

Session 2022-23
No. 33



Tuesday
12 July 2022

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

Written Statements1

Written Answers.....2

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

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

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

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

<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
Baroness Evans of Bowes Park	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
Earl Howe	Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Chief Whip
Baroness Barran	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
Lord Bellamy	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Justice
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 Harrington of Watford	Minister of State, Home Office and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Lord Kamall	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
Lord Offord of Garvel	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scotland Office
Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and Whip
Baroness Penn	Whip
Baroness Scott of Bybrook	Whip
Lord Sharpe of Epsom	Whip
Baroness Stedman-Scott	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Stewart of Dirleton	Advocate-General for Scotland
Lord True	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
Baroness Vere of Norbiton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Minister of State, Home Office
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip

© Parliamentary Copyright House of Lords 2022

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

Written Statements

Tuesday, 12 July 2022

Energy (Oil and Gas) Profits Levy Bill

[HLWS197]

Baroness Penn: I have made a statement under Section 19(1)(a) of the Human Rights Act 1998 that, in my view, the provisions of the Energy (Oil and Gas) Profits Levy Bill are compatible with the convention rights. A copy of the statement has been placed in the Library of the House.

Patient Safety Commissioner for England

[HLWS196]

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

In July 2021, the Government published its formal response to the recommendations by the Independent Medicines and Medical Devices Safety review led by Baroness Cumberlege setting out an ambitious programme of change. As part of our response, we committed to appoint a Patient Safety Commissioner with a remit covering medicines and medical devices.

I am pleased to announce the appointment of Dr Henrietta Hughes OBE FRCGP SFFMLM as the first ever Patient Safety Commissioner for England. This appointment was made following an open competition, in line with the Governance Code for Public Appointments, and following a pre-appointment scrutiny hearing with the Health and Social Care Committee. Dr Hughes will continue working as a GP and remain Chair of Childhood First.

The First Do No Harm report, led by Baroness Cumberlege highlighted the need to avoid harm and protect patients. The Patient Safety Commissioner will add to and enhance existing work to improve patient safety in relation to medicines and medical devices by being a champion for patients and helping us to learn more about what we can do to put patients first. The Commissioner's core duties are to promote the safety of patients, and promote the importance of the views of patients and other members of the public. The Commissioner will act independently, and a Memorandum of Understanding will be agreed to ensure the Commissioner's independence is safeguarded.

School Rebuilding Programme

[HLWS195]

Baroness Barran: My Right Honourable Friend, the Secretary of State for Education (James Cleverly), has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

I am delighted to confirm details of the next 61 schools prioritised for the School Rebuilding Programme.

The School Rebuilding Programme was announced by the Prime Minister in June 2020 and will transform the learning environment at 500 schools and sixth form colleges over the next decade, supporting teachers in England to deliver a high-quality education, so that pupils gain the knowledge, skills and qualifications they need to succeed. The programme will also support levelling up of opportunity by addressing school buildings with the highest condition need across England.

It represents an important commitment to invest in construction sector jobs and skills, helping drive growth in the economy. The programme will have a continued focus on modern methods of construction and provide opportunities across the industry, including for small and medium-sized enterprises.

As with the first 100 schools announced in 2021, this group of schools has been prioritised solely on the basis of the condition of their buildings. The projects include primary and secondary schools, as well as special schools. This also represents a substantial investment in schools in the midlands and north of England, with 37 out of 61 projects in these regions.

The new school buildings will be energy efficient designs with high sustainability standards, delivering a generation of new school buildings that will be net zero carbon in operation and mitigate the risks of climate change.

The ten-year programme will continue to target school buildings in the worst condition across England. From 19 July to 8 October 2021, we conducted a public consultation with the sector on our approach to prioritising schools for the long-term programme. As set out in the Government's response, we invited responsible bodies – such as academy trusts and local authorities – to submit nominations for their schools with the poorest condition buildings to join the programme.

In 2022 to 2023, we expect to prioritise up to 300 schools in total. We are announcing a smaller group of 61 schools now to maintain the pace of delivery and address some of the poorest condition buildings as soon as possible. We are still assessing all other nominations received and have not ruled out any nominated schools for selection at this point. We plan to make another announcement later this year to confirm further schools selected.

Alongside the rebuilding programme, the Government has committed £1.8 billion in the financial year 2022-23 for maintaining and improving the condition of the school estate.

Further details, including lists of the school rebuilding projects, have been published on GOV.UK. Copies will be placed in the House Library.

Written Answers

Tuesday, 12 July 2022

A303: South West

Asked by **Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the updated business case for the A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down Improvement Scheme has been presented to the Investment, Portfolio and Delivery Committee (IPDC); and if so, (1) when, (2) what is the date of the report containing the updated business case, and (3) what conclusions the IPDC has made on the report. [HL1492]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: National Highways presented the initial Full Business Case (dated January 2022) for the scheme to the DfT Investment, Portfolio and Delivery Committee (IPDC) on 7 February 2022. The Committee was content to approve the initial Full Business Case in support of National Highways proceeding with Main Works and Delivery Assurance Partner contract awards subject to HM Treasury and Ministerial approval. Subsequent HMT approval was conditional upon National Highways and DfT returning to HMT to seek final investment and FBC approval before commencing main works mobilisation and following the conclusion of the planning process.

Allwyn Entertainment: National Lottery

Asked by **Baroness Buscombe**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what engagement (1) the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), and (2) the Gambling Commission, has had with (a) the Ministry of Defence, (b) the Home Office, and (c) the security services, ahead of the announcement on 15 March that Allwyn Entertainment UK was the Preferred Applicant for the fourth National Lottery licence; and whether the Ministry of Defence or the Home Office have approached either DCMS or the Gambling Commission in response to the announcement. [HL1338]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: The Gambling Commission is responsible for running the competition for the fourth National Lottery licence. Under the National Lottery Act 1993, the Commission must ensure that any person who either runs or benefits from the running of the National Lottery is fit and proper and that the Licensee's operation meets high standards of propriety.

Fit and proper checks examine the identity, integrity, criminality and financial standing of those who run, or benefit from running, the National Lottery, or are applying to do so. As part of its duties under the Act, the Commission cannot award the licence unless it is satisfied that the proposed licensee is fit and proper. The

Commission is required to revoke a licence if it becomes satisfied that the licensee is no longer, or indeed never was, fit and proper.

In addition, following the announcement of Allwyn as the preferred applicant in March 2022, standard vetting checks (Baseline Personnel Security Standard or BPSS level) are being carried out, on behalf of the Commission, by UK Security Vetting on key people connected with the proposal. These include Qualifying Direct Shareholders, which is any person who holds at least 5% interest in the licensee.

Animals and Plants: EU Law

Asked by **Baroness McIntosh of Pickering**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many of the 570 Defra items listed on the Retained EU law dashboard, published on 22 June, relate to (1) phytosanitary, (2) plant, or (3) animal health, welfare and hygiene, measures. [HL1279]

Lord Benyon: Currently, of the 570 Defra Items listed on the Retained EU law dashboard 174 of these relate to phytosanitary, plant or animal health, welfare, and hygiene measures. The breakdown across each of these areas is displayed in the table below. This information is available on the Retained EU law dashboard at the link provided here: [Retained EU law dashboard - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/retained-eu-law-dashboard).

Defra will continue to review retained EU law to ensure it has an accurate record of it. The dashboard will be updated every quarter with any additional retained law added.

	Total REUL
Phytosanitary	6
Plant (excluding Phytosanitary)	65
Animal Health	88
Animal Welfare	15
Animal Hygiene	0
Total	174

Asylum: Children

Asked by **Baroness Lister of Burtersett**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to reports that children have been treated as adults and issued 'notices of intent' for removal to Rwanda, how many asylum seekers claiming to be children have been assessed to be adults by the Home Office on the basis that their physical appearance and demeanour very strongly suggested that they were significantly over 18 years of age since 1 January. [HL1314]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Immigration officers operating at the border perform a difficult but vital function in preventing abuse of the immigration system

and protecting genuine children from the safeguarding risks associated with allowing adults to access safe spaces which are properly reserved for children.

The UK Supreme Court recently considered and fully endorsed the lawfulness of the ‘significantly over 18’ policy for initial age assessments conducted at the border by immigration officers in the case of *BF Eritrea UKSC 2019/0147*.

Furthermore, the initial age assessment process represents only the first stage of a broader age assessment procedure. It has been designed to allow those who wish to maintain their claim to be a child to seek assessment by a local authority. It is long established Home Office policy to give significant weight to a local authority age assessment.

The Home Office publishes data on asylum in the ‘[Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release](#)’. Data on the number of age disputes and outcomes are published in table Asy_D05 of the [asylum and resettlement detailed datasets](#). Information on how to use the datasets can be found in the ‘Notes’ page of the workbook. The latest data covers up to March 2022.

Information on future Home Office statistical release dates can be found in the ‘[Research and statistics calendar](#)’.

The published statistics for age disputes indicate there were 428 disputes raised on the basis of physical appearance and demeanour in the first quarter of 2022. Of the 255 disputes resolved in the same period, 126 cases were resolved with an outcome the person was an adult and 129 concluded the person was a child.

The statistics do not distinguish between those who have been assessed to be significantly over 18 and others who have been age disputed but referred directly to a local authority for further assessment. Detail of the volume of age dispute cases for the following quarter will be made available in future planned statistical publications.

Anyone who is the subject of an age dispute will be excluded from inadmissibility procedures as a matter of policy, where either the individual is undergoing assessment by a local authority, where there are ongoing legal proceedings on the subject of age or where the Home Office accepts a subsequent assessment by a local authority that the individual is a child.

Aviation: Standards

Asked by Lord Blunkett

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will publish their new Aviation Passenger Charter, as specified at point 9 of the guidance on UK government action to minimise disruption in the aviation sector and protect passengers, announced by the Department for Transport and the Civil Aviation Authority on 30 June; and what consultation they will conduct prior to its publication. [\[HL1423\]](#)

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: We are working with industry, consumer and disability groups to develop and publish an Aviation Passenger Charter. The charter will provide a single point of information on their rights and responsibilities whilst travelling by air, from booking to if things go wrong. We aim to publish this soon.

China: Partners in the Blue Pacific

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they plan to use their membership of the Partners in the Blue Pacific (PBP) to support UK priorities; and what the reaction of the government of China has been to the formation of the PBP. [\[HL1298\]](#)

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The Partners in the Blue Pacific (PBP) is a new initiative between Australia, Japan, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the United States and our Pacific partners. It builds on our longstanding commitment to the region to help better coordinate our approach and support the Pacific Island Countries line with the Pacific Islands Forum's upcoming 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. This will ensure our support is properly informed by what Pacific Islands Countries themselves need, and that our governments have stronger and regular engagement on Pacific issues and priorities.

Many countries have expressed interest in the PBP since its launch, including China.

Company Accounts

Asked by Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Lord Callanan on 20 May (HL31) and 21 June (HL864), whether (1) quangos acting under a legislative framework, and (2) government departments overseeing the activities of quangos acting under a legislative framework, take into account the leading case law on the subject matter at stake. [\[HL1372\]](#)

Lord Callanan: Regulators and other public bodies will consider case law to the extent that it is directly applicable to their legal functions.

Asked by Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Callanan on 20 December 2021 (HL4706), which said that the Companies Act 2006 “does not establish a requirement for the company to disclose its indistributable reserves”, what consideration they have given to amending that answer in light of the Financing Reporting Council Publication Miscellaneous Reports By Auditors Required By The United Kingdom Companies Act 2006, published in March, which said that “With respect to the auditor's responsibility, the auditor's statement states that it is restricted to an examination of the relationship between

the company's net assets and it's called up share capital and indistributable reserves as stated in the audited balance sheet". [HL1375]

Lord Callanan: No consideration has been given to amending the response to HL4706. The Companies Act 2006 does not establish a requirement for the company to disclose its indistributable reserves. The publication referenced provides guidance for auditors when making reports required, in certain circumstances, by The Companies Act 2006. Proposals to require certain companies to disclose their distributable reserves were included in the Government's response to *Restoring trust in audit and corporate governance*.

Asked by Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Henley on 11 April 2018 (HL6619), why (1) they, and (2) the Financial Reporting Council, consider that the powers of section 464 do not include distributable profits GAAP for the audited annual accounts as relevant accounts, given that section 853(4) Companies Act 2006 states that "references to 'realised profits' and 'realised losses', in relation to a company's accounts, are to such profits or losses of the company as fall to be treated as realised in accordance with principles generally accepted at the time when the accounts are prepared, with respect to the determination for accounting purposes of realised profits or losses". [HL1376]

Lord Callanan: The accounting standards in Section 464 of the Companies Act 2006 are relevant to the preparation of individual or group accounts in accordance with Part 15 of the Act. The Act does not establish a requirement for companies to disclose their distributable profits. Individual accounts are the starting point for calculating distributable profits under Part 23 of the Act. Proposals to give ARGA responsibility for issuing guidance on what should be treated as "realised" profits and losses for the purposes of section 853 of the Act were included in the Government's response to *Restoring trust in audit and corporate governance*.

Digital Technology and Training

Asked by Lord Allen of Kensington

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the survey conducted by the Institute of Directors in April which found that six in 10 employers thought that digitisation, upskilling and professional training would have the greatest impact on the future productivity of their firm and only one in ten cited additional investment in plant and machinery; what steps they plan to take as a result of the survey; and what assessment they have made of the case for tax credits for investment in digitisation and training. [HL1256]

Lord Callanan: Government is helping businesses to invest in digitisation and training through our Help to

Grow programmes. Help to Grow Digital aims to support up to 100,000 SMEs to boost their performance by providing financial discounts of up to £5,000, to cover up to half the costs of approved digital technologies, along with advice and support on the learning platform. Help to Grow Management, meanwhile, is an intensive national training programme designed to improve leadership and management skills. Delivered by leading business schools across the UK, the programme is 90% subsidised by government, with participants contributing £750. It will support up to 30,000 SME business leaders to increase productivity, seize investment opportunities and grow their businesses, developing skills in areas such as financial management, innovation and staff engagement.

Disinformation

Asked by Baroness Merron

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to reach those who are (1) less engaged in current affairs, (2) vulnerable, or (3) have accessibility considerations, to help them tackle misinformation and disinformation; and how they will ensure that such groups have the necessary media literacy skills to identify misinformation or disinformation. [HL1315]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: Her Majesty's Government published its Online Media Literacy Strategy in July 2021, setting out plans to support the education and empowerment of people to make safe and informed choices online. The strategy has a particular focus on vulnerable users.

Through our Year 1 Online Media Literacy Strategy we established the pilot 'Train the Trainer' grant scheme. We administered £250,000 in funding to five media literacy organisations working with schools to adapt their resources for teachers of children with special educational needs. Three of the grantees specialise in news literacy programmes which help build resilience to misinformation and disinformation through information literacy.

Our Year 2 Action Plan announced plans to establish the Media Literacy Programme Fund which will further support media literacy organisations which are undertaking work to support vulnerable users. We have also established the expert Media Literacy Taskforce which has been charged with exploring how to extend the reach of media literacy initiatives to those who are disengaged or lack access to support.

Farms: Renewable Energy

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to (1) incentivise, and (2) reward, farmers contributing to reductions in carbon emissions through renewable energy production. [HL1173]

Lord Benyon: The Net Zero Strategy sets out a clear vision for a sustained increase in deployment of

renewable generation capacity in the 2020s and beyond. This also brings forward the Government's goal of ensuring a fully decarbonised power system by 15 years, to 2035. The British Energy Security Strategy set out a series of bold commitments to support and accelerate this as part of a decisive shift away from expensive fossil fuels.

The current allocation round of the Contracts for Difference is the Government's main mechanism for encouraging large-scale renewable generation, such as solar, in Great Britain. Overall, this will provide £285 million a year to eligible projects. The Government recently announced that further scheme allocation rounds will run annually from 2023.

On farm, the Farming Investment Fund, which launched in November 2022, seeks to encourage farmers in the use of renewable energy as part of its large grants offering (the Transformation Fund). When the first of the farm productivity grants opened it was oversubscribed so we trebled the budget in that fund so that we could support over 4000 farmers nationally with their investment plans. The Government intends to launch future rounds of the scheme, where there will be further opportunities to enhance and reward environmental sustainability measures taken by farmers.

Defra is also exploring renewable energy sources such as capturing methane on farm for use as biogas and green fuels for farm machinery, supporting companies and further research in pioneering innovative new technologies.

We will continue supporting the effective use of land by encouraging large scale projects to locate on previously developed, or lower value land, where possible. We will also support solar that is co-located with other functions (for example, agriculture, onshore wind generation, or storage) to maximise the efficiency of land use.

Fuel Oil and Liquefied Natural Gas

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Gloucester

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many households in the UK rely on (1) oil, and (2) liquified petroleum gas, as their sole source of energy. [\[HL1309\]](#)

Lord Callanan: Oil as primary source:

- 760,000 households in England (The English Housing Survey (2019));
- 129,000 households in Scotland (The Scottish House Condition Survey (2019));
- 140,000 households in Wales (The Welsh Housing Conditions Survey (2017/18)); and
- 526,000 households in Northern Ireland (The Northern Ireland House Condition Survey (2016)).

Liquified petroleum gas as primary source:

- 160,000 households in England (The English Housing Survey (2019));

- 18,000 households in Scotland (The Scottish House Condition Survey (2019)); and
- Data on liquified petroleum gas has not been published separately in Wales or Northern Ireland.

Fuel Oil and Liquefied Natural Gas: Prices

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Gloucester

To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent discussions they have had regarding the adequacy of regulations governing the costs paid by off-grid households for (1) oil, and (2) liquified petroleum gas. [\[HL1308\]](#)

Lord Callanan: The Government understands that fuel prices are an important component of off-grid household and business expenditures and recognises the impact of fuel costs on UK consumers.

The main drivers of changes in heating oil and liquified petroleum gas are the international traded prices of crude oils and refined products. The Government continues to monitor the market closely. An open and competitive market is the best way to keep prices low.

Guantanamo Bay: Closures

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Coventry

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representation they have made to the government of the United States of America to close the detention facilities at Guantanamo Bay. [\[HL1305\]](#)

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK Government's long-standing position remains that the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay should close. We will continue to engage with the US Government on this issue, as we do on a range of national security issues, and in the context of our joint determination to tackle international terrorism and combat violent extremism.

Housing: Disability

Asked by Baroness Deech

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the remarks by Baroness Stedman-Scott on 21 June (HL Deb col 52GC), when they will conclude their analysis of the responses to their consultation on section 36 of the Equality Act 2010 relating to reasonable adjustments to common parts of leasehold homes; and when that section will be commenced. [\[HL1427\]](#)

Baroness Stedman-Scott: This consultation will end on 18 August, after which analysis of the responses will take a number of weeks, and then regulations needed prior to commencement will be prepared. I would expect commencement of the legislation on or after October 2023, given the time required for the regulations and issue of guidance for landlords, tenants and other involved parties.

Migrant Workers: Health Services and Social Services

*Asked by **Baroness Altmann***

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many of the total number of Health and Care Worker visas issued in Q1 2022 were issued to people due to work in (1) the health sector, and (2) the social care sector. [HL1300]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office publishes data on Health and Care Worker visas in the 'Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release'.

Data on the number of Health and Care visas issued are published in table Vis_D02 of the 'entry clearance visa applications and outcomes detailed datasets'. Data on work sectors can be found in table CoS_D01 of the 'Work sponsorship (Certificate of Sponsorship)' dataset. Information on how to use these datasets can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook. The latest data relates to year ending March 2022.

Information on future Home Office statistical release dates can be found in the 'Research and statistics calendar'.

The Home Office does not publish the number of Health and Care worker visas granted by sector.

The published sector (industry) data show visa applications where a certificate of sponsorship was used. The 'Human Health and Social Work Activities' sector cannot be disaggregated to differentiate social care from health.

Motor Vehicles: Energy-intensive Industries

*Asked by **Lord Taylor of Warwick***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to grant the automotive sector energy-intensive status. [HL1367]

Lord Callanan: There is no single definition of an energy-intensive industry (EII). There are currently two schemes for eligible EIIs that provide relief from high industrial electricity costs. The Compensation Scheme provides businesses with relief from a proportion of the costs of both the UK Emissions Trading Scheme and Carbon Price Support mechanism in their electricity bills. The Exemption Scheme provides a discount on the indirect costs of the Contracts for Difference, Renewables Obligation and Feed in Tariffs schemes.

Northern Ireland Protocol

*Asked by **Lord Taylor of Warwick***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure continued peace amid plans to discard parts of the Northern Ireland Protocol. [HL1327]

Lord Caine: Our overriding priority is the restoration of fully functioning devolved government, as provided for in the 1998 Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. While the Protocol was originally intended to protect the 1998

Agreement in both construct and implementation, it is now undermining it and threatening political stability in Northern Ireland. We cannot allow this to continue. While our preference remains to resolve issues around the Protocol through negotiation, this will require greater flexibility from the European Union than hitherto has been the case. Our legislation will enable us to deal with the problems created by the Protocol in ways that uphold the 1998 Agreement, avoids a hard border on the island of Ireland and protects the integrity of both the UK Internal Market and the EU Single Market.

Platinum Jubilee 2022: Medals

*Asked by **The Lord Bishop of St Albans***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to include active members of the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry with five years of service to the list of groups awarded the commemorative Platinum Jubilee Medal. [HL1324]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: Individual Government Departments, the devolved administrations and the Crown Dependencies were responsible for applying the criteria and making eligibility decisions regarding the award of The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Medal to their staff and other organisations that fall under their sponsorship. The criteria are in line with those for the Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2012.

To qualify for the Medal, recipients must be in an eligible public sector role in a frontline emergency service accessed via a call to the 999 emergency telephone number or equivalent. This does not include members of the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry, but that in no way diminishes our appreciation for the vital work they do.

Recovery Loan Scheme

*Asked by **Lord Taylor of Warwick***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to introduce a permanent replacement to the Recovery Loan Scheme to support cashflow. [HL1296]

Lord Callanan: As of the end of March 2022, the Recovery Loan Scheme has provided over £3.4bn of finance to more than 15,000 businesses.

We are consulting with lenders and business representative organisations on how best to continue to support businesses, including on the role of a government-backed loan guarantee scheme. Any such scheme would be announced in parliament in due course.

Roads: South West

*Asked by **Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Amesbury to Berwick Down Improvement Scheme's value for money assessment has been revisited by the Investment, Portfolio and Delivery Committee (IPDC) since the road scheme's value for money was originally

assessed as 'low', with a cost benefit ratio of 1.15. [HL1493]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: An updated Value for Money (VfM) assessment for the scheme was included in the initial Full Business Case presented to the Department for Transport Investment, Portfolio and Delivery Committee on 7 February 2022.

Sizewell C Power Station

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to make the Government Investment Decision for Sizewell C before the summer recess; and what assessment they have made of the impact if that decision were delayed. [HL1297]

Lord Callanan: The Government is in constructive negotiations with the developer over the proposed Sizewell C project. The Department cannot comment on negotiations given the commercially sensitive nature of discussions. The project is also subject to an ongoing application for development consent, entirely separate from the commercial negotiations.

Small Businesses

Asked by Lord Allen of Kensington

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they plan to take to reverse the fall in the number of small businesses in the UK. [HL1258]

Lord Callanan: Small businesses are the backbone of our economy and government aims to make the UK one of the best places in the world to start and grow a business. The government provides a range of support that all businesses can access. These include information on starting up and running a business on GOV.UK, one to one advice via our free Business Support Helpline and through 38 Growth Hubs across England, government backed Start-Up Loans, and businesses with 5 or more employees can access our Help to Grow schemes.

Small businesses will also benefit from the £15 billion of targeted support to help with the rising cost of living. This brings the total cost of living support measures announced to £37 billion this year. Government has cut fuel duty for 12 months, raised the Employment Allowance to £5,000, and is zero-rating VAT on energy-saving materials. This builds on existing support, including business rates relief worth £7 billion over five years.

Small Businesses: Government Assistance

Asked by Lord Allen of Kensington

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to support small businesses in light of the Office for National Statistics release Producer price inflation, UK: May 2022, published on 22 June, showing that in the last year factory gate prices rose by 15.7 per cent

and producer input prices rose by 22.1 per cent. [HL1257]

Lord Callanan: Small businesses will benefit from the £15 billion of targeted government support to help with the rising cost of living. This brings the total cost of living support measures announced to £37 billion this year. Government has cut fuel duty for 12 months, raised the Employment Allowance to £5,000, and is zero-rating VAT on energy-saving materials. This builds on existing support, including business rates relief worth £7 billion over five years.

Additionally, Help to Grow programmes will enable eligible SMEs to mitigate the effects of rising costs by providing financial discounts on approved digital technologies up to a value of £5000 and improving SME leadership and management skills through subsidised courses.

Television: Visual Impairment

Asked by Baroness Crawley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to require television broadcasters improve accessibility for visually impaired people. [HL1341]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: Her Majesty's Government recognises that as part of a digitally inclusive society, television content should be accessible for all UK audiences, including people with visual impairments. As the independent regulator, Ofcom is responsible for holding broadcasters to account for the delivery of television access services, which includes the provision of audio-description services. Statutory targets are set by Ofcom which include five and ten year targets for licensed television services. Ofcom's Code on Television Access Services sets out these obligations and provides guidance and best practice for broadcasters.

UK Endorsement Board

Asked by Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Callanan on 21 June (HL865), which stated "the UK Endorsement Board has interpreted its statutory functions in accordance with the Companies Act and the provision in Section 11 of the Interpretation Act 1978", whether they will issue a correction to the Written Answer by Lord Callanan on 20 May (HL31) which stated "The UK Endorsement Board is only required to assess international accounting standards against the criteria in Regulation 7(1) in SI 2019/685". [HL1373]

Lord Callanan: The Government does not intend to amend its response to HL31 and does not believe that the two statements quoted in the question are in contradiction with one another. The UK Endorsement Board (UKEB) is required to assess international accounting standards (IAS) against the criteria in Regulation 7(1). This also requires the UKEB to have regard to the matters set out in

Regulation 7(2). The interpretation of these functions is considered by the UKEB within the context of the Companies Act. However, the UKEB is not required to assess IAS against individual sections of the Companies Act.

*Asked by **Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Callanan on 21 June (HL865), whether the answer "the UK Endorsement Board has interpreted its statutory functions in accordance with the Companies Act" means that the UK Endorsement Board has determined the suitability of accounting standards for the applicable accounting framework of the Companies Act 2006 as set out by the Written Answers by Lord Henley on 30 January 2019 (HL12948 and HL12949), namely "sections 92, 498(1)&(2), 519, 714(4), 836 and 837 Companies Act 2006"; and if so, whether there is a public record of that having happened. [HL1374]

Lord Callanan: The UK Endorsement Board (UKEB) is required to assess international accounting standards (IAS) in accordance with Regulation 7(1) and with regard to the matters in Regulation 7(2). The interpretation of these functions is considered by the UKEB within the context of the Companies Act. However, the UKEB is not required to assess IAS against individual sections of the Companies Act nor publish any evidence in that regard. With regards to the quoted sections of the Companies Act regarding the calculation of distributable profits, I refer the noble Baroness to my response to HL31 on 20 May 2022.

USA: Partners in the Blue Pacific

*Asked by **Lord West of Spithead***

To ask Her Majesty's Government at what level discussions by the Partners in the Blue Pacific in Washington on 23 June were held; and whether the EU were present at that meeting as observers. [HL1299]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The governments of Australia, Japan, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States dispatched high-level officials to Washington, D.C. on June 23 and 24 for consultations with the Pacific Heads of Mission and other partners, including France. The European Union were present as observers. The meeting followed consultations with Pacific Island Countries, and the Pacific Islands Forum. The Partners of the Blue Pacific (PBP) was launched at the meeting as an inclusive, informal mechanism to support Pacific priorities more effectively and efficiently. The countries will continue to work together in partnership as plans for the PBP develop.

Venezuela: Politics and Government

*Asked by **Lord Hannan of Kingsclere***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they still recognise Juan Guaidó as the legitimate interim

president of Venezuela; and if so, whether they consider the current occupants of the Venezuelan embassy and consulate in London to be legitimate. [HL1311]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We remain deeply concerned about the political situation in Venezuela, where multiple crises are afflicting its people. We continue to recognise Juan Guaidó as the interim constitutional president of Venezuela and continue in our efforts to support a return to democracy in Venezuela. While UK Government does not accept the legitimacy of the Maduro regime, we maintain limited engagement with regime officials where necessary.

Wind Power: Seas and Oceans

*Asked by **Lord Taylor of Warwick***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to cut approval times for new offshore wind farms from four years to one year. [HL1330]

Lord Callanan: In the British Energy Security Strategy the Government outlined how it will cut approval times. The Government will strengthen the National Policy Statements, establish a fast-track consenting process for priority cases, implement a new Offshore Wind Environmental Improvement Package, review the Habitats Regulations Assessment process and work with the Offshore Wind Acceleration Task Force on further cutting the timeline.

World Heritage Sites: Stonehenge

*Asked by **Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb***

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the findings by the Examining Authority and the Secretary of State for Transport that the Amesbury to Berwick Down Improvement Scheme would cause "significant harm" to the World Heritage Site, and the UNESCO World Heritage Committee's opinion that the scheme would adversely impact on the outstanding value of the World Heritage Site, whether the contingent heritage valuation survey which makes up 73 per cent of the Amesbury to Berwick Down improvement scheme's expected benefits has been re-run. [HL1494]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Following an Order of the High Court made on 30 July 2021, the decision, dated 12 November 2020, to grant development consent for the application by National Highways (formerly Highways England) for the proposed A303 Stonehenge scheme was quashed. The Secretary of State is currently re-determining the application.

All further details on the re-determination process are published on the schemes project page on the Planning Inspectorate's website.

As this is now a live planning application, I am unable to comment further.

*Asked by **Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the statement by National Highways that the Amesbury to Berwick Down Improvement Scheme would "protect and enhance" the Stonehenge World Heritage Site, in light of the findings by the Examining Authority and the Secretary of State for Transport that the scheme would cause "significant harm" to the World Heritage Site. [[HL1495](#)]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Following an Order of the High Court made on 30 July 2021, the decision, dated 12

November 2020, to grant development consent for the application by National Highways (formerly Highways England) for the proposed A303 Stonehenge scheme was quashed. The Secretary of State is currently re-determining the application.

All further details on the re-determination process are published on the schemes project page on the Planning Inspectorate's website.

As this is now a live planning application, I am unable to comment further.

Index to Statements and Answers

Written Statements.....1

Energy (Oil and Gas) Profits Levy Bill	1
Patient Safety Commissioner for England.....	1
School Rebuilding Programme.....	1

Written Answers.....2

A303: South West.....	2
Allwyn Entertainment: National Lottery	2
Animals and Plants: EU Law	2
Asylum: Children	2
Aviation: Standards	3
China: Partners in the Blue Pacific.....	3
Company Accounts	3
Digital Technology and Training	4
Disinformation.....	4
Farms: Renewable Energy.....	4
Fuel Oil and Liquefied Natural Gas	5
Fuel Oil and Liquefied Natural Gas: Prices.....	5
Guantanamo Bay: Closures	5
Housing: Disability.....	5
Migrant Workers: Health Services and Social Services	6
Motor Vehicles: Energy-intensive Industries	6
Northern Ireland Protocol.....	6
Platinum Jubilee 2022: Medals	6
Recovery Loan Scheme.....	6
Roads: South West	6
Sizewell C Power Station	7
Small Businesses	7
Small Businesses: Government Assistance	7
Television: Visual Impairment	7
UK Endorsement Board	7
USA: Partners in the Blue Pacific	8
Venezuela: Politics and Government	8
Wind Power: Seas and Oceans	8
World Heritage Sites: Stonehenge.....	8