



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 9 December 2022 and the information is correct at the time of publication (03:27 P.M., 09 December 2022). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

Questions marked thus **[R]** indicate that a relevant interest has been declared.

Questions with identification numbers of **900000 or greater** indicate that the question was originally tabled as an oral question and has since been unstarred.

ANSWERS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ **Business: Cost of Living**

Alison McGovern:

[\[100950\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with businesses in Wirral South on the potential impact of the cost of living crisis on those businesses.

Kevin Hollinrake:

The Government recognises the impact rising prices are having on businesses, including those in Wirral South, and is engaging with businesses across the UK to understand these challenges and explore ways to mitigate them.

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The Government has reversed the National Insurance rise, saving SMEs £4,200 on average, cut fuel duty for 12 months and brought in the Energy Bill Relief Scheme, which is shielding businesses across the country from soaring energy prices, saving some around half of their wholesale energy costs.

We have also announced £13.6 billion of support for businesses over the next five years, reducing the burden of business rates for SMEs.

Seema Malhotra:

[\[100983\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether he has had recent discussions with businesses in Feltham and Heston constituency on the potential impact of the cost of living crisis on those businesses.

Kevin Hollinrake:

The Government recognises the impact rising prices are having on businesses, including those in Feltham and Heston, and is engaging with businesses across the UK to understand these challenges and explore ways to mitigate them.

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The Government has reversed the National Insurance rise, saving SMEs £4,200 on average, cut fuel duty for 12 months and brought in the Energy Bill Relief Scheme, which is shielding businesses across the country from soaring energy prices, saving some around half of their wholesale energy costs.

We have also announced £13.6 billion of support for businesses over the next five years, reducing the burden of business rates for SMEs.

■ Business: Equality**Alison McGovern:**[\[100954\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with (a) the Minister for Women and Equalities and (b) Cabinet colleagues on improving (i) access to entrepreneurial career pathways and (ii) business ownership for people with protected characteristics in Wirral South.

Kevin Hollinrake:

The Government is fully committed to supporting businesses and creating the best conditions for enterprise so that everyone, whatever their background, has the means and know-how to start and grow a business.

We are supporting early-stage entrepreneurs from all backgrounds through the Start-Up Loans Company which provides funding and intensive support to new entrepreneurs. Since 2012, 40% of Start Up Loans have gone to women, worth over £341m and 20% of loans worth 183m have gone to Black, Asian, and Ethnic-minority business. (as at October 2022). 106 SMEs in Wirral South have received loans to the value of £1,014,500 as of October 2022.

■ Business: Ownership**Alison McGovern:**[\[100953\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many and what proportion of businesses are owned by women in Wirral South.

Kevin Hollinrake:

In the UK in 2021, 19% of SMEs with employees (a three-percentage point increase on 2020) and 20% of firms with no employees (21% in 2020) were female-led. The government does not hold regional data relating to the proportion of female-led business.

The Rose Review is supported by the industry-led 'Rose Review Council for Investing in Female Entrepreneurs' that aims to coordinate industry-led action to increase investment into female-led businesses.

The Government has set an ambition to increase the number of female entrepreneurs by half by 2030, equivalent to 600,000 new entrepreneurs.

■ Consumer Goods: Safety**Seema Malhotra:**[\[100976\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will take steps to introduce new rules on product safety.

Kevin Hollinrake:

The Government is undertaking a review of the current product safety framework which is heavily based on the EU model. The Review seeks to reform the framework to ensure it is fit for the digital age and better meets the needs of UK consumers and

businesses. A call for evidence was run last year and the Government response was published on 11 November 2021. We are currently finalising a consultation on proposals for reform.

■ **Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Accountancy**

John Cryer:

[\[102746\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what the (a) nature and (b) value was of all (i) contracts, (ii) consultancies and (iii) other services placed with the accountancy firms (A) Deloitte & Touche, (B) Ernst & Young, (C) KPMG and (D) PricewaterhouseCoopers in each year since 2010-11 by (1) their Department, (2) any predecessor Departments and (3) departmental agencies.

Kevin Hollinrake:

Details of post-2016 Government contracts above £10,000 can found on Contracts Finder. <https://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder>

Information prior to 2016 is not held centrally and can only be obtained disproportionately.

■ **Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy: Chief Scientific Advisers**

Greg Clark:

[\[100915\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many meetings (a) they and (b) other Ministers in their Department have had with the Department's Chief Scientific Adviser from (i) 1 December 2021 to 28 February 2022, (ii) 1 March to 31 May 2022 and (iii) 1 June to 31 August 2022.

George Freeman:

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) draws from a range of scientific advice and expertise. I meet with both the BEIS Chief Scientific Adviser and the Government Chief Scientific Adviser regularly. In line with the practice of successive administrations, details of internal meetings are not normally disclosed.

■ **Equality: Postal Services**

Mr Virendra Sharma:

[\[104120\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential equality implications of the Royal Mail Group's proposal to move to five-day letter delivery.

Kevin Hollinrake:

The Government has no current plans to change the statutory minimum requirements of the universal postal service which are set out in the Postal Services Act 2011.

The Government remains committed to ensuring that the universal service obligation remains affordable and accessible to all users, and that it is financially sustainable in the longer-term.

■ EU Law: Business**Sir John Hayes:**[\[100889\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an estimate of what the cost to businesses was of complying with EU regulations under each Government Department between 2001 and 2015; and how much and what proportion of those costs were from regulations which the UK was obligated to follow as a condition of its membership of the EU and which were deemed out of scope for repeal.

Kevin Hollinrake:

The Government does not hold this information centrally and on a fully comparable basis, as legislation to implement obligations arising from EU regulations, decisions and directives was exempt from the Better Regulation scrutiny process.

However, going forwards the Retained EU Law (REUL) programme and related departmental appraisals will seek to assess the costs to business from changes to REUL as it currently stands. This appraisal may provide suggestive evidence on retrospective costs prior to EU withdrawal.

■ Hospitality Industry: Vacancies**Anthony Mangnall:**[\[101067\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will take steps to help the hospitality industry to tackle shortages in the workforce.

Kevin Hollinrake:

This Department is working with the Hospitality Sector Council to deliver on our Hospitality Strategy to improve the resilience of hospitality businesses.

To help address the immediate challenges of labour shortages in the hospitality sector, the Department for Work and Pensions has been working hard to fill ongoing vacancies by using work coaches to help find local talent and Plans for Jobs programmes, such as Kickstart and Sector-based Work Academy Programmes.

■ Land Registry**Stephen Morgan:**[\[101050\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his department has made on the causes of delays for (a) applications for charging orders to be removed and (b) other applications at HM Land Registry; and when he expects these to be addressed.

Kevin Hollinrake:

Despite extremely high levels of transactions in the property market in recent times, HM Land Registry has continued to deliver the most essential services required to support the property market.

HM Land Registry received approximately 1.8 million more service requests in 2021 than in 2019. As a result of this demand, routine applications are taking longer to

process. Any application that is urgent can be expedited free of charge and will be completed within 10 days.

Improving speed of service is the top priority for HM Land Registry and it is addressing this urgently through a combination of recruitment, training, and automation.

■ **Royal Mail: Standards**

Beth Winter: [\[101074\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what recent discussions he has had with OFCOM on the delivery of the universal postal service minimum requirement obligations by the Royal Mail.

Kevin Hollinrake:

Ministers and officials meet Ofcom regularly to discuss a range of issues in relation to the delivery of the universal postal service by Royal Mail.

■ **Small Businesses: Cost of Living**

Alison McGovern: [\[100949\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how many SMEs in Wirral South have received Government funding for support during the cost of living crisis.

Kevin Hollinrake:

The Government recognises the impact rising prices are having on businesses, including those in Wirral South.

Businesses in Wirral South will have benefitted from the Government's reversal of the National Insurance rise, saving SMEs on average £4,200, cut fuel duty for 12 months and the Energy Bill Relief Scheme, to protect SMEs from high energy costs over the winter. The Employment Allowance was increased to £5,000 from April and we have continued to provide business rate relief worth over £7bn, freezing the business rates multiplier for a further year.

The Government is providing financial support - 106 SMEs in Wirral South have received Start Up Loans to the value of £1,014,500 as of October 2022.

■ **Technology: Copyright**

Sarah Olney: [\[101039\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the potential impact of proposals on the expansion of the text and data mining exception on (a) UK and (b) non-UK based technology companies.

George Freeman:

The proposed exception will only apply to copying for data mining conducted in the UK. A non-UK- technology company may seek to benefit from the exception by

basing their business in the UK or the part which conducts data mining. An impact assessment will be published alongside the legislation when laid.

■ Zero Hours Contracts

Alison McGovern:

[100957]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make an assessment of the adequacy of employment (a) legislation and (b) guidance in ensuring that employees on zero-hour contracts receive sufficient notice of their shift hours.

Kevin Hollinrake:

Zero hours contracts are an important part of the UK's flexible labour market, for both employers to manage changing demand and for individuals who may need to balance work around other commitments such as childcare and study.

We have made good progress in bringing forward measures that add flexibility for workers while ensuring the protection of employment rights including banning exclusivity clauses in Zero Hours Contracts in 2015. In 2020, the Government introduced the right for all workers to receive a day one written statement of rights, setting out leave entitlements and pay. This ensures all workers have transparent information about their employment relationship.

CABINET OFFICE

■ GREAT: Qatar

Florence Eshalomi:

[104455]

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the cost to the public purse was of The Garden of GREAT at the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar as part of the GREAT Britain and Northern Ireland Campaign.

Jeremy Quin:

Cabinet Office publishes expenditure, including on the GREAT campaign, on a rolling monthly basis on gov.uk as part of routine government transparency arrangements. This can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cabinet-office-spend-data>.

DEFENCE

■ Antiaircraft Missiles

John Healey:

[104136]

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what is the (a) in service and (b) out of service date for Starstreak.

Alex Chalk:

The requested information can be found below:

In service date - 1995

Out of service date - 2026

■ Antitank Missiles**John Healey:**[\[104135\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what is the (a) in service and (b) out of service date for NLAWs.

Alex Chalk:

The requested information can be found below:

In service date - 2009

Out of service date - 2029

■ Armed Forces: Housing**Luke Pollard:**[\[104385\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when he plans to decide whether to extend the Future Accommodation Model across the rest of the UK.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The Future Accommodation Model (FAM) pilot, which is designed to improve and enhance the Defence accommodation offer, continues to run at HMNB Clyde, Aldershot Garrison, and RAF Wittering. We will take the lessons from these pilot sites to shape future iterations of the Defence Accommodation Strategy, continually evolving and improving our accommodation offer.

A decision on FAM's future is expected in early 2023. A comprehensive change and communications plan will support the end of the pilot and the introduction of the new accommodation offer which is expected to launch from autumn 2023. If a decision is taken to develop a different accommodation policy to FAM, there will be continuity for personnel who are already receiving FAM accommodation allowances.

■ Challenger Tanks**Mr Virendra Sharma:**[\[104153\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 1 December 2022 to Question 97545 on Challenger Tanks, when he expects that review to conclude.

Alex Chalk:

The disposals plan is reviewed regularly as part of routine capability management. A decision on what will happen to the remaining platforms will be taken once the options have been considered.

■ Navantia**Mr Kevan Jones:** [\[104111\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 1 December 2022 to Question 94705, who owns Navantia S.A., S.M.E.

Alex Chalk:

Navantia S.A., S.M.E. is owned by the Sociedad Estatal de Participaciones Industriales (SEPI).

■ Veterans: Cost of Living Payments**John Healey:** [\[104133\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many veterans are eligible for Disability Cost of Living payments.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) is responsible for the administration and payment of Constant Attendance Allowance and War Pension Mobility Supplement. 5,323 Veterans who were in receipt of either of these two allowances and not in receipt of any of the other disability benefits received the £150 payment from the Ministry of Defence.

If Veterans were in receipt of the following other qualifying disability benefits they would have been eligible for the £150 from the relevant responsible authority instead (Department of Work and Pensions or Scottish Government): Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payment, Attendance Allowance, Scottish Disability Benefits (Adult Disability Payment and Child Disability Payment), and Armed Forces Independence Payment.

As Veterans are not tracked once they leave service, it is not known how many of the recipients of the £150 payment from the DWP or Scottish Government were Veterans.

■ Veterans: Identity Cards**John Healey:** [\[104132\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 31 October 2022 to Question 68602 on Veterans: Identity Cards, if he will set out the number of veterans ID cards distributed by region.

Dr Andrew Murrison:

The attached table details the breakdown of Veterans ID cards issued upon discharge, within each local authority since its creation in December 2018. Please note that a tilde ~ represents less than five people.

Attachments:

1. Distribution of regional veterans ID cards [\[20221207- PQN_22-23_2022_14591 \(104132\)- Healey- Supporting table.xlsx\]](#)

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT**■ Gambling: Advertising****Jessica Morden:****[102808]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if the Government will take steps to reduce the number of gambling advertisements on television.

Jessica Morden:**[102810]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if she will have discussions with the BBC Board on seeking to ensure that BBC presenters do not appear in gambling advertisements on commercial channels.

Paul Scully:

Broadcasters have discretion over how advertising breaks are set and what adverts are broadcast, as long as they comply with the advertising codes of practice issued by the Broadcast Committee of Advertising Practice (BCAP) and the Committees of Advertising Practice (CAP), which are enforced by the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA). These codes set rules such as preventing gambling adverts from airing around any programmes that particularly appeal to children. All gambling advertising, wherever it appears, is subject to strict controls on content and placement enforced by the Advertising Standards Authority and Ofcom.

The gambling industry's own Code for Socially Responsible Advertising also includes restrictions on televised advertising, such as a ban on showing most forms of gambling advertising before 9 pm, and the 'whistle-to-whistle' ban preventing betting ads from airing during and immediately before and after live sporting events.

The Committee of Advertising Practice has recently made changes to the advertising codes in response to research on features of advertising that appeal to children and vulnerable people. These include banning content that over-emphasises skill or downplays risk involved in betting, as well as the use of content or persons who have 'strong appeal' to children, such as influencers or top-flight footballers. The Code in relation to broadcast advertising can be found here:

https://www.asa.org.uk/type/broadcast/code_section/17.html

The government has not engaged with the BBC on the subject of its presenters appearing in gambling advertisements. The BBC is independent from the government and any additional rules or guidelines specifically for BBC staff would be a matter for the BBC to decide.

The government is currently reviewing the Gambling Act 2005 to ensure it is fit for the digital age. As part of its broad scope, the Gambling Act Review will look at the impacts of advertising and marketing by gambling operators, wherever it appears. We will publish a White Paper outlining our conclusions in the coming weeks.

■ ICT: Innovation**Chi Onwurah:** [\[104199\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent steps her Department has taken in helping to support the development of exascale supercomputing technology.

Chi Onwurah: [\[104200\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what recent estimate her Department has made of the size of the UK's exascale supercomputing technology sector in comparison to that in (a) the United States, (b) Japan and (c) Europe.

Paul Scully:

At present, the UK does not have exascale capability. Exascale systems are at an early stage of deployment globally. The US' first exascale system, Frontier, was brought online earlier this year. As for Japan and the EU, they have not reached exascale capability yet. The first EU's exascale system, Jupiter, is expected to be deployed in 2023.

In September 2021, DCMS took on responsibility for coordination of activity and policy development for large-scale computing (LSC).

The Future of Compute review, independently led by Professor Zoubin Ghahramani, will build on the 2021 report by the Government Office for Science ([Large-scale computing: the case for greater UK coordination](#)) which set out the building blocks to creating a world-class computing ecosystem. The Future of Compute review will produce recommendations on the UKs compute capability over the next decade and the interventions required to ensure that UK researchers and businesses can fully exploit world-class compute infrastructure to support science, innovation and growth.

The Future of Compute review will contain an overview of the international advanced compute landscape. Ahead of the review's publication, the [Top500 list](#) provides an up-to-date assessment of international compute capabilities and a ranking of the most powerful systems globally.

The review will be published in due course.

■ Sportsgrounds: Utilities**Conor McGinn:** [\[104331\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what support is being given to (a) football clubs and (b) rugby league clubs who own their stadium to assist with increased utility costs.

Stuart Andrew:

The Government recognises the importance of football and rugby league clubs, both professional and at grassroots level, which provide valuable opportunities for communities to come together and to take part in sport.

We understand that the rise in utility costs is having an impact on organisations of all sizes. In September we announced the Energy Bill Relief Scheme, under which businesses and other non-domestic energy users are offered support. This includes support to football and rugby league clubs.

After an initial six months of the scheme, the Government will provide ongoing focused support for vulnerable industries. A review is currently underway to determine where this should be targeted.

■ Telecommunications: Infrastructure

Stella Creasy: [\[104158\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether her Department has plans to (a) reform, (b) revoke or (c) retain the Communications (Access to Infrastructure) Regulations 2016.

Julia Lopez:

In 2020, the Government launched a Review of The Communications (Access to Infrastructure) Regulations 2016 (“ATI Regulations”) to explore whether improvements could be made to further boost investment in infrastructure, and encourage the use of infrastructure sharing to deploy telecoms networks.

In our response to the call for evidence published in June 2020, the Government stated it would not be making any major changes to the ATI Regulations at this time. The Government believed that doing so would be disproportionate given the low levels of interest from industry. However, we have created powers through the Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Act to change the ATI regulations via secondary legislation in future if necessary.

The Government wants to make it as easy as possible for companies to build out fibre networks. Sharing infrastructure reduces the overall impact on society by reducing the need for new poles or digging out new ducts for cables.

The Government's review of the Access to Infrastructure regulations can be found [here](#).

EDUCATION

■ Adult Education and Apprentices: Finance

Emma Hardy: [\[101047\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will set out the total spending on (a) adult education and (b) apprenticeships in each of the last five years.

Robert Halfon:

Departmental spending on adult education is reported through publication of Annual Reports and Accounts. These are available for each of the last five financial years with the most recent report published for 2020/21. These can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dfe-annual-reports>.

Spend on apprenticeships is reported in the Education & Skills Funding Agency Annual Report and Accounts. The latest report, for 2021/22, is published here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-and-skills-funding-agency-esfa-annual-report-and-accounts-2021-to-2022>.

The table below shows the department's ring-fenced apprenticeships spend for the last five years.

FINANCIAL YEAR	TOTAL RING-FENCED APPRENTICESHIPS SPEND (£ MILLION)
2017/18	1,586
2018/19	1,738
2019/20	1,919
2020/21	1,863
2021/22	2,455

■ Childcare: Students

Grahame Morris:

[\[104182\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will extend the 30 hours free childcare provision to student (a) midwives, (b) nurses and (c) paramedics.

Claire Coutinho:

The government is not currently planning to extend 30 hours free childcare. The department recognises the value of parents continuing in education and provides a range of support for students in further or higher education to support them with childcare.

Support available to students includes the Childcare Grant and Parents' Learning Allowance. These schemes are available for full-time students with dependent children, including student nurses, midwives and paramedics.

For additional financial support to help with childcare costs, since September 2020, all eligible nursing, midwifery, paramedic and other allied health profession students have received a non-repayable training grant of a minimum of £5,000 per academic year. Eligible students with child dependants can also access a further £2,000 per academic year.

Additionally, all parents are eligible for the universal 15 hours of free early education which is available to all three and four-year olds, regardless of family circumstances.

Working parents of three and four-year-olds may also be eligible for an additional 15 hours of free childcare if they earn the equivalent of 16 hours a week at national minimum/living wage and under £100,000 per year. Students who participate in paid

work in addition to their studies and meet the income requirements will be eligible for the additional hours.

Parents who meet these income criteria may also be able to receive support from Tax-Free Childcare, which can be worth up to £2,000 per year for children aged 0-11, or up to £4,000 per year for disabled children aged 0-16.

Further information on the childcare offers available to parents can be accessed at: <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>.

The department remains committed to improving the cost, choice, and availability of childcare, and we continue to look at ways to make childcare more affordable and to encourage families to use government-funded support they are entitled to.

■ Disability and Special Educational Needs: Children and Young People

Steve McCabe:

[\[102763\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps the Department is taking to improve the provision of education for children or young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Claire Coutinho:

On 29 March, the department published the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) green paper, which sets out our plans to improve the experience and outcomes for children and young people with SEND and those who need AP, within a fairer and more financially sustainable system.

The consultation closed on 22 July. The department is currently reviewing the feedback received and using this, along with continued engagement with the system, to inform the next stage of delivering improvements for children, young people and their families.

The department is committed to publishing a full response to the green paper in an improvement plan early in early 2023.

The department will continue to support the system in the immediate term to deliver change and continue to improve the experience and outcomes for children and young people with SEND and those who need AP.

■ Further Education: Energy

Emma Hardy:

[\[101048\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment her Department has made of the potential impact of removing energy cost support after April 2023 on the finances of further education colleges.

Robert Halfon:

The department knows that alongside pay and inflationary pressures, one of the biggest challenges facing some colleges is the rising cost of energy. We are keeping

under review the potential impacts of the rising cost of energy on providers across the department's remit.

Colleges are autonomous institutions responsible for their own financial sustainability and are taking actions to respond to inflationary pressures, for example through reducing energy consumption.

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has recently outlined the range of support on energy cost increases that will be available for businesses, the public sector and households. As part of that, the Energy Bill Relief Scheme will provide a price reduction to ensure that all businesses and other non-domestic customers, including colleges, are protected from excessively high energy bills over this winter. Discounts will be applied to energy usage initially between 1 October 2022 and 31 March 2023.

Schools and colleges in England will also be allocated a share of £500 million in capital funding in financial year 2022/23. This comprises £447 million for schools and sixth form colleges and £53 million for FE colleges, to spend on energy efficiency upgrades.

This will not only help schools and colleges save money, but it will also make them more energy efficient during the cold period and increase winter resilience for future years. A further education college group will receive £290,000 on average from that additional funding. Allocations were published on 6 December 2022 to help colleges plan, and payments are expected to be made in January 2023.

The department is investing £3.8 billion more in further education and skills over the Parliament as a whole to ensure people can access high-quality training and education that leads to good jobs, addresses skills gaps, boosts productivity and supports levelling up. This will support the sector to reform and deliver the technical, skilled education employers want and our economy needs.

■ Schools: Physical Education and Sports

Dan Carden:

[\[104371\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on (a) protecting and (b) increasing funding for school (a) physical education and (b) sport.

Nick Gibb:

The Department announced on 25 June 2022 that funding for the Primary PE and Sport Premium will continue at £320 million for the 2022/23 academic year. The premium is used by primary schools to make improvements to the quality of their PE, school sport and physical activity provisions.

Officials from the Department for Education work closely with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport and the Department of Health and Social Care on the overall strategy for sport. Ministers will work together to consider arrangements for

the Primary PE and Sport Premium and other funding for school sport for the 2023/24 academic year and beyond. This funding will be announced as soon as possible.

■ Teachers: Veterans

Mr Kevan Jones:

[\[104126\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many bursaries have been awarded under the Troops to Teachers scheme since January 2022.

Nick Gibb:

Since January 2022, four trainees have been awarded a bursary under the Troops to Teachers undergraduate bursary scheme.

Veterans who have a degree are able to undertake postgraduate initial teacher training (ITT) courses, where they can access bursaries and scholarships of up to £29,000 available on these routes into teaching.

The Department is committed to further promoting opportunities for service leavers to get into teaching. Many veterans utilise these services to support service leavers into ITT each year. As part of the cross government Veterans Action Plan, the Department has committed to increase collaboration with the Ministry of Defence to promote opportunities for service leavers to get into teaching, increasing signposting, events, and communications tailored to veterans. The Department also encourages them to take up services such as 'Get School Experience' and the Teacher Training Adviser service to help them towards a career in teaching.

■ T-levels

Mr Laurence Robertson:

[\[104105\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to help encourage the take up of T-levels by schools; and if she will make a statement.

Robert Halfon:

Over 200 schools are either already offering T Levels, or plan to start delivery over the next two years. The department wants as many young people as possible to benefit from T Levels and are working with the Careers and Enterprise Company, Apprenticeship Support and Knowledge programme, academy trusts and other representative bodies to ensure that schools are aware of these high-quality technical education courses. Resources have been developed for teachers and careers advisers to help them understand T Levels, which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/t-levels-resources-for-teachers-and-careers-advisers>.

The department has also strengthened Provider Access Legislation to specify that schools must provide at least six encounters with providers of technical education and apprenticeships for all pupils during school years 8-13, helping learners to understand and take up technical education options, such as T Levels.

There is extensive support available for providers. The department has made over £400 million capital funding available for high quality facilities and equipment, invested £240 million over the past 4 years to help providers prepare to deliver high

quality placements, and invested £23 million since 2019 to help upskill the workforce. The department has published the process for registering to deliver T Levels from 2024. Information about how to register can be accessed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-register-to-deliver-t-levels-from-2024-to-2025-academic-year>.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

■ Internal Drainage Boards: Disclosure of Information

Julian Sturdy:

[100941]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether the Government make an assessment of the potential merits of increasing the transparency of internal drainage boards.

Rebecca Pow:

Internal drainage boards (IDBs) are independent, locally funded and operated, statutory public bodies, with responsibility for water level management and flood risk in their areas (predominately low-lying areas across England). There are currently 112 IDBs in England.

Each IDB has a management board, overseeing operations, and ensuring good governance arrangements, including management of public finances. The management board is made up of members representing the beneficiaries of the IDBs' work. The majority of IDBs have their own websites and they are encouraged to make minutes of meetings, financial reports and programmes of their works available to the public.

As independent public bodies, IDBs are accountable to the communities they serve, as well as coming under the remit of the Local Government Ombudsman, the new Office for Environmental Protection, and they must comply with other public body duties e.g. around financial audits and accountancy, under the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014. Each year these audits are published and we will explore any qualified opinions from an auditor with the Association of Drainage Authorities and the relevant IDBs.

■ Water Companies: Finance

John McNally:

[97619]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether her Department is taking to increase the (a) transparency and (b) standardisation of incumbent water companies' bulk supply and discharge tariffs.

Rebecca Pow:

The Government is committed to ensuring that the water industry offers a stable, predictable and transparent charging regime for bulk supply and discharge.

We updated our charging guidance to Ofwat in 2016 and provided further supplementary guidance to the regulator in 2018. It can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/water-industry-charging-guidance-to-ofwat>

Ofwat, the independent economic regulator for the water industry in England and Wales, must have regard to our guidance in their regulation of water companies in England. They set out how they regulate bulk supply and discharge charges in their charging rules. Ofwat's charging rules were updated last year, taking effect in April 2022. These updates simplified the publishing deadlines for charges and introduced a new requirement on English water companies to use standardised terms and worked examples in their charging arrangements for developer services.

Bulk supply and discharge charging guidance is a devolved matter in Wales and Scotland. Welsh government's charging guidance to Ofwat can be found at [Water charging guidance | GOV.WALES](#) Scottish government's charging guidance is issued directly by Scottish Water, and can be found at [Microsoft Word - Part 1 Wholesale Charges Scheme 2022-23 - Non TC - Jan 4.2% \(scottishwater.co.uk\)](#)

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

■ AIDS and HIV Infection: Children

Florence Eshalomi: [\[104379\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to end HIV and AIDS in children around the world.

Florence Eshalomi: [\[104380\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to end HIV and AIDS in women and girls around the world.

Mr Andrew Mitchell:

As part of efforts to end the preventable deaths of mothers, newborns and children, the UK funds UNAIDS, the Robert Carr Fund and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. On 8th December, Minister of State Mitchell met with Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director of UNAIDS, and discussed our shared priorities on gender equality and the importance of this for progress on HIV. Our recent £1 billion pledge to the Global Fund will help to save over 1 million lives and avert over 28 million new infections across the three diseases, and will help to provide medicine for 170,000 mothers to prevent transmission of HIV to their babies. The UK also funds research on HIV and AIDS, such as the development, through the International Partnership on Microbiocides, of the dapivirine ring. This is the first long-acting HIV prevention product for women of its kind. The UK also invests in health systems strengthening to improve access to quality health services for all, including services for the prevention of HIV and to reduce AIDS related deaths.

■ China: London Policing College**Sir Iain Duncan Smith:****[30976]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what information she holds on whether the London Police College which is funded by UK aid money previously had links to the People's Public Security University of China.

Anne-Marie Trevelyan:

The Government has robust processes in place to ensure that all projects funded by UK aid meet our human rights obligations and values. This includes publicly available HMG guidance

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/583304/OSJA_Guidance_2017.pdf) that sets out the human rights risks that must be considered prior to providing any justice or security sector assistance.

We are aware of concerns raised by a recent report from Freedom from Torture regarding a British Council partnership with London Policing College (LPC). This project was part of a regional programme that included efforts to reduce human rights violations and other malpractice through better policing. Neither the Xinjiang Policing College, nor the People's Public Security University of China participated in the project, and no funds were distributed to any overseas institutions. The LPC have now ceased all programme partnerships in China.

■ Development Aid**Florence Eshalomi:****[104378]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether his Department is taking steps to work with community-led organisations to develop measurement tools based on programme implementation data to identify programmes that are suitable for (a) investment and (b) scale-up.

Mr Andrew Mitchell:

The UK's International Development Strategy recognises the importance of locally-led decision-making - to give those who benefit from our programmes a voice in what we do and how we do it.

The FCDO's Official Development Assistance (ODA) programming decisions are delegated to those closest to delivery, working with local organisations to assess emerging evidence and programme performance.

Our approach to annual programme monitoring ensures that teams look at the learning being built through delivery and at programme delivery against objectives. This enables informed decisions on future changes to the programme, including on possible scale-up. All programme annual reviews are published on Dev Tracker (devtracker.gov.uk).

The FCDO are developing an advisory panel which will include local and UK based organisations who will represent community led organisations. The advisory panel will

support the FCDO in developing our approach to working with small organisations. We will test our thinking and approaches with this group before implementing changes to approach. So far over 100 organisations have expressed an interest in becoming part of this advisory panel.

■ Development Aid: Family Planning

Mr Virendra Sharma: [\[104172\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether his Department is taking steps to ensure (a) family planning and (b) sexual and reproductive health and rights are funding priorities for in-country programmes.

Mr Andrew Mitchell:

The UK is proud to defend and promote universal and comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and will continue working with other countries to protect gender equality in international agreements. Most recently, the UK co-led a cross-regional joint statement on SRHR, delivered at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Third Committee for Human Rights, signed by 71 countries.

At the 2017 Family Planning Summit, the UK publicly committed to spend an average of £225 million on family planning each year to 2022. The UK has exceeded this commitment, spending an average of approximately £246 million every year between April 2017 and March 2022. New UK funding to the Global Family Planning Partnership 'FP2030' prioritises in-country programmes in regions including North, West, and Central Africa; East and Southern Africa; Asia and the Pacific; and Latin America and the Caribbean.

■ Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office: Chief Scientific Advisers

Greg Clark: [\[100925\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many meetings (a) they and (b) other Ministers in their Department have had with the Department's Chief Scientific Adviser from (i) 1 December 2021 to 28 February 2022, (ii) 1 March to 31 May 2022 and (iii) 1 June to 31 August 2022.

Mr Andrew Mitchell:

The Foreign Secretary was not in post during the time periods listed in the question. Between 1 December 2021 and 28 February 2022 the former Minister for Africa (Vicky Ford MP) met with the Chief Scientific Adviser once. During the period 1 March to 31 May 2022 former Minister for Asia (Amanda Milling MP) met with the Chief Scientific Adviser five times and former Minister for Africa (Vicky Ford MP) four times. During the period 1 June to 31 August 2022 former Minister for Development (Vicky Ford MP) met with the Chief Scientific Adviser on two occasions.

The meetings included virtual meetings, in-person briefings and group meetings.

The Chief Scientific Adviser provides all Ministers with regular written submissions and briefings on science and research activities.

■ Human Rights: AIDS and HIV Infection**Florence Eshalomi:** [\[104377\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps he is taking to help countries impliment legal reforms that would help end AIDS and HIV amongst the (a) LGBT+ community (b) women and (c) migrants.

Mr Andrew Mitchell:

Our funding to the Robert Carr Fund and to UNAIDS helps to support legal and policy reform to combat stigma and discrimination and to improve access to HIV services for those most at risk. Addressing stigma and discrimination and ensuring equality of access to HIV prevention, testing and treatment services is critical to the global HIV response. The UK is a champion for human rights. We support the strategy of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria with its focus on addressing inequities and structural drivers of HIV infection and AIDS-related deaths including legal barriers.

■ Mauritius: Piracy**Daniel Kawczynski:** [\[100914\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what funding has been provided to Mauritius to prosecute suspected Somali pirates captured by the Royal Navy in the Indian Ocean, since the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on this issue in 2012.

Mr Andrew Mitchell:

In 2013 the then Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Alistair Burt, announced a £2.25 million package supporting anti-piracy efforts in the Indian Ocean region. As part of this, £650,000 was allocated to Mauritius for the funding of a new courtroom facility equipped to handle piracy prosecutions. The announcement can be found on GOV.UK (<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/uk-to-allocate-further-funding-for-work-against-piracy>).

■ Russia: Human Rights**Tulip Siddiq:** [\[101029\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to help support the human rights of people in Russia opposing the war in Ukraine.

Leo Docherty:

We continue to call on the Russian Government to comply with its international commitments on respecting human rights.

With international partners, the UK has invoked the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe's (OSCE) Moscow Mechanism. At the OSCE ministerial on 1 December, the Foreign Secretary referred to the reports of the Moscow Mechanism,

which have detailed the atrocities of Russia's armed forces in Ukraine, including torture, executing civilians, unlawful detention, enforced disappearances and countless other breaches of international humanitarian law. We are taking forward the Moscow Mechanism's recommendations: we have helped to secure a UNHRC special rapporteur and we stand in solidarity with human rights defenders.

We continue to attend the trials of human rights defenders in Russia, whilst holding human rights violators to account through sanctions regimes.

■ **Russia: United Nations**

Julian Sturdy: [\[99819\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will make it his policy to advocate for the expulsion of Russia from the United Nations.

Leo Docherty:

The UK has led efforts across the United Nations (UN) and the wider multilateral system to protest and call out Russia's actions in Ukraine. Russia's invasion of Ukraine is a clear violation of the UN Charter. We used our Presidency of the UN Security Council (UNSC) in April to highlight and condemn Russia's atrocities, rebut its disinformation, maintain international pressure on Russia and give a platform to Ukrainian voices. The suspension or expulsion of a Member State from the UN requires a decision by the General Assembly, upon the recommendation of the UNSC. Should the threshold of nine 'yes' votes from the UNSC's 15 members be cleared, Russia and China would veto such a recommendation.

■ **Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya**

Wayne David: [\[102838\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, when he last met with Belarusian opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya; and when he next intends to do so.

Wayne David: [\[102839\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether the UK Government is taking steps to support (a) Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya and (b) the opposition movement in Belarus.

Leo Docherty:

Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya last visited the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office on 9 March 2022, where she met the Rt. Hon. James Cleverly, then Minister for Europe. Although there are currently no firm plans in place for a future visit, the UK remains in regular contact with Mrs Tsikhanouskaya and other prominent Belarusian civil society figures.

The UK Government continues to urge the Belarusian authorities to end their repression of their own citizens, enter into an inclusive dialogue with the democratic

opposition and civil society, and offer the Belarusian people the genuine choice of government that they both want and deserve.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ Better Care Fund

Rachael Maskell: [\[99910\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the Better Care Fund.

Helen Whately:

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a review of the Better Care Fund (BCF), which concluded that it encouraged the local integration of health and social care services. The review also found that the BCF improved delayed discharge and supported delivery of services such as reablement, housing adaptations and step-up care.

■ Cancer: Greater London

Andrew Rosindell: [\[92132\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Answer of 10 November to Question 80646, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of cancer patient outcomes for hospitals under the North East London Clinical Commissioning Group.

Helen Whately:

In North East London, the one year cancer survival rate has improved from 58.9% in 2004 to 74.1% in 2019.

■ Cancer: Health Services

Dame Caroline Dinéage: [\[98731\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of workforce pressures within the NHS on people living with cancer.

Helen Whately:

No specific assessment has been made.

■ Cancer: Waiting Lists

Dame Caroline Dinéage: [\[98729\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if the Government will publish a sustainable and funded plan for the cancer workforce to ensure the training and retention of more healthcare professionals to tackle the Cancer backlog.

Helen Whately:

Health Education England is implementing the priorities in the Cancer Workforce Plan Phase 1 and is investing an additional £50 million in 2022/23 to further expand the cancer and diagnostics workforce.

Chi Onwurah:[\[98886\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the potential impact of missed NHS cancer referral targets on patient health.

Helen Whately:

No formal assessment has been made.

We have allocated more than £8 billion from 2022/23 to 2024/25, in addition to the £2 billion Elective Recovery Fund and £700 million Targeted Investment Fund already made available in 2021/2022 to increase elective activity, including cancer services.

Care Workers: Pay**Rachael Maskell:**[\[99905\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of taking legislative steps to introduce a minimum hourly rate for social care workers to help tackle shortages in that labour market.

Helen Whately:

No specific assessment has been made.

Care Workers: Vacancies**Derek Thomas:**[\[99936\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of staff vacancies in the care sector that resulted from policy on vaccination status; and what steps he is taking to encourage staff to return to the profession.

Helen Whately:

No specific assessment has been made.

We launched our new domestic national recruitment Made with Care campaign on 2 November 2022, highlighting the extraordinary work that care workers do to attract both former care workers and new entrants into the sector.

Cataracts: Greater Manchester**Navendu Mishra:**[\[103008\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will make an estimate of the number of successful cataract operations in (a) Stepping Hill Hospital and (b) across all NHS hospitals in Greater Manchester.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 8 December 2022]: This information is not collected in the format requested.

■ Cervical Cancer

Sir Stephen Timms: [\[102752\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what progress his department has made on WHO targets to eliminate cervical cancer as a public health threat by 2030.

Sir Stephen Timms: [\[102753\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to develop UK-wide policy for the elimination of all HPV-related cancers, and if he will make a statement.

Helen Whately:

[Holding answer 8 December 2022]: Each nation of the United Kingdom has a national human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination programme and a national cervical screening programme. In England, there is a universal HPV immunisation offer for all school aged children aged between 12 to 13 years old. General practitioner practices also offer free HPV vaccination for anyone until their 25th birthday. HPV vaccines are also promoted annually to university students and NHS England is planning a further awareness campaign in 2023.

■ Dental Health: Children

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[102976\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps has he taken to work with key stakeholders to help improve children's dental health in (a) Slough constituency and (b) Berkshire.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 8 December 2022]: In England local authorities are responsible for assessing the oral health needs, developing oral health strategies and commissioning oral health improvement programmes for children and adults in their local area, including in Slough constituency and Berkshire. The Department has published of resources to support local authorities in assessing and improving the oral health of children.

NHS England asked dental practices to return to full delivery of contracted activity from July 2022, including Berkshire. In September, we announced 'Our plan for patients', which outlines how we will meet oral health needs and increase access to dental care, including in Berkshire. The plan includes improvements to ensure dentists are remunerated fairly for more complex work, allowing greater flexibility to reallocate resources and to utilise dentists with greater capacity to deliver National Health Service treatment, whilst enabling full use of the dental team.

■ Dental Services

Seema Malhotra: [\[100973\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many patients have been provided with NHS dental treatment in the last 12 months.

Neil O'Brien:

The information is not held in the format requested.

Seema Malhotra: [\[100974\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he has made an assessment of the factors that contribute to people in some areas being unable to access NHS dentists for routine care.

Neil O'Brien:

NHS England asked dental practices to return to full delivery of contracted activity from July 2022. In September, we announced 'Our plan for patients', which outlines how we will meet oral health needs and increase access to dental care. The plan includes improvements to ensure dentists are remunerated fairly for more complex work, allowing greater flexibility to reallocate resources and to utilise dentists with greater capacity to deliver National Health Service treatment, whilst enabling full use of the dental team. The plan also includes streamlining processes for overseas dentists and holding the local NHS to account for dentistry provision. In addition, Health Education England is also reforming dental education to improve the recruitment and retention of dental professionals.

Wes Streeting: [\[101015\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will publish a list of dental practices in England showing whether each practice is taking new NHS patients.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 6 December 2022]: National Health Service dental practice profiles at NHS.UK show whether practices are currently accepting new patients directly or by referral. This information is available at the following link:

<https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-dentist>

■ Dental Services: Contracts

Feryal Clark: [\[101086\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how much money NHS England will claw back from NHS dental practices in England which had not met their contractual targets in the 2021-22 financial year.

Neil O'Brien:

The information requested is not currently held centrally. The year-end reconciliation process for National Health Service dentists is conducted in the following financial year from the date of the activity.

■ Health Services: Children in Care**Rachael Maskell:** [\[97740\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department takes to collect data on the use of health services by children in care.

Neil O'Brien:

The Child Protection Information System shares information to alert children's social care professionals when a child who is looked after or subject of a child protection plan attends an unscheduled care setting and informs the health professional of the child's protected status. Unscheduled care settings include emergency departments; walk-in centres; minor injury units; ambulance services; general practitioner out of hours services; direct access paediatric wards and maternity units and urgent treatment centres.

Digital health records and datasets contain information on safeguarding vulnerability to allow service access and outcomes to be segmented by child protection status. This includes statistical reports on child development outcomes at two years old, which are collected for children on protection plans, children looked after and children with other safeguarding vulnerabilities.

■ Healthy Start Scheme: North East**Catherine McKinnell:** [\[100964\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 21 September 2022 to Question 45820 on Healthy Start Scheme: North East, what proportion of eligible claimants claimed Healthy Start vouchers in (a) the North East and (b) each local authority area in the North East in (i) April 2022 and (ii) each subsequent month for which data is available.

Neil O'Brien:

The Department of Health and Social Care is continuing working with the NHS Business Services Authority and the Department for Work and Pensions to obtain data on the uptake of the Healthy Start scheme.

■ Lecanemab**Ian Lavery:** [\[99854\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what discussions he has had with the Dementia Research Institute on the potential roll-out of Lecanemab to the NHS.

Helen Whately:

I have held no discussions.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is the independent body responsible for developing authoritative, evidence-based recommendations for the National Health Service on whether new medicines represent a clinically and cost-effective use of resources.

NICE has been asked by the Department to conduct an appraisal of lecanemab for treating early Alzheimer's disease. The appraisal is anticipated to begin in late August 2023.

■ NHS: Vacancies

Richard Burgon: [\[99918\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the potential impact of below-inflation pay rises on the level of staff vacancies in the NHS.

Will Quince:

The Pay Review Body (PRB) process is the established mechanism for determining pay uplifts in the public sector, including for staff working in the NHS.

In formulating their recommendations, the Review Bodies carefully consider evidence from a wide range of stakeholders, including NHS system partners and trade unions. In reaching their recommendations the independent PRBs consider a number of factors, including recruitment, retention, morale and motivation, alongside affordability and the economic context, including inflation.

■ Obesity: Children

Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi: [\[102974\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what recent steps has he taken to work with key stakeholders on reducing childhood obesity levels in (a) Slough constituency and (b) Berkshire.

Neil O'Brien:

[Holding answer 8 December 2022]: The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities South East supports stakeholders in the region, including Slough and Berkshire, to consider approaches to address childhood obesity. Stakeholders from Slough and Berkshire have participated in regional network meetings relating to childhood obesity, where information on national policy, evidence and data insights is shared.

■ Pancreatic Cancer: Leeds North West

Alex Sobel: [\[94850\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to (a) decrease NHS waiting times, (b) increase treatment capacity and (c) increase NHS staffing capacity for people diagnosed with Pancreatic Cancer in Leeds North West constituency.

Helen Whately:

We have allocated more than £8 billion from 2022/23 to 2024/25, in addition to the £2 billion Elective Recovery Fund and £700 million Targeted Investment Fund already made available in 2021/2022 to increase elective activity, including cancer services.

In addition, the autumn statement provided a further £3.3 billion in 2023/24 and 2024/25 to increase capacity in the health system.

Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust provides a specialist pancreatic cancer service for West Yorkshire. In addition, the West Yorkshire and Harrogate Cancer Alliance has funded a project with Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust to improve patient experience and recovery for those receiving surgical treatment for pancreatic cancer.

Health Education England is investing an additional £50 million in 2022/23 to further expand the cancer and diagnostics workforce.

■ **Pneumococcal Diseases: Vaccination**

Jim Shannon:

[\[99847\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will take steps to ensure that NHS England prioritises the uptake of pneumococcal vaccinations.

Neil O'Brien:

To improve the uptake across the pneumococcal programmes, vaccinations are offered all year round and general practitioners (GPs) proactively invite patients when they are eligible.

For the adult programme, this applies to those aged 65 years old and over and in the childhood programme, this applies to children aged 12 weeks, one year old and clinical risk groups at two years old and over. All parents are also actively encouraged to check their children's vaccine records and contact their local GP if they have missed any vaccinations.

■ **Sickle Cell Diseases: Prescriptions**

Daisy Cooper:

[\[101794\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of a temporary suspension of NHS prescription charges for patients with sickle cell disease for (a) patients, (b) the NHS, and (c) the economy in light of the rising cost of living.

Neil O'Brien:

No specific assessment has been made. However, we have frozen prescription charges this year and approximately 89% of prescription items in England are provided free of charge. For those who pay for prescriptions, pre-payment certificates can be used to limit costs at £2 a week for regular prescriptions. Additionally, the NHS Low Income Scheme can assist people on a low income who do not qualify for a prescription charge exemption.

■ Social Services: Children**Rachael Maskell:****[97738]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to help ensure that children in the social care system receive no delay in receiving (a) trauma care and (b) other health interventions.

Neil O'Brien:

'Promoting the health and wellbeing of looked after children: Statutory guidance for local authorities, clinical commissioning groups and NHS England' sets out the arrangements for the planning, commissioning and delivery of health services for children in the social care system, which is available at the following link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1100188/Promoting_the_health_and_well-being_of_looked-after_children_August_2022_update.pdf

Local authorities' corporate parenting responsibilities include a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of looked-after children. This includes the promotion of children's physical, emotional and mental health and acting on any early signs of health issues. In addition, local authorities, integrated care boards and NHS England must cooperate to commission health services for children in the relevant area and the health needs of looked-after children should be taken into account in developing local Joint Strategic Needs Assessments.

HOME OFFICE**■ Anti-Corruption Champion****Harriett Baldwin:****[100958]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has taken recent steps to appoint an anti-corruption champion to take forward the Government's Anti-Corruption Strategy.

Tom Tugendhat:

An announcement on a new champion will be made in due course.

■ Children: Detainees**Janet Daby:****[101056]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her Department's statistics Police Powers and Procedures, published on 17 November 2022, what recent discussions she has had with police forces in (a) Essex and (b) Merseyside on the number of children detained in police custody without an Appropriate Adult being called.

Chris Philp:

The collection and publication of data on police custody will bring additional transparency and accountability to custody in England and Wales and help us better understand how and why police powers and procedures are used within the custody process. The Home Office only received data from a subset of forces so the findings should be interpreted with caution as it is partial and not representative of the national picture. We will work with police forces and the NPCC to improve data quality in the future and use the data published on 17 November to inform conversations with the police and other stakeholders to promote wider policy development.

All data collections are reviewed each year by the Policing Data Requirement Group (PDRG) to ensure that the amount of data requested from the police is proportionate and that forces have the technical capabilities to provide the data requested. We will be considering the feasibility of collecting data on the period of time between a child being detained in police custody, an Appropriate Adult first being in attendance and the average time taken for an AA to arrive.

Police custody is a core element of the criminal justice system and is critical for keeping the public safe. Children should only be detained in custody as a last resort and any opportunities to divert children away from custody should be taken. The data published on 17 November suggests that children were more likely to be detained in custody for robbery offences, possession of weapons offences and theft offences and less likely to be in custody for non-notifiable offences. It is positive to see that the number of children in police custody has decreased significantly, by 84%, over the last 10 years.

We hold regular discussions with policing and wider stakeholders on the availability of Appropriate Adults and custody policy in general. The data published on 17 November shows that, for the forces who provided data to us, an Appropriate Adult was called for 99% of children in custody. We expect forces to act in accordance with the statutory safeguards for children in custody, including the provision of appropriate adults. Procedures in custody are subject to independent scrutiny and oversight by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services. We expect forces to take recommendations from HMICFRS seriously and act in response to them.

■ Counter-terrorism: Public Places**Holly Lynch:**[\[102878\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to bring forward legislative proposals to create the Protect Duty.

Tom Tugendhat:

The first duty of the Government is to protect the public, and we are committed to improving the security of public places, to ensure the public can go about their lives freely and with confidence.

The commitment made to the 'Protect Duty' in the Queen's Speech and the 2019 manifesto remains, and we are working hard to bring forward this important piece of legislation as soon as possible.

■ **Detention Centres: Manston**

Layla Moran:

[\[104417\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department plans to publish minutes of all meetings with Public Health officials on the outbreak of Diphtheria linked to Manston migrant centre.

Robert Jenrick:

The Home Office regularly meets with UKHSA, including regular discussions on Diphtheria and other communicable diseases. These meetings have been chaired and organised by UKHSA and any decision on releasing minutes would be for them.

■ **Domestic Abuse: Cost of Living**

Dr Rupa Huq:

[\[101759\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps is she taking to support those fleeing domestic abuse in the context of the cost-of-living crisis.

Miss Sarah Dines:

Tackling domestic abuse is a priority for this Government. A central part of this is making sure victims and survivors get the support they need.

The Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan, which we published in March, invests over £230 million, including over £140 million specifically for supporting victims and survivors.

The commitments it made include doubling funding for the National Domestic Abuse Helpline. And with the Ministry of Justice, we committed to provide multi-year funding for support services. This will offer more stability and consistency for service users, as services will not be dependent on yearly grants. It will help to ensure delivery of high-quality support throughout any increases in the cost of living.

The Plan also committed to establish trials of a 'flexible fund', which charities could use to provide extra money to victims and survivors in light of cost of living pressures. This money could be used to help them flee an abuser.

■ **Homes for Ukraine Scheme**

Mr Alistair Carmichael:

[\[100903\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how long on average it takes for applications to the Ukrainian Sponsorship Scheme to be processed.

Robert Jenrick:

The Home Office does not publish data on the average processing times for an application under the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme.

Applications for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme are processed as quickly as possible whilst ensuring that the appropriate checks and safeguarding measures are in place.

■ Independent Anti-slavery Commissioner

Holly Lynch: [\[102879\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what progress she has made on appointing a new Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner.

Miss Sarah Dines:

The role of the Anti-Slavery Commissioner (IASC) as set out in the 2015 Modern Slavery Act is to encourage good practice in the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of slavery and human trafficking offences and the identification of victims.

The process to recruit a new IASC follows the principles set out within the Cabinet Office Governance Code on Public Appointments.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/578498/governance_code_on_public_appointments_16_12_2016.pdf

A decision on the appointment is under consideration.

■ Migrants: Detainees

Layla Moran: [\[104424\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress she has made in implementing Recommendation 1 of the Review into the Welfare in Detention of Vulnerable Persons by Stephen Shaw.

Layla Moran: [\[104425\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress she has made in implementing Recommendation 2 of the Review into the Welfare in Detention of Vulnerable Persons by Stephen Shaw.

Layla Moran: [\[104426\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress she has made in implementing Recommendation 3 of the Review into the Welfare in Detention of Vulnerable Persons by Stephen Shaw.

Layla Moran: [\[104427\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress she has made in implementing Recommendation 4 of the Review into the Welfare in Detention of Vulnerable Persons by Stephen Shaw.

Layla Moran: [\[104428\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress she has made in implementing Recommendation 5 of the Review into the Welfare in Detention of Vulnerable Persons by Stephen Shaw.

Layla Moran: [\[104429\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress she has made in implementing Recommendation 6 of the Review into the Welfare in Detention of Vulnerable Persons by Stephen Shaw.

Layla Moran: [\[104430\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress she has made in implementing Recommendation 7 of the Review into the Welfare in Detention of Vulnerable Persons by Stephen Shaw.

Layla Moran: [\[104431\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress she has made in implementing Recommendation 8 of the Review into the Welfare in Detention of Vulnerable Persons by Stephen Shaw.

Layla Moran: [\[104432\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress she has made in implementing Recommendation 9 of the Review into the Welfare in Detention of Vulnerable Persons by Stephen Shaw.

Layla Moran: [\[104433\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress she has made in implementing Recommendation 10 of the Review into the Welfare in Detention of Vulnerable Persons by Stephen Shaw.

Layla Moran: [\[104434\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress she has made in implementing Recommendation 11 of the Review into the Welfare in Detention of Vulnerable Persons by Stephen Shaw.

Layla Moran: [\[104435\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress she has made in implementing Recommendation 12 of the Review into the Welfare in Detention of Vulnerable Persons by Stephen Shaw.

Layla Moran: [\[104436\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress she has made in implementing Recommendation 13 of the Review into the Welfare in Detention of Vulnerable Persons by Stephen Shaw.

Layla Moran: [\[104437\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress she has made in implementing Recommendation 14 of the Review into the Welfare in Detention of Vulnerable Persons by Stephen Shaw..

Layla Moran: [\[104438\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress she has made in implementing Recommendation 15 of the Review into the Welfare in Detention of Vulnerable Persons by Stephen Shaw.

Layla Moran: [\[104439\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress she has made in implementing Recommendation 16 of the Review into the Welfare in Detention of Vulnerable Persons by Stephen Shaw.

Layla Moran: [\[104440\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress she has made in implementing Recommendation 17 of the Review into the Welfare in Detention of Vulnerable Persons by Stephen Shaw.

Layla Moran: [\[104441\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress she has made in implementing Recommendation 18 of the Review into the Welfare in Detention of Vulnerable Persons by Stephen Shaw.

Layla Moran: [\[104442\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress she has made in implementing Recommendation 19 of the Review into the Welfare in Detention of Vulnerable Persons by Stephen Shaw.

Robert Jenrick:

Stephen Shaw's reports (of 2016 and 2018) led to a comprehensive and systematic programme of work to improve and reform immigration detention. It informed both our strategic and tactical approach to reform and the treatment of people who are detained. This work has strengthened our decision-making and safeguards for the vulnerable, ensuring those who are detained are treated with dignity and respect in an estate that is fit for purpose.

Progress has been made on all accepted recommendations and I will write to the MP for Oxford West and Abingdon with more detail. A copy of this letter will be placed in the House library for all.

■ **Police: Finance**

Sarah Jones: [\[104364\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much was provided to police forces through (a) the DCLG grant, (b) the Welsh grant and (c) other grants in 2010/11.

Chris Philp:

The information requested is available online, on the Government website, at the link listed below. The tables show police forces' funding allocations for 2010-11 which contain information on the DCLG grant, Welsh grant and other grants.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2009-11-26/debates/09112628000414/PoliceGrants>

It is not possible to make direct comparisons between current police funding figures and police funding in the years before 2015-16 due to a number of significant changes in the structure of police funding and the structure of policing over the period.

■ Prevent Independent Review**Preet Kaur Gill:****[101040]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent estimate she has made of when the Independent Review of Prevent will be laid before Parliament.

Tom Tugendhat:

The Independent Review of Prevent has now been received by the department.

The Government is now reviewing the recommendations in their entirety and will publish the Independent Reviewer's report and the Government's response in due course.

■ Visas: Applications**Wendy Chamberlain:****[104477]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications for visas in (a) September (b) October (c) November awaited an outcome for more than 12 weeks.

Wendy Chamberlain:**[104478]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications for visas in (a) September (b) October (c) November awaited an outcome for more than 16 weeks.

Robert Jenrick:

Information relating to the processing times of visas can be found at the link below:

[Migration transparency data - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/migration-transparency-data)

VSI_02: Percentage of applications, for each Route, processed within Service Standards.

■ Visas: Fees and Charges**Angela Crawley:****[102908]**

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has made an assessment of the potential merits of abolishing visa fees for minors.

Robert Jenrick:

The Home Office keeps the fees for immigration and nationality applications under regular review. However, no specific assessment on the potential merits of abolishing the visa fees for minors has been undertaken.

The Home Office provides exceptions to the need to pay application fees in a number of specific circumstances. These exceptions ensure the Home Office's immigration and nationality fee structure complies with international obligations and wider government policy.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE■ **Exports: North West****Conor McGinn:**[\[99892\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps she plans to take to promote exports from businesses in (a) St Helens, (b) Liverpool City Region and (c) the North West.

Andrew Bowie:

The Department for International Trade (DIT) offers a tailored service to businesses via our dedicated Northern Powerhouse team that offers support and expertise to meet the export needs of SMEs and larger businesses at a local level. Our offices in Leeds, Manchester, and Darlington, help drive growth and prosperity through export and investment, and provide a range of upskilling services to businesses including the export academy and export champion programmes. DIT's Trade Advisor Service gives exporters outside the capital and Southeast the tools, support, and opportunities to succeed in global trade.

JUSTICE■ **Prison Accommodation: Wales****Beth Winter:**[\[101072\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, (a)- how many and (b) what proportion of prison cells were not in use due to disrepair or poor estate conditions at (i) HMP Berwyn, (ii) HMP Cardiff, (iii) HMP Parc, (iv) HMP Prescoed, (v) HMP Swansea and (vi) HMP Usk as of 30 November 2022.

Damian Hinds:

The capacity of each prison and the overall capacity of the prison estate is reviewed on a weekly basis. A table summarising places out of use for maintenance, refurbishment or repair at each of the requested prisons on 30/11/2022 is provided below.

	BASELINE OPERATIONAL CAPACITY	PLACES OUT FOR MAINTENANCE, REFURBISHMENT OR REPAIR	
Berwyn	2000	80	4%
Cardiff	779	11	1%
Parc (Adult)	1639	0	0%
Parc (Youth Custody Service)	48	0	0%
Prescoed	220	10	5%
Swansea	468	1	0%
Usk	276	0	0%

■ Prison Officers: Retirement

Grahame Morris:

[\[902659\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment he has made with Cabinet colleagues of the potential merits of lowering the pension age of prison officers to 60.

Damian Hinds:

Our hardworking prison staff play a vital role in keeping the public safe and rehabilitating offenders, often in the most challenging of circumstances. We engage with officers, staff and trade unions regularly and meet with the Prison Officer's Association and other unions to discuss a range of issues.

Civil Service Pension policy, including pension age, is led by the Cabinet Office rather than His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS).

■ Prisoner Escapes: Sexual Offences

Steve Reed:

[\[102870\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate he has made of the number of absconds from prison who have committed a sexual assault in 2022 to date.

Damian Hinds:

We are unable to answer this question within cost limits as the required detail may not be on the prison NOMIS system in all cases. To obtain a robust estimate would require linking to and checking police records for all prisoners in scope to identify whether they have committed a sexual offence (or sexual offences).

Public protection is our top priority. When a prisoner absconds, police are immediately notified and are responsible for locating the offender. The majority of absconders are quickly recaptured and returned to custody.

Those who abscond face serious consequences, including being returned to closed prison conditions where they may serve up to two additional years on conviction. Prisoners subject to parole decisions will likely face longer before they are released.

■ Prisoners' Release: Employment Schemes

Steve McCabe: [\[102761\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department is taking to support prison leavers find employment.

Steve McCabe: [\[102762\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment his Department has made of the impact of unemployment on re-offending rates.

Damian Hinds:

There is evidence that prison leavers who get a job within a year after release are up to nine per cent less likely to re-offend than those who do not.

We have put in place a series of measures to give prisoners the chance to work while in prison, while released on temporary licence, and following release. Dedicated Prison Employment Leads will identify candidates and match them to jobs. They will also oversee our new Employment Hubs, where prisoners can access support with job applications.

Building strong links with employers is a key part of the steps we are taking. We are working with James Timpson to roll out Employment Advisory Boards, which will link prisons with industry, so that local businesses can provide challenge and advice on the training prisoners can be given in prison to meet the needs of the local labour market.

We are on track to roll out Prison Employment Leads, Employment Hubs and Employment Advisory Boards across all 92 resettlement prisons by April 2023.

We have recently changed the law so that prisoners can become apprentices. The first prisoner apprentices started on 30 September and employers recruiting prisoner apprentices include construction firm Kier Group.

Damien Moore: [\[99984\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department is taking to help offenders find employment following release from prison.

Damian Hinds:

We have put in place a series of measures to give prisoners the chance to work while in prison, while released on temporary licence, and following release. Dedicated Prison Employment Leads will identify candidates and match them to jobs. They will also oversee our new Employment Hubs, where prisoners can access support with job applications.

Building strong links with employers is a key part of the steps we are taking. We are working with James Timpson to roll out Employment Advisory Boards, which will link

prisons with industry, so that local businesses can provide challenge and advice on the training prisoners can be given in prison to meet the needs of the local labour market.

We are on track to roll out Prison Employment Leads, Employment Hubs and Employment Advisory Boards across all 92 resettlement prisons by April 2023.

We have recently changed the law so that prisoners can become apprentices. The first prisoner apprentices started on 30 September and employers recruiting prisoner apprentices include construction firm Kier Group.

■ Prisoners: Costs

Steve Reed:

[\[102940\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what estimate he has made of the cost to the public purse of a prisoner serving (a) two, (b) three, (c) four, (d) five and (e) six years in prison.

Damian Hinds:

An average cost per prisoner, costs per prison place and overall prison unit costs for each private and public sector prison in England and Wales are routinely published by Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS). This information is produced on an annual basis and is published after the end of each financial year on the gov.uk website.

The most recently published costs are for the financial year 2020-21 and can be accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prison-performance-data-2020-to-2021>.

We do not calculate information by length of sentence, but by the average cost of an offender over the course of a single year across establishments, by prison category and overall.

■ Prisoners: Gender Recognition

Kenny MacAskill:

[\[102996\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, pursuant to the Answer of 30 November to Question 96653 on Prisoners: Gender Recognition, how many transgender prisoners in each offence category reported are of (a) male sex (transwomen) and (b) female sex (transmen).

Damian Hinds:

The information requested is in the attached table.

Attachments:

1. Data Table [\[2022-12-08 102996 data table v2.xlsx\]](#)

■ Prisoners: Police Custody**Beth Winter:** [\[101073\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to his oral statement of 30 November 2022, Official report, column 915, on Prison Capacity, whether specific police stations have been identified for the 400 police cells required for temporary use.

Damian Hinds:

At the time of writing, Operation Safeguard places are not in use. His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service and police forces are in the process of jointly planning how and where these places will be accessed if needed.

Police forces across the country already use police cells occasionally to hold prisoners overnight, for example due to late sitting courts. The triggering of Operation Safeguard expands this practice and is not an unprecedented move, having already been triggered in 2007. It is an established procedure that has been used before to ensure that our prison system can operate effectively and safely during periods of high demand.

Steve Reed: [\[102853\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will make an estimate of the duration of Operation Safeguard.

Damian Hinds:

Operation Safeguard will be in use for no longer than is necessary. We are taking all practical steps available to us to support the continued running of the criminal justice system by fulfilling our primary responsibility to accommodate those sentenced or remanded to custody. Despite the pressures, the safety and wellbeing of the prisoners in our care and of our staff will continue to be a priority.

On top of essential work to maintain the estate, we have committed to delivering 20,000 new prison places. We have already created 3,100 so far and the opening of HMP Fosse Way next spring will allow 1,700 offenders to be held when full. We are also creating thousands of further places through new houseblocks and major refurbishment programmes.

LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES**■ Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities: Accountancy****John Cryer:** [\[102745\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what the (a) nature and (b) value was of all (i) contracts, (ii) consultancies and (iii) other services placed with the accountancy firms (A) Deloitte & Touche, (B) Ernst & Young, (C) KPMG and (D) PricewaterhouseCoopers in each year since 2010-11 by (1) their Department, (2) any predecessor Departments and (3) departmental agencies.

Dehenna Davison:

In line with Government transparency requirements, since 2016 we have published details of our contracts on Contracts Finder. Further information is available [here](#).

■ Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities: Chief Scientific Advisers

Greg Clark: [\[100921\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how many meetings (a) they and (b) other Ministers in their Department have had with the Department's Chief Scientific Adviser from (i) 1 December 2021 to 28 February 2022, (ii) 1 March to 31 May 2022 and (iii) 1 June to 31 August 2022.

Dehenna Davison:

In line with the practice of successive administrations, details of internal meetings are not normally disclosed.

■ Freeports

Andy McDonald: [\[104325\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, which contractors operate the customs sites in each Freeport in England.

Andy McDonald: [\[104326\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how many jobs have been created in each Freeport site in England; and what estimate his Department has made of how many jobs will have been created at each such site by 2024-25.

Andy McDonald: [\[104327\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will list the legal entities that own each Freeport site in England.

Dehenna Davison:

Information on Freeport Custom Site contractors, a list of legal entities that own each Freeport site can be found using the following [link](#). We will publish an annual report in due course.

■ Housing: Graduates and Young People

Julian Sturdy: [\[100942\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what plans the Government has to make housing more (a) obtainable and (b) affordable for (i) graduates and (ii) young professionals.

Lucy Frazer:

This Government is committed to providing the genuinely affordable homes the country needs. That is why, through our £11.5 billion Affordable Homes Programme, we will deliver tens of thousands of homes for both rent and sale.

We do not specifically allocate new supply for young people. However, increasing the supply of affordable home ownership and rental properties tends to benefit those in lower age brackets, making housing more accessible for those entering the market for the first time.

■ **Right to Buy Scheme: Housing Associations**

Tulip Siddiq: [\[101031\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether it remains his Department's policy to extend the right to buy to housing association tenants.

Lucy Frazer:

Any announcements will be made in the usual way.

NORTHERN IRELAND

■ **Streptococcus: Disease Control**

Claire Hanna: [\[104370\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, if he will have urgent discussions with the Department of Health and Public Health Agency in Northern Ireland on ensuring a robust plan to deal with Strep A cases.

Mr Steve Baker:

I am aware of the recent outbreak of strep A among children in Northern Ireland and across the UK.

This is a devolved matter for the Northern Ireland Department of Health and the Public Health Agency in Northern Ireland to respond to.

In the absence of an Executive, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland has passed legislation that clarifies the powers for Northern Ireland Departments to maintain delivery of public services, including health services.

PRIME MINISTER

■ **Prime Minister: Government Chief Scientific Adviser**

Greg Clark: [\[102796\]](#)

To ask the Prime Minister, how many meetings (a) he and (b) his predecessors had with the Government Chief Scientific Adviser from (i) 1 December 2021 to 28 February 2022, (ii) 1 March to 31 May 2022 and (iii) 1 June to 31 August 2022.

Rishi Sunak:

I refer my right hon. Friend to the answer of 16 February 2022, Official Report, PQ 120718.

TRANSPORT**■ A580: Accidents****Conor McGinn:**[\[104330\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many road traffic accidents have been reported on the A580 in each years since 2010.

Mr Richard Holden:

The number of personal injury road collisions reported to police on the A580 for each year since 2010 is shown in the table.

YEAR	NUMBER OF COLLISIONS
2010	147
2011	132
2012	169
2013	119
2014	121
2015	132
2016	79
2017	88
2018	75
2019	76
2020	72
2021	58

■ Train Operating Companies: Finance**Louise Haigh:**[\[104222\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will publish the savings that each Train Operating Company has been asked by his Department to make in financial years (a) 2021-22, (b) 2022-23 and (c) 2023-24.

Huw Merriman:

Budget setting discussions between the Department and operators have always been treated as commercially confidential. In future we hope to put more information in the public domain.

■ Transpennine Express: Standards**Navendu Mishra:**[\[104344\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many and what proportion of TransPennine Express train services were subject to a p-coded cancellation in each of the last 12 months.

Huw Merriman:

The Department does not hold all information relating to "p-coded" services, which is a broad term used in the rail industry for planned alterations to the timetable including omissions from the plan of the day, such as engineering works, Bank Holidays, industrial action, and special events.

TransPennine Express' approach to managing the consequences of issues such as staff shortages is to either reduce the timetable in advance, or to cancel them on the day.

I will write to the Member to set out the situation in greater detail and will place a copy of that letter in the library of the House.

TREASURY**■ Aggregates Levy: Wales****Liz Saville Roberts:**[\[101034\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of devolving the Aggregates Levy to Wales.

John Glen:

The government has committed to keep devolution of the Aggregates Levy to Wales under review. This is with the intention of devolving it in future, subject to the agreement of both governments and legislatures.

Devolution would be subject to cross border impacts being worked through in full, to ensure the best outcome for businesses and consumers on both sides of the border.

■ Duty Free Allowances: Airports**Mr Laurence Robertson:**[\[104107\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment he has made of the potential merits of introducing arrivals duty free policies in airports on (a) tax revenue and (b) job creation; and if he will make a statement.

James Cartlidge:

Duty-free on arrival, which would apply to inbound passengers, would place additional pressure on the public finances to which excise duty makes a significant contribution. Any loss in tax revenue would have to be balanced by a reduction in public spending, increased borrowing or increased taxation elsewhere.

Although there are no plans to introduce such a scheme, the government keeps all taxes under review.

■ Financial Services: Age Discrimination

Julian Sturdy: [\[105320\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to help ensure that age discrimination is removed from financial services.

Andrew Griffith:

The Government is committed to tackling financial exclusion and discrimination and aims for everyone, whatever their background, age or income, to be able to access useful and affordable financial products and services. The Government works closely together with regulators, the financial services industry and other stakeholders, to ensure that all consumers of financial services are appropriately protected.

In February 2021, the FCA published its finalised guidance for firms on the fair treatment of vulnerable customers, setting out a number of areas of best practice. This guidance explores, among other things, how firms can understand the needs of vulnerable customers and provide targeted services for this cohort.

In addition, like all service providers, financial services firms are bound under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments, where necessary, in the way they deliver their services.

■ Financial Services: Education

Julian Knight: [\[104277\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether his Department has made an estimate of the potential economic benefits of the Government prioritising financial education.

Andrew Griffith:

The government is committed to ensuring that individuals have the opportunity to build financial capability, so they are able to maximise their use of the products and services made available by the financial services industry. This in turn helps support their participation in the wider economy. However, the government has not undertaken analysis to quantify the potential economic benefits of financial education interventions.

■ Investment Income: Taxation

Andy McDonald: [\[104329\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what his policy is on the taxation of dividend payments made by businesses authorised to operate in a Freeport.

Victoria Atkins:

Dividends paid by companies operating in freeports are taxed in the same way and at the same rates as companies that do not operate in freeports.

■ NHS: Tax Allowances

Patrick Grady:

[\[104214\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he has made an assessment of the potential impact of creating a tax-unregistered pension scheme for consultants on the retention of experienced consultants in the NHS.

Andrew Griffith:

The Government values the extraordinary work being done by NHS staff. In recognition of this vital work, the NHS Pension Scheme is one of the most generous schemes available. In addition, the existing tax relief offered on pension contributions is expensive, costing the Exchequer £67.3 billion in 2020/21, with around 58 per cent relieved at the Higher and Additional rates. A tax unregistered scheme would primarily benefit NHS staff affected by the annual and lifetime allowances, who are the highest-earning savers in the NHS pension scheme.

The Government has listened carefully to the concerns of NHS staff and is committed to ensuring that hard-working NHS staff do not find themselves reducing their work commitments due to the interaction between their pay, their pension and the relevant tax regime. That is why, on 22 September the Government announced changes to the NHS Pension Scheme. These include changing pension rules regarding inflation, encouraging NHS Trusts to offer pension recycling and implementing permanent retirement flexibilities to support workforce retention. The Government continues to keep all areas of the tax system under review.

■ Research: Tax Allowances

Chi Onwurah:

[\[104202\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 28 November 2022 to Question 90808 on Research: Tax Allowances, on which 2021 R&D figure his Department is basing its forecast.

Victoria Atkins:

The amount of qualifying R&D expenditure used to claim R&D tax relief is estimated to be £38.1 billion for the tax year 2020 to 2021. This was published in HMRC's Research and Development Tax Credits Statistics: September 2022, Section 5.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/corporate-tax-research-and-development-tax-credit/research-and-development-tax-credits-statistics-september-2022>

■ Teesside Freeport: Tax Allowances

Andy McDonald:

[\[104328\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the number of applications for (a) enhanced capital allowances, (b) Stamp Duty Land Tax relief and (c) employer National Insurance contributions relief that were processed in the tax sites of the Tees Freeport in each month since November 2021 to date.

Victoria Atkins:

Since November 2021, under the tax reliefs available at Teesside Freeport, HMRC has not received any claims for enhanced capital allowances and Stamp Duty Land Tax relief. It is normal for there to be a delay in the receipt of enhanced capital allowance claims because claims are made in the corporation tax return within one year from the end of the accounting period for which the claim relates, and there is scope for SDLT freeport claims to be made up to 30 September 2026.

With regards to Employer National Insurance contributions relief, HMRC do not routinely analyse take-up at an individual Freeport level, and so do not have the requested data readily available.

Treasury: Chief Scientific Advisers**Greg Clark:**[\[100926\]](#)

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many meetings (a) they and (b) other Ministers in their Department have had with the Department's Chief Scientific Adviser from (i) 1 December 2021 to 28 February 2022, (ii) 1 March to 31 May 2022 and (iii) 1 June to 31 August 2022.

James Cartlidge:

HM Treasury is committed to ensuring that we access the very best scientific expertise. The Director General for the Enterprise and Growth Unit, who is responsible for public science funding, acts as HM Treasury's Chief Scientific Adviser and meets with the Chancellor of the Exchequer regularly. The Chancellor of the Exchequer also meets with the Government Chief Scientific Adviser and the Chief Medical Officer when necessary.

WORK AND PENSIONS**Department for Work and Pensions: Accountancy****John Cryer:**[\[102743\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the (a) nature and (b) value was of all (i) contracts, (ii) consultancies and (iii) other services placed with the accountancy firms (A) Deloitte & Touche, (B) Ernst & Young, (C) KPMG and (D) PricewaterhouseCoopers in each year since 2010-11 by (1) their Department, (2) any predecessor Departments and (3) departmental agencies.

Mims Davies:

Between 1 December 2021 and 31 August 2022, the Department's Chief Scientific Adviser met with a) the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in a total of 4 meetings and with b) other Ministers in the Department for Work and Pensions in a total of 7 meetings. This included:

- (i) Between 1 December 2021 – 28 February 2022 – a) 1 meeting, b) 3 meetings
- (ii) Between 1 March to 31 May 2022 – a) 1 meeting, b) 2 meetings

(iii) Between 1 June to 31 August 2022 - a) 2 meetings, b) 2 meetings

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Chief Scientific Advisers

Greg Clark:

[\[100923\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many meetings (a) they and (b) other Ministers in their Department have had with the Department's Chief Scientific Adviser from (i) 1 December 2021 to 28 February 2022, (ii) 1 March to 31 May 2022 and (iii) 1 June to 31 August 2022.

Mims Davies:

Between 1 December 2021 and 31 August 2022, the Department's Chief Scientific Adviser met with a) the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in a total of 4 meetings and with b) other Ministers in the Department for Work and Pensions in a total of 7 meetings. This included:

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(iii) Between 1 June to 31 August 2022 - a) 2 meetings, b) 2 meetings

■ Discretionary Housing Payments

Ms Karen Buck:

[\[104098\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether local authorities will be allowed to roll over unspent Discretionary Housing Payment funding from 2022-23 to 2023-24 rather than return the sums to the Department.

Mims Davies:

The Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) are DEL funded and therefore in line with HM Treasury guidance, the DHP funding for a specific year is unable to be carried forward.

■ Local Housing Allowance: Homelessness

Jonathan Ashworth:

[\[104334\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether the Government has made an estimate of the potential costs associated with homelessness in the context of the Department's decision to maintain the level of the Local Housing Allowance for financial year 2023-24.

Mims Davies:

No assessment has been made.

The causes of homelessness are multi-faceted and often complex, they interact dynamically making it difficult to isolate the relative importance of individual factors.

This Government is providing an additional £50 million, through a top up to the Homelessness Prevention Grant, for local authorities to help prevent vulnerable households from becoming homeless. This additional £50 million investment builds

on the £316 million in funding already available to local authorities through the Homelessness Prevention Grant for 2022/23. This is part of the £2 billion of funding to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping over the next three years.

In 2020 LHA rates were raised to the 30th percentile, a significant investment of almost £1 billion, we have maintained the increase since then so that everyone who benefited from the increase continues to do so.

We recognise that rents are increasing but the challenging fiscal environment means that difficult decisions were necessary to ensure support is targeted effectively. The Chancellor announced at Autumn Statement a package of targeted support worth £26 billion.

For those who require additional support with housing costs, Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) are available. Since 2011 we have provided nearly £1.5 billion in funding.

■ Pension Credit

Jonathan Ashworth:

[\[104332\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Answer of 14 November 2022 to Question 82311, if he will provide an estimate of the increase in average processing times for Pension Credit in the last 12 months.

Laura Trott:

This information is only available at disproportionate cost to The Department for Work & Pensions as the Department does not have a business requirement for this information to be retained.

We are processing claims as quickly as possible and streamlining our processes, as well as increasing our staffing resources, which has resulted in the outstanding claims reducing considerably. We expect the clearance of claims to reduce as outstanding claims are cleared.

All successful claims and arrears are paid accordingly to ensure no one misses out.

■ Personal Independence Payment

Jonathan Ashworth:

[\[104333\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether all Personal Independence Payments that were due to be paid to recipients on 5 December 2022 have been paid as of 6 December.

Tom Pursglove:

DWP successfully issues over 1 million payments per day to our customers across all of its benefits and pensions, with around 5 million every Thursday, due to the lead in time required for the traditional Monday payday for pensions. On Thursday 1st December, we issued over 14 million payments (with a spike for Christmas Bonuses and Winter Fuel). However, one file, containing 91,000 PIP payments, did not complete the full payment process to be credited into customer bank accounts as

expected on Monday 5th December. Remediation action was instigated at 8am on Monday, and all payments were made to customers' accounts by 5pm on the same day. We are aware that a small number of customers (fewer than 60) did not receive their PIP payment on Monday due to non-related issues, for example, where they hadn't notified DWP of a bank account change. We have contacted these customers and directly made alternative arrangements for payment.

■ **State Retirement Pensions: Terminal Illnesses**

Dr Rupa Huq:

[\[101760\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of extending the State Pension to people of working age with a terminal diagnosis.

Laura Trott:

We have no plans to allow early access to State Pension.

For those at the end of their life, the Government's priority is providing financial support quickly and compassionately. The main way that the Department does this is through special benefit rules, sometimes referred to as "the Special Rules". These enable people who are nearing the end of their lives to get faster, easier access to certain benefits, without needing to attend a medical assessment, serve waiting periods and in most cases, receive the highest rate of benefit. For many years, the Special Rules have applied to people who have 6 months or less to live and now they are being changed so they apply to people who have 12 months or less to live.

MINISTERIAL CORRECTIONS

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Accountancy

John Cryer:

[\[102743\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the (a) nature and (b) value was of all (i) contracts, (ii) consultancies and (iii) other services placed with the accountancy firms (A) Deloitte & Touche, (B) Ernst & Young, (C) KPMG and (D) PricewaterhouseCoopers in each year since 2010-11 by (1) their Department, (2) any predecessor Departments and (3) departmental agencies.

An error has been identified in the written answer given on 9 December 2022. The correct answer should have been:

Mims Davies:

Between 1 December 2021 and 31 August 2022, the Department's Chief Scientific Adviser met with a) the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in a total of 4 meetings and with b) other Ministers in the Department for Work and Pensions in a total of 7 meetings. This included:

(i) Between 1 December 2021 — 28 February 2022 — a) 1 meeting, b) 3 meetings

(ii) Between 1 March to 31 May 2022 — a) 1 meeting, b) 2 meetings

(iii) Between 1 June to 31 August 2022 — a) 2 meetings, b) 2 meetings

Please see the attachment provided for a comprehensive list for each of the organisations requested covering the data sets requested in the PQ.

Further Information regarding the contracts can be found on gov.uk's Contract Finder Service located here.

Attachments:

1. [Attachment.xlsx](#)

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ The 2021 Government Chemist Review

Minister of State (Minister for Science, Research and Innovation) (George Freeman): [\[HCWS427\]](#)

The twenty-fifth Annual Review of the Government Chemist has been received. The Review will be placed in the Libraries of the House plus those of the Devolved Administrations in Wales and Northern Ireland. The Review will also be laid before the Scottish Parliament.

The Government Chemist is the Referee Analyst named in Acts of Parliament. The Government Chemist's team carry out analysis in high-profile or legally disputed cases. A range of referee analysis work was carried out during 2021, which included the evaluation of genetically modified organisms in rice products, pesticide detection in an organic peanut product, aflatoxin in dried figs, and structural data around a liposomal vitamin C product. The Government Chemist continues to work closely with government departments, their governance group, Devolved Administrations, Non-Governmental Organisations, and industry to identify tools, standards, and guidance to facilitate effective testing for food fraud and to grow knowledge transfer activities.

■ UK Measurement Strategy for the National Measurement System

Minister of State (Minister for Science, Research and Innovation) (George Freeman): [\[HCWS426\]](#)

A Measurement Strategy for the National Measurement system is being published today. The National Measurement System (NMS) is an essential part of the UK's research and innovation infrastructure that is critical for science, innovation and trade.

This strategy describes how the UK will capitalise on its world-leading National Measurement System in the 2020s.

The National Measurement System will focus on three challenges where enhanced measurement capability and expertise will support the UK:

1. The health and wellbeing of a growing population

The National Measurement System will support the UK's position at the forefront of leading-edge healthcare, enabling people to live longer, healthier and safer lives.

1. Managing and reducing our environmental impact

The National Measurement System will provide the critical measurement infrastructure needed to help the UK improve energy efficiency, transition to clean energy sources and mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change.

1. Increasing prosperity and supporting innovation

The National Measurement System will support new and existing innovative businesses, providing access to the measurement capability and expertise needed to translate new ideas into products

DEFENCE

■ Defence Update

Secretary of State for Defence (Mr Ben Wallace):

[\[HCWS428\]](#)

In the summer I updated the House on progress under the UK Combat Air Strategy, setting out the crucial importance of combat air to the nation's security, sovereign industrial base and to our role in international affairs. I outlined the significant progress being made to develop a next generation combat air system, highlighting the substantial work underway with close and valued partners Japan and Italy.

It is with great pleasure that I now offer a further update on international partnering for our future combat air capability. In a landmark announcement, the Prime Ministers of the UK, Japan and Italy, announced that we will work together under a joint programme partnership, the next step in deepening our collaboration. Within the UK, the aircraft under development will be known as Tempest.

Together, our ambition is to develop a next generation capability designed to outmatch adversaries even in the most highly contested environments, by utilising a network of cutting-edge capabilities such as advanced sensors, weapons and data systems. Due to enter service in 2035, it is being developed to keep ahead of the threat for decades to come and undertake a wide variety of missions within our wider military, across all domains.

Tempest will be developed by the newly formed Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP), under a spirit of equal partnership, created by the merging of Japan's FX programme with the UK and Italy's Future Combat Air System (FCAS). This new programme will take forward our joint concepting activity and support technological and operational sovereignty across partner nations.

This announcement represents a major opportunity to develop our sovereign defence-industrial capabilities, demonstrating our commitment to the 2018 Combat Air Strategy and the 2021 Defence and Security Industrial Strategy. The programme is delivering an uplift in skilled jobs for all three partner nations, providing a launchpad for careers in science and engineering. The enterprise already employs over 2,500 highly skilled personnel in the UK alone, including engineers and programmers, with recruitment expanding rapidly.

This programme will also be important in supporting economic growth across the country, with key combat air hubs in the north-west and south-west of England and in Edinburgh, supported by a supply chain of hundreds of organisations from one end of the UK to the other. It is a key avenue for investment in Research and Development, both public and private, with MOD and our industry partners having already invested well over £1 billion in developing the skills and technologies needed to deliver at pace.

This capability will be designed by some of the world's leading defence companies. In the UK, these include BAE Systems, Leonardo UK, MBDA UK and Rolls-Royce, working closely with the Ministry of Defence. The international partnership includes MHI, IHI and MELCO for Japan; and Leonardo SpA., Avio Aero, MBDA IT and Elettronica for Italy.

This is a truly strategic endeavour, demonstrating our commitment to maintaining the capabilities needed to defend the UK, protect and reassure our allies and partners and deter those who would threaten international security. It is a clear sign of a global Britain working with like-minded partners from across the world to deepen our defence capabilities, grow our advanced industrial capacity, and demonstrate our shared commitment to international security.

DIGITAL, CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ App Security and Privacy Code of Practice and Call for Views Response

Minister for Media, Data and Digital Infrastructure (Julia Lopez): [\[HCWS429\]](#)

I am pleased to inform the House that the Government has published two documents titled 'Code of Practice for App Store Operators and App Developers' and 'Call for Views Response on App Security and Privacy Interventions'. This follows on from a [Call for Views](#) held between 4 May and 29 June 2022 where we sought feedback on our proposed interventions to protect users' security and privacy from malicious and poorly developed apps.

We are publishing a world-first voluntary Code of Practice that sets minimum security and privacy requirements for App Store Operators and App Developers. Given that people's lives are dependent on apps to use services, such as online banking, health and entertainment services, this Code is essential as malicious and poorly designed apps continue to be accessible to users on app stores which can result in the loss of personal data, money and access to devices. This work will help deliver an objective within the National Cyber Strategy to reduce the cyber risk at source by ensuring that app stores (and app developers) follow better levels of cyber security.

This Code will improve the security and privacy practices of both developers and operators and therefore ensure that apps are more suitably built. The Code, and the eight principles within it, has been informed by feedback from operators, developers and security experts following the Call for Views, and received support from a vast majority of respondents. It has been thoroughly tested to ensure it strikes an appropriate balance in protecting users whilst also not overly burdening operators and developers. Furthermore, the Code will ensure that more information about an app's data practices is conveyed to users so they can make informed decisions when deciding whether to download an app.

Given the global nature of cyber security issues and digital markets, we plan to prioritise creating international alignment on the Code's security and privacy requirements. We will do this by engaging with international counterparts to promote the need for the requirements, particularly in the context of future competition regulation, and explore the viability of creating an international standard based on the Code.

I will place a copy of both the ‘ [Code of Practice for App Store Operators and App Developers](#) ’ and ‘ [Call for Views Response on App Security and Privacy Interventions](#) ’ in the Libraries of both Houses.

FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

■ Human Rights and Democracy Report for 2021

Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs (James Cleverly): [\[HCWS430\]](#)

I have today laid before Parliament a copy of the 2021 Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) Report on Human Rights and Democracy (CP number 768).

The report analyses human rights developments overseas in 2021 and illustrates how the government worked to promote and defend human rights globally, including our work to stop sexual violence against women and girls in conflict around the world and to eradicate modern slavery, to defend those who are abused, targeted or killed for their religion or beliefs, to promote media freedom and to support human rights defenders.

Against a backdrop of violations of human rights and increasing authoritarianism in the world, the UK remains steadfastly dedicated to protecting and promoting human rights.

■ Sanctions Designations

Minister of State (Indo-Pacific) (Anne-Marie Trevelyan): [\[HCWS432\]](#)

On 9 December, to mark International Anti-Corruption Day and Human Rights Day on 10 December, the UK announced a package of 30 sanctions under our Global Human Rights, Global Anti-Corruption and geographic sanctions regimes. Travel bans and/or asset freezes have been imposed on designated individuals and entities.

Covering targets from eleven countries, the package demonstrates the UK's continued determination to take action to tackle corruption and to hold to account perpetrators of human rights abuses and violations.

Under the Global Anti-Corruption Regulations 2021, sanctions can be imposed for involvement in serious corruption, which covers bribery and misappropriation of property. The sanctions announced today include designations of individuals and entities involved in serious corruption in the Western Balkans and Moldova.

Under the Global Human Rights Regulations 2020, sanctions can be imposed for involvement in serious violations and abuses of certain human rights: the right to life, the right to be free from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and the right to be free from slavery, not to be held in servitude or required to perform forced or compulsory labour. The sanctions announced today include designations addressing serious violations and abuses of human rights in Nicaragua, Pakistan, Russia and Uganda.

The UK's geographic sanctions regimes are also a powerful tool for targeting perpetrators of, and those involved in, human rights abuses and violations that involve specific

countries. Designations announced today under our Mali, Myanmar, South Sudan and Iran regimes aim to send a strong signal about respect for human rights and the UK's preparedness to take action. Designations under our Russia sanctions regime target those who have destabilised or threatened the territorial integrity of Ukraine.

The UK is also using all the levers at our disposal to prevent Conflict-Related Sexual Violence and to ensure that perpetrators are held to account. This is why today some of these designations specifically address the abhorrent crimes of sexual violence.

The full list of designations is as follows:

Western Balkans

1. Slobodan Tesic: Serbia/Bosnia, dealer of arms and munitions in the Balkans
2. Milan Radojicic: Kosovo, Vice President of Serb List (SL)
3. Zvonko Veselinovic: Kosovo, businessman and leader of an organised crime group

Moldova

4. Vladimir Plahotniuc: businessman and former Chairman of the Democratic Party of Moldova (PDM)
5. Ilan Shor: businessman and Member of Parliament and Chairman of the Sor Party

Nicaragua

6. Yohaira Hernandez Chirino: Deputy Mayor of Matagalpa
7. Sadrach Zelodon Rocha: Mayor of Matagalpa

Pakistan

8. Mian Abdul Haq: cleric of Barchundi Sharif shrine

Russia

9. Colonel Ramil Rakhmatulovic Ibatullin: Commander of the 90th Guards Tank Division
10. Valentin Aleksandrovich Oparin: Major of Justice and an investigator of the 534th Military Investigation Department of the Armed Forces of the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation
11. Artur Rinatovich Shambazov: former senior detective in the main department for the protection of national statehood of the Ukrainian Security Service (SBU) in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea
12. Andrey Vyacheslavovich Tishenin: former senior detective in Ukrainian Security Service and former officer in Russian federal Security Service in Crimea
13. Oleg Vladimirovich Tkachenko: former Head of the Department for Public Prosecutors for the Rostov region

Uganda

14. Kale Kayihura: former Inspector General of the Ugandan Police Force

Mali

15. Katiba Macina: jihadist armed group in Mali led by Amadou Kouffa and founding member of the AQ-aligned JNIM terror group

Myanmar

16. 33rd Light Infantry Division of Myanmar Army: part of the Myanmar Armed Forces under the command of Brigadier-General Aung Aung

17. 99 Light Infantry of Myanmar Army: part of the Myanmar Armed Forces under the leadership of Brigadier- General Than Oo

18. Office of the Chief of Military and Security Affairs (OCMSA)

South Sudan

19. Gordon Koang Biel: County Commissioner for Koch, Unity State

20. Gatluak Nyang Hoth: County Commissioner for Mayendit, Unity State

Iran

21. Iman Afshari: Presiding Judge of Branch 26 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court

22. Ali Alghasimehr: Public Prosecutor of the Revolutionary Court of Shiraz and Chief Justice of Fars province

23. Mohamed-Reza Amouzad: Presiding Judge of Branch 28 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court

24. Allah Karam Azizi: Head of Rajaei Shahr Prison

25. Hassan Babaei: member of the Iranian Judiciary in Tehran province

26. Ali Cheharmahali: former Director of Greater Tehran Penitentiary and former Director of Evin prison

27. Mousa Gazanfarabad: former Head of the Revolutionary Court in Tehran

28. Seyed Ali Mazloun: Presiding Judge of Branch 29 of the Tehran Revolutionary Court

29. Mustafa Mohebi: former Director of the Prisons Organisation in Tehran

30. Gholamreza Ziyayi: former Director of Evin Prison and Director of Raja'i Shahr prison

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

■ Health Update

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Primary Care and Public Health) (Neil O'Brien): [\[HCWS433\]](#)

The Government is delaying the implementation of the introduction of further advertising restrictions on TV and online for less healthy food and drink products until 1 October 2025.

Due to a delay to Royal Assent of the Health and Care Act 2022, and recognition that industry needs more time to prepare for the restrictions, in May 2022, Government announced a year delay to the implementation of these restrictions to 1 January 2024.

However feedback from industry and the regulators is now clear that there is insufficient time to prepare for implementation on the previously announced date of 1 January 2024.

This is because ahead of implementation there are a number of steps that need to be taken including: a Government consultation on draft regulations that are required to set out the details of the advertising restrictions, such as the definition of product categories in scope of the advertising restrictions and the definition of the exemptions for small and medium enterprises, audio only content and services connected to regulated radio; the subsequent making of such Regulations; a consultation from the statutory regulator (Ofcom) on the designation of a frontline regulator; the possible designation of a frontline regulator by Ofcom; and publication of guidance to support business compliance with advertising restrictions, following consultation on such guidance from the frontline regulator.

Through discussions with key stakeholders it is clear that this process cannot be delivered by January 2024.

We have listened carefully to the concerns raised by advertisers, broadcasters and regulators about the importance of having sufficient time with these documents to fully prepare and restructure their advertising. We also recognise that businesses need time to reformulate their products. This is why we have decided to delay implementation of this policy until 1 October 2025.

Parliament included a power in the Health and Care Act to delay implementation of the advertising restrictions if necessary. We will be utilising this power to amend the date of implementation for the advertising restrictions by secondary legislation, which we are laying today.

To illustrate our commitment to this policy, we are also launching a consultation on the definitions included in secondary legislation, to provide detail to that included in the Health and Care Act. This consultation will run for 16 weeks, until 31 March 2023.

This consultation will not be inviting opinions on the policy or looking to deviate from anything announced in the consultation response in June 2021 – it will be to confirm the clarity of the definitions used and that the text in the secondary legislation is fit for purpose.

Addressing obesity remains a priority for the government. Having a fit and healthy population is essential for a thriving economy and we remain committed to helping people live healthier lives.

New Regulations on out of home calorie labelling for food sold in large businesses including restaurants, cafes and takeaways came into force in April 2022 and restrictions on the promotion by location of products high in fat, salt or sugar came into force in October 2022.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ UK-South Korea Trade Agreement Update

Secretary of State for International Trade (Kemi Badenoch):

[[HCWS431](#)]

Today the Department for International Trade has launched a public Call for Input on a future Free Trade Agreement between the United Kingdom and South Korea. The Call for Input can be accessed via the following link –

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/trade-with-south-korea-call-for-input>

The UK is committed to building on our strong, existing trade and investment relationship with South Korea. South Korea is our 20th largest trade partner with bilateral trade worth £14.3 billion in 2021.

The UK's current trade relationship with South Korea is based on the EU-South Korea trade agreement, which was negotiated by the European Commission in 2011 and, after a further negotiation, formed the basis of the UK-Korea trade agreement on 01/01/2021. We now have the opportunity to update the agreement, ensuring it is a modern and fit-for-purpose arrangement that meets the specific needs of the UK. This will include important areas such as digital trade, enhanced climate provisions and further support for small and medium sized businesses.

South Korea was the world's 10th largest economy in terms of GDP in 2021, with a population of almost 52 million people. An updated agreement could provide the UK with the opportunity to increase the value of UK exports to South Korea, which were worth £8.1 billion in 2021. With updated modern provisions the UK can seek to expand our key exports in digital, business and financial services, contributing to domestic growth at a time of global economic hardship.

Opening discussions towards a modern deal will assist both nations to take an ambitious, progressive, and sustainable step towards shared growth and job creation. As two countries with a strong record of cooperation, resting on shared democratic values, a bespoke trade agreement will provide a foundation for further growth in our trading relationship.

The Government has been clear that when we are negotiating trade deals, the NHS will not be on the table. The price the NHS pays for drugs will not be on the table. The services the NHS provides will not be on the table. We will not agree measures which undermine the Government's ability to deliver on our manifesto commitments to the NHS.

As we committed to in our manifesto in all of our trade negotiations, we will not compromise on our high environmental protection, animal welfare and food standards.

The Call for Input will run for eight weeks and invite businesses, public sector bodies, individuals, and other interested stakeholders to set out their priorities for a closer trading relationship with South Korea.

The information that the Government receives through this exercise will be crucial in shaping our approach to negotiations and our priorities and objectives, ensuring that our

final approach is informed by stakeholder needs and the demands of the British economy.

Next Steps

The UK and South Korean Governments share a desire to develop closer ties and we have jointly agreed to aim to launch negotiations as soon as possible next year, after we have fully reflected on the results of the call for input and developed a negotiating mandate. Prior to launching negotiations, the UK Government will publish its approach to negotiations. This will include a response to the call for input and our strategic objectives, as well as an economic scoping assessment. We will continue to keep Parliament, the devolved administrations, UK citizens and businesses updated, as we make progress towards seizing the opportunities presented by a new, modern trade agreement with South Korea.

TREASURY

Financial Services

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Jeremy Hunt):

[\[HCWS425\]](#)

In the Autumn Statement, I set out the government's strategy for boosting growth by investing in our people, in the infrastructure that connects our country, by creating the right environment for business investment, and by supporting our world-leading financial services companies and innovators. Alongside this, I identified five growth sectors – one being financial services – for which the government will prioritise the review of retained EU law, to ensure we identify changes that will support these sectors to grow.

I am today setting out a bold collection of reforms taking forward the government's vision for an open, sustainable, and technologically advanced financial services sector that is globally competitive and acts in the interests of communities and citizens. These reforms will create jobs, support businesses, and power growth across all four nations of the UK.

The UK is one of the world's leading financial centres and our financial services sector is one of the engines of the UK's economy. Financial and related professional services employ over 2.3 million people, two thirds of whom are outside of London, with hubs in Belfast, Birmingham, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, and Manchester.[1] In 2021, the financial services sector contributed £173.6 billion to the UK economy, 8.3% of total economic output.[2]

The announcements being made today build on the reform agenda the government is taking forward through the Financial Services and Markets (FSM) Bill. The government's approach recognises and protects the foundations on which the UK's success as a financial services hub is built: agility, consistently high regulatory standards, and openness. This approach will ensure that the sector benefits from dynamic and proportionate regulation, and that consumers and citizens benefit from high quality services, appropriate consumer protection, and a sector that embraces the latest technology.

I have set out below details of the measures being taken forward, which I look forward to delivering in close collaboration with our vibrant financial services sector.

A competitive marketplace promoting effective use of capital

Building a smarter regulatory framework for the UK

The government has today published its policy statement *Building a smarter financial services framework for the UK*. A copy will be deposited in the Library. This is an ambitious plan for repealing retained EU law in financial services and replacing it with a new framework tailored to the UK, embracing the new opportunities presented by our position outside the EU.

Our approach includes:

- Publishing draft Statutory Instruments to demonstrate how the government can use the powers within the FSM Bill to reform the prospectus and securitisation regimes and to ensure the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) has sufficient rulemaking powers to regulate payments services and e-money. Overhauling the prospectus regime will enable the government to implement recommendations from Lord Hill's UK Listing Review, helping to widen participation in the ownership of public companies, simplify the capital raising process for companies on UK markets, and make the UK a more attractive destination for Initial Public Offerings. The government is also committed to working with the FCA and Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA) to bring forward relevant reforms identified in HM Treasury's 2021 review of the Securitisation Regulation.
- Plans to repeal the regulations for the European Long Term Investment Fund (ELTIF), without replacement. This reflects the fact that no ELTIFs have been established in the UK, removing unnecessary retained EU law, and that the newly established Long Term Asset Fund (LTAF) regime provides a fund structure better suited to the needs of the UK market. Firms have already begun to seek FCA authorisation for funds taking advantage of this new structure.
- Publishing the Short Selling Regulation Review, a Call for Evidence on the UK's regime for regulating short selling, with the aim of putting in place a regulatory regime tailored to the UK, which supports market integrity and bolsters the competitiveness of UK financial markets.
- Publishing PRIIPs and UK Retail Disclosure, a consultation on a proposed alternative framework for retail disclosure in the UK. Following the repeal of the Packaged Retail and Insurance-based Investment Products (PRIIPs) Regulation, the new framework for retail disclosure in the UK will work more effectively with the UK's dynamic capital markets and foster more informed retail investor participation.
- Publishing the Information Requirements in the Payment Account Regulations Consultation which examines proposals to remove unnecessary customer information requirements related to bank accounts imposed by the EU in the Payment Accounts Regulations. This would reduce unnecessary regulations on banks, freeing them up to better meet the needs of UK customers.

Updating banking regulation and the ring-fencing regime

The government will bring forward secondary legislation in 2023 to improve the functionality of the ring-fencing regime. These reforms, in response to the independent review on Ring-fencing and Proprietary Trading, will benefit customers, the financial services industry, and the economy, while maintaining appropriate financial stability safeguards. The government will also issue a public Call for Evidence in the first quarter of 2023 to review the practicalities of aligning the ring-fencing and resolution regimes.

The PRA intends to consult on removing rules for the capital deduction of certain non-performing exposures (NPEs) held by banks. This would allow the PRA to apply a judgement-led approach to address the adequacy of firms' provisioning for NPEs, help to simplify the UK rulebook and avoid the unnecessary gold plating of prudential standards. Such an approach would be possible only because of our regulatory freedoms outside the EU.

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Ensuring a regulatory focus on growth and competitiveness

The government is legislating through the FSM Bill to introduce new secondary objectives for the FCA and PRA to provide for a greater focus on growth and international competitiveness while maintaining their existing primary objectives. To further support this aim, I will today lay before Parliament new remit letters for the FCA and the PRA which will set clear, targeted recommendations for how the regulators should have regard to the government's economic policy.

Separately, the government and regulators will separately commence a review of the Senior Managers & Certification Regime in Q1 2023. The government will launch a Call for Evidence to look at the legislative framework of the regime, and the FCA and PRA will review the regulatory framework. The government's Call for Evidence will be an information gathering exercise to garner views on the regime's effectiveness, scope and proportionality, and to seek views on potential improvements and reforms.

Wholesale markets reforms

The government is committed to strengthening the UK's position as a world-leading wholesale capital markets centre, and is taking forward reforms to the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID) framework through the Wholesale Markets

Review. Measures in the FSM Bill deliver key elements of this. To further support this agenda, the government:

- Will today lay before Parliament The Markets in Financial Instruments (Investor Reporting) (Amendment) Regulations 2022, which will remove burdensome EU requirements related to reporting rules. This also builds on the reforms brought forward through The Markets in Financial Instruments (Capital Markets) (Amendment) Regulations 2021 laid in June 2021.
- Will bring forward secondary legislation in Q1 2023 to remove burdens for firms trading commodities derivatives as an ancillary activity, for example, when manufacturers seek to fix the future price of their purchases of specific raw materials.
- Is committing, alongside the FCA, to having a regulatory regime in place by 2024 to support a consolidated tape for market data. A consolidated tape will bring together market data from multiple platforms into one continuous feed. This will improve market efficiency, lower costs for firms and investors, and make UK markets more attractive and competitive.
- Will launch the Investment Research Review: an independent review of investment research and its contribution to UK capital markets competitiveness. The review is part of the government's wider commitment to enhance the UK's ability to attract companies to list and grow.
- Will establish a new industry-led Accelerated Settlement Taskforce to explore the potential of faster settlement of financial trades in the UK. Reducing settlement times from the current industry standard of two days could reduce counterparty risk and increase operational efficiency. The taskforce will bring together industry stakeholders to recommend an approach that works for the UK.

Unlocking investment to drive growth across the whole economy

The UK's financial services sector is an engine for growth across all four nations of the UK. The government is therefore bringing forward measures that will unleash the sector to drive investment and growth.

The government set out its plans to reform Solvency II at Autumn Statement, unlocking more than £100bn pounds for UK insurers to invest in long-term productive assets. HM Treasury is working with BEIS to deliver the recommendations made to government as part of the Secondary Capital Raising Review, and more broadly on reforms to corporate governance, to further enhance the attractiveness of UK public markets.

Going further, the government announces today that it:

- Will, in early 2023, consult on new guidance to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) in England and Wales on asset pooling. The government will also consult on requiring LGPS funds to ensure they are considering investment opportunities in illiquid assets such as venture and growth capital, as part of a diversified investment strategy.

- Is committed to accelerating the pace of consolidation so that no pension savers are left in poorly governed and underperforming schemes. In the new year DWP will lead the way by consulting on a new Value for Money framework, alongside the FCA and the Pensions Regulator, which will set required metrics and standards in key areas such as investment performance, cost and charges and quality of service that all schemes must meet.
- Will amend the tax rules for Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs). With effect from April 2023, new rules will remove the requirement for a REIT to own at least three properties, where they hold a single commercial property worth at least £20 million; and amend the rule that applies to properties disposed of within three years of significant development activity, to ensure that this rule operates in line with its original intention.
- Has today published a technical consultation, VAT treatment of fund management: consultation, which sets out proposals for legislative reform intended to codify existing policy to give legal clarity and certainty, not to make policy changes. The consultation seeks input on whether the proposed changes achieve this objective.

A World Leader in Sustainable Finance

The government is ensuring that the financial system plays a major role in the delivery of the UK's net-zero target, and is acting to secure the UK as the best place in the world for responsible and sustainable investment. The UK is the world's premier financial centre for sustainable finance. The government is acting to ensure the UK retains global leadership in this rapidly growing sector. To deliver on its commitment align the financial services sector with Net Zero and to support the sector to unlock the necessary private financing, the government:

- Will publish an updated Green Finance Strategy early 2023.
- Will consult in Q1 2023 on bringing Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) ratings providers into the regulatory perimeter. HM Treasury will also join the industry-led ESG Data and Ratings Code of Conduct Working Group, recently convened by the FCA, as an observer. These services are increasingly a component of investment decisions, and the government wants to ensure improved transparency and good market conduct.

A sector at the forefront of technology and innovation

Our regulatory framework for financial services must support innovation and leadership in emerging areas of finance. To ensure the sector is prepared to embrace and facilitate the adoption of cutting-edge technologies, the government is:

- Setting up a Financial Market Infrastructure Sandbox in 2023, and is legislating to implement this in the FSM Bill. This will enable firms to test and adopt new technology and innovations, such as distributed ledger technology, in providing the infrastructure services that underpin markets.
- Working with the regulators and market participants to bring forward a new class of wholesale market venue, which would operate on an intermittent trading basis. This

highly innovative approach would be a global first and would act as a bridge between public and private markets, boosting the UK as a destination for all companies to get the investment they need to create jobs and grow.

- Legislating in the FSM Bill to establish a safe regulatory environment for stablecoins – which may be used for payments – and ensure the government has the necessary powers to bring a broader range of investment-related cryptoasset activities into UK regulation.
- Publishing its formal response to the consultation on expanding the Investment Manager Exemption to include cryptoassets, which will facilitate their inclusion in the portfolios of overseas funds managed in the UK. The government intends for this change to be made through HMRC regulations this year
- Bringing forward a consultation in the coming weeks to explore the case for a central bank digital currency – a sovereign digital pound – and consult on a potential design. The Bank of England will also release a Technology Working Paper setting out cutting-edge technology considerations informing the potential build of a digital pound.

Delivering for consumers and businesses

The government is committed to a financial services sector that supports the real economy and will continue to work with the regulators and industry to ensure that the sector is delivering for people and businesses across the UK. The government:

- Has published a consultation, Reforming the Consumer Credit Act 1974. By modernising the regulation of consumer lending, reform will update consumer protections and ensure they work well in a modern and increasingly digital economy. It will also increase accessibility of credit products by allowing firms to better serve consumers through more innovative credit products.
- Has consulted on reforms to remove well-designed performance fees from the pensions regulatory charge cap and will lay regulations early in the New Year. This will provide clarity for industry and ensure pension savers can benefit from investing in UK innovation.
- Is committed to working with the FCA to examine the boundary between regulated financial advice and financial guidance, with the objective of improving access to helpful support, information and advice, while maintaining strong protections for consumers.

I am confident that the measures announced today, in tandem with the work taken forward through the FSM Bill, will deliver for this key growth sector, and the people and businesses that rely upon it.

Documents relating to all announcements can be found on GOV.UK

www.gov.uk/government/collections/financial-services-the-edinburgh-reforms

[1] TheCityUK calculations based on Nomis, 'Business register and employment survey: open access', (May 2022), available at:

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/query/construct/components/date.asp?menuopt=13&subcomp=>

[2] House of Commons Library 'Financial services: contribution to the UK economy':
<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn06193/>