

Daily Report

Tuesday, 10 January 2017

This report shows written answers and statements provided on 10 January 2017 and the information is correct at the time of publication (06:33 P.M., 10 January 2017). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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Notes:

Questions marked thus **[R]** indicate that a relevant interest has been declared.

Questions with identification numbers of **900000 or greater** indicate that the question was originally tabled as an oral question and has since been unstarred.

ANSWERS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ Carbon Emissions

Steve McCabe:

[\[58581\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 25 October 2016 to Question 47955, what steps his Department has taken to ensure that the targeted reduction of CO2 emissions to 57 per cent of 1990 levels by 2030 is met.

Jesse Norman:

The Government has already made progress towards the targeted reduction of CO2 emissions by 2030 - provisional statistics indicate that UK emissions in 2015 were 38% lower than in 1990.

We are looking ahead to our emissions reduction plan which will set out how we will reduce emissions through the 2020s and so form an important signal to the markets, businesses and investors.

■ Energy: Meters

John Penrose:

[\[58256\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department has made an estimate of the potential net benefit of smart meter roll-out in (a) cost savings for suppliers, (b) cost savings for consumers and (c) the transmission system; and if he will make a statement.

Jesse Norman:

The Smart Meter Roll-out Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) published on 10 November estimates the costs and benefits for suppliers, consumers' savings and energy networks – the document is available at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/smart-meter-roll-out-gb-cost-benefit-analysis.

The smart meter rollout is expected to deliver significant net benefits to Great Britain, estimated overall at £5.7 billion over the lifetime of the programme.

■ Green Deal Scheme

Margaret Ferrier:

[\[58549\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what support the Government provides to people who received Green Deal finance from a company that has since gone into liquidation.

Jesse Norman:

Consumers who have entered Green Deal Plans will continue to be covered by the Green Deal Framework even if their Green Deal Provider has gone into liquidation.

This means that the plan repayments will continue as normal, with no disruption in service.

Where consumers have a concern, they can still make any complaints to the Green Deal Ombudsman or the Financial Services Ombudsman (FOS) as appropriate, even though the Green Deal Provider is in liquidation.

CABINET OFFICE

■ Elections: Fraud

Andrew Stephenson:

[\[58804\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many of the recommendations made in Securing the Ballot that the Government identifies in its response to that report as requiring or likely to require primary legislation the Government plans to implement in the (a) current Parliamentary session and (b) remainder of the current Parliament.

Andrew Stephenson:

[\[58805\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many of the 50 recommendations made in Securing the Ballot the Government plans to see implemented by (a) the Government or (b) other parties, including the Electoral Commission and returning officers, in time for (i) local authority elections in 2017, (ii) local authority elections in 2018, (iii) the next general election due in 2020 and (iv) elections of police and crime commissioners in 2020.

Chris Skidmore:

The Government published its response to Sir Eric Pickles' review of electoral fraud in December, and is now looking closely at how and when the work on each of the recommendations addressed in the response can be taken forward. In the coming weeks and months, the Government will work closely with the Electoral Commission, the Association of Electoral Administrators, the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives, and other electoral administrators, in order to set out clearly the nature and timing of that work. We will look to implement the majority of Sir Eric's recommendations either through primary and secondary legislation, or through new or reinforced guidance, as appropriate. In its response, the Government has clearly identified where the recommendations that it intends to bring forward will require primary legislation in order to be implemented.

TREASURY■ **LIBOR: Fines**

Martin Docherty-Hughes: [\[58513\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 15 December 2016 to Question 56783, how decisions on the allocation of monies from LIBOR fines between facilities based at MoD sites, MoD events and registered charities were made; and who in his Department was responsible for those decisions.

Martin Docherty-Hughes: [\[58514\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 15 December 2016 to Question 56783, if he will publish the eligibility criteria for applying for funding from LIBOR fines for military charities.

Mr David Gauke:

The commitment of LIBOR fines to 'support Armed Forces and Emergency Services charities and other related good causes that represent those that demonstrate the very best of values' is subject to a robust governance process. This utilises grant making experts, the Charity Commission and the Government New Grants Advice Panel (NGAP) to ensure that appropriate due diligence is conducted on all applications for support. In addition the grant team consult relevant Government Departments and other Grant Making Bodies, such as The Heritage Lottery Fund.

This process satisfies the mandated requirements of the 'Minimum Standards for Government Grants' which were introduced following the report in to The Kids Company by the Parliamentary Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee (PACAC), which came into force on 1st December 2016. Each application is considered both on its individual merits and holistically for any impact across its particular sector. Once this process is complete, the assessment overview is passed to the Treasury and matched against the available funding, prior to final endorsement by both the Chief Secretary to the Treasury and the Chancellor of Exchequer.

The eligibility criteria for applying for funding was published on the GOV.UK website on 23 August 2016 and is repeated below:

'to support Armed Forces and Emergency Services charities and other related good causes that represent those that demonstrate the very best of values.'

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS■ **Churches: Blackburn**

Mr Mark Hendrick: [\[57603\]](#)

To ask the right hon. Member for Meriden, representing the Church Commissioners, (a) what steps the Diocese of Blackburn has taken to work with Caring for God's Acre to map flora and fauna on its Estate, (b) which churches in the Diocese of Blackburn have recorded flora and fauna in churchyards, (c) what notable finds of flora and fauna have

been recorded and (d) what plans the Diocese of Blackburn has to take part in the Cherishing Churchyards Week from 3 June to 11 June 2017.

Dame Caroline Spelman:

A) The Blackburn Diocese Environment Group are currently in the process of deciding what the future role of the Diocesan Environmental Project Officer will look like. The Diocese of Blackburn has discussed working with 'Caring for God's Acre' and with the current limited resources, the Diocesan Environment Group hopes to undertake a 'Living Churchyards' scheme. They are currently exploring the potential of partnership with the local Wildlife Trust and any project will need funding or sponsorship to get underway. The Diocese of Blackburn is fully committed to supporting enquiries into parish energy consumption and to the international 'Just Water' campaign.

B & C) The Diocese does not hold central records of which Churches have recorded notable flora and fauna in their churchyards, this is more likely to be held locally within parishes, the local Wildlife Trusts and Natural England. If funding can be found for the 'Living Churchyards' project a more strategic plan can be produced.

D) The Blackburn Diocese Environment Group plans to encourage individual parishes that have the capacity to participate in Cherishing Churchyards 2017, and hopes to take a more coordinated approach in 2018. Across the Blackburn Diocese work is often undertaken in partnership and so the Diocese would want any project to also involve the land of other faith communities.

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

■ Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority

Mr Stewart Jackson:

[58483]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, whether he plans further to devolve (a) community infrastructure levy funding, (b) 100 per cent business rate growth and (c) EU legacy structural funds to the new Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority after May 2017; and if he will make a statement.

Andrew Percy:

[Holding answer 9 January 2017]: Together with local partners in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, we have now agreed proposals for a devolution deal that would see the significant transfer of power and resources from central Government to the local area. In addition to devolving funds in areas such as economic growth, transport and skills, the deal also includes additional revenue raising powers.

In October 2015, we announced that, by the end of this Parliament, local authorities will be able to keep 100% of the business rates they raise locally, including 100% of growth.

The Government commissioned a review of the Community Infrastructure Levy in November 2015, which was undertaken by an independent panel who submitted their

report in October. We are currently reviewing the recommendations and further announcements will be made in due course.

We will consider the future of all programmes that are currently EU funded, once we have left the EU and will consult closely with stakeholders, including local authorities to review all EU funding schemes to ensure that any on-going funding commitments best serve the UK's national interest.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Department for Culture, Media and Sport: Equality

Paula Sherriff: [\[58231\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, who the diversity champion is on her departmental board.

Matt Hancock:

Sue Owen, The Permanent Secretary at DCMS is the lead Civil Service Diversity Champion, and for the department.

■ Television: Licensing

Royston Smith: [\[58171\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of portable television licences for people living in multiple accommodation.

Matt Hancock:

We have made no assessment of the potential merits of a portable television licence for people living in multiple accommodation.

DEFENCE

■ Arms Trade: Cluster Munitions

Andrew Gwynne: [\[58374\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what information his Department holds on the sale of UK-manufactured cluster bombs to non-NATO countries between 1980 and 1995.

Harriett Baldwin:

UK-manufactured BL755 cluster munitions were supplied to Saudi Arabia under a government-to-government agreement signed in 1986. The final delivery against this agreement was made in 1989.

■ Ascension Island: Aviation

Stephen Gethins:

[\[58274\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what environmental impact assessment his Department plans to undertake for the runway resurfacing project on Ascension Island; and whether that assessment will be open to stakeholder consultation.

Mark Lancaster:

The Ascension Island Runway Resurfacing Project is a United States Air Force (USAF) led project and will be co-ordinated in consultation with the Ascension Island Government Conservation Department. The design and scope assessment has been contracted-out by the USAF and we are assured that all environmental considerations will be factored into this assessment. The Ministry of Defence has also provided the contractor with additional information for the environmental assessment and will continue to liaise with all stakeholders as the project develops.

■ Imphal Barracks

Rachael Maskell:

[\[58300\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the cost to the public purse was of refurbishing Imphal Barracks in York in order to accommodate 1st Division Headquarters.

Mark Lancaster:

Work has recently started on the refurbishment of Imphal Barracks in order to accommodate 1st Division Headquarters. Work is ongoing and final costs will not be available until Financial Year 2017-18.

While there is no Defence requirement for Imphal Barracks after 2031, the necessary refurbishment works represent value for money to avoid any costly repairs and to ensure the site remains safe and compliant for the occupants over the next 15 years.

■ Joint Strike Fighter Aircraft

Douglas Chapman:

[\[58279\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what ammunition his Department plans to use for the Semi-Armour-Piercing High-Explosive Incendiary-Tracer round for the F35B Lightning II gun.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Ministry of Defence has not yet confirmed which ammunition it might use for the F-35B Lightning gun.

Douglas Chapman:

[\[58280\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 16 December 2016 to Question 57051, what the final test point score was for the F-35B Lightning II; and what the planned such test point score was in flight sciences testing through to 30 September 2016.

Harriett Baldwin:

Flight sciences testing is intended to expand the operational envelope of the F-35 incrementally and safely. As at September 2016, 74.5% of F-35B Lightning flight sciences test points had been completed for the year. This was ahead of schedule.

Douglas Chapman:[\[58643\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 16 December 2016 to Question 57052, on joint strike fighter aircraft, whether he has made an assessment of the potential effect that the ending of the System Development and Demonstration programme will have on the proposed initial operating capability for the UK F-35B in 2018 upon completion of Block 3F testing.

Harriett Baldwin:

The F-35 System Development and Demonstration programme is planned to conclude on completion of Block 3F testing. UK F-35B Lightning initial operating capability is scheduled to be at Block 3F standard and remains on track for 2018.

Douglas Chapman:[\[58645\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of a phase start for Initial Operational Test and Evaluation for the F35B Lightning II.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Ministry of Defence is actively engaged in initial operational test and evaluation planning as part of a joint F-35 test team with the United States. The plan is subject to appropriate scrutiny but no decisions have been taken on a phased start to testing.

Douglas Chapman:[\[58646\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the F35B Lightning II is due to complete air-to-air instrumentation testing before the end of Block 3F testing.

Harriett Baldwin:

Air-to-air range instrumentation is a test asset used on previous aircraft programmes. Instrumentation components integrated within F-35B Lightning test aircraft will be tested before initial operational test and evaluation starts. This is unrelated to Block 3F testing.

RFA Tiderace**Douglas Chapman:**[\[58281\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 19 December 2016 to Question 57254, what the cost was to the public purse of accommodation in South Korea for the Lady Sponsor for the naming ceremony for RFA Tiderace.

Douglas Chapman:[\[58282\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 15 December 2016 to Question 56630, what the cost was to the public purse of (a) travel and (b)

accommodation for the 25 members of the Armed Forces and 10 MoD civilian staff who attended the naming ceremony for RFA Tiderace.

Harriett Baldwin:

Of those Armed Forces personnel and Ministry of Defence civilian staff who attended the naming ceremony for Royal Fleet Auxiliary Tiderace in December 2016, only the Chief of Materiel (Fleet) and his Military Assistant travelled to the Republic of Korea (ROK) specifically for the event.

Costs of accommodation and transfers within the ROK were funded under the contract with Daewoo Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering.

■ **Type 31 Frigates: Exports**

Douglas Chapman:

[\[58644\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 16 December 2016 to Question 57632, what assessment has been made of the identity of the principal competitors for Type 31 frigates in the global export market.

Harriett Baldwin:

Analysis of the global frigate market included identification of ships within the 2,000 to 6,000 tonne displacement range which are likely to be in service or developed over the next 20 years.

■ **USA: Nuclear Weapons**

Caroline Lucas:

[\[58420\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, when the Third Tier arrangement between the UK and the US for responding to an accident in the UK involving US nuclear weapons was last reviewed and updated; and what the dates and locations of (a) the last and (b) the next scheduled tabletop and field exercises conducted under the auspices of that arrangement are.

Harriett Baldwin:

The Third Tier Arrangement was last updated on 27 March 2014. The most recent tabletop and field exercises conducted under the auspices of the Arrangement, Exercise DIAMOND DRAGON 2015, were held in Suffolk over the period 30 June to 2 July 2015. The dates and locations of the next tabletop and field exercises are yet to be agreed.

■ **Yemen: Armed Conflict**

Caroline Lucas:

[\[58289\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, with reference to his comments on the Andrew Marr BBC TV programme on 11 December 2016, on Yemen, what the evidential basis is for his statement that Houthis in Yemen are supported by al-Qaeda.

Sir Michael Fallon:

Terrorist organisations such as AQ and Daesh prosper in ungoverned environments where they have the freedom to develop their capabilities. This remains a particular concern in Yemen where AQAP are benefitting from the continued instability that results from Houthi aggression.

EDUCATION■ **Alternative Education**

Angela Rayner: [\[57499\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what her Department's most recent estimate is of the number of children not being educated in school.

Edward Timpson:

The Department holds no data on children not educated in school.

■ **Free Schools: Admissions**

Angela Rayner: [\[57948\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many new school places have been created in free schools rated inadequate by Ofsted in each year for which data is available; and how many free schools have been closed by her Department due to an inadequate rating by Ofsted.

Edward Timpson:

There are now 345 free schools across the country. When at full capacity, they will provide over 180,000 new school places. Over a quarter of free schools inspected so far by Ofsted have been rated outstanding compared to just over a fifth of all state schools.

The table below provides the total capacity (as set out in funding agreements available at <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/>) of the schools judged to be inadequate by Ofsted at the end of each academic year since inspections began. The majority of the schools were in the process of building up to their full capacity at the point of inspection. The Department intervenes promptly when poor standards are identified and has closed three free schools as a result of an inadequate Ofsted judgement.

END OF ACADEMIC YEAR	NUMBER OF PLACES WHEN AT FULL CAPACITY
2012/13	112
2013/14	2,540
2014/15	3,631
2015/16	3,065

■ Grammar Schools: Disadvantaged

Lucy Powell:

[57560]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many year seven pupils received free school meals in each grammar school in (a) 2014, (b) 2015 and (c) 2016.

Nick Gibb:

School level data on the total number of pupils in receipt of free school meals can be found in the underlying data of the Schools, Pupils and their Characteristics statistics for 2014[1], 2015[2] and 2016[3] respectively[4].

School-level data for individual years cannot be made available since the numbers involved for some of the schools would risk the identification of individual pupils.

[1] <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2014> - click on underlying data, open the 'SFR15_2014_school_level_pupils_UD' file and the free school meal figures are in column EC.

[2] <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2015> - click on underlying data, open the 'SFR16_2015_Schools_Pupils_UD' file and the free school meal figures are in column EC.

[3] <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2016> - click on underlying data, open the 'SFR20_2016_Schools_Pupils_UD' file and the free school meal figures are in column EB.

[4] In all three datasets, grammar schools are identified by applying the filter 'Selective' in the column 'AdmissionsPolicy' and 'State-funded secondary' in the column 'Phase-type grouping'.

■ Pupils: Nationality

Steve McCabe:

[56640]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 10 November 2016 to Question 50659, what data from the National Pupil Database her Department shares with (a) the Home Office for immigration purposes, (b) media bodies and (c) other parties.

Nick Gibb:

The National Pupil Database (NPD) is information the Department holds on pupils attending schools in England.

Where the police or Home Office have clear evidence that a child may be at risk or there is evidence of criminal activity, limited data including a pupil's name, address and school details may be requested from the National Pupil Database. It is right that we share this data if it helps to keep a child safe from harm or to disrupt a crime.

For this purpose the Department has a data sharing arrangement in place with the Home Office which is set out in a Memorandum of Understanding.

The Secretary of State has legal powers to share extracts of data from the NPD, under strict terms and conditions, with named bodies and third parties who, for the purpose of promoting the education or well-being of children in England, are;

- Conducting research or analysis;
- Providing statistics; or
- Providing information, advice or guidance

There is no routine sharing of NPD data with media bodies. Anyone requesting data from the NPD must comply with strict confidentiality and security rules.

Details of the data held in the NPD that is available for named bodies and third parties to request, and the process and guidelines for requesting data extracts, is available on gov.uk.

■ Pupils: Personal Records

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[57722\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many applications to extract information from the National Pupil Database were refused in each of the last five years; and if she will make a statement.

Nick Gibb:

Anyone requesting data from the National Pupil Database (NPD) must comply with strict confidentiality and security rules. Details of the data held in the NPD that is available for named bodies and third parties to request, guidelines for requesting data extracts, and details of external requests authorised are all available on gov.uk.

The applications to extract information from the NPD that were refused in each of the last five years including both the Department and external requests are:

YEAR	NUMBER OF CASES REJECTED
2012	9
2013	0
2014	3
2015	6
2016 (up to 15 th Dec)	7

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[57723\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what information the National Pupil Database holds on the (a) nationality and (b) ethnic background of pupils; and if she will make a statement.

Nick Gibb:

The National Pupil Database (NPD) is a powerful research database to allow accurate evaluation and assessment of 'what works' in education, by showing how pupils progress over time within the education system. Secure re-use of NPD where legislation, security and public good criteria support it enables rigorous independent evaluation and policy scrutiny to occur.

Details of the School Census and data held in the NPD that is available for named bodies and third parties to request, and the process and guidelines for requesting data extracts, is available on gov.uk.

The new data on nationality and country of origin is solely for the Department's analysts to use for research. The new data has not and will not be held within the National Pupil Database. It has not and will not be shared with any other Government Department or external organisations. The data is provided to school by parents, this is completely optional and parents are under no obligation to provide it if they do not want to.

The NPD holds data on ethnic background provided by the parents to the school, and reported by the school as part of the School Census. This data has been collected in the School Census since 2003. This data is also completely optional and parents can opt out of submitting it if they choose.

Mr Jim Cunningham:

[\[57724\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many applications to extract information from the National Pupil Database were approved in each of the last five years; and if she will make a statement.

Nick Gibb:

Anyone requesting data from the National Pupil Database (NPD) must comply with strict confidentiality and security rules. Details of the data held in the NPD that is available for named bodies and third parties to request, guidelines for requesting data extracts, and details of external requests authorised are all available on gov.uk.

The applications to extract information from the National Pupil Database that were approved in each of the last five years including both the Department and external requests are:

YEAR	NUMBER OF CASES APPROVED
2012	188
2013	294

YEAR	NUMBER OF CASES APPROVED
2014	312
2015	320
2016 (up to 15 th Dec)	250

Note: Calendar year is the year that the application was fully processed and data provided to the recipient. Some cases approved each year will reflect initial applications made late in the previous year.

■ Schools: Admissions

Caroline Ansell:

[\[57607\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps the Government is taking to improve the number of available places in good and outstanding schools; and if she will make a statement.

Nick Gibb:

We are committed to making sure as many children as possible have a place at a good school. The latest Ofsted report clearly shows that standards have risen. Compared to 2010 almost 1.8 million more pupils are now taught in good or outstanding schools. The 'Schools that work for everyone' consultation sets out plans to make more good school places available, to more parents, in more parts of the country. This includes scrapping the ban on new grammar school places, and harnessing the resources and expertise of universities, independent and faith schools.

■ Schools: Buildings

Mike Kane:

[\[57152\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans her Department has to ensure that new and existing school building stock can adapt to rising pupil numbers.

Nick Gibb:

Supporting local authorities to create sufficient school places is one of the Government's top priorities. We have committed to invest £7 billion to create new school places between 2015 and 2021, which, along with our investment in 500 new free schools, we expect to provide 600,000 new places. £4.8 billion of this is already allocated for 2015 to 2019.

Local authorities are under a statutory duty to ensure that there is a school place available for every child in their area. We allocate funding to councils based on their own estimates of the places they will need so there is no shortfall between the number of places we are funding and those that councils indicate they need to create. We expect local authorities to plan effectively and make good investment decisions,

which is why we announce basic need funding allocations three and a half years in advance.

The establishment of free schools are helping to ensure there are enough school places for every child. The programme is responsive to the need for pupil places and 76% of mainstream free schools opened up to September 2016 have been opened in areas where there was a need for additional school places. This programme augments money given to local authorities for new school places, providing even more new places through this central programme.

■ Schools: Closures

Steve McCabe: [\[58097\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 8 December 2016 to Question 55973, on school closures, whether the guidance her Department gives to academies on school closure consultations includes advice on pausing such consultations.

Steve McCabe: [\[58098\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 8 December 2016 to Question 55973, on school closures, on how many occasions a school closure consultation has been paused and that school subsequently closed down completely since 2015.

Steve McCabe: [\[58099\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer of 8 December 2016 to Question 55973, on school closures, for what reasons she would deem it necessary to pause a school closure consultation.

Nick Gibb:

The Department's guidance on consultation sets out the minimum periods for which local authorities and academy trusts must consult, where school closure is proposed, but it does not mention pausing a consultation.

Consultation on a proposal to close a school is undertaken locally either by the local authority or the academy trust to allow those directly affected by the proposals to provide their comments.

It is up to the local authority or academy trust to decide whether a consultation needs to be paused. The Department does not record or hold this information centrally.

■ Secondary Education: Admissions

Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck: [\[57513\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what her Department's estimate is of the potential number of pupils in the 2017 secondary intake; and what projections they have made for future intakes in each of the next five years.

Nick Gibb:

The Department produces annual pupil projections for each year by age rather than by school national curriculum year. Information about the projected number of pupils by age in secondary schools is in the underlying data of the national pupil projections statistics[1].

From the most recent projections, figures for the estimated future number of pupils in secondary schools, in January of each year, who were age 11 at the start of the academic year (that is the age at which the vast majority of pupils are in year 7) are given below.

[1] Data from the 2016 national pupil projections is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-pupil-projections-july-2016> in the document called 'Underlying data: SFR25/2016'.

Universities: Sexual Harassment**Catherine West:****[58634]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether she has discussed the levels of sexual harassment occurring on university campuses with the (a) Home Secretary and (b) Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Vulnerability, Safeguarding and Countering Extremism.

Joseph Johnson:

This Government takes very seriously all forms of harassment wherever it takes place, including in higher education. The Secretary of State for Education has regular discussions with the Home Secretary on all matters where we have a joint interest.

Catherine West:**[58641]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will make an assessment of the merits of launching an inquiry into the levels of staff-to-student sexual harassment in universities.

Joseph Johnson:

This Government takes any form of violence and sexual harassment in universities seriously. In November 2015, Universities UK was asked by Government to convene a sexual violence and harassment taskforce. The Taskforce reported its findings in October 2016 in the report 'Changing the Culture', which can be found on their website at: <http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/2016/changing-the-culture.pdf>

The Taskforce made a series of recommendations to universities on preventing and responding to sexual harassment, sexual violence and hate crime in universities. Staff to student harassment and sexual abuse is covered as part of the institution-wide response recommendation, which applies to staff as well as students. Universities UK plan to establish more baseline evidence on this issue and report later this year.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS**Chemicals: EU Law****Barry Gardiner:****[58077]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of the UK leaving the EU on the application in the UK of standards under the REACH regulation on the sale of chemicals.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

As we start the process of leaving the EU, we will aim to deliver a stable and clear legislative framework for the continued effective management of chemicals, including maintaining standards that underpin trade and the protection of human health and the environment, and deliver on our international commitments.

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs: Yorkshire and the Humber**Jon Trickett:****[58503]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how much her Department and its arms-length departmental bodies have spent on (a) staffing, (b) other revenue costs and (c) capital expenditure in the current fiscal year in Yorkshire and the Humber.

George Eustice:

Information on the total amount of current and capital expenditure on services by organisation in Yorkshire and the Humber is publicly available on gov.uk as part of the Country and Regional Analysis statistical release. This information covers 2011-12 through to 2015-16 and can be found at the following web link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/country-and-regional-analysis-2016>

Information specifically on spend on staffing in Yorkshire and the Humber can only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Elephants: India**David Mackintosh:****[58134]**

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what discussions she has had with her EU counterparts on ensuring elephants are given the highest level of international protection.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The UK Government is committed to tackling the crisis facing the African elephant from poaching and illegal trafficking. We fully support the existing global ban on ivory trade. The UK has discussed the global level of protection afforded to the elephant with EU Member States on numerous occasions. In particular, the proposal submitted to the 17th meeting of the Conference of Parties (CoP17) to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) to include all populations of

African elephant in Appendix I was debated in EU CITES meetings in preparation for CoP17.

■ Flood Control

Rachael Maskell: [\[58126\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when the Government plans to publish a Flood Resilience Review addressing the risks of flooding from surface water.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

In the National Flood Resilience Review we prioritised looking at the greatest flood risks facing the country - river and coastal flooding. The government recognises that surface water flooding can also be a significant source of flooding and we will be considering this in more detail during 2017.

Rachael Maskell: [\[58346\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, with reference to paragraph 2.151 and table 1.10 of the Autumn Statement 2015, Cm 9162, how much in planned efficiency savings will fund the capital funding for flood protection in each year from 2016-17 to 2020-21.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

All of the efficiency savings will be reinvested in the Government's six year capital investment programme to better protect homes and businesses across England. The table below summarises the Environment Agency's forecast for these efficiency savings:

2016/17	£39.4 MILLION
2017/18	£48.4 million
2018/19	£46.0 million
2019/20	£43.9 million
2020/21	£41.8 million

■ Food: Prices

Rachael Maskell: [\[58127\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent assessment she has made of the effect of rising food prices on average household budgets.

George Eustice:

Year on year food prices have continued to fall, with a 2% fall over the last 12 months, according to the most recent official Consumer Prices Index (CPI) figures

released on 13 December. General inflation is 1.2 per cent, up from 0.9 per cent in October. Food prices rose by 0.4% in the month to November 2016. However, overall, food prices have fallen by 7% since their peak in February 2014.

Commodity prices, exchange rates and oil prices are known to be the most important drivers of retail food price inflation.

This Government is committed to tackling poverty and disadvantage and to delivering real social reform, and we believe that economic growth and employment offer the best route to give people a better future. Household spend on food by households with the lowest 20% income is included in the Living Cost of Food Survey (LCFS) and has remained constant at around 16.5% for a number of years. The Government helps the most vulnerable afford and have access to nutritious food through initiatives such as the Healthy Start scheme and Free School Meals, and through the welfare system.

■ Food: Trade Promotion

Barry Gardiner:

[\[58167\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans the Government has to support food and drink supply chains through the Great campaign.

George Eustice:

Defra is working with the Department for International Trade to deliver a shared International Action Plan, launched in October, to drive exports of British food and drink. This will be supported by a campaign under the 'Food is GREAT' pillar to encourage UK producers, throughout the supply chain, to export more and to build global recognition of UK excellence in food and drink.

■ Hunting

David Mackintosh:

[\[58128\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps she is taking to help prevent the hunting to extinction of endangered species.

David Mackintosh:

[\[58129\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps the Government is taking to prohibit the importation of trophies secured from the killing of (a) lions, (b) elephants and (c) other mammals in African countries.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Through the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) legal rules are in place to ensure that any international movement of trophies from the hunting of endangered species can only take place if the hunt is assessed as not having a detrimental impact on the survival of the species.

In light of growing concerns about the sustainability of the hunting of some species, we have worked with EU Member States to introduce stricter controls on the importation of hunting trophies of certain endangered species, including lions and

African elephants. As a result, the importation of hunting trophies of certain species from certain countries is currently prohibited.

We have also been pressing for tough, transparent, global standards for the hunting of protected species. I attended the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES where Parties agreed to remove the loophole that allowed such trophies to be transported as personal effects. As a result, export permits will be needed for almost all hunted animals of endangered species included in Appendix II of CITES, including lions and African elephants, as well as those in Appendix I. Building on this, we agreed clear criteria the exporting country should consider when assessing that the hunt was both legal and sustainable before issuing an export permit.

Finally, in the case of lions and African elephants, the UK has to then confirm that we agree with this assessment and issue a corresponding permit before any import can take place. As a result, we secured greater scrutiny of trade in trophies to ensure the sustainability of exports.

We will continue to monitor the impact of trophy hunting and will work to put in place greater protection, including prohibiting imports, if this is shown to be needed.

■ **Packaging: Waste**

Rachael Maskell: [58201]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, pursuant to the Answer of 12 September 2016 to Question 56277, what the evidential basis is for the target figures for 2018 and 2019; and if she will make a statement.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The evidential base for the estimated packaging target recycling and recovery rates for 2018 and 2019 forms part of the Impact Assessments for consultations on packaging recycling and recovery targets, which can be found at: consult.defra.gov.uk/waste/packagingtargets2018-20.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ **Islamic State: Religious Freedom**

Michelle Donelan: [908046]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent reports he has received on the persecution of Christian and other religious minorities by Daesh.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

We regularly receive reports of Daesh attacks on Christian and other religious minorities. We are working with partners to bring Daesh to justice. This includes working with the Government of Iraq to bring a proposal before the UN to gather and preserve evidence in Iraq as a first step.

■ Israel: Palestinians

Craig Tracey:

[\[908051\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of (a) trends in the level and (b) the causes of recent violence in Israel and the West Bank.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

I strongly condemn Sunday's terrorist attack in Jerusalem which killed four Israeli soldiers. I understand the deep frustration on all sides at the lack of progress on the Middle East peace process but there can be absolutely no justification for terrorism.

■ Libya: Islamic State

Peter Dowd:

[\[908047\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what progress has been made on tackling Daesh in Libya.

Mr Tobias Ellwood:

On 15th December 2016, I welcomed the news that Libyan forces aligned to the Government of National Accord (GNA) defeated Daesh forces in Sirte – Daesh's most important base outside Syria and Iraq. Although the situation remains fragile, we continue to work with the GNA to help them tackle the threat posed by extremist groups.

■ Marshall Scholarships

Mr Alan Mak:

[\[908054\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what his future plans are for the Marshall Scholarship scheme.

Alok Sharma:

The Government supports the Marshall Scholarship Programme as a key element in the special relationship between the US and the UK.

We have made additional funding available to enable 40 scholars to study at UK universities from September 2017.

■ Poland: Diplomatic Relations

David Morris:

[\[908050\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the strength of diplomatic relations between Poland and the UK.

Boris Johnson:

Poland and the UK are close allies. As the Prime Minister, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Maidenhead (Mrs May) said during November's UK-Poland intergovernmental consultations: "The relationship between Poland and the United

Kingdom is important both for the prosperity and the security of our countries. And as the UK leaves the EU, I am determined to strengthen this partnership”.

■ Press Freedom

Stewart Malcolm McDonald: [\[908048\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to promote press freedom abroad.

Alok Sharma:

A free and fair media is a fundamental building block for any functioning democracy, and for stability and prosperity worldwide. That understanding is integral to the UK's international engagement, backed up by practical assistance, including through the FCO's Magna Carta Fund, which is supporting relevant projects worth £1.3 million this year.

■ USA: Climate Change

Vicky Foxcroft: [\[908045\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions the Government has had with the incoming US administration on climate change.

Boris Johnson:

I arrived back from the US on January 10th 2017, where I held a series of meetings with key figures from the incoming Administration. It was clear from my discussions that the new Administration is looking forward to working closely with us to tackle the shared challenges we face. Our ambassador and Embassy in Washington are already engaging the transition team across a range of these issues. The Prime Minister, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Maidenhead (Mrs May) has also spoken to President-elect Trump twice since his election, and is looking forward to visiting soon after the inauguration. The Government works regularly with the US on a range of climate and energy issues and will continue to do so.

HEALTH

■ Community Health Services: Liverpool

Rosie Cooper: [\[58635\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the value is of the contract won by Bridgewater NHS Trust for community health services in Liverpool; and if he will make an assessment of the likelihood of redundancies within those services in the first two years of that contract.

Rosie Cooper: [\[58636\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when the change in financial value of the tendered contract for community services in Liverpool to £77 million was communicated

to the bidders for that contract; and whether the bid for that contract from Bridgewater NHS trust was changed following that change in value.

Rosie Cooper:

[\[58637\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much funding in addition to the core contract value for community services in Liverpool has been agreed between Bridgewater NHS Trust and Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group to support transaction costs related to the transition between contracts; and in which years of that contract such funding will be available.

Rosie Cooper:

[\[58638\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the time available for due diligence related to (a) finance, (b) IT, (c) estates, (d) clinical quality and (e) employees prior to the transition to the new contract for community services to Bridgewater NHS Trust in March 2017; and if he will make a statement.

Rosie Cooper:

[\[58639\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the proposed (a) governance and (b) financial risk-sharing arrangements are between Bridgewater NHS Trust, Liverpool City Council and the GP provider organisation relating to the new contract for community health services in Liverpool; and what contingency arrangements there are in the event of the failure of that contract.

Mr Philip Dunne:

We are informed by NHS Improvement of the following details in relation to the future provision of community services in Liverpool.

The value of the contract for community health services in Liverpool for 2017/18 is £81.6 million. This matches the value of the contract for these services in 2016/17.

NHS Improvement and Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust both recognise the need for thorough due diligence. Any analysis of potential redundancies will take place during this process.

The new contract will not be in place until 1 July 2017 to enable due diligence to be completed. This will enable NHS Improvement fully to assess the Full Business Case to be submitted by Bridgewater NHS Foundation Trust. NHS Improvement will also have sight of the Care Quality Commission's inspection report for the Trust and the Trust's subsequent action plan and response. It will also have sight of the outcome of the clinical review in relation to Liverpool Community Healthcare NHS Trust being led by Dr Bill Kirkup which will have reported well within the timeframe.

The funding envelope was communicated to bidders in advance of their submissions. Both bidders were given the opportunity to resubmit their bids by NHS Improvement in October 2016. At this juncture, Bridgewater NHS Foundation Trust revised its bid price.

The current status of Bridgewater NHS Foundation Trust is that of 'preferred provider' and as such NHS Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has not yet formally engaged the Trust in any contract discussions.

Details around governance and financial risk sharing are still being worked on. Bridgewater NHS Foundation Trust is currently working on the details of the proposed governance and financial risk sharing arrangements between the Trust, Liverpool City Council and the Liverpool GP Provider Organisation. These will be shared as part of the Full Business Case submission. The contract would be let by NHS Liverpool CCG on behalf of all three commissioners of these services; Liverpool City Council, NHS England and NHS Liverpool CCG itself. The contract would be under the standard National Health Service contracting arrangements. The contract would be let to Bridgewater NHS Foundation Trust.

■ Department of Health: Yorkshire and the Humber

Jon Trickett:

[58319]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the value of (a) staffing expenditure, (b) other revenue costs and (c) capital expenditure by his Department and its arms-length bodies in whole or in part in Yorkshire and the Humber in 2016-17.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The data requested for 2016-17 is not collected centrally.

Information for 2011-12 through to 2015-16 on the total amount of current and capital expenditure on services by organisations in Yorkshire and the Humber is publically available on gov.uk as part of the Country and Regional Analysis statistical release. This information can be found at the following web link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/country-and-regional-analysis-2016>

A breakdown of total spending for the Department of Health group, including staff expenditure can be found in the *Department of Health's Annual Report and Accounts*. The latest available being 2015-16, and reported in *Note 2.2 Department Group Expenditure Detail* on Page 136 following the web link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/539602/DH_Annual_Report_Web.pdf

■ NHS Walk-in Centres

Mr Ivan Lewis:

[58385]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what guidance his Department issues to clinical commissioning groups on the provision of NHS walk-in centres.

Mr Philip Dunne:

The Department does not offer such guidance. The configuration of local urgent care services is a matter for NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups and local healthcare providers.

■ NHS: Private Patients

Justin Madders:

[\[58618\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 5 December 2016 to Question 55033, what the number of private patients treated by the NHS was in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Providers report income from private patients as part of their annual accounts, however the number of private patients treated by individual National Health Service providers is not collected centrally.

■ Pathology

Ms Margaret Ritchie:

[\[58212\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the availability of pathology services.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Pathology services play a major role in the diagnosis and treatment of cancer, as well as many other conditions. The National Health Service in England spends an estimated £2.5 to £3.0 billion annually on these services, and employs over 2,600 consultant pathologists. The Department's national delivery partners are working to modernise the delivery of pathology services, and reviewing the workforce and training that will be required in the future.

■ Pathology: Northern Ireland

Ms Margaret Ritchie:

[\[58213\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what recent discussions he has had with Northern Ireland's Minister of Health on the resources available for pathology services.

Mr Philip Dunne:

Health is a devolved matter in the United Kingdom and so the question of the resources available for pathology services in Northern Ireland is a matter for Northern Ireland's Minister of Health.

HOME OFFICE

■ Asylum

Alison Thewliss:

[\[58422\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many claims for asylum were refused in (a) Scotland, (b) England, (c) Wales and (d) Northern Ireland in each month since January 2016.

Alison Thewliss:

[58423]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many claims for asylum were granted in (a) Scotland, (b) England, (c) Wales and (d) Northern Ireland in each month since January 2016.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

I am sorry but the data required to answer the question is not recorded in a way that can be reported on accurately. Such an answer can only be provided at disproportionate cost. The government produces regular data on asylum as part of its Migration Statistics and the latest release can be found at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/572376/asylum2-q3-2016-tables.ods

■ **Asylum: Deportation**

Ms Diane Abbott:

[58115]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many failed asylum seekers under the age of 18 were deported in December in each year since 2010.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The number of enforced returns by age is published in table rt_03 (returns data tables) in 'Immigration Statistics, July - September 2016', available from the Home Office website at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/572380/returns2-q3-2016-tables.ods

■ **Asylum: Housing**

Chris Stephens:

[58478]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what consultations took place with the National Asylum Seekers stakeholder forum and other interested parties on changing the sharing criteria in asylum accommodation contracts to allow siblings of the same sex to room-share to the age of 20; and if she will make a statement.

Chris Stephens:

[58479]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what consultations took place with the National Asylum Seekers stakeholder forum and other interested parties on extending the contracts on asylum accommodation.

Chris Stephens:

[58480]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what consultations took place with the National Asylum Seekers stakeholder forum and other interested parties on changing the sharing criteria in asylum accommodation contracts to allow siblings of opposite sex to room-share to the age of 16; and if she will make a statement.

Chris Stephens:

[\[58481\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what consultations took place with the National Asylum Seekers stakeholder forum and other interested parties on changes to the sharing criteria of asylum accommodation contracts to allow children up to the age of 16 to share with their parents; and if she will make a statement.

Chris Stephens:

[\[58482\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what consultations took place with the National Asylum Seekers stakeholder forum and other interested parties on changes to the sharing criteria in asylum accommodation contracts to allow willing mothers to use shared non-mother and baby unit accommodation; and if she will make a statement.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

In considering the proposal to extend the current contracts the Home Office listened carefully to a range of interested parties, including the evidence that has been given to the Home Affairs Committee and direct feedback from non-governmental organisations' through regular engagement activity with various stakeholder groups. In extending the contracts the Home Office took the opportunity to make improvements to the contracts that address the concerns that have been raised. We will continue to work closely with a range of stakeholders to continue to improve the operation of the contracts.

No changes have been made in relation to the requirements and restrictions on room sharing and the contract continues to require our contractors to comply with national legislation and local authority rules.

■ Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence

Mrs Helen Grant:

[\[58032\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on what date the Government plans to ratify the Istanbul Convention.

Sarah Newton:

The Coalition Government signed the Istanbul Convention to show its strong commitment to tackling violence against women and girls, and this Government remains committed to ratifying it.

In most respects, the measures already in place in the UK to protect women and girls from violence comply with or go further than the Convention requires.

Further amendments to domestic law, to take extra-territorial jurisdiction over a range of offences, are necessary before the Convention can be ratified. We will seek to legislate when the approach to implementing the extra-territorial jurisdiction requirements in England and Wales is agreed and Parliamentary time allows.

■ Domestic Violence

Sarah Champion: [\[58622\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her policy is on continuing direct grant funding from her Department to support independent domestic violence advisers and multi-agency risk assessment conference coordinators after March 2017.

Sarah Champion: [\[58623\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with local authorities, other commissioners and the voluntary and community sector on planned changes to funding arrangements for independent domestic violence advisers and multi-agency risk assessment conference coordinators from March 2017.

Sarah Newton:

In March 2016 we published our Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy for 2016-2020, which sets out an ambitious programme of reform, supported by increased funding of £80 million.

As set out in the Strategy, from April 2017 we will move from supporting individual Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVA) and multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) coordinator posts, to a model of supporting community-led services which encourage new approaches through the £15 million VAWG Service Transformation Fund which was announced on 7 December 2016.

This will help promote better collaboration and joint leadership, encourage new approaches incorporating early intervention, and establish and embed the best ways to help victims, survivors and their families. We have consulted widely with the voluntary and community sector and statutory stakeholders in the development of both the strategy and the Transformation Fund and we will continue to work with the women's sector to monitor the level of IDVA and MARAC provision.

■ Driving Tests: Personation

Karl McCartney: [\[58619\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what checks are made to ensure that people convicted of using an impersonator to take a written or practical driving test do not continue to drive using a fraudulently obtained driving licence.

Karl McCartney: [\[58620\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people have been investigated by police forces for impersonating a candidate and taking their written or practical driving test for them by police force area in each of the last five years.

Karl McCartney: [\[58621\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people have been investigated by police forces for using an impersonator to take a written or practical driving test for them by police force area in each of the last five years.

Brandon Lewis:

The Home Office does not hold the information requested centrally. This is an operational matter for the police and other partner agencies.

■ **Home Office: Staff****Mr Pat McFadden:**[\[58467\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many (a) EU and (b) non-EU nationals are employed by (i) her Department, (ii) the UK Border Force and (iii) her Department's other agencies.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Home Office undertakes checks to confirm that potential candidates meet the eligibility requirements to work in the UK. However, the Home Office does not record the nationality of employees on our IT systems and is unable to provide this information.

■ **Immigrants: Detainees****Gavin Newlands:**[\[58597\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the letter from the Minister for Immigration to the Home Affairs Select Committee of 18 November 2016, what review of detention needs is taking place; and what the timescale is for that review.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Following Renfrewshire Council's refusal of planning permission for a short term holding facility near Glasgow airport the Government is considering its position in relation to the right of appeal and any subsequent review of detention needs in Scotland.

■ **Immigration Officers: Training****Caroline Lucas:**[\[58122\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans her Department has to introduce a training programme for immigration caseworkers on medical evidence of torture.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

We consider all asylum claims in a sensitive manner on an individual, objective and impartial basis ensuring that all cases are managed effectively throughout the asylum process to avoid unnecessary delay.

All members of staff who make decisions in asylum receive training on international and domestic law and safeguarding issues supplemented by a mentoring programme with an experienced caseworker that can last up to 6 months. Within the training there are specific sections that detail torture and Medico Legal Reports and how they should be used and analysed in asylum claims.

Asylum Operations recently received funding from the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund to review and redevelop its training prospectus. As part of that work, Asylum Operations is liaising with a range of external stakeholders - including migrant charities and non-governmental organisations - to ensure a robust and effective safeguarding training product.

■ Immigration: EU Nationals

Tom Brake: [58741]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many current European citizens applying for permanent residency in the UK have had their applications rejected since 23 June 2016.

Tom Brake: [58742]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many European citizens applying for permanent residency in the UK have had their applications rejected between 6 May 2015 and 23 June 2016.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Statistics on decisions on applications for Documents Certifying Permanent Residence issued to EEA nationals are published quarterly in table ee_02_q of Immigration Statistics. These cover the period including 2015 and 2016 to September, and include data for grants, refusals and invalid applications (hence rejected). The most recent edition (European Economic Area data tables Immigration Statistics July to September 2016) is available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/572387/eea-q3-2016-tables.ods

■ Marriage of Convenience: Arrests

Tim Farron: [57896]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many arrests have been made in relation to sham marriages since 2010.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Our published data on arrests made on enforcement visits is available at the following link (Table EVAR 01 refers):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-enforcement-data-november-2016>

■ Members: Correspondence

Rob Marris: [58386]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the letter from the hon. Member for Wolverhampton South West of 3 November 2016 on representation of the Special Constabulary, reference ZA5692.

Brandon Lewis:

The Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service replied to right hon. Member in a letter dated 25 November 2016.

■ **Overseas Students****Caroline Lucas:**[\[58738\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer to the hon. Member for Ealing Central and Acton of 21 October 2016 to Question 48536, on overseas students, if her Department will undertake a cost-benefit analysis of the economic contribution that net student migration makes to the UK economy.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Government recognises that international students make an important contribution during their time here, and they help make our education system one of the best in the world. The UK remains the second most popular destination in the world for international higher education students. There is no limit on the number of genuine international students who can come to the study to UK.

■ **Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman****Naz Shah:**[\[58589\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what information her Department holds on the total amount of compensation payments it has made at the request of the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman in each of the last five years.

Sarah Newton:

I am sorry but this information is not available and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

■ **Refugees: Calais****Ms Diane Abbott:**[\[58113\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has suspended all processing and admission of migrants formerly at Calais.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

We have worked closely with the French authorities to support the clearance of the Calais camp and to transfer children eligible to come to the UK. Since 10 October, we have transferred over 750 children from France. The current phase has been concluded. More children will be transferred from across Europe under the Immigration Act in the coming months, including from France.

We will continue to meet our obligation under the Dublin Regulation to transfer unaccompanied refugee children to the UK where a family link has been established.

■ Refugees: Children**Sammy Wilson:**[\[58466\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent steps the Government has taken to speed up family reunification for unaccompanied refugee children in Europe.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The Government has, and continues to, work closely with partners across Europe to ensure the timely and effective operation of the Dublin Regulation. We have seconded experts to France and Greece, and we have a long-standing secondee in Italy to support the work on unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in Europe, including the Dublin Regulation. The Government has transferred more than 750 children to the UK in support of the French operation to clear the Calais camp under both the family reunification provisions of the Dublin Regulation and the terms of section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016. Prior to the Calais camp clearance, between 1 January and 1 October, there were over 140 unaccompanied asylum seeking children accepted for transfer from Europe to the UK under the Dublin Regulation.

■ Refugees: English Language**Caroline Ansell:**[\[58368\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when the additional £10 million funding for English language teaching announced in September 2016 for refugees from the Syrian Vulnerable Person's Resettlement Scheme and the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme will be made available to those groups.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The additional £10 million English language funding package for those who have been resettled under the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement and Vulnerable Children's Resettlement schemes is available to the local authorities who support adults (age 19+). This funding comes jointly from the Department for Education's Adult Education budget and from the Syrian Resettlement Programme budget and guidance on how to claim is being issued through the Strategic Migration Partnerships.

■ Refugees: Sponsorship**Tom Brake:**[\[58764\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many refugees have been supported through the Community Sponsorship scheme since that scheme was launched.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The number of people who have been resettled under the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement scheme is published in the quarterly Home Office immigration statistics. Since the scheme began in January 2014 a total of 4,414 people have been resettled in the UK to the end of September 2016. The figure includes those Syrians resettled

with a community sponsor during this period. The refugees that we are bringing to the United Kingdom are very vulnerable people. Our prime concern is their safety and protection as they arrive in this country. We want to protect their privacy and ensure their recovery and integration, as they rebuild their lives in safe and secure surroundings, among supportive communities in the UK. We will, therefore, not be providing a running commentary on numbers that have been resettled with a community sponsor.

■ Undocumented Migrants

Stuart C. McDonald:

[57308]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many undocumented migrants (a) have been removed from the UK, (b) are the subject of legal proceedings seeking their removal, (c) have been granted status in the UK and (d) have an outstanding application for leave to remain since being identified through the right to rent scheme.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The information requested is not routinely collated in the format sought in your question. At the time of the Home Office Science Evaluation of Phase 1 of the scheme, volumes of data were low enough to allow manual analysis of individual cases. Volumes of data are now at a level which makes conducting such an exercise cost prohibitive.

However our records show that between the start of the scheme and 30 September 2016, 31 individuals identified through the Right to Rent scheme have been removed from the UK.

Other cases may be being progressed to removal, or have been made subject to reporting restrictions, or have sought to regularise their stay, or have left the UK voluntarily. The Right to Rent scheme is designed to restrict access to the private rented sector for illegal migrants in order to encourage voluntary departure from the UK and discourage illegal migration. The Home Office will always investigate information it receives about illegal migrants and take appropriate enforcement action according to the information available and the circumstances of the case. It is not always possible to attribute a return or other enforcement activity to the application of a sanction earlier in the case or to the route through which a particular individual was brought to the attention of the Home Office.

As with right to work checks, the Right to Rent scheme is predicated on checks being carried out by third parties (in this case landlords and lettings agents). This means that the majority of illegal migrant prospective tenants will be denied access to the private rented sector as a result of these checks with no intervention by enforcement officers or reference to the Home Office. The sanctions set out in the Immigration Acts 2014 and 2016 in relation to the Right to Rent scheme are there to address circumstances where the scheme is not adhered to by landlords and agents.

■ Undocumented Migrants: Private Rented Housing

Stuart C. McDonald:

[57110]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many referral notices were issued to landlords or agents as part of the right to rent scheme between (a) 1 December 2014 to 31 January 2016 and (b) since 1 February 2016.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

The following table contains the figures from 1 December 2014 to 31 January 2016, and from 1 February 2016 to 30 November 2016. We are not able to report on part months.

The Right to Rent scheme was rolled out in parts of the West Midlands on 1 December 2014 and to the rest of England on 1 February 2016. Civil penalty referral notices are served where the Home Office finds evidence to suggest there has been a breach of the Right to Rent scheme. Not all Referral Notices result in civil penalties, as some recipients are able to demonstrate that they carried out the checks correctly, or that they are not the liable party. The scheme is not retrospective, so does not apply to tenancies which were in place before the scheme came into effect.

Table 1 - Number Referral notices issued to landlords or agents as part of the right to rent scheme between (a) 1 December 2014 to 31 January 2016 and (b) 1 February 2016 to 30 November 2016.

Period	Notices issued
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01/12/2014- 31/01/2016	39
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01/02/2016 - 30/11/2016	152
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-

30/11/2016

Notes

1. This data shows the number of referral notices issued to Landlords part of the right to rent scheme between the specified period as recorded on National Operations Database (NOD).
2. These statistics have been taken from a live operational database. As such, numbers may change as information on that system is updated.

■ Visas: Overseas Students

Paul Scully:

[58543]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many students have been granted short-term study visas to study English in the UK in the last year for which figures are available.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Published information on applications for short term study (previously referred to as 'student visitor') visas is published in table vi_01_q (Visa data tables volume 1) in 'Immigration Statistics, July-September 2016', available from the Home Office website at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-july-to-september-2016/list-of-tables>

■ Work Permits: Africa

Mr Peter Lilley:

[58592]

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many work permit applications have been approved for (a) doctors and (b) nurses and auxiliary nurses from (i) Nigeria, (ii) Ghana and (iii) other African countries in each year since 2007.

Mr Robert Goodwill:

Work Permit arrangements ended in 2008 and were replaced by the Points Based System. The work permit database has been archived and there are no reporting facilities any longer on this database therefore data for 2006 and 2007 is not available.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

■ CDC

Mr Mark Hendrick:

[57817]

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps the Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC) has (a) taken and (b) plans to take to deliver the UK National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2014 to 2017, published on 14 December 2016; and how progress will be measured on the CDC's delivery of that plan.

Rory Stewart:

The National Action Plan and accompanying Implementation Plan are intended to strengthen the UK's ability to reduce the impact of conflict on women and girls and to promote their inclusion in conflict resolution. CDC's investments help to address the root causes of conflict and promote stability via their impact on job creation and economic development, including for women.

CDC's Code of Responsible Investing requires it to pay specific attention to the impact on women of its investment wherever it works but CDC does not have a direct role in conflict resolution or supporting women in conflict, so the Plan is not directly applicable and CDC is not included in the Implementation Plan for the NAP.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

■ Exports: Eritrea

Rebecca Long Bailey: [\[58208\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, how many export licences to Eritrea the Government has issued to UK-based companies in each of the last three years.

Mark Garnier:

The Government has granted the following numbers of strategic export (dual use) licences in the last 3 years:

2014: 1

2015: 1

2016: 3

Licensing data of this nature is routinely published as official statistics on www.gov.uk.

■ Investment

Sammy Wilson: [\[58571\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, whether he plans to include the issue of corporate responsibility to respect human rights in international investment agreements after the UK leaves the EU.

Sammy Wilson: [\[58572\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps he is taking to ensure that human rights considerations are included in the negotiation of future international trade and investment agreements.

Greg Hands:

Until the UK leaves the EU, we will remain subject to EU trade & investment agreements and policy, of which human rights is a fundamental principle. The UK has a strong history of protecting human rights and promoting our values globally. We will in due course consider all options in the design of future bilateral trade and investment agreements.

■ Overseas Companies: Eritrea

Rebecca Long Bailey:

[\[58207\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what recent estimate his Department has made of the number of UK-based companies operating in Eritrea.

Mark Garnier:

We are currently aware of two UK companies operating in Eritrea. The Government of Eritrea places restrictions on the number and type of international businesses that are allowed to operate in the country.

■ Overseas Trade: Zambia

Andrew Rosindell:

[\[58363\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what steps the Government is taking to promote trade between the UK and Zambia.

Mark Garnier:

The Department for International Trade (DIT) has a dedicated trade promotion officer in Zambia. In addition, trade promotion activity across Southern Africa is coordinated regionally through the 'hub' in Johannesburg from where additional support is provided, including sector-specific expertise.

DIT provides support to UK companies considering investment in Zambia, ranging from oil and gas exploration to sustainable farming opportunities. In 2016, the Department, delivered a Mining Mission to Zambia, linking UK-based businesses with Zambian counterparts. Furthermore, a British Chamber of Commerce has been established which provides support for British companies seeking business opportunities in Zambia.

■ Trade Promotion: Finance

Barry Gardiner:

[\[58539\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Trade, what the annual budget is for the GREAT campaign.

Greg Hands:

The annual budget for the GREAT Britain campaign is £60million.

To date, the campaign has secured confirmed economic returns of £2.2bn for the UK, a return of 20:1 on investment. A further £2.1bn is currently being independently audited. The National Audit Office recently reviewed and commended the campaign.

NORTHERN IRELAND■ **Borders: Northern Ireland**

Caroline Lucas: [\[55763\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, pursuant to the Answer of 16 November 2016 to Question 52620, whether it is the UK's policy to claim jurisdiction of Carlingford Lough up to the high water mark on its County Lough coast after the UK leaves the EU.

James Brokenshire:

There has been a historical dispute between the UK and Irish Governments in relation to Carlingford Lough dating back to the 1920s. The UK Government's longstanding position is that the northern side of the Lough forms part of the UK. In practice the regulation of activities is the responsibility of the Loughs Agency, a North-South body established under the Belfast Agreement which is supported by the UK and Irish Governments.

TRANSPORT■ **Department for Transport: Equality**

Paula Sherriff: [\[58243\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, who the diversity champion is on his departmental board.

Mr John Hayes:

The Permanent Secretary, Philip Rutnam, is the Department for Transport's (DfT's) corporate Diversity Champion on the Departmental Board and is accountable for the delivery of the DfT Equality Objectives. He is supported by Directors General and Agency Chief Executives, who champion the specific Protected Characteristics of sex, race, age, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy & maternity, marriage & civil partnership, transgender, and religion & belief.

■ **Great Western Railway Line: Electrification**

Grant Shapps: [\[58269\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what the timetable is for the completion of the Great Western Railway's electrification scheme; and if he will make a statement.

Paul Maynard:

Network Rail is delivering the Great Western Electrification Programme to the dates set out in Sir Peter Hendy's report published on 25 November 2015. This includes completing electrification of the Great Western Mainline to Cardiff by December 2018.

For the sections of electrification due for completion in Control Period 6 (CP6) (2019-2024), including the four sections which were deferred in November 2016, delivery schedules will be agreed as part of Network Rail's CP6 planning process.

■ Railway Signals

Mrs Flick Drummond:

[\[58431\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment his Department has made of the (a) resilience of power supply arrangements to railway signalling centres and (b) provision of back-up power supplies in the event of National Grid failures.

Paul Maynard:

Network Rail, as the infrastructure provider, is best placed to assess power supply resilience.

Network Rail's signalling power supplies are treated by the National grid as a priority. As such the standard provision for signalling centres on most parts of the network including railway operating centres are classified as part of an essential services distribution board. These are backed up by a fixed diesel generator and an uninterruptible power supply.

WORK AND PENSIONS

■ Department for Work and Pensions: Equality

Paula Sherriff:

[\[58246\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, who the diversity champion is on his departmental board.

Caroline Nokes:

All Executive Members of the Departmental Board have a Diversity Champion role as follows:

- Champion of Champions: Sir Robert Devereux KCB (Permanent Secretary)
- Social Mobility: Andrew Rhodes (Director General, Operations)
- Age: Peter Schofield (Director General, Finance Group)
- Gender: Mayank Prakash (Director General, Digital Group)

Additionally, the following members of the Department's Executive Team have Diversity Champion roles as follows:

- Sexual Orientation and Transgender: Jeremy Moore (Director General, Strategy, Policy and Analysis Group)
- Disability, Health and Wellbeing: Debbie Alder (Director General, Human Resources)
- Race: Neil Couling (Director General, Universal Credit)

■ Department for Work and Pensions: iNHouse Communications

Melanie Onn: [58308]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether his Department is in communication with iNHouse Communications Ltd in relation to any ongoing commercial tender process.

Caroline Nokes:

There have been no communications with this company with regard to any tender process.

■ Food Poverty

Dan Jarvis: [58293]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment has been made of recent trends in the level of food poverty in the UK; and if he will make a statement.

Damian Hinds:

[Holding answer 9 January 2017]: The Government measures poverty using information from the Household Below Average Income Survey. The survey from 2014/15 shows that:

- Average incomes have grown in 2015 (2014/15) at their fastest rate since 2002 (2001/02).
- Since 2010 (2009/10) there are:
 - o 100,000 fewer children in relative poverty;
 - o 200,000 fewer children in absolute poverty.

The latest survey can be accessed from the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/households-below-average-income-199495-to-201415>

■ Housing Benefit: Supported Housing

Julie Elliott: [58369]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will review his Department's plans to cap housing benefit for those in supported housing in line with local housing allowance.

Caroline Nokes:

As announced by the Secretary of State on 21 November 2016, the proposals for the future funding of supported housing are currently subject to public consultation. The consultation document was published on 21 November 2016 and closes on 13 February 2017.

Julie Elliott:

[\[58753\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the effect of the housing benefit cap on the affordability of housing for claimants living in supported housing.

Caroline Nokes:

In his Written Ministerial Statement to the House of Commons on 15th September 2016 the Secretary of State confirmed that the Government was committed to protecting and boosting the supply of supported housing and ensuring it provides value for money and works for those who use it as well as those who pay for it.

■ **Jobcentres: Glasgow**

Stewart Malcolm McDonald:

[\[58153\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what estimate he has made of how many people in the disabled working-age population in the Glasgow South constituency are using services at (a) Castlemilk and (b) Langside jobcentres.

Damian Hinds:

This information requested is not available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

Stewart Malcolm McDonald:

[\[58154\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many of his Department's staff are expected to be relocated as a result of proposed jobcentre closures in Glasgow.

Damian Hinds:

After 20 years, the PFI contract covering the majority of the department's buildings expires on 31 March 2018. This gives the department a once in a generation opportunity to review what offices it needs.

The department has around 900 offices. It needs to make better use of the space it occupies and reduce the amount of empty space that it has, reducing overall estate costs.

The department is committed to retaining an accessible jobcentre network and continuing to serve customers in all areas of the country. Increasingly, our customers access many of our services on-line. We tailor our service so that face-to-face contact can be focused on those who need extra support from us.

This exercise is not about reducing headcount, it is about the buildings the department works in.

Approximately 260 DWP members of staff are expected to be relocated as a result of proposed jobcentre closures in Glasgow.

Alison Thewliss:

[\[58428\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, on which date a Minister of his Department last visited Bridgeton Jobcentre Plus in Glasgow.

Damian Hinds:

There is no record of any visits to Bridgeton Jobcentre Plus.

Stewart Malcolm McDonald:[\[58472\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what recent discussions he has had with third sector organisations on the proposed jobcentre closures in Glasgow.

Damian Hinds:

We are committed to continuing to serve people in all areas of the country to make sure that they can continue to access the services they need.

We started a consultation process for the proposed closure of some Glasgow jobcentres on 7 December 2016 and have posted information on the Gov.uk website.

The consultation will close on 31 January 2017.

We will explain what any changes will mean for people using our services nearer to any agreed moves.

Stewart Malcolm McDonald:[\[58473\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the proposed jobcentre closures in Glasgow on levels of deprivation in (a) Glasgow South constituency and (b) the city of Glasgow.

Damian Hinds:

Following the initial announcement we undertake a site level Equality Analysis, which covers both customers and colleagues, to enable us to pay due regard to people impacted by the change who have a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.

In addition, the number of staff supporting customers isn't decreasing. Our proposal means we will be able to deliver enhanced services by bringing together some neighbouring jobcentres in Glasgow where we can achieve access to more employers and partners.

Increasingly, our customers access many of our services on-line. This includes claiming benefits, looking for jobs and keeping us informed of their efforts to find work. We tailor our service so that face-to-face contact can be focused on those who need extra support from us.

We have also agreed that where the distance from the current location to the proposed alternative jobcentre is over three miles or 20 minutes away by public transport, we are undertaking a public consultation to inform our final decisions on closure and alternative service delivery options.

We started this consultation on 7 December 2016 which includes information on the gov.uk website. The consultation will close on 31 January 2017.

Finally, employment is not just a DWP agenda and we will continue to work with Skills Development Scotland, the Scottish Government, local authorities and other partner organisations to provide access to employment opportunities.

Stewart Malcolm McDonald:

[\[58475\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps he is taking to provide an equality impact assessment in relation to the proposed jobcentre closures in Glasgow.

Damian Hinds:

We will be undertaking an equality analysis as part of the detailed planning for service reconfiguration. This will include feedback from public consultation in those locations where this applies.

Stewart Malcolm McDonald:

[\[58476\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what plans he has to meet with representatives of the eight jobcentres in Glasgow earmarked for closure before his Department's public consultation ends on 31 January 2017.

Damian Hinds:

In relation to elected representatives, the Minister for employment wrote to the elected representatives from Glasgow on 7 December to inform them of the proposals and subsequently met with them on Thursday 15th December to discuss plans and hear views to ensure final proposals offer the best service possible for the people of Glasgow. On 20th December the Minister for Employment attended a Westminster Hall Debate on the proposals.

In terms of staff representation, this will be twofold, firstly via the affiliated Departmental Trade Unions and secondly, staff will have the opportunity to participate in 1-2-1 discussions with their managers. These conversations are already underway.

Representatives from local organisations can choose to respond to the proposals by participating in the consultation process, details of which are available on gov.uk and this will be open until 31 January 2016. Additionally, they may choose to respond when engaging in normal partnership activities.

■ Means-tested Benefits

Caroline Lucas:

[\[58277\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the (a) number and (b) value of recoverable hardship payments awarded is.

Caroline Lucas:

[\[58278\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the total value is of (a) amounts recovered from claimants as recoverable hardship payments and (b) recoverable hardship payments written off due to the recipient being in 26 weeks of continuous qualifying employment in the last 12 months for which figures are available.

Damian Hinds:

The information requested is not available and to provide it would incur disproportionate cost.

■ **National Insurance: Glasgow****Stewart Malcolm McDonald:** [\[58474\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many national insurance numbers have been issued by jobcentres in (a) Castlemilk and (b) Langside in the last 12 months.

Caroline Nokes:

No national insurance numbers have been issued by Jobcentres in Castlemilk and Langside in the past 12 months.

■ **Social Security Benefits: Children****Alison Thewliss:** [\[58591\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 15 December 2016 to Question 56948, if his Department will meet the PCS union in January 2017 to discuss social security benefits for children.

Damian Hinds:

The Department is willing to meet with the PCS if they request it.

■ **Social Security Benefits: Hounslow****Ruth Cadbury:** [\[58512\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what proportion of claimants affected by the lower benefit caps in Hounslow are in receipt of (a) jobseeker's allowance, (b) employment and support allowance, (c) income support, (d) another benefit and (e) housing benefit alone.

Caroline Nokes:

The information is provided in the table below.

Estimated breakdown of households affected by the lower cap levels by benefit receipt, 2016/17

BENEFIT RECEIVED	PROPORTION OF CAPPED HOUSEHOLDS
	HOUNSLOW, (LONDON BOROUGH OF)
Employment and Support Allowance	18%
Income Support	46%
Jobseeker's Allowance	20%
Other	16%
Housing Benefit Only	0%

Total 100%

These estimates focus on the benefit cap continuing to be applied under Housing Benefit. The benefit cap will increasingly be applied under Universal Credit as it gradually rolls out.

Universal Credit will replace Income Support, income-based Jobseeker's Allowance, income-based Employment and Support Allowance and Housing Benefit, along with Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit.

Notes:

Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Estimates assume no behavioural responses - any behavioural responses to the lower cap, such as claimants moving into employment, would cause the number of households affected to reduce and may change the proportional split.

The methodology used to estimate the households affected by the cap is consistent with that described in the latest impact assessment published here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/welfare-reform-and-work-act-impact-assessment-for-the-benefit-cap>

■ Supported Housing

Julie Elliott:

[58752]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps he is taking to ensure that funding is provided to older people and other vulnerable people so that those people can access adequate supported housing.

Ca

roline Nokes:

In his Written Ministerial Statement to the House of Commons on 15th September 2016 the Secretary of State confirmed that the new funding model will ensure that the supported housing sector will be funded at the same level it would have otherwise been in 2019/20, taking into account the effect of Government policy on social sector rents.

An online consultation on this new model seeking the views of the sector was launched on 21st November 2016 and will run until 13th February 2017 and can be accessed from the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/funding-for-supported-housing>

■ Universal Credit: Telephone Services

Ruth Cadbury:

[58511]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what instructions are given to staff working on the universal credit enquiry lines on protocols concerning the disclosure of personal data to third parties who have implicit consent from the claimant.

Damian Hinds:

In Universal Credit Live service, as the claimant does not have access to the claim information themselves via an online account, we have implied consent arrangements in place so that someone can act on a claimants behalf. In Universal Credit Full Service, the online account allows claimant's access to their information - a claimant can specify explicit consent at any time via the online account or on the phone, so an advocate can enquire on their behalf. Instructions to operational staff reflect these arrangements.

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

■ UK HPR1000 Reactor

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State , Minister for Energy and Industry (Jesse Norman):

[\[HCWS398\]](#)

I have today asked the UK's independent nuclear regulators, the Office for Nuclear Regulation, and the Environment Agency, to begin a Generic Design Assessment of the UK HPR1000 reactor.

This is the nuclear reactor design by China General Nuclear which General Nuclear Services (a subsidiary of Electricite de France SA and China General Nuclear) propose to use at a prospective new nuclear power station at Bradwell in Essex.

In September the Secretary of State confirmed that the Government had decided to proceed with the first new nuclear power station for a generation at Hinkley Point C. This will see the start of a new nuclear programme that will help provide the energy security we require as we move to a low carbon energy future.

The investment by General Nuclear Services (GNS) in committing the resources required for the UK HPR1000 reactor (Hualong Reactor) to go through the Generic Design Assessment underlines the fact that international companies continue to view investment in the UK's low-carbon energy future positively.

The Government welcomes such investment. The nuclear industry in the UK is subject to a stringent regulatory regime to ensure safety, security and mitigation of any potential environmental detriment. Generic Design Assessment is now an established feature of the regulatory regime and is a respected process for rigorous and transparent nuclear regulation. I am therefore pleased to be asking the regulators to begin to assess the UK HPR1000 reactor through GDA.

As with previous such assessments, the full cost of the GDA will be charged to the Requesting Party (in this case GNS) which submits the design for assessment. This process is independent of any final agreement to commission a reactor of the relevant type.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

■ Update Regarding Proposed Merger of 21st Century Fox and Sky

Secretary of State for Department for Culture, Media and Sport (Karen Bradley):

[\[HCWS399\]](#)

Sky PLC announced on Friday 9 December that it had received an approach from 21st Century Fox Inc to acquire the 61% share of Sky PLC which it does not already own and I

made a statement on 20 December about the proposed merger and the process that would need to be followed.

21st Century Fox have been in contact with my officials and have confirmed that they intend to notify the proposed merger to the European Commission for review under the EU Merger Regulation. Before formal notification, the parties intend to engage in pre-notification discussions with the Commission from January onwards. The timing of a formal notification to the Commission is therefore not fixed and will happen dependent on the parties' ongoing discussions with the Commission. It is in the nature of this process that we cannot know in advance the dates upon which certain steps will happen.

As I made clear to the House on 20 December, I will aim to make a decision on whether or not to intervene within 10 working days of formal notification being made to the European Commission. Given the clear intention of the parties to engage with the Commission informally, I have asked my officials to prepare and put in place the necessary procedures to ensure that when I need to make a decision I can do so as quickly as possible and with the relevant information in front of me. As such, my officials have commenced their work to analyse the relevance of the public interest considerations as set out in the Enterprise Act 2002 to the merger. In doing so, they will look at the available evidence and will consider representations which are relevant to those specified public interests. This is preparatory work, and I am clear that the point has not yet been reached where I will be taking a decision on whether or not to intervene.

Any decision I do take on whether or not to intervene will be a quasi-judicial one and it is important that I am able to act independently and that the process is scrupulously fair and impartial. As a result, I will not be commenting on the merits of the proposed merger. I do, however, I recognise that this is an issue of significant interest to the public and has raised a lot of interest in Parliament, as well as being a significant issue for the parties concerned. I will therefore be keeping Parliament informed of the process as it moves ahead and will make a further statement when the parties have formally notified the Commission, ahead of making any decision about whether to intervene.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

■ Eighth Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention

The Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Sir Alan Duncan):
[\[HCWS400\]](#)

The Eighth Review Conference to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention held in Geneva concluded on 25 November 2016.

At the Review Conference, States Parties agreed a Final Declaration reaffirming their continued commitment to the Convention's objectives and their determination to exclude completely the possibility of the use of biological weapons. States Parties reviewed the operation of the Convention and expressed views on its Articles. States Parties agreed that the prohibitions in Article I, defining the scope of the Convention, apply to all scientific

and technological developments in the life sciences and in other fields of science relevant to the Convention that have no peaceful purpose.

The Conference also agreed to:

- hold meetings of States Parties of up to five days every year before the next Review Conference in 2021. The first meeting in December 2017 will seek progress on issues of substance and process, aiming to agree a substantive programme of work up to 2021.
- renew for five years the mandate of the three-person Implementation Support Unit, which serves as a focal point and support for States Parties' work under the Convention.
- continue to seek improvements to the Convention's assistance and co-operation database and to ensure specific, timely and concrete offers to States Parties seeking assistance under the Convention.
- renew the sponsorship programme to support participation by States Parties otherwise unable to attend key meetings, funded by voluntary contributions.

The United Kingdom worked closely with other European Union Member States and likeminded partners in preparatory meetings and at the Review Conference to secure an outcome which strengthened implementation of the Convention. Despite our best efforts and the support of an overwhelming majority of States Parties, a more ambitious work plan proved impossible to secure.

The UK will continue to support work in this field, addressing substantive issues with likeminded States Parties and others; where necessary, we will do so outside the formal framework of Convention-sponsored meetings. The UK will engage constructively in future annual meetings of States Parties to support and strengthen the Convention which remains a foundation stone of the international non-proliferation system.