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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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Lord Caine	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office, Whip
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Lord Markham	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
Earl of Minto	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence
Baroness Neville-Rolfe	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
Lord Offord of Garvel	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business and Trade and Scotland Office
Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Culture, Media and Sport
Baroness Penn	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Lord Roborough	Whip
Baroness Scott of Bybrook	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Lord Sharpe of Epsom	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office
Lord Stewart of Dirlerton	Advocate-General for Scotland
Baroness Swinburne	Whip
Baroness Vere of Norbiton	Parliamentary Secretary, HM Treasury
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Chief Whip
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions

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Written Statements

Wednesday, 28 February 2024

Decommissioning of Temporary Jobcentres

[HLWS290]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: My honourable Friend, the Minister of State for Employment (Jo Churchill MP) has made the following Written Statement:

We previously provided updates on decommissioning Temporary Jobcentres; [Expanding Our Services](#) on 23 March 2021, and [Expanding Our Services Update](#) on 21 October 2021. These statements reaffirmed the Department's commitment to reducing its Jobcentre estate back to pre-pandemic levels by decommissioning the Temporary Jobcentres or the additional space in established Jobcentres in a phased approach, where the increased capacity is no longer needed. The full list of Temporary Jobcentres and their current status can be found [here](#).

As part of this ongoing, phased, approach to decommissioning the Temporary Jobcentres, the Department is today announcing the sixth and latest phase, which consists of decommissioning a further 42 temporary sites or additional space in existing Jobcentres. This latest phase brings the total number of temporary sites announced to date to 182. Details of the sites being decommissioned in this latest phase are listed below.

The remaining 12 sites of the 194 originally opened will be either decommissioned or absorbed into the estate in the coming months and we will individually update all those Members whose constituencies are affected at the time.

The decommissioning of Temporary Jobcentres will not reduce the levels of service, or access to face-to-face appointments. Customers will return to being served by an established Jobcentre and there will be no reduction in the number of Work Coaches supporting customers as a result of the decommissioning.

The Department continues to support and update colleagues in a timely and sensitive manner. We also remain committed to ensuring all relevant stakeholders, unions, organisations and Parliament are engaged and regularly updated on our work. Letters are being sent to each right hon. and hon. Member with changes in their constituency to explain what this means for their local Jobcentre, its staff, and their constituents.

Finally, in conjunction with this carefully planned decommissioning programme, we are looking to improve and upgrade Jobcentres over time. It is important that all those who come to Jobcentres are given the highest level of attention and service.

The 42 Temporary Jobcentres or additional space in existing sites to be formally decommissioned are:

Temporary Jobcentres

Temporary Jobcentre location	Address
Aberdeen	Unit C and D City Wharf, Shiprow, Aberdeen AB11 5BY
Basingstoke	Centenary House, 10 Winchester Road, Basingstoke RG21 8UG
Birmingham (South)	1 Facet Road, Kings Norton, Birmingham B38 9PT
Blackpool	8 Albert Road, Blackpool FY1 4SW
Bradford	Unit D, Bradford Business Park, Kings Gate, Bradford BD1 4SJ
Chatham	Unit 61A, Dockside Outlet Centre, Maritime Way, St Mary's Island, Chatham ME4 3ED
Coventry	MSU D First Floor, West Orchards Shopping Centre, Smithford Way, Coventry CV1 1QL
Eastbourne	1 Grove Road, Eastbourne BN21 4TW
Edinburgh Waverley Bridge	Unit L23, Waverley Mall, Waverley Bridge, Edinburgh EH1 1BQ
Fareham	95 West Street, Fareham PO16 0AQ
Halesowen	60 Whitehall Road, Halesowen B63 3JS
Kidderminster	Unit J2 Crossley Retail Park, Carpet Trades Way, Kidderminster DY11 6DY
Leicester	Pegasus House, 17 Burleys Way, Leicester LE1 3BE
London Barnet	Building 2, North London Business Park, Oakleigh Road South, Barnet N11 1GN
London Cooks Road (Newham)	1-4 Cooks Road, London E15 2PW
London Ilford (Redbridge)	The Exchange, High Road, Ilford, IG1 1RS
London Queen's Park (Brent Wembley)	111-115 Salusbury Road, Queens Park, London NW6 6RG
London Royal Albert Dock (Newham)	Altitude, 14 Lascars Avenue, Royal Albert Dock London E16 2YP
London Woolwich	71-77 Powis Street, Woolwich, Greenwich SE18 6JB
Macclesfield	Unit 2 The Silk Works, Pickford Street, Macclesfield SK11 6JD
Manchester (Central)	58 Mosley Street, Manchester M2 3HZ
Milton Keynes	Phoenix House, Elder Gate, Milton Keynes MK9 1AW
Norwich	Lower Units 16, 17, 18 and Upper Units 10, 11, 12, Castle Quarter, Norwich NR1 3DD
Peterlee	56 Yoden Way, Peterlee SR8 1AS
Portsmouth	5a Edinburgh Road, Portsmouth PO1 1DE
Slough	4 The Observatory, High Street, Slough SL1 1LE
Solihull	Jago House, 692 Warwick Road, Solihull B91 3DX

<i>Temporary Jobcentre location</i>	<i>Address</i>
Staines upon Thames	100 Church Street, Staines upon Thames TW18 4DQ
Sutton in Ashfield	Broadway, Brook Street, Sutton in Ashfield NG17 1AL
Additional space in established Jobcentres	

Additional space in established Jobcentres

Additional space will be decommissioned or reabsorbed into the estate and services will continue as usual.

<i>Additional space location</i>	<i>Address</i>
Ayr (reabsorbed)	Wallacetoun House, John Street, Ayr KA8 0BX
Cambridge (reabsorbed)	Henry Giles House, 73-79 Chesterton Road, Cambridge CB4 3BQ
Horsham (reabsorbed)	Marlborough House, 50 East Street, Horsham RH12 1HN
Lancaster (reabsorbed)	Mitre House, Church Street, Lancaster LA1 1JW
Leamington Spa (reabsorbed)	Brandon House, Holly Walk, Leamington Spa CV32 4JE
London Peckham (Southwark) (reabsorbed)	24-26 Peckham High Street, Peckham, London SE15 5DS

12 remaining Temporary Jobcentres or additional space in existing sites to be decommissioned or absorbed into the estate in the coming months are:

<i>Temporary Jobcentre location</i>	<i>Address</i>
Ashton Under Lyne	101 Old Street, Ashton Under-Lyne OL6 6BJ
Birmingham	B1, 50 Summer Hill Road, Birmingham B1 3RB
Bournemouth	580 Tringham House, Deansleigh Road Bournemouth BH7 7DT
Bradford	Aldermanbury House, 2 - 4 Godwin Street, Bradford BD1 2ST
Colwyn Bay	Unit B, Bay View Centre, Sea View Road, Colwyn Bay LL29 8DG
Doncaster	The Blue Building, 39-40 High Street, Doncaster DN1 1DE
Keighley	Unit 1 Hanover House, 49 Low Street, Keighley BD21 3PP
Kings Lynn	30-34 Broad Street, Kings Lynn PE30 1DP
London Barnsbury (Islington)	Unit 1a and 1b, 427 - 429 Caledonian Road, London, N7 9BG
London Clapham (Lambeth)	Clapham Place, Unit 1, 340 Clapham Road, London SW9 9FA
Preston	Fishergate Shopping Centre, Preston PR1 8HJ
Stafford	30 Greengate Street, Stafford ST16 2HY

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Fund

[HLWS291]

Baroness Penn: My Honourable friend the Minister for Housing and Homelessness (Felicity Buchan MP) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

I am pleased to inform the House that my Department has today confirmed further funding for three of our Homelessness and Rough Sleeping grants:

- £107 million allocated through the Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme;
- £109 million allocated to councils across England as a top up to the Homelessness Prevention Grant to help address Ukraine and homelessness pressures; and
- £6 million allocated to London and across 101 local authorities in England, via the 2023/24 Rough Sleeping Winter Pressures funding, bringing the total of the fund to £10 million.

Taken together with our existing investment this means Government is providing nearly £2.4 billion to tackle homelessness and end rough sleeping between 2022 and 2025. These announcements build on the significant support we have put in through our rough sleeping strategy, [Ending Rough Sleeping for Good](#), and are a further example of our ongoing commitment to end rough sleeping.

We have confirmed today that we are allocating a further £107 million to councils in England through the Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme. The Programme aims to increase the supply of high-quality accommodation with accompanying support for people with the longest histories of rough sleeping or the most complex needs and vulnerable young people (aged 18-25) who are experiencing or are at risk of homelessness or rough sleeping.

This allocation, following a final bidding round, will fund the delivery of 808 homes and three years of support for their occupants. This adds to 1,230 homes funded through the previous four bidding rounds. Meanwhile, we have funded 6,000 homes through the £433 million Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme and housed over 1,090 people through the £42 million Housing First programme. The Government is also providing additional support to house Afghans and others in temporary accommodation through the £1.2 billion Local Authority Housing Fund, which is expected to deliver around 7,000 homes by 2026.

We have also confirmed today that councils in England will receive an additional £109 million in 2024/25 via a top up to the Homelessness Prevention Grant. This funding can be used flexibly – for example, to offer financial support for people to find a new home or to work with landlords to prevent evictions, among other preventative measures, or to provide temporary accommodation.

This funding forms part of the £120 million UK-wide funding announced at Autumn Statement 2023 to help councils address homelessness pressures and support

Ukrainian guests who can no longer remain in sponsorship in 2024/25. The remaining funding has been allocated to Scotland (£7.7 million), Wales (£2.6 million) and Northern Ireland (£0.6 million) to help prevent homelessness amongst Ukrainians.

Finally, we have given a further £6 million to councils in England through the Rough Sleeping Winter Pressures funding, which builds on the initial allocation of £4 million announced in January. We know that winter is particularly high-risk for individuals who are sleeping rough, increasing the demand for immediate 'off-the-street' accommodation, and this funding will support

councils to create additional off-street capacity and reduce the risk of deaths from exposure to extreme weather. This complements funding already provided to councils through the Rough Sleeping Initiative 2022-25, which totals over £547 million across three years.

The funding announced today forms part of a wider package of support for people who are homeless or sleeping rough, and further demonstrates the Government's commitment to tackle homelessness and end rough sleeping, working in partnership with local government and the voluntary sector to achieve this ambitious aim.

Written Answers

Wednesday, 28 February 2024

Air Pollution: Ethnic Groups

Asked by *Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to work with health professionals to address the disproportionate impact of air pollution on Black and racialised communities. [HL2670]

Lord Markham: The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence has published guidance on air pollution which includes recommendations on advice health professionals can provide to people who may be affected by poor air quality. A copy of the guidance is attached.

NHS England focuses on reducing healthcare inequalities at both national and system level in the most deprived and underserved communities, through its Core20PLUS5 programme. This programme sets out a target population comprising of the poorest 20 percent of the population, along with ethnic minorities and inclusion health groups.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Air pollution [air-pollution-outdoor-air-quality-and-health-pdf-1837627509445.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2024-02-21/HL2670>

Air Pollution: Public Health

Asked by *Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they will publish guidance on how people can protect themselves from the harms of air pollution. [HL2669]

Lord Markham: The Government makes a wide range of information available to the public through the UK-Air website and on social media. This includes a five-day forecast, latest local measurements from nationwide monitoring networks and health advice informed by the work of the Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants.

Air quality forecasts are communicated using the Daily Air Quality Index (DAQI). The DAQI informs the public about air pollution levels in their area and provides health advice in the form of recommended actions that can be taken by the general public and susceptible individuals. As part of the Air Quality Information System review, the Government are conducting an evaluation assessing the appropriateness and effectiveness of the current DAQI.

Asylum: Appeals

Asked by *Lord Bailey of Paddington*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that the asylum seekers' appeal system

is not intentionally undermined, with the result that rejected applications are subsequently accepted. [HL2462]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: Where a person has been refused asylum and makes further submissions, there will only be a right of appeal if the further submissions amount to a fresh claim. There will be a fresh claim only if the further submissions have not previously been considered and, taken together with the previously considered material, created a realistic prospect of success. In the vast majority of cases where there is a right of appeal, the Home Office is represented by Presenting Officers who are specially trained on immigration law and practice, including cross-examination, to ensure any credibility issues are raised before the tribunal, and that decisions are robustly defended at appeal where it is right to do so.

Asylum: Northern Ireland

Asked by *Lord Dodds of Duncairn*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the implications for asylum applications in Northern Ireland of the decision in the application for judicial review by Aman Angsom [2023] NIKB 102 of 18 October 2023. [HL2467]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: This judgment found in favour of the SSHD in respect of our policy to disperse asylum seekers on section 95 support under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, from Northern Ireland to Scotland. Where individuals in asylum accommodation are relocated, their asylum claims will continue to be processed in line with legislation and policies in place, irrespective of place of residence in the UK.

Duty Free Allowances: Tourism

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask His Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to reinstating tax-free shopping for tourists, and what stage the review by the Office for Budget Responsibility has reached into the potential benefits of doing so. [HL2581]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Government is welcoming industry submissions on the VAT Retail Export Scheme and the associated airside scheme (tax-free shopping). The Government will continue to accept representations and consider this new information carefully, alongside broader data.

The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) is independent. It has announced it is reviewing the costing of the abolition of tax-free shopping in 2020. The OBR has stated that it will aim to publish its conclusions alongside the Spring Budget.

Economic Situation

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to monitor and mitigate the impact of potential recessionary pressures on household finances and consumer confidence. [[HL2583](#)]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: According to the latest data from the Office for National Statistics, economic output contracted in Q3 and Q4 of 2023. Consumer confidence has since strengthened, and in January 2024 it reached its highest level since January 2022.

The OBR has forecast growth in each year of its November 2023 forecast, and confirmed that the combined impact of the Autumn Statement and Spring budget policies provides a permanent 0.5% increase in the level of potential output by the end of the forecast.

Since 2022, the government has demonstrated its commitment to supporting the most vulnerable by providing one of the largest support packages in Europe. Support for households to help with the cost of living is worth £104 billion over 2022-23 to 2024-25, or £3,700 per household on average.

The government continues to monitor developments in the economy and consider the implications for its policies.

Education: Autism

Asked by *Lord Touhig*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the National Autistic Society's Cullum Centres; and what consideration they have given to rolling out the Cullum model in mainstream schools across the country. [[HL2503](#)]

Baroness Barran: The department works closely with the National Autistic Society (NAS) and is aware of the Cullum Centres and the evaluation currently being undertaken by Goldsmiths, University of London, but has made no assessments of the Centres to date. The department engages regularly with NAS and other autism stakeholders to understand the issues faced by autistic children and young people and to understand possible solutions.

The department supports local authorities to provide sufficient school places for all children, including autistic children, through capital funding. The department has published over £1.5 billion of High Needs Provision Capital Allocations for the 2022/23 and 2023/24 financial years. This funding is allocated to local authorities to support them to deliver new places and improve existing provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including those with autism, or who require alternative provision (AP). This funding forms part of the department's transformational investment of £2.6 billion in new high needs provision between 2022 and 2025 and is on top of

the department's ongoing delivery of new special and AP free schools.

Reaching over 70% of schools and further education (FE) colleges, the Universal Services programme helps the school and FE workforce to identify and meet the needs of children and young people with SEND earlier and more effectively. The programme will also help the schools to successfully prepare children and young people for adulthood, including employment. Universal offers online training, professional development groups, bespoke school and college improvement projects, sector-led research, autism awareness training and an embedded focus on preparation for adulthood, including employer-led webinars for college staff. The programme commenced in May 2022 and runs until Spring 2025, with a budget of nearly £12 million.

The department has begun collecting data from local authorities on available capacity in special schools, SEND units and resourced provision, along with corresponding forecasts of demand for these places. This data will help the department to effectively support local authorities to fulfil their statutory duty to provide sufficient specialist places.

Asked by *Lord Touhig*

To ask His Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to introducing national guidance on how to adapt school environments to support the needs of autistic pupils. [[HL2504](#)]

Baroness Barran: I refer the noble Lord to the answer of 12 February 2024 to Question [11638](#).

Asked by *Lord Touhig*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the current level of training on autism that teachers receive; and what consideration they have given to introducing whole school staff training on autism. [[HL2505](#)]

Baroness Barran: I refer the noble Lord to the answer of 22 February 2024 to Question [14564](#).

Energy: Carbon Emissions

Asked by *Lord Jackson of Peterborough*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the merits of an environmental duty on all relevant regulators, including the Planning Inspectorate, to ensure regulation that is proportionate to the need for more low carbon energy to improve the UK's energy security. [[HL2482](#)]

Lord Callanan: Under the Planning Act 2008, the Planning Inspectorate deploys an Examining Authority which examines and makes recommendations to the Secretary of State on whether to consent to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, giving regard to relevant environmental matters in accordance with accompanying regulations and guidance. The updated

National Policy Statements (NPSs) define low carbon infrastructure as a “Critical National Priority”. This means that when due account has been taken of relevant environmental legislation, remaining residual impacts are unlikely to outweigh the urgent need for this infrastructure. Strengthening our NPSs is one of several measures we are taking forward to improve the planning system.

Foreign Investment in UK: National Security

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to recommendations made by the House of Commons Business and Trade Sub-Committee on National Security and Investment on 9 February in their submission to the Government's call for evidence ahead of reforms to the UK's investment-screening regime, what steps they are taking to strengthen the screening processes under the National Security and Investment Act 2021 to better align with the investment rules of UK allies. [HL2502]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: The Government is grateful for each response to the recent Call for Evidence on the National Security and Investment Act, including the submission from the Business and Trade Sub-Committee. The Government is now analysing all the responses and will respond publicly in due course.

The NSI Act brought the UK's approach to investment screening in line with many of our allies. Whilst the vast majority of acquisitions pose no national security risk, where the government does identify risk, it will not hesitate to act.

Fractures: Health Services

Asked by Baroness Merron

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the reply by Lord Markham on 19 January 2023 (HL Deb col 1926), what is meant by “different versions” of the fracture liaison service. [HL2561]

Lord Markham: The Government and NHS England recognise the value of quality-assured secondary fracture prevention services, including Fracture Liaison Services (FLS). Some local health systems may offer secondary fracture prevention support without using FLS. Examples might include medication management for people at risk of osteoporosis, falls prevention services and frailty programmes.

Asked by Baroness Merron

To ask His Majesty's Government what proportion of England has a full fracture liaison service. [HL2562]

Lord Markham: According to figures from a Freedom of Information request by the Royal Osteoporosis Society cited in an All-party Parliamentary Group inquiry report in 2021, 51% of National Health Service trusts in England

provided a fracture liaison service in the same year. A copy of the report is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Inquiry report [appg-on-osteoporosis-and-bone-health-fls-inquiry-inquiry-report-2021.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2024-02-19/HL2562>

Asked by Baroness Merron

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the level of fracture care in areas where there is no full fracture liaison service. [HL2563]

Lord Markham: The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) has published multiple best practice clinical guidelines on assessing and managing fractures, including assessing and managing the risk of fragility fractures in people aged 18 years old and over with osteoporosis. These include details on drug treatments and lifestyle information. NICE guidelines are not mandatory, although health and care commissioners are expected to take them fully into account.

Some local health systems may offer secondary fracture prevention support without using fracture liaison services. Examples might include medication management for people at risk of osteoporosis, falls prevention services and frailty programmes.

Health Services: Waiting Lists

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask His Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of referral-to-treatment cases which will be taken off the main elective waiting list as a result of new guidance from NHS England. [HL2543]

Lord Markham: Following the changes made to the national Referral to Treatment (RTT) reporting guidance on 2 February 2024, internal data from NHS England indicates that the impact on the overall RTT waiting list will be a decrease of approximately 37,000 pathways across National Health Service acute providers. These pathways are within the community paediatric specialty, which is the only specialty that is explicitly identified as being a community pathway in the NHS dataset.

Patient rights to treatment within 18 weeks for consultant led services will not change under this proposal and long waits will still be visible within the published statistics; they will simply appear in the community data and not RTT.

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask His Majesty's Government why consultant-led community services activity is no longer to be recorded on the main elective waiting list. [HL2546]

Lord Markham: Most community activity is non-consultant led and therefore reported outside of the

Referral to Treatment (RTT) dataset. There were inconsistencies in the previous reporting of consultant-led community services, so to improve consistency and accuracy of reporting across community services, the referral-to-treatment guidance has been updated to clarify the reporting expectations for consultant-led community data.

This change allows for consolidated reporting of consultant-led and non-consultant-led community services data within published community datasets. The aim is to encourage more consistent and accurate reporting across elective pathways, enabling better insights into community services and activity across the country. Patient rights to treatment within 18 weeks for consultant led services will not change under this proposal and long waits will still be visible within the published statistics; they will simply appear in the community data and not RTT.

High Speed 2 Line: Buckinghamshire

Asked by Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they were aware that trees would be felled in Sheephouse Wood when they agreed £40m funding for a tunnel to mitigate the impact on wildlife in Sheephouse Wood. [HL2483]

Lord Davies of Gower: Wildlife mitigations adjacent to Sheephouse Wood include physical measures to protect the local bat population, as well as a green overbridge, and landscaping for public access. Given that the HS2 route in this area is overground rather than in tunnel, a number of trees along the perimeter of Sheephouse Wood have had to be removed to fulfil safety requirements alongside an operational railway. These trees were removed with the necessary permissions from Natural England, and HS2 Ltd informed the Department for Transport in advance of the works taking place. The requirement to deliver these works was included in the overall funding allocations for the HS2 project.

High Speed 2 Line: Old Oak Common Station

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Davies of Gower on 20 February (HL2422), whether there are committed sources of funding in place for continuing work on (1) preparing for tunnelling main bores from Old Oak Common towards Euston, and (2) installing boring machines for above main bores; and, if not, why construction is continuing without a committed funding source in place. [HL2642]

Lord Davies of Gower: The project to deliver Old Oak Common station is fully funded, which includes funding for enabling works and site preparation to allow for tunnel boring machines to be launched to construct the Old Oak Common to Euston tunnels.

As previously stated, the scope and cost estimates for this section of the route are subject to review following the announcement. As set out in Network North, we will appoint a development company to manage the delivery of the station and will harness the future growth that the station will unleash to support its development, to ensure we get the best possible value for the British taxpayer and ensure that funding is underpinned by contributions from those people and businesses its development supports.

Hill Farming: Environmental Land Management Schemes

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask His Majesty's Government what further steps they plan to take to support and protect upland and hill farmers to offset any loss of income they face under the new environmental land management schemes. [HL2595]

Lord Douglas-Miller: Upland farmers play a vital role in managing some of our most important and iconic landscapes, which are valued and recognised by the public. In addition to farming, the management of upland landscapes can provide many environmental benefits and ecosystem services, including clean air and water, carbon sequestration and flood risk management.

Upland farmers are well placed to benefit from our Environmental Land Management (ELM) schemes, which are designed to maintain sustainable, productive land which delivers for both farmers and the environment.

The schemes under ELM have been designed to be as accessible and attractive to as wide a range of farmers as possible. We continue to work closely with a range of environmental and agricultural stakeholders to collaboratively design our new approaches to ensure they are fit for purpose.

Support for small farmers, including upland farmers, includes the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) Management Payment. At the recent National Farmers Union Conference, the Prime Minister announced that this payment will be doubled to a maximum of £2000 per year. At the Conference the Prime Minister also announced the biggest ever package of grants this year, to boost productivity and resilience, which will total £220 million. Upland farmers will be eligible to benefit from this, through increases to the Improving Farming Productivity scheme and the Farming Equipment and Technology fund. And the Prime Minister announced that the Government is also increasing funding for grassroots mental health support, because we know what a tough job farming is; and providing funding to support food producers by redirecting surplus food into the hands of those who need it.

This builds on support already in place for upland farmers. Upland farmers can get paid for over 130 relevant actions under Countryside Stewardship and the SFI from 2024. This will include new moorland and upland peat actions, with considerably higher payments

for moorlands in good environmental condition. They can also extend their Higher Level Stewardship agreements for five years if they have one that can run alongside any Countryside Stewardship or SFI agreement they have, allowing them to get paid for more actions and take advantage of recent price increases. And they can apply for Countryside Stewardship Wildlife Offers for a range of management options that focus on providing habitats for farm wildlife.

Upland farmers in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or National Parks can apply for the Farming in Protected Landscapes programme, which funds farmers to support nature recovery, mitigate the impacts of climate change, provide opportunities for people to discover, enjoy and understand the landscape and its cultural heritage, or protect or improve the quality and character of the landscape or place. And upland farmers can continue to benefit from the Landscape Recovery scheme, creating the landscape scale and tailored environmental land management change we need for our targets. So far 56 successful projects have been selected for Rounds 1 and 2 of Landscape Recovery, demonstrating the Government's commitment to funding that delivers environmental benefits in harmony with food production. Defra will open a third round of Landscape Recovery in 2024.

Horizon IT System: Compensation

Asked by Lord Sikka

To ask His Majesty's Government what are the (1) highest, and (2) lowest, compensation payments made to sub postmasters wrongly prosecuted by the Post Office to date. [HL2496]

Lord Offord of Garvel: Postmasters with overturned Horizon convictions are offered a fixed sum award of £600,000 to settle their claim, however those who wish to can continue to have their claim individually assessed. The amounts awarded to individuals are not revealed out of respect for their privacy, but the total so far paid to people whose convictions have been overturned is over £35 million.

The small number of postmasters who were prosecuted but not convicted are eligible to claim compensation via the Horizon Shortfall Scheme or GLO scheme.

Horizon IT System: Convictions

Asked by Lord Sikka

To ask His Majesty's Government how many of the sub-postmasters wrongfully convicted because of flawed Horizon computer evidence are yet to have their convictions overturned, allowing for payment of compensation. [HL2499]

Lord Offord of Garvel: 700 postmasters were prosecuted by Post Office and a further 283 were prosecuted by others based on Post Office evidence, totalling 983 convictions. As of 13 February, there are now 102 overturned wrongful convictions.

On 10 January, the Prime Minister announced that the Government intends to bring forward legislation to overturn the convictions of all those convicted in England or Wales on the basis of Post Office evidence during the Horizon scandal.

Immigration: Legal Representation

Asked by Lord Bailey of Paddington

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that immigration lawyers and law firms are not involved in (1) coaching claimants, or (2) encouraging them to make false statements to deceive the immigration system. [HL2461]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: The Home Office Professional Enablers Taskforce was created in March 2023 to investigate the activities of all Professional Enablers, who may be using their expertise or position to abuse the immigration system. This includes legal professionals and immigration advisers.

Where unethical and illegal practices are identified and evidence exists that obligations have been breached, the taskforce may refer legal practitioners to the relevant regulatory body or to law enforcement partners, where criminality is evident for consideration of sanctions or penalties.

Import Controls: EU Countries

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Vere of Norbiton on 13 February (HL2022), what discussions they have had with representatives of channel ports regarding the introduction of EU import controls, and (1) whether these were written or oral discussions; (2) what dates these discussions were held; (3) what points of concern were raised, if any; and (4) what their response was to those concerns. [HL2522]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Government officials conducted in-depth engagement to develop the Border Target Operating Model. A wide selection of stakeholders involved at the border were invited to contribute, including representatives of channel ports. There were over 10,000 registrations for workshops and seminars over the engagement period in spring and summer 2023 and over 200 stakeholders provided written feedback. This included a range of border locations and other stakeholders involved in movements of goods across the channel. The Government responded to a range of questions on the requirements for safety and security controls for EU imports, due to be introduced from 31 October 2024. The Government is continuing to engage with stakeholders across affected sectors in all parts of the United Kingdom and the EU to ensure that they understand the changes outlined in the Border Target Operating Model. Baroness Neville-Rolfe also met with

members of the ports industry in November 2023 to discuss the Border Target Operating Model.

Imports: EU Countries

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask His Majesty's Government what discussions, if any, they have held with EU countries regarding the introduction of safety and security declaration requirements for EU imports on 31 October, and what were the contents of any such discussions. [[HL2523](#)]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: Government officials engage regularly with officials from EU Member States to discuss new customs-related requirements, including safety and security declarations. This has included official visits to Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Denmark and Ireland with further engagement planned for Italy, Spain, Poland and Germany in 2024. Baroness Neville-Rolfe visited Belgium to discuss import controls with the Belgian Government and industry in early February 2024. Partners have been extremely helpful in communicating these requirements using their own stakeholder communication channels, and providing suggestions for further guidance that could be helpful. More formal communication of these changes to EU Member States took place in the Trade Specialised Committee on Customs Cooperation and Rules of Origin, the minutes of which can be found on gov.uk.

Asked by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made, if any, of the economic impact of safety and security declaration requirements for EU imports. [[HL2524](#)]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: As is standard for such changes, any necessary impact assessment of the changes will be published alongside the legislation.

Long Covid

Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the overall burden of Long Covid, (2) the number of new cases being identified each month, (3) the percentage of sufferers who are able to receive specialist treatment, and (4) the provisions available for long-term support and assistance. [[HL2607](#)]

Lord Markham: The Government does not currently routinely record the total amount of people with long COVID or new cases identified. However, the most recent data from the Office of National Statistics shows that for the 4-week period ending 5 March 2023, 1.9 million people, or 2.9% of the population, in private households in the United Kingdom reported experiencing long COVID symptoms; 83,000 people first had, or suspected they had, COVID-19 less than 12 weeks previously, 1.73

million people had symptoms for 12 or more weeks, 1.3 million people for at least a year and 762,000 for at least two years; and 1.5 million people reported day-to-day activities adversely affected. Of these, 381,000 reported that their ability to undertake day-to-day activities had been limited a lot.

Whilst no specific assessment has been made of the percentage of long COVID sufferers who are able to receive specialist treatment, activity data released by NHS England shows that, for the month of December 2023, there was a total of 1,104 initial specialist assessments completed during the month and an additional 8,696 follow-up appointments were carried out. In total, since the data was first published in July 2021, 101,998 patients have received an initial specialist assessment. A further 347,837 follow-up appointments have taken place.

NHS England has invested £314 million to expand long COVID treatment in the National Health Service and rehabilitation services, establishing 100 long COVID services for adults and 13 specialist paediatric hubs for children and young people. These assess people with long COVID and direct them into appropriate care pathways which provide appropriate support and treatment. Commissioning of post-COVID services will transition from the long COVID national programme to integrated care boards by the end of March 2024. Funding for long COVID services in 2024/25 is expected to be allocated based on the 2023/24 distribution.

The NHS and wider scientific community are working at unprecedented pace to better understand long COVID, supported by £50 million in research funding.

Mental Health Services: Finance

Asked by Lord Stevens of Birmingham

To ask His Majesty's Government when before 1 April they will confirm whether NHS mental health funding will increase as a share of overall NHS expenditure in 2024/25, as required by section 3(2) of the Health and Care Act 2022. [[HL2579](#)]

Lord Markham: Information on mental health funding within the National Health Service will be made available once NHS planning guidance is published.

Milk: Health Education

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to promote the benefits of drinking milk to children and young people. [[HL2602](#)]

Lord Markham: Milk and dairy products make a valuable contribution to the nutrient content of the diet, providing protein and B vitamins for example. They are also an important source of calcium, which is especially important for children to help build healthy bones and teeth. In the United Kingdom, exclusive breastfeeding is recommended for around the first six months of a baby's

life with continued breastfeeding throughout the first year. Following this, the Government encourages the population to consume some lower fat milk and dairy products as part of a healthy, balanced diet. This is reflected in the UK's national food model, the Eatwell Guide, a copy of which is attached.

The Healthier Families and Start4Life websites both include information in an online-only format to parents of young and primary school aged children on the consumption of lower fat, unsweetened milk as part of a healthy balanced diet.

The Eatwell Guide principles, including consumption of milk and dairy products, underpin the School Food Standards and Public Health England's example menus and guidance for early years settings, available on GOV.UK in an online-only format.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Eatwell Guide (colour edition) [Eatwell_guide_colour_edition (2).pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2024-02-20/HL2602>

Nigeria: Abduction

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that rates of kidnappings for ransom have increased in central Nigeria. [HL2532]

Lord Benyon: The UK Government condemns the abduction and captivity of all persons for ransom. We are aware of a rise in kidnappings in central Nigeria. It is difficult to provide a definitive figure because of differing recording practices across agencies and because not all kidnaps are reported to the Nigerian authorities. At the latest UK-Nigeria Security and Defence Partnership (SDP) dialogue in February, we strengthened our commitment to providing mentoring and capacity-building support to the agencies with a mandate to tackle the threat of kidnap. This will help reduce harm to victims and hold those responsible to account.

Nigeria: Boko Haram and Islamic State

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the link between Boko Haram and Islamic State of West Africa Province in Nigeria's northern states, and perpetrators of violence in Nigeria's central states. [HL2534]

Lord Benyon: It is likely that some criminal networks engage in illicit trade, including trading of weapons, with terrorist groups in Nigeria, including in its northern states. This is distinct from intercommunal violence, which occurs particularly in Nigeria's Middle Belt and is driven by lack of economic opportunities, disruption to traditional ways of life created by environmental

degradation and historical grievances. Through our UK-Nigeria Security and Defence Partnership, we are working with Nigeria to respond to shared threats and are supporting Nigeria to tackle insecurity and promote human rights.

Nigeria: Internally Displaced People

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the second-order effects of mass displacement in central Nigeria, especially on (1) educational outcomes, (2) the use of narcotics among young people, and (3) the risk of trafficking. [HL2533]

Lord Benyon: Displacement in Nigeria has a significant impact on children, who are often no longer able to attend school and therefore lack education provision for an extended period of time. This can also increase vulnerability to trafficking and other safeguarding issues. While the UK funds development initiatives in some Middle Belt states, our humanitarian assistance is aligned with the UN Humanitarian Response Plan which focusses on North-East Nigeria, which is most impacted by displacement. The UK is also supporting Nigeria's National Drugs Law Enforcement Agency to increase the local law enforcement agencies' capacity and capability to disrupt narcotics flow across Nigeria, in line with human rights standards.

Nigeria: Violence

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the sources of weapons used by perpetrators of recent violence in Plateau State, Nigeria. [HL2535]

Lord Benyon: The proliferation of weapons is exacerbating security challenges across Nigeria, although exact sources of weapons used in the recent violence in Plateau state remain uncertain. We are supporting Nigeria to address the proliferation of weapons by providing x-ray image interpretation training to the Nigerian Drugs Law Enforcement Agency to assist them with detecting weapons and weapon parts when screening baggage, fast parcels, and air freight. Furthermore, we are supporting Nigeria to strengthen its borders, including through the Collaboration Against Trafficking and Smuggling (CATS) programme. This programme operates along the Nigerian-Niger border and aims to build the capability of the border agencies to tackle cross-border human trafficking and smuggling.

Political Parties: Freedom of Information

Asked by Lord Sikka

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they plan to introduce legislation to extend the provisions of the

Freedom of Information Act 2000 to include registered political parties. [HL2495]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: The Government has no plans to extend the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to registered political parties.

Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry

Asked by Baroness Hoey

To ask His Majesty's Government who are the members of the statutory inquiry established to investigate the Post Office Horizon scandal; and who chairs that inquiry. [HL2434]

Lord Offord of Garvel: The Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry is chaired by Sir Wyn Williams FLSW, a former High Court judge, who is supported by an Inquiry team including counsel, solicitors, assessors, and the Secretariat.

The statutory roles to the Inquiry which support the Chair are Counsel to the Inquiry (Jason Beer, KC), Solicitor to the Inquiry (Segun Jide) and Secretary to the Inquiry (Leila Pilgrim). There are two assessors to the Inquiry (Erika Eliasson-Norris and David Page) who have been appointed to provide advice to the Chairman on their area of relevant expertise regarding the Inquiry.

Post Office: Incentives

Asked by Lord Sikka

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they intend to publish the names and bonus amounts paid to Post Office senior employees under the 'Transformation Incentive Scheme' for co-operating with the Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry. [HL2497]

Lord Offord of Garvel: This is a matter for Post Office Ltd as the Department does not hold this information. Government understands that all current Post Office employees who received the bonus have voluntarily returned the remuneration associated with the sub-metric relating to the Post Office's support for the Inquiry. Nick Read (Post Office CEO) took a further step and voluntarily returned the full bonus payment attributed to the overall Inquiry metric.

Asked by Lord Sikka

To ask His Majesty's Government when the 'Transformation Incentive Scheme' authorising payment of bonuses to the Post Office senior employees for co-operating with the Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry was designed, approved, and implemented; and which Ministers approved it. [HL2498]

Lord Offord of Garvel: While Ministers at the then Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and HM Treasury Ministers signed off on the 2021/22 Transformation Incentive Scheme (TIS) they did not authorise the payment of bonuses. Determining whether targets have been met and bonuses should be

awarded is the responsibility of Post Office Limited's Remuneration Committee.

The timeline of approvals is set out in both Post Office Limited's *Review of the Transformation Incentive Scheme (TIS)*, also known as the Amanda Burton Report, and HM Government's *Review Of The Governance Relevant To Post Office Limited's Senior Executive Remuneration*.

Pregnancy: Air Pollution

Asked by Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb

To ask His Majesty's Government what research they have (1) commissioned, and (2) published, on the impact of exposure to air pollution on foetal development during pregnancy. [HL2668]

Lord Markham: The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), formerly Public Health England, contributed to a report by the Royal College of Physicians' and Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health that examined the impact of exposure to air pollution across the course of a lifetime. It states that from the earliest stages of development DNA is susceptible to changes arising from exposure to air pollution. During critical periods of development, any interference can harm organs and tissues or change their developmental trajectory so that their function is impaired. The susceptibility of the development of lungs and the brain to air pollution are highlighted in the report.

UKHSA also provides the scientific secretariat to the Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants, which is currently preparing a report considering the evidence linking maternal exposure to air pollution during pregnancy, with preterm birth, low birth weight and stillbirth.

Processed Food: Labelling

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking, in light of recent research by University College London, to ensure that ultra-processed foods, particularly meat-alternative products, are (1) clearly labelled, and (2) not categorised in the green 'healthy' category of the traffic-light food labelling system. [HL2560]

Lord Douglas-Miller: The UK maintains high standards on the information that is provided on food labels so that consumers can have confidence in the food that they buy. The fundamental principle of food labelling rules is that information provided to the consumer must not mislead and must enable the safe use of food. Prepacked food has to show: (1) a list of ingredients; (2) the net quantity of the food; (3) the quantity of certain ingredients used; (4) ingredients causing allergies or intolerances; (5) a best before or use by date; (6) any special storage conditions and/or conditions of use; (7) country of origin where required;

(8) origin of the primary ingredient (where required); (9) instructions for use where necessary and (10) other labelling as required.

In addition, the name of the food (or of any ingredients) should be accompanied by details of the physical condition of the food or the specific treatment which it has undergone (for example, powdered, refrozen, freeze-dried, quick-frozen, concentrated, smoked) in all cases where omission could mislead the purchaser. This means that consumers are able to examine the label on any food and determine whether it meets their particular requirements.

While nutrition labelling is mandatory on most prepacked food, front of pack 'traffic light' nutrition labelling remains voluntary, and it is for the individual business to decide on which foods the information will be most useful to consumers. Manufacturers and retailers are encouraged to provide front of pack nutrition labelling on as many of their products as possible where the information is meaningful for consumers. Research has shown that consumers expect to find front of pack nutrition labelling on pre-prepared convenience foods, ready meals and other processed products.

The Department of Health and Social Care published guidance in 2013 on applying voluntary front of pack nutrition labelling. The traffic light score for each product is set against thresholds for 'green', 'amber' and 'red', and should be applied on an individual basis relating to the nutritional content and are used to represent whether a product is 'high' (red), 'medium' (amber) or 'low' (green) in specific, individual nutrients (total fat, saturated fat, total sugars and salt). The guidance can be found [here](#) and attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

FoP nutrition label guide [HL2560 attachment.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2024-02-19/HL2560>

Radio Frequencies: Rural Areas

Asked by *Baroness Bonham-Carter of Yarnbury*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the closure of longwave radio on 31 March on people living in rural areas. [HL2423]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: The BBC is not ending long-wave transmissions of BBC Radio 4 on 31 March 2024. The Corporation announced in 2022 that it would be ending the separate programming for Radio 4 on long wave only and moving to a single Radio 4 schedule.

The BBC has been communicating this change to ensure that listeners know how they can still hear Radio 4 programmes which are only broadcast on long wave on other BBC radio services or other platforms.

Under the BBC's 2016 Royal Charter and Agreement, it is a matter for the BBC to determine how long to continue with its long-wave transmissions.

Railway Stations: Stonehouse

Asked by *Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb*

To ask His Majesty's Government when they will announce their decision on the Strategic Outline Business Case 'Restoring Your Railway Stroudwater Station' submitted in September 2022; why that decision has not yet been made; and what is the intended purpose of the planned Ministerial visit to Stroudwater Station. [HL2549]

Lord Davies of Gower: The Department for Transport is in receipt of a Strategic Outline Business Case for the proposed reopening of Stonehouse (Bristol Road) railway station, also known as Stroudwater station. The Department is not yet in a position to provide details on next steps for the scheme, but hopes to be able to do so in due course. Ministers conduct visits for a wide range of reasons, including to help them appreciate local issues in person.

Railways: East of England

Asked by *Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Davies of Gower on 14 February (HL2133), what are the minimum and expected timescales for the following stages of Ely Area Capacity Enhancement and upgrading of Haughley Junction: (1) the final business case, (2) the Ministerial decision to proceed to implementation, (3) the issuance of a Transport Work Act Order, (4) the commencement of works, and (5) the completion of works. [HL2548]

Lord Davies of Gower: The recently announced Network North programme of investment included confirmation of government's support for the Ely Area Capacity Enhancement (EACE) programme and the substantial benefits this will bring, including a doubling of passenger services on the Ely to Kings Lynn and Ipswich to Peterborough routes together with additional freight paths into the Port of Felixstowe.

Network Rail have developed the scheme to Outline Business Case stage; next steps will involve further investment case development and delivery planning.

Salt and Sugar: Taxation

Asked by *Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the recommendation contained in The National Food Strategy, published on 15 July 2021, to introduce a Sugar and Salt Reformulation Tax. [HL2494]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: There are no current plans to introduce a Sugar and Salt Reformulation Tax. The Government published its response to the National Food Strategy on 13 June 2022, setting out the approach to working with the food industry to create a healthier food environment for all and investing in innovative approaches to address weight and diet related ill health.

However, the Soft Drinks Industry Levy (SDIL) encourages producers to remove added sugar from soft drinks. It has been very successful in this aim, with a reduction of sugar in soft drinks of 46% between 2015 and 2020.

The Government remains committed to helping people live healthier lives. Having a fit and healthy population is essential for a thriving economy, and reducing sugar and salt in food remains a priority for the Government through the voluntary reformulation and reduction programme.

The Government keeps all taxes under constant review and welcomes representations from stakeholders to inform policy development.

School Milk

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to encourage wider take up of the Nursery Milk Scheme in early years settings and among childminders. [HL2600]

Asked by Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to review administrative barriers for childminders seeking to claim from the Nursery Milk Scheme. [HL2601]

Lord Markham: The Nursery Milk Scheme allows early years childcare settings such as childminders, nurseries and some schools, to reclaim the cost of providing one-third of a pint of milk to children under five who attend their childcare setting for at least two hours per day. It is not compulsory for childcare settings who are eligible to join the Scheme, but all are welcome to do so.

The Nursery Milk Scheme is currently run by the NHS Business Services Authority under a direction given by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care. There are no current plans to changes the way in which the Scheme operates.

Sports: Transgender People

Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of Sport England's approach to supporting the implementation of the UK Sports Councils' Guidance for Transgender Inclusion in Domestic Sport, published on 30 September 2021. [HL2473]

Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the UK Sports Councils' Guidance for Transgender Inclusion in Domestic Sport, published on 30 September 2021, in protecting female sport. [HL2474]

Asked by Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town

To ask His Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with Sport England in relation to the UK Sports Councils' Guidance for Transgender Inclusion in Domestic Sport, published on 30 September 2021. [HL2475]

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport regularly meets Sport England and UK Sport to discuss a range of issues relating to participation in sport, including participation by transgender people.

In 'Get Active: A strategy for the future of sport and physical activity', HM Government set out our view that, when it comes to competitive sport and particularly women's sport, competitive fairness and safety have to be the primary considerations. These considerations cannot be reconciled with self-identification in the female category in gender-affected sport alone.

The Sports Councils' Equality Group's transgender inclusion guidance was published after extensive consultation and a review of scientific research. It makes clear that inclusion, fairness, and safety cannot always be balanced in gender-affected sport. It therefore encourages national governing bodies to consider the specific factors at play in their sport, and to use scientific, peer-reviewed evidence to help make decisions in an open and transparent way. The Government will continue to engage with Sport England and national governing bodies to ensure that this guidance is being implemented.

Sudan: Children

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of remarks by Clare Nicolet, head of Médecins Sans Frontières's emergency response in Sudan, that "we estimate that at least one child is dying every two hours in one IDP camp. Our current estimate is that there are around 13 child deaths each day"; and what is their response. [HL2416]

Lord Benyon: The humanitarian situation in Sudan continues to deteriorate, with almost 18 million people now thought to be in acute food insecurity and 700,000 children already acutely malnourished. The UK is providing more than £38 million in humanitarian funding in 2023-24. The lack of humanitarian access to Internally Displaced People (IDP) camps continues to make it extremely difficult for humanitarian organisations to provide the necessary levels of assistance.

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