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**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

# **HOUSE OF LORDS**

## **WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS**

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

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<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
<b>Baroness Evans of Bowes Park</b>	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
<b>Earl Howe</b>	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence and Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
<b>Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
<b>Baroness Anelay of St Johns</b>	Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
<b>Lord Ashton of Hyde</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Whip
<b>Lord Bates</b>	Minister of State, Department for International Development
<b>Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government, Wales Office
<b>Lord Bridges of Headley</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Exiting the European Union
<b>Baroness Buscombe</b>	Whip
<b>Earl of Courtown</b>	Deputy Chief Whip
<b>Lord Dunlop</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scotland Office and Northern Ireland Office
<b>Lord Gardiner of Kimble</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
<b>Baroness Goldie</b>	Whip
<b>Lord Henley</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
<b>Lord Keen of Elie</b>	Advocate-General for Scotland and Ministry of Justice Spokesperson
<b>Baroness Mobarik</b>	Whip
<b>Lord Nash</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
<b>Baroness Neville-Rolfe</b>	Commercial Secretary to the Treasury
<b>Lord O'Shaughnessy</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health
<b>Lord Price</b>	Minister of State, Department for International Trade
<b>Lord Prior of Brampton</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
<b>Baroness Shields</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office
<b>Lord Taylor of Holbeach</b>	Chief Whip
<b>Baroness Vere of Norbiton</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Williams of Trafford</b>	Minister of State, Home Office
<b>Lord Young of Cookham</b>	Whip
<b>Viscount Younger of Leckie</b>	Whip

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# Written Statements

*Wednesday, 22 February 2017*

## **Finance Bill 2017**

[[HLWS488](#)]

**Baroness Neville-Rolfe:** My honourable friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Jane Ellison) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

Finance Bill 2017 will be published on Monday 20 March.

Explanatory notes on the Bill will be available in the Vote office and the Printed Paper Office and placed in the Libraries of both Houses on that day.

Copies of the explanatory notes will also be available on GOV.UK.

# Written Answers

Wednesday, 22 February 2017

## A1

*Asked by Lord Lea of Crondall*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by Viscount Younger of Leckie on 7 February (HL Deb, col 1592), and in the light of the report by the Office of Rail and Road on 2 February stating that Highways England is revising the plans about what capital projects it will define by 2020, whether the programme to dual-carriage the A1 north of Newcastle will start in 2020 and be completed on time and on budget by 2023. [HL5358]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** As set out in the Road Investment Strategy (RIS) of December 2014, construction of the A1 dualling schemes between Morpeth and Ellingham is expected to start works in 2019-2020. This is subject to completion of statutory planning processes and continuing to demonstrate value for money.

The A1 in Northumberland programme will also benefit from a package of smaller scale junction improvements, overtaking lanes and pedestrian improvements north of Ellingham. These are planned to start construction in 2018 and this is also subject to completion of statutory planning processes and continuing to demonstrate value for money.

## Animal Welfare: Circuses

*Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they remain committed to banning the use of wild animals in circuses and if so, when they intend to legislate accordingly. [HL5398]

**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** The Government remains committed to banning the use of wild animals in travelling circuses and we will introduce legislation when Parliamentary time is available.

## Art Works: Imports

*Asked by Lord Freyberg*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much revenue has been collected through VAT on imported works of art in each financial year since 2010-11. [HL5353]

**Baroness Neville-Rolfe:** The revenue collected through VAT on imported works of art over the past four calendar years is as follows:

2013 – £35,861,082

2014 – £51,816,418

2015 – £41,793,022

2016 – £49,974,454

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) does not hold data for earlier years. HMRC is required to retain import entries for 3 years after the year of entry. Information on import VAT paid is contained within these entries.

## Asylum: Children

*Asked by Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what support they are offering to unaccompanied children seeking asylum in the UK, who are presently in Calais, Dunkirk and elsewhere in France; and what plans they have to extend the cut-off date for children claiming asylum under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016. [HL5356]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The UK has contributed significantly to hosting, supporting and protecting the most vulnerable children affected by the migration crisis. In the year ending September 2016, the UK granted asylum or another form of leave to over 8,000 children. In 2016, we transferred over 900 unaccompanied minors to the UK from Europe, including more than 750 from France as part of the UK's support for the Calais camp clearance.

On February 8, the Government announced that we will transfer the specified number of 350 children to the UK under section 67 of the Immigration Act. This includes the more than 200 children already transferred under section 67 from France as part of the UK's support for the Calais camp clearance. This number has been agreed following consultation with local authorities on their capacity to accommodate and care for unaccompanied children. We will announce in due course the basis on which further children will be transferred from Europe to the UK under section 67 of the Immigration Act to the specified number.

The primary responsibility for unaccompanied children in Europe lies with the State in which they are present. It is not possible for a child in France to claim asylum in the UK, and there is no application process under section 67 of the Immigration Act or the Dublin Regulation.

The UK has also established a £10 million Refugee Children's Fund to support the needs of vulnerable refugee and migrant children arriving in Europe.

## Blue Badge Scheme

*Asked by Baroness Thomas of Winchester*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will pursue continued Blue Badge reciprocal arrangements with EU member states after the UK leaves the EU. [HL5376]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The UK supports the rights of disabled people to retain their independence by enabling them to park close to where they need to go and recognises the benefits the Blue Badge Scheme provides

for disabled people in the UK as well as when travelling to Europe.

The Government is considering carefully all the potential implications arising from the UK's exit from the EU including the implications for the continued recognition of Blue Badges.

### Chile: Fires

*Asked by Lord Naseby*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what response they have made to Chile's appeal for help in dealing with the aftermath of widespread forest fires. [\[HL5360\]](#)

**Lord Bates:** The UK is not providing a direct response to fires in Chile. However, the UK has supported the deployment of a disaster management expert through the UN.

### Disability

*Asked by Baroness Thomas of Winchester*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how the European Disability Strategy 2010–2020 and subsequent strategies will be incorporated into UK law after the UK leaves the EU. [\[HL5380\]](#)

**Lord Henley:** The UK has long been a leader in disability rights, and this Government fully intends to continue ensuring that this is the case. We continue to promote good practice and implement improvements for disabled people. Additionally, we continue to be signatories to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, a convention binding in international law.

### Families

*Asked by Lord Northbourne*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to address issues arising from family breakdowns, and the impact on male children of growing up in a household without a resident father. [\[HL5362\]](#)

**Lord Henley:** The Government recognises the damaging impact of conflict between parents on children's outcomes. New evidence was published last year highlighting this link, and making clear that the presence or absence of parental conflict has a much greater impact on a child's outcomes than the structure of the child's family. Our child maintenance system encourages separated parents to collaborate and make family based arrangements where they can, working together in the interests of their child once they separate. Evidence shows that after separation where parents are able to take a collaborative, low conflict approach it is better for children's outcomes, including over the involvement of the non-resident parent where this is appropriate, whether this is the child's mother or father.

### Fire Prevention: Furniture

*Asked by The Countess of Mar*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their response to the European Furniture Industry Confederation's supplementary letter to its submission to the consultation on changes to the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988. [\[HL5402\]](#)

**Lord Prior of Brampton:** The consultation on proposals to revise the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988 took place between September and November last year. There were over 120 responses, including from the European Furniture Industry Confederation.

Revision of the regulations is complex, with a broad spectrum of views expressed by respondents from industry, fire services, charities and regulators. The responses are currently being analysed and the views expressed and the evidence presented is being considered and evaluated. Once this is completed, the Government will issue its response. We anticipate that this will be in the spring.

### Free School Meals

*Asked by Lord Storey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what criteria will be used to determine eligibility for free school meals following the rollout of Universal Credit. [\[HL5335\]](#)

*Asked by Lord Storey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether there will be any changes to the criteria which determine eligibility for pupil premium funding following the rollout of Universal Credit. [\[HL5336\]](#)

*Asked by Lord Storey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether the number of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding will change following the completion of the rollout of Universal Credit. [\[HL5337\]](#)

**Lord Nash:** The Department for Education is working closely with the Department for Work and Pensions and other government departments to consider new criteria for determining entitlement to benefits-related free school meals as the rollout of Universal Credit progresses. We will communicate our proposals in due course.

Schools currently receive pupil premium funding for each child registered as claiming benefit-related free school meals at any point in the last 6 years. There are no plans to change this criterion.

### Industrial Democracy

*Asked by Lord Hunt of Chesterton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the Prime Minister's statement that she favours greater

industrial democracy in the UK, whether they intend to establish an all-party inquiry into this matter, along the same lines as the 1977 Bullock Report. [HL5393]

**Lord Prior of Brampton:** The Government is committed to strengthening the worker voice in the boardroom. The Government's green paper on Corporate Governance Reform explored a range of options for strengthening the worker voice. The Government will publish its response in due course after analysing the responses it has received.

### Israeli Settlements

*Asked by The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Prime Minister raised with the Prime Minister of Israel during his visit to the UK on 6 February (1) the government of Israel's recent announcement of plans for new settlement building in the West Bank, and (2) the law recently passed by the Knesset to allow the retroactive expropriation of private Palestinian land in the West Bank for settlements, in the light of UK policy that continuing Israeli settlement expansion in the West Bank erodes the viability of the two-state solution. [HL5373]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** When the Prime Minister, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Maidenhead (Mrs May), met the Prime Minister of Israel on 6 February they discussed the Middle East Peace Process and the UK's firm commitment to a two-state solution as the best way to bring stability and peace to the region. The Prime Minister reiterated the UK's concerns about settlement activity and our strong opposition to the land regularisation bill which paves the way for significant growth in settlements deep in the West Bank, threatening the viability of the two state solution.

### Local Broadcasting: Television

*Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what the viewing figures have been for local television stations, established under the Local Digital Television Programme Services scheme, since 2012. [HL5400]

**Lord Ashton of Hyde:** There are currently 21 local TV stations on air. Data collected by the Broadcasters' Audience Research Board (BARB) in April 2016, showed that an average of 821,000 UK households watched at least one local TV channel on digital terrestrial television in an average week, for at least three consecutive minutes. Across the same period, an average of 1.5 million households per week watched a local TV service for a minimum of three consecutive minutes through any platform across the UK.

*Asked by Baroness Jones of Whitchurch*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what subsidies have been provided to local television stations,

established under the Local Digital Television Programme Services scheme, by (1) the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and (2) the BBC, since 2012. [HL5401]

**Lord Ashton of Hyde:** The BBC has provided funding to support the development of the local television transmission network operated by Comux, the holder of the local television multiplex licence. Out of a total budget of £25m, the BBC has to date provided grants totalling £21,191,935 to Comux.

Individual Local TV services also benefit from financial support from a BBC content acquisition scheme operating until March 2020. The scheme was established following an agreement reached between the BBC and the Government in 2011 and which was updated in the new BBC Agreement published in December 2016. Under this scheme, the BBC agreed to set aside £15m for the acquisition of news and other content meeting requirements set by the BBC from local TV stations for the first three years of their operation. To date the BBC has so far provides funding of £7,701,790 to local TV services under the scheme.

DCMS has not provided any funding to local television.

### Local Sustainable Transport Fund

*Asked by Lord Bradshaw*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to develop the local Sustainable Transport Fund, and what is the current budget of that fund. [HL5340]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The Local Sustainable Transport Fund ran from 2011/12 to 2015/16. In the Autumn Statement of 2015 the Chancellor announced over £300m would be available for cycling over the life of this Parliament. The funding will continue to support local authority projects and boost walking and cycling during the current parliament.

Of this £300m, £80m was allocated to continue to build on the legacy of the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. This money has been spread over two competitions as follows: £20m Sustainable Travel Transition Year and £60m Access Fund.

### M1: Speed Limits

*Asked by Lord Chadlington*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the proposal by Highways England to limit a section of the M1 to a speed of 60mph between 7am and 7pm, what evidence they have that the reduced speed limit would reduce air pollution. [HL5346]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Highways England will announce any measures to improve air quality on the M1 between Junctions 32-35a when the smart motorway scheme opens, which is expected to be in March 2017.



*Asked by Lord Chadlington*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the proposal by Highways England to limit a section of the M1 to a speed of 60mph between 7am and 7pm and in the light of the study by NICE Air pollution: outdoor air quality and health, published in December 2016, what evidence they have that the reduced speed limit would contribute to smoother driving. [HL5347]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Evidence from smart motorways implemented across England demonstrates that the controlled environment of signs, signals and enforcement leads to improved lane discipline, less congestion, less incidents and smoother speeds, all of which contribute to smoother driving.

### **Motorways: Exhaust Emissions**

*Asked by Lord Chadlington*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the aim of the Smart motorways programme to increase road capacity, how they intend to manage the additional emissions resulting from increased numbers of vehicles using the roads. [HL5348]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Smart Motorways are at the core of Highways England's £15bn investment programme to transform England's Strategic Road Network, helping to ease congestion and improve traffic flow. Keeping traffic moving reduces stop-start decelerations and accelerations, which in itself has emissions benefits.

Highways England undertake an environmental assessment of each Smart Motorway scheme and if any measures are found to be necessary to manage emissions, these would be developed as part of scheme preparation work.

### **Pre-school Education**

*Asked by The Earl of Listowel*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the importance of high quality early years education and care to (1) the ability of parents to contribute to national productivity, and (2) the potential for later economic productivity of those children benefiting from such provision. [HL5359]

**Lord Nash:** Evidence from the Effective Pre-school, Primary and Secondary Education (EPPSE) study shows that good quality early education has a lasting impact on children's attainment and later outcomes. Children attending high quality pre-school had improved academic attainment at age 16, and were more likely to go onto A-levels and attend university. Attending some pre-school compared with not attending pre-school was predicted to result in an increase in lifetime earnings. We continue to build our evidence in this area through the £6 million longitudinal Study of Early Education and Development (SEED).

Wider research shows the impact of early years education and care on parents' employment and, therefore, their ability to contribute to national productivity. For example, research from the Institute of Fiscal Studies in 2014 found that the expansion of funded provision led to a rise in maternal employment rate for those whose youngest child was three years old (see: Brewer, M et al. (2014) 'The impact of free, universal pre-school education on maternal labour supply').

### **Public Expenditure: Northern Ireland**

*Asked by Lord Empey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they plan to take to ensure the stability of Northern Ireland's finances in the event that the Northern Ireland Executive is unable to set a budget for 2017–18. [HL5388]

**Lord Dunlop:** As a Government we are committed to continuing to work with the parties to pave the way for the return of a strong, stable power-sharing Executive after the election. Agreeing a budget for 2017/18 and further years will be a matter of priority for any new Executive formed.

### **Public Sector: Internet**

*Asked by Baroness Thomas of Winchester*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the requirement of EU Directive 2016/2102 on the accessibility of the websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies will be incorporated into UK law after the UK leaves the EU. [HL5379]

**Lord Young of Cookham:** Following the Directive's adoption, there will now follow a process by which the specific standard for accessibility will be decided and the UK will be strongly represented in the negotiations. We expect these negotiations to conclude before the UK exits the EU, meaning that the agreed standard(s) will come under the remit of the forthcoming Great Repeal Bill, which will see that all existing EU law at the time will be given full application in UK law.

### **Railways: Disability**

*Asked by Baroness Thomas of Winchester*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the requirements of EU Directive 2008/164 /EC relating to rail accessibility at stations and on trains will be incorporated into UK law after the UK leaves the EU. [HL5381]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The Prime Minister has made it clear that we will convert existing EU regulations into UK law when we leave. Once the Great Repeal Bill is given Royal Assent, Parliament will be free – subject to international agreements and treaties with other countries and the EU on matters such as trade – to amend, repeal and improve any law it chooses. The Government is

carefully considering all of the implications arising from the UK's exit from the European Union. However until exit negotiations are concluded, the UK remains a full member of the EU and all the rights and obligations of EU membership remain in force.

The Government is committed to increasing the accessibility of rail transport and ensuring that disabled people have the same access to transport and opportunities to travel as everyone else. We will shortly be publishing an Accessibility Action Plan which will bring together a range of actions from across different transport modes to address the barriers faced by disabled people accessing public transport.

### Road Traffic Offences: Mobile Phones

*Asked by Lord Bradshaw*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to use traffic officers employed by Highways England to help deter drivers from using mobile phones while driving on motorways. [HL5341]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** There are no plans to extend Highways England Traffic Officer powers. Highways England will continue to work closely with the National Police Chief's Council and motorway policing groups to support their enforcement activities.

### Roads: Accidents

*Asked by Lord Bradshaw*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to deal with the rise in road casualties among children. [HL5342]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** It is important to be clear about the statistics on road casualties. Child road casualties are currently at an historic low. The total number of children who were killed or seriously injured (KSI casualties) in 2015, the last complete calendar year statistics are available for, is 13 per cent lower than the 2010-14 average and represents a 6 per cent fall from the previous year.

Whilst recently published provisional figures for the year ending September 2016 suggest a rise in child KSI casualties in comparison with the year ending September 2015, it is important to note that these provisional figures are estimates based on incomplete returns from police forces and are subject to considerable uncertainty. The provisional 2016 statistics will be revised and not finalised until June 2017.

The government remains firmly committed to providing cycle training to school children in order to give the next generation of cyclists the skills and confidence to cycle safely on local roads. In recognition of the importance of this, we will provide £50 million up to 2019/20 to support Bikeability cycle training in schools. This funding will help to increase children's road awareness, encourage active travel and improve future motorists' empathy for more vulnerable road users. Recent research shows

significant improvements in children's ability to perceive road hazards after Bikeability training.

We also support child road safety through our THINK! educational resources. We are updating our current programme to include a framework for age appropriate Road Safety Education skills and appropriate material for education practitioners.

### Schools: Homophobia

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many incidents of homophobic and transphobic bullying were recorded last year in schools broken down by region. [HL5407]

**Lord Nash:** The Government does not hold information on the number of cases of homophobic bullying recorded in schools. The recording of instances of bullying is managed locally by schools.

We are examining the overall prevalence of a range of bullying types, including homophobic, biphobic, and transphobic bullying, through surveys such as the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) Teacher Voice and the Pupil and Parent/Carer omnibus surveys, which will report later this year.

We are committed to promoting LGBT equality, including amongst young people. We are currently investing £3million in a three-year programme to prevent and address homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in schools.

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they plan to take to keep gay, lesbian, transgender and bisexual pupils safe in schools, in the light of claims that a transgender pupil aged 11 was shot with a BB gun at a school in Greater Manchester. [HL5408]

**Lord Nash:** The UK has one of the world's strongest legislative frameworks to prevent and tackle discrimination.

The Equality Act 2010 protects transgender people from discrimination. The Government has published guidance for schools on how to comply with the Act. The guidance contains advice on supporting transgender children and protecting them from discrimination.

The Government has sent a clear message to schools that bullying, for whatever reason, is unacceptable and should not be tolerated. All schools are required by law to have a behaviour policy with measures to prevent bullying amongst pupils. Schools are free to develop their own anti-bullying strategies and they are held clearly to account for their effectiveness through Ofsted.

Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying is unacceptable and the government is committed to tackling it. In September, the Government announced a £3million programme from 2016-2019 to prevent and address homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in a



sustainable way. The programme focuses on primary and secondary schools in England.

All schools in England have a legal duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at their school. As part of this duty all schools must have regard to the statutory guidance *Keeping Children Safe in Education*. The guidance sets out that all school staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn and that all schools should have an effective child protection policy.

### Social Services

*Asked by Lord Warner*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the Care Quality Commission carried out its last risk assessment of the adult social care market; what were its findings, and how many (1) residential care homes, and (2) nursing homes, were involved in that assessment. [HL5367]

**Lord O'Shaughnessy:** The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health and adult social care in England.

The CQC reviews the state of care in all sectors it regulates and publishes its State of Care report annually. The CQC published this report in October 2016 and this report provides the most comprehensive view yet of what the CQC's expert-led inspections have found. The report includes analysis of information up to 31 July 2016; at that point the CQC had inspected and rated more than 16,000 adult social care services, including, 9,100 residential homes and 3,649 nursing homes. A copy of the CQC's *The state of health care and adult social care in England Care Report 2015/16* is attached.

Despite challenging conditions, adult social care services have so far been able to maintain quality. The CQC observed that 71% received a 'Good' rating overall and 1% were rated as 'Outstanding'. 26% of services were rated as 'Requires Improvement' and 2% of services were rated 'Inadequate'. This figure was much lower than last year's figure of 7% of services rated 'Inadequate'. Three-quarters of those that we had rated as 'Inadequate', and then re-inspected, improved, but a quarter of services originally rated 'Inadequate' did not improve enough to change their overall rating on re-inspection.

Since the publication of the 2016 State of Care report, the CQC has completed its comprehensive programme of inspecting all adult social care services locations in England that were registered before 1 October 2014. The CQC plans to publish more detailed analysis of these findings in Summer 2017.

The CQC also monitors through its Market Oversight scheme the financial sustainability of those care organisations that local authorities would find difficult to replace should they fail and become unable to carry on delivering a service. Where the CQC identify significant risks to the sustainability of a provider's business, they can respond by taking steps, including requiring a risk

mitigation plan or an independent review of the business. Over the last five to six years, residential capacity has remained broadly stable in terms of beds.

The Care Act 2014 placed duties on local authorities making them responsible for ensuring there is an effective pool of quality providers of social care in their area with capacity to meet the needs of their local population. The Department is working with CQC to monitor care home capacity. Although there are inevitable entries and exits from the care market, we have not seen a significant decline in the numbers of care home beds. We have also empowered the CQC to monitor the finances of large and difficult to replace care providers. The Care Act 2014 gave local authorities duties to step in and make sure people continue to receive care were their care provider to fail financially and services stop.

It is up to local authorities how they spend the extra money coming into the system but we would expect the additional resources to help them commission services that are sustainable, diverse and offer sufficient high quality care and support for people in their areas.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

State of Care Report 2015-16 [2016 State of Care Report.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-02-08/HL5367>

### Taxis: Wheelchairs

*Asked by Baroness Thomas of Winchester*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking to increase the provision of wheelchair accessible taxis and private hire vehicles in non-metropolitan and rural areas. [HL5409]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Local licensing authorities are best placed to understand the needs of local residents, and they already have powers to determine the composition of their taxi and private hire vehicle fleets. We encourage them to ensure that the vehicles available reflect the needs of all passengers, including those who use wheelchairs.

Our upcoming consultation on revised best practice guidance for licensing authorities will include proposals for strengthened recommendations on supporting an inclusive taxi and private hire vehicle service.

### Trade Agreements

*Asked by Lord Porter of Spalding*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of local government's experience in developing international trade and inward investment relationships; and whether they intend to involve local government leaders in trade negotiations following the UK's exit from the EU. [I] [HL5329]

**Lord Price:** There are 38 Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) covering England. Each LEP is a partnership of

local authorities and business. This Department works with LEPs on promoting the benefits of international trade to local businesses and in attracting potential inward investment.

We are seeking the views and input of a wide range of UK stakeholders, including local government representatives, to inform our approach to trade as we prepare to leave the EU.

### **Training**

*Asked by **Lord Porter of Spalding***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the benefits of devolving skills provision and funding to local areas in order to ensure that the industrial strategy is a success for all parts of the country. [I] [[HL5330](#)]

**Lord Nash:** Mayoral Combined Authorities will be able to use their devolved Adult Education Budget to align their skills support with opportunities in the local labour market, and offer more bespoke solutions to individuals with multiple needs. We are committed to ensuring we have a strong skills system that can drive increases in productivity, improvements in social mobility

and help make a success of Brexit. This will be essential to the success of our Industrial Strategy.

### **Ukraine: Russia**

*Asked by **The Marquess of Lothian***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the governments of Ukraine and Russia to seek a ceasefire in eastern Ukraine and an end to the violence there. [[HL5375](#)]

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** The second Minsk Agreement, signed in February 2015, provides for a comprehensive ceasefire in eastern Ukraine, alongside a range of other steps (such as the withdrawal of foreign troops, humanitarian access and an amnesty and prisoner exchange). The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe's Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) monitors the implementation of the agreement and reports on ceasefire violations. The UK is the second largest contributor of monitors to the SMM, and we are strongly supportive of Franco/German-led diplomatic efforts under the Normandy process to secure full implementation of the Minsk Agreement, including a comprehensive ceasefire. We regularly raise this in international fora and with the governments of both Russia and Ukraine.

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