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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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

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Ministers and others who make Statements or answer Questions are referred to only by name, not their ministerial or other title. The current list of ministerial and other responsibilities is as follows.

<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
Baroness Evans of Bowes Park	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
Earl Howe	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence and Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
Lord Agnew of Oulton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
Baroness Barran	Whip
Lord Bates	Minister of State, Department for International Development and Treasury Spokesperson
Baroness Blackwood of North Oxford	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and Wales Office
Baroness Buscombe	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Callanan	Minister of State, Department for Exiting the European Union
Earl of Courtown	Deputy Chief Whip
Lord Duncan of Springbank	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office and Scotland Office
Baroness Fairhead	Minister of State, Department for International Trade
Lord Gardiner of Kimble	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Baroness Goldie	Whip
Lord Henley	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Lord Keen of Elie	Advocate-General for Scotland and Ministry of Justice Spokesperson
Baroness Manzoor	Whip
Baroness Stedman-Scott	Whip
Baroness Sugg	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
Lord Taylor of Holbeach	Chief Whip
Baroness Vere of Norbiton	Whip
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Minister of State, Home Office and Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for International Development
Lord Young of Cookham	Cabinet Office Spokesperson and Whip
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip

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Written Statements

Thursday, 11 April 2019

Agriculture and Fisheries Council

[HLWS1468]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: My Rt Hon Friend Robert Goodwill (Minister of State for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food) has today made the following statement:

Agriculture and Fisheries Council takes place in Luxembourg on 15 April.

As the provisional agenda stands, the primary focus for agriculture will be on the Post-2020 Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform package. Ministers will exchange views on the green architecture elements in the Regulation on CAP Strategic Plans.

Council will also exchange views on the agricultural aspects of the Commission's strategic long-term vision for a climate neutral economy, the market situation, and the Task Force in Rural Africa, an expert group set up by the European Commission.

There are currently four items scheduled for discussion under 'any other business':

- information from the Presidency on research and agriculture.
- information from the Commission on the Declaration on Smart and Sustainable Digital Future for European Agriculture and Rural Areas.
- information from the Slovakian delegation on the Renewable Energy Directive post-2020.
- information from the Netherlands delegation on the EU Action against Deforestation and Forest Degradation.

Counter-Terrorism Asset Freezing Regime: 1 October to 31 December 2018

[HLWS1470]

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

Under the Terrorist Asset-Freezing etc. Act 2010 (TAFSA 2010), the Treasury is required to prepare a quarterly report regarding its exercise of the powers conferred on it by Part 1 of TAFSA 2010. This written statement satisfies that requirement for the period 1 October 2018 to 31 December 2018.

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

Under the ISIL-AQ asset freezing regime, the UN has responsibility for designations and the Treasury, through the Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation (OFSI),

has responsibility for licensing and compliance with the regime in the UK under the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida (Asset-Freezing) Regulations 2011.

Under EU Regulation 2580/2001, the EU has responsibility for designations and OFSI has responsibility for licensing and compliance with the regime in the UK under Part 1 of TAFSA 2010.

A new EU asset freezing regime under EU Regulation (2016/1686) was implemented on 22 September 2016. This permits the EU to make autonomous Al-Qaida and ISIL (Da'esh) listings. One new designation under the regime was made during this quarter, and is recorded in the fifth column of the annexed table entitled 'New Designations in this Quarter'.

The Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act 2018 will help ensure that UK counterterrorist sanctions powers remain a useful tool for law enforcement and intelligence agencies to consider utilising, while also meeting the UK's international obligations.

Under the Act, a designation could be made where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that the person or group is or has been involved in a defined terrorist activity and that designation is appropriate. This approach is in line with the UK's current approach under UN and EU sanctions and would be balanced by procedural protections such as the ability of designated persons to challenge the Government in court.

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

The Statement includes the following attached material:

Frozen funds table [WMS Q4 of 2018 - Table (002).pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2019-04-11/HLWS1470/>

EU Settlement Scheme: Emails

[HLWS1471]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My rt hon Friend the Minister of State for Immigration (Caroline Nokes) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

The EU Settlement Scheme is an integral part of protecting the rights of EU citizens who have made their homes here in the UK, giving them an easy way of demonstrating their status in this country so that in years to come we do not find ourselves in a position where people have issues making clear the rights that they have. The scheme, which is free of charge, is performing well and over 400,000 EU citizens have already applied, with over 50,000 applications received on the opening weekend.

The Home Office receives a large number of enquiries in relation to the Scheme. When responding to generic enquiries, responses are sent in batches. The process for this is such that recipients would not normally be able to see the other email addresses. Regrettably, it has come to my attention that on Sunday 7 April three emails were

sent that did not follow the appropriate procedure and 240 email addresses were made visible to other recipients. No other personal data was included in the communication.

We have written to all individuals who received this email to apologise. The Departmental Data Protection Officer has been informed and the Department has voluntarily notified the Information Commissioner's Office of the incident. An internal review is also underway to determine the details of what happened and the lessons that need to be learned.

The Home Office takes its data protection responsibilities very seriously and is committed to the continued improvement of its performance against the UK's high data protection standards. As a Department we have been taking steps to ensure we have the culture, processes and systems in place to treat the public's personal data appropriately.

As a further immediate step we have put in place strict controls on the use of bulk emails when communicating with members of the public to ensure this does not happen again as lessons are learned. An independent review of the Department's compliance with its data protection obligations has also been commissioned which will be led by Non-Executive Director Sue Langley and will report in due course.

Ministerial Equivalence and Exemption Directions in Financial Services: EU and EEA

[HLWS1475]

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

The Equivalence Determinations for Financial Services and Miscellaneous Provisions (Amendment etc) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (S.I. 2019/541), includes a power for ministers, for up to twelve months after exit day, to make equivalence directions and exemption directions for the European Union and EEA member states.

I have today laid before Parliament ministerial directions which exercise the power in 4 specific areas, to help ensure that the UK will have a functioning regulatory regime for financial services in all scenarios.

The first direction determines that the EU-adopted International Financial Reporting Standards are equivalent to UK accounting standards and can continue to be used, for example, to prepare financial statements for requirements under the Transparency Directive, and to prepare a prospectus under the Prospectus Directive. This delivers on a commitment made by the government in November 2018.

HM Treasury, the European Union and the EEA European Free Trade Association countries have decided to provide exemptions for central banks and certain public bodies under certain prudential regulations in the area of financial services in the event that the United Kingdom leaves the European Union without an agreement.

Therefore, directions have been made exempting these EU and EEA bodies from certain requirements under UK law in force after exit.

These measures are important for avoiding disruption to the financial services sector, and the businesses and individuals relying on it, in the event that the United Kingdom withdraws from the European Union without an agreement.

Copies of the directions are available in the Vote Office and Printed Paper Office and will be published alongside the *Equivalence Determinations for Financial Services and Miscellaneous Provisions (Amendment etc) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019* on Legislation.gov.uk.

Public Appointments Order in Council

[HLWS1473]

Lord Young of Cookham: My honourable friend the Minister for Implementation (Oliver Dowden) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

Today I wish to inform the House that the Privy Council has made a revised Order in Council that makes provision for an independent Commissioner to monitor the procedures adopted by appointing authorities when making appointments to public bodies. This revokes the Order made in November 2017 and provides an amended Schedule of bodies and offices to be regulated by the Commissioner. Regulation by the Commissioner in accordance with the Governance Code on Public Appointments is an important part of ensuring that those appointments made by Government Ministers which are subject to regulation are made in an open, fair and transparent manner.

The revised Order in Council has been gazetted in the Edinburgh, London and Belfast Gazettes and published on the website of the Privy Council Office. Changes to the Schedule reflect where public bodies have been created, renamed, dissolved or subject to machinery of government changes since November 2017. A copy of the Order in Council has been placed in the libraries of both houses.

We have only added bodies to the Schedule where they legally exist as of the date of the Order being made. This means that two bodies previously announced by the Government have not been included in this revised order: the Holocaust Memorial Centre Ltd and the Trade Remedies Authority (TRA). The former is soon to be established as an arms length body of Government. At that point, it can be treated as a regulated body by notification to the Commissioner under section 2 (3) of the Order in Council. The TRA has already been notified to the Commissioner under this section who has confirmed that it will be treated as a regulated body as soon as it exists. In the meantime, interim appointments to the TRA have been made in line with the Governance Code and principles on Public Appointments. The TRA will be the only arms length body of the Department for International Trade and will appear as such on the schedule of the Order in Council when it is next updated.

We will conduct a comprehensive review of the Order in Council later this year to ensure consistency in the Schedule and the types of bodies included. This will provide a further opportunity to add the two bodies above and any other newly created bodies to the Schedule as appropriate, and the subsequent Order in Council will be published. Thereafter, we intend to undertake an annual refresh of the Order.

The Statement includes the following attached material:

Public Appointments Order in Council - April 2019 [2019-04-10
Final OinC 2019.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2019-04-11/HLWS1473/>

Service Complaints Ombudsman: Annual Report 2018

[HLWS1469]

Earl Howe: My right hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State and Minister for Defence People and Veterans (Tobias Ellwood) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

I am pleased to lay before Parliament today the Service Complaints Ombudsman's annual report for 2018 on the fairness, effectiveness and efficiency of the Service complaints system.

This report is published by Nicola Williams and covers the third year of operation of the reformed Service complaints system and the work of her office in 2018.

The findings of the report and the new recommendations made will now be fully considered by the Ministry of Defence, and a formal response to the Ombudsman will follow once that work is complete.

Teacher Training Skills Test

[HLWS1472]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: My right honourable friend the Minister of State for School Standards (Nick Gibb) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

I would like to set out for the House some actions my department is taking to resolve an error we have identified in the marking scheme of one of the professional skills tests for prospective teachers.

The skills tests assess the core skills that teachers need to fulfil their professional role in schools. This is to ensure all teachers are competent in numeracy and literacy, regardless of their specialism.

All current and prospective trainee teachers must pass the skills tests in numeracy and literacy before they can be recommended for the award of qualified teacher status (QTS). Trainee teachers must pass the skills tests before they start their course of initial teacher training.

Since February 2018, candidates have been able to take unlimited test attempts, with the first three attempts offered free of charge.

The design of the skills tests is the responsibility of the Standards and Testing Agency (STA). The agency recently reviewed all marking schemes in operation for the skills tests and discovered an error in one test. This test was immediately taken out of use and the STA have confirmed that there are no errors in the remaining marking schemes that are in operation.

The error applies to a marking scheme for one of the literacy skills tests and has resulted in a small number of candidates failing their literacy test when they should have passed. The incorrect marking scheme for this test has been in operation for at least ten years. We know that just over 200 candidates were affected by the error between September 2017 and November 2018, approximately 150 of whom went on to pass their literacy test.

We will offer a payment to compensate candidates affected for any expenses they may have incurred in having to retake the test. My department will make best endeavours to contact candidates affected by the marking scheme error. Any candidates who think they may have been affected can also contact the skills test helpline by emailing support@sta.psionline.com

It is regrettable that this error has prevented some candidates from progressing their applications to teacher training. My department is taking swift action to make sure that those affected are supported to progress their applications.

The Chief Executive of the STA has assured me that there are no remaining marking scheme errors and that the schemes will be quality assured on a regular basis to prevent further errors.

The Times/Sunday Times

[HLWS1474]

Lord Keen of Elie: My Right Honourable Friend the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (Rt Hon Jeremy Wright) has made the following Written Statement:

On 10 January 2019, News UK submitted an application to vary certain conditions put in place in 1981 by the then Secretary of State for Trade. The changes proposed by News UK would allow The Times and The Sunday Times to share journalistic resources, subject to the agreement of each newspaper's editor. The application proposed no other changes to the 1981 conditions. As set out in the Invitation to Comment which my department published on 18 January 2019, this was treated as an application by News UK to replace the 1981 conditions with new undertakings in accordance with Schedule 18 to the Communications Act 2003.

I have considered this application in my quasi-judicial role regarding media merger cases. Having considered News UK's application and the representations made to the Invitation to Comment, I have concluded that there has been a material change in circumstances since 1981 that warrants me considering the application. I have also concluded that the change of circumstances justifies the

variation, as the effect of News UK's proposed changes would not, in my view, materially impact on the public interest considerations contained in Section 58 Enterprise Act 2002.

I am, therefore, minded to accept News UK's application. However, in considering the proposed new undertakings as a whole, I have noted that the existing governance arrangements - agreed in 1981 - lack clarity and certainty over roles and responsibilities. Before agreeing the application I am therefore of the view that

these arrangements need to be suitably updated and enhanced to better reflect current corporate best practice.

I have asked DCMS officials to discuss these issues with News UK and to consider new proposals from News UK to update the proposed undertakings to address my concerns. I will update the House in due course on these discussions. Should News UK be able to offer revised undertakings which meet my concerns, I will, as required in legislation, consult on the final form of the undertakings before deciding whether or not to accept them.

Written Answers

Thursday, 11 April 2019

Air Pollution: Children

Asked by **The Lord Bishop of St Albans**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by Unicef Healthy air for every child: A call for national action, published on 5 February; and what steps, if any, they intend to take in response to its recommendations, in particular the recommendation to set up a "Little Lungs Fund" of £215 million to pay for measures that specifically reduce children's exposure to toxic air. [[HL14975](#)]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The Secretaries of State for Environment and Health recently attended the Clean Air Summit, at which a number of representatives of UNICEF were also present. UNICEF's representatives used this opportunity to highlight findings of their report and to discuss its recommendations to reduce the impact of air pollution on the most vulnerable members of society, including our children. The claims in the UNICEF report are currently being assessed by the government.

Our Clean Air Strategy is clear that children are impacted by air pollution more than the general population, and all the measures set out in the Strategy will reduce emissions of pollution, improving public health. The Government has committed £3.5bn overall to deliver actions across all sectors and achieve cleaner air for people of all ages, including children.

Airlines

Asked by **Lord Taylor of Warwick**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of Brexit on demand in the UK airline sector. [[HL15017](#)]

Baroness Sugg: Flights between the UK and the EU will continue whatever the outcome of EU Exit. In a deal scenario, flights will continue as now during the time-limited Implementation Period. In a no deal scenario, the EU has adopted a regulation which gives UK airlines the right to fly to and from the EU for 12 months, and the UK will reciprocate these rights for EU airlines.

The Department for Transport maintains close contact with the airline sector to ensure that their requirements are factored into EU Exit negotiations and preparations.

Animal Welfare: Sentencing

Asked by **Lord Selkirk of Douglas**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by Battersea Dogs and Cats Home Sentencing for animal cruelty in England and Wales, published in 2017, what plans they have to introduce legislation to increase the maximum sentence for the most serious

cases of animal cruelty from six months to five years imprisonment. [[HL14914](#)]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: We are committed to the highest standards of animal welfare and the Government has announced that it will increase the custodial maximum penalty for animal cruelty from 6 months' to 5 years' imprisonment as soon as Parliamentary time allows.

Electoral Register

Asked by **Lord Hughes of Woodside**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many electors were removed from the electoral registers of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland in each year since the EU referendum in 2016; and what percentage of the register this represents. [[HL15034](#)]

Asked by **Lord Hughes of Woodside**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many electors have been added to the electoral register of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland since 2016; and what percentage this represents in each case. [[HL15035](#)]

Lord Young of Cookham: Information on annual deletions from and additions to the electoral registers by nation is not held centrally by the Government. Each Electoral Registration Officer maintains their own register for the area for which they are responsible. Headline registration statistics are collated and published annually by the Office for National Statistics.

Football: Sportsgrounds

Asked by **Lord Pendry**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ashton of Hyde on 25 March (HL14535), on what date they intend to release the final report of their review into safe standing in football stadiums. [[HL15011](#)]

Lord Ashton of Hyde: We believe that all-seater stadia are currently the best means to ensure the safety and security of fans at designated football matches in England and Wales.

The Minister for Sport and Civil Society expects to receive the final report on the findings of the evidence review shortly and will then consider an appropriate date for the report's release.

General Elections: Candidates

Asked by **Baroness Tonge**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether UK parliamentary candidates are permitted to sign a pledge to another nation. [[HL15023](#)]

Lord Young of Cookham: Candidates at UK parliamentary elections must comply with the requirements for standing as a candidate at these

elections. Otherwise, candidates enjoy the same freedom of expression as applicable to all citizens.

High Speed 2 Railway Line

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the latest estimated costs of the HS2 project; and when the line is expected to open. [HL14923]

Baroness Sugg: The 2015 Spending Review confirmed a funding envelope for the whole of HS2 of £55.7bn in 2015 prices.

HS2 Ltd has been set Delivery-In-Service targets by Government under its Development Agreement, which are to deliver initial Phase One services from 2026 and the whole HS2 network by 2033.

HS2 Ltd is currently working with their contracted suppliers to update and agree the latest cost and schedule positions for Phase One. Once completed we will make these details public as part of the Phase One Full Business Case, which is due for publication later in 2019.

House of Lords Library: Magazine Press

Asked by Lord Palmer

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker what was the total cost of the production of Issue 1 of the House of Lords Library magazine *The Library*, published in April; and what estimate he has made of the future costs of the publication of that magazine. [HL15039]

Lord Lamington: The total cost of production for issue 1 of the House of Lords Library Magazine *The Library* published in April was £2,642.50 plus VAT (template and printing). The magazine is available in print and digitally, and the cost of future issues will therefore depend upon the demand for printed copies. Likely subscriber numbers indicate a cost for printing of £185 plus VAT per issue, and it is expected that *The Library* will be published approximately nine times per year.

Local Government: Elections

Asked by Lord Rennard

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to assess the likely level of personation that could occur at polling stations in the May 2019 local elections; and whether they will obtain from Electoral Registration Officers for those elections the number of tendered ballot papers issued in each local authority area. [HL15081]

Lord Young of Cookham: The Electoral Commission collate information on allegations of electoral fraud, including personation, at elections and in due course will publish a report covering all polls held in 2019.

The Government has no plans to ask Electoral Registration Officers to provide information on the

number of tendered ballot papers issued in each local authority. Whilst details of tendered ballot papers issued are recorded at each polling station, numbers are not totalled and there is no requirement to record this number.

Manufacturing Industries

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the analysis by the Office for National Statistics, *Manufacturing Sector Performance, UK: 2008–2018*, published on 2 April, that there may be a decline in growth in the UK manufacturing sector as a result of post-Brexit tariffs. [HL15049]

Lord Henley: The report *Manufacturing Sector Performance, UK: 2008–2018*, published by the Office for National Statistics on the 2nd April, details how the manufacturing sector has grown since the recession, and does not cover potential tariffs, or the UK exiting the European Union.

Both the UK and the EU share a strong commercial interest in preserving integrated supply chains.

The government recognises that the manufacturing sector remains a vital contributor to the economy of the UK, driving innovation, exports, job creation, and productivity growth. The sector supports 2.7 million jobs, generates 49% of the UK total exports of goods and services, and accounts for 66% of all business expenditure on UK R&D. Through our modern Industrial Strategy and Made Smarter – our key national industrial digitalisation programme – we are building an economy fit for the future. In the process, we are exploiting the wealth of opportunities from next generation technologies that foster competitive business environments, allowing for UK manufacturing to flourish. As the 9th largest global manufacturing economy, we are – and will continue to be – a major manufacturing nation.

Submarines: Decommissioning

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what assessment they have made of the report by the National Audit Office Investigation into submarine defueling and dismantling, published on 3 April, and of the impact of that report's findings on the UK defence sector. [HL15046]

Earl Howe: The National Audit Office's investigation acknowledges the complex nature of activities to defuel and dismantle decommissioned nuclear powered submarines. It also recognises the Ministry of Defence has taken steps to start initial dismantling and has ensured the storage of all laid-up submarines is safe. The Department is working closely with the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and key industrial partners to ensure its programmes are delivered safely, efficiently and effectively.

Thames House: Pedestrian Areas

Asked by Lord Blencathra

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they gave to pedestrian safety when deciding to block off the pavement outside 12 Millbank. [HL14894]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: As has been the policy of successive governments, the government does not comment on matters relating to the intelligence agencies. The Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament scrutinises the policies, expenditure, administration and operations of the intelligence agencies on behalf of Parliament.

Asked by Lord Blencathra

To ask Her Majesty's Government with whom they consulted before deciding to block off the pavement outside 12 Millbank; and whether they conducted an equality impact assessment on that blockage. [HL14895]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: As has been the policy of successive governments, the government does not comment on matters relating to the intelligence agencies. The Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament scrutinises the policies, expenditure, administration and operations of the intelligence agencies on behalf of Parliament.

Asked by Lord Blencathra

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Security Service is liable for any (1) deaths of, and (2) injuries to, pedestrians as a result of their decision to block the pavement outside 12 Millbank. [HL14896]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: As has been the policy of successive governments, the government does not comment on matters relating to the intelligence agencies. The Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament scrutinises the policies, expenditure, administration and operations of the intelligence agencies on behalf of Parliament.

Thames Tideway Tunnel

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the construction of the Thames Tideway Tunnel is (1) on time, and (2) on budget. [HL14921]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The Thames Tideway Tunnel is being financed and built by Bazalgette Tunnel Limited, also known as Tideway. Tideway report quarterly to Government on progress. In their most recent report, covering October to December 2018, Tideway report that construction is on track. The tunnel will be operational by 2023.

Tideway issued a press release on 4 April which outlines recent progress and updates their latest cost estimate. Their revised estimate is £3.361 billion (in

2014/15 prices), which is an increase of £217m on the £3.144 billion baseline set at the start of the project. Tideway estimates that it does not change the estimated £20-25 peak annual cost for Thames Water customers (in 2014/15 prices), as overall costs remain within that range. This level of increase has no impact on the taxpayer.

Universities

Asked by Lord Grocott

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Viscount Younger of Leckie on 3 April (HL14848), whether they will provide in the text of their response to this question a list of the members of (1) the Russell Group, (2) Million+, and (3) University Alliance. [HL15063]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: Information regarding a list of members of the Russell Group, Million+ and University Alliance is not held centrally. However, information from the members' websites is reflected in the following table:

1) Russell Group Membership	2) Million+	3) University Alliance
Birmingham University	Abertay University	UWE Bristol
University of Bristol	Anglia Ruskin	University of Greenwich
University of Cambridge	Bath Spa University	University of Central Lancashire
Cardiff University	University of Bedfordshire	University of Brighton
Durham University	University of Bolton	The Open University
University of Edinburgh	Canterbury Christ Church University	Teesside University
University of Exeter	University of Cumbria	University of South Wales
University of Glasgow	University of East London	University of Salford
Imperial College London	Edinburgh Napier University	University of Portsmouth
King's College London	Glasgow Caledonian University	Oxford Brookes University
University of Leeds	University of the Highlands and Islands	Nottingham Trent University
University of Liverpool	Leeds Trinity University	Kingston University
London School of Economics	London Metropolitan University	University of Hertfordshire
University of Manchester	London South Bank	Coventry University
Newcastle University	Middlesex University	
University of Nottingham	Southampton Solent University	
University of Oxford	University of Sunderland	

1) Russell Group Membership	2) Million+	3) University Alliance
Queen Mary University of London	University of West London	
Queen's University Belfast	University of the West of Scotland	
University of Sheffield	University of Staffordshire	
University of Southampton	University of Wolverhampton	
University College London		
University of Warwick		
University of York		

Notes

1) Information was taken from the members' websites on 5 April.

Universities: Procurement

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following Office for National Statistics changes to the recording of student loans in the national accounts, what guidance has been provided to universities regarding their classification, or otherwise, as contracting authorities for the purposes of the Public Service Contracts Regulations 2015. [HL15080]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The Office for National Statistics (ONS) announcement is a statistical change. Therefore, there are no changes to the operation of the student loans system or Department for Education departmental accounting.

In April 2018, the ONS announced that they would review the treatment of student loans – in particular re-examine the classification of student loans as financial assets for government. They argued the stock of student loans has grown rapidly in recent years and a significant proportion of the total value of the loan book is now expected to be cancelled at maturity.

The ONS announced in December 2018 that the recording of student loans in the national accounts and

public sector finances would mean that student loan payments will be split into a portion that is genuine government lending (and will be repaid) and a portion that is government spending (which is not expected to be repaid).

Video Games: Exports

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to help continue trade growth in the UK gaming industry after Brexit. [HL15018]

Lord Ashton of Hyde: DCMS Creative Industries economic estimates show the UK games sector was worth approximately £1.1 billion in 2017, a 7.3% increase on the previous year.

The Creative Industries Trade and Investment Board, established through the Creative Industries Sector Deal, enables a more strategic and industry-led approach to trade and export support. This will help support trade growth for the sector, including the video games industry, following the UK's exit from the EU. Among many actions to help promote the sector in 2018/19, government supported video games companies at three major international trade shows through the Department for International Trade's Tradeshow Access Programme, which saw £113m of export wins for the industry.

Young People: Rural Areas

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ashton of Hyde on 29 March (HL14672) and to the report by Rural England State of Rural Services 2018, published in February, whether they have made any assessment of why young people living in rural areas are more likely to engage in risky behaviours than those living in urban areas. [HL15040]

Lord Ashton of Hyde: Primary responsibility for safeguarding young people sits with the local authority, the relevant clinical commissioning group and the police.

Government believes these locally based partnership arrangements are the best way to protect the welfare of all young people, taking account of local circumstances.

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