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**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

# **HOUSE OF LORDS**

## **WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS**

**Written Statements .....1**

**Written Answers.....9**

[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>Earl Howe</b>	Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
<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
<b>Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist</b>	Whip
<b>Lord Callanan</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
<b>Earl of Courtown</b>	Deputy Chief Whip
<b>Lord Frost</b>	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
<b>Lord Gardiner of Kimble</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
<b>Baroness Goldie</b>	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence
<b>Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park</b>	Minister of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
<b>Lord Greenhalgh</b>	Minister of State, Home Office and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
<b>Lord Grimstone of Boscobel</b>	Minister of State, Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Department for International Trade
<b>Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Penn</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Scott of Bybrook</b>	Whip
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<b>Lord Stewart of Dirleton</b>	Advocate-General for Scotland
<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>Lord Wolfson of Tredegar</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Justice
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# Written Statements

Thursday, 18 March 2021

## Audit and Corporate Governance Reforms

[HLWS848]

**Lord Callanan:** My Right Honourable friend the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Kwasi Kwarteng has today made the following statement:

Today the Government is publishing its ambitious plans to strengthen the UK's audit, company reporting and corporate governance framework, "Restoring trust in audit and corporate governance", which I will lay in the House. These proposals will ensure the UK's markets are at the cutting edge of global best practice.

British business is built on trust, so it is vital that our leading companies can command the confidence of the financial markets, investment community and wider public as the UK recovers from the effects of Covid-19. Our comprehensive package of reforms will strengthen reporting, audit and governance in the UK's largest companies. The proposals will help cement the UK's position as a world-leading destination for investment by helping to ensure that our leading companies are governed responsibly and that investors, creditors, workers and others have access to the information they need.

Our proposals respond to the independent reviews led by Sir John Kingman, Sir Donald Brydon and the Competition and Markets Authority, and I would like to thank each of them for their valuable contributions. Today's publication sets out a balanced and wide-ranging package of reforms which will lay the foundations for British companies to build back stronger as the UK recovers from the effects of Covid-19 and in the wake of recent corporate failures. Restoring business confidence, but also people's confidence in business, is crucial to repairing our economy and building back better from the pandemic.

In particular, the Government's proposals include:

- supporting directors of large companies in planning for long-term success through annual resilience statements: setting out how they are mitigating short and long-term risks, for the benefit not only of shareholders but also of local communities, suppliers, customers and the wider UK economy.
- making directors of the country's biggest companies more accountable when they breach their duties, with the prospect of fines or bans only when there are serious failings, such as misleading accounts or hiding information from auditors. This measure is targeted at the very largest companies in the UK, not start-ups and small businesses, and would not affect the vast majority of directors. Instead, it reflects the level of responsibility that comes with a board position in the largest companies.

- addressing "rewards for failure" through mechanisms to claw bonuses back following misconduct or management failures.

- measures to unleash competition and strengthen governance in the audit market, overseen by a new regulator, to increase choice and drive up resilience.

- recognising the economic importance of the largest privately-owned companies by ensuring they meet the highest governance and reporting standards.

- making company reporting more transparent and informative: so that they pay out dividends only when they have sufficient reserves, and enabling companies to have a wider range of metrics audited, for example climate disclosures.

These proposals will all be backed by the creation of a strong and independent statutory authority for audit, corporate reporting and governance. Replacing the Financial Reporting Council, the new regulator will be given much stronger powers to enforce standards. We also propose that it will have the power to impose an operational split between the audit and non-audit functions of accountancy firms, to reduce the risk of any conflicts of interest that may affect the standard of audit they provide.

The UK is consistently placed as one of the leading destinations for foreign investment in Europe and around the world. These reforms will sustain and build on the UK's position, and reinforce the Government's wider work to ensure the UK remains a world-class destination for investment.

The reforms cover the whole of the UK since, although company law is devolved in Northern Ireland, to date the Northern Ireland Executive has preferred to align with Great Britain in this area. The Government will also continue to work closely with the Devolved Administrations in Wales and Scotland in developing the final provisions.

In light of the challenging circumstances for companies, the Government's consultation period will run for 16 weeks. The Government then intends to bring forward legislation when Parliamentary time allows. We will implement reforms in a proportionate way that does not prove burdensome to business, for example considering a limited exemption for newly listed firms from the new requirements.

I will place a copy of the three supplementary publications, including an Impact Assessment of the proposed measures, in the Libraries of both Houses.

## COP26 Presidency: Governance, Structure and Parliamentary Accountability

[HLWS852]

**Lord Goldsmith:** My Rt Hon Friend the COP President-Designate (Alok Sharma MP) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

Following the creation of a full-time COP26 President role, I wanted to update the House on the governance, structure and parliamentary accountability of the role.

COP26 is a UN conference hosted by the UK, in partnership with Italy, which will be held in Glasgow in November 2021. World leaders will attend the conference, with the aim to agree how to tackle the threat of global climate change and deliver a resilient, net zero economy that protects and values the natural world.

The UK is a world leader on climate change. We were the first major economy to legislate for net zero by 2050. In November 2020, the Prime Minister set out our new Nationally Determined Contribution, committing to reduce our emissions by at least 68% by 2030 on a 1990 baseline, and in December 2020 we published the UK's first Adaptation Communication.

#### *Ministerial team*

The Rt Hon Lord Goldsmith, Minister for Pacific and the Environment, will be the COP26 spokesperson in the House of Lords. The Rt Hon Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP, Minister for Business, Energy and Clean Growth, will also address COP26 questions in the House of Commons and is the UK International Champion on Adaptation and Resilience for the COP26 Presidency. Katherine Fletcher MP has been appointed as my Parliamentary Private Secretary.

#### *Role of UN COP President*

The COP President-Designate is responsible within the UK for delivering the COP26 summit in Glasgow. Ahead of the summit I am engaging with the UNFCCC Secretariat and the current COP President as they prepare the provisional negotiations agenda. I am working to increase ambition internationally, developing effective international relationships with countries, institutions, businesses and stakeholders to achieve the necessary commitments in advance of and at COP. I am regularly engaging with the members of the UNFCCC to understand their positions and work with them to reach consensus on the negotiations. I will continue my close engagement with a large number of civil society actors as we seek to deliver an inclusive COP.

With the will of all Parties, I will formally become COP President during the opening ceremony of the Glasgow Summit. At the summit, I will participate as COP President, under the authority of the COP and its 197 parties. I will lead the formal negotiations, preside over meetings and will facilitate proceedings in accordance with the COP's draft Rules of Procedure. I will have oversight of the overall package of outcomes and will work closely with UNFCCC members to secure consensus. As COP President I will also lead the COP Bureau, which is an 11-member body that assists the President and supports the work of COP, for the duration of my term until COP27 in late 2022.

The Prime Minister has made the role full time and as a full member of the Cabinet. My Cabinet colleagues remain responsible for delivering on their respective policy responsibilities.

#### *Delivering a successful outcome*

At the Climate Ambition Summit on 12 December 2020, I set out four clear objectives for the UK Presidency.

To ask countries to commit to net zero by mid-century, building on the 70% of world GDP covered by net zero targets today. To set the path to this, countries are being asked to come forward with ambitious 2030 emissions reductions targets (known as NDCs) which align with net zero goals. We will also be looking to accelerate the phase-out of coal, encourage investment in renewables, halt fossil fuel subsidies and pick up the pace on electric vehicle roll out. All of these areas are critical to stop average global temperatures exceeding 1.5C.

To urgently protect and help adapt our communities and natural habitats from the destructive effects of climate change. This will involve enabling and encouraging countries affected by climate change to build defences, warning systems and resilient infrastructure to avoid loss of homes and livelihoods.

To increase funding to support these aims, making good on the \$100bn annual climate finance goal affirmed through the Paris Agreement. We need to be in a position to unleash the trillions in private and public finance to meet global net zero.

To close off the outstanding elements of the Paris Rulebook, and accelerate delivery of the Paris Goals through collaboration between Governments, Businesses and Civil Society.

We will deliver these objectives through a major international engagement programme. I have briefed all UN Member States three times and have personally engaged with over 50 countries. In the last month I have visited Ethiopia, Gabon, Egypt, Nigeria, India, Nepal, Belgium and France, and have spoken to representatives from a wide range of other countries and organisations, including the United States and China and hosted virtual roundtables and engaged with civil society groups.

#### *Parliamentary scrutiny and engagement*

There will be regular Oral Questions, which commenced on 24 February. And written questions can be submitted to the COP26 President.

There will be full select committee scrutiny of the role. A BEIS Select Committee session was held on 19 January. The Chairs of the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Environmental Audit, Science and Technology, Foreign Affairs, International Development, Treasury, Transport, Scottish Affairs, Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Liaison Committees have come together informally as a 'Committee on COP26' which is an initiative I welcome and am committed to appearing in front of them alongside my ministerial colleagues, who will also be able to answer questions on their respective policy responsibilities.

My ministerial team and I will send a regular newsletter to colleagues in both Houses. I have agreed a programme of engagement activity with the Chairs of the Climate All-Party Parliamentary Groups.

We will be providing a digital toolkit to members in due course to support them to engage constituents in the Together for Our Planet campaign. We will also be working with partners to engage schools in COP26, including providing a tailored toolkit.

A range of opportunities are available for members and their constituents to get involved at COP26 itself. These include hosting events, creative installations and exhibitions within UK Government managed spaces.

We also expect there will be a range of fringe events and activities across the city of Glasgow and throughout the UK organised by stakeholders, civil society organisations and businesses.

#### *Domestic and Devolved Administration engagement*

We are working with the Scottish Government, the Welsh Government and the Northern Ireland Executive to ensure an inclusive and ambitious summit for the whole of the UK. All parts of the UK will have important roles to play in ensuring the summit's success.

I have invited climate change Ministers from the Scottish Government, the Welsh Government and the Northern Ireland Executive to participate in a regular Devolved Administrations Group to ensure effective engagement and collaboration on COP26 in support of the delivery of an inclusive and welcoming COP26 representative of the whole of the UK.

I also chair the COP26 UK Mayors' and Regions Advisory Council with mayors and council leaders from across the UK, including Glasgow, Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast. In addition to ongoing engagement with stakeholders across the UK, to ensure an inclusive, whole of society COP26, that is representative of all of the UK in Glasgow.

We have launched the Together for our Planet campaign which will raise awareness and understanding of COP26 and the work the UK is doing to combat climate change. The campaign aims to drive awareness and create opportunities for people across the UK to participate in the run-up to COP26.

#### *COP Unit governance*

The Prime Minister chairs the Climate Action Strategy Cabinet Committee (CAS), which determines the UK's overarching climate strategy both domestically and internationally. I continue to chair the Climate Action Implementation Cabinet Committee (CAI), which supports the CAS to operationalise the Government's climate strategy.

I am supported by the COP26 Unit which has over 200 posts and is based in the Cabinet Office. The COP Unit team brings together civil servants from across Whitehall and external expertise. International engagement, coordinated by the COP26 team in cooperation with the FCDO, takes place across all Departments and by all Ministers with an interest in the cross-cutting campaigns and our COP objectives, as well as by the Prime Minister.

As set out above, the regular processes are in place to ensure parliamentary scrutiny and support towards delivery of COP26.

#### *Progress so far*

Reducing emissions: countries representing around 65% of global CO2 emissions and around 70% of the world's economy have now committed to reaching net zero emissions or carbon neutrality. When the UK took the role of incoming COP Presidency in December 2019, coverage was just 20% of global emissions and 26% of world GDP. On 12th December, over 90 countries, businesses, sectors, cities, including 75 world leaders, attended the Climate Ambition Summit, co-hosted with the UN and France in partnership with Italy and Chile. At the summit 45 leaders highlighted plans for new and more ambitious NDCs (covering 71 countries including all EU member states) and 24 countries announced new commitments, strategies or plans to reach net zero or carbon neutrality. The Summit delivered real steps forward - for example Colombia committed to an impressive 51% emissions reduction target; and Pakistan announced a moratorium on new coal plants.

On helping protect communities and natural habitats from the impact of climate change: at the CAS, 20 countries put forward plans for protecting their economies and communities from the impact of climate change. On 25 January we launched the Adaptation Action Coalition to bring together countries to identify the solutions, technologies and resources needed to protect people and nature as the planet warms. Action on nature is at the heart of our COP Presidency. At the UN General Assembly in September 2020 the Prime Minister signed the Leaders' Pledge for Nature committing leaders to take ten urgent actions to put nature on a path to recovery by 2030. The UK played a key role in pioneering and negotiating the Pledge, and which now has over 80 countries signed up. On 2 February 2021 we launched the Forest, Agriculture and Commodity Trade (FACT) Dialogue, which will bring together key countries exporting agricultural products and the countries consuming these products to agree global principles and a roadmap of actions to make global supply chains process greener and more sustainable, tackling one of the primary drivers of nature loss.

On increasing climate finance: there is an urgent need to get more finance flowing to support swift climate action. Developed countries must meet and surpass the \$100bn of climate finance commitment, matching UK ambition to double UK ICF to at least £11.6 billion between 2021 and 2025. Private finance is also key. So far we have seen major asset owners, representing over \$5 trillion, and asset managers, representing over \$9 trillion, commit to net zero targets by 2050. Climate-related Financial Disclosures are increasing and jurisdictions in Brazil, New Zealand, Hong Kong and Switzerland are taking action to make disclosure mandatory, complementing the UK's announcement for a pathway to mandatory disclosure across the economy by 2025.

On making progress on the outstanding elements of the Paris Rulebook, and accelerating delivery of the Paris Goals: we have been convening UNFCCC members in discussions to lay the groundwork for the negotiations, and we will be hosting, alongside Chile, a series of monthly multilateral consultations. More broadly, we have built partnerships to increase international collaboration on key issues, establishing the Energy Transition Council and Zero Emissions Vehicles Transition Council, as well as working through existing coalitions: the Powering Past Coal Alliance has grown to 114 members covering 20% of OECD coal power capacity.

I look forward to engaging with you and continuing to update you over the coming months on the road to COP26.

### **European Union (Withdrawal) Act and Common Frameworks Report**

[HLWS847]

**Lord True:** My Hon. Friend, the Minister of State for the Constitution and Devolution (Chloe Smith MP), has today made the following written statement:

I am today laying before Parliament a report, ‘The European Union (Withdrawal) Act and Common Frameworks: 26 September 2020 to 25 December 2020’. I am laying this report because it is a legal requirement under the EU (Withdrawal) Act 2018 for quarterly reports to be made to Parliament on the progress of the work to develop Common Frameworks. The report is available on GOV.UK and details the progress made between the UK Government and devolved administrations regarding the development of Common Frameworks. This report details progress made during the tenth 3-month reporting period, and sets out that no ‘freezing’ regulations have been brought forward under section 12 of the European Union (Withdrawal) Act. A copy of the ‘The European Union (Withdrawal) Act and Common Frameworks: 26 September 2020 to 25 December 2020’ report has been placed in the libraries of both Houses. The publication of the report reflects the Government’s continued commitment to transparency.

### **Independent Review into Do Not Attempt Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Orders during COVID-19 Pandemic**

[HLWS855]

**Lord Bethell:** My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (Matt Hancock) has made the following written statement:

The Government is announcing today the publication of the Care Quality Commission’s (CQC) report into the use of Do Not Attempt Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (DNACPR) decisions taken during the COVID-19 pandemic. We would like to firstly thank the CQC for their swift work on the review, as well as the people, their

families, representatives and staff who shared their experiences on such an important and complex issue. A copy of the report is available [[link](#)].

The report follows concerns raised at the beginning of the pandemic around the use of “blanket” DNACPR decisions across groups of people, particularly our most vulnerable. The Care Quality Commission has investigated these concerns.

Sensitive and well communicated DNACPR decisions can be an important part of patient care and end of life experience. It is essential therefore, that good practice is embedded across the health and care system to build understanding of the role good DNACPR decisions play in high quality personalised care.

We are pleased to see the numerous examples of good practice, across both health and social care settings highlighted by the report. We heard about experiences of people and their families seeing health and care providers go above and beyond to overcome the challenges posed by the pandemic.

However, such good practice was not true everywhere. The report tells the stories of people who were denied the opportunity to discuss their DNACPR decisions, as well as families and carers feeling unable to support their loved ones or challenge DNACPR decisions. This is completely unacceptable.

Inappropriate or “blanket” application of DNACPRs decisions are wholly unacceptable, even in pressurised circumstances. All decisions about DNACPR must, in all circumstances, be made on an individual basis according to need.

We must be able to ensure that people feel equal partners in their care and that staff across all care settings feel well equipped to hold these difficult conversations. We must have processes to ensure that people feel supported to speak up when they have concerns. We support the recommendations of the CQC, including ensuring that staff have the training needed to be able to support people with DNACPR decisions; that there is national guidance and system level oversight; and, that people are well informed of what good practice looks like, what their rights are and for DNACPR decisions to be considered as part of good end of life care.

The Government is determined to tackle bad practice and welcome the report’s recommendation for a Ministerial Oversight Group to drive progress on this important issue. We are committed to driving forward the delivery of these recommendations and ultimately ensure everyone experiences the compassionate care they deserve.

### **Notification to Parliament of a Contingent Liability: Indemnification to CGI IT UK Ltd**

[HLWS850]

**Lord Callanan:** My Right Honourable friend the UK International Champion on Adaptation and Resilience for the COP26 Presidency and Minister of State (Minister for

Business, Energy and Clean Growth) (Anne-Marie Trevelyan) has today made the following statement:

1) In line with our emergency response for nuclear incidents obligations, my Department has been developing a new software application to support the management of nuclear emergencies. The new system will replace two ageing legacy systems managed by BEIS and MOD.

2) My Department is procuring Application Management and Support (AMS) services presently. We intend to indemnify the selected supplier in respect of liabilities that they may incur if employees of the former supplier of these services bring employment law claims against them in relation to the application of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE).

3) In relation to this, I have today laid before Parliament a Departmental Minute giving notice of the Department incurring this contingent liability in the form of indemnity protection provided to the selected supplier.

4) We believe it is appropriate to incur this contingent liability, to ensure that the new software system can go live without any delay. We consider the provision of this liability as the best value for money option to ensure the new service is available.

### **Post Office: Horizon Historical Shortfall Scheme**

[HLWS849]

**Lord Callanan:** My Honourable friend the Minister for London and Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Labour Markets) (Paul Scully) has today made the following statement:

Problems with the Post Office's Horizon IT System have affected the lives and livelihoods of many postmasters.

Over the years, the Horizon accounting system recorded shortfalls in cash in branches. The Post Office at the time thought that some of these were caused by postmasters, and this led to dismissals, recovery of losses by POL and, in some instances, criminal prosecutions.

A group of 555 of these postmasters, led by former postmaster Alan Bates, brought a group litigation claim against the Post Office in 2016. It is clear from the findings of Mr Justice Fraser, just how wrong Post Office was in its relationship with postmasters and that there were clear failings with the Horizon system.

The Government pays tribute to those postmasters and colleagues across the House who continue to shine a spotlight on such an important issue.

The Post Office reached a full and final settlement with claimants in the group litigation in December 2019 and apologised for its past failings. That settlement was an important step towards addressing the wrongs of the past, but it was only the start of a long journey for the Post

Office to repair and strengthen the relationship with postmasters.

As part of the settlement the Post Office agreed to set up the Historical Shortfall Scheme. The Scheme was open to current and former postmasters who did not participate in the group litigation claim against Post Office and did not have a criminal conviction, but who may have experienced and repaid Horizon shortfalls. It is therefore an important step in making sure that all those who were affected have the opportunity to seek resolution.

The Scheme closed in August 2020 and received over 2,400 applications. This number was higher than the Post Office had anticipated when the Scheme was established. All of these applications of course need to be properly assessed.

The Post Office is committed to the successful delivery and timely completion of the Historical Shortfall Scheme. However, the cost of the Scheme is beyond what the business can afford.

The Government will therefore provide sufficient financial support to Post Office to ensure that the Scheme can proceed, based on current expectations of the likely cost. The BEIS Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is providing this support in his capacity as sole shareholder in the Post Office.

There are two reasons this is being done.

First, we must ensure that those postmasters who have applied to this scheme are able to seek redress. By supporting the Scheme, we will make it possible for these postmasters to be fairly compensated.

Second, we must protect the post office network. As we have seen through the pandemic, it provides essential services to citizens across the country.

Without this support the Post Office would be unable to deliver fully the Historical Shortfall Scheme and it would be unable to continue to operate its network as we know it today. This is a critical intervention that benefits current and former postmasters and the millions of customers that rely on their local post office branch.

The final cost of delivering the Historical Shortfall Scheme will be determined over the coming months, including through the work of an Independent Panel. This support will ensure that postmasters are appropriately compensated, however we will not spend more of taxpayer's money than is necessary to ensure the Scheme meets its objectives.

The Post Office is rightly contributing what it can from its own resources to the delivery of the Scheme.

While it is important that the Scheme remains independent of Government it is also important that this shareholder support delivers Value for Money. The Government is confident that the controls in place in the design of the Historical Shortfall Scheme will make sure this is the case.

The Post Office will make the first offers to applicants shortly. However, given the number of applications it will take time to work through all the claims that Post Office

has received. The Government would therefore like to thank postmasters in advance for their patience and reassure them that their claims will be properly handled.

The Horizon dispute has affected the lives of too many people and supporting the Scheme operated by Post Office will help them right the wrongs of the past.

We must also ensure that a situation like this can never be allowed to occur again. That is why this Government has asked Sir Wyn Williams to lead the Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry.

Sir Wyn's Inquiry will work to fully understand what happened, gather available evidence and ensure lessons have been learnt so that this cannot occur again. It will also look specifically at whether the Historical Shortfall Scheme is being properly delivered. The Government looks forward to receiving Sir Wyn's report in the Summer.

## Refugee Protection and Integration

[HLWS851]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** My rt hon Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Priti Patel) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

Global Britain has a proud record of helping those fleeing persecution, oppression or tyranny from around the world. In addition to providing £10 billion each year to support people in need through overseas aid, the UK is a global leader in refugee resettlement. Between 2016 and 2019 we resettled more refugees from outside Europe than any EU member state.

In 2015, we committed to resettle 20,000 of the most vulnerable refugees who fled the brutal conflict in Syria through the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS). This included people requiring urgent medical treatment, survivors of violence and torture, and women and children at risk.

Today we are delighted to be able to confirm that we have now met that commitment. We have resettled 20,080 vulnerable refugees across the UK since September 2015.

In total, this means across all Government-funded resettlement schemes, more than 25,000 refugees have been resettled in the UK over the past 6 years and around half of whom were children.

This achievement has been made possible thanks to the outstanding work and dedication of many partners including non-governmental organisations in the UK and international partners, community and faith groups, local authorities, devolved administrations and individual members of the public. I am truly grateful for this collaborative effort.

Resettlement is vital to safely and legally provide a path to settlement for vulnerable people fleeing persecution and it is right that we continue to offer safe pathways for those in need of protection. The launch of our new global UK Resettlement Scheme will now build on the success of previous schemes and we will continue our proud

record of resettling refugees who need our help from around the world.

We want refugees in the UK to have the freedom to succeed and that means access to the tools they need to become fully independent, provide for themselves and their families and the ability to contribute and integrate into the economic and cultural life of the UK.

That is why today I have also announced £14 million of funding to help newly-granted refugees to integrate in the UK. The £14 million fund will pilot new approaches across the country to support newly-granted refugees to learn English, move into work, access housing and build links in their local communities. Lessons learned from these pilots will inform future support available to all refugees.

This Government continues to step forward to provide help to those facing oppression or tyranny. This year we have also introduced a new pathway to citizenship for British National (Overseas) status holders and their family members who are facing draconian new security laws in Hong Kong which may see an estimated 320,000 people come to the UK over the next five years.

We have also enabled over 29,000 close relatives of refugees to join them in the UK through refugee family reunion in the last five years.

Looking ahead, as we reform the asylum system, Global Britain will continue its proud tradition of providing safe haven to those in need through safe and legal routes.

## Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme Funding

[HLWS854]

**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:

Today (18 March 2021), the Government is launching the next phase of the Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme. Councils across England are invited to bid for a share of funding totalling £212 million for 2021/22 to 2023/24 to deliver move-on homes for rough sleepers. These homes will be a national asset to support vulnerable people, and high-quality support services will be provided alongside to help vulnerable people move on from rough sleeping.

This funding is part of the £433 million Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme available over the lifetime of this parliament to deliver 6,000 new homes for rough sleepers, announced by the Government in May 2020. This represents the largest ever investment in move-on accommodation. Today's announcement builds on the first year of the programme, in which the Government allocated more than £150 million for move-on accommodation for rough sleepers, as well as investing in high-quality support over the next three years, so that vulnerable people helped through the programme can



maintain their tenancies and move on from rough sleeping.

Further information on future years of the Programme is available in the fund's prospectus, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rough-sleeping-accommodation-programme-2021-24>.

The Government has made clear that no one should be without a roof over their head, which is why we have committed to end rough sleeping. That is also why, including this programme, we have spent £700 million in 2020/21 and are spending over £750 million over the next financial year to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping.

This Programme builds on the Government's unprecedented Everyone In initiative, which has so far supported 37,000 individuals during the pandemic, with more than 26,000 already successfully moved on to longer-term accommodation. Together with our pledge to fully enforce the Homelessness Reduction Act, this funding demonstrates our commitment to making the most of this opportunity to transform the lives of the some of the most vulnerable in society, and to ending rough sleeping for good.

### Third Annual Report of the Biometrics and Forensics Ethics Group

[HLWS846]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** I am pleased to announce the publication of the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual report of the Biometrics and Forensic Ethics Group on 18 March 2021. The Group provides Ministers with independent advice on matters relating to ethical issues in forensic science and biometrics and considers issues in data ethics.

I would like to thank the Group for their advice concerning the use and retention of biometric identifiers and for their advice on the development and testing of biometric technologies.

The group have provided advice and guidance on issues such as; retention of additional DNA profile information on the National DNA Database, and a trial on the use of near match reporting; consideration of the ethical issues in genetic genealogy and massively parallel sequencing approaches for criminal investigations; and recommendations for leaflets to inform the public on issues relating to burial at sea and deletion of custody images.

The Biometrics and Forensics Ethics Group annual report can be viewed on the website of the Group at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/biometrics-and-forensics-ethics-group> and a copy will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

### Transfer of European Bank for Reconstruction and Development Contingent Capital Liability

[HLWS853]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** My right honourable friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Rishi Sunak) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

I am today laying a Departmental Minute to advise that HM Treasury (HMT) intends – subject to the standard procedure for notification to Parliament of the assumption of contingent liabilities as described below – to transfer the contingent liability of £1,738,000,000 with respect to the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO).

This transfer provides HMT with financial and accounting responsibility for the EBRD to match HMT's longstanding policy responsibilities. HMT is not incurring or undertaking a new contingent liability – the EBRD's standing contingent liability is swapping from the FCDO to the HMT balance sheet. This will not produce a net budget impact on either department's balance sheet as it is budget neutral and will appear as nil in the 2021/22 Main Estimates. The EBRD's shareholding is held by the UK Crown, meaning it is at HMG's discretion to determine which department holds the EBRD's callable liability.

The EBRD is a multilateral development bank (MDB) where HM Government (HMG) has an 8.52% capital shareholding. The Chancellor is UK Governor at the EBRD and the Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Secretary, the UK Alternate Governor. The UK's overall capital contribution totals £2,300,000,000, of which previous payments have made up the 20% "paid-in" capital contribution requiring a cash transfer. The other 80%, £1,738,000,000, is "callable capital" – the EBRD has the right to call for payment for these shares if there is a crisis affecting the bank's assets or liabilities. No MDB has ever issued a call to payment on callable capital shares.

Although the EBRD has the right to call for payment of this callable capital incurred when the initial capital instalment was paid, no such instance has occurred in any MDB in the past. EBRD has a AAA credit rating, with a diversified portfolio of investments across a large range of countries. As of June 2020, the EBRD held €29.8 billion in equity (including shareholders' subscribed capital) and €11.6 billion in its reserves. Again, the transfer of the contingent liability from FCDO to HMT swaps the liability between balance sheets but does not incur or undertake further liabilities. If the liability were to be called, provision for any payment will be sought through the normal Supply procedure.

## **UK Counter-terrorist Asset Freezing Regime: 1 October 2020 to 31 December 2020**

[HLWS856]

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

Under the Terrorist Asset-Freezing etc. Act 2010 (TFAFA 2010), the Treasury was required to prepare a quarterly report regarding its exercise of the powers conferred on it by Part 1 of TFAFA 2010. This written statement satisfies that requirement for the period 1 October 2020 to 31 December 2020.

This report also covers the UK's implementation of the UN's ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida asset freezing regime (ISIL-AQ), and the operation of the EU's asset freezing regime under EU Regulation (EC) 2580/2001 concerning external terrorist threats to the EU (also referred to as the CP 931 regime).

Under the ISIL-AQ asset freezing regime, the UN has responsibility for designations and the Treasury, through the Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation (OFSI), has responsibility for licensing and compliance with the regime in the UK under the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida (Asset-Freezing) Regulations 2011.

Under EU Regulation 2580/2001, the EU has responsibility for designations and while the UK was a member of the EU and throughout the Transition Period OFSI had responsibility for licensing and compliance with the regime in the UK under Part 1 of TFAFA 2010.

EU Regulation (2016/1686) was implemented on 22 September 2016. This permits the EU to make autonomous Al-Qaida and ISIL (Da'esh) listings.

### *UK Sanctions following the end of the Transition Period*

Since the Transition Period ended at 11:00pm on 31 December 2020, the UK no longer applies EU sanctions regulations and all sanctions regimes will be implemented through UK regulations. The Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018 (the Sanctions Act) provides the legal framework for the UK to impose, update and lift sanctions autonomously. Information on the three new Counter-Terrorism Sanctions regimes can be found via this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-counter-terrorism-sanctions>.

These new sanction regimes ensure that the UK implements its international obligations under UN Security Council Resolution 1373 and give effect to the UK's obligations under UN Security Council Resolution 2368.

This is the final Quarterly Report to Parliament on the UK's Terrorist Asset Freezing Regime.

The attached tables set out the key asset-freezing activity in the UK during the quarter.

The Statement includes the following attached material:

Counter-terrorist Asset Freezing Regime Q4 2020 [WMS Q4 of 2020 -Table.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2021-03-18/HLWS856/>

## Written Answers

Thursday, 18 March 2021

### Asylum

Asked by **Lord Green of Deddington**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many asylum claims in (1) January, (2) February, and (3) to date in March, 2021, have been treated as inadmissible on the basis that the claimant was judged to have travelled through or have a connection to a safe third country; and which those countries were. [HL13905]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The Home Office publishes data on asylum applications in the 'Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release'. Data on the number of asylum applications are published in Table Asy\_D01 and data on the number and type of asylum initial decisions are published in table Asy\_D02 of the Asylum and Resettlement datasets.

Figures on the number of asylum application decisions made in the first quarter of 2021 are due to be published on 27 May 2021. Information on future Home Office statistical release dates can be found in the 'Research and statistics calendar'. We are working to bring inadmissibility decisions in line with current reporting and hope to publish that information in the same timeframe.

We are reviewing the cases of those who claimed asylum before 1 January and their suitability for decision-making under the new rules. If it is appropriate for any claimants to receive decisions under the new provisions, they will be informed of that, in line with the Home Office published policy guidance.

The Home Office current published guidance is clear that we will serve an inadmissibility decision only when an individual's return is agreed by a third country. The Home Office continues to work closely with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development to secure agreements to enable returns to be made. Any case where return is not agreed within 6 months from the date of claim will be admitted to the asylum process and will have their asylum claim substantively considered in the UK.

Information on the Home Office inadmissibility rules can be found on gov.uk under 'Inadmissibility: third country cases'.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Inadmissibility - Third Country Cases [inadmissibility-guidance-v5.0ext.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-03-04/HL13905>

### Coronavirus: Disease Control

Asked by **Baroness Benjamin**

To ask Her Majesty's Government on what evidence they based their decision to open non-essential retail, hairdressers, and beauty parlours no sooner than 12 April but not open museums, galleries and heritage buildings until 17 May at the earliest; and what plans they have to publish the data which supported that decision. [HL13784]

Asked by **Baroness Benjamin**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what comparative analysis they undertook of the risk of COVID-19 infection posed by (1) museums, galleries and heritage buildings, and (2) non-essential retail, hairdressers, and beauty parlours. [HL13787]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** The design of the roadmap has been informed by the latest scientific evidence and seeks a balance between our key social and economic priorities, whilst preserving the health and safety of the country. The scientific evidence shows that opening too early or too quickly risks a further lockdown.

The Chancellor announced in the 2021 Budget an additional £300 million to support theatres, museums and other cultural organisations in England through the Culture Recovery Fund. The Chancellor also set out that we will provide £90 million funding to support our government-sponsored national museums in England due to the financial impact of Covid-19.

### Coronavirus: Vaccination

Asked by **Lord Walney**

To ask Her Majesty's Government (1) what plans they have to ensure research is conducted into the efficacy of each COVID-19 vaccine for those with blood cancer, and (2) what the timeline will be for any such research. [HL13943]

**Lord Callanan:** I refer the noble Lord to the answer given to my Hon. Friend the Member for Crawley by my Hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Science, Research and Innovation on 26 February 2021 to Question 152472.

### Derelict Land: Prosecutions

Asked by **Baroness Pinnock**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that remedies ordered by courts following prosecutions under section 216 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 are complied with. [HL13874]

**Lord Wolfson of Tredegar:** The maximum penalty under section 216 of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is a fine. The Government takes the recovery and enforcement of all financial impositions very seriously and remains committed to ensuring impositions are paid. The courts will do everything within their powers to trace those who do not pay and use a variety of means to ensure the recovery of criminal fines and financial penalties. This includes deducting money from an individual offender's earnings or benefits if they are unemployed or issuing warrants instructing approved enforcement agents to seize and sell goods belonging to the offender. Enforcement actions that can be taken against an offender who is a company include a warrant to seize and sell goods, and an application for the administration or winding up of the company.

The Government has committed in its Planning White Paper to review and strengthen existing planning enforcement powers and sanctions available to authorities, including higher fines where appropriate.

### **Dogs: Smuggling**

*Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the Dogs Trust Puppy Smuggling, published on 4 December 2020; and what steps they are taking to address the illegal trade in puppies. [HL13912]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** Defra takes the abhorrent trade in puppy smuggling seriously. We operate a rigorous pet-checking regime, and the Animal and Plant Health Agency works collaboratively with other agencies and bodies to share intelligence, disrupt illegal imports and seize non-compliant animals.

The end of the transition period has created new opportunities for cracking down on puppy smuggling, and in line with our manifesto commitment the Government is considering a range of options. These options will take into consideration the results from our latest disease risk assessments for GB, the recommendations of stakeholders such as the British Veterinary Association and Dogs Trust, and recent Parliamentary work from the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Select Committee.

### **Domestic Premises (Energy Performance) Bill (HL)**

*Asked by Lord Foster of Bath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Callanan on 10 February (HL12638), what assessment they have made of clauses 2(1) and 2(2) of the Domestic Premises (Energy Performance) Bill [HL]. [HL13898]

**Lord Callanan:** The Government believes supporting the Private Members Bill in question generally would

reduce flexibility in the way we approach greenhouse gas emission savings and could potentially mean that more cost-effective approaches receive less attention or support. In addition, Government is committed to supporting low income and vulnerable households by meeting our statutory fuel poverty target, to improve as many fuel poor homes as is reasonably practicable to a minimum energy efficiency rating of Band C by 2030. The Government has recently published a strategy, Sustainable Warmth – supporting vulnerable households in England, which sets out our plans to support fuel poor households in detail.

### **Environment Protection: Employment**

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by Friends of the Earth An Emergency Plan on Green Jobs for Young People, published on 1 March. [HL13885]

**Lord Callanan:** My Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister's Ten Point Plan will support up to 90,000 highly-skilled green jobs across the UK within this Parliament, and up to 250,000 by 2030.

In order to ensure we have the skilled workforce to deliver net zero and our Ten Point Plan, we have launched the Green Jobs Taskforce, working in partnership with business, skills providers, and unions, to help us develop plans for new long-term good quality, green jobs and advise what support is needed for people in transitioning industries.

The Government is investing £2 billion in the Kickstart Scheme, which will create paid, quality 6-month work placements for hundreds of thousands of young people aged 16-24 on Universal Credit. The Kickstart Scheme is aimed specifically at young people deemed to be at risk of long-term unemployment. The Scheme provides the opportunity for young people to develop their employability and experience as well as providing a potential route into longer-term employment.

### **Flood Insurance in Doncaster Independent Review**

*Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking in response to the report by Amanda Blanc Independent Review of Flood Insurance in Doncaster, published on 14 April 2020, which found that flood risk insurance is not available to households that need it most. [HL13911]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** The Independent Review of Flood Insurance in Doncaster was published on 5 November 2020. The report examined the level of insurance cover held by those affected in Doncaster, the barriers they may have faced in obtaining cover and

whether there are any systemic issues in the provision of flood insurance.

The report identifies that 95% of homeowners were able to confirm that they had both buildings and contents insurance that covered flood risk. This compares with 94% of households at risk of flooding in Defra's national looking at the availability and affordability of flood insurance. This shows the sustained availability of home insurance for homeowners, especially in this area of high flood risk. The report signals that around 7% of insurance policies held by Doncaster homeowners did not cover floods and 45% of tenants said they did not have contents insurance.

The reviewer made 12 recommendations addressing the accessibility and affordability of flood insurance, which government is considering and will respond in due course.

Research has found that since the launch of the joint government and industry initiative Flood Re in 2016, availability of flood insurance has increased. Around 96% customers with prior flood claims can now get five or more quotes from insurers and four out of five householders with a prior flood claim saw price reductions of over 50%. More than 300,000 properties have benefitted since the Scheme's launch.

### Fly-tipping

*Asked by The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to improve the application process for licences from the Environment Agency to collect and transport waste in order to prevent illegal fly-tipping. [HL13919]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** Fly-tipping is a crime which blights local communities and the environment, and the Government is committed to tackling this unacceptable behaviour.

The Government is committed to improving the carrier, broker and dealer (CBD) regime in England and we plan to consult later this year. We want to enhance the background checks needed to operate as a waste carrier, broker or dealer and introduce an element of technical competence as a requirement. We also plan to make it easier for regulators to enforce against non-compliant operators and to make it harder for un-registered operators to find work in the sector. We are working with industry and the regulator as we develop our consultation.

We also intend to consult on the introduction of mandatory electronic waste tracking. This will reduce the ability of waste criminals to hide evidence of the systematic mishandling of waste and make it easier for enforcement authorities to identify material dropping out of the system, and therefore make it easier to protect against fly-tipping. Together these measures will ensure all businesses will be made more accountable for the waste they handle, help to ensure that waste is dealt with appropriately and therefore help to reduce the incidence of waste crime and fly-tipping.

### Fracking

*Asked by Lord Greaves*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their most recent assessment of (1) the contribution that the Bowland Shale Formation can make to meeting the energy requirements of the UK, and (2) the proportion of such requirements during the next 10 years that will be met by shale gas fracking. [HL13899]

**Lord Callanan:** BEIS and Ofgem's joint annual Statutory Security of Supply Report provides an assessment of the current availability of secure, affordable electricity, gas and oil for meeting the needs of consumers. The latest report, published on 18 December 2020, does not use hydraulically fractured shale gas in any of its security of supply assessments. Please see attached.

In October 2017, BEIS published a report summarising gas security over the next 20 years, including consideration of the role of shale gas in general. Please see attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Gas security of supply assessment [gas-security-supply-assessment.pdf]

Gas security of supply review [gas-security-of-supply-review.pdf]

Statutory security of supply report [statutory-security-of-supply-report-2020.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2021-03-04/HL13899>

*Asked by Lord Greaves*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will issue new exploration licences for the potential extraction of gas by fracking, and what advice they provide to the holders of existing exploration licences. [HL13900]

**Lord Callanan:** The Oil and Gas Authority operates the licensing regime that gives companies exclusive rights to search, bore for and get petroleum and it stewards existing onshore exploration licences to ensure they fulfil agreed work commitments.

The Government's position on hydraulic fracturing is set out in the Written Ministerial Statement of 4 November 2019 [HLWS68]. As set out in the Statement, the shale gas industry should take the Government's position into account when considering new developments.

### GCE A-level and GCSE: Assessments

*Asked by The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what contingency planning they undertook between August 2020 and January 2021 to prepare for the possibility that A-Level

and GCSE examinations might be cancelled in 2021. [HL13918]

**Baroness Berridge:** It was right that the department planned for exams to go ahead because they are the fairest method of assessing what students know and can do. Despite education remaining a national priority, the department remained conscious that the course of the virus and the subsequent extent of necessary public health restrictions would be unknown. We therefore worked closely with Ofqual and the exam boards to plan for a range of scenarios between August 2020 and January 2021. This allowed the department to launch the joint Department for Education and Ofqual consultation on alternative arrangements to exams on 15 January, soon after my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State's statement to the house on 6 January that, given the further disruption to education, exams could not go ahead as planned.

The department has now confirmed further details on alternative arrangements to exams, which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/awarding-qualifications-in-summer-2021/awarding-qualifications-in-summer-2021>.

## Genetically Modified Organisms

*Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what methodology they intend to use to analyse responses to the consultation by the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs The regulation of genetic technologies which opened on 7 January; and what steps they are taking to ensure that responses received using non-technical language are taken into account and understood. [HL13887]

*Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment was made of the content of the Gene editing explainer, published in January, prior to its publication as a supporting document for the consultation by the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs The regulation of genetic technologies which opened on 7 January. [HL13888]

*Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with (1) the Scottish, and (2) the Welsh, Government about the impact of any changes to the regulation of genetic engineering in food and farming in England on the maintenance of existing regulations relating to genetic modification in those countries; and what assessment they have made of any such change on (1) frictionless trade with Northern Ireland, and (2) the functioning of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland. [HL13889]

*Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the compatibility of any changes to the regulation of genetic engineering in food and farming in England with the UK–EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement. [HL13890]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** All consultation responses will be taken into account and analysed regardless of type. Free text responses will be analysed using well-established methodology from social sciences for the analysis of qualitative data, in line with standard practice for the analysis of public consultations. All views are being considered, whether or not they use technical language, and no weighting will be applied to more technical responses.

Prior to its publication, the Gene editing (GE) explainer document was reviewed by Defra's Chief Scientific Adviser and Defra's communications team. This ensured that the information was scientifically accurate and pitched so that a lay person could understand it.

We are gathering views and evidence on trade as part of the our consultation process. We will continue to monitor and respond to the approach taken in the EU to the regulation of GMOs.

Defra officials have regular ongoing discussions with Scottish and Welsh Government counterparts about the regulation of genetically modified organisms. These discussions are considering the impact of any potential changes to the regulation of genetic engineering in food and farming in England.

Owing to the application of Union law to Northern Ireland by virtue of the Northern Ireland Protocol, GE organisms will in Northern Ireland continue to be considered as GMOs and regulated as such.

## Green Homes Grant Scheme

*Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Lord Callanan on 15 February (HL12862) and 23 February (HL13155), what is the average time for individual payments for each of the final two stages of delivery of Green Homes Grant funds; and what is the longest time it has taken to complete individual payments for each stage. [HL13862]

**Lord Callanan:** The scheme administrator is prioritising the payment of the vouchers and we are continuing to see an increase in the number of vouchers being paid out to installers once work is complete.

## High Speed Rail (West Midlands-Crewe) Act 2021

*Asked by Lord Rosser*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will publish the report of the consultation required under

section 60 of the High Speed Rail (West Midlands–Crewe) Act 2021. [[HL14104](#)]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The report of the consultation required under section 60 of the High Speed Rail (West Midlands–Crewe) Act 2021 will be published before the 1 May 2021.

The consultation ran from 1 February 2021 to 26 February 2021. The analysis of consultation responses is currently taking place.

*Asked by Lord Rosser*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many submissions were made to the consultation required under section 60 of the High Speed Rail (West Midlands–Crewe) Act 2021; and, of these submissions, how many mentioned (1) Woore, and (2) Aldersey's Rough. [[HL14105](#)]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** There have been 499 responses to the consultation required under section 60 of the High Speed Rail (West Midlands–Crewe) Act 2021.

The coding and analysis of consultation responses is ongoing by an independent organisation, Ipsos MORI, so we are unable to provide exact figures for the number of responses which mention specific areas or themes at this time. The initial findings are that around 80 responses have mentioned Woore and around 30 responses have mentioned Aldersey's Rough.

## Holidays: Repayments

*Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to encourage (1) banks, and (2) the holiday and travel sector, to pay refunds to customers whose holidays were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. [[HL14060](#)]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** The Government recognises that businesses have legal obligations to ensure consumers are fairly compensated when cancellations occur. We have put in place a wide range of financial support to help businesses manage cashflow to enable timely refunds to consumers. Most are trying to arrange refunds due to Covid-19, where appropriate. However, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has created a Covid-19 taskforce to allow reporting and to take appropriate enforcement action, if there is evidence that any business is behaving unfairly during the pandemic.

## Home Education

*Asked by Lord Watson of Invergowrie*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made on their consultation on elective home education. [[HL13946](#)]

**Baroness Berridge:** Parents have a right to educate their children at home, and the government wants the many parents who do it well to be supported. Most

parents who take up the weighty responsibility of home education do a very good job, and many children benefit from being educated at home.

However, others are deemed to be 'home educated' but, in reality, such education provided is inappropriate, ineffective or through unsuitable settings (such as unregistered independent schools).

In the spring of 2019, a consultation was held on proposals for: a mandatory register of children not attending state or registered independent schools to help local authorities carry out their responsibilities in relation to children not in school, a duty on parents to register their child with the local authority if not registered at specified types of schools; a duty on proprietors of certain education settings to respond to enquiries from local authorities; and a duty on local authorities to provide support to parents who educate children at home.

The consultation closed on 24 June 2019 with nearly 5000 responses. Responses to the consultation have been considered and the government are committed to publishing the response in due course.

## Home Office: Equality

*Asked by Lord Bradley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many equality impact assessments undertaken in the Home Office since January 2019 identified the possibility of indirect discrimination on the basis of any of the protected characteristics defined by law; and in relation to any 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. [[HL13893](#)]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The information requested is not held centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

## Institute of Teaching: Degrees

*Asked by Baroness Donaghy*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what process will be followed in (1) granting the Institute for Teaching degree awarding powers, and (2) enabling the Institute for Teaching to validate academic awards delivered by other bodies. [[HL13896](#)]

**Baroness Berridge:** The Institute of Teaching will register as a higher education provider with the Office for Students (OfS) at the earliest opportunity, so it can apply for degree awarding powers. The Institute will be required to follow the process for acquiring degree awarding powers, which is managed by the OfS.

Once probationary degree awarding powers have been acquired, the Institute will be able to independently award its own Postgraduate Certificates in Education (PGCEs). In due course, the Institute will also be able to validate the PGCEs of other providers, once it has successfully gained full degree awarding powers.

More information will be provided by the department within the tender documentation for this procurement once it is launched.

### **Iran: Education**

*Asked by Lord Pickles*

To ask Her Majesty's Government (1) what criteria informed the decision to direct £16 million of UK aid to improving educational links with Iran between 2013 and 2017, (2) what projects the grants were used on, (3) how the projects were monitored, and (4) what plans they have to publish the results of such monitoring. [[HL13929](#)]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Between 2013 and 2017, the total FCO bilateral spending on Iran was approximately £4.4 million. These funds were spent on developing long-term people-to-people educational and cultural links between our two countries, including supporting English teachers, artists and Chevening scholars. Chevening supports exceptional young people all over the world to reach their potential, and remains open for applicants in Iran. Given these projects were run by a combination of British Council, Chevening and the FCO, these programmes were monitored and evaluated in line with standard FCO and British Council processes. The British Council do not currently operate or fund programmes in Iran.

### **Lex Greensill**

*Asked by Lord Macpherson of Earl's Court*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether any meeting took place between the then Cabinet Secretary and Lex Greensill on 7 November 2017; and if so, what record exists of that meeting. [[HL13822](#)]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** The then Cabinet Secretary and Lex Greensill met on 7 November 2017, as detailed in the relevant transparency return. The Cabinet Office does not hold a written record of the meeting.

### **Military Exercises**

*Asked by Earl Attlee*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Goldie on 4 March (HL13345), on which occasions in the last 20 years the British Army has deployed a largely fully formed and supported brigade for manoeuvre and deployment training; and when they expect that a similar scale of exercise will be conducted in order (1) to test the UK's ability and identify any weaknesses, (2) to reassure allies, and (3) to deter potential opponents. [[HL13886](#)]

**Baroness Goldie:** The British Army has regularly conducted collective training at Brigade level over the years and has plans to do so in the future. Over the course of Operations HERRICK (2002 - 2014) and TELIC (2003 - 2011) the British Army continuously trained and

prepared a series of Brigade level deployments, including full Mission Rehearsal Exercises on an enduring 6 monthly rotational basis. Other significant Brigade level training in the past includes Exercises SAIF SAREEA 2 in 2002 and SAIF SAREEA 3 in 2018.

The Army's Collective Training Group delivers a comprehensive programme of Mission Ready and Combat Ready Training to the Field Army. All training delivered at Battle Group level and above is delivered in a Brigade context as a minimum. Whilst this training methodology may not involve deploying the entire Brigade into the field at the same time, it does ensure that the skill sets involved in deploying a Brigade are practised regularly. Furthermore, use of simulation ensures that this type of training can be conducted efficiently whilst maximising the impact and utility of the training.

In addition to this continuous series of events delivered in a Brigade and Divisional context, there are also a series of planned exercises that focus on Brigade level and above training. Examples of these include the 16 Air Assault Brigade deploying of Ex SWIFT RESPONSE 22 in 2022 and the deployment of elements on Ex CERBERUS 22. Furthermore, the British Army regularly participates in the DEFENDER series, a US led multinational exercise in Europe, at the Brigade level.

### **National Security: Cross Border Cooperation**

*Asked by The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to improve security co-operation with the EU. [[HL13917](#)]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The safety and security of our citizens is the Government's top priority.

The UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement delivers a comprehensive package of capabilities which ensures we can work with counterparts across Europe to tackle serious crime and terrorism – protecting the public and bringing criminals to justice.

We also have excellent bilateral cooperation with Member States across the EU on a wide range of law enforcement and criminal justice issues and we will continue to consider ways to strengthen these bilateral relationships.

More widely, we continue to enhance our support to - and work closely with - international organisations such as Interpol to improve and develop law enforcement technology and tools that have a global reach.

The UK will continue to be a global leader on security and one of the safest countries in the world.

### **Office for Environmental Protection**

*Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Interim Office of Environmental Protection will be able to receive complaints and issue provisional decisions in advance of its statutory empowerment. [[HL13910](#)]



**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** The Interim Office for Environmental Protection (OEP) will be able to receive complaints from members of the public about failures of public authorities to comply with environmental law, as the Interim Environmental Governance Secretariat has been doing since 1 January 2021.

The Interim OEP will check the complaints it receives to determine if they will fall within the remit of possible investigation by the OEP once it is established as a legal body. This will involve, for example, establishing whether a complaint concerns compliance with environmental law by a public authority. On the basis of this assessment the Interim OEP will make and issue provisional decisions on this question of whether complaints will fall within the OEP's statutory remit, informing complainants and the relevant public authorities.

The Interim OEP will not be able to take any formal decisions or enforcement action pending the necessary legislative provisions taking effect. However, as part of its work before it has statutory powers, the Interim OEP may enter into dialogue with specific authorities about complaints against them. It will be for the Interim OEP, once its Board has been appointed and assembled, to determine how to approach this.

### Open University

*Asked by Lord Watson of Invergowrie*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to permit the Open University to offer initial teacher training courses. [HL13945]

**Baroness Berridge:** To deliver Initial Teacher Training (ITT) courses leading to Qualified Teacher Status, the Open University must become an accredited ITT provider. The process to become an accredited ITT provider is cyclical. When the next cycle opens, the Open University, and any other interested organisation, is welcome to explore the potential of becoming an accredited ITT provider. Any organisation who is interested in offering Initial Teacher Training should register their interest with the Department at the [ITT.accreditation@education.gov.uk](mailto:ITT.accreditation@education.gov.uk) mailbox to be kept informed of future opportunities to apply.

### Palestinians: Refugees

*Asked by Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to provide assistance to Palestinian refugees in poverty in Syria. [HL13908]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK is a longstanding supporter of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). We recognise UNRWA's unique mandate from the UN General Assembly (UNGA), to protect and provide protection and core services to Palestinian refugees across Gaza, the West

Bank, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. The UK provided £51m to UNRWA in 2020. This includes £6m to the Regional Syria Emergency Appeal. Our support will help provide life-saving assistance for the 438,000 Palestinian refugees in Syria, 95% of whom need sustained humanitarian assistance

*Asked by Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking, if any, to work with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees to support (1) distance learning for refugee children, and (2) families in economic hardship in Lebanon. [HL13909]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** In 2020, the UK provided £51 million in funding to UNRWA to support its unique role providing protection and core services to Palestinian refugees across Gaza, the West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

In response to the pandemic, UNRWA has strengthened remote learning, which includes a virtual learning environment, television broadcasts and websites for accessing links to learning materials.

### Pets

*Asked by Lord Black of Brentwood*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to review the law relating to keeping dangerous animals as pets. [HL13865]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** Anyone wishing to keep a dangerous wild animal as a pet requires a licence from their local authority under the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976. A local authority must only grant a licence if it is satisfied that it would not be contrary to the public interest on the grounds of safety or nuisance; that the applicant is a suitable person; and the animal's accommodation is adequate and secure. The Act was updated in 2007, following review and consultation. The Act was updated again in 2010 to allow local authorities to focus their enforcement activity more effectively. The Act's original aim was to ensure that where private individuals keep dangerous wild animals they do so in circumstances which create no risk to the public. Based on available evidence, including the absence of reported attacks on the public by escaped dangerous wild animals, we consider that the Act is fulfilling those objectives. Separately, any evidence that the welfare needs of kept dangerous wild animals are not being met would be a matter for the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and its associated obligations and requirements, which we keep under constant review.

### Police: Per Capita Costs

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the difference in funding per head for police services in (1) urban, and (2) rural, areas; and

what steps they are taking to reduce any such difference. [HL13930]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** On the 4th February 2021, the Government published a total police funding settlement of up to £15.8 billion in 2021/22, an increase of up to £636 million compared to 2020/21. This continued investment shows the Government is committed to supporting the entire policing sector.

The police funding formula remains the most reliable mechanism we have to distribute core grant funding although this Government is alive to the concerns many in the policing sector hold over the current formula and we acknowledge that the current arrangements are out of date. Careful consideration will be given during the upcoming Spending Review and as part of our longer-term vision for policing.

### Poverty: Diseases

*Asked by Baroness Suttie*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the public health impact and (2) the role of UK funding in Product Development Partnerships over the last ten years in tackling poverty-associated diseases such as Tuberculosis. [HL13941]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** UK Government funding by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office to Product Development Partnerships has contributed to 66 new health technologies, including diagnostics, drugs and vaccines being available for diseases and health threats that are underserved by commercial markets. These products have reached over 2.4 billion people around the world. This includes the game changing GenXpert technology to detect TB in 4 hours compared to several weeks previously. The technology was subsequently progressed to diagnose Ebola and COVID-19. This technology was developed with our core support by the Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics and their partners. Since 2005, we are also one of the major donors to the TB Alliance, which has developed new treatments for TB, including the first child-friendly drug regimen and novel treatments for multi-drug resistant TB, such as Pretomanid, which, in combination with 2 other drugs, offers a highly effective, shorter and less toxic treatment option.

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office is a leading supporter of Product Development Partnerships, which bring together partners from the public, private and philanthropic sectors to develop new products in a way that de-links the cost of development from the final cost of product.

### Primary Education: Finance

*Asked by Lord Smith of Finsbury*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what guarantees they have established, if any, that primary schools in

receipt of Space for Sports and the Arts funding since 2003 will have the full duration of the funding honoured. [HL14111]

**Baroness Barran:** Space for Sport & Arts was a funding programme that ran for four years, from 2001 to 2005. Sport England managed the programme, including grant management and awards of funding.

Under the Terms & Conditions of awards, any disposal or change of use of a funded facility at a school requires Sport England consent during the term of the grant (21 years from the date of award acceptance).

### Rural Areas

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have (1) to encourage tourism in rural areas, and (2) to revitalise local rural economies. [HL13931]

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** The Prime Minister set out in the Reopening Roadmap published on 22 February the Government's intention to publish a Tourism Recovery Plan in Spring. We are working with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to ensure tourism in rural areas is embraced and rural organisations are consulted.

We work closely with the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government to ensure that plans to revitalise local economies take into account the needs of rural economies. The UK Levelling Up Fund prospectus sets out how the Fund will help invest in infrastructure that improves everyday life across the UK, including regenerating town centres and high streets, upgrading local transport, and investing in cultural and heritage assets. The UK Community Renewal Fund will support innovative responses to local challenges and local needs in urban, rural and coastal areas across the UK, to help local areas prepare for the introduction of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund from 2022.

### Slavery

*Asked by Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to strengthen the National Referral Mechanism for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery; and if so, how. [HL13907]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** We have introduced a series of reforms to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) since 2017 to improve the identification and support of potential victims of modern slavery.

To achieve quicker and more certain decision-making a new Single Competent Authority (SCA) was launched in April 2019 to handle all NRM cases and provide high quality, timely decisions for victims. Independent Multi-Agency Assurance Panels were also set up to review all negative conclusive grounds decisions on cases referred

directly to the SCA, adding an additional level of scrutiny to such cases.

A new digital referral system was also launched in 2019 to support the NRM process, making it easier for those on the front line to refer victims into support by providing a single point for referrals across the UK.

In July 2020, the Home Office produced an e-learning module to help First Responders identify potential victims of modern slavery and make referrals into the NRM when appropriate to do so. We are committed to working with First Responder Organisations to ensure they have the right training and tools to identify potential victims.

Building on the successes of this work, we are now taking a fresh look at the system to ensure it delivers on its objectives through the NRM Transformation Programme. This Programme will introduce a series of changes to ensure victims have their cases settled promptly, receive support tailored to their recovery needs from the outset, and are empowered to move on with their lives. We also intend to streamline the decision-making process through operational improvements so that victims are identified at the earliest stage and receive the right kind of support at the right time, ensuring decisions taken are robust, effective and meaningful.

Additionally, we are seeking to test an alternative decision-making model for children, to empower local authorities with responsibility for children's social care to make decisions about whether children are victims of modern slavery in conjunction with local safeguarding partners.

### Small Businesses: Cybercrime

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the threat to small businesses from cyber-attacks; and what steps they are taking to support small business to improve their cyber defences. [HL14068]

**Baroness Barran:** The government's [Cyber Security Breaches Survey 2020](#) found almost half (46%) of micro and small businesses reported cyber security breaches or attacks in the past 12 months. The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) 2020 Annual Review identified an increase in ransomware and phishing attacks over the past year.

The National Cyber Security Strategy sets out the government's work to protect the UK online and help ensure all organisations, large and small, are effectively managing their cyber risk. The NCSC, working closely with trade bodies, local initiatives, banks and industry partners, provides a range of actionable guidance, training and easy to implement tools to help small businesses improve their cyber security. Last month, the NCSC launched a state-of-the-art tool which creates a personalised 'Cyber Action Plan' for small businesses as part of the cross-government Cyber Aware campaign.

DCMS is carrying out a review of business resilience and cyber security to identify what more can be done to build cyber resilience across the economy and increase security in supply chains.

### Somalia: Politics and Government

*Asked by The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the postponement of presidential elections in Somalia, what assessment they have made of the (1) political, and (2) security, situation in that country. [HL13915]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Somalia is at a important stage in agreeing an electoral process, which will have broader implications for its political and security development. It is vital that talks resume and leaders come to an agreement on the implementation of an inclusive electoral process, to proceed as soon as possible. The UK, with its international partners, raised concerns over the violence around demonstrations in Mogadishu on 19 February, and called on all parties to maintain calm and exercise restraint to allow political dialogue to advance. We urge Somalia's leaders to reach agreement on the elections, in the interests of the people of Somalia and in order to cement progress towards long-term security and stability.

### South Sudan: Infant Mortality

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of Salisbury*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of efforts to reduce maternal and under-five mortality rates in South Sudan; and what plans they have, if any, to reduce the level of funding provision to the South Sudan Health Pooled Fund. [HL13938]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK-led Health Pooled Fund is supporting activities in South Sudan that are recognised globally as important contributors to reducing maternal and under five mortality rates. As announced last year, the impact of the global pandemic on the UK economy has forced us to take the tough but necessary decision to temporarily reduce how much we spend on Official Development Assistance. The FCDO is reviewing all individual country allocations as part of the Country Business Planning process, including specific implications for all spend in South Sudan and therefore the Health Pooled Fund. These will be communicated to Parliament in due course.

### South Sudan: Peace Negotiations

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of Salisbury*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the progress of the peace process in South Sudan, and (2) the contribution made by the South Sudan Council of Churches' Action Plan for Peace to that process. [HL13936]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The full and inclusive implementation of the 2018 Peace Agreement is a priority for the UK as the best chance for a more stable and prosperous future for the people of South Sudan. We welcome recent progress, including commitment to proceed with transitional justice mechanisms and the formation of regional governance structures. Overall implementation is however slow, with continued delays to tasks such as the unification of armed forces and the appointment of a transitional national legislature contributing to increased levels of violence and a worsening humanitarian situation. Civil Society and faith organisations have an important role in supporting progress on the peace process. This includes work by the South Sudan Council of Churches' under their Action Plan for Peace, which has promoted advocacy, peace and reconciliation, and provided a neutral forum to support dialogue between communities at a national and local level.

### Teachers: Training

*Asked by Baroness Donaghy*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they will ensure (1) the financial sustainability of the Initial Teacher Training (ITT) providers, and (2) their ability to engage in long-term planning will not be jeopardised by the outcome of the ITT market review. [HL13894]

**Baroness Berridge:** The review into initial teacher training (ITT) is focusing on how the ITT sector can provide consistently high-quality training, in line with the Core Content Framework, in a more efficient and effective market.

An expert advisory group is working with the department with the aim of making well informed, evidenced-based recommendations on how to make sure that all trainees receive high-quality evidence-based training, the ITT market maintains the capacity to deliver enough trainees and is accessible to candidates and that the ITT system benefits all schools.

We committed to engaging with the sector in late spring 2021 and we are currently considering a range of engagement opportunities. We will make these opportunities available via the usual means and we expect to report on the review in summer 2021. The government will then consider the Chair's recommendations and advise the sector accordingly at that stage.

*Asked by Baroness Donaghy*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the completion of the Initial Teacher Training (ITT) market review, to confirm whether ITT providers will continue to be able to equip student teachers to (1) critique, (2) question, and (3) contextualise evidence and research relating to children's education and learning. [HL13895]

**Baroness Berridge:** The Initial Teacher Training (ITT) market review is still in progress and we do not yet know what the review will recommend. The review's focus is to

ensure that all ITT trainees have access to high quality training and support across their training year. The government will consider the Chair's recommendations once these are finalised and advise the ITT sector accordingly at that stage.

### Transport: Exhaust Emissions

*Asked by Baroness Randerson*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to implement the recommendation set out in the report by the Climate Change Committee The Sixth Carbon Budget: The UK's path to Net Zero, published in December 2020, to include emissions from international aviation and shipping in their Sixth Carbon Budget. [HL13875]

**Lord Callanan:** The UK plays a leading role in the development of measures driving emissions reduction in the international aviation and shipping sectors at the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) while UK aviation and shipping emissions are covered by our domestic legislation. We are considering all of the CCC's recommendations, including on International Aviation and Shipping, carefully ahead of setting the sixth carbon budget.

### UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

*Asked by Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they intend to publish their response to the List of Issues for the combined 6th and 7th reports under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. [HL13906]

**Baroness Berridge:** This government is fully committed to protecting and promoting children's rights. In 2020 we held a parliamentary reception to celebrate 30 years of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which was ratified in 1991 by the government. We regularly report to the UN Committee on the work we have been doing across the UK to implement the UNCRC and promote children's rights.

We intend to submit our combined sixth and seventh report to the UN Committee in accordance with the timelines prescribed by the Committee, in February 2022.

### Yemen: Humanitarian Aid

*Asked by The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty's Government why they are reducing the amount of humanitarian aid provided to Yemen. [HL13916]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK is facing the worst economic contraction in over 300 years, and a budget deficit of close to £400 billion. As announced last year, given the impact of this global pandemic on the economy and, as a result, the public finances, we will move to a target of spending 0.5% of Gross National

Income as Official Development Assistance (ODA) in 2021.

On 1 March, the Minister of State for Middle East and North Africa announced that the UK will provide at least £87 million to Yemen over the course of our next financial year (2021/22), with the UK contributing over

£1 billion since the conflict began. Our funding will feed an additional 240,000 of the most vulnerable Yemenis every month, support 400 healthcare clinics and provide clean water for 1.6 million people. We will also provide one-off cash support to 1.5 million of Yemen's poorest households to help them buy food and basic supplies.

## Index to Statements and Answers

<b>Written Statements.....1</b>	
Audit and Corporate Governance Reforms ..... 1	Holidays: Repayments ..... 13
COP26 Presidency: Governance, Structure and Parliamentary Accountability ..... 1	Home Education ..... 13
European Union (Withdrawal) Act and Common Frameworks Report ..... 4	Home Office: Equality..... 13
Independent Review into Do Not Attempt Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Orders during COVID-19 Pandemic ..... 4	Institute of Teaching: Degrees ..... 13
Notification to Parliament of a Contingent Liability: Indemnification to CGI IT UK Ltd..... 4	Iran: Education ..... 14
Post Office: Horizon Historical Shortfall Scheme 5	Lex Greensill ..... 14
Refugee Protection and Integration ..... 6	Military Exercises ..... 14
Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme Funding..... 6	National Security: Cross Border Cooperation ... 14
Third Annual Report of the Biometrics and Forensics Ethics Group..... 7	Office for Environmental Protection ..... 14
Transfer of European Bank for Reconstruction and Development Contingent Capital Liability ... 7	Open University..... 15
UK Counter-terrorist Asset Freezing Regime: 1 October 2020 to 31 December 2020..... 8	Palestinians: Refugees ..... 15
<b>Written Answers.....9</b>	Pets ..... 15
Asylum ..... 9	Police: Per Capita Costs ..... 15
Coronavirus: Disease Control..... 9	Poverty: Diseases..... 16
Coronavirus: Vaccination ..... 9	Primary Education: Finance ..... 16
Derelict Land: Prosecutions ..... 9	Rural Areas ..... 16
Dogs: Smuggling ..... 10	Slavery ..... 16
Domestic Premises (Energy Performance) Bill (HL) ..... 10	Small Businesses: Cybercrime ..... 17
Environment Protection: Employment ..... 10	Somalia: Politics and Government ..... 17
Flood Insurance in Doncaster Independent Review ..... 10	South Sudan: Infant Mortality ..... 17
Fly-tipping ..... 11	South Sudan: Peace Negotiations ..... 17
Fracking ..... 11	Teachers: Training ..... 18
GCE A-level and GCSE: Assessments..... 11	Transport: Exhaust Emissions ..... 18
Genetically Modified Organisms ..... 12	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child ..... 18
Green Homes Grant Scheme ..... 12	Yemen: Humanitarian Aid..... 18
High Speed Rail (West Midlands-Crewe) Act 2021 ..... 12	