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**Wednesday**  
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**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**  
**(HANSARD)**

# **HOUSE OF LORDS**

## **WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS**

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<b>Lord Benyon</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
<b>Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist</b>	Whip
<b>Lord Caine</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office
<b>Lord Callanan</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
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<b>Lord Grimstone of Boscobel</b>	Minister of State, Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Department for International Trade
<b>Lord Harrington of Watford</b>	Minister of State, Home Office and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
<b>Lord Kamall</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
<b>Lord Offord of Garvel</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scotland Office
<b>Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and Whip
<b>Baroness Penn</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Scott of Bybrook</b>	Whip
<b>Lord Sharpe of Epsom</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Stedman-Scott</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and Department for Work and Pensions
<b>Lord Stewart of Dirleton</b>	Advocate-General for Scotland
<b>Lord True</b>	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
<b>Baroness Vere of Norbiton</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
<b>Baroness Williams of Trafford</b>	Minister of State, Home Office
<b>Viscount Younger of Leckie</b>	Whip

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# Written Statements

Wednesday, 25 May 2022

## Delivering Justice for Victims

[HLWS52]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** My right honourable friend the Deputy Prime Minister, Secretary of State for Justice and Lord Chancellor (Dominic Raab) has made the following written statement:

"Today the Government is publishing a draft Victims Bill for pre-legislative scrutiny, ensuring we will deliver on our manifesto commitment to pass and implement a Victims Law.

We are also publishing a wider package of measures that put victims firmly at the heart of the criminal justice system. These are set out in the Government's response to the consultation "Delivering justice for victims - a consultation on improving victims' experiences of the justice system". The consultation launched in December 2021 and ran for eight weeks. It received over 600 responses, alongside important feedback gathered through 39 engagement events with frontline professionals and victims.

In response, we have set out a wide range of measures to send a clear signal that the justice system must deliver justice for victims. The Government is also announcing the new cross-government Victims Funding Strategy, which will drive better outcomes for victims by tackling barriers to sustainable funding and ensuring consistent commissioning.

Collectively these measures will amplify victims' voices in the criminal justice process, improve the support victims receive, and strengthen oversight of criminal justice agencies. In doing so, they will help victims to have confidence that there is the right support available and that if they report crime, the criminal justice system will treat them in the way they should rightly expect.

The draft Victims Bill will:

- Enshrine the overarching principles of the Victims' Code in primary legislation and set out key entitlements in secondary legislation, to send a clear signal about what victims can and should expect from the criminal justice system.
- Introduce a joint statutory duty on PCCs, health and local authorities to collaborate when commissioning support services for victims of sexual, domestic, violence, and serious violence so that services are more holistic and better coordinated.
- Introduce a statutory definition of Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) and Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs), accompanied by statutory guidance at a later date, to increase awareness and consistency of these roles.
- Place a duty on criminal justice agencies to collect data and keep under review their compliance with the

Victims' Code and to take into account feedback from victims about their experiences. It will also introduce a duty for Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) to take a convening role in monitoring compliance locally so that there can be a better view of how the system treats victims. As a result, the Victims' Commissioner will no longer be responsible for reviewing the operation of the Victims' Code but will still be able to engage on compliance at a national level through their other functions.

- Provide the Justice Secretary, Home Secretary and Attorney General with the power to require criminal justice inspectorates to undertake regular joint thematic inspections on victims' issues, to ensure clearer and sharper focus on how victims are treated.
- Require the Victims' Commissioner to lay their annual report in Parliament, and require relevant agencies and departments to respond to recommendations in that report, to enhance scrutiny of the actions being taken.
- Remove the need for victims of crime to raise a complaint via an MP before it can be investigated by the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, to simplify the process for victims wanting to escalate complaints against public bodies. This will be an exception for victims of crime, for whom approaching an MP to share a potentially traumatic experience is more likely to be a barrier to making a complaint and does not constitute an indication that the Government intends to remove the 'MP filter' more widely.

The accompanying measures announced within the consultation response will:

- Increase the Victim Surcharge by 20% so that offenders pay more towards vital victim support services. This change is being made via statutory instrument.
- Introduce a duty in the Victims' Code requiring the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) to meet victims in certain cases before a hearing takes place, where the victim is willing to do so.
- Work with criminal justice inspectorates to enhance their oversight of victims' experiences and use ratings to improve performance, including more regular focus on victims' issues and experiences in all inspections.
- Improve agencies' communications on complaints, ensuring clear and accessible points of contact to help victims make and progress their complaints.
- Raise the profile and professional standing of ISVAs and IDVAs, through the introduction of a non-public register, a network for support providers and an annual report.
- Include information about community impact statements in the Victims' Code to promote their use in appropriate cases and amplify the voices of communities impacted by crime.
- Work with the judiciary to introduce a Victims' Code entitlement for Victim Personal Statements in the

Mental Health Tribunal where the release of offenders is being considered, so that victims are able to explain the impact of the crime on them.

- Give victims the right to attend a parole hearing in full for the first time, should they wish to and subject to the circumstances of the case and agreement of the Parole Board.
- Allow victims to ask questions within submissions to the Parole Board and require that the Board takes account of these when reaching their decision, so that victims' voices are amplified in the process.

Together these measures will contribute to our plan to give victims the justice they deserve, and build back a better, stronger, fairer country.'

### **Higher Education and Skills in Local Communities**

[HLWS54]

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

Today I am announcing a national programme which will be delivered by The Open University. The Open University will partner with 10-12 further education (FE) providers in England to support the delivery of high quality level 4 and 5 courses in areas where there is currently limited provision.

As a government we are working to level up the country, and access to high quality education at level 4 and above is a vital part of this. There are too many communities who do not currently have access to local, convenient, high quality higher education (HE) and I am determined to address this.

We want people wishing to train and upskill throughout their life to have local access to a new type of HE, focused on providing the higher level skills to meet local employer needs, with shorter courses that deliver the skills they require rather than only three year degrees.

The Open University will be working in partnership with a selection of FE providers and employers at a local level to understand the skills the economy needs and ensure the education system give people those skills.

We know FE providers are at different stages and require different levels of support to take the important step into delivering good quality level 4 and 5 courses that employers want. So I have asked the Office for Students to commission a HE sector leader to provide validation and course support to help FE providers develop and deliver high quality higher technical courses that meet local skills needs.

We are delighted that the Office for Students has appointed The Open University to deliver this vital programme. The Open University will work with FE providers who need support developing and delivering courses and having them validated. They will help people in areas currently underserved by HE courses to access a high-quality course accredited by a known and recognised

institution. The Government is providing up to £10m to support The Open University with the costs of setting-up and running the programme over the next 3 years.

The Open University is inviting bids now from local FE providers who are ambitious about delivering high quality level 4 and 5 courses. They will be announcing which organisations they will be supporting in the autumn, and we look forward to working with them and the Office for Students to level up opportunity.

This new programme comes alongside a £32m Higher Technical Education Skills Injection Fund for colleges and universities which will be invested in equipment and facilities to support technical studies, and boost training opportunities with businesses in key areas such as digital, construction and health care.

I would like to use this statement to encourage education sector leaders to engage with these programmes of support. Together we can build an even better HE offer that is fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and delivering on the priorities of local employers and learners in every part of the country.

### **Recognition of Ulster Scots as a National Minority and Funding for An Ciste Infheistíochta Gaeilge, the Irish Language Investment Fund**

[HLWS55]

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

Today, the Government is recognising officially Ulster Scots as a national minority under the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, and is announcing £4 million in funding for An Ciste Infheistíochta Gaeilge, the Irish Language Investment Fund. This delivers on two of the Government's commitments in the New Decade, New Approach agreement (NDNA).

NDNA placed an emphasis on respect for, and mutual understanding of, Northern Ireland's diverse national and cultural identities. The carefully balanced package of measures within it will benefit everyone in Northern Ireland.

Ulster Scots have a proud history and a distinct language, heritage and culture, and this recognition will afford them the same status as other minorities in the UK. The recognition of Ulster Scots is without prejudice as to whether they meet the definition of a 'racial group' under the Equality Act 2010, as only the courts can rule on this matter.

The Irish language forms another key part of Northern Ireland's rich tapestry of identities, languages and cultures. Through the NDNA financial package, the UK Government will make available £4 million to be provided to An Ciste Infheistíochta Gaeilge for capital grant funding to non-profit organisations promoting the Irish language.

The Government is proud to deliver on the commitments it made to the people of Northern Ireland in NDNA, and today's announcement will support that vision of greater inclusion, tolerance and openness in Northern Ireland.

## Unit for Future Skills

[HLWS53]

**Baroness Barran:** My Honourable Friend The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Skills (Alex Burghart) has made the following statement:

In February, it was announced in the Levelling Up White Paper that the Department for Education would be setting up a new Unit for Future Skills. The White Paper recognises that good information is necessary for the skills system to respond effectively to emerging needs. The Unit has therefore been set up to improve the quality of jobs and skills data, working across Government to make this publicly accessible.

Rich sources of information on skills and jobs already exist. However, this information is often held by various parts of government and in different or incompatible formats. Furthermore, data in the public domain is typically not presented in a way that is most useful for its intended audience, whether learners, providers, local areas, businesses, or researchers.

Today, the Unit has officially launched with its first data release. This covers the jobs, sectors and regions people work in after gaining a qualification. This is the first time we have brought together data on higher and further education to make it easier for people to see where their training can take them: for example, showing the routes young people take through high-quality technical education to get good jobs where they live. This data is an early example of what the Unit can do, and we will work with others to improve this and release more useful information.

The Unit will work extensively with a variety of stakeholders to enrich our employer-led skills system and make it more responsive to the economy's needs. The Unit covers England only, but will work with devolved administrations to share learning and insights.

Alongside the data from the Unit for Future Skills, the Skills Productivity Board has also published its remaining reports, concluding its work. The Board is an expert committee set up in 2020 to provide independent, evidence-based advice on skills and their contribution to productivity. Findings from the Board emphasise the need for sustained focus on data improvements and formed the basis of the Unit's priorities.

You will be able to follow the Unit's work and access its products through a dedicated website, which has also gone live today: (<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/unit-for-future-skills/>). The Unit will continue to work with other government departments to bring together different datasets and make these widely available, including through APIs (application programming interface).

Specific priorities for the Unit over the next 6 months include:

- Improved dashboard on career pathways providing users with more detail on which post-16 qualifications support successful employment in specific sectors within a local area (improvements to be designed based on user feedback on dashboard released today).
- A skills demand dashboard. Development of a product based on newly available data from the ONS, showing what types of jobs are being advertised in which local area.
- Research projects on future skills demand forecasting and a UK specific skills taxonomy. The latter will underpin better linking of data, enriching its potential.
- Roundtables and stakeholder workshops, to gather feedback on the Unit's launch products and define its longer-term priorities

## Written Answers

Wednesday, 25 May 2022

### Accountancy: Standards

Asked by *Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Callanan on 16 September 2020 (HL7849), which version of the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) framework is applicable to directors preparing International Accounting Standards (IAS) accounts given that (1) the (a) EU, and (b) UK Endorsement Board, have not endorsed any framework, and (2) the EU adopted international accounting standards at the end of the transition period on 31 December 2020 which are not legislation and do not include any framework. [HL294]

**Lord Callanan:** The Companies Act 2006 (the Act) requires UK-registered companies which use international accounting standards when preparing their accounts to use UK-adopted international accounting standards. UK-adopted international accounting standards are defined in Section 474 of the Act as the international accounting standards which are adopted for use within the United Kingdom by virtue of Chapter 2 or 3 of Part 2 of SI 2019/685. These are any international accounting standards endorsed by the EU as at the end of the EU Exit transition period, and any subsequent UK adoptions of international accounting standards by the Secretary of State or, following the delegation of this function, by the UK Endorsement Board. A consolidated text of UK-adopted international accounting standards can be found on the UK Endorsement Board's website.

### Agricultural Products: Exports

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by the National Farmers Union Growing our agri-food exports to 2030 and beyond, published on 27 April, what plans they have to match Agricultural and Horticulture Development Board levy contribution funding to help grow British agricultural exports. [HL168]

**Lord Benyon:** We welcome the National Farmers Union (NFU) report on growing exports over the next few years and we look forward to working with NFU to grow exports. We always champion our hardworking farmers and growers and look for ways to unlock opportunities for the sector's growth. The recently launched Farming Investment Fund supports the creation of on-farm reservoirs and irrigation infrastructure directly supporting growers in producing a variety of crops.

The promotion of food exports and the opening up of new markets round the world is a key part of the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board's (AHDB) activities. AHDB works closely with the

Government on this work and although there are no plans for the Government to match the levy contribution, the Government continues to invest in building UK export capability, including the expansion of the agri-food and drink attaché network and formation of the Export Council. In addition, the Government has invested in a range of schemes to help the sector grow their exports such as the Department for International Trade's Export Academy, the Internationalisation Fund, support from our vast overseas network, UK Export Finance, an international events programme, online services, Export Champions and the Export Support Service.

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by the National Farmers Union Growing our agri-food exports to 2030 and beyond, published on 27 April, what plans they have (1) to expand the GREAT campaign in relation to agricultural products, and (2) to make the campaign more accessible to potential users in the agricultural sector. [HL169]

**Lord Benyon:** The GREAT Food and Drink campaign supports food and drink exports via marketing and promotional activity targeted to consumers and trade audiences in four key priority markets: China, Japan, the United Arab Emirates and the United States. It promotes the breadth, quality and innovation of the UK's food and drink production and champions our unique culinary offer to help shift perceptions and support exports.

Meat and dairy continue to be central to the GREAT campaign's food and drink promotion in international markets. The campaign works with meat and dairy producers across the UK and will continue to ensure that the best of UK food and drink features prominently in international promotion, working closely with the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board. The Government continues to invest in building UK export capability, including the expansion of the agri-food and drink attaché network and formation of the Export Council. In addition, the Government has invested in a range of schemes to help the sector grow their exports such as the Department for International Trade's Export Academy, the Internationalisation Fund, support from our vast overseas network, UK Export Finance, an international events programme, online services, Export Champions and the Export Support Service.

### Apprentices: Taxation

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to require that companies spend over half of their apprenticeship levy on young people. [HL182]

**Baroness Barran:** It is important that employers have access to training to meet their skills needs and the apprenticeships programme is delivering that. Requiring employers to spend half of their levy funds on young people would restrict employer choice and may reduce opportunities for older workers who may want to re-train,

up-skill or re-enter the workforce. Employers are best placed to determine the apprenticeships they need; the government, therefore, have no plans to restrict apprenticeship funding in this way.

The government want more young people to benefit from the high-quality training and opportunities for progression that apprenticeships bring and have a range of work underway to ensure that young people can access apprenticeships more easily. This includes working on new ways to connect young people in schools and colleges with employers and providers much earlier in their final academic year when they are considering their options and working with the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education to identify and promote standards most suitable for those starting their careers. We are also working with employers and providers to highlight the benefits of hiring young apprentices and increase their use of our free recruitment tools so that vacancies are accessible through our Find an Apprenticeship service.

The government also continues to offer £1,000 payments to employers when they hire apprentices aged 16 to 18, or those aged 19 to 24 who are care leavers or have an Education, Health and Care Plan.

### Asylum: Costs

*Asked by Lord Carlile of Berriew*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the average cost of (1) detaining an asylum seeker in custody, and (2) providing them with social housing in the community. [HL135]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The Home Office does not detain anyone in temporary asylum accommodation. Our accommodation providers do not have enforcement powers and those we are accommodating are free to come and go as they please.

Information on the average cost per night to hold an individual in immigration detention can be found at [Migration transparency data - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/migration-transparency-data). As at Quarter 4 2021, the average cost per night to hold an individual in immigration detention was £101.61.

The total expenditure on asylum is published in the Home Office Annual Report and Accounts, available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ho-annual-reports-and-accounts> (opens in a new tab).

We do not publish a breakdown of costs of our accommodation & support contracts by location or property type as such detail is considered commercially sensitive.

### Asylum: Detainees

*Asked by Lord Carlile of Berriew*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that individual asylum seekers are not detained if there is no evidence that the individual

presents a reasonable suspicion of danger to national security. [HL134]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The Home Office does not detain anyone in temporary asylum accommodation. Our accommodation providers do not have enforcement powers and those we are accommodating are free to come and go as they please. However, detention is an essential part of effective immigration control and is used to ensure that those with no right to remain in the UK are returned to their home country if they will not leave voluntarily. Migrants, including asylum claimants, may be detained for immigration purposes only in accordance with Home Office policy, as set out in the Detention General Guidance and the Adults at Risk in Immigration Detention policy.

The published detention policy makes it clear that detention must only be used when necessary, and for the shortest possible period. There is a presumption in favour of liberty for any person. We only detain people where removal is a realistic prospect within a reasonable timeframe, or initially to establish their identity or basis of claim. This is set out in both legislation and domestic caselaw and we are held to account on this by the courts, and by a series of safeguards that ensure proper scrutiny of decisions to detain, and on-going detention. Due to the complex range of factors involved, the suitability of detention must be appraised on a case by case basis. Once a person is in detention, regular reviews are undertaken to ensure that their detention remains lawful, appropriate, and proportionate. All asylum claims are considered as quickly as possible and enforcement action is taken once any claims have been considered and refused, and once any appeal rights have been exhausted.

### Asylum: Families

*Asked by Lord Carlile of Berriew*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what (1) advice, and (2) training, they give to public servants dealing with asylum seekers who have family living in the UK. [HL136]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** Public servants, including asylum decision making staff, give careful consideration of the protection needs by assessing all the evidence provided by the claimant.

All case working staff receive extensive training on considering asylum claims through our foundation training programme and must follow published Home Office policy guidance when making decisions. The training and guidance cover topics on dependents applying for asylum, child dependents and family asylum claims including those for family and private life.

In addition, an information leaflet is issued to asylum claimants at the point of claim which outlines the asylum process and the claimant's responsibilities within that process. This information leaflet is periodically reviewed.

## Cabotage

Asked by *The Earl of Clancarty*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the remarks by Baroness Vere of Norbiton on 18 May that "the EU will not accept greater amounts of cabotage" (HL Deb col 447), what is the basis for those remarks. [HL363]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** During negotiations on the UK-EU Trade and Co-operation Agreement, the UK requested special arrangements, including cabotage easements, for the specialist events haulage sector, which includes UK-based performing arts organisations touring in the EU, but the EU did not agree to this.

## Cabotage: Arts

Asked by *The Earl of Clancarty*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the remarks by Baroness Vere of Norbiton on 18 May that "a large proportion of the UK touring industry can continue to operate" (HL Deb col 449), whether a "large proportion" means the majority. [HL364]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** In its recent consultation, held in February 2022, DfT sought views on possible measures, designed through close work with the specialist events haulage sector, to help this specific sector adapt to the rules under the UK-EU Trade and Co-operation Agreement. The consultation received widespread support for the proposed dual registration measure and it was announced on 6 May 2022 that we would proceed with this approach.

The dual registration measure is open to all eligible specialist events haulage firms. Each operator will need to make its own business decisions on utilising the measure, based on their specific needs and resources; for some, this might include partnering with a company with a European operating base. Whether a "large proportion" or a "majority" of specialist events haulage firms utilise the measure as a means for continuing operation is a matter for individual operators.

## Cape Industries: Asbestos

Asked by *Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking, if any, to persuade Cape Industries Ltd to contribute to the funding of research on asbestos-related diseases. [HL123]

**Baroness Stedman-Scott:** No steps have been taken: whether to contribute to the funding of research on asbestos-related diseases would be a matter for Cape Industries Ltd.

## Conditions of Employment

Asked by *Lord Knight of Weymouth*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the timeframe for the introduction of a new single enforcement body for employment rights. [HL262]

**Lord Callanan:** Creating the new single enforcement body for employment rights will require primary legislation and so timing will be dependent on the legislative timetable.

## Coronavirus: Screening

Asked by *Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have made towards developing (1) rapid, and (2) accurate, PCR testing infrastructure to control infections and protect patients in (a) NHS, and (b) private hospitals. [HL164]

**Lord Kamall:** In National Health Service hospitals, rapid polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing is in place to support the urgent testing of patients. Free symptomatic testing continues to be provided for patients in hospital for whom a test is required for clinical management or to support treatment pathways; individuals who live or work in high-risk closed settings in patient facing roles where infection needs to be identified quickly to minimise outbreaks; and individuals whose immune system means they are at higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19 who are eligible for anti-viral medication or other treatments. People in this group will be contacted directly and automatically receive tests for use should they have COVID-19 symptoms.

Hospitals also use rapid lateral flow device testing where appropriate, which can be used in emergency departments as part of the early decision assist test pathway. The UKHSA does not provide PCR testing to private hospitals as part of the testing regime.

Asked by *Lord Mendelsohn*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what percentage of eligible patients have received doses of COVID-19 antiviral therapies within the five day guidelines set out by Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation. [HL214]

**Lord Kamall:** Clinical access policies specify that the oral antiviral treatments molnupiravir and nirmatrelvir+ritonavir must be administered within five days of the patient starting to experience symptoms. Over 95% of eligible non-hospitalised patients who have received an antiviral treatment to date were treated within five days from the onset of symptoms. However, the antiviral infusion remdesivir is suitable to be administered within seven days of the patient becoming symptomatic.



## Databases: Regulation

*Asked by Lord Clement-Jones*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the evidence review published by the Ada Lovelace Institute on 5 May on UK public attitudes to regulating data and data-driven technologies; and what steps are they taking to assess public attitudes to data regulation. [HL365]

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay:** We welcome the Ada Lovelace Institute's review of public attitudes to regulating data-driven technologies, and agree that this is a pressing issue. The findings reflect those of the Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation's (CDEI's) public engagement research and highlight key questions that the CDEI's current and planned work addresses.

We agree that it is vital to understand people's experiences and perspectives in order to align data policy and governance with societal values and needs: this is embedded at the CDEI through a dedicated Public Attitudes Insight team. The CDEI has shared its insights into public perceptions of data use in the recently-published, world-first [Public Attitudes to Data and AI Tracker Survey](#) which has already been widely used across the public and private sector.

The CDEI and the Cabinet Office's Central Digital and Data Office have also been at the forefront of creating an [algorithmic transparency standard](#) for the public sector, which has the needs and expectations of the public at its core, and has since been adopted as a pilot with several public sector organisations. This is a key example of how public engagement can be translated into trustworthy data practices – a recommendation from the Ada Lovelace Institute's review.

The CDEI will continue to work closely with the Ada Lovelace Institute to monitor the public's attitudes towards data-driven technologies and data regulation, and consolidate and apply the findings to the Government's work on data-sharing. Research into public attitudes is fundamental to the Government's efforts to create a trustworthy data-driven technology ecosystem.

## Defence: Expenditure

*Asked by Lord Coaker*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to reviewing defence spending since Russia's invasion of Ukraine. [HL139]

**Baroness Goldie:** As the Secretary of State for Defence has made clear, Defence spending and our capabilities will be based on the threat picture and to that end we are constantly evaluating our priorities.

Following SR20, Defence spending increased by over £24 billion over the next four years up to 2025: the biggest investment in the UK's Armed Forces since the end of the Cold War.

This commitment cements our position as the second largest Defence spender in NATO, clearly exceeding the 2% of GDP target.

## Diagnosis and Prescription Drugs

*Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the need for accurate diagnosis to ensure the prescribing of anti-viral drugs. [HL166]

**Lord Kamall:** A range of treatment options are available to non-hospitalised patients at higher risk from COVID-19 to reduce severe disease, hospitalisation and death. The highest risk cohort also have access to free lateral flow device testing to facilitate access to these treatments.

The clinical access policy states that an individual must be in the highest risk cohort, have symptoms of COVID-19 without signs of recovery and must have a confirmed positive test result. The patient must then undergo a clinical assessment before they can be prescribed an antiviral treatment.

## Driving Licences: Kosovo

*Asked by Lord Bowness*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to entering into a mutual recognition agreement with the government of Kosovo regarding driving licences; and what, if anything, is preventing the completion of such an agreement. [HL295]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** Holders of driving licences issued in Kosovo who become resident in or are visiting Great Britain can drive cars and motorcycles for up to one year from the date they arrive. To continue driving after this period Kosovan drivers must apply for a provisional driving licence and pass both a theory and practical driving test.

The UK does exchange driving licences with certain countries but Kosovo is not currently a designated country. The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency has received a request from the Embassy of Kosovo to consider a possible reciprocal driving licence exchange agreement and will provide the necessary information to progress this.

The recognition and designation of a country for licence exchange purposes depends on it having satisfactory arrangements in place for the issue of driving licences. This means that driving tests and licensing procedures are required to be comparable with our own here in Great Britain. Applications are subject to the assessment of testing and licensing standards, consultation, introduction of legislation and conclusion of an agreement for reciprocity.

## Evusheld

Asked by *Lord Mendelsohn*

To ask Her Majesty's Government why they have not recognised the laboratory assay tests conducted in (1) the US, and (2) the EU, on Evusheld against Omicron subvariants. [HL215]

**Lord Kamall:** We understand that the United States of America has increased the suggested dose of Evusheld, in line with in vitro results showing that Evusheld has reduced efficacy against some Omicron subvariants. The Food and Drug Administration's in vitro data was pseudovirus data, whereas the tests being conducted by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) are based on live virus data. The European Medicines Agency has acknowledged the possibility that Evusheld has reduced efficacy against Omicron subvariants, based on laboratory studies. The data generated by the UKHSA will enhance our understanding of the effectiveness of Evusheld's neutralisation of Omicron subvariants, including BA.2.

Asked by *Lord Mendelsohn*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Department of Health and Social Care on 20 April (151279), on what date the UK Health Security Agency began further testing on Evusheld's effectiveness against the Omicron variant. [HL218]

**Lord Kamall:** The UK Health Security Agency began testing during March 2022.

Asked by *Lord Mendelsohn*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Department of Health and Social Care on 20 April (151279), what the in vitro data has shown about Evusheld's efficacy against Omicron sub-lineage BA.2 VOC-22JAN-01. [HL219]

**Lord Kamall:** The UK Health Security Agency is continuing further testing on the treatment's effectiveness against the Omicron variants, including BA.1 and BA.2. The timing of these results is dependent on identification of new variants of concern and technical scientific assays.

## Flexible Working

Asked by *Lord Knight of Weymouth*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will publish the outcome of their consultation Making flexible working the default, which ran from 23 September 2021 to 1 December 2021. [HL261]

**Lord Callanan:** The Government consultation on making flexible working the default received over 1,600 responses, which we are currently reviewing. We will publish the Government response in due course.

## Fuels: Excise Duties

Asked by *Lord Blunkett*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Callanan on 7 April (HL7355) what steps they will take, if any, against British petrol retailers who have not passed on to consumers the entire five pence cut in fuel duty from the 23 March Spring Statement. [HL338]

**Lord Callanan:** The Government is clear that retailers should pass the 5 pence per litre cut in Fuel Duty on to consumers immediately.

The CMA has been closely monitoring the situation and will continue to do so. The Government is ready to support the CMA to use their powers to act against petrol stations if there is evidence that they are infringing competition or consumer law. This could ultimately lead to fines or legally binding commitments from companies to change their behaviour.

## Government Departments: CCTV

Asked by *Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the decision by the Department of Health and Social Care to remove (1) Hikvision, and (2) Dahua, technology cameras from their premises, what plans other government departments have, if any, to also remove those cameras from their premises. [HL184]

**Lord True:** As has been the case under successive administrations, it is not government policy to comment on the security arrangements of government buildings. Specific details regarding the make and model of security systems are withheld on national security grounds.

## Government Departments: CCTV and Procurement

Asked by *Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Cabinet Office will offer written guidance on the use of Chinese-made cameras in government departments; and whether they intend to include provisions in the Procurement Bill to prevent the purchase of (1) equipment, or (2) commodities, linked to states accused of (a) genocide, or (b) slave labour. [HL185]

**Lord True:** As has been the case under successive administrations, it is not government policy to comment on the security arrangements of government buildings. Specific details regarding the make and model of security systems are withheld on national security grounds.

The Procurement Bill will strengthen the approach to excluding suppliers from bidding for public contracts where there is clear evidence of their involvement in forced labour or other Modern Slavery practices. We are

also taking action in the Bill to clarify that any serious breach of ethical standards applicable to a supplier can be considered to be professional misconduct, which may lead to exclusion.

## Hate Crime: Criminal Records

*Asked by Lord Strathcarron*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to delete records for those accused of non-crime hate incidents. [HL178]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The Government recognises the concern surrounding the recording of non-crime hate incidents (NCHIs). We also note the 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 NCHIs is lawful provided that there are robust safeguards in place so that the interference with freedom of expression is proportionate.

Accordingly, the Government included provisions in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill - which received Royal Assent on 28 April 2022 - 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 of NCHI data more transparent and subject to stronger safeguards, including on retention. In the short term, we have no plans to ask police forces to review or delete existing personal NCHI data that they may have on record. To do so would be a disproportionately costly, time consuming and resource-intensive process that is not warranted at this stage.

The College of Policing is also reflecting on the Court of Appeal's judgment carefully and make any changes that are necessary to its existing guidance which will remain in force in the interim period before the new Code enters into effect.

## Heathrow Airport

*Asked by Lord Patten*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of London Heathrow being the only international hub airport in the UK. [HL268]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** In 2012, the Government established the independent Airports Commission to examine the nature, scale and timing of any requirement for additional capacity to maintain the UK's global hub status. The Airports Commission carried out a detailed assessment of the UK aviation market and considered that it was served by a diverse system of airports, from a global aviation hub at Heathrow through large scale point-to-point airports, such as Manchester, Birmingham and Gatwick, down to small airports primarily focusing on maintaining lifeline routes.

Further assessment of the UK aviation market and its hub status was carried out by the Government as part of the development of the Airports National Policy Statement (ANPS), which provides the primary basis for decision making on development consent applications for a Northwest Runway at Heathrow Airport. The ANPS sets out the importance of Heathrow Airport's position as one of the world's major hub airports.

## High Speed 2 Line: Pollution

*Asked by Lord Berkeley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the (1) legal limits, (2) the existing levels, (3) maximum daily mean averages, and (4) maximum hourly mean levels, for (a) NO<sub>2</sub>, (b) PM<sub>10</sub>, (c) PM<sub>2.5</sub>, and (d) O<sub>3</sub> levels, for each of the routes being taken or planned by trucks moving spoil and material to or from the HS2 Euston sites; and, in each case, what are the expected values after HS2 has stopped using rail freight for moving spoil and materials. [HL125]

**Baroness Vere of Norbiton:** No decisions have been made in relation to the removal of spoil and material from Euston by rail.

Once a decision is determined, an assessment on the potential impacts (including air quality) will be undertaken. Any decision that is made will need to comply with the Environmental Minimum Requirements that apply to the HS2 scheme.

## HM Courts and Tribunals Service: ICT

*Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effect of the HM Courts & Tribunals Service Common Platform roll-out on (1) the delivery of justice, and (2) staff morale. [HL203]

**Baroness Scott of Bybrook:** We have rolled out Common Platform to 112 criminal courts in England and Wales. It has already improved the format and timeliness of outcomes of hearings generated and shared with our criminal justice partner agencies and removed the need for staff to rekey information across different IT systems. In the Magistrates' court, information about cases is now in a single place enabling collaborative working, updating information in real time, and creating efficiencies. The additional functionality currently being developed will bring more efficiencies and we will continue to monitor the impact of these on the delivery of justice.

We have designed the Common Platform in partnership with our key stakeholders and continue to release further improvements and functionality. When new functionality is implemented, we gather feedback from users to identify and prioritise improvements.

We support our workforce through the implementation of Common Platform and their health, safety and wellbeing is taken extremely seriously. At an organisational level, we have carried out a Change Impact

Assessment, Public Sector Equality Analysis and a Workforce Equality Analysis, which remain under regular review. Alongside that, the Civil Service People Survey provides a real understanding of how HMCTS is managing change.

### Hong Kong: Human Rights

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the arrest by Hong Kong's national security police of Margaret Ng and Cardinal Joseph Zen, along with three other trustees of the Hong Kong Humanitarian Relief Fund. [HL122]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The Hong Kong authorities' decision to target leading pro-democracy figures including Cardinal Zen, Margaret Ng, Hui-Po-Keung and Denise Ho under the National Security Law is unacceptable.

The Sino-British Joint Declaration is a legally binding treaty between the UK and China, and under this China committed to uphold Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy and protect the rights and freedoms of its people. This explicitly includes freedom of expression, which is fundamental to Hong Kong's way of life.

We continue to make clear to mainland Chinese and Hong Kong authorities our strong opposition to the National Security Law, which is being used to curtail freedoms, punish dissent and shrink the space for opposition, free press and civil society.

### Immunosuppression: Coronavirus

*Asked by Lord Mendelsohn*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to provide antibody testing for severely immunocompromised patients to assess their levels of antibodies in response to COVID-19 vaccines. [HL156]

**Lord Kamall:** There are currently no plans to implement targeted antibody testing for immunocompromised patients. However, National Health Service clinicians can arrange antibody testing for patients based on the assessment of clinical need.

*Asked by Lord Mendelsohn*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what number of immunocompromised individuals who have received antiviral treatment in England in response to COVID-19 have subsequently been (1) hospitalised, and (2) died, due to COVID-19. [HL161]

**Lord Kamall:** This information is not held centrally in the format requested.

### Infectious Diseases: Diagnosis

*Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to re-evaluate the Coronavirus Test Device Approvals process in relation to future pandemics; and whether the approval process for new diagnostic tests for other infectious diseases will remain under the authority of the UK Health Security Agency. [HL144]

**Lord Kamall:** The Coronavirus Test Device Approvals (CTDA) process is designed to evaluate mature COVID-19 testing technologies and the scope of the policy is kept under review. The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) has consulted with industry and the public on the expansion of the CTDA process and is currently analysing the responses received. The UKHSA is considering its regulatory role in relation to testing for other infectious diseases and we have committed to reviewing the CTDA process by the end of 2022.

### Infectious Diseases: Screening

*Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what guidance is given to hospitals on screening for the diagnosis of superbug bacterial infections. [HL162]

**Lord Kamall:** Guidance on screening for the diagnosis of bacterial infections is organism or resistance specific. The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) recommends the active patient admission screening of risk groups to minimise the impact of carbapenemase-producing Enterobacterales (CPE). Patients should be strongly considered for screening on admission if they are likely to stay in hospital overnight and if in the last 12 months, they have been previously identified as CPE positive; been an inpatient in any hospital in the United Kingdom or abroad; had multiple hospital treatments; had a known epidemiological link to a known carrier of CPE; and they are admitted into augmented care or high-risk units.

The UKHSA also recommends screening for candida auris in hospital units which have ongoing cases and/or colonisations, or identification of a new infected or colonised patient. The UKHSA's antimicrobial resistance and healthcare associated infections reference unit supports the diagnosis of bacterial infections, including carbapenem-resistant bacteria, Staphylococcus and Acinetobacter species and Neisseria gonorrhoeae. The unit also provides information and advice on infection prevention and control issues.

*Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what guidance is given to hospitals on pre-operative screening for high-risk patients with high prevalence of superbugs, such as Carbapenemase Producing Enterobacteriaceae (CPE). [HL163]

**Lord Kamall:** The UK Health Security Agency has advised health and social care providers, including hospitals, on minimising the impact of carbapenemase-producing Enterobacterales (CPE). This includes recommendations for pre-operative screening and information regarding surgical prophylaxis options for high-risk patients. Patients should be considered for screening on admission if they are likely to stay in hospital overnight and if in the last 12 months, they have been previously identified as CPE positive; been an inpatient in any hospital, in the United Kingdom or abroad; had multiple hospital treatments; had known epidemiological link to a known carrier of CPE; and they are being admitted into augmented care or high-risk units.

### **Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy**

*Asked by Lord Coaker*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent progress they have made in delivering actions set out in their policy paper Global Britain in a Competitive Age: Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy, published on 16 March 2021 and updated on 2 July 2021. [HL138]

**Baroness Goldie:** The Integrated Review (IR) sets out the vision for a Global Britain in a more competitive age, by integrating foreign, security, defence and development policies. It addressed the unprecedented challenges and geopolitical shifts posed by a deteriorating global security environment.

We believe the Integrated Review and Defence Command Paper hold true, but we are continuing to monitor the situation in Ukraine to ensure our strategic approach remains threat-led and in line with the agile planning and delivery mechanisms developed following the Integrated Review. We will continue to review our capabilities and readiness levels accordingly.

Recent examples of progress delivering on the IR's objectives can be seen respectively through:

(i) Defence's commitment of least £6.6 billion for next generation capabilities and research, especially cyber and space, with investment currently forecasted to surpass this target; (ii) CSG21's deployment in the Indo-Pacific and the permanent deployment of HMS Tamar and HMS Spey to the Western Pacific, an example of a multilateral deployment of cutting-edge military capabilities focused on developing global partnerships and strengthening existing alliances; (iii) our response to Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine, which has shown the UK at its best, united with our allies to deter Russian aggression on NATO's eastern flank; (iv) from a peak of 5,000 personnel in March 2021 in support of the COVID response, Defence's continued provision of personnel and support across the UK and in support of the Devolved Administrations to manage the pressure on their health services.

### **LIBOR**

*Asked by Lord James of Blackheath*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to direct the Serious Fraud Office to review its handling of the case of Tom Hayes; and, further to the judgment of the US Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in United States V. DB Group Services (UK) Limited (and Deutsche Bank AG) which found that the rigging of Libor interest rates was not against the rules, whether they will ask the Criminal Cases Review Commission to reconsider its decision not to refer Tom Hayes's case back to the Court of Appeal. [HL249]

**Lord Stewart of Dirleton:** The Serious Fraud Office (SFO) is an operationally independent body. The Attorney General is responsible for safeguarding the independent decision making of the SFO, to maintain this independence the Attorney General cannot overturn a decision reached by the SFO in a particular case.

The Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC) is an independent arm's length body who consider cases where people believe they have been wrongly convicted or wrongly sentenced. It would be inappropriate for the Government or the SFO to ask the CCRC to reconsider any decision they have made, including in the case of Tom Hayes.

*Asked by Lord Vinson*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Stewart of Dirleton on 6 April (HL7312), what assessment they have made of the judgment of the US Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in United States V. DB Group Services (UK) Limited (and Deutsche Bank AG) which found that the rigging of Libor interest rates was not against the rules. [HL285]

**Lord Stewart of Dirleton:** There has been no further assessment made on the judgment of the US Court of Appeal in these cases.

### **Ministers: Codes of Practice**

*Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether Ministers who are convicted of criminal offences are in breach of the Ministerial Code. [HL380]

*Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether Ministers who are convicted of criminal offences may continue in office; and whether they have any plans to amend the Ministerial Code concerning rules for any Ministers convicted of criminal offences. [HL381]

**Lord True:** The Ministerial Code sets out the principles and standards of behaviour expected of all those who serve in Government.

### *Principles*

Ministers of the Crown are expected to maintain high standards of behaviour and to behave in a way that upholds the highest standards of propriety. Section 1.3 of the Ministerial Code notes the “overarching duty on Ministers to comply with the law”; Section 1.6 sets out that Ministers are personally responsible for deciding how to act and conduct themselves in the light of the Code, and for justifying their actions and conduct to Parliament and the public.

Ministers only remain in office for so long as they retain the confidence of the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister is the ultimate judge of the standards of behaviour expected of a Minister and the appropriate consequences of a breach of those standards. In turn, the Prime Minister is accountable to Parliament and the public as leader of Her Majesty’s Government, including, ultimately, at the ballot box.

It should be noted that paying a fixed penalty notice is not a criminal conviction.

### *Past precedent*

The noble peer may be aware of previous occasions when reports show that Ministers were found to have breached the law but remained in Ministerial office. For example:

In September 2009, the Attorney General was given a £5,000 civil penalty, for employing an illegal immigrant under a law she had previously helped introduce as a Home Office Minister. The then Prime Minister concluded that no further action was necessary, was satisfied that the Minister did not “knowingly” break the law, and noted her full apology. [1]

In 2003, the then Solicitor General was banned by the courts from driving for seven days and fined £400 for speeding; the same Minister (then Leader of the Commons) was fined £60 and three points for speeding September 2007; and in January 2010, fined £350 and three points for driving without due care and attention. [2]

In 2007, a Home Office Minister was fined £100 and given three points for using his mobile phone whilst driving, admitting he was taking a phone call on government matters. [3]

### *Proportionality of sanctions*

Action in response to proven breaches of the Ministerial Code should be proportionate. In April 2021, the Committee on Standards in Public Life recommended: “We recommend that the Prime Minister should retain the right to decide on any sanction following a breach of the Code. The current expectation that any breach of the Ministerial Code should lead to resignation is disproportionate. We recommend that there should be a proportionate range of sanctions where the Code has been breached, and will provide further detail on this matter in our final report. Resignation should be retained as an available sanction where a serious breach has occurred.” The Prime Minister accepted this recommendation in April 2021.

The Committee again added in November 2021: “No other area of public life has such a binary system of sanctions, and in both Parliament and the Civil Service there are a range of sanctions available according to the seriousness of the offence. There is no reason why this should not be the case for ministers... The Ministerial Code should detail a range of sanctions the Prime Minister may issue, including, but not limited to, apologies, fines and asking for a minister’s resignation.” The Government concurs with this approach.

- 1) The Guardian, 22 September 2009.
- 2) The Guardian, 8 January 2010.
- 3) BBC News, 2 November 2007.

## **National Institute for Health and Care Excellence**

*Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what work they are currently undertaking, if any, to identify topics which require modular updates by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence and which may be facilitated for entry to managed access. [HL70]

**Lord Kamall:** The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence’s (NICE) outline for future modular updates was published in the January 2022 board paper Review of methods, processes and topic selection for health technology evaluation programmes: conclusions and final update. The paper states that NICE has identified potential topics for future modular reviews, including processes to facilitate rapid entry to managed access, methods issues for digital, genomic and antimicrobial technologies and the societal value of health benefits in severe diseases and health inequalities. A copy of the paper is attached. During the implementation of NICE’s strategy 2021 to 2026, it will prioritise developing a proportionate approach to health technology appraisals and MedTech early value assessment in the next 12 months.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

NICE [Review of methods, processes and topic selection for health technology evaluation programmes conclusions and final update (1).docx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-05-10/HL70>

## **National Institute for Health and Care Excellence: Standards**

*Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath*

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what discussions they have held, if any, with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) in relation to the delay in its committee meeting to discuss the use of the drug Trodelvy (sacituzumab govitecan) for certain

patients living with triple negative secondary breast cancer. [HL149]

**Lord Kamall:** The Department and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) have discussed the decision to reschedule the committee meeting for the appraisal of Trodelvy to June 2022. This was due to the large number of other items, including other cancer treatments, on the agenda for the meeting in May and ensuring all topics were given the appropriate time and diligence. The consultation for this appraisal received a high number of responses and NICE wishes to ensure sufficient time for the committee to consider this feedback. NICE expects to issue final guidance on Trodelvy in August 2022.

### Northern Ireland Protocol: Legal Opinion

*Asked by Lord Field of Birkenhead*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will place in the Library of the House a copy of the legal opinion the Attorney General received on disapplying parts of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland. [HL342]

**Lord Stewart of Dirleton:** It is a longstanding convention, accepted by governments of all parties, not to disclose outside government whether the Law Officers have given legal advice or the contents of any advice. This convention protects the Law Officers' ability to give full and frank legal advice on some of the most contentious and difficult issues the Government will be considering.

### Overseas Students: Ukraine

*Asked by Lord Storey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Ukrainian students have been offered a place at a UK university; and what are those universities. [HL235]

**Baroness Barran:** Latest statistics from the Higher Education Statistics Agency show there were 870 students from Ukraine studying at UK higher education (HE) providers in the academic year 2020/21. Further information on where they were studying can be found here: <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/students/table-59>.

Following Russia's unprovoked attack on Ukraine, we have seen an extremely positive response from the HE sector in their offer of support to future cohorts of Ukrainian students and I am confident the sector will do their utmost to support Ukrainians wishing to access HE.

To support those who are granted leave under the Home for Ukraine Scheme, the Ukraine Family Scheme or the Ukraine Extension scheme, introduced by the Home Office, we have extended access to HE student support, home fee status, tuition fee caps, Advanced learner loans and FE19+ funding. This ensures Ukrainians who have been affected by the war in Ukraine can access support on

the same basis as those within other protection-based categories (such as refugees).

Further information regarding the admissions of Ukrainian students entering UK HE in 2022 will be available through UCAS acceptances data at the end of the year.

### Peat Bogs: Conservation

*Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made protecting peatlands in England; and what discussions they have had with the devolved nations and regions about this issue. [HL90]

**Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park:** In the Net Zero Strategy, we committed to aim to restore approximately 280,000 ha of peatland in England by 2050, with the Nature for Climate Fund providing funding for the restoration of approximately 35,000ha of peatland by 2025. In the England Peat Action Plan, published last year, we set out the steps we will take to protect and restore our peatland.

In 2021, Defra established the Lowland Agricultural Peat Task Force to explore ways of preserving the carbon stored in our lowland farmed peatlands, both to reduce emissions and to safeguard productive agriculture, and we look forward to receiving its recommendations later this summer.

The Heather and Grass etc. Burning (England) Regulations 2021 prohibits burning on deep peat in protected sites without a licence and the accompanying guidance sets out the very limited circumstances where burning will be seen as a permissible activity conducted in the right place for the right reasons. We are continuing to engage with stakeholders to encourage sustainable land management practices that reflect our ambitions to restore and protect our peatlands.

Through the England Peat Action Plan, we are encouraging landowners and land managers to adopt or create good quality wildfire management plans and use sustainable land management practices to reduce fuel loads - making the land more resilient to and mitigating the risk of wildfire. Last April we supported the development of a new training program, to consolidate knowledge, skills and understanding of vegetation fires including wildfire incidents. Defra has committed further funding for the next three years and we continue to share learning and good practice with the devolved administrations.

We have consulted on measures to end the use of peat and peat containing products in horticulture, including a ban on the sale of peat in the retail sector by the end of this Parliament. We continue to engage with the industry on making the transition to peat-free alternatives as seamless as possible and will publish our formal response to the consultation in due course.

## Pesticides: Safety

Asked by *Baroness Hayman of Ullock*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the latest findings by the Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use (CRRU) regarding the presence of rodenticide in barn owls; and what plans they have, if any, to prohibit the purchase and use of Second Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides (SGARs) by non-professional users who are not formally trained in their use. [HL198]

**Baroness Stedman-Scott:** Second Generation Anticoagulant Rodenticides (SGARs) were developed to address public health and other concerns arising from increasing resistance among rats and mice to the longstanding use of existing rodenticides. The approval for these substances was renewed under EU Biocidal Products Regulations (EU BPR) in 2016, and are now regulated under corresponding regulations, the Great Britain Biocidal Products Regulation (GB BPR). During the product authorisation process, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) conducts rigorous evaluations for safety and efficacy using scientific data, with restrictions placed on authorisations as appropriate.

A stewardship regime is in place in the UK for professional use of SGARs. A cornerstone of the stewardship scheme is the Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use (CRRU) Code of Best Practice, which sets out guidance on the safe use of rodenticides. It is a legal requirement to comply with this code. The scheme also supports the monitoring of exposure of barn owls and red kites to SGARs (as a sentinel species) led by the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH). Alongside the stewardship scheme, restrictions are placed on non-professional ("amateur") use of rodenticides to further limit the risks to non-target animals and birds. Rodenticide use by amateur users is restricted to use in and around buildings, with the majority of amateur use restricted to indoor use only.

The stewardship scheme is overseen by a Government Oversight Group (GOG) led by HSE with representatives of other government stakeholders. This year the GOG is conducting a review of the stewardship scheme, including the restrictions placed on amateur use, after five years of operation. HSE is aware of the key findings of the latest report from the CEH, and these will be taken into account as part of the ongoing review, the results of which will be published in due course.

## Pigs: Livestock Industry

Asked by *Baroness McIntosh of Pickering*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the current state of the livestock industry, and in particular the pig sector. [HL155]

**Lord Benyon:** The supply chain inflation seen in the livestock sector in recent months, driven significantly by Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the consequential

increase in costs for feed, fuel and fertilisers, has created challenges across this sector and the wider food and farming industry.

We have recognised that increasing input costs, particularly fertiliser, feed, fuel and energy, are creating short term pressures on cash flow. On 6 May, we announced that we are to bring forward half of this year's BPS payment as an advance injection of cash to farm businesses to help provide confidence.

This builds on measures we recently announced to assist farmers with the availability of fertilisers for the coming growing season to help address uncertainty among growers and keep costs down for farmers. These include delays to changes to the use of urea; revised and improved statutory guidance on the use of slurry; and the publication of further details of the Sustainable Farming Incentive. The Government has announced that it will pay farmers to help with the costs of sowing nitrogen fixing plants and green manures to reduce dependence on manufactured fertilisers, and that farmers will be further supported through new slurry storage grants.

We are working closely with the industry to identify where further mitigations are available to tackle the challenges they face. We continue to keep the market situation under review through the UK Agriculture Market Monitoring Group, which monitors UK agricultural markets including price, supply, inputs, trade and recent developments. We have also increased our engagement with industry to supplement our analysis with real time intelligence.

The pig industry has faced several additional challenges in recent months. We provided a package of measures to help address these including temporary work visas for pork butchers, and Private Storage Aid and Slaughter Incentive Payment schemes to facilitate an increase in the throughput of pigs through abattoirs.

We are launching a UK-wide review of supply chain fairness in the pig sector. We will be engaging with industry on this with a consultation expected later this year. We want to hear from industry about improvements to fairness and transparency that could be made to ensure a profitable and productive future.

Although we have recently seen an increase in deadweight pig prices, we will continue to work with the industry to support them at this very challenging time.

## Privy Council

Asked by *Lord Blunkett*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by the Lord President of the Council on 26 June 2018 (156454), why the whole of the Privy Council will no longer be invited to attend the next meeting of the Accession Council; and when was the last time that the attendance of Privy Councillors at the Accession Council was limited. [HL293]

**Lord True:** Revised arrangements for an Accession Council on the Demise of the Crown have been put in



place following a routine review of operational delivery arrangements.

The updated arrangements are an equitable and proportionate response to three key challenges identified during the review:

First, the number of Privy Counsellors potentially eligible to attend an Accession Council has increased exponentially since 1952.

Secondly, whilst it has long been agreed that St. James's Palace is the most appropriate setting for the Accession Council, the historic nature of St. James's Palace presents a number of significant challenges in terms of capacity, accessibility and crowd flow.

Thirdly, the pace at which an Accession Council must take place means that very limited additional infrastructure and provision can be put in place to support dignified delivery of such an important occasion.

Attendance arrangements for previous Accession Councils has varied and - like current planning - took into account contemporary operational challenges. There is no constitutional understanding that all Privy Counsellors must be summonsed to an Accession Council.

### Schools: Biometrics

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many full-time equivalent staff at the Department of Education have responsibility for biometric technology use in schools; and what are the job titles of each post. [HL226]

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what policy guidance they have sent to schools in the last five years on the use of biometric technology in schools; and on what dates each set of guidance was issued. [HL227]

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what meetings they have had with private companies to discuss the use of biometric technologies in schools in the last five years; and in each case, which companies they met with and on what dates. [HL228]

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many meetings they have had with the Biometrics and Surveillance Camera Commissioner in the last three years on the issue of the use of biometric technologies in schools. [HL229]

**Baroness Barran:** The decision to use biometric technology rests entirely with individual schools and colleges. Schools and colleges are legally responsible, as per the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Protection of Freedoms Act and Data Protection Act for any data they gather and use.

However, in the department there is a team of three officials who work on a range of policy areas relating to health and safety in schools. They also have, as part of their work, responsibility for the provision of guidance for schools and colleges linked to these areas. This includes, amongst others, the non-statutory 'protection of biometric information of children in schools and colleges' guidance, which is available here: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/692116/Protection\\_of\\_Biometric\\_Information.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/692116/Protection_of_Biometric_Information.pdf).

The department published the current version of this guidance to support schools and colleges in 2018. It replaced the 'protection of children's biometric information in schools' guidance from 2012. The department has also publicly committed to updating the 2018 version of the guidance to reflect changes in legislation, replacing the Data Protection Act 1998 with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.

The department has not had any meetings with private companies to discuss the use of biometric technologies in schools in the last five years. This is because schools and colleges have the autonomy to choose whether to use biometric technology and, if so, to select the most appropriate provider. However, the department does work closely with others from across government, including the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, the Home Office and the Information Commissioner's Office on this issue.

Whilst the office of the Biometrics and Surveillance Camera Commissioner has no statutory regulatory function in the oversight of automated biometric technology used in schools, the department has met with the Commissioner's Office officials recently to explain the purpose of the department's guidance and will continue to engage with them as appropriate going forward.

### Schools: Coronavirus

*Asked by Lord Storey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer from Baroness Barran on 25 April (HL7840), what advice the UK Health Security Agency has given to education providers on managing the disposal of surplus COVID-19 test kits. [HL177]

**Lord Kamall:** In April 2022, advice was issued to education providers that test kits which have expired should be disposed of in line with the requirements of the waste duty of care regulations. If more than one carton of lateral flow device test kits requires disposal, a waste contractor must be informed.

Kits within three months' expiry and less than four cartons in pristine condition should be retained. We are currently undertaking a pilot exercise with 51 schools to collect excess stock, with the hope of deploying a wider returns exercise.

## Special Educational Needs

Asked by *Lord Storey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many children with special educational needs and disabilities do not have a place in an educational setting. [HL176]

**Baroness Barran:** The information requested is not held for all children with special educational needs and disabilities. However, the department holds data from local authorities on the number of children and young persons with education, health and care (EHC) plans “awaiting provision”, available in the publication ‘Education, health and care plans’ at: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/education-health-and-care-plans/2022>.

The “awaiting provision” category covers children and young people in a wide range of circumstances who are awaiting the provision specified on their EHC plan. This includes, for example, some who are in an education setting but are awaiting provision in another setting, including those currently attending a mainstream school who are to move to a special school, and some who have only recently moved into the area.

The last published figure in May 2022 for the number of children of compulsory school age who have an EHC plan and were not in education on the census date is 1,503, which represents 0.3% of all EHC plans. The equivalent figures for other age groups are also in the published data.

## Tidal Power

Asked by *Baroness Kennedy of Cradley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the latest case for the development of a tidal lagoon to generate energy in the UK. [HL152]

**Lord Callanan:** The Government remains open to considering well-developed proposals for harnessing the tidal range energy in the bays and estuaries around the UK's coastlines, including barrage schemes and other alternatives. Any proposal would need to demonstrate strong evidence of value for money before the Government could take a view on its potential.

## UK Trade with EU: Agricultural Products

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to introduce checks on EU agri-food products imported to the UK. [HL181]

**Lord Benyon:** Biosecurity remains a top priority for the Government, not only to protect consumers, but also to ensure that trading partners and industry have strong assurance of the UK's standards of food safety, animal and plant health.

Since 1 January 2021, the UK has put in place strict biosecurity controls on the highest risk imports of

animals, animal products, plants and plant products from the EU. These controls on the highest risk goods will remain in place. We constantly review whether further safeguards are needed and have a scientific process to assess and respond to changing biosecurity threats.

Existing pre-notification requirements and the four-hour derogation for pre-notification will continue for all products of animal origin. Traders must continue to pre-notify to maintain traceability of imports and to allow UK authorities to collect essential data to inform design decisions. Traceability is vital for identifying consignments posing potential risk and allows us properly to manage any biosecurity incidents.

## Ukraine: Armed Conflict

Asked by *Lord Selkirk of Douglas*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made, if any, to the government of Russia regarding that country's (1) invasion of, and (2) indiscriminate bombing of civilians in, Ukraine; and whether such representations included discussions of restitution by the government of Russia towards the (a) families, and (b) communities, of those who were injured or killed. [HL172]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The Foreign Secretary summoned the Russian Ambassador on 24 February to protest against the Russian invasion and demand that Russia fulfil its obligations under International Humanitarian Law. The Minister for Europe and North America spoke with his Russian counterpart on 25 February, where he condemned Russia's unprovoked and unjustified attack on Ukraine and stressed the invasion is an appalling violation of the UN Charter. The Ministry of Defence summoned the Russian Defence Attaché on 24 February and 21 March and protested in the strongest terms against the persistent and unjustified acts of violence being committed against innocent civilians by Russian forces. Restitution was not discussed in these meetings.

The UK has worked with partners to refer the situation in Ukraine to the International Criminal Court, to establish a Commission of Inquiry through the UN Human Rights Council and, with the support of Ukraine, to establish an OSCE Mission of Experts under the Moscow Mechanism.

Asked by *Lord Selkirk of Douglas*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the indiscriminate bombing of (1) hospitals, and (2) schools, in Ukraine by Russia. [HL173]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Russia's assault on Ukraine is a premeditated and barbaric invasion of a sovereign democratic state. Russian attacks have killed large numbers of innocent people and caused large-scale destruction of civilian infrastructure, amounting to war crimes. Those attacks include the well-documented

bombing of schools and hospitals, such as the horrific attack on a school in Bilohorivka. Atrocities such as these, as well as horrific mass graves near Kyiv and reports of illegal abductions and deportations, show the world the true nature of Putin's illegal war in Ukraine. Those responsible must be held to account.

In response to attacks against hospitals, the UK has delivered over 5 million medical items. We will provide up to 20 NHS ambulances and are funding the purchase of new ambulances up to £7 million. Frontline medical aid charity, UK-Med, will also receive funding of up to £300,000 to help train Ukrainian doctors, nurses and paramedics on how to deal with mass casualties.

*Asked by Lord Selkirk of Douglas*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are aware of any evidence that Ukraine was threatening to attack Russia prior to that country's invasion of Ukraine. [HL174]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We have seen no credible indication that Ukraine posed a threat to Russia prior to the invasion. Any suggestions by Russia to the contrary are a blatant attempt to justify its unprovoked, premeditated and barbaric invasion of a sovereign democratic state. Indeed, it has been Russia that has continually threatened and violated Ukraine's sovereignty since 2014, including by illegally annexing Crimea, pursuing destabilising activity in eastern Ukraine, and building up over 100,000 troops on Ukraine's border throughout the last year ahead of its illegal invasion.

### Ukraine: Military Aid

*Asked by Lord Coaker*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to assist NATO allies in providing military assistance to Ukraine. [HL137]

**Baroness Goldie:** The UK is at the forefront of the international effort in support of Ukraine and was instrumental in the convening of two International Defence Donor Conferences for Ukraine, which included representation from the EU and NATO. Alongside partner nations, the UK established an International Donor Coordination Centre in Stuttgart in February. This plays a leading role in the international community that ensures the military aid to Ukraine is as coordinated and effective as possible. The UK will continue to give military support and is conducting logistics operations to support the delivery of donations from partner nations.

### Ukraine: Nazism

*Asked by Lord Selkirk of Douglas*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the remarks by President Putin on the alleged recent spread of Nazism in Ukraine, and (2) of the accuracy of any evidence on which those remarks were based. [HL175]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** President Putin's claims of Nazi influence in Ukraine have no basis in reality and are a transparent attempt at disinformation to justify his illegal war. Since the invasion began, Russia has used information operations to undermine Ukrainian sovereignty, create false pretexts, obscure the truth, and hide war crimes.

Ukraine has a vibrant democracy. In 2019, Ukrainians voted in record numbers to elect a Jewish President and in Ukrainian Parliamentary elections the same year, a coalition of extreme-right parties achieved just 2% of the vote.

### Universal Credit

*Asked by Lord Field of Birkenhead*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what has been the value of Universal Credit payments as a percentage of average earnings, for each year since its inception. [HL140]

*Asked by Lord Field of Birkenhead*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the real value of Universal Credit since (1) May 2010, (2) May 2015, (3) June 2017, and (4) December 2019. [HL57]

**Baroness Stedman-Scott:** The Department for Work and Pensions publishes annual Abstract of DWP benefit rates statistics. The purpose of the publication and data tables is to provide a reference source for people who are interested in benefit uprating and the value of benefits compared to prices and earnings. The publication and supporting data tables are attached and can also be accessed via the gov.uk website.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Data Tables [HL57 and HL140 Tables.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-05-11/HL140>

### Yemen: Peace Negotiations

*Asked by Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support negotiations to extend the truce in Yemen before it expires, to release relief supplies. [HL150]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK welcomes the two-month truce in Yemen, brokered by the UN on 1 April and the creation of a Presidential Leadership Council on 6 April. After over seven long years of conflict, a negotiated political settlement is the only way to bring long-term stability to Yemen and end the humanitarian suffering. The UK will continue to use its diplomatic relations and role as penholder on Yemen in the UN Security Council to support efforts towards political dialogue and peace. The UK continues to

encourage the conflict parties to engage constructively with UN-led peace efforts. As part of the truce agreement, there has been an increase in the number of fuel ships entering Yemeni ports, bringing much needed relief to the Yemeni population.

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