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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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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

Thursday, 21 July 2022

Academy Trust and Local Government Pensions

[HLWS260]

Baroness Barran: My Right Honourable Friend the Secretary of State for Education (James Cleverly) has laid the following statement:

In 2013, we introduced a guarantee to Local Government Pensions Scheme (LGPS) administering authorities that in the event of the closure of an academy trust any outstanding LGPS liabilities will not revert to the fund.

Although there is no end date to the Guarantee, we committed to undertake assessments at regular intervals to determine whether the guarantee remains affordable and is being fully recognised by LGPS Administering Authorities in their risk assessments of academy schools and the subsequent setting of employer contribution rates.

I can today confirm that we will continue to provide a guarantee to LGPS administering authorities with a new increased annual ceiling of £20m, and a Parliamentary Minute, which sets out the detail of the Guarantee, has been laid in both Houses.

When we first introduced the Guarantee, we agreed annual limits for each financial year based on estimates. We have reviewed all payments the Department has made under the Guarantee policy since 2013 and have set a new annual limit of £20m per annum.

In the three most recent financial years the amounts requested and paid under the Guarantee policy were as follows: 2021/22: £3m, 2020/21: £4m, 2019/20: £11m. Since the Guarantee was introduced, the Department has never reached the set annual limit.

We expect administering authorities to recognise the direct Government backing provided by the Guarantee and continue to treat academies equitably with Local Authority maintained schools when setting employer contribution rates and deficit recovery periods.

The Guarantee provides academy trusts with direct Government backing for certain pension costs which will enable LGPS administering authorities, and I ask you to ensure that this is reflected in this year's scheme valuation, both in the setting of the employer contribution rates and the length of the deficit recovery period.

Active Travel England: Framework Document

[HLWS262]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: My Honourable Friend, the Minister of State for Transport (Trudy Harrison), has made the following Ministerial Statement:

The Department for Transport is today publishing the Framework Document for Active Travel England. This confirms Active Travel England's responsibilities and objectives and sets out its relationship with, and accountability to, the Department and Parliament.

Active Travel England will lead the delivery of the Government's strategy and vision for creating a new golden age of walking and cycling where half of all journeys in towns and cities are walked and cycled by 2030.

Active Travel England will hold the active travel budget in England, including for new infrastructure and behaviour change initiatives such as cycle training. It will assess all applications for active travel capital and revenue funding, including from wider funds such as the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlements, the Levelling Up Fund and RIS2, and award funding to schemes only if they meet the standards and principles set out in Local Transport Note 1/20, or any later national design standards. It will also inspect new active travel infrastructure to ensure schemes meet these new standards and principles and ask for funds to be returned for any which have not been completed as promised, or not started or finished within the agreed timeframe. Active Travel England will work with local authorities developing new schemes and support their capacity by delivering training and disseminating best practice. ATE will also begin to inspect, and publish reports on, highway authorities for their performance on active travel and identify particularly dangerous failings in their highways for cyclists and pedestrians. In these regards, the commissioner and inspectorate will perform a similar role to Ofsted from the 1990s onwards in raising standards and challenging failure.

It will also act as a statutory consultee in the planning system and review active travel provision in major planning applications.

Ministers at the Department for Transport will have responsibility for Active Travel England. As an Executive Agency, Active Travel England will have a degree of operational independence in delivering its duties. It will be led by its Chief Executive Officer who will be the agency's Accounting Officer and report to Parliament as needed. Active Travel England will also have its own Board which will be chaired by the National Active Travel Commissioner.

The Framework Document will come into effect when Active Travel England is formally established as an Executive Agency later this year and will be reviewed next year. I am placing a copy of Active Travel England's Framework Document in the Libraries of both Houses.

The standing up of Active Travel England is gathering pace. Today's publication of its Framework Document follows last month's announcement of senior appointments to Active Travel England. This included confirming Chris Boardman as England's National Active Travel Commission on a permanent basis and the appointment of Danny Williams as Active Travel England's Chief Executive.

Annual European Union Finances Statement

[HLWS269]

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

I am today laying before Parliament, “*The European Union Finances Statement 2021 on the implementation of the Withdrawal and Trade and Cooperation Agreements*” (CP 732). This is an annual publication and the 41st in the series.

This year’s statement continues to include an updated government estimate of the financial settlement. As detailed below, the estimate can be found in Annex A and contributing figures in Chapter 2 and 4.

This year’s edition is the first in the publication series to cover the UK as a non-Member State and having completed the eleven-month transition period. Now that the UK has left the EU and is no longer involved in the EU’s Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), detailed financial reporting on participation is of diminishing relevance.

This year’s edition follows the recommendations from the European Scrutiny Committee in relation to how the information is presented in this year’s document. The cut-off date for reporting for this edition of the EU Finances Statement is December 2021, as these statements will continue to be published on a yearly basis. However, the Statement also provides brief details of the invoice received subsequently to this period in April 2022, and which will be reported on in detail in next year’s Statement. This year, the April invoice provides a single net liability for the UK of €3,419,693,252.35 (£2,877,500,887.19).

The focus of this statement, therefore, is on the implementation of the Withdrawal Agreement (WA) and the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA), in effect turning the formerly annexed chapters into the main body of the text. The presentation of both payments and the outstanding liability under the WA has changed, accordingly.

This year the Statement separates backward-looking reporting on the payment of net liabilities made by the UK from HM Treasury’s forecast of outstanding liabilities. Chapter 2 gives a breakdown of the April and September 2021 invoices received from the EU and their payment during that calendar year. It gives an updated figure for the total paid up to 31 December 2021 of £5,812,719,159.

Chapter 3 of the statement provides detail on the verification arrangements that HM Treasury has undertaken in relation to the financial settlement under the WA, and which was reflected in domestic law in the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Act 2020.

HM Treasury estimates that the current net value of the financial settlement is £35.6bn. Chapter 4 breaks down the forecast outstanding UK net liabilities to the EU from

1 January 2022 onwards, providing a point estimate of the total outstanding of €29.0bn (£24.6bn).

This statement reports on the status of EU Programme association in Chapter 5. In this edition we give the current estimate for the total cost of participation in all three programmes over the 7-year MFF (around £17 billion). This breaks down to in the region of £15 billion for Horizon Europe, £1.2 billion for Euratom R&T and Fussion4Energy, and £0.8 billion for Copernicus.

As all payments will be made from departmental accounts HM Treasury do not plan to replicate or consolidate financial reporting on the TCA in future editions of the statement. Nor do we intend to report annually our revised estimate of liabilities expected under the TCA, because actual costs will, in future years, appear in the departmental resource accounts.

The latest estimate of £42.5bn shows an increase against the original range of £35-39bn, which is primarily due to the most recent valuation of the UK’s obligation under Article 142 for EU pensions. The primary drivers are the latest discount rates and inflation assumptions, which are centrally set by the Government for valuing long-term liabilities. However, given this is a multi-decade liability, the variables used in this forecast will continue to fluctuate up and down. The agreed scope of the underlying liability remains unchanged, and the UK will continue to pay those liabilities as they come due, according to the actual value at the time.

Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership

[HLWS264]

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:

The United Kingdom continues to make good progress toward joining the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) this year. Below is an update to Parliament on developments in negotiations over the course of recent months.

This bloc of 11 countries represents around £9 trillion in GDP and includes some of the world’s largest current and future economies. Joining CPTPP puts Britain at the heart of a dynamic group of countries, as the world economy increasingly centres on the Pacific region. And as these economies grow, it is even more important that the UK is in a free trade agreement with them, so that we benefit from this growth.

CPTPP membership offers a wide range of benefits for the UK. Accession could see 99.9% of UK exports being eligible for tariff-free trade with CPTPP members. Joining could also, for example, greatly benefit our world-class services sector through advanced provisions that facilitate digital trade, and modern rules on data to enable more financial and professional services markets to be opened up.

This will support the economy across the UK: the Department for International Trade's published scoping assessment shows that joining the agreement could benefit all parts of the country, with the greatest relative gains expected in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.

The UK announced its intention to join CPTPP in February last year and began formal negotiations on our accession in June 2021. In February this year, CPTPP Parties confirmed that we were ready to move to the final phase of the accession process, having largely demonstrated our compliance with the existing CPTPP rules.

This final phase of the accession process involves applicants making high-standard market access offers to CPTPP Parties. The UK submitted initial offers in March 2022, including on goods, services, investment, government procurement and financial services. Since then, we have continued to engage in talks on both a bilateral and collective basis with CPTPP members in order to come to an agreement on these market access issues.

We will continue to negotiate with CPTPP members over the coming months. We will ensure the UK joins the agreement on the right terms, and that British businesses can begin taking advantage of this trade deal as soon as possible.

The Department will continue to engage with Parliament over the course of negotiations. Once the agreement is signed, it will be subject to pre-ratification scrutiny under the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010 (CRaG), and any legislation required to implement the agreement will need to be passed. Prior to commencing scrutiny under CRaG the Government will commission and publish the advice of the independent Trade & Agriculture Commission, as well as laying its own report under section 42 of the Agriculture Act 2020.

Covid-19 Vaccine Supply

[HLWS261]

Lord Kamall: My Hon Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Vaccines and Public Health) (Maggie Throup) has made the following Written Statement:

This statement is a retrospective notification to the House of Commons following accounting advice that the initial phase of this transaction should be classified as a gift. It is normal practice that when a Department proposes to make a gift of a value exceeding £300,000, a minute is presented to the House of Commons setting out particulars of the gift.

In September 2021, the UK Government announced initiatives to share 4 million Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine doses with Australia and 1 million doses with the Republic of Korea. This arrangement was mutually beneficial and ensured these Pfizer/BioNTech doses – which were not immediately required in the UK – were used to support international vaccination efforts. The same volume of doses were returned later in the year.

Sharing doses meant those countries had immediate access to vaccines they could put to use in their domestic campaigns and enabled the UK to better align timings of our own supply with our requirements.

The Vaccine Taskforce has worked to optimise supply for UK domestic need through its close work with vaccine developers, as well as supporting the global distribution of vaccines with our international partners. The reciprocal dose sharing arrangements with Australia and South Korea is an example where we have worked with other countries in a mutually beneficial way to achieve this.

HM Treasury has approved the decision.

Government Delivery

[HLWS263]

Baroness Evans of Bowes Park: My Rt Hon Friend the Prime Minister has made the following statement:

The Government that I have had the privilege to lead has focused relentlessly on delivery. This statement updates the House on what we have achieved since I was invited by Her Majesty The Queen to form a government in July 2019, and puts on record why the millions of people who voted Conservative in 2019, many for the first time, were right to place their trust in me and in this Conservative Government.

First, after the country had endured three years of indecision and uncertainty with a deadlocked Parliament and a paralysed government, we got Brexit done. We delivered on the decision the people of the United Kingdom made in 2016, and took our country out of the European Union, negotiating a new Trade and Cooperation Agreement that preserves zero tariff, zero quota trade. Since our exit, we have been seizing the opportunities that come with this new freedom. We have signed three major new trade deals with Australia, New Zealand and Singapore, supporting food, drink and manufacturing exports as well as digital trade, and taking our total number of FTAs to over 70, with negotiations underway on many more. We have selected eight locations for freeports, with two already operational and the others coming on stream later this year. We have passed the Agriculture Act and the Fisheries Act, reforming what were wasteful and bureaucratic European schemes to the benefit of our farming and fishing communities and the environment. We have put in place a points-based immigration system that gives the people of this country control over our own borders. It is because we have this control that we have been able to react swiftly and generously to events in Afghanistan, Hong Kong and Ukraine, and strike the Migration and Economic Development Partnership with Rwanda in response to the shared international challenge of illegal migration, breaking the business model of people smuggling gangs.

Second, thanks to the fortitude and spirit of the British public, we guided the country through its greatest challenge since the Second World War. A pandemic is the kind of crisis that no administration wants to face, but

which it is the Government's solemn duty to tackle. We supported the NHS and the incredible doctors, nurses and carers who acted so valiantly to treat and care for the ill, and to whom I owe my own life. We built a huge testing regime, distributing more than two billion lateral flow tests across the UK, and at the peak delivering more than seven million tests to households every 24 hours. We invested in antivirals, adding more powerful new drugs to our armoury than any of our neighbours. In the face of predictions of 12 per cent unemployment, we deployed the furlough scheme, which supported the jobs of 11.7 million people through lockdown. Most importantly, we bet early and bet big on vaccines before success was guaranteed, becoming the first country in the world to administer one outside of clinical trials and the fastest in Europe to roll them out at scale – over 70 per cent of the entire UK population aged 12 or above received at least one dose within the first six months, and the total number of jobs now stands at over 150 million. Thanks to these efforts, we were able to emerge from lockdown early and set out our plan for living with Covid, getting our lives back on track.

Third, when I became Prime Minister I stood on the steps of Downing Street and said it was my job to level up the country, because while potential is evenly distributed throughout the population, opportunity is not. This meant bringing down crime, strengthening our health system, sorting out social care and improving our schools – and the Government acted on every front.

Our streets are safer. We have recruited more than 13,500 additional police officers, over halfway to delivering our pledge to put an extra 20,000 officers on the streets by 2023. We have taken over 50,000 knives and offensive weapons off the streets, and brought knife crime and thefts down last year compared to 2019. We have backed the police with the support they need, providing the largest funding boost in a decade, and equipping them with new powers to tackle disruptive protests and use stop and search. We have rolled up over 1,500 county lines, going for the gangs that peddled them and protecting the young people exploited by them. We have changed the law to make sure serious violent and sexual criminals spend more time behind bars.

Our NHS is on a surer footing. We have more doctors and around 30,000 more nurses than in March 2019, well over halfway to meeting our commitment of 50,000 more nurses by 2024. We have recruited another 18,000 primary care staff, such as physiotherapists and pharmacists, putting us on track to reach 26,000 by 2024. We have launched the biggest catchup programme in the NHS's history to tackle the legacy of the pandemic, aiming to deliver around 30 per cent more elective activity by 2024-25 than before the pandemic hit, underpinned by a £39 billion investment. We have opened almost 100 Community Diagnostic Centres, helping millions of patients to access earlier diagnostic tests closer to home. We have begun the biggest hospital-building programme for a generation. We have published England's first women's health strategy to improve the

health and well-being of women and girls, and widened access to life saving drugs.

Our broken social care system is finally being fixed. We have ended the cruel lottery of social care costs with a plan that means no one will pay more than £86,000 over their lifetime, when previously many had to pay six figure sums. We have lifted the previous limit for financial support by more than 400 per cent, so that anyone with assets of under £100,000 will be eligible for help, and those with under £20,000 will pay nothing at all. We have designed a way to make the overall system fairer, so that those who fund themselves do not pay more than state-funded individuals for the equivalent standard of care. We have committed to providing our brilliant social care workforce with new training and qualification opportunities, so that they can progress and improve while providing an even greater standard of care.

Our schools are better. We have supported children to recover from the impact of the pandemic with over two million tutoring courses and a programme to reach six million by 2024. We have supported teachers too, with over 80,000 benefiting from additional training and support, while bringing starting salaries up to £30,000, attracting more bright and able graduates to inspire the next generation. We have injected the biggest funding boost in a decade, taking core funding to £56.8 billion by 2024-25. We have driven up school standards, with 87 per cent of schools now rated Good or Outstanding, up from 68 per cent in 2010. We have set an ambition for 90 per cent of children to leave primary school at the expected standard in reading, writing and maths by 2030.

Fourth, in spite of the challenges posed by Covid and the subsequent headwinds in the global economy, we secured the fastest economic growth in the G7 last year. We have helped people into jobs by partnering with employers, including 500,000 since January this year through the Way to Work programme, and we have the lowest unemployment rate in almost 50 years. We have focused on getting young people into work, an area where versus other OECD countries we know we can do better, with 163,000 supported by the Kickstart Scheme to start their career and gain vital work experience. We have redressed Britain's historic underinvestment in infrastructure, developing a five-year, £600 billion pipeline of infrastructure projects to improve connectivity and drive economic growth, including a £96 billion investment through the Integrated Rail Plan – building three new high-speed lines in Northern Powerhouse Rail, HS2 East and HS2 West, and reopening lines to industrial and country towns cut off under Beeching. We have committed £5 billion to boost buses and cycling and a further £5.7 billion to level up local transport systems in the mayoral combined authority areas. We have accelerated the deployment of wind, new nuclear, solar and hydrogen power generation, with the Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution and our broader net zero agenda already yielding £22 billion in private sector investment and 68,000 clean jobs – and an ambition to unlock £100 billion of investment and 480,000 such jobs

by the end of the decade. We have continued to support the production of domestic oil and gas in the nearer term, which must underpin our transition to cleaner and cheaper power, working to retain the skills and industry in Aberdeen and elsewhere by putting nearly £2 billion into technologies such as carbon capture, usage and storage. We have raised the proportion of properties able to access the fastest gigabit-capable broadband from nine per cent when my administration took office to 68 per cent now. We have set an ambitious 2030 date for ending sales of new petrol and diesel cars, with over half of all new cars sold now electric or hybrid, and we have bolstered our strategic road network through a £27.4 billion Road Investment Strategy that includes building the first new trans-Pennine dual carriageway since 1971.

We have awarded 101 Towns Deals across the country to address high levels of deprivation and open up new opportunities by fostering economic regeneration, stimulating investment and delivering vital infrastructure. We have made it easier to own a home, with over 400,000 first time buyers last year marking the highest number since 2006, and housebuilding rebounding strongly after the challenges posed by the start of the pandemic. We have set out plans for renters reform that will provide renting families more security at the same time as supporting landlords. We have cemented the UK's status as a science superpower, recognising that the ability to advance and exploit science and technology will be an increasingly important competitive edge over the coming decade, growing research and development spending by 33 per cent over this Parliament, the fastest ever rate. We have attracted more venture capital investment in tech startups this year than any country bar the US, putting us ahead of China, Japan and Germany. We are levelling up skills, because stronger skills lead to better, higher paid jobs – with over 20,000 people already benefiting from Skills Bootcamps, and 175 colleges due to offer T-Levels from this September. We have announced a Lifelong Loan Entitlement so that from 2025 everyone can access funding to support up to four years of post-18 study, be that modular or full time – helping people gain skills at any stage of their life. We have increased the National Living Wage by the largest ever cash amount, and reduced the Universal Credit taper rate to make sure work pays.

Fifth, embracing the freedom we now have to chart our own course, we led on the international stage. We used our G7 Presidency to launch the \$600 billion Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment – closing the infrastructure gap in developing countries while enhancing our economic and national security – and to agree a minimum corporate tax rate to crack down on avoidance. We have driven action on climate change, marshalling nearly 200 countries at COP26 to treble global net zero agreements so that they now cover 90 per cent of the world economy, committing to reach net zero in the UK by 2050, and driving down emissions at the fastest rate in the G7. We have stepped up where our help was needed, be it in evacuating over 15,000 people from Afghanistan in just 16 days through Operation Pitting,

offering a route to the UK for holders of British National (Overseas) passports and their family members in Hong Kong, standing up the Homes for Ukraine scheme, or providing £548 million to COVAX to get 1.3 billion vaccine doses into 87 developing countries.

Across these five fronts – Brexit, Covid, public services, the economy, and the world stage – this Government has delivered. As we prepare for a change in administration, there are two further fronts on which we are already taking decisive action, and on which the commitment of the next Conservative Prime Minister will not waver.

At home, we are standing by the side of the British public as we cope with pressures on the cost of living – just as we did in the darkest hours of the Covid crisis. We have set out a £37 billion package which will see the most vulnerable eight million households get support worth £1,200. Qualifying low income households will get £650, with the first half being paid into bank accounts this month, and the remainder following in the autumn. Every household in the country will get £400 towards their energy costs. Most will get a £150 council tax rebate. Pensioners in receipt of winter fuel payments will get a separate payment of £300, and disabled people a further £150. Both I, and my successor, will continue to focus support on those who need it the most.

Abroad, we are standing up for Ukraine – as we always have when our fundamental values are threatened. We have brought the G7 and NATO together in support of the Ukrainian people so that the free West speaks with one voice and brings its collective might to bear. We have provided significant amounts of lethal aid, including 2,000 anti-tank missiles in January before the invasion started. We have committed military, humanitarian and economic assistance totalling nearly £4 billion, more than any other country apart from the US. We have donated over 11 million medical items, 856 mobile generators and 20 NHS ambulances, and sent the largest fire deployment to ever leave the UK. We have acted decisively with our allies to sanction over 1,000 individuals and 100 entities, freeze the assets of banks, and isolate Russia from international trade. We have introduced the fastest and largest visa scheme in our history to welcome Ukrainians who wish to find safety elsewhere, with over 95,000 arriving in the UK to date. We have stepped up our NATO commitments to strengthen the alliance, more than doubling our presence in Estonia, providing the SkySabre air defence system to Poland, and delivering enhanced air policing missions. For as long as it takes, the UK will continue to back Ukraine's fight for freedom.

Finally, in everything this Government has done, we have striven to deliver for the whole of our United Kingdom – for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. From the vaccination programme, where we were able to ensure everyone across our islands could benefit from swift access to jabs, to the furlough scheme, which relied on the financial firepower of the UK Treasury, to our Levelling Up Fund, supporting town centre and high street regeneration, local transport projects, and cultural

and heritage assets across the UK, the benefits of our great union have never been more evident.

I am proud of our record in office since 2019. I remain determined that we continue to deliver in our final weeks. And I know that the Conservative Government that follows after us will do what its predecessors have always done and meet the challenges of the day by serving the British people.

Intergovernmental Relations: 2022 Quarter 2 Report

[HLWS259]

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist: My Rt Hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (Greg Clark) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

Today, the UK Government published the report of our engagement with the devolved governments in quarter two of 2022 on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

The report covers a period where we have seen unprecedented events, and gives an insight into the extensive engagement between the UK Government, Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Northern Ireland Executive between 1 April and 30 June 2022. During this reporting period the governments collaborated on a number of areas, not least in the further development and progress of the domestic response to the war in Ukraine, including the expansion of the ‘Homes for Ukraine’ resettlement scheme to allow children and minors under the age of 18 to come to the UK in defined circumstances.

The report is part of the UK Government’s ongoing commitment to transparency of intergovernmental relations to Parliament and the public. The UK Government will continue with publications to demonstrate transparency in intergovernmental relations throughout 2022 and beyond.

Mexico Trade Negotiations

[HLWS267]

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.

The first round of United Kingdom-Mexico Free Trade Agreement negotiations took place during the week commencing 11 July. A small delegation of officials undertook technical discussions in-person in Mexico City with most talks taking place virtually.

During the first round, talks focused on gathering insights on key interests and priorities across policy areas as well as building a shared understanding of each other’s initial positions in the areas expected to be covered in the Free Trade Agreement. Technical discussions were held across 31 policy areas over 28 sessions.

The United Kingdom and Mexico share a joint ambition to take our trade and economic relationship to the next level, deepening trade and increasing investment flows for the benefit of both countries.

The existing United Kingdom-Mexico Trade Continuity Agreement is outdated. These negotiations are an important opportunity to negotiate a significantly more ambitious agreement which is better suited for the 21st Century. This includes strengthening United Kingdom-Mexico trade in goods and services, already worth £4.2 billion, and delivering on new and progressive issues such as digital trade, trade and gender equality and innovation.

The second round of official level negotiations is due to take place in Autumn 2022.

HM Government remains clear that any deal will be in the best interests of the British people and the economy.

HM Government will keep Parliament updated as these negotiations progress.

Military Support to Ukraine

[HLWS258]

Baroness Goldie: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence (The Rt Hon Ben Wallace MP) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

I am pleased to provide the House with a further update on equipment that the UK is providing to the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The UK is proud to lead the way in providing military assistance to Ukraine. The Prime Minister announced at the NATO Leaders’ Summit on 30 June that a further £1bn of military support to Ukraine will be provided. This brings the UK’s total military support to Ukraine to £2.3bn.

We have already supplied Ukraine with a significant quantity of equipment, including:

- More than 6,900 anti-tank missiles (including more than 5,000 NLAW, as well as Javelin, Brimstone, and other anti-tank weapons).
- Multiple Launch Rocket Systems.
- 120 Armoured Fighting Vehicles.
- 6 Stormer vehicles fitted with Starstreak launchers as well as hundreds of Starstreak missiles.
- Maritime Brimstone.
- More than 16,000 rounds of artillery ammunition, as well as anti-structure munitions and 4.5 tonnes of plastic explosive.
- Communications equipment.
- Electronic warfare equipment.
- More than 82,000 helmets, 8,450 sets of body armour, medical supplies and more than 5,000 night-vision devices.

Our support for the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) will continue. In the next few weeks, we will be giving the AFU equipment, including:

- More than 20 M109 155mm self-propelled guns.
- 36 L119 105mm artillery guns and ammunition.
- More than 50,000 rounds of ammunition for Ukraine's soviet era artillery.
- At least 1,600 more anti-tank weapons.
- Unmanned aerial systems (including 100s loitering aerial munitions).
- Counter-battery radar systems.
- Medical equipment.

Future planned military support will also include more sophisticated defence systems across a range of capabilities.

On 25 April I also committed to placing an update on international donations of military equipment to Ukraine in the House Library. I include below two summaries: one of UK donations; and a second of combined international donations. These summaries only contain quantities known to the UK where other countries are content for this information to be released. We do not necessarily see or know the totality of assistance provided by all donors. The delivery and provision of aid is dynamic and fast moving so the numbers and types of capability included are likely to change quickly.

The scale and range of equipment we are providing, at pace, demonstrates how we are delivering on our commitment to provide Ukraine with support to resist and defeat the Russian invasion. We will continue to do so until Ukraine's sovereignty is restored.

UK donations to Ukraine

Major capabilities	Weapon	Ammunition	Other Aid
Anti Air	<100	>300	
Anti Tank	>100	>9,000*	
Anti Structure		>15,000	
Anti Personnel (including small arms, mortar & grenade)	>6,000	>1,000,000	
Anti Ship		<100	
Artillery	<10	>16,000	
Communication Systems			<100
Long range			>100
Satellite			>400
Short Range			>300
Electronic Warfare Systems			<100
Jamming			>300
Physical Counter			<100
Equipment Support			>100
Spare Parts			<100
Tools (pallets, kits etc)			<100

Major capabilities	Weapon	Ammunition	Other Aid
Intelligence, surveillance & reconnaissance (ISR) systems			>100
Laser Designator (eg range finders, aiming systems)			<100
Optical (including Uncrewed Aerial Systems)			<100
Radar			<100,000
Life Support			<100
Rations			<100,000
Medical			<100,000
Clothing			>5,000
NVDs / Thermal			>2,000
Sleeping			>100
Mobility			<100
Armoured Fighting Vehicles			<10
Ambulances			<10
Soft Skinned (including cargo Uncrewed Aerial Systems)			>8,000
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)			<100,000
Ballistic Vest			
Helmet			

*Includes single use weapons and unguided munitions

International donations to Ukraine – 43 countries including UK (International data as at 5 July 2022)

Major capabilities	Weapon	Ammunition	Other Aid
Anti Air	>700	>100,000	
Anti Tank	<4,000	<250,000*	
Anti Structure	>2,000	>600,000	
Anti Personnel (including small arms, mortars & grenades)	>700,000	>100,000,000	
Anti Ship		<200	
Artillery	>200	>250,000	
Mobility			>600
Armoured Fighting Vehicles			<100
Ambulances			>200
Soft Skinned (including cargo Uncrewed Aerial Systems)			

Communication Systems	
Long Range	<100
Satellite	>900
Short Range	>400
Electronic Warfare Systems	
Jamming	>400
Physical Counter	>200
Equipment Support	
Spare Parts	>13,000
Tools (pallets, kits etc)	>100
Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD)	
PPE	<100
Metal Detector	>400
Robot	<100
Intelligence, surveillance & reconnaissance (ISR) systems	
Laser Designator (e.g. range finders, aiming systems)	>2,000
Optical (including Uncrewed Aerial Systems)	>500
Radar	<100
Life Support	
Rations	>1,000,000
Medical	>200,000
Clothing	>200,000
NVDs / Thermal	>30,000
Optics (sights, binoculars etc)	>30,000
Sleeping	>500,000
Utilities (including generators)	>100
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	
Ballistic Vest	>100,000
CBRN PPE	>70,000
Helmet	>200,000

*Includes single use weapons and unguided munitions

NHS Covid Travel Pass for Children

[HLWS270]

Lord Kamall: My Hon Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Vaccines and Public

Health) (Maggie Throup) has made the following Written Statement:

As part of our continued commitment to support travel for the school holidays, on 21 July the Government is launching an NHS Covid Pass service for parents or guardians of children aged 5 to 15 years old to request a digital Travel Pass on behalf of their child. This will include a record of all Covid-19 vaccinations received and proof of prior infection (recovery status). Children aged 5 to 11 can currently only access an NHS Covid Pass letter. Children aged 12-15 can currently only access a digital NHS Covid Pass using their own NHS login, this new service means that parents can also request a Pass on their behalf.

Launching this new service, and thereby extending a digital solution to children aged 5 to 11, alongside giving the parents of children aged 12 to 15 the ability to request a pass on their child's behalf, will make it quicker, simpler and save families the cost of testing in countries where this is required for foreign travel. The UK has no Covid certification requirements, this is to support outbound travel to a variety of countries that still have requirements.

A parent or guardian will be able to request a PDF version of the travel NHS Covid Pass via the NHS website. The digital pass will only be sent if they enter a mobile number which matches the number on the child's GP record and if they correctly enter a one-time password sent to this number, or if they enter an email address that matches the email address on the child's GP record.

This service will be available for children aged 5 to 15 resident in England or Isle of Man. For those registered with a GP in Wales, parents or guardians should check the Gov.Wales "Get your NHS Covid Pass" website for information on their service. In Scotland, under 16s can request a copy by phoning the Covid Status Helpline on 0808 196 8565. In Northern Ireland, parents or guardians of children aged 5 to 11 years can request a digital or printed Covid certificate on behalf of a dependent. Those under 16 can upload the certificate (requested on their behalf) to display on the CovidCert NI app.

Serious Fraud Office and the Unaoil Case: Independent Review

[HLWS265]

Lord Stewart of Dirleton: I wish to provide details of the findings of an independent review I commissioned into the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) failings identified by the Court of Appeal in the case of *R. v Akle & Anor* [2021]. I committed to this in my written statement of 9 February 2022.

The objectives of the review were to consider and provide recommendations in relation to the following matters:

- 1) What happened in this case and why? In particular, assessing the two key failings identified in the judgment: a) What occurred as regards SFO contact with third-parties and why; and b) Why did the SFO

disclosure failures identified in the Court of Appeal judgment occur?

2) What implications, if any, do the failings highlighted by this case have for the policies, practices, procedures and related culture of the SFO?

3) What changes are necessary to address the failings highlighted by the judgment and any wider issues of SFO policies, practices, procedures or related culture identified by the reviewer?

I am grateful for Sir David Calvert-Smith's work on leading this review. His findings fall into two categories: thematic failings and events. Sir David found five recurrent themes that were fundamental to the Court's judgment, some of which indicate general organisational issues within the SFO's control and where failures occurred. These themes are: record-keeping; compliance with casework assurance processes; resourcing; understanding about priorities; and distrust between the case team and senior management resulting from the latter's contact with David Tinsley. Sir David highlights a sequence of 17 events or mistakes that led to the Court's judgment.

Following these conclusions, Sir David makes eleven recommendations which the Attorney General's Office (AGO) and SFO accept. They broadly cover:

1) Case assurance — all cases should have sufficient resources, all members of case teams should comply fully with case assurance processes and all contact with defendants, suspects and their representatives should be recorded as necessary. Superintendence should be revised and considered further.

2) Disclosure — all cases should have effective disclosure strategies and management, and the Attorney General's Office and SFO should work together to identify any necessary changes to the Attorney General's Disclosure Guidelines.

3) Personnel — all staff should be able to raise concerns about cases, the relationships between investigators and prosecutors should function as envisaged under the Roskill model, and there should not be 'interregnum periods' between Directors or General Counsel.

Building on work already undertaken by the SFO a clear plan of action to respond to the Review recommendations has been developed. I will be closely monitoring the SFO's progress and delivery of that plan and will provide an update to Parliament in November 2022 and February 2023.

I will place a copy of the review and the response in the libraries of both Houses so that they are accessible to members. Junior officials' names have been redacted from the published review in line with standard government practice. The SFO has waived legal privilege in relation to legal advice referred to in the review only for the purposes of this review.

The documents will also be available on GOV.UK.

Search and Rescue Aviation Procurement Update

[HLWS268]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: My Honourable Friend, the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Transport (Robert Courts) has made the following Ministerial Statement:

Following an extensive 18-month procurement process to procure the next decade of search and rescue aviation services, this process has now finished, and I wish to inform the House of the results.

I am pleased to announce that a £1.6 billion contract will be signed today to provide a search and rescue helicopter service for the whole of the UK with Bristow Helicopters Ltd.

The new contract will see the UK search and rescue region benefit from advances in technology to save more lives, even more quickly. A fleet of state-of-the-art helicopters, planes and drones will operate across the United Kingdom and far out to sea in support of the lifesaving work of HM Coastguard. These aircraft will also support the work of the other emergency services, border protection, fisheries protection and pollution prevention.

A strong competition led to this contract being signed, and a credible, data-led requirement resulted in a contract that is highly innovative and takes account of anticipated future demands such as increased tourism in certain areas.

The new contract will guarantee that there will be no base closures or job losses in this critical service. Instead, two new seasonal bases, operating for six months of the year, will be opened in areas of particular growing demand. A new base at Fort William will meet the summertime peak tourism demand in the Ben Nevis area, while a new base in Carlisle will also meet similar demands in the Lake District area. All helicopter bases will continue to be operational 24 hours a day, apart for Fort William and Carlisle which will operate 12 hours a day from April to September. The transition out from the current contract will start 30 September 2024 and run through to 31 December 2026. The transition will be seamless and will follow extensive engagement with stakeholders including the thousands of rescue volunteers who rely on these arrangements. In addition to our existing base in Doncaster, highly sophisticated surveillance planes will operate from Prestwick and Newquay. This will give the UK much more capability to search for people needing our help over large areas and prevent illegal or anticompetitive activity in UK waters. Both Doncaster and Prestwick will be operational 24 hours a day, with Newquay operational 12 hours a day all year round. Some of these aircraft can reach the mid-Atlantic, which is the extent of the UK's search and rescue region.

The new service will comprise of:

- 18 Helicopters including existing Leonardo AW189s and Sikorsky S92As augmented with the introduction of Leonardo AW139 helicopters.

- Six King Air fixed-wing planes, including the B350, B350ER and the B200.

- One mobile deployable Schiebel S-100 drone system capable of operating anywhere in the UK.

A new state-of-the-art search and rescue helicopter simulation training facility at Solent Airport next to the HM Coastguard Training Facility will house a synthetic rescue hoist and helicopter suspended over a large training pool. This is a vital addition to training the next generation of technical winch crew.

Further innovation throughout the life of the contract will involve the use of uncrewed aircraft and aircraft powered by sustainable aviation fuels.

This is a major investment by the UK Government in critical national service which covers a wide range of activity. It protects the services we have come to rely on for years to come.

UK Commission on Covid Commemoration

[HLWS257]

Lord True: Today, I am establishing a UK Commission on Covid Commemoration to secure a broad consensus across our whole United Kingdom on how we mark and commemorate this very distinctive period in our collective history.

I have appointed the Rt Hon Baroness Morgan of Cotes to chair the Commission. She will be supported by 10 members from across the UK who have knowledge and understanding of some of the issues experienced by those affected by Covid-19 and are well respected in their fields of expertise.

Working together with the administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, the Commission will recommend how those who have lost their lives should be remembered in our communities and across the UK. It will also consider how we can commemorate the service of critical workers, recognise the experience of those who were seriously affected by Covid-19, celebrate the advances in UK science and remember the national spirit which led to so many people volunteering to support their neighbours and communities.

The Commission will engage individuals, particularly those who have lost loved ones, and organisations across the UK, to inform its recommendations. I have asked the Commission to submit its report to the Prime Minister by the end of March 2023.

I have today placed a copy of the list of the Commissioners and terms of reference for the Commission in the libraries of both Houses in Parliament and published them on GOV.UK.

UK-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement

[HLWS266]

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:

The Government has, today, laid before Parliament a report on the UK-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement. The report is required under Section 42 of the Agriculture Act 2020, prior to the agreement being laid before Parliament for formal scrutiny under the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010 (CRaG).

The Government has always been clear that we will not compromise on the UK's high environmental protection, animal welfare and food safety standards in our trade negotiations. This report, which draws on independent advice from the Trade and Agriculture Commission[1], Food Standards Agency and Food Standards Scotland, confirms the Government's view that the UK-New Zealand FTA is consistent with the maintenance of UK statutory protections in these areas.

This report is intended to inform and support scrutiny of the UK-New Zealand agreement prior to its ratification and entry into force. The text of the agreement was published on 28th February 2022 and will be formally laid before Parliament for scrutiny under the provisions of CRaG in due course.

[1] TAC advice published on 30th June 2022 at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-new-zealand-fta-secretary-of-state-for-international-trades-request-for-trade-and-agriculture-commission-advice>.

Written Answers

Thursday, 21 July 2022

Abortion: Clinics

Asked by **Lord Kennedy of Southwark**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the (1) use of buffer zones outside abortion clinics, and (2) reports from women and girls who have attended such clinics in the UK that they were intimidated and harassed on arrival. [[HL1558](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office takes the matter of protests outside abortion clinics extremely seriously and recognises the adverse impact that such protests can have on patients and staff. It is completely unacceptable that anyone should feel harassed or intimidated simply for exercising their legal right to healthcare advice and treatment.

We have conducted extensive reviews into these protests, which has included reviewing evidence from those directly affected, with the impact on women being at the centre of our consideration. We continue to welcome any new evidence on this important and sensitive issue, as we keep this matter under review.

We believe that managing harmful protests requires a locally driven response and that the police and local authorities have the necessary powers to provide this. Public Spaces Protection Orders have been implemented successfully to restrict harmful protests in Ealing, Richmond, and Manchester.

Accountancy: Standards

Asked by **Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Callanan on 15 June (HL757), whether the use of judgement in resolving accounting issues is by reference to (1) the purpose of audited accounts as set out in company law, or (2) the Conceptual Framework that has "no status because it is not adopted into UK law". [[HL1553](#)]

Lord Callanan: Section 393 of the Companies Act 2006 places a requirement on directors that the accounts must provide a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities, financial position and profit or loss of a company or group. Directors must provide such information as is necessary to ensure that this requirement is met, including where no specific accounting standard applies to a transaction, event or condition. For those companies using "UK-adopted international accounting standards", IAS 8 "Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors" provides a basis for the use of judgement in resolving accounting issues in such situations.

Afghanistan: Politics and Government

Asked by **The Lord Bishop of Southwark**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to relocate (1) interpreters, (2) security guards, and (3) other locally employed government staff, who are still in Afghanistan, back to the UK; and what is the timescale for that relocation. [[HL1587](#)]

Baroness Goldie: The Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) launched on 1 April 2021 and remains open. This scheme offers relocation or other assistance to former Locally Employed Staff (LES) to reflect the changing situation in Afghanistan.

To date, we have relocated over 9,900 eligible individuals and their dependants and we estimate that there are around 8,000 (inclusive of their dependents) ARAP eligible individuals still to be relocated to the UK. This figure is subject to change as we continue to work through the outstanding applications.

It is not possible to break down statistics for the number of individuals relocated by specific job role, and timescales can vary enormously from case to case dependant on the individual circumstances of an applicant. This can include, but is not limited to, factors such as their ability to respond to requests for information, their location, their access to IT or the employment checks we need to undertake.

We continue to work alongside our partners to relocate eligible Afghans through third countries. Due to operational sensitivities, it is not possible to share specific details.

Arts: Customs

Asked by **Lord Jones of Cheltenham**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made in negotiations with the EU regarding a carnet waiver for creative artists. [[HL1629](#)]

Baroness Penn: ATA Carnets are not a requirement for anyone temporarily importing goods between the UK and EU. They are an optional facilitation which allow goods to be imported temporarily without the normal customs formalities (i.e. customs declarations) and import duty being paid. They allow a single document to be used for multiple countries' customs controls.

The use of an ATA Carnet is subject to an issuing fee and a requirement to provide a security. It is therefore a commercial decision for businesses and individuals whether a Carnet is the most suitable option for temporarily moving their goods. The Government is not currently having any discussions with the EU to negotiate a waiver of ATA Carnets for creative artists.

An alternative option to an ATA Carnet is the Temporary Admission (TA) procedure. The UK and EU both operate a similar TA procedure which allows goods

to be imported temporarily with relief from customs duty and import VAT, subject to certain conditions being met. If TA is used in conjunction with the UK or EU Returned Goods Relief scheme (for returning goods), goods can be moved temporarily between the UK and EU without having to pay import duties.

Asylum: Applications

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to improve (1) accountability, (2) transparency, and (3) value for money, in recording the average time it takes to process asylum seeker applications from the initial claim to the date of final interview. [HL1284]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office remains committed to routinely publishing information which shows the number of cases in the entire asylum system outstanding to improve accountability, transparency and value for money. However, some data we are unable to provide as it is not easily aggregated, can only be obtained at disproportionate costs or not held in a reportable format.

Data on case age and Asylum Operations costs and productivity can be found in ASY_03 and ASY_04 of the published Transparency data (also attached).

Immigration and protection data: Q1 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

Whilst there are a number of older outstanding cases in the system, these are more complex cases which generally have barriers that causes delays in the time taken to process an asylum seeker application from the initial date of claim to the date of final interview. These barriers are often varied and require time to clear, but our teams are actively working to clear and progress these enable the final interview to take place.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

published Transparency data [UKVI_IP_Q1_2022.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-06-27/HL1284>

Asylum: Hotels and RAF Linton-on-Ouse

Asked by Lord Newby

To ask Her Majesty's Government what they expect the cost to be of (1) converting RAF Linton so that it will be suitable as a large-scale reception centre for 1,500 asylum seekers, (2) running such a large-scale reception centre, and (3) accommodating 1,500 asylum seekers in hotels; and whether they plan to publish estimates of the capital and running costs of RAF Linton as a large-scale reception centre alongside a cost-benefit analysis. [HL1090]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The sharp increase in small boat crossings and the pandemic has meant increased use of contingency accommodation to meet our

legal duty to provide accommodation to destitute asylum seekers, which is costing the UK taxpayers almost £5 million a day, every day.

The Home Office is looking at proposals to establish a new asylum accommodation centre at RAF Linton-On-Ouse, North Yorkshire. This would support our response to the increasing pressures on the UK asylum system.

Ministers have not taken any final decision to accommodate asylum seekers at RAF Linton. Should it be progressed, the site would provide safe and cost-effective accommodation to asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute.

We will be able to assess value for money once we have received firm bids for the provision of the service, but we anticipate being able to generate cost savings.

It would not be appropriate to comment further while planning is ongoing.

Asylum: Middle East

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will list all the safe and legal routes for asylum seekers from (1) Afghanistan, (2) Syria, and (3) Yemen, which would allow them to claim asylum in the UK (a) on arrival, or (b) prior to their departure from their country of origin. [HL1083]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The UK welcomes refugees and people in need of protection through its existing resettlement schemes. The government encourages eligible individuals to use established safe and legal pathways. These include the UK Resettlement Scheme, Community Sponsorship, Mandate Resettlement Scheme, the Afghanistan Citizens Resettlement Scheme and the Afghanistan Relocations and Assistance Policy.

In addition to our refugee resettlement schemes, family reunion policy allows a spouse/partner and children under 18 of those granted protection in the UK to join them here if they formed part of the family unit before the sponsor fled their country.

With worldwide displacement now standing at around 80 million people we cannot help everyone. We will, however, continue to maintain clear, well-defined safe, and legal routes for people who need protection. Access to the UK's asylum system should be based on need, not on the ability to pay people smugglers. Those already in a safe country should claim asylum there.

While we do not allow asylum claims from abroad, all asylum claims lodged from within the UK and admitted to the UK asylum system are given full and careful consideration so that we do not remove anyone who faces persecution or serious harm on return to their country of origin.

Our guidance for considering asylum claims is available on GOV.UK.

More information on safe and legal routes is available via the link below:

Nationality and Borders Bill: Factsheet Safe and Legal Routes - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).

Asylum: Middle East and Somalia

Asked by *Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what they consider safe, legal routes to be for asylum seekers from (1) Afghanistan, (2) Iraq, (3) Iran, and (4) Somalia. [HL1132]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The UK welcomes refugees and people in need of protection through its existing resettlement schemes. The government encourages eligible individuals to use established safe and legal pathways. These include the UK Resettlement Scheme, Community Sponsorship, Mandate Resettlement Scheme, the Afghanistan Citizens Resettlement Scheme, and the Afghanistan Relocations and Assistance Policy.

Individuals from the listed countries may be eligible for resettlement through these existing schemes.

In addition to our refugee resettlement schemes, family reunion policy allows a spouse/partner and the children under 18 of those granted protection in the UK to join them here if they formed part of the family unit before the sponsor fled their country.

Since 2015, we have resettled more than 27,000 refugees through safe and legal routes directly from regions of conflict and instability – around half of whom are children.

With worldwide displacement now standing at around 80 million people, we cannot help everyone. We will, however, continue to maintain clear, well-defined safe, and legal routes for people who need protection. Access to the UK's asylum system should be based on need, not on the ability to pay people smugglers. Those already in a safe country should claim asylum there.

More information on safe and legal routes is available on GOV.UK.

Biocidal Products: Pollution Control

Asked by *Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of environmental pollution from biocides in personal care products, such as (1) benzalkonium chloride in soaps, or (2) chlorhexidine in mouthwashes. [HL1418]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: These have not currently been identified as chemicals of concern for the Environment Agency (EA)'s monitoring. The EA operates a Prioritisation and Early Warning System for chemicals of emerging concern and will consider these substances under that system.

Care Workers: Car Allowances

Asked by *Lord Browne of Belmont*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to increase the mileage allowance for frontline care workers given the rising cost of fuel. [HL1679]

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

Most domiciliary care staff are employed by private providers who decide their mileage reimbursement rate. Employers, including those of care staff, are not required to use AMAPs. 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.

If an employee is paid less than the approved amount, they are entitled to claim tax relief (Mileage Allowance Relief) on the shortfall. The maximum MAR claim is set to the same level as the AMAP rates.

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

China: Politics and Government

Asked by *Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in arrangements for the 11th UK-China Economic and Financial Dialogue, what consideration they have given to (1) reports that the Foreign Secretary described events in Xinjiang as a "genocide", (2) threats to the territorial integrity of Taiwan, and (3) the statement by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office in the Six-monthly report on Hong Kong, published on 31 March, that "fundamental parts of the 'One Country, Two Systems' framework have been undermined". [HL1663]

Baroness Penn: Economic and Financial Dialogues (EFDs) provide an important mechanism for progressing our economic, financial and trade relationships. No date has been agreed for the next UK-China EFD.

We have been clear that we will not hesitate to stand up to China on our values where they are threatened.

The UK has led international efforts at the UN to hold China to account for its human rights violations in Xinjiang. We have imposed sanctions, including asset freezes and travel bans, on senior Chinese officials and taken steps to help ensure that no UK organisations are complicit in these violations through their supply chains. As a co-signatory to the Joint Declaration, we will continue to stand up for the people of Hong Kong, to call out the violation of their freedoms, and to hold China to their international obligations.

Companies: Carbon Emissions

Asked by *Lord Kennedy of Southwark*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to encourage greater transparency among UK companies accused of exaggerating their environmental commitments, commonly termed as greenwashing, to prevent this from adversely impacting the Government's Net Zero strategy. [HL1557]

Lord Callanan: Businesses have a vital role to play in helping us to meet our net zero target and are encouraged to join the UN-backed Race to Zero, with 7,552 already setting credible and robust targets and outlining plans to deliver on these targets.

'Greening Finance: A Roadmap to Sustainable Investing' sets out how the Government will ensure decision-useful information on sustainability is available to financial market decision-makers, helping to combat potential "greenwashing". The UK is also requiring asset managers, regulated asset owners and listed companies to publish transition plans that consider the government's net zero commitment or provide an explanation if they have not done so.

Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide

Asked by *Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the publication of the Yazidi Justice Committee Report on State Responsibility and the Yazidi Genocide on 6 July, what steps they have taken, or are planning to take, to refer (1) Syria, (2) Iraq, or (3) Turkey, to the International Court of Justice for alleged violations of the Genocide Convention to make a formal determination of genocide and associated international obligations. [HL1550]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We note the findings from the Yazidi Justice Committee's report. The UK has focused its response to the abhorrent crimes that Daesh inflicted by supporting the Government of Iraq to take the necessary actions to secure justice for the Yazidi people and many other victims of Daesh's crimes.

This includes leadership in ensuring that the UN Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2379 to establish a UN Investigative Team for the Accountability of Daesh (UNITAD) and supporting this with £2 million in funding. We are encouraging close co-operation between UNITAD and the Government of Iraq to achieve justice for Daesh's victims.

We will continue to use our position at the UN, including as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, to raise situations of concern and to support the deployment of all appropriate tools available to the UN in dealing with potential mass atrocities. Our focus is always on securing an end to violence and protecting civilians.

Coronavirus: Vaccination

Asked by *Lord Blunkett*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the remarks by Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist on 23 March (HL Deb col 958), what assessment they have made of the effectiveness of existing vaccines available in the UK in (1) protecting against, or (2) reducing the impact of, Omicron (a) B.4, and (b) B.5; what assessment they have made of the likely availability of the improved vaccine undergoing experimentation at (i) St George's Hospital, and (ii) beyond; and on what date the fourth Covid-19 booster vaccine will be available for general use across the UK this autumn. [HL1424]

Lord Kamall: Vaccine effectiveness against emerging variants is continuously assessed. There is currently insufficient data for a robust assessment of the effectiveness of Covid-19 vaccines against mild or severe disease with the Omicron BA.4 and BA.5 variants. However, preliminary analyses indicate that the vaccination status of cases infected with BA.4 and BA.5 is not significantly different to that of cases infected with BA.2, suggesting that protection conferred by the vaccines likely remains comparable.

Moderna and Pfizer are conducting clinical trials for Omicron-specific variant vaccines, with the intention of making these available in the second half of 2022.

The Government continues to be guided by the advice of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) on Covid-19 vaccinations. On 15 July 2022, the JCVI issued advice on an autumn booster vaccination programme. This advice states that a booster dose should be offered to residents in a care home for older adults and staff working in care homes for older adults; frontline health and social care workers; all adults aged 50 years old and over; persons aged five to 49 years old in a clinical risk group; persons aged five to 49 years old who are household contacts of people with immunosuppression; and persons aged 16 to 49 years old who are carers.

Asked by *Lord Kennedy of Southwark*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking, if any, to encourage those over the age of 75 who have not come forward for their Spring booster vaccination to do so. [HL1520]

Lord Kamall: Since March 2022, the National Health Service has invited more than five million eligible people in England to receive their Covid-19 spring booster dose, including those aged 75 years old and over, residents of care homes for older adults and those aged 12 years old and over who are immunosuppressed. As of 26 June 2022, over 4.2 million people have received a booster dose in the spring programme.

On 22 June 2022, NHS England issued an online press release urging eligible people to receive the booster vaccination. At the end of June, NHS England also sent approximately 250,000 reminders via text message, email

and letter, advising that the booster vaccination offer remains available.

Development Aid: LGBT+ People

Asked by Baroness Barker

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the level of international funding for LGBT+ organisations; and what plans they have to increase the Official Development Assistance funding allocation to such groups. [HL1664]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The UK regularly engages our partners, including governments, civil society, philanthropists and multilateral organisations, on taking a collaborative approach to Official Development Assistance funding in support of LGBT+ rights. As co-chairs of the Equal Rights Coalition (ERC), the UK and Argentina oversaw the adoption of the ERC's first strategy and five-year implementation plan in July 2021. The UK actively participates in the ERC Donor Coordination Working Group which aims to improve coordination between all actors.

Plans for levels of UK funding for the current spending round are not yet confirmed. In June 2022, the Prime Minister announced £2.7 million of new UK funding to support LGBT+ grassroots human rights defenders, and advance equality and freedom across the Commonwealth.

Disposable Wipes: VAT

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to increase VAT on wet wipes. [HL1607]

Baroness Penn: Wet wipes are subject to the 20 per cent standard rate of VAT. As with all elements of tax policy, the Government keeps this under review.

Economic Cooperation: China

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to hold the 11th UK–China Economic and Financial Dialogue before the appointment of the next Prime Minister; and if so, what are the reasons for making such arrangements. [HL1661]

Baroness Penn: The Government has no plans to hold the next 11th UK-China Economic and Financial Dialogue before the appointment of the next Prime Minister.

Economic and Financial Dialogues remain an important mechanism for progressing our economic, financial and trade relationships.

Environment Protection: Protest

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to prevent environmental protests that endanger the lives of others. [HL1511]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Peaceful protest is a vital part of a democratic society. However, there is a balance to be struck and rights to peaceful protest do not extend to highly disruptive and dangerous acts, such as tunnelling, which places not only the lives of the protesters at risk, but also those who rescue them.

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act has already increased the maximum penalty for those who obstruct the highway, putting their lives and those of road users at risk. The Public Order Bill further improves the police's ability to respond to dangerous protest acts by criminalising tunnelling which causes serious disruption and creating serious disruption prevention orders; a new court order that targets the most prolific protesters.

European Court of Human Rights: Belfast Agreement

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to withdraw from the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR); and if so, what is their assessment of the impact of withdrawing from the ECHR on the 1998 Good Friday Agreement. [HL1086]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK has a longstanding tradition of ensuring rights and liberties are protected domestically and of fulfilling our international human rights obligations. The proposed Bill of Rights is fully in line with the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement.

Food Data Transparency Partnership

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have for the (1) work, and (2) membership, of the Food Data Transparency Panel; and whether they will invite the Consortium for Labelling for the Environment, Animal Welfare and Regenerative Farming (CLEAR) to join that panel. [HL1621]

Lord Benyon: To drive positive change through better information, transparency, and accountability, we are launching a transformational Food Data Transparency Partnership. The partnership will provide consumers with the information they need to make more sustainable, ethical, and healthier food choices and incentivise industry to produce healthier and more ethical and sustainable food.

Improving food system data and information is a shared challenge. The partnership will provide a framework to bring together the UK government, including the Department for Health and Social Care, Defra and the Food Standards Agency, Devolved Administrations and representatives from across the whole food supply chain and civil society.

We want to design stakeholders, including industry and civil society, into the fabric of how the programme is run and into how its outputs are developed. The governance

structure and process for involvement is being developed and will be announced in the coming months.

Initially, the partnership will develop consistent and defined metrics to measure the health, environmental sustainability, and animal welfare impacts of food. By the end of 2023, in England, we will streamline reporting requirements relating to the production and sale of food and drink. We will consult on implementing mandatory public reporting against a set of health metrics and explore a similar approach to sustainability and animal welfare. We will fully consult on any mandatory measures before they are introduced.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Departmental Records

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government why the colonial archive series FCO 141 has been withdrawn from public access by the National Archives; and whether these documents are being withheld from public viewing and research. [HL1562]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: The National Archives issued a [public statement](#) on Monday 11 July which answers this question.

Fuels: Excise Duties and VAT

Asked by Lord Allen of Kensington

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the RAC Fuel Watch data which show that the average UK petrol and diesel prices was around 191 pence per litre of petrol and 199 pence per litre of diesel as of June, what steps they are taking to reduce (1) fuel duty, and (2) VAT on fuel, to assist families and businesses with the increased cost of living. [HL1818]

Baroness Penn: The temporary 5p cut to duty on petrol and diesel represents a £2.4 billion tax cut in 2022-23, to help consumers with high fuel prices.

VAT is a broad-based tax on consumption and the 20% standard rate applies to most goods and services. It would cost over £6 billion to cut VAT on road fuel from 20% to 5%.

The Government keeps all taxes under review.

Georgia: Sanctions

Asked by Lord Willoughby de Broke

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Georgian nationals resident in the UK are subject to government sanctions. [HL1659]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Government is not aware of any Georgian nationals resident in the UK who have been designated under UK sanctions.

High Speed 2 Line: Iron and Steel

Asked by Baroness Redfern

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the origin of the steel procured for the HS2 project which is produced outside the UK. [HL1747]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Steel used on HS2 is procured through our supply chain, principally the Main Works Civil Contractors. The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) publish data annually, the most recent covering FY20/21, on the origin of steel use across Government projects, including HS2.

Holiday Activities and Food Programme

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Barran on 4 July (HL1123), how those eligible for a free place on the Holiday Activities and Food Programme will be notified of this to ensure that none of those eligible for free school meals will miss out during the summer holidays; and what will be done to ensure that this programme is implemented successfully by local councils across England. [HL1560]

Baroness Barran: Local authorities have the discretion to provide free or subsidised holiday club places for children who are not in receipt of free school meals, but who the local authority believes could benefit from holiday activities and food (HAF) provision.

Guidance and grant letters provide a clear structure for local authorities in performing their role as HAF coordinators, while encouraging innovation and ensuring the programme is appropriate for the local area. They are encouraged to work with a wide range of organisations and partners across their local area and ensure schools and other services are on board with directing children and families to the programme.

To support local authorities, the department has appointed a national support partner, Childcare Works, which helps local authorities use their funding as effectively as possible and to target their programme at those most in need. Childcare Works facilitates local networks and forums where local authorities can exchange ideas, learn from each other, and work together. The department has also provided local authorities with a communication toolkit to support local promotion of the programme.

The department is working with national and local partners to build on the success of the HAF programme. On 14 June, we held a roundtable event with representatives from supermarkets and sport organisations, many of whom are already providing support to the programme.

The department is monitoring delivery carefully, including through the regular reports that local authorities send to the department. During the summer of 2021, the

HAF programme reached over 600,000 children and young people in England in total, including over 495,000 children eligible for free school meals. This means hundreds of thousands of children from low-income families are benefitting from healthy food and better nutrition.

Income Tax

Asked by Lord Sikka

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of additional individuals who (1) have become, or (2) are likely to become, liable to pay income tax in 2022/23 because of the freezing of (a) tax-free personal allowance, and (b) income tax thresholds. [HL1614]

Asked by Lord Sikka

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many UK adults are not liable to pay income tax because their total income is less than the tax-free personal allowance. [HL1616]

Baroness Penn: The OBR's 2022 Economic and Fiscal Outlook published the projected number of additional individuals brought into paying tax due to the freeze on the Personal Allowance and Income Tax thresholds as 575,000 in 2022-23.

The number of UK adults that are not liable to pay Income Tax because their total income is less than the Personal Allowance can be estimated with the following two figures:

- The ONS population projection for the number of UK adults (aged 16 and over) in 2022 is around 55 million.
- The total number of individual Income Tax payers is estimated by HMRC to be 34 million in 2022-23.

HMRC's estimate is based on the 2019-20 Survey of Personal Incomes and is projected using economic assumptions consistent with the Office for Budget Responsibility's March 2022 Economic and Fiscal Outlook. This represents a sample of individuals in contact with HMRC. However, HMRC do not hold information for all people with incomes below the Income Tax Personal Allowance.

Internet: Children

Asked by Lord Pendry

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the delay to the progress of the Online Safety Bill until the autumn, what steps they are taking in the interim to protect children from online harm and abuse. [HL1774]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: The Government has a comprehensive work programme to ensure that children are protected from online harm and abuse ahead of the implementation of the Online Safety Bill.

The Information Commissioner's Age Appropriate Design Code provides world-leading protections for children's personal data and the UK's regulatory regime for video-sharing platforms requires companies in scope to take appropriate measures to protect under-18s from harmful material.

Furthermore, the Government published its [Online Media Literacy Strategy](#) in July 2021, and we have also published practical guidance and codes for companies on what they can do to [design safer services](#), [increase children's safety online](#) and [tackle online child sexual exploitation and abuse](#) ahead of the new regulatory framework.

The Government is also supporting the development of innovative online safety technology in advance of regulation coming into force. This includes initiatives such as the Safety Tech Challenge Fund which supported the development of 'proof of concept' tools to identify child sexual abuse material in end-to-end encrypted environments whilst upholding user privacy.

Iraq: Genocide

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the publication of the Yazidi Justice Committee Report on State Responsibility and the Yazidi Genocide on 6 July, whether they have assessed whether genocide of the Yazidi has or is continuing to occur; if not, whether they plan (1) to take undertake such an assessment, and (2) to recognise ongoing those events as genocide. [HL1547]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We note the Yazidi Justice Committee's report on State Responsibility and the Yazidi Genocide. It is the long-standing policy of the British Government that any judgment as to whether genocide has occurred is a matter for a competent national or international court, rather than for governments or non-judicial bodies.

Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty Review Conference

Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are their priorities for the Review Conference on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; and what emphasis will they put on the following elements of strategic risk reduction (1) building confidence, (2) increasing mutual understanding and comprehension about nuclear posture and capabilities amongst the P5, and (3) effective crisis management and crisis prevention tools. [HL1701]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK is committed to effective international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation and we will engage in such relevant discussions at the NPT RevCon (Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of

Nuclear Weapons). We want Russia to demonstrate the same commitment: it was Russia's violation of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty that led to that Treaty's demise. Russia's proposed moratorium would do nothing to address its existing deployments of prohibited missiles, and so would not improve the international political situation.

Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference

Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, in discussions at the Review Conference on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and given the international political situation, they will prioritise discussion on a moratorium for (1) intermediate-range nuclear weapons, and (2) the deployment of new short-range nuclear weapons. [[HL1703](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Our priorities are to recognise the successes of the past 50 years and reaffirm our commitment to the NPT, finding common areas of agreement across all three pillars (disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear technology).

We will work collaboratively to reduce the risk of nuclear conflict and build mutual trust and confidence that allows further progress towards disarmament. The P5 process remains an important channel through which the Nuclear Weapon States discuss the Treaty's implementation. It is also an important risk reduction measure to build trust and confidence, especially during times of tension.

Peru: Indigenous Peoples

Asked by Lord Alderdice

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made, if any, to the government of Peru about the threats from illegal loggers to (1) leaders, and (2) members, of the Wampis community; and what plans, if any, they have to press for them to be protected. [[HL1590](#)]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The UK Government monitors human rights in Peru closely. We hold regular discussions on them with the Peruvian Government, including raising prominent cases with the authorities and with civil society stakeholders.

The safety of environmental defenders in the Peruvian Amazon region is a particular priority for our human rights work in Peru. Officials in our Embassy to Lima met with the Peruvian Ministry of Justice and Human Rights on 13 July to raise concerns about threats to the Wampis community and human rights defenders, as well as the problem of illegal logging. We are monitoring the Peruvian Government's response and will continue to hold an active dialogue with them on these issues. Our Ambassador to Lima has travelled within Peru to meet

environmental defenders and indigenous peoples, and Embassy representatives are in close contact with organisations representing human rights defenders.

Police: Banks

Asked by Lord Sikka

To ask Her Majesty's Government what amount of funding, if any, police forces have received from banks in the last 10 years. [[HL1618](#)]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Police and Crime Commissioners generate income through a variety of funding sources including Government grants, police precept, charging for policing commercial events and investments (both interest and dividends).

You can find detailed breakdowns of force financing arrangements in their published annual financial statements.

Poverty: Children

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support lone parent families, in light of the Institute for Fiscal Studies briefing on 4 July which stated that (1) "1.5 million children of lone parents were in relative income poverty" in 2019–20, and that (2) "the pre-pandemic relative poverty rate for children of lone parents was almost double that for children living with two parents". [[HL1563](#)]

Baroness Stedman-Scott: This Government is committed to reducing child poverty and supporting low-income families, and believes work is the best route out of poverty. With a record 1.3 million vacancies across the UK, our focus is firmly on supporting people to move into and progress in work. This approach is based on clear evidence about the importance of parental employment - particularly where it is full-time - in substantially reducing the risks of child poverty and in improving long-term outcomes for families and children.

The latest available data on in-work poverty shows that in 2019/20, children in households where all adults were in work were around six times less likely to be in absolute poverty (before housing costs) than children in a household where nobody works.

To help parents into work, our Plan for Jobs is providing broad ranging support for all jobseekers with our Sector Based Work Academy Programmes (SWAP), Job Entry Targeted Support and Restart scheme.

We are also extending the support Jobcentres provide to people in work and on low incomes. Through a staged roll-out, which started in April 2022, around 2.1m low-paid benefit claimants will be eligible for support to progress into higher-paid work. This is on top of the support we have already provided by increasing the National Living Wage to £9.50 per hour and giving nearly 1.7 million families an extra £1,000 (on average) a year

through our changes to the Universal Credit taper and work allowances.

To further support parents to move into and progress in work, eligible UC claimants can claim back up to 85% of their registered childcare costs each month up to a maximum of £646.35 per month for one child and £1,108.04 per month for two or more children. This is on top of the free childcare offer in England which provides 15 hours a week of free childcare for all 3- and 4-year-olds and disadvantaged 2-year-olds, doubling for working parents of 3- and 4-year-olds to 30 hours a week.

Around 1.9 million of the most disadvantaged pupils are eligible for and claiming a free school meal, saving families around £450 per year. In addition, around 1.25 million more infants enjoy a free, healthy and nutritious meal at lunchtime as well as over 90,000 disadvantaged further education students. We are also investing £200 million a year to continue the Holiday Activities and Food Programme, which benefitted over 600,000 children last summer, and we have increased the value of the Healthy Start Vouchers by a third to £4.25 a week.

Child Maintenance can make a real difference to lone parent households on a low income whether that is through a family-based arrangement (FBA) or the statutory scheme administered by the Child Maintenance Service (CMS). We estimate that receiving parents in separated families received £2.4 billion annually in child maintenance payments in the three financial years ending 2019 to 2021 through both FBAs and payments received through the CMS. As a result, there were around 140,000 fewer children in absolute low-income households each year on average between 2018/19 to 2020/21 (on an after-housing costs basis).

Prison Sentences: Older People

Asked by Lord Garnier

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people were serving a determinate sentence of 20 years or more in each year since 2012; and of those, how many were aged (1) under 18, (2) 18 to 20, (3) 21 to 24, (4) 25 to 29, (5) 30 to 34, (6) 35 to 39, (7) 40 to 49, (8) 50 to 59, (9) 60 to 69, and (10) 70 or over. [HL1594]

Asked by Lord Garnier

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people were serving a determinate sentence of 20 years or more in each year since 2012, broken down by ethnicity. [HL1595]

Asked by Lord Garnier

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people aged 70 to 79 received a determinate custodial sentence of 20 years or more in each year since 2012. [HL1598]

Asked by Lord Garnier

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people aged 80 or over received a determinate custodial sentence of (1) 10 years to less than 15 years, (2) 15

years to less than 20 years, and (3) 20 years or more, in each year since 2012. [HL1599]

Lord Bellamy: Responses are collated from two different data sources. Please refer to the footnotes of the tables to understand the differences.

HL1598 and HL1599:

The Ministry of Justice publishes information on detailed sentence and custodial sentence length, in England and Wales, for the years 2017 to 2021 available, in the [Outcomes by Offence data tool \(MS Excel Spreadsheet, 21 MB\)](#).

In this dataset, the age range for offenders 25 and over was not broken down further prior to 2017 – please refer to note 5 in the tables. Further breakdowns by age range are therefore not available before 2017.

The data requested is provided in the attached tables. Please note that court data records length as the custodial period specified in the sentence.

HL1594 and HL1595:

Requested information can be found in the attached data tables.

The sentence length information is the *Judicially Imposed Sentence Length (JISL)* which reflects the custodial period plus time to be served on post-release Probation supervision.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Table [2022-07-22 HL1594-95 HL1598-99 Table.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-07-08/HL1594>

Asked by Lord Garnier

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people aged 60 to 69 received an extended determinate sentence with a custodial period of 20 years or more in each year since 2012. [HL1596]

Asked by Lord Garnier

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people aged 70 or over received an extended determinate sentence with a custodial period of 10 years or more in each year since 2012. [HL1597]

Asked by Lord Garnier

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people received an extended determinate sentence with a custodial period of 10 years or more in each year since 2012; and of those, how many were aged (1) under 18, (2) 18 to 20, (3) 21 to 24, (4) 25 to 29, (5) 30 to 34, (6) 35 to 39, (7) 40 to 49, (8) 50 to 59, (9) 60 to 69, and (10) 70 or over, at the time of sentencing. [HL1624]

Lord Bellamy: The Ministry of Justice publishes information on detailed sentence and custodial sentence length, in England and Wales, for the years 2017 to 2021,

available in the [Outcomes by Offence data tool \(MS Excel Spreadsheet, 21 MB\)](#).

In this dataset, the age range for offenders 25 and over was not broken down further prior to 2017 – please refer to note 5 in the tables. Further breakdowns by age range are therefore not available before 2017. Where data is provided for 2012 to 2017, the 25 + age range is aggregated.

The data requested is provided in the attached tables.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Table [2022-07-22 HL1596-97 & HL1624 Table.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-07-08/HL1596>

Asked by Lord Trefgarne

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many (1) men, and (2) women, over the age of 70 are serving custodial sentences in England and Wales. [HL1658]

Lord Bellamy: As of 31 March 2022 (latest available published statistics), there were 1,618 male sentenced prisoners and 21 female sentenced prisoners aged '70 and over' in prisons in England & Wales.

Refugees: Middle East and Ukraine

Asked by Lord Rosser

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many refugees from (1) Ukraine, (2) Afghanistan, and (3) Syria, have been helped through either (a) the Homes for Ukraine scheme, (b) the Ukraine Family Scheme, (c) the Afghans Citizens' Resettlement Scheme, (d) the Afghans Relocation and Assistance Policy, or (e) the Syrian Resettlement Programme, since each of those respective schemes began. [HL1583]

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

Work is underway to assure information relating to all the individuals relocated under the ARAP and ACRS on case working systems. Once this work concludes, statistics on both schemes - including the number of people resettled under each - will be included in future editions of the Immigration Statistics.

The Home Office publishes data on resettlement in the 'Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release'. Data on refugees resettled in the UK by scheme can be found in table Asy_D02 of the 'asylum and resettlement detailed datasets'. Information on how to use the datasets can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbooks. The latest data relate to the year ending March 2022. Data for June 2022 will be published on 25 August 2022. Information

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

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Table Asy_D02 [asylum-applications-datasets-mar-2022 (2) - Asy_D02.xlsx]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2022-07-07/HL1583>

Religious Freedom

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, following the International Ministerial Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief, they will (1) introduce a Religious Freedom Bill guaranteeing the provisions of Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and (2) make the appointment of a Special Envoy on Freedom of Religion or Belief a statutory requirement. [HL1548]

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what were the outcomes and recommendations of the International Ministerial Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief, held in London between 5 and 7 July. [HL1549]

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the policy of the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office concerning Freedom of Religion or Belief and the mandate of the Special Envoy on Freedom of Religion or Belief is restricted to the provisions of Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; and whether it can be used to promote other substantive issues. [HL1551]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The International Ministerial Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) hosted by the UK brought together governments, faith and belief leaders and civil society for discussions to address challenges to the right to FoRB. The Conference gave a platform to those persecuted for their religion or belief. Forty-seven governments, international organisations and other entities pledged action in support of FoRB. Thirty countries joined the UK in signing up to a set of statements. My Right Honourable Friend, the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs (Elizabeth Truss), outlined FCDO progress in implementing recommendations from the Bishop of Truro's report and noted the breadth of religion and belief groups that suffer from persecution. I [Lord Ahmad] announced new UK funding for support for defenders of FoRB, as well as funding and expertise for countries prepared to make legislative changes to protect FoRB.

FCDO policy on FoRB, and the work of the FoRB Special Envoy, is grounded in international human rights law and standards and recognises the interdependence of all human rights, and the importance of respect for the

promotion of democracy, rule of law and stability around the world. The role of FoRB Special Envoy is an appointment made by the Prime Minister and currently held by Fiona Bruce MP. We work closely together to promote FoRB around the world. The Human Rights Act contains protections for the ECHR Article 9 right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, and the new Bill of Rights will continue this protection.

Rwanda: Politics and Government

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Rwanda concerning its record on (1) freedom of expression, (2) political debate, and (3) the right for women and girls to safely access abortion, in that country. [HL1559]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The UK Government firmly believes that freedom of expression, a strong opposition and vibrant civil society is vital for a healthy and well-functioning democracy in Rwanda and that civil society and opposition parties must be able to operate freely, holding the Government to account and contributing to the debate on how the country should be governed. We remain concerned about some restrictions on the space for opposition voices in Rwanda. The UK remains strongly committed to championing comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights globally, including in Rwanda.

We regularly discuss a range of issues with the Government of Rwanda through our High Commission in Kigali and at Ministerial level. The Prime Minister met President Kagame in Kigali during the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in June, and the Minister for Africa met Foreign Minister Biruta in London on 18 May.

Senior Civil Servants: Recruitment

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many current members of the Senior Civil Service were recruited via the Fast Stream; and why they have paused the Civil Service Fast Stream recruitment in 2022/23 for the 2023 intake. [HL1566]

Lord True: The Fast Stream is a talent pipeline for government departments and professions. It is only right we pause bringing in candidates as departments set out how they might achieve the government's commitment to return the Civil Service to the size it was in 2016.

Whilst we pause the Fast Stream for the 2023 intake, we will take the opportunity to further improve the Fast Stream offer. This reform will ensure that when the scheme reopens, it is focused on driving up specialist skills in the Civil Service, as well as improving the regional representation of the Fast Stream.

Information provided by departments to the Cabinet Office shows that as of 1st April 2021, 890 Senior Civil Servants were reported to have been successful in the central Fast Stream selection process. This represents 20% of all Senior Civil Servants (as a percentage of all members where information has been reported by the department as known).

Shireen Abu Akleh

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the US State Department statement on 4 July that a detailed forensic analysis "could not reach a definitive conclusion regarding the origin of the bullet that killed Palestinian-American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh", despite multiple eyewitness reports that it was fired by an Israel Defense Forces soldier. [HL1564]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We remain in close contact with the US and other partners on the tragic case of Shireen Abu Akleh. We continue to call for justice, accountability, and urgent steps to be taken to de-escalate tensions, and for restraint in the use of force. The safety of journalists across the globe is vital and they must be protected when carrying out their critical work.

South Sudan: Humanitarian Aid

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park on 13 June (HL49), what assessment they have made of the violence in Abyei; and what further steps they intend to take in response. [HL1681]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: We are carefully observing the ongoing clashes in Abyei and the border regions. As noted in our answer of 13 June, we are heavily engaged with the UN Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) and welcomed their mandate being renewed by the UN Security Council on 12 May. It is essential that UNISFA is able to fulfil its mandate to protect civilians, and support law and order, local peacebuilding and community dialogues. We join the UN Secretary-General's call for the African Union to intensify its mediation efforts to help reach a political solution for Abyei.

We continue to urge the Governments of Sudan and South Sudan to regularise meetings of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee and agree joint security mechanisms to improve stability in Abyei until its final status can be agreed. We will work with the UN and the humanitarian community in Sudan and South Sudan to address humanitarian needs in Abyei, and call on the governments of both countries to allow humanitarian actors to deliver aid to those in need without hindrance.

Sudan: Rapid Support Forces

Asked by The Earl of Sandwich

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken, if any, towards designating the Sudanese Rapid Forces as a terrorist organisation. [HL1405]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Whilst the Government keeps the list of proscribed organisations under review, we do not routinely comment on whether an organisation is or is not under consideration for proscription.

We remain concerned at the behaviour of Sudan's Rapid Support Forces, including internal repression and human rights violations across the country. We have raised our concerns, including with the RSF leadership.

Taxation

Asked by Lord Sikka

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of fiscal drag on the tax revenues for the year 2022–23. [HL1617]

Baroness Penn: The Treasury does not produce fiscal forecasts. The independent Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) are the Government's official forecaster. Inflation has a range of impacts on the public finances and previous OBR forecasts have shown how inflation can also increase spending on welfare and debt interest, as well as tax revenues. Borrowing in the financial year-to-June 2022 is currently £3.7 billion more than the £51.8 billion forecast by the OBR in March 2022. The OBR will produce an updated forecast alongside the next Budget, which will reflect the impacts of an updated inflation outlook on both revenues and spending.

UN Convention Against Torture

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the joint submission by Human Rights Watch and Lawyers for Justice on the Palestinian Authority and Hamas to the UN Committee Against Torture at its 74th Session, 12–29 July; and what discussions they have had with the Palestinian Authority as a signatory of the Convention Against Torture. [HL1586]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are aware of the joint submission and will review the findings. We take allegations or concerns of torture and mistreatment very seriously and will follow up with action, as appropriate.

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

Asked by Baroness Mobarik

To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent discussions they have had with the government of France regarding an agreement to stop asylum seekers undertaking unsafe Channel crossings. [HL1569]

Asked by Baroness Mobarik

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will negotiate with the government of France for centres in that country where asylum seekers can apply for asylum to the UK, rather than crossing the Channel to apply. [HL1570]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The UK maintains regular contact with the Government of France on our joint cooperation to tackle illegal migration at the shared border at Ministerial and official level. The UK has committed several funding packages to supporting this work, including a bilateral arrangement which was reached between the UK and France on 20 July 2021.

The UK has a proud record of providing protection for people who need it, in accordance with our obligations under the Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights. However, there is no provision within our Immigration Rules for someone to be allowed to travel to the UK to seek asylum or temporary refuge. Those who need international protection should claim asylum in the first safe country they reach – that is the fastest route to safety.

France is a safe country, and, like the UK, it has an asylum system which provides protection to those who need it. People in France who need protection, can and should claim asylum there rather than refuse the chance to do so and travel illegally and dangerously to the UK instead.

It is for this reason that the UK Government will not negotiate to have centres in France where asylum seekers can apply for asylum to the UK. All asylum claims that are lodged from within the UK and admitted to the UK asylum system, are given full and careful consideration so that we do not remove anyone who faces persecution or serious harm on return to their country of origin.

UNRWA

Asked by Baroness Deech

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by the Henry Jackson Society UNRWA's Future Reconsidered, published on 23 February 2020, which referred to the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) as a significant road block to peace and a Two State solution, whether they will review the \$92m annual funding they provide to the Agency. [HL1554]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We remain longstanding supporters of the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) and their work to support Palestinian refugees across the region including Gaza. Minister Milling had the opportunity to see the UNRWA supported refugee camp in Jerusalem during her recent visit to the region in June 2022 and saw first-hand the challenges refugees face along with the impact of valuable UK support. At the UNRWA pledging conference in New York in June, we announced a new multi-year funding programme with the agency providing £15 million in 2022, which helps

UNRWA provide education to over 533,000 children a year (half of them girls), and access to health services for 3.5 million Palestinian refugees.

Uzbekistan: Politics and Government

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of recent events in Karakalpakstan; what discussions they have had with the government of Uzbekistan (1) regarding those events, and (2) to seek a peaceful resolution. [HL1567]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: I [Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon] was saddened by the loss of life that occurred during recent events in the Karakalpakstan region of Uzbekistan. I understand that initially peaceful protests against plans to change Karakalpakstan's autonomous status within Uzbekistan, developed into violent unrest with casualties among civilians and law enforcement. The situation now seems calm. We have taken note of the creation of an Independent Commission under the Parliamentary Ombudsman to investigate these events.

On 7 July, I raised the unrest in Karakalpakstan with the Uzbek Deputy Foreign Minister and our Ambassador and his team in Tashkent are also in contact with the Uzbek authorities. We have been clear in our communications that the right to peaceful protest and respect for media freedom should be protected. In discussion of these events in multilateral fora, we urged the Uzbek authorities to adhere to their international commitments in their response, and that due process be followed as the authorities seek to understand what happened. We will continue to monitor developments closely.

Veterans: Hong Kong

Asked by Lord Craig of Radley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the remarks by Lord Sharpe of Epsom on 8 March (HL Deb col 1370) that "the Government remain committed to implementing a solution to the issue of British Hong Kong veterans before the end of this calendar year", whether they will still "update Parliament by the end of June". [HL1232]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The option identified by the Home Secretary in December 2021 is being further refined to ensure it will be a sufficient solution for British Hong Kong veterans.

The Government remains committed to implementing a solution by the end of this calendar year, and will provide a further update at the earliest opportunity.

Water Companies: Prosecutions

Asked by Lord Sikka

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will introduce legislation enabling members of the general

public to prosecute directors of water companies for wilful neglect of their statutory duties. [HL1460]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: We have existing powers to enable regulators to hold directors of companies liable for offences committed by their company if consent, connivance or neglect on their part can be shown. In addition, Ofwat, as the independent economic regulator, protects the interests of consumers by ensuring water companies properly carry out their statutory functions. They will not hesitate to take enforcement action where these duties are breached. In recent years we have seen historic fines placed on water companies, including fines of £90m for Southern Water and £4m for Thames Water in 2021 for serious pollution events.

The Government has introduced a range of further measures through the Environment Act 2021, and we have been clear that if we do not see the significant changes we expect, we will take further action.

Water: Sewage

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of increased releases of raw sewage into waterways on animal farming, in light of Vancomycin-resistant Enterococci being found in more than 10 per cent of supermarket pork products. [HL1591]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The Government has made improving water quality a priority. The Environment Act has placed our ambition on a statutory footing, setting a duty for water companies to achieve a progressive reduction in the adverse impacts of discharges from storm overflows. Our Storm Overflow Discharge Reduction Plan will be published in September and will set out the targets water companies will be required to meet to achieve this.

Currently, no assessment has been undertaken on sewage discharges on animal farming more generally. Pharmaceuticals may enter the environment during the manufacture and disposal of pharmaceutical products, or as they pass through humans and animals into wastewater treatment networks or the wider environment.

There is much to be done to improve our understanding of the impacts that pharmaceuticals have on the environment, but some are known to cause adverse impacts on aquatic life and contribute to the spread of antimicrobial resistance.

The Environment Agency (EA) and Defra has worked with Water UK on the Chemicals Investigation Programme to investigate the fate and travel of antimicrobial resistance through waste water treatment works, and are advocating more work via the 2024 price review.

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