

**Session 2022-23
No. 7**



**Monday
23 May 2022**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

Written Statements1
Written Answers.....6

[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/>

Members who want a printed copy of Written Answers and Written Statements should notify the Printed Paper Office.

This printed edition is a reproduction of the original text of Answers and Statements, which can be found on the internet at <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>.

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 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
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 Harrington of Watford	Minister of State, Home Office and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
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 and Whip
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
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip

© Parliamentary Copyright House of Lords 2022

This publication may be reproduced under the terms of the Open Parliament licence, which is published at www.parliament.uk/site-information/copyright/

Written Statements

Monday, 23 May 2022

Family Hubs Transformation Fund

[HLWS44]

Baroness Barran: Today, I am providing an update on the first wave of successful local authorities to be awarded funding through the £12m Family Hubs Transformation Fund.

The Government is committed to delivering on the Best Start for Life: A Vision for the First 1001 Critical Days Report, and on our manifesto pledge to champion family hubs. Family hubs are a way of joining up locally to improve access to services, the connections between families, professionals, services, and providers, and put relationships at the heart of family support. They bring together services for children of all ages, with a great Start for Life offer at their core.

Family Hubs Transformation Fund

The Family Hubs Local Transformation Fund is a key part of this commitment and is funded through HM Treasury's Shared Outcomes Fund, which aims to test innovative ways of working across the public sector to address complex policy challenges.

We launched the £12m Family Hubs Transformation Fund last November to support at least 12 local authorities in England to open family hubs. The fund will enable us to learn more about the process of local transformation, to build our evidence base, and to create valuable resources and learning for those local authorities moving to a family hub model in the future.

The Family Hubs Transformation Fund will support LAs with the costs of moving to a family hubs model. It is different and separate to the Start for Life and Family Hubs Programme that was announced at Autumn Budget; the eligibility for which was announced in April as part of a £1bn government commitment to families. The Start for Life and Family Hubs Programme includes additional funding for services, which is not available to LAs as part of the Family Hubs Transformation Fund.

The application window closed in December 2021, and we received 84 bids from upper-tier local authorities. The volume of applications shows a real appetite for change, and the high quality of bids reflects the passion and dedication to delivering for children and families.

The first wave of successful local authorities are:

- Brighton and Hove.
- Wirral.
- Stockport.
- Dorset.
- Solihull.
- York.
- Cheshire East.

We expect to announce an additional five local authorities to receive funding through the Family Hubs Transformation Fund in the coming months.

Introduction of Additional Blood Donor Testing

[HLWS42]

Lord Kamall: My Hon Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Patient Safety and Primary Care) (Maria Caulfield) has made the following Written Statement:

I would like to inform the House that the Government has accepted the advice of the Advisory Committee on the Safety of Blood, Tissues and Organs (SaBTO) and will be introducing additional testing to detect hepatitis B in donated blood from 31 May 2022. The Scottish Government, Welsh Government, and the Northern Ireland Executive have also accepted the advice of SaBTO.

The safety of people donating and people receiving blood and blood products is the Government's priority. We have robust safeguards in place that protect both donors and those receiving this potentially lifesaving intervention, which includes testing all donations for possible infections prior to use in transfusion.

In 2019, SaBTO established the Occult Hepatitis B Infection (OBI) working group to consider options for further improving pre-donation testing for hepatitis B. The group considered different testing options to identify those donors that have undetectable levels of the surface antibody to hepatitis B, but do have hepatitis B DNA and a core antibody to hepatitis B. These donors are known as occult donors and have been shown to be able to transmit hepatitis B to blood donor recipients. The OBI working group recommended the introduction of core antibody testing, alongside the current testing, for all current donors once, and then all new and returning donors. SaBTO reviewed the findings of the working group and agreed with the recommendations.

The Government has reviewed the evidence compiled by the OBI working group together with SaBTO's advice and has accepted the recommendation. The introduction of this new form of testing further improves the rigorous processes we have in place to ensure the health and wellbeing of donors and the safe and consistent supply of blood for patients.

The Department of Health and Social Care is working with NHS Blood and Transplant to implement this change and the overall impact of the changes will be reviewed in twelve months by SaBTO and the Government.

Mexico Trade Negotiations

[HLWS45]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade (Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP) has today made the following statement:

On Friday 20 May 2022, the Department for International Trade launched negotiations for an enhanced and upgraded Free Trade Agreement with Mexico, with the first round of negotiations to be held in Mexico City in July.

The Department is publishing a comprehensive set of documents setting out the UK's strategic approach for negotiations between the UK and Mexico. In line with our commitments to scrutiny and transparency, these documents have been published and placed in the House libraries. The UK's negotiating objectives for the upgraded agreement, published today, were informed by our Call for Input, which requested views from consumers, businesses, and other interested stakeholders across the UK on their priorities for enhancing our existing trading relationship with Mexico.

These negotiations follow our signing of the UK-Mexico Trade Continuity Agreement on 15 December 2020, which committed both parties to commence negotiations on a new, comprehensive and bespoke agreement by 1 June 2022.

An enhanced and comprehensive agreement with Mexico is a key part of the UK's strategy to secure advanced modern agreements with new international partners, and upgrade existing continuity agreements in order to better suit the UK economy. Through these enhanced trade partnerships we can deliver economic growth to all the nations and regions of the UK and create new opportunities for UK business.

Mexico is an important trading partner for the UK, with trade worth £4.2 billion in 2021 despite the disruptions of the coronavirus pandemic to global trade. Mexico is one of the world's largest democracies and the 16th biggest global economy. Its population is almost double the size of the UK's and is projected to reach 146 million people by 2035. Its demand for global imports is forecast to grow by 35% in real terms between 2019 and 2035 as its economy expands. The current agreement ensured reduced duties on UK exports in key industries such as transportation, chemicals, and machinery manufacturing. These already popular products could face further demand in a growing Mexican market.

Our existing agreement removes tariffs on the majority of goods we trade. However, the agreement is outdated and not designed for a digital age, containing limited provisions on services, which employs 82% of the UK workforce. In these negotiations we will be advancing an upgraded trade partnership with cutting-edge services and digital provisions tailored to our unique strengths as the world's second-largest services exporter and a leader on digital trade. An upgraded trade agreement with enhanced provisions can support UK trade across sectors of UK strength, including financial, creative, digital and technology services.

Forging stronger trade links with Mexico will also support the UK's accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, a free trade area with a collective GDP of £9 trillion in 2021, of which Mexico is an influential member.

The Government is determined that any agreement must work for consumers, producers, investors, and businesses alike. We remain committed to upholding our high environmental, labour, public health, food safety and animal welfare standards, alongside protecting the National Health Service.

The Government will continue to update and engage with key stakeholders, including Parliament and the Devolved Administrations, throughout our negotiations with Mexico.

Monkeypox Update

[HLWS48]

Lord Kamall: My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (Sajid Javid) has made the following written statement:

Cases

Following announcements made by the UK Health Security Agency on 7, 14, 18 and 20 May, I am writing to inform the House that (as of 12pm on Monday 23 May 2022) a total of 56 Monkeypox cases, in 3 unlinked incidents, have now been confirmed in the UK. Further cases have been identified worldwide, outside the endemic regions of West and Central Africa.

Monkeypox virus in the UK is extremely rare and the detection of Monkeypox in unlinked cases indicates community transmission. Prior to May 2022, there were three previous domestically acquired cases – two household transmissions related to an imported case and one healthcare worker related to a separate imported case.

In the coming days, I expect that further cases will be detected by the UK Health Security Agency's expert diagnostic capabilities, working with NHS services to ensure heightened vigilance among healthcare professionals.

The UK was the first country in the world to identify and report this recent emergence of non-endemic cases to the WHO, who continues to receive reports of further cases in other countries across the globe.

The infection can be passed on through direct contact with Monkeypox skin lesions or scabs; contact with clothing or linens (such as bedding or towels) used by an infected person; and potentially by close respiratory contact via coughing / sneezing by an individual with a Monkeypox rash. Monkeypox has not previously been described as a sexually transmitted infection, though it can be passed on by direct contact during sex. A notable proportion of cases have been among gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men.

The virus does not usually spread easily between people without close contact and the risk to the UK population remains low.

World leading experts at the UK Health Security Agency, working in partnership with health protection agencies in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, are providing the latest scientific, clinical, and public health

advice. They are also providing testing capability at the Rare and Imported Pathogens Laboratory at UKHSA Porton Down and have stood up additional capacity at UKHSA Colindale. They continue to contact trace, rapidly investigate the source of these infections, and raise awareness among healthcare professionals. Any close contacts of the cases are being identified and provided with health information and advice.

UKHSA, and its partner public health agencies in the devolved administrations, will continue to keep the scientific and clinical evidence under review to ensure that decisions are made on the best available evidence despite the fast-moving situation.

Individuals, especially gay, bisexual, or men who have sex with men, who develop an unusual rash or lesions (such as scabs) on any part of their body, but particularly their genitalia, should contact NHS 111 or a sexual health service. Individuals should notify clinics ahead of attendance and avoid close contact with others until they have been seen by a clinician. They can be assured that discussion will be treated sensitively and confidentially.

UKHSA has set up a dedicated helpline to support clinicians dealing with Monkeypox cases.

Vaccination and treatment

The smallpox vaccine, Imvanex (MVA-Bavarian Nordic), although not specifically licensed for the prevention of Monkeypox in Europe, has been used in the UK in response to previous incidents. This vaccine has a good safety record; it is made from a smallpox-related virus that cannot replicate and has been demonstrated to be highly effective at preventing infection (when given within 4 days of exposure) and reducing severe illness (if given between 4 and 14 days of exposure).

The vaccination of named close contacts of cases is underway, with vaccine eligibility being kept under close review. As of 10am on 23 May 2022, over 1,000 doses of Imvanex have been issued or are in the process of being issued, to NHS Trusts. There remain over 3,500 doses of Imvanex in the UK.

We are also exploring procurement options in case any specific antiviral treatment is shown to be effective against this virus; further details will be provided in due course.

I can confirm to the House that it will be kept abreast of updates as the situation evolves.

Platinum Jubilee Civic Honours Competition

[HLWS43]

Lord True: My Rt Hon Friend the Minister for the Cabinet Office and HM Paymaster General (Michael Ellis QC MP) has today made the following statement:

I am pleased to announce that Her Majesty The Queen has commanded that city status has been granted to Bangor, Colchester, Doncaster, Douglas, Dunfermline, Milton Keynes, Stanley and Wrexham and a Lord

Mayorality to Southampton to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee.

Her Majesty's Government has been delighted over the number of places across the United Kingdom, Crown Dependencies and Overseas Territories, which entered the competition. Irrespective of the final outcome, this is a celebration of not only the rich and diverse communities which make up the United Kingdom, but of communities all across the undivided Realm which the UK, Crown Dependencies and Overseas Territories constitute.

City status, Lord Mayoralties, and Lord Provostships are civic honours granted by Her Majesty acting on the advice of Her Ministers under the Royal Prerogative. The granting of these honours is rare and they continue to be highly sought after.

The competition received an extremely high standard of applications, and those unsuccessful applicants should not be disappointed. All valid entries received individual consideration on their merits and, for the first time, applications were also assessed by an expert panel, before Ministers made final recommendations to Her Majesty The Queen.

I offer my congratulations to Bangor, Colchester, Doncaster, Douglas, Dunfermline, Milton Keynes, Stanley, Wrexham and Southampton who have been granted these prestigious honours from an exceptional and vast field of applicants.

Reducing Bureaucracy in Higher Education

[HLWS47]

Baroness Barran: My Right Honourable Friend, the Minister of State for Higher and Further Education (Michelle Donelan) has laid the following statement.

Today I am providing an update on my commitment in September 2020 to reduce regulatory burden in Higher Education.

Bureaucracy has a direct impact on how well providers can do their jobs: every pound spent on unnecessary bureaucracy is a pound that is not being spent on teaching and research.

I am therefore pleased to confirm that the OfS has already:

- reduced its enhanced monitoring by over 75%, removing 376 individual information or reporting requirements;
- removed its requirement for detailed monitoring returns on Access and Participation Plans in 2022; and
- streamlined its communications with HE providers and provided a direct contact for every registered provider.

In addition, I recently set up the HE Data Reduction Taskforce, to bring together attendees from providers, arm's length bodies and other data experts across the HE Sector to identify where we are putting overlapping data requirements on providers and where they could be reduced. The taskforce provides a real opportunity for all

parties involved in data in the HE Sector to discuss challenges and opportunities and, most importantly, to agree tangible actions.

Institutional bureaucracy

There is, however, more that providers themselves could do to remove internal bureaucracy which is not needed to comply with regulatory requirements.

I therefore want to use this statement to encourage HE providers strongly to look at ways that they could reduce this gold plating. This should include:

- Reviewing their own Schemes of Delegation to ensure that they are fit for purpose, and that regulatory decisions and activity are clearly delegated to the right level in the provider. Not every decision needs to go to the Board of Governors, or through multiple layers of governance.
- Ensuring that they remain focussed on the content of the decisions they are making and the reasons for the decision, rather than ensuring that it goes to multiple committees.
- Carefully considering which processes, committees, activities and external subscriptions genuinely add value for students and which could be dispensed with, to free up academic time for teaching and research.

Unnecessary bureaucracy can take up time that could be spent focusing on the academic experience or quality of teaching which a student receives. This Government and the OfS will continue to focus on this, but providers also need to look internally to do the same.

Review of Legislative Drafting

[HLWS46]

Lord True: My Rt Hon Friend the Leader of the House of Commons and Lord President of the Council (Mark Spencer MP) has today made the following statement:

During the passage of the Ministerial and Other Maternity Allowances Bill, significant concern was expressed in both Houses about the Bill's use of gender-neutral language in the context of pregnancy and childbirth. The Bill was amended so that gender-neutral nouns (e.g. "person") were replaced with gendered ones (e.g. "mother" and "expectant mother").

Ministers committed to consider and review the Government's approach to drafting legislation on subjects that prompt these questions around language. The most obvious area is legislation relating to pregnancy or childbirth, but there will be other areas where similar issues arise. Ministers emphasised that "we must not countenance the erasure of women from our public discourse or our legislation" (Official Report, House of Lords, 25 February 2021, Col. 961).

Ministers also note that, academics writing in the journal, *Frontiers in Global Women's Health* have warned of potential "adverse health consequences and deeper and more insidious discrimination against women" from de-gendered language such as "pregnant people".

Previous context on stereotyping

In 2007, as recorded in the Official Report, 8 March 2007, Col. 146WS, the then (Labour) Government stated their intention to draft legislation to avoid rigid stereotypes that only men could hold positions of authority. The approach adopted was to avoid the use of male pronouns on their own in contexts where a reference to women and men is intended. This Government agrees with that approach. This statement addresses the separate issues of when it is appropriate to use gendered nouns like 'woman' and 'mother'.

Each Bill is brought forward on its own merits and is drafted in a way to ensure legal clarity and in order to fulfil the Bill's policy intent. Ministers believe it can be appropriate to use sex-specific language in legislation where such language delivers the desired policy outcome. This may include, for example, legislation which relates to the needs of men and women respectively, or areas of policy where biological sex is a relevant or pertinent concept. For example, the School Premises (England) Regulations 2012 explicitly requires separate toilet facilities in schools for boys and for girls. This is different from the desire to avoid stereotypes on positions of authority.

Guidance moving forward

When drafting a Bill it is necessary to take into account the fact that a person may change their legal sex by obtaining a Gender Recognition Certificate. The effect of section 9 of the Gender Recognition Act 2004 is that a reference to a "woman" in legislation, without more, will include someone who is a woman by virtue of a Certificate and will not include someone who is a man by virtue of a Certificate. In some cases, this might be the desired result but in others it might not.

Ministers are aware that there is, in some quarters, opposition to section 9 of the 2004 Act. However, that provision is the law and so drafting practice must take it into account. This, however, does not mean that sex-specific language cannot be used.

A number of drafting approaches are available to deliver the desired policy outcome whilst still using sex-specific language. One approach is to use sex-specific language to refer to the main case (for example "women"), with the addition of further wording so that the provision also has the desired policy outcome for less common cases.

Other drafting options include using sex-specific language and then disapplying section 9 of the 2004 Act (something that is envisaged in section 9(3) of the Act), or using sex-specific language for both cases (for example "woman or man"). Sometimes an ungendered noun will be appropriate, even in contexts in which sex is relevant. For example, someone undergoing a medical procedure might still be referred to as a "patient".

The drafting approach in any case also needs to take account of the pre-existing legislative context. An amendment of an existing Act that uses gender-neutral

nouns might need to do the same; and an amendment of an older Act that uses gendered nouns in a way that would be interpreted as covering both sexes might adopt the approach of the older Act.

The Office of the Parliamentary Counsel will update its drafting guidance in light of this Ministerial statement and steer.

Dignity, tolerance and respect

This statement should be read alongside the comments of the Prime Minister of 23 March 2022, Official Report, Column 334: ‘We must recognise that when people want to make a transition in their lives, they should be treated

with the maximum possible generosity and respect. We have systems in this country that allow that and have done for a long time, we should be very proud of that, but I want to say in addition that I think, when it comes to distinguishing between a man and a woman, the basic facts of biology remain overwhelmingly important.’

We believe that this statement sets out a common sense and practical approach to ensure dignity, tolerance and respect for everyone. It will help champion the broader cause of equality by continuing to recognise the different needs and experiences of both men and women in our society.

Written Answers

Monday, 23 May 2022

Ajax Vehicles: Procurement

Asked by **Lord Coaker**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent progress they have made on delivering outstanding Ajax armoured vehicles. [HL41]

Baroness Goldie: I refer the Noble Lord to the written statement (HCWS739) made by my hon. Friend the Minister for Defence Procurement (Jeremy Quin) in the House of Commons on 29 March 2022.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Armoured Cavalry Programme: Ajax Update [HCWS 739.docx]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-05-10/HL41>

Business: Investment

Asked by **Lord Taylor of Warwick**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to encourage investment in businesses based in the (1) North East, (2) East Midlands, and (3) North West of England. [HL111]

Lord Callanan: The £1.4bn Global Britain Investment Fund will drive investment in industries where the UK has both natural strengths and geographic spread. This includes in the automotive sector, which has regional clusters in the West Midlands, North West and North East; the life sciences sector, where currently two thirds of manufacturing jobs are already located outside of London and the South East; as well as the offshore wind sector, which is generating new investment in coastal communities in the North East and East of England as well as in Scotland and Wales.

Company Accounts: Standards

Asked by **Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted**

To ask Her Majesty's Government why the UK Endorsement Board's analysis for the endorsement of IFRS 17 made no separate assessment of the requirement in the International Accounting Standards and European Public Limited-Liability Company (Amendment etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019, SI 2019/685, regulation 7(1), which sets out the criteria for the endorsement of an accounting standard. [HL26]

Lord Callanan: The UK Endorsement Board undertook a significant project to assess IFRS 17 against the adoption criteria set out in Regulation 7(1) of SI 2019/685, that must be met before an international accounting standard may be adopted for use in the UK. Results of its assessment against those criteria are set out

in its Endorsement Criteria Assessment, containing sections specifically addressing each of the Regulation 7(1) adoption criteria. The Endorsement Criteria Assessment can be found on the UKEB's website.

Asked by **Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted**

To ask Her Majesty's Government why the UK Endorsement Board's analysis for the endorsement of IFRS 17 made no assessment of the statutory setting in which the endorsement criteria in the International Accounting Standards and European Public Limited-Liability Company (Amendment etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019, SI 2019/685, sits, including sections 72, 712 and 836 of the Companies Act 2006. [HL27]

Lord Callanan: The UK Endorsement Board's project on adoption of IFRS 17 and its final assessment directly address the adoption criteria and other requirements set out in SI 2019/685. The UK Endorsement Board's Endorsement Criteria Assessment, available on the UKEB's website, makes explicit reference to this legislative context.

The sections of the Companies Act 2006 referenced in the question are not specifically matters that the UK Endorsement Board is required to address under the terms of Regulation 7 of SI 2019/685.

Asked by **Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted**

To ask Her Majesty's Government why the UK Endorsement Board took no account the two opinions of George Bompas QC in its analysis for the endorsement of IFRS 17 despite linking to those opinions on its website. [HL28]

Asked by **Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted**

To ask Her Majesty's Government why the UK Endorsement Board has not commented on (1) the opinion from Mr Todd QC and Mr Rivett, and (2) the other six opinions it placed on its website for the purpose of endorsement of IFRS 17. [HL30]

Lord Callanan: The UK Endorsement Board has sought advice to clarify the legal position and the approach to be taken when assessing an international accounting standard against the criteria in Regulation 7(1)(a) of SI 2019/685 (the true and fair view criteria). In April 2022, it obtained an Opinion from Counsel on the interpretation of Regulation 7(1)(a). This Opinion was only one piece of a wide range of information that has been considered by the UK Endorsement Board as part of its responsibilities relating to the endorsement and adoption of international accounting standards.

The UK Endorsement Board website contains links to prior Counsel opinions, that were obtained by a number of different organisations, in order to provide contextual background for stakeholders.

Asked by **Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted**

To ask Her Majesty's Government why the UK Endorsement Board's analysis for the endorsement of

IFRS 17 made no assessment of whether the need to override the application of a standard would be "extremely rare". [HL29]

Lord Callanan: The UK Endorsement Board's Endorsement Criteria Assessment (ECA) for IFRS 17 sets out the results of the UK Endorsement Board's assessment of the standard against the adoption criteria in SI 2019/685. The ECA states that this assessment has not identified any requirement of IFRS 17 that would prevent individual or consolidated accounts prepared using the standard from giving a true and fair view of the entity's assets, liabilities, financial position and profit or loss. Following discussion of this matter by the UK Endorsement Board at its meeting on 9 May 2022, the final version of the ECA makes specific reference to the fact that the UK Endorsement Board is satisfied that the circumstances in which the application of IFRS 17 would result in accounts which did not give a true and fair view would be extremely rare.

Coronavirus: Screening

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to work with the diagnostics industry to (1) solicit, and (2) implement, feedback on the (a) efficiency, and (b) transparency, of regulatory bodies as part of ongoing reviews of the Coronavirus Test Device Approvals process. [HL145]

Lord Kamall: The UK Health Security Agency regularly engages with the diagnostics industry in the United Kingdom and others on the Coronavirus Test Device Approvals (CTDA) process. We will review the CTDA process due by the end of the year and consider its efficiency and transparency.

Cosmetic Surgery

Asked by Baroness Finlay of Llandaff

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to implement a credential for the regulation of cosmetic surgery; and what progress they have made with regard to implementing any such plans. [HL142]

Asked by Baroness Finlay of Llandaff

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to (1) raise the standards, and (2) improve the safety, of the cosmetic surgery industry. [HL143]

Lord Kamall: The General Medical Council and the Royal College of Surgeons are developing a cosmetic surgery credential. The credential will set out the expectations of doctors working in this area of practice and strengthen regulation and patient protection by ensuring surgeons have appropriate training, qualifications and experience.

The cosmetic surgery credential will not be mandatory. However, we expect the cosmetic surgery industry to embrace the credential as a way of demonstrating that doctors have the relevant skills and knowledge to deliver safe care to patients. We anticipate the cosmetic surgery credential will be completed in 2023.

Crossrail

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their latest estimate of the overall cost of the Crossrail project; what is the cost attributed to Network Rail; and what is the latest estimate of its economic benefit. [HL242]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The latest estimate of the overall cost for completing Crossrail is £18.9 billion. This includes Network Rail on Network Works at a total estimate cost of £3.0 billion.

Analysis in the 2010 Business Case stated that the Crossrail programme will add an estimated £42 billion to the UK economy. This is a forecast and will be assessed in planned work to evaluate the impact of Crossrail post opening on 24 May 2022.

Domestic Advisory Group

Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town

To ask Her Majesty's Government why neither Which? nor any other specific and independent consumer voice has been included in the membership of the Domestic Advisory Group established under the Trade and Cooperation Agreement. [HL60]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The membership of the Domestic Advisory Group (DAG) consists of a range of stakeholders and consumer organisations are an important element. They are currently represented through Citizens Advice.

The Government welcomes views on the implementation of the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement through a variety of channels including the regular engagement with departments.

Down Syndrome Act 2022

Asked by Lord Wigley

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much money they have allocated to meet the financial implications of the Down Syndrome Act 2022. [HL118]

Lord Kamall: No specific funding has been allocated. The Down Syndrome Act 2022 requires the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care to issue guidance to relevant authorities on the appropriate actions to meet the needs of people with Down Syndrome in the exercise of the relevant functions. The guidance will be developed and published in due course. An assessment of any funding requirements will also be completed alongside the development of the guidance.

Embassies: Diplomatic Service

Asked by Lord Wigley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take to appoint a nominated person or persons to have responsibility for communicating with the Governments of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland in every UK overseas embassy, if those governments so wish. [HL119]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: While international relations are a matter reserved to the UK Government (UKG) and Westminster Parliament, the UKG recognises the legitimate interest the devolved Governments have on international activity, especially where this has impact on matters of devolved competence, or in their responsibility to implement aspects of international agreements.

Each of the devolved governments has a presence at various locations overseas and often their staff are co-located within UK embassies. FCDO staff in our overseas network already work closely together with officials from each of the devolved governments. The FCDO also has regular engagement with officials from the devolved governments in the UK, including through a recently instituted Director-level forum which held its first meeting in March 2022, with another anticipated in summer 2022. That forum is underpinned by frequent official level engagement across all levels. The FCDO is eager to maintain and develop this engagement further, and identify where closer collaboration and cooperation will continue to bring benefits to every part of the UK, drawing on our extensive diplomatic network overseas.

Humanitarian Aid

Asked by Baroness Hodgson of Abinger

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the remarks by the Executive Director of the World Food Programme that there will be increased demand for global humanitarian assistance as a result of the conflict in Ukraine; and what plans they have to increase the UK's humanitarian assistance over the next 12 months. [HL66]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Global humanitarian need and acute food insecurity is at an all-time high, driven by covid-19, climate change and conflict - with over 300 million people in need of assistance in 2022 and 43 million people living a step away from famine. Until Russia's invasion Ukraine's exports of food and fertiliser were feeding up to 400 million people worldwide. Russia's war is preventing these exports and causing food, energy and other commodity prices to rise, as well as diverting humanitarian resources from pre-existing crises. This is hitting the world's poorest hardest, and increasing global humanitarian needs.

The UK is a major humanitarian donor. We have announced a package to address critical rising food insecurity in the Horn of Africa including £25 million to Somalia, £88 million in Yemen, and pledged £286 million

to meet needs in Afghanistan. The UK and our partners secured the largest ever World Bank financial commitment to developing countries affected by Russia's invasion - \$170 billion over the next 15 months. The UK has also increased support through the Bank with approximately £730 million in financial guarantees so the Bank can lend more to Ukraine without taking resources from the rest of the world.

Immunosuppression: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the likelihood of an immunocompromised patient infected with COVID-19 being (1) hospitalised, and (2) dying, versus individuals who are not immunocompromised. [HL160]

Lord Kamall: This information is not held centrally.

Insurance Companies: Company Accounts

Asked by Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Callanan on 16 September 2020 (HL7963) which stated that "calculation of the distributable profits and of a distribution by a public company must be based on the profits of the company as set out in the company's accounts", how and when did the discussions of UK Endorsement Board in its adoption of IFRS 17 take that function into account to ensure that accounts of insurance companies are reliable for that function. [HL31]

Lord Callanan: The calculation of distributable profits must take the profits of the company as set out in the company's accounts as its starting point. However, directors must also take into account additional factors set out in Part 23 of the Companies Act 2006. For example, for certain insurance companies that are authorised under the Solvency 2 Directive this includes the factors set out in s833A. The effect of these additional factors is to ensure that a company may only make distributions out of profits available for the purpose. The UK Endorsement Board is only required to assess international accounting standards against the criteria in Regulation 7(1) in SI 2019/685.

Iran: Nuclear Power

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the European Leadership Network open letter to the US and Iranian Leadership on the Iran nuclear deal, dated 26 April; in particular, the warning that the Iran nuclear talks are leading to 'corrosive stalemate devolving into a cycle of increased nuclear tension; and whether they have reiterated their call to show more flexibility with the governments of (1) Iran, and (2) the USA. [HL87]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have reached the end of talks in Vienna to restore the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPoA). There is a deal on the table that would return Iran to its JCPoA commitments, and return the US to the deal. Iran is currently preventing conclusion of the deal with demands beyond the JCPoA. We are in regular discussion with the US on the urgent need for a diplomatic solution to end Iran's nuclear escalation.

Legislative Drafting

Asked by *Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to publish the outcome of the review of language used in drafting legislation, following the passage of the Ministerial and other Maternity Allowances Act 2021. [HL67]

Asked by *Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consultation they have undertaken in advance of the development of proposals regarding the review of language used in drafting legislation, following the passage of the Ministerial and other Maternity Allowances Act 2021. [HL68]

Lord True: Following consideration by the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel, the Government has today issued a written ministerial statement setting out its approach to the use of gendered language in legislative drafting.

Local Government: Candidates

Asked by *Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what percentage of candidates in the May 2022 council elections have a disability; and what plans they have (1) to enable, and (2) to assist, disabled candidates (a) to participate in local elections, and (b) to serve as councillors. [HL17]

Lord Greenhalgh: It is the Government's ambition to see more disabled people in public office.

DLUHC do not hold or collect data centrally on percentages of candidates standing for local election. However, DLUHC has developed a new scheme to support disabled people seeking to become local candidates and to support those who have been elected to local public office. This work is a part of the 2022/23 local government improvement programme, delivered largely by the LGA, launched in April this year.

The scheme includes:

- a coaching programme for disabled councillors to support them as resilient and confident leaders of their communities.
- a campaign to attract more people with disabilities to stand for council elections and a new 'Be a Councillor' guide for disabled candidates who are considering standing for the 2023 elections.

- a bespoke leadership development programme for disabled councillors, which provides councillors with unique networking opportunities and support.

The full 2022-2023 Sector Support Offer for local councils is available (attached) on the LGA website: <https://local.gov.uk/publications/sector-support-offer-2022-23>

The Answer includes the following attached material:

2022-2023 Sector Support Offer for local councils [220523 Sector support offer for councils _ Local Government Association - HL17.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-05-10/HL17>

Local Government: Elections

Asked by *Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the results of the local government elections on 5 May. [HL96]

Lord Greenhalgh: The Government does not undertake any formal assessment of the delivery or outcome of elections.

The Electoral Commission is responsible for formally reporting on the delivery of elections.

Local Government: Remote Meetings

Asked by *Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to allowing job-sharing councillors to enable more people with (1) disabilities, and (2) caring responsibilities, (a) to stand for, and (b) to serve in, the positions. [HL18]

Asked by *Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure that (1) disabled councillors, (2) those shielding from COVID-19 or other illnesses, and (3) those with caring responsibilities, are able (a) to legally participate in council proceedings remotely, and (b) to be recorded as present at the meeting. [HL19]

Lord Greenhalgh: The Government launched a call for evidence last year to gather views and inform a longer-term decision about whether to make express provision for councils to meet remotely and enable councillors to attend meetings remotely, if necessary, on a permanent basis. The Department has considered the responses to the consultation and the Government will respond shortly.

Malaria: Disease Control

Asked by *The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they used the 15th anniversary of World Malaria Day on 25 April to support their aim of highlighting the need

for "continued investment and sustained political commitment for global malaria prevention and control" and to ensure that children in particular, especially those in Africa, do not die from preventable disease. [HL84]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: World Malaria Day provides an opportunity to keep malaria high on the international health agenda. Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office Ministers used social media and a response to an oral question in the House of Lords to highlight the need for global collaboration and commitment to tackle malaria.

The British Deputy Head of Mission to the United States also raised similar themes at an event in Washington convened by President Kenyatta of Kenya to mark World Malaria Day. We will continue to use upcoming events to maintain political momentum to protect those most vulnerable such as children under 5, who are disproportionately impacted by this disease.

Migrant Camps: Humanitarian Aid

Asked by Baroness Hodgson of Abinger

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consultations they have had, if any, with (1) the UN, and (2) other donor countries, to advocate for humanitarian access to widow camps in North West Syria. [HL61]

Asked by Baroness Hodgson of Abinger

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to including widow camps in UN humanitarian programmes. [HL62]

Asked by Baroness Hodgson of Abinger

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to include access to widow camps in North West Syria in their Syria Response Plan. [HL63]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK supports improved access to reach populations in need across Syria. The UK continues to use our position at the UN Security Council to call on all parties to respect agreed ceasefires and we work closely with humanitarian partners, such as the UN and NGOs, to press for improved humanitarian access. The UK has sent a joint letter with six other donors to the UN leadership calling for a more effective response to Gender Based Violence (GBV) across the whole of Syria by ensuring greater prioritisation of critical needs, such as widows camps and more clearly articulated workplans to address them.

The UK funds UN and NGO partners to provide food, non-food items, water, education, healthcare, trauma and psychosocial support, safe spaces for children and victims of GBV and other life-saving assistance to those most in need in north west Syria. In 2021, the UK was the second largest donor to the Syria Cross-border Humanitarian Fund (SCHF), a multi-sector, multi-donor pooled fund that has the flexibility to respond to emergency needs. The SCHF directs support towards the urgent needs of an

estimated 2.8 million internally displaced persons in North West Syria, including women and children in widow camps.

Mike Ashley

Asked by Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether Mike Ashley was a serving member of the Accounting Standards Board when he acted as an expert witness to defend PwC against the Financial Reporting Council's action in respect of PwC's audit of Mayflower plc; and if so, (1) what assessment was made of whether this constituted a conflict of interest, and (2) whether he offered to resign from the Board. [HL130]

Lord Callanan: Mike Ashley was a serving member of the UK Accounting Standards Board, which was a Board of the FRC, when he acted as an expert witness on behalf of PwC during the Tribunal between the Accountancy Investigation and Discipline Board and PwC. The judgement for this case is available on the FRC's website (and a copy is attached to this response). The Government does not hold information relating to the procedures of the UK Accounting Standards Board which was a Board of the FRC and ceased operating in 2012.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Case Judgement copy - HL130 [Attachment to HL130.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-05-11/HL130>

Mike Ashley and Seema Jamil-O'Neill

Asked by Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted

To ask Her Majesty's Government for which years did (1) UK Endorsement Board member Mike Ashley act as the KPMG audit partner of HSBC Holdings plc, and (2) UK Endorsement Board Executive Director Seema Jamil O'Neil act as the Senior Manager for the KPMG audit of HSBC Holdings plc. [HL127]

Lord Callanan: Information from the UK Endorsement Board website explains that Mike Ashley retired as the Partner and the Head of Quality and Risk Management of KPMG Europe LLP in September 2013, having spent about 35 years with the firm and its predecessor firm, Peat Marwick. The Government does not hold information relating to the specifics of Mr Ashley's role at KPMG.

The UK Endorsement Board operates independently from the Government. BEIS is therefore unable to provide information relating to members of staff, including information on job history, supporting its work.

Asked by Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether UK Endorsement Board member Mike Ashley, while also a partner of KPMG, had any involvement in the

recruitment of Seema Jamil O'Neil from KPMG to the staff of the Accounting Standards Board. [HL128]

Lord Callanan: The Government does not hold information relating to the recruitment of staff to the UK Accounting Standards Board which was a Board of the FRC and ceased operating in 2012.

Asked by Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted

To ask Her Majesty's Government for which period did (1) Mike Ashley serve as a member of the Accounting Standards Board, and (2) Seema Jamil O'Neil serve as a member of staff of the Accounting Standards Board. [HL129]

Lord Callanan: Mike Ashley was a member of the UK Accounting Standards Board, which was a Board of the FRC, from 2004 to 2010.

BEIS is unable to provide information relating to members of UK Endorsement Board staff, including information on job history, because the UK Endorsement Board operates independently from the Government.

Nagorno-Karabakh: Armed Conflict

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to UNESCO and the government of Azerbaijan to allow a UNESCO mission unimpeded access to document Armenian and Azerbaijan heritage in Nagorno-Karabakh as part of a reconciliation measures. [HL99]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK Government continues to raise the importance of the protection of all cultural heritage sites in Nagorno-Karabakh with both the Government of Azerbaijan and the Government of Armenia and is deeply concerned by reports that both parties have destroyed cultural heritage. We continue to press both sides to ensure UNESCO is able to undertake its crucial work in support of historical and cultural heritage. At this stage, we have not made direct representations to UNESCO regarding their efforts to secure access to Nagorno-Karabakh.

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to publish the names of the organisations which took part in the early engagement programme with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence before the publication of its new methods and processes for its health technology evaluation programme. [HL69]

Lord Kamall: While there was no specific early engagement programme, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's (NICE) recent review of its methods and processes for health technology evaluation was overseen by a steering group and working group. The

organisations which participated in these groups are as follows:

Centre for Health Technology Evaluation, NICE;
 Centre for Guidelines, NICE;
 Centre for Health Economics, University of York;
 NHS England and NHS Improvement;
 The Office for Life Sciences;
 The Department of Health and Social Care;
 NICE appraisal committee;
 British In Vitro Diagnostics Association;
 The Association of the British Pharmaceuticals Industry;
 The Psoriasis and Psoriatic Arthritis Alliance;
 The British Medical Journal Technology Assessment Group;
 The Ethical Medicines Industry Group;
 The BioIndustry Association;
 Genetic Alliance;
 ReCor Medical UK, Association of British HealthTech Industries;
 School of Health and Related Research, the University of Sheffield; and
 Alzheimer's Research UK.

NATO: Membership

Asked by Lord Coaker

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will publish a statement setting out their strategy on expanding NATO membership, in light of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. [HL42]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK has always been a committed supporter of NATO's Open Door Policy, enshrined in Article 10 of the Washington Treaty which founded NATO in 1949. NATO's expansion has been pivotal in spreading democracy, free speech and the rule of law across Europe. Each nation has the right to choose its own security arrangements. Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine has fundamentally changed European security and it is understandable that faced with this threat, countries may review their security arrangements, including considering applying to join the alliance and to benefit from its collective security guarantees.

Newport Wafer Fab: Semiconductors

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the current status of the bid by a Chinese owned company to purchase Newport Wafer Fab; how many UK businesses in the semi-conductor supply chain are owned by companies based outside the UK; and what assessment they have made of (1) the value of Newport Wafer Fab's intellectual property, and (2) the sensitivity of any defence contracts it holds. [HL186]

Lord Callanan: On 5 July 2021, Nexperia announced on its website that it had completed a transaction to acquire 100% of Newport Wafer Fab.

The Government recognises the importance of semiconductor technology to key UK industries, and the wider digital ecosystem. Supply chains for semiconductors are extremely complex, spanning a large number of countries.

The Government is not able to comment on a company's commercially sensitive information, nor can the Government comment on the detail businesses' commercial transactions or on national security assessments.

Northern Ireland Assembly: Elections

Asked by **Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to introduce proportional representation into elections for the Northern Ireland Assembly. [HL200]

Lord Caine: Since 1998, Members of the Northern Ireland Assembly have been elected using the Single Transferable Vote. This system was also used for the Assemblies elected in 1973 and 1982.

Palestinians: Food

Asked by **Baroness Anelay of St Johns**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken, if any, in response to the statement by the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process on 25 April that, without urgent funding support from the international community, the World Food Programme and the UN Relief and Works Agency "will not be able to meet the food needs of the Palestinian population this year, which can have a destabilizing impact across the Occupied Palestinian Territories, particularly in the Gaza Strip". [HL15]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is a long-term supporter of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), which provides protection and core services to Palestinian refugees in Gaza and across the wider region. The UK is working with UNRWA and other donors to improve UNRWA's financial viability. This includes broadening UNRWA's donor base, encouraging the full disbursement of pledges and encouraging support through multi-year funding. The UK continues to monitor closely the ongoing humanitarian situation in Gaza.

Pauline Wallace

Asked by **Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether Pauline Wallace, Chair of the UK Endorsement Board, was involved in defending PwC against the Financial Reporting Council's action in respect of PwC's audit of

Mayflower plc; and if so, whether she worked with Mike Ashley as part of that defence. [HL131]

Lord Callanan: Pauline Wallace was at partner at PwC between 2002 and 2013. The judgement for the tribunal between the Accountancy Investigation and Discipline Board and PwC was provided in 2006 and is available on the FRC's website. HM Government does not hold information on whether Pauline Wallace had any involvement in the tribunal.

Pregnancy: Humanitarian Aid

Asked by **Baroness Cox**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will provide humanitarian assistance for (1) general food and water distribution, (2) blanket supplementary feeding for children aged six to 59 months, and (3) blanket supplementary feeding for pregnant and lactating women. [HL50]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is committed to providing principled humanitarian assistance and supporting those in greatest need around the world, as set out in the Integrated Review. The 2021 Spending Review commits FCDO to spend £3 billion on humanitarian efforts over the next three years.

Preventing malnutrition when disasters arise is essential for saving lives and for giving those affected a better chance to become more resilient in the long term. To do this, a basic preventative package needs to be provided and targeted to populations at greatest risk (this includes adolescent girls, women and young children). This package will vary depending on the context but will likely include: (1) treatment for acute malnutrition; (2) other essential health and nutrition services for women and children; (3) Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH); (4) food assistance with specific provision for young children and pregnant / breastfeeding women. Other services might be needed to address impacts that psychological trauma and displacement can have on nutrition. This includes supporting women to breastfeed as a strategy for preventing mortality and malnutrition.

Queen's Guards: Uniforms

Asked by **Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, given that a suitable replacement for bearskin has been developed that meets all of their "five requirements", what steps they are taking to introduce a faux fur for the ceremonial caps worn by the Queen's Guard. [HL79]

Baroness Goldie: I refer the noble Lady to the answer my Hon. Friend the Minister for Defence Procurement (Jeremy Quin) gave to Question 121824 on 21 February 2022 in the House of Commons

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Queen's Guards: Uniforms [UIN 121824.docx]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-05-10/HL79>

Sand

Asked by **Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by the United Nations Sand and Sustainability: 10 strategic recommendations to avert a crisis, published on 26 April, what plans they have (1) to promote global action, and (2) to promote protection of that resource; and what assessment they have made of UK (a) supplies, (b) use, and (c) conservation, of sand. [HL20]

Lord Greenhalgh: Aggregate mineral surveys have been regularly undertaken by the Government since 1973. These provide an in-depth assessment of national and sub-national sales, inter-regional flows, transportation, consumption and permitted reserves of primary aggregates. The survey provides comprehensive data for monitoring and facilitating aggregates provision at a local, regional and national level.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) recognises that it is essential that there is a sufficient supply of minerals to provide the infrastructure, buildings, energy and goods that the country needs. It is clear that as minerals are a finite natural resource, best use needs to be made of them to secure their long-term conservation. This is why mineral planning authorities are required to safeguard mineral resources through their planning policies, by defining Mineral Safeguarding Areas and Mineral Consultation Areas. Furthermore, the NPPF is clear that local planning authorities should not normally permit other development proposals in Mineral Safeguarding Areas if it might constrain potential future use for mineral working.

Seema Jamil-O'Neill

Asked by **Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the processes for the recruitment of Seema Jamil O'Neill (1) to the staff of Accounting Standards Board, and (2) to the post of Executive Director of the UK Endorsement Board, in 2021 were subject to (a) public advertising, and (b) open competition. [HL126]

Lord Callanan: The Government does not hold information relating to the recruitment of staff to the UK Accounting Standards Board which was a Board of the FRC and ceased operating in 2012. All permanent posts for staff recruited to the Secretariat of the UK Endorsement Board are subject to public advertising and open competition.

Supply Chains

Asked by **The Marquess of Lothian**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the potential for a supply chain crisis affecting the UK in the next few months; and what steps they (1) have put in place, or (2) plan to put in place, to mitigate the impact of any such crisis. [HL83]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: Supply chain resilience is a priority for HM Government. In October, the Prime Minister appointed Sir Dave Lewis to advise on supply chains and identify both immediate improvements and any necessary long-term changes. We are working to secure the supply chains of the future already, including for critical minerals, by working with like-minded nations around the world.

Although not every aspect of the market can, or should, be controlled, HM Government has taken quick and decisive action to ease pressures where immediate interventions have been required. We have put in place a raft of measures to deal with the extraordinary set of circumstances brought on by the pandemic and the re-animation of the global economy. These include increasing HGV testing capacity, extending cabotage rights, training up to 5,000 HGV drivers, and making available temporary visas for poultry workers and butchers.

Swimming Pools

Asked by **Lord Lee of Trafford**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will make targeted hypothecated funds available to keep heated public swimming pools open. [HL153]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: We recognise the importance of ensuring public access to indoor and outdoor pools and that swimming is a great way for people of all ages to stay fit and healthy. The responsibility of providing this access lies at local authority level, and Her Majesty's Government continues to encourage local authorities to invest in good swimming facilities.

We also recognise the impact rising energy prices will have on businesses of all sizes. Ofgem and Her Majesty's Government are in regular contact with business groups and suppliers to understand the challenges they face and explore ways to protect consumers and businesses.

Sport England has invested £25,027,478 in swimming and diving projects since January 2017, which includes £15,724,500 to Swim England. This is in addition to the £100 million National Leisure Recovery Fund which supported the reopening of local authority swimming pools throughout the country after the pandemic, with 1,176 separate pools supported across 701 sites.

Teesside International Airport

Asked by *Lord Patten*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, what assessment they have made of the effects on the (1) regional, and (2) national, economy of the decision of Loganair to cease serving Teesside International Airport. [HL267]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Whilst the decision by Loganair to withdraw from Teesside Airport is disappointing, it is ultimately a commercial decision by the airline.

The Government recognises the importance of regional airports to our aviation sector and to the communities they serve. We continue to support regional airports through various policy measures such as our introduction next year of a 50% cut in Air Passenger Duty on domestic flights.

Terrorism: Northern Ireland

Asked by *Lord Naseby*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what matters are outstanding preventing the establishment of a truth and reconciliation commission in relation to Northern Ireland. [HL263]

Lord Caine: On Tuesday 17 May, the Government introduced the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill in the House of Commons.

This legislation will establish a new information recovery body, named the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery. This Body will carry out robust and thorough investigations - supported by full state disclosure - for the primary purpose of information recovery, which can potentially deliver better outcomes for victims and survivors of the Troubles.

Asked by *Lord Naseby*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to publish the details of the factors being considered in relation to the possible offering of amnesties as part of a proposed truth and reconciliation commission to deal with alleged crimes during the Northern Ireland troubles. [HL264]

Lord Caine: On Tuesday 17 May, the Government introduced the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill in the House of Commons.

The Bill sets out that individuals who were involved in Troubles-related deaths or serious injuries will only be eligible for immunity on the basis of cooperation with a new information recovery body, named the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery.

Tourism

Asked by *Lord Faulkner of Worcester*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with representatives of the tourism industry, including (1) the Tourism Alliance, (2) the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions, (3) the London Blue Badge Guides, (4) the Institute of Tourist Guiding, (5) the Association of Professional Tourist Guides, and (6) the British Guild of Tourist Guides, to encourage the return of guided tours to the UK. [HL54]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: Her Majesty's Government set out our Tourism Recovery Plan in June 2021. This set out our plans for a growing, dynamic, sustainable and world-leading tourism sector reaching its full potential and driving growth across all parts of the UK.

In developing that plan, we engaged with a range of representative groups, in particular through the Tourism Industry Council. We continue to engage with them as we deliver it, as well as with both VisitBritain and VisitEngland which are working with us to support the recovery of tourism across the country, including doing all that we can to ensure the return of guided tours.

Trade Agreements: Israel

Asked by *Baroness Anelay of St Johns*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made regarding consultations on a new, enhanced UK-Israel trade agreement since the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding in November 2021. [HL124]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: The United Kingdom is strongly committed to our trade and investment relationship with Israel.

A public consultation on an enhanced bilateral free trade agreement (FTA) with Israel was formally launched on 1st February 2022.

We are now in the process of analysing the responses we received during this consultation and will publish a formal response to this in due course.

UK Endorsement Board: Public Appointments

Asked by *Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted*

To ask Her Majesty's Government why an advertisement for the appointment of a Chair for the UK Endorsement Board appeared on the Cabinet Office website on 15 December 2021 but was then taken down before the completion of that process. [HL245]

Lord Callanan: The advert for a campaign to recruit a new Chair to the UK Endorsement Board was published on the Cabinet Office website on 15 December 2021, and remained there until the closing date for applications on 23 January 2022. Campaigns that are not regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments are no longer visible to the public on the website after they have closed for applications.

Vehicle Number Plates: Fraud

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to counter the practice of vehicle number plate cloning. [HL243]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The law requires that anyone supplying number plates for road use in the UK must be registered with the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA). It is a legal requirement for suppliers to carry out checks to ensure that number plates are only sold to those who can prove they are entitled to the registration number. Number plate suppliers must also keep records of the plates they have supplied.

The DVLA visits number plate suppliers to monitor compliance with the legal requirements and works closely with the police and trading standards to share intelligence and support investigations and prosecutions of suppliers who do not comply.

Anyone who suspects that their number plate has been cloned should report this to the police, who are responsible for on road enforcement. Any fines or

correspondence received for offences which have not been committed should be returned to the issuing authorities for investigation. Vehicle keepers can also write to the DVLA, who may issue a new registration number for a vehicle if there is evidence that a number plate has been cloned.

Yazidis

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they are taking to secure the safety of Yazidis in Sinjar following attacks by Turkish military; when they last discussed long-term security of the Yazidi people with (1) the Kurdish regional government, and (2) the government of Iraq; and what response they received. [HL5]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are following closely the situation in northern Iraq. FCDO Ministers and senior officials regularly reiterate to the need for dialogue and cooperation between Turkey and Iraq, including the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, to combat terrorism, ensure regional security, and protect civilians. Our diplomatic missions are in regular contact with Turkish and Government of Iraq and Kurdistan regional Government authorities. Our focus is always on securing an end to violence and protecting civilians. The UK continues to champion on the rights of minorities, including Yazidis, in Iraq, including through working with a wide range of actors to ensure full implementation of the Yazidi Survivors Law.

Index to Statements and Answers

Written Statements.....1	
Family Hubs Transformation Fund1	
Introduction of Additional Blood Donor Testing .1	
Mexico Trade Negotiations1	
Monkeypox Update2	
Platinum Jubilee Civic Honours Competition3	
Reducing Bureaucracy in Higher Education3	
Review of Legislative Drafting4	
Written Answers.....6	
Ajax Vehicles: Procurement.....6	
Business: Investment6	
Company Accounts: Standards.....6	
Coronavirus: Screening7	
Cosmetic Surgery7	
Crossrail.....7	
Domestic Advisory Group.....7	
Down Syndrome Act 20227	
Embassies: Diplomatic Service8	
Humanitarian Aid8	
Immunosuppression: Coronavirus.....8	
Insurance Companies: Company Accounts.....8	
Iran: Nuclear Power.....8	
Legislative Drafting.....9	
Local Government: Candidates9	
Local Government: Elections9	
Local Government: Remote Meetings.....9	
Malaria: Disease Control.....9	
Migrant Camps: Humanitarian Aid10	
Mike Ashley10	
Mike Ashley and Seema Jamil-O'Neill10	
Nagorno-Karabakh: Armed Conflict.....11	
National Institute for Health and Care Excellence11	
NATO: Membership.....11	
Newport Wafer Fab: Semiconductors11	
Northern Ireland Assembly: Elections12	
	Palestinians: Food..... 12
	Pauline Wallace 12
	Pregnancy: Humanitarian Aid 12
	Queen’s Guards: Uniforms..... 12
	Sand 13
	Seema Jamil-O’Neill 13
	Supply Chains..... 13
	Swimming Pools..... 13
	Teesside International Airport 14
	Terrorism: Northern Ireland 14
	Tourism..... 14
	Trade Agreements: Israel..... 14
	UK Endorsement Board: Public Appointments. 14
	Vehicle Number Plates: Fraud..... 15
	Yazidis 15