make representations to the government of Kosovo about allowing Kosovan Roma in other countries the right to vote in the forthcoming elections. [HL13215]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: In the run up to the recent elections, we publicly and privately encouraged the electoral authorities in Kosovo to ensure all eligible overseas voters in Kosovo were able to do so, regardless of ethnicity. These snap elections had a shorter preparatory period than normal, putting pressure on the Central Election Commission and creating risks that not all ballots cast overseas would arrive on time. The process of verifying and counting the votes from overseas is now underway.

Legal Aid Scheme: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Blencathra

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many legal aid claims related to the COVID-19 pandemic have been submitted; what is the total amount claimed; and which law firms are making the claims. [HL13159]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: This information could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Livestock: Exports

Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ban the live export of animals for consumption overseas. [HL13189]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Leaving the European Union has enabled us to take a major step forward in delivering on our commitment to end excessively long journeys for animals going for slaughter or fattening.

We are currently consulting in England and Wales on proposals to end the unnecessary practice. This is a key priority for the Government, and we hope to have legislation in place by the end of the year.

The consultation period closes on 25 February 2021. Further details can be found at the document attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Consultations on improvements to animal welfare [HL13189 attachment 1.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-02-09/HL13189>

Merchant Shipping: Navigation

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Vere of Norbiton on 5 February (HL12745), whether, in the event of the failure of satellite-based and radio-based navigation provisions, ships' officers should use navigation methods that were in place before the introduction of those provisions. [HL13330]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Merchant ships' navigation officers, under part of their certificates of competency, are provided practical training both ashore and on board to detect and adequately respond to failures of satellite-based and radio-based navigation systems. These responses already include reverting to use of navigation methods other than the satellite and radio-based navigation provisions.

In addition, merchant ships' navigation watchkeeping procedures contain explicit instructions to routinely employ alternative navigations systems - such as radar for harbour and coastal waters, and celestial navigation for oceans - so as to not rely solely on the satellite and radio-based navigation provisions.

Merchant Shipping: Radio

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Goldie on 10 December 2020 (HL10934), what assessment they have made of whether UK ocean-going merchant ships will be able to use the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System

(GMDSS) in the event of the failure of satellite-based communications, and whether those ships will be able to use the GMDSS to communicate in the event that commercial coast stations are closed. [HL13331]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: UK-registered ocean-going merchant ships operate under the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) convention which contains common rules for radio equipment installations. The International Maritime Organization's view is that it is important to maintain medium frequency (MF)/ high frequency (HF) communication systems in case of failure of satellite systems.

The UK relies on the IMO's assessment of the availability of maritime HF communications in its ongoing review and modernisation of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS). The availability of coast stations for general communications is considered adequate.

Should a coast station close, nation State search and rescue services will continue to respond to HF GMDSS Distress, Urgency and Safety radio traffic. Should the IMO consider the provision of service through HF GMDSS coast stations to be a concern and that could only be addressed at the international level, then it would take action.

Ministry of Justice: Equality

Asked by Lord Bradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many equality impact assessments undertaken by the Ministry of Justice since December 2019 identified the possibility of indirect discrimination on the basis of any of the protected characteristics defined by law; and in relation to such assessments, on how many occasions they (1) altered the policy proposal, (2) decided not to proceed with the policy proposal, or (3) continued the policy proposal without amendment. [HL13233]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) ensures that assessment of the equalities impacts of its policy proposals is integrated in the development, implementation and review of its policies. Where potential negative impacts are identified, including the potential for indirect discrimination, we take the necessary mitigating actions or adopt alternative approaches. We do not keep central records of all our equality assessments undertaken since December 2019 but publish our policy consultation equality assessments regularly on the MoJ consultation hub which is publicly available on GOV.UK:

https://consult.justice.gov.uk/consultation_finder/.

Peace and Security Council

Asked by Baroness Kennedy of Cradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what support they have given to the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. [HL13192]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK engages the African Union's Peace and Security Council (AU PSC), on issues of interest to the UK and the UN Security Council, when invited to its open sessions, and through regular contact with AU PSC Permanent Representatives. The UK also provides technical support to the AU PSC Secretariat, through Amani Africa (£110,000 funding over 2 years). UK support (£2,103,570 over 2018-2021) to the African Union Commission's Political Affairs and Peace and Security Departments includes technical assistance for the AU's Continental Early Warning System, which informs AU PSC procedures and decision-making. The UK also supports the AU's Peace Support Operations Division, enabling it to respond to AU PSC direction e.g. we have provided significant levels of financial, political and training support for the African Union Mission in Somalia since it first deployed in 2007.

Police: Recruitment

Asked by Lord Browne of Belmont

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the current level of police recruitment in England and Wales. [HL13165]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government is committed to increasing the number of police officers by 20,000 by March 2023 and good progress is being made to increase the numbers of officers across all forces in England and Wales.

As part of the Police Uplift, data on police recruitment is now published quarterly. The latest data to 31 December 2020, shows that 6,620 additional officers had been recruited in England and Wales as part of the police uplift meaning that we are on track to deliver this commitment.

Since November 2019 (when data collection began), 14,585 officers have joined police forces. 6,620 were recruited specifically as part of the uplift programme, with others joining forces through locally funded recruitment and to replace leavers.

As at 31 December 2020 provisional data show that there were 135,248 officers in the 43 territorial police forces in England and Wales, 5% above the baseline taking into account those recruited through the uplift programme and through other routes since the start of the campaign.

The Police Officer uplift statistics can be viewed here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-officer-uplift-statistics>.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Police Office Uplift Stats - Dec 2020 [police-officer-uplift-quarterly-update-to-december-2020-hosb0421.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-02-09/HL13165>

Remote Education

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the Sutton Trust Learning in Lockdown, published in January; and what steps they are taking to assist schools in targeting resources to disadvantaged children. [HL13209]

Baroness Berridge: The government is investing over £400 million to support access to remote education and online social care services, including securing 1.3 million laptops and tablets for disadvantaged children and young people.

The data for the Sutton Trust report was collected at the start of the new term. Since then, the department has substantially increased delivery of devices to support vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils with remote learning. Already since the start of this scheme, over one million laptops and tablets have been delivered to schools, academy trusts, local authorities and further education providers to date.

We have also partnered with the UK's leading mobile operators to provide free data to help disadvantaged children get online as well as delivering over 60,000 4G wireless routers for pupils without connection at home and buying more for issues.

Where remote education is needed and pupils continue to experience barriers to digital remote education, we expect schools to work to overcome these barriers. This could include distributing school-owned laptops or supplementing digital provision with different forms of remote education such as printed resources or textbooks. This should be supplemented with other forms of communication to keep pupils and students on track or answer questions about work.

We have introduced a new £350 million National Tutoring Programme for disadvantaged pupils and students. This will increase access to high quality tuition for disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people, helping to accelerate their academic progress and tackling the attainment gap between them and their peers.

As part of the National Tutoring Programme, schools in the most disadvantaged areas are being supported to employ in-house Academic Mentors to provide tuition to their pupils. During this period of national restrictions, as members of school staff, we expect mentors to continue

providing tuition support to pupils in line with their school's policies.

Remote Education: Computers

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many organisations were asked to provide offers for the purchase of laptops and tablets provided to children to use for home learning. [HL13204]

Baroness Berridge: The department issued tender opportunities for the procurement of devices to all suppliers present under the Crown Commercial Services Framework, under Technology Products and Associated Services (TePAS) Lot 2: Hardware and Associated Services. A list of all suppliers present under Lot 2 of the TePAS framework can be found at:

<https://www.crowncommercial.gov.uk/agreements/RM6068>.

The only exception to the above is the very first procurement, which was a Direct Award to Computacenter made under Procurement Policy Note 01/20: Responding to COVID-19, details of which are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/procurement-policy-note-0120-responding-to-covid-19>. We awarded this contract directly because of the urgency at the start of COVID-19 outbreak of providing devices for disadvantaged children and care leavers to support access to remote education and social care.

Reparation by Offenders

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effectiveness of restorative justice; and what plans, if any, they have for encouraging its use. [HL13180]

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: The Government remains committed to the provision of good quality, victim-focused restorative justice to help victims cope and recover from the effects of crime. From April 2019 to March 2020, the Ministry of Justice provided about £76m to Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs), with about £3.9m spent on restorative justice services. PCCs also spent another £1.8m from other sources on restorative justice services. PCCs are responsible for evaluating victim services that they commission locally, including restorative justice.

In addition to the PCC funded schemes, restorative justice is also available in the youth justice system and provided by some probation Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs). From 26 June 2021, probation services delivery arrangements will change, bringing services together under 12 regional probation directors (RPDs) with responsibility and funding for commissioning specialist rehabilitative services from other sectors. The new commissioning framework

includes a category for restorative justice services and has been designed to support local co-commissioning between PCCs, RPDs, health commissioners and local government. This is important for improving standards and ensuring safe and effective practice.

Under the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime, all victims have the right to receive information about how to access restorative justice services in their local area to participate if they wish to do so. The revised Code was published in November 2020 and will come into effect on 1 April 2021 and will be widely communicated to victims and criminal justice practitioners. The revised Code includes information which explains what restorative justice is and how it works. The Government will work with criminal justice agencies and organisations providing support to victims of crime to raise awareness of victims' rights under the Code.

Skilled Workers

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants *Mind the Skills Gap*, published on 2 December 2020. [HL13210]

Baroness Berridge: 'Mind the Skills Gap', published on 2 December 2020 by the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA), provides a helpful snapshot of some skills and training issues that employers face as a result of COVID-19.

The timing of this report is useful in aiding our understanding of business and employee behaviours and perspectives on skills and training, especially with regard to how they may have altered in the last 12 months as a result of COVID-19.

The report shows that the proportion of employers providing training and professional development for their staff has remained broadly stable since we gathered similar information in the Employer Skills Survey 2019, though a greater number reported identifying skills gaps, potentially as a result of COVID-19 altering business requirements and practices.

It is unclear whether this difference is solely due to the impacts of COVID-19 or is a result of the more focused scope of the CIMA survey. It covers 1023 small and medium-sized businesses (10-249 staff employed), whereas the Employer Skills Survey engages with 70,000 employers of all sizes across England.

The next wave of the Employer Skills Survey is this year, which will provide an updated and more detailed understanding of skills needs and investment and training behaviour. In addition, the Skills for Jobs white paper sets out reforms to post-16 technical education and training to support people to develop the skills needed to get good jobs and improve national productivity.

Small Businesses: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Hay of Ballyore

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to assist small businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL13176]

Lord Callanan: The Government has introduced an unprecedented and comprehensive package of business support measures to help as many individuals and businesses as possible during this difficult period.

As part of the Local Restrictions Support Grant (closed) (LRSRG), business premises that are required by law to close during the current period of national restrictions since 5th January can access grants of up to £4,500 per 6 weeks of closure.

In addition to the LRSRG, each closed business will be eligible for a one-off payment of up to £9,000 to help them through Spring. Local Authorities in England have been allocated a further £500m in discretionary funding to support businesses that are significantly impacted by the restrictions even though not required to close. This is in addition to £1.1bn already allocated in November 2020. Local Authorities have discretion to use this funding to support businesses in the way they see fit.

Between March and September 2020, small businesses were supported through the Small Business Grant Fund (SBGF), the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant Fund (RHLGF) and the Local Authority Discretionary Grants Fund (LADGF). As of 30th September, more than £11.6 billion has been dispersed to more than a million business premises across the three schemes. These schemes are now closed.

Devolved Administrations have received funding according to the Barnett formula to develop and administer grant schemes to support small businesses.

In addition to grant support, the Government has announced further measures which build on the existing business support package, including extension of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme until the end of April 2021, extension of the Coronavirus Loan Guarantee schemes until 31 March 2021, and introduction of Pay As You Grow measures, meaning businesses now have the option to repay their Bounce Back Loans over a period of up to ten years.

As off 24 January 2021, BBLS has seen 1,471,001 loans approved worth £44.74 billion, and CBILS has seen 87,529 loans approved worth £20.84 billion.

St Helena: Reservoirs

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will provide the funding to the government of St Helena for a new reservoir; and if so, when such funding will be provided. [HL13186]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK Government has financed major water infrastructure investments over the last 10 years, including reservoir enlargements. The UK is currently funding a capital investment programme on the island, and the St Helena Government are responsible for proposing and prioritising the list of individual projects. The St Helena Government is currently developing its long term water management strategy, which will identify potential water infrastructure needs.

Trade Agreements: India

Asked by Baroness Hooper

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the announcement that the terms of an Enhanced Trade Partnership have been agreed with the government of India, what steps they are taking to ensure that Gibraltar can benefit from the provisions of that Partnership. [HL13313]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: In all trade deals, HM Government is seeking trade outcomes that support British Overseas Territories' economic interests, and which reflect their unique characteristics.

Trade and investment between the United Kingdom and India was worth £48 billion in 2019 and we are developing an even more ambitious relationship. We have committed to launching an Enhanced Trade Partnership with India later this year and are in the process of cementing the terms of this. Through the Enhanced Trade Partnership both sides are working to bring down trade barriers, open up opportunities for trade and investment, and chart the roadmap towards a potential Free Trade Agreement.

Trade Promotion

Asked by Lord Balfe

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Grimstone of Boscobel on 8 February (HL12500), what (1) financial, (2) administrative, (3) Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, and (4) other Government department or agency, support is given to Trade Envoys. [HL13230]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: The Prime Minister's Trade Envoy programme is financially supported and managed solely by the Department for International Trade (DIT). The Department meets all travel and subsistence costs associated with the role, as well as any other incidental costs incurred by Trade Envoys to fulfil their duties. All costs incurred are subject to the Department's guidelines, which apply to the programme's use of public funds.

Trade Envoys work closely with colleagues in the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and HM Trade Commissioners, who provide market and

business intelligence and logistical support when visits are made. Trade Envoys are deployed where they can add the most value, which includes supporting Her Majesty's Government's wider overseas objectives when appropriate.

Trade Promotion: Public Appointments

Asked by Lord Balfe

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Grimstone of Boscobel on 8 February (HL12500), why they have appointed a Trade Envoy for Taiwan; and why they have not appointed a Trade Envoy for the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. [HL13226]

Asked by Lord Balfe

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Grimstone of Boscobel on 8 February (HL12500), what consideration is given to the political affiliation of Trade Envoys before they are appointed. [HL13228]

Asked by Lord Balfe

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Grimstone of Boscobel on 8 February (HL12500), what criteria they use to determine which countries have a Trade Envoy appointed to them. [HL13229]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: Prime Minister's Trade Envoys are drawn from both Houses and across the political spectrum. They are chosen based on relevant skills and experience required to undertake the role. This experience can be related to their assigned market or UK industry knowledge, or their Government-to-Government experience, as well as willingness and an ability to undertake some international travel.

With regard to the criteria used to determine which countries are added to the programme, I refer my noble Friend to the answer I gave to the noble Lord, Viscount Waverley, on 16 February 2021, UIN: [HL13033](#).

Asked by Lord Balfe

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Grimstone of Boscobel on 8 February (HL12500), what is the period of office for which Trade Envoys are appointed; and what performance reviews they conduct into the (1) work, and (2) effectiveness, of such Envoys. [HL13227]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: Trade Envoys are appointed for the term of the Government and the Prime Minister decides when to make changes.

Trade Envoys' day-to-day activities are managed through the Department for International Trade (DIT). Each Trade Envoy is allocated a Relationship Manager whom they meet on a regular basis to discuss engagements, objectives, goals they wish to achieve, and ensure they are aligned to the Department's objectives.

DIT's ministerial team regularly meets with the Trade Envoys, providing an opportunity to update on progress in their respective markets, and give feedback on their role. Officials are also in the process of establishing a mechanism which will help capture the value Trade Envoys bring to our trade and investment efforts more effectively.

UN Climate Conference 2021

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made on preparations for COP26. [HL13201]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Planning for COP26 is progressing in all areas and we are continuing to work closely with the venues and our delivery partners to ensure that we deliver the facilities and logistics needed for the event, in line with the requirements outlined by the UNFCCC.

Alongside summit preparations, the COP26 President, ministers and senior officials have been engaging with a wide range of UK and international partners.

Last month, COP President Designate Alok Sharma initiated a comprehensive round of consultations with the chairs of all UNFCCC negotiating groups to complement his ongoing informal engagement with international partners – which has included trips to Gabon, Ethiopia, Egypt and Nigeria already this year. And we continue to engage our international partners extensively at a technical level, as well as through our diplomatic network around the world.

Universities: Vocational Education

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the ability of universities to deliver adequate technical skills training. [HL13283]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: The government intends to transform technical education and training, which will have a pivotal role in building back better.

As a key part of this, we want to invest in and increase the take-up of approved higher technical qualifications to meet the skills needs of the economy. Higher education providers, further education colleges, and independent training providers will all have a role to play in this. Last year we published reforms which aim to make higher technical education a more high-quality, prestigious, and popular choice – and those reforms are now well underway. In the recent Skills for Jobs White Paper, we built on these reforms, committing to stimulate the provision of high-quality higher technical education as we work towards making it as easy to get a student finance loan for an approved higher technical qualification as it is for a full-length degree. The details can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pioneering-reforms-to-boost-skills-and-jobs>.

In order to be registered with the Office for Students, the independent regulator of higher education in England, higher education providers are required to meet a minimum set of requirements which are designed to ensure that all students receive a high-quality academic experience, that students' interests are protected, and that students' qualifications hold their value over time.

Vaccine Taskforce

Asked by Lord Birt

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that decision-making by the UK Vaccine Task Force relating to COVID-19 vaccines has been delayed by the civil service. [HL13157]

Lord Callanan: The Vaccine Taskforce has made, and continues to make, decisions rapidly to tackle COVID-19 and its variants. This has been recognised by the Public Accounts Committee in its recent report, that “the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, NHS England and NHS Improvement, and Public Health England have made major and world beating progress in buying and starting to roll-out the vaccines.”

The Vaccine Taskforce has worked at pace, resulting in the UK being the first country to procure, authorise, and deploy the Pfizer/BioNTech and Oxford University/AstraZeneca vaccines. This is the largest immunisation programme in UK history and, as of 23 February, over 17.5 million people in the UK have received the first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. This has been alongside various other achievements within the past 11 months, including:

- The Government has struck agreements to buy 457 million doses of vaccines across eight leading candidates, including the Pfizer/BioNTech, Oxford University/AstraZeneca, and Moderna vaccines, which have shown positive efficacy results through clinical trials.
- The Government has invested over £300 million to ensure the country's vaccine manufacturing capabilities are scaled-up, so that effective vaccines can be made available to the public as quickly as possible.
- Over 440,000 people have enrolled in a national registry expressing their interest to take part in clinical trials to accelerate the development of a successful vaccine.
- The Government has committed to ensuring that everyone at risk of COVID-19, anywhere in the world, has access to safe and effective vaccines, and has donated £500 million to the COVAX international vaccine-sharing initiative to enable this.

Western Europe: Overseas Aid

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what percentage of the total overseas aid provided by the UK has gone to

(1) Greece, (2) Cyprus, and (3) Malta, in each year since 2015. [[HL13179](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: 0 per cent of Official Development Assistance (ODA) has been provided to Greece, Cyprus and Malta as they have been non-ODA

eligible countries since 1995, 1997 and 2003 respectively as defined by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC).

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