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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Chief Whip
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Lord Benyon	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist	Whip
Lord Caine	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office
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Lord Greenhalgh	Minister of State, Home Office and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Lord Grimstone of Boscobel	Minister of State, Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Department for International Trade
Lord Kamall	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
Lord Offord of Garvel	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scotland Office
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Written Statements

Wednesday, 1 December 2021

HIV Action Plan

[HLWS424]

Lord Kamall: My Right Honourable friend the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (Sajid Javid) has today made the following statement:

The government is committed to achieving zero new HIV infections, AIDS and HIV-related deaths in England by 2030. Today I am pleased to announce the publication of a new Action Plan which will drive forward progress towards delivering on this commitment and sets out how we will achieve our interim ambition of an 80% reduction in new infections by 2025. To support this, NHSEI will expand opt-out testing in emergency departments in the highest prevalence local authority areas, a proven effective way to identify new cases, and will invest £20m over the next three years to support this activity. It is timely that we publish our plan shortly ahead of World AIDS Day to underline again our commitment to tackling HIV, show our support for people living with HIV and remember those we have lost to AIDS.

The reduction in HIV transmission in England is a success story. There was a 35% reduction in new HIV diagnoses in England between 2014 and 2019. In 2019 an estimated 94% of people living with HIV had been diagnosed, 98% of those diagnosed were on treatment, and 97% of those on treatment having an undetectable viral load – meaning they cannot pass on the infection.

However, our ambitions are highly stretching and will require a doubling down on existing efforts and the adoption of new strategies to ensure we reach everyone we need to. We will need to maintain the excellent progress made with key groups – gay and bisexual men, younger adults, those in London – and significantly improve diagnoses for other groups. To achieve this, the HIV Action Plan sets out how we will ensure that partners across the health system and beyond maintain and intensify partnership working around four core themes – prevent, test, treat and retain. We will enhance, expand and bring together single elements of evidence-based HIV prevention activities into a comprehensive combination prevention programme. Components include preventing people from acquiring HIV, ensuring those who acquire HIV are diagnosed promptly, preventing onward transmission from those with diagnosed infection and delivering interventions which aim to improve the health and quality of life of people with HIV.

A national HIV Action Plan Implementation Steering Group, chaired by Kevin Fenton and comprising of all key partners, including the voluntary sector, will ensure we drive forward progress in line with our aims, and we will make an annual report to Parliament on our progress.

I would like to thank Dame Inga Beale, members of the HIV Oversight Group, the Independent HIV Commission,

and all those that have helped for their excellent work in supporting the development of our Plan. The Action Plan sets out how we will continue to work together with all those who share our ambition to achieve zero new HIV infections. The publication of the Plan today is an important step towards achieving our goal.

Initial Teacher Training

[HLWS422]

Baroness Barran: My honourable friend the Minister of State for School Standards (Robin Walker) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

Today, I am announcing the publication of the Government's response to the Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Market Review report.

The [ITT Market Review report](#) was published in July 2021. The report draws on a strong evidence base and best practice examples to support its 14 recommendations for improving and delivering high-quality teacher training. After its publication, we held a public consultation and stakeholder engagement programme on the Review recommendations to ask for input from ITT providers, schools, teachers and interested bodies. This engagement has been crucial in informing the detail of the Government's response to the review.

The [Government response to the initial teacher training \(ITT\) Market Review report](#) sets out our plans for a new ITT market. These plans are based on many of the Review's recommendations and the best available evidence on the features of world-class training.

Our reforms to the ITT market will deliver consistently high-quality training so that all teachers begin their careers with the knowledge and skills they need to be effective in the classroom. The reforms establish a new set of Quality Requirements for all ITT programmes that lead to qualified teacher status. These will ensure that all ITT providers offer:

- an evidence-based training curriculum that, at a minimum, applies the principles of the [ITT Core Content Framework](#);
- intensive training and practice opportunities to students; and
- a lead mentor or mentor leadership team to support trainees, with all mentors themselves offered a training curriculum.

When formulating our response, we have fully considered all views and feedback from the consultation and wider stakeholder engagement. Whilst we want the reforms set out in the response implemented as soon as possible, we have listened to the sector and understand that, to ensure success, we need to give schools and ITT providers reasonable time to prepare for implementation. We have therefore decided to extend the implementation timeline by one year, meaning that all ITT programmes leading to QTS will need to comply with the new ITT Quality Requirements from September 2024.

Most of the recommendations proposed in the ITT Market Review have been accepted with some amendments and clarifications based on the feedback received. These amendments include funding to support mentoring requirements, reducing some of the proposed minimum time allocations and giving providers more flexibility in how they deliver the new intensive placement.

We have also accepted the Review recommendation of an accreditation process that will require ITT providers to demonstrate that they meet the quality requirements. An accreditation process is necessary to ensure that all providers are treated fairly and that both new and existing providers meet the new requirements.

We will provide funding to support the implementation of these and further measures outlined in the government response in 2024/25. Additional funding will be subject to future Spending Review outcomes.

The Government is committed to levelling up education standards to help every child reach their full potential. Brilliant teachers are central to this ambition, which is why we are creating a world-class teacher development system, providing teachers and school leaders with evidence-based training and support at every stage of their career.

Slough Borough Council

[HLWS423]

Lord Greenhalgh: My Hon. Friend, the Minister of State for Equalities and Levelling Up Communities (Kemi Badenoch) has today made the following statement:

On 25 October 2021, I announced to the House that the Secretary of State was minded to intervene at Slough Borough Council (“the Authority”) and to appoint Commissioners to take over functions associated with financial management and governance, oversight of the collection of revenues and distribution of benefits, and non-executive functions relating to the appointment and dismissal of statutory officers.

At the same time, I sought views on how best to improve political stability in the Authority’s leadership and to move towards a four yearly election cycle.

These proposals followed the publication of an external assurance review, led by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy and Jim Taylor, the former Chief Executive of Salford City Council, Trafford Council and Rochdale Borough Council. The review showed that the Authority had failed in its Best Value Duty. This is a requirement set out in the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. In addition, the review showed that the financial challenge was acute, and that the Authority could not become financially sustainable without Government support.

The governance element of the Review identified poor practices which had dated as far back as 2011, but which were still occurring today; the Council was unable to resolve such difficulties on its own (p.29). The Council had the third highest level of borrowing per head for councils in England, but there was little evidence of any concerted, strategic, or commercial plan of investment; there was little evidence that the Council understood the financial implications and risks of such borrowing (p.21).

Financial government was poor; the Council was not equipped to undertake pre-decision scrutiny; its budget lacked clear business cases setting out how its planned savings could be delivered (p.17). There was no significant corporate ownership or understanding of finance; if the senior council senior team and senior members had acted more rigorously, the current financial impact on the Council could have been mitigated (p.18).

As part of my announcement in October, I invited the Authority to make representations about my proposals to formally intervene on or before 5 November 2021. The Authority, its Conservative Councillor Group, an independent Councillor and seven residents made representations. All representations supported the intervention and the proposal to appoint Commissioners. The Authority accepted the findings of the external assurance review, stated that it looked forward to working with Commissioners, and in relation to elections, confirmed that it had established a cross-party working group and planned a consultation. The Conservative Group and the independent Councillor pledged to work with the Commissioners. Residents were universally supportive of the intervention and keen to see real improvement in the Authority’s services.

Best Value Intervention in Slough Borough Council

Following consideration of these representations, the Secretary of State has decided to proceed with the proposals announced on 25 October.

The Secretary of State is mindful that the lessons from past interventions suggest that once Commissioners are in post, additional issues can arise. He is therefore directing the Authority to undertake an assessment of the functional capability of all service areas within the next three months, to identify any gaps in capacity and capability, and may expand the scope of the intervention if necessary.

Appointing Commissioners for Slough Borough Council

The Secretary of State has decided to appoint two Commissioners with a proven record of leadership and transformation, strong financial management and governance, and the specific expertise that will be relevant to their functions.

- Max Caller CBE (Lead Commissioner) – Max led the Best Value Inspections at Northamptonshire and Liverpool and was a Commissioner at Tower Hamlets. Max is a former Chief Executive of the London Boroughs of Hackney and Barnet and former Chair of

the Local Government Boundary Commission for England.

- Margaret Lee (Finance Commissioner) – Margaret recently retired from Essex County Council where she held senior finance roles, including the statutory finance officer, and is a member of the London Borough of Croydon Improvement and Assurance Panel.

The Commissioners have been appointed for three years from 1 December 2021 to 30 November 2024, or such earlier or later time as we determine. We are clear that the Directions should operate for as long, and only as long, and only in the form, as necessary.

The Commissioners will be asked to provide their first report within the next three months, with their initial views and an assessment of whether they require further support. If further appointments are necessary, we hope to reflect the diversity of Slough's population. Further reports will be provided every six months, or as agreed with the Commissioners.

I want to be clear that most decisions will continue to be made by the Authority; the intention being that Commissioners will only use their powers as a last resort if they are dissatisfied with the Authority's improvement processes.

Commissioners will work collaboratively with the Children's Services Commissioner, Trevor Doughty, to make sure that these vital services continue to be delivered effectively and efficiently in line with the Authority's statutory duties. The Children's Services Commissioner will continue to support the Slough Children First company and Slough Borough Council on its important work to continue to improve children's social care services, which are no longer rated 'inadequate'. He will also work with the Council to explore the ideal future scope of services to be delivered by the company, including the recommendation on this in Jim Taylor's report.

Following the recent Ofsted-Care Quality Commission inspection of local services for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), the local area must now prepare a Written Statement of Action setting out how it will improve these services. The Department for Education are supporting the Council in this important task, and are considering how to engage and work with the Commissioner team to ensure this work is also prioritised.

I am also asking the Commissioners to support the Authority in relation to the negotiations with the Department for Education on the safety valve intervention programme. The Authority will participate in the programme given the size of its Dedicated Schools Grant deficit. The programme requires collaboration across education and finance leadership for the long-term benefit of children and young people with high needs.

As with other interventions led by my department, the Authority will be directed to meet the costs of the Commissioners. The Government has reviewed the level of fees paid to Commissioners appointed using powers in the Local Government Act 1999 and has determined that they should be uplifted. The fees paid to individuals are published in appointment letters which are available separately on gov.uk. I am assured this provides value for money given the expertise that is being brought, and the scale of the challenge in councils requiring statutory intervention. Given the importance of these roles, my department will also move to a new annual open recruitment process to identify potential candidates for future Commissioner appointments and other non-statutory improvement roles. Further information on this process will be published in due course.

Future of Slough Borough Council

Since the publication of the external assurance review the Authority have updated their financial position. The situation is unprecedented. Commissioners will play an important role in informing Ministers' response to the situation in Slough, including the Council's request for exceptional financial support, and what the right medium-term plan might be for Slough, given the scale of the financial and wider challenges facing the Council.

Conclusion

The Government will continue to work closely with the political, business, and cultural leadership of Slough, and is committed to making sure the residents of Slough have what they need from their local council, including confidence in its service delivery and financial management and governance.

I have published the Directions and Explanatory Memorandum associated with this announcement at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/intervention-at-slough-borough-council>.

Written Answers

Wednesday, 1 December 2021

Abortion: Ambulance Services

Asked by **Baroness Eaton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that ambulance call-outs have risen following home use of medical abortion pills; and what steps they are taking in response. [HL3990]

Lord Kamall: We are considering all evidence submitted to the Government's public consultation on whether to make permanent the temporary measure allowing for home use of both pills for early medical abortion, including evidence from ambulance services. The consultation asked questions on whether other NHS services had been affected by the temporary measure. We will publish our response in due course.

Buildings: Carbon Emissions

Asked by **Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure effective cross-departmental working towards the decarbonisation of the built environment in the UK. [HL4107]

Lord Callanan: The recently published Heat and Buildings Strategy brings together work from across Government on energy efficiency and clean heat, delivering a consistent and coherent approach across different markets, buildings and occupancy types. The Government has taken action to ensure that decision-making across government is aligned to deliver net zero, including establishing two Cabinet Committees, chaired by my Rt. Hon. Friends the Prime Minister and the COP President, to co-ordinate action across government, strengthening official-level governance, and taking new approaches to embed net zero in spending decisions.

Coal: Safety

Asked by **Lord Wigley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of coal tips in England that (1) pose, and (2) potentially pose, a danger to nearby communities; and what is the estimated cost of addressing any such dangers. [HL4177]

Lord Callanan: The vast majority of disused tips in England are now in either local authority or private ownership along with the legal responsibility for preventing any danger to the public. The majority of spoil tips were transferred to the current owners following the closure of the coal industry and break up of British Coal

(formerly National Coal Board) and disposal of its land. The Coal Authority own eight tips in England, and these are kept under regular inspection with an annual budget allocated to undertake any necessary maintenance and safety works.

Coronavirus: Drugs

Asked by **Lord Mendelsohn**

To ask Her Majesty's Government why patients who are immunocompromised must (1) test positive for COVID-19, (2) have no detectable antibodies for COVID-19, and (3) have been hospitalised specifically for acute symptoms of COVID-19, in order to access Ronapreve; and what plans they have to end this health inequality between immunocompromised patients and the rest of the population. [HL4093]

Lord Kamall: The interim clinical policy for Ronapreve (casirivimab and imdevimab) was expanded on 4 November. The clinical policy prioritises the most vulnerable hospitalised patients for whom this treatment will provide the most benefit. Patients are eligible to be considered for Ronapreve if they are hospitalised for management of symptoms of confirmed COVID-19 and negative for COVID-19 antibodies. This is based on clinical trial evidence of efficacy in this group.

Patients are also eligible for Ronapreve if they have hospital-onset COVID-19 and are at high risk of progression to severe illness or if the virus presents a material risk of destabilising a pre-existing condition or compromising recovery. These patients do not need to be negative for COVID-19 antibodies. These conditions are for both immunocompromised and non-immunocompromised patients and reflect clinical trial evidence of efficacy and available supply.

Asked by **Lord Mendelsohn**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to rollout Ronapreve as a prophylactic preventative treatment for COVID-19. [HL4094]

Lord Kamall: On 20 August 2021, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) approved Ronapreve (casirivimab and imdevimab) as the first monoclonal antibody combination product indicated for use in the prevention and treatment of acute COVID-19 infection.

The current supply of Ronapreve is limited globally, therefore the clinical policy prioritises the most vulnerable hospitalised patients for whom this treatment will provide the most benefit, which is supported by the clinical evidence. There are no current plans to make Ronapreve available for prophylaxis. We also anticipate that further neutralising monoclonal antibody treatments will be submitted for evaluation for a marketing authorisation by the MHRA in the next few months. If approved, these could become available for community treatment or prevention use.

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to secure stocks of AstraZeneca's treatment AZD7442 as a prophylactic preventative therapy against COVID-19 infection. [HL4095]

Lord Kamall: We are unable to provide the information requested as it is commercially sensitive.

The Department published a Prior information Notice in Find a Tender Service on 5 October 2021 inviting suppliers to submit an Expression of Interest on neutralising antibody treatments they are developing for treating and preventing COVID-19. The engagement enables the Department to monitor development of all neutralising monoclonal antibodies for treatment and prevention of COVID-19.

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to evaluate AZD7442 for emergency use as a preventative treatment against COVID-19; and what are the timelines for its approval. [HL4096]

Lord Kamall: We continue to monitor the emerging data for AstraZeneca's long-acting antibody therapy, AZD7442. AstraZeneca are discussing potential approval for the therapy with the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency.

We anticipate that further neutralising monoclonal antibody treatments will be submitted for evaluation for a marketing authorisation by the MHRA in the next few months. These treatments could become available for community treatment or preventative use.

Coronavirus: Medical Treatments

Asked by Lord Framlingham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) clinical trial data showing the effectiveness of Ivermectin to treat COVID-19, and (2) the urgency of approving new treatments for COVID-19; and when they expect the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency to come to a decision on approving Ivermectin for use in the UK. [HL4081]

Lord Kamall: Evidence from clinical trials of ivermectin as a treatment for COVID-19 is inconclusive at this stage. We will continue to monitor the data from clinical trials continuing worldwide, including the Government-funded PRINCIPLE trial, to expand the evidence base for ivermectin. We recognise the need to make treatments for COVID-19 available to patients once proven as safe and effective. The RAPID-C19 group was established to accelerate the process between the completion of clinical trials and patient access. Ivermectin will be considered for marketing authorisation in the United Kingdom as a treatment for COVID-19 should an application be received from a manufacturer.

Coronavirus: Screening

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to improve the quality of lateral flow tests. [HL4003]

Lord Kamall: All tests are robustly assessed through laboratory validation, as precursor to procurement. To improve the quality of lateral flow tests The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) has recently introduced additional criteria that devices must meet to be accepted for validation. The criteria focus on improvements to the usability, sustainability and performance of lateral flow antigen tests, compared to devices currently available. In addition, the UKHSA works with suppliers to improve the sustainability and usability of lateral flow devices, such as reducing the amount of packaging.

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many COVID-19 test device products have been subject to desktop reviews by the UK Health Security Agency. [HL4004]

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many suppliers of COVID-19 tests have submitted information regarding their products for desktop reviews. [HL4005]

Lord Kamall: As of 16 November 2021, 173 applications for COVID-19 test device products have been subject to desktop review by the UK Health Security Agency. As of 16 November, 108 suppliers have submitted information as part of the desktop review validation process. However, in order to be triaged for desktop review, every application must submit accompanying data in the first instance regarding their product. There are currently 93 COVID-19 test device product applications which are 'pending information', where further information has been requested from the supplier.

Coronavirus: Vaccination

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to test people with immunodeficiencies for their individual responses to COVID-19 vaccinations. [HL4097]

Lord Kamall: The UK Health Security Agency is working with a range of partners, such as the University College of London, to monitor the effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccinations in clinical risk groups, including those with immunosuppression. The VirusWatch study is underway to monitor antibody response following vaccination among individuals with immunosuppression.

As part of the COVID-19 Immunity National Core Study, the UK Research and Innovation OCTAVE study is examining the effectiveness of vaccines in clinically at-risk groups. This includes vaccine responses in patients with certain immunosuppressed conditions.

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to provide COVID-19 vaccines with a longer expiry date to poorer nations to ensure they can be used. [HL4169]

Lord Callanan: The Vaccine Task Force is working closely with vaccine suppliers, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and international partners such as COVAX and UNICEF to allocate vaccines according to need, facilitate the rapid delivery of doses and maximise the shelf life available to recipients.

Our approach to the 20m recently announced for donation via COVAX at the G20 in October was also previously laid out in the answer given by my Hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State to the Hon. Member for Oxford West and Abingdon on 9th November 2021 to Question 69687.

Electronic Cigarettes: Smuggling

Asked by Lord Naseby

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to stop the importation of illegal e-cigarette products into the UK. [HL4098]

Asked by Lord Naseby

To ask Her Majesty's Government what support they are providing to Trading Standards offices to undertake enforcement actions to ensure that illegally imported e-cigarette products are removed from the UK market. [HL4099]

Lord Kamall: Through the introduction of the Tobacco and Related Products Regulations 2016, we have introduced e-cigarette product and safety standards, along with a duty to notify a product to be placed on the United Kingdom market to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). Non-compliant products are subject to local trading standards enforcement. The Department continues to work closely with the MHRA, Trading Standards and other regulatory enforcement agencies to ensure that products sold in the UK comply with regulations for all e-cigarette products and the non-compliant products are removed from the market. Central funding is provided to local authorities for local trading standards activity, including illicit e-cigarettes.

Ethiopia: Armed Conflict

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate, if any, they have made of the number of Tigrayans who

have been detained in Addis Ababa; and what assessment they have made of reports of landlords checking their tenants' identification cards, including UN staff other relief agencies. [HL4248]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: We are extremely concerned by reports of widespread human rights violations and abuses in Ethiopia committed by all sides to the conflict. The Minister for Africa spoke with the Ethiopian State Minister Redwan on 18 November and expressed her concern over ethnic profiling and mass arrests and detentions across the country and stressed the need for all parties to the conflict to engage in meaningful talks. The British Ambassador to Ethiopia also raised our concerns about ongoing detentions with President Sahle-Work on 12 November.

The Foreign Secretary, our Ambassador in Addis Ababa and the Minister for Africa continue to raise human rights issues in our discussions with the Ethiopian Government and more broadly we have reminded all warring parties of their obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law. Our priority is to ensure that Ethiopians, irrespective of ethnicity, religion and political affiliation, receive life-saving aid and that humanitarian access to areas affected by conflict and insecurity is restored.

Family Hubs: Finance

Asked by Lord Farmer

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much funding they have provided in total for family hubs since 2020; and how much of this has been allocated, broken down by fund. [HL3993]

Baroness Barran: At Budget, the government announced £82 million to create a network of family hubs. This is part of a wider £300 million package to transform services for parents, carers, babies and children in half of council areas across England.

Further information on funding profiles and how funding will be allocated will be made available in due course.

Government Departments: Disability

Asked by Baroness Garden of Frognal

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many disabled people are employed by each department. [HL4424]

Lord True: Information on the number of disabled staff by department can be found in Table 38 of the Civil Service Statistics, the latest version of which was published 28 July 2021 and is available in the Government efficiency, transparency and accountability collection on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk). The latest figures show that 13.6% of Civil Servants declare themselves as having a disability.

Government Departments: Equal Pay

Asked by Lord Sikka

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the ethnicity pay gap in each government department. [HL4400]

Lord True: There is currently no legislative requirement or set methodology for the collection and reporting of ethnicity pay data for employers. Therefore no ethnicity pay gap figures are currently available centrally.

The Commission for Race and Ethnic Disparities recommended that employers report on ethnicity pay on a voluntary basis and publish a diagnosis and action plan to address any disparities.

The government is carefully considering the findings of the Commission's report and will publish its response in due course, alongside the response to the 2018/19 consultation on ethnicity pay reporting.

Government: China

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of government advisors who have links to, or investments in, Chinese companies; and how many Chinese companies have representatives participating in trade or business advisory groups convened by Her Majesty's Government. [HL4118]

Lord True: Ministers and officials meet with a wide range of stakeholders in the course of normal business. Details of all official meetings by ministers are published on the government website.

Where ministers appoint specific advisers or members of an advisory group, any relevant outside interests should be declared and considered before appointments are made.

Health and Care Bill

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they expect to publish the (1) Wade-Gery, and (2) Goldacre, reviews before the committee stage of the Health and Care Bill in the House of Lords. [HL4276]

Lord Kamall: The Wade-Gery Review was published on 23 November. The Goldacre Review will be published early in 2022, which is likely to be after Committee stage of the Bill in the House of Lords.

Health Services: Females

Asked by Baroness Grey-Thompson

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to publish the Women's Health Strategy; and what plans

they have to include commitments on menstrual health conditions in that strategy. [HL4133]

Lord Kamall: We will publish the Women's Health Strategy in due course. We are currently analysing the responses to the call for evidence which will inform the priorities, content and actions in the Strategy. Within the call for evidence, the online survey included questions on menstrual health.

Immunosuppression: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people who are immunocompromised or immunosuppressed have been hospitalised due to COVID-19 in England since 2 September. [HL4023]

Lord Kamall: The data requested is not held centrally.

IRA

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to discuss with the government of the Republic of Ireland the reported remarks made by Senator Michael McDowell about the decision not to investigate crimes by the Provisional Irish Republican Army that occurred before April 1998. [HL4131]

Lord Caine: The UK Government engages regularly with the Irish Government, on a range of matters that require or benefit from the partnership between our two countries, including legacy matters. Legacy issues are due to be discussed during the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference (BIIGC) on 2 December.

The UK and Irish Governments have also been undertaking a period of engagement regarding legacy issues, as announced following the BIIGC in June. During this engagement, the recent public intervention by former Attorney General and Justice Minister in Ireland, Michael McDowell, who stated that a de facto moratorium on the investigation and prosecution of IRA members exists in Ireland, has been discussed.

IVF

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Kamall on 2 November (HL3362), what were the affected genes in the mitochondrial genome and the associated mutations in each of the 24 patients licensed as eligible for mitochondrial replacement treatment; and on what dates each corresponding application was approved by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority. [HL4059]

Lord Kamall: The following table shows the gene affected and the mutation in the 26 patients licensed as eligible for mitochondrial donation treatment, the date

each application was made and then approved by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) Statutory Approvals Committee.

HFEA Application reference Gene affected by mutation Mutation Date received Date approved by the HFEA Statutory Approvals Committee

M0001 MT-TK Details omitted to protect patient identity 28 June 2017 31 August 2017

M0002 MT-TK Details omitted to protect patient identity 4 September 2017 26 October 2017

M0007 MT-ND1 m.3460 G>A 13 March 2018 24 May 2018

M0003 MT-TL1 Details omitted to protect patient identity 25 September 2017 26 July 2018

M0005 MT-TL1 m.3243 A>G 5 December 2017 26 July 2018

M0008 MT-TL1 m.3243 A>G 15 March 2018 26 July 2018

M0004 MT-TK Details omitted to protect patient identity 4 December 2017 30 August 2018

M0006 MT-TS1 Details omitted to protect patient identity 9 January 2018 30 August 2018

M0009 MT-TI m.4300 A>G 28 June 2018 27 September 2018

M0010 MT-TI m.4300 A>G 11 July 2018 27 September 2018

M0013 MT-ND4 m.11778 G>A 14 July 2018 25 October 2018

M0012 MT-ND1 m.3460 G>A 13 July 2018 25 October 2018

M0014 MT-ND4 m.11778 G>A 23 November 2018 31 January 2019

M0015 MT-ND4 m.11778 G>A 23 November 2018 31 January 2019

M0011 MT-ND4 m.11778 G>A 12 July 2018 29 August 2019

M0016 MT-TK m.8344 A>G 5 July 2019 26 September 2019

M0017 MT-ND4 m.11778 G>A 22 August 2019 31 October 2019

M0018 MT-TL1 Details omitted to protect patient identity 10 December 2019 26 March 2020

M0019 MT-TL1 Details omitted to protect patient identity 10 December 2019 26 March 2020

M0020 MT-TL1 Details omitted to protect patient identity 30 March 2020 25 June 2020

M0021 MT-ND1 Details omitted to protect patient identity 30 March 2020 25 June 2020

M0022 MT-ND1 Details omitted to protect patient identity 26 June 2020 24 September 2020

M0024 MT-ND4 Details omitted to protect patient identity 9 December 2020 29 July 2021

M0025 MT-ND4 Details omitted to protect patient identity 9 December 2020 29 July 2021

M0026 MT-ND4 Details omitted to protect patient identity 7 June 2021 4 October 2021

M0027 MT-ND1 Details omitted to protect patient identity 7 June 2021 4 October 2021

Source: HFEA.

Migrants: Finance

Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the No Recourse to Public Funds policy for migrants on support for families, including with childcare costs. [HL4141]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: To be granted leave to enter or remain in the UK, most temporary migrants must demonstrate they can maintain and support themselves and their families without recourse to public funds. There are, nonetheless, strong and important safeguards in place to ensure people subject to the NRPF condition can receive support. People with leave under the Family and Human Rights routes, and those who have been granted leave on the Hong Kong British National (Overseas) visa route as a British National (Overseas) status holder or a family member of a British National (Overseas) status holder can apply, for free, to have their NRPF condition lifted by making a 'change of conditions' application. They can apply if they are destitute or at risk of destitution, if the welfare of their child is at risk due to their low income, or where there are other exceptional financial circumstances. Local authorities are required to provide financial support and/or accommodation through section 17 of the Children Act 1989, where a child is in need, regardless of their immigration status or that of their parents. Government support for families is generally led by the Department for Work and Pensions, HMRC, and the Department for Education, and they may have conducted further assessment of the impacts of the NRPF policy.

Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty Review Conference

Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

To ask Her Majesty's Government who they will send as representatives to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in January 2022. [HL4155]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is pleased that the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference has recently been confirmed for January 2022. We are aware that the format will be different due to COVID restrictions which will have an impact on the UK's delegation. We are still awaiting details on key elements of the Review Conference programme. The UK hopes to have Ministerial attendance at the Review Conference as well as a cross Whitehall delegation.

Ofcom: Public Appointments

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government (1) why they have convened a new interview panel for the selection of the new chair of Ofcom, (2) why they changed the job specification for this position after the initial inconclusive appointments process, and (3) whether unsuccessful candidates from the previous appointments process are eligible to re-apply. [HL4226]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: The previous Secretary of State decided to re-run the first competition to appoint a new Chairman of Ofcom, as he was not presented with a choice of high-quality candidates from a diverse field. This decision was supported by the Commissioner for Public Appointments, the Rt. Hon Peter Riddell CBE. The competition that was launched on 1 November 2021 is an entirely new competition and, as such, has a new advisory assessment panel. The essential criteria were amended to ensure they would attract a diverse field of applicants and these have been publicly available on the public appointments website since this process launched. The panel, whose names have also been published, will be responsible for assessing candidates objectively against these criteria.

The process to appoint the new Chairman of Ofcom will be run in line with the Governance Code for Public Appointments, which means it must be a fair and open process. It would not be permitted under the code to prevent previous candidates from applying.

Older People: Crimes of Violence

Asked by Lord McCrea of Magherafelt and Cookstown

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to prevent the elderly from being attacked in their own homes. [HL4143]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Making our communities safer and reducing crime is a key priority for the Government, which includes protecting elderly people from crime. That is why we are delivering on the people's priorities by recruiting an additional 20,000 police officers to give the police the resources they need, of which 11,053 have already been recruited. We have also increased funding for policing this year by £636m compared to 20/21.

In July, we published the Beating Crime Plan, which sets out our strategy for protecting the law-abiding majority, swiftly bringing criminals to justice, and managing offenders with rigour and discipline. It also commits all of Government to do everything within its power to drive crime down. Moreover, the first two rounds of the Safer Streets Fund were designed to prevent neighbourhood crimes such as burglary, robbery and theft. The fund supports communities in England and Wales that are disproportionately affected by these crimes to implement well-evidenced crime prevention initiatives, such as street lighting and home security.

Property: China

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Callanan on 2 November (HL3659), whether they can provide a breakdown of the 60 titles within Greater London where the registered owner is the People's Republic of China; and if so, in which London borough each is located. [HL4116]

Lord Callanan: HM Land Registry does not hold this information.

Further details about the information that HM Land Registry holds, what is publicly available, and how it can be obtained, is set out online via the GOV.UK website.

Prosecutions

Asked by Lord Storey

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people arrested in (1) 2019, (2) 2020, (3) 2021, are awaiting a determination from the Crown Prosecution Service. [HL4164]

Lord Stewart of Dirleton: The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) does not maintain a central record of the dates of arrest for suspects in cases submitted to the Crown Prosecution Service for a charging decision. This information could only be obtained by an examination of CPS case files, which would incur disproportionate cost.

Prostate Cancer: Tomography

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many suspected prostate cancer patients in each local Cancer Alliance have undergone a multi-parametric magnetic resonance imaging scan in England in each year since 2016. [HL4027]

Lord Kamall: The information is not held in the format requested. While the number of scans of the prostate is collected, this does not represent the number of patients or whether the purpose of the scan was for suspected cancer.

Public Bodies: Public Appointments

Asked by Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top

To ask Her Majesty's Government who they have appointed to (1) arms-length bodies, and (2) other public bodies, since 1 January; and how many of these appointments were (a) women, or (b) people from a minority background. [HL4120]

Asked by Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many of the people appointed to (1) arms-length bodies, and (2) other public bodies, since 1 January have a political affiliation; and which political parties they were affiliated to in each case. [HL4121]

Lord True: The government publishes annual data reports on public appointments, including information on gender, ethnic background and political affiliation. The [latest report published on 21 October](#) provides data on those appointed during the 2020-21 financial year and appointees in post on 31 March 2021. Data on those appointed during the 2021-22 financial year and those in post on 31 March 2022 will be published next year.

Latest figures show that in 2020-21, 44% of appointees were women and 10% were from an ethnic minority background. 6% stated they had taken part in political activity in the past five years across a range of political parties.

Public appointments are announced on the HM Government Public Appointments website <https://publicappointments.cabinetoffice.gov.uk>.

Public Telephones: Rural Areas

Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Hudnall

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the importance of public telephone boxes in rural areas; and what steps they will take to ensure they are maintained in situ in areas with poor mobile signal. [HL4147]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: The Government recognises the importance of public telephone boxes to people across the UK. The telephony Universal Service Order requires that certain providers maintain telephony services across the UK, including access to public telephone boxes.

It is for Ofcom to designate the providers subject to this Order and set rules for public telephone boxes, including the rules regarding their removal. Ofcom estimates that there are 1500 public telephone boxes in areas with poor mobile coverage, many of which will be rural.

Ofcom has recently announced a consultation designed to strengthen these rules. Ofcom's proposals include a criterion that protects public telephone boxes where they do not have coverage from all four mobile network providers.

Railways: Okehampton

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Exeter

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the successful re-opening of the railway line between Exeter and Okehampton, what plans they have to reinstate the remaining section of the line between Okehampton and Calstock to secure an alternative route to Plymouth and Cornwall; what is the timetable for any such plans; and what assessment they have made of the risk of the Great Western Railway line to (1) coastal erosion, and (2) high seas. [HL4271]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: My Department has invested over £120m to ensure the resilience of the Great Western line between Exeter and Plymouth. My Department is not proposing to extend the recently re-

opened line between Exeter and Okehampton, to provide an alternative route to Plymouth. However, we recently announced funding to develop a Strategic Outline Business Case for a Restoring Your Railway scheme from Tavistock to Bere Alston.

Research: China

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many enterprises owned by the government of China (1) have contracts with Her Majesty's Government, and (2) are in receipt of UK research grants. [HL4117]

Lord Callanan: The Government does not make research grant awards to enterprises owned by foreign governments. UKRI takes independent decisions on the distribution of research grants between eligible UK higher education institutions and research establishments, which may themselves collaborate with international partners.

Saleh Ibrahim Mabrouk

Asked by Lord Willoughby de Broke

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will apply for the extradition of Saleh Ibrahim Mabrouk from Libya, following the High Court ruling on 16 November. [HL4178]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Whether to seek extradition in a case is an operational decision for law enforcement and prosecution agencies. The UK Government, as a matter of longstanding policy and practice, will neither confirm nor deny whether an extradition request has been made or received until such time as an arrest has been made in relation to the request.

Schools: Registration

Asked by Lord Storey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the reasons why unregistered and illegal schools continue to operate in England. [HL4441]

Baroness Barran: It is a criminal offence under section 96 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 to conduct an independent educational institution unless it is registered. Section 97 of that Act permits no-notice inspections of settings believed to be operating in breach of this registration requirement.

Between 1 January 2016 and 31 August 2021, 114 settings inspected under section 97 were identified as operating as an unregistered independent school. Joint work between the Department for Education and Ofsted has led to 101 of these settings changing their provision, meaning they no longer operate unlawfully, in breach of the 2008 Act. In that time, groups responsible for operating illegal settings have been successfully prosecuted five times.

The department and Ofsted continue to investigate and, if needs be, prosecute those conducting any settings where intelligence or evidence suggests the operation of an unregistered school.

The department consulted in 2020 on extending the registration requirement to settings that operate full time but only offer a very narrow curriculum, which are currently allowed to operate without registration. The department will respond to this consultation soon, setting out next steps. The department has also committed to taking forward measures to make it easier to investigate and prosecute such settings, including in the 2019 Integrated Communities Action Plan. The department intends to take forward such measures when a suitable legislative opportunity arises.

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what evidence they have that the majority of migrants crossing the English Channel to gain entry into the UK are part of criminal gangs; and whether they will publish that evidence. [[HL4162](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: At no stage has the Government claimed that the majority of migrants crossing the English Channel are part of criminal gangs. What has been said is that the majority of *crossings* are judged to be *facilitated* by criminal gangs.

These crossings are dangerous and unnecessary – France is a safe country with a fully-functioning asylum system, and those in need of refuge have no need to make these hazardous journeys. Those who attempt to cross are endangering themselves and those who have to rescue

them. And those who facilitate them are risking the lives of others in the selfish pursuit of profit. Tragically, we have seen further deaths in the last few weeks of people trying to cross the Channel in small boats. We make no apology therefore for going after the evil people smuggling gangs who facilitate the majority of these crossings.

We must ensure that those involved in people smuggling are punished with the severity it rightly deserves. The Nationality and Borders Bill will enable this and will also act as a much stronger deterrent for those tempted to pursue that despicable path. These long overdue reforms will break the business model of the criminal trafficking networks and make their activities unviable.

Universal Credit: Disqualification

Asked by Baroness Lister of Burtersett

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the increase in Universal Credit sanctions in June and July 2021; and when they plan to publish their report on the effectiveness of Universal Credit sanctions. [[HL4139](#)]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: No assessment has been made of the increase in Universal Credit sanctions in June and July 2021. The increase is a result of the re-introduction of conditionality following its suspension at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. The sanctions rate remains low at 0.78%.

We do not plan to publish a report on the sanctions evaluation as we were unable to assess the deterrent effect and therefore this research doesn't present a comprehensive picture of sanctions.

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