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**Thursday
20 January 2022**

**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	Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
Lord Agnew of Oulton	Minister of State, Treasury and Cabinet Office
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Chief Whip
Baroness Barran	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
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
Lord Callanan	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen	Whip
Earl of Courtown	Deputy Chief Whip
Baroness Goldie	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence
Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park	Minister of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Lord Greenhalgh	Minister of State, Home Office and 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
Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
Baroness Penn	Whip
Baroness Scott of Bybrook	Whip
Lord Sharpe of Epsom	Whip
Baroness Stedman-Scott	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Stewart of Dirleton	Advocate-General for Scotland
Lord True	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
Baroness Vere of Norbiton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Minister of State, Home Office
Lord Wolfson of Tredegar	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Justice
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip

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Written Statements

Thursday, 20 January 2022

Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2020 and Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2014 (Consequential Modifications) Order 2022

[HLWS536]

Lord Offord of Garvel: My Hon Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Scotland (Iain Stewart) has today made the following statement:

I wish to update the House on the Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2020 and Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2014 (Consequential Modifications) Order 2022.

The government consulted within the House and this statement is to ensure that the House is aware of the circumstances of the Order's approval, and to set out the UK Government's approach in bringing forward the Order.

The Order was laid on 16 November and considered by the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments. The motion for approval was agreed at the end of the day's business on 5 January 2022, having been tabled to the Order Paper just before the rise of the House for the Christmas recess.

Due to an administrative error in the orders tabled by the Government, which was not picked up by the House of Commons authorities, the Order was listed for decision under Standing Order No. 118(6) even though the previously planned Delegated Legislation Committee debate had been postponed until early 2022. The Order therefore appeared on the Order Paper ahead of its debate in Committee, and was agreed by the House without objection on Wednesday 5 January. The debate in the House of Lords took place as normal on 14 December 2021.

The Secretary of State for Scotland is due to make this Order next week.

The Order

The aim of this Order is to make consequential amendments to legislation in view of the Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2020. This legislation was brought forward by the Scottish Government and introduces opposite sex civil partnerships to Scotland. The changes made through the Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2020 reflect that civil partnerships in Scotland are no longer just an option for same sex relationships and they are now open for opposite sex relationships too.

The Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2020 and Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2014 (Consequential Modifications) Order 2022 amends the Equality Act 2010 to add further protection for individuals, such as religious and belief celebrants, who do not wish to take part in the registration of mixed sex

civil partnership. The Gender Recognition Act 2004 is also amended to reflect that because opposite sex civil partnership is now recognised, it is possible for civil partners to apply for gender recognition and stay in the civil partnership.

The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 2008 is also amended to ensure equal treatment for children of marriages, and children of civil partnerships, in cases of assisted reproduction. The Order also makes changes to legislation concerning the registration overseas, through UK consular officials and armed forces, of marriages and civil partnerships.

The Order is made under the Scotland Act 1998, and extends across the United Kingdom, although some provisions only extend to certain parts of the UK. It demonstrates devolution in action, and the UK Government is pleased to support the Scottish Government introduce opposite sex civil partnerships to Scotland.

Dartford–Thurrock Crossing Annual Accounts 2020-21

[HLWS534]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Under regulation 3 (1) (d) of the Trunk Road Charging Schemes (Bridges and Tunnels) (Keeping of Accounts) (England) Regulations 2003, annual accounts for the Dartford – Thurrock Crossing Charging Scheme are published today. The accounts relate to financial year 2020-2021 and will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

NATO Parliamentary Assembly

[HLWS533]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: My Right Honourable Friend, the Minister for Middle East, North Africa and North America (James Cleverly), has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

The hon. Member for Gosport (Dame Caroline Dinenage) has replaced the hon. Member for South Derbyshire (Heather Wheeler) as a Member of the United Kingdom delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.

Petition of Concern Mechanism: Northern Ireland Assembly

[HLWS537]

Lord Caine: My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Brandon Lewis) has today made the following statement:

I am today laying before both Houses of Parliament the fourth report by the UK Government on the use of the Petition of Concern mechanism in the Northern Ireland Assembly.

As part of the New Decade, New Approach deal upon which devolved government was restored in Northern

Ireland on 11 January 2020, the UK Government committed to undertaking such a report every six months.

This report covers the period from 12 July 2021 to 11 January 2022 during which no Petition of Concern has been lodged against any motion in the Assembly.

The fact that there have been no uses of the Petitions of Concern since the restoration of the political institutions is a positive reflection of the conduct of business within the Assembly. However, I want to take this opportunity to reinforce the importance of a stable, mature, functioning Executive and Assembly that is focussed on addressing the issues that really matter to their daily lives.

The UK Government is standing by its commitment to bring forward legislation that provides the necessary reforms to the Petition of Concern mechanism. The Northern Ireland (Ministers, Elections and Petitions of Concern) Bill has completed Report Stage in the House of Lords. Once this legislation has completed its passage through Parliament and received Royal Assent, it is crucial that the Assembly reflects the detail of these reforms in its standing orders to ensure the full implementation of these aspects of the New Decade, New Approach deal.

This is the final report of this Assembly mandate under the UK Government’s commitment to report on the use of the Petition of Concern. As there have been no uses of the Petition of Concern mechanism since the restoration of the Northern Ireland Assembly, we conclude that no further reform is necessary at this time.

Public Service Pension Scheme Indexation and Revaluation 2022

[HLWS535]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: My right honourable friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Simon Clarke) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

Public service pensions continue to be among the very best available. This technical update sets out the rates of indexation and revaluation that will be applied to public service pensions in April 2022.

Legislation governing public service pensions requires them to be increased annually by the same percentage as additional pensions (State Earnings Related Pension and State Second Pension). Public service pensions will therefore be increased from 11 April 2022 by 3.1 per cent, in line with the annual increase in the Consumer Prices Index up to September 2021, except for those public service pensions which have been in payment for less than a year, which will receive a pro-rata increase. This will ensure that public service pensions take account of increases in the cost of living and their purchasing power is maintained.

Separately, in the career average revalued earnings public service pension schemes introduced in 2014 and 2015, pensions in accrual are revalued annually in relation to either prices or earnings depending on the terms specified in their scheme regulations. The Public Service Pensions Act 2013 requires the Treasury to specify a measure of prices and of earnings to be used for revaluation by these schemes.

The prices measure is the Consumer Prices Index up to September 2021. Public service schemes which rely on a measure of prices, therefore, will use the figure of 3.1 per cent for the prices element of revaluation.

The earnings measure is the Whole Economy year on year change in Average Weekly Earnings (non-seasonally adjusted and including bonuses and arrears) up to September 2021. Public service schemes which rely on a measure of earnings, therefore, will use the figure of 4.1 per cent for the earnings element of revaluation.

Revaluation is one part of the amount of pension that members earn in a year and needs to be considered in conjunction with the amount of in-year accrual. Typically, schemes with lower revaluation will have faster accrual and therefore members will earn more pension per year. The following list shows how the main public service schemes will be affected by revaluation:

Scheme	Police	Firefighters	Civil Service	NHS Teachers	LGPS	Armed Forces	Judicial Forces	
Revaluation for active member	4.35%	4.1%	3.1%	4.6%	4.7%	3.1%	4.1%	3.1%

Written Answers

Thursday, 20 January 2022

BBC: Television Licences

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to replace the BBC licence fee with a grant where viewers pay a voluntary subscription for entertainment and sport. [[HL5205](#)]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: The Government has committed to maintain the current licence fee funding model for the duration of this 11-year Charter period, until 2027.

We will be reviewing the licence fee funding model well in advance of the next Charter period.

Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to publish their assessment of section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994. [[HL5206](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government supports the police to use section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 to tackle serious violence and keep the streets safe. A decision on publication of materials supporting the Government's assessment of police use of section 60 will be taken in due course.

Customs: Dover

Asked by *Baroness Randerson*

To ask Her Majesty's Government why they used the mechanism of a Special Development Order to grant temporary planning permission for the Dover Inland Border Facility; why this development has been considered to be a response to a national emergency; and why the responses to previous consultations are not being taken into account. [[HL5187](#)]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Special Development Orders (SDOs) are a long-established part of the planning system, designed for handling planning proposals of national significance. The SDO route has therefore been chosen because it allows permission to be granted in a timely manner whilst also providing effective mechanisms to ensure development is appropriate.

The proposals for a Dover Inland Border Facility have been subject to two rounds of public engagement as well as ongoing informal engagement with local stakeholders. Comments on the previous proposals have been considered and have informed the current proposals. All comments, including those previously received, will be included in any formal submission under the SDO.

Asked by *Baroness Randerson*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what the findings were of the Environmental Impact Assessment undertaken as part of the Special Development Order establishing the Dover Inland Border Facility. [[HL5188](#)]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: In accordance with the Special Development Order (SDO) Regulations, an Analysis of the Likely Environmental Effects of the Development Report and a Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report have been undertaken for the Dover Inland Border Facility (IBF) scheme. The reports have concluded that there are no significant effects on the environment from the proposals.

The inclusion of initiatives incorporated into the site masterplan for the Dover IBF will be delivered through the retention and protection of the key ecological features and further enhancements. In conjunction with these initiatives, the site has been designed to minimise carbon emissions and a carbon assessment will be submitted as part of the SDO.

Asked by *Baroness Randerson*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what green initiatives are being undertaken as part of the Dover Inland Border Facility; and how the initiatives will enable Dover District Council to reach its goal of becoming carbon neutral. [[HL5189](#)]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: HMRC's teams are developing key features as part of the Dover Inland Border Facility (IBF) development to ensure their wider goal of reducing carbon impacts. These include reducing the environmental impact, enhancing the socio-economic standing of the areas and surrounding sites, and working to achieve a Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method – 'Very Good' rating.

The inclusion of initiatives incorporated into the site masterplan for the Dover IBF will be delivered through the retention and protection of key ecological features. This includes the formation of a landscape buffer between the operational areas of the proposed development and the local residential area. The colour scheme of the proposed buildings is being designed in accordance with the guidance published by the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the buildings themselves are adaptable for re-use elsewhere if required.

External lighting on the site has been designed to minimise any potential effects in accordance with the appropriate British Standards. In conjunction with these initiatives, the site has been designed to minimise carbon emissions and will include an engine off policy when vehicles are parked. Electric hook up provision will be provided on site to allow goods vehicles with refrigeration units to be powered whilst parked. Electric vehicle charging will also be provided on site. The scheme has been designed to encourage methods of sustainable travel for site staff, including a cycle lane and promoting public transport over car travel.

Debts: Households

Asked by **Baroness Kennedy of Cradley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the level of household debt in England. [HL5180]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Government regularly monitors personal debt levels by working closely with the Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) and the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). The Government also engages regularly with a range of stakeholders in the debt advice sector on their research and findings.

The FCA conducts a biennial Financial Lives Survey which provides a comprehensive insight into the finances of the UK population. The latest findings from the survey were published in February 2021, which also analysed the impact of the pandemic on people's finances. The results showed that between March and October 2020, the number of people with low financial resilience increased by 3.5 million, from 10.7 million to 14.2 million.

MaPS monitors financial difficulty through their research, in particular the Debt Need Survey. MaPS will publish the results of their 2021 Debt Need Survey early this calendar year, which will include a regional breakdown of their new Need for Debt Advice measure.

Energy: France

Asked by **Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of any potential impact on electricity supply to the UK of the plans by the government of France to decarbonise that country's energy production. [HL5163]

Lord Callanan: Great Britain benefits from a diverse electricity mix, meaning the Government is not dependent on any one supplier or market participant for ensuring security of supply.

The Capacity Market is the Government's policy tool to maintain secure electricity supplies in Great Britain. It secures the capacity needed to meet likely peak demand for future years. When determining the capacity needed, the National Grid Electricity System Operator considers what capacity will be available from interconnected countries, including France, in their advice.

Extradition: USA

Asked by **Lord Marlesford**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, in cases involving the extradition of a UK citizen to the United States where there is an outstanding judgment in the UK High Court, the Home Secretary is entitled to await such judgment before making a decision on extradition. [HL5182]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Extradition requests between the UK and the US are governed by Part 2 of the

Extradition Act 2003. This sets out the factors that the Home Secretary must consider before making a decision on an extradition request.

Under the Act, the Home Secretary may seek an extension from the court to the time permitted to consider a request.

Fly-tipping: Somerset

Asked by **Lord Patten**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effects, if any, of the dumping of (1) disused vehicles, and (2) scrap metal, on Sites of Special Scientific Interest within the (a) Blackmore Vale Commons, and (b) Moors area, of Somerset. [HL5183]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Natural England is not aware of, or currently investigating, any recent incidences on the Blackmore Vale Commons and Moors SSSIs.

Local authorities are responsible for keeping relevant land (land, which is open to the air, under the direct control of the authority, and accessible to the public with or without payment, as defined in the Environmental Protection Act 1990) clear of litter and refuse. Landowners are responsible for the land that they own.

Local and national park authorities (authorities) must remove abandoned vehicles from any land in the open air (including private land) and roads (including private roads). Authorities do not have to remove an abandoned vehicle if the cost of moving it from open land to the nearest convenient road is determined to be unreasonably high (for example, if special machinery is needed).

The Environment Agency has a role in circumstances where an incident may affect a watercourse and could potentially cause flooding or pollution. Both local authorities and the Environment Agency carry out investigations and can take enforcement action against fly-tipping.

If fly-tipping occurs on an SSSI, this would be investigated by Natural England and enforcement action taken if SSSI features have been damaged. Natural England can take enforcement action on the owner/occupier or third party who:

- Intentionally or recklessly damages the SSSI.
- Destroys any of the features of special interest.
- Disturbs wildlife for which the site was notified.
- Carries out list operation without consent.

Hate Crime

Asked by **Lord Blencathra**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following reports that the Home Secretary will seek to change how non-crime hate incidents are recorded, what plans they have to compensate people who have been recorded as

having committed such incidents; and how any such compensation would be calculated. [HL5161]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government recognises the concern surrounding the recording of non-crime hate incidents (NCHIs). We have also noted the recent Court of Appeal judgment in the *Harry Miller v College of Policing* case that was handed down on 20 December 2021. The Court found that the recording of non-crime hate incidents is lawful provided that there are robust safeguards in place so that the interference with freedom of expression is proportionate.

Accordingly, we are bringing forward amendments to the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill to ensure that the recording of NCHIs is governed by a Code of Practice that is subject to Parliamentary approval. The content of the Code will be drafted in due course, and will make the processes surrounding the recording and retention of NCHI data more transparent and subject to stronger safeguards.

There are no plans to introduce a compensation scheme.

Immigration: Human Trafficking

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to grant leave to remain to all confirmed victims of trafficking. [HL5207]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government remains committed to ensuring that the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) provides appropriate support for victims of modern slavery to help them to recover from their exploitation. Discretionary leave is currently considered, via our non-statutory guidance '*Discretionary leave for victims of modern slavery*' on an automatic basis, for all confirmed victims (those with a positive Conclusive Grounds decision) without immigration status. Part 5 of the Nationality and Borders Bill, currently before Parliament, focuses on modern slavery and will help to ensure that all victims are identified and supported as quickly as possible. Clause 64 sets out, for the first time in primary legislation, the circumstances in which a confirmed victim of modern slavery will be entitled to a grant of leave where it is necessary for the purpose of:

assisting the person in their recovery from physical or psychological harm arising from the relevant exploitation;

enabling the person to seek compensation in respect of the relevant exploitation; or

enabling the person to co-operate with a public authority in connection with an investigation or criminal proceedings in respect of the relevant exploitation.

The inclusion of this clause in the Bill will provide clarity for both decision-makers and victims around the circumstances in which confirmed victims qualify for temporary leave to remain.

Mathematics: Higher Education

Asked by Lord Clement-Jones

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of health of the (1) study of, and (2) research into, pure mathematics in Higher Education. [HL5098]

Baroness Barran: The government strongly supports mathematical sciences in higher education. Ensuring that there is high-quality provision in a range of subjects is critical in order to build our workforce and support our public services.

We are pleased many students chose to take up courses in mathematical sciences (39,210 students in England in the 2019/20 academic year). Our student loan system supports students who have the qualifications to access higher education, including a range of mathematics courses. In the 2019/20 academic year, a total of £300 million was made available as tuition fee and maintenance loans for students doing maths courses. Breakdowns of higher education enrolments in England can be found here: <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/students/table-49>.

The UK continues to be a world leader in mathematics. Following the government's announcement in January 2020 to invest additional funding into Mathematical Sciences, UK Research and Innovation has awarded £104 million of additional funding to the discipline, over and above the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council's core Mathematical Sciences Theme budget. The additional investment has funded institutes, small and large research grants, fellowships, doctoral studentships and postdoctoral awards.

Furthermore, the department has funded the Advanced Maths Support Programme (AMSP) since 2018, providing support to schools and colleges to improve the effectiveness of level 3 maths teaching and increase participation, providing tailored support to schools and colleges. To ensure that the programme is targeted at those students, teachers, schools and colleges most in need, the AMSP provides support through a priority area programme and a national programme.

The AMSP delivers high quality teacher professional development as well as focused support and enrichment for students and institutions across A level mathematics, further mathematics and core maths to improve participation and provision in level 3 mathematics through targeted support.

The AMSP provides targeted support for students preparing for study at higher education. Over summer 2021 the AMSP ran a 4 to 6 week supported self-study programme of approximately 30 learning hours for year 13 students to support transition to higher education.

The AMSP also provides regular higher-level problem-solving classes and other support and information for students considering studying maths and maths-rich subjects at university and helps them to prepare for university admission tests.

Microplastics: Health Hazards

Asked by *Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to investigate the human health impacts of microplastics in (1) food, and (2) the environment. [HL5085]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Defra and the Environment Agency are working with academia, National Highways, and the UK water industry to improve our understanding of the scale of the microplastic pollution problem and to identify the key sources within the natural environment.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has been monitoring the scientific literature concerning the occurrence and effects of microplastics in food. On the basis of current evidence, the FSA considers it is unlikely that the presence of microplastic particles at the levels that have been reported to occur in certain types of food, especially seafood, would cause harm to consumers.

The Government is funding research to examine wider sources of microplastics, which will enable us to monitor and assess emerging information concerning microplastics in food and the environment. Our proposed bans on numerous commonly littered plastic items will further reduce the sources of microplastics that damage our environment.

Missionaries of Charity: Finance

Asked by *Lord Patten*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of India regarding its decision to block overseas funding for the Missionaries of Charity. [HL5184]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are aware that some NGOs have faced difficulties in India due to the application of the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) by the Indian authorities and that some, like Missionaries of Charity, have recently had applications to renew their foreign funding licenses rejected. We continue to support a wide range of local Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) partners in India, including through programmes, and officials have discussed issues facing NGOs directly with the Indian Government.

We are pleased to note, on 8 January, the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs restored the FCRA license of the Missionaries of Charity, meaning the NGO will be able to receive and use foreign funding again. The British High Commission in New Delhi will continue to monitor developments.

Pupils: Absenteeism

Asked by *Baroness Deech*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will publish their response to the Children not in

school consultation, which ran from 2 April 2019 to 24 June 2019; and whether they plan to introduce the register of children educated otherwise than at mainstream schools outlined in that consultation. [HL5106]

Baroness Barran: The department remains committed to a form of local authority register for children not in school. We will set out further details on this in the government response to the 'children not in school' consultation, which we will publish in the coming weeks.

Railways: Coronavirus

Asked by *Lord Bradshaw*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to cut one in four trains from service; and whether a new timetable is being prepared to scale back rail services in response to a rise in Covid-19 cases. [HL5224]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Government has no plans to remove one in four trains from service. Rail operators are responsible for mitigating the effects of the pandemic on their business, and for ensuring they are able to provide services within existing operational constraints. In response to significant resourcing challenges caused by the current surge in Covid-19 cases, many operators have implemented temporary revised train timetables, which provide passengers with certainty and reliability.

Refugees: Cyprus

Asked by *Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether any refugees are present on the territory of the British sovereign bases in Cyprus; if so, how many; and what plans they have for the resettlement of any such persons. [HL5177]

Baroness Goldie: The Sovereign Base Areas Administration informs me that there are no refugees recognised by the Administration present in the territory of the Sovereign Base Areas.

It is possible that refugees, recognised by the Republic of Cyprus, could be present within the jurisdiction of the Sovereign Base Areas on Cyprus, because there are no immigration controls between the Republic of Cyprus and the Sovereign Base Areas, and persons afforded refugee status by the Republic of Cyprus may move freely throughout the island.

Shipping: Coronavirus

Asked by *Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Neptune Declaration on Seafarer Wellbeing and Crew Change; and what steps they will take to (1) recognise seafarers as key workers, (2)

ensure they have access to Covid-19 vaccinations in UK ports, and (3) allow crews to have easy access to air flights. [HL5239]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: As one of the first states to declare seafarers as keyworkers we welcomed the Neptune Declaration and remain committed to working domestically and internationally to protect the health and wellbeing of crew of all nationalities. All seafarers, regardless of nationality, are and have always been eligible to receive Covid vaccines in the UK at no cost. As keyworkers, seafarers are exempt from many Covid related requirements when travelling to the UK during the course of their work.

Social Security Benefits and State Retirement Pensions: Christmas Bonus

Asked by Lord Sikka

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the annual cost of administering the £10 Christmas bonus paid to individuals receiving the state pension and other benefits. [HL5198]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: The information requested is not collated centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost to the department.

Tetraethyllead

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government why they decided not to place tetraethyllead on a list of substances "of very high concern"; on what grounds that decision was taken; whether the transition period has been extended for the use of this substance in the fuel for small aircraft; and if so, when that transition period will end. [HL5186]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Tetraethyllead is listed on the UK REACH Candidate list as a substance of very high concern. There is no transition period associated with these obligations under UK REACH.

Trident Submarines: Deployment

Asked by Lord Trefgarne

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the reply by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 12 January (HL Deb, col 1083), whether they have anything further to add about whether one of the UK's Trident submarines is always on patrol. [HL5407]

Baroness Goldie: Since April 1969, there has always been at least one Royal Navy nuclear-armed submarine at sea keeping us safe from the most extreme threats to our national security and way of life. We will maintain four deterrent submarines to ensure at least one will always be on a Continuous at Sea Deterrence patrol.

Tuna: Import Duties

Asked by Lord Borwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Agnew of Oulton on 21 December 2021 (HL4995), what was the total amount of import tariffs collected on tuna imported from the Maldives in (1) financial year 2020–21, and (2) each of the preceding four years. [HL5162]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: HMRC does not hold the information requested. Traders pay customs duty and import VAT based on calculated liabilities for goods, either immediately or on a monthly basis via duty deferment accounts. The subsequent revenue collected is not recorded on a product or sector basis, and thus no breakdown by product or country of origin is held.

Universal Credit

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to increase Universal Credit payments in the event that energy bills increase. [HL5203]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The Government recognises the recent increase in wholesale global gas prices will be a cause of concern for consumers, businesses, and energy suppliers across the UK.

There is a wide range of Government support in place to support consumers with their energy costs. The Energy Price Cap has been shielding millions of consumers from the volatility in the wholesale markets, and the Government is supporting low income and fuel poor households with their energy bills in a number of ways, the total value of this support being £2.5 billion a year including:

- The Warm Home Discount, which provides eligible households with a £140 discount.
- Winter Fuel Payments and Cold Weather Payments, which help ensure those most vulnerable are better able to heat their homes over the colder months.

There is also support available this winter through the £500m Household Support Fund, which helps those in greatest need with the cost of essentials over the coming months.

The Government has also taken decisive action to support low-income working households on Universal Credit by cutting the taper rate from 63p to 55p and increasing work allowances by £500 a year. These changes are effectively a tax cut for low paid households on Universal Credit worth £2.2 billion in 2022-23 and mean that 1.9 million households will keep on average around an extra £1,000 on an annual basis.

In the long-term, the best way to reduce energy bills for households is to invest in energy efficiency. The Government has allocated over £500 million to Local

Authorities this year for the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund and the Sustainable Warmth programmes. These schemes will help reduce low-income households' energy use through efficiency improvements, which are estimated to save participants an average of £350-450 per year on their energy bills. At the Spending Review, an additional £1.8bn was confirmed to accelerate these programmes over the next three years.

Wind Power: Seas and Oceans

Asked by Lord Sikka

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will provide a list of (1) UK offshore wind farms, (2) and UK offshore wind farms which are controlled by entities registered outside the UK. [[HL5196](#)]

Lord Callanan: The Crown Estate publishes an annual Offshore Wind Operational Report which contains both a list of UK offshore windfarms and details of their ownership.

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