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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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

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

<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
Baroness Evans of Bowes Park	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
Earl Howe	Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Chief Whip
Baroness Barran	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
Lord 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

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Written Statements

Wednesday, 20 July 2022

BEIS: Departmental Update

[HLWS250]

Lord Callanan: My Right Honourable friend the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Kwasi Kwarteng) has today made the following statement:

BEIS has been committed to improving the business environment and delivering upon the pillars of the Plan for Growth. We have a plan to secure more domestic energy, support people with the cost of living now, grow the economy and raise wages by reindustrialising our industrial heartlands and unleashing innovation, and accelerating great British science. At the same time, we recognise the power of the private sector and have taken steps to boost enterprise by making the UK the best place in the world to start, grow and invest in a business.

We have seen a significant increase in the global wholesale price of gas as a result of Covid-19 aftershocks coupled with Putin's illegal war in Ukraine, which has led to pressure on business and family budgets.

Tackling the cost of living to help families keep more of their own money:

- Raising the National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage, giving a full-time worker a £1,000 a year pay rise. Uprating the National Living Wage has provided a pay rise for about 2.5 million UK workers. This included the largest ever uplift of a £1,000 a year pay rise for full time workers aged 23 and over.
- Helping now with the cost of living by ensuring families receive at least £400 of their electricity bills this winter. Our Energy Bills Support Scheme grant payment will take £400 off family electricity bills.
- Increasing support this winter with at least £250 additional support for most vulnerable. The Warm Home Discount (£150), Winter Fuel Payments (between £100 and £300) and Cold Weather Payments (£25/week), which ensure that the most vulnerable can heat their homes over the colder months.
- Protecting the energy price cap, insulating families from the significant increase in wholesale gas prices. The energy price cap also currently shields 22 million consumers from being overcharged by suppliers. The cap will remain in place until at least the end of this year, ensuring consumers pay a fair price for their energy.
- Shielding the public from rip-offs and boosting competition. Draft legislation will be published this Autumn to give the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) enhanced powers to tackle bad business practices, including making it illegal to pay someone to write or host a fake review and making it easier for consumers to opt out of subscriptions.

Pioneering British science to cure cancers and develop technologies so people have better lives:

- Establishing the Advanced Research and Invention Agency (ARIA) to improve people's lives through state-of-the-art technologies. ARIA will support high-risk, high-reward research and projects which support transformative change, including securing £800 million (by 2025/26) at the Spending Review, agreeing key principles with Devolved Authorities and setting out ARIA's independence.

- Securing biggest ever Research & Development budget. We have secured £39.8 billion of R&D investment supporting our commitment to ensure total R&D investment reaches 2.4% of GDP by 2027.

- Strengthening the UK vaccine ecosystem to ensure resilience against Covid-19 and other future health emergencies. The Vaccine Taskforce has already invested over £395 million in UK manufacturing infrastructure and skills. We have ambitious plans to invest more alongside industry to secure our domestic vaccine resilience. Areas of focus include mRNA capability and investments which will strengthen the resilience of the UK's vaccine supply chains.

- Developing cures for disease, diagnostics and other life-saving research. With DHSC we are committing up to £200 million to healthcare research, diagnostics and manufacturing, building on our world leading COVID-19 vaccination programme.

- Setting out our visions for the UK to be a global hub for innovation by 2035. We will do this by working with private business, reforming our existing R&D institutions and supporting 7 Technology Families from quantum computing to artificial intelligence.

- Building a world-leading UK Space Sector. We have published the National Space Strategy backed by £1.75 billion and aligned civil and defence policy for the first time. Through our part owned OneWeb satellite system, we have seen the launch of multiple waves of UK satellites. We also invested £20 million in specialised technology to support the James Webb telescope launch, marking a significant step in space discovery and our understanding of the universe.

Boosting British manufacturing and reindustrialising our former heartlands to drive long-term growth:

- Delivered two gigafactories, bringing back manufacturing to Britain. We've announced funding for 2 major gigafactories in the UK using the Automotive Transformation Fund. Envision AESC based in Sunderland and Britishvolt in Blyth, Northumberland, will have a total capacity of over 40GWh, create over 3,500 direct jobs, as well as 1000s more in the supply chain and will see over £2bn of private sector investment in the region. We have also helped secure Ford's investment of £230m in production of electric vehicle components at Halewood.

- New support for Energy Intensive Industry to protect it for the future. We've announced a 3-year extension to EII compensation scheme in the British Energy

Security Strategy and more than doubling the budget. This goes alongside our consultation on ‘other’ energy support measures to reduce electricity prices to improve competitiveness for these industries.

- Commenced the National Security and Investment Act protecting British industry from hostile activity. This gives the Government greater powers to protect our national security by screening and, if necessary, intervening in investments and other acquisitions of control over sensitive entities and assets in the UK economy.
- Taken significant steps to begin to compensate postmasters who have suffered as a result of the appalling Horizon IT failings. This has included announcing that Government will provide funding for interim compensation payments of up to £100k ahead of full funding for eligible postmasters whose Horizon-related convictions have been quashed. We have also announced £19.5 million interim compensation for the “GLO” group of postmasters who exposed the Horizon scandal – to be followed as soon as possible by final compensation.

Securing Britain’s energy to ensure more cleaner, cheaper energy is generated in this country:

- Accelerating domestic energy independence through the British Energy Security Strategy (BESS). The BESS and the Energy Security Bill includes support for household energy affordability and efficiency, new and ambitious commitments on nuclear and renewable energy, and setting out the role of the North Sea in our low carbon transition, including delivering our £1 billion commitment to Carbon Capture and Storage clusters by 2030.
- Largest-ever renewable energy auction providing 11GW of great British electricity, with wind power coming in cheaper than ever. Earlier this month, we secured a record 11GW of renewable energy through the biggest Contracts for Difference round yet – enough to power around 12 million homes.
- Rebuilding Britain’s proud nuclear sector. We have Passed the Nuclear Energy (Financing) Act 2022, which will unblock obstacles and cut costs. We are also investing in the sector through the £120 million Future Nuclear Fund, £100 million for Sizewell C (in addition to driving forward negotiations), £120 million to develop Small Modular Reactors. We have also established Great British Nuclear a landmark moment in Britain’s nuclear history, to ensure we deliver multiple new projects this decade.
- Securing strong domestic oil and gas extraction. We have given the UK’s oil and gas sector clarity about the role hydrocarbons will play in our energy need with an upcoming new licencing round, backed by the North Sea Transition Deal we will ensure jobs are protected and technologies developed.
- Kickstarted UK Hydrogen Industry with capital and revenue support as well as world-leading legislative framework. Over the last year, we published our

Hydrogen Strategy and Investor Roadmap and launched a Net Zero Hydrogen Fund worth up to £240 million to nurture the UK’s world leading hydrogen economy. The Energy Security Bill also provides a legislative framework for our Hydrogen business models.

- Denying Britain’s enemies access to funding by ending Putin’s revenue streams. We also committed to end the use of Russian oil and coal power by the end of 2022 and are working with allies to support them away from use of expensive fossil fuels.
- Backing other renewable technologies to build stronger domestic supply chain. We have provided a £60 million boost for floating offshore wind projects, supported entrepreneurs to find innovative ways to reduce expensive fossil fuel dependence through the Energy Entrepreneurs Fund, and ringfenced £20 million per year for Tidal Stream electricity.
- Worked with our colleagues across Government to deliver the UNFCCC COP26 Summit in Glasgow in November 2021 to move 90% of the global economy to net zero. This followed the publication of our Heat and Buildings and Net Zero Strategies, which laid out a clear path to decarbonise all sectors of the UK economy and achieve net zero by 2050. The Summit was attended by 120 world leaders and over 40,000 registered participants. The resulting Glasgow Climate Pact increases the likelihood of delivering the Paris Commitment 1.5 degree scenario.
- Since publishing the Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution in November 2020, we have landed £22bn of inward investment into home-grown clean technologies, and estimate to have created around 68,000 green jobs.

Call for Evidence Response on SLAPPs

[HLWS243]

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

Today the Government is publishing its response to its Call for Evidence on SLAPPs – Strategic Lawsuits Against Public participation.

SLAPPs are a growing form of aggressive litigation which seek to intimidate, silence and harass an opponent via improper use of the judicial system. The invasion of Ukraine has heightened concerns around the way foreign actors may be misusing the UK legal system to fund litigation against free speech in our country.

For this reason, I published a Call for Evidence on 17 March 2022 inviting views on potential measures for legislative, procedural and regulatory reform. We also ran stakeholder engagement roundtables in early May, inviting evidence from legal and media professionals, civil society organisations and academics, to develop a robust policy base for reform. The Call for Evidence

closed on 19 May and received 120 responses, all of which have been individually analysed and assessed.

The evidence received throughout this process has been invaluable in exposing the extent of this problem and the measures necessary to effectively combat it.

To that end, we will legislate at the earliest opportunity to enable clearer identification of SLAPPs and introduce an early dismissal process, supported by a formal costs protection scheme. SLAPPs claims that would be subject to an early dismissal mechanism would have to satisfy a three-part test, requiring a court to be satisfied:

- that a case relates to a public interest issue, for example investigating financial misconduct by a company or individual;
- that it has some features of an abuse of process, for example sending a very large number of highly aggressive letters on a trivial matter; and
- that it is without sufficient evidence of merit.

I do not rule out further reform, as SLAPPs are an evolving issue affecting different areas of domestic law, as well as jurisdictions around the world. Our approach must continue to develop in a way that counters the ever-expanding threats which SLAPPs present. At the same time, while we must protect the right to freedom of expression, we will also ensure that the right balance is struck between that and the right to reputation and privacy.

These reforms sit alongside our proposals for a Bill of Rights that will reinforce freedom of speech and freedom of expression. These reforms alongside the Bill of Rights represent an opportunity to put President Putin and his cronies on notice. We will not allow our courts to be abused to censor those brave enough to call out corruption. We will protect our free press, which is there precisely to hold the powerful to account. We will defend freedom of speech—the liberty that guards all our other freedoms in this country. Our reforms will further strengthen free speech so that those with blood on their hands and those with dirty money in their bank accounts are no longer free to hide in the shadows.

The response to the Call for Evidence is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/strategic-lawsuits-against-public-participation-slapps> and a copy will be placed in the House library.'

Changes in Immigration Rules

[HLWS251]

Lord Harrington of Watford: My hon Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Safe and Legal Migration (Kevin Foster) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

My Rt Hon friend the Home Secretary is today laying before the House a Statement of Changes in Immigration Rules.

The changes reflect amendments to the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme to allow children who are

not applying with, or to join, their parent or legal guardian in the UK to qualify for a visa.

As the Government announced on 22 June 2022, these changes are designed to ensure, where a Ukrainian parent or legal guardian confirms it is their child's best interests for the child to come to the UK without them, there is a route for them.

In these cases, the sponsor will need to give a greater commitment to support the child for 3 years or until the child turns 18 (so long as the sponsorship lasts at least 6 months), whichever is soonest. The local authority will conduct safeguarding checks and pre-approval of the sponsor before the visa application can be made, and there will need to be parental consent which, in line with the Ukrainian Government's requirements, will need to be certified by an authority approved by the Ukrainian government.

There have already been applications from children travelling without their parents. These applications were on hold while the Government carefully worked through the challenges around allowing children to travel without a parent. On 15 July the Home Office published a concession to the Immigration Rules to allow these cases to be prioritised once they have the necessary approval from the local authority.

We have also introduced an additional safeguarding requirement to ensure if a sponsor is not approved by the local authority under the Home for Ukraine Scheme, they cannot sponsor the same or another child under this Scheme or the Ukraine Family Scheme.

The Homes for Ukraine Scheme will be opened to new child applicants applying without their parents or legal guardians on 10 August.

Contingent Liability: Recovery Loan Scheme

[HLWS240]

Lord Callanan: My Right Honourable friend the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Kwasi Kwarteng) has today made the following statement:

I am tabling this statement for the benefit of Honourable and Right Honourable Members to bring to their attention the details of the extension to the Recovery Loan Scheme (RLS).

RLS is facilitated by the Government-owned British Business Bank and delivered through its delivery partners. Under the extension, lenders will offer facilities of up to £2 million to support businesses that would otherwise be unable to access the finance they need, or would only be able to do so at a higher rate of interest. There will be a £6 billion cap on the aggregate value of loans provided through the scheme for the first two years.

The extension covers the period from 1 August 2022 to 30 June 2024. Under the extension, the following changes will come into force:

- The maximum amount of external finance available will be £2 million per business in Great Britain; for

businesses in scope of the Northern Ireland Protocol, the maximum amount will be £1 million per business.

- The requirement for businesses to certify that they have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic will no longer apply. To lend through the scheme, lenders will be required to certify that they would not have been able to offer a facility to the business on their normal commercial terms, or that they would have only been able to do so at a higher interest rate.
- Personal guarantees will be permitted, but not required, for facilities under £250,000 (as has been the case to date for facilities above £250,000). This brings the scheme in line with standard commercial practice in business lending. Principal private residences may not be used as security under any circumstances.

Otherwise, scheme parameters are unchanged. As previously:

- The minimum facility size will be £25,001 for loans and overdrafts and £1,000 for asset and invoice finance.
- Businesses will be required to meet the costs of interest payments and any fees from the outset.
- Businesses who have made use of the previous Coronavirus loan schemes will be able to access the scheme.

Given the above, the maximum contingent liability for lending up to the £6 billion cap on the scheme is £4.2 billion.

I will be laying a Departmental Minute today containing a description of the liability undertaken.

Contingent Liability: UK Infrastructure Bank

[HLWS252]

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

It is normal practice when a government department proposes to undertake a contingent liability in excess of £300,000 and for which there is no statutory authority, for the Minister concerned:

- To present a departmental Minute to Parliament, giving particulars of the liability created and explaining the circumstances; and
- To refrain from incurring the liability until fourteen parliamentary sitting days after the issue of the Minute, except in cases of special urgency.

I am writing to notify Parliament of a contingent liability that the Treasury intends to create related to the final stage of the establishment of the UK Infrastructure Bank (UKIB) as a publicly owned company with operational independence.

As set out in the UKIB Policy Design document published at Budget 2021, UKIB's Framework Document and most recently in UKIB's Strategic Plan published last month; the ambition is for UKIB to offer sovereign

equivalent guarantees to support and enable private and public investment in infrastructure, with core objectives to help tackle climate change and support regional and local economic growth.

UKIB will be able to deploy these guarantees flexibly up to an overall limit of £10 billion, which is capped at £2.5 billion in any given year.

UKIB will manage its capital position through its economic capital framework with an appropriate buffer, as well as through the institution's wider liquidity and operational risk management. The government's expectation is that the default position is for UKIB to meet any calls on its guarantees from its existing funded financial capacity.

To maximise the impact of UKIB's guarantees and promote crowding in of private investment, it is important to allow UKIB to rely on the UK government's credit rating. To ensure UKIB can utilise this credit rating HMT intends to provide backing to UKIB such that rating agencies would consider it to have a sovereign credit rating. This backing will create a new contingent liability from HMT to UKIB.

UK Government Investments' Contingent Liability Central Capability has been consulted as part of establishing the structure of the new scheme.

UKIB will report to Parliament through its Annual Reports and Accounts on any guarantees entered into, providing details on the amount of actual or contingent liabilities.

Authority for any expenditure required under this liability will be sought through the normal procedure.

A departmental Minute has been laid in the House of Commons providing detail on this contingent liability.

Coronavirus-related Spend

[HLWS247]

Lord Callanan: My Right Honourable friend the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Kwasi Kwarteng) has today made the following statement:

I am tabling this statement for the benefit of Hon. Members to bring to their attention spend under the Industrial Development Act 1982. In addition to the obligation to report on spend under the Industrial Development Act annually, the Coronavirus Act 2020 created a new quarterly reporting requirement for spend which has been designated as coronavirus-related under the Coronavirus Act. This statement fulfils that purpose.

The statement also includes a report of the movement in contingent liability during the quarter. Hon. Members will wish to note that measures such as Local Authority grants, the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and Self-Employed Income Support Scheme, and tax measures such as the suspension of Business Rates are not provided under the Industrial Development Act 1982 and hence are not included below.

This report covers the first quarter of 2022, from 1 January to 31 March 2022, in accordance with the Coronavirus Act.

The Written Ministerial Statement covering the fourth quarter of 2021 was published on 29th June 2022.

This is the final quarterly report on Coronavirus expenditure under the Industrial Development Act 1982. This is in line with the reporting requirements under Section 75 of the Coronavirus Act 2020.

Spend under the Coronavirus Act 2020

Under the Coronavirus Act 2020, there is a requirement to lay before Parliament details of the amount of assistance designated as Coronavirus related provided in each relevant quarter. In the period from 1 January to 31 March 2022, the following expenditures were incurred:

Actual expenditure of assistance provided by Her Majesty's Government from 1 January to 31 March 2022	£277,208,581
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Actual expenditure of assistance provided by Her Majesty's Government from 25 March 2020	£4,102,510,707
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Expenditure by Department

Actual expenditure of assistance from 1 January to 31 March 2022 provided by:

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy	£237,216,907
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Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs	£6,075
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Department for Transport	£39,991,674
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Contingent liability under the Coronavirus Act 2020

Contingent liability of assistance provided by the Secretary of State from 1 January to 31 March 2022	£9,228,141,179
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All contingent liability of assistance provided by the Secretary of State from 25 March 2020	£83,769,317,646
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DWP Estate

[HLWS248]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: My honourable Friend, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Employment (Julie Marson MP) has made the following Written Statement:

This Government is committed to helping people back into work, and to support this cross-government effort, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has invested in the temporary expansion of its Jobcentre network. This has enabled us to deliver for claimants, including through our comprehensive, multi-billion pound Plan for Jobs.

Plan for Jobs has delivered for claimants over the last two years through Kickstart, Sector Based Work Academies, Job-Entry Targeted Support (JETS), Restart

and the expansion of our Youth Hubs. Together, these programmes have helped people get into work and upskill, no matter where they live or the stage of their career.

Recently, our Way to Work Scheme achieved the target of getting 500,000 people into work. Since January 31, over 520,000 Intensive Work Search Universal Credit and Jobseekers Allowance claimants moved into work during the campaign as we mobilised our workforce and brought employers into jobcentres to see the talent on offer. Latest figures, up to June, show a record high of 29.6 million people are now on payroll in the UK.

Thanks to our Plan for Jobs and the Government's responsive labour market policy throughout the pandemic, the unemployment level is at a near record low. The Department's approach 'Any Job, Better Job, Career' means work coaches are building on the strength of the labour market with a new focus on progression, helping claimants into better jobs and ensuring they are on a career path that is right for them.

We outlined on 17 March the Department's strategy which will, over the next ten years, reshape how, where and when it delivers its back of house services. Over the ten-year period the Department will transition to an estate that is smaller, greener, and better – making DWP more efficient for customers and our employees. By having a smaller footprint, this helps us to be greener. This type of bold modernisation can support efficiencies, create value for money, reduce fraud and error, build resilience and sustainability, and achieve improved customer outcomes and experience. As announced on 17 March, we took advantage of lease breaks in 2023 to improve the future delivery of DWP Back of House services.

As part of this ten-year programme, we are now providing an update on another strand of this work, focusing on changes to some of our Front of House sites, taking advantage of the lease breaks once again and leaving older lower-quality buildings whilst optimising opportunities presented from some of the temporary Jobcentres opened during the pandemic.

We will do this in four ways:

- consolidate services in some locations where there is another nearby which offers better accommodation for customers and staff;
- look to close older and poorer premises and permanently relocate to the new temporary Jobcentre, making it an established site;
- co-locate with key partners;
- and in some cases, secure new premises.

The location of the new sites will be as close as possible to the existing offices in order to maintain physical presence in areas and minimise the impact on customers, while providing an improved office environment for customers and staff. This is not about reducing headcount or services offered, and we expect no jobs to be lost.

Details of some of these further site moves have been announced today. Letters are being sent to each MP with

an affected site in their constituency explaining what it means for their local Jobcentre and their constituents.

FCDO Services Ministerial Targets 2022-23

[HLWS241]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: FCDO Services operates as a trading fund of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). I have set the following performance targets for 2022-2023:

- 1) An in-year surplus in excess of 0.0% before interest, tax and dividend;
- 2) Achievement of the return on capital employed (ROCE) of at least 6.5% (weighted average);
- 3) A productivity ratio of at least 82%, measuring actual billable hours versus available billable hours;
- 4) An in-year customer satisfaction rating average of at least 82;
- 5) An average Civil Service People Survey “Your Say” score for ‘Employee Engagement’ of at least 61%; and
- 6) An average Civil Service People Survey “Your Say” score for ‘My Manager’ of at least 65%.

FCDO Services will report to Parliament on its success against these targets through its Annual Report and Accounts for 2022-2023.

FCDO Services is a Trading Fund of the FCDO. It provides a range of integrated, secure services worldwide to the FCDO and other UK Government departments, supporting the delivery of government agendas. Services include protective security, estates and construction, cloud computing, communications and monitoring, logistics, translation and interpreting. This is combined with a portfolio of global maintenance work. FCDO Services also manages the UK National Authority for Counter Eavesdropping (UK NACE), helping protect UK assets from physical, electronic and cyber-attack.

Finance Bill 2022-23: Draft Legislation and Tax Documents

[HLWS253]

Baroness Penn: My right honourable friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Lucy Frazer) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

In line with the Tax Policy Making framework, the Government is publishing draft legislation ahead of potential inclusion in Finance Bill 2022-23. This allows for technical consultation and provides taxpayers with predictability over future tax policy changes. Alongside this, the Government is making announcements in a small number of technical areas of tax policy to support the operation of the tax system. Draft legislation is being published to seek stakeholder views at this stage. The final contents of Finance Bill 2022-23 will be a decision for the Chancellor at the next Budget. The Government is also publishing a number of tax-related consultations and summaries of responses to consultations which have already been conducted.

Publication of draft legislation

The Government is publishing draft legislation and associated documents, further to previous announcements, including at Budget or in *Tax Administration and Maintenance: Autumn 2021* [CP 577], published on 30 November 2021:

- **R&D tax relief reforms:** The Government is publishing draft legislation which will amend the definition of qualifying expenditure to include data and cloud costs. These changes will ensure the reliefs support modern innovation. The draft legislation will also refocus the reliefs towards Research & Development (R&D) in the UK and implement measures to improve compliance. The Government will limit overseas spending on subcontracted R&D and externally provided workers, with some limited exceptions. These changes will ensure the reliefs provide better targeted support for innovation in the UK.
- **OECD Pillar 2 reforms:** The Government is publishing draft legislation and a summary of responses to the consultation on the implementation of Pillar 2 in the UK. This builds on the historic agreement of 137 countries to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s (OECD’s) two pillar solution to the tax challenges of a globalised and digital economy. Pillar 2 will ensure that multinational enterprises pay a minimum 15% rate of tax in each jurisdiction that they operate in.
- **Air Passenger Duty reform:** The Government is publishing draft legislation which will implement reform to Air Passenger Duty (APD), as announced at Autumn Budget 2021. These reforms aim to bolster UK air connectivity through a 50% cut in domestic APD and further align the tax with UK environmental objectives by adding a new ultra-long-haul distance band.
- **Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme:** The Government is publishing draft legislation which introduces new and temporary reliefs from the Annual Tax on Enveloped Dwellings (ATED) and 15% rate of Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT) where a corporate entity makes a dwelling available to Ukrainian refugees under the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme, as announced in a Written Ministerial Statement on 31 March 2022. The payments individuals, community groups and businesses receive under this scheme will be exempt from either income tax or corporation tax. Therefore, it will ensure that those wishing to offer accommodation do not face any unfair obstacles or immediate tax burdens.
- **Pensions: Relief relating to Net Payment arrangements:** The Government is publishing draft legislation which will provide the basis for HMRC to make top-up payments directly to low-earning individuals saving in pension schemes using a net pay arrangement from 2024-25 onwards, as announced at Autumn Budget 2021. These top-ups will help to better

align outcomes with equivalent savers saving into pension schemes using Relief at Source.

- **Improving the administration of Insurance Premium Tax (IPT):** The Government is publishing draft legislation to improve the administration of IPT, as announced at Tax Administration and Maintenance Day 2021 (TAM Day 2021). This measure will provide HMRC with powers to make a statutory instrument to move Insurance Premium Tax forms from secondary legislation into a public notice.
- **Collective money purchase pension scheme:** As announced in a Written Ministerial Statement on 21 February 2022, the Government always intended that certain payments made instead of a pension from a collective money purchase pension scheme in the process of winding up should not attract pensions tax charges. However, there are instances where the current legislation may not achieve the intended outcome. This draft legislation clarifies the tax legislation to ensure that a collective money purchase pension scheme that is in the process of winding up can make certain types of payments without attracting pension tax charges.
- **Relief on disposals of joint interests in land:** The Government is publishing draft legislation to make changes to the legislation for Capital Gains Tax roll-over relief and private residence relief to ensure that Limited Liability Partnerships and Scottish partnerships which hold title to land are included, as announced at TAM Day 2021.
- **Transfer pricing documentation: Master File / Local File:** As announced at TAM Day 2021, the Government is publishing draft legislation which will make it a requirement for large multinational businesses operating in the UK to keep and retain transfer pricing documentation in a prescribed and standardised format, set out in the OECD's Transfer Pricing Guidelines, giving businesses certainty on the appropriate format and documentation they need to keep.
- **Tax conditionality: licenses in Scotland and Northern Ireland:** As announced at TAM Day 2021, this draft legislation will make licence renewal applications in Scotland and Northern Ireland for taxi and scrap metal licences conditional on completing a tax check with HMRC to ensure the applicant is appropriately registered for tax. This change applies for licence renewals from April 2023 and extends the approach already in place for licences issued in England and Wales.
- **Aggregates Levy Reform:** As announced at TAM Day 2021, the Government is publishing draft legislation to make changes to Aggregates Levy exemptions, by replacing four exemptions for by-product aggregate arising from specific types of construction with one broader, more general exemption. It will also restrict an exemption so that aggregate extracted on a construction site specifically for construction use is taxed in the same way as other construction aggregate.

The Government is also publishing draft legislation and associated documents in the following areas which have not been previously announced:

- **Soft Drinks Industry Levy (SDIL):** concentrates mixed with sugar when dispensed: The Government is publishing draft legislation which closes a minor loophole and will ensure that all soft drinks meeting the SDIL sugar content condition that are dispensed from fountain machines are within the scope of the levy.
- **Further tax provisions in connection with the Dormant Assets Scheme:** The Dormant Assets Scheme is being expanded to include eligible assets from the pensions, insurance, investment and wealth management, and securities sectors. The Government has therefore published draft legislation to ensure that payments from an authorised reclaim fund are treated for the purposes of income tax as if they were from the pension asset that was initially transferred. It also ensures that where an asset has been transferred to an authorised reclaim fund and its owner was alive at the time of transfer but subsequently dies before the asset has been reclaimed, the owner will be treated for Inheritance Tax purposes as still owning the original asset.
- **Taxation of Lump Sum Exit Scheme payments:** As announced in the Lump Sum Exit Scheme (LSES) consultation response, this draft legislation provides clarity that LSES payments will be treated as capital in nature and will be subject to capital gains tax, or corporation tax in the case of incorporated entities.
- **Chargeable gains: Separating spouses and civil partners:** The Government is publishing draft legislation which provides that the transfer of assets between spouses and civil partners that are separating are made on a no gain/no loss for up to three full tax years after the parties cease to live together. This follows on from a recommendation by the Office of Tax Simplification.
- **Changes to the Qualifying Asset Holding Companies rules:** The Government is publishing draft legislation which intends to make limited changes to its Qualifying Asset Holding Companies regime, which went live in April 2022. These changes will ensure that the regime is available to a broader range of investment structures, consistent with the original policy rationale and subject to safeguards. It is intended that the existing anti-fragmentation rule in paragraph 4 of Schedule 2, Finance Act 2022 will be extended with effect from today so that it also applies where interests are held through one or more QAHCs as well as directly in the company concerned.
- **Approval regime for Aerodromes not customs and excise designated:** The Government is publishing draft legislation which makes an amendment to establish an approval regime for aerodromes that handle international flights, and which are not customs and excise designated airports. This will facilitate a fairer system which will strengthen both aerodrome operator accountability and border control provisions.

The Government is also announcing the following measure which will take immediate effect from today and publishing draft legislation:

- Double taxation relief: time limit for claims: Legislation will be introduced to restrict certain claims for double taxation relief. No extended time limit claims will be allowed in relation to amounts calculated by reference to the foreign nominal rate of tax, unless the relevant accounting period is under enquiry, or there has been an actual adjustment of UK or foreign tax within the last six years. This change will only affect certain double taxation relief claims in relation to distributions received by UK companies in previous years and will protect tax revenue in respect of such distributions.

All draft legislation is accompanied by a Tax Information and Impact Note (TIIN), an Explanatory Note (EN) and, where applicable, a summary of consultation responses document.

Other publications

The Government is also publishing the following consultations:

- Improving the data HMRC collects: Under the current system, HMRC collects data from taxpayers and employers via tax returns to administer the tax system and inform Government decision-making. The Government is consulting on a number of options for additional data for HMRC to collect, use, and safely share across Government, and how this can be done in a way that minimises any extra burden for customers. This will help ensure the information the Government holds is more accurate, bring direct benefits to businesses and taxpayers, provide better insights for policymaking and support Government aims to build a trusted, modern tax administration system.
- Digitalising Business Rates: Connecting business rates and tax data: The way that the business rates system currently operates makes it difficult for the Government to precisely target support when responding to the needs of businesses. Digitalising Business Rates (DBR) aims to join together business rates data held across different parts of Government (billing authorities, the VOA and HMRC) with tax data. By bringing together businesses' property data and tax information in one place, the Government will be better able to design and apply reliefs to support businesses that are most in need, rather than having to rely on property information in isolation. This consultation lays out and seeks views on options for the policy and IT design for the DBR project.

The Government is also publishing summaries of responses to the following discussion documents and consultations:

- 'Preventing and collecting international tax debt'
- 'Helping Taxpayers Get Offshore Tax Right'
- 'IFRS 17 (new international accounting standard for insurance contracts)'

- 'ITSA registration for the self-employed and landlords'
- 'OECD Model Rules for Digital Platforms (MRDP)'

All publications can be found on the gov.uk website. The Government's tax consultation tracker has also been updated.

Update on previously announced policy

At Autumn Budget 2021, the Government's plans for alcohol duty reform were announced and a consultation on the detail of those planned reforms was published. The consultation closed on 30 January 2022. The Government is considering the feedback received and will respond in the Autumn.

Immigration and Border Control

[HLWS254]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My rt hon Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Priti Patel) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

Today will see the publication of two documents supporting the Home Office's strategy for the future border: The Independent Review of Border Force (CP 700) and the New Plan for Immigration Legal Migration and Border Control Strategy Statement (CP 706). These documents have been laid before both Houses today and will be made available on Gov.UK.

The strategy statement sets out our ambition for transformational change for everyone using our systems and crossing the UK border. We will deliver a fully end-to-end digital customer experience which will bring benefits to all.

This is an ambitious plan in which we will continue to deliver a world leading legal migration and border system. The plans we have set out in this strategy statement are essential for a streamlined, digital system which responds to customer needs and enhances the security of the UK. Our flagship permission to travel scheme will mean that it is easier for our friends to come to and contribute to the UK, but harder for those not using legal means to come here. We will be more easily able to tackle problems upstream and know more about those who use the system to come here.

I would like to thank Alexander Downer for his work in conducting the BF Review and to all those who have been involved. The recommendations in this report are our commitment to a package of reforms for Border Force so it can continue to respond to emerging threats, keep our border secure, and ease the passage of legitimate travellers and goods across our border in a world that is very different from when Border Force was formed a decade ago.

The publication of the Strategy and Report on the BF Review is a pivotal step in achieving the vision for the future of the border which will increase public confidence that we are improving the efficiency and effectiveness of

the UK border and making it more secure to tackle future challenges.

Improving Water Quality and Tackling Nutrient Pollution

[HLWS256]

Lord Benyon: My Right Hon Friend the Secretary of State (George Eustice) has today made the following statement:

Improving water quality is a government priority. We are the first government to take such substantial steps to restore our water environment, from setting in motion the largest water company infrastructure project ever to reduce discharges from storm overflows, to seeing the largest fines in history placed on water companies. We have provided new funding to the Environment Agency to increase farm inspections to at least 4,000 inspections a year by 2023, and we are launching future farming schemes that will reward farmers and land managers for actions to reduce run-off, such as introducing cover crops and buffering rivers. This is reinforced by our proposed Environment Act targets to reduce the key sources of river pollution.

We are today launching a further package to tackle nutrient pollution, which is a significant problem for our freshwater habitats and estuaries. Increased levels of nutrients (especially nitrogen and phosphorus) can speed up the growth of certain plants, disrupting natural processes and devastating wildlife.

While we have taken substantial steps, this is taking time to make an impact on the ground and we must go further. At present some 27 catchments, and several of our internationally important water bodies and protected sites, are in unfavourable status due to nutrient pollution. In accordance with complex and bureaucratic EU-derived domestic legislation and case law, Local Planning Authorities can only approve a plan or a project if they are certain it will have no negative effect on the site's integrity. Natural England, in its statutory role as an adviser on the natural environment, has advised a total of 74 Local Planning Authorities on the nutrient impacts of new plans and projects on protected sites where those protected sites are in unfavourable condition due to excess nutrients. They have issued tools and guidance on an approach called 'nutrient neutrality' to mitigate the impact of nutrient pollution so that development can go ahead. However, there is still a gap in the ability of LPAs and developers to find mitigation quickly and effectively.

In order to drive down pollution from all development in the relevant catchments, we will be tabling an amendment to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. This will place a new statutory duty on water and sewerage companies in England to upgrade wastewater treatment works to the highest technically achievable limits by 2030 in nutrient neutrality areas. Water companies will be required to undertake these upgrades in a way that tackles the dominant nutrient(s) causing pollution at a protected site. We are also using feedback

from the recent 'call for evidence' to water companies to identify where these upgrades could be accelerated and delivered sooner. Our proposed Environment Act target to tackle wastewater pollution across the country will still see upgrades brought in elsewhere, on a slightly longer timeframe.

In the meantime, we know the impact of new housing is a small proportion of overall nutrient pollution, but mitigation requirements have a significant impact on overall house building. This amendment will improve water quality and in doing so will support housebuilding to continue in areas affected by nutrient pollution. We want these improvements to be factored in for the purposes of a Habitats Regulation Assessment.

Wastewater treatment upgrades will reduce a significant source of nutrient pollution, helping to recover these crucial habitats, which will thereby reduce the level of mitigation required by individual developers when legislation comes into force.

Supporting mitigation

Building on our initial package of support announced in March 2022, I will issue a ministerial direction to support Natural England to establish a Nutrient Mitigation Scheme.

Natural England will develop the scheme, working with Defra and DLUHC. Defra and DLUHC will provide funding to pump prime the scheme: this is intended to frontload investment in mitigation projects, including wetland and woodland creation. This will then be recouped through a simple payment mechanism where developers can purchase 'nutrient credits' which will discharge the requirements to provide mitigation. Natural England will accredit mitigation delivered through the Nutrient Mitigation Scheme, enabling LPAs to grant planning permission for developments which have secured the necessary nutrient credits. Wetlands and woodlands will also *provide biodiversity enhancements to areas and promote public access to nature across England, helping to deliver on our levelling-up missions for pride in place and well-being.*

Natural England will deliver the scheme by establishing an 'Accelerator Unit', with the support of Defra, DLUHC, the Environment Agency and Homes England. The previous announcement of £100,000 funding from DLUHC for affected areas will help support delivery of the scheme. We will open the scheme to all developers while ensuring that small and medium enterprises are prioritised, given the difficulties they can face in securing mitigations due to access to funds and skills. This scheme will not be a requirement but an option to discharge mitigation requirements more efficiently. We recognise that there are a number of private markets and local planning authority-led nutrient mitigation schemes that are already being established. Natural England will be working closely with these providers to ensure they do not crowd out private markets, and will ensure that the national scheme dovetails with these markets and provides additional support as needed. We will announce further details in the autumn when the scheme will

launch, and in the meantime, Natural England will be in touch with local authorities and developers.

Our amendment will support the delivery of the tens of thousands of homes currently in the planning system, by significantly reducing the cost of mitigation requirements. The mitigation scheme will make delivering those requirements much easier for developers.

Longer term, we continue to progress proposals to reform the Habitats Regulations so that impacts on protected sites are tackled up front, focusing on what is best for bringing sites back into favourable status. Recovering our protected sites is critical to meeting the government's ambitious environment commitments, including our apex target to halt the decline in species abundance by 2030. Through this work we can improve water quality, biodiversity and our wider environment while also enabling sustainable development.

Planning

We understand the concerns that some Local Planning Authorities have around the impact of nutrient neutrality on their ability to demonstrate they have a sufficient and deliverable housing land supply.

We will make clear in planning guidance that judgements on deliverability of sites should take account of strategic mitigation schemes and the accelerated timescale for the Natural England's mitigation schemes and immediate benefits on mitigation burdens once legislation requiring water treatment upgrades comes into force. DLUHC will revise planning guidance over the summer to reflect that sites affected by nutrient pollution forming part of housing land supply calculations are capable of being considered deliverable for the purposes of housing land supply calculations, subject to relevant evidence to demonstrate deliverability. It will be for decision takers to make judgements about impacts on delivery timescales for individual schemes in line with the National Planning Policy Framework.

The rollout of advice in relation to nutrient pollution to additional catchments in March, and for those already caught by the issue, resulted in a number of planning permissions having been granted prior to the nutrient neutrality issue being raised, but where a post-permission approval is still required (Reserved Matters approval or discharges of conditions). I am aware of views that the Habitats Regulations Assessment provisions do not apply to subsequent stages of outline approval, and while we know the following will be disappointing to the developers whose sites are affected, it is important to ensure there is clarity on how the assessment provisions should operate.

The Habitats Regulations Assessment provisions apply to any consent, permission, or other authorisation, this may include post-permission approvals; reserved matters or discharges of conditions. It may be that Habitats Regulation Assessment is required in situations including but not limited to:

- where the environmental circumstances have materially changed as a matter of fact and degree

(including where nutrient load or the conservation status of habitat site is now unfavourable) so that development that previously was lawfully screened out at the permission stage cannot now be screened out; or

- development that previously was lawfully screened in but judged to pass an Appropriate Assessment cannot now do so because the mitigation (if any) secured is not adequate to enable the competent authority to be convinced of no adverse effect on integrity of the habitats site.

DLUHC will therefore also update the Planning Practice Guidance on the application of the Habitats Regulations Assessment in this regard, and consider any further additional revisions as necessary over the Summer.

Independent Review of Destination Management Organisations: Government Response

[HLWS242]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: I am repeating the following Written Ministerial Statement made today in the other place by my Honourable Friend, the Minister for Sport, Tourism, Heritage and Civil Society, Nigel Huddleston MP:

The Government is today publishing its formal response to the independent review of Destination Management Organisations (DMO) which was undertaken by Nick de Bois (Chair of the VisitEngland Advisory Board) and published in September 2021. The DMO Review was commissioned in March 2021 by the then Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (the Rt Hon Oliver Dowden CBE, MP) and the current Minister for Sport, Tourism, Heritage and Civil Society.

The DMO Review is an important component of the UK Government's post-COVID Tourism Recovery Plan, which can be summarised as securing a swift recovery to pre-pandemic tourism volumes and visitor expenditure before building back better towards a more productive, innovative, resilient, sustainable and inclusive visitor economy, with the benefits of tourism spread across every nation and region of the UK.

England's DMOs have an important role to play both in the recovery of the sector from COVID-19 and achieving the government's Levelling Up objectives. Their role is not only to market and promote England's unique, amazing and varied visitor offer, but also to work with local businesses as they recover, to attract new investment, and to help England deliver a more sustainable, data-driven, resilient and accessible industry. For this to happen, DMOs need to be at their best, and we need to address long-running concerns about the structure, funding models and fragmentation of England's DMO landscape.

Mr de Bois was given the task of surveying the DMO landscape in England (tourism being a devolved responsibility within the UK). He was asked to evaluate

the current system, with a view to making recommendations on whether there may be a more efficient and effective model for supporting English tourism at a local and regional level and delivering the government's policy agenda.

Mr de Bois submitted his report last summer, and we published it in September 2021. This response addresses Mr de Bois' recommendations and outlines the actions that are going to be taken forward in the current spending review. The DMO Review made 12 recommendations in total, six of which are directed at the Government, four at DMOs themselves, and one each for Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and Local Authorities. I am pleased to say that we will be accepting the majority of his recommendations.

A new accreditation system will be introduced over the 2022-23 financial year, with VisitEngland receiving new funding for implementation. By creating a new 'national portfolio' of accredited, high-performing Local Visitor Economy Partnerships we will reduce fragmentation and bring coherence to the current DMO landscape. It will make it clearer to public and private actors who to engage with in order to support the regional visitor economy - as well as to prospective visitors looking for information about English destinations. We are proposing to change the name of DMOs to Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEPs), to capture the wider strategic focus on the visitor economy and the breadth of activity and relationships they will establish to support the local visitor economy.

The Government also commits to a pilot of Mr de Bois' recommendation of a tiering model including multi-year core funding in a region of England. That will give one top tier LVEP, or collection of LVEPs (known as a Destination Development Partnership), a firm foundation to engage in a wide range of destination management type activities as well as prompt increased private sector investment. The response sets out the criteria upon which the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and VisitEngland will decide where the pilot is run.

A targeted pilot will ensure we support those areas with most potential to develop their visitor economies, help achieve the government's Levelling Up objectives and align with the devolution commitments set out in the Levelling Up White Paper. A pilot will allow the government to collect evidence to understand how effective the proposed model can be, and to support any future funding considerations.

Up to £4.05 million (£1.35 million per year) has been allocated towards the DMO Review implementation. The ambition is for a successful pilot to enable roll out of the multi-year funding nationally, however this is subject to future spending rounds and therefore, not guaranteed.

I will place a copy of the Government response in the Libraries of both Houses.

Interception of Communications Code of Practice

[HLWS244]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My Rt hon Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Priti Patel) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

The Investigatory Powers Act 2016 provides a regulatory framework for the use of a number of covert investigatory powers, to ensure that the powers are used by public authorities in a lawful way in order to, for example, gather vital information on those who are suspected of the most serious crimes, including terrorism. The Act provides the necessary safeguards to protect individual privacy and our democratic freedoms whilst enabling our law enforcement and security agencies to protect the UK from serious harm.

The Act is accompanied by a set of Codes of Practice. These codes provide guidance for law enforcement agencies, UK Intelligence Community (UKIC) and public authorities who exercise such powers. It sets out how the powers in primary legislation should be exercised. Under Schedule 7(5) of the Investigatory Powers Act 2016, the Secretary of State may from time to time revise the whole or part of a code.

I intend to launch a public consultation on amending the Interception of Communications Code of Practice to reflect HMG's position on Cloud-service providers and the enterprise services they provide to customers, and the circumstances in which an Intercepting Authority should serve a warrant on either the Cloud-service provider or the enterprise customer.

I must be clear that the intention to amend the Code is subject to the outcome of the consultation and we will consider any representations made as a result of the consultation. Further details will be published in the consultation response.

The public consultation will run between 20 July– 14 September and my officials are also in the process of seeking input from the independent Investigatory Powers Commissioner who oversees and monitors the operation of the legislation.

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

Israel Trade Negotiation

[HLWS245]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for International Trade (Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP) has today made the following statement:

On Wednesday 20 July 2022, the Department for International Trade launched negotiations for a new, upgraded free trade agreement with Israel.

In line with our commitments to scrutiny and transparency, the Department for International Trade has published, and placed in the House Libraries, more information on these negotiations. This includes:

The United Kingdom's strategic case for a UK-Israel Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

Our objectives for the negotiations.

A summary of the United Kingdom's public consultation on trade with Israel.

A scoping assessment, providing a preliminary economic assessment of the impact of the agreement.

The United Kingdom's negotiating objectives for the upgraded agreement, published today, were informed by our Call for Input, which requested views from consumers, businesses, and other interested stakeholders across the United Kingdom on their priorities for enhancing our existing trading relationship with Israel.

These negotiations follow our signing of the UK-Israel Trade and Partnership Agreement on 18 February 2019.

A new and enhanced trade agreement with Israel is a key part of the United Kingdom's strategy to secure advanced modern agreements with new international partners, and upgrade existing continuity agreements in order to better suit the UK economy.

Israel is an important trading partner for the United Kingdom, with trade worth £5 billion in 2021 despite the disruptions of the coronavirus pandemic to global trade. As two of the most innovative and dynamic economies in the world – both in the top 15 of the Global Innovation Index – we know that the opportunities of the future will come from sectors in which we both excel, such as technology, research and development, digital and data.

Our existing agreement, which forms the basis of our current trading relationship, is outdated and not designed for a digital age. Originally signed in 1995 between Israel and the EU, it was developed before smartphones, artificial intelligence and the internet transformed our economies. While it allows tariff-free trade on 99% of UK goods exports by value, it currently contains scant provision for the United Kingdom's thriving services sector. We intend to change this by putting services at the heart of a modern new agreement, which better benefits the UK economy. Upgrading our trade deal with Israel will help unlock a stronger, more advanced partnership. A new agreement could make it cheaper and easier for innovative UK services and tech companies to trade with Israel, benefiting sectors including finance, accountancy and legal. The new deal will play to our strengths, reflecting the realities of trading in the 21st century and allowing us to take advantage of future innovations.

Around 6,600 businesses from all four corners of the United Kingdom exported their goods to Israel in 2020. Of these firms, 5,600 were Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs). The United Kingdom's SMEs could be amongst the biggest winners from a new agreement with Israel, as we seek to make it easier to do business and focus on trade barriers that may have deterred them from previously entering this exciting marketplace.

The Government are determined that any agreement must work for consumers, producers, investors, and businesses alike. We remain committed to upholding our high environmental, labour, public health, food safety and animal welfare standards, alongside protecting the National Health Service.

The Government will continue to update and engage with key stakeholders, including Parliament and the Devolved Administrations, throughout our negotiations with Israel.

Office for Nuclear Regulation Post-Implementation Review: Publication

[HLWS239]

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:

Together with the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Baroness Stedman-Scott, I am today laying in Parliament the Post-Implementation Review (the Review) of Part 3 of the Energy Act 2013 (EA 2013). The Review was commissioned in March 2021 by the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, as required by Section 118 of the EA 2013 – the Act that established the Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR), the UK's independent nuclear regulator. The Review concluded in March 2022, and the Full Report has now been laid in Parliament. The Full Report, alongside the Summary Report and the Joint Government Response, will be published on gov.uk.

The review was led by an independent reviewer, supported by a dedicated review team from across the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), as the Departments responsible for the policy and sponsorship of the ONR. Evidence was collected from documentary reviews, extensive discussion with the ONR, and interviews with external stakeholders. I would like to thank all of those who contributed to the Review.

The Review found that the objectives of Part 3 of the EA 2013 are being met; the ONR is effectively delivering its regulatory purposes, enabling the safe and secure use and storage of nuclear materials at civil nuclear sites. The Review noted that the ONR is seen domestically and internationally as a strong example of principles-based regulation and is respected for its technical ability and regulatory performance.

Having a strong and effective independent regulator is essential to ensuring that civil nuclear facilities and activities are safely and securely operated at all times. This includes robust regulation of the UK's nuclear legacy, current generating fleet, new nuclear, transport of civil nuclear and radioactive materials, and civil nuclear safeguards.

There are 14 recommendations and 29 suggestions within the Review. These support the government's strategic priorities, notably our commitment in the British

Energy Security Strategy to work with the nuclear regulators to understand the potential for any streamlining or removal of duplication from consenting and licensing. More generally, the recommendations support the ongoing improvement of the regulator's approach to innovation, proportionality and consistency, and efficiency.

The government and the ONR welcome the report. The findings will help ensure the ONR remains a modern, transparent regulator delivering trusted outcomes and value. The findings are aligned with the government's public sector reform agenda, supporting effective relationships between public bodies and government departments in the interests of the citizens they serve.

An implementation plan has been agreed between DWP, BEIS, and the ONR. BEIS will complete a formal review of progress to be completed and published within 24 months of the Review's publication.

Reservoir Safety: Safety Regime and Modernising Legislation

[HLWS249]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: My Right Hon Friend the Secretary of State (George Eustice) has today made the following statement:

Reservoirs play a vital role in safeguarding our water supply, by storing water that falls in the wetter part of the year, to ensure continuity of supply when it is dry. But storing large volumes of water is not without risk – in August 2019 parts of the spillway at Toddbrook Reservoir collapsed following significant heavy rainfall and around 1,500 local people were temporarily evacuated while the reservoir was made safe. More than 17,000 were potentially at risk of flooding from the reservoir dam being breached. Fortunately, incidents such as this are very rare. We have a strong record of reservoir safety and compliance with our safety regulations is good.

We cannot however be complacent. The number of reservoirs in England is growing by an average of 15-20 per year, adding resource pressures for already stretched panels of engineers. Reservoir assets are ageing, which increases risks where investment is limited. In addition, the more extreme periods of drier and wetter weather expected as a result of climate change, will place increasing stresses on reservoir infrastructure.

Following Toddbrook, Professor David Balmforth's independent review considered whether the regulation of reservoirs, which protects more than 2.2 million households and properties in England, remains effective and robust in securing the ongoing safety of this critical infrastructure. The review identified common examples of poor practice in the work of reservoir safety engineers and concluded that the Reservoirs Act 1975 does not effectively support modern, risk-based safety practices. It recommended:

- a new risk/hazard-based safety regime, where safety requirements are proportionate to risks;
- improving safety management practice by reservoir owners;
- improving inspection and supervision by reservoir engineers; and
- strengthening the regulator's role.

I am therefore confirming today that the Government has accepted Professor Balmforth's recommendations and will carry out reform of the reservoir safety regime and modernisation of the Reservoirs Act 1975. Defra and the regulator – the Environment Agency - will commence a programme of work now, with a view to consultation in 2023/24. Once the consultation has concluded, the Government will then work to develop legislative proposals. The Government would then legislate when Parliamentary time allows.

The Government considers that the review has made a strong case for improving safety practice, strengthening roles and responsibilities for owners, engineers, and the regulator, and for modernising the legal framework.

The following principles will be applied to shape and guide the reforms. We will aim to:

- Reduce risk to life as low as reasonably practical
- Take early action to address risks where possible
- Fairly apportion costs for risk management with reservoir owners
- Take a proportionate, risk-based and customer-friendly approach

The Government has been considering whether small raised reservoirs, which are between 10,000m³ and 25,000m³ in volume and are currently unregulated, should be brought under the scope of the Reservoirs Act 1975. We are minded that, subject to a consultation, such reservoirs should be regulated in future and will develop proposals as part of the reform of the safety regime. Research suggests that there are around 500 small raised reservoirs which pose risks for local communities if the structures were to fail. At least 5 incidents a year occur where emergency measures are needed to prevent dams and embankments from breaching or failing which indicates a strong need to regulate such reservoirs to ensure public safety. During 2022/23 the Environment Agency plans to introduce a free registration scheme for owners of small raised reservoirs, which will collect data about these reservoirs and help inform a proportionate approach to regulation.

The reform programme will be taken forward collaboratively, with owners and engineers being involved in shaping the details. It will include:

- reforms that can be done through existing powers, secondary legislation, guidance, training and Codes of Practice during 2022/23 and 2023/24, including:

- improving enforcement options and flexibility using civil sanctions;
 - introducing review of engineers' reports by the Environment Agency;
 - developing proposals for a proportionate charging scheme to improve recovery of regulatory costs; and
 - introducing a free registration scheme for owners of small raised reservoirs during 2022/23.
- preparing for modernising the Reservoirs Act 1975 with a view to consulting on proposals during 2023/24, including:
 - developing a new risk/hazard classification and how it could operate;
 - developing proposals to make the future supply of reservoir engineers more sustainable;
 - developing proposals for regulating small raised reservoirs within the new safety regime, for consultation.

This will build on actions that have already been taken to strengthen reservoir safety, for example:

- a Ministerial Direction in April 2021 requiring reservoir owners to prepare on site emergency flood plans for all their large raised reservoirs. Owners were given a year to do this and the Environment Agency report that 94% of registered reservoirs now have plans certified by reservoir engineers;
- guidance issued to reservoir owners about having inspection information packs for their reservoirs;
- guidance developed in collaboration with engineers and issued by the Environment Agency to improve spillway inspection and management; and
- the Institution of Civil Engineers, at my request, is carrying out research to improve the future supply of engineers.

The reform programme will be spread over several years so that changes can be managed alongside ongoing reservoir safety management in a proportionate and reasonable way. The Welsh Government and the other UK administrations will be kept informed and involved with the development of the safety regime because the Reservoirs Act covers England and Wales, and reservoir engineers work across the UK. The Reservoirs Act 1975 as amended by the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 will remain in force until legislative changes are made.

The Government's planned actions in response to individual recommendations in the review are summarised in Table 1 below.

Our reforms will bring the reservoir safety regime for England into line with other high risk sectors such as the nuclear industry and rail. It will lead to a modernised safety regime that protects the lives and livelihoods of those living downstream of reservoirs, while preserving the important role of these crucial assets in safeguarding our water supply in a changing climate.

Table 1 Summary of Reservoir Safety Review Recommendations and Actions

Consultation on proposed reforms is anticipated in 2023/24.

	Short Description of Recommendation	Proposed Actions for 2022/23 and 2023/24
1	Divide 'high risk' reservoirs into three hazard classes	Accept in principle and prepare for consultation by researching and developing an improved hazard classification.
	a) More frequent inspection to be required for high hazard	Defra lead
	b) Thresholds between classes to be determined by EA in consultation	
	c) Government should review threshold for high risk designation	
2	Strengthen EA regulation	Accept and begin to develop business case and options for introducing a proportionate charging scheme.
	a) EA to raise awareness of duties & responsibilities	EA lead
	b) EA to support owners in developing their capacity	
	c) EA to charge for regulation (& incentivise good behaviours)	
	d) EA to adjudicate disputes between engineers and owners	
3	Introduce Reservoir Safety Management Plans (RSMPs) reflecting class	Accept in principle and prepare for consultation, by developing proposals for prescribed, risk-based RSMPs.
	a) Owners should prepare RSMPs reflecting hazard class	Defra and EA joint lead
	b) RSMPs should be kept as prescribed form of record	
	c) Supervising engineer to review and certify annually	
	d) Owners to ensure competent staff (certified for higher hazard class)	
	e) EA to produce guidance	
4	Strengthen Supervising Engineer (SE) role	Accept principle of improved SE practice and develop guidance and training.
	a) SEs to engage in surveillance, review records, check RSMP delivery	EA lead
	b) SEs to certify compliance with RSMP and approve RSMP for next year	

5	Strengthen Inspecting Engineer (IE) role	Accept and begin to develop improved good practice guidance for IEs.	c) EA to introduce reporting of near misses and anonymous reporting		
	a) IEs to identify potential failure modes as part of inspections	EA lead	d) EA to update guidance for SEs, IEs and for risk assessments		
	b) IEs to require precautionary interim measures quickly if concerned		10	Introduce risk assessments and manage reservoirs so risk is reduced to 'ALARP'	Accept in principle and prepare for consultation by developing proposals for risk assessments
	c) IEs to produce risk assessment for higher hazard classes		a) Owners to manage risks to ALARP based on a risk assessment	Defra lead	
	d) Clear timescales to be attached to MIOS		b) Risk assessment to be based on good practice (& informs RSMP)		
	e) Precautionary measures to be ALARP[1] if they compromise operation		c) MIOS should ensure risks are both tolerable and ALARP		
6	Improve management of Measures in the Interest of Safety (MIOS)	Accept and begin to develop improved good practice guidance for MIOS.	d) If risk cannot be reduced to tolerable levels, decommission		
	a) MIOS to be clearly indicated in IE reports	EA lead	11	Strengthen EA duties and powers	Accept in principle and begin EA quality assurance of panel engineer's work.
	b) Owner to appoint construction engineer for MIOS within 14 days		a) EA and Defra to produce / commission a code of practice	Defra and EA joint lead	
	c) Urgent MIOS to be completed asap and by specified completion date		b) Expand EA duties to allow them to assure owners duties are fulfilled		
	d) Certification issued on completion of MIOS to provide details		c) Expand EA duties to allow them to assure SE & IE reports & RSMPs		
	e) RSMP amendments to be specified with required dates		d) Expand EA powers to challenge SE & IE reports, RSMPs (etc)		
7	Improve supply of future panel engineers	Accept and continue existing work to explore options for implementing with Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE).	e) Expand EA duties to spot check owners' activities		
	(Especially in light of small number of current engineers and aging profile)	Defra lead	12	Strengthen EA enforcement	Accept in principle and plan for consultation and implementation.
8	Support career progression for panel engineers	Accept in principle and plan how to take forward following advice from ICE.	a) Full recovery of enforcement costs	Develop business case and options for EA civil sanctions.	
	a) Revise designation of panels to introduce more responsibility tiers	Defra lead	b) Expand EA powers to include fines	Defra and EA joint lead	
	b) ICE to provide more support with training, mentoring, guidance		c) Strengthen independence of EA regulator from role as operator		
9	Better knowledge sharing and learning for panel engineers	Accept and begin developing guidance and other best practice sharing mechanisms.	13	Climate change research: a) current and b) future programme of research	Accept and include in R&D programme
	a) EA to provide more access to learning for engineers	Defra and EA joint lead			EA lead
	b) EA to ensure lessons from incidents are more comprehensive		14	Publication of data and transparency reports by a) EA and b) Owners	Accept principle of data publication – EA to develop proposals
					EA lead
			15	Review and update	Accept, engage with

legislation and regulations (includes concern that current legislation is outdated and inflexible for modern H&S practices)

stakeholders, and develop programme of reform

Defra lead

Service Complaints Ombudsman's 2021 Service Complaints System Report: Formal Response

[HLWS246]

Baroness Goldie: My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr Leo Docherty) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

I am pleased to place in the Library of the House today the Ministry of Defence's (MOD) formal response to the Service Complaints Ombudsman for the Armed Force's annual report for 2021 on the fairness, effectiveness and efficiency of the Service Complaints System.

The Ombudsman's report assessed the Service Complaints System and the work of her office in 2021. The response sets out MOD's comments and approach to each of the Ombudsman's recommendations that she has made and includes a summary of our position on recommendations that remain open from previous annual reports.

The MOD values the strong independent oversight that the Ombudsman brings to the Service Complaints System, and remains committed to having a system in which our personnel can have confidence.

The Statement includes the following attached material:

MOD FORMAL RESPONSE [SCO MOD Formal Response.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2022-07-20/HLWS246/>

United Kingdom Internal Market Act 2020 (Exclusions from Market Access Principles: Single-Use Plastics) Regulations 2022

[HLWS255]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: My Right Hon Friend the Secretary of State (George Eustice) has today made the following statement:

This statement is made in accordance with section 10(11) of the United Kingdom Internal Market Act 2020 (the UKIM Act). The United Kingdom Internal Market Act 2020 (Exclusions from Market Access Principles: Single-Use Plastics) Regulations 2022 create an exclusion from the market access principles in Part 1 of the UKIM Act for legislation so far as it prohibits or restricts the supply of single use plastic straws, drink stirrers,

stemmed cotton buds, plates, cutlery, chopsticks, balloon sticks and expanded and extruded polystyrene food and drinks containers, including cups.

This exclusion was requested by the Scottish Government through the Resources and Waste Common Framework, in line with the process for considering UKIM Act exclusions in Common Framework areas¹. Under the Act, the Secretary of State is required to seek consent from the Scottish Ministers, the Welsh Ministers and the Department for the Economy in Northern Ireland. If that consent is not given within one month, the Regulations may be made without consent.

Welsh Ministers and Scottish Ministers have consented to the making of these regulations and consent has been sought from the Department for the Economy in Northern Ireland. As this legislation is of a cross-cutting nature, the consent request requires referral to the Northern Ireland Executive as per Northern Ireland's Ministerial Code. This has not been possible due to the ongoing absence of a First and deputy First Minister in Northern Ireland, meaning the Executive cannot meet. My officials have however continued to engage at official level with the relevant Northern Ireland departments in the development of this legislation and there has been engagement with the Minister for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Edwin Poots MLA and the Minister for the Economy, Gordon Lyons MLA who have raised no objections to the approach.

In line with section 10(7) of the UKIM Act, I have considered the importance of facilitating the access to the market within Great Britain of qualifying Northern Ireland goods. The supply of the items covered by this exclusion is banned in Scotland, and the UK Government and the Welsh Government have consulted on banning the supply of these items in England and in Wales in so far as it is not already banned there. The relevant EU Directive (Article 5 of the Single-Use Plastic Directive) under Annex II of the NI Protocol, once implemented in Northern Ireland, will have equivalent effect to the proposed and existing legislation in Scotland, England and Wales. As such, I do not consider there is a need to make additional or separate provision to maintain access to the market within Great Britain for these single-use plastic items.

I therefore intend to proceed with making the United Kingdom Internal Market Act 2020 (Exclusions from Market Access Principles: Single-Use Plastics) Regulations 2022. I welcome the commitments and shared ambition across the UK to continue to work together to reduce plastic waste and tackle plastic pollution across the UK.

[1] www.gov.uk/government/publications/process-for-considering-ukim-act-exclusions-in-common-framework-areas.

Written Answers

Wednesday, 20 July 2022

Adoption

Asked by **Lord Watson of Invergowrie**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the findings included in Adoption UK's Barometer Report, published in June, which found that 85 per cent of the adopters surveyed said their adoption agency does not regularly review their child's contact arrangements with birth relatives; and what plans they have to make such reviews mandatory. [HL1544]

Asked by **Lord Watson of Invergowrie**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the findings included in Adoption UK's Barometer Report, published in June, which showed that only (1) 12 per cent of adopters surveyed were offered advice and training on establishing contact with birth family relatives of their adopted child, and (2) 17 per cent of adopted adults surveyed reported being given any professional support prior to establishing contact with their own birth family in childhood; and what steps they plan to take in response. [HL1545]

Asked by **Lord Watson of Invergowrie**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to Adoption UK's Barometer Report, published in June, what steps they are taking to measure the impact of a lack of support for adopted people and their families when establishing birth family contact. [HL1546]

Baroness Barran: Local authorities have a legal duty to provide a comprehensive adoption service. This specifically includes 'Assistance, including mediation services, in relation to arrangements for contact between an adoptive child and a natural parent, natural sibling, former guardian or a related person of the adoptive child', as set out in Adoption Support Services Regulations 2005. It can be found at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2005/691/part/2/made?view=plain>. Contact arrangements should be reviewed regularly, and families should be supported with the contact arrangements before, during and after the adoption.

As set out in our 'Adoption Strategy: achieving excellence everywhere', the department is working with Regional Adoption Agencies (RAAs) to develop and trial what good practice around contact looks like, with a view to setting national standards in this area. This includes investigating what support is needed for children, birth parents, and adoptive parents. RAAs are also currently trialling a new programme called 'Letterswap', a new digital platform to improve the current 'Letterbox' system. The published adoption strategy is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/adoption-strategy-achieving-excellence-everywhere>.

Agriculture and Countryside: Education

Asked by **The Earl of Leicester**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to teach school children about the countryside and British farming. [HL1527]

Baroness Barran: There are opportunities within the geography and science curriculums to teach about the countryside, farming and agriculture, and how important the latter are to food production. These do not feature as stand-alone topics in the National Curriculum. The National Curriculum is a framework designed to give teachers the freedom and flexibility to cover particular topics in greater depth if they wish, and this could include teaching about the countryside and farming.

As part of the department's Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy, our National Education Nature Park initiative will also give children and young people the opportunity to learn about and connect with nature.

By 2025 we aim to introduce a natural history GCSE, giving young people a further opportunity to engage with and develop a deeper knowledge and understanding of the natural world. In studying this GCSE, young people will explore organisms and environments in more depth, gain knowledge and practical experience of fieldwork and develop a greater understanding of conservation.

Agriculture: Apprentices

Asked by **The Earl of Leicester**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many apprenticeships in the farming industry were (1) started, and (2) completed, in each year between 2018 and 2021. [HL1525]

Baroness Barran: The department publishes the Apprenticeships in England by Industry Characteristics publication that shows apprenticeship starts amongst employers in the Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing enterprise sector: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/apprenticeships-in-england-by-industry-characteristics#content-3-heading>.

Apprenticeship starts in the Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing sector (and its sub-divisions) from the 2017/18 to the 2020/21 academic years are shown in the attached table and can be found in the 'Apprenticeship starts' tab.

Industry based data is not held for achievements. However, the most timely data for starts and achievements for apprentices studying agricultural and related subjects from the 2017/18 to the 2020/21 academic years can also be found in the attached table and can be found in the 'Starts and achievements' tab.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

HL1525 Table [Apprenticeships_agriculture_data.xls]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-07-06/HL1525>

Agriculture: Seasonal Workers

Asked by *Baroness McIntosh of Pickering*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the shortage of seasonal workers in the first six months of this year, and (2) the extent of the impact to crops of fruit and vegetables; and what plans they have to address this in 2023. [HL1528]

Lord Benyon: Horticulture has long relied on seasonal workers to bring home the harvest. After a series of annual pilots the government announced last December that the Seasonal Worker visa route has been extended to 2024 to allow overseas workers to come to the UK for up to six months to harvest both edible and ornamental crops. An initial allocation of 30,000 visas was made available for 2022, which will be increased to 40,000 (including 2000 for the poultry sector). Defra continues to monitor the supply of labour to UK horticulture throughout the year, working with operators and sector growers to ensure there is sufficient labour for harvesting the UK's fruit and vegetable crops.

Asylum: Rwanda

Asked by *Lord Kennedy of Southwark*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 4 July (HL1084), what is the maximum acceptable cost of transporting asylum claimants from the UK to Rwanda under the terms of the UK–Rwanda Migration and Economic Development Partnership; and whether asylum seekers will be liable personally to fund any part of that cost. [HL1522]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Under the terms of the Migration and Economic Development Partnership the United Kingdom will arrange the transport for relocating individuals to Rwanda.

We do not routinely disclose commercial or operational information relating to individual charter flights. However, no asylum seeker will be liable to fund any part of the costs related to their relocation to Rwanda.

Aviation: Noise

Asked by *Baroness Randerson*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to incorporate the World Health Organization noise guidelines, published in 2018, into legislation related to aviation. [HL1576]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Government has no current plan to legislate to incorporate the World Health Organisation (WHO) Environmental Noise Guidelines into UK law.

Following the 2018 publication of the WHO Environmental Noise Guidelines, the Government convened the DEFRA-led Interdepartmental Group on Costs and Benefits Noise Subject Group. This group continues to review the evidence underpinning the WHO's guidelines, together with more recent evidence and it will consider whether there are any necessary updates to relevant government guidance.

Bahrain: Human Rights

Asked by *Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to (1) the visit by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon to Bahrain in February, and (2) the comment by a Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office spokesperson to the Middle East Eye on 22 June which said that “a number of human rights cases were raised with senior members of the Bahrain Government by Lord Ahmad during his visit in February”, what were the names of individuals whose cases Lord Ahmad raised with the government of Bahrain during this visit. [HL1406]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: During my visit to Bahrain, I discussed human rights issues and the individual cases of Abduljalil Al Singace, Mohammed Ramadan and Hussain Moosa during my meetings with senior members of the Government of Bahrain, as well as with the independent human rights oversight bodies.

Bread and Flour: Folic Acid

Asked by *Lord Rooker*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by Lord Kamall on 6 July (HL Deb col 999), whether they will cite the “scientific contestation” referred to concerning folic acid fortification as part of the Bread and Flour Regulations review. [HL1579]

Asked by *Lord Rooker*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by Lord Kamall on 6 July (HL Deb col 1000), whether they will give details of the cases where people “have died because of high levels of folic acid”. [HL1580]

Asked by *Lord Rooker*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have held with governments of other nations which operate a policy of mandatory fortification with folic acid regarding any unintended consequences which have arisen. [HL1581]

Asked by *Lord Rooker*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by Lord Kamall on 6 July (HL Deb cols 1001–2) regarding the scientific evidence available regarding folic fortification, whether they will publish the science brief referred to by Lord Kamall referencing heliocentrism versus geocentrism. [HL1582]

Lord Kamall: The scientific contestation referred to is summarised in the paper Folic acid and neural tube defects: Discovery, debate and the need for policy change by Professor Nicholas Wald. Professor Wald asserts that the United Kingdom should pursue a higher level of fortification than would be permitted by the UK's Tolerable Upper Level (TUL). A copy of the paper is attached.

The Government and its independent scientific advisory bodies have agreed that fortification of non-wholemeal wheat flour with folic acid, at a level informed by the guidance for supplemental intake of folic acid intake advised by the UK Expert Group on Vitamins and Minerals, is a safe and effective measure to reduce the number of neural tube defects (NTDs).

This view is supported by the Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COT) and by the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN). In 2018 COT published Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment: COT position paper on the current upper level for folic acid intake in response to a previous paper by Professor Wald, addressing the technical points raised in objection to the TUL and continuing to recommend its use. A copy of this paper is attached.

Deaths associated with high levels of folic acid refers to potential unintended harms which may arise following the fortification of flour with folic acid, such as an increase in the potential masking of vitamin B12 deficiency or pernicious anaemia where the deficiency can cause permanent neurological damage which can lead to death if untreated.

No recent discussions have taken place with countries which have implemented folic acid fortification on unintended consequences of the policy. However, evidence from a number of countries, including those which have implemented folic acid fortification policies, was considered by the SACN and COT to establish the safety and efficacy of fortifying food with folic acid. Analysis by COT and the SACN found that there was insufficient evidence to discount a number of potential risks at very levels of fortification.

While there is no specific scientific briefing relating to the debate between heliocentrism versus geocentrism, as I stated in the debate, we will routinely review the policy post-implementation to ensure it meets the objective of reducing NTDs while avoiding any unintended consequences. The forthcoming consultation will outline the proposed fortification levels with the supporting scientific rationale.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

A [Attachment A- P Wald 200622 (1).pdf]

B [Attachment B- COT position paper folic acid 2018 (1).pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-07-07/HL1579>

British Airways: Strikes

Asked by *Lord Kennedy of Southwark*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of any strike action of British Airways staff on travel at airports in the summer; and what plans they have to prevent any further travel disruption if such strikes take place. [HL1561]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The aviation industry operates in the private sector, therefore an industrial action is a matter for British Airways and the unions.

Ultimately, this strike action by Unite the Union and GMB has been suspended following a higher pay offer from British Airways. This offer will now be put to a vote of union members.

British Nationality: Assessments

Asked by *Lord Rosser*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of conducting 'Life in the UK' tests in (1) Welsh, and (2) Scots Gaelic, with only a handbook in English; and what plans they have to produce handbooks in those languages. [HL1534]

Asked by *Lord Rosser*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have for including Cornish (1) culture, (2) history, and (3) language, in the 'Life in the UK' test. [HL1535]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Life in the UK test requires candidates to learn and build an understanding of the culture, laws and history of the UK, which helps candidates to engage with and integrate into life in the UK. Applicants taking the test in Wales can opt to sit the test in Welsh, and those taking the test in Scotland can sit the test in Scottish Gaelic.

The Test, in its current form, has been in place for nearly 10 years and the Home Office intends to set out plans to review the content of the handbook within the next 12 months. Any review will consider the impact the current test content has had in the past 10 years, including the languages which the test can be taken and the materials provided.

Bus Services: Industrial Disputes

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to prepare for bus workers going on strike this month. [HL1653]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Government is committed to ensuring that everyone, everywhere has access to great bus services and regularly engages with bus operators on a variety of issues.

Where there are disputes between a private entity and its employees relating to employees' terms and

conditions, it is the responsibility of the company concerned to resolve these issues and make conditions for their employees sufficiently appealing.

The Government recognises the importance of bus services to the everyday lives of the travelling public. Where industrial action is set to occur, we expect operators to make efforts to minimise disruption and to ensure those reliant on their services can still travel.

Bus Services: Travel Information

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government why they have not (1) responded, or (2) taken action, following their 'Bus Services Act 2017: accessible information' public consultation, which ran from 5 July 2018 to 16 September 2018. [HL1575]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Department agrees that it is essential that buses should have accessible onboard information to help all passengers to travel with confidence. Since the 2018 consultation the Department has worked with industry specialists to determine the most appropriate way forward, and to ensure that the proposed Regulations take full account of the way local services are provided in England, Scotland and Wales.

Car Allowances

Asked by Lord Strathcarron

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will review the 45 pence per mile HMRC mileage rate motoring allowance in the light of current levels of inflation. [HL1589]

Baroness Penn: The Government sets the Approved Mileage Allowance Payments (AMAP) rates to minimise administrative burdens. The AMAP rates aim to reflect running costs including fuel, servicing and depreciation. Depreciation is estimated to constitute the most significant proportion of the AMAP rates.

Employers are not required to use the AMAP rates. Instead, they can agree to reimburse the actual cost incurred, where individuals can provide evidence of the expenditure, without an Income Tax or National Insurance charge arising.

Alternatively, they can choose to pay a different mileage rate that is higher or lower than the AMAP rates. If an employee is paid less than the approved amount, they are allowed to claim Mileage Allowance Relief (MAR) from HMRC. However, if the payment exceeds the relevant AMAP rate, and this results in a profit for the individual, they will be liable to pay Income Tax and National Insurance contributions on the difference.

As with all taxes and allowances, the Government keeps the AMAP rates under review and any changes are considered by the Chancellor.

Coronavirus: Medical Treatments

Asked by Lord Mendelsohn

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the recent reported increase in COVID-19 infections, what plans they have (1) to meet with charities working with the clinically extremely vulnerable to COVID-19, and (2) to set out their strategy for protecting the clinically extremely vulnerable if Evusheld is not procured and made available; and what assessment they have made of how effectively this strategy will protect the clinically extremely vulnerable in the absence of Evusheld procurement or a reversion to non-pharmaceutical interventions such as social distancing and mask mandates. [HL1194]

Lord Kamall: The term 'clinically extremely vulnerable' (CEV) is no longer in use following the end of the shielding programme in September 2021. The majority of people previously identified as CEV are now well protected through the vaccination programme. There is a smaller patient cohort whose immune systems mean that they continue to be at higher risk of infection. The Department continues to regularly engage with charities and organisations representing those whose who are immunosuppressed or immunocompromised.

The Government has issued public health advice for those at higher risk in an online only format, which advises eligible individuals to ensure they receive additional doses of the vaccines as appropriate. Many people in this cohort are also eligible for new monoclonal antibody and antiviral treatments to prevent the risk of serious illness and hospitalisation. The advice also suggests that those who are immunosuppressed should seek advice from their National Health Service clinician where appropriate and consider additional steps to prevent the risk of infection. This may include avoiding those who have tested positive for COVID-19 and their household contacts until 10 days after a positive test and ensuring their home is well ventilated when receiving visitors.

The Department is currently conducting its assessment of the effectiveness of Evusheld, which includes requesting advice from clinicians in line with available data, the public health situation and other treatments available. While we are considering the advice received, we are unable to confirm a specific timetable for any decision. However, we provide an update to Parliament shortly.

Coronavirus: Protective Clothing and Screening

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take in response to the increasing number of COVID-19 cases; and what plans they have (1) to re-introduce free testing, and (2) to update their advice on the wearing of face masks. [HL1628]

Lord Kamall: The COVID-19 vaccination and booster programme and the availability of antiviral treatments has ensured a reduced risk of severe illness or hospitalisation. We have transitioned the response towards guidance and encouraging responsible behaviours, while targeting protection towards those individuals most at risk from the virus. Testing remains available for eligible groups, including for certain high-risk individuals and settings.

It is currently recommended that face coverings should be worn when COVID-19 rates are high, in crowded and enclosed spaces and when coming into close contact with individuals at high risk. While there are currently no plans to update the guidance on wearing face coverings, the Government continues to assess the situation and will take further action if required to ensure the response remains effective and proportionate.

Deportation

Asked by **Lord Rosser**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many charter deportation flights took place in 2021; and how many deportees were on each of those flights. [[HL1537](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: This Government's priority is keeping the people of this country safe, and we make no apology for seeking to remove dangerous foreign criminals. Foreign nationals who abuse our hospitality by committing crimes should be in no doubt of our determination to deport them.

Charter flight operations are an important means to return disruptive individuals or where they are limited scheduled routes, particularly during the global Coronavirus pandemic. We manage the charter programme flexibly, balancing it with the use of scheduled flights to best respond to operational needs.

In the calendar year 2021 – The Home Office operated 63 flights removing 1365 individuals.

FLIGHT DATE	DESTINATION	NUMBER OF PEOPLE REMOVED
13/01/2021	ROMANIA	25
19/01/2021	LITHUANIA	23
26/01/2021	POLAND	Less than 10
04/02/2021	ROMANIA	34
11/02/2021	LITHUANIA	16
18/02/2021	POLAND	16
25/02/2021	HUNGARY & BULGARIA	15
02/03/2021	ROMANIA	20
09/03/2021	LITHUANIA	Less than 10
18/03/2021	POLAND	13
24/03/2021	ROMANIA	12
31/03/2021	LITHUANIA	20
08/04/2021	HUNGARY & BULGARIA	11
13/04/2021	ROMANIA	30
15/04/2021	POLAND	23
19/04/2021	ALBANIA	20
21/04/2021	VIETNAM	27
27/04/2021	ROMANIA	29
29/04/2021	POLAND	15
06/05/2021	HUNGARY & BULGARIA	Less than 10
11/05/2021	LITHUANIA	22
13/05/2021	ALBANIA	30
18/05/2021	POLAND	18
20/05/2021	ALBANIA	29
25/05/2021	ROMANIA	30
27/05/2021	ALBANIA	24
03/06/2021	ALBANIA	31
10/06/2021	ALBANIA	Less than 10
15/06/2021	LITHUANIA	15
17/06/2021	ALBANIA	19
22/06/2021	POLAND	18
24/06/2021	ROMANIA	20
01/07/2021	ALBANIA	37
06/07/2021	SPAIN & PORTUGAL	Less than 10
13/07/2021	ROMANIA & LITHUANIA	30
15/07/2021	ALBANIA	12
21/07/2021	ZIMBABWE	14
28/07/2021	VIETNAM	20
03/08/2021	POLAND	13
05/08/2021	ALBANIA	22
10/08/2021	JAMAICA	Less than 10
17/08/2021	POLAND & ROMANIA	22
19/08/2021	ALBANIA	27
25/08/2021	ZIMBABWE	Less than 10
01/09/2021	NIGERIA & GHANA	Less than 10
14/09/2021	POLAND & ROMANIA	33
16/09/2021	ALBANIA	34
28/09/2021	LITHUANIA	18
30/09/2021	ALBANIA	39
05/10/2021	POLAND & ROMANIA	29
07/10/2021	ALBANIA	22
13/10/2021	ALBANIA	16
21/10/2021	ALBANIA	29
27/10/2021	LITHUANIA	18
02/11/2021	ROMANIA	19
04/11/2021	ALBANIA	35

10/11/2021	JAMAICA	Less than 10
16/11/2021	POLAND	14
18/11/2021	ALBANIA	13
30/11/2021	ROMANIA	30
02/12/2021	LITHUANIA	10
09/12/2021	ALBANIA	28
14/12/2021	POLAND	16
16/12/2021	ALBANIA	21
21/12/2021	LITHUANIA	16

The Home Office has obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation Act 2018 and in law generally to protect personal data. This exempts personal data if disclosure would contravene any of the data protection principles in Article 5(1) of the General Data Protection Regulation and section 34(1) of the Data Protection Act 2018.

East Coast Main Line: Railway Signals

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Vere of Norbiton on 8 July (HL1360), who are the industry partners who have provided cost estimates for funding the East Coast Digital Programme; what is the 3 Lines of Defence approach to scrutinising cost estimates; and who is responsible for the independent analysis within the 3 Lines of Defence approach. [HL1708]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The success of the East Coast Digital Programme is dependent on collaborative business change across a number of organisations, known as industry partners. Alongside my Department and Network Rail, these include passenger and freight train operators and suppliers.

The 3 Lines of Defence approach is the formal Network Rail Cost Estimate Assurance process. The 1st line is led by business operations which perform the day to day activity. At this stage proposed costs are assessed to ensure they capture all relevant scope and risk as well as being sufficiently evidenced. The 2nd line is provided by other functions in the business to provide a strategic overview of costs and to ensure work has been undertaken diligently. The 3rd line is independent assurance, which for the East Coast Digital Programme Full Business Case was provided by Turner and Townsend. In addition to this assurance, the Department's Centre of Excellence and the Infrastructure Projects Authority have both independently reviewed the Programme, prior to approval of the Full Business Case.

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Vere of Norbiton on 8 July (HL1360), what assessment they have made of

additional capacity that will be produced by the East Coast Digital Programme. [HL1709]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The introduction of digital signalling, as part of the East Coast Digital Programme, will increase rail system capability. This can either be used to increase performance or capacity. The priority for the East Coast Digital Programme, and therefore the central economic analysis in the Full Business Case, has assumed that the benefits offered by this increased system capability are captured as performance improvements, including reduction in passenger delays by improving the reliability of infrastructure and improved punctuality of trains which delivers additional revenue from an increase in passenger numbers.

Electric Scooters

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government why they have extended trials of rented electric scooters to 2024; and how the outcome of those trials will be taken into account in the proposed Transport Bill. [HL1573]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Government has decided to allow e-scooter trials to be extended from November 2022 to 31 May 2024. The extension will be restricted to existing trial areas only and will allow us to gather further evidence where gaps are identified, building on the findings of the current evaluation. The move towards a new regime means that the trials continue to have significant value, as well as providing a practical example of how better regulation can encourage responsible use.

Evidence we are gathering through these trials and other data sources is helping us to understand the safety and wider impacts of e-scooters. We intend to publish the findings from the current national evaluation later this year.

Electric Scooters: Regulation

Asked by Lord Naseby

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to regulate e-scooters in the same ways as other road vehicles, including through the use of (1) speed limits, (2) number plates, and (3) mandatory insurance. [HL1612]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: It is the intention of the Government that the Transport Bill will create a new low-speed zero emission vehicle category that is distinct from the existing cycle and motor vehicle categories. New powers in the Bill would allow the Government to decide which vehicles will fall into this category and make regulations to ensure that they are safe to use and safe for pedestrians and other road users.

The Government plans to use these powers to legalise e-scooter use, with robust technical requirements and clear expectations of users. We are currently considering

options for e-scooter regulations, including such things as the requirements for users to hold a driving licence or to register and insure the vehicle, and various technical specifications for vehicles including maximum speed limits.

No decisions have been made, and we will consult before they come into force so that, all interested parties have a chance to shape the new regime.

Fertilisers

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to keep fertiliser plants open amidst rising gas prices. [HL1541]

Lord Callanan: The Government is closely monitoring the fertiliser market. On 6 May, the Government announced steps to support farmers with cost pressures caused by demand and instability seen across the globe – Direct Payments in England will be paid in two instalments each year for the remainder of the agricultural transition period, to help farmers with their cashflow. Furthermore, we have provided more than £2 billion in relief to help Energy Intensive Industries with electricity costs since 2013 – Fertiliser plants are recipients of this support.

Football: Qatar

Asked by Lord Birt

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether all UK football fans, regardless of their sexuality, can safely attend the forthcoming FIFA World Cup in Qatar. [HL1517]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: During a visit to Doha on 4-5 July, the Minister for the Middle East, Rt Hon. Amanda Milling MP, raised this with local organisers. They reiterated their public commitment that "everybody is welcome" to the tournament, including LGBT+ visitors. We will continue to encourage the equal treatment of all fans and respect for individual rights so that anyone, of any background, can go and enjoy themselves.

Freight Facilities Grant

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many maritime operators have used the (1) Mode Shift Revenue Support, and (2) Waterborne Freight Grant, schemes. [HL1829]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: There are no currently supported flows by inland waterways and there have been none during the last three financial years since April 2019. This scheme is open to all freight operators, including maritime operators, who wish to move freight through inland water freight transport instead of road, where inland waterway transport is more expensive.

There have been no projects supported by the Waterborne Freight Grant during the last three financial years since April 2019. This scheme is also open to all freight operators, including maritime operators, who wish to run waterborne freight transport instead of road, where transport by water is more expensive.

Fuels: Excise Duties

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what price petrol and diesel would need to reach in order to prompt them to further cut fuel duty. [HL1523]

Baroness Penn: The temporary 12-month cut to duty on petrol and diesel of 5p per litre represents a £2.4 billion tax cut in 2022-23.

All taxes, including fuel duty, remain under review.

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that the five pence per litre cut to fuel duty is passed on to consumers. [HL1524]

Baroness Penn: The Government has been clear that it expects all those in the supply chain to pass the fuel duty cut through to consumers in full.

In June, the Business Secretary requested that the independent Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) undertake an urgent review of the market for road fuel. The CMA's initial findings suggest that the fuel duty cut appears to have been largely passed through, with the largest fuel retailers doing so immediately and others more gradually.

The Government fully supports the CMA in its further work to better understand the supply of the road fuel in the UK, and will await these findings.

Healthy Start Scheme

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Gloucester

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to the potential merits of introducing an automatic registration process for the Healthy Start scheme. [HL1345]

Lord Kamall: The Department has not considered the potential merits of introducing an automatic registration process for the Healthy Start scheme.

The NHS Business Services Authority operates the Healthy Start scheme which has recently transitioned from paper vouchers to a prepaid card. All applicants to the scheme, where they meet the eligibility criteria set out in the legislation, must accept the terms and conditions of the prepaid card at the point of application. As the prepaid card is a financial product and cannot be issued without the applicant accepting these terms, the NHS Business Services Authority cannot automatically provide eligible families with a prepaid card.

Help to Grow Schemes

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to introduce a Help to Grow Scheme for the third sector. [HL1543]

Lord Callanan: Studies show that improving the performance of UK SMEs to match competitor countries such as Germany, could add up to £100 billion to the economy. Help to Grow aims to close that gap by specifically targeting SMEs who will benefit in a way that impacts growth potential and productivity. There are currently no plans to introduce a Help to Grow scheme for the third sector. Businesses applying to either Help to Grow schemes (management and digital) must:

- Be registered in the UK;
- Have between 5-249 employees;
- Have been operating for at least twelve months; and
- Not be a charity.

Homes for Ukraine Scheme

Asked by *Lord Kennedy of Southwark*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that the applications of Ukrainian refugees through the Homes for Ukraine scheme are processed as quickly and thoroughly as possible. [HL1521]

Lord Harrington of Watford: UKVI have issued thousands of visas under the Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme. The latest figures can be found here: Ukraine Family Scheme and Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme (Homes for Ukraine) visa data - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Ukrainians with valid passports can now prove their identity using the UK Immigration: ID check app as part of the application. There are fewer steps to complete and an improved customer experience.

More information on the ID check app, including a video giving top tips, can be found on GOV.UK at: Using the 'UK Immigration: ID Check' app - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Hospitals: Construction

Asked by *Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will list the 40 new hospitals they have promised to build; how much building work has been completed on each new hospital; and when they expect each new hospital to admit its first patients. [HL1452]

Lord Kamall: The Government has committed to build 40 new hospitals by 2030, in addition to eight previously announced schemes.

The schemes are grouped into five cohorts for delivery by 2030, based on an assessment of readiness to progress

and the extent to which schemes can realise the benefits of the national programme. This assessment is subject to continuous review and the timescales for individual schemes may change. A list of schemes and cohorts is attached, due to the size of the data. This includes where schemes are in construction and projected opening dates where this information is held centrally. There are eight schemes in cohort five, which refers to schemes yet to be confirmed and currently subject to an ongoing selection process.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Table [FORMATTED TABLE FOR MINISTERIAL CLEARANCE 20220707_HL1452_Lord Roberts of Llandudno (1).docx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-07-04/HL1452>

Hospitals: Protective Clothing

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to reintroduce mandatory mask-wearing in hospitals. [HL1718]

Lord Kamall: Mask wearing in National Health Service hospitals is determined locally by individual, organisational and system risk assessments. NHS England continues to work with NHS trusts to ensure that effective infection prevention and control is in place in all areas.

Human Trafficking

Asked by *Lord Rosser*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what data they hold on the route of travel of people illegally trafficked into the UK. [HL1536]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government is resolute in its commitment to tackle Organised Immigration Crime. In the closely related crimes of people smuggling and human trafficking, our law enforcement partners bear down on the Organised Criminal Groups (OCGs) who facilitate illegal travel to the UK and who exploit vulnerable migrants, often treating them as commodities and knowingly putting people in life-threatening situations.

We work closely with international law enforcement partners to share intelligence data and dismantle these networks to disrupt the illegal movement of people and the various routes they take to enter the UK.

We have a dedicated Organised Immigration Crime Taskforce, led by the National Crime Agency (NCA), committed to dismantling OCGs engaged in immigration crime. The Taskforce is active in 17 countries worldwide, and its activities include supporting judicial and intelligence capacity building in source and transit

countries, and intelligence sharing in key near Europe countries to disrupt people smuggling.

We also share information about criminality around small boats between agencies. This includes the Joint Intelligence Cell in France and international networks of both NCA and Home Office. Since July 2020, the Joint Intelligence Cell has taken down 17 small boat OCGs and secured over 400 arrests – taking the criminals behind these crossings off the street. Our cooperation with the French has also prevented more than 23,000 migrant crossing attempts.

Alongside our efforts to tackle organised immigration crime we continue to strengthen our efforts to tackle modern slavery and human trafficking. The UK works with partner countries and international law enforcement authorities to disrupt criminal networks and protect potential victims from being trafficked and exploited in the UK.

Immigration

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the integration of immigrants in UK society; and what plans they have to improve this integration. [HL1649]

Lord Harrington of Watford: The Government takes the integration of immigrants into UK society very seriously and this is reflected in our specific resettlement and welcome programmes for arrivals from Ukraine, Afghanistan and Hong Kong. These programmes are all designed to support new arrivals in understanding life in our country, their responsibilities, and the opportunities that exist for them.

Through bespoke resettlement and welcome packages for arrivals from Ukraine, Afghanistan and Hong Kong, the Government continues to monitor the integration needs of new arrivals, working closely with local authorities and other organisations to gather data and inform policy development.

All refugees to the UK have immediate access to the labour market and to mainstream services that support their integration, including benefits and healthcare. We ask local authorities to provide monitoring data on refugees who arrive via a UK Resettlement Scheme, which covers their first year in the UK. The data covers key areas such as education, employment, health and English language.

The Government also understands the vital role that education plays in promoting integration and preparing our children and young people for life in a modern and diverse Britain. All schools must promote community cohesion; and are required to actively promote our shared values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance for those of different faiths and beliefs.

Marine Environment: International Cooperation

Asked by Lord Randall of Uxbridge

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they plan to support the international implementation of the Global Ocean Alliance 30by30 initiative. [HL1707]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Since 2019, the UK has been leading the Global Ocean Alliance (GOA) of countries championing ambitious ocean action under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), including the '30by30' target to protect at least 30% of the global ocean by 2030. The ocean has historically been underrepresented in the CBD, and the GOA plays an important role in raising the profile of ocean and marine issues.

In addition to leading the GOA, the UK also serves as Co-Chair of the High Ambition Coalition (HAC) for Nature & People, alongside Costa Rica and France. The HAC champions 30by30 for both the land and the ocean. Between these two UK-led alliances, nearly 120 countries support 30by30 for the ocean, and over 100 countries support 30by30 for both the land and the ocean.

As we approach the 15th Conference of Parties (COP15) to the CBD in December 2022, the UK will continue its proactive leadership role in both the GOA and HAC, working with Costa Rica, France, and members of both ambition groups, to call for the 30by30 target to be enshrined within the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF).

The UK is committed to securing an ambitious outcome at COP15, including ambitious outcomes for the ocean, to halt and reverse biodiversity loss globally by 2030. It is also crucial that we continue working after COP15 to support the global implementation of the GBF, including the 30by30 target.

We are therefore delighted that the UK, Costa Rica, and France published a joint communique during the Stockholm+50 conference in June 2022, outlining plans for the HAC for Nature and People to evolve into a new phase to support the implementation of the 30by30 target following COP15, and we welcome the opportunity this provides for further collaboration with the GOA both ahead of and post-COP15.

In addition, the UK continues to provide support for marine protection internationally, including through the £500 million Blue Planet Fund. The Blue Planet Fund, financed from the UK overseas aid budget, will support developing countries to protect and sustainably manage their marine resources and address human-generated threats across four key themes: biodiversity, climate change, marine pollution, and sustainable seafood.

Migrants: Detainees

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the hourly rate of pay for detainees in immigration removal

centres; and how many hours have been worked by detainees in each year since 2015. [[HL1538](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: In accordance with the Detention Centre Rules 2001, all detained persons should be provided with an opportunity to participate in activities to meet, as far as possible, their recreational and intellectual needs. This includes the provision of voluntary paid activity opportunities. Rule 17 of the Detention Centre Rules permits those in detention to engage voluntarily in paid activities. These activities are provided to meet the recreational and intellectual needs of detained individuals. In accordance with Rule 17, pay rates are determined by the Secretary of State for the Home Department. The currently approved rates of pay are £1 per hour and, for specified projects, £1.25 per hour, as set out in the published Detention Services Order 1/2013 'Paid Activities'. Management information on the number of hours of paid activity undertaken by detained individuals for each year from 2015 is set out in the table below. This is provisional management information that is subject to change. It has not been assured to the standard of Official Statistics.

Total hours of paid activity undertaken

2015 - 920,597

2015 - 881,077

2017 - 669,213

2018 - 532,876

2019 - 454,000

2020 - 250,970

2021 - 126,282

2022 (January 1st to June 30th) - 98,351

Mobile Broadband: Cybersecurity

Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the vulnerability of mobile internet systems in the UK to hostile actions; and what steps they plan to take to ensure that all homes and businesses have access to landline connections. [[HL1533](#)]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: DCMS works closely with the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) to understand and identify vulnerabilities. The NCSC has performed extensive and detailed analysis of the security of the telecommunications sector. This analysis informed the UK Telecommunications Supply Chain Review, and subsequently informed the development of the Telecommunications (Security) Act, which received Royal Assent in November 2021.

The Act introduces a new telecommunications security framework in the UK which places duties on public telecommunications providers to protect their networks and services against security compromises. It also introduces new national security powers which are

designed to manage the risks posed by high-risk vendors, both now and in the future.

The universal service obligations set in the Electronic Communications (Universal Service) Order 2003 require designated providers to offer telephony services throughout the UK. BT and KCOM are therefore required to maintain access to a range of telephony services (including landlines), as well as provide a series of special measures designed for users who have a disability.

NHS: Coronavirus

Asked by Lord Scriven

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the forecast cost pressures on the NHS due to COVID-19 (1) in July, and (2) for the rest of the 2022–23 financial year. [[HL1585](#)]

Lord Kamall: No assessment has been made in the format requested. However, the Spending Review 2021 provided £6.096 billion for the National Health Service to fund the recovery from COVID-19 in 2022/23. The funding was provided to address the impact of the pandemic on NHS services, funding for costs directly incurred by COVID-19 costs and new pressures relating to anticipated service demand.

Offenders: Deportation

Asked by Lord Parekh

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether citizens of Commonwealth countries may be deported after serving custodial sentences for criminal offences in the UK; and if so, what assessment they have made of the effect of this policy on UK residents who arrived from Commonwealth countries before 1973 and may therefore be without documentation of their residential status. [[HL1532](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Commonwealth citizens convicted of a crime in the UK and given a prison sentence will be considered for deportation at the earliest opportunity. Deportation will be pursued where it is conducive to the public good including where a person receives a custodial sentence of 12 months or more, commits an offence that caused serious harm or is a persistent offender. Section 7 of the Immigration Act 1971 provides an exemption from deportation for Commonwealth citizens resident in the UK on 1 January 1973 and ordinarily resident in the UK for at least 5 years before the decision to make a deportation order. The onus is on the person claiming an exemption under section 7 to prove they meet the criteria.

Parking: Pedestrian Areas

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to respond to the results of their 'Managing pavement

parking' public consultation, which ran from 31 August 2020 to 22 November 2020. [HL1574]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: We are actively considering the options for pavement parking policy and will publish the formal consultation response and announce next steps as soon as possible. The formal consultation response will be available to view on the Gov.uk website.

PHE Reproductive Health, Sexual Health and HIV Innovation Fund

Asked by Baroness Barker

To ask Her Majesty's Government what investment they will make in the Sexual Health, Reproductive Health and HIV Innovation Fund this financial year. [HL1666]

Asked by Baroness Barker

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much was allocated to the Sexual Health, Reproductive Health and HIV Innovation Fund in the financial years (1) 2021–22, and (2) 2022–23. [HL1667]

Asked by Baroness Barker

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take to ensure that the next round of the Sexual Health, Reproductive Health and HIV Innovation Fund focuses on (1) tackling inequalities, and (2) communities who have not seen the same improvement in HIV outcomes. [HL1668]

Asked by Baroness Barker

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take to ensure that the next round of the Sexual Health, Reproductive Health and HIV Innovation Fund includes a focus on (1) shared learning, and (2) ensuring successful pilot projects feed in to national services. [HL1669]

Lord Kamall: In December 2021, we announced that an independent review of the impact of the Sexual Health, Reproductive Health and HIV Innovation Fund had been commissioned. The review has now been completed and we are currently considering its findings to inform further steps in 2022. Decisions on future investment in the Fund will be made in due course. In 2021/22, £300,000 was allocated to the Innovation Fund.

The Fund aims to support projects which address inequalities and focus on those with poor sexual and reproductive health and HIV outcomes. Bids for funding have previously been assessed on sustainability and how learning will be shared across the sector, including into national services. A library of resources and learning from projects supported by previous Funds is being compiled and will be published later this year.

Railways: Tickets

Asked by Lord Naseby

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to safeguard the role of the ticket office across the rail network. [HL1529]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: No final decision has been taken on ticket offices. Ticket offices have seen a significant decline in use over the last decade, yet their numbers have not substantially changed. Staff will always provide face-to-face services on the railways, which can be crucial for those who need additional support and cannot, or do not want to, use contactless or mobile tickets.

There is a process for train operators to propose any changes to the opening hours of ticket offices or for closing ticket offices which is set out in the Ticketing and Settlement Agreement, which regulates what train operators can do in terms of fares, ticketing and retailing across the network. This can be found on the Rail Delivery Group's website.

Respiratory Syncytial Virus

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to establish a sub-committee of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) on Respiratory Syncytial Virus, as discussed in the JCVI meetings in (1) June 2019, and (2) October 2019. [HL1578]

Lord Kamall: The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) monitors new vaccines in development to inform future work and is aware of a range of Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) vaccines and monoclonal immunisations in late stages of development. The JCVI's secretariat is planning for a subcommittee on RSV to review these products and advise on the potential use in the national immunisation programme. The timing of the subcommittee will be dependent on progress towards authorisation for these products. However, the first meeting is expected to take place either at the end of 2022 or the beginning of 2023.

Schools: Sports

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to increase sports funding for schools. [HL1540]

Baroness Barran: The department continues to deliver year on year increases to school funding, with the total core school budget increasing to £56.8 billion by the 2024/25 academic year. This is a £7 billion cash increase, compared with 2021/22.

In addition to the school's core budget, the department confirmed that for the 2022/23 academic year, primary schools will continue to receive the £320 million PE and sport premium.

In October 2021, the department announced nearly £30 million a year to improve the teaching of physical education at primary school, and to open primary and secondary school sport facilities in the evenings, at weekends, and during the holidays.

To support the pupils who the department knows are most inactive, such as girls and pupils with special education needs and disabilities, we are investing nearly £2 million over a three-year period to deliver the Inclusion 2024 programme and the girls' competitive sport Your Time initiative.

Seasonal Workers: Visas

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to provide advance notice for the 2023 allocation of seasonal worker visas. [[HL1542](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: On the 24 December 2021, the Government announced the continuation of the Seasonal Worker route until 2024, including how quotas will be set throughout this period.

Sri Lanka: Development Aid

Asked by Lord Naseby

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assistance they have given to the government of Sri Lanka to help meet that country's emergency needs for (1) life saving drugs, and (2) other medical equipment. [[HL1530](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is closely monitoring the situation in Sri Lanka, particularly as it relates to the supply of pharmaceuticals and medical equipment supplies. The UK contributes to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) Operation in Sri Lanka. The DREF is supporting the Sri Lanka Red Cross with an allocation of CHF691,002 in response to shortages and civil unrest. It will support with the provision of essential medicine, first aid and psychosocial support. We are also working to support the United Nations (UN) and its agencies in the coordination of their response based on the UN's recent joint Humanitarian Needs and Priorities (HNP) Plan, launched on 9 June. This called for US\$47.2 million to provide life-saving assistance to 1.7 million people who are most at risk and need immediate support. The World Bank have announced assistance of US\$400 million, which includes funds to meet medicines and medical equipment needs. The UK is a major donor of the UN and World Bank.

The UK recognises the difficult economic situation and welcomes the ongoing in-depth discussions with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on reforms needed to

bring the economy back to a sustainable path. The Prime Minister spoke to the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka Ranil Wickremesinghe on 30 May and underlined the UK's continued support to the people of Sri Lanka during these economic difficulties.

Syria: Refugees

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made, if any, of the levels of repatriation of European citizens, in particular women and children, who were held in closed camps in north-east Syria; and what representations they have received from (1) Save the Children, and (2) others, on this issue. [[HL1518](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK continues to work with and learn from our international partners on a range of issues to help address the difficult situation in north east Syria, including in relation to camps for displaced persons, where we continue to provide humanitarian assistance. We are aware of a number of reports that have been published on this issue, including by Save the Children. It is ultimately a matter for individual countries how they address any situations involving their nationals, including, where applicable, repatriation to the country of origin.

Tenants' Associations (Provisions Relating to Recognition and Provision of Information) (England) Regulations 2018

Asked by Lord Young of Cookham

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the review of the effectiveness of the Tenants' Associations (Provisions Relating to Recognition and Provision of Information) (England) Regulations 2018 will be carried out. [[HL1660](#)]

Lord Harrington of Watford: The Government wants to make it easier for leaseholders to come together to take on responsibilities for their properties. We are currently considering the Law Commission's report and recommendations on improvements to the Right to Manage for leaseholders. We will also continue to monitor the operation of the Statutory Instrument.

Young People: Farmers

Asked by The Earl of Leicester

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to improve the rates of young people in the UK forging careers in the farming industry. [[HL1526](#)]

Baroness Barran: The department has introduced T Levels which will provide students with a high quality, technical alternative to A levels after GCSEs. T Levels in Agriculture, Land Management & Production and Animal Care & Management will be available from September 2023.

We are committed to supporting more young people into apprenticeships in the agriculture, environmental and animal care sectors. Funding for apprenticeships in England will grow to £2.7 billion by the 2024/25 financial year to support more apprenticeships in employers of all sizes. There are currently 40 high-quality, employer-designed apprenticeship standards available in these sectors, in occupations such as crop technician, livestock unit technician and agriculture professional adviser. Alongside this, there are a number of land-based providers delivering specific provision in farming and agriculture to cater for those pursuing qualifications and careers in these areas.

The Free Courses for Jobs offer, which was launched in April 2021, gives eligible adults the chance to access high value level 3 qualifications, including 18 agricultural qualifications, for free, which can support them to gain higher wages or a better job.

The Careers & Enterprise Company is supporting schools and colleges to embed best practice in the delivery of careers information, advice and guidance, so young people are aware of the full range of training and

careers available to them and have access to a broad range of employers and workplaces, including those in the agricultural, forestry and fishing sectors. This will be delivered through the national roll-out of Career Hubs, Career Leader training, and the Enterprise Adviser Network.

The National Careers Service, a free, government funded careers information, advice and guidance service draws on a range of labour market information to support and guide individuals. It is impartial, and careers guidance is tailored to individual needs, but careers advisers can play a key role in alerting people to the range of farming careers available. National Careers Service supports this through disseminating regular information to careers advisers.

The Service website gives customers access to a range of useful digital tools and resources to support them including 'Explore Careers' which includes more than 130 industry areas and more than 800 job profiles including include a range of roles in the farming industry, describing what those roles entail, qualifications and entry routes.

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