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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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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, 7 July 2022

Care Costs Cap

[HLWS189]

Lord Kamall: My Hon Friend the Minister of State (Minister for Care and Mental Health) (Gillian Keegan) has made the following Written Statement:

The government is implementing a comprehensive reform programme of adult social care with £5.4 billion investment over three years, building on measures in the Health and Care Act. This includes £3.6 billion to reform the social care charging system and enable all local authorities to move towards paying providers a fair cost of care.

Today the Department of Health and Social Care has published updated operational guidance on implementing the cap on care costs, alongside the government response to the consultation on this draft guidance. This guidance seeks to support all local authorities in their preparations for implementing our reforms from October 2023.

These changes will end the lottery of unpredictable care costs through the introduction of a £86,000 cap on personal care costs, as well as a more generous means test, raising the upper capital limit from £23,350 to £100,000, and the lower capital limit from £14,250 to £20,000.

The Government's consultation on the statutory guidance to implement charging reform ran from 4 March until 31 March 2022 and sought views on how a cap on care costs would operate in practice. The consultation received 161 responses, indicating broad support of the policy principles and the aims of our reforms. The feedback suggested that sections of the guidance needed further development to ensure they are clear and workable. We have therefore worked with local authorities and the wider adult social care sector to clarify and expand the guidance in line with this feedback.

The guidance updates the existing care and support statutory guidance (CASS) and covers the following areas:

- Cap on care costs (including detail on: daily living costs; what counts towards the cap; the metering process; requesting that the local authority meets self-funders' needs and cross-border issues);
- Independent personal budgets (including detail on: the principles of establishing an independent personal budget; verification of the purchase of care; dispute resolution; and moving from an independent personal budget to a personal budget); and
- Care accounts (including detail on: what should be included in a care account; care account statements; retention of care accounts; and portability of care accounts).

We have also amended the guidance in response to feedback on the implementation of one specific aspect of our reforms, the extension of Section 18(3) of the Care Act 2014.

As announced in Building Back Better, from October 2023 we will extend the right for self-funding individuals to have their eligible care needs met by their local authority, such that they can access care at, generally lower, local authority rates. This is aimed at improving fairness and accessibility, as well as supporting the operation of the cap, which is based on how much local authorities pay for care. We will do this by extending the application of Section 18(3) of the Care Act 2014.

The consultation sought views on how best to ensure smooth implementation of this change. Respondents pointed towards a need to mitigate the initial impacts of Section 18(3) and a common theme in responses from local authorities was concern about the workability of full implementation from October 2023. They were also concerned about the potential impact on those awaiting care and support, should a large number of people with existing care arrangements already in place approach their local authority to arrange their care at this point in time.

The guidance published today therefore clarifies our intention to stage the extension of Section 18(3) over 18 months, so that people entering residential care from October 2023 are initially eligible. Additionally, anybody already living in residential care will be eligible from April 2025 at the latest, and earlier if the market can sustain full rollout. This will be kept under regular review. Section 18(3) already applies to individuals who are receiving care outside of a residential care setting.

Section 18(3) does not affect an individual's ability to use the cap on care costs; all care users will be able to meter towards the cap on care costs from October 2023. Rather, Section 18(3) helps individuals ensure that they pay no more than the metering rate when meeting their eligible needs; the metering rate is based on the fees commissioned by local authorities, and these cannot always be secured by individuals arranging their own care. This means that individuals using section 18(3) from October 2023 onwards need not pay more than £86,000 on getting the personal care they need; their local authority will arrange their care and they will meter towards the cap based on the amount they spend. Everyone who funds their own care will be able to ask their local authority to meet their needs from April 2025 at the latest. People with assets of less than £100,000 do not need to use Section 18(3); they will be able to ask their local authority to meet their needs from October 2023, as a result of the extended and more generous means test.

This staged approach to introduction will allow individuals funding their own care to benefit from local authorities' expertise in commissioning as quickly as possible, while allowing local authorities and social care providers to plan for this change and avoid unnecessary disruption to service provision.

Today's publication is a further milestone on the government's journey to reform adult social care, creating a system that is fit for the future and of which we can all be proud.

Energy Infrastructure Planning Projects

[HLWS192]

Lord Callanan: My Honourable friend the Minister for London and Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Small Business, Consumers and Labour Markets) (Paul Scully) has today made the following statement:

This Statement concerns an application for development consent made under the Planning Act 2008 by NNB Generation Company (SZC) Limited for the construction and operation of a nuclear power station near Leiston in Suffolk.

Under section 107(1) of the Planning Act 2008, the Secretary of State must make a decision on an application within three months of the receipt of the Examining Authority's report unless exercising the power under section 107(3) of the Act to set a new deadline. Where a new deadline is set, the Secretary of State must make a Statement to Parliament to announce it. The current statutory deadline for the decision on the Sizewell C Nuclear Power Station application is 8 July 2022.

I have decided to set a new deadline of no later than 20 July 2022 for deciding this application. This is to ensure there is sufficient time to allow the Secretary of State to consider the proposal.

The decision to set the new deadline for this application is without prejudice to the decision on whether to grant or refuse development consent.

Fiscal Risks and Sustainability Report 2022

[HLWS188]

Baroness Penn: My right honourable friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Simon Clarke) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) has published its Fiscal Risks and Sustainability report (FRS) today. This report fulfils the OBR's obligation to examine and report on the sustainability of, and the risks, to the public finances, in accordance with the Charter for Budget Responsibility. The UK continues to be a leading example in fiscal transparency and risk management.

The FRS has been laid before Parliament today and copies are available in the Vote Office and Printed Paper Office. The government will respond formally to the FRS 2022 at a subsequent fiscal event.

The UK has experienced several significant shocks over the last decade, including the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, Russia's invasion of Ukraine and a spike in global energy prices.

The government has taken a balanced approach, ensuring that it continues to support people and the

economy in the face of global pressures and uncertainty with temporary, timely and targeted support, while reducing debt over the medium-term. The government's support for cost of living has now totalled over £37 billion this year, with the OBR noting in today's report the government spent as much "*as it did supporting the economy through the financial crisis*".

The government is also committed to building a stronger economy for future generations and the OBR today has revised up long-run productivity growth because of the government's plans to deliver the over £600bn in gross public sector investment over the next 5 years, reaching the highest sustained levels of public sector net investment as a proportion of GDP since the late 1970s.

In the long run, the OBR's projections show that demographic change, other cost pressures and the transition to net zero will put present significant challenges to the public finances. The OBR note the actions the government has taken to strengthen the public finances and reduce debt levels over the medium-term, but significant pressures remain. The report also highlights the UK still faces threats in the near-term. The public finances remain sensitive to inflation and interest rates, with the outlook for energy prices being uncertain and pronounced by heightened geopolitical tensions. The government must therefore continue to bring down the level of debt and rebuild fiscal space so we can safeguard the economy against future challenges and respond as future risks materialise.

Offshore Transmission Network: Holistic Network Design and Pathfinder Projects

[HLWS186]

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:

Today marks a significant milestone for the Offshore Transmission Network Review (OTNR), and the British Energy Security Strategy, with the publication of the first major deliverable – the Holistic Network Design, developed by National Grid Electricity System Operator. The full Holistic Network Design and supporting documents and maps can be found at: <https://www.nationalgrideso.com/future-energy/the-pathway-2030-holistic-network-design>.

The UK Government launched the OTNR in 2020 to improve the delivery of transmission connections for offshore wind. Considering the increasingly ambitious targets for offshore wind deployment, the current approach of delivering individual links for each wind farm is no longer fit for purpose and will not deliver the best outcomes for consumers, the environment or local communities.

More recently, the British Energy Security Strategy set out bold plans to scale up and accelerate affordable, clean and secure energy made in Britain, for Britain, so we can

enjoy greater energy self-sufficiency with cheaper bills. This included an ambition for 50GW of offshore wind by 2030.

Holistic Network Design: Developing the GB network in a timely way is vital. Without it we will waste a significant volume of cheap, green electricity. This will require more network infrastructure than today, both onshore and offshore, but through an upfront, strategic approach to network planning we will ensure that new network infrastructure is minimised, and where it cannot be avoided, it is brought forward in the most appropriate place.

The first step to this new innovative approach is the Holistic Network Design, which has been published today (07 July) by National Grid ESO. The HND represents a significant shift in how network infrastructure is planned. It is a first of a kind strategic network design for the upgraded and new onshore and offshore network infrastructure needed to connect 18 offshore wind farms. This will provide the network infrastructure needed to meet our ambition of delivering 50GW of offshore wind by 2030.

The Holistic Network Design, for the first time balances economic factors with consideration of environmental and community impacts. It sets out the need for this infrastructure, not a detailed project plan. No decisions have yet been taken on the route for the network, or how best to do this. All projects that come forward as a result of the HND will be subject to the relevant democratic planning processes. These will ensure local stakeholders get their say on developments and impacts are mitigated as far as possible.

Pathfinder projects: Alongside improving strategic network planning for 2030 and beyond, we are also facilitating innovation for well-advanced projects connecting ahead of 2030. Today, four initial Pathfinder Projects are being announced – in Norfolk, Aberdeen and South Yorkshire. These projects have voluntarily opted in to utilise changes made under the OTNR to increase network coordination and maximise the benefits for consumers, communities, and the environment. NGENO will continue working with developers to progress these projects.

Five projects off the coast of East Anglia have today confirmed their commitment to exploring coordinated network designs, with a view to identifying future Pathfinder projects. Further information on these announcements can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/offshore-transmission-network-review>.

Online Safety Bill: Scope

[HLWS191]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: I am repeating the following Written Ministerial Statement made today in the other place by my Right Honourable Friend, the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Nadine Dorries MP:

The Online Safety Bill will deliver vital protections for children, ensure there are no safe spaces for criminals online and protect and promote free speech.

All services in scope of the Bill must tackle criminal activity online, and all services likely to be accessed by children will have duties to protect them from harmful content. The major platforms will have additional responsibilities to set out clearly what content harmful to adults they allow on their service, and to enforce their own policies consistently. Nothing in the Bill requires services to remove legal content from their platform and users will continue to be able to hold robust discussions of controversial issues, including those which might cause offence, online.

The Bill sets a threshold for harmful content, which brings into scope content of a kind which presents a material risk of significant harm to an appreciable number of children or adults in the UK. Disagreement online will not meet the threshold of harm in the Bill, including on issues of scientific debate.

A key feature of the online safety regulatory framework will be the designation of priority harmful content for children and adults. Services in scope of the Bill which are likely to be accessed by children will be required to prevent them from encountering ‘primary priority content that is harmful to children’, and to protect children in age groups at risk of harm from ‘priority content that is harmful to children’.

The largest and most high risk, Category 1, services will also need to be clear in their terms of service how ‘priority content that is harmful to adults’ is addressed by the service. Services will be able to set their own tolerance for legal content for adult users. Category 1 services will need to assess the risk of priority harmful content to adults, set out clearly in terms of service how such content is treated and enforce their terms of service consistently. This could include specifying that the content will be removed or deprioritised in news feeds, but could also include the platform stating that such content is allowed freely or that it will be recommended or promoted to other users. In addition, all services will need to have regard to freedom of expression when implementing their safety duties.

Final details of the types of content covered by the three categories (primary priority content for children, priority harmful content for children and priority harmful content for adults) will be designated in secondary legislation following consultation with Ofcom. This will ensure the types of designated content are based on the most recent evidence and emerging harms can be added quickly, future-proofing the legislation. However, the government recognises the interest from parliamentarians and stakeholders in the identity of priority harmful content. To provide more detail on the harms that we intend to designate, the government is publishing a proposed list of the types of content that it expects to be listed as primary priority and priority harmful content for children and priority harmful content for adults.

The government considers that the types of content on the indicative list meet the threshold for priority harmful content set out in the Bill. This threshold is important to ensure that the online safety framework focuses on content and activity which poses the most significant risk of harm to UK users online. It is important for the framework to distinguish in this way between strongly felt debate on the one hand, and unacceptable acts of abuse, intimidation and violence on the other. British democracy has always been robust and oppositional. Free speech within the law can involve the expression of views that some may find offensive, but a line is crossed when disagreement mutates into abuse or harassment, which refuses to tolerate other opinions and seeks to deprive others from exercising their free speech and freedom of association.

This may not be an exhaustive list of the content which will be designated as priority harmful content under the Bill. We will continue to engage extensively with stakeholders, parliamentarians and Ofcom, including on some of the most harmful content online, ahead of designating the details of the three categories of priority harmful content in secondary legislation.

Indicative list of priority harmful content

Adults:

Priority content (Category 1 services need to address in their terms and conditions):

- Online abuse and harassment. Mere disagreement with another's point of view would not reach the threshold of harmful content, and so would not be covered by this.
- Circulation of real or manufactured intimate images without the subject's consent.
- Content promoting self-harm.
- Content promoting eating disorders.
- Legal suicide content.
- Harmful health content that is demonstrably false, such as urging people to drink bleach to cure cancer. It also includes some health and vaccine misinformation and disinformation, but is not intended to capture genuine debate.

Children:

Primary priority content (children must be prevented from encountering altogether):

- Pornography.
- Content promoting self-harm (with some content which may be designated as priority content, e.g. content focused on recovery from self-harm).
- Content promoting eating disorders (with some content which may be designated as priority content, e.g. content focused on recovery from an eating disorder).
- Legal suicide content (with some content which may be designated as priority content, e.g. content focused on recovery).

Priority content (companies need to ensure content is age appropriate for their child users):

- Online abuse, cyberbullying and harassment.
- Harmful health content (including health and vaccine misinformation and disinformation).
- Content depicting or encouraging violence.

Online Bill: Update for Report Stage

[HLWS190]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: I am repeating the following Written Ministerial Statement made today in the other place by my Right Honourable Friend, the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Nadine Dorries MP:

Today the Government is committing to a series of changes to strengthen the Online Safety Bill further, and deliver our manifesto commitment of making the UK the safest place in the world to be online. This ground-breaking legislation will make technology companies accountable to an independent regulator to keep their users safe, while enshrining safeguards for freedom of expression online.

The Government has tabled amendments to make a series of changes to the Bill. This includes:

- Temporary “must carry” requirements for platforms to carry recognised news publisher content until an appeal on removal or moderation has taken place.
- Changes to the illegal safety duties, to include the risk that a service is used for the commission or facilitation of an offence, better to address concerns about cross-platform harms and breadcrumbing.
- Providing further powers to enable Ofcom to require companies to take additional steps to tackle child sexual exploitation and abuse online.
- Strengthening the harmful and false communications offences, by including a partial exemption for holders of certain licences to ensure licence holders are not able to undermine the offence or avoid prosecution for harmful behaviour.
- Changes to make clearer that category one service providers can decide to allow harmful content on their service if they choose to.

In addition, many people are rightly concerned about the threat that state-sponsored disinformation poses to UK society and democracy. The Government has tabled an amendment that builds a ‘bridge’ between the National Security Bill and the Online Safety Bill. This amendment to the National Security Bill will designate the offence of Foreign Interference as a “priority offence” in Schedule 7 to the Online Safety Bill. This will capture the kind of state-sponsored disinformation that is of most concern: covert attempts by foreign state actors to manipulate our information environment in order to interfere in UK society and undermine our democratic, political and legal processes.

Following careful consideration and consultation with stakeholders and parliamentarians, the Government

commits to implement the following changes, bringing forward amendments in the Lords where necessary:

Small but high-risk services:

Emerging risky services list

The tech sector is fast-moving and companies can rapidly expand. The Government recognises concerns that this pace of change will make it more challenging for Ofcom to keep the register of high-risk, high-reach (Category 1 services) up to date. To address this, the Government will introduce a new duty on Ofcom to identify and publish a list of companies that are close to the Category 1 thresholds. This will ensure that Ofcom proactively identifies emerging risky companies, and is ready to assess and add these companies to the Category 1 register without delay.

This new requirement on Ofcom will be combined with Ofcom's existing duties continually to assess regulated services and to add them to the register of categories if they meet the relevant threshold conditions. This will ensure the regime remains agile and able to adapt to emerging threats, as well as ensuring Ofcom can develop a detailed understanding of new risks.

Deferred power to apply the adult safety duties to small but high-risk services

We also recognise the concerns which have been raised around smaller platforms which allow or encourage suicide, antisemitic, incel, and racist content on their services and will continue with cross-government work on such issues. These platforms will already be subject to the illegal safety duties, ensuring that they put in place effective measures to prevent the most harmful content being shared on their services.

The current provisions in the Bill relating to legal content that poses a risk of harm to adult users acknowledges that the reach of such content as well as the functionality of the service, such as algorithmic promotion of harmful content, will affect the risk it poses to users.

Further research is necessary to determine whether there is sufficient evidence to expand the duties on small but risky platforms. We will therefore be conferring a deferred power on the Secretary of State to create a new category of small but high-risk services which will be subject to the duties relating to adults' risk assessment and adult safety. This change will mean those smaller but high-risk services will be held to account for the transparent and consistent enforcement of their own terms and conditions. The services included in this new category would be identified through a similar process as for Category 1 services in the Bill, but without a requirement relating to the number of users of the service. The Secretary of State will also be able to consider other relevant factors in addition to the risk of harm to avoid inadvertently bringing small services into scope where this would not be proportionate to the risk presented.

To ensure the Secretary of State has the necessary evidence to inform the decision whether to make this

change, we will require Ofcom to produce a report with evidence of the prevalence of, and risk associated with, priority harmful content on non-Category 1 services. The Secretary of State will be required to consider that report when taking the decision on whether to commence the power.

It is vital that the Online Safety Bill remains targeted and proportionate and does not impose any undue burdens on business. We will only apply the adult's risk assessment and adult safety duties to services in this new category, rather than the full range of Category 1 duties.

Definition of "recognised news publisher":

We are committed to protecting media freedom and the invaluable role of a free press in our society and democracy. We are clear that online safety regulation must protect the vital role of the press in our society. This is why we have provided protections for recognised news publisher content and journalistic content. News publishers' websites are not in scope of online safety regulation. The legislation also contains safeguards for news publisher content and wider journalistic content when it is shared on in-scope social media platforms, including a right of appeal for journalists when their content is removed. At Report stage, we will strengthen protections, including to ensure that recognised news publishers' content remains online while an appeal takes place. However, we are clear that sanctioned news outlets such as RT must not benefit from these protections. As such, we intend to amend the criteria for determining which entities qualify as recognised news publishers in the Lords explicitly to exclude entities that are subject to sanctions.

Epilepsy trolling:

Flashing images sent online deliberately to people with epilepsy can result in significant harm. The Government has listened to parliamentarians and stakeholders about the impact and consequences of this awful behaviour. We welcome the Law Commission's recommended new criminal offence and can confirm that the Government will legislate for a new offence of epilepsy trolling through this Bill at the earliest possible stage. We had hoped to introduce a Government amendment at Report stage but it is essential to create an offence that is legally robust and enforceable so that those perpetrating this disgraceful behaviour will face the appropriate criminal sanctions. We therefore commit to table amendments to create this offence in the Lords..

Secretary of State's power of direction on codes of practice:

We recognise the concerns raised that the Bill allows too great a degree of executive control. These have focused in particular on the power for the Secretary of State to require Ofcom to modify a draft of a code of practice for reasons of public policy. We remain committed to ensuring that Ofcom maintains its regulatory independence, which is vital to the success of the framework. With this in mind, we have built a number of safeguards into the use of the Secretary of State's

powers, to ensure they are consistent with our intention of having an independent regulator, and are only used in limited circumstances with appropriate scrutiny.

We will make two substantive changes to this power: firstly, we will make it clear that this power would only be used ‘in exceptional circumstances’; and secondly, we will replace the ‘public policy’ wording with a more clearly defined list of reasons for which the Secretary of State could issue a direction. This list will comprise national security, public safety, public health, the UK’s international relations and obligations, economic policy and burden to business.

We are grateful for the continued engagement and scrutiny of the Bill as it moves through its Parliamentary stages. These changes ensure that the Bill remains sustainable, workable, and proportionate, and will create a significant step-change in the experience people have online.

Publishing risk assessment summaries:

We recognise the need for companies to be as transparent as possible when it comes to the level of risk in the design and operation of their services. This needs to be balanced with ensuring confidential information is protected, whilst maintaining the Bill’s risk-based and proportionate approach. The Bill already requires in-scope services to carry out risk assessments, keep them up-to-date and update them before making a significant change to the design or operation of their service. Ofcom will also require major platforms to publish annual transparency reports - summaries of risk assessments

could be included in this, however, we recognise calls to ensure this is more robustly enforced.

We therefore intend to require the highest risk companies to publish a summary of their illegal and child safety risk assessments, with a further requirement that the same categories of company submit these risk assessments in full to Ofcom. This should ensure greater transparency from the highest risk companies, whilst making it easier for Ofcom to supervise compliance with the risk assessment duty.

Public Sector Fraud Authority

[HLWS187]

Lord True: The Government has announced in the Spring Statement that it will create a Public Sector Fraud Authority (PSFA) to fight public sector fraud.

The PSFA will focus on performance and outcomes, building expert-led services to support government departments and public bodies to combat fraud. It will bring increased scrutiny across the system.

The government had planned for the PSFA to be launched in July 2022, with a statement to the House. The planned statement will be made, but at a later date.

The PSFA will be part of wider spending by the government of over £750 million to combat fraud. Once launched, it will replace the existing Centre of the Counter Fraud Function.

Written Answers

Thursday, 7 July 2022

Afghanistan: Development Aid

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much aid they have provided to Afghanistan since 1 January. [HL1202]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The FCDO has disbursed £160 million on humanitarian assistance since 1 January 2022. Our aid is vital and will provide life-saving support to the most vulnerable, especially women and girls, minority groups, and people with disabilities. We are also funding child protection support and supporting access to gender-based violence services.

Afghanistan: Food Supply

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the food security crisis in Afghanistan and the prospect of famine. [HL1201]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Afghanistan continues to face a serious and worsening humanitarian crisis. It is affecting just under half of the population, with 18.9 million facing acute food insecurity. This is now one of the world's most severe food security crises. 92% of the population faces insufficient food consumption. People continue to turn to drastic measures to feed their families with nearly 60% of households resorting to crisis coping strategies. Over 6 million people have been internally displaced and millions of children are out of school. The combination of food and other household prices rising and the reduction in economic opportunities in Afghanistan will lead to a significant increase in poverty rates in Afghanistan. The recent earthquake in eastern Afghanistan on 22 June has exacerbated the situation.

On 11 January 2022, the UN launched an appeal for \$4.4 billion for 2022, the largest humanitarian appeal on record, reflecting the magnitude of the humanitarian challenge ahead. The UK was at the forefront in responding to this. On 30 March, the Foreign Secretary announced the UK pledge of £286 million for 2022/2023, the second highest commitment to the Humanitarian Response Plan for Afghanistan to date. This commitment reflects the UK's enduring commitment to the people of Afghanistan.

Afghanistan: Refugees

Asked by *The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many former Locally Employed Staff have made applications for relocation or other assistance under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy; how many of these

applications have (1) been processed, and (2) are waiting to be processed; what is the average length of time for an application to be processed; and how long they expect it will take to clear any backlog. [HL1237]

Baroness Goldie: Since January 2022 we have received approximately 3,000 ARAP applications per month. Given many of these are speculative or duplicates, we cannot provide precise data as to processed or waiting to be processed numbers.

Application processing times can vary given the complexities of individual circumstances such as, but not limited to, their ability to respond to requests for information, their location, access to IT or employment checks.

However, the speed of decision making in HM Government does not solely determine the speed of evacuation. Many ARAP applicants are undocumented and cannot leave Afghanistan through any official route. We are bringing them out at the speed our partners in the region will allow.

To date, we have relocated over 9,600 eligible individuals and their dependents and we estimate that there are 8,000 (inclusive of their dependents) ARAP eligible individuals still to be relocated to the UK. This figure is subject to change as we continue to work through the outstanding applications.

Aircraft Carriers: F-35 Aircraft

Asked by *Lord West of Spithead*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Goldie on 20 June (HL693), when the UK will be able to deploy a carrier with its full load of 36 F-35B UK aircraft, should the operational requirement demand it. [HL1252]

Baroness Goldie: On current plans, by the end of 2025, the UK will have procured 48 F-35Bs.

The Queen Elizabeth Class carriers have been designed to be able to embark 40 aircraft, a mix of fixed wing and rotary wing. The composition and size of the any embarked air group in a deploying carrier will be tailored to meet the operational requirement.

Apprentices: Minimum Wage

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to review the current national minimum wage for apprentices. [HL1216]

Lord Callanan: The National Minimum Wage rates, including for apprentices, are based on the independent and expert advice of the Low Pay Commission (LPC). The Government set a remit in March 2022 for the LPC to make recommendations in the Autumn for minimum wage rates to apply from April 2023. The LPC draws on economic, labour market and pay analysis, independent

research, and stakeholder evidence to inform its recommendations.

Asylum: Rwanda

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask Her Majesty's Government what percentage of people seeking asylum in the UK must be sent to Rwanda for them to consider the policy a successful deterrent against small boat crossings of the English Channel. [HL1248]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The number of people who can be relocated to Rwanda under the Migration and Economic Development Partnership is uncapped. This is part of a suite of measures aimed at breaking the business model of people smuggling gangs, and as with all policies its impact will be kept under review.

Australia: Navy

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in light of the AUKUS agreement, what decisions they have made regarding the provision of nuclear-trained submariners to the Royal Australian Navy. [HL1251]

Baroness Goldie: Initial steps are underway to ensure Australia has a workforce with the necessary skills, training, and qualifications to build, operate, and sustain a conventionally-armed nuclear-powered submarine capability.

Bangladesh: Climate Change

Asked by Baroness Uddin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of Bangladesh about steps that could be taken to mitigate the impact of climate change in that country. [HL1223]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We regularly engage with the Government of Bangladesh in regards to the impacts of climate change. In January 2020 we launched a UK-Bangladesh climate partnership to share expertise in all COP26 priority areas and hosted a series of virtual exchanges on adaptation, mitigation, climate finance and on nature. The UK was pleased to support Bangladesh, as chair of the Climate Vulnerable Forum to host an event in Glasgow that highlighted the urgency of tackling climate change for vulnerable countries. Our six year £120 million Bangladesh Climate and Environment Programme, announced at COP26, also has a focus on resilience in climate vulnerable areas. The programme will support the scaling up of locally-led adaptation and help households to cope with climate impacts.

British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies: Sanctions

Asked by Baroness Stern

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether any (1) systems, or (2) agreements are in place, to encourage the British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies to proactively share information with UK authorities relating to entities registered in these jurisdictions that are suspected to be connected to sanctioned individuals. [HL1119]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies share valuable company ownership information with UK law authorities under the Exchange of Notes process, whereby information is shared with UK law authorities within at least 24 hours of receiving a request (and within one hour for urgent requests). Information provided has enabled the seizure of illicit funds, including information to support the National Crime Agency's (NCA) first Unexplained Wealth Order, which froze approximately £25 million. Furthermore, the UK's Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation, which sits within HM Treasury, engages regularly with the Overseas Territories and the Crown Dependencies on compliance, enforcement and licensing. This engagement has assisted these jurisdictions in developing the implementation of financial sanctions across the wider UK Family.

UK sanctions apply in all Overseas Territories and the Crown Dependencies, and these jurisdictions have frozen Russian assets with a combined estimated value in excess of £10 billion. These figures are likely to change.

Coronavirus: Notifiable Diseases

Asked by Baroness Masham of Ilton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether Covid-19 is a notifiable disease; if so, (1) who is under a duty to make such notifications, and (2) to whom such notifications are made; whether the public are (a) under a duty, or (b) advised, to notify if they have Covid-19; and if so, who the public should notify. [HL1242]

Lord Kamall: Covid-19 is a notifiable disease. Registered medical practitioners have a duty to make such notifications to the proper officer of the local authority and the UK Health Security Agency. There is no specific duty for the general public to make a notification and there is no advice to do so. However, individuals attending medical or dental appointments in person are advised to inform their healthcare provider where they are symptomatic or if they have a positive test for Covid-19.

Coronavirus: Vaccination

Asked by **Baroness Young of Old Scone**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the ongoing Covid-19 vaccination programme will be centrally or locally coordinated. [HL1227]

Lord Kamall: The Covid-19 vaccination programme will continue to be centrally coordinated. Whilst it is expected that the programme will continue to be managed at national, regional and local levels, the National Health Service is working with providers, local authorities, voluntary and community sector leaders and communities on the delivery of Covid-19 vaccinations. This includes maximising uptake and coverage, ensuring flexibility to respond to local needs and promoting better understanding of the benefits of vaccination and public health prevention initiatives.

Cystic Fibrosis: Social Services

Asked by **Baroness Davidson of Lundin Links**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what (1) number, and (2) percentage, of (a) children, and (b) adults, with cystic fibrosis in England saw a social worker at their latest annual review for each year since 2015. [HL1079]

Lord Kamall: The information requested is not collected centrally. However, from April 2023, local authorities will be mandated to collect data on adult social care patients and users. While this will not include information on diagnoses or medical conditions as standard, data will be collected on physical, sensory and social support; memory and cognition; and learning disability and mental health.

Disability Living Allowance

Asked by **Lord Dodds of Duncairn**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people were in receipt of the Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance in each of the four countries of the UK in the last year; and how many of those recipients in each country used it to cover the cost of a Motability Scheme lease agreement. [HL1233]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: The latest available information showing the number of individuals who received the Higher Rate mobility award of Disability Living Allowance, is given in the table below.

Number of individuals in receipt of Higher Rate Mobility Award of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) by country, at the end of each quarter, February 2021 to November 2021: Great Britain.

Quarter	England	Wales	Scotland	Total (GB)
Feb-21	464,946	46,003	68,817	579,767
May-21	456,141	45,065	67,551	568,752
Aug-21	448,341	44,246	66,397	558,979
Nov-21	440,127	43,259	64,974	548,362

Source: DLA Cases in Payment, Stat-Xplore, Department for Work and Pensions

We do not hold information on the number of higher rate mobility recipients that use it to cover the cost of a Motability Scheme lease agreement. However, the latest Motability annual report does show that over 640,000 people use the scheme.

Environmental Land Management Schemes

Asked by **Baroness Redfern**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what support they will give to land managers to track the outcomes of their engagement in Environmental Land Management schemes; and how they will evaluate the impact of Environmental Land Management schemes by comparing areas where land managers (1) are, and (2) are not, participating in such a scheme. [HL834]

Lord Benyon: We are building on our experience of delivering, monitoring and evaluating agri-environment schemes over the last few decades, working closely with farmers, land managers and wider industry stakeholders to test, trial and pilot our approach to scheme design and delivery, including monitoring and evaluation.

We are in the process of establishing our monitoring and evaluation plans for each of the Environmental Land Management schemes. To ensure strength in design of our monitoring and evaluation we are using a mixed methods research approach, this includes consideration of how to compare between sites that our participating in schemes and those that are not. This will help us to understand what additionality and impact our schemes are delivering.

More specifically, in the Sustainable Farming Incentive pilot, land managers will be supported through monitoring and site visits to track how they are delivering their outcomes. Similar to our approach to monitoring Countryside Stewardship, we are using a combination of physical and virtual site visits, remote monitoring, and desk-based administrative checks. We are still designing our monitoring and evaluation plans for Local Nature Recovery. In the first round of Landscape Recovery, each project will be responsible for developing their monitoring, evaluation, and learning strategy. There will also be scheme-level monitoring, evaluation and learning which will help us learn about how the scheme is working and make improvements for later rounds of Landscape Recovery projects.

F-35 Aircraft

Asked by **Lord West of Spithead**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Goldie on 20 June (HL691), whether there has been a change to the agreement that two squadrons would have Royal Naval Fleet Air Arm designation. [HL1253]

Baroness Goldie: Three F35 Squadrons are designated as Royal Air Force. A fourth, 809 Naval Air Squadron

will carry Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm designs. The fifth Lighting Force squadron has yet to be designated, with a timeline on identity and ownership yet to be established.

F-35 Aircraft: Procurement

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Goldie on 20 June (HL695), what representations they have made, if any, to the government of the United States regarding the (1) manufacture, and (2) delivery profile, of F-35 combat aircraft, given the changes to the orders made for that aircraft by other governments. [HL1255]

Baroness Goldie: We have informed the US led F-35 Joint Program Office (JPO) of our Tranche 2 purchase intention. However, we are subject to our internationally agreed manufacture and delivery schedules, and capacity limitations in the overall F-35 development programme with its many global customers.

Food Supply

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact on the global food security crisis of reduced exports of grain, fertiliser and other agricultural products as a result of Russia's invasion of Ukraine [HL1240]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The impact of the invasion is being felt around the world but most acutely in countries already facing dangerous levels of food insecurity. The World Food Programme estimates that if the war continues, up to 47 million more people could face acute food insecurity this year, bringing the total as high as 323 million by the end of the year. There is an estimated 25 million ton backlog of grain unable to leave Ukraine due to Putin's reckless blockade of Ukraine's Black Sea ports. The UK is working closely with our international partners to mitigate the impacts of Russia's actions and to tackle global food and nutrition insecurity. We are holding Russia's actions to account, being clear that Western sanctions are not to blame, supporting UN-led negotiations to reopen maritime routes for food exports from Ukraine's sea ports, and supporting efforts to transfer grain to global markets via rail routes.

France: Diplomatic Relations

Asked by Lord Blencathra

To ask Her Majesty's Government, when pursuing diplomatic relations with the government of France, what consideration they have given to "Fashoda syndrome", a concept describing the priority given by the government of France to asserting French influence in parts of Africa which are perceived to be susceptible to British influence. [HL1180]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We work very closely with France on key global challenges, both bilaterally and in multilateral fora. This includes in Africa, where the UK and France are committed to cooperating to support peace, stability, resilience and economic development across the continent. For example, we have both been involved in the regional effort against Boko Haram, and our forces operate side-by-side to combat extremism in the Sahel, where UK Chinooks provide support to French troops.

Health Professions: Dermatology

Asked by Baroness Finlay of Llandaff

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to address shortages in the dermatology workforce in England; and what assessment they have made of the potential role of (1) tele-dermatology for diagnostic support and triage, (2) GPs, (3) nurses, and (4) pharmacists, in increasing capacity for treatment and monitoring of skin disorder. [HL1184]

Lord Kamall: Following the 2021 Spending Review, we are increasing the number training posts in dermatology in England to 15, with doctors in postgraduate training in post from August 2022. The National Health Service is also ensuring that patients can access specialist care through dermatology outpatient services. This focuses on a personalised approach for patients waiting for outpatient appointments, improving waiting times and offering choice for patients at the point of referral. Pharmacies can offer clinical advice and over-the-counter medicines for many skin conditions and where appropriate pharmacists can advise the patient to consult a general practitioner (GP), nurse or other healthcare professional.

Many dermatology departments in England now offer a rapid access Teledermatology Advice and Guidance service for GPs to seek advice from a specialist prior to a referral being made. The use of technology, such as digital images, reduces unnecessary face-to-face appointments and provides flexibility for patients when booking outpatient appointments.

A Teledermatology Roadmap for 2020-21 v1.0 provides recommendations on optimising teledermatology triage and specialist advice, including establishing a working group of multidisciplinary clinical leads and other stakeholders. A copy of the Roadmap is attached. The two-week wait skin cancer pathway: innovative approaches to support early diagnosis of skin cancer as part of the NHS Covid-19 recovery plan also includes a new virtual pathway using teledermatology. A copy of the guidance for the skin cancer pathway is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

A Teledermatology Roadmap for 2020-21 v1.0 [NOTP Teledermatology Roadmap 202021 v10 FINAL (1).pdf]

The two-week wait skin cancer pathway: innovative [B0829-suspected-skin-cancer-two-week-wait-pathway-optimisation-guidance (1).pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-06-22/HL1184>

Housing: Compulsory Purchase

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government on how many occasions in the past three years local authorities in England have exercised their powers (1) to requisition, and (2) to purchase compulsorily, houses or flats that have been unoccupied for long periods; and whether they will issue new guidance for areas of great housing need. [HL1381]

Lord Greenhalgh: The Government is keen for local authorities to bring back more empty homes into productive use. In Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill which is currently before Parliament we are improving the process for making and confirming compulsory purchase orders so local authorities have more confidence in using these powers.

Local authorities can exercise their powers to take over the management of long-term empty homes (through Empty Dwelling Management Orders) in certain circumstances in order to bring them back into use in the private rented sector. The department does not collect data on the number of such orders made.

Local authorities can also use their housing compulsory purchase powers under the Housing Act 1985 to deal with empty homes. In the last 3 years, 118 compulsory purchase orders under these enabling powers have been submitted to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities for confirmation. There are also other enabling powers that compulsory purchase orders can be made under that could involve empty homes. No further detailed breakdown is available.

Housing: Construction

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what additional housing they are planning, together with (1) local authorities, (2) the Housing Corporation, and (3) others, in light of the arrival of more refugees from (a) Afghanistan, (b) Ukraine, and (c) Hong Kong, and other long-term visa holders. [HL1187]

Lord Harrington of Watford: The UK has a long and proud history of welcoming migrants including recent arrivals from Ukraine, Afghanistan, Syria and Hong Kong. All conflict and threat situations are unique and require unique and tailored responses, including different levels of required housing support and different means of providing this.

We are actively exploring options to provide suitable settled homes for refugees in housing need, which support their integration and access to education and employment.

In the longer-term, the provision of affordable housing is a key element of the Government's plan to end the

housing crisis, tackle homelessness and provide aspiring homeowners with a step onto the housing ladder. Our £11.5 billion Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) will provide up to 180,000 new homes across the country, should economic conditions allow. Around half the homes will be for affordable and social rent and we will deliver more than double the amount of social rent compared to the current programme, with around 32,000 social rent homes due to be delivered.

India: Rivers

Asked by Baroness Uddin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of India regarding (1) that country's management of its river flows and dams, and (2) the consequential impact on Bangladesh. [HL1224]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Ministers and officials regularly raise environmental issues in discussions with their Indian counterparts.

The UK's South Asia Water Governance Programme, which ran from 2012 to 2021, worked with countries across South Asia, including India and Bangladesh, to increase regional cooperation in the management of the transboundary Himalayan Rivers to deliver inclusive development and climate resilience in the region. Her Majesty's Government will continue supporting regional cooperation on transboundary Himalayan Rivers through the new Climate Action for a Resilient Asia programme, announced at COP26.

Leasehold: Reform

Asked by Lord Truscott

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect to introduce legislation to Parliament as part of the second phase of their leasehold and commonhold reforms. [HL1249]

Lord Greenhalgh: The Government has already made great strides with the Leasehold Reform (Ground Rent) Act 2022, which came into force from 30 June 2022. We will bring forward the second part of our leasehold reforms in the next session of this Parliament.

Myanmar: Armed Conflict

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are making representations to the government of Myanmar following attacks in (1) 2021, and (2) 2022, by armed men on villages of the Bayingyi minority. [HL1186]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We strongly condemn the reported attacks against the Bayingyi people, and all ethnic groups in Myanmar. We are deeply concerned by the continuing conflict in Sagaing Region, where many of the Bayingyi communities live.

Since the coup, we have had no senior bilateral engagement with the military regime but we continue to call out their actions publicly, most recently in a statement to the UN General Assembly on 13 June 2022. On 26 November, we coordinated a joint statement which raised concern at the risk of mass atrocities in Sagaing Region and elsewhere in Myanmar, and urged the military to end the violence. Although international humanitarian access to Sagaing is difficult, we have managed to provide assistance to local partners who operate in these hard-to-reach areas.

Palace of Westminster: Repairs and Maintenance

Asked by Lord Colgrain

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker what has been the cost of (1) the salaries, recruitment fees, and redundancy payments for non-parliamentary staff, and (2) the contractors to undertake surveys and preparatory work, to prepare for Restoration and Renewal since 2014. [HL1268]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The House of Lords does not hold detailed information regarding the salaries, recruitment fees, and redundancy payments for non-parliamentary staff involved in the Restoration and Renewal Programme.

The House of Lords is recharged for its share of Restoration and Renewal costs by the House of Commons. Since 2014 the House of Lords contribution to the Restoration and Renewal Programme has been £58.7m. Of this sum, staff costs have totalled £7.55m and other costs, which include the costs of contractors to undertake surveys and other preparatory work, have totalled £51.15m.

Palestinians: Health Services

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to make representations to the World Health Organisation to (1) collect, and (2) publish, health statistics for Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank; and for Palestinians living in camps outside of these areas. [HL1235]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We do not collect this data. The World Health Organisation Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean regularly share health data on the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs). The UK is a major donor of the World Health Organisation globally. We remain a key supporter of United Nations Relief and Works Agency, who help provide basic education to more than 533,000 children a year (half of whom are girls), and access to health services for 3.5 million Palestinian refugees.

Parking and Public Sector: ICT

Asked by Baroness Altmann

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure that all (1) parking facilities, and (2) essential public services, including medical appointments, council inquiries, service payments, and registrations, are always available to those who do not have (a) internet access, (b) a Wi-Fi connection, or (c) a smartphone. [HL1260]

Lord Greenhalgh: The Government's Service Standard is mandated for government departments to follow in the development of new digital services. The Service Standard requires new services to be accessible to all users, including disabled people, people with other legally protected characteristics, people who do not have access to the internet and/or lack the skills or confidence to use the internet.

The Service Standard mandates that users who need "assisted digital support" should be able to access public services by phone, face to face meetings, or via webchat. All central government services must meet these requirements to go onto GOV.UK and assurance is provided through a formal Assessment process.

The NHS also follows the Service Standard with additional elements specific to health needs. People can contact their GP practice by telephone, in person or using a secure online form and patients unable to access remote general practice consultations for any reason should be offered an alternative appointment mode. In England and Wales there is no provision for births, deaths, marriages or civil partnerships to be registered online, attendance in person is required. Online tools must always be provided in addition to, rather than as a replacement for, other channels for accessing general practice, and practice receptions should be open so that patients without access to telephone or online services are in no way disadvantaged.

Responsibility for parking facilities rests with the relevant local authority, as they are best placed to consider how local needs can be effectively met.

DLUHC is currently reviewing Private Parking Code of Practice, which has previously recommended that operators accept at least two different payment methods. For example, cash and card. There are currently no plans to issue a similar direction to local authority car parks.

Poland: Property

Asked by Baroness Deech

To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent discussions they have had with the government of Poland regarding the restitution of property seized from Polish Jewish citizens during the period of Nazi occupation; and what was the outcome of any such discussions. [HL1181]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK continues to meet its commitments under the Terezín declaration.

Her Majesty's Government (HMG) raised concerns with the Polish Government about legislation introduced last year concerning the restitution of property seized during the Nazi occupation. The UK's Special Envoy for post-Holocaust Issues, Lord Pickles, has followed developments closely and through the British Embassy in Warsaw, we have been acting in consultation with our likeminded partners to engage with the Polish Government. Following the passage of the legislation, which HMG judges will have a negative effect on legitimate claimants, the then Minister for Europe (Wendy Morton) publicly expressed their disappointment and called for legal avenues for claims to remain open.

The UK will continue to demonstrate our unwavering commitment to supporting Holocaust survivors and their descendants. Lord Pickles is chairing a discussion on restitution at the Terezín Declaration Conference on 3 November. Working with like-minded partners and the World Jewish Restitution Organisation (WJRO), the FCDO will continue to urge Poland to fairly, objectively and sensitively deal with Holocaust-era property restitution.

Proceeds of Crime: Nigeria

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 8 June (HL408), whether they will include victim compensation in any agreement about the appropriate use of funds. [[HL1229](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford:

- The NCA's recent recovery of \$23,439,724.98 from the associates and family of former Nigerian Head of State, General Sani Abacha, was carried out following a request from the US Department of Justice (USDOJ).
- Acting on a request from the USDOJ, the NCA pursued nearly seven years of protracted litigation and international negotiation to obtain the recovery order, to enforce the US forfeiture order relating to the recovered monies.
- As such the funds have now been transferred to the Home Office for onward transmission to the USDOJ. The ultimate intention is for the \$23.5m to be repatriated for the benefit of the Nigerian people.

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 8 June (HL408), what steps they will take to ensure that the total sum of the Abacha loot will not end up in the hands of criminals. [[HL1230](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The UK is a signatory to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) and places great importance on the recovery and return of the proceeds of corruption.

The UK is mindful of its obligations under international law, including UNCAC, and the principles for transparent and accountable asset return which were endorsed at the Global Forum for Asset Recovery in 2017.

In January 2022, the UK published its first ever Framework for Transparent and Accountable Asset Return, which applies across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The purpose of the Framework is to ensure consistency, transparency and accountability in the UK's process for returning assets.

When returning funds, the UK will always sign a case-specific agreement with the relevant country detailing the steps that the recipient Government will take to ensure the funds are put to their intended use.

All agreements which oversee the return of funds abroad are published on gov.uk

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 8 June (HL408), why they are transferring funds to the US Department of Justice given that the United Nations Convention states that returns should be made to the victim country. [[HL1231](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford:

- The NCA's recent recovery of \$23,439,724.98 from the associates and family of former Nigerian Head of State, General Sani Abacha, was carried out following a request from the US Department of Justice (USDOJ).
- Acting on a request from the USDOJ, the NCA pursued nearly seven years of protracted litigation and international negotiation to obtain the recovery order, to enforce the US forfeiture order relating to the recovered monies.
- As such the funds have now been transferred to the Home Office for onward transmission to the USDOJ. The ultimate intention is for the \$23.5m to be repatriated for the benefit of the Nigerian people.

Refugees: Resettlement

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many refugees have been resettled under the UK Resettlement Scheme which was announced by the Home Secretary in June 2019; and how many refugees they expect to be resettled in the UK under its provisions (1) this year, and (2) for each of the next five years. [[HL1238](#)]

Lord Harrington of Watford: The Home Office publishes data on asylum and resettlement in the 'Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release'. Data on the number of refugees resettled through the UKRS is published in table Res_D01 of the asylum and resettlement detailed data.

In the first quarter of this year, the Government has resettled 345 individuals through the UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS). The scheme began in January 2021 and

as of April 2022, a total of 1,470 refugees have been resettled through the UKRS.

There is no stated target for the new global UKRS. The number of individuals resettled in a particular period will depend on a range of factors, including the flow of referrals from UNHCR in the field and local authorities' ability to provide suitable accommodation and care packages in the UK.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Table - Res_D01 - Asylum and Resettlement Data [resettlement-local-authority-datasets-mar-2022 (1).xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-06-23/HL1238>

Support Through Court: Finance

Asked by Lord Ponsonby of Shulbrede

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the article in the Guardian 'Court support service under threat as Ministry of Justice pulls funding', published on 19 June, and the comments of a Ministry of Justice spokesperson that "charities will soon be able to bid for new grant funding", whether there will be a gap in the provision for Litigants in Person between the ceasing of funding for Support Through Court and whatever new provision they intend to make. [HL1243]

Lord Bellamy: The Ministry of Justice recognises the pivotal role that organisations such as Support Through Court play in assisting litigants in person. The Ministry has agreed extensions to ensure continuity of funding, taking both the Litigants in Person Support Strategy and Legal Support for Litigants in Person grants to 30 September 2022. All organisations have been notified, including Support Through Court.

There will be new grant funding available soon for legal support for litigants in person throughout England and Wales. The details on the level of funding and how it will be administered are close to being finalised. There will be a competed process for determining which charities are awarded funding. I will write to the Noble Lord confirming the process shortly.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the UK Prosperity Fund will be implemented. [HL1318]

Lord Greenhalgh: The Fund was launched on 13 April 2022 and will run until March 2025. We intend the first payments to places to take place in the Autumn.

Ukraine: Armed Conflict

Asked by Lord Selkirk of Douglas

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that Russia pays restitution to Ukraine after the war in that country. [HL1116]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Mr Putin alone is responsible for the damage and destruction caused by his illegal war in Ukraine. His regime must pay for the damage that it has caused. The UK will continue to support efforts to achieve accountability for crimes committed during the illegal invasion, including by the provision of assistance to the International Criminal Court investigation.

Universal Credit

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what work they are doing to ascertain the needs of vulnerable claimants who will be moving from Employment Support Allowance to Universal Credit; and what additional safeguards they will introduce to protect claimants who transfer from Employment Support Allowance to Universal Credit. [HL1246]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: The Department is fully committed to supporting vulnerable claimants, including those on ESA during the roll out of Universal Credit.

To support this, we have completed an Equality Analysis before restarting managed migration to ensure we are fully compliant with the Public Sector Equality Duty. During the discovery phase we will work with small numbers of existing benefit claimants from different places across the country to identify what is needed to prompt and help people to make a claim to Universal Credit.

There will be a range of support available to individuals, including a dedicated DWP telephone line and signposting to independent support through the Help to Claim service.

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