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WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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

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

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

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Written Statements

Wednesday, 25 January 2017

Conduct Guidance: Northern Ireland Election

[[HLWS438](#)]

Lord Young of Cookham: As is normal ahead of an election, guidance has today been issued for civil servants in UK Government departments and those working in arms length bodies, on the principles that they should

observe in relation to the conduct of Government business in the run up to the forthcoming elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly on 2 March 2017.

The guidance sets out the need to maintain the political impartiality of the Civil Service and the need to ensure that public resources are not used for party political purposes during this period.

The period of sensitivity begins with immediate effect.

Copies of the guidance have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses and on the Cabinet Office website at Gov.uk.

Written Answers

Wednesday, 25 January 2017

Care Homes: Closures

Asked by Lord Ouseley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of private care homes likely to close during 2017 due to local authorities not being able to pay fees; and what alternative provision will be made to accommodate displaced elderly and infirm residents in order to avoid increased demands for hospital bed spaces. [HL4593]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: The Department continues to work with the Care Quality Commission to monitor care home capacity and although there is inevitable churn, we have not seen a significant decline in care home beds.

The Government understands concerns about the pressures in the market. Although local government finances remain tight, Government has provided local authorities access to up to £7.6 billion of new support for social care by 2019/20, so they can increase social care spending in real terms by the end of the Parliament.

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 supporting local authorities to influence their local market through improved market facilitation and commissioning to ensure that local markets are effective.

The Department has worked with Association of Directors of Adult Social Services, Local Government Association, the care sector and other partners to produce a wide range of guidance and support about market shaping and commissioning. We have brought this together in an online hub called Adult Social Care Market Shaping which is an online only resource widely available to people and organisations including local authorities, service users, and care providers.

The Department continues to monitor capacity and effectiveness of the market.

Care Homes: Finance

Asked by Lord Myners

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Prior of Brampton on 15 December 2016 (HL3810), how many care home providers are currently subject to the Care Quality Commission's (CQC) Market Oversight Scheme where the CQC is exercising enhanced oversight of the financial sustainability of the care provider. [HL4572]

Asked by Lord Myners

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Care Quality Commission (CQC) has taken any action to review whether the owners of any adult social care provider have intentionally weakened the ability of the care provider to fulfil its duties to patients and other stakeholders by not taking sufficient steps to ensure that the care provider is adequately capitalised; and whether the CQC has taken or prepared action to sanction or initiate legal action in connection with the same. [HL4573]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: There are currently 49 providers in the Market Oversight scheme, of which 38 are care home providers.

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) have no right of veto in ensuring that a care group is adequately capitalised as this falls outside of the CQC's regulatory remit. However, financial viability is considered in relation to all providers when they apply for registration with the CQC. The CQC will refuse registration if providers cannot demonstrate that they have the financial resources needed to provide and continue to provide the services as described in their statement of purpose and to the required standards. This assessment is made in relation to the applicant who will be a Registered Provider, but will not necessarily be the owner, as set out in the question. The CQC's powers of enforcement are limited to Registered Providers. In all circumstances where poor care is identified during an inspection, the CQC will act to protect service users, whatever the cause, and this could include financial stress.

European Parliamentary Elections Act 2002

Asked by Lord Stoddart of Swindon

To ask Her Majesty's Government at what stage of the process of leaving the EU the European Parliamentary Elections Act 2002 will be repealed. [HL4585]

Lord Bridges of Headley: The Government has been clear that while we remain an EU Member State, we will abide by our obligations and exercise our rights. We will continue to play our full role in the EU up until the very moment we leave. Once we are outside of the EU we will no longer elect members of the European Parliament.

Families: Disadvantaged

Asked by Lord Beecham

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth on 23 December 2016 (HL4166), what were the data quality issues in respect of the evaluation of the Troubled Families Programme and how long it took to resolve them. [HL4381]

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: In September 2015, quality assurance by analysts in the Department of Communities and Local Government of the dataset for the National Institute of Economic and Social Research's (NIESR) 'Impact Study' (one strand of the evaluation of the Troubled Families Programme 2012-2015) revealed significant errors, particularly in NIESR's handling of the data submitted for the study by some local authorities.

It took around 11 months, working with NIESR, for these errors to be resolved satisfactorily and the final version of their report to be signed off. This process included making sure all relevant and correct data was included in the study, re-running all of the analysis and carrying out further quality assurance. The quality assurance process was strengthened by the commissioning of an independent peer review undertaken by the University of Cambridge to consider the study's approach to data handling, its analysis and conclusions. That peer review recommended that the report authors include clear statements in the report about how they had handled the data, the assumptions made in their analysis and the limitations of the study's findings.

Forests

Asked by Lord Kirkwood of Kirkhope

To ask Her Majesty's Government what targets they have set for future woodland planting in England expressed in hectares per annum including private land, and land owned or let by charities and conservation bodies. [HL4616]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: There have been no targets set, in terms of hectares per annum, for woodland planting. We remain committed to planting 11 million trees before the end of this Parliament. We also aspire to have 12% woodland cover by 2060 and we are committed to working with the public, private and third sectors to develop new ways of supporting landowners to plant more trees.

Asked by Lord Kirkwood of Kirkhope

To ask Her Majesty's Government what mechanisms are in place to co-ordinate new woodland planting throughout the UK. [HL4620]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: Forestry is a devolved matter and this response relates to forestry in England only.

New woodland planting in England is supported by the Rural Development Programme Countryside Stewardship woodland creation grant scheme. We also launched the second round of the Woodland Creation Planning Grant last September to encourage further uptake of Countryside Stewardship Grants. To support tree planting further throughout England, the Forestry Commission opened the Woodland Carbon Fund, which will aim to boost woodland creation rates and help to meet the Government's future carbon targets. This fund was launched last November.

High Speed 2 Railway Line

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Hyperloop project; and whether they intend to review the HS2 project in the light of this and other expected future technological developments. [HL4598]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Department for Transport is in discussion with the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, Innovate UK and the Department for Transport's Science Advisory Council to assess the potential for the development of hyperloop technologies in the UK. The Science Advisory Council intends to publish a paper on hyperloop shortly setting out its position on the technical credibility of the concept.

Plans for HS2 are based on proven technologies which enable through services to the existing network. Utilising untested systems risks delays to the delivery of the much needed additional capacity to our network and increases the potential risks to cost and programme.

Ministers: Nationality

Asked by Lord Clark of Windermere

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether any ministers are citizens of a country other than the UK; and if so, who. [HL4604]

Lord Young of Cookham: The information requested is not held centrally.

Ministry of Defence: Reviews

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Earl Howe (HL4337) on 9 January, what definition of reviews was used to provide the answer. [HL4777]

Earl Howe: As the noble Lord's question asked for the number of all reviews announced to Parliament by the Ministry of Defence, all Written Ministerial Statements since 2011 were examined and all those in which a Defence Minister announced a review of any kind were included.

Mortgages: Regulation

Asked by Lord Mawson

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the regulation of the mortgage market and the effects of that regulation on the ability of people to obtain mortgages in a timely and efficient manner. [HL4670]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: The government is committed to increasing competition in banking and creating an environment in which firms compete to offer a range of products that suit the varying needs of their customers.

The Government has not undertaken a formal assessment of the regulation of the mortgage market and the effects of that regulation on the ability of people to obtain mortgages in a timely and efficient manner.

Although the Treasury sets the legal framework for the regulation of financial services, specific rules are a matter for the FCA whose day-to-day operations are independent from government control and influence.

In May 2016 the FCA published a review which assessed the impact of recent changes to the regulation of mortgage lending. Where lending is affordable, the FCA did not see evidence that the responsible lending rules have prevented creditworthy consumers obtaining loans.

In May 2016 the FCA launched a targeted Market Study into consumers' ability to make effective choices in the mortgage market. The FCA plan to publish an interim report in summer 2017 and a final report in early 2018.

Railways: Greater London

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 16 January (HL4450), what were the uncertainties in Transport for London's business case concerning the operational risks in splitting a franchise and the claimed benefits; how those differed from the risks in the Department for Transport's own business case for a single franchise; how the risks associated with a split franchise differed from the risks on other lines where there is more than one franchise operator; and what comparative assessment they have made of the benefits to passengers using services provided by London Overground. [HL4713]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Department for Transport carefully considers business cases from scheme promoters on a regular basis. In terms of Transport for London's business case, there were a number of uncertainties concerning the operational risks in splitting a franchise. These uncertainties included:

- The impact of devolution on overall operational performance across the whole of the South Eastern network;
- The increased pressure on stabling capacity further to devolution and the lack of detail on the necessary resultant investment; and
- Inefficiencies such as those arising as a result of splitting staff and management systems across two organisations following devolution.

Many of the benefits claimed by Transport for London (TfL) in their business case were not resourced, and could be implemented through the upcoming franchise without incurring the significant costs of splitting services or the risks outlined above.

The Department's business case for the South Eastern franchise takes into account a wide range of risks and opportunities for the franchise and the Department does

not comment on these at this stage in the franchise competition process.

Each franchise is different and has unique operational circumstances and it would not, therefore, be appropriate to compare the risks associated with splitting the South Eastern franchise against risks on other lines where there is more than one franchise operator.

The Department has fully considered the Business Case TfL presented which included detail on the benefits provided to passengers on London Overground.

Refugees: Malaysia

Asked by Baroness Hamwee

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many outstanding applications there are for leave to remain by stateless persons of Malaysian origin. [HL4794]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office Stateless policy is designed to assist those who do not qualify for protection but are unable to return to the country of their former habitual residence because they are stateless and would not be admitted to any other country. The requirements are set out in the Immigration Rules and reflect our obligations under the 1954 UN Convention relating to the status of stateless persons.

The Immigration Minister released information on stateless applications and decisions made on 30 November 2016 in response to three Parliamentary Questions from the hon. Member for Sheffield Central, UINs 50073, 50074 and 50075.

Additionally, the Home Office regularly shares information with UNHCR, relating to stateless applications and decisions made. The information provided is published by UNHCR, in regular trend reports. The latest published report by UNHCR on mid year trends June 2015 is attached to this answer and can also be found at the link below:

<http://www.unhcr.org/uk/statistics/unhcrstats/56701b969/mid-year-trends-june-2015.html>

The Answer includes the following attached material:

UNHCR Report [UNHCR Report.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-01-19/HL4794>

Service Industries: Trade Agreements

Asked by Lord De Mauley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, given the importance to the UK economy of the export of services, whether they intend that any trade agreements that they negotiate in future will give as great a prominence to services as to goods. [HL4763]

Lord Price: Services exports are of great importance to the UK economy - the UK ran an £89.9bn surplus on services exports in 2015. The UK is a strong advocate for

services trade liberalisation, and leaving the European Union presents an opportunity for the UK to become a world leader in the free trade of services. The Government will consider all options in the design of future bilateral trade agreements.

Social Services: Finance

Asked by Lord Ouseley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they are giving to identifying new sources of income to meet increasing care costs, especially in the light of the projected growth in the number of people over the age of 75 within the next five years. [HL4592]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: Social care continues to be a key priority for this Government. The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government has announced that local authorities will have access to £900 million of additional funding for social care over the next two years, including £240 million through the Adult Social Care Support Grant, funded by reforms to the New Homes Bonus, and additional flexibility for local authorities to raise money through the social care precept.

From April 2017, additional social care funds will be made available to local government through the Better Care Fund, rising to £1.5 billion by 2019/20, with funding going direct to councils to ensure health and social care services work together to support older and vulnerable people.

The Government recognises that there needs to be reform in the medium and long term to encourage high standards across the whole country. We will put social care on a sustainable footing for the future, giving people the comfort of knowing that they will be cared for in their old age.

Trade Agreements

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the average period between a trade agreement being concluded and the process of its ratification by Parliament being commenced. [HL4788]

Lord Price: EU free trade agreements can only be concluded and come fully into force once all EU Member States have ratified the agreement according to their own constitutional arrangements.

Trident Submarines

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the question asked by Lord West of Spithead in the debate on the future capability of the armed forces on 12 January (HL Deb, col 2128), whether there has been any consideration of reviewing the decision made by the previous Chancellor of the Exchequer on funding the capital costs of the deterrence successor programme from contingency rather than defence funds. [HL4769]

Earl Howe: The Chancellor of the Exchequer and Defence Secretary agree that funding and control for the Dreadnought programme remain rightly part of the Defence Budget.

Universities: Radicalism

Asked by Lord Murphy of Torfaen

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to ensure the balance of enabling free speech in universities whilst mitigating the potential risk caused by extremist speakers. [HL4673]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: Universities are legally required to take reasonable steps to ensure freedom of speech for staff, students and visiting speakers. This includes publishing a code of conduct setting out how they do this. They must balance this duty alongside their other legal responsibilities including the statutory Prevent duty which requires them to have due regard to avoid the potential risk of people being drawn into terrorism.

The Prevent guidance for Higher Education sets out that universities should have policies in place for the management of external speakers and events. This includes guidance on how universities balance their duty to promote free speech whilst mitigating the potential risk to safety or welfare that may be posed by extremist speakers.

The Department for Education's regional Prevent coordinator network provides additional support to universities to enable them to assess the potential risks from certain speakers and how to take mitigating action to ensure that ideas and opinions can be heard, challenged and debated.

The statutory Prevent duty is monitored by the Higher Education Funding Council for England who report to us that institutions are properly balancing the need to protect their students, whilst ensuring that freedom of speech on campus is not undermined.

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