

*From the Permanent Secretary
Sir Chris Wormald*



Department of Health & Social Care

Dame Meg Hillier MP
Chair, Public Accounts Committee
House of Commons
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21st November 2022

Dear Chair,

Thank you for your letter dated 3 November 2022.

The donations of COVID-19 vaccines to Barbados and Antigua and Barbuda were authorised and delivered in August 2022 during the parliamentary summer recess. The vaccines in question had a limited shelf life and to provide maximum benefit to the recipient countries and prevent further wastage, the doses needed to be donated as soon as possible.

Subsequent changes in Ministers meant that the earliest opportunity to publish the Written Ministerial Statement and notify Parliament of the donations was the first day after conference recess, on 12th October. The letter to you was timed to coincide with the WMS to parliament, so that the whole of Parliament was informed simultaneously.

Yours sincerely,

**SIR CHRIS WORMALD
PERMANENT SECRETARY**