

Session 2022-23
No. 16



Tuesday
14 June 2022

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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[I] indicates that the member concerned has a relevant registered interest. The full register of interests can be found at <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/standards-and-interests/register-of-lords-interests/>

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Ministers and others who make Statements or answer Questions are referred to only by name, not their ministerial or other title. The current list of ministerial and other responsibilities is as follows.

<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
Baroness Evans of Bowes Park	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
Earl Howe	Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Chief Whip
Baroness Barran	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
Lord Benyon	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist	Whip
Lord Caine	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office
Lord Callanan	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Earl of Courtown	Deputy Chief Whip
Baroness Goldie	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence
Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park	Minister of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Lord Greenhalgh	Minister of State, Home Office and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Lord Grimstone of Boscobel	Minister of State, Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Department for International Trade
Lord Harrington of Watford	Minister of State, Home Office and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Lord Kamall	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
Lord Offord of Garvel	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scotland Office
Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and Whip
Baroness Penn	Whip
Baroness Scott of Bybrook	Whip
Lord Sharpe of Epsom	Whip
Baroness Stedman-Scott	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Stewart of Dirleton	Advocate-General for Scotland
Lord True	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
Baroness Vere of Norbiton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Minister of State, Home Office
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip

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Written Statements

Tuesday, 14 June 2022

Prisons Strategy White Paper: Response to Consultation Questions

[HLWS97]

Baroness Scott of Bybrook: My honourable friend the Minister of State for Prisons (Victoria Atkins) has made the following statement:

'Today I am publishing the Government response to the Prisons Strategy White Paper consultation.

The Prisons Strategy White Paper was published in December 2021. The commitments in the paper tackle this Government's priorities for prisons: building the next generation of prisons and managing an estate that is safe and secure for staff and prisoners; supporting rehabilitation and resettlement through education, employment and accommodation; and creating prison and probation services that cut crime and protect the public.

19 questions were included in the White Paper to ensure the views of interested parties were considered. The consultation opened on the 7 December 2021 and closed on the 4 February 2022, receiving 155 responses. The Government has carefully considered the responses and is grateful for all of the contributions.

Since publication of the White Paper, this Government has moved swiftly to deliver its aims:

- HMP Five Wells opened in March, delivering 1,700 modernised places.
- Digital upgrades have been delivered to a further 7 prisons, with 4 additional sites completed by October 2022.
- The landmark Security Investment Programme was completed in March 2022, including the deployment of Enhanced Gate Security across 42 high-risk sites.
- Committed an additional £25m investment in prison security: installing high-specification drugs trace detection, mobile phone blocking technology, x-ray baggage scanners, and an Intelligence Management System.
- Secured £34m to improve prison safety and move towards a more preventative approach.
- Accelerated the roll out of Employment Hubs with 23 now established and the appointment of 20 Employment Board Chairs.
- Announced that we will legislate to enable prisoner apprenticeships, in collaboration with the Department for Education.
- Committed to action on Friday releases to tackle the strain this can cause if prisoners cannot access essential services; this includes pursuing legislation to address this issue for those at risk of reoffending, when parliamentary time allows.

- Plans to open a Residential Women's Centre in Wales to provide a community-based alternative to a short custodial sentence.

- Launched our staff retention toolkit into all prisons alongside a number of new initiatives to support retention, including a new buddy scheme.

- Key Performance Indicators, introduced in April 2022, set clear expectations of delivery, and Governors will be held to account as part of their performance reviews.

As the consultation response makes clear, this is the start of an ambitious delivery plan in the years to come and the Government is committed to continued engagement with stakeholders to ensure we deliver on it.

Today, I lay in Parliament this response, which sets out the views of respondents to our consultation questions and how the government proposes to implement the commitments in the White Paper.'

Singapore Digital Economy Agreement Update

[HLWS98]

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

Today, I am proud to announce that the UK-Singapore Digital Economy Agreement (DEA) enters into force, following the completion of the necessary domestic procedures on both sides. This will allow UK businesses to start benefitting from the provisions contained within the agreement, helping them to trade and grow.

This ground-breaking agreement is the world's most innovative digital trade agreement, concluded as it was between two of the most advanced digital trade nations. The UK-Singapore Digital Economy Agreement is deeper and wider than previous trade agreements covering the modern digital economy. Complementing and building on the G7 Digital Trade Principles that we brokered under the UK's G7 Presidency, the Singapore Digital Economy Agreement will serve as an ambitious model for modern trade agreements in future – cementing the UK's place as a world leader in digital trade.

By securing open digital markets, prompting the free flow of trusted data, and cutting red tape through overhauling outdated paper-based processes, businesses across the UK can expand into new markets and thrive.

- Now that this ground-breaking trade agreement has entered into force, businesses and consumers across the UK will start to benefit from: Support to UK businesses to access Singapore's digital markets. Digitally delivered services makes up around a third of UK services trade globally - this was worth over £361 billion in 2020, and this deal will help strengthen this further.

- Securing and locking-in trusted cross-border data flows, the foundation for today's modern digital economy – representing up to 26.3% of UK GVA in

2019. This will enable businesses to trade more easily, cheaply, and more quickly, facilitating everything from more efficient manufacturing and supply chains to more reliable infrastructure.

- Cutting red tape by supporting the overhaul of outdated, paper-based trading systems. For example, the agreement contains specific commitments around maintaining legal frameworks that enable the digitisation of trade documents such as Bills of Lading.
- Keeping our country and citizens safe through deepening our partnership with Singapore in areas such as cybersecurity, as well as legally binding

commitments covering online consumer protection and personal data protection.

- Supporting our bid to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), alongside Singapore and 10 other vibrant trading nations. Membership would mean access to a £9 trillion free trade area with some of the biggest and fastest-growing markets in the world.

With this agreement coming into force, our economy and brilliant businesses can build back better from the pandemic and start to benefit from easier, quicker, and more trusted access to the valuable Singapore market.

Written Answers

Tuesday, 14 June 2022

Bread: Food Composition

Asked by *Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the survey by Opinium, conducted on 13–17 May, which found that 61 per cent of respondents said they were "not totally confident of what goes into most supermarket loaves"; what steps they intend to take in response; and what plans they have to improve the health benefits of bread. [HL567]

Lord Benyon: It is essential that consumers have trust in the food they eat, and we recognise the importance of accurate labelling and quality standards for foods, including bread.

The UK maintains high standards on the information provided on food labels and packaging so that consumers can have confidence in the food that they buy. Existing food labelling rules and other requirements on the control of additives in food production ensure that food is produced safely and labelled effectively to enable consumers to make informed choices on the food they buy and consume. The Government is committed to optimising the information that is available to consumers, and the Food Strategy White Paper, which we expect to publish soon, will set out work that we will be taking forward on consumer information and transparency.

Bread sold on the domestic market must also comply with The Bread and Flour Regulations 1998 which sets out specific composition and labelling requirements. There is an ongoing review of The Bread and Flour Regulations 1998 which will include a public consultation on policy proposals where members of the public will be able to express their views. Part of the consultation will look at the implementation of government plans to introduce folic acid fortification to flour. This policy aims to improve public health benefits of bread and other flour containing products by helping to reduce the number of cases of Neural Tube Defects in foetuses.

Coronavirus: Medical Treatments

Asked by *Lord Mendelsohn*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to enable a system whereby COVID Medicines Delivery Units (1) can be contacted by patients directly for emergency treatment, and (2) have direct access to patient medical records so it can give the appropriate clinical advice to each patient. [HL730]

Asked by *Lord Mendelsohn*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will review the (1) operation of, and (2) access to, the COVID Medicines Delivery Unit (CMDU) system,

with particular reference to the role of the 119 telephone number in that process. [HL732]

Lord Kamall: There are currently no plans to enable self-referral. When an individual within the eligible treatment cohort registers a positive test, their eligibility is identified through clinical coding which notifies the local COVID Medicine Delivery Unit (CMDU) to contact the patient to assess their suitability for treatment. If patients are not contacted within 24 hours or are not digitally identifiable, they can contact their general practitioner (GP) or NHS 111 for a referral to a CMDU. CMDUs have access to the patient's medical history to ensure that the treatments available are safely and appropriately prescribed for the individual.

The Antivirals and Therapeutics Taskforce and NHS England and NHS Improvement review the operations of CMDUs to ensure they remain fit for purpose. The 119 service provides assistance to order tests and report results for patients who are not able to do so online. The 119 service does not provide clinical advice and cannot confirm eligibility for treatment or refer patients to CMDUs to be assessed for treatment.

Doctors: Gender Recognition

Asked by *Lord Clement-Jones*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment the NHS made of the implications for the right of a patient to request treatment from a doctor of the same sex when allowing doctors to register under a new name and gender on the General Medical Council medical register. [HL478]

Lord Kamall: No formal assessment has been made.

Infosys: Contracts

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 Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office; and what was the cost to the taxpayer of each of those contracts. [HL542]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Officials have found no record of any contracts having been awarded by the FCDO to Infosys in that timeframe.

Records of Government contracts above £10,000 in central government and £25,000 in the wider public sector are published on Contracts Finder:

<https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Search>.

Non-tuberculous Mycobacteria

Asked by *Baroness Masham of Ilton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact on patients with non-tuberculous mycobacteria should there be a delay to the

next meeting of the NHS England's Clinical Priorities Advisory Group. [HL646]

Asked by Baroness Masham of Ilton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures are in place to test patients treated with macrolide therapy for non-tuberculous mycobacteria; and how many of these tests have been undertaken in England. [HL647]

Lord Kamall: No formal assessment has been made. Patients with non-tuberculous mycobacteria will continue to be managed in primary and secondary care settings and treated with the current available treatments known as 'Guideline Based Therapy' as recommended by the British Thoracic Society.

The British Thoracic Society guideline for the use of long-term macrolides in adults with respiratory disease suggests that patients who are able to expectorate should be considered for testing for non-tuberculous mycobacteria prior to starting long-term macrolide therapy. A copy of the guideline is attached. NHS England and NHS Improvement do not hold data on the number of tests undertaken.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Guideline for Long Term Macrolide Use [BTS Guideline for Long Term Macrolide Use (1).pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-06-06/HL646>

Northern Ireland: Animal Welfare

Asked by Lord Morrow

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the requirement for animals purchased in Great Britain to be returned to the selling herd or sent to an approved test centre for 42 days before they can be transported to Northern Ireland; what analysis they have conducted of the impact of this period increasing from 30 days to 42 days since the introduction of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland; and what steps they are taking to reduce this period. [HL440]

Lord Benyon: Once an animal has been purchased at a show in Great Britain, this animal can then move to Northern Ireland, as long as it has fulfilled its residency requirements. This means the animal must have been a resident in GB for 3-6 months, or from birth, depending on the reason for movement. These requirements apply to GB originating animals that are intending to move into Northern Ireland after purchase.

In order to support the ability for Northern Ireland livestock (sheep, goats, cattle) to attend shows, sales and exhibitions in Great Britain an easement was formally agreed between the UK Government and EU Commission in January this year, which allows Northern Ireland livestock to attend shows and sales in Great Britain without being subject to a 6-month residency requirement

in Great Britain, on the condition that they return to Northern Ireland after 15 days. This allows for livestock to return to Northern Ireland without having to spend 6 months in Great Britain.

Following their arrival in or return to Northern Ireland, DAERA then require livestock to be subject to 30 days in isolation with a minimum time lapse of 42 days between Tuberculosis tests.

Parliamentary Procedure

Asked by Lord Forsyth of Drumlean

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker whether he plans to publish the marked-up text showing the proposed changes to the Companion to Standing Orders from the 2017 version; and whether he plans to consult peers prior to printing the new version. [HL810]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The new edition of the Companion to the Standing Orders will, like all previous editions since the Procedure Committee was first appointed in 1940, be issued under the authority of that Committee. In line with longstanding practice, the members of the Procedure and Privileges Committee have been briefed on all the changes contained in the latest edition, and no changes of substance have been or will be made unless they have been agreed by the House as a whole.

Passports: Applications

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the time taken to (1) issue new passports, and (2) renew current passports. [HL662]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Since April 2021, people have been advised to allow up to ten weeks when applying for their British passport as more than 5 million people delayed applying due to the pandemic.

Between March and May, over 90% of applications processed were completed within six weeks, with approximately 98.5% completed within ten weeks.

Perishable Goods: UK Trade with EU

Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering

To ask Her Majesty's Government what decisions they have taken following the recent discussions with the (1) United Nations, and (2) the EU, on the movement of perishable goods between the UK and the EU under the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement. [HL382]

Lord Benyon: We are not aware of any discussions with the UN on this specific issue.

We continue to engage with the EU on a range of sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) issues through the TCA framework. The TCA established the Trade Specialised Committee on SPS measures, including certification

requirements and border clearance processes, and their application, in order to facilitate trade between the Parties. The Committee last met in September 2021 and the minutes can be found [here](#).

Visas: Ukraine

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Harrington of Watford on 1 June (HL337), and his remarks on 7 June in relation to Ukraine that "visas take between two and three days" and that "the number of applications awaiting conclusions is about 19,000" (HL Deb col 1088), how

many of those applicants have been waiting for clearance for (1) one, (2) two, (3) five, and (4) more than 10, weeks; and what are the reasons for the longer delays. [HL806]

Lord Harrington of Watford: Information on the number of visas granted under these schemes can be on the GOV.UK webpage: Ukraine Family Scheme and Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme (Homes for Ukraine) visa data - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

Applications are normally processed in date order from when documents were uploaded, or after an appointment at a Visa Application Centre (VAC). We are working seven days a week to process applications.

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