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Thursday
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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

Written Statements 1

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/>

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Lord Benyon	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist	Whip
Lord Caine	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office
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Lord 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

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Written Statements

Thursday, 9 June 2022

Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme Review: Supplementary Consultation

[HLWS85]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: My honourable friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice (Tom Pusglove) has made the following written statement:

'Today I have laid before Parliament a public consultation on one of the eligibility rules of the statutory Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme 2012 (the Scheme). This follows the Criminal Injuries Compensation Review 2020 in which we consulted on proposals to improve the experience of victims applying for compensation, by making the Scheme simpler and easier to navigate.

The statutory Scheme exists to compensate victims of violent crime in Great Britain, to recognise, through compensation, the injuries and harm they experienced. The so-called unspent convictions rule has been an eligibility requirement since the first statutory scheme came into force in 1996. The 2012 Scheme sets out the circumstances in which an award will be withheld or reduced where the applicant has an unspent conviction. In the 2012 Scheme an exclusion was introduced which means that an applicant is not eligible if they have an unspent conviction that resulted in a custodial or community sentence. The rationale for this is to prevent individuals who have committed serious illegal acts benefitting from state-funded compensation, to reflect the degree of harm done to others and the cost to society of offending behaviour.

Since 2012 there have been varying calls for abolition of the rule or reform of it to re-introduce discretion, particularly in relation to certain victim groups or specific circumstances such as compulsion or childhood trauma. As part of our review of the Scheme leading up to the 2020 consultation, options for reform were carefully explored and in the consultation our conclusions for proposing no change to the rule were explained.

In July 2021 the Supreme Court determined that the rule in the 2012 Scheme is lawful and proportionate, and stated that the exclusionary approach is an acceptable one and has the advantage of leading to consistency and clarity. The Supreme Court also noted that the legislator is entitled to adopt a Scheme with clearly defined rules for determining entitlement to publicly-funded compensation. However, in a separate case the High Court found that the Government had not met a legitimate expectation to consult on reform of the unspent convictions rule. This was because the 2020 consultation did not ask a specific question on whether it should be revised in line with a recommendation made by the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse in 2018. As required by the High Court we are publishing this supplementary consultation to invite views on reform of the rule.

We are looking at the rule afresh. The consultation poses broad questions about retaining the rule unchanged, which remains an option, and on the following potential reforms: introducing exemptions so that not all claims are automatically rejected on the basis of a specified unspent conviction; amending the terms of the rule to reduce the number of claims that are automatically rejected; and removing the exclusionary part of the rule so that no claims are automatically rejected.

After this second consultation we will decide whether or not to revise the rule and share our conclusions and proposals about reform of the Scheme as a whole following our comprehensive review.

The consultation is available in full at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/criminal-injuries-compensation-scheme-review-supplementary-consultation>. The consultation will close on 5 August 2022.'

Medical Examiners

[HLWS86]

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:

It is our intention to work towards commencing implementation plans for the statutory medical examiner system from April 2023, recognising the need for all relevant government departments to be ready and aligned to enable successful implementation. The statutory medical examiner system will be centrally funded in England. This follows the required amendment to the Coroners and Justice Act 2009, which has now been made through the Health and Care Act 2022, to host medical examiners in England in NHS bodies rather than local health authorities.

The National Medical Examiner has published the report for year 2021 which sets out the non-statutory medical examiner system progress to date. The medical examiner system will introduce an additional layer of scrutiny of the cause of death by the medical practitioner, improving the quality and accuracy of the medical certificate of cause of death and thereby informing the national data on mortality and patient safety. The medical examiner system will increase transparency and facilitate discussions with the bereaved about any concerns they may have, providing new levels of scrutiny to improve detection of criminal activity or poor practice.

After the statutory medical examiner system has been introduced, all non-coronial deaths will be scrutinised by a medical examiner, for both burials and cremations.

Serious Violence Duty: Draft Statutory Guidance Consultation

[HLWS87]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My rt hon Friend the Minister of State for Crime and Policing (Kit Malthouse)

has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

The Government is today announcing the publication of a consultation on the draft statutory guidance on the Serious Violence Duty (the Duty) which will be issued by the Secretary of State as statutory guidance under Chapter 1 of Part 2 of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 to support specified authorities and organisation exercising functions in relation to the Duty.

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 introduced the Duty to ensure specified authorities, being police, fire and rescue authorities, local authorities, specified health authorities and criminal justice agencies and organisations work collaboratively, to share data and information, understand the causes and consequences of serious violence, focusing on prevention and early intervention and put in place plans informed by evidence to prevent and reduce serious violence. In addition, section 6(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, has been amended to ensure that serious violence is an explicit priority for Community Safety Partnerships and that a strategy is in place to explicitly tackle serious violence.

The Duty is a key part of the Government's programme of work to reduce serious violence and put an end to the tragedies afflicting our communities. It is very important we work together, across government, statutory, private, and voluntary sectors to deliver this crucial change. The Government has made £130m available this financial year (22/23) to tackle serious violence, including murder and knife crime.

This Government committed to update and formally consult on the draft statutory guidance published in May 2021 on before the Duty's implementation. Officials have revised the guidance by engaging with other government departments, stakeholders and wider partners. Government amendments are also reflected in the new draft, these:

- provide clarity that the definition of violence for the purpose of the Duty includes domestic abuse and sexual violence;
- exclude patient information and in addition health or social care authorities cannot share personal information under the data sharing provisions in respect of the Duty;
- restrict data requests from local policing bodies (PCCs, and in London the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime and the Common Council of the City of London as police authority) to information already held by an authority to whom the request is made;
- that the Secretary of State lays a copy of the final statutory guidance for the Serious Violence Duty in Parliament; and
- clarify on the face of the legislation that specified authorities must publish a strategy and that regulations will provide further detail about the publication or dissemination of a strategy.

Specific guidance is included for authorities operating in Wales, to reflect the distinct Welsh legislative and operational context as well as additional content on housing and homelessness. The outline policy for secondary legislation on the publication and dissemination of local partnerships serious violence strategies and local policing bodies' discretionary role to support the development and implementation of the local serious violence strategy is included.

The consultation, which launches today, 9 June, will run for a period of six weeks, closing on 21 July. Once the response to the consultation along with a final version of the guidance have been published, the Duty and associated secondary legislation will be commenced to enable local partnerships to work towards publication and dissemination of their serious violence strategies.

A copy of this consultation and the draft statutory guidance will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses and also made available on GOV.UK.

Smokefree 2030: Independent Review

[HLWS84]

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

In 2019, this Government set the bold ambition for England to be Smokefree by 2030 – reducing smoking rates to 5% or less.

Today, Dr Javed Khan OBE published his Independent Review on Smokefree 2030, providing this Government with a wide range of recommendations for how we can achieve this ambition.

Tragically, smoking remains the single biggest cause of preventable illness and death across the country. There are still almost six million smokers in England - and two out of three will die from smoking unless they quit.

Although smoking rates have fallen, we know that they are currently not falling fast enough.

The Government is committed to levelling up society and extending the same chances in life to all people and all parts of our country. However, smoking is one of the largest drivers of health disparities and rates vary substantially across different parts of the country. As stated by Dr Khan in his Independent Review, at its most extreme, smoking prevalence is 4.5 times higher in Burnley than in Exeter.

Smoking is a significant drain on the household finances of our most disadvantaged families. In Halton in Cheshire, smokers spend an estimated £3,551 a year on tobacco, nearly 15% of their income. Reducing smoking presents a huge economic opportunity in higher disposable income and higher labour productivity.

Smoking is particularly high amongst certain populations, and one third of all cigarettes smoked in England are smoked by people with a mental health condition. Nearly 10% of mothers smoke at the time of giving birth, increasing the risk of sudden infant death

syndrome by over three times compared to mothers who do not smoke. Further, the risk of stillbirth is increased by at least 60% if the father smokes. Smoking is also known to increase the risk of miscarriage.

Behind all of these statistics are individuals, families and communities who are suffering from the harms of tobacco. This Government is committed to doing more to help smokers to quit and stop people from taking up this deadly addiction. We also know that most smokers want to quit.

For these reasons, we asked Dr Khan to undertake this Independent Review to help the Government reduce the devastation that smoking causes in our communities. There are a number of recommendations in Dr Khan's Independent Review. The Government will now consider its response.

There is a call for greater investment – from local authority-led stop smoking services, through to improved data and evidence. The government is already investing funding through the public health grant, but we will examine where we can go further.

There is a call to offer vaping as a substitute for smoking. Vaping is far less harmful than smoking and is an effective quitting device. It is recognised that there is much more Government can do to tackle the myths and misconceptions that surround vaping. We have worked with the MHRA to provide [guidance](#) to support bringing e-cigarettes to market as licensed therapies and this Government will take forward a range of work on vaping as a substitute for smoking in due course.

Dr Khan also calls for the NHS to prioritise further action to stop people from smoking. Smoking costs the NHS £2.5 billion every year. The benefits of focusing on preventing smoking-related illnesses, rather than treating them, are clear for patients and the NHS themselves.

This Government is determined to address the challenges raised in the Independent Review and to meet the Smokefree 2030 target. We know that more action needs to be taken to protect our people from this dangerous addiction.

The Department will now carefully consider the recommendations set out in this Independent Review. The Independent Review will help to inform our upcoming White Paper on Health Disparities, which we plan to publish this summer. To complement this, the Department will also be publishing a new Tobacco Control Plan in due course.

We would like to thank Dr Khan for his far-reaching work on the Independent Review, and for his clear and challenging Recommendations.

A copy of The Independent Khan Review will be deposited in the Libraries of both Houses.

Storm Arwen Review: Final Report

[HLWS83]

Lord Callanan: My Right Honourable friend the Minister of State for Energy, Clean Growth and Climate

Change (Greg Hands) has today made the following statement:

The Energy Emergencies Executive Committee Storm Arwen Review was commissioned in December 2021 by the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, due to unacceptable levels of power disruption following Storm Arwen. The Interim Report was published in February 2022, and the Final Report has now been completed and published on gov.uk.

The review has been a joint endeavour between government, industry and the regulator (Ofgem) with the aim of identifying lessons to be learned and actions to take forward. These actions will drive improvements to Great Britain's electricity network resilience to severe weather events. The actions recommended by this review address concerns under the three pillars of system resilience, consumer protection and additional support.

The majority address improvements to be made across all electricity Distribution Network Operators regardless of their impact during this particular storm. Lessons from subsequent storms that hit the UK in February 2022 have also been incorporated and reflected as part of this final report. While improvements will be made, no electricity system can be totally immune from disruption.

The Energy Emergencies Executive Committee will be responsible for the implementation of these actions, in collaboration with other partners as appropriate, alongside my Department which will ensure the delivery and implementation of the actions recommended.

Transforming for a Digital Future: 2022-25 Roadmap

[HLWS82]

Lord True: My Hon Friend the Parliamentary Secretary (Mrs Heather Wheeler MP) has today made the following statement:

Later today, I will publish *Transforming for a Digital Future: Government's 2022-25 Roadmap for Digital and Data*, which sets out an ambitious plan to ensure that, by 2025, we deliver a transformed, more efficient digital government that provides better outcomes for everyone. I have requested that a copy of the full text be deposited in the libraries of both Houses in Parliament.

The Importance of Digital and Data

Digital and data are key to unlocking many of this government's priorities, from generating efficiencies to Net Zero and Levelling Up. Better digital systems and access to data will allow smaller teams across government to work faster, make better decisions, and deliver better policies. Modern technology will minimise waste and reduce our reliance on paper-based forms. A more digitally-skilled civil service, working across the UK, will ensure that citizens get access to the same great services no matter where they live.

The Opportunity

Government has some excellent digital services and examples of digital transformation, but we still need to harness the full potential of digital transformation at scale. Many services are in need of improvement to deliver the right outcomes, our technology is in need of refreshing to give value for money, we have significant and persistent gaps in skills and expertise, and our business systems are in need of reform to keep pace with the digital age.

If we maintain the current course, we will miss opportunities to deliver the experiences and outcomes that citizens expect and we have committed to deliver, we will see talented digital and data professionals choosing to work elsewhere, and we will miss out on efficiency savings.

Cross-Government Support and Collaboration

This roadmap has been collectively agreed by the Cabinet Economic and Domestic Implementation Committee.

The roadmap is the result of an unprecedented level of collaboration from digital leaders across government. The Central Digital and Data Office (CDDO) in the Cabinet Office has worked with representatives from departments to develop the roadmap, including regular engagement with the Permanent Secretary level Digital and Data Board.

CDDO will continue to work closely with departments to support and monitor progress against the roadmap. Each mission has a senior civil servant ‘executive sponsor’ who will act as an advocate for that mission and support work to progress against the specific commitments.

As a result, I am confident that there is sufficient support and momentum behind this roadmap to ensure we will meet all of the commitments it sets out by 2025.

What We Will Deliver by 2025

The roadmap sets out a bold vision for change which is supported by a set of clear, feasible and measurable commitments that departments have collectively agreed to deliver between now and 2025.

By 2025 the most frequently used critical services will have great user experience and incorporate efficient processes that reduce their cost to run. We will provide a single, efficient and accessible digital identity process for citizens, and ensure that data which is central to priority government objectives will be safely shared and used to improve policy and service delivery. We will build digital technology in a consistent way, improving the quality of what we build and our speed to deployment. We will be an employer of choice for digital talent, with highly skilled teams and leaders, and have funding structures and delivery approaches that enable and incentivise modern, efficient and user-centric investment and high quality services.

The pace of technological change and the growing expectations of citizens and businesses mean we must renew our focus and go further than ever before to realise

the opportunities presented by digital transformation. I am confident that, by fulfilling the commitments set out in the roadmap, we will be able to do exactly that.

Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail: Public Consultation

[HLWS88]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: My Right Honourable friend, the Secretary of State for Transport (Grant Shapps), has made the following Ministerial Statement:

Today, my Department launches a public consultation on the primary legislative changes required to deliver structural reform of our railways. This follows publication of the Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail (“Plan for Rail”) in May 2021 which heralded the start of the biggest transformation of Great Britain’s railways in three decades, and announcement in the Queen’s Speech on 10 May 2022 to introduce a Transport Bill to Parliament which will modernise rail services, put passengers and freight customers first, deliver for taxpayers and combine the best of the public and private sectors.

The Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail highlighted the need for change. It was clear our railways had become fragmented, the system was complicated, and passengers deserved better. This alongside spiralling costs, delays to upgrades and commercial failures pointed to a railway in need of fundamental reform. Getting this right means we can ensure this historic industry delivers for its users, setting it on a more sustainable and secure footing. It also means delivering a stronger, more levelled up and increasingly green economy, of which the railways are a crucial part.

Many of the commitments set out in the Plan for Rail do not require legislation in order to take forward, and the government is already working in close partnership with the rail industry to deliver rapid improvements for passengers and freight customers. For example, new flexible season tickets went on sale last summer and we continue to work with train operators to roll-out digital ticketing to make journeys easier. We are also undertaking a comprehensive accessibility audit of stations across Great Britain, continuing to cut the costs and time of infrastructure work through Project SPEED and developing a 30-year Whole Industry Strategic Plan.

In addition to this, we have launched the Great British Railways Transition Team (GBRTT), under the leadership of Andrew Haines, to drive forward reforms and develop the model for a new arms-length body, Great British Railways, including its initial structure, leadership and people. GBRTT is focused on establishing a new, customer focused, industry culture, driving revenue recovery efforts and establishing an Interim Strategic Freight Unit to work collaboratively with the sector, ensuring an immediate focus on delivery of the government’s ambitions for rail freight. The Great British Railways Transition Team is also currently overseeing a competition for the location of a national headquarters for Great British Railways, to be based outside of London, in line with this Government’s commitment to levelling up.

However, primary legislation is required to deliver key elements of structural reform set out in the Plan for Rail. This includes providing Great British Railways, with the powers and authority it needs to act as the single guiding mind for the railways, ending years of fragmentation. The consultation launched today seeks views of all those with an interest in our railways, to help shape these reforms.

The consultation is focused across three key areas as outlined below.

The first is on the establishment of Great British Railways, including its proposed functions and duties and how we propose to legislate and work with stakeholders to enable Great British Railways to become the single guiding mind for the railways.

The second is focused on how we will ensure clear accountabilities in the rail sector through a new governance framework, including the regulator's role in providing independent scrutiny and challenge.

The third centres on reform of wider industry structures and processes that are needed to deliver transformation of the railways and a new industry culture, including a new

Passenger Champion role for Transport Focus and proposals for open data sharing.

Great British Railways is key to delivering a customer-focussed railway. The plans outlined in this consultation will deliver a rail system that is the backbone of a cleaner, greener public transport system, offering passengers and freight customers a better deal and greater value for money for taxpayers. The private sector has played an integral role in improving our railways over the past 25 years - these plans are designed to take the best of the private sector and fuse it with a single guiding mind that can drive benefits and efficiencies across the system as a whole.

I hope that all of those with an interest in our railways will find the time to participate and share their views through this consultation. Sharing your views will help to ensure the legislative changes we enact will deliver the vision set out in the Plan for Rail, securing our railways so that they are able to flourish into the future and as we approach their bicentenary in 2025.

Written Answers

Thursday, 9 June 2022

Army Reserve

Asked by *Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the size of the Territorial Army in 1998; what is the current size of the trained strength of the Army Reserve; what assessment they have made of whether the number of reservists is adequate; and if the number is not adequate, what steps they will take to increase the number of reservists. [HL514]

Baroness Goldie: The number of Army Reserves under Future Soldier is optimal for forecasted future demands. Under Future Soldier plans, the Army Reserve will grow and better integrate with the Regular Army, and the British Army will become a whole force of over 100,000 regulars and reservists.

The total strength of the Territorial Army Group A (trained and untrained) as of 1 April 1998 was 51,100. In line with published statistics, the following table shows the strength of the Army Reserve as of 1 January 2022:

<i>FR20 Strength 01 January 2022</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Trained</i>	<i>Untrained</i>
Total	29,400	26,200	3,300
Army Reserve Group A	27,600	24,400	3,200
Army Reserve Group C	100	100	-
FTRS (Volunteer Reserve)	1,700	1,700	-

Notes:

The way the Army Reserve strength is measured has changed over time and Future Reserves 2020 (FR20) did not exist in 1998. The 51,100 therefore compares to the Group A Trained and Untrained Strength of 27,600 in 2022.

Figures have been rounded to the nearest 100. Totals and sub-totals have been rounded separately and so may not appear to be the sum of their parts.

Asylum: Rwanda

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of Durham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will publish the terms of reference for the Monitoring Committee, which was referred to in the Memorandum of Understanding with the government of the Republic of Rwanda for the provision of an asylum partnership arrangement; and when the Monitoring Committee will be operational. [HL523]

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of Durham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether individuals have been appointed to the Monitoring Committee that was set out in the Memorandum of Understanding with the government of the Republic of Rwanda for the provision of an asylum partnership arrangement. [HL524]

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of Durham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether co-chairs have been appointed to the Joint Committee that was to be established "without delay" after the asylum partnership arrangement with the government of the Republic of Rwanda came into effect. [HL525]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The terms of reference and membership of the Monitoring Committee for the Migration and Economic Development Partnership are in the process of being developed. The Monitoring Committee is due to become operational in the coming months. More details on this will be set out in due course.

The co-chairs for the Joint Committee will be decided upon in due course.

Bounce Back Loan Scheme

Asked by *Baroness Buscombe*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much they paid out to Bounce Back Loan Scheme lending banks under the government-backed guarantee between 1 January 2022 and 30 April; and what percentage of this figure was attributed to fraud. [HL474]

Lord Callanan: Data relating to settled claims and suspected fraud within the Bounce Back Loan Scheme is captured on a cumulative basis.

As of 31 March 2022, c.£351 million in settled claims on the scheme guarantee have been paid to lenders, of which c.£72 million [20%] have a suspected fraud marker as reported by lenders to the British Business Bank.

The lenders under the Scheme are not law enforcement agencies, it is the courts who determine whether or not a fraud has been committed. These statistics are an indicator of levels of suspected fraud rather than actual, proven levels.

Civil Proceedings

Asked by *Lord Cromwell*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether their proposed Economic Crime Bill will include a legal definition of Strategic Litigation Against Public Participation (SLAPPs). [HL479]

Asked by *Lord Cromwell*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether their proposed Economic Crime Bill will establish an (1) earlier, and (2) low-cost, procedure to (a) identify, and

(b) dismiss, Strategic Litigation Against Public Participation (SLAPPs). [HL480]

Asked by Lord Cromwell

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether their proposed Economic Crime Bill will make it an offence to (1) undertake, or (2) knowingly participate in, Strategic Litigation Against Public Participation (SLAPPs). [HL481]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Building on the recently enacted Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Act, the Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Bill will bear down on kleptocrats, criminals and terrorists who abuse our financial system, strengthening the UK's reputation as a place where legitimate business can thrive while driving dirty money out of the UK. It will include reform of Companies House, reforms to prevent abuse of limited partnerships, additional powers to seize suspect cryptoassets more quickly and easily, and reforms to give businesses more confidence to share information in order to tackle money laundering and other economic crime.

My right hon. Friend, the Deputy Prime Minister, is giving Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation ('SLAPPs') and libel reform in UK courts urgent consideration in light of reports that Russia and its allies may be funding litigation against free speech in the UK.

An urgent call for evidence was launched in response to the challenges presented by the increasing use of SLAPPs – Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation.

The call for evidence set out options for possible reforms and sought views on those proposals. It also invited those who have been subject to SLAPPs or who have an interest to share their experiences and the impact on them.

The call for evidence closed on 19 May and the Ministry of Justice, working with several other Government departments and regulators, are considering the options for reform. In doing so we are committed to a robust defence of transparency, the rule of law and freedom of speech.

Cost of Living

Asked by Lord Truscott

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effect of the conflict in Ukraine on the cost of living in the UK. [HL511]

Baroness Penn: The conflict in Ukraine has affected the global economy. The government is closely monitoring developments and the channels through which they may affect the UK economy, and we remain committed to supporting businesses, people, and jobs.

The high inflation seen recently has largely been caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, as global supply chain disruption has pushed up goods prices, and higher global energy prices. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has added to inflationary pressures and the cost of living- it has already

pushed up the prices consumers pay for fuel, some goods and is contributing to higher expected energy prices in the autumn.

We know that millions of households across the UK are struggling to make their incomes stretch to cover the cost of living. That is why the government is providing over £15bn of additional support, as announced by the Chancellor on 26 May 2022. This is in addition to the £22bn announced previously, with government support for the cost of living now totalling over £37bn this year.

More information on government support for the cost of living can be found on the Gov.uk website.

Countryside: Conduct

Asked by Baroness Kennedy of Cradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent assessment they have made of the effectiveness of the Countryside Code. [HL425]

Lord Benyon: Natural England recently updated the Countryside Code, following significant stakeholder engagement. It comprises a version aimed at visitors to the countryside (updated April 2021) and a version aimed at land managers with public access on their land (launched February 2022). Monitoring and evaluating the impact and effectiveness of the updated Countryside Code has been, and will continue to be, undertaken in several ways.

Natural England has included two questions relating to the Countryside Code in the People and Nature Survey for England since April 2021. This online panel survey, which has Official Statistics status, gathers evidence and trend data through relating to people's enjoyment, access, understanding of and attitudes to the natural environment, and its contributions to wellbeing. One of these questions collects data on participants' reported behaviours when visiting the countryside, corresponding to the behaviours included in the Countryside Code. The other question collects data on the extent to which participants have heard of the Countryside Code and follow it. Data is currently available for the period April to December 2021, which includes responses from a nationally representative sample of 18,747 adults in England (see attachment, 'PANS Monthly Countryside Code data for December 2021' (www.gov.uk/government/statistics/the-people-and-nature-survey-for-england-monthly-indicators-for-december-2021-official-statistics)). A detailed analysis of this data will be carried out at the end of a full year's data collection, during 2022/23.

In addition, Natural England recently delivered two small-scale stakeholder surveys focused on the Countryside Code:

- In an online survey of 3,801 stakeholders carried out in winter 2020/21, participants shared their opinions about the effectiveness of the Countryside Code, current levels of public awareness about it and official efforts to improve this. They also provided information about their personal level of engagement and familiarity

with the Countryside Code, including to which extent they have used and promoted it. The results of this survey, in addition to Natural England's response to the headline findings, have been published (see attachment, [NERR095 2021 'The Countryside Code: Stakeholder Survey. A summary of findings' \(//publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6527410754551808\)](#)). These results informed work to update the Countryside Code.

- Natural England delivered another online survey in autumn 2021, aimed at land managers, which received 613 responses. This survey collected data on the opinions and awareness of land managers in relation to the Countryside Code, in addition to direct experiences of undesirable visitor behaviours on the land they manage and self-reported behaviours relevant to managing public access on their land in line with the Countryside Code. The results will be published in spring 2022.

Natural England will use these survey results as a baseline and will run further stakeholder surveys on an annual basis to track change in awareness and utilisation of the Countryside Code, and the impact of the Code on reported behaviours.

Natural England has also delivered internal evaluations of the impact of communication campaigns launched to promote the updated versions of the Countryside Code.

Natural England will commission a more complete evaluation of the effectiveness of the Countryside Code, and recent promotional initiatives, during 2022/23.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Countryside Code Stakeholder Survey [Countryside Code Survey Evidence Summary FOR PUBLICATION.pdf]

PANS Monthly Countryside Code data for Dec 2021 [Monthly_Countryside_Code_data_for_December_2021.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-05-23/HL425>

Developing Countries: Food Aid

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking through the Food and Agriculture Organization (1) to expedite the export of foodstuffs from the Ukraine, and (2) to mobilise the release of emergency stocks of food to the poorest countries and arrange the necessary shipping. [HL486]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are urgently working with the UN, the G7 and the international community to explore the best solutions to extract the 25 million tons of grain currently stuck in Ukraine. We recognise the consequences of the conflict are impacting all of our economies. We are clear that prices are rising because of Russia's actions: Putin's illegal, unprovoked and premeditated invasion of Ukraine is exacerbating price rises in commodity markets.

We are calling on all countries to keep food trade flowing - the worst outcome now would be an obstruction of food trade. We are aware of reports of certain countries imposing restrictions on exports and the worrying impact this could have on global food supplies. The UK has led over 50 World Trade Organisation members to commit to keeping food markets open, predictable and transparent, and is seeking agreement at June's Ministerial Conference on further actions.

Asked by Lord McCrea of Magherafelt and Cookstown

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assistance they are providing to transport grain out of Ukrainian silos and into countries on the verge of famine. [HL497]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are urgently working with the UN, the G7 and the international community to explore the best solutions to extract the 25 million tons of grain currently stuck in Ukraine. We continue to work with the Ukrainians and other international partners to find ways to resume the export of grain from Ukraine and to the countries that desperately need it.

East Africa: Famine

Asked by Lord Oates

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to lead an international response to prevent widespread famine in (1) East Africa, and (2) the Horn of Africa. [HL502]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The humanitarian situation across the Horn and East of Africa is extremely concerning. Conflict and drought are the main causes of humanitarian need. The region is experiencing one of its most severe droughts in history with more than 15 million people in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia assessed to be acutely food insecure, according to the UN. Nearly 500,000 people in Ethiopia and Somalia are experiencing famine-like conditions.

The UK is a major humanitarian donor to the region. In 2022 the UK has provided £72 million to support more than one million people in Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and South Sudan affected by conflict, drought and flooding. Across the region UK funded humanitarian activities are making a difference and saving lives. In Kenya the UK is providing 26,000 children with life-saving nutritional support. In Ethiopia a further 200,000 children and pregnant and lactating women in southern and eastern regions will receive similar aid. The UK also played a critical role in convening the recent UN Horn of Africa Drought Roundtable which took place in late April in Geneva. This included working with states in the region and the UN to ensure appropriate levels of participation. It helped to bring much needed focus on the drought and it mobilised roughly US\$400 million in new funding.

Our response to the drought builds on long-established resilience building programmes in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. In Kenya this includes support to the Hunger Safety Programme, which has provided 600,000 people in

drought prone areas with regular financial assistance. In Ethiopia, the UK funded Productive Safety Net Programme has benefitted some 8 million people via financial welfare provision and community public works projects. In Somalia the UK has been supporting over 220 rural communities in three large urban cities with durable solutions initiatives for internally displaced persons. These programmes, coupled with additional investments, have enabled the UK to reach nearly 8 million individuals as a part of our emergency humanitarian response.

Employment: Disability

Asked by Lord McCrea of Magherafelt and Cookstown

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take to ensure that disabled people entering employment are not financially disadvantaged. [HL494]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: There are a range of DWP initiatives that support disabled people and people with health conditions to live independent lives and start, stay and succeed in employment. These include the Intensive Personalised Employment Support programme, Access to Work, Disability Confident and support in partnership with the health system, including Employment Advisers in NHS Improving Access to Psychological Therapy services.

The Green Paper explored how the benefits system can better meet the needs of claimants now and in the future, by improving claimant experience of our services, enabling independent living, and improving employment outcomes. We remain committed to responding to this Green Paper consultation with a White Paper later this year.

Energy: Prices

Asked by Lord McCrea of Magherafelt and Cookstown

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to help householders facing increasing energy bills. [HL493]

Lord Callanan: On 26 May 2022, the Government announced a £15 billion package of cost of living support. This is in addition to the over £22 billion announced previously for the cost of living now totalling over £37 billion this year. This means almost eight million of the most vulnerable households will get £1,200 of one-off support in total this year, with all domestic electricity customers receiving at least £400.

Furs: Imports and Sales

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking, if any, to ban the (1) import, and (2) sale, of fur. [HL401]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The Government made a commitment to explore potential action in relation to animal fur, as set out in the Action Plan for Animal

Welfare. We have since conducted a Call for Evidence on the fur sector along with other forms of engagement with interested parties.

We are continuing to build our evidence base on the fur sector and speak to a range of interested parties, to make sure we fully understand the issues at hand before taking any decisions regarding fur.

Government Departments: Brexit

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that (1) the Competition and Markets Authority, (2) the Health and Safety Executive, and (3) the Food Standards Agency, have sufficient staff to manage additional responsibilities following the UK's exit from the EU; and whether they will allocate additional funding to these agencies to ensure they can fulfil their regulatory responsibilities. [HL551]

Baroness Penn: Spending Review 2021 set departmental budgets, including those for the Competition and Markets Authority, the Health and Safety Executive and the Food Standards Agency from 2022-23 to 2024-25. These settlements took account of new responsibilities following EU exit.

Secretaries of State and accounting officers hold responsibility for departmental workforce matters, including, for example departmental workforce planning, recruitment, and resourcing decisions.

Hare Coursing

Asked by Baroness Kennedy of Cradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to take action on illegal hare coursing. [HL426]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Measures to address hare coursing were included in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act that gained Royal Assent on 29 April this year. Hare coursing causes considerable distress to farmers, landowners and rural communities, in addition to the suffering it causes animals.

Our new legislation introduces two new criminal offences relating to activity connected with hare coursing and increases the powers of the courts to deal with offenders upon conviction. We have significantly increased the maximum penalties available upon conviction for offences under the existing and new legislation including, for the first time, the possibility of custodial sentences.

These measures will come into force on 1 August this year ahead of the start of the next hare coursing season.

Home Office: Infosys

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many contracts were awarded to Infosys in the last five years

by the Home Office; and what was the cost to the taxpayer of each of those contracts. [HL543]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Two contracts were awarded to Infosys in the last five years, both have been published on Contracts Finder where further detail on the values can be found.

[ERP Test Services - Contracts Finder](#)

[QAT013 Infrastructure Testing - Contracts Finder](#)

Horn of Africa: Humanitarian Aid

Asked by Lord Oates

To ask Her Majesty's Government what humanitarian assistance they are providing to the 5.7 million children in the Horn of Africa who are expected to suffer acute malnourishment this year as a result of the ongoing drought. [HL501]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The UK is a major humanitarian donor to the East Africa region. In 2022 the UK has provided £72 million to support more than one million people in Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and South Sudan affected by conflict, drought and flooding. Across the region UK-funded humanitarian activities are making a difference and saving lives. In Kenya the UK is providing 26,000 children with life-saving nutritional support. In Ethiopia a further 200,000 children and pregnant and lactating women in southern and eastern regions will receive similar aid. The UK also played a critical role in convening the recent UN Horn of Africa Drought Roundtable which took place in late April in Geneva. This included working with states in the region and the UN to ensure appropriate levels of participation. It helped to bring much needed focus on the drought and it mobilised roughly US\$400 million in new funding.

Our response to the drought builds on long-established resilience building programmes in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. In Kenya this includes support to the Hunger Safety Programme, which has provided 600,000 people in drought prone areas with regular financial assistance. In Ethiopia, the UK funded Productive Safety Net Programme has benefitted some 8 million people via financial welfare provision and community public works projects. In Somalia the UK has been supporting over 220 rural communities in three large urban cities with durable solutions initiatives for internally displaced persons. These programmes, coupled with additional investments, have enabled the UK to reach nearly 8 million individuals as a part of our emergency humanitarian response.

Housing: Disability and Older People

Asked by Baroness Greengross

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take to ensure that (1) older people, and (2) people with disabilities, can live in suitable housing. [HL484]

Lord Greenhalgh: This Government is committed to ensuring older and disabled people can access homes that best suits their needs. We work closely with the

Department of Health and Social Care to provide capital funding to incentivise supply. This includes investing £11.5 billion in the new Affordable Homes Programme, which includes delivery of new specialist or supported housing for older, disabled and other vulnerable people. We have also committed £573 million for the Disabled Facilities Grant each year from 2022-23 to 2024-25 to support eligible older and disabled people to adapt their homes to suit their needs. As announced in the Levelling Up White Paper, we will shortly launch a new government taskforce to look at ways we can provide better choice, quality and security of housing for older people.

Housing: Older People

Asked by Baroness Greengross

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) whether capital funding is an effective way to incentivise the supply of housing for older people, and (2) how capital funding interacts with other factors such as planning legislation in this context. [HL485]

Lord Greenhalgh: Boosting the supply of a range of specialist housing across the country is key to our aim of ensuring older people can access the right homes to suit their needs. We work closely with the Department of Health and Social Care to provide capital funding to incentivise supply. Since 2010, we have delivered over 574,100 new affordable homes, including specialist housing for older people, through our investment in affordable housing. We know that communities would welcome more homes, so long as they are the right sort of homes, are well designed and have the right supporting infrastructure. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill centres these interests, and will change the plan-making system, creating incentives to have a plan in place, with this plan having more weight in planning decisions. This will give certainty to communities and applicants about what can be built and where, supporting more permissions for development communities want.

Hydroelectric Power

Asked by Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Callanan on 8 April (HL7358), what is the source for their figure of "less than 1% of total generation capacity"; and whether the economic constraints referred to have changed as a result of price rises over the last year. [HL487]

Lord Callanan: The source of the assessment of the potential for hydroelectric power in England and Wales is the Hydropower Resource Assessment Report Version 13.0, October 2010.

Despite the level of current wholesale electricity prices, hydro project developers generally require long term power purchase agreements.

Hydroelectric Power: Smart Export Guarantee

Asked by **Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Callanan on 8 April (HL7358), whether hydro power companies are eligible for the Smart Export Guarantee; and if so, what the mechanism is for them to approach electricity suppliers. [HL488]

Lord Callanan: The Smart Export Guarantee came into force on 1 January 2020 and requires most electricity suppliers to offer a tariff to buy electricity exported by small low-carbon generators, including small hydro. Licensed suppliers with more than 150,000 customers are required to offer at least one SEG tariff to small-scale, low-carbon generators.

Imports: Israel

Asked by **Baroness Sheehan**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Grimstone of Boscobel on 27 April (HL7831), what checks are carried out to ensure that Israeli export goods originate from Israel and not from illegal Israeli settlements in Palestinian Occupied Territories. [HL452]

Lord Grimstone of Boscobel: Goods originating from illegal Israeli settlements are not covered by any United Kingdom trade agreement, so do not receive tariff preferences. Should HMRC have reasonable doubts regarding the origin of an imported good, or suspect that a certificate of origin has been erroneously completed, then a verification of the good's origin can be requested.

National Flagship: Procurement

Asked by **Lord West of Spithead**

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the national flagship will be ordered; and whether it will be built in a UK shipyard. [HL463]

Baroness Goldie: The National Flagship programme remains in its Design Stage, with a competitive procurement process in progress. A separate competition for the construction of the National Flagship will be launched in due course. The detailed construction schedule will be subject to the successful bidder's build strategy. It is the intention to build the National Flagship in the UK.

Peacekeeping Operations

Asked by **Lord Kilclooney**

To ask Her Majesty's Government in which countries members of the UK defence forces serve as part of a United Nations presence. [HL490]

Baroness Goldie: The UK deploys peacekeepers to contingent deployments in the United Nations Force in

Cyprus and to the UN peacekeeping mission in Mali. We deploy a contingent to the UN Support Office in Somalia, and Military Staff Officers and experts to Cyprus, Mali, South Sudan, Somalia, Afghanistan, Libya, South Korea and the UN Headquarters in New York.

Prisoners: Females

Asked by **The Lord Bishop of Gloucester**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many women aged (1) 18 to 25, and (2) 26 years or older, are currently held in each female prison establishment. [HL530]

Asked by **The Lord Bishop of Gloucester**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many women in prison aged (1) 18 to 25, or (2) 26 years or older, are currently sharing a cell. [HL534]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: The requested data, correct as of 31st March 2022, is provided in table form below.

HL530 – The number of people housed in each female prison aged (1) 18 to 25, and (2) 26 years or older.

	Age group		Total
	18-25	26+	
Askham Grange	6	90	96
Bronzefield	69	389	458
Downview	40	234	274
Drake Hall	20	257	277
East Sutton Park	5	59	64
Eastwood Park	47	326	373
Foston Hall	36	220	256
Low Newton	22	219	241
New Hall	37	290	327
Peterborough (Female Site)	53	265	318
Send	11	171	182
Styal	53	320	373
Total	399	2840	3239

HL534 – The number of people aged (1) between 18 and 25, and (2) 26 years or older sharing a cell in a female prison.

Sharing Type	Age group		Total
	18-25	26+	
Number sharing	107	739	846
Not sharing	292	2101	2393
Total	399	2840	3239

Cells are only shared when absolutely necessary, and where they are assessed to be of an adequate size and condition. Prison cell occupancy is certified by the Prison

Group Director (PGD) in accordance with the Certified Prisoner Accommodation Framework, which provides guidelines for determining cell capacities.

The sharing of double occupancy cells (designed for two) can, in some circumstances, be beneficial; some prisoners prefer it and, in the right circumstances, it can benefit their mental health and wellbeing.

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Gloucester

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the average number of miles that women in prison aged (1) 18 to 25, and (2) 26 years or older, are held from their home address. [HL580]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: The requested information can be found in the table below. It covers all prisoners housed in female prisons across England and Wales and was accurate as of 31st March 2022.

Distance	Age group		Total
	18-25	26+	
Total number of prisoners	399	2840	3239
Average straight-line distance (Miles)	43.2	45.6	45.3

HMPPS is committed to ensuring, where practicable, that prisoners are accommodated as close as possible to their resettlement communities and families. Whilst this is a priority, it is not always possible due to a variety of factors including wider population pressures, or where prisoners have specific sentence planning needs which can only be met at certain establishments.

There are complex and wide-ranging issues involved in transferring and locating prisoners, and allocation decisions must reflect both the specific needs and circumstances of the prisoner, including their security assessment, as well as the operating environment and range of services at the receiving prison.

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Gloucester

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many women in prison aged (1) 18 to 25, and (2) 26 years or older, have previously been in local authority care in each of the last 10 years. [HL581]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) is committed to meeting the needs of all vulnerable offenders, including those who have previously been in local authority care. All individuals that come into contact with the criminal justice system need to be able to access the right support to help them engage with their sentence.

HMPPS has a Strategy for Care Experienced People which is based on the assessment of needs specific to this group. The strategy focuses on identifying people with care experience and collaborative working with local authorities and other organisations, helping individuals to receive the necessary support.

HMPPS holds a limited amount of the information requested. Since 2015, as part of the basic custody screening interview, we have recorded the answers of all new prisoners coming into custody as to whether or not they have been in the care of local authority children's services at any time. The information is purely self-declared.

Age when BCS Part 1 Completed	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 TYD up to and including 31/03/2021
Age 18 to 25	281	285	233	206	214	143	134	49
Age 26 or over	709	772	678	701	657	467	460	151

The data for 2022 is up to and including 31 March which is the most recent date for which it can be verified. It should be noted that individual prisoners admitted to custody on separate occasions could be included in multiple years across this data.

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Gloucester

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the ethnic breakdown of women in prison aged (1) 18 to 25, and (2) 26 years or older, for each of the last 10 years. [HL582]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: The attached tables show the numbers of female prisoners aged (1) 18 to 25, and (2) 26 years or older, for each of the last 10 years.

The Female Offender Strategy (FOS), a comprehensive programme of work to improve outcomes for women at all points of the Criminal Justice System, included a clear commitment to look at how the distinct needs of ethnic minority women can be better addressed, and work is underway to deliver this commitment.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Table [2022-06-13 HL582 table .xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-05-26/HL582>

Prisons: Discipline

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Gloucester

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many adjudications were received by women in prison aged (1) 18 to 25, or (2) 26 years or older, for each of the last 10 years. [HL532]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: The prisoner discipline system upholds justice in prisons and ensures incidents of prison rule-breaking have consequences. The Ministry of Justice monitors adjudication outcomes by offence, age, gender, ethnicity, religion and adjudicator, this data is published quarterly and can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly>.

The specific information requested can be found in the table attached. The information is provided by the age groupings of (1) 18-25 and (2) 26 and over, to provide full data to answer the question.

Number of adjudications outcomes for women and specific age group, 2012 - 2021, England and Wales

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Age										
18-25	2,655	2,002	2,140	2,326	1,929	2,680	2,645	2,248	1,739	1,750
26 and over	4,720	4,589	4,996	5,667	6,348	7,817	8,834	8,720	6,450	6,034

Data sources and quality

The figures in this table have been drawn from administrative IT systems which, as with any large-scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing.

Source: PQ HL532, Prison NOMIS System, (Ministry of Justice; Data and Analysis, Directorate)

Prisons: Restraint Techniques

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Gloucester

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many incidents of physical restraint took place in the female prison estate on women aged (1) 18 to 25, and (2) 26 years or older, in each year since 2018. [HL529]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: The requested data on use of force incidents is available for the 12 months ending March 2019 to March 2022. This is detailed in the attached Excel spreadsheet.

Every use of physical force is reviewed, and prison officers receive appropriate training to ensure that it is only used when necessary, reasonable and proportionate, and as a last resort.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Table [2022-06-10 HL529 Table 1.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-05-25/HL529>

Renewable Energy: Business Rates

Asked by Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Callanan on 8 April (HL7358), what the process is for renewable energy generators and storage providers to apply for the exemption from business rates. [HL489]

Lord Callanan: As set out in the Spring Statement 2022, the green plant and machinery exemption applies from April 2022. The Valuation Office Agency will implement this exemption. There will be no need for

renewable energy generators or storage providers to apply.

Social Security Benefits: Foetal Anticonvulsant Syndrome

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people with Fetal Valproate Spectrum Disorder have been refused the award of (1) Personal Independence Payment, or (2) Disability Living Allowance, over the last 12 months. [HL536]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: The information requested is not readily available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the (1) value, and (2) use, of the Condition Insight Report for Valproate in enabling (a) Personal Independence Payment, and (b) Disability Living Allowance, assessors to understand Fetal Valproate Spectrum Disorder. [HL537]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: Both Personal Independence Payment (PIP) assessment providers have a Condition Insight Report (CIR) on Foetal Valproate Spectrum Disorder. CIR provide condition-based information which Health Professionals (HPs) have access to during the course of the PIP assessment process. CIRs are often developed with input from stakeholder groups that advocate for those with the relevant condition. While it is not possible to objectively assess the specific impact of a CIR on HPs' knowledge, the CIR on Foetal Valproate Spectrum Disorder is a welcome addition to the information available to HPs.

Claims to DLA are dealt with by DWP case managers. Case managers refer to Departmental guidance *The Children's A-Z of Medical Conditions* which sets out the main care and mobility needs likely to arise from different disabling conditions. If necessary, further information is gathered from health professionals, or in the case of a child, from their school.

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government why those with Fetal Valproate Spectrum Disorder are required to re-apply for (1) Personal Independence Payment, and (2) Disability Living Allowance, given that the condition is lifelong and does not present changing symptoms. [HL538]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: Entitlement to Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is assessed on the basis of the needs arising from a health condition or disability, rather than the health condition or disability itself. Award rates and their durations are set on an individual basis, based on the claimant's needs and the likelihood of those needs changing, including where childhood developmental

milestones are reached. Award reviews allow for the correct rate of DLA or PIP to remain in payment, including where needs have increased as a consequence of a congenital, degenerative or progressive condition.

Ukraine: Military Aid

Asked by Lord McCrea of Magherafelt and Cookstown

To ask Her Majesty's Government what further steps they are taking to encourage other countries to provide urgent military equipment to Ukraine. [HL496]

Baroness Goldie: The UK continues to galvanise support from the international community. We have worked closely with allies and partners to ensure that Ukrainian Armed Forces requirements are met at pace. The Defence Secretary has hosted two international donor conferences to coordinate aid from 35 partner nations and, via strong participation in the International Donor Coordination Centre, the UK continues to enable support to Ukraine from across the world.

Ukraine: Railways

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps, if any, they are taking to support the government of Ukraine to replace railway track with an UIC 1.435mm gauge track

to the Polish border, to enable trains to travel to and from Poland and other EU member states without having to replace bogies. [HL516]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are urgently working with the UN, the G7 and the international community to explore the best solutions to extract the 25 million tons of grain currently stuck in Ukraine. We continue to work with the Ukrainians and other international partners to find ways to resume the export of grain from Ukraine and to the countries that desperately need it. Network Rail has recently assisted the Ukrainian rail authorities with a gift of surplus road vehicles and rail engineering tools, which can be used to repair damaged rail infrastructure.

Westminster Hall

Asked by Lord Blencathra

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker what discussions he has had with the Privy Council Office, if any, concerning the use of Westminster Hall for the Accession Council. [HL570]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: I have not had any discussions with the Privy Council Office on the use of Westminster Hall for the Accession Council.

Index to Statements and Answers

Written Statements.....1		
Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme Review: Supplementary Consultation	1	
Medical Examiners.....	1	
Serious Violence Duty: Draft Statutory Guidance Consultation.....	1	
Smokefree 2030: Independent Review	2	
Storm Arwen Review: Final Report	3	
Transforming for a Digital Future: 2022-25 Roadmap.....	3	
Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail: Public Consultation.....	4	
Written Answers.....6		
Army Reserve.....	6	
Asylum: Rwanda	6	
Bounce Back Loan Scheme.....	6	
Civil Proceedings.....	6	
Cost of Living.....	7	
Countryside: Conduct.....	7	
Developing Countries: Food Aid.....	8	
East Africa: Famine	8	
Employment: Disability.....	9	
Energy: Prices.....	9	
Furs: Imports and Sales	9	
Government Departments: Brexit.....	9	
Hare Coursing.....	9	
Home Office: Infosys	9	
Horn of Africa: Humanitarian Aid	10	
Housing: Disability and Older People	10	
Housing: Older People	10	
Hydroelectric Power	10	
Hydroelectric Power: Smart Export Guarantee ..	11	
Imports: Israel.....	11	
National Flagship: Procurement	11	
Peacekeeping Operations.....	11	
Prisoners: Females.....	11	
Prisons: Discipline.....	12	
	Prisons: Restraint Techniques..... 13	
	Renewable Energy: Business Rates..... 13	
	Social Security Benefits: Foetal Anticonvulsant Syndrome..... 13	
	Ukraine: Military Aid	14
	Ukraine: Railways	14
	Westminster Hall	14