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**HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT**

**PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

Tuesday 22 March 2022

House of Commons

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The House met at half-past Eleven o'clock

PRAYERS

[MR SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

Mr Speaker: I have a short statement to make. Today marks the fifth anniversary of the death of PC Keith Palmer, who died in the line of duty protecting this Parliament from terrorist attack. His sacrifice will not be forgotten. I express on behalf of the whole House our sympathy with his family, friends and colleagues on this sad anniversary.

Oral Answers to Questions

JUSTICE

The Secretary of State was asked—

Ukraine: Potential War Crimes by Russia

1. **Dr Ben Spencer** (Runnymede and Weybridge) (Con): What steps his Department is taking to support an investigation into potential war crimes committed by Russia in Ukraine. [906194]

7. **Damien Moore** (Southport) (Con): What steps his Department is taking to support an investigation into potential war crimes committed by Russia in Ukraine. [906200]

8. **Mr John Whittingdale** (Maldon) (Con): What steps his Department is taking to support an investigation into potential war crimes committed by Russia in Ukraine. [906202]

11. **David Duguid** (Banff and Buchan) (Con): What steps his Department is taking to support an investigation into potential war crimes committed by Russia in Ukraine. [906205]

14. **David Johnston** (Wantage) (Con): What steps his Department is taking to support an investigation into potential war crimes committed by Russia in Ukraine. [906208]

The Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (Dominic Raab): With your forbearance, Mr Speaker, may I join the expression that you gave on the fifth anniversary of the murder of PC Palmer? I send my sympathies to the family and our total solidarity in this House with those who risk their lives on the frontline.

Vladimir Putin's regime is responsible for an illegal invasion. There is strong evidence of war crimes and we believe that those responsible must be held to account.

Dr Spencer: I associate myself with my right hon. Friend's remarks regarding PC Palmer. What steps has he taken to ensure that the mechanisms are in place so that the evidence of war crimes can be confidently collected by the International Criminal Court?

Dominic Raab: We are doing two things in particular. First, I have convened a cross-Whitehall group, which we have done in the past, to ensure that we can provide whatever support may be needed for everything from witness protection services to the gathering of evidence and information co-operation. Secondly, I have been to The Hague and I will be going back this week. I am working with a coalition of countries that also have unique expertise in that area to provide the support that the Court needs.

Damien Moore: Will my right hon. Friend assure the House that our recently passed Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Act 2022 will ensure that this Conservative Government will take every step to deprive those found guilty of war crimes in Ukraine of their illegally gotten gains?

Dominic Raab: My hon. Friend will know that, because of the Sergei Magnitsky regime for asset freezes and visa bans for anyone who has committed serious human rights abuses, we already have that capacity in place. That is on top of the further co-operation that we will provide with the ICC and, I should mention, that the Attorney General will provide with the prosecutor general of Ukraine.

Mr Whittingdale: Does my right hon. Friend agree that, while the shelling of civilians is itself a war crime, any use of chemical or biological weapons, as predicted by President Biden today, would be a breach of the Geneva protocol and the chemical weapons convention and would most certainly be a war crime?

Dominic Raab: My right hon. Friend is absolutely right. I am always careful to allow the ICC, of which both the prosecutor and the chambers of the Court are independent, to make those determinations, but the points of principle that he has set out are absolutely right. There must be no impunity for those in Moscow or the commanders on the ground who commit those atrocities.

David Duguid: Can my right hon. Friend outline to the House what steps the Government have taken to build the broadest caucus of support for prosecuting President Putin and his regime over their actions in Ukraine? Will he join me in applauding the role of the British ICC judge and British prosecutor in their work on the issue?

Dominic Raab: My hon. Friend is right. We secured the election of Karim Khan and Jo Korner. They operate independently on the Court but it is a sign of how well regarded this country's legal profession is that we have two such senior figures there, as well as the registrar. Again, they operate independently, but we are working with the Ukrainian authorities, led by the Attorney General. I am also going back to The Hague to ensure that we understand the specific needs of the ICC, not just to provide support ourselves but to ensure that we bring together a coalition of countries with that unique expertise so that justice can be done.

David Johnston: There will not be many people watching the TV each night who think that what Putin is doing to Ukraine does not constitute war crimes. I appreciate what my right hon. Friend says about the evidence and that these things can take a while. Without going into details, therefore, can he assure the House that we have learned the lessons of previous attempts to pursue war crimes cases, so that we might bring Putin and co. to justice faster?

Dominic Raab: My hon. Friend is right, although, of course, we have a war going on and we need to be realistic that that will take time and strategic patience. We had Radovan Karadžić, the butcher of the Balkans, delivered to a British jail cell last year under a sentence enforcement agreement that I happened to negotiate with the UN in 2004. These things will take time; that is the realpolitik that we are dealing with. We are ensuring, however, first, that things such as the preservation of evidence are a priority now in conduct on the ground, and secondly, that the message goes out that we and our partners in support of the ICC are being clear that, if someone commits those kinds of crimes, sooner or later they will end up in the dock of the Court and behind bars.

Mr Barry Sheerman (Huddersfield) (Lab/Co-op): As the Secretary of State is a very senior member of the Government, would he ensure that this House is updated regularly on what is going on? So much has happened, even over the last weekend, in this dreadful conflict, so would he send a message that this House should be updated regularly? I started by thinking that this must be settled peacefully, but are we really going to allow injustice to rule in this country and to let Russia get away with it?

Dominic Raab: The hon. Gentleman is absolutely right, and I thank him for what he has said. I would be happy to update the House through oral questions or other means, and I am very happy to meet him. It is absolutely right that there will not be a peaceful settlement to this. I think we can all agree that trusting Vladimir Putin to keep his word is going to be a very tall order for anyone in the community, let alone President Zelensky, and there cannot just be a brushing under the carpet of atrocities committed now or in the future.

Peter Grant (Glenrothes) (SNP): The Secretary of State will be aware that Russian criminality in Ukraine did not start this year; it started in 2014. Since then, there have been crimes against the people of Ukraine, including, we have to say, gross abuses of the human rights of ethnic Russians in Ukraine. Will he use his influence to ensure that any war crimes investigation is extended to the beginning of the illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014?

Dominic Raab: I thank the hon. Gentleman, who makes a really important point. Of course, I must at this point say that it will be for the ICC, which operates independently, to determine the temporal scope of its jurisdiction.

Tony Lloyd (Rochdale) (Lab): The Justice Secretary made a very important point earlier when he said that this is about not just those in Moscow, but the commanders on the ground, although in fact it is even about individual

soldiers. What can we do as a nation to help the ICC get the message across that those in the field could find themselves before the Court?

Dominic Raab: I thank the hon. Gentleman, and I think he is right. Of course, one of the things Putin has done is clamp down on all independent sources of media, but that is of course something that we are looking at trying to support so that Russians get the facts on the ground. He is also right to say that the conscripts, as well as the commanders, are at risk here. Many of those young Russian conscripts, who were told they were going in as peacekeepers, will have points at which they are not sure whether to follow essentially illegal orders either for their own welfare or for the good of Ukraine itself.

Jim Shannon (Strangford) (DUP): Especially perverse have been the Russian attacks on hospitals, schools and churches—on babies, children and elderly people—in Ukraine. What steps have been taken to co-ordinate with the UN to ensure that these travesties will not go unanswered in The Hague and that evidence is collected, collated and unquestionable?

Dominic Raab: I thank the hon. Gentleman, who I know has long had an interest in this area of accountability, and he is absolutely right. Of course, one of the critical issues right now is the preservation of evidence—not just that crimes were committed, but on whose orders they may have been committed. Those are all things we are looking at, and I think it is important that we work with all our allies on this. We have some unique expertise in law enforcement, with mechanisms in relation to information co-operation, witness protection, sentence enforcement and forensic evidence, but other states also have unique capabilities in those areas. What is crucial is that the early evidence—not just of crimes, but of the responsibility up the chain of command—is preserved where possible.

Bill of Rights and Human Rights Act 1998

2. **Greg Smith** (Buckingham) (Con): What progress he has made on bringing forward a Bill of Rights. [906195]

5. **Lee Anderson** (Ashfield) (Con): What progress he has made on bringing forward a Bill of Rights. [906198]

15. **Debbie Abrahams** (Oldham East and Saddleworth) (Lab): What steps he is taking to reform the Human Rights Act. [906209]

21. **Allan Dorans** (Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock) (SNP): What recent discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on reforming the human rights framework. [906215]

22. **Wendy Chamberlain** (North East Fife) (LD): What assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of the independent Human Rights Act review published in December 2021. [906216]

The Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (Dominic Raab): The Government were elected on a manifesto commitment to replace the Human Rights Act 1998, and we have launched a consultation on a UK-wide Bill of Rights. We intend to bring forward legislation in the next Session.

Greg Smith: I am very grateful to my right hon. Friend for that answer. Does he agree with me that to ensure that the Nationality and Borders Bill we are debating later today is fully workable, especially in supporting those who desperately need our help, such as those coming from Ukraine, a British Bill of Rights is essential to close the loopholes that allow those who seek to abuse the system—and, in doing so, take away resources from our authorities helping those in need—in relying on existing human rights legislation?

Dominic Raab: I thank my hon. Friend, and he is absolutely right that the Nationality and Borders Bill is crucial for dealing with those issues—not just as a matter of the protection of our borders, but in stemming this appalling trade in misery. The Bill of Rights would make sure that we have the right balance of protecting our freedoms by ensuring that the Executive can be held to account, but also making sure, when Parliament makes difficult balanced judgments on qualified rights, that there is greater respect for that in the public interest.

Lee Anderson: The Secretary of State will be aware that the current human rights laws are not fit for purpose and are stopping us deporting foreign criminals including rapists and murderers, much to the delight of the leftie lawyers. Does my right hon. Friend agree that we should fast-track the new Bill of Rights so we can get rid of these foreign rapists and criminals as quickly as possible and send them back to where they come from?

Dominic Raab: My hon. Friend is bang on; he speaks in a very straightforward way, but I think that is what the public expect. We are not talking about undermining the fundamental freedoms—in fact, we are going to strengthen them, including free speech. We are making sure that those who do us harm or have been convicted of serious offences can be returned home without elastic interpretations of rights scuppering the process.

Debbie Abrahams: Contrary to the comments of the last questioner, the Law Society has said that the Government's Human Rights Act proposals

“do not recognise the significant benefits that have been achieved...through the HRA”,

while the General Council of the Bar says that the HRA “has worked and continues to work well.”

Given that those who work in our justice system reject the need for changes and only despots and tyrants like Putin object to human rights other than their own, why does the Justice Secretary not scrap these proposals and stop wasting taxpayers' time and money?

Dominic Raab: We are of course familiar with the views of the Law Society and others but respectfully disagree, and in the end it is not solely our job to listen to legal practitioners, important as they are, or indeed to serve their interests, but also to stand up for victims and the public and make sure we have a common-sense approach to justice. *[Interruption.]* I respectfully disagree with the hon. Lady; she might want to put herself on the side of the criminals, but we will put ourselves on the side of the victims.

Allan Dorans: The Scottish Government have committed to introducing a new Human Rights Bill for Scotland by 2025 incorporating four major United Nations rights treaties—an international covenant on economic, social

and cultural rights; conventions on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women; the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination; and the rights of persons with disabilities—along with other progressive human rights. Has the Secretary of State reviewed these plans with a view to incorporating them into any future Bill of Rights?

Dominic Raab: Although I disagree with the hon. Gentleman, I pay respect to the way he has introduced this question. There is a school of thought—I have been up to Edinburgh and discussed this with the Scottish Government—that we should expand a wider range of policy issues, social and economic, and environmental goals, and turn them into judicially enforceable rights. Many of those areas involve collective issues that require finely balanced judgment calls and often require public finances to be allocated in a very sensitive way, and I think they should be decided by hon. Members in all parts of this House, accountable to the British people, not lawyers in a courtroom.

Wendy Chamberlain: It is agreed by legal experts in areas ranging from local government to the House of Lords that the HRA is a delicate and well-tuned piece of legislation, and the organisation Lawyers in Local Government said in its response to the independent HRA review that the Government's proposals not only risk reducing the accountability of public authorities and undermining the rules but will concretely cause further delay in reaching decisions on social housing, which is worse for all our constituents and for councils. This is not about ideology but about real-world outcomes. The HRA is working well, so will the Government accept that plans to scrap it are counterproductive?

Dominic Raab: I am afraid that I will not, and I respectfully disagree. I will side with the local authorities of whatever political colour or composition who are trying to serve their constituents. They of course need to be held to the rule of law and be accountable, but I am not on the side of the lawyers suing local authorities.

Mr Speaker: I call Scottish National party spokesperson Angela Crawley.

Angela Crawley (Lanark and Hamilton East) (SNP): In their consultation response the Scottish Government highlighted that in the initial UK Government approach to Windrush:

“No amount of evidence or reasoned argument proved able to persuade the Home Office of the catastrophic errors which had occurred.”

The HRA was instrumental in securing justice for the Windrush victims, and the UK Government later said they would learn lessons from those failings. Should they not start by ditching plans to overhaul the legislation that was instrumental in securing justice for the Windrush victims?

Dominic Raab: It is really important that the hon. Lady raises the question of the Windrush scandal. Hon. Members across the House would agree that that should never have happened, but of course it happened throughout the entirety of the entry into force of the Human Rights Act and there was nothing about the Act that led to the situation being addressed in this House—that was down

to hon. Members who became aware of what had happened because of members of our communities who had been affected. Frankly, the Human Rights Act did not stop Windrush and had absolutely no role in remedying it.

Mr Speaker: I call Angela Crawley for her second question. No, she does not want it, so let's try somebody else. I call Gavin Newlands.

Sanctions: Assets Seizure

4. **Gavin Newlands** (Paisley and Renfrewshire North) (SNP): What recent discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on seizing the assets of sanctioned Russian oligarchs. [906197]

12. **Chris Stephens** (Glasgow South West) (SNP): What recent discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on seizing the assets of sanctioned Russian oligarchs. [906206]

19. **Deidre Brock** (Edinburgh North and Leith) (SNP): What recent discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on seizing the assets of sanctioned Russian oligarchs. [906213]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice (James Cartlidge): I am pleased to report that the Ministry of Justice is working closely with colleagues across Government to look at how we can go further to crack down on illicit money in British property, including considering temporary asset seizures beyond the freezing regime that we already have in place. I am not yet in a position to present the details of this to the House. It is a complex issue involving important policy and legal considerations. What I can say is that unlike the Putin regime, the Government will always preserve the rule of law and act against kleptocratic wealth.

Gavin Newlands: When concerns about Russian interference in UK politics were raised by the Intelligence and Security Committee a couple of years ago, the Prime Minister laughed them off, saying that they were driven by "Islington remainers" unable to accept Brexit. What confidence should we have that the Government are taking the threat seriously, particularly given the slow approach to sanctioning oligarchs that saw Putin's cronies handed two weeks to rush their wealth out of the UK before the rules came into force?

James Cartlidge: Everybody can be incredibly confident that the UK has acted swiftly to execute the biggest package of sanctions ever imposed against a G20 nation. Let us be clear that the UK has designated more than 1,000 individuals, entities and subsidiaries under the Russia sanctions regime since the invasion, including President Putin and Foreign Minister Lavrov. More than 3 million Russian companies are barred from raising money on UK capital markets. We will also target more than 500 members of the Duma and Federation Council. That makes up the largest and most severe package of economic sanctions Russia has ever seen.

Chris Stephens: Given the rushed nature of legislation as the Government play catch-up with EU states, for example, there have been reports that further measures will be required to close remaining loopholes exploited

by oligarchs. What discussions have taken place around that, and will the Minister confirm that further legislation should be expected in this coming year?

James Cartlidge: The hon. Gentleman is right that we need to legislate effectively and that is why we will take time to get the detail right on property while prioritising further action as far as we can. To be clear, in the past week the Government have passed the Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Act 2022, established a register of beneficial ownership, and sanctioned more than 1,000 individuals and entities. The Deputy Prime Minister explained in answer to the first set of questions the action he is taking at the International Criminal Court to ensure that it can fully investigate Russian war crimes, but I accept that more might need to be done.

Deidre Brock: The international corruption unit and the international anti-corruption co-ordination centre have operated for some time now in the National Crime Agency. Why was it necessary to set up a third kleptocracy unit and how will this new body's work differ from that of the existing bodies? Were they not already investigating the behaviour of oligarchs?

James Cartlidge: I do not think that anybody should doubt that we have the measures in place. Our sanctions regime is bold and we have taken swift, comprehensive measures. I also remind the hon. Lady that only last week the Deputy Prime Minister announced further measures on strategic lawsuits against public participation, or SLAPPs. When we talk about powerful oligarchs in this country, that is important. Judge us by the actions. I am sure we all agree that these measures are swift and comprehensive and, most importantly, will have an impact on the Putin regime.

Andrew Bridgen (North West Leicestershire) (Con): Does the Minister agree that the international sanctions causing such hardship to the Russian people are totally the responsibility of one man, and his name is Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin?

James Cartlidge: My hon. Friend puts it perfectly. Of course, the sanctions will have and are having an economic impact. We have no quarrel with the Russian people. The blame for that impact lies squarely at the door of the Kremlin, and I think the whole world knows that.

Mr Speaker: I call the shadow Secretary of State, Steve Reed.

Steve Reed (Croydon North) (Lab/Co-op): First, Mr Speaker, let me associate myself and my party with your comments earlier about PC Keith Palmer and others who died five years ago today.

The Intelligence and Security Committee's Russia report states that under this Government, some UK law firms became "de facto" Russian state agents and played a role in

"promoting the nefarious interests of the Russian state", including oligarchs' assets. Will the Minister tell the House what he has done to stop UK law firms such as Debevoise & Plimpton, Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton and Steptoe & Johnson acting as enablers of Russian criminals and the Kremlin?

James Cartledge: As I set out very recently in my written answer to the hon. Gentleman, the rule of law means that everyone has a right to access legal representation. Legal advice is often necessary to ensure that those who are subject to sanctions fully understand and comply with the restrictions, but as I said to him, lawyers are required to follow strict procedures when transacting with sanctioned individuals. Those individuals are required to obtain a licence from the Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation to make payments for legal services, and lawyers should carefully consider whether their advice is helping the client to comply with the sanctions or is participating in or facilitating a breach of those sanctions. To be clear, there are severe penalties for breaches, including fines and potential imprisonment.

Steve Reed: Given what is happening in Ukraine, there is an urgency about going further than the Minister outlined. Will he consider imposing sanctions on law firms that continue to act for the Kremlin and Putin's cronies, whose looted wealth is funding Russia's murderous war machine?

James Cartledge: It was only on 20 January that the Backbench Business Committee brought before this House a debate on SLAPPs lawfare. I responded to that debate, and at the end I said the Government would be responding. Less than two months later, the Deputy Prime Minister came before the House with detailed proposals. Of course, a key part of this is the behaviour of law firms. Any action we take—we have to be clear on this; we are the Ministry of Justice—must be subject to the rule of law and must take a balanced approach, recognising that while we want to take action, it is a fundamental right to be legally represented.

Violence Against Women and Girls

6. **Ruth Jones** (Newport West) (Lab): What steps he is taking with Cabinet colleagues to tackle violence against women and girls in (a) Newport West constituency and (b) Wales. [906199]

10. **Christian Wakeford** (Bury South) (Lab): What steps he is taking with Cabinet colleagues to tackle violence against women and girls. [906204]

20. **Kate Osborne** (Jarrow) (Lab): What steps he is taking with Cabinet colleagues to tackle violence against women and girls. [906214]

The Minister of State, Home Department (Victoria Atkins): The Government set out in the summer their ambitious tackling violence against women and girls strategy to fundamentally change attitudes, support women and girls who are victims of crime and relentlessly pursue perpetrators. This focus includes plans to roll out to all Crown courts pre-recorded cross-examination for complainants of sexual and modern slavery offences, and giving victims of domestic abuse more time to report incidents of common assault. Last month, we launched the tender for the first ever national 24/7 helpline for victims of rape and sexual assault.

Ruth Jones: Last week, I met Cyfannol Women's Aid Newport, whom I thank for all the work they do to keep women and girls in my community safe and supported. Labour has published a full Green Paper with serious

and common-sense measures to end violence against women and girls. Will the Minister now commit to working with the Labour party to implement those important and long overdue proposals? After all, this is a matter of life and death.

Victoria Atkins: I thank the hon. Lady for her kind invitation. I note that throughout the passage of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, I was delighted to work with colleagues across the House. I think we all recognise the vital importance of that legislation brought forward by the Government. I am particularly pleased that we are helping the police and crime commissioner in Gwent to support victims in the hon. Lady's constituency and elsewhere in the police area. There is more than £6 million to help victims across Wales. We are absolutely determined to tackle violence against women and girls in a way that looks after victims, but also, importantly, changes some of the behaviours and attitudes that sadly lie behind so many of these crimes.

Christian Wakeford: The backlog of court cases means that victims of rape are facing years fighting for justice. Rapists are walking free because victims are dropping court cases due to the trauma caused by delays. Will the Minister carry out an immediate review into setting up specialist rape courts, as recommended by the joint inspectorates, so that justice can be done and the public, including my constituents in Prestwich, Radcliffe and Whitefield, can be kept safe?

Victoria Atkins: I do hope the hon. Gentleman in his, I imagine, copious free time now that he has crossed the Floor, is able to read the rape review, because had he done his homework he would have seen the forensic examination we have conducted of the investigation and prosecution of offences of rape. We have seen tentative first steps toward increases in convictions for rape, but we are clear that through the rape review and working with the police, the Crown Prosecution Service and victims, we will make progress. I very much hope he will support the Government in our measures to do so.

Kate Osborne: After women spoke out about feeling exposed to physical aggression and sexual harassment when travelling on our regional north-east public transport system, the Northumbria police and crime commissioner, Kim McGuinness, launched the free Safer Transport Northumbria app, which takes people through a series of simple steps that allows them to raise safety concerns and report crimes. Does the Minister agree that that is a brilliant initiative from our Northumbria PCC, and will she commit to providing more funding for our region to tackle violence against women and girls?

Victoria Atkins: I welcome local initiatives such as the one that the hon. Member describes. I hope that she also welcomes the national efforts that we set out in the tackling violence against women and girls strategy, particularly on public transport, because we know that that can be a place of harassment and very unwelcome behaviour by perpetrators. I pay tribute to my hon. Friend the Member for Brecon and Radnorshire (Fay Jones), who led a campaign to outlaw cyber-flashing. I trust that when provisions to outlaw that crime on public transport and elsewhere are introduced in the Online Safety Bill, they will have the hon. Lady's support.

Mrs Maria Miller (Basingstoke) (Con): I wish my hon. Friend a very happy birthday. In June, after three years' work, the Law Commission will publish recommended changes to the criminal law to stop the publication of intimate sexual images online without consent, which is one of the worst forms of violence against women and girls. Will the Minister include those changes in the Online Safety Bill through Government amendments before it reaches the Lords, or will she look for others to do that on her behalf?

Victoria Atkins: I thank my right hon. Friend; I can think of no better way in which to celebrate one's birthday than by receiving questions from her.

We absolutely understand that the law must keep pace with society, which is why we are taking action to address some of these 21st-century crimes, such as cyber-flashing, and making efforts in the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill to tackle breastfeeding voyeurism and to extend the so-called revenge porn offence to include those who threaten to post or disclose such images. We have asked the Law Commission to advise us on that very complicated area of law. We await the results of that advice in the summer and we will look carefully at implementing or acknowledging any such changes that the commission may advise.

Ellie Reeves (Lewisham West and Penge) (Lab): Ministry of Justice figures show that between 2015 and 2020, 17% of rapists sent to prison received sentences of less than five years. Does the Minister agree that that is incredibly lenient for one of the worst crimes? Will she back Labour's call for minimum sentences of seven years for rape, or will the Government continue to be tough on victims and soft on crime?

Victoria Atkins: I know that the hon. Lady and I share a determination to crack down on the perpetrators of vile crimes. It is with some regret, therefore, that I note that the Labour party declined the opportunity to support the Government on the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, in which we require serious sexual and violent offenders to spend more time in prison when they receive sentences of between four and seven years. I also gently remind her that the average sentence for rapists is around 10 years, so rather than putting different proposals forward, it would be very nice if Labour Members supported the Government's real-time work to ensure that rapists spend longer in prison.

Ellie Reeves: That is precisely what Labour's proposals would have achieved. The Government are not just letting victims down on sentences for rape; the Government have failed to act despite Labour's call for a review into sentences for spiking offences and the introduction of minimum sentences for stalking. The Minister has an opportunity to show that the Government are serious about tackling violence against women and girls by backing Labour's proposals. Will she do that today?

Victoria Atkins: Forgive me, but the hon. Lady seems to have misunderstood how legislation happens in this place. Labour Members had the chance to vote for rapists to spend longer in prison through the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill; they did not just abstain, but voted against that. I entreat the Labour party to consider acting and putting real pressure behind

their warm words and to stand with the Government to ensure that rapists spend longer in prison. That is what the Government are doing, and we will achieve that through the good work of Conservative colleagues.

Prison Leavers: Employment

9. Stephen Metcalfe (South Basildon and East Thurrock) (Con): What steps he is taking to increase the proportion of offenders who are employed on leaving prison. [906203]

The Minister for Crime and Policing (Kit Malthouse): The Government will deliver a presumption in favour of offering offenders the chance to work in prison, on release on temporary licence, and on release.

Stephen Metcalfe: Does my right hon. Friend agree that getting offenders into employment is vital to reducing reoffending? Will he therefore outline to the House what steps his Department is taking to refocus on the key performance indicators that it measures, to ensure that offender employment is a priority for this Government?

Kit Malthouse: My hon. Friend, in his usual manner, has put his finger on the button of part of the solution to the reoffending cycle. We firmly believe that there are three pillars for success in rehabilitating offenders: the first is a home, the second is a job, and the third is a friend. We are committing to providing all three to those who leave the secure estate. With all other Departments, we will publish our outcome delivery plan in the new financial year. I can reassure my hon. Friend that our right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister is setting extremely challenging and ambitious targets for the Department, particularly in regard to housing and employment.

Court Cases Backlog

13. Munira Wilson (Twickenham) (LD): What steps he is taking to help reduce the backlog of court cases. [906207]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice (James Cartlidge): We are taking action across all jurisdictions to bring backlogs down and improve waiting times for those who use our courts by expanding physical capacity, introducing new legislation and ramping up judicial recruitment. We are already seeing the results of our efforts. In the Crown courts, the outstanding case load has reduced from approximately 61,000 in June 2021 to approximately 59,000 at the end of January 2022; in the magistrates courts, the case load is close to recovering to pre-pandemic levels; and for most of our tribunals, the outstanding case load is either static or already beginning to reduce.

Munira Wilson: The Minister will be aware that a recent report by the Public Accounts Committee revealed that the number of rape and sexual assault cases waiting to be tried increased by more than 400% in the first year of the pandemic. Delays in such cases were already over 18 months pre-pandemic. The toll that those delays take means that the victims of sexual assault are much more likely to withdraw their case. Will the Minister support greater investment, as the Committee and indeed the rape review recommend, in independent sexual violence advisers, whose support for victims halves the likelihood of their withdrawing from the process?

James Cartlidge: The hon. Member makes a very good point. We sympathise with those whose cases are backlogged. Our aim is to increase capacity across all our courts so that we can continue to bring the backlog down. On her specific point about funding, I am pleased to say that investment in the advisers will increase to £185 million by the end of the spending review.

Shaun Bailey (West Bromwich West) (Con): I welcome the £477 million that the Government have committed to dealing with the backlog, but we know that it is an acutely regional issue. Will the Minister assure my constituents in the Black Country that as the Government roll out the £477 million, they will take a regional approach to its operational delivery? One way he could do so might be to visit the Black Country and see how he can ensure it gets the maximum delivery from that £477 million.

James Cartlidge: I would be absolutely delighted to come and visit. I should say, of course, that the biggest Crown court in the midlands is Birmingham's, which was the first that I visited after getting this job. My hon. Friend is right that we have to look at the issue regionally. There are significant variations, but the most important thing we can do is have wider capacity across the country. Alongside the almost half a billion pounds of funding that my hon. Friend mentions, key measures include increasing magistrates' sentencing powers so that we can free up almost 2,000 days in the Crown court, where the most serious cases can be heard.

Mr Speaker: You could always reopen Chorley court. That would help.

Steve Reed (Croydon North) (Lab/Co-op): Last week, the roof of Sheffield magistrates court fell in, delaying countless cases. A rape case was delayed when toilet water leaked into a courtroom at Maidstone Crown court in Kent. Survivors of rape already wait three years for their case to come to trial. How many cases have been delayed in total over the past five years because the Government have failed to fix crumbling courts?

James Cartlidge: I have given the hon. Gentleman a written answer detailing these points, but I am happy to write to him again. As I just said—it is crucial to stress this—not only is the backlog falling, but we want to go further. The key measures include legislation to increase magistrates' sentencing powers; funding, with almost half a billion pounds in the spending review; and increased court capacity, with renewed Nightingale courts where appropriate. Increasingly, the biggest challenge is judicial capacity, but I am pleased to say that we are recruiting more full-time judges and allowing more part-time recorders to sit for more days. Importantly, having launched our £1 million recruitment campaign for our volunteer judiciary, the magistracy, we have had in excess of 20,000 expressions of interest.

Rob Butler (Aylesbury) (Con): Aylesbury Crown court was the first to fully reopen after covid, thanks to the determined leadership of His Honour Judge Francis Sheridan, who steps down as resident judge this month. Will my hon. Friend join me in paying tribute to all the court staff in Aylesbury for their progress in clearing

the backlog, and in thanking Judge Sheridan for his constant innovation to make his court more efficient and much more strongly focused on victims?

James Cartlidge: My hon. Friend, as a former magistrate with much additional knowledge of probation issues, speaks about these matters with huge expertise. I do pay tribute to the resident judge, and indeed to all members of the judiciary. They are, of course, independent from Government, and they have huge responsibilities. As I said during my first appearance at the Dispatch Box, we owe a huge debt to all our judiciary as well as all our clerks and all those who work in our courts for keeping justice going during the pandemic, and we can repay them by taking every possible measure to reduce the backlog.

Preventing Reoffending: Youth Custody Centres

16. **Kerry McCarthy (Bristol East) (Lab):** What steps his Department is taking with youth custody centres to help prevent reoffending. [906210]

The Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Victoria Atkins): The number of children entering the youth justice system has fallen by 81% in the last decade and the number of children on the secure estate has fallen by about three quarters. We are, however, developing a more specialised workforce focused on rehabilitation, because we accept that that is how to help these young people to move away from a life of crime. Every prison officer on the youth estate is now funded to take up a qualification in youth justice by next year. We have also created specialist youth justice worker officers, who are trained to work with children, and we already have 284 in post.

Kerry McCarthy: I hope that the Minister has been talking to her colleague the Housing Minister about his plans to regulate supported housing, which were announced last week and which we very much welcome. Will she now talk to him about the need to ensure that if 16 and 17-year-olds are released from custody and it is not appropriate for them to go back to their family home, they are not placed in unregulated housing?

Victoria Atkins: Very much so. As I said in answer to previous questions, home is a vital part of rehabilitation and cutting reoffending. We know about some of the particular pressures that young people can face if, for example, they have been drawn into county lines gangs, and the geographical location of their home may be a pertinent element in their reoffending or their vulnerability to reoffending. I am happy to confirm that I will be speaking to the Housing Minister. I am also drawing together a cross-Whitehall group of Ministers to discuss how we can tackle youth offending at the earliest stages, not just when a child reaches the justice system.

Domestic Abuse Offences: Prosecution Rate

18. **Elliot Colburn (Carshalton and Wallington) (Con):** If he will take steps to help improve the prosecution rate for domestic abuse offences. [906212]

The Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Victoria Atkins): The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 will ensure that more perpetrators are brought to justice. The Act creates new offences such as non-fatal strangulation, and extends the coercive and controlling behaviour offence to include

former partners. Through the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, we are also giving victims more time to report domestic abuse-related assaults so that they can seek justice.

Elliot Colburn: My constituency sits in the London Borough of Sutton, which, while having relatively low levels of violent crime, has higher domestic abuse rates than the London average. Surely poor police conduct only serves to undermine the efforts to increase prosecution rates. What work is my hon. Friend undertaking to encourage domestic abuse victims to come forward and to ensure that there is confidence in the criminal justice system and protection for victims and their children?

Victoria Atkins: Trust is the fundamental bond between us, the public, and the police, prosecutors, the courts and the criminal justice system. Given recent events, it is right that Members ask difficult and scrutinising questions of those agencies, but it is also right that we support the Home Secretary's review through the Angiolini inquiry into police attitudes and conduct, as well as the review carried out by Her Majesty's inspectorate of constabulary and fire and rescue services. Let me also draw my hon. Friend's attention to the success of the Domestic Abuse Matters training. There is real evidence of improvement in the rates of charging people with coercive and controlling behaviour offences in police forces in which that training has been undertaken. Some 32 police forces have undergone the training, and we expect the rest to follow so that victims of domestic abuse can be supported.

Alex Norris (Nottingham North) (Lab/Co-op): The lack of reporting, understanding and prosecution of domestic abuse at child contact centres is creating a potential risk at those venues. Happily, the Domestic Abuse Act committed the Government to producing a report on this. Is the Minister willing to meet the all-party parliamentary group on child contact centres and services to discuss the matter further?

Victoria Atkins: I am happy to take up the hon. Gentleman's kind invitation. As he knows, we are very concerned about evidence from the family harms panel review about how some perpetrators use the family courts to continue their abuse. I hope the hon. Gentleman will be comforted by the news that in February we launched an integrated domestic abuse courts pilot in courts in Dorset and north Wales, which is testing a more investigative and less adversarial approach to family court proceedings.

Equality Act 2010: Time Limits for Claims

23. **Mrs Pauline Latham** (Mid Derbyshire) (Con): If he will consider the potential merits of extending the time limits for claims under the Equality Act 2010 from three to six months. [906217]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice (Tom Pursglove): The Government continue to look closely at extending time limits for these Equality Act cases. However, these decisions must take account of wider impacts across the justice system. The pandemic has put additional pressure on the entire Courts and Tribunals Service, and restoring existing service levels needs to be prioritised before additional loading is added.

Mrs Latham: I thank the Minister for his answer. The Government have committed to considering extending the time limits for Equality Act claims in employment tribunals. Currently, a three-month time limit means that pregnant women have to bring a case in the first months after birth, and sexual harassment victims have to do so while they are still incredibly traumatised. That is unconscionably restrictive, and because it forces people down the litigation route before mediation is finished, it is probably also very inefficient. Will the Department deliver an extension so that those who are subject to workplace harassment and discrimination can access justice?

Tom Pursglove: I am grateful to my hon. Friend for raising this issue. The tribunal already has the discretion to provide the extension that she is seeking, where it considers it to be just and equitable to do so. This is a Government Equalities Office lead, and as the Ministry of Justice we are happy to engage with the GEO and to look at this closely.

Topical Questions

T1. [906228] **Felicity Buchan** (Kensington) (Con): If he will make a statement on his departmental responsibilities.

The Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (Dominic Raab): Last week, I went to The Hague to offer British assistance to the International Criminal Court in bringing those responsible for war crimes in Ukraine to justice. Russian commanders carrying out war crimes should know that they cannot act with impunity and that, like Karadžić and Charles Taylor before them, their actions risk landing them in a jail cell. I also set out proposals to tackle strategic lawsuits against public participation—SLAPPs—to stop oligarchs using our libel laws to muzzle journalists and academics.

Felicity Buchan: My constituency has strong links to Ukraine. Can my right hon. Friend reassure my constituents that this Government will do everything to support the investigation of war crimes potentially committed in Ukraine?

Dominic Raab: We are looking at a package of measures including financial assistance and also technical assistance, which is crucial to the preservation of evidence. The kinds of things I am analysing with colleagues across Whitehall include specialist IT capabilities and other expert areas such as police and military analysis—all the things that the ICC will need.

Mr Speaker: I call the shadow Minister, Afzal Khan.

Afzal Khan (Manchester, Gorton) (Lab): Can I bring the Minister on to a more domestic issue? Victims of domestic abuse and other serious crimes are more often than not denied justice due to the broken criminal justice system. Legal aid provides a lifeline to those who need it most, but the system is on its knees due to chronic underfunding. Sir Christopher Bellamy QC recommended a minimum fee increase not as an opening bid but as a necessary first step to nurse the legal aid system back to health. How will the Minister stop the continuing haemorrhage of criminal solicitors and barristers from the workforce in the meantime, so that further victims are not denied access to justice?

Dominic Raab: We have set out in detail our response to the Bellamy review, and indeed we matched the Bellamy recommendations on the quantum of investment and on the 15% uplift for fees. I think it was only last week that the hon. Gentleman backed those plans pretty much wholeheartedly, and I hope he still does.

Aaron Bell (Newcastle-under-Lyme) (Con): Litigation or the threat of litigation should not be used to intimidate or to silence things that are in the public interest. I welcome what my right hon. Friend said last week about SLAPPs. Can he reassure me, my constituents, journalists across the country and the wider public that he will do whatever it takes to support the freedom of the press and freedom of speech more widely?

Dominic Raab: My hon. Friend is absolutely right, and we have set out our proposals on SLAPPs. I also want to bring his attention to the submission that we had from the media group that involves the *i*, *The Times*, Associated Newspapers, *The Daily Telegraph* and others, which talks about the specific proposals we have put forward in our Bill of Rights to strengthen and reinforce freedom of expression and media rights as critically important, alongside the other work we are doing. I hope that the Labour party will support it.

T2. [906229] **Fabian Hamilton** (Leeds North East) (Lab): In December, my constituent Daphne Franks and I delivered a paper to the Ministry of Justice setting out proposals to end predatory marriage, but so far nothing has been done, mainly because the review of wills has been paused by the Law Commission. Given that the elderly and vulnerable are still being targeted every day, may I ask the Secretary of State whether he will now step in and support the legislative changes set out in our proposal so that we can finally bring this appalling abuse to an end?

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice (Tom Pursglove): I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman for raising this issue in the House. I am happy to have a conversation and a meeting with him to discuss his proposals in greater detail. It is important to recognise that in the marriage space we are awaiting the outcome of the Law Commission's review, which is expected in July. Like other Ministers in the Department, I will want to have a thorough look at all these matters in the round.

T4. [906231] **Dame Andrea Leadsom** (South Northamptonshire) (Con): Today would have been Harry Dunn's 21st birthday. Instead, his twin brother Niall faces this fabulous milestone alone and there is still no justice for Harry's family from the tragic killing of him by an American citizen who was driving on the wrong side of the road. I know that the hearts of colleagues from across the House go out to Harry Dunn, his whole family and all his friends, particularly his brother. Will my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, who has done so much to try to help, give the House an update on what is being done to deliver justice for Harry?

Mr Speaker: So that the House is aware, let me say that this is sub judice, so please be cautious in your answer, as I would expect that you would be.

Dominic Raab: Thank you, Mr Speaker, I will be mindful of what you say. First, let me thank and pay tribute to my right hon. Friend, who has championed the Dunn family and the memory of Harry in the most remarkable way. Of course my heart goes out to Tim, Charlotte, Bruce, Tracey and all the family right now. Indeed, I was thinking about Tracey and Charlotte in particular as we prepare for Mother's day this week. I can tell my right hon. Friend, without tripping up in the way that Mr Speaker described, that the whole Government and I wholeheartedly support the Foreign Secretary's ongoing efforts to secure a virtual trial so that we can see justice done for Harry and his family.

T6. [906234] **Patrick Grady** (Glasgow North) (SNP): Will the Secretary of State confirm clearly, for the record, that the Government will not make changes to the Human Rights Act without legislative consent from the devolved institutions?

Dominic Raab: The hon. Gentleman will know, because I have said it in the House on a number of occasions, that it would be inappropriate to consider the application of the Sewel convention until we have the text of the Bill of Rights, but he will not have to wait too much longer for that.

T5. [906233] **Dame Caroline Dinenage** (Gosport) (Con): Will my right hon. Friend look again at whether there are any opportunities to support grandchildren to have better access to their grandparents following a divorce or bereavement?

Tom Pursglove: I am grateful to my hon. Friend for raising this issue. The Government understand the important role that grandparents often play in children's lives—I can very much relate to that through my own experiences growing up—and the stability they can provide, particularly during times of divorce, separation or bereavement. I know that she had a productive meeting with my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister recently. This matter is under active consideration at pace and we will revert to her as quickly as possible.

T8. [906236] **Taiwo Owatemi** (Coventry North West) (Lab): One of my constituents, after leaving a near two-decade-long abusive relationship, reported an assault to the police, but she was then told that the statute of limitations on her case had run out, as it was not processed in time, which means that she will never see justice. What steps will the Minister take to reform the statute of limitations process for victims of assault in abusive relationships?

The Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Victoria Atkins): I hope that the House will understand that I must not comment on an individual case, but for offences that are triable either way—assault and occasioning actual bodily harm—or those that are indictable only, there are no such time limits. One category of offence—common assault charges—does have the traditional six-month time limit. Exactly the situation the hon. Lady has described is what we are seeking to change for the better through the police Bill. We are removing that six-month time limit—extending it to two years—so that cases of the sort she describes will not hit that legal barrier to securing justice for victims.

T7. [906235] **Peter Gibson** (Darlington) (Con): I commend my right hon. Friend the Minister for the steps he has taken recently to publicise community payback to tackle antisocial behaviour. In Darlington, antisocial behaviour involving off-road bikes and quad bikes causes tremendous trouble; will the Minister outline what steps he will take to use community payback to tackle that?

The Minister for Crime and Policing (Kit Malthouse): I am pleased that my hon. Friend recognises that dozens of teams of offenders are fanning out across England and Wales and doing fantastic work, paying back into their community by improving the environment. My hon. Friend has been a persistent campaigner on the antisocial behaviour that quad bikes bring to his constituency and I know he will have conversations with his local police and crime commissioner about what the police can do to catch the individuals responsible. When they do catch them, it is absolutely appropriate that they pay back into the community through the kind of work that we now see on a daily basis. It might also be appropriate to GPS tag offenders so that we know where they are moving at speed off-road.

Andy Slaughter (Hammersmith) (Lab): If, as the Secretary of State said earlier, he is concerned about the oppressive use of litigation costs in SLAPP cases, will he look into the same problems in respect of media cases? Will he consider introducing—perhaps in his Bill of Rights—the type of low-cost arbitration recommended by the Leveson inquiry?

Dominic Raab: I recognise the issue that the hon. Gentleman wants to deal with but we are not going to rake over the old coals of that debate.

Stephen Hammond (Wimbledon) (Con): My right hon. Friend the Minister recently met me and my constituent Donna Mooney to discuss imprisonment for public protection sentences. Will he update the House on the progress of his thoughts on the matter and whether he plans to bring forward any plans for reform?

Kit Malthouse: I had a useful and informative meeting with my hon. Friend and his constituent. As he knows, we have in place an action plan for IPP sentences that we are prosecuting with, I hope, some verve and energy to drive down the numbers. My hon. Friend will know that the Justice Committee held an inquiry into IPP sentences; we await its conclusions before we look at the next steps.

Gareth Thomas (Harrow West) (Lab/Co-op): My constituent Huw Davies is struggling to regain control of a home that he has owned for many years and is wondering when there will be tougher action to prevent lasting powers of attorney from being taken out fraudulently. Will Ministers set out what they are doing to toughen up the law and to toughen up the enforcement activity in respect of lasting powers of attorney?

Tom Pursglove: I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman for raising an issue of which we are mindful. He will know that we are soon to embark on a process to reform lasting powers of attorney, to make sure that all the processes are fit for the modern world, that incidents of abuse and fraud are tackled robustly and that all the right checks and mechanisms are there.

Andy Carter (Warrington South) (Con): I welcome the work that my hon. Friend the Minister has been doing to recruit more magistrates and the changes to the retirement age to enable senior magistrates to sit for longer. Will he tell us about the plans to introduce powers to keep more cases in the magistrates court and when he expects those powers to come into effect?

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice (James Cartlidge): My hon. Friend is, of course, a serving magistrate and speaks with great authority on these matters. As he knows, the Judicial Review and Courts Bill, which contains key parts of those powers, has not yet received Royal Assent. On my hon. Friend's other point, I can confirm that the Public Service Pensions and Judicial Offices Bill recently received Royal Assent. The Public Service Pensions and Judicial Offices Act 2022 raises the statutory mandatory retirement age to 75. As my hon. Friend says, that is an important measure to ensure that we maximise the number of people in our judicial labour force.

Chris Bryant (Rhondda) (Lab): Does not Mariupol alone demand that we go even further on sanctions in relation to Russia? Could we not sanction all the Russian banks, rather than just 60% of them? Should we not be taking action against the oil and gas companies? Should we not be removing tier 1 visas from people in the UK who have them and have not yet condemned the war in Ukraine? Should we not be putting more pressure on companies—such as Infosys in India—that have big investments in Russia? Should we not make sure that all the family members and apparatchiks are also sanctioned?

Dominic Raab: The hon. Gentleman is absolutely right that we should continually challenge ourselves. The most important thing, though, is that we are focused on and targeted at those either with direct links into the Kremlin or who fund or indirectly fund, to put the squeeze on Putin's war machine.

Simon Fell (Barrow and Furness) (Con): On 30 March last year, my constituent Tim Dack sadly passed away from covid-19. Before he passed away, he woke up from his coma and he proposed to his partner; she was then doubly saddened to find out that she could not be listed as his partner on his death certificate, despite the fact that they had lived together for multiple years. My understanding is that there are uncommenced provisions in the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 that would allow such listing to happen. Might one of my Front-Bench colleagues be able to enlighten me on when those changes will be brought forward?

Tom Pursglove: I am grateful to my hon. Friend for raising that difficult and tragic constituency case. I would be grateful if he took the opportunity to meet me to discuss it in more detail, so that I can understand the circumstances and provide a full response.

Ruth Jones (Newport West) (Lab): Last week, I received an email from the Gwent Citizen Panel about the consultation on the Government proposals to scrap the Human Rights Act 1998. The Government produced a consultation on 14 December but did not produce an easy-read version, or any other versions, such as one in British Sign Language, an audio version or one in Makaton. Why was that?

Dominic Raab: I will look at the various variations the hon. Lady has referred to; I will make sure to get her an answer by correspondence within the week.

Matt Hancock (West Suffolk) (Con): Are the Secretary of State and the Minister for prisons aware of the shocking report out this morning by Ofsted and Her Majesty's inspectorate of prisons, which describes a terrible level of reading ability in prisons and a lack of progress over recent years? What plans do the Government have to put in place the recommendations of the 2016 Coates report and to ensure accountability, so that prison governors understand the vital nature of teaching all prisoners to read? Without that skill, there can be no serious rehabilitation.

Victoria Atkins: I thank my right hon. Friend for his attention to this issue and wider issues of education within the prison system. We absolutely understand the criticisms made in the report. I hope we have pre-empted some of the report's observations through the "Prisons Strategy" White Paper, which shows the Government's determination to cut reoffending through rehabilitation. The White Paper includes, for example, the development of personal learning plans for prisoners and the introduction

of new prison key performance indicators in English and maths, so that we can hold prisons to account for the outcomes they achieve for prisoners.

Mr Barry Sheerman (Huddersfield) (Lab/Co-op): On this day five years ago, our lovely friend, the policeman Keith, was tragically killed—it haunts us all.

Can I ask a question about a real crisis occurring in the criminal justice system—the failure to attract the right number of young recruits into criminal law? Civil law and commercial law are so well paid that we cannot attract young men and women into criminal law. It is a real crisis. What is the Secretary of State going to do about it?

Dominic Raab: I thank the hon. Gentleman. He is right to say that there are difficulties in this area. If he reads our response to the Bellamy review, he will see that there are a number of ways that we want to address the issue, including by increasing fees and breaking down some of the barriers, for example through the promotion of CILEX, so that we can encourage more non-graduate routes into the profession. That will help with not just the volume but the diversity of practitioners.

Speaker's Statement

12.33 pm

Mr Speaker: Before the urgent question, I wish to make a short statement about the sub judice resolution. I have been advised that there are relevant active legal proceedings in the Court of Appeal. I am exercising the discretion given to the Chair in respect of matters sub judice to allow reference to these proceedings, as they may concern issues of national importance. However, I urge Members to exercise caution in what they say and to avoid referring in detail to cases that remain before the Court of Appeal.

While I do not have to give any reason for accepting or declining a request for an urgent question, I wish to be clear that one of the reasons that I decided to allow a brief exchange on the issue today is that, last night, Sky News seemed to be reporting developments on this—it was apparently well briefed—and I understand the Minister was also available for comment this morning, before this House was informed.

We have been through this issue again and again. I do not want this to happen again. Please, respect the House; respect the Back Benchers. They have been elected to hear things here—so please, Ministers, show due respect to Back Benchers. The Government know my views about telling the House about policy developments first. I will continue to grant UQs if I think that has not happened.

Sub-Postmasters: Compensation

12.34 pm

Mr Kevan Jones (North Durham) (Lab) (*Urgent Question*): To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy if he will make a statement on the steps taken to ensure that the group of 555 sub-postmasters are fairly compensated.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Paul Scully): I fully take your words on board, Mr Speaker, and humbly apologise. I thank the right hon. Member for his question. It is really important that we discuss this matter.

Over recent weeks, the House has repeatedly returned to the subject of the Post Office Horizon scandal. Members from all parts of the House are rightly united and outraged at what the sub-postmasters experienced and at the way that they have suffered as a consequence. Some people's lives have had their unjustly devastated, losing their roles as postmasters and often their other businesses as well. Some were imprisoned, and more faced the shadow of convictions over their working and personal lives. Saddest of all, some did not live to see justice, including some who took their own lives.

The Post Office has already apologised, but we know that that is not enough. The victims rightly want the truth to be known and those responsible to be held accountable. That is why we asked Sir Wyn Williams to hold his inquiry, which has lately heard so much tragic testimony from those affected.

As well as apologies and accountability, people want proper compensation to be paid. Those people who exposed the scandal in the first place—the postmasters who won the court case against the Post Office—have not been fairly compensated. But those who were not convicted were not entitled to receive historical shortfall scheme compensation themselves, which, paradoxically, could leave those postmasters eligible for receiving the HSS better compensated than those who won the court case.

The Government recognise that this is just not right, which is why the Chancellor announced today that we are making funds available to ensure that those in the group litigation order group are not financially disadvantaged by the decision to litigate against the Post Office. The GLO group will now be able to access the same levels of compensation as its non-GLO peers.

The postmasters' legal case was funded by litigation funders Therium. Our worry in Government has always been that any compensation that we bring forward for this group of postmasters would not be fully passed on as Therium has a right to claim a proportion of any compensation received. However, following extensive negotiations with the company, I am really pleased that Therium has agreed to waive its rights to any claim on this compensation, meaning that we can now proceed.

We envisage that the funding will support payments under a new scheme similar to the HSS to compensate those GLO members who were not convicted. Those who have convictions overturned already have access to compensation, and we want this compensation to be paid as promptly as possible. We will be writing to the Justice For Subpostmasters Alliance to consult it about the scheme's operations, and I am meeting representatives

of the JFSA on 30 March to discuss these proposals. We will set target dates for compensation awards in the light of our discussions with them. It will not be a long and formal consultation. It will aid decisions on the approach, and I will then inform the House of our plans to deliver that just compensation, which these people so richly deserve.

Mr Kevan Jones: I thank the Minister for his statement. I congratulate him on moving this matter further than his predecessors who made pathetic attempts and showed such ignorance.

The Treasury statement this morning said that the 555 group will be fully and fairly compensated. Similar things were said by the Prime Minister, and the Minister said that before the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee. Can he outline what that means in practice? Is it just reimbursing the legal costs, or will we have a more sophisticated scheme? Certainly, my constituent Tom Brown, who paid back £84,000 that he did not need to pay, is £84,000 out of pocket. He needs that back.

I am also interested to know about interim payments. The sad fact is that there are people in abject poverty now, who are living from week to week, so the quicker we can get some interim payments to those people, the better.

On the overall historical shortfall scheme, has the Minister any idea about how many people were affected by it? I would like to reopen that, because the window given to these sub-postmasters was very short, so it needs to be looked at in detail.

The other question I would like to ask the Minister is about those who have died. He points to the fact that, tragically, some have taken their lives, but there are many others who have died. Will the scheme involve their estates? It would be a complete injustice if those families did not get any of that compensation. I urge him to take the administration of the scheme out of the hands of the Post Office. I, the 555, the hon. Member for North West Leicestershire (Andrew Bridgen) and others have no faith at all in the Post Office to administer it. It is important that it is seen to be independent of the Post Office.

The Minister talks about the 555. I am happy to meet the Minister and, I am sure, the hon. Member for North West Leicestershire and Lord Arbuthnot to talk about the details of the scheme, but I reiterate the point that we need to get this right now. I accept that this is a step forward, but this will not go away. The Minister knows that—can he tell the Treasury that? It will cost quite a lot of money, and I do not know whether he has established yet how much. Does he have an open cheque book now from the Treasury? He might need one.

Paul Scully: Once again, I thank the right hon. Gentleman for his work and for bringing this urgent question to the House today, because it is important that we continue to press on and get this done. I really welcome his attention to this matter. I also thank Lord Arbuthnot, whom he mentioned, who has helped in the past couple of weeks to unlock the situation we have today.

The right hon. Gentleman asks how the process will work and how quickly the 555 will get their money. That is the conversation I want to have with Alan Bates and the JFSA over the next couple of weeks, to ensure that we get something that they feel confident in. I

envisage its sitting alongside and being similar to the HSS scheme, which starts on the basis of looking at losses and ongoing losses. It is important that we address those in the full and fair way I have described and make the compensation meaningful. Yes, we will absolutely work with estates; the HSS already works with the estates of those who have died and with the creditors of those who may be bankrupt, to ensure that they can be restored to a far better position.

I will happily meet the right hon. Gentleman and colleagues across the House who have campaigned on this issue for so many years. I would love to say I have a blank cheque from the Treasury, but that is clearly not going to happen in this place. However, the Treasury knows that we need to sort it out. I want to ensure that the scheme has the confidence of the JFSA. The HSS has an independent panel with it, so it has a degree of independence specifically to give people confidence, but we will work on that in the weeks to come.

Andrew Bridgen (North West Leicestershire) (Con): I welcome the announcement that the 555 sub-postmasters, including my constituents, will now at long last get the compensation they deserve. Does the Minister agree, however, that it is important that the public inquiry currently running gets to the truth of why the Post Office decided to defend the action brought by the 555 for more than four years, at huge cost to the public purse, when back in 2015, following the investigation by Second Sight and Ron Warmington and the evidence from the Fujitsu whistleblower, I knew, the right hon. Member for North Durham (Mr Jones) knew and more importantly the Post Office knew that the Horizon system was faulty and that the convictions of the sub-postmasters were completely unsafe?

Paul Scully: I thank my hon. Friend for all the work he has done to expose this matter. That is why the independent statutory inquiry led by Sir Wyn Williams has been listening to testimony from those so badly affected. The next stage of his inquiry is exactly to get to the bottom of the questions my hon. Friend asks: who knew what and when in the Post Office, Fujitsu and Departments across Government. We will get to the bottom of that.

Mr Speaker: I call SNP spokesperson Marion Fellows.

Marion Fellows (Motherwell and Wishaw) (SNP): The Horizon scandal has spanned decades under Labour, Lib Dem and Tory Ministers. It is a stain on the Post Office and its single shareholder the Government. This response proves that the Government do the right thing in the end, once they have done everything else. I congratulate the Minister on his work. He has been true to his word; among all the Ministers who went before him, we never had that, so I do praise him.

The Justice For Subpostmasters Alliance took on the Post Office and shone a light on it. It should be commended and properly, fully compensated for everything it has done. Many parliamentarians have already mentioned some of this, including members of the all-party parliamentary group on post offices, of which I have the honour of being chair. We need to see a firm commitment in tomorrow's spring statement to the full compensation that has been promised by the Minister, and reassurance that there will be no impact on the post office network as a result.

Paul Scully: I thank the hon. Member for all the work that she does with the APPG, not just on righting this wrong but on the future as well. I thank her for her kind words. This is a moment in time that I hope we can all be really pleased with, as we are moving this on, but it is only a moment in time—it is not finished. There is a lot more of the process to go. I will be judged on this only when I know that the 555 and other members have had the full and final compensation. I accept and agree with that. I want that money to go into the pockets of the postmasters, and I want to minimise legal fees. Clearly the Post Office does not have the resources to pay that level of compensation without affecting the future network, which is why it has been separated so that the Post Office has the future that we all want it to have.

Lucy Allan (Telford) (Con): I thank the Minister from the bottom of my heart for everything that he has done—I am extremely grateful. Does he agree that the conduct of the group litigation by the Post Office was shameful, that it was a war of attrition trying to grind down people who wanted to seek justice, and that it was intentionally trying to stop this coming to light? Thanks to the 555, it is now impossible to ignore. Does he join me in thanking the 555 for their tenacity and determination? Will he ensure that the Post Office apologises for what it has put them through?

Paul Scully: I thank my hon. Friend for all the work that she has done on behalf of her constituent Tracy Felstead and the 554 other postmasters. I will not comment on the Post Office, purely and simply because having instigated the independent inquiry, I want it to remain independent. I do not want to put undue pressure on it. Clearly the Post Office has apologised, and I suspect it will not be the last time that it does so. We absolutely want to get answers. I also thank Nick Wallis, who has done amazing work—his life's work in journalism—in setting out the stall of the 555 and telling their story.

Chi Onwurah (Newcastle upon Tyne Central) (Lab): I thank my right hon. Friend the Member for North Durham (Mr Jones) for securing this urgent question and for his tireless efforts in standing up for all those affected by the Horizon scandal. I pay tribute to all the postmasters who fought for justice, and especially to the efforts and determination of the 555 litigants whose civil case paved the way for convictions to be quashed and compensation finally delivered.

Labour has consistently called for all those affected by the Horizon scandal to be able to access the compensation they deserve. It was simply unacceptable that those who led this slow march to justice had been excluded from the historical shortfall scheme. In a week in which we have had plenty of warm words from the Government on their commitment to British workers but little by way of action, it is vital that the Government get this right. Hard-working, honest people had their lives torn apart because of a misguided belief that workers are dishonest and technology infallible.

Today's announcement is warmly welcomed on the Labour Benches. I thank the Minister for his work on this issue; his commitment has been unquestionable throughout. However, I do want to press him in saying that speed is now vital. The Government have delayed far too long in getting to this point, and there can be no

further delays for all those affected to get the compensation that will go some way towards making amends for this appalling injustice. As such, will he say how many are affected and provide a timescale for when all compensation payments will have been made? Labour has called for all those involved to be held accountable, so will he update the House on what investigations are ongoing into the role of Fujitsu? Will he commit to regularly updating the House on the progress of the scheme? This has been one of the greatest miscarriages of justice this country has ever seen. Every day's delay only compounds that injustice. I hope the Government can finally start to right these wrongs for good.

Paul Scully: I hope I can show by my actions that I will keep the House updated as we go along. On where we are with the compensation, I can announce that as of 11 March, 45% of people in the historical shortfall scheme had already received offers. That amounts to 1,067 individuals. The Post Office reports that it is firmly on track to make 95% of initial offers by the end of the year. The historical shortfall scheme started slowly, as it first worked through the cases and benchmarked those that would help inform future payments, so that we know so much more about the 555. Dovetailed with the HSS information that we have gained, I want to ensure that we can start delivering that compensation very quickly. I am still aiming for the end of the year for the HSS. We need to establish, once we know what the process is, an exact timescale agreed with the JFSA.

Mr Speaker: And we will hear it first in the Chamber, and we will make sure it is done via a statement, rather than by me granting urgent questions. Lovely, Minister.

Mr Andrew Mitchell (Sutton Coldfield) (Con): I very much welcome what my hon. Friend has said today, and there is no doubt that he has been part of the resolution of this problem, but he will know that across the House for many, many months everyone has accepted that this is a huge miscarriage of justice and a disgrace. There is an independent inquiry, which he has rightly referred to today, but will he make sure that within Government there is a lessons-learned process and lessons drawn for the future, so that the role of Government, too, is placed under the microscope, to ensure that nothing like this ever happens again?

Paul Scully: First, my right hon. Friend talked about the independent inquiry, and I want to answer the earlier question about Fujitsu. Fujitsu is not on the preferred list of Government suppliers, but it can tender for Government contracts. Indeed, when we hear from the independent inquiry, that will give us all the information we need for how we move our relationship going forward.

To speak to the point that my right hon. Friend made, we always want to learn lessons, not just on what happened with the scandal, but on how we have handled it recently. Covid has taught us how to accelerate decision making, which has given me some of the weaponry I needed to get to this point quicker than we might have done in normal times. There are plenty of lessons we will be learning in the Government.

Karl Turner (Kingston upon Hull East) (Lab): I begin by thanking my right hon. Friend the Member for North Durham (Mr Jones) and the hon. Member for North West Leicestershire (Andrew Bridgen) for the

work they have done throughout this scandalous issue. I thank the Minister, too. It is rare for me to congratulate Ministers, but he has ploughed through real barriers in Whitehall to get where we are today. What people are asking me is this: what are we doing to get some money back from Fujitsu? This will cost the taxpayer potentially hundreds of millions of pounds. How on earth are we going to allow Fujitsu to get away with it?

Paul Scully: I thank the hon. Gentleman not only for his kind words, but for the work he has done in representing members of the group litigation order in the first place, as well as for his work here and his determination. The frank answer is that we will not—we will push as much as we can in any avenue to tackle compensation. Wherever it comes from, it should not be the UK taxpayer who is picking up the tab for other people's problems.

Siobhan Baillie (Stroud) (Con): This scandal continues to shock, and I thank the campaigners and the Members in this House with greyer hair than me, perhaps caused by this horrendous situation. I echo the calls for interim payments and more information about the practical steps to manage expectations, but it is understandable that victims, such as my constituent Nichola Arch, want to see the details. They are also looking to see whether things such as mixed malicious prosecution are included. For those found not guilty, can the Minister provide some comfort from the Dispatch Box today?

Paul Scully: I thank my hon. Friend for the work she has done representing Nichola Arch and others. I saw her on GB News the other day talking with Nichola in the constituency casebook section. They both spoke excellently on this. I can confirm that our intention is very much to allow people who were prosecuted but not convicted full access, in the same way as members of the HSS. We have to work through that detail, but I have full confidence that we will get there.

Andrew Gwynne (Denton and Reddish) (Lab): I add my thanks to the Minister for his tenacity in pushing this through some of the barriers that we have faced over a long time. I also thank my right hon. Friend the Member for North Durham (Mr Jones) and the hon. Member for North West Leicestershire (Andrew Bridgen) for sticking with this for such a long time. It is great that we are now getting a clearer picture of the compensation. I support what my right hon. Friend said about interim payments being key, because there is real hardship in this injustice, but I want to ask the Minister about the 736 who have been wrongly convicted of misdoing. Only 72 of them have had their convictions quashed or overturned. What are the Government doing to ensure justice for all sub-postmasters?

Paul Scully: Anyone who was convicted can apply for interim payments, and the majority of them have had their payments. The 555 will be able to have that, should they have been convicted. We are working with the Post Office to ensure that we can get to the remaining people so that they apply for their convictions to be overturned. Clearly we do not want anyone to have a conviction on their record that should not be there and is there through no fault of their own. We will ensure that we continue to push for that.

Bob Blackman (Harrow East) (Con): I remember my first ever job was working on the Post Office counter automation project—it was some 40 years ago, I hasten to say, and for Burroughs Machines, not Fujitsu. I congratulate my hon. Friend on the work he has done thus far, but clearly this is a case of needing to compensate people quickly. He is going to do a short consultation. Will he consider now, after that consultation, making interim payments immediately, rather than waiting until the end of the year?

Paul Scully: First, I do not want to pre-empt anything that we may do, but when I talk about a short consultation, this is about 555 people who have a well organised group together and their lawyers. We have already started, so this is not something where we are writing out to people and waiting for answers to come back; this is a focused bit of work. What I can say is that we will start the process that is agreed with the JFSA as soon as possible—and as soon, Mr Speaker, as I have updated the House first.

Peter Grant (Glenrothes) (SNP): The Minister will be aware of the plight of my constituent Myra, who jointly ran a post office with her mum. They begged and borrowed £70,000 from friends and families to fill a shortfall that they could not understand, but which we now know—and the Post Office probably knew at the time—was not a shortfall at all. They lost their jobs, lost their home and were branded thieves and liars. Myra's mum did not live to see her name cleared. Myra was not allowed to claim under the historical shortfall scheme. Does the Minister agree that no matter how carefully the criteria for any compensation scheme are drawn, there will always be people who do not fit those criteria? Will he ensure that there is a catch-all clause in the compensation scheme so that nobody but nobody is left without the compensation for which they have waited far too long?

Paul Scully: Please send my condolences to Myra and the family. Within any scheme there will always be hard edges, but please let me know if particular people are falling through the gaps and let me see what further we can do to support them through this difficult time.

Martin Vickers (Cleethorpes) (Con): I add my tribute to the Minister, who came after a long line of Ministers who did not grasp this issue, but he certainly has. Following other points that have been made, may I seek clarity on those who have died? Will their estates benefit?

Paul Scully: Yes. In the same way as with the HSS, we can work with the estates to ensure that compensation is paid through them. That is my understanding.

Andy McDonald (Middlesbrough) (Lab): I congratulate my right hon. Friend the Member for North Durham (Mr Jones) on securing this urgent question. I also congratulate the Minister, who has stuck at this and been candid with us on every occasion. This is one of many battles—it is won, and I congratulate him—but the purpose of compensation is to put people in the position they would have been in had the insult not occurred in the first place. It is essential that this scheme properly compensates people for their past and future pecuniary losses, as well as compensating for their pain, suffering and loss of amenity, including the loss of

[*Andy McDonald*]

liberty. Will he ensure that those principles are adhered to in this scheme, because nothing less than that will satisfy the people who have been so badly wronged by this terrible episode?

Paul Scully: I thank the hon. Gentleman for his kind words. In terms of loss of liberty, that comes up with the overturned convictions. In terms of the overall losses, as I said, the HSS works by looking at the past losses as well as what is ongoing and making an assessment of that with an independent panel behind it. I envisage that there will be the same scheme for the 555 so that there will be parity in their compensation.

Jerome Mayhew (Broadland) (Con): As Back Benchers, we often ask Ministers for action and get absolutely nowhere, but today is different. I join the tributes to the Minister for how hard and how successfully he has been working in Government to get to a solution. I also put on record my recognition of Therium's decision not to seek its extra compensation. This week of all weeks, it is nice to have a business doing the right thing. Can he give some indication to my constituents and others of the rough timeframe for receipt of the compensation payment?

Paul Scully: I thank my hon. Friend for his kind words. It is difficult for me to say, because it depends on what scheme we come up with. If it is the scheme that I am envisaging, which is similar to the HSS and runs alongside it, I expect those payments to be largely out of the door and in people's pockets by the end of the year. I do not see there being a long time delay from adding the 555 to that, because we know so much about them and can include them in that scheme or something similar.

Kate Osborne (Jarrow) (Lab): I thank my right hon. Friend the Member for North Durham (Mr Jones) and the Minister for their work in this area. I also pay tribute to the 555 for their long battle to get justice and compensation in one of the biggest miscarriages of justice in our history. I pay particular tribute to my constituent Chris Head, who is one of the 555 and a tireless campaigner on the issue. Chris would like me to ask the Minister whether the scheme will have independent oversight so that victims are fairly and independently assessed.

Paul Scully: I, too, pay tribute to Christopher Head, who was one of the youngest postmasters involved. We often have Twitter ding-dongs, shall we say, which have mellowed slightly since we have all got to the same point. The hon. Lady asks about independent oversight. The historical shortfall scheme has independent oversight with an independent panel. None the less, I want to ensure that the JSFA is as comfortable with the scheme that we come up with as it can be, because we want to give it the confidence that there is independent oversight of it so that those people can get full and fair compensation.

James Wild (North West Norfolk) (Con): I join hon. Members in welcoming the announcement and the tenacity that the Minister has shown in addressing this injustice. Will the Government look to recover the compensation costs from those responsible for the

scandal—the providers of the Horizon system—and to recover the bonuses paid to those who were running the Post Office during that shameful period?

Paul Scully: Nothing is off the table. We need to look at all those sorts of things, because the UK taxpayer should not be on the hook for other people's mistakes and sometimes deliberate—often deliberate—approaches in that regard.

Tony Lloyd (Rochdale) (Lab): I add my thanks and I welcome the Minister's statement. The reality is that sub-postmasters have lost enormously and compensation will go only so far. One thing that they want is to know that there is genuine accountability. I know that the Minister does not want to anticipate the inquiry, but can he make it clear that where there is individual wrongdoing, it will be properly dealt with at whatever level is appropriate?

Paul Scully: Absolutely; I can make that clear. We want to know those answers. People want full and fair compensation, but they also want answers and accountability. We can have accountability only if we do exactly what the hon. Gentleman said.

Mr Barry Sheerman (Huddersfield) (Lab/Co-op): I congratulate the Minister; there is light at the end of the tunnel for a lot of people now. My right hon. Friend the Member for North Durham (Mr Jones) has played a blinder, but this is another example of cross-party Back Benchers in this House working hard for their constituents and making a difference. Let me briefly mention the Criminal Cases Review Commission, which has a very small staff who have worked really hard on the issue. The chief executive Helen Pitcher and her team have done a solid amount of work. Can we recognise that and can the Minister give Helen and her team some help, because they desperately need to retain some commissioners to finish this work?

Paul Scully: I pay tribute to the CCRC. It is because of its resource that we want to ensure that people can go directly to the Court of Appeal to try to circumvent overloading it. I pay tribute to the work that it has done to get us this far.

Jim Shannon (Strangford) (DUP): I commend the right hon. Member for North Durham (Mr Jones) for his endeavours and for his tenacity. I also commend the Minister for delivering on it; it is always good to have a Minister who does that, so I thank him. I welcome the news that payments will be equalised, but this is the second time in two days that I have come across a case where those who paid for litigation and went through the stress of a court case ended up worse off than those who did nothing. Could consideration be given to the court costs being covered as an act of good faith for those postmasters whose lives and reputations have been decimated?

Paul Scully: In terms of the original funding, the court cases will absolutely be taken into account—that is the entire process. They will be compensated as if they were going through the HSS and as if they had not gone through the court case in the first place and had those court fees and legal fees taken away from them. I totally agree with the hon. Gentleman.

Margaret Ferrier (Rutherglen and Hamilton West) (Ind): I welcome the Government's move to ensure that the 555 sub-postmasters receive the compensation that they deserve. I thank the Minister for his work to fix this matter; he has really cared about it. Can he confirm what discussions he has had with his Cabinet colleagues about how we can ensure that future victims of such scandals do not face the same issues of accessing compensation that is swallowed up by legal fees?

Paul Scully: That is the last question, so I will say that although the last three quarters of an hour have been my moment in the sun, it is not about me: it is about the 555. I thank all hon. Members on both sides of the House who have been involved in ensuring that we have reached this point. There is plenty more to do. Clearly, we will all learn from this to inform us in other situations that may arise so that we can ensure that people get compensation as soon as possible.

Points of Order

1.6 pm

Stuart C. McDonald (Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch East) (SNP): On a point of order, Mr Speaker. As you know, this afternoon we will consider Lords amendments to the Nationality and Borders Bill. One of many complaints about the Bill is that it could cost an extraordinary sum of money to achieve not very much. For that reason, some hon. Members have been trying to get hold of the Government's economic impact assessment for the Bill for some time. The Home Affairs Committee has been told on three occasions by Ministers and staff that it will be published "shortly" and at least two written questions have had the same answer. At a Committee hearing on 2 February, however, the Home Secretary, after first insisting that she would not publish anything at all, said that she would

"happily write to the Committee Chair and provide cost estimates, and even some of the cost estimates based on future projections" within two weeks. In subsequent correspondence, however, she has invoked prejudice to negotiations with potential partners in disclosing offshoring costs. She did say:

"When the time is right, I would be delighted to provide details on cost estimates".

When will the time be right? Is there anything that I or you can do to ensure that hon. Members see that important document before our debate this afternoon?

Mr Speaker: I am grateful to the hon. Member for giving me notice of the point of order. There is no formal procedural requirement for the House to have access to the information that he mentions before its consideration of Lords amendments today, but if Ministers undertake to provide information, they should do so.

I have no powers to compel the Government to provide the information sought by the hon. Member, but I always encourage Ministers to provide as much relevant material to the House as possible. He has put his point on the record and it will have been heard by Ministers. I encourage them to consider whether they can give more information to the House even at this late stage. I do hope that they will listen.

Ruth Cadbury (Brentford and Isleworth) (Lab): On a point of order, Mr Speaker. On 2 March, I tabled a named day question to the Home Office about Ukraine. It raised a policy question about visas and was relevant to my constituent and, no doubt, the constituents of many other hon. Members. It was due for an answer on 8 March. My staff chased it up twice last week but I have still had no answer. What else can we do to ensure that we get timely answers to our questions through the appropriate procedures of the House?

Mr Speaker: First, I thank the hon. Member for giving me notice of the point of order. It is important that Members receive timely answers to questions, especially named day questions—it is in the nature of the named day question that it tells Ministers when they should be answered. The hon. Member's point is on the record, and it will no doubt be drawn to the attention of the Leader of the House, who I am sure will pursue this matter. I know the previous Leader of the House was very concerned when the Government were letting down

[Mr Speaker]

Members of this House by not answering those questions on time—or within what we would say was the right time—which is in the nature of named day questions.

The hon. Member may also consider whether she wants to draw this to the attention of the Procedure Committee, which monitors the performance of the Government in timely responses to questions. I have to say that we seem to be going backwards again. We were doing really well, so I appeal to all Departments to treat Members with respect, because in the end they are answerable to the constituents who are asking the questions of them. Please, let us get our act together within the Government.

Shared Prosperity Fund (Wales) Bill

Motion for leave to bring in a Bill (Standing Order No. 23)

1.10 pm

Ben Lake (Ceredigion) (PC): I beg to move,

That leave be given to bring in a Bill to require the Secretary of State to report to Parliament on the merits of devolving management and administration of the money allocated to Wales via the Shared Prosperity Fund to the Welsh Government.

Ahead of the spring statement tomorrow, surging energy bills and increasing costs of living are rightly making us nervous. We are at a critical juncture not only in overcoming the legacy of the covid-19 pandemic and the devastating consequences of the war in Ukraine, but in how we approach levelling up. What I advocate today through this Bill is a clear UK-wide commitment to lower energy bills and to meeting our net zero targets by improving energy efficiency in homes and businesses, delivered through a devolved shared prosperity fund.

Households and businesses across the UK are feeling not just a pinch, but a hammer blow from rising energy bills. Given that they have already risen by 54% and likely to rise further due to our dependence on fossil fuels, the Wales fiscal analysis team has calculated that the average Welsh household on a default dual-fuel tariff will see its energy bill rise by £693 from April. Wales is particularly vulnerable in this respect. We have the highest-poverty and child poverty rate of the four nations, with almost one in four people, and 31% of our children, living in poverty. Our vulnerability to energy price shocks is compounded by having the oldest, least energy-efficient housing stock in the UK, with a fifth of homes in Wales built before 1900, and the lowest proportion of dwellings rated energy performance certificate C grade or above. This also affects our climate ambitions, of course, with housing responsible for about 20% of our carbon emissions.

Some will argue that the Chancellor has already helped address the energy crisis by providing a rebate to UK households. However, I would argue that this measure was insufficient at its introduction and is even less adequate now. I realise that calls on the Government to introduce a windfall tax on cash-rich oil and gas producers—we should remember that the largest producer in the North sea has just reported \$1.7 billion in profit—are likely to go unheeded. Nevertheless, the Government must ensure that they do not revert to a business-as-usual approach to energy supply, or fall for the siren call of those who would have us believe that salvation can be found in greater exploitation of fossil fuel reserves. To do so would not only be to forget the calls made at COP26 in November or the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report on climate change, but grossly to overstate the short-term benefit of shale gas extraction and to underestimate its cost.

Cardiff University recently concluded that 1,016 fracking pads would be needed to replace just half of the UK's gas imports to 2035. This would mean the construction of one shale gas pad approximately every five days over the next 15 years across our country. What is more, additional domestic gas production is unlikely to translate into lower prices for UK consumers, as our prices reflect Europe's gas markets, with which we are intricately interconnected. Indeed, the Green Alliance cross-party think-tank offers a sobering fact for proponents of

fracking: the first four days of the current gas crunch in September saw the greatest gas export from the UK to Europe on record, as domestic producers sought the best price for their product. Finally, there is the small matter that fracking is a devolved matter, and it has been banned in Wales since 2018 following a Plaid Cymru motion. Wales also joined the Beyond Oil & Gas Alliance at COP26, but, worryingly, the UK Government refused to commit this week to respecting devolved powers over fracking.

There is no solace to be found in the technologies of the past. Instead, we must commit ourselves to delivering a step change in our energy system, towards which I believe the shared prosperity fund, if managed effectively, could make an important contribution. The Government promised in 2019 to replace EU regional funding with a programme that is

“fairer and better tailored to our economy.”

So far, however, the amount of funding allocated to that end has failed to match the promise of the UK Government’s levelling-up rhetoric. Just as worrying is the lack of a joined-up approach that brings together communities, local authorities and the Welsh Government to address the unique challenges that Wales faces. Instead, we are at very real risk of seeing competition, rather than co-operation, between various groups and authorities bidding for funding, resulting in a disjointed approach to key issues such as energy efficiency and a failure to realise the promise of economic regeneration.

Instead, through this Bill, Plaid Cymru and Members from across the UK are advocating using the shared prosperity fund as a means to level up the UK through fostering greater collaboration among its nations and regions. Such an approach is far more likely to achieve the transformational change that we all desire and to realise important objectives such as a more energy-efficient housing stock. There is ample evidence in favour of a bold and extensive retrofitting scheme, and in response to last year’s Budget, Plaid Cymru echoed calls by the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales for a £3.6 billion investment programme over 10 years to improve the efficiency of the Welsh housing stock. It has been estimated that by delivering a long-term funding settlement that would leverage further investment from the private sector, guarantee green jobs and deliver much-needed energy efficiency improvements, this measure could deliver average annual savings of some £418 for Welsh households.

If we applied such an infrastructure programme—developed by, and tailored for, each of the nations and regions of the UK—we could secure real long-term energy savings for UK households. Unfortunately, that opportunity was missed in the autumn. By devolving the administration of different aspects of the shared prosperity fund to Wales, the Government will ensure the levelling-up agenda respects local democracy and harnesses the energy and focus of every tier of government towards the realisation of a coherent strategy. Failure to do so will mean that the levelling up we all hope to

bring about will continue to elude us, no matter how lofty the rhetoric we employ or the number of policy documents we produce.

Only by devolving the management and administration of the shared prosperity fund can we hope to bring about a transformational programme that will meet our societal, economic and climate action responsibilities.

Question put and agreed to.

Ordered,

That Ben Lake, Hywel Williams, Liz Saville Roberts, Richard Thomson, Claire Hanna, Stephen Farry, Alison Thewliss, Geraint Davies, Jonathan Edwards, Wendy Chamberlain and Beth Winter present the Bill.

Ben Lake accordingly presented the Bill.

Bill read the first time; to be read a Second time on Friday 6 May, and to be printed (Bill 288).

NATIONALITY AND BORDERS BILL (PROGRAMME) (NO. 3)

Motion made, and Question put forthwith (Standing Order No. 83A(7)),

That the following provisions shall apply to the Nationality and Borders Bill for the purpose of supplementing the Orders of 20 July 2021 (Nationality and Borders Bill (Programme)) and 7 December 2021 (Nationality and Borders Bill (Programme) (No. 2)):

Consideration of Lords Amendments

(1) Proceedings on consideration of Lords Amendments shall (so far as not previously concluded) be brought to a conclusion six hours after their commencement.

(2) The proceedings—

(a) shall be taken in the order shown in the first column of the following Table, and

(b) shall (so far as not previously concluded) be brought to a conclusion at the times specified in the second column of the Table.

TABLE

Lords Amendments	Time for conclusion of proceedings
1, 4 to 9, 52, 53, 10 to 20, 54, 2, 3, 43 to 51, 21	Three hours after the commencement of proceedings on consideration of Lords Amendments
22, 24, 23, 25 to 27, 40, 28 to 39, 42, 41	Six hours after the commencement of those proceedings

Subsequent stages

(3) Any further Message from the Lords may be considered forthwith without any Question being put.

(4) The proceedings on any further Message from the Lords shall (so far as not previously concluded) be brought to a conclusion one hour after their commencement.—(*Michael Tomlinson.*)

Question agreed to.

Nationality and Borders Bill

Consideration of Lords amendments

[Relevant documents: *Seventh Report of the Joint Committee on Human Rights, Legislative Scrutiny: Nationality and Borders Bill (Part 1)*—Nationality, HC 764; *Ninth Report of the Joint Committee on Human Rights, Legislative Scrutiny: Nationality and Borders Bill (Part 3)*—Immigration offences and enforcement, HC 885; *Eleventh Report of the Joint Committee on Human Rights, Legislative Scrutiny: Nationality and Borders Bill (Part 5)*—Modern Slavery, HC 964; *Twelfth Report of the Joint Committee on Human Rights, Legislative Scrutiny: Nationality and Borders Bill (Parts 1, 2 and 4)*—Asylum, Home Office Decision-Making, Age Assessments, and Deprivation of Citizenship Orders, HC 1007; *Tenth Special Report of the Joint Committee on Human Rights, Legislative Scrutiny: Nationality and Borders Bill: Government Responses to the Committee's Seventh, Ninth, Eleventh and Twelfth Reports*, HC 1208; *Letter from the Chair of the Joint Committee on Human Rights to Tom Pursglove MP, Minister for Justice and Tackling Illegal Migration, relating to Part 2 (Asylum) and Part 5 (Modern Slavery) of the Nationality and Borders Bill*, HC 588, dated 17 November 2021; *Letter from Tom Pursglove MP, Minister for Justice and Tackling Illegal Migration, to the Chair of the Joint Committee on Human Rights relating to Part 2 (Asylum) and Part 5 (Modern Slavery) of the Nationality and Borders Bill*, HC 588, dated 25 November 2021; e-petition 601583, *Remove Clause 9 from the Nationality and Borders Bill*.]

Mr Speaker: I must draw the House's attention to the fact that financial privilege is engaged by Lords amendments 10, 12 and 26. If they are agreed to, I will cause the customary entry waiving Commons financial privilege to be entered in the *Journal*.

After Clause 4

PROVISION FOR CHAGOS ISLANDERS TO ACQUIRE BRITISH NATIONALITY

1.19 pm

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Tom Pursglove): I beg to move, That this House disagrees with Lords amendment 1.

Mr Speaker: With this it will be convenient to discuss the following:

Government amendments (a) and (b) in lieu of Lords amendment 1.

Lords amendment 4, Government motion to disagree, and Government amendments (a) to (f) in lieu.

Lords amendment 5, and Government motion to disagree.

Lords amendment 6, and Government motion to disagree.

Lords amendment 7, and Government motion to disagree.

Lords amendment 8, and Government motion to disagree.

Lords amendment 9, and Government motion to disagree.

Lords amendment 52, and Government motion to disagree.

Lords amendment 53, and Government motion to disagree.

Lords amendment 10, and Government motion to disagree.

Lords amendment 11, and Government motion to disagree.

Lords amendment 12, and Government motion to disagree.

Lords amendment 13, and Government motion to disagree.

Lords amendment 14, and Government motion to disagree.

Lords amendment 15, and Government motion to disagree.

Lords amendment 16, and Government motion to disagree.

Lords amendment 17, and Government motion to disagree.

Lords amendment 18, and Government motion to disagree.

Lords amendment 19, and Government motion to disagree.

Lords amendment 20, and Government motion to disagree.

Lords amendment 54, and Government motion to disagree.

Lords amendments 2, 3, 43 to 51 and 21.

Tom Pursglove: Mr Speaker, may I begin by joining in, on behalf of the Home Office, your tribute to PC Keith Palmer, who lost his life five years ago today? All of us who were in the House will never forget that day. It was an enormous tragedy; he died in the line of service, protecting our democracy and the people in this place. We will be forever grateful to him and his family, and our thoughts are very much with them today, and with everybody caught up in that terrible tragedy on Westminster bridge.

This country has a long and proud tradition of providing sanctuary to those in need. The British people are generous and compassionate, and we only have to look around us to see that compassion in action right now. I think I speak for the whole House in thanking everyone stepping up to support people fleeing the conflicts in Afghanistan and Ukraine.

This Bill is about delivering a long-term solution to the long-term problems that have beset the asylum system over decades. It has three central objectives: to make the system fairer and more effective so we can better protect and support those in genuine need; to deter illegal entry, breaking the business model of evil criminal trafficking; and to make it easier to remove those with no right to be here.

The reforms we are introducing through this Bill have been debated at length both in this House and the other place, and I want to put on record my thanks to all Members for the rigour with which they have scrutinised the measures we have proposed. I also want to say that as the Bill has progressed through Parliament, this Government have been listening carefully to the questions and concerns raised not only by Members but by the many organisations, communities and individuals who have been carefully following its progress.

We have amended the Bill to clarify that new measures to tackle people smugglers will not criminalise those acting under the direction of Her Majesty's Coastguard. We have also introduced an amendment to resolve the lawful residence issue that has troubled many individuals with indefinite leave to remain under the EU settlement scheme who wish to naturalise but have not previously held comprehensive sickness insurance.

In response to the appalling situation in Ukraine, we have added new powers to enable us to impose visa penalties on countries posing a threat to international peace and security or whose actions lead, or are likely to lead, to armed conflict or a breach of humanitarian law. We have also announced an expansion of the Hong Kong British national overseas route, which will enable individuals aged 18 or over who were born on or after 1 July 1997 and have at least one BNO parent to apply to the route independently.

Before going further, I would like to say something more about the situation in Ukraine, in particular the calls we have heard in respect of unaccompanied children. We of course recognise the deeply troubling circumstances faced by all Ukrainians who are caught up in this conflict, and we of course acknowledge calls for support to Ukrainian orphans and unaccompanied children. However, the UK cannot act unilaterally on such matters, and the views of affected Governments must be taken into account. The Ukrainian Government have been clear that children must not be taken into care without the prior agreement of their authorities; we cannot simply transfer unaccompanied minors to the UK without first securing their authorisation. It may be in the best interests of many children to remain in the region given that it is common for those labelled as orphans by the media who are in the Ukrainian care system to have living parents, and ultimately their Government, whom they are not fleeing, should have the final say on these matters.

We are working urgently, however, with the authorities in Ukraine and Poland to secure the final agreements needed to bring to the UK a group of over 50 Ukrainian children, known as the Dnipro kids, who have escaped the brutal war and are currently in Poland. I recognise that many Members are following that issue closely and have a keen interest in it, and Home Office Ministers will keep the House updated. This is a complex case, and it is absolutely right that we wait for the appropriate checks and written permissions before bringing these children to the UK. The Home Secretary and her counterparts in the Ukrainian, Polish and Scottish Governments are united in their determination to ensure these children get the right support and the care they need.

However, I remind the House that our Ukraine family scheme also provides an immediate pathway for those Ukrainians, including unaccompanied children subject to safeguarding checks, with family already settled in the UK to come to our country. We would expect most children to apply in family groups, such as a parent with a child, but I can assure colleagues that this scheme is designed to allow as many people as possible to come to the UK and to give them immediate access to the support they need. We must do nothing less.

Returning to the Bill, Members will have seen that many amendments were proposed and agreed to during its passage through the other place, including some proposed by the Government. The Government have

carefully considered each of the non-Government amendments, and I would like to explain what we have concluded and why. But before doing so, I would like to offer an apology to the House for the late publication of the updated explanatory notes. Manuscript copies of the updated notes have been distributed, but I accept that they should have been published online on Friday, and I am sorry that this did not happen—for that discourtesy I genuinely am apologetic, Mr Speaker.

On Lords amendment 1, relating to access to British overseas territories citizenship and British citizenship for Chagossians, I again place on record my sympathy with the Chagossians for how they were treated in the 1960s and 1970s. I also want to place on record my admiration for the way in which Members from across the House have championed their cause, in particular my hon. Friend the Member for Crawley (Henry Smith), who has been a consistent and tireless advocate on this issue for many years; he has run an exceptional campaign. We have listened carefully to the concerns raised in both Houses and in the Chagossian community on the difficulties faced by Chagossians in accessing British nationality. These difficulties have arisen from the unique historical treatment of those who were removed from the British Indian Ocean Territory in the 1960s and 1970s and the limited recognition of those circumstances in British nationality law. Given that, the Government have concluded it would be appropriate to take action in this Bill, consistent with our other measures designed to correct historical unfairness in nationality law, and will put forward an amendment as such. This will mean there is a new route to British nationality for direct descendants of the Chagossians removed from the British Indian Ocean Territory. In doing that, we are satisfied that the Chagossian diaspora is unique and we are not setting a precedent that would undermine the general principles governing the acquisition of British citizenship by descent. Further details will follow in due course, and I want again to say a huge “Well done and congratulations” to my hon. Friend for helping us to bring about this important change.

Patrick Grady (Glasgow North) (SNP): This is, I think, at least one small point of agreement, but can the Minister explain why the amendment passed in the House of Lords is not acceptable in that form to the Government, and in particular whether the provision in the amendment that no charge will be made for Chagossians applying for citizenship will be retained somehow?

Tom Pursglove: The direct answer to the hon. Gentleman's question is that we judged that the amendment tabled in the House of Lords is technically deficient. I can confirm, however, that this route is free and there will be no good character requirement associated with it. We think the way this is presented in response to the Lords amendment is the correct way to progress and that it recognises the broad agreement for this, delivering on precisely what this House and the other place wish to see. I think we can all come together and be very pleased about that.

Lords amendment 4 removes the clause from the Bill that contains our proposals regarding notification requirements for those who are subject to a deprivation of citizenship decision. Deprivation is necessary to protect the public from those seeking to do serious harm, such as terrorists, or those who acquired their citizenship by fraudulent means. I again emphasise that the underlying

[Tom Pursglove]

deprivation of citizenship power is a century old, is only used in a small number of cases, is never used to target people because of their ethnic or religious background, and always comes with a right of appeal. The changes we want to make do not change any of that. This measure is simply about how we notify someone of the intention to remove their citizenship. It is necessary in order to ensure that we are able to use this power where we cannot contact a person; for example, because they are in a warzone. When contact is made, that person will be able to appeal the deprivation decision as usual.

We have considered very carefully amendments to the deprivation of citizenship clause tabled by Lord Anderson of Ipswich and agreed to in the other place. Lord Anderson's amendments provide more clarity on the reasons for not giving notice of a deprivation decision, as well as introducing a degree of judicial oversight of the decision not to give notice. We are content that the original intention of the clause is not altered by these amendments, and we are satisfied that the amendments will enable us to protect the rights of the individual while delivering on our security objectives.

Jonathan Gullis (Stoke-on-Trent North) (Con): I thank the Minister for taking the time to meet me and other colleagues with large ethnic minority communities in their constituencies, such as the Pakistani Kashmiri community that I am proud to have in Stoke-on-Trent North, Kidsgrove and Talke, and for giving that clarification and accepting the Lords amendments. They will help to ensure that it is made clear to people in that community that they should not fear, despite some of the misinformation produced by certain Members of the House outside the Chamber.

1.30 pm

Tom Pursglove: I am grateful to my hon. Friend for raising that point and for the engagement I have had with him on these matters throughout the passage of the Bill. I genuinely hope that the amendments in lieu we propose today, which draw on the sensible and reasonable suggestions made by Lord Anderson in the other place, will help to provide reassurance about oversight and the nature of the mechanisms. The way in which some individuals have sought to present the issue in the public narrative is regrettable, but I hope that people will recognise that it is about protecting the British people from high-harm individuals, some of whom are in a war zone and have no regard whatsoever for the harm that they would cause on the streets of our country. We are exceptionally mindful of that. The first responsibility of any British Government is to keep the British people safe. The amendments will help us to do just that.

Simon Hoare (North Dorset) (Con): I entirely support what the Minister is saying. Does he agree that citizenship of this country not only accrues rights but demands responsibilities? When people shy away from those responsibilities and ally themselves with a cultural value set so alien to ours that we cannot even recognise it, that must have consequences.

Tom Pursglove: I agree with my hon. Friend's assessment that citizenship of this country comes with rights and responsibilities, and with recognition and acceptance of

important constitutional principles including the rule of law. Those are all fundamental and central to the way in which our society has developed and is crafted and on which it stands. They are important principles that we all accept are crucial.

Richard Graham (Gloucester) (Con): For the record, just so that we are all absolutely clear, we on the Government Benches, as elsewhere, strongly support the full integration of every community and British passport holder. The Government amendment will make it absolutely clear above all to Muslims of all places of origin and above all those born and bred in the UK that there is no threat to them whatsoever.

Tom Pursglove: My hon. Friend puts it better than I could. He has stated with crystal clarity the nature of the change, which I believe is enhanced and improved by accepting the sensible and pragmatic amendments tabled by Lord Anderson. It is also worth saying for the benefit of the House that taking out of the equation the issue of citizenship being obtained by fraud, the provision relates to 19 cases a year on average, and the changes we are making through the Bill do not alter the qualification, so no additional individuals will be brought into scope. The changes relate purely to the matter of notification.

On a procedural note, I should say that although Lord Anderson's amendments were agreed in the other place, they were deleted when peers agreed to remove the substantive deprivation of citizenship clause from the Bill. The Government are therefore retabling the substantive clause, as amended by peers to include Lord Anderson's amendments. I hope that meets with the favour of the House. It acts on and reflects the desire expressed for greater safeguards and greater clarity on these measures.

Lords amendment 5 inserts a clause specifying that nothing in the part of the Bill to which it applies authorises any policies or decisions that are incompatible with the 1951 refugee convention or the 1967 protocol relating to the status of refugees. It is the clear position of this Government that everything we are doing is compatible with all our obligations under international law. We do not think it is necessary to set that out on the face of the Bill. The Government therefore do not agree to the amendment.

Stuart C. McDonald (Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch East) (SNP): The Minister will be aware that there is a massive range of legal opinion and that the opinion of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is that that is not the case at all when a lot of what is going on in part 2 of the Bill is in flagrant breach of the refugee convention. If the Minister is so certain that the powers do not breach the refugee convention, what is the harm to him of accepting the amendment?

Tom Pursglove: We do not see a need to augment the Bill in the way that the hon. Gentleman suggests. A plethora of opinions are expressed in the House and more generally when we debate the nature of what is proposed and whether people think it is the right thing to do. We are clear as a Government that we think that the package of measures we are introducing through the Bill is a proportionate response to the issues we face and will fix the broken asylum system in particular. We are also clear—and I have been clear on many occasions

in this House and through the various iterations of the Bill—that we will at all times live up to our international obligations.

Mr Alistair Carmichael (Orkney and Shetland) (LD): History suggests that the day will come when the hon. Gentleman's party is not in government, and it is eminently possible that there will one day be a Government who wish to depart from our obligations under the 1951 convention. Is that not why it is a good idea to have such a provision on the face of the Bill?

Tom Pursglove: Any Government in such circumstances could amend the primary legislation to remove that requirement. I also make the crucial point that we have an independent judiciary in this country, and it is open to people to bring points of challenge where they believe that there are grounds for doing so. It is fair to say that that is a regular occurrence in our society and a cornerstone of how our government, politics and society have evolved over centuries. No doubt that will continue to be the case, but let me again be very clear that the Government have acted and will continue to act in accordance with our international obligations. I must be very clear on that point.

Lords amendment 6 removes the clause from the Bill that establishes our differentiated approach to those who are recognised as refugees. That is an essential and fundamental part of our plan to deter people from making dangerous and unnecessary journeys to the UK. We therefore cannot agree to the amendment, which will simply encourage people to continue to risk their lives at sea.

Tom Hunt (Ipswich) (Con): Does the Minister agree that Lords amendment 6 is a huge slap in the face for all those people who play by the rules and engage in proper legal processes to get to this country, whether they are a refugee or not?

Tom Pursglove: My hon. Friend and I have had many conversations about this topic over recent months and he makes a genuine point that individuals coming to this country illegally makes it more difficult for us to help genuine refugees in the way that we all want to. We see that reflected in the generosity of spirit shown across the country as people offered help in response to the Afghan crisis and to what we are seeing unfold so tragically in Ukraine. There is an outpouring of emotion and wanting to help, but there is also genuine concern about people putting their lives in the hands of evil criminal gangs, and paying significant sums of money to those gangs, which have no regard for human life and are willing in effect to play roulette with the safety of the people they are transporting.

Lee Anderson (Ashfield) (Con): The Minister may be aware that at present Opposition Members, especially Labour Members, are struggling to tell the difference between a man and a woman, so it is no surprise that they are struggling to tell the difference between a genuine refugee and an economic migrant. Would it not be wise of the Minister to remind those on the Labour Front Bench what the difference is?

Tom Pursglove: I certainly think that my hon. Friend's constituents and mine, and people across the country, feel strongly—[*Interruption.*] The hon. Member for

Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch East (Stuart C. McDonald) is chuntering from a sedentary position, but I will make the point that, no matter where they are in the country, people feel very strongly that individuals should not put their lives in the hands of evil criminal gangs, whose only motivation is to turn a profit by taking greater and greater risks with the lives of the individuals they are putting in small boats. I would argue that we, as a Government and in this House, have a duty to stop that happening. That is precisely what the measures in the Bill are designed to do, while at the same time providing safe and legal passage for people who require sanctuary to come to this country, and enabling us to care for them properly when they are here. That is an absolutely humane and decent stance to take, and one that I will continue to passionately defend.

Lords amendment 7 would change our approach to allowing people who are claiming asylum to work by reducing the period in which claimants may not work from 12 months to six months, as well as removing the condition restricting jobs for those who are allowed to work to those on the shortage occupation list.

Sir Edward Leigh (Gainsborough) (Con): It seems that Lords amendment 7 goes to the heart of what we are talking about today. Does the Minister agree that the Bill, taken as a whole, is a package, and that if we start amending it in this way to facilitate economic migration, we will end any chance we have of stopping cross-channel migration, stopping the evil criminal gangs and taking back control of our borders? This is a package, and I am afraid we have to vote down all the amendments.

Tom Pursglove: I am very grateful to my right hon. Friend, who is a passionate advocate of taking action to address those concerns. I argue that this is a package of measures that come together. There is no one single intervention that will solve this problem. We must have a robust and proportionate approach to tackling, for example, very dangerous channel crossings—in November, we saw a tragic loss of life that none of us wants to be repeated—while also ensuring we have safe and legal routes by which people can come to this country to get the sanctuary they need when they find themselves in desperate circumstances. That is what I believe the Government are delivering.

The right to work, while well-meaning, would undermine our economic migration scheme and allow people to bypass it over and above those who follow the proper process by applying for visas and paying relevant fees to work in the UK. We cannot allow that to happen. I must therefore advise the House that we cannot accept the amendment.

Lords amendment 8 prevents third country inadmissibility measures from coming into force until formal returns agreements are in place. We expect to work with our international partners to tackle the shared challenges of illegal migration. We continue to seek effective returns agreements to ensure that people can be removed from our country when they have no right to be here. In the meantime, we want to continue resolve cases where we can on a case-by-case basis.

As I have said many times before, those in need of protection should claim in the first safe country they reach. That is the fastest route to safety. The first safe country principle is widely recognised internationally.

Patrick Grady: Will the Minister explain to me how the United Kingdom can ever be the first safe country of arrival for someone fleeing a war zone or a natural disaster? If you leave without all your paperwork, how can you ever get to the United Kingdom before anywhere else when we are surrounded by water?

Tom Pursglove: We have many resettlement routes whereby people can come to this country. I have said this several times in the House, and it bears repeating now, that people getting in small boats to come to the United Kingdom are coming from perfectly safe countries at great risk, and they are lining the pockets of evil criminal gangs, which funds wider criminality, when there are fully functional and appropriate asylum systems, where people can gain help and support, that they are leaving to make those perilous journeys. It is also important to point out—I recognise that the hon. Gentleman is a particularly keen advocate of the European Union and wishes we were a member of it—that it is a fundamental feature of the common European asylum system that people should claim asylum in the first safe country they reach. Without any enforcement of that, we simply encourage criminal smugglers to continue to exploit vulnerable migrants and leave flows of migrants across Europe, which culminate in the dangerous channel crossings. The Bill's inadmissibility measures are an essential part of our approach to enforcing the safe first country principle, and for that reason we cannot agree to the amendment.

Tim Farron (Westmorland and Lonsdale) (LD): Will the Minister give way?

Tom Pursglove: I am conscious that I need to make some progress, so I will continue for now. I have been quite generous, and I will see how I get on in the next few minutes.

Lords amendments 9, 52 and 53 would delete from the Bill provisions that would make it easier to remove an individual from the UK while their asylum claim is pending. We have said repeatedly that while people are dying making dangerous and unnecessary journeys to the UK, we must consider every option to discourage people from funding criminal gangs and putting their lives at risk by crossing the channel. That includes the option of processing of asylum claims overseas. We must ensure we have the flexibility to do everything we can to disincentivise people from putting themselves and others at risk and lining the pockets of people smugglers. That is the clear rationale for this policy. I want to make it absolutely clear again that unaccompanied asylum-seeking children will not have their claims processed overseas.

1.45 pm

Stuart C. McDonald: I am grateful to the Minister for giving way. He talked about unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, but that means he is not ruling out other children being placed in awful offshore detention facilities. Will he publish an economic impact assessment on how many billions of pounds this will cost the taxpayer? It has been promised for months.

Tom Pursglove: I am not going to get drawn into listing all other possible exemptions to removal in that way, but I set out on Report that, for example, family groups would not be separated, because that would

clearly not be in accordance with our international obligations. Clearly, much will depend on the particular circumstances of the countries we are working with. We always work in the asylum system and in the immigration space on a case-by-case basis, but I want to assure hon. Members that we will continue to uphold our international obligations and ensure that any removal is compliant with our obligations under the refugee convention and article 3 of the European convention on human rights, which protects against torture and inhuman and degrading treatment.

I am aware that there has been speculation recently about the potential costs of, and possible locations for, overseas asylum claim processing. I cannot give a running commentary on negotiations, or share information that could tie the hands of the negotiators. I only say again that the provisions are an essential part of the suite of measures that we are introducing to deliver our objective of discouraging unwanted behaviours, such as making unnecessary and dangerous journeys, and we therefore cannot agree to the amendments.

Lords amendment 10 creates a more generous approach on family reunion for those who are already in Europe, which we do not consider fair. There is already generous provision in our rules for family reunion, under which more than 40,000 people have been reunited with family members in the UK since 2015. This is a single global approach to family reunion, which does not encourage what are often dangerous journeys into Europe, facilitated by smugglers and traffickers. We therefore cannot support the amendment. Similarly, Lords amendment 11 would commit the UK to resettling at least 10,000 refugees each year.

Our view has long been that the number of refugees and people in need of protection that we resettle each year must be based on our capacity, our assessment of the international situation and our ability to care for people properly when they come to the UK. I understand that hon. Members are seeking assurances that our doors will remain open to those in need, but I respectfully suggest that what is really needed to deliver refugee resettlement is not a number but an approach—an approach that is compassionate and flexible. That is exactly what the Government are delivering through our new plan for immigration.

Tim Loughton (East Worthing and Shoreham) (Con): Coming back to amendment 10, which the Minister is grouping with Lords amendment 11, he just said that we already have a very generous family reunion scheme, but is it not the case that our current family reunion scheme is considerably less generous than the Dublin III arrangements we had pre-Brexit? If we are genuinely to accommodate a lot of children who have lost their parents and for whom their last surviving relative may be an aunt, uncle, brother or sister who has made it legally to the UK, we need to expand the scheme.

Tom Pursglove: I am grateful to my hon. Friend for his intervention. This is an area that he is very passionate about and has a considerable knowledge of. He will recognise that we have a global approach to family reunion, which is an important distinction when compared with Dublin III. It would be useful for us as Ministers to meet him, as a former Children's Minister, to discuss his ideas. As I say, I know he takes a passionate and keen interest in these matters. Family reunion is something

we continue to be committed to. As I said in my opening remarks on the situation in Ukraine, it is an area where, for example in response to that crisis, we are constantly reviewing what we can do to assist with that issue and challenge. The Dnipro Kids situation illustrates the work we are doing in that space. Of course, there has to be agreement with the Ukrainian Government and the Polish Government to progress on that, but it shows the pragmatic approach we are willing to take on these matters to be responsive to crises as they arise and to ensure that we do our bit to try to support those children wherever we can.

I do not wish to detain the House for longer than necessary, but I think it would be helpful for me to set out the safe and legal routes that we have to the UK. The UK resettlement scheme, which was launched in February 2021, prioritises the resettlement of refugees, including children, in regions of conflict and instability. The number of refugees we resettle each year depends on a variety of factors, including local authorities' capacity to support refugees and the number of community groups willing to take part. There were 1,131 refugees resettled in the UK through that scheme in the year ending December 2021.

Richard Graham: Will the Minister give way?

Tom Pursglove: I have given way to my hon. Friend already and I am keen to make some progress, because I am conscious that a lot of Members want to speak.

The community sponsorship scheme enables local community groups to welcome refugees to the UK and provide housing and support. In the year ending December 2021, 144 refugees were resettled through that scheme.

The mandate resettlement scheme was launched in 1995. That global scheme resettles refugees with a close family member in the UK who is willing to accommodate them. Since published statistics began in 2008, there 435 refugees have been resettled through that route, as of September 2021.

Refugee family reunion allows a spouse or partner and children under 18 of those granted protection in the UK to join them here, if they formed part of the family unit before the sponsor fled the country. There is discretion to grant leave outside of the immigration rules for extended family members in exceptional circumstances. We have granted over 40,000 refugee family reunion visas since 2015, of which more than half were granted to children. In 2021, there were 6,134 family reunion visas issued, which was an increase of 28% on the previous year. Again, more than half were issued to children.

In August 2021, we announced the Afghan citizens resettlement scheme, one of the most generous schemes in our country's history. That scheme will give up to 20,000 people at risk a new life in the UK, including women and girls, members of ethnic or religious minorities and people who are LGBT+.

In addition, under the Afghan relocations and assistance policy, current or former locally employed staff who are assessed to be under serious threat to life are offered priority relocation to the UK. Through that route, we have relocated more than 7,000 locally employed staff and their family members since April 2021, in addition to 1,400 former staff and families who were relocated under the previous *ex gratia* scheme for Afghan interpreters.

The Ukraine family scheme, which was launched on 4 March, allows British nationals and people settled in the UK to bring family members to the UK. That covers immediate family members as well as parents, grandparents, children over 18 and siblings, aunts, uncles, nephews, nieces, cousins and in-laws. Individuals will be granted leave for three years and will be able to work and access public services and benefits. As of 20 March, 61,100 applications had been started, 31,500 had been submitted and 10,200 visas had been issued.

The Homes for Ukraine scheme, which was launched on 14 March, will allow individuals, charities, community groups and businesses in the UK to bring Ukrainians to safety, including those with no family ties to the UK. There will be no limit on arrivals and, again, those who come here will have access to public services and benefits.

Tim Farron (Westmorland and Lonsdale) (LD): May I clarify a point on the two-tier system to which the Minister is asking the House to agree? If a Ukrainian who has relatives in the UK comes here, we will accept them. If a refugee from Ukraine comes here on a sponsorship scheme, we will accept them. What if somebody from Ukraine just turns up? Will they be removed to a safe country that they have come from? Will they be removed to a third country that they can apply from? What will we do for those Ukrainians who flee from the murderous despot Putin and come here by an irregular route? Do they have to come on an inflatable?

Tom Pursglove: Let me be very clear: there is absolutely no reason why any Ukrainian should pay an evil people smuggler to come to be safe in the United Kingdom. I have set out the detail of our two generous schemes, which are uncapped and wide in capturing people's many and varied circumstances. I would not want anybody—this applies to any group—to put their life in the hands of evil criminal gangs who have only one regard, which is to turn a profit, putting those individuals in great danger. We have had many debates about the nature and construction of the Ukrainian scheme and I am confident that there is no reason why people should resort to that means of travelling to the United Kingdom. Nobody should encourage Ukrainians, or anybody else for that matter, to make those perilous journeys.

Stuart C. McDonald: Will the Minister give way?

Tom Pursglove: I have given way to the hon. Gentleman a few times and I want to conclude my remarks.

Stephen Kinnock (Aberavon) (Lab): Will the Minister give way?

Tom Pursglove: I will give way to the shadow Minister.

Stephen Kinnock: The Minister is being very generous. He gave detailed numbers on how many visas had been granted in all the schemes that he read out. I note that he did not include the number of visas granted under the Homes for Ukraine scheme. Will he update the House on how many visas the Home Office has issued under that scheme as of today?

Tom Pursglove: I am afraid that I do not have those figures to hand, but we hope to be able to say more on that very soon. It is the early days of that scheme but we have seen an overwhelmingly generous response from people offering sanctuary in their homes, and we want

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to take up those offers. I look forward to being able to say more about the figures on early implementation as soon as we can.

I understand the concerns raised by right hon. and hon. Members, but I hope that those schemes speak of our willingness to respond to international crises with compassion and to support higher numbers of refugees and people in need of protection when necessary. That is our approach, so we do not think that it is necessary to put a number in statute.

I understand the rationale behind Lords amendment 12, which relates to grants of asylum connected with cases of genocide. We, of course, stand by victims of genocide. Whether or not a determination of genocide is made, the UK is committed to seeking an end to serious violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law. We are also committed to preventing the escalation of any such violations and alleviating the suffering of those affected, but it is not practical for us to be bound to consider asylum claims in British missions from the very large number of individuals overseas who might like to come here. Even with a cap on the number of individuals, we can expect many thousands of applications, which UK caseworkers would need to assess individually to determine whether each individual belongs to the specific group found to be at risk. We do not think that is practical.

Brendan O'Hara (Argyll and Bute) (SNP): To clarify the Minister's point, is he saying that the opposition to Lords amendment 12 is on an administrative rather than a humanitarian basis? He seems to suggest that there may be too many people coming for the British embassies to handle. Surely that is no basis to turn our backs on people who are victims of genocide.

Tom Pursglove: I do not accept the hon. Member's characterisation of those remarks for a minute. My primary concern is twofold: to ensure that staff, for example, in British missions are safe and not put at risk; and to ensure that individuals turning up at British missions are also not put at undue risk, considering the sorts of circumstances that we are talking about in such debates and the lengths to which some countries will go to persecute individuals when genocide is relevant. Our approach is better: to develop bespoke schemes as circumstances arise with similar accessibility to the schemes that I described. We would argue that that is the right approach.

I do not understand the rationale behind Lords amendments 13 to 19. They would delete the new offence of knowingly arriving in the UK without a valid entry clearance, and that could make it impossible to take enforcement action against someone who has arrived in, but not technically "entered", the UK without clearance. That would compromise our plans to enhance the security of our borders, so we cannot accept those amendments.

Similarly, I cannot say that I understand the rationale behind Lords amendment 20, which would compromise our plans to enhance our ability to prosecute people smugglers. It would do that by preserving the status quo in legislation, which means that prosecutors have to prove that people smugglers are acting for gain. Time and again, however, that requirement has been found to have significant operational limitations. We need to

remove it to ensure that the lives of vulnerable people are not put at risk by the actions of people smugglers and that traffickers are brought to justice for the misery that they inflict.

Tim Farron: Will the Minister give way?

Tom Pursglove: I have already taken one intervention from the hon. Gentleman and I want to conclude my speech quickly.

Lords amendment 54 would mean that powers set out in the part of the Bill to which it applies

"must not be used in a manner or in circumstances that could endanger life at sea."

I take this opportunity to again place on record my admiration for the incredibly brave individuals who engage in rescue work. I also want to make it absolutely clear that our priority is always to save and preserve lives. We are proud of our heritage as a great seafaring nation and will always lead the way globally in complying with our relevant domestic and international obligations, including those under the UN convention on the law of the sea. We do not think it necessary to put those commitments in the Bill and we therefore do not support the amendment.

I wish to speak in favour of Lords amendments 2 and 3, together with Lords amendments 42 to 51. These Government amendments will resolve the lawful residence issue for individuals with indefinite leave to remain under the EU settlement scheme who wish to naturalise, but have not previously held comprehensive sickness insurance.

The problem is that those who wish to become British citizens based on a period of residence in the UK need to have been in the UK lawfully—for five years, for most people—before making their application. Unfortunately, a number of European economic area nationals or their family members do not currently meet that requirement because they did not hold comprehensive sickness insurance, which was a legal requirement for those who were in the UK as students or as self-sufficient persons. They could still be granted indefinite leave to remain, also known as settled status, under the EU settlement scheme, which did not have a lawful residence requirement, but they would not technically meet the requirements for citizenship.

2 pm

The amendments will resolve those technicalities and will mean that the Secretary of State does not need to inquire into lawful residence in citizenship applications where a person has already been granted indefinite leave to enter or remain, because any concerns about their immigration history will have been considered and addressed prior to any grant of indefinite leave. I acknowledge that hon. Members have campaigned on the issue and I commend the amendments to the House.

Government Lords amendment 21 is a tidying-up amendment that removes a definition of the term "United Kingdom waters" from the clause relating to working in UK waters. Further to comments made on Third Reading in the other place, I would like to say that although the term is used elsewhere in the Bill, it is not used in proposed new section 11B, which the Bill will insert into the Immigration Act 1971. I hope that the clarification that the amendment provides is helpful; I commend it to the House.

Stephen Kinnock: May I associate myself with the Minister's comments about PC Keith Palmer, who died in the line of duty and whose tragic passing this House will never forget?

The Bill has been introduced against the backdrop of an asylum and immigration system that is simply not fit for purpose. The British people want and deserve a system that is fair, compassionate and orderly, as has been made abundantly clear by the fact that more than 150,000 households have signed up to house refugees fleeing the horrors of Putin's barbaric war. But from the Windrush scandal to the botched Afghan resettlement scheme and the shambolic response on Ukraine, the Home Office has consistently failed to live up to the standards that the public rightly expect from their Government, so we should not really be surprised that the Bill not only fails to meet any of the challenges that our migration system faces, but actively makes the situation worse. That is why the Opposition rejected the Bill in its entirety on Second Reading; it is why we support every one of the Lords amendments, each of which seeks to mitigate the worst excesses of this dreadful legislation. The fact that the Government were defeated fully 19 times in the other place is proof positive that this appalling legislation is not fit for the statute book.

I turn to the specific reasons that our asylum and immigration system is so comprehensively broken. Let us start with the most visible example: the small boats crisis in the English channel. The number of desperate asylum seekers risking their lives by crossing the channel on small boats has increased from 299 in 2018 to an eye-watering 28,526 in 2021, of whom more than 3,000 were children. Yet Conservative Ministers have failed to engage constructively with their French counterparts to tackle the people traffickers, so the Home Secretary has now resorted to criminalising vulnerable refugees who are fleeing war-torn countries such as Ukraine.

Janet Daby (Lewisham East) (Lab): I have spoken to asylum seekers who have told me about how children come to this country: it is often their parents who are giving the money to traffickers, and they have no idea how the journey will commence. Does my hon. Friend agree that the Government simply seem totally unaware of that point and have not included it in their consideration at all?

Stephen Kinnock: My hon. Friend is absolutely right. There are many dreadful aspects to the whole story, but the impact on children who are utterly innocent and deserve nothing but our compassion and care, but who are not being treated with either of those values and principles, should make the Government hang their head in shame.

Tim Loughton: I completely agree that the situation with boats coming across the channel is wholly unsatisfactory, but the hon. Gentleman has just accused the Government of failing to engage satisfactorily with the French authorities. Giving £54 million to the French to do something about this; making constant requests, which have been rebuffed, for meetings with the French Interior Minister and others—where have the Government not tried to engage constructively? How would the hon. Gentleman's party have engaged constructively? What are his practical suggestions to do something about this, rather than the grandstanding that he does every time he is at the Dispatch Box?

Stephen Kinnock: I guess what matters is results and outcomes. The Government's attempts to engage have clearly failed; the hon. Member will have his own view of why that may be, but I gently suggest that gratuitously insulting our European partners and allies on a regular basis, as the Prime Minister does, is probably not helping very much.

A particularly disturbing aspect of the Bill is that it seeks to criminalise a person who is seeking asylum for "arriving in the United Kingdom without...clearance".

That means that a Ukrainian person who had brought their elderly parents to our country in the early days of the war would have been criminalised under the Bill. Do the Government not comprehend the horrors from which refugees are fleeing? We should not seek to criminalise refugees who are desperately looking for a new home; we should go after the people traffickers. The Opposition therefore fully support Lords amendment 13, which removes the new offence.

Lloyd Russell-Moyle (Brighton, Kemptown) (Lab/Co-op): My hon. Friend is making very good points. Is it not the case that the only way to apply for asylum in Britain is to come through an irregular route, because someone has no possibility of applying for asylum if they are not in Britain? Criminalisation is shutting off almost all legal routes to applying for asylum. In effect, the only way to get to the UK would be to make a false application first via a tourist route or another route, but the Government would then say, in a Kafkaesque way, "You have falsely applied, because you came in via the wrong route." That is particularly pernicious, is it not?

Stephen Kinnock: My hon. Friend is absolutely right. The whole thing smacks of a kind of bureaucratic trickery whereby every option is blocked off by some additional piece of bureaucracy. The Bill should have been an opportunity to unlock some of that, but instead it leaves us in stalemate.

Sir John Hayes (South Holland and The Deepings) (Con): Appositely to the remarks of the hon. Member for Brighton, Kemptown (Lloyd Russell-Moyle) about where people claim asylum and how it is processed, the Bill will allow a claim to be processed elsewhere before people get here. Based on what the hon. Gentleman says, that will be a positive move, will it not? It will also mean that people who are travelling through safe countries where they could claim asylum can do so there and have their claim processed there.

Stephen Kinnock: I think that the right hon. Gentleman is referring to offshoring, but as we have seen, offshoring does not work: it is costing millions and millions in Australia and every expert is panning the idea. If I have understood his intervention correctly, I am afraid that it is simply a non-starter.

The Opposition support Lords amendment 6, which removes the Government's attempt to introduce differential treatment of refugees based on method of arrival. For instance, if a Ukrainian citizen were to flee and travel here across Europe while waiting for a Government visa office to open or a safe route to be provided, clause 11 would make them a second-class refugee. To be a first-tier refugee, they would have to have taken an aeroplane directly from Ukraine. That absurd technicality shows just how unjust the proposal is.

Jonathan Gullis: I am getting rather confused. The Labour party seems to be saying that we should not remove pull factors that mean that people are willing to risk their lives crossing the English channel and put money into the hands of the people smugglers. What has happened to the Labour party? Back in 2004, Baroness Scotland, a Labour Minister, said that

“a person should seek protection in the first safe country where they have the chance to do so.”—[*Official Report, House of Lords*, 5 April 2004; Vol. 659, c. 1684.]

What happened to that Labour party?

Stephen Kinnock: What is required is a properly resourced and competent processing system, so that when people come here they can be processed quickly. That would resolve many of the issues to which the hon. Gentleman referred.

Arguably even more astonishing is the fact that clause 38 appears to criminalise the good Samaritans who want to save lives in the channel by removing the “for gain” clause, meaning that it is not just profiteering people traffickers who are deemed criminals, but good, honest people trying to rescue drowning refugees. Lords amendment 20 reintroduces the “for gain” wording, a move that we fully support.

That brings me to the so-called pushback policy. Pushing back dinghies may well mean condemning refugees, including innocent children, to their deaths. This is an utterly barbaric proposal which, again, contravenes the law of the sea. We therefore support Lords amendment 54, which adds language to schedule 6, stating that these enforcement powers must never put lives at risk.

Profound concern has been expressed about the Bill’s failure to comply with the United Nations refugee convention. The United Nations high commissioner for human rights, among others, has criticised the legislation for undermining the human rights of refugees in a range of different ways. At a time when authoritarian regimes such as Russia and China are riding roughshod over international laws and norms, we must show that Britain, as a leading liberal democracy, is ready to lead by example. Britain must show that we stand with refugees and stand up for international law. We therefore support Lords amendment 5, which would add a new clause stating that nothing in the Bill must authorise policies which do not comply with the refugee convention.

Gary Sambrook (Birmingham, Northfield) (Con): Would the hon. Gentleman like to tell the House what safe and legal routes the then Labour Government opened up after the second Iraq war? I may be able to help him with the answer: I do not think there were any.

Stephen Kinnock: The safe and legal routes are not working properly, and they need to be made to work more effectively. We currently have thousands of Afghan refugees stuck in hotels. Let us put in place a system that actually works. I suggest to the hon. Gentleman that looking forward is more effective than looking back.

Another stark failure of this Government has been the asylum waiting lists that are keeping refugees in limbo and costing the taxpayer dear. There are now over 100,000 people awaiting initial decisions on their asylum applications, with an astonishing 61,864 having had to wait for six months or longer. These failures are

less about capacity and more about a distinct lack of competence. The numbers of asylum seekers are fewer than the UK’s recent peak, so the Home Office should be able to cope. However, under this Home Secretary the system simply is not working.

Lords amendment 7 offers a sensible proposal which could minimise the damage caused by the backlog, as it would give asylum seekers the right to work if their case was taking longer than six months. That would allow dignity to asylum seekers, who could then earn their way and contribute rather than being completely disempowered and excluded from the labour market. The Lords amendment would also prevent asylum seekers from being forced into the dangerous net of the black-market economy just to survive, which is so often more attractive to them than relying on £38 per week from the Government. Moreover, the Government have already said that all Ukrainians can work here as soon as they arrive, so why is it a problem to allow other individuals and families fleeing terror the same opportunity? If the Government are worried about being seen to give asylum seekers work, they should fix the system so that applications are processed within six months. We are pleased to see that more than 66 Conservative parliamentarians, including 27 members of this House, have signed a letter to the Home Secretary expressing support for Lords amendment 7, and we encourage Ministers to see the light and follow suit.

The introduction last year of “inadmissibility” has only led to further delays. Because the Government have failed to renegotiate a single returns policy with any country, labelling asylum seekers as “inadmissible” for processing is effectively meaningless, as the asylum seeker in question cannot be returned. This simply adds six months of bureaucracy, uncertainty and confusion for the refugee, and a huge cost to the British taxpayer. Of the 8,593 “notices of intent” to deem people inadmissible that were issued in 2021, incredibly, only 64 were upheld. This policy simply increases the enormous backlog further and is a complete waste of money, so we support Lords amendment 8.

Let me now turn to perhaps the most unhinged element of the Bill, the so-called offshoring provisions which allow—theoretically at least—asylum seekers to be sent to faraway lands for processing. The latest ludicrous suggestion is that Ascension Island, 4,500 miles away in the South Atlantic, should be used for the purpose. That is utter nonsense. It is operationally illiterate because it is utterly impractical, and it is economically illiterate because it would cost an eye-watering amount of taxpayers’ money.

2.15 pm

Tom Pursglove: May I make it clear, for the benefit of the House, that the suggestion about Ascension Island is untrue?

Stephen Kinnock: I thank the Minister for that intervention.

Offshoring in Australia costs roughly \$1 billion a year, for about 300 people. Experts in Australia have also said that it is not effective as a deterrent, and that the vast majority of those offshored are now back in Australia as a result of mental and physical suffering.

Tom Hunt: The shadow Minister has said that only 300 people have been linked to the offshoring. That is partly because the message has gone out to all the many hundreds of thousands who might have been tempted that it is not worth trying.

Stephen Kinnock: I do not think we are in control of which messages get out and which do not. This is about results and consequences, not about the process. If the process is not working, it needs to be fixed.

Rather than being fair, compassionate and orderly, this process would be cruel, demeaning and costly. This is why the Labour party supports Lords amendment 9, which removes offshoring from the Bill. While we are on the topic of fairness and compassion, I should note our long-standing support for Lords amendment 10, which would allow unaccompanied children in Europe to join family members who are living lawfully in the UK. At this point I should also note my personal dismay at the Bill's approach to victims of modern slavery, which, again, utterly contravenes the principles of fairness and compassion. I look forward to hearing the observations of my hon. Friend the Member for Halifax (Holly Lynch) on that subject later today.

What is abundantly clear is that little to no resilience is built into Britain's asylum system. It is simply failing to adapt and keep pace. It is also utterly inflexible at each point in the process. Ukrainian refugees are having to fill in 50 pages of paperwork in order not to be turned away; that is far beyond the necessary security checks. We have 100,000—person-long asylum waiting lists, and 12,000 Afghan refugees are stuck in hotels. Lords amendment 11 is a useful first step and one that we support, but with Putin's barbaric actions moving the goalposts almost every day, we suggest that the Government should move further and faster in delivering a resilient system with the capacity that is required to adapt. A Government who fail to plan are a Government who plan to fail, and Lords amendment 11 would at least go some way to forcing this Government to plan and to build capacity.

Finally, while we feel that the concessions given on clause 9 are a welcome step forward, we remain unconvinced that the fears of innocent citizens who feel at risk from this policy have been allayed. It is still too vague, and we will be pushing Lords amendment 4 to a vote.

Imran Hussain (Bradford East) (Lab): Only after outrage over pushback have the Government been forced to concede on some of the most chilling aspects of this racist, divisive and discriminatory Bill, including through the removal of some of the *carte blanche* powers that were previously given to the Home Secretary. Does my hon. Friend agree, however, that there are still similar concerns about due process, and in particular about the notion that people can be stripped of their citizenship just because of our relations with another country?

Stephen Kinnock: I congratulate and pay tribute to my hon. Friend and other colleagues who have led a passionate and powerful campaign on this issue. There are 324,963 signatures to a petition about clause 9, and I pay tribute to all those who have campaigned on it. We will be voting for Lords amendment 4 today.

Tim Loughton: At the start of the hon. Gentleman's speech, I asked him what practical solutions his party had put forward, particularly to combat the journeys

across the channel. He has skipped through a great many Lords amendments, in each case opposing Government suggestions and putting nothing in their place. May I give him one final opportunity, before he sits down, to tell us what practical measures his party is proposing to deal with the illegal and dangerous boats coming across the channel? So far, he has not come up with a single practical suggestion.

Stephen Kinnock: We are supporting every one of these amendments, almost all of which contain practical suggestions. That is the policy of the Labour Front Bench. On the broader point, one thing we would do is not have a party leader who regularly and consistently insults our democratic partners and allies. On that basis, we would negotiate a successor to Dublin and get constructive engagement with the French on security in relation to people smugglers. This is about grown-up politics, as I am sure the hon. Member would agree.

I would like to end by paying tribute to the noble Lords and Baronesses Coaker, Stroud, Lister, D'Souza, Rosser, Judge, Pannick, Kerr, Kirkhope, Dubs, Alton, Neuburger and Ritchie for working cross-party in such a constructive and effective way to win so many votes in the other place. Let me be clear: this Bill reflects and represents a catalogue of failure on immigration policy and a combination of incompetence and indifference from a Government who are presiding over a system that is neither fair, compassionate nor orderly. It is a desperate attempt to distract from the Home Secretary's failings, and it solves none of the challenges our immigration system faces. We know that many Members on the Government Benches are deeply uncomfortable with the content of this legislation. The British people want and deserve an asylum and immigration system that is fair, compassionate and orderly. Today, Members on the Government Benches can stand up for decency by joining us in the Division Lobby later this afternoon. Let us hope that they will do so.

Damian Green (Ashford) (Con): I rise to support Lords amendment 11, but I want to start by thanking Ministers for their flexibility in accepting the logic of the amendment I moved at an earlier stage to extend the benefits of the British national overseas scheme to younger Hong Kong residents born after 1997. I thank all those on both sides of this House who supported it, and those in the other place who did so, notably Lord Alton, Lord Patten of Barnes, Lord Falconer and the Bishop of St Albans, as well as the non-governmental organisation Hong Kong Watch. Most of all, I thank the Ministers who have taken it on board and acted on it. That is a good result, so in the same spirit of pragmatic and sensible co-operation, let me try again with the Lords amendment that would set up a permanent safe route that crucially, from the Government's own perspective, would remove a significant driver of the traffic in small boats across the channel.

I absolutely get that one of the Government's key aims is to minimise and hopefully stop altogether this dangerous route of illegal immigration. I support them wholeheartedly in that aim. Been there, done that, when the traffic was in the backs of lorries, which was equally dangerous and also led to the deaths of innocent people fleeing trouble. It can be done; we can stop these routes. So why Lords amendment 11? The Government, and indeed the Minister in his opening remarks, have correctly

[*Damian Green*]

asserted that people in need of protection must come to the UK via safe and lawful routes rather than making an illegal journey. However, those routes need to be available to people, and for far too many people, they are simply not available under the current system.

The Minister went through the details of the resettlement pathway, and in the explanatory notes to the Bill the Government assert that they intend

“to enhance resettlement routes to continue to provide pathways for refugees to be granted protection in the UK”.

But this resettlement route can be an effective response to the challenge of the channel crossings, of which there were about 28,000 last year, and break the model of the criminal people smugglers, only if it achieves two things. First, it must be accessible to meaningful numbers of people. Secondly, it must not be restricted to one geographic area. However, the Home Office data confirms that 87% of those arriving by small boats in 2021 comprised nationals from Iran, Iraq, Syria and Yemen, for whom there is currently no alternative legal and safe route by which they can apply to get to the UK, so it is pointless the Minister saying that he believes in accessible routes. The people coming across the channel—he and I, and I suspect everyone in this House, want them to stop putting themselves at risk—do not have those routes available to them, and that is why we need this Lords amendment and a change to the Government’s proposals.

Lloyd Russell-Moyle: The right hon. Gentleman is making a good point. I wanted to highlight the difficulty for Syrian Kurds, who often flee over the Turkish border. This Government believe that Turkey is a safe place for them, but many Kurds legitimately do not believe that it is a safe place for them to wait for resettlement, and they therefore continue their journey through Europe and eventually arrive in Britain. The Government’s proposals would make that harder. They need to provide decent routes, particularly for Kurds and other minorities that might find neighbouring countries hostile to them rather than receptive of them.

Damian Green: I find myself in rare, perhaps unique agreement with the hon. Gentleman on that point. I am sure that he and I will not want to see that happen too often.

Returning to the Government’s wider plan, the new plan for immigration states:

“The UK’s commitment to resettling refugees will continue to be a multi-year commitment with numbers subject to ongoing review guided by circumstances and capacity at any given time.”

If nothing else, Lords amendment 11 invites the Government to take a small step forward—I agree with the hon. Member for Aberavon (Stephen Kinnock) that it is a small step, but it is a significant step and I hope we will vote on it later—to strengthen their objectives with a concrete and predictable floor of 10,000 places. That would provide local authorities and civil society more widely with the certainty, time and space to plan and to deliver the capacity so that resettlement can be successful. I should pause and pay tribute to my own local authority in Ashford, which was very active in coming forward early for the Syrian resettlement scheme and has done the same with the Afghans. I also pay tribute to the civil society NGOs in my constituency that are doing the

same with Ukraine. I suspect that that is reflected all around the country. There are lots of people out there who want to be generous.

Richard Graham: It seems to me that the Homes for Ukraine scheme offers a model that could be used for all sorts of other nationalities as well. There is no reason why we should have one lot of refugees who are being housed and able to work from day one while others are in hotels decided on by the Home Office and often planted on councils that are trying to do their best but do not have much accommodation. Does my right hon. Friend agree that this is a real opportunity for us to rethink how we accept refugees in our country now?

Damian Green: I do; my hon. Friend makes an extremely profound point. We are facing a crisis of a type we have not faced before, and we should use this opportunity to look at ourselves and our systems and ask whether we can do things differently. We should use the entirely justifiable outpouring that we have seen over Ukraine to set up a permanent system so that if we get something like this again—God forbid, but sadly it will probably happen—we will have the systems in place to make it easier for people, particularly those who are fleeing persecution and death. The Syrian refugee scheme saw 275 local authorities—two thirds of the local authorities in this country—volunteering to resettle refugees. I think that proves the point that an ambitious and intelligently designed programme can meet the appetite of people in their own areas to help those who are fleeing persecution.

David Simmonds (Ruislip, Northwood and Pinner) (Con): Does my right hon. Friend recall that, following the 2003 Hillingdon judgment that clarified the responsibilities of local authorities in respect of refugee children, Bev Hughes, the then Minister at the Home Office, wrote to every local authority to inform them that the cost of supporting refugee children would be met in full? A year later, however, when the invoices were submitted to the Home Office, the right hon. Member for Barking (Dame Margaret Hodge), who had taken on that ministerial responsibility, refused to meet those costs, thus undermining the confidence of local authorities to step up to the plate in that respect.

Damian Green: My hon. Friend, a former leader of Hillingdon Council, will be more expert on this matter than I am. In various phases, I have been on either side of the argument between the Home Office and local authorities, so I shall declare a position of neutrality on that, but he makes a valid point.

Lords amendment 11 is modest in its ambitions. It sets a number, which I have heard Ministers claim is a limit, but the amendment actually states:

“The Secretary of State must arrange for the resettlement in the United Kingdom of at least 10,000 refugees each year.”

So if the arrangements are there, the Secretary of State has met the terms. It is conceivable that in some years there will not be the need to resettle 10,000 refugees, but, sadly, looking around the world at the moment, I do not think that figure is at all unrealistic. This approach will have huge practical advantages because, as we have discussed, it will allow local authorities and others to plan ahead. As we see at the moment, this country is good at scrambling together a plan at the last moment, but for once let us do some proper forward planning.

2.30 pm

We have all heard people say often, “Britain has a proud tradition of accepting refugees”, and indeed the Minister did not fail in this duty in his opening remarks. We all use that phrase a lot and it is largely true, if we perhaps look at history at bit sporadically. Let us take this opportunity to put ourselves in that proud tradition and show that this House can live up to the generosity of spirit that the British people are showing to Ukrainian refugees today. In that spirit, I ask the House to support Lords amendment 11.

Stuart C. McDonald: It is a pleasure to follow the right hon. Member for Ashford (Damian Green), with whom I agree entirely. Let me start by echoing the comments of both the Minister and shadow Minister on PC Keith Palmer, whose incredible bravery we should never forget.

It is appropriate to recognise that one or two slivers of progress have been made, for example, on BNO visas and Chagossians, but the fundamental problem is that the core idea at the heart of this Bill, which was appalling from its outset last July, remains at its heart: the idea that we should punish and dehumanise certain refugees so as to disincentivise others from coming here, all on the basis that they should stay in the first country they come to. I thought that that was a horrible idea at the time, but the subsequent events in Afghanistan and the further invasion of Ukraine highlight as never before how utterly misconceived and nonsensical the Government’s thinking was, because although most refugees do seek protection in the first country they enter, some will not, for a host of perfectly understandable reasons. The Government have recognised that, rightly, in their family scheme for Ukrainians. Of course it makes sense for Ukrainians to come to join a brother, aunt or grandparent here in the UK and not to stop in Poland or France, but this Bill will criminalise and undermine recognised refugees from Afghanistan or anywhere else who seek protection here motivated by precisely the same reasons. The Bill represents nothing less than this Government resiling from the refugee convention. The Tories are ripping up a 70-year-old convention exactly when we see that it is as crucial as ever; the Bill’s incompatibility, to lawyers out there and most people in here, is as clear as day. The Government know it as well, which is why they cannot even accept Lords amendment 5, a simple amendment that would require powers in part 2 to be exercised in accordance with the refugee convention. If the Minister is right and everything is absolutely consistent with the convention, no harm is done and there is absolutely no reason for the Government to oppose that amendment.

The House of Lords has done its best to make this Bill barely tolerable, but the Government are seeking to reverse almost every one of its eminently sensible proposals. The Government are not listening, whether to parliamentarians, international authorities or the public. Through their motions to disagree, the Government want to take us back to a Bill and a system that will see refugees criminalised with an offence punishable with up to four years in prison, conceivably with people who rescued them next to them in the dock. It is a system that would see people subject to offshoring while their claim is heard and processed. There is the ludicrous inadmissibility procedure that means nothing can happen while the Government pretend they are going to remove a person to a country they have passed through, despite

having no returns agreement in place with it. Even once recognised as a refugee, an Afghan, Syrian or persecuted Christian convert, or whoever else, is going to be treated as a sub-class of refugee, with limits on recourse to public funds, no prospect of settlement and limited family reunion rights. In short, they will be unable to rebuild their life here at all, which is exactly the purpose of the Bill: deliberately making the asylum process awful. Those are just some of the most appalling aspects of the Bill that the Lords have sought to fix.

Let us consider this proposition: up to four years in prison for an Afghan or anyone else who takes an unauthorised route to get here. It is outrageous, so Lords amendment 13 and all the consequential ones should remain in place. What about this: penalising those who charitably seek to assist refugees? That is absolutely absurd, so we support Lords amendments 20 and 54, which ensure that push-back powers are not exercised in a manner that endangers life. It is incredible that these things are even up for debate. We should not be ripping up the convention by making the unauthorised Afghan or Ukrainian arrivals second-tier citizens, deliberately destroying their prospects of rebuilding their lives. So Lords amendment 6, which deletes clause 11, must be left in place. It is hard to overstate how significant this is. As former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said, the provisions of clause 11 would

“threaten the integrity of the global asylum system”.

This is about denying recognised refugees their rights under the refugee convention and it is totally unacceptable.

Where is the Government’s draft guidance about how they will use these sweeping powers? Apparently it exists, but, like so much else in relation to this Bill, they have kept it to themselves. How will decision makers decide when to use powers to strip recognised refugees of many of their rights? Who will face the burden of proof as to whether the provisions should apply? What will the standard of proof be? Will decisions take into account the individual circumstances of the refugee, in the context of the particular countries they passed through? How much discretion will decision makers have not to treat recognised refugees in this frankly disgusting manner? Any exercise of these powers will be abhorrent, but we have little idea about how these sweeping powers will be used. That is another reason we should not be providing them to the Home Secretary.

The utterly obscene idea of offshoring asylum claims must be kicked into touch. All sorts of myths have been perpetuated about how this was successful—it was not; it has been abandoned by the Australians. It did not stop—it did not exceed 300 people—because message got out that it was not worth trying to get to Australia; it stopped because the whole process was at capacity within weeks of its being launched. So we support Lords amendments 9, 52 and 53. Frankly, if Members are still thinking of resisting these amendments, they are either not interested or are utterly indifferent to the grotesque suffering it has caused those caught up in the Australian scheme. We are talking about children self-harming; suicides and suicide attempts; a mental health catastrophe; and sexual assaults. If that is not enough, perhaps Members should consider the billions of pounds such a system will cost, while achieving nothing. Yet the Home Secretary, who is now paying salaries to people responsible for the Australian disgrace, will not even publish her assessment of the costs. We have been promised the economic impact assessment repeatedly.

[*Stuart C. McDonald*]

The Home Affairs Committee was told it was to be published shortly, and that was last autumn. Here we are at ping-pong and it has been kept hidden. There must be a reason for that.

Tom Hunt: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that when this was introduced in Australia the number of individuals who lost their lives at sea dramatically decreased, to almost zero? Surely that ought to be taken into account when assessing its effectiveness.

Stuart C. McDonald: I take into account all the evidence we heard on this matter in the Bill Committee—all the written submissions and the oral evidence we heard. Any assessment by anyone independent of the Government behind that scheme says that none of that was attributable to the offshoring and it was actually attributable to something else I do not like, which was push-backs, but push-backs in a completely different context to those—

Jonathan Gullis: We both served on the Bill Committee but we seem to have a very different recollection. George Brandis, the Australian high commissioner, talked about a three-part effect, with push-back, offshoring and deterring by having tougher sanctions for those who enter illegally all having worked in tandem with one another to deter people from making the journey. That is unlike what the hon. Gentleman is trying to portray, which is that one silver bullet was the magic answer—it simply was not. It is just a shame that only two local authorities in the entirety of Scotland take part in the asylum dispersal scheme, unlike Stoke-on-Trent, which is the fifth largest contributor.

Stuart C. McDonald: Conservative Members can continue to try to upset local authorities in Scotland and achieve absolutely nothing in doing so, but on the more substantive—

Jonathan Gullis: It is fact—[*Interruption.*]

Stuart C. McDonald: The hon. Gentleman has made his intervention, so I am going to try to—

Madam Deputy Speaker (Dame Eleanor Laing): Order. Members should not make interventions when they are sitting down—end of story.

Stuart C. McDonald: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. Let me answer the intervention the hon. Gentleman made while he was standing up. As I said in response to the original intervention, other than what we heard from the politician who gave evidence to us, all the impartial expert evidence was that offshoring achieved absolutely nothing; it was not anything to do with a decline in the number of drownings. The second point to make, in relation to Scottish local authorities, is exactly the same point as has been made by the Conservative party leader of Stoke-on-Trent City Council: the Home Office does not step up to its responsibilities because it does not fund local authorities to undertake this work.

Jonathan Gullis: I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman for giving way after mentioning Stoke-on-Trent. The leader of Stoke-on-Trent City Council is annoyed about the asylum dispersal scheme because only a third of local authorities are currently part of it. The council is asking

for other areas—such as the 30-plus local authority areas in Scotland—to step up and do their bit because our city of Stoke-on-Trent is now at the one in 200 threshold in terms of refugee versus local citizen. Instead of attacking Stoke-on-Trent City Council with some vague quote, let us get into the facts of the matter. If Scotland stepped up to the plate and did its bit, Stoke-on-Trent would not have to carry the burden for the rest of the country.

Stuart C. McDonald: Stoke-on-Trent City Council is among a group of councils that have taken the Home Office to court, and it protests about how the Home Office handles the scheme. In fairness to the Home Secretary, she agrees with the point I am making, which is that it is outrageous that local authorities have been left without proper funding to do their job. As I have said a million times in the House, once that funding is in place the hon. Gentleman will see other Scottish local authorities step up to the plate, just as every single Scottish local authority did in respect of the Syrian resettlement scheme.

Let us get back to offshoring, because none of what we were just talking about has anything to do with the fact that what offshoring achieved in Australia was self-harm, disastrous mental health consequences and all sorts of appalling torture and degrading treatment for the people there. Offshoring is going to cost billions of pounds, there is no sensible argument in favour of it and we need to get rid of it as soon as we can.

We also support Lords amendment 8, which means the Government cannot delay the consideration of asylum claims in order to attempt removal when in reality there is no prospect of removal happening. In itself, the amendment goes nowhere near far enough in the provision of safeguards against the inappropriate use of inadmissibility procedures, but it is better than nothing at all.

All the Lords amendments I have gone through are designed to prevent the Government from taking the broken asylum system and smashing it to pieces, but there are Lords amendments that also seek to improve the current broken system, which sees people having to wait months even to register their claim, and years to get a decision. Lords amendment 7 is a simple but powerful example. It allows asylum seekers to work after six months. The arguments have been repeated ad infinitum in this place and seem to us to be overwhelming. Nobody can fail to understand the significance of work to tackling poverty, the improvement of mental health and wellbeing and the aiding of integration. If people are left out of work for years—which is how long asylum claims take these days—how can they rebuild their lives?

The Government bang on about pull factors, but that argument is not only morally repugnant—in essence, “Let asylum seekers suffer to disincentivise others from coming”—but empty. The Migration Advisory Committee itself says that there is no evidence to back up what the Government say. Frankly, there is no evidence to back up virtually anything the Government say, which is why very little is ever published. We therefore pay tribute to all the campaigners behind Lords amendment 7.

Lords amendments 10, 11 and 12 represent three different forms of safe route that would enhance our protection system. Lords amendment 10, tabled by

Lord Dubs, puts in place a form of family reunion for those in Europe, thereby repairing some of the damage caused by the end of our participation in the Dublin system. The Government recognised that family rules were far too constrained for Ukrainians; Lords amendment 10 is built on the same principle, with a particular benefit for unaccompanied children. With the demise of our participation in Dublin, we see more and more children getting into dinghies to join siblings or other relatives here, and the amendment would help to stop that. The Dublin system was not perfect but it was a lot better than our restrictive family reunion rules, which involve massive fees and impossible legal tests. Lords amendment 10 improves on all that.

Similarly, we support Lords amendment 12, which opens a safe route for people fleeing genocide—I hope my hon. Friend the Member for Argyll and Bute (Brendan O'Hara) will say more on that later—and we fully support Lords amendment 11, which ensures the regular resettlement of 10,000 refugees per year. For too long, the extent to which we have sought to meet our obligations to resettle refugees has been left to the whim of the Home Office. The Syrian scheme was a success, but the infrastructure that made it successful has been left to wither and—to put it politely—the Afghan scheme has barely started, despite the huge responsibility we have for those people. We get lots of rhetoric from the Government on this issue, but little delivery. We need a stable and predictable annual goal with a degree of flexibility, which is exactly what Lords amendment 11 delivers.

Finally, I turn to the one part of the Bill that is largely welcome: part 1. We warmly welcome the progress on the recognition of Chagos islanders as British overseas territory citizens, but questions arise in relation to the amendment in lieu, because unlike the original Lords amendment it does not include an entitlement for Chagos islanders to register as British citizens at the same time. Were it not for historic injustices, that would have been made an automatic entitlement in May 2002. The Government's proposals mean there will be only a discretionary route. What is the rationale for that? Will the Minister confirm that that discretion will be used in all cases of this type? Will he ensure that only a restricted fee is charged, as in other cases of historic injustice?

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Kevin Foster): Just to help and to keep this short, I can tell the hon. Gentleman that our intention is to operate in the spirit of the Lords amendment—that is, there will not be a fee for registration—but I am more than happy to outline in some detail at another time exactly how the process will work.

Stuart C. McDonald: It is useful to hear that said from the Dispatch Box, so I thank the Minister.

Lastly, the provisions on stripping people of citizenship without notice were introduced at short notice in the Public Bill Committee, without any chance to hear or receive evidence on them. The provisions were frightening, and their lordships have exposed them for the utterly unfit provisions they were. Indeed, the whole episode has cast light on how unfit for purpose nationality laws have become, and in particular the ever-increasing powers of Ministers to strip people of their citizenship.

2.45 pm

The amendments in lieu based on those tabled by Lord Anderson are certainly much better than what we had previously and do address some of the concerns that have been expressed since the Bill was last considered in this place. Nevertheless, concerns have rightfully been expressed about a two-tier system of deprivations, as there are no benefits in the amendments in lieu for those who have already been deprived of their citizenship without notice. Unless that can be fixed, we continue to believe that Lords amendment 4 is the best solution.

In short, the Government have got this Bill totally wrong and it should be opposed in every single way possible.

Several hon. Members rose—

Madam Deputy Speaker (Dame Eleanor Laing): Order. As the House can see, a great many people wish to speak. I will try to manage without a formal time limit because it is not normal to have one at this stage of dealing with Lords amendments, but I will introduce a time limit if we cannot have a bit of discipline. If everyone speaks for around four minutes, all colleagues will have a chance to speak, so let us try to do it without a formal time limit.

Mr David Davis (Haltemprice and Howden) (Con): I will be as quick as I can, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Unlike the Opposition, I take the view that this Bill is a serious attempt to deal with an almost intractable problem. Nobody should challenge that point. Nevertheless, we are a great nation, and our greatness rests on the fact that we take a moral stance on most things. That is not a formula for softness but it is an argument for rigour in what we do. Lord Kirkhope's amendment 9 strips out the Government's plans to create an offshore asylum-processing system, and I believe he is right. Asylum offshoring would be a moral, economic and practical failure. Previous international experience shows that to introduce it here would be an unmitigated disaster.

The first problem with offshoring is an ethical one. To get a sense of the issue, we have only to look at what happened in Australia when it adopted the same approach in 2013. It meant that children, modern slavery victims and torture survivors could be detained offshore. The Refugee Council of Australia has documented gut-wrenching stories of sexual, physical and mental abuse in the processing facilities. A 14-year-old girl who was held offshore for five years doused herself in petrol and tried to set herself alight. A 10-year-old boy attempted suicide three times. Another child starved themselves near to death and had to be removed back to Australia.

Those were not isolated cases. In fact, there have been numerous reports of assaults and sexual abuse relating to Australia's processing facility on Nauru. Between January and October 2015 alone—just a few months—there were 48 reports of assault and 57 reports of assault against a minor. That is what we appear to be trying to copy. We cannot risk creating a similar situation here. I ask the House to remember what happened to the views of migration around Europe when we saw the body of a drowned child on a Turkish beach. That is what would happen if such stories started to come out of a British offshoring facility.

[Mr David Davis]

The second problem with offshoring is its staggering cost. Australia ended up spending over £1 million per person detained offshore—around £4.3 billion for 3,127 asylum seekers. That is 25 times higher per head than what we spend now. We would expect to have many more applicants than Australia had. Last year alone we had 50,000 applicants. Despite what was said earlier, the Australians have learned the lesson. They have wound down their policy, shut down their processing centre in Papua New Guinea and have not sent any new asylum seekers there since 2014.

Tom Hunt: It is right that I point out that Australia may not be using Papua New Guinea but it still uses another island, and its approach continues to be very robust.

Mr Davis: The one that I was citing was Nauru, not Papua New Guinea, which turned it down itself and refused to take any more. That is the actual fact of it. By the way, I talked to Tony Abbott about this issue last week and will recount a bit of that discussion in a moment. Since that centre was closed, there were 92,000 asylum applications, so it is not as though the story went away.

There is also a major practical problem: where is this facility going to be? Will it be in Ghana, which referred to the policy as “Operation Dead Meat”? Rwanda? We have heard more on Rwanda today, and I will leave it to my right hon. Friend the Member for Sutton Coldfield (Mr Mitchell) to talk about Rwanda, as he knows more about it than I do. Albania? Moldova? Gibraltar? All these places have all been talked about—none has said yes. Even if we do find somewhere, we will have to pay it a spectacular bribe to get it to take in our dirty washing; that is what it is, in effect. The Government are simply proposing shifting responsibility for our problems to another country. That does not fit with the behaviour of the great country that I believe we are.

Given the time limit, I will finish on this point. I spoke last week to Tony Abbott, who was Prime Minister of Australia for some of the time we are discussing. We did not talk primarily about this policy, but I asked him what was most effective. I am afraid that he rather agreed with what the hon. Member for Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch East (Stuart C. McDonald) said—that the really effective policy was pushback.

Frankly, what we have to deal with, in the Home Office and with our French allies, is a series of practical problems, alongside the legalities of how we handle the channel, which is not yet resolved either. What we cannot do is put aside ethical standards in order to drive people away from our shores.

John McDonnell (Hayes and Harlington) (Lab): When people look back on this debate, I think it will be in the same way that we look back on debates around the Poor Law. They tried to solve poverty in those times by being cruel to the poor; I think that is what we are trying to do here. We are not addressing the real issues we face.

I fully concur with everything the right hon. Member for Haltemprice and Howden (Mr Davis) said. I find it bizarre that we are even considering offshoring at this point in time; I think we all know that, practically, it is never going to come off—it is never going to happen—and this is a wasted debate.

I want to concentrate on employment rights. In my constituency, I have two detention centres, which house nearly 1,000 people. Most of them will be detained, but will then come into the community, and will eventually be allowed to remain. There are 1,700 asylum seekers in hotels in my constituency as well. They are not a burden—I welcome them. They may be a financial burden on local authorities and others—central Government need to support them—but, socially and emotionally, I welcome them completely.

The problem that these people have is that, most of the time, they are trapped in the system. Hon. Members just need to look at the figures from their own casework. Cases take at least six months or a year; I have dealt with cases that have been waiting for four or five years before there is a result. In the meantime, people are denied the right to earn a living. They are told to live on £5.40 a day, and that means they live in poverty.

Someone mentioned Syrian asylum seekers; those I have met are some of the most qualified people I have ever met. They have gone through universities and training; they have skills that they could use to give the country so much, and yet they are trapped in the system, living in poverty. And, tragically, what does living in poverty do, in some instances? People try different angles. Sometimes, unfortunately, they end up in criminality. This system, which refuses to allow people to exercise their skills and devote their talents to our community, forces them into poverty and, in some instances, criminality. All Lords amendment 7 said was, “Just allow these people to work—allow them to support themselves and their families, and to give something back to this country.”

Seema Malhotra (Feltham and Heston) (Lab/Co-op): As my constituency neighbour, my right hon. Friend will be aware of the number of asylum seekers in Feltham and Heston who face the challenges that he has outlined. As well as being more humane, allowing people to work would allow them to make a financial contribution. He will have heard stories similar to those I have—of young people with degrees, who have been tortured, who have fled for their lives, and want nothing more than to start their lives again in a country that they want to call home.

John McDonnell: More recently, a calculation was made of the sort of financial contribution that would be made to the country if we allowed people to work six months after they applied for asylum. At least £200 million would be put into our economy. We are denying ourselves these people’s ability to create wealth. I went through the same process when refugee Ugandan families turned up here in the time of Idi Amin; hon. Members may remember that. I have to tell the hon. Member for Ruislip, Northwood and Pinner (David Simmonds) that Hillingdon, then under the leadership of Terry Dicks, whom the hon. Gentleman will recall, was not kind to those refugees at the time. However, eventually those Ugandan Asians settled, and they made a huge contribution to this society, including a massive economic contribution, because we allowed them to use their talents and take up employment. Often, they created businesses. They made a great contribution, certainly in west London, as my hon. Friend the Member for Feltham and Heston (Seema Malhotra) can tell us.

I cannot understand the rationale for the Government's approach. There is an argument that allowing employment will somehow add to the pull factor, but having to live on £5.40 a day is not the sort of pull factor that will attract millions to this country. We should look at the issue rationally, and recognise that the large number of people trapped in this poverty trap could contribute so much. That is why Lords amendment 7 needs to be looked at more rationally. Suffering cannot be part of our policy for dealing with the world refugee crisis—a crisis that will, as a result of climate change and other matters, become worse. We have to recognise that there will be movements of people. We have to accommodate that, and that is partly about making sure that those people are welcomed in a way that allows them to make an effective contribution to our society.

Janet Daby: I thank my right hon. Friend for making such a moving and significant speech about the plight of Afghan people. Why, in his view, are the Government not allowing Afghan refugees to make an economic contribution, although they absolutely could?

John McDonnell: I do not want to go over this too much, because other people want to come in on this debate, but there is a contradiction in our allowing Ukrainians, but not others, to work immediately. People can draw their own inferences from that. Inferences can be drawn from it that people in this House might not like. I ask hon. Members to contemplate that, to look at Lords amendment 7, and to think again. It is a beneficent amendment that will assist not only the individuals concerned but our wider community and economy.

Several hon. Members *rose*—

Madam Deputy Speaker (Dame Eleanor Laing): Order. My plea for Members to limit themselves to four-minute speeches simply has not worked. I point out to the hon. Member for Lewisham East (Janet Daby), who intervened just now, that I consider that she has now made her contribution, because there is not enough time for everybody to get into the debate. We will now have a formal four-minute limit. I call Sir John Hayes.

Sir John Hayes: I am grateful to you, Madam Deputy Speaker. Disraeli observed:

“How much easier it is to be critical than to be correct.”

Many of the amendments put forward by the Lords are carelessly critical. They are veiled, as these things so often are, in a thin covering of assumed moral superiority, but surely it is not moral to oppose a Bill that tries to make the asylum system fit for purpose. Surely it is not ethical to conflate illegal immigration with the immigration of those people who diligently seek to come to this country lawfully and to surmount the hurdles we put in their path, and who, having done so, take pride in making the contribution mentioned by the right hon. Member for Hayes and Harlington (John McDonnell).

3 pm

In particular, Lords amendments 6 and 9 go entirely against the grain of the Bill, which, it should be remembered, delivers on a pledge made to the British people by their Government. From the darkening gloom, a silver light upsoars, and that silver light was the pledge to take back control. Many of those who elected this Government made the unsurprising assumption that taking back

control had at its heart, at its core, taking back control of our borders, for if a nation cannot control its borders, what can it control? How do we define a nation if it does not control who comes here and who stays here? Our asylum system is palpably, as acknowledged by all, no longer fit for purpose, and all acknowledge that, yet when the Government try to do something about this, falteringly and hesitatingly—I do not think that the Bill goes far enough, by the way—they face a barrage of criticism from those who are happy to allow the chaos to continue.

As I heard the shadow Minister speaking, I was reminded of Dan Quayle, the former American politician, who said:

“The future will be better tomorrow.”

Better tomorrow, but with no suggestion of what that future might be like, no hint of what Labour would do to improve the current system, indeed no detail of how the Opposition would amend or reform asylum, just a criticism of a Government trying to get this right.

It is preposterous that the Lords should attempt to amend this Bill against a backdrop of 28,000 men, women and children setting out to sea in dinghies to make the precarious trip to our shores, three times the number of crossings since 2020. If those numbers continue, we will see many repeats of that horrible day last November that claimed 27 lives.

This is straightforward—the people smugglers' message is plain: “If we get you here and you pay the money to achieve that purpose, you will never leave.” The truth is that even once claims have been processed and around 40% have been found not to be valid, people rarely leave because of a combination of irresponsible activists, fat-cat lawyers and the Human Rights Act, which needs to be ditched as soon as possible. Let us reform the asylum system by backing this Bill and rejecting these amendments once and for all.

Tim Farron: I think this is the worst bit of legislation that I have seen in 17 years—and there is some competition. Fundamentally, it is the worst bit of legislation because it is based on an utterly bogus premise, which is that we are swamped by asylum seekers. We are not. Compared with the 27 members of the European Union, the UK is 18th when it comes to the number of asylum claims that are granted. For many reasons that we know all about, last year was a heavy year. There were 48,000 asylum cases in the UK, 96,000 in France, and 127,000 in Germany. That is a reminder that our problem is an entirely structural one— incompetence in the Home Office—not that we are “swamped”.

Lords amendment 7 is about the right to work. Why are we not granting asylum seekers the right to work? It is right for integration, learning the language, and the dignity of those people being able to support their family and to pay their way. There is a left-wing and a right-wing argument for saying yes to this; it is barmy to say no.

Lords amendment 6 is about having two tiers. This is the most appalling and repugnant part of the entire Bill. I assume that the Government have confidence in our asylum system, in which case we judge people on the merits of their asylum claim through the system, not through the utterly bogus, completely contrived and arbitrary notion of the means by which they got here. Let us remember that 89% of Iranian asylum seekers

[Tim Farron]

have their claims granted, 97% of Eritreans, and 96% of Sudanese, none of whom have a legal route. The only way that they can get here is by making dangerous journeys. Let us be very clear: this Bill is a traffickers' charter. If Members vote for this Bill, they are voting for deaths in the channel, because they will be removing the right of anyone who is not Ukrainian, Afghan or Syrian to have a safe route here, which is an outrage. Conservative Members know that that is the truth. Then there is offshoring. We have the guarantee that it is not the Ascension Islands, so where is it? South Georgia? People from all parts of the House have already mentioned that offshoring is ridiculous. It is a pantomime bit of nonsense, and it is also inhumane and massively expensive.

People talk about the pull factor, for pity's sake. Have the Government not worked out that there is no dastardly, lunatic policy they could introduce to protect this country from asylum seekers that rivals the fact that we are a flipping island surrounded by water? People come here not because of the pull factor, but because of the push factor—because of the outrages that they experience. The people here have no sense of what it is like themselves. This is the sort of nonsense that people invent to try to push through the worst piece of legislation that I have seen in 17 years.

I want to spend a moment talking about Ukraine and our offer to the refugees fleeing that appalling and murderous tyrant, Putin. There is a lot to commend in the fact that there is some kind of a scheme now, but let us remember that it is laden with admin bureaucracy. I was talking to a Kendal friend of mine who is Ukrainian by birth. Their friends have seven-month-old twins who do not have passports, so the online application is not open to them. They have to get themselves to the embassy in Warsaw, as that is the only way that they can get here. We are throwing up barrier after barrier after barrier.

Why do people want to come here? Why do they not stay in the first place they reach? There are loads of reasons—cultural ties, the Commonwealth, language. There is also the fact that we have a reputation, a glorious reputation; people want to come to the United Kingdom because they know that it is a place of tolerance and of liberty. It is a place where there is religious tolerance, where they can earn a living, and where they can raise a family in safety.

The simple fact is this: even this despicable Bill will not undermine Britain's centuries-old reputation as a place of sanctuary. Whatever this Government do, they cannot sully our reputation much, because this country's reputation and history are glorious and so is its future, despite this puny little Government.

Sir Robert Buckland (South Swindon) (Con): It is always a pleasure to follow the hon. Member for Westmorland and Lonsdale (Tim Farron), even though, as is sadly often the case, he ruined some respectable points with absurd hyperbole. This Bill is not the living embodiment of meanness. It is actually a reasonable and proper attempt to try to deal with a system that has evolved to become very complex. It now has distinctions that are out of date because of our departure from the EU. Having worked with my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary on aspects of this Bill, I can say that it

is in direct fulfilment of our manifesto commitment. There is no doubt in my mind about its importance and about the need for it to be passed.

There is, however, reasonable question to ask about the position of asylum seekers being able to undertake work after six months. I have long regarded as unnecessary the waste of not just lives but expenditure when asylum seekers have to stay in a state of limbo, often for years, before knowing whether their claim is to be accepted. It is unnecessary because people who are in this position have a contribution to make to our society. That is not particularly controversial or a view confined to political parties. It is supported by a broad coalition of people of all colours and none. Indeed, a YouGov poll showed that 81% of people who were asked agreed with the principle of allowing asylum seekers the right to work. As we reset the system through this Bill, we have an opportunity to do something that has the merit of being both practical and right. We are conferring the right to work on our friends from Ukraine who are arriving in our country after fleeing war and persecution, so why not do the same for others who are and fleeing persecution and seeking asylum?

After the Government did whatever it took to save millions of jobs during the covid pandemic, we now face a significant undersupply of workers. Allowing access to gainful economic activity for some asylum seekers achieves several things. It helps in some measure to answer that question about labour shortage. It will bring in revenue to the Exchequer—the right hon. Member for Hayes and Harlington (John McDonnell) mentioned a figure of £200 million, and the potential revenue is certainly in the hundreds of millions. When we put on the other side of the balance the fact that asylum accommodation costs £350 million a year, we can start to see why the numbers add up.

In my constituency, working with The Harbour Project in Swindon, which helps people in my dispersal centre to deal with the effects of the wait for resolution, I have seen for myself the effects on their mental health of having nothing to do. Even volunteering is different.

Tom Pursglove: I am grateful for the constructive way my right hon. and learned Friend is making his case. If he is agreeable, I would be keen to meet him to discuss the issue and the arguments he makes, and to set out some of the work we are doing on transforming the speed at which asylum cases are processed, which I hope will also help to allay some of his concerns.

Sir Robert Buckland: I am grateful to my hon. Friend for that offer, which I accept with alacrity. I would like to bring colleagues such as the noble Baroness Stroud, who did so much work on this issue, to meet him and officials to look into the detail of the volunteering question in particular. While we encourage asylum seekers to volunteer and they get reasonable expenses, even payments in kind for the volunteering they do are prohibited. There is a real issue there that is preventing many people from making a contribution to the local community, as I have seen for myself in Swindon.

We know the reality that many people under that pressure go off the radar. They end up being exploited, or even bound into modern-day slavery, and we lose them from the entire system. The effect of creating a right to work could deal a hammer blow to that type of exploitation.

I therefore welcome the comments of my hon. Friend the Minister and urge the Government, in the spirit of co-operation, to look carefully at how we can do what other countries such as Denmark have started to do in allowing some asylum seekers the right to work. The Migration Advisory Committee has said there is no meaningful evidence to suggest that doing so would create a pull factor. The question is begged: if that is a pull factor, why do we have small boats now?

Olivia Blake (Sheffield, Hallam) (Lab): I refer the House to my entry in the Register of Members' Financial Interests. I have help from the Refugee, Asylum and Migration Policy Project for my work in this area.

I have said throughout the debates in Parliament that this Bill is divisive. As my constituents reach across borders to help and house those fleeing the war in Ukraine, this Government are sowing division by making an insidious distinction between “good” and “bad” refugees—a division that we should all completely reject. That is why I rise today to support Lords amendments 4 to 9, especially Lords amendment 6.

Clause 11 makes a totally spurious division between group 1 and group 2 refugees that flies in the face of the 1951 refugee convention. The convention clearly states that refugees, wherever they come from,

“shall enjoy fundamental rights and freedoms without discrimination.”

The Government know that there are no visa or pre-entry clearances for someone wishing to claim refuge. There is no such thing as an illegal refugee in international law, yet that is exactly what the new group 2 category attempts to establish. All clause 11 seeks to do is lazily turn far-right talking points about asylum seekers and refugees into legislation, without seriously thinking through any of the consequences for the people involved.

For example, currently people fleeing war can apply for humanitarian protection leave. The protection grants them five years in the UK, access to the NHS and other public funds, an option to apply later for indefinite leave to remain and the right to work. However, the Government are scrapping humanitarian protection as we know it and aligning it instead with the new group 2 status, meaning regular visa reviews every two and a half years compared with every five, no recourse to public funds, no right to work, restricted family visa rights and no route to indefinite leave to remain. That is something I think many in this House have missed, and I hope they will reflect on it.

It is remarkable that in the middle of the Ukraine crisis, as thousands of people join the effort to support people from Ukraine, the Government are actually proposing that people running from the horrors of war should have fewer rights to come here. Those rights were brought in through an EU directive that became British law, and now the Government are using the smokescreen of this Bill to remove them, all by aligning them with a faulty two-tier refugee system.

Clive Lewis (Norwich South) (Lab): My hon. Friend is making a very interesting speech. Does she agree that the UN refugee convention was about our common humanity? I have heard a lot of talk about a “great country”, but what we see now from this Government is an attempt to split humanity into two tiers. That undermines the concept of human rights and of there being one, sole, universal understanding of what it is to be a

human being. This Government are putting humanity into categories, and history tells us that that is a slippery slope and fundamentally wrong.

Olivia Blake: I agree—it is fundamentally wrong. That is why we should ensure that clause 11 is not included in this Bill. Clause 11 is out of tune with the hundreds of thousands of people who have come forward to help Ukrainian refugees. It is an affront to the 1951 refugee convention, and I urge hon. Members to reject it and to reject this Bill.

3.15 pm

Henry Smith (Crawley) (Con): I rise to thank the Government sincerely for amendment 1, the Chagos nationality amendment. I particularly thank the Minister, the hon. Member for Corby (Tom Pursglove) for his comments earlier and his colleague, my hon. Friend the Member for Torbay (Kevin Foster), who is not currently in his place, for meeting me and engaging on the issue of Chagos nationality justice and finally, after many years of campaigning, seeing the matter resolved by this Government. I am truly appreciative.

I express my thanks to hon. Members across this House, both present and past, and present and past members of the other place for their work over many years on this important matter. I also do not forget the many members of the Chagos islands community: those visiting Parliament today, those across this country and those in other parts of the world. They have suffered an injustice of approximately half a century and the Government today have gone a significant way towards ensuring that those people who are descendants of British subjects rightly have the ability to apply for British overseas territories citizenship, and therefore ultimately British citizenship if they so wish.

In conclusion, I repeat my appreciation to the Government. The second campaign that continues for the Chagos islanders is a right of return to their homeland, but I promise the Home Office that I will tackle the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office with that one, and conclude my remarks by expressing my appreciation to Home Office Ministers and officials.

Patrick Grady: I echo the words of the hon. Member for Crawley (Henry Smith); there is a small amount of consensus on the concession the Government have made today towards members of the Chagossian community. However, if the Government are at long last willing to listen to the House of Lords to correct that historical injustice, why are they not willing to listen to it on all the other points? It appears to be the exception that proves the rule.

We in the SNP hold no torch for their lordships' House, but for those who are defenders of the Lords and stand up for the check it is supposed to provide on the decisions of the elected Chamber, why is everything else being dismissed out of hand? Why are the Government not willing to accept Lords amendment 5 and put the 1951 refugee convention into the Bill? They say they accept the convention and always act in accordance with it—although of course the reality is very different. There is a gap between their rhetoric about respecting the convention and the reality that they want to turn arriving in the UK from a war zone into a crime.

[Patrick Grady]

That is why the House should also support Lords amendments 6 and 11. Ministers have yet to explain, despite having been asked several times in this debate, how the UK, which is surrounded by water, could ever possibly be the first safe country of arrival for someone seeking asylum without proper paperwork. Political human rights defenders from Eritrea are not provided with exit visas and passports by their Government. They have to run across the border at night in case they get shot, and then hope to God that they can get to a safe country such as the United Kingdom, where there is already an expat community. But then this freedom-loving, democracy-defending, global-Britain-is-great Tory Government want to turn them into criminals, which is exactly what they were fleeing in the first place. Exactly how putting asylum seekers into the prison system represents value for money for taxpayers is completely beyond me.

That is why the House should vote to retain Lords amendment 7 extending the right to work to asylum seekers. As if the current system is not dehumanising enough for individual asylum seekers, being denied the right to work actively harms wider society. Let them pay tax. Let them contribute to our economy and industries that are crying out for staff. Let them use their skills and talents to benefit everyone. I believe that even some Tory Back Benchers have finally been persuaded of this. I pay particular tribute to the Maryhill Integration Network, based in Glasgow North, for championing this amendment and becoming not just a provider of vital services to the local migrant population but an authoritative national voice on the rights of refugees and asylum seekers.

The House should also support the amendment tabled by Lord Alton, one of the finest minds and voices in the upper Chamber, that seeks to ensure that applicants for asylum who are at risk of being killed in a genocide can claim asylum in the UK. It provides exactly the kind of safe and legal route the Government say they want to see, and it was supported by former Tory Cabinet Ministers in the House of Lords. Yet once again the Government want to reject it. It is clear that this Government are determined to strip away from the Bill any vestige of compassion or recognition of vulnerability on the part of asylum seekers that the Lords have managed to shoehorn into it. Well, I hope the Government are made to work for it. I hope we divide on every single amendment before us and that when they have to cancel their dinners, receptions and all their other engagements this evening, they think about what it must be like to travel on a small boat and to be in the hands of people-traffickers. No one chooses that. No one is so desperate to come to the Tories' land of milk and honey. People are forced into this kind of thing.

Alexander Stafford (Rother Valley) (Con) *rose—*

Patrick Grady: I will not give way because I am out of time, and this Government are out of ideas and out of compassion. As they have shown in recent weeks in response to the current situation in Ukraine, people in Scotland and people across the United Kingdom do not want to put up barriers to people fleeing war, famine and disasters caused by a climate emergency that we in

the west created. They want to show solidarity and compassion. They want to say it loud and say it clear—that refugees are welcome here.

Mr Andrew Mitchell (Sutton Coldfield) (Con): I take a rather different view from the hon. Member for Glasgow North (Patrick Grady). I draw the House's attention to my outside interests. I also want to make it clear that I think this is a most important piece of legislation and I completely agree with the aims of the Home Office. I congratulate the Home Secretary on her vigorous attempts to remedy a serious problem.

I want to raise three brief points. First, I point out to the House that when the right hon. Member for Hayes and Harlington (John McDonnell) and my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for South Swindon (Sir Robert Buckland) agree so clearly, the Government should think carefully about whether they can move on the issue of 12 months coming down to six months.

The two Lords amendments I particularly want to raise, which would improve the Bill, are those tabled by Lord Kirkhope of Harrogate. They should be given very serious consideration. Lord Kirkhope was the Immigration Minister under Michael Howard, the former Home Secretary in John Major's Government. Both are much respected and on the right of the Conservative party. Our former colleague Lord Kirkhope's views are an important contribution to this debate. Furthermore, he has a long-standing interest and expertise in the handling of population movement in Europe from Calais to Moscow.

On amendment 11, my right hon. Friend the Member for Ashford (Damian Green) has already made clear the huge benefits that would come in if it were agreed to. It is designed to break the people-smugglers' business model. The Government are quite right: people fleeing terror and persecution should only come here by safe and legal routes. We will only stop people in desperation coming over the channel—that is, set up the settlement pathway the Home Office rightly refers to and break the smugglers' model—if, first, we have accessible and meaningful numbers, and, secondly, we are not restricted to one geographic area. The Home Office confirms that 87% of the 28,000 arriving illicitly in 2021 came from Iran, Iraq, Syria and Yemen, for whom there is currently no alternative legal and safe route to which they can apply to get to the United Kingdom. Endorsing resettlement is central to the Government's new approach set out in the "New Plan for Immigration", but Ministers have yet to bring forward any provision in legislation that would see the necessary safe and legal routes made available.

It is rarely popular among Conservatives to talk of specific targets. Any figure can be changed up or down by the Government to reflect international circumstances. I fear that we must do so if the Government's laudable aim of stemming the dangerous flow of desperate people across the channel, exploited by evil traffickers, is to stop. The figure of 10,000 suggested by Lord Kirkhope equates to 15 per parliamentary constituency, or five families per local authority. The amendment makes it clear that this is inclusive of, not in addition to, the Afghan refugees, and having a target would enable local authorities to plan in a co-ordinated manner, as we have heard, and avoid the current system where so many Afghans whom we want to help are waiting to move out of inappropriate accommodation.

On amendment 9 and offshoring, this is the issue that Lord Kirkhope looked at so comprehensively before and reluctantly rejected. The Home Office is asking Parliament to grant it this power when it has no idea of where it would exercise it, when it could exercise it or if it can exercise it. We know that it would be incredibly expensive. Judging by the cost of Australian offshoring, the British taxpayer would face unprecedented costs per asylum seeker. It would be much cheaper to put each one in the Ritz and send all the under-18s to Eton. That would cost a great deal less than what is proposed. Much more sensible is to recruit and train several hundred new civil servants to process these claims more rapidly and, yes, to crack down on an over-lengthy appeals process exploited through unscrupulous lawyers.

Tahir Ali (Birmingham, Hall Green) (Lab): Recently, I was sent hundreds of Valentine cards from pupils at St Dunstan's Primary School in my constituency, to my surprise; it is more than I have ever received. In each card, handmade and written by a pupil, the message was clear: to stand in solidarity with refugees and vote against this draconian Bill. Primary school children were asking me to do the right thing. These young people want a society based on compassion, humanity and solidarity with those in need. They want their country and their communities to be safe havens for those fleeing war, famine and persecution. It is moving to see such displays of unconditional love and understanding from our young people, and I am immensely proud to represent these pupils. I only wish that an ounce of their compassion could be found among Conservative Members who will vote to support this inhumane Bill.

Make no mistake, this Bill is one of the most draconian pieces of legislation brought before this House in quite some time. Millions of people across the UK have recoiled in utter disgust at some of the provisions contained within it, and they are right to do so. Its timing could not be worse. We have all been given a stark reminder of the importance of providing support and assistance to those fleeing war. The situation in Ukraine is driving millions from their homes, many of whom have found refuge in neighbouring countries. However, those who have sought to claim asylum here in the UK have faced nothing but obstruction and bureaucracy. A cold shoulder has been given to the Ukrainian people by the Home Office. They are the latest victims of the long-standing hostile environment faced by those in search of safety.

Let us be clear that this Bill does nothing to improve the lives of those fleeing war and persecution—quite the opposite. Clause 11, concerning illegal entry into the UK, will criminalise those who do not arrive by regular routes, which for millions of refugees are simply not available. It will do nothing to support those who face perilous journeys after fleeing from their homes, and it seeks only to further punish those who are most in need of help. Furthermore, there are no serious measures in this Bill aimed at tackling people trafficking, or any provisions to ensure that safe and legal routes are made more widely available. Instead of measures designed to safeguard and support refugees, this Bill contains only provisions to further dehumanise and isolate them, with the suggestion of offshore processing facilities and the ability for them to be sent back to countries they have travelled through.

That is why I am standing with those pupils from St Dunstan's Primary School in opposition to the Bill. I urge others to learn from their example and do the same. Edward from the school said:

"Roses are red / Violets are blue / Do you support refugees too?"

Holly said:

"Show your heart for refugees".

Sam said:

"Roses are red / Violets are blue / I support refugees / How about you?"

3.30 pm

Danny Kruger (Devizes) (Con): With 20,000 Syrians, 18,000 Afghans, 100,000 Hongkongers and an unlimited number of Ukrainians—probably upwards of 100,000 are expected—it is just not the case, as the hon. Member for Birmingham, Hall Green (Tahir Ali) just said, that there is not an ounce of compassion in this country for supporting refugees fleeing from conflict. It is simply not the case.

Of course there are difficulties, and there is too much bureaucracy in many cases, and we are all familiar with that. I do not think there is any individual to blame, whether Ministers or officials. The fact is that systems are often clunky and bureaucratic, and we need to improve that, but there is a factor that applies when we consider mass migration and asylum in our times. We are trying to manage hard borders in an age of free trade and mass migration. We are facing enormous pressures on our borders.

Beyond the remit of this Bill is our foreign engagement. We need to be more engaged. In other debates, we have discussed the need for further investment in our defences, in development spending and in our diplomatic corps. I also think we need to accept more refugees into this country in the years ahead—not more economic migrants, except for those who are highly skilled and able to make a significant contribution, but certainly more refugees.

I want to speak briefly in support of the sponsorship scheme that the Government have introduced, which is so good as a model. Rather than Government and councils being responsible for identifying migrants and admitting them into this country, we are inviting communities themselves to take the lead, and I find it surprising that Opposition Members, who object so strenuously to bureaucracy and faceless systems, want the Government to match refugees with sponsors. They think councils should be responsible for organising where people come and live. I think we have a better system that is self-organising. Members around the House will have noticed the inspiring example in eastern Europe of communities reaching out to refugees, which is all self-organising and shows that it does not need Government to match people.

How do we do this securely? It is totally wrong to say that anyone who breaks into the UK has a right to live here. It is a terrible incentive for people to take dangerous trips across the channel, it is unjust to legal migrants and refugees, and it is wrong for the citizens who live here. It is the essence of sovereignty that people cannot just decide to move here on their own initiative. We have a moral obligation to illegal migrants to save their lives if they undertake these dangerous journeys, to treat them with absolute decency when they get here and

[*Danny Kruger*]

then to return them to the back of the queue. If possible, that means back to the last safe country they were in, and if necessary to a third country. The effect will be to deter this dangerous and illegal crossing.

We must do more to deter people smuggling, which is why I support the measures in the Bill to introduce stronger penalties for people who break into this country, much stronger penalties against the smugglers who bring them over, more power and resources for our Border Force, including opportunities to return to France if that can be done safely, and more power to remove illegal immigrants.

I will finish with two quick conclusions. First, I think we need more use of the community sponsorship route as the default model for refugee resettlement. I echo the point made by my right hon. Friend the Member for Ashford (Damian Green) earlier. I believe in the generosity and compassion of local communities in this country, and I believe that community sponsorship is the most effective way to accommodate refugees and asylum seekers in our country. Secondly, to ensure the security of our borders, I wonder whether we should consider a new Department for borders that looks after visas, asylum and security. A smaller and more effective operation might be better.

Claudia Webbe (Leicester East) (Ind): The Bill is anti-refugee to its core. It lacks basic humanity and represents an acceleration of the Government's deeply damaging demonisation of refugees and asylum seekers. Its callousness has been further illuminated by the situation in Ukraine. The Government must provide safe passage and refuge for displaced people, refugees and asylum seekers arriving from Ukraine and all theatres of conflict around the globe.

The outpouring of compassion and solidarity for people fleeing Ukraine has been inspiring, yet when we contrast that to how asylum seekers from non-European and non-majority white countries are treated by the Government, a worrying picture emerges of the inherent racism in how crises are reported, discussed and responded to. The sorrow and despair that we all feel for Ukraine should be identical to the sorrow and despair that we feel for Yemen, Palestine and Syria. The media class and the Government must recognise that every conflict is deserving of our solidarity and our compassion, so the UK must not only rapidly extend its support for people fleeing Ukraine but abandon its unbelievably callous refugee and asylum policy—starting by ripping up this Bill.

Many of the Lords amendments would improve the Bill. I especially support Lords amendment 4, which removes the licence given to the Home Secretary to deprive British people of their citizenship without informing them. I also support Lords amendment 5, which seeks to ensure that the Bill does not violate the UK's shared international obligations under the refugee convention. Lords amendment 6, which removes from the Bill the power given to the Home Secretary to treat people differently according to the way that they arrive and claim asylum, must also be adopted to prevent a two-tier system that would limit protection for refugees due not to their need but to their method of travel.

I also support Lords amendment 7 on permission to work, yet I believe the six-month limit should be lifted and that people claiming asylum should be able to work regardless of how long they have been in our country. Lords amendments 8 and 9 are steps in the right direction, yet they do not go far enough to prevent asylum seekers from being transferred to other countries and processed offshore. Lords amendment 10, which would introduce a family reunion provision, is important, yet we must accept all people fleeing war, persecution and other horrors, not only those with family ties in the UK. I wholeheartedly support Lords amendment 54, which prohibits the use of new maritime powers contained in schedule 6 in ways that would endanger life at sea. That is an abhorrent proposal and we must fight tooth and nail against its ever being implemented.

Overall, although the Lords amendments improve important aspects, they do not go nearly far enough to rectify this irredeemable Bill. Time and again, the Government have chosen to turn their back on those seeking protection from war, torture or other awful acts. The Bill will compound the misery of people fleeing intolerable conditions. It must be scrapped.

Tim Loughton: I welcome the Bill, although not without reservation. The ridiculous caricature that we just heard from the hon. Member for Leicester East (Claudia Webbe) and from other Opposition Members helps absolutely nobody.

I very much welcome the offer to meet the Minister on my issue of family reunion. I welcome the flexibility that he and other Ministers have shown on the We Belong campaign by young people who have been in this country for many years and whose wish to become officially British will at last be speeded up. I do not welcome the litany of constant carping from Opposition Members, who have not offered a single practical solution to the serious problems that we are facing, particularly in the channel. They have had every opportunity to do so and they have failed on every occasion.

I support Lords amendment 7—I said that my support for the Bill was not without reservation—and I think there is merit in the six-month campaign. There is a waste of talent that is left in limbo in this country that we could put to good use. I also welcome Lords amendment 12—the genocide amendment—and the good work done on it by Lord Alton. As somebody who has been sanctioned by China for my support of the recognition of genocide, I would be expected to support that.

I will concentrate on Lords amendment 10—the so-called Dubs amendment. I have form in this area, and I am afraid that the family reunion scheme needs to be much better. The Minister said that there is already generous provision in our rules for refugee family reunion, and 40,000 people have benefited from that, but only since 2015 or over seven years. The Home Secretary did say some time ago that she wanted to see a generous equivalent replacement for Dublin III as we came beyond Brexit. I want to hold her to that promise, but I fear what is contained in the Bill does not hold water.

The Dubs amendment would expand family reunion so that unaccompanied children in Europe can easily join family members in the UK, such as their grandparents, aunts, uncles and siblings. At the moment, however, the UK's refugee family reunion rules only cover children trying to reunite with their parents in the UK as long as

a parent has refugee status or humanitarian protection, and the child was born before their parents fled the country of origin. This rule is limited so that it excludes most unaccompanied children and prevents them from uniting with family.

For some children, these are their closest surviving relatives. They may be aunts and uncles because they have lost their parents in a place of war. Refugees may have lost their parents before they left their country or on their journey to sanctuary, and siblings in this country may be the only link they have. We have seen the horrendous pictures from Lesbos of the camps there containing many unaccompanied children, where there are fires, predators and other dangers, and those are the young people we really should be concentrating on rescuing. In refusing one case, the Home Office said:

“You currently live in a shelter for unaccompanied minors... I note you have provided no evidence why this arrangement cannot continue”.

That is not a permanent solution.

The Government have also argued that there is discretion to allow family reunion outside the rules in certain circumstances, but it is not right that children who had a clear official route to safety and family reunion under the EU's Dublin III regulation are now reliant on Government discretion. This discretion is rarely exercised, and the very few cases actually granted outside the rules are mainly done so only on appeal, which requires legal assistance. At best, children are left waiting months alone and separated from family, and at worst, they are prevented from safely joining loved ones at all.

I call on the Government to make good the promises given by the Home Secretary as we moved out of the Dublin III regulation post Brexit. There has been a long hiatus, but we need to put that right and that is why I support Lords amendment 10.

Janet Daby: I am grateful to be able to speak in this debate. Many amendments were passed in the other place, but for the sake of time, I will focus on Lords amendments 4, 9, 10 and 13.

I am pleased that Lords amendment 4 deletes clause 9, which I have spoken about before. Clause 9 is one of the most chilling parts of the Bill. I have had countless people write to me about this since the Government brought this Bill to Parliament. It would allow the Secretary of State to deprive a person of their British citizenship without notice, and it is right that the Lords chose to remove the clause entirely from the Bill.

Lords amendment 9 would stop overseas asylum processing. We have seen that this type of system is ineffective, inhumane and too expensive. As we have already heard from the shadow Minister, my hon. Friend the Member for Aberavon (Stephen Kinnock), and other Opposition Members, in Australia the offshore processing cost is estimated to be Aus \$1 billion a year to deal with 300 migrants. I would like to add my voice to this by saying that I do not think it is in our country's best interest to have overseas asylum processing.

On Lords amendment 10, Britain has a proud history of offering sanctuary to vulnerable unaccompanied children, but the Government ended the Dubs scheme and have not replaced it. I was proud that, last year, Lewisham Council was the first borough in the UK to be formally recognised for its work by becoming a borough of

sanctuary. I encourage all boroughs to be boroughs of sanctuary, and I also thank all families across our countries for offering Ukrainian families a home.

In contrast, the Government are ignoring the treacherous journeys that these desperate people are making. Without safe, legal routes for family reunion, unaccompanied children are making the most dangerous journeys. The Government would be better targeting the traffickers, rather than the victims, if they want to stop people making these treacherous journeys. This amendment is therefore vital because it imposes a duty on the Government to allow unaccompanied children to be admitted to the UK.

I will end on Lords amendment 13. In the other place, Labour rightly voiced concerns that clause 39 would criminalise everyone who arrives in the UK to claim asylum. The clause will have wider implications for all asylum seekers, not only people making irregular channel crossings. It is time the Government recognised that they need to treat refugees humanely, not as a problem they need to solve by criminalising them.

Can the Minister therefore answer me this? If a Ukrainian family enters the UK without a visa in the hope of being granted asylum, will the Government's proposal mean they are guilty of a criminal offence punishable by up to four years in prison? If so, it is ridiculous that we could be imprisoning people for fleeing a war started by Vladimir Putin—or any other war or natural disaster, for that matter.

3.45 pm

Simon Hoare: To begin my remarks on a personal note, I thank my hon. Friend the Minister for having taken the time to talk to me about a number of amendments and for having approached the Bill with his customary calmness and friendliness and with respect for the House. It is always a pleasure to call my hon. Friend a friend, and he has handled this Bill incredibly well.

I served on the Committee stage of the Immigration Act 2016, and we should remind ourselves that Ministers told us then that that was the Bill to end all Bills and solve all problems, yet another one came along a minute or two later, so I have little or no doubt that we will return to many of these issues over the coming months and years.

This is also an opportunity to pause: all new laws and Bills set rules, guidelines, prohibitions and so forth, but this bill provides the House with an opportunity to briefly reflect on the enormous contribution of so many people not born in this country who have seen in this country a beacon of light and hope and decency, and who have made their way by all sorts of routes to put down roots and become part of our society. It is an opportunity to remind ourselves of the benefits of immigration and not to see it always through the prisms of prohibition and just say “It's bad and must be controlled and stopped.”

I strongly support many of the Lords amendments on the right to work. My hon. Friend the Minister said he could not support that because it would be a disincentive to those seeking to abide by the rules to allow people to work, yet as others have mentioned, we are rightly allowing those from Ukraine to do so without anyone making that point. My right hon. and learned Friend the Member for South Swindon (Sir Robert Buckland), my right hon. Friends the Members for Haltemprice

[Simon Hoare]

and Howden (Mr Davis) and for Sutton Coldfield (Mr Mitchell), my hon. Friend the Member for Ashfield (Lee Anderson) and indeed the right hon. Member for Hayes and Harlington (John McDonnell) all expressed very cogently and calmly the clear economic and socioeconomic benefits of allowing people to work, and I urge the Minister, even at this late stage of ping-pong, to rethink on that issue.

On offshoring, I first want to say that that is the most dehumanising word. It turns our fellow human beings into commodities to have this idea that we can move them from pillar to post. I do not find it at all palatable. The Minister is also asking us to sign a blank cheque. We have his word—and his word carries weight—that any countries involved with this would share our values, but that is not on the face of the Bill and there is no guarantee. We do not know where this offshoring would be located or how it would work, and we certainly do not know how much it would cost. My right hon. Friend the Member for Sutton Coldfield said we might as well send them to Eton and that really would be a punishment, but there is no costing to this and we should not be offshoring; if people want and are trying to come here, we should have the decency, scope and capacity to deal with it here, in country. I do not see the link between putting people off coming here illegally and offshoring; we saw that in the Australian experiment, which clearly did not work.

A rethink on both those issues from the Minister would be helpful.

Brendan O'Hara: I rise to speak in support of Lords amendment 12, put forward by Lord Alton of Liverpool, who for decades has been the conscience of this place in dealing with matters of genocide. The amendment would enable the Bill to do three things: provide safe passage for victims of genocide; create a route to asylum that is not currently available in the UK; and help the UK Government meet their legal responsibilities under the UN genocide convention. Let me begin by declaring an interest as chair of the all-party parliamentary group on the Yazidi people and vice-chair of the APPG on international freedom of religion or belief and the APPG for the prevention of genocide and crimes against humanity.

Lords amendment 12 has its origins in Sinjar and the Nineveh plains in northern Iraq, where in August 2014 Daesh terrorists attacked peaceful Yazidi communities. During its reign of terror, Daesh raped, murdered or sold into sexual slavery thousands of women, and sent young boys to its terrorist training camps. Daesh sought to completely destroy the Yazidi community and erase their ethnic and religious identity, culture and way of life. I have spoken many times in this House about the fate of the Yazidis, and in 2016 the House voted unanimously that what happened to them was a genocide.

Despite the overwhelming evidence of the atrocities and the fact they meet every single standard laid out in the 1948 convention on genocide, the Government still steadfastly refuse to create a safe or legal route to enable victims of genocide or those at risk of being victims of genocide passage to the United Kingdom. We have a legal and moral responsibility to say that that has to change. It cannot be right that the most abused communities

in the world—whether they are the Yazidis, the Uyghurs, the Rohingya or whoever—cannot find safe passage to the United Kingdom.

Let us compare the UK's record to that of Germany. Since Daesh launched its attack in 2014, 85,000 Yazidi people have been given sanctuary in Germany. In contrast, the UK has not taken in a single Yazidi from northern Iraq. Not one. The Government will say that they are considering eight applications from Yazidis from Iraq, but considering only eight applications from victims of one of the worst genocides in the 21st century is a shameful statistic. As we have heard so often in the debate, that is not an accident, because the system is deliberately designed not to recognise those fleeing genocide as a specific group that requires a bespoke solution. Minister, that has to change.

In conclusion, Baroness Kennedy was absolutely right to describe the Bill as

“an affront to human rights and civil liberties.”—[*Official Report, House of Lords*, 5 January 2022; Vol. 817, c. 639.]

Regardless of the form in which the Bill passes tonight, it will continue to be an affront to human rights and civil liberties and an indelible stain on what is left of the reputation of the United Kingdom. If it has to pass, at least allow those who are suffering the most heinous of crimes at hands of some of the most brutal regimes a glimmer of hope that in their greatest hour of need they will find refuge here. I ask Government Members to consider this humanitarian amendment and make a change that will allow the most abused people to find refuge here in the United Kingdom.

Sir Edward Leigh: I commend the Minister for the moderate and sensible way in which he introduced the Bill and I urge him, when considering how we should vote on all the amendments, to be robust and to hold the line. When the Bill becomes an Act it will be crawled over by so-called human rights lawyers, and I believe that it is the bare minimum to try to deal with the scandal of channel crossings, which are putting so many lives at risk.

Let us pause for a moment and think about what we can agree on. The push factors are enormous, such is the misery in the world in places such as Yemen, Syria, Iraq and many other countries. There is no limit to the number of people who want to come here. Let us consider the pull factors. We have the most liberal labour laws in Europe. We speak English; we can do nothing about that. We have no national identity card, which I think will become increasingly essential in the modern world. People can vanish into the community, and we already have large communities from all over the world. The pull factors are enormous—in a way, President Macron has a point.

We have to ask people who oppose the Bill and seek to amend it, what is their solution? Everybody accepts that the cross-channel trade is appalling—it criminalises desperate people and lines the pockets of gangsters—but what is the solution? Such is the pull factor and the push factor that even if we did have offshore asylum claims for 2,000, 5,000 or 10,000, it would probably make very little difference to the number of people desperate to get into this country by any means at all.

I repeat that what we have in the Bill is the bare minimum to try to break the cycle of it being just about economically attractive to make the appallingly dangerous

journey. We have to have a variety of measures in our toolkit. I do not know whether we will ever resort to pushback, although the Greeks have pursued it very successfully, and I do not know whether we will ever resort to offshoring, although the Australians have used it very successfully.

Jeremy Corbyn (Islington North) (Ind): I am sorry I have only recently come into the Chamber; I was at the Westminster Bridge event. Will the right hon. Gentleman reflect for a moment on the fact that there are 1 million refugees in Bangladesh, many hundreds of thousands in Uganda and over 1 million in Poland? Many countries around the world, which are very poor and have very little infrastructure, have taken in far more refugees than any European country. They are holding their hands out to support people. He appears to be moving in the opposite direction.

Sir Edward Leigh: I do not think that that is true. Actually, if we talk about our response to Ugandan refugees, Hong Kong and many other areas, we have been generous. We have to have a sense of proportion. Such is the overwhelming number of people who want to come here, we have to hold the line. If we did not, it would have a catastrophic effect on race relations. *[Interruption.]* Yes, it would, because people would be angry about it. They would think, “Why did I vote Brexit when I can’t even control my own borders? What are the Government doing?” The Government, to be responsible, have to respond by trying to deal with illegal cross-channel crossings. All the Lords amendments would just add to the pull factors. For instance, one amendment says that people should be allowed to work after six months. That is an extraordinarily attractive pull factor. I am afraid that the Government have to hold the line. My personal view is that until we are prepared to criminalise people who take the illegal route, until we are prepared to arrest them and until we are prepared to deport them, we will never have a chance of dealing with this trade.

The Bill is just the first step in trying to deal with this appalling problem. I ask those who support the amendments and oppose the Government today—I repeat the question—what is their solution? People are pouring across the channel every day. Sooner or later there is going to be a terrible tragedy. We have already had one tragedy in November. What is their solution? How are they going to stop that? How are they going to break the cycle used by criminal gangs? There is no solution, apart from what the Government are attempting to do today. It is a minimum solution. It is, actually, a humanitarian solution. It is about trying to prevent people from taking appalling risks. If we allow any of the amendments—any of the amendments—and if we do not hold the line, sooner or later there will be an even greater tragedy in the English channel.

Several hon. Members *rose—*

Mr Deputy Speaker (Mr Nigel Evans): The wind-ups will begin at 12 minutes past 4, as the Minister has kindly agreed to truncate his wind-up to get more time in. We are going to a three-minute limit. At roughly 18 minutes past 4, we are expecting multiple Divisions.

Beth Winter (Cynon Valley) (Lab): The events in Ukraine in the past month have shown how quickly millions of lives can be thrown into chaos by war and

violence, and how individuals can find themselves dependent on asylum or sanctuary afforded by other countries. The British people, yet again, have shown themselves willing to offer financial support and to offer up their homes for refugees. I take issue with the comments of the previous speaker, the right hon. Member for Gainsborough (Sir Edward Leigh), about the Bill. The Bill is absolutely appalling and inhumane. The British people I know are caring, compassionate and welcoming of all refugees, and we should welcome refugees from wherever they are fleeing violence, war and famine.

Unfortunately, the Government are completely out of touch with that sentiment in their new plan for immigration. The Bill cuts across everything that we should stand for in this country. It breaches international laws, violates basic principles of justice and runs completely counter to what is needed. It will cause greater inequity and harm communities.

4 pm

In the limited time that I have, I want to associate myself strongly with Lords amendment 4, which would remove from the Bill Government powers to make a deprivation of citizenship order without giving notice to the person affected. More than 100 of my Cynon Valley constituents have signed a parliamentary petition backing that proposal. I also associate myself with Lords amendments 9, 52 and 53, which would remove from the Bill the Government’s inhumane powers to make it easier to remove a person to a safe third country while their asylum claim is pending.

I also wish to refer to Lords amendments 5 and 6 on how the Bill’s introduction of differential treatment according to the nature of arrival affects our compliance with the refugee convention. The concern of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is that the Bill “risks breaching commitments under the Refugee Convention”.

That is also the concern of the Welsh Government, who expressed in a letter to the Minister that they would withhold their legislative consent from the Bill. They do not agree to a number of clauses.

On differential treatment, the Welsh Government said:

“We believe that this is incompatible with the UN Refugee Convention. In terms of the impact on Wales, we have concerns about the practical impact of this change and the systemic destitution and homelessness which it will create for those who the UK Government has found to have fled a well-founded fear of persecution.”

I therefore support Lords amendment 6.

In conclusion, I have identified the Welsh Government’s concerns about certain amendments. The Welsh Government have asked the UK Government to reconsider 10 critical clauses to avert an impending tragedy. Wales is a nation of sanctuary. We want to welcome refugees from wherever they flee across the world. Please withdraw the Bill immediately.

David Simmonds: It seems to me that many of the criticisms that are levelled at the Bill are more matters of Home Office administration than of law. I was particularly grateful to my right hon. Friend the Member for Ashford (Damian Green), who is no longer in his place, for accepting my earlier intervention in which I sought to make the point that the Labour party has a long history of talking a very good game in respect of refugees and asylum seekers but of not honouring its

[David Simmonds]

promises to those individuals in practice. We need to make sure that we all accept the broad responsibility of support for refugees.

Given the shortness of time, I will confine my comments to three enormously important areas. Having sat through a lot of scrutiny of this legislation on the Joint Committee on Human Rights, I think there is a valid concern about the two-tier system. As I understand it, the case from the human rights lawyers who advise the Committee is that it would not be a matter for the Government to demonstrate that safe and legal routes were available in general; it would be necessary to show that each individual refugee had access to a safe and legal route but chose to come to the UK by another means. I know that the Minister is aware of that question and I would like to hear from him how the Government propose to address that concern, so that we can be confident that the two-tier approach will genuinely achieve what we want it to, which is to break the business model of traffickers.

That links to the wider issue that a number of Members have highlighted: we have yet to see the necessary practical proposals that demonstrate where those safe and legal routes will be. We know that the Home Office has invested an enormous amount in digital technology—that has been put to good effect in respect of Ukraine—so that people can make their applications abroad. There are a number of other ideas about how that might happen, and the response to Syrian refugees demonstrated that, through resettlement, we can do this better.

In my view, the situation demonstrates the importance of supporting the existence of the ability to process claims offshore. Although I agree with several Members that the Australian system is simply bonkers expensive when applied to the UK, the ability to administer the application process outside the United Kingdom is critical if we are to make safe and legal routes work, so I very much support the Government in introducing it.

Having made the point that a lot of the issues are about administration, I hope that the Government are listening to the point about right to work. It frustrates me as a Conservative politician that taxpayers' money is being spent on supporting people whose skills could be put to good use in our economy. The Home Office has made some helpful steps in that direction. I hope that the message from both sides of the Chamber tonight will be listened to and that we will see some movement on administration as the Bill moves towards becoming law.

Kim Johnson (Liverpool, Riverside) (Lab): I rise to support the Lords amendments. The deeply draconian elements of the Bill have been called out time and again. It is appallingly racist and divisive legislation that deliberately seeks to strengthen hostile environment policies and willingly flies in the face of international law. We have heard repeatedly in this House and in the other place about how it will criminalise refugees who are seeking routes to safety, arriving on our shores against tremendous odds, and how it will create refugee camps on faraway islands—hidden from view, inaccessible and outside regular jurisdiction.

The Bill seeks to expand the powers of the Home Office to unprecedented levels to permit the deprivation of citizenship at the flick of a pen—a move that will

undoubtedly discriminate against black and immigrant communities, further deepening the hostile environment that has already proven so damaging. It seeks to criminalise the very act of seeking asylum by inventing “illegal” routes to accessing our shores and seeking safety and protection, creating a two-tier system for refugees that breaks our obligations under international law and the refugee convention. The list of deeply cruel and inhumane policies goes on.

Lee Anderson: Will the hon. Member give way?

Kim Johnson: No, thank you. Sit down.

We have already witnessed mass opposition to the very worst of the Bill's proposals. I have nothing but the utmost pride in workers and volunteers in the Royal National Lifeboat Institution and our border forces and in the incredible work of the PCS union in defying the Government's instructions to push boats back into the channel. The Trades Union Congress has called on the Government to go further by suspending deportation flights until they have addressed the miscarriages of justice in the immigration system, and by scrapping in its entirety this Bill, which will breach international human rights law and increase worker exploitation.

The Lords amendments are supported by the vast majority of Liverpool, Riverside constituents, trade unions, human rights organisations and international bodies that work to support refugees every single day. I am very proud that my city, Liverpool, is a city of sanctuary and is happy to support refugees, but we still have 730 Afghan refugees languishing in hotels.

I conclude by reminding hon. Members that there are 84 million refugees globally. Millions have been displaced because of conflict and persecution and are seeking safe passage, including Syrian Kurds, Afghans and Yemenis, who have suffered the world's worst humanitarian crisis: 20 million are in need of humanitarian aid. I ask all hon. Members to support the Lords amendments and scrap this Bill.

Jonathan Gullis: Let us be very clear. Currently, illegal economic migrants are entering this country across the English channel from a safe mainland European country, France. That situation is totally unacceptable to the people of Stoke-on-Trent North, Kidsgrove and Talke, because they believe in fairness and they believe in doing things by the book.

People with a legitimate claim to come to our country to escape persecution and flee for their lives are being put at the bottom of the list because of people who are illegally entering our country via small boats—and what do the Opposition parties think? They support the Lords amendments, which would simply make it even easier for people to try to come across the channel, making a dangerous journey, risking their lives and putting money into the hands of criminal gangs. Let us not forget that 70% of the individuals who are currently making that channel crossing are men, predominantly single men in their 20s and 30s. Let us not forget that it is women and children who are most at risk: they are being left at home, where they are being persecuted.

The Labour party thinks that people in places like Stoke-on-Trent are racist because 73% voted for Brexit. It thinks that they are thick and uncompassionate, despite the fact that we are the fifth largest contributor to the asylum dispersal scheme in our United Kingdom.

That is why Stoke-on-Trent kicked Labour out, and why the people there will not want it back any time soon. Labour does not understand that when people voted for this Government and elected, for the first time ever, a Conservative Member of Parliament for Stoke-on-Trent, North Kidsgrove and Talke, they did so because they wanted to take back control—which is what they did in 2016 when they voted for Brexit. The out-of-touch wokerati on the Opposition Benches are constantly obsessed with being popular with Twitter and Londoners, so this does not surprise me one bit.

As for the Scottish National party, only one Scottish local authority takes part in the asylum dispersal scheme. To be fair, it is Glasgow, the largest contributor to the scheme. Despite the pontificating, the grandstanding and the virtue-signalling, the fact is that the SNP does not stand up and help out as it should. It is about time that Scotland did its bit, went out and signed up. The Minister is on the Front Bench: let SNP Members go and sign the paperwork with him, and let us get refugees into local authority areas in Scotland. Stoke-on-Trent is doing its bit. It is about time that others, whether in the north Islington coffee bar elites or the Scottish National party-run local authorities, did their bit as well.

Mr Deputy Speaker (Mr Nigel Evans): I call Alison Thewliss, whom I must ask to sit down at 4.12 pm.

Alison Thewliss (Glasgow Central) (SNP): I must say to the hon. Member for Stoke-on-Trent North (Jonathan Gullis) that Glasgow is far more diverse and far more welcoming of refugees than he will ever be. We in Glasgow are proud to welcome refugees. We are proud of our diversity. I have been inundated with emails from my constituents about this anti-refugee Bill, and not one of those emails has been in support of the Government's position, or of this anti-refugee Bill which will punish people who are fleeing from war, persecution and female genital mutilation in countries around the world.

In the past seven years I have dealt with 1,853 immigration cases, and all of them have been riddled with Home Office incompetence and Home Office indifference to the plight of my constituents, whom I value and whom I want to be welcome in Glasgow. That indifference and that incompetence are deliberate. They are meant to make people feel unwelcome, and they run absolutely contrary to everything that my constituents stand for. I am very proud that those in Kenmure Street in Pollokshields came out of their houses when they saw the attempts to take people away in Home Office vans and said, "These are our neighbours—let them go." Glasgow welcomes refugees, and we want nothing to do with this vicious Bill.

Tom Pursglove: With the leave of the House, Mr Deputy Speaker. Let me begin by thanking Members for their contributions to today's debate. We have heard thought-provoking speeches from Members in all parts of the House. There can be no doubt about the strength of feeling on these important issues; there can also be no doubt that as a House, we stand united in our desire to support vulnerable people, in accordance with our long-standing tradition of welcoming those in need of protection. We perhaps just disagree on how that can best be achieved. Nevertheless, it is frustrating that criticism is often not matched by a credible alternative plan.

Let me touch on some of the issues that have been raised. The hon. Member for Argyll and Bute (Brendan O'Hara) mentioned the plight of the Yazidis. I can confirm that we have resettled over 40 Yazidi people through both the United Kingdom resettlement scheme and, previously, the vulnerable persons resettlement scheme. The UK is firmly committed to protecting ethnic and religious minorities in Iraq. We raise this issue regularly with the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government, and continue to monitor the situation of Yazidis and other minority groups in Iraq.

I also want to clarify the position with regard to illegal entry offences. I think it worth restating the position that I have consistently maintained in the House. This is not an attempt to prosecute every illegal entrant. Instead, prosecutions will focus on egregious cases: for example, cases in which an individual has entered in breach of a deportation order, or was previously removed as an illegal entrant or overstayer. We intend to take a firm stance in such cases, in order not to inadvertently reward such individuals with a grant of leave rather than punishing their abuse of the system. We are working closely with the police and our internal investigation teams to ensure that this policy is properly enforced, but is also proportionate.

It is misleading to say that genuine humanitarian rescues will be criminalised. We need to be clear about this to ensure that people are not concerned when undertaking those important activities. Individuals and organisations will be able to continue to rescue people in danger or in distress at sea, as they do now. It may be perfectly reasonable for people to be taken to the UK, depending on the circumstances—for example, the weather conditions, or a commercial ferry continuing its scheduled route. Decisions on whether to prosecute are taken by the relevant prosecution authorities in the UK, taking into account evidential and public interest tests. That is a well established process that applies to the law in this land in many areas. Before prosecutors make such a decision, a referral by investigators is required. To make that, investigators must believe that there is sufficient evidence to prove that the person concerned was not actually carrying out a rescue of someone in danger or distress. I cannot be clearer about this.

On the issue of the right to work, a number of colleagues have raised concerns and suggestions. One clear distinction I would like to make is on the point about Ukrainians and Afghans being in a position to work. Those individuals have come through safe and legal routes—bespoke routes—that the UK Government established to provide sanctuary. That is an important distinction. I refer Members to my earlier observations on the policy more generally, but I very much look forward to the meeting with my right hon. and learned Friend the Member for South Swindon (Sir Robert Buckland) to ensure that we explore this and discuss thoroughly the concerns and views that colleagues are expressing.

On Lords amendment 11 and the 10,000 resettlement figure, I thank my right hon. Friend the Member for Ashford (Damian Green), who so eloquently set out his case. We genuinely believe that flexibility is important in developing schemes and guidance. That is a position that I have maintained throughout the Bill's passage. It will mean that we are able to develop bespoke schemes

[Tom Pursglove]

that take account of circumstances at any given time in the world, and that we are properly able to care for people in a responsible and managed manner. That is important, as is taking proper account of the capacity of local services at any given point in time. I would argue that the response to the Afghanistan and Ukraine crises demonstrates what can be achieved and why that approach makes sense and is better than having prescriptive schemes set down in legislation that are difficult to alter or remove should circumstances mean that they are no longer required. It is right to identify what routes are needed at any given point in time and then to resource them appropriately. We are of course looking at what more can be done, particularly around community sponsorship and global resettlement schemes, and I hope that that provides some reassurance about our intentions. I hear the observation that colleagues have raised today about generosity and ensuring that our schemes are comprehensive and meet the needs that exist—

4.18 pm

Three hours having elapsed since the commencement of proceedings on consideration of Lords amendments, the debate was interrupted (Programme Order, this day).

The Deputy Speaker put forthwith the Question already proposed from the Chair (Standing Order No. 83F). That this House disagrees with Lords amendment 1.

Question agreed to.

Lords amendment 1 accordingly disagreed to.

The Deputy Speaker then put forthwith the Questions necessary for the disposal of the business to be concluded at that time (Standing Order No. 83F).

Government amendments (a) and (b) made in lieu of Lords amendment 1.

Clause 9

NOTICE OF DECISION TO DEPRIVE A PERSON OF CITIZENSHIP

Motion made, and Question put, That this House disagrees with Lords amendment 4.—(Tom Pursglove.)

The House divided: Ayes 318, Noes 223.

Division No. 218]

[4.19 pm

AYES

Adams, rh Nigel	Baker, Duncan
Afolami, Bim	Barclay, rh Steve
Afriyie, Adam	Baron, Mr John
Aldous, Peter	Baynes, Simon
Allan, Lucy	Bell, Aaron
Anderson, Lee	Benton, Scott
Anderson, Stuart	Beresford, Sir Paul
Andrew, rh Stuart	Bhatti, Saqib
Ansell, Caroline	Blackman, Bob
Argar, Edward	Blunt, Crispin
Atherton, Sarah	Bone, Mr Peter
Atkins, Victoria	Bottomley, Sir Peter
Bacon, Gareth	Bowie, Andrew
Bacon, Mr Richard	Bradley, Ben
Badenoch, Kemi	Brady, Sir Graham
Bailey, Shaun	Braverman, rh Suella
Baillie, Siobhan	Brereton, Jack

Bridgen, Andrew	Fletcher, Mark
Brine, Steve	Fletcher, Nick
Bristow, Paul	Ford, Vicky
Britcliffe, Sara	Foster, Kevin
Browne, Anthony	Fox, rh Dr Liam
Bruce, Fiona	Francois, rh Mr Mark
Buchan, Felicity	Frazer, rh Lucy
Buckland, rh Sir Robert	Freeman, George
Burghart, Alex	French, Mr Louie
Burns, rh Conor	Fuller, Richard
Butler, Rob	Garnier, Mark
Cairns, rh Alun	Ghani, Ms Nusrat
Campbell, Mr Gregory	Gibb, rh Nick
Carter, Andy	Gibson, Peter
Cartlidge, James	Gideon, Jo
Cates, Miriam	Girvan, Paul
Caulfield, Maria	Glen, John
Chalk, Alex	Goodwill, rh Sir Robert
Chishti, Rehman	Gove, rh Michael
Chope, Sir Christopher	Graham, Richard
Churchill, Jo	Gray, James
Clark, rh Greg	Grayling, rh Chris
Clarke, rh Mr Simon	Green, Chris
Clarke, Theo	Green, rh Damian
Clarke-Smith, Brendan	Griffith, Andrew
Clarkson, Chris	Griffiths, Kate
Clifton-Brown, Sir Geoffrey	Grundy, James
Coffey, rh Dr Thérèse	Gullis, Jonathan
Colburn, Elliot	Halfon, rh Robert
Collins, Damian	Hall, Luke
Courts, Robert	Hammond, Stephen
Coutinho, Claire	Hands, rh Greg
Cox, rh Sir Geoffrey	Harper, rh Mr Mark
Crosbie, Virginia	Harris, Rebecca
Crouch, Tracey	Harrison, Trudy
Daly, James	Hart, Sally-Ann
Davies, David T. C.	Hart, rh Simon
Davies, Gareth	Hayes, rh Sir John
Davies, Dr James	Heald, rh Sir Oliver
Davies, Mims	Heapey, James
Davies, Philip	Heaton-Harris, rh Chris
Davison, Dehenna	Henry, Darren
Dinenage, Dame Caroline	Higginbotham, Antony
Dines, Miss Sarah	Hinds, rh Damian
Djanogly, Mr Jonathan	Hoare, Simon
Docherty, Leo	Hollinrake, Kevin
Donaldson, rh Sir Jeffrey	Hollobone, Mr Philip
M.	Holloway, Adam
Donelan, rh Michelle	Holmes, Paul
Dorries, rh Ms Nadine	Howell, Paul
Double, Steve	Huddleston, Nigel
Dowden, rh Oliver	Hudson, Dr Neil
Doyle-Price, Jackie	Hughes, Eddie
Drax, Richard	Hunt, Jane
Drummond, Mrs Flick	Hunt, rh Jeremy
Duguid, David	Hunt, Tom
Duncan Smith, rh Sir	Jack, rh Mr Alister
Iain	Javid, rh Sajid
Dunne, rh Philip	Jenkin, Sir Bernard
Edwards, Ruth	Jenkinson, Mark
Ellis, rh Michael	Jenkyns, Andrea
Ellwood, rh Mr Tobias	Jenrick, rh Robert
Elphicke, Mrs Natalie	Johnson, Dr Caroline
Eustice, rh George	Johnson, Gareth
Evans, Dr Luke	Johnston, David
Evennett, rh Sir David	Jones, Andrew
Everitt, Ben	Jones, Fay
Fabricant, Michael	Jones, Mr Marcus
Farris, Laura	Jupp, Simon
Fell, Simon	Kawczynski, Daniel
Firth, Anna	Kearns, Alicia
Fletcher, Katherine	Keegan, Gillian

Knight, rh Sir Greg
 Knight, Julian
 Kruger, Danny
 Lamont, John
 Latham, Mrs Pauline
 Leadsom, rh Dame Andrea
 Leigh, rh Sir Edward
 Lewer, Andrew
 Lewis, rh Brandon
 Lewis, rh Dr Julian
 Lockhart, Carla
 Loder, Chris
 Logan, Mark
 Longhi, Marco
 Lopez, Julia
 Lopresti, Jack
 Loughton, Tim
 Mackinlay, Craig
 Mackrory, Cherilyn
 Maclean, Rachel
 Mak, Alan
 Malthouse, rh Kit
 Mangnall, Anthony
 Marson, Julie
 Mayhew, Jerome
 Maynard, Paul
 McCartney, Jason
 McCartney, Karl
 McPartland, Stephen
 McVey, rh Esther
 Menzies, Mark
 Merriman, Huw
 Metcalfe, Stephen
 Millar, Robin
 Miller, rh Mrs Maria
 Mills, Nigel
 Moore, Damien
 Moore, Robbie
 Mordaunt, rh Penny
 Morris, Anne Marie
 Morris, James
 Morrissey, Joy
 Mortimer, Jill
 Morton, Wendy
 Mullan, Dr Kieran
 Mumby-Croft, Holly
 Mundell, rh David
 Murray, Mrs Sheryll
 Murrison, rh Dr Andrew
 Nici, Lia
 O'Brien, Neil
 Offord, Dr Matthew
 Opperman, Guy
 Paisley, Ian
 Parish, Neil
 Patel, rh Priti
 Penning, rh Sir Mike
 Penrose, John
 Percy, Andrew
 Philp, Chris
 Pincher, rh Christopher
 Poulter, Dr Dan
 Pow, Rebecca
 Prentis, Victoria
 Pursglove, Tom
 Quince, Will
 Raab, rh Dominic
 Randall, Tom
 Redwood, rh John
 Rees-Mogg, rh Mr Jacob
 Richards, Nicola
 Richardson, Angela

Roberts, Rob
 Robertson, Mr Laurence
 Robinson, Gavin
 Rosindell, Andrew
 Rowley, Lee
 Russell, Dean
 Rutley, David
 Sambrook, Gary
 Saxby, Selaine
 Scully, Paul
 Seely, Bob
 Selous, Andrew
 Shannon, Jim
 Shapps, rh Grant
 Shelbrooke, rh Alec
 Simmonds, David
 Skidmore, rh Chris
 Smith, Chloe
 Smith, Greg
 Smith, Henry
 Smith, rh Julian
 Smith, Royston
 Solloway, Amanda
 Spencer, Dr Ben
 Spencer, rh Mark
 Stafford, Alexander
 Stephenson, Andrew
 Stevenson, Jane
 Stevenson, John
 Stewart, rh Bob
 Stewart, Iain
 Streeter, Sir Gary
 Stride, rh Mel
 Sturdy, Julian
 Sunderland, James
 Swayne, rh Sir Desmond
 Syms, Sir Robert
 Thomas, Derek
 Timpson, Edward
 Tolhurst, Kelly
 Tomlinson, Justin
 Tracey, Craig
 Tugendhat, Tom
 Vara, Shailesh
 Vickers, Martin
 Vickers, Matt
 Villiers, rh Theresa
 Walker, Sir Charles
 Wallis, Dr Jamie
 Warburton, David
 Warman, Matt
 Watling, Giles
 Webb, Suzanne
 Whately, Helen
 Wheeler, Mrs Heather
 Whittaker, Craig
 Whittingdale, rh Mr John
 Wiggin, Sir Bill
 Wild, James
 Williams, Craig
 Williamson, rh Sir Gavin
 Wilson, rh Sammy
 Wood, Mike
 Wragg, Mr William
 Wright, rh Jeremy
 Young, Jacob
 Zahawi, rh Nadhim

Tellers for the Ayes:
 Michael Tomlinson and
 Scott Mann

Abrahams, Debbie
 Ali, Rushanara
 Ali, Tahir
 Allin-Khan, Dr Rosena
 Amesbury, Mike
 Anderson, Fleur
 Antoniazzi, Tonia
 Ashworth, rh Jonathan
 Barker, Paula
 Beckett, rh Margaret
 Begum, Apsana
 Benn, rh Hilary
 Betts, Mr Clive
 Black, Mhairi
 Blackford, rh Ian
 Blackman, Kirsty
 Blake, Olivia
 Blomfield, Paul
 Bradshaw, rh Mr Ben
 Brennan, Kevin
 Brock, Deidre
 Brown, Alan
 Brown, rh Mr Nicholas
 Bryant, Chris
 Buck, Ms Karen
 Burgon, Richard
 Byrne, Ian
 Byrne, rh Liam
 Cadbury, Ruth
 Callaghan, Amy
 Cameron, Dr Lisa
 Campbell, rh Sir Alan
 Carmichael, rh Mr Alistair
 Chamberlain, Wendy
 Champion, Sarah
 Chapman, Douglas
 Clark, Feryal
 Cooper, Daisy
 Cooper, rh Yvette
 Corbyn, rh Jeremy
 Cowan, Ronnie
 Crawley, Angela
 Creasy, Stella
 Cruddas, Jon
 Cummins, Judith
 Daby, Janet
 Davey, rh Ed
 Davies-Jones, Alex
 Davis, rh Mr David
 Day, Martyn
 De Cordova, Marsha
 Dhesi, Mr Tanmanjeet Singh
 Docherty-Hughes, Martin
 Dodds, Anneliese
 Doogan, Dave
 Dorans, Allan
 Doughty, Stephen
 Duffield, Rosie
 Eagle, Dame Angela
 Eagle, Maria
 Eastwood, Colum
 Efford, Clive
 Elliott, Julie
 Elmore, Chris
 Eshalomi, Florence
 Esterson, Bill
 Evans, Chris
 Farron, Tim
 Farry, Stephen
 Fellows, Marion
 Ferrier, Margaret

NOES

Flynn, Stephen
 Fovargue, Yvonne
 Foxcroft, Vicky
 Foy, Mary Kelly
 Gardiner, Barry
 Gibson, Patricia
 Glindon, Mary
 Grady, Patrick
 Grant, Peter
 Green, Kate
 Green, Sarah
 Greenwood, Lilian
 Griffith, Nia
 Gwynne, Andrew
 Haigh, Louise
 Hamilton, Fabian
 Hamilton, Mrs Paulette
 Hanna, Claire
 Hardy, Emma
 Hayes, Helen
 Healey, rh John
 Hendrick, Sir Mark
 Hendry, Drew
 Hillier, Dame Meg
 Hobhouse, Wera
 Hodgson, Mrs Sharon
 Hopkins, Rachel
 Hosie, rh Stewart
 Huq, Dr Rupa
 Hussain, Imran
 Jardine, Christine
 Johnson, Kim
 Jones, Darren
 Jones, rh Mr Kevan
 Jones, Ruth
 Jones, Sarah
 Kane, Mike
 Keeley, Barbara
 Kendall, Liz (*Proxy vote cast
 by Mr Pat McFadden*)
 Khan, Afzal
 Kinnock, Stephen
 Kyle, Peter
 Lake, Ben
 Lavery, Ian
 Leadbeater, Kim
 Lewell-Buck, Mrs Emma
 Lewis, Clive
 Linden, David
 Lloyd, Tony
 Long Bailey, Rebecca
 Lucas, Caroline
 Lynch, Holly
 MacAskill, Kenny
 Madders, Justin
 Mahmood, Mr Khalid
 Mahmood, Shabana
 Maskell, Rachael
 Mc Nally, John
 McCarthy, Kerry
 McDonald, Andy
 McDonald, Stewart Malcolm
 McDonald, Stuart C.
 McDonnell, rh John
 McFadden, rh Mr Pat
 McGinn, Conor
 McGovern, Alison
 McKinnell, Catherine
 McMahon, Jim
 Mearns, Ian
 Miliband, rh Edward

Mishra, Navendu
 Monaghan, Carol
 Moran, Layla
 Morden, Jessica
 Morgan, Helen
 Morgan, Stephen
 Morris, Grahame
 Murray, Ian
 Murray, James
 Newlands, Gavin
 Nichols, Charlotte
 Norris, Alex
 O'Hara, Brendan
 Olney, Sarah
 Onwurah, Chi
 Oppong-Asare, Abena
 Osamor, Kate
 Osborne, Kate
 Oswald, Kirsten
 Owatemi, Taiwo
 Owen, Sarah
 Peacock, Stephanie
 Pennycook, Matthew
 Phillips, Jess
 Pollard, Luke
 Powell, Lucy
 Qaisar, Ms Anum
 Qureshi, Yasmin
 Rayner, rh Angela
 Reed, Steve
 Rees, Christina
 Reeves, Ellie
 Reeves, Rachel
 Reynolds, Jonathan
 Ribeiro-Addy, Bell
 Rimmer, Ms Marie
 Rodda, Matt
 Russell-Moyle, Lloyd
 Shah, Naz
 Sharma, Mr Virendra
 Sheerman, Mr Barry
 Sheppard, Tommy

Siddiq, Tulip
 Slaughter, Andy
 Smith, Alyn
 Smith, Cat
 Smith, Jeff
 Smyth, Karin
 Sobel, Alex
 Spellar, rh John
 Stephens, Chris
 Stevens, Jo
 Stone, Jamie
 Streeting, Wes
 Stringer, Graham
 Sultana, Zarah
 Tami, rh Mark
 Tarry, Sam
 Thewliss, Alison
 Thomas, Gareth
 Thomas-Symonds, rh Nick
 Thompson, Owen
 Thomson, Richard
 Thornberry, rh Emily
 Timms, rh Stephen
 Turner, Karl
 Twist, Liz
 Vaz, rh Valerie
 Wakeford, Christian
 Webbe, Claudia
 Western, Matt
 Whitehead, Dr Alan
 Whitford, Dr Philippa
 Whitley, Mick
 Whittome, Nadia
 Williams, Hywel
 Wilson, Munira
 Winter, Beth
 Yasin, Mohammad
 Zeichner, Daniel

Tellers for the Noes:
Colleen Fletcher and
Gerald Jones

Bottomley, Sir Peter
 Bowie, Andrew
 Bradley, Ben
 Brady, Sir Graham
 Braverman, rh Suella
 Brereton, Jack
 Bridgen, Andrew
 Brine, Steve
 Bristow, Paul
 Britcliffe, Sara
 Browne, Anthony
 Bruce, Fiona
 Buchan, Felicity
 Buckland, rh Sir Robert
 Burghart, Alex
 Burns, rh Conor
 Butler, Rob
 Cairns, rh Alun
 Carter, Andy
 Cartlidge, James
 Cates, Miriam
 Caulfield, Maria
 Chalk, Alex
 Chishti, Rehman
 Chope, Sir Christopher
 Churchill, Jo
 Clark, rh Greg
 Clarke, rh Mr Simon
 Clarke, Theo
 Clarke-Smith, Brendan
 Clarkson, Chris
 Clifton-Brown, Sir Geoffrey
 Coffey, rh Dr Thérèse
 Colburn, Elliot
 Collins, Damian
 Courts, Robert
 Coutinho, Claire
 Cox, rh Sir Geoffrey
 Crosbie, Virginia
 Crouch, Tracey
 Daly, James
 Davies, David T. C.
 Davies, Gareth
 Davies, Dr James
 Davies, Mims
 Davies, Philip
 Davis, rh Mr David
 Davison, Dehenna
 Dinenage, Dame Caroline
 Dines, Miss Sarah
 Djanogly, Mr Jonathan
 Docherty, Leo
 Donelan, rh Michelle
 Dorries, rh Ms Nadine
 Double, Steve
 Dowden, rh Oliver
 Doyle-Price, Jackie
 Drax, Richard
 Drummond, Mrs Flick
 Duguid, David
 Duncan Smith, rh Sir Iain
 Dunne, rh Philip
 Edwards, Ruth
 Ellis, rh Michael
 Ellwood, rh Mr Tobias
 Elphicke, Mrs Natalie
 Eustice, rh George
 Evans, Dr Luke
 Evennett, rh Sir David
 Everitt, Ben

Fabricant, Michael
 Farris, Laura
 Fell, Simon
 Firth, Anna
 Fletcher, Katherine
 Fletcher, Mark
 Fletcher, Nick
 Ford, Vicky
 Foster, Kevin
 Fox, rh Dr Liam
 Francois, rh Mr Mark
 Frazer, rh Lucy
 Freeman, George
 French, Mr Louie
 Fuller, Richard
 Garnier, Mark
 Ghani, Ms Nusrat
 Gibb, rh Nick
 Gibson, Peter
 Gideon, Jo
 Glen, John
 Goodwill, rh Sir Robert
 Gove, rh Michael
 Graham, Richard
 Gray, James
 Grayling, rh Chris
 Green, Chris
 Green, rh Damian
 Griffith, Andrew
 Griffiths, Kate
 Grundy, James
 Gullis, Jonathan
 Halfon, rh Robert
 Hall, Luke
 Hammond, Stephen
 Hands, rh Greg
 Harper, rh Mr Mark
 Harris, Rebecca
 Harrison, Trudy
 Hart, Sally-Ann
 Hart, rh Simon
 Hayes, rh Sir John
 Heald, rh Sir Oliver
 Heapey, James
 Heaton-Harris, rh Chris
 Henderson, Gordon
 Henry, Darren
 Higginbotham, Antony
 Hinds, rh Damian
 Hoare, Simon
 Hollinrake, Kevin
 Hologoby, Mr Philip
 Holloway, Adam
 Holmes, Paul
 Howell, Paul
 Huddleston, Nigel
 Hudson, Dr Neil
 Hughes, Eddie
 Hunt, Jane
 Hunt, rh Jeremy
 Hunt, Tom
 Jack, rh Mr Alister
 Javid, rh Sajid
 Jenkin, Sir Bernard
 Jenkinson, Mark
 Jenkyns, Andrea
 Jenrick, rh Robert
 Johnson, Dr Caroline
 Johnson, Gareth
 Johnston, David
 Jones, Andrew
 Jones, Fay

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendment 4 disagreed to.

*Government amendments (a) to (f) made in lieu of
 Lords amendment 4.*

Before clause 11

*Motion made, and Question put, That this House
 disagrees with Lords amendment 5.—(Tom Pursglove.)*

The House divided: Ayes 313, Noes 231.

Division No. 219]

[4.34 pm

AYES

Adams, rh Nigel
 Afolami, Bim
 Afriyie, Adam
 Aldous, Peter
 Allan, Lucy
 Anderson, Lee
 Anderson, Stuart
 Andrew, rh Stuart
 Ansell, Caroline
 Argar, Edward
 Atherton, Sarah
 Atkins, Victoria
 Bacon, Gareth
 Bacon, Mr Richard
 Badenoch, Kemi
 Bailey, Shaun
 Baillie, Siobhan
 Baker, Duncan
 Barclay, rh Steve
 Baron, Mr John
 Baynes, Simon
 Bell, Aaron
 Benton, Scott
 Beresford, Sir Paul
 Bhatti, Saqib
 Blackman, Bob
 Blunt, Crispin
 Bone, Mr Peter

Jones, Mr Marcus
 Jupp, Simon
 Kawczynski, Daniel
 Kearns, Alicia
 Keegan, Gillian
 Knight, rh Sir Greg
 Knight, Julian
 Kruger, Danny
 Kwarteng, rh Kwasi
 Lamont, John
 Latham, Mrs Pauline
 Leadsom, rh Dame Andrea
 Leigh, rh Sir Edward
 Lewer, Andrew
 Lewis, rh Brandon
 Lewis, rh Dr Julian
 Loder, Chris
 Logan, Mark
 Longhi, Marco
 Lopez, Julia
 Lopresti, Jack
 Loughton, Tim
 Mackinlay, Craig
 Mackrory, Cherilyn
 Maclean, Rachel
 Mak, Alan
 Malthouse, rh Kit
 Mangnall, Anthony
 Marson, Julie
 Mayhew, Jerome
 Maynard, Paul
 McCartney, Jason
 McCartney, Karl
 McPartland, Stephen
 McVey, rh Esther
 Menzies, Mark
 Merriman, Huw
 Metcalfe, Stephen
 Millar, Robin
 Miller, rh Mrs Maria
 Mills, Nigel
 Mitchell, rh Mr Andrew
 Moore, Damien
 Moore, Robbie
 Mordaunt, rh Penny
 Morris, Anne Marie
 Morris, James
 Morrissey, Joy
 Mortimer, Jill
 Morton, Wendy
 Mullan, Dr Kieran
 Mumby-Croft, Holly
 Mundell, rh David
 Murray, Mrs Sheryll
 Murrison, rh Dr Andrew
 O'Brien, Neil
 Offord, Dr Matthew
 Opperman, Guy
 Parish, Neil
 Patel, rh Priti
 Penning, rh Sir Mike
 Penrose, John
 Percy, Andrew
 Philp, Chris
 Pincher, rh Christopher
 Poulter, Dr Dan
 Pow, Rebecca
 Prentis, Victoria
 Pursglove, Tom
 Quince, Will
 Raab, rh Dominic
 Randall, Tom

Redwood, rh John
 Rees-Mogg, rh Mr Jacob
 Richards, Nicola
 Richardson, Angela
 Roberts, Rob
 Robertson, Mr Laurence
 Rosindell, Andrew
 Rowley, Lee
 Russell, Dean
 Rutley, David
 Sambrook, Gary
 Saxby, Selaine
 Scully, Paul
 Seely, Bob
 Selous, Andrew
 Shapps, rh Grant
 Shelbrooke, rh Alec
 Simmonds, David
 Skidmore, rh Chris
 Smith, Chloe
 Smith, Greg
 Smith, Henry
 Smith, rh Julian
 Smith, Royston
 Solloway, Amanda
 Spencer, Dr Ben
 Spencer, rh Mark
 Stafford, Alexander
 Stephenson, Andrew
 Stevenson, Jane
 Stevenson, John
 Stewart, rh Bob
 Stewart, Iain
 Streeter, Sir Gary
 Stride, rh Mel
 Sturdy, Julian
 Sunderland, James
 Swayne, rh Sir Desmond
 Syms, Sir Robert
 Thomas, Derek
 Timpson, Edward
 Tolhurst, Kelly
 Tomlinson, Justin
 Tracey, Craig
 Tugendhat, Tom
 Vara, Shailesh
 Vickers, Martin
 Vickers, Matt
 Villiers, rh Theresa
 Walker, Sir Charles
 Wallis, Dr Jamie
 Warburton, David
 Warman, Matt
 Watling, Giles
 Webb, Suzanne
 Whately, Helen
 Wheeler, Mrs Heather
 Whittaker, Craig
 Whittingdale, rh Mr John
 Wiggin, Sir Bill
 Wild, James
 Williams, Craig
 Williamson, rh Sir Gavin
 Wood, Mike
 Wragg, Mr William
 Wright, rh Jeremy
 Young, Jacob
 Zahawi, rh Nadhim

Tellers for the Ayes:

**Scott Mann and
 Michael Tomlinson**

NOES

Abrahams, Debbie
 Ali, Rushanara
 Ali, Tahir
 Allin-Khan, Dr Rosena
 Amesbury, Mike
 Anderson, Fleur
 Antoniazzi, Tonia
 Ashworth, rh Jonathan
 Barker, Paula
 Beckett, rh Margaret
 Begum, Apsana
 Benn, rh Hilary
 Betts, Mr Clive
 Black, Mhairi
 Blackford, rh Ian
 Blackman, Kirsty
 Blake, Olivia
 Blomfield, Paul
 Bradshaw, rh Mr Ben
 Brennan, Kevin
 Brock, Deidre
 Brown, Alan
 Brown, rh Mr Nicholas
 Bryant, Chris
 Buck, Ms Karen
 Burgon, Richard
 Byrne, Iain
 Byrne, rh Liam
 Cadbury, Ruth
 Callaghan, Amy
 Cameron, Dr Lisa
 Campbell, rh Sir Alan
 Campbell, Mr Gregory
 Carmichael, rh Mr Alistair
 Chamberlain, Wendy
 Champion, Sarah
 Chapman, Douglas
 Clark, Feryal
 Cooper, Daisy
 Cooper, rh Yvette
 Corbyn, rh Jeremy
 Cowan, Ronnie
 Crawley, Angela
 Creasy, Stella
 Cruddas, Jon
 Cummins, Judith
 Daby, Janet
 Davey, rh Ed
 David, Wayne
 Davies-Jones, Alex
 Day, Martyn
 De Cordova, Marsha
 Dhesi, Mr Tanmanjeet Singh
 Docherty-Hughes, Martin
 Dodds, Anneliese
 Donaldson, rh Sir Jeffrey M.
 Doogan, Dave
 Dorans, Allan
 Doughty, Stephen
 Duffield, Rosie
 Eagle, Dame Angela
 Eagle, Maria
 Eastwood, Colum
 Efford, Clive
 Elliott, Julie
 Elmore, Chris
 Eshalomi, Florence
 Esterson, Bill
 Evans, Chris
 Farron, Tim
 Farry, Stephen

Fellows, Marion
 Ferrier, Margaret
 Flynn, Stephen
 Fovargue, Yvonne
 Foxcroft, Vicky
 Foy, Mary Kelly
 Gardiner, Barry
 Gibson, Patricia
 Girvan, Paul
 Glindon, Mary
 Grady, Patrick
 Grant, Peter
 Green, Kate
 Green, Sarah
 Greenwood, Lilian
 Griffith, Nia
 Gwynne, Andrew
 Haigh, Louise
 Hamilton, Fabian
 Hamilton, Mrs Paulette
 Hanna, Claire
 Hardy, Emma
 Hayes, Helen
 Healey, rh John
 Hendrick, Sir Mark
 Hendry, Drew
 Hillier, Dame Meg
 Hobhouse, Wera
 Hodgson, Mrs Sharon
 Hopkins, Rachel
 Hosie, rh Stewart
 Huq, Dr Rupa
 Hussain, Imran
 Jardine, Christine
 Johnson, Kim
 Jones, Darren
 Jones, rh Mr Kevan
 Jones, Ruth
 Jones, Sarah
 Kane, Mike
 Keeley, Barbara
 Kendall, Liz (*Proxy vote cast
 by Mr Pat McFadden*)
 Khan, Afzal
 Kinnock, Stephen
 Kyle, Peter
 Lake, Ben
 Lavery, Ian
 Leadbeater, Kim
 Lewell-Buck, Mrs Emma
 Lewis, Clive
 Linden, David
 Lloyd, Tony
 Lockhart, Carla
 Long Bailey, Rebecca
 Lucas, Caroline
 Lynch, Holly
 MacAskill, Kenny
 Madders, Justin
 Mahmood, Mr Khalid
 Mahmood, Shabana
 Malhotra, Seema
 Maskell, Rachael
 Mc Nally, John
 McCarthy, Kerry
 McDonald, Andy
 McDonald, Stewart Malcolm
 McDonald, Stuart C.
 McDonnell, rh John
 McFadden, rh Mr Pat
 McGinn, Conor

McGovern, Alison
 McKinnell, Catherine
 McMahon, Jim
 Mearns, Ian
 Miliband, rh Edward
 Mishra, Navendu
 Monaghan, Carol
 Moran, Layla
 Morden, Jessica
 Morgan, Helen
 Morgan, Stephen
 Morris, Grahame
 Murray, Ian
 Murray, James
 Newlands, Gavin
 Nichols, Charlotte
 Norris, Alex
 O'Hara, Brendan
 Olney, Sarah
 Onwurah, Chi
 Oppong-Asare, Abena
 Osamor, Kate
 Osborne, Kate
 Oswald, Kirsten
 Owatemi, Taiwo
 Owen, Sarah
 Paisley, Ian
 Pennycook, Matthew
 Perkins, Mr Toby
 Phillips, Jess
 Pollard, Luke
 Powell, Lucy
 Qaisar, Ms Anum
 Qureshi, Yasmin
 Rayner, rh Angela
 Reed, Steve
 Rees, Christina
 Reeves, Ellie
 Reeves, Rachel
 Reynolds, Jonathan
 Ribeiro-Addy, Bell
 Rimmer, Ms Marie
 Robinson, Gavin
 Rodda, Matt
 Russell-Moyle, Lloyd
 Shah, Naz
 Shannon, Jim

Sharma, Mr Virendra
 Sheppard, Tommy
 Siddiq, Tulip
 Slaughter, Andy
 Smith, Alyn
 Smith, Cat
 Smith, Jeff
 Smyth, Karin
 Sobel, Alex
 Spellar, rh John
 Stephens, Chris
 Stevens, Jo
 Stone, Jamie
 Streeting, Wes
 Stringer, Graham
 Sultana, Zarah
 Tami, rh Mark
 Tarry, Sam
 Thewliss, Alison
 Thomas, Gareth
 Thomas-Symonds, rh Nick
 Thompson, Owen
 Thomson, Richard
 Thornberry, rh Emily
 Timms, rh Stephen
 Turner, Karl
 Twist, Liz
 Vaz, rh Valerie
 Wakeford, Christian
 Webbe, Claudia
 West, Catherine
 Western, Matt
 Whitehead, Dr Alan
 Whitford, Dr Philippa
 Whitley, Mick
 Whittome, Nadia
 Williams, Hywel
 Wilson, Munira
 Wilson, rh Sammy
 Winter, Beth
 Yasin, Mohammad
 Zeichner, Daniel

Tellers for the Noes:
 Gerald Jones and
 Colleen Fletcher

Baynes, Simon
 Bell, Aaron
 Benton, Scott
 Beresford, Sir Paul
 Bhatti, Saqib
 Blackman, Bob
 Blunt, Crispin
 Bone, Mr Peter
 Bowie, Andrew
 Bradley, Ben
 Brady, Sir Graham
 Braverman, rh Suella
 Brereton, Jack
 Bridgen, Andrew
 Brine, Steve
 Bristow, Paul
 Britcliffe, Sara
 Browne, Anthony
 Buchan, Felicity
 Buckland, rh Sir Robert
 Burghart, Alex
 Burns, rh Conor
 Butler, Rob
 Cairns, rh Alun
 Campbell, Mr Gregory
 Carter, Andy
 Cartlidge, James
 Cates, Miriam
 Caulfield, Maria
 Chalk, Alex
 Chope, Sir Christopher
 Churchill, Jo
 Clark, rh Greg
 Clarke, rh Mr Simon
 Clarke, Theo
 Clarke-Smith, Brendan
 Clarkson, Chris
 Clifton-Brown, Sir Geoffrey
 Coffey, rh Dr Thérèse
 Colburn, Elliot
 Collins, Damian
 Courts, Robert
 Coutinho, Claire
 Cox, rh Sir Geoffrey
 Crosbie, Virginia
 Crouch, Tracey
 Daly, James
 Davies, David T. C.
 Davies, Gareth
 Davies, Dr James
 Davies, Mims
 Davies, Philip
 Davis, rh Mr David
 Davison, Dehenna
 Dinenage, Dame Caroline
 Dines, Miss Sarah
 Djanogly, Mr Jonathan
 Docherty, Leo
 Donaldson, rh Sir Jeffrey M.
 Donelan, rh Michelle
 Dorries, rh Ms Nadine
 Double, Steve
 Dowden, rh Oliver
 Doyle-Price, Jackie
 Drax, Richard
 Drummond, Mrs Flick
 Duguid, David
 Duncan Smith, rh Sir Iain
 Dunne, rh Philip
 Edwards, Ruth
 Ellis, rh Michael
 Ellwood, rh Mr Tobias

Elphicke, Mrs Natalie
 Eustice, rh George
 Evans, Dr Luke
 Evennett, rh Sir David
 Everitt, Ben
 Fabricant, Michael
 Farris, Laura
 Fell, Simon
 Firth, Anna
 Fletcher, Katherine
 Fletcher, Mark
 Fletcher, Nick
 Ford, Vicky
 Foster, Kevin
 Fox, rh Dr Liam
 Francois, rh Mr Mark
 Frazer, rh Lucy
 Freeman, George
 French, Mr Louie
 Fuller, Richard
 Garnier, Mark
 Ghani, Ms Nusrat
 Gibb, rh Nick
 Gibson, Peter
 Gideon, Jo
 Girvan, Paul
 Glen, John
 Goodwill, rh Sir Robert
 Gove, rh Michael
 Graham, Richard
 Gray, James
 Grayling, rh Chris
 Green, Chris
 Green, rh Damian
 Griffith, Andrew
 Griffiths, Kate
 Grundy, James
 Gullis, Jonathan
 Halfon, rh Robert
 Hall, Luke
 Hammond, Stephen
 Hands, rh Greg
 Harper, rh Mr Mark
 Harris, Rebecca
 Harrison, Trudy
 Hart, Sally-Ann
 Hart, rh Simon
 Hayes, rh Sir John
 Heald, rh Sir Oliver
 Heapey, James
 Heaton-Harris, rh Chris
 Henderson, Gordon
 Henry, Darren
 Higginbotham, Antony
 Hinds, rh Damian
 Hoare, Simon
 Hollinrake, Kevin
 Hollobone, Mr Philip
 Holloway, Adam
 Holmes, Paul
 Howell, Paul
 Huddleston, Nigel
 Hughes, Eddie
 Hunt, Jane
 Hunt, rh Jeremy
 Hunt, Tom
 Jack, rh Mr Alister
 Javid, rh Sajid
 Jenkin, Sir Bernard
 Jenkinson, Mark
 Jenkyns, Andrea
 Jenrick, rh Robert

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendment 5 disagreed to.

Clause 11

DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT OF REFUGEES

Motion made, and Question put, That this House disagrees with Lords amendment 6.—(Tom Pursglove.)

The House divided: Ayes 318, Noes 220.

Division No. 220]

[4.47 pm

AYES

Adams, rh Nigel
 Afolami, Bim
 Afriyie, Adam
 Aldous, Peter
 Allan, Lucy
 Anderson, Lee
 Anderson, Stuart
 Andrew, rh Stuart
 Ansell, Caroline
 Argar, Edward
 Atherton, Sarah
 Atkins, Victoria
 Bacon, Gareth
 Bacon, Mr Richard
 Badenoch, Kemi
 Bailey, Shaun
 Baillie, Siobhan
 Baker, Duncan
 Barclay, rh Steve
 Baron, Mr John

Johnson, Dr Caroline
 Johnson, Gareth
 Johnston, David
 Jones, Andrew
 Jones, Fay
 Jones, Mr Marcus
 Jupp, Simon
 Kawczynski, Daniel
 Kearns, Alicia
 Keegan, Gillian
 Knight, rh Sir Greg
 Knight, Julian
 Kruger, Danny
 Kwarteng, rh Kwasi
 Lamont, John
 Latham, Mrs Pauline
 Leadsom, rh Dame Andrea
 Leigh, rh Sir Edward
 Lewer, Andrew
 Lewis, rh Brandon
 Lewis, rh Dr Julian
 Lockhart, Carla
 Loder, Chris
 Logan, Mark
 Longhi, Marco
 Lopez, Julia
 Lopresti, Jack
 Loughton, Tim
 Mackinlay, Craig
 Mackrory, Cherylyn
 Maclean, Rachel
 Mak, Alan
 Malthouse, rh Kit
 Mangnall, Anthony
 Marson, Julie
 Mayhew, Jerome
 Maynard, Paul
 McCartney, Jason
 McCartney, Karl
 McPartland, Stephen
 McVey, rh Esther
 Menzies, Mark
 Merriman, Huw
 Metcalfe, Stephen
 Millar, Robin
 Miller, rh Mrs Maria
 Mills, Nigel
 Mitchell, rh Mr Andrew
 Moore, Damien
 Moore, Robbie
 Mordaunt, rh Penny
 Morris, Anne Marie
 Morris, James
 Morrissey, Joy
 Mortimer, Jill
 Morton, Wendy
 Mullan, Dr Kieran
 Mumby-Croft, Holly
 Mundell, rh David
 Murray, Mrs Sheryll
 Murrison, rh Dr Andrew
 Nici, Lia
 O'Brien, Neil
 Offord, Dr Matthew
 Opperman, Guy
 Paisley, Ian
 Parish, Neil
 Patel, rh Priti
 Penning, rh Sir Mike
 Penrose, John
 Philp, Chris
 Pincher, rh Christopher

Poulter, Dr Dan
 Pow, Rebecca
 Prentis, Victoria
 Pursglove, Tom
 Quince, Will
 Raab, rh Dominic
 Randall, Tom
 Redwood, rh John
 Rees-Mogg, rh Mr Jacob
 Richards, Nicola
 Richardson, Angela
 Roberts, Rob
 Robertson, Mr Laurence
 Robinson, Gavin
 Rosindell, Andrew
 Rowley, Lee
 Russell, Dean
 Rutley, David
 Sambrook, Gary
 Saxby, Selaine
 Scully, Paul
 Seely, Bob
 Selous, Andrew
 Shannon, Jim
 Shapps, rh Grant
 Shelbrooke, rh Alec
 Simmonds, David
 Skidmore, rh Chris
 Smith, Chloe
 Smith, Greg
 Smith, Henry
 Smith, rh Julian
 Smith, Royston
 Solloway, Amanda
 Spencer, Dr Ben
 Spencer, rh Mark
 Stafford, Alexander
 Stephenson, Andrew
 Stevenson, Jane
 Stevenson, John
 Stewart, rh Bob
 Stewart, Iain
 Streeter, Sir Gary
 Stride, rh Mel
 Sturdy, Julian
 Syms, Sir Robert
 Thomas, Derek
 Timpson, Edward
 Tolhurst, Kelly
 Tomlinson, Justin
 Tracey, Craig
 Tugendhat, Tom
 Vara, Shailesh
 Vickers, Martin
 Vickers, Matt
 Villiers, rh Theresa
 Walker, Sir Charles
 Wallis, Dr Jamie
 Warburton, David
 Warman, Matt
 Watling, Giles
 Webb, Suzanne
 Whately, Helen
 Wheeler, Mrs Heather
 Whittaker, Craig
 Whittingdale, rh Mr John
 Wiggin, Sir Bill
 Wild, James
 Williams, Craig
 Williamson, rh Sir Gavin
 Wilson, rh Sammy
 Wood, Mike

Wragg, Mr William
 Wright, rh Jeremy
 Young, Jacob
 Zahawi, rh Nadhim

Tellers for the Ayes:
Scott Mann and
Michael Tomlinson

NOES

Ali, Rushanara
 Ali, Tahir
 Allin-Khan, Dr Rosena
 Amesbury, Mike
 Anderson, Fleur
 Antoniazzi, Tonia
 Ashworth, rh Jonathan
 Barker, Paula
 Beckett, rh Margaret
 Begum, Apsana
 Benn, rh Hilary
 Betts, Mr Clive
 Black, Mhairi
 Blackford, rh Ian
 Blackman, Kirsty
 Blake, Olivia
 Blomfield, Paul
 Bradshaw, rh Mr Ben
 Brennan, Kevin
 Brock, Deidre
 Brown, Alan
 Brown, rh Mr Nicholas
 Bryant, Chris
 Buck, Ms Karen
 Burgon, Richard
 Byrne, Ian
 Byrne, rh Liam
 Callaghan, Amy
 Cameron, Dr Lisa
 Campbell, rh Sir Alan
 Carmichael, rh Mr Alistair
 Chamberlain, Wendy
 Champion, Sarah
 Chapman, Douglas
 Clark, Feryal
 Cooper, Daisy
 Cooper, rh Yvette
 Corbyn, rh Jeremy
 Cowan, Ronnie
 Crawley, Angela
 Creasy, Stella
 Cruddas, Jon
 Cummins, Judith
 Daby, Janet
 Davey, rh Ed
 David, Wayne
 Davies-Jones, Alex
 Day, Martyn
 De Cordova, Marsha
 Dhesi, Mr Tanmanjeet Singh
 Docherty-Hughes, Martin
 Dodds, Anneliese
 Doogan, Dave
 Dorans, Allan
 Doughty, Stephen
 Duffield, Rosie
 Eagle, Dame Angela
 Eagle, Maria
 Eastwood, Colum
 Efford, Clive
 Elliott, Julie
 Elmore, Chris
 Esterson, Bill
 Evans, Chris
 Farron, Tim

Farry, Stephen
 Fellows, Marion
 Ferrier, Margaret
 Flynn, Stephen
 Fovargue, Yvonne
 Foxcroft, Vicky
 Foy, Mary Kelly
 Gardiner, Barry
 Gibson, Patricia
 Glindon, Mary
 Grady, Patrick
 Grant, Peter
 Green, Kate
 Green, Sarah
 Greenwood, Lilian
 Griffith, Nia
 Gwynne, Andrew
 Haigh, Louise
 Hamilton, Fabian
 Hamilton, Mrs Paulette
 Hanna, Claire
 Hardy, Emma
 Healey, rh John
 Hendrick, Sir Mark
 Hendry, Drew
 Hillier, Dame Meg
 Hobhouse, Wera
 Hodgson, Mrs Sharon
 Hopkins, Rachel
 Hosie, rh Stewart
 Huq, Dr Rupa
 Hussain, Imran
 Jardine, Christine
 Johnson, Kim
 Jones, Darren
 Jones, rh Mr Kevan
 Jones, Ruth
 Kane, Mike
 Keeley, Barbara
 Kendall, Liz (*Proxy vote cast
 by Pat McFadden*)
 Khan, Afzal
 Kinnock, Stephen
 Kyle, Peter
 Lake, Ben
 Lavery, Ian
 Leadbeater, Kim
 Lewell-Buck, Mrs Emma
 Lewis, Clive
 Linden, David
 Lloyd, Tony
 Long Bailey, Rebecca
 Lucas, Caroline
 Lynch, Holly
 MacAskill, Kenny
 Madders, Justin
 Mahmood, Mr Khalid
 Mahmood, Shabana
 Malhotra, Seema
 Maskell, Rachael
 Mc Nally, John
 McCarthy, Kerry
 McDonald, Andy
 McDonald, Stewart Malcolm
 McDonald, Stuart C.

McDonnell, rh John
 McFadden, rh Mr Pat
 McGinn, Conor
 McGovern, Alison
 McKinnell, Catherine
 McMahon, Jim
 Mearns, Ian
 Miliband, rh Edward
 Mishra, Navendu
 Monaghan, Carol
 Moran, Layla
 Morden, Jessica
 Morgan, Helen
 Morgan, Stephen
 Morris, Grahame
 Murray, Ian
 Murray, James
 Newlands, Gavin
 Nichols, Charlotte
 Norris, Alex
 O'Hara, Brendan
 Olney, Sarah
 Onwurah, Chi
 Oppong-Asare, Abena
 Osamor, Kate
 Osborne, Kate
 Oswald, Kirsten
 Owatemi, Taiwo
 Owen, Sarah
 Peacock, Stephanie
 Pennycook, Matthew
 Perkins, Mr Toby
 Phillips, Jess
 Pollard, Luke
 Powell, Lucy
 Qaisar, Ms Anum
 Qureshi, Yasmin
 Rayner, rh Angela
 Reed, Steve
 Rees, Christina
 Reeves, Ellie
 Reeves, Rachel
 Reynolds, Jonathan
 Ribeiro-Addy, Bell
 Rimmer, Ms Marie
 Rodda, Matt
 Russell-Moyle, Lloyd

Shah, Naz
 Sharma, Mr Virendra
 Sheerman, Mr Barry
 Sheppard, Tommy
 Siddiq, Tulip
 Slaughter, Andy
 Smith, Alyn
 Smith, Cat
 Smith, Jeff
 Smyth, Karin
 Sobel, Alex
 Spellar, rh John
 Stephens, Chris
 Stevens, Jo
 Stone, Jamie
 Streeting, Wes
 Stringer, Graham
 Sultana, Zarah
 Tami, rh Mark
 Tarry, Sam
 Thewliss, Alison
 Thomas, Gareth
 Thomas-Symonds, rh Nick
 Thompson, Owen
 Thomson, Richard
 Thornberry, rh Emily
 Timms, rh Stephen
 Turner, Karl
 Twist, Liz
 Vaz, rh Valerie
 Wakeford, Christian
 Webbe, Claudia
 West, Catherine
 Western, Matt
 Whitehead, Dr Alan
 Whitford, Dr Philippa
 Whitley, Mick
 Whittome, Nadia
 Williams, Hywel
 Wilson, Munira
 Winter, Beth
 Yasin, Mohammad
 Zeichner, Daniel

Tellers for the Noes:
Colleen Fletcher and
Gerald Jones

Bell, Aaron
 Benton, Scott
 Beresford, Sir Paul
 Bhatti, Saqib
 Blackman, Bob
 Blunt, Crispin
 Bone, Mr Peter
 Bowie, Andrew
 Brady, Sir Graham
 Braverman, rh Suella
 Brereton, Jack
 Bridgen, Andrew
 Brine, Steve
 Bristow, Paul
 Britcliffe, Sara
 Browne, Anthony
 Bruce, Fiona
 Buchan, Felicity
 Burghart, Alex
 Burns, rh Conor
 Butler, Rob
 Cairns, rh Alun
 Carter, Andy
 Cartlidge, James
 Cates, Miriam
 Caulfield, Maria
 Chalk, Alex
 Chishti, Rehman
 Chope, Sir Christopher
 Churchill, Jo
 Clark, rh Greg
 Clarke, rh Mr Simon
 Clarke, Theo
 Clarke-Smith, Brendan
 Clarkson, Chris
 Clifton-Brown, Sir Geoffrey
 Coffey, rh Dr Thérèse
 Colburn, Elliot
 Collins, Damian
 Courts, Robert
 Coutinho, Claire
 Cox, rh Sir Geoffrey
 Crosbie, Virginia
 Daly, James
 Davies, David T. C.
 Davies, Gareth
 Davies, Dr James
 Davies, Mims
 Davies, Philip
 Davison, Dehenna
 Dinéage, Dame Caroline
 Dines, Miss Sarah
 Djanogly, Mr Jonathan
 Docherty, Leo
 Donelan, rh Michelle
 Dorries, rh Ms Nadine
 Double, Steve
 Dowden, rh Oliver
 Doyle-Price, Jackie
 Drax, Richard
 Drummond, Mrs Flick
 Duguid, David
 Duncan Smith, rh Sir Iain
 Dunne, rh Philip
 Edwards, Ruth
 Ellis, rh Michael
 Ellwood, rh Mr Tobias
 Elphicke, Mrs Natalie
 Eustice, rh George
 Evans, Dr Luke
 Evennett, rh Sir David
 Everitt, Ben

Fabricant, Michael
 Farris, Laura
 Fell, Simon
 Firth, Anna
 Fletcher, Katherine
 Fletcher, Mark
 Fletcher, Nick
 Ford, Vicky
 Foster, Kevin
 Fox, rh Dr Liam
 Francois, rh Mr Mark
 Frazer, rh Lucy
 Freeman, George
 French, Mr Louie
 Fuller, Richard
 Garnier, Mark
 Gibb, rh Nick
 Gibson, Peter
 Glen, John
 Goodwill, rh Sir Robert
 Gove, rh Michael
 Graham, Richard
 Gray, James
 Grayling, rh Chris
 Green, Chris
 Griffith, Andrew
 Griffiths, Kate
 Grundy, James
 Gullis, Jonathan
 Halfon, rh Robert
 Hall, Luke
 Hands, rh Greg
 Harper, rh Mr Mark
 Harris, Rebecca
 Harrison, Trudy
 Hart, rh Simon
 Hayes, rh Sir John
 Heald, rh Sir Oliver
 Heapey, James
 Heaton-Harris, rh Chris
 Henderson, Gordon
 Henry, Darren
 Higginbotham, Antony
 Hinds, rh Damian
 Hollobone, Mr Philip
 Holmes, Paul
 Howell, Paul
 Huddleston, Nigel
 Hughes, Eddie
 Hunt, Jane
 Hunt, rh Jeremy
 Hunt, Tom
 Jack, rh Mr Alister
 Javid, rh Sajid
 Jenkin, Sir Bernard
 Jenkinson, Mark
 Jenkyns, Andrea
 Jenrick, rh Robert
 Johnson, Dr Caroline
 Johnson, Gareth
 Johnston, David
 Jones, Andrew
 Jones, Fay
 Jones, Mr Marcus
 Jupp, Simon
 Kawczynski, Daniel
 Keegan, Gillian
 Knight, rh Sir Greg
 Knight, Julian
 Kruger, Danny
 Kwarteng, rh Kwasi
 Lamont, John

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendment 6 disagreed to.

After Clause 12

CHANGES TO THE IMMIGRATION ACT 1971

Motion made, and Question put, That this House disagrees with Lords amendment 7.—(Tom Pursglove.)

The House divided: Ayes 291, Noes 232.

Division No. 221]

[4.59 pm

AYES

Adams, rh Nigel
 Afolami, Bim
 Afriyie, Adam
 Aiken, Nickie
 Aldous, Peter
 Allan, Lucy
 Anderson, Lee
 Anderson, Stuart
 Andrew, rh Stuart
 Ansell, Caroline
 Argar, Edward
 Atherton, Sarah
 Atkins, Victoria
 Bacon, Gareth
 Bacon, Mr Richard
 Badenoch, Kemi
 Bailey, Shaun
 Baillie, Siobhan
 Baker, Duncan
 Barclay, rh Steve
 Baron, Mr John
 Baynes, Simon

Latham, Mrs Pauline
 Leadsom, rh Dame Andrea
 Leigh, rh Sir Edward
 Lewer, Andrew
 Lewis, rh Brandon
 Loder, Chris
 Logan, Mark
 Longhi, Marco
 Lopez, Julia
 Lopresti, Jack
 Mackinlay, Craig
 Mackrory, Cheryl
 Maclean, Rachel
 Mak, Alan
 Malthouse, rh Kit
 Mangnall, Anthony
 Marson, Julie
 Mayhew, Jerome
 Maynard, Paul
 McCartney, Karl
 McPartland, Stephen
 McVey, rh Esther
 Menzies, Mark
 Metcalfe, Stephen
 Millar, Robin
 Miller, rh Mrs Maria
 Mills, Nigel
 Moore, Damien
 Moore, Robbie
 Mordaunt, rh Penny
 Morris, James
 Morrissey, Joy
 Mortimer, Jill
 Morton, Wendy
 Mullan, Dr Kieran
 Mumby-Croft, Holly
 Mundell, rh David
 Murray, Mrs Sheryll
 Murrison, rh Dr Andrew
 Nici, Lia
 O'Brien, Neil
 Offord, Dr Matthew
 Opperman, Guy
 Parish, Neil
 Patel, rh Priti
 Penning, rh Sir Mike
 Penrose, John
 Percy, Andrew
 Philp, Chris
 Pincher, rh Christopher
 Poulter, Dr Dan
 Pow, Rebecca
 Prentis, Victoria
 Pursglove, Tom
 Quince, Will
 Raab, rh Dominic
 Randall, Tom
 Redwood, rh John
 Rees-Mogg, rh Mr Jacob
 Richards, Nicola
 Roberts, Rob
 Robertson, Mr Laurence
 Rosindell, Andrew

Rowley, Lee
 Russell, Dean
 Rutley, David
 Sambrook, Gary
 Saxby, Selaine
 Scully, Paul
 Seely, Bob
 Selous, Andrew
 Shapps, rh Grant
 Shelbrooke, rh Alec
 Simmonds, David
 Skidmore, rh Chris
 Smith, Chloe
 Smith, Greg
 Smith, Henry
 Smith, rh Julian
 Smith, Royston
 Solloway, Amanda
 Spencer, Dr Ben
 Spencer, rh Mark
 Stafford, Alexander
 Stephenson, Andrew
 Stevenson, Jane
 Stevenson, John
 Stewart, rh Bob
 Stewart, Iain
 Streeter, Sir Gary
 Stride, rh Mel
 Sturdy, Julian
 Sunderland, James
 Swayne, rh Sir Desmond
 Syms, Sir Robert
 Timpson, Edward
 Tolhurst, Kelly
 Tomlinson, Justin
 Tracey, Craig
 Vara, Shailesh
 Vickers, Martin
 Vickers, Matt
 Villiers, rh Theresa
 Walker, Sir Charles
 Wallis, Dr Jamie
 Warburton, David
 Warman, Matt
 Watling, Giles
 Webb, Suzanne
 Whately, Helen
 Wheeler, Mrs Heather
 Whittaker, Craig
 Whittingdale, rh Mr John
 Wiggin, Sir Bill
 Wild, James
 Williams, Craig
 Williamson, rh Sir Gavin
 Wood, Mike
 Wright, rh Jeremy
 Young, Jacob
 Zahawi, rh Nadhim

Tellers for the Ayes:
Scott Mann and
Michael Tomlinson

NOES

Abrahams, Debbie
 Ali, Rushanara
 Ali, Tahir
 Allin-Khan, Dr Rosena
 Amesbury, Mike
 Anderson, Fleur

Antoniazzi, Tonia
 Ashworth, rh Jonathan
 Barker, Paula
 Beckett, rh Margaret
 Begum, Apsana
 Benn, rh Hilary

Betts, Mr Clive
 Black, Mhairi
 Blackford, rh Ian
 Blackman, Kirsty
 Blake, Olivia
 Blomfield, Paul
 Bradshaw, rh Mr Ben
 Brennan, Kevin
 Brock, Deidre
 Brown, Alan
 Brown, rh Mr Nicholas
 Bryant, Chris
 Buck, Ms Karen
 Burgon, Richard
 Byrne, Ian
 Byrne, rh Liam
 Cadbury, Ruth
 Callaghan, Amy
 Cameron, Dr Lisa
 Campbell, rh Sir Alan
 Campbell, Mr Gregory
 Carmichael, rh Mr Alistair
 Chamberlain, Wendy
 Champion, Sarah
 Chapman, Douglas
 Clark, Feryal
 Cooper, Daisy
 Cooper, rh Yvette
 Corbyn, rh Jeremy
 Cowan, Ronnie
 Crawley, Angela
 Creasy, Stella
 Cruddas, Jon
 Cummins, Judith
 Daby, Janet
 Davey, rh Ed
 David, Wayne
 Davies-Jones, Alex
 Day, Martyn
 De Cordova, Marsha
 Dhesi, Mr Tanmanjeet Singh
 Docherty-Hughes, Martin
 Dodds, Anneliese
 Donaldson, rh Sir Jeffrey M.
 Doogan, Dave
 Dorans, Allan
 Doughty, Stephen
 Duffield, Rosie
 Eagle, Dame Angela
 Eagle, Maria
 Eastwood, Colum
 Efford, Clive
 Elliott, Julie
 Elmore, Chris
 Esterson, Bill
 Evans, Chris
 Farron, Tim
 Farry, Stephen
 Fellows, Marion
 Ferrier, Margaret
 Flynn, Stephen
 Fovargue, Yvonne
 Foxcroft, Vicky
 Gardiner, Barry
 Gibson, Patricia
 Girvan, Paul
 Glindon, Mary
 Grady, Patrick
 Grant, Peter
 Green, Kate
 Green, Sarah
 Greenwood, Lilian

Griffith, Nia
 Gwynne, Andrew
 Haigh, Louise
 Hamilton, Fabian
 Hamilton, Mrs Paulette
 Hanna, Claire
 Hardy, Emma
 Hayes, Helen
 Healey, rh John
 Hendrick, Sir Mark
 Hendry, Drew
 Hillier, Dame Meg
 Hoare, Simon
 Hobhouse, Wera
 Hodgson, Mrs Sharon
 Hopkins, Rachel
 Hosie, rh Stewart
 Huq, Dr Rupa
 Hussain, Imran
 Jardine, Christine
 Johnson, Kim
 Jones, Darren
 Jones, rh Mr Kevan
 Jones, Ruth
 Jones, Sarah
 Kane, Mike
 Keeley, Barbara
 Kendall, Liz (*Proxy vote cast*
by Mr Pat McFadden)
 Khan, Afzal
 Kinnock, Stephen
 Kyle, Peter
 Lake, Ben
 Lavery, Ian
 Leadbeater, Kim
 Lewell-Buck, Mrs Emma
 Lewis, Clive
 Linden, David
 Lloyd, Tony
 Lockhart, Carla
 Long Bailey, Rebecca
 Loughton, Tim
 Lucas, Caroline
 Lynch, Holly
 MacAskill, Kenny
 Madders, Justin
 Mahmood, Mr Khalid
 Mahmood, Shabana
 Malhotra, Seema
 Maskell, Rachael
 Mc Nally, John
 McCarthy, Kerry
 McDonald, Andy
 McDonald, Stewart Malcolm
 McDonald, Stuart C.
 McDonnell, rh John
 McFadden, rh Mr Pat
 McGinn, Conor
 McGovern, Alison
 McKinnell, Catherine
 McMahon, Jim
 Mearns, Ian
 Miliband, rh Edward
 Mishra, Navendu
 Monaghan, Carol
 Moran, Layla
 Morden, Jessica
 Morgan, Helen
 Morgan, Stephen
 Morris, Grahame
 Murray, Ian
 Murray, James

Newlands, Gavin
 Nichols, Charlotte
 Norris, Alex
 O'Hara, Brendan
 Olney, Sarah
 Onwurah, Chi
 Oppong-Asare, Abena
 Osamor, Kate
 Osborne, Kate
 Oswald, Kirsten
 Owatemi, Taiwo
 Owen, Sarah
 Paisley, Ian
 Peacock, Stephanie
 Pennycook, Matthew
 Perkins, Mr Toby
 Phillips, Jess
 Pollard, Luke
 Powell, Lucy
 Qaisar, Ms Anum
 Qureshi, Yasmin
 Rayner, rh Angela
 Reed, Steve
 Rees, Christina
 Reeves, Ellie
 Reeves, Rachel
 Reynolds, Jonathan
 Ribeiro-Addy, Bell
 Rimmer, Ms Marie
 Robinson, Gavin
 Rodda, Matt
 Russell-Moyle, Lloyd
 Shah, Naz
 Shannon, Jim
 Sharma, Mr Virendra
 Sheerman, Mr Barry
 Sheppard, Tommy
 Siddiq, Tulip
 Slaughter, Andy
 Smith, Alyn
 Smith, Cat

Smith, Jeff
 Smyth, Karin
 Sobel, Alex
 Spellar, rh John
 Stephens, Chris
 Stevens, Jo
 Stone, Jamie
 Streeting, Wes
 Stringer, Graham
 Sultana, Zarah
 Tami, rh Mark
 Tarry, Sam
 Thewliss, Alison
 Thomas, Gareth
 Thomas-Symonds, rh Nick
 Thompson, Owen
 Thomson, Richard
 Thornberry, rh Emily
 Timms, rh Stephen
 Turner, Karl
 Twist, Liz
 Vaz, rh Valerie
 Wakeford, Christian
 Webbe, Claudia
 West, Catherine
 Western, Matt
 Whitehead, Dr Alan
 Whitford, Dr Philippa
 Whitley, Mick
 Whittome, Nadia
 Williams, Hywel
 Wilson, Munira
 Wilson, rh Sammy
 Winter, Beth
 Yasin, Mohammad
 Zeichner, Daniel

Tellers for the Noes:
Colleen Fletcher and
Gerald Jones

Blackman, Bob
 Blunt, Crispin
 Bone, Mr Peter
 Bowie, Andrew
 Bradley, Ben
 Brady, Sir Graham
 Braverman, rh Suella
 Brereton, Jack
 Bridgen, Andrew
 Brine, Steve
 Bristow, Paul
 Britcliffe, Sara
 Browne, Anthony
 Bruce, Fiona
 Buchan, Felicity
 Buckland, rh Sir Robert
 Burghart, Alex
 Burns, rh Conor
 Butler, Rob
 Cairns, rh Alun
 Carter, Andy
 Cartledge, James
 Cates, Miriam
 Caulfield, Maria
 Chalk, Alex
 Chishti, Rehman
 Chope, Sir Christopher
 Churchill, Jo
 Clark, rh Greg
 Clarke, rh Mr Simon
 Clarke, Theo
 Clarke-Smith, Brendan
 Clarkson, Chris
 Clifton-Brown, Sir Geoffrey
 Coffey, rh Dr Thérèse
 Colburn, Elliot
 Collins, Damian
 Courts, Robert
 Coutinho, Claire
 Cox, rh Sir Geoffrey
 Crosbie, Virginia
 Crouch, Tracey
 Daly, James
 Davies, David T. C.
 Davies, Gareth
 Davies, Dr James
 Davies, Mims
 Davies, Philip
 Davison, Dehenna
 Dinenage, Dame Caroline
 Dines, Miss Sarah
 Djanogly, Mr Jonathan
 Docherty, Leo
 Donelan, rh Michelle
 Dorries, rh Ms Nadine
 Dowden, rh Oliver
 Doyle-Price, Jackie
 Drax, Richard
 Drummond, Mrs Flick
 Duguid, David
 Dunne, rh Philip
 Edwards, Ruth
 Ellis, rh Michael
 Elphicke, Mrs Natalie
 Eustice, rh George
 Evans, Dr Luke
 Evennett, rh Sir David
 Everitt, Ben
 Fabricant, Michael
 Farris, Laura
 Fell, Simon
 Firth, Anna

Fletcher, Katherine
 Fletcher, Mark
 Fletcher, Nick
 Ford, Vicky
 Foster, Kevin
 Fox, rh Dr Liam
 Francois, rh Mr Mark
 Frazer, rh Lucy
 Freeman, George
 French, Mr Louie
 Fuller, Richard
 Garnier, Mark
 Gibb, rh Nick
 Gibson, Peter
 Gideon, Jo
 Glen, John
 Goodwill, rh Sir Robert
 Gove, rh Michael
 Graham, Richard
 Gray, James
 Grayling, rh Chris
 Green, Chris
 Green, rh Damian
 Griffith, Andrew
 Griffiths, Kate
 Grundy, James
 Gullis, Jonathan
 Halfon, rh Robert
 Hall, Luke
 Hands, rh Greg
 Harper, rh Mr Mark
 Harris, Rebecca
 Harrison, Trudy
 Hart, Sally-Ann
 Hart, rh Simon
 Hayes, rh Sir John
 Heald, rh Sir Oliver
 Heapey, James
 Heaton-Harris, rh Chris
 Henderson, Gordon
 Henry, Darren
 Higginbotham, Antony
 Hinds, rh Damian
 Hollinrake, Kevin
 Hollobone, Mr Philip
 Holloway, Adam
 Holmes, Paul
 Howell, Paul
 Huddleston, Nigel
 Hudson, Dr Neil
 Hughes, Eddie
 Hunt, Jane
 Hunt, rh Jeremy
 Hunt, Tom
 Jack, rh Mr Alister
 Javid, rh Sajid
 Jenkin, Sir Bernard
 Jenkinson, Mark
 Jenkyns, Andrea
 Jenrick, rh Robert
 Johnson, Dr Caroline
 Johnson, Gareth
 Johnston, David
 Jones, Andrew
 Jones, Fay
 Jones, Mr Marcus
 Jupp, Simon
 Kawczynski, Daniel
 Keegan, Gillian
 Knight, rh Sir Greg
 Knight, Julian
 Kruger, Danny

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendment 7 disagreed to.

Lords amendment 8 disagreed to.

Clause 28

ACCELERATED DETAINED APPEALS

Motion made, and Question put, That this House disagrees with Lords amendment 9.—(Tom Pursglove.)

The House divided: Ayes 302, Noes 232.

Division No. 222]

[5.11 pm

AYES

Adams, rh Nigel
 Afolami, Bim
 Afriyie, Adam
 Aiken, Nickie
 Aldous, Peter
 Allan, Lucy
 Anderson, Lee
 Anderson, Stuart
 Andrew, rh Stuart
 Ansell, Caroline
 Argar, Edward
 Atherton, Sarah
 Atkins, Victoria
 Bacon, Gareth
 Bacon, Mr Richard
 Badenoch, Kemi
 Bailey, Shaun
 Baillie, Siobhan
 Baker, Duncan
 Barclay, rh Steve
 Baron, Mr John
 Baynes, Simon
 Bell, Aaron
 Benton, Scott
 Beresford, Sir Paul
 Bhatti, Saqib

Kwarteng, rh Kwasi
 Lamont, John
 Latham, Mrs Pauline
 Leadsom, rh Dame Andrea
 Leigh, rh Sir Edward
 Lewer, Andrew
 Lewis, rh Brandon
 Lewis, rh Dr Julian
 Loder, Chris
 Logan, Mark
 Longhi, Marco
 Lopez, Julia
 Lopresti, Jack
 Loughton, Tim
 Mackinlay, Craig
 Mackrory, Cherylyn
 Maclean, Rachel
 Mak, Alan
 Malthouse, rh Kit
 Mangnall, Anthony
 Mann, Scott
 Marson, Julie
 Mayhew, Jerome
 Maynard, Paul
 McCartney, Karl
 McPartland, Stephen
 McVey, rh Esther
 Menzies, Mark
 Merriman, Huw
 Metcalfe, Stephen
 Millar, Robin
 Miller, rh Mrs Maria
 Mills, Nigel
 Moore, Damien
 Moore, Robbie
 Mordaunt, rh Penny
 Morris, Anne Marie
 Morris, James
 Morrissey, Joy
 Mortimer, Jill
 Morton, Wendy
 Mullan, Dr Kieran
 Mumby-Croft, Holly
 Mundell, rh David
 Murray, Mrs Sheryll
 Murrison, rh Dr Andrew
 Nici, Lia
 O'Brien, Neil
 Offord, Dr Matthew
 Opperman, Guy
 Parish, Neil
 Patel, rh Priti
 Penning, rh Sir Mike
 Penrose, John
 Percy, Andrew
 Philp, Chris
 Pincher, rh Christopher
 Poulter, Dr Dan
 Pow, Rebecca
 Prentis, Victoria
 Pursglove, Tom
 Quince, Will
 Raab, rh Dominic
 Randall, Tom
 Redwood, rh John
 Rees-Mogg, rh Mr Jacob

Richards, Nicola
 Richardson, Angela
 Roberts, Rob
 Robertson, Mr Laurence
 Rosindell, Andrew
 Rowley, Lee
 Russell, Dean
 Rutley, David
 Sambrook, Gary
 Saxby, Selaine
 Scully, Paul
 Seely, Bob
 Selous, Andrew
 Shapps, rh Grant
 Shelbrooke, rh Alec
 Simmonds, David
 Skidmore, rh Chris
 Smith, Chloe
 Smith, Greg
 Smith, Henry
 Smith, Royston
 Spencer, Dr Ben
 Spencer, rh Mark
 Stafford, Alexander
 Stephenson, Andrew
 Stevenson, Jane
 Stevenson, John
 Stewart, rh Bob
 Stewart, Iain
 Streeter, Sir Gary
 Stride, rh Mel
 Sunderland, James
 Swayne, rh Sir Desmond
 Syms, Sir Robert
 Thomas, Derek
 Timpson, Edward
 Tolhurst, Kelly
 Tomlinson, Justin
 Tomlinson, Michael
 Tracey, Craig
 Vara, Shailesh
 Vickers, Martin
 Vickers, Matt
 Villiers, rh Theresa
 Walker, Sir Charles
 Wallis, Dr Jamie
 Warburton, David
 Warman, Matt
 Watling, Giles
 Webb, Suzanne
 Whately, Helen
 Wheeler, Mrs Heather
 Whittaker, Craig
 Whittingdale, rh Mr John
 Wiggin, Sir Bill
 Wild, James
 Williams, Craig
 Williamson, rh Sir Gavin
 Wood, Mike
 Wright, rh Jeremy
 Young, Jacob
 Zahawi, rh Nadhim

Tellers for the Ayes:
Amanda Solloway and
Steve Double

NOES

Abrahams, Debbie
 Ali, Rushanara
 Ali, Tahir

Allin-Khan, Dr Rosena
 Amesbury, Mike
 Anderson, Fleur

Antoniazzi, Tonia
 Ashworth, rh Jonathan
 Barker, Paula
 Beckett, rh Margaret
 Begum, Apsana
 Benn, rh Hilary
 Betts, Mr Clive
 Black, Mhairi
 Blackford, rh Ian
 Blackman, Kirsty
 Blake, Olivia
 Blomfield, Paul
 Bradshaw, rh Mr Ben
 Brennan, Kevin
 Brock, Deidre
 Brown, Alan
 Brown, rh Mr Nicholas
 Bryant, Chris
 Buck, Ms Karen
 Burgon, Richard
 Byrne, Ian
 Cadbury, Ruth
 Callaghan, Amy
 Cameron, Dr Lisa
 Campbell, rh Sir Alan
 Campbell, Mr Gregory
 Carmichael, rh Mr Alistair
 Chamberlain, Wendy
 Champion, Sarah
 Clark, Feryal
 Cooper, Daisy
 Cooper, rh Yvette
 Corbyn, rh Jeremy
 Cowan, Ronnie
 Crawley, Angela
 Creasy, Stella
 Cruddas, Jon
 Cummins, Judith
 Daby, Janet
 Davey, rh Ed
 David, Wayne
 Davies-Jones, Alex
 Davis, rh Mr David
 Day, Martyn
 De Cordova, Marsha
 Dhesi, Mr Tanmanjeet Singh
 Docherty-Hughes, Martin
 Dodds, Anneliese
 Donaldson, rh Sir Jeffrey M.
 Doogan, Dave
 Dorans, Allan
 Doughty, Stephen
 Duffield, Rosie
 Eagle, Dame Angela
 Eagle, Maria
 Eastwood, Colum
 Efford, Clive
 Elliott, Julie
 Elmore, Chris
 Esterson, Bill
 Evans, Chris
 Farron, Tim
 Farry, Stephen
 Fellows, Marion
 Ferrier, Margaret
 Flynn, Stephen
 Fovargue, Yvonne
 Foxcroft, Vicky
 Foy, Mary Kelly
 Gardiner, Barry
 Gibson, Patricia
 Girvan, Paul

Glendon, Mary
 Grady, Patrick
 Grant, Peter
 Green, Kate
 Green, Sarah
 Greenwood, Lilian
 Griffith, Nia
 Gwynne, Andrew
 Haigh, Louise
 Hamilton, Fabian
 Hamilton, Mrs Paulette
 Hanna, Claire
 Hardy, Emma
 Hayes, Helen
 Healey, rh John
 Hendrick, Sir Mark
 Hendry, Drew
 Hillier, Dame Meg
 Hoare, Simon
 Hobhouse, Wera
 Hodgson, Mrs Sharon
 Hopkins, Rachel
 Hosie, rh Stewart
 Huq, Dr Rupa
 Hussain, Imran
 Jardine, Christine
 Johnson, Kim
 Jones, Darren
 Jones, rh Mr Kevan
 Jones, Ruth
 Jones, Sarah
 Kane, Mike
 Keeley, Barbara
 Kendall, Liz (*Proxy vote cast*
by Mr Pat McFadden)
 Khan, Afzal
 Kinnock, Stephen
 Kyle, Peter
 Lake, Ben
 Lavery, Ian
 Leadbeater, Kim
 Lewell-Buck, Mrs Emma
 Lewis, Clive
 Linden, David
 Lloyd, Tony
 Lockhart, Carla
 Long Bailey, Rebecca
 Lucas, Caroline
 Lynch, Holly
 MacAskill, Kenny
 Madders, Justin
 Mahmood, Mr Khalid
 Mahmood, Shabana
 Malhotra, Seema
 Maskell, Rachael
 Mc Nally, John
 McCarthy, Kerry
 McDonald, Andy
 McDonald, Stewart Malcolm
 McDonald, Stuart C.
 McFadden, rh Mr Pat
 McGinn, Conor
 McGovern, Alison
 McKinnell, Catherine
 McMahon, Jim
 Mearns, Ian
 Miliband, rh Edward
 Mishra, Navendu
 Mitchell, rh Mr Andrew
 Monaghan, Carol
 Moran, Layla
 Morden, Jessica

Morgan, Helen
 Morgan, Stephen
 Morris, Grahame
 Murray, Ian
 Murray, James
 Newlands, Gavin
 Nichols, Charlotte
 Norris, Alex
 O'Hara, Brendan
 Olney, Sarah
 Onwurah, Chi
 Oppong-Asare, Abena
 Osamor, Kate
 Osborne, Kate
 Oswald, Kirsten
 Owatemi, Taiwo
 Owen, Sarah
 Paisley, Ian
 Peacock, Stephanie
 Pennycook, Matthew
 Perkins, Mr Toby
 Phillips, Jess
 Pollard, Luke
 Powell, Lucy
 Qaisar, Ms Anum
 Qureshi, Yasmin
 Rayner, rh Angela
 Reed, Steve
 Rees, Christina
 Reeves, Ellie
 Reeves, Rachel
 Reynolds, Jonathan
 Ribeiro-Addy, Bell
 Rimmer, Ms Marie
 Robinson, Gavin
 Rodda, Matt
 Russell-Moyle, Lloyd
 Shah, Naz
 Shannon, Jim
 Sharma, Mr Virendra
 Sheerman, Mr Barry
 Sheppard, Tommy
 Siddiq, Tulip

Slaughter, Andy
 Smith, Alyn
 Smith, Cat
 Smith, Jeff
 Smyth, Karin
 Sobel, Alex
 Spellar, rh John
 Stephens, Chris
 Stevens, Jo
 Stone, Jamie
 Streeting, Wes
 Stringer, Graham
 Sultana, Sarah
 Tami, rh Mark
 Tarry, Sam
 Thewliss, Alison
 Thomas, Gareth
 Thomas-Symonds, rh Nick
 Thompson, Owen
 Thomson, Richard
 Thornberry, rh Emily
 Timms, rh Stephen
 Turner, Karl
 Twist, Liz
 Vaz, rh Valerie
 Wakeford, Christian
 Webbe, Claudia
 West, Catherine
 Western, Matt
 Whitehead, Dr Alan
 Whitford, Dr Philippa
 Whitley, Mick
 Whittome, Nadia
 Williams, Hywel
 Wilson, Munira
 Wilson, rh Sammy
 Winter, Beth
 Yasin, Mohammad
 Zeichner, Daniel

Tellers for the Noes:
Colleen Fletcher and
Gerald Jones

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendment 9 disagreed to.

Lords amendments 52 and 53 disagreed to.

After Clause 37

IMMIGRATION RULES: ENTRY TO SEEK ASYLUM AND
 JOIN FAMILY

*Motion made, and Question put, That this House
 disagrees with Lords amendment 10.—(Tom Pursglove.)*

The House divided: Ayes 305, Noes 230.

Division No. 223]

[5.25 pm

AYES

Adams, rh Nigel
 Afolami, Bim
 Afriyie, Adam
 Aiken, Nickie
 Aldous, Peter
 Allan, Lucy
 Anderson, Lee
 Anderson, Stuart
 Andrew, rh Stuart
 Ansell, Caroline
 Argar, Edward
 Atherton, Sarah
 Atkins, Victoria
 Bacon, Gareth
 Bacon, Mr Richard
 Badenoch, Kemi
 Bailey, Shaun
 Baillie, Siobhan
 Baker, Duncan
 Barclay, rh Steve

Baron, Mr John
 Baynes, Simon
 Bell, Aaron
 Benton, Scott
 Beresford, Sir Paul
 Bhatti, Saqib
 Blackman, Bob
 Blunt, Crispin
 Bone, Mr Peter
 Bottomley, Sir Peter
 Bowie, Andrew
 Bradley, Ben
 Brady, Sir Graham
 Braverman, rh Suella
 Brereton, Jack
 Bridgen, Andrew
 Brine, Steve
 Bristow, Paul
 Britcliffe, Sara
 Browne, Anthony
 Bruce, Fiona
 Buchan, Felicity
 Burghart, Alex
 Burns, rh Conor
 Butler, Rob
 Cairns, rh Alun
 Carter, Andy
 Cartledge, James
 Cates, Miriam
 Caulfield, Maria
 Chalk, Alex
 Chishti, Rehman
 Chope, Sir Christopher
 Churchill, Jo
 Clark, rh Greg
 Clarke, rh Mr Simon
 Clarke, Theo
 Clarke-Smith, Brendan
 Clarkson, Chris
 Clifton-Brown, Sir Geoffrey
 Coffey, rh Dr Thérèse
 Colburn, Elliot
 Collins, Damian
 Courts, Robert
 Coutinho, Claire
 Cox, rh Sir Geoffrey
 Crosbie, Virginia
 Daly, James
 Davies, David T. C.
 Davies, Gareth
 Davies, Dr James
 Davies, Mims
 Davies, Philip
 Davison, Dehenna
 Dinenage, Dame Caroline
 Dines, Miss Sarah
 Djanogly, Mr Jonathan
 Docherty, Leo
 Donelan, rh Michelle
 Dorries, rh Ms Nadine
 Dowden, rh Oliver
 Doyle-Price, Jackie
 Drax, Richard
 Drummond, Mrs Flick
 Duguid, David
 Duncan Smith, rh Sir Iain
 Dunne, rh Philip
 Edwards, Ruth
 Ellis, rh Michael
 Ellwood, rh Mr Tobias

Elphicke, Mrs Natalie
 Eustice, rh George
 Evans, Dr Luke
 Evennett, rh Sir David
 Everitt, Ben
 Fabricant, Michael
 Farris, Laura
 Fell, Simon
 Firth, Anna
 Fletcher, Katherine
 Fletcher, Mark
 Fletcher, Nick
 Ford, Vicky
 Foster, Kevin
 Fox, rh Dr Liam
 Francois, rh Mr Mark
 Frazer, rh Lucy
 Freeman, George
 French, Mr Louie
 Fuller, Richard
 Garnier, Mark
 Ghani, Ms Nusrat
 Gibb, rh Nick
 Gibson, Peter
 Gideon, Jo
 Glen, John
 Goodwill, rh Sir Robert
 Gove, rh Michael
 Graham, Richard
 Gray, James
 Grayling, rh Chris
 Green, Chris
 Green, rh Damian
 Griffith, Andrew
 Griffiths, Kate
 Grundy, James
 Gullis, Jonathan
 Halfon, rh Robert
 Hall, Luke
 Hammond, Stephen
 Hands, rh Greg
 Harper, rh Mr Mark
 Harris, Rebecca
 Harrison, Trudy
 Hart, Sally-Ann
 Hayes, rh Sir John
 Heald, rh Sir Oliver
 Heaton-Harris, rh Chris
 Henderson, Gordon
 Henry, Darren
 Higginbotham, Antony
 Hinds, rh Damian
 Hollinrake, Kevin
 Hollobone, Mr Philip
 Holloway, Adam
 Holmes, Paul
 Howell, Paul
 Huddleston, Nigel
 Hudson, Dr Neil
 Hughes, Eddie
 Hunt, Jane
 Hunt, rh Jeremy
 Hunt, Tom
 Jack, rh Mr Alister
 Javid, rh Sajid
 Jenkin, Sir Bernard
 Jenkinson, Mark
 Jenkyns, Andrea
 Jenrick, rh Robert
 Johnson, Dr Caroline

Johnson, Gareth
 Johnston, David
 Jones, Andrew
 Jones, Fay
 Jones, Mr Marcus
 Jupp, Simon
 Kawczynski, Daniel
 Kearns, Alicia
 Keegan, Gillian
 Knight, rh Sir Greg
 Knight, Julian
 Kruger, Danny
 Kwarteng, rh Kwasi
 Lamont, John
 Latham, Mrs Pauline
 Leadsom, rh Dame Andrea
 Leigh, rh Sir Edward
 Lewer, Andrew
 Lewis, rh Brandon
 Lewis, rh Dr Julian
 Loder, Chris
 Logan, Mark
 Longhi, Marco
 Lopez, Julia
 Lopresti, Jack
 Mackinlay, Craig
 Mackrory, Cherilyn
 Maclean, Rachel
 Mak, Alan
 Malthouse, rh Kit
 Mangnall, Anthony
 Mann, Scott
 Marson, Julie
 Mayhew, Jerome
 Maynard, Paul
 McCartney, Karl
 McPartland, Stephen
 McVey, rh Esther
 Menzies, Mark
 Merriman, Huw
 Metcalfe, Stephen
 Millar, Robin
 Miller, rh Mrs Maria
 Mills, Nigel
 Moore, Damien
 Moore, Robbie
 Mordaunt, rh Penny
 Morris, Anne Marie
 Morris, James
 Morrissey, Joy
 Mortimer, Jill
 Morton, Wendy
 Mullan, Dr Kieran
 Mumby-Croft, Holly
 Mundell, rh David
 Murray, Mrs Sheryll
 Murrison, rh Dr Andrew
 Nici, Lia
 O'Brien, Neil
 Offord, Dr Matthew
 Opperman, Guy
 Parish, Neil
 Patel, rh Priti
 Penning, rh Sir Mike
 Penrose, John
 Percy, Andrew
 Pincher, rh Christopher
 Poulter, Dr Dan
 Pow, Rebecca
 Prentis, Victoria
 Pursglove, Tom
 Quince, Will

Raab, rh Dominic
 Randall, Tom
 Redwood, rh John
 Rees-Mogg, rh Mr Jacob
 Richards, Nicola
 Richardson, Angela
 Roberts, Rob
 Robertson, Mr Laurence
 Rosindell, Andrew
 Rowley, Lee
 Russell, Dean
 Rutley, David
 Sambrook, Gary
 Saxby, Selaine
 Scully, Paul
 Seely, Bob
 Selous, Andrew
 Shapps, rh Grant
 Shelbrooke, rh Alec
 Simmonds, David
 Skidmore, rh Chris
 Smith, Chloe
 Smith, Greg
 Smith, Henry
 Smith, rh Julian
 Smith, Royston
 Spencer, Dr Ben
 Spencer, rh Mark
 Stafford, Alexander
 Stephenson, Andrew
 Stevenson, Jane
 Stevenson, John
 Stewart, rh Bob
 Stewart, Iain
 Streeter, Sir Gary
 Stride, rh Mel
 Sturdy, Julian
 Sunderland, James
 Swayne, rh Sir Desmond
 Syms, Sir Robert
 Thomas, Derek
 Timpson, Edward
 Tolhurst, Kelly
 Tomlinson, Justin
 Tomlinson, Michael
 Vara, Shailesh
 Vickers, Martin
 Vickers, Matt
 Villiers, rh Theresa
 Walker, Sir Charles
 Wallis, Dr Jamie
 Warburton, David
 Warman, Matt
 Watling, Giles
 Webb, Suzanne
 Whately, Helen
 Wheeler, Mrs Heather
 Whittaker, Craig
 Whittingdale, rh Mr John
 Wiggin, Sir Bill
 Wild, James
 Williams, Craig
 Williamson, rh Sir Gavin
 Wood, Mike
 Wragg, Mr William
 Wright, rh Jeremy
 Young, Jacob
 Zahawi, rh Nadhim

Tellers for the Ayes:
 Amanda Solloway and
 Steve Double

NOES

Abrahams, Debbie
 Ali, Rushanara
 Ali, Tahir
 Allin-Khan, Dr Rosena
 Amesbury, Mike
 Anderson, Fleur
 Antoniazzi, Tonia
 Ashworth, rh Jonathan
 Barker, Paula
 Beckett, rh Margaret
 Begum, Apsana
 Benn, rh Hilary
 Betts, Mr Clive
 Black, Mhairi
 Blackford, rh Ian
 Blackman, Kirsty
 Blake, Olivia
 Blomfield, Paul
 Bradshaw, rh Mr Ben
 Brennan, Kevin
 Brock, Deidre
 Brown, Alan
 Brown, rh Mr Nicholas
 Bryant, Chris
 Buck, Ms Karen
 Burgon, Richard
 Byrne, Ian
 Byrne, rh Liam
 Cadbury, Ruth
 Callaghan, Amy
 Cameron, Dr Lisa
 Campbell, rh Sir Alan
 Campbell, Mr Gregory
 Carmichael, rh Mr Alistair
 Chamberlain, Wendy
 Champion, Sarah
 Chapman, Douglas
 Clark, Feryal
 Cooper, Daisy
 Cooper, rh Yvette
 Corbyn, rh Jeremy
 Cowan, Ronnie
 Crawley, Angela
 Creasy, Stella
 Crouch, Tracey
 Cruddas, Jon
 Cummins, Judith
 Daby, Janet
 Davey, rh Ed
 David, Wayne
 Davies-Jones, Alex
 Day, Martyn
 De Cordova, Marsha
 Dhesi, Mr Tanmanjeet Singh
 Docherty-Hughes, Martin
 Dodds, Anneliese
 Donaldson, rh Sir Jeffrey M.
 Doogan, Dave
 Dorans, Allan
 Duffield, Rosie
 Eagle, Dame Angela
 Eagle, Maria
 Eastwood, Colum
 Efford, Clive
 Elliott, Julie
 Elmore, Chris
 Esterson, Bill
 Evans, Chris
 Farron, Tim
 Farry, Stephen
 Fellows, Marion

Ferrier, Margaret
 Flynn, Stephen
 Fovargue, Yvonne
 Foxcroft, Vicky
 Foy, Mary Kelly
 Gardiner, Barry
 Gibson, Patricia
 Girvan, Paul
 Glindon, Mary
 Grady, Patrick
 Grant, Peter
 Green, Kate
 Green, Sarah
 Greenwood, Lilian
 Griffith, Nia
 Gwynne, Andrew
 Haigh, Louise
 Hamilton, Fabian
 Hamilton, Mrs Paulette
 Hanna, Claire
 Hardy, Emma
 Hayes, Helen
 Healey, rh John
 Hendrick, Sir Mark
 Hendry, Drew
 Hillier, Dame Meg
 Hobhouse, Wera
 Hodgson, Mrs Sharon
 Hopkins, Rachel
 Hosie, rh Stewart
 Huq, Dr Rupa
 Hussain, Imran
 Jardine, Christine
 Johnson, Kim
 Jones, Darren
 Jones, rh Mr Kevan
 Jones, Ruth
 Jones, Sarah
 Kane, Mike
 Keeley, Barbara
 Kendall, Liz (*Proxy vote cast
 by Pat McFadden*)
 Khan, Afzal
 Kinnock, Stephen
 Kyle, Peter
 Lake, Ben
 Lavery, Ian
 Leadbeater, Kim
 Lewell-Buck, Mrs Emma
 Lewis, Clive
 Linden, David
 Lloyd, Tony
 Lockhart, Carla
 Long Bailey, Rebecca
 Loughton, Tim
 Lucas, Caroline
 Lynch, Holly
 MacAskill, Kenny
 Madders, Justin
 Mahmood, Mr Khalid
 Mahmood, Shabana
 Malhotra, Seema
 Maskell, Rachael
 Mc Nally, John
 McCarthy, Kerry
 McCartney, Jason
 McDonald, Andy
 McDonald, Stewart Malcolm
 McDonald, Stuart C.
 McDonnell, rh John
 McFadden, rh Mr Pat

McGinn, Conor
 McGovern, Alison
 McKinnell, Catherine
 Mearns, Ian
 Miliband, rh Edward
 Mishra, Navendu
 Monaghan, Carol
 Moran, Layla
 Morden, Jessica
 Morgan, Helen
 Morgan, Stephen
 Morris, Grahame
 Murray, Ian
 Murray, James
 Newlands, Gavin
 Nichols, Charlotte
 Norris, Alex
 O'Hara, Brendan
 Olney, Sarah
 Onwurah, Chi
 Oppong-Asare, Abena
 Osamor, Kate
 Osborne, Kate
 Oswald, Kirsten
 Owatemi, Taiwo
 Owen, Sarah
 Peacock, Stephanie
 Pennycook, Matthew
 Perkins, Mr Toby
 Phillips, Jess
 Pollard, Luke
 Powell, Lucy
 Qaisar, Ms Anum
 Qureshi, Yasmin
 Rayner, rh Angela
 Reed, Steve
 Rees, Christina
 Reeves, Ellie
 Reeves, Rachel
 Reynolds, Jonathan
 Ribeiro-Addy, Bell
 Rimmer, Ms Marie
 Robinson, Gavin
 Rodda, Matt
 Russell-Moyle, Lloyd
 Shah, Naz
 Shannon, Jim

Sharma, Mr Virendra
 Sheerman, Mr Barry
 Sheppard, Tommy
 Siddiq, Tulip
 Slaughter, Andy
 Smith, Alyn
 Smith, Cat
 Smith, Jeff
 Smyth, Karin
 Sobel, Alex
 Spellar, rh John
 Stephens, Chris
 Stevens, Jo
 Stone, Jamie
 Streeting, Wes
 Stringer, Graham
 Sultana, Sarah
 Tami, rh Mark
 Tarry, Sam
 Thewliss, Alison
 Thomas, Gareth
 Thomas-Symonds, rh Nick
 Thompson, Owen
 Thomson, Richard
 Thornberry, rh Emily
 Timms, rh Stephen
 Turner, Karl
 Twist, Liz
 Vaz, rh Valerie
 Wakeford, Christian
 Webbe, Claudia
 West, Catherine
 Western, Matt
 Whitehead, Dr Alan
 Whitford, Dr Philippa
 Whitley, Mick
 Whittome, Nadia
 Williams, Hywel
 Wilson, Munira
 Winter, Beth
 Yasin, Mohammad
 Zeichner, Daniel

Tellers for the Noes:
Colleen Fletcher and
Gerald Jones

Barclay, rh Steve
 Baron, Mr John
 Baynes, Simon
 Bell, Aaron
 Beresford, Sir Paul
 Bhatti, Saqib
 Blackman, Bob
 Blunt, Crispin
 Bone, Mr Peter
 Bottomley, Sir Peter
 Bowie, Andrew
 Bradley, Ben
 Brady, Sir Graham
 Braverman, rh Suella
 Brereton, Jack
 Bridgen, Andrew
 Brine, Steve
 Bristow, Paul
 Britcliffe, Sara
 Browne, Anthony
 Bruce, Fiona
 Buchan, Felicity
 Burghart, Alex
 Burns, rh Conor
 Butler, Rob
 Cairns, rh Alun
 Campbell, Mr Gregory
 Carter, Andy
 Cartledge, James
 Cates, Miriam
 Caulfield, Maria
 Chalk, Alex
 Chishti, Rehman
 Chope, Sir Christopher
 Churchill, Jo
 Clark, rh Greg
 Clarke, rh Mr Simon
 Clarke, Theo
 Clarke-Smith, Brendan
 Clarkson, Chris
 Clifton-Brown, Sir Geoffrey
 Coffey, rh Dr Thérèse
 Colburn, Elliot
 Collins, Damian
 Courts, Robert
 Coutinho, Claire
 Cox, rh Sir Geoffrey
 Crosbie, Virginia
 Daly, James
 Davies, David T. C.
 Davies, Gareth
 Davies, Dr James
 Davies, Mims
 Davies, Philip
 Davison, Dehenna
 Dinage, Dame Caroline
 Dines, Miss Sarah
 Djanogly, Mr Jonathan
 Docherty, Leo
 Donaldson, rh Sir Jeffrey M.
 Donelan, rh Michelle
 Dorries, rh Ms Nadine
 Dowden, rh Oliver
 Doyle-Price, Jackie
 Drax, Richard
 Drummond, Mrs Flick
 Duguid, David
 Duncan Smith, rh Sir Iain
 Dunne, rh Philip
 Edwards, Ruth
 Ellis, rh Michael
 Ellwood, rh Mr Tobias

Elphicke, Mrs Natalie
 Eustice, rh George
 Evans, Dr Luke
 Evennett, rh Sir David
 Everitt, Ben
 Fabricant, Michael
 Farris, Laura
 Fell, Simon
 Firth, Anna
 Fletcher, Katherine
 Fletcher, Mark
 Fletcher, Nick
 Ford, Vicky
 Foster, Kevin
 Fox, rh Dr Liam
 Francois, rh Mr Mark
 Frazer, rh Lucy
 Freeman, George
 French, Mr Louie
 Fuller, Richard
 Garnier, Mark
 Ghani, Ms Nusrat
 Gibb, rh Nick
 Gibson, Peter
 Gideon, Jo
 Girvan, Paul
 Glen, John
 Goodwill, rh Sir Robert
 Gove, rh Michael
 Graham, Richard
 Gray, James
 Grayling, rh Chris
 Green, Chris
 Griffith, Andrew
 Griffiths, Kate
 Grundy, James
 Gullis, Jonathan
 Halfon, rh Robert
 Hall, Luke
 Hands, rh Greg
 Harper, rh Mr Mark
 Harris, Rebecca
 Harrison, Trudy
 Hart, Sally-Ann
 Hart, rh Simon
 Hayes, rh Sir John
 Heald, rh Sir Oliver
 Heaton-Harris, rh Chris
 Henderson, Gordon
 Henry, Darren
 Higginbotham, Antony
 Hinds, rh Damian
 Hollinrake, Kevin
 Hollobone, Mr Philip
 Holloway, Adam
 Holmes, Paul
 Howell, Paul
 Huddleston, Nigel
 Hudson, Dr Neil
 Hughes, Eddie
 Hunt, Jane
 Hunt, rh Jeremy
 Hunt, Tom
 Jack, rh Mr Alister
 Javid, rh Sajid
 Jenkin, Sir Bernard
 Jenkinson, Mark
 Jenkyns, Andrea
 Jenrick, rh Robert
 Johnson, Gareth
 Johnston, David
 Jones, Andrew

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendment 10 disagreed to.

After Clause 37

REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT SCHEMES

Motion made, and Question put, That this House disagrees with Lords amendment 11.—(Tom Pursglove.)

The House divided: Ayes 313, Noes 227.

Division No. 224]

[5.37 pm

AYES

Adams, rh Nigel
 Afolami, Bim
 Afriyie, Adam
 Aiken, Nickie
 Aldous, Peter
 Allan, Lucy
 Anderson, Lee
 Anderson, Stuart
 Andrew, rh Stuart

Ansell, Caroline
 Argar, Edward
 Atherton, Sarah
 Atkins, Victoria
 Bacon, Gareth
 Badenoch, Kemi
 Bailey, Shaun
 Baillie, Siobhan
 Baker, Duncan

Jones, Fay
 Jones, Mr Marcus
 Jupp, Simon
 Kawczynski, Daniel
 Kearns, Alicia
 Keegan, Gillian
 Knight, rh Sir Greg
 Knight, Julian
 Kruger, Danny
 Kwarteng, rh Kwasi
 Lamont, John
 Latham, Mrs Pauline
 Leadsom, rh Dame Andrea
 Leigh, rh Sir Edward
 Lewer, Andrew
 Lewis, rh Brandon
 Lewis, rh Dr Julian
 Lockhart, Carla
 Loder, Chris
 Logan, Mark
 Longhi, Marco
 Lopez, Julia
 Lopresti, Jack
 Loughton, Tim
 Mackinlay, Craig
 Mackrory, Cherilyn
 Maclean, Rachel
 Mak, Alan
 Malthouse, rh Kit
 Mangnall, Anthony
 Mann, Scott
 Marson, Julie
 Mayhew, Jerome
 Maynard, Paul
 McCartney, Karl
 McPartland, Stephen
 McVey, rh Esther
 Menzies, Mark
 Merriman, Huw
 Metcalfe, Stephen
 Millar, Robin
 Miller, rh Mrs Maria
 Mills, Nigel
 Moore, Damien
 Moore, Robbie
 Mordaunt, rh Penny
 Morris, Anne Marie
 Morris, James
 Morrissey, Joy
 Mortimer, Jill
 Morton, Wendy
 Mullan, Dr Kieran
 Mumby-Croft, Holly
 Mundell, rh David
 Murray, Mrs Sheryll
 Murrison, rh Dr Andrew
 Nici, Lia
 O'Brien, Neil
 Offord, Dr Matthew
 Paisley, Ian
 Parish, Neil
 Patel, rh Priti
 Penning, rh Sir Mike
 Penrose, John
 Percy, Andrew
 Philp, Chris
 Pincher, rh Christopher
 Poulter, Dr Dan
 Pow, Rebecca
 Prentis, Victoria
 Pursglove, Tom
 Quince, Will

Raab, rh Dominic
 Randall, Tom
 Redwood, rh John
 Rees-Mogg, rh Mr Jacob
 Richards, Nicola
 Richardson, Angela
 Roberts, Rob
 Robertson, Mr Laurence
 Robinson, Gavin
 Rosindell, Andrew
 Rowley, Lee
 Russell, Dean
 Rutley, David
 Sambrook, Gary
 Saxby, Selaine
 Scully, Paul
 Seely, Bob
 Selous, Andrew
 Shannon, Jim
 Shapps, rh Grant
 Shelbrooke, rh Alec
 Simmonds, David
 Skidmore, rh Chris
 Smith, Chloe
 Smith, Greg
 Smith, Henry
 Smith, rh Julian
 Smith, Royston
 Spencer, Dr Ben
 Spencer, rh Mark
 Stafford, Alexander
 Stephenson, Andrew
 Stevenson, Jane
 Stevenson, John
 Stewart, rh Bob
 Stewart, Iain
 Streeter, Sir Gary
 Stride, rh Mel
 Sturdy, Julian
 Sunderland, James
 Swayne, rh Sir Desmond
 Syms, Sir Robert
 Thomas, Derek
 Timpson, Edward
 Tolhurst, Kelly
 Tomlinson, Justin
 Tomlinson, Michael
 Tracey, Craig
 Vara, Shailesh
 Vickers, Martin
 Vickers, Matt
 Villiers, rh Theresa
 Walker, Sir Charles
 Wallis, Dr Jamie
 Warburton, David
 Warman, Matt
 Watling, Giles
 Webb, Suzanne
 Whately, Helen
 Wheeler, Mrs Heather
 Whittaker, Craig
 Whittingdale, rh Mr John
 Wiggin, Sir Bill
 Wild, James
 Williams, Craig
 Williamson, rh Sir Gavin
 Wilson, rh Sammy
 Wood, Mike
 Wragg, Mr William
 Wright, rh Jeremy
 Young, Jacob
 Zahawi, rh Nadhim

Tellers for the Ayes:

Abrahams, Debbie
 Ali, Rushanara
 Ali, Tahir
 Allin-Khan, Dr Rosena
 Amesbury, Mike
 Anderson, Fleur
 Antoniazzi, Tonia
 Ashworth, rh Jonathan
 Barker, Paula
 Beckett, rh Margaret
 Begum, Apsana
 Benn, rh Hilary
 Betts, Mr Clive
 Black, Mhairi
 Blackford, rh Ian
 Blackman, Kirsty
 Blake, Olivia
 Blomfield, Paul
 Bradshaw, rh Mr Ben
 Brennan, Kevin
 Brock, Deidre
 Brown, Alan
 Brown, rh Mr Nicholas
 Bryant, Chris
 Buck, Ms Karen
 Burgon, Richard
 Byrne, Ian
 Byrne, rh Liam
 Cadbury, Ruth
 Callaghan, Amy
 Cameron, Dr Lisa
 Campbell, rh Sir Alan
 Carmichael, rh Mr Alistair
 Chamberlain, Wendy
 Champion, Sarah
 Chapman, Douglas
 Clark, Feryal
 Cooper, Daisy
 Cooper, rh Yvette
 Corbyn, rh Jeremy
 Cowan, Ronnie
 Crawley, Angela
 Creasy, Stella
 Crouch, Tracey
 Cruddas, Jon
 Cummins, Judith
 Daby, Janet
 Davey, rh Ed
 David, Wayne
 Davies-Jones, Alex
 Davis, rh Mr David
 Day, Martyn
 De Cordova, Marsha
 Dhesi, Mr Tanmanjeet Singh
 Docherty-Hughes, Martin
 Dodds, Anneliese
 Doogan, Dave
 Dorans, Allan
 Duffield, Rosie
 Eagle, Dame Angela
 Eagle, Maria
 Eastwood, Colum
 Efford, Clive
 Elliott, Julie
 Elmore, Chris
 Esterson, Bill
 Evans, Chris

Amanda Solloway and
 Steve Double

NOES

Farron, Tim
 Farry, Stephen
 Fellows, Marion
 Ferrier, Margaret
 Flynn, Stephen
 Fovargue, Yvonne
 Foxcroft, Vicky
 Gardiner, Barry
 Gibson, Patricia
 Glindon, Mary
 Grady, Patrick
 Grant, Peter
 Green, rh Damian
 Green, Kate
 Green, Sarah
 Greenwood, Lilian
 Griffith, Nia
 Gwynne, Andrew
 Haigh, Louise
 Hamilton, Fabian
 Hamilton, Mrs Paulette
 Hammond, Stephen
 Hanna, Claire
 Hardy, Emma
 Hayes, Helen
 Healey, rh John
 Hendrick, Sir Mark
 Hendry, Drew
 Hillier, Dame Meg
 Hoare, Simon
 Hobhouse, Wera
 Hodgson, Mrs Sharon
 Hopkins, Rachel
 Hosie, rh Stewart
 Huq, Dr Rupa
 Hussain, Imran
 Jardine, Christine
 Johnson, Kim
 Jones, Darren
 Jones, rh Mr Kevan
 Jones, Ruth
 Jones, Sarah
 Kane, Mike
 Keeley, Barbara
 Kendall, Liz (*Proxy vote cast
 by Mr Pat McFadden*)
 Khan, Afzal
 Kinnock, Stephen
 Kyle, Peter
 Lake, Ben
 Lavery, Ian
 Leadbeater, Kim
 Lewell-Buck, Mrs Emma
 Linden, David
 Lloyd, Tony
 Long Bailey, Rebecca
 Lynch, Holly
 MacAskill, Kenny
 Madders, Justin
 Mahmood, Mr Khalid
 Mahmood, Shabana
 Malhotra, Seema
 Maskell, Rachael
 Mc Nally, John
 McCarthy, Kerry
 McCartney, Jason
 McDonald, Andy

McDonald, Stewart Malcolm
 McDonald, Stuart C.
 McDonnell, rh John
 McFadden, rh Mr Pat
 McGinn, Conor
 McGovern, Alison
 McKinnell, Catherine
 McMahon, Jim
 Mearns, Ian
 Miliband, rh Edward
 Mishra, Navendu
 Mitchell, rh Mr Andrew
 Monaghan, Carol
 Moran, Layla
 Morden, Jessica
 Morgan, Helen
 Morgan, Stephen
 Morris, Grahame
 Murray, Ian
 Murray, James
 Newlands, Gavin
 Nichols, Charlotte
 Norris, Alex
 O'Hara, Brendan
 Olney, Sarah
 Onwurah, Chi
 Oppong-Asare, Abena
 Osamor, Kate
 Osborne, Kate
 Oswald, Kirsten
 Owatemi, Taiwo
 Owen, Sarah
 Peacock, Stephanie
 Pennycook, Matthew
 Perkins, Mr Toby
 Phillips, Jess
 Pollard, Luke
 Powell, Lucy
 Qaisar, Ms Anum
 Qureshi, Yasmin
 Reed, Steve
 Rees, Christina
 Reeves, Ellie
 Reeves, Rachel
 Reynolds, Jonathan
 Ribeiro-Addy, Bell
 Rimmer, Ms Marie
 Rodda, Matt

Russell-Moyle, Lloyd
 Shah, Naz
 Sharma, Mr Virendra
 Sheerman, Mr Barry
 Sheppard, Tommy
 Siddiq, Tulip
 Slaughter, Andy
 Smith, Alyn
 Smith, Cat
 Smith, Jeff
 Smyth, Karin
 Sobel, Alex
 Spellar, rh John
 Stephens, Chris
 Stevens, Jo
 Stone, Jamie
 Streeting, Wes
 Stringer, Graham
 Sultana, Sarah
 Tami, rh Mark
 Tarry, Sam
 Thewliss, Alison
 Thomas, Gareth
 Thomas-Symonds, rh Nick
 Thompson, Owen
 Thomson, Richard
 Thornberry, rh Emily
 Timms, rh Stephen
 Turner, Karl
 Twist, Liz
 Vaz, rh Valerie
 Wakeford, Christian
 Webbe, Claudia
 West, Catherine
 Western, Matt
 Whitehead, Dr Alan
 Whitford, Dr Philippa
 Whitley, Mick
 Whittome, Nadia
 Williams, Hywel
 Wilson, Munira
 Winter, Beth
 Yasin, Mohammad
 Zeichner, Daniel

Tellers for the Noes:
 Colleen Fletcher and
 Gerald Jones

Atkins, Victoria
 Bacon, Gareth
 Bacon, Mr Richard
 Badenoch, Kemi
 Bailey, Shaun
 Baillie, Siobhan
 Baker, Duncan
 Barclay, rh Steve
 Baron, Mr John
 Baynes, Simon
 Bell, Aaron
 Benton, Scott
 Beresford, Sir Paul
 Bhatti, Saqib
 Blackman, Bob
 Blunt, Crispin
 Bone, Mr Peter
 Bowie, Andrew
 Bradley, Ben
 Brady, Sir Graham
 Braverman, rh Suella
 Brereton, Jack
 Bridgen, Andrew
 Brine, Steve
 Bristow, Paul
 Britcliffe, Sara
 Browne, Anthony
 Bruce, Fiona
 Buchan, Felicity
 Buckland, rh Sir Robert
 Burghart, Alex
 Burns, rh Conor
 Butler, Rob
 Cairns, rh Alun
 Campbell, Mr Gregory
 Carter, Andy
 Cartledge, James
 Cates, Miriam
 Caulfield, Maria
 Chalk, Alex
 Chishti, Rehman
 Chope, Sir Christopher
 Churchill, Jo
 Clark, rh Greg
 Clarke, rh Mr Simon
 Clarke, Theo
 Clarke-Smith, Brendan
 Clarkson, Chris
 Clifton-Brown, Sir Geoffrey
 Coffey, rh Dr Thérèse
 Colburn, Elliot
 Collins, Damian
 Courts, Robert
 Coutinho, Claire
 Cox, rh Sir Geoffrey
 Crosbie, Virginia
 Crouch, Tracey
 Daly, James
 Davies, David T. C.
 Davies, Gareth
 Davies, Dr James
 Davies, Mims
 Davies, Philip
 Davis, rh Mr David
 Davison, Dehenna
 Dinenage, Dame Caroline
 Dines, Miss Sarah
 Djanogly, Mr Jonathan
 Docherty, Leo
 Donaldson, rh Sir Jeffrey M.
 Donelan, rh Michelle
 Dorries, rh Ms Nadine

Dowden, rh Oliver
 Doyle-Price, Jackie
 Drax, Richard
 Drummond, Mrs Flick
 Duguid, David
 Duncan Smith, rh Sir Iain
 Dunne, rh Philip
 Edwards, Ruth
 Ellis, rh Michael
 Ellwood, rh Mr Tobias
 Elphicke, Mrs Natalie
 Eustice, rh George
 Evans, Dr Luke
 Evennett, rh Sir David
 Everitt, Ben
 Fabricant, Michael
 Farris, Laura
 Fell, Simon
 Firth, Anna
 Fletcher, Katherine
 Fletcher, Mark
 Fletcher, Nick
 Ford, Vicky
 Foster, Kevin
 Fox, rh Dr Liam
 Francois, rh Mr Mark
 Frazer, rh Lucy
 Freeman, George
 French, Mr Louie
 Fuller, Richard
 Garnier, Mark
 Ghani, Ms Nusrat
 Gibb, rh Nick
 Gibson, Peter
 Gideon, Jo
 Girvan, Paul
 Glen, John
 Goodwill, rh Sir Robert
 Gove, rh Michael
 Graham, Richard
 Gray, James
 Grayling, rh Chris
 Green, Chris
 Green, rh Damian
 Griffith, Andrew
 Griffiths, Kate
 Grundy, James
 Gullis, Jonathan
 Halfon, rh Robert
 Hall, Luke
 Hammond, Stephen
 Hands, rh Greg
 Harper, rh Mr Mark
 Harris, Rebecca
 Harrison, Trudy
 Hart, Sally-Ann
 Hart, rh Simon
 Hayes, rh Sir John
 Heald, rh Sir Oliver
 Heaton-Harris, rh Chris
 Henderson, Gordon
 Henry, Darren
 Higginbotham, Antony
 Hinds, rh Damian
 Hoare, Simon
 Hollinrake, Kevin
 Hollobone, Mr Philip
 Holloway, Adam
 Holmes, Paul
 Howell, Paul
 Huddleston, Nigel
 Hudson, Dr Neil

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendment 11 disagreed to.

Lords amendment 12 disagreed to.

Clause 39

ARTICLE 33(2): PARTICULARLY SERIOUS CRIME

Motion made, and Question put, That this House disagrees with Lords amendment 13.—(Tom Pursglove.)

The House divided: Ayes 317, Noes 220.

Division No. 225]

[5.49 pm

AYES

Adams, rh Nigel
 Afolami, Bim
 Afriyie, Adam
 Aiken, Nickie
 Aldous, Peter
 Allan, Lucy
 Anderson, Lee
 Anderson, Stuart
 Andrew, rh Stuart
 Ansell, Caroline
 Argar, Edward
 Atherton, Sarah

Hughes, Eddie
 Hunt, Jane
 Hunt, rh Jeremy
 Hunt, Tom
 Jack, rh Mr Alister
 Javid, rh Sajid
 Jenkin, Sir Bernard
 Jenkinson, Mark
 Jenkyns, Andrea
 Jenrick, rh Robert
 Johnson, Dr Caroline
 Johnson, Gareth
 Johnston, David
 Jones, Andrew
 Jones, Fay
 Jupp, Simon
 Kawczynski, Daniel
 Kearns, Alicia
 Keegan, Gillian
 Knight, rh Sir Greg
 Knight, Julian
 Kruger, Danny
 Kwarteng, rh Kwasi
 Lamont, John
 Latham, Mrs Pauline
 Leadsom, rh Dame Andrea
 Leigh, rh Sir Edward
 Lewer, Andrew
 Lewis, rh Brandon
 Lewis, rh Dr Julian
 Lockhart, Carla
 Loder, Chris
 Logan, Mark
 Longhi, Marco
 Lopez, Julia
 Lopresti, Jack
 Loughton, Tim
 Mackinlay, Craig
 Mackrory, Cherilyn
 Maclean, Rachel
 Mak, Alan
 Malthouse, rh Kit
 Mangnall, Anthony
 Mann, Scott
 Marson, Julie
 Mayhew, Jerome
 Maynard, Paul
 McCartney, Jason
 McCartney, Karl
 McPartland, Stephen
 McVey, rh Esther
 Menzies, Mark
 Merriman, Huw
 Metcalfe, Stephen
 Millar, Robin
 Miller, rh Mrs Maria
 Mills, Nigel
 Mitchell, rh Mr Andrew
 Moore, Damien
 Moore, Robbie
 Mordaunt, rh Penny
 Morris, Anne Marie
 Morris, James
 Morrissey, Joy
 Mortimer, Jill
 Morton, Wendy
 Mullan, Dr Kieran
 Mumby-Croft, Holly
 Mundell, rh David
 Murray, Mrs Sheryll
 Murrison, rh Dr Andrew
 Nici, Lia

O'Brien, Neil
 Offord, Dr Matthew
 Opperman, Guy
 Parish, Neil
 Patel, rh Priti
 Penning, rh Sir Mike
 Penrose, John
 Percy, Andrew
 Philp, Chris
 Pincher, rh Christopher
 Poulter, Dr Dan
 Pow, Rebecca
 Prentis, Victoria
 Pursglove, Tom
 Quince, Will
 Raab, rh Dominic
 Randall, Tom
 Redwood, rh John
 Rees-Mogg, rh Mr Jacob
 Richards, Nicola
 Richardson, Angela
 Roberts, Rob
 Robertson, Mr Laurence
 Rosindell, Andrew
 Rowley, Lee
 Russell, Dean
 Rutley, David
 Sambrook, Gary
 Saxby, Selaine
 Scully, Paul
 Seely, Bob
 Selous, Andrew
 Shannon, Jim
 Shapps, rh Grant
 Shelbrooke, rh Alec
 Simmonds, David
 Skidmore, rh Chris
 Smith, Chloe
 Smith, Greg
 Smith, Henry
 Smith, rh Julian
 Smith, Royston
 Spencer, Dr Ben
 Spencer, rh Mark
 Stafford, Alexander
 Stephenson, Andrew
 Stevenson, Jane
 Stevenson, John
 Stewart, rh Bob
 Stewart, Iain
 Streeter, Sir Gary
 Stride, rh Mel
 Sturdy, Julian
 Sunderland, James
 Swayne, rh Sir Desmond
 Syms, Sir Robert
 Thomas, Derek
 Timpson, Edward
 Tolhurst, Kelly
 Tomlinson, Justin
 Tomlinson, Michael
 Tracey, Craig
 Tugendhat, Tom
 Vara, Shailesh
 Vickers, Martin
 Vickers, Matt
 Villiers, rh Theresa
 Walker, Sir Charles
 Wallis, Dr Jamie
 Warburton, David
 Warman, Matt
 Watling, Giles

Webb, Suzanne
 Whately, Helen
 Wheeler, Mrs Heather
 Whittaker, Craig
 Whittingdale, rh Mr John
 Wiggin, Sir Bill
 Wild, James
 Williams, Craig
 Williamson, rh Sir Gavin

Wilson, rh Sammy
 Wood, Mike
 Wragg, Mr William
 Wright, rh Jeremy
 Young, Jacob
 Zahawi, rh Nadhim

Tellers for the Ayes:
Amanda Solloway and
Steve Double

NOES

Abrahams, Debbie
 Ali, Rushanara
 Ali, Tahir
 Allin-Khan, Dr Rosena
 Amesbury, Mike
 Anderson, Fleur
 Antoniazzi, Tonia
 Ashworth, rh Jonathan
 Barker, Paula
 Beckett, rh Margaret
 Begum, Apsana
 Benn, rh Hilary
 Betts, Mr Clive
 Black, Mhairi
 Blackford, rh Ian
 Blackman, Kirsty
 Blake, Olivia
 Blomfield, Paul
 Bradshaw, rh Mr Ben
 Brennan, Kevin
 Brock, Deidre
 Brown, Alan
 Brown, rh Mr Nicholas
 Bryant, Chris
 Buck, Ms Karen
 Burgon, Richard
 Byrne, Ian
 Byrne, rh Liam
 Cadbury, Ruth
 Callaghan, Amy
 Cameron, Dr Lisa
 Campbell, rh Sir Alan
 Carmichael, rh Mr Alistair
 Chamberlain, Wendy
 Champion, Sarah
 Chapman, Douglas
 Clark, Feryal
 Cooper, Daisy
 Cooper, rh Yvette
 Corbyn, rh Jeremy
 Cowan, Ronnie
 Creasy, Stella
 Cruddas, Jon
 Cummins, Judith
 Daby, Janet
 Davey, rh Ed
 David, Wayne
 Davies-Jones, Alex
 Day, Martyn
 De Cordova, Marsha
 Dhesi, Mr Tanmanjeet Singh
 Docherty-Hughes, Martin
 Dodds, Anneliese
 Doogan, Dave
 Dorans, Allan
 Duffield, Rosie
 Eagle, Dame Angela
 Eagle, Maria
 Eastwood, Colum
 Efford, Clive

Elliott, Julie
 Elmore, Chris
 Esterson, Bill
 Evans, Chris
 Farron, Tim
 Farry, Stephen
 Fellows, Marion
 Ferrier, Margaret
 Flynn, Stephen
 Fovargue, Yvonne
 Foxcroft, Vicky
 Foy, Mary Kelly
 Gardiner, Barry
 Gibson, Patricia
 Glindon, Mary
 Grady, Patrick
 Grant, Peter
 Green, Kate
 Green, Sarah
 Greenwood, Lilian
 Griffith, Nia
 Gwynne, Andrew
 Haigh, Louise
 Hamilton, Fabian
 Hamilton, Mrs Paulette
 Hanna, Claire
 Hardy, Emma
 Hayes, Helen
 Healey, rh John
 Hendrick, Sir Mark
 Hendry, Drew
 Hillier, Dame Meg
 Hobhouse, Wera
 Hodgson, Mrs Sharon
 Hopkins, Rachel
 Hosie, rh Stewart
 Huq, Dr Rupa
 Hussain, Imran
 Jardine, Christine
 Johnson, Kim
 Jones, Darren
 Jones, rh Mr Kevan
 Jones, Ruth
 Jones, Sarah
 Kane, Mike
 Keeley, Barbara
 Kendall, Liz (*Proxy vote cast*
by Mr Pat McFadden)
 Khan, Afzal
 Kinnock, Stephen
 Kyle, Peter
 Lake, Ben
 Lavery, Ian
 Leadbeater, Kim
 Lewell-Buck, Mrs Emma
 Lewis, Clive
 Linden, David
 Lloyd, Tony
 Long Bailey, Rebecca
 Lucas, Caroline

Lynch, Holly
 MacAskill, Kenny
 Madders, Justin
 Mahmood, Mr Khalid
 Mahmood, Shabana
 Malhotra, Seema
 Maskell, Rachael
 Mc Nally, John
 McCarthy, Kerry
 McDonald, Andy
 McDonald, Stewart Malcolm
 McDonnell, rh John
 McFadden, rh Mr Pat
 McGinn, Conor
 McGovern, Alison
 McKinnell, Catherine
 McMahon, Jim
 Mearns, Ian
 Miliband, rh Edward
 Mishra, Navendu
 Monaghan, Carol
 Moran, Layla
 Morden, Jessica
 Morgan, Helen
 Morgan, Stephen
 Morris, Grahame
 Murray, Ian
 Murray, James
 Newlands, Gavin
 Nichols, Charlotte
 Norris, Alex
 O'Hara, Brendan
 Olney, Sarah
 Onwurah, Chi
 Oppong-Asare, Abena
 Osamor, Kate
 Osborne, Kate
 Oswald, Kirsten
 Owatemi, Taiwo
 Owen, Sarah
 Peacock, Stephanie
 Pennycook, Matthew
 Perkins, Mr Toby
 Phillips, Jess
 Pollard, Luke
 Powell, Lucy
 Qaisar, Ms Anum
 Qureshi, Yasmin
 Reed, Steve
 Rees, Christina
 Reeves, Ellie
 Reeves, Rachel

Reynolds, Jonathan
 Ribeiro-Addy, Bell
 Rimmer, Ms Marie
 Rodda, Matt
 Russell-Moyle, Lloyd
 Shah, Naz
 Sharma, Mr Virendra
 Sheerman, Mr Barry
 Sheppard, Tommy
 Siddiq, Tulip
 Slaughter, Andy
 Smith, Alyn
 Smith, Cat
 Smith, Jeff
 Smyth, Karin
 Sobel, Alex
 Stephens, Chris
 Stevens, Jo
 Stone, Jamie
 Streeting, Wes
 Stringer, Graham
 Sultana, Zarah
 Tami, rh Mark
 Tarry, Sam
 Thewliss, Alison
 Thomas, Gareth
 Thomas-Symonds, rh Nick
 Thompson, Owen
 Thomson, Richard
 Thornberry, rh Emily
 Timms, rh Stephen
 Turner, Karl
 Twist, Liz
 Vaz, rh Valerie
 Wakeford, Christian
 Webbe, Claudia
 West, Catherine
 Western, Matt
 Whitehead, Dr Alan
 Whitford, Dr Philippa
 Whitley, Mick
 Whittome, Nadia
 Williams, Hywel
 Wilson, Munira
 Winter, Beth
 Yasin, Mohammad
 Zeichner, Daniel

Tellers for the Noes:
 Colleen Fletcher and
 Gerald Jones

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendment 13 disagreed to.

Lords amendments 14 to 20 and 54 disagreed to.

Lords amendments 2, 3, 43 to 51 and 21 agreed to.

After Clause 56

AGE ASSESSMENTS: RESTRICTIONS

Tom Pursglove: I beg to move, That this House disagrees with Lords amendment 22.

Madam Deputy Speaker (Dame Rosie Winterton): With this it will be convenient to discuss the following:

Lords amendment 24, and Government motion to disagree.

Lords amendment 23, and Government motion to disagree.

Lords amendment 25, and Government motion to disagree.

Lords amendment 26, and Government motion to disagree, and amendments (a) and (b) in lieu.

Lords amendment 27, and Government motion to disagree.

Lords amendment 40, and Government motion to disagree.

Lords amendments 28 to 39, 42 and 41.

Tom Pursglove: We now turn to the remaining Lords amendments. Lords amendment 22 relates to our plans for conducting assessments of age-disputed people. Scientific methods of age assessment are already in use by many European countries, and the Bill will bring us into line with them. Failure to ensure proper assessments creates obvious safeguarding concerns and, of course, can create a plethora of risks to the most vulnerable when we get it wrong. I know those concerns are shared across the House. This amendment creates numerous restrictions on our ability to use age assessments in practice.

First, I want to make it very clear there is no appetite to start conducting comprehensive age assessments where there is no doubt about someone's claimed age. Such an approach would serve no purpose whatsoever and would take significant resources away from the main task of seeking to establish the age of those involved where age is in doubt. However, there is no question but that the system is being abused, and we need to put a stop to that.

Secondly, the amendment would require that only local authority social workers could undertake age assessments under the Bill. There is significant variation in the experience and capacity of local authorities to undertake these age assessments, which are a significant resource burden on them. The Home Office already leads on other vulnerability areas, with responsibility for making complex and significant decisions such as claims for asylum. For these reasons, we are seeking to establish a national age assessment board comprising qualified social workers employed by the Home Office who may undertake age assessments upon referral by a local authority. Local authorities will retain the ability to conduct these assessments if they wish to do so.

Thirdly, the amendment would ensure that scientific methods of age assessment are specified only if they are considered ethical and accurate beyond reasonable doubt and approved by relevant professional bodies.

Peter Aldous (Waveney) (Con): The British Dental Association has highlighted specific concerns, on ethical, health and accuracy grounds, about using X-rays to assess the age of asylum applicants. I am grateful to my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary for listening to these worries, but I would be grateful if my hon. Friend the Minister confirmed that the Age Estimation Science Advisory Committee that has been set up to look at this process could include a practising dentist.

Tom Pursglove: I am grateful to my hon. Friend for that suggestion. I know that he has discussed this issue with the Home Secretary separately. I am not in a

position to give him a firm undertaking today, but we will certainly take away and consider that particular point, and perhaps we could remain in contact on it. I am grateful for his input in relation to this aspect of the policy.

No one method of age assessment is likely to be accurate beyond reasonable doubt. Therefore, this amendment sets an unrealistic expectation on what scientific methods could achieve. The expertise required spans a number of areas, and the independent Age Estimation Science Advisory Committee has been set up to advise on this complex topic.

David Simmonds: Does the Minister agree that the burden imposed by some of the risks inherent in uncertain age is quite a significant concern for local authorities? Does he recognise, as I do, that the current Merton-compliant age assessment process, which is considered the gold standard, is the result of a number of judicial reviews over the years that have included consideration of scientific method? Beyond that, does he welcome, as I do, the additional clarity that the Government will in future be able to use scientific methods that do meet the required ethical standards in order to assist local authorities and address some of the remaining uncertainty?

Tom Pursglove: My hon. Friend, who speaks with real experience given his time as a distinguished local authority leader, raises an important point. Of course these ethical considerations are very important in relation to all this. I am acutely mindful of the enormous burden that age assessment has placed on local authorities over a number of years. Some local authorities do this work very well, but the situation is patchy. The capacity that exists, and the speed, thoroughness and ease with which this work is done, depends on where you are in the country. It is important that we are developing this national resource to help with some of this work so as to relieve some of the burdens. One thing I will certainly want the national age assessment board to do is reflect on the best practice that exists in local authorities around the country and bring together that model of best practice to make sure that we get this right.

Finally, the amendment would lower the current standard of proof for social worker age assessments from the “balance of probabilities”, which is long established in case law, to a “reasonable degree of likelihood”. Lowering this standard would require social workers to accept individuals as children whom on balance they believe to be adults. For the House’s benefit, it is important to note that there are safeguarding considerations that flow in either direction. Children being placed in adult settings is clearly not acceptable, and it is not good for adults to be placed in children’s settings either. For those reasons, we cannot accept the amendment.

I will now turn to the amendments relating to modern slavery, beginning with Lords amendments 23 and 24, which would omit from the Bill the clause that deals with late compliance with a slavery or trafficking information notice. I understand the motivations behind the concerns expressed by the noble Lords who tabled these amendments. This Government are completely committed to supporting victims of modern slavery and tackling perpetrators, but removing the clause would mean that we were unable to clearly set out the consequences

of not complying with the slavery or trafficking information notice, which would not help decision makers or individuals involved in the process. It would also create a lack of transparency and certainty.

It is clear on the face of the Bill that where there is good reason for late compliance, there will be no damage to credibility. We have given repeated assurances that, in keeping with the approach taken in our current statutory guidance, “good reasons” will allow for things such as individual vulnerabilities or the effect traumatic events and coercive control can have on people’s ability to accurately recall, share, or recognise such events. I expect that work to be carried out through a trauma-informed approach, which will ensure that decision makers have the flexibility and discretion to appropriately consider “good reasons” without prejudging what that should cover. We therefore cannot agree to the amendments.

Lords amendment 25 would remove from the Bill the clause that deals with disqualification from modern slavery protections where an individual is a threat to public order or has claimed to be a victim in bad faith. It would replace the clause with a new clause that does not provide a definition of public order and, as a result, the Government would remain unable to operationalise the public order disqualification. That would mean we were unable to remove individuals who had committed serious criminal offences or who posed a risk to national security, despite it being in line with our international obligations to do so.

The Government have been clear that the disqualification will not be applied in a blanket manner. Rather, following a referral to the national referral mechanism, where an individual meets the public order definition or has claimed in bad faith, the specific circumstances and vulnerabilities of each case will be carefully considered. It is our view that Lords amendment 25 does not fulfil the aims of the original clause and would not protect the modern slavery system from those who act in bad faith, nor protect our communities from those who present a threat to public order or a risk to national security.

Richard Fuller (North East Bedfordshire) (Con): The Minister said that in those cases, there would be an assessment of the risk to public order. Has he made an assessment of what proportion of the cases, say in 2020, would have had these individual assessments based on the criteria presented in the Bill? He may not have that information to hand, but if he could reply to the House on that later, it would be helpful.

Tom Pursglove: I recognise entirely the interest that my hon. Friend shows in these matters. If I may, I will take that point away, ponder it and then comment on it specifically when I wind up the debate. I am grateful for the question, and I am happy to revisit that point.

For the reasons I have outlined, we cannot agree to Lords amendment 25. Lords amendment 26 would remove the clause that provides leave to remain for victims of modern slavery or human trafficking and replace it with a new clause. I pay tribute to my right hon. Friend the Member for Chingford and Woodford Green (Sir Iain Duncan Smith) and to Lord McColl for their work in this area. We agree that confirmed victims should be granted leave where necessary to assist them in their physical and psychological recovery from harm

[Tom Pursglove]

caused by exploitation, to seek compensation in respect of their exploitation or to assist the authorities with investigations or prosecutions in respect of that exploitation.

The Government have already committed to providing all those who receive a positive conclusive grounds decision and are in need of specific support with appropriate tailored support for a minimum of 12 months, where necessary. That will be set out in guidance, but the amendment does not make the critical link between relevant exploitation and the grant of leave. That means that someone could be granted leave to remain on the basis of personal circumstances unconnected to their exploitation, or to pursue an unrelated compensation claim or to assist an unrelated investigation. For those reasons, we are not able to support the amendment.

Sir Iain Duncan Smith (Chingford and Woodford Green) (Con): My hon. Friend will recall that last time we debated these provisions, we had an agreement that the Government in principle accepted the 12-month process. We expected to see it put in the Bill in the other place, but the truth is that the Bill has arrived back here after being amended by the Lords rather than the Government. I accept that Lords amendment 26, to replace clause 64, has a lot of other things in it.

The point of my amendment (a), which I know that I cannot vote on tonight because of ping-pong, is that we need to get that in the Bill. The key thing, after all, is that those who come through the NRM should get up to a minimum of 12 months, which would allow them to pursue prosecutions against the traffickers. They will lose that if the Minister does get it into the Bill, so will he now give me an understanding that that will be the case?

6.15 pm

Tom Pursglove: My right hon. Friend is passionate in raising the issue and has done so constructively throughout the process. We are all cognisant of the need to ensure that we bring the evil individuals responsible for that criminality to justice. I refer him to the commitment that was made from the Dispatch Box by the Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department, my hon. Friend the Member for Redditch (Rachel Maclean), on Report. Future legislation on modern slavery more generally is very likely to be in the offing. We are also happy to meet him—I know that the Home Secretary has spoken to him—to discuss his point in greater detail. We want to work through it carefully to ensure that we get it right.

Sir Iain Duncan Smith: The key thing is whether the Minister is prepared to consider tabling an amendment in the other place that puts the 12-month minimum into the Bill. If he does that, it will send a huge signal that we are on the side of those who are most beaten up and traduced by the system of slavery, and it will put us back on the right course. I ask him to please give me that sort of commitment.

Tom Pursglove: My recollection of the earlier proceedings relates to putting the matter firmly in guidance, but as I say, we are happy to meet to discuss it. We want to get it right, and we are willing to consider the position with him following this debate. That is an undertaking to him on which we will certainly follow through.

Jeremy Corbyn: I support the points made by the right hon. Member for Chingford and Woodford Green (Sir Iain Duncan Smith), which we discussed on Report. He is right that 12 months is an absolute minimum for a victim to pursue the prosecution of a case. I hope that the Government will reconsider that and go for a much longer period, so that the norm will be that those people get a permanent right to remain and live in this country. After all, they are victims of appalling behaviour by some brutal people. We should support them and not put artificial hurdles in their way.

Tom Pursglove: The right hon. Gentleman definitely gets the tone right in highlighting the severity of the criminality perpetrated by individuals who, as I say, we all want to bring to justice.

Another point that I would make, because it is useful in the context of the debate, is that such matters are considered on a case-by-case basis and people are often awarded a period of leave that is longer than 12 months, which is beneficial for them. We would not want to see an adverse situation where people received less time than perhaps they would have done, given that individuals are receiving more after a case-by-case consideration that takes into account all the relevant factors. As I say, we are very willing to take the issue away and to engage with my right hon. Friend the Member for Chingford and Woodford Green. We will have those discussions and conclude them accordingly. He should leave that with us and we will get that meeting organised as quickly as possible.

Lords amendment 27 inserts a new clause that relates to victims of slavery aged under 18. It would mean that victims under 18 could not be issued with a slavery and human trafficking notice. It would exclude that group from the new disqualifications from modern slavery protections, provide a blanket grant of leave to remain, and legislate for a specific reasonable grounds test for those whose exploitation took place under the age of 18—yet not for other victims.

Before issuing a slavery or trafficking information notice, decision makers would not have information about an individual or their exploitation, including, crucially, their age when the relevant exploitation took place. Similarly, the reasonable grounds evidence gathering process is when information regarding the person's exploitation is often identified, so only at that stage could decision makers know that the person's exploitation had occurred before they turned 18. In practice, therefore, it would become unworkable to differentiate on the basis of the timings of exploitation. We know that children who have been trafficked need support, but what concerns us about this Lords amendment is that it would move us away from taking a case-by-case approach and could incentivise adults to claim that they are children. We therefore cannot support it.

I turn to Lords amendment 40, which concerns the operation of the electronic travel authorisation scheme in respect of individuals travelling to Northern Ireland on a local journey from the Republic of Ireland. We have been very clear in emphasising our continuing commitment to the Good Friday agreement and the protocol, and we would like to take the opportunity to reassure colleagues again that there will be no controls on the border between Northern Ireland and Ireland.

However, this amendment could result in an unacceptable gap in UK border security that would allow persons of interest or risk who would be otherwise refused an electronic travel authorisation to enter the UK legally, undermining the very purpose of the ETA scheme, which is to prevent the travel of those who pose a threat to the UK. It is important that, as now, all individuals—except British and Irish citizens—arriving in the UK, including those crossing the land border into Northern Ireland, continue to enter in line with the UK's immigration framework to protect both the UK immigration system and the common travel area from abuse. This is a well-established principle of the operation of the common travel area and applies when travelling in all directions. The UK is entitled to introduce and change its own requirements in the interest of securing the UK border, and we will continue to liaise with the Irish authorities on matters of border security in relation to the common travel area. We therefore cannot support this amendment.

Stephen Farry (North Down) (Alliance): First, would the Minister accept that great concern has been expressed by all parties in the Oireachtas—the Irish Parliament—and representatives from the Irish Government, who are very concerned about the impact the Bill will have on what are often daily movements on the island of Ireland by non-Irish nationals? Would he also accept that this is very damaging for the tourism trade on the island of Ireland, which is very much an integrated market, with people often landing in Dublin and then wishing to travel into Northern Ireland, and will prove to be a major obstacle in the way of those natural journeys?

Tom Pursglove: I am very grateful to the hon. Gentleman for his question. The Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department, my hon. Friend the Member for Torbay (Kevin Foster), was whispering in my ear at the same time, making the point that he has already had a meeting with the Irish Government to discuss this, and I know that that engagement is ongoing. He is also very willing to meet the hon. Gentleman to discuss this in greater detail, and we will get that meeting organised for him as quickly as possible to progress that.

I turn now to Lords amendments 28 to 39 and 42, which the Government have introduced in response to the crisis in Ukraine. They strengthen our visa penalty powers, meaning that we can impose penalties where a country poses a risk to international peace and security or when its actions lead or are likely to lead to armed conflict or a breach of humanitarian law. Lords amendment 42 means that these powers will come into effect as soon as the Bill receives Royal Assent, rather than two months after Royal Assent as we had originally been planning, so that we will be able to use them much sooner. I commend those amendments to the House, and I would like to think that they will be broadly welcomed.

Jeremy Corbyn: I understand the thought process behind these amendments, and I do not have any problem with that, but could the Minister assure the House that people wanting to come to this country from Russia or Belarus who have been taking part in peaceful activities to oppose the war and call for peace, and who need to get somewhere else, will not be prevented from coming to this country?

Tom Pursglove: The direct answer to the right hon. Gentleman's question is that people will still be able to apply for visas in the normal way, so I hope that provides him with assurance.

Lords amendment 41 is a minor drafting amendment in relation to costs orders. It does not change the underlying policy, which requires tribunal procedure rules to be made setting out that the tribunal must consider whether to impose a charge or to make an order where prescribed conduct that is to be treated as improper, unreasonable or negligent has occurred. It simply clarifies that this requirement applies only in relation to the immigration and asylum chamber of the first-tier tribunal and of the upper tribunal. This will prevent any uncertainty from arising about the jurisdictions in which clause 77 should be applied, and I hope this clarification meets with the approval of the House.

With that, I conclude my remarks, and I will gladly pick up any points in the wind-up.

Several hon. Members *rose*—

Madam Deputy Speaker (Dame Rosie Winterton): Order. Before I call the shadow Minister, I should say that I will need to impose a time limit, which will probably start off at five minutes. Apart from Members who have an amendment down, I will be prioritising those who did not speak in the previous debate.

Holly Lynch (Halifax) (Lab): It is a pleasure to be responding for Labour to this second group of Lords amendment to the Bill, and I want to start by joining others in paying tribute to those who lost their lives or were injured in, and all those who responded to, the attack on Westminster five years ago today. I pay particular tribute to PC Keith Palmer and thank all those who work so hard to keep us safe every day.

I intend to keep my remarks tightly to the amendments before us, particularly Lords amendments 24 to 27, but I want to start by again expressing regret that modern slavery provisions have been included in a Bill on immigration. Members might remember that on Report I was intervened on only by Conservative MPs seeking to agree with me—which is certainly unusual—that the provisions in the Bill on modern slavery will only take us backwards. If this Bill passes unamended we will identify and protect fewer victims of modern slavery and identify and prosecute fewer perpetrators. That is not only our view: the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner has been fierce in her opposition to a number of the changes, and Caroline Haughey QC, one of the leading legal experts in this area, has said this Bill will

“catastrophically undo all that has been achieved in the 10 years since the first modern slavery prosecution.”

Lords amendment 27 seeks to exempt child victims from the most damaging of the Bill's provisions and ensure that all decisions are made in their best interests. Throughout the passage of the Bill we have voiced our concerns that the Government fail to recognise that identifying victims of modern slavery or human trafficking is a safeguarding, not an immigration, matter. Last year, 43% of victims referred to the national referral mechanism were children, with 31% of them being British, and the rise in county lines gangs is believed to be one of the biggest drivers of the rise in child referrals.

[Holly Lynch]

This amendment must also be considered in light of what is currently happening in Ukraine and the reports by charity and aid agencies on the ground of the heightened risks of children being exploited and trafficked along the Ukrainian border and in neighbouring countries, such as the flow of people away from the Russian bombardment. If the Minister is not minded to strike part 5 from the Bill and work with the sector and us on genuine alternatives, he must protect children from the worst of the changes, which only put barriers between victims and the support and justice they need and deserve.

If the Government are to deliver on their own promise of smashing county lines, they must accept Lords amendment 27. The Government's own existing statutory guidance states:

"Whatever form it takes, modern slavery and child trafficking is child abuse and relevant child protection procedures... must be followed if modern slavery or trafficking is suspected."

Under the changes introduced in the Bill a child can access protection only if they disclose details of their trauma against a Home Office-mandated timeline, and can access NRM support only if they have no public order offences in their background. The Government's own guidance rightly says that a child who has been trafficked must be protected, not ifs, no buts—which means no clause 63, no clause 66 and no clause 67 as a condition of support on recognition as being a victim. As a minimum, in order for the Government just to adhere to their own guidance and protect child victims of trafficking, they must adopt Lords amendment 27 to prevent changes that would leave children more vulnerable to criminals and traffickers.

In Committee, at the 12th sitting, the Minister stressed that the Government's view was that it would somehow be unfair to establish a system that distinguishes between a child and an adult, and he has repeated that sentiment today. He said in Committee:

"To create a carve-out for one group of individuals would create a two-tiered system based on the age at which exploitation may have taken place",

and went on to say that it

"would not be appropriate or fair to all victims."—[*Official Report, Nationality and Borders Public Bill Committee*, 28 October 2021; c. 484.]

I am afraid that is just absurd: we differentiate between children and adults throughout domestic legislation, recognising the age-related vulnerability of children, and it is the very basis of the Government's own age assessment proposals in the Bill. Child victims have rights to protection under the United Nations convention on the rights of the child and the Council of Europe convention on action against trafficking in human beings, and it is there in the Government's own guidance. If the Minister is really trying to tell us that the Government do not like creating two-tier systems given what else the Bill does, we are simply not having it. I urge the Government to follow their own guidance, recognise that child victims of trafficking are victims of abuse and adopt Lords amendment 27.

6.30 pm

Let me turn to Lords amendment 24, which would remove clause 58 from the Bill. The clause would damage the credibility of victims of modern slavery if they

failed to disclose their trafficking experience within a set timeframe determined by the Home Office. It relies entirely on a misconstruction of what we consider to be a perfect victim: an individual who self-identifies as such and can fully disclose their experience in one setting. That has been widely discredited by the evidence presented at every stage and by victims' own testimonies. There are many reasons why a victim might be unable to disclose evidence immediately, including the impact of trauma and fear of reprisals against them or their family by their traffickers.

I pay tribute to the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, Dame Sara Thornton, for all she has achieved in her time in office. She recently said:

"Traumatised victims cannot disclose their suffering to order—it takes time to build trust and confidence. I cannot imagine that we would contemplate asking victims of sexual assault or child abuse to respond within a set period."

It is often those who are most in need of support and justice who find it the hardest to disclose their experiences. Indeed, the Government's own statutory guidance under the Modern Slavery Act 2015 identifies a list of barriers to disclosure, stating:

"Victims' early accounts may be affected by the impact of trauma. This can result in delayed disclosure".

The failure to adopt Lords amendment 24 will increase not only the risk of re-trafficking and abuse but the length of the decision-making process. The Minister has tried to reassure us that further detail will be supplied in the statutory guidance, with cases being resolved on an individual basis and good reasons for delayed disclosure being clarified further. In fact, in Committee during our discussions on part 5 alone the Minister referred to the statutory guidance a staggering 51 times when it is still to be published, which I must say made a mockery of parliamentary scrutiny. It took five years for the guidance on the Modern Slavery Act to be published, so I ask the Minister once again, given how much he has referred to the guidance for the Bill, when we can expect it to be published and whether the Government will accept the invitations from the sector to work with them on drafting it. In its absence, simply to adhere to their own guidance on disclosure for traumatised victims, the Government must adopt Lords amendment 24.

On Lords amendment 25, once again the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, Dame Sara Thornton, has been explicit in her criticism of clause 62. She has written:

"The bar for disqualification has been set very low", which

"will undermine our ability to bring perpetrators to justice."

She has said:

"There might be exceptional circumstances in which it is right to withhold support when there is a genuine, current and serious threat to public order, but the present bill goes far beyond this."

The Lords amendment would reflect those genuine threats while preventing the Bill from undermining our ability to bring traffickers to justice as is her and our fear.

The Minister will be aware that many in his own party have voiced serious concerns about the original public order disqualification threshold introduced by the Government. Given that 48% of victims of modern slavery in the UK last year were criminally exploited, that suggests that clause 62 has the potential to exclude almost half of all victims from support.

Richard Fuller: To maintain the hon. Lady's record of Conservative interventions that are somewhat supportive, is not what she has just said about that 48% the answer to the question I posed to my hon. Friend the Minister? Under the Bill as presented, the Home Office will be required to intervene in half the cases to make the very difficult judgment on whether to exclude or not exclude. Does that not open us up to a huge amount of potential risk?

Holly Lynch: I thank the hon. Gentleman for that helpful contribution. As we learn more about county lines gangs and their operating model, we see more and more young people and children subject to the worst exploitation by some of the vilest criminal gangs. Those are the children who are referred into the national referral mechanism. They have been encouraged, exploited and forced to commit crimes as part of their exploitation, so if we are to bust those gangs they are the children we need to be looking after and supporting, and we need to support them through the prosecutions of their abusers. That 48% were criminally exploited, so we must ensure that children who have been victims of county lines gangs have protection.

Clause 62 will drive more people underground and make it significantly harder for the police and authorities to investigate the perpetrators of human trafficking without the trust and support for victims in place. It also sends a clear message to perpetrators of human trafficking that they are free to exploit vulnerable people with a criminal record, knowing they will now be exempt from protection. This clause represents a massive step backwards in our shared ambition to see more traffickers before the courts if it passes unamended.

Lords amendment 26 removes clause 64 and introduces a minimum 12 months leave to remain, and tailored support for all individuals who have been found to be confirmed victims of modern slavery. To demonstrate how difficult it still is to have your migration status resolved upon recognition of your exploitation, data obtained from the Home Office shows that in 2019-20 only 2%, or 17 out of 754, of child victims of modern slavery in the UK were granted discretionary leave to remain. The amendment would ensure that victims are provided with protection, support, security and stability to support their recovery in a way that promotes engagement with police and prosecutors. This proposal has gathered significant cross-party support, and I wish to highlight the work that has been conducted across the House and in the other place, specifically by the right hon. Member for Chingford and Woodford Green (Sir Iain Duncan Smith) and Lord McColl. On the Labour Benches, we strongly support the amendment. Once again, it is frustrating that the Government have failed to listen and to act on the commitments they made in earlier stages of the Bill in this place.

Just last week, the Court of Appeal rejected the Government's attempt to overturn the High Court ruling last October that granted thousands of victims of human trafficking leave to remain. During the court case, the Government stated that they want to ensure the Government are in keeping with the European convention on action against trafficking in human beings, yet that differs from what the Government have argued in both Houses. That would have a considerable impact, given that 91% of conclusive grounds decisions made in 2021

were positive, which means the Home Office deemed the individuals to be confirmed victims of modern slavery.

In conclusion, the amendments seek only to bring the Bill closer to adhering to the Government's own guidance and best practice on supporting vulnerable victims of modern slavery and trafficking. There are others, but I have made the case for Lords amendments 24, 25, 26 and 27, all of which would significantly improve the proposed legislation before us. Lords amendment 22 also has our full support. The sector has been unified in its condemnation of the initial measures contained within that section of the Bill and there has been overwhelming evidence in support of the Lords amendments at every stage. The most recent number of referrals to the NRM was 12,727, representing a 20% increase in referrals compared to the previous year—the highest number of referrals since the NRM began. That is a deeply worrying trend and more must be done to tackle this abhorrent crime that continues to see shockingly low prosecution rates.

All sides of the House have worked to end the abhorrent crime that is modern slavery. We should be seeking to build on the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and on our commitments in that legislation. We want to work with the Government, as do the sector and the victims themselves. I therefore strongly urge the Government to think again and accept the Lords amendments.

Sir Iain Duncan Smith: I will not be very long, because what I am going to speak about is quite narrow and I know others want to speak.

Just before 2015, the Centre for Social Justice produced the report that persuaded the Government, of which I was a member, to be the first in the world to introduce legislation on modern-day slavery. I could not have been prouder of this place when the Bill passed. It has been a signal that has gone around the world and others have followed suit. Let me put this issue into context. We should be pushing to make the Modern Slavery Act 2015 even more focused and even better, but my suspicion is that some are looking at it and saying, "This is full of ways to come in illegally through the backdoor." I must say to my hon. Friend the Minister that I just do not think that that is the case here.

I am speaking to my amendments (a) and (b) in lieu of Lords amendment 26. I understand the Government's concerns with the way it was framed in the other place, but I would rather have debated it at some length to try to ensure it was better written.

The point that I want to make is narrow. My amendment, which I know we cannot vote on, so this is a debating point, would add this key element: those who have got through the NRM, which is difficult enough as it is, are clearly victims of modern slavery and we therefore need to be generous to them. One of their difficulties, which we have discovered through all sorts of mechanisms, is that they have suffered trauma and real problems, and they are discombobulated and frightened. They therefore find it difficult to co-operate with authority. Many of them have fled authorities that are responsible for the penalties that they have suffered under, so they need more time.

The police say, "We need more time to settle such people so that we can get prosecutions." We consulted on 12 months and the police were very clear, saying, "If

[*Sir Iain Duncan Smith*]

you introduce 12 months as a minimum, we will get many more prosecutions. We will start to round up some of these gangs and we will get on top of this. At the moment, we cannot get individuals to give evidence. They are frightened that they will end up back on the street and that these people will get them.” There is a logic to this change that is in keeping with the aim of the Bill, which is to make sure that those who traffic people are arrested and prosecuted. That is what it is all about.

I have heard some say that there is an increase in the number of people coming into the NRM, which therefore suggests that this change will become a pull factor. First, whether we agree or disagree about the 12 months being a pull factor, relatively, the numbers are absolutely tiny compared with the number of asylum claims. Secondly, the 12 months cannot be a pull factor because there is already a period of time after the NRM anyway. Is the idea that someone is thinking “I will go after the NRM because I am an illegal and I will find a way of delaying that because then I get the extra 12 months”? That is not the point. The 12 months are there because when someone is through that, they must be a victim of modern slavery. The debate is not about whether people are victims of modern slavery; they are victims of modern slavery. The question is what is the best way to treat them to ensure that they get the best outcome and that, in return, we get the best outcome in terms of prosecutions.

Let me make this point to the Minister—we debated this issue on Third Reading. I think that he and the Government get it, but that they get a certain amount of pushback about whether there is some kind of pull factor. The point about the pull factor has been made so often. It is a bit like “Dr Dolittle” and the “pushmi-pullyu” concept—it depends who people are getting this from and which angle they take.

The truth is that I am not even going to argue about pull factors. I will simply say that the purpose of this amendment, which we cannot vote on tonight, is to enable the Government to debate this issue with me carefully so that in the other place, they will table an amendment that enshrines the 12-month minimum in legislation. The guidance will take forever to come through and, anyway, it is not binding—it is guidance. Somebody who has a bad attitude will not stick to the guidance. They will go for *de minimis* and I do not want them to do that. *De minimis* should be 12 months in legislation. If we believe in this, it will be a beacon. We should be proud of what we are doing.

In conclusion, if I could get on bended knee, I would beg my Government—please, please—to think of putting back in in the other place a 12-month minimum after someone has completed the NRM. There are lots of things that I do not particularly like in the Bill, but if we can do that, I will take a self-denying ordinance and support the Government. I will do that just to get the 12 months in because such people deserve the best that we can give them.

Several hon. Members *rose*—

Madam Deputy Speaker (Dame Rosie Winterton): Order. I think I will have to reduce the time limit to four minutes after the contribution from the SNP spokesperson.

Stuart C. McDonald: It is a pleasure to follow the right hon. Member for Chingford and Woodford Green (Sir Iain Duncan Smith), with whom I agree. I also agreed with pretty much everything said by the shadow Minister, the hon. Member for Halifax (Holly Lynch), so I can be fairly brief.

The hon. Member for Halifax was right to say at the outset that, again, it is frustrating that the Government do not appear to be listening—not to their Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, anti-slavery charities, medical professionals, social workers or survivors—and that everything is being seen through the prism of migration enforcement. The Government are undermining not just the refugee convention, but other international obligations including the European convention on action against trafficking in human beings.

The Minister said a lot of good things at the Dispatch Box, as he did in the debate on the previous group, but sometimes what he says bears very little resemblance to the provisions that are actually in the Bill. I have a lot of respect for him as a Minister, but he cannot ask us to legislate—to pass a Bill—based on how he wants it implemented. We have to go by what is in the Bill, which too often simply does not live up to what he is trying to sell us.

The SNP supports what their lordships have done to take out some of the most offensive provisions of the Bill and to improve protections for trafficking survivors. We believe that the Government’s motions to disagree will not only take out the positive reforms that their lordships suggested and restore some really regressive provisions that undermine modern slavery legislation across the UK, but reinstate challenges and hurdles for survivors of trafficking and slavery, especially children. The only beneficiaries will be those who perpetrate those awful crimes.

6.45 pm

We support Lords amendment 24, which scraps clause 58—a clause that totally inappropriately instructs fact-finders on how to assess late provision of evidence from trafficking survivors. Not only is the clause particularly inappropriate in relation to trafficking victims, for reasons that the House has heard, but it is wrong in principle for Parliament to tell decision makers including judges what to make of evidence that they will see and hear and that we lawmakers never will. They are skilled people who know how to handle evidence, including late evidence, without MPs having to blunder in. Crucially, all we are doing by increasing the apparent threat that a victim will not be believed is handing a boost to traffickers—an extra weapon of coercion and control.

We support Lords amendment 25, which refines clause 62 on disqualification from protection under the convention. The Government are seeking to disqualify from protection far too broad a group of victims, including children. We all know that many victims of trafficking and slavery are coerced into committing crime, and sometimes that is a consequence of their trafficking or slavery—indeed, those who already have a criminal record are frequently specifically targeted for trafficking. If we allow the Government to have their way, it is the victims who will be worse off and the traffickers who will gain a new tool for coercion.

We support Lords amendment 27, which protects victims under 18 from the most damaging provisions and puts the best interests of the child at the heart of decision making. Fundamentally, how can any of that be objectionable? For all the reasons that the shadow Minister gave, we give the amendment our full support.

We support Lord McColl's amendment 26, which provides essential leave to remain for victims to rebuild their lives, prevent re-trafficking and bring perpetrators to justice. I pay tribute to all hon. Members who have continued to champion that cause.

We strongly support Lords amendment 22. The procedures in the Bill for age assessments represent a totally inappropriate power grab by the Home Secretary from local authorities and indeed devolved Governments. Lords amendment 22 at least puts in place a framework to provide proper constraints on her power. The amendment is the only way to prevent harmful, dangerous, totally unjustified, unethical and inaccurate age assessments from becoming the norm. The British Dental Association, the British Medical Association, the British Association of Social Workers, the Royal College of Nursing and many others have asked us to keep the amendment, so we should support them, and we should support multi-agency teams and social workers with investment and support, not make them subservient to the Home Office.

We are sympathetic to Lords amendment 40, which is designed to protect local journeys between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland from electronic travel authorisation provisions. Surely there must be a better way to handle the issue than requiring authorisations in advance. I have not been privy to the conversations that have been had, but there must be other solutions.

I will finish by briefly echoing a question that the right hon. Member for Islington North (Jeremy Corbyn) asked. In principle, the Government's visa penalty clauses have a role and a purpose and we support them, but we share his concerns about what they might mean for Russians fleeing persecution, for example, including those who have protested against the further invasion of Ukraine. The Minister suggested that they would be able to apply as ever, but as I understand it, some of the measures in the Bill—[*Interruption.*] Oh, he is going to deal with that point when he sums up. I look forward to hearing what he has to say.

In short, the SNP continues to support the efforts of those in the other place to force the Government to listen to the advice that they have been given and to think again about many of the Bill's provisions.

Tom Hunt: I intended to speak on the first group of amendments, but I have a lot to say about the second group as well, so I welcome the opportunity to contribute to this debate.

I welcome Lords amendments 28 and 29. It is good that we have a Government who take security in this country incredibly seriously. It is right that we are compassionate and generous when it comes to Ukrainian refugees, but I am sympathetic to the Government's position of not completely waiving checks and of listening to the advice of the security services. I see Lords amendments 28 and 29 as an extension of the principle

that the Government must protect the security of our country from individuals coming from countries deemed to be high-risk.

Lords amendments 30 to 35 amend clause 69—an incredibly important clause, in my view. I always hesitate to use the term “pull factor” because of some of the comments that have been made about pull factors, but I do think that one pull factor has been the ability of many people who have entered this country illegally, and who may or may not be legitimate refugees, to stay here. It is a case of, “Once you're in, you're in.” If we determine that an individual is not a refugee—if that person does not pass the tests—we must get them back to the country they came from as soon as possible. I therefore welcome clause 69 and think it should be protected from any potential amendments.

Let me be honest with the House: my view is that those who come here illegally should immediately be deported to the country from which they came. If someone wants to claim asylum, they ought to go through the correct procedure. I should be interested to hear from the Minister whether that is the case.

In general, I think that the Bill is extremely important. In relation to the amendments and what we heard earlier today, I suspect that many other Members on both sides of the House have constituents who, while they are incredibly big-hearted, and in particular have a big-hearted attitude to the Ukrainian refugees—and indeed other refugees—see a distinction between them and people who enter the country illegally and who we should not assume are refugees. Some may not be, and I think it important for us to bear that in mind. I also think that those in the other place—I will be careful about what I say, and I will be very respectful of the other place—should tread carefully, because I think there is immense support for this Bill out there in the country.

Stephen Farry: I will restrict my comments to Lords amendment 40, which I originally tabled in this House with my colleagues the hon. Members for Foyle (Colum Eastwood) and for Belfast South (Claire Hanna). I was very pleased when the House of Lords took it up. I especially thank Baroness Ritchie and Baroness Suttie, and all those who spoke in favour of the amendment at that time.

I believe that the system of electronic travel authorisations is essentially unworkable in the context of the island of Ireland. I know that the UK Government have received representations from the Irish Government, and they will also be aware of the cross-party opposition to this proposal in the Irish Houses of Parliament, the Oireachtas. It is important that we listen carefully to those voices and take account of the considerable concern felt in Northern Ireland about this measure.

Of course the common travel area applies to Irish citizens, but we are now talking about citizens of the European economic area who previously had freedom of movement and about all the other non-Irish residents of the island of Ireland having to apply for an ETA in due course. The Government may say that this is a simple process and there is no intention of introducing routine border checks; I recognise that they have been clear about that. None the less, it will be a new bureaucratic process. People may either forget to apply for their ETAs or forget to renew them, and some may even be

[Stephen Farry]

placed in a degree of legal jeopardy. Someone who is in Northern Ireland without an ETA and has to interact with the UK state, perhaps for healthcare reasons or in the event of a traffic accident, will potentially be in a position of some uncertainty, and there may well be repercussions from that.

There are three instances in which this could become a problem. There are tens of thousands of movements each day on the island of Ireland involving Northern Ireland citizens—for the purposes of work or education, for example, and because people living in one part of the island may have business in the other jurisdiction. People who do not intend to do any business in Northern Ireland often have to travel through it to get from A to B. The quickest route from Dublin to Donegal is through Northern Ireland on the A5, and even someone making a very localised journey from Clones or Cavan town, for example, will cross the border four times in the course of that short journey. This could become fairly absurd.

There is also the question of tourism. The island of Ireland is very much a single market for tourists. Many people come to the south, and then want to come to Northern Ireland to see all our wonderful attractions and take advantage of our great scenery. We can foresee a situation where tourists are not aware of the requirements, or where tour operators have to go through bureaucracy in order to ensure that their passengers on bus tours, for example, are fully compliant with this new law. That may well put some people out of the market or persuade them not to offer that type of service. That would be a huge loss to our tourism sector, which is a key aspect of the Northern Ireland economy. The movements that happen at present on the island of Ireland are not a threat to UK security. I encourage the Government to reflect on this further and talk more to the Irish Government about finding a resolution.

Several hon. Members *rose*—

Madam Deputy Speaker (Dame Rosie Winterton): Order. I am afraid that I have to reduce the time limit to three minutes.

Richard Fuller: I want the UK to be known as a place of refuge and justice as well as a place of opportunity and freedom. When examining immigration Bills over the years, I have always looked to see where there could be an issue of moral hazard in what is being proposed and the changes being made. In this Bill, my eyes were immediately drawn to clause 62 and to Lords amendment 25. The title of clause 62 is “Identified potential victims etc: disqualification from protection”. The clause is replete with moral hazards in whatever actions the Government might take. As it happens, I do not think that the Government have got the balance right, but I am also not sure that the Lords amendment is quite right.

My request to the Minister, who is ably managing the Bill, is to continue the conversation with their lordships on this provision, because of the risks of moral hazard. For example, is it really right that we should continue to include taking away this protection from children? Is it right that we should continue to have a provision that

someone who in their past has undertaken a crime under duress should be liable to the protections being taken away? The Minister has argued that it is important to define this, so that the issues of public order can be applied, and I see some relevance there, but why is it important to rely so heavily on information that relates to an individual’s past, rather than taking into account their circumstances and the potential risk they pose today? That balance has not been struck correctly.

The noble Lords Coaker and Randall sought to correct that by trying to draw a tighter definition about the risks, stating that there has to be

“an immediate, genuine, present and serious threat”,

but I think they have overcooked it a little bit. It is quite a lot to say that all those criteria have to apply. Between the Government’s present criteria, which rely too much on an individual’s past, and the Lords amendment, which is drawn a bit too tightly about where these protections should be applied, there is scope for the Government to find some ground for compromise. I certainly hope so.

Mr Carmichael: I shall of necessity be very brief. First, I would like to place on record my appreciation of my colleagues in the other place, in particular Lord Paddick, Baroness Hamwee, Baroness Ludford and Baroness Suttie.

I find myself somewhat perplexed about the measures relating to modern slavery because, as the right hon. Member for Chingford and Woodford Green (Sir Iain Duncan Smith) said, the Conservative party has until recently had a really good story to tell on modern slavery. It started with the work of Anthony Steen. The right hon. Gentleman spoke about the passing of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, and in this context I pay particular tribute to the former Prime Minister, the right hon. Member for Maidenhead (Mrs May). I saw how, as Home Secretary, she drove this agenda in Government. Believe me, the Home Secretary in the coalition Government was not always an immediate ally for Liberal Democrat Ministers. She had a particular knack for generating tension, not just within the coalition but occasionally within her own party, but she really understood the importance of this issue and drove it forward in a way that I think the party should be proud of. I am afraid that what I see in relation to Lords amendments 24 to 26, coming from people such as Lord Randall—someone with whom, again, I was pleased to work during his time in this House—flies in the face of that work. It undermines the tremendous progress this country and the Conservative party have made.

7 pm

On Lords amendments 24 to 27, I simply adopt the comments made by the hon. Member for Halifax (Holly Lynch) and those made in the interventions on her by the hon. Member for North East Bedfordshire (Richard Fuller), as there was nothing to disagree with. We have some thoughtful, well-informed contributions coming from the other place, not least from Conservative Members there, and the Government would be well advised to listen to them and their sage advice. On Lords amendment 40, the hon. Member for North Down (Stephen Farry) highlighted well the practical difficulties that will arise if the provision he addressed is left to stand.

Fiona Bruce (Congleton) (Con): I wish to speak briefly in support of the proposal made by my right hon. Friend the Member for Chingford and Woodford Green (Sir Iain Duncan Smith) in lieu of Lords amendment 26, to which he referred in his impassioned speech. Disappointingly, it cannot be voted on today. If we are to break the business model of the criminal gangs behind modern slavery, we have to increase the number of successful prosecutions. One of the most effective ways to do that is to enable more victims to participate in the pursuit of justice by sharing intelligence and acting as witnesses. Evidence from programmes such as Justice and Care's victim navigator programme shows that when given wraparound support over a longer period more victims develop the confidence to engage with criminal investigations; 89% of Justice and Care's supported victims engaged with police at the last published evaluation, which compared with the national average of about a third.

I welcome the commitment that the Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department, my hon. Friend the Member for Redditch (Rachel Maclean) gave on Report that

"all those who receive a positive conclusive grounds decision and are in need of tailored support will receive appropriate individualised support for a minimum of 12 months."—[*Official Report*, 8 December 2021; Vol. 705, c. 427.]

However, to provide victims with the certainty and stability they need, this extended support should be included in the statutory framework.

The Government have taken the positive step of putting support for modern slavery victims in law for the first time in this Bill, but clause 63 is limited to support during the initial recovery period during the national referral mechanism. The Bill offers no support to victims after the point at which someone has been formally recognised as a victim. The Government have already committed to doing this for a minimum of 12 months and it would be a simple matter to add that commitment to the Bill, giving a more comprehensive picture of the full range of support available, and providing victims with greater certainty and stability for their recovery as a result. I hope that Ministers will support the intent behind the amendment in lieu tabled by my right hon. Friend, and I note the Minister's comment today that the Government are very willing to take these concerns away and have discussions with my right hon. Friend and, I hope, others. I also hope that the concern about the importance of putting the 12-month period into statute will not only be taken away, but acted upon.

Nadia Whittome (Nottingham East) (Lab): This Bill is such wide-reaching and deeply flawed legislation that there is so much I could speak on, but in the limited time we have I will focus on Lords amendment 22, which deals with the age assessment of children.

Without that amendment, the Bill will increase the number of children who have to undergo age assessments. These processes are unethical and inaccurate, focusing on vague criteria such as a child's "appearance and demeanour". Other, more detailed investigations are, of course, re-traumatising for children. There is a real danger that the measures in the Bill will lead to an increase in the number of children who are wrongfully treated as adults and subsequently neglected by the

authorities. That will place some of the most vulnerable children at incredibly high risk of harm, as we have already seen.

In December 2017, Alexander Tekle died by suicide less than a year after he arrived in the UK from Eritrea as an unaccompanied minor. Alex was failed on two fronts. First, he was wrongfully assessed as an adult and placed in adult Home Office accommodation, where he was violently assaulted. Secondly, the different local authorities that were subsequently entrusted with his care failed him miserably, leading him into a spiral of depression and substance abuse. Services again failed to step in and ensure that he was supported to overcome these issues. The uncertainty over Alex's immigration status also caused persistent distress. In fact, an inquest held earlier this year found that the Home Office's policies contributed to the spiral that led to his death. What happened to Alex is not an isolated case: there has been an alarming increase in reports of suicide among teenagers who arrived in the UK as unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. It is a pattern of failure. But instead of the Government righting this wrong, children like Alex continue to be treated with suspicion from the moment they set foot in this country.

The Bill does not focus on improving the care of unaccompanied refugee children; in fact, the Home Office seems interested only in building even more barriers. It is particularly cynical that the Department pretends that age assessments are done for young people's safety when, given the supervision provided in children's placements, the level of risk is low should a young adult on occasion be placed in one. This contrasts with the hundreds of children who have been put in hotels and forced to share rooms and even beds with adult men they do not know.

The Home Office does not provide any solutions in the Bill. We cannot allow this devastating situation to continue. [*Interruption.*] Conservative Members may chunter from a sedentary position, but I am talking about something extremely serious: a young boy who committed suicide after Home Office failings. It would be great if they showed a bit of humility. Everyone who professes to care about unaccompanied refugee children should vote in support of Lords amendment 22.

Simon Hoare: It is to be welcomed that there will be no north-south border checks on the island of Ireland. The Minister will know that there is excellent intelligence sharing between the UK, the Police Service of Northern Ireland and the Irish authorities.

I understand what the Government are trying to do in the Bill, but I am afraid they again show a little bit of a lack of sensitivity or understanding with regard to how the all-island economy works, particularly when it comes to tourism, which is hugely important, as the hon. Member for North Down (Stephen Farry) said. In 2019, 2.245 million visitors came to the island of Ireland and spent £589 million. Such visitors maintain and support 70,800 jobs in Northern Ireland alone. There has been a 90% increase in the number of visitors to the island of Ireland from North America and 60% of all visitors to the island spend nights in both the Republic and the north of Ireland.

I understand what the Minister is trying to do, but he is using a misdirected sledgehammer to crack a non-existent nut, because we have seen no evidence to show that

[Simon Hoare]

there is systemic abuse of the common travel area whereby people come from the south to the north and then over to GB. There is no evidence for that at all. I suggest the Government go away and have another think about the legislation. It seems to me to be sensible to exempt those who have established their right of residence in the Republic of Ireland from having to have an electronic travel authorisation. They do not need it. A lot of them will move between hospitals and doctors' surgeries and dentists and between retail and hospitality and all the rest of it. Their bona fides have been recognised by the Republic, whether they were born in the Republic or elsewhere, and that should, through the usual intelligence sharing, be enough.

Visitors from the Irish diaspora of New Zealand, Australia, Canada or North America should be required to have an ETA only if they propose to move from the island of Ireland—irrespective of whether they have landed north or south of the border—to come to GB.

Kevin Foster indicated dissent.

Simon Hoare: The Minister shakes his head and grimaces; I am not entirely sure why, because the idea is eminently workable. Tourism Ireland and Tourism NI are anxious that the legislation on ETAs will be an inhibitor for people who wish to visit the island of Ireland. They do not say, "I'm coming to the north" or "I'm coming to the south"—they say, "I'm going to Ireland." They do not see the boundary as we know it and see it.

That is one way of dealing with the situation; there may be others. Our fear is that this measure would be damaging for tourism and for business confidence. Post covid, visitors should speedily be encouraged to come to the island of Ireland. Putting other impediments in their way would not be in the interests of the economy.

Jeremy Corbyn: Briefly, I have three points. First, this Bill is not an acceptable piece of legislation—it is an appalling piece of legislation. There is a refugee crisis, all around the world. We should recognise that and be more humane in our approach. I absolutely support Ukrainian refugees being able to find safety wherever they want to go and absolutely support any measures to welcome them to this country, because of the trauma they have suffered and because of this awful war; the same should apply to victims of wars in Afghanistan, Yemen, Iraq or elsewhere. Those people are just as traumatised and their lives are just as damaged.

Secondly, the right hon. Member for Chingford and Woodford Green (Sir Iain Duncan Smith) made a number of points on the 12-month rule that is apparently being introduced for victims of modern slavery. I hope the Minister can clarify that he is serious in what he says on this subject and that we are going to open the route for people who are victims of modern slavery to get permanent residence in this country as a place of safety. They have suffered grievously, from huge levels of abuse. As the right hon. Gentleman also pointed out, the numbers involved are not very large.

I am conscious of the time, but the third point that I want to make is about the new clause inserted by Lords amendment 36, subsection (2) of which refers to

"Visa penalties for countries posing risk to international peace and security".

I would be grateful if the Minister could respond to my earlier intervention and those of other colleagues on the definition of who poses risk. There is no definition of which countries the measure refers to or how it will play out.

An activist for peace in a country which the Minister feels is a risk is clearly at double risk. The Minister said they can seek an application—of course they can, but how do they practically make that application? In addition, those who are not activists and who do not have any particular political views, but who are caught up in an international conflict, such as a married couple where one person is from this country and the other is from another country—it does not have to be Russia—also deserve a right to come to this country. I hope that this new clause does not make it even more difficult for them to come home when they want to.

John McDonnell: I am grateful to be called to speak again, as I spoke in the earlier debate. I think I have less than a minute and a half, so I will be brief. I want to speak to Lords amendment 22.

Those of us who have dealt with children who have gone through the age assessment process recognise just how traumatising it is for those children, many of whom are already suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder. That is why it is important that we minimise the numbers going through the process and make sure that it causes the least harm possible. I cannot fully understand why the Government object to this amendment, which, in my view, sets out the best practice we have been arguing for over a number of years.

The new clause introduced by Lords amendment 22 would reduce the number of people who go through the process by making sure that there is a "significant reason" to doubt the age. It would also ensure that the assessment is carried out by a local authority social worker, because—we have to be honest—Home Office social workers have been found lacking. That is not my judgment—it is the judgment of the courts. There is a difference of culture. The Home Office is about enforcement; the local authority is about supporting those who have been traumatised.

The new clause also introduces an element of best practice by making sure that the Association of Directors of Children's Services draws health and other professionals into multidisciplinary teams, which we have been arguing for, so that we get the best possible and most objective assessment. There would also be an objectivity in the process that we doubt would be the case under the Home Office.

7.15 pm

Tom Pursglove: Again, I am very grateful to Members from across the House for their many and varied contributions during the course of this debate. In responding, there are a few points on which I wish to touch.

First, I wish to deal directly with the point raised by the right hon. Member for Islington North (Jeremy Corbyn), as well as by the hon. Member for Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch East (Stuart C. McDonald). The ability of individuals to lodge visa applications in

the circumstances that the right hon. Gentleman described, would, to be clear, depend on the visa penalty applied, and such applications may not be considered on the back of that. We will, however, carefully consider the right hon. Gentleman's point about peaceful protesters, which is an understandable and legitimate point, before taking any decisions on applying visa penalties. The key point here is that, in any case, we will ensure that the most vulnerable individuals—those with compelling, compassionate grounds for travelling—are exempted from the application of visa penalties. I hope that that gives him the reassurance that he was seeking.

My hon. Friend the Member for North East Bedfordshire (Richard Fuller) raised an issue in relation to the treatment of children. Although I am unable to provide specific figures on the number of cases owing to the nature of the offences, national security considerations and also because the individual circumstances are taken into account, it is essential that amendment 25 is rejected in favour of the original drafting of the public order disqualification, so that dangerous individuals can be removed. This is about providing a clear definition in line with our international obligations, so that we can withhold support from individuals on grounds of public order, potentially where they relate to national security or involve serious criminality.

However, I hope that I can provide greater reassurance more generally around victims of modern slavery aged under 18 by saying that ensuring decision makers take account of individuals' vulnerabilities is fundamental to our approach. We will make it clear in guidance how children, or those who were children at the time of their exploitation, should be considered, taking into account their particular vulnerabilities and specific needs. This includes making it clear in guidance how the damage to credibility measure is to be applied in the case of children. I also emphasise that decisions to withhold protections from the national referral mechanism on public order grounds from children and adults will be made on a case-by-case basis, as I have set out previously.

The fact is that potential and confirmed victims of modern slavery may have been convicted of serious criminal offences or be involved in terrorism-related activity, which does include children in some instances. It is right that the Government should be able to withhold protections from those individuals who pose a threat to public order, but this is not a blanket disqualification. The guidance underpinning these measures and the decision making around them will be made by trained decision makers and will consider the needs of children and specific safeguarding vulnerabilities.

I hope that I can also reassure the hon. Member for Halifax (Holly Lynch) in saying that it remains our firm intention to engage properly and thoroughly with the sector in designing that guidance to make sure that we get this right. Indeed, our existing modern slavery statutory guidance provides for the specific vulnerabilities of children, and all decision makers in the competent authorities receive specific training on children as potential victims, including distinct training—

7.18 pm

Six hours having elapsed since the commencement of proceedings on Lords amendments, the debate was interrupted (Programme Order, this day).

The Deputy Speaker put forthwith the Question already proposed from the Chair (Standing Order No. 83F), That this House disagrees with Lords amendment 22.

The House divided: Ayes 307, Noes 217.

Division No. 226]

[7.18 pm

AYES

Adams, rh Nigel
Afolami, Bim
Afriyie, Adam
Aiken, Nickie
Aldous, Peter
Allan, Lucy
Anderson, Lee
Anderson, Stuart
Andrew, rh Stuart
Ansell, Caroline
Argar, Edward
Atherton, Sarah
Atkins, Victoria
Bacon, Gareth
Bacon, Mr Richard
Badenoch, Kemi
Bailey, Shaun
Baillie, Siobhan
Baker, Duncan
Baron, Mr John
Baynes, Simon
Bell, Aaron
Benton, Scott
Beresford, Sir Paul
Bhatti, Saqib
Blackman, Bob
Bone, Mr Peter
Bottomley, Sir Peter
Bowie, Andrew
Bradley, Ben
Brady, Sir Graham
Brereton, Jack
Bridgen, Andrew
Brine, Steve
Bristow, Paul
Britcliffe, Sara
Browne, Anthony
Bruce, Fiona
Buchan, Felicity
Buckland, rh Sir Robert
Burghart, Alex
Burns, rh Conor
Butler, Rob
Cairns, rh Alun
Campbell, Mr Gregory
Carter, Andy
Cartlidge, James
Cates, Miriam
Caulfield, Maria
Chalk, Alex
Chishti, Rehman
Chope, Sir Christopher
Churchill, Jo
Clark, rh Greg
Clarke, rh Mr Simon
Clarke, Theo
Clarke-Smith, Brendan
Clarkson, Chris
Clifton-Brown, Sir Geoffrey
Coffey, rh Dr Thérèse
Colburn, Elliot
Collins, Damian
Courts, Robert

Coutinho, Claire
Crosbie, Virginia
Crouch, Tracey
Daly, James
Davies, David T. C.
Davies, Gareth
Davies, Dr James
Davies, Mims
Davies, Philip
Davison, Dehenna
Dinenage, Dame Caroline
Dines, Miss Sarah
Djanogly, Mr Jonathan
Docherty, Leo
Donelan, rh Michelle
Dorries, rh Ms Nadine
Double, Steve
Dowden, rh Oliver
Doyle-Price, Jackie
Drax, Richard
Drummond, Mrs Flick
Dunne, rh Philip
Edwards, Ruth
Ellis, rh Michael
Ellwood, rh Mr Tobias
Elphicke, Mrs Natalie
Eustice, rh George
Evans, Dr Luke
Evennett, rh Sir David
Everitt, Ben
Fabricant, Michael
Farris, Laura
Fell, Simon
Firth, Anna
Fletcher, Katherine
Fletcher, Mark
Fletcher, Nick
Ford, Vicky
Foster, Kevin
Fox, rh Dr Liam
Frazer, rh Lucy
Freeman, George
French, Mr Louie
Fuller, Richard
Garnier, Mark
Ghani, Ms Nusrat
Gibb, rh Nick
Gibson, Peter
Gideon, Jo
Glen, John
Goodwill, rh Sir Robert
Gove, rh Michael
Gray, James
Grayling, rh Chris
Green, Chris
Green, rh Damian
Griffith, Andrew
Griffiths, Kate
Grundy, James
Gullis, Jonathan
Halfon, rh Robert
Hall, Luke
Hammond, Stephen

Hancock, rh Matt
 Hands, rh Greg
 Harper, rh Mr Mark
 Harris, Rebecca
 Harrison, Trudy
 Hart, Sally-Ann
 Hart, rh Simon
 Hayes, rh Sir John
 Heald, rh Sir Oliver
 Heappey, James
 Heaton-Harris, rh Chris
 Henderson, Gordon
 Henry, Darren
 Higginbotham, Antony
 Hinds, rh Damian
 Hoare, Simon
 Hollinrake, Kevin
 Hollobone, Mr Philip
 Holloway, Adam
 Holmes, Paul
 Howell, Paul
 Huddleston, Nigel
 Hudson, Dr Neil
 Hughes, Eddie
 Hunt, Jane
 Hunt, rh Jeremy
 Hunt, Tom
 Jack, rh Mr Alister
 Javid, rh Sajid
 Jenkin, Sir Bernard
 Jenkinson, Mark
 Jenkyns, Andrea
 Johnson, Dr Caroline
 Johnson, Gareth
 Johnston, David
 Jones, Andrew
 Jones, Fay
 Jones, Mr Marcus
 Jupp, Simon
 Kawczynski, Daniel
 Kearns, Alicia
 Keegan, Gillian
 Knight, rh Sir Greg
 Knight, Julian
 Kruger, Danny
 Kwarteng, rh Kwasi
 Lamont, John
 Latham, Mrs Pauline
 Leadsom, rh Dame Andrea
 Leigh, rh Sir Edward
 Lewer, Andrew
 Lewis, rh Brandon
 Lewis, rh Dr Julian
 Lockhart, Carla
 Loder, Chris
 Logan, Mark
 Longhi, Marco
 Lopez, Julia
 Lopresti, Jack
 Loughton, Tim
 Mackinlay, Craig
 Mackrory, Cherylyn
 Mak, Alan
 Malthouse, rh Kit
 Mangnall, Anthony
 Marson, Julie
 Mayhew, Jerome
 Maynard, Paul
 McCartney, Jason
 McCartney, Karl
 McPartland, Stephen
 McVey, rh Esther

Menzies, Mark
 Merriman, Huw
 Metcalfe, Stephen
 Millar, Robin
 Miller, rh Mrs Maria
 Mills, Nigel
 Mitchell, rh Mr Andrew
 Moore, Damien
 Moore, Robbie
 Mordaunt, rh Penny
 Morris, Anne Marie
 Morris, James
 Morrissey, Joy
 Mortimer, Jill
 Morton, Wendy
 Mullan, Dr Kieran
 Mumby-Croft, Holly
 Mundell, rh David
 Murray, Mrs Sheryll
 Murrison, rh Dr Andrew
 Nici, Lia
 O'Brien, Neil
 Offord, Dr Matthew
 Opperman, Guy
 Paisley, Ian
 Parish, Neil
 Patel, rh Priti
 Penning, rh Sir Mike
 Penrose, John
 Percy, Andrew
 Pincher, rh Christopher
 Poulter, Dr Dan
 Pow, Rebecca
 Prentis, Victoria
 Pursglove, Tom
 Quince, Will
 Raab, rh Dominic
 Randall, Tom
 Redwood, rh John
 Rees-Mogg, rh Mr Jacob
 Richards, Nicola
 Richardson, Angela
 Roberts, Rob
 Robertson, Mr Laurence
 Rosindell, Andrew
 Rowley, Lee
 Russell, Dean
 Rutley, David
 Sambrook, Gary
 Saxby, Selaine
 Scully, Paul
 Seely, Bob
 Shapps, rh Grant
 Shelbrooke, rh Alec
 Simmonds, David
 Skidmore, rh Chris
 Smith, Chloe
 Smith, Greg
 Smith, Henry
 Smith, rh Julian
 Smith, Royston
 Solloway, Amanda
 Spencer, Dr Ben
 Spencer, rh Mark
 Stafford, Alexander
 Stephenson, Andrew
 Stevenson, Jane
 Stevenson, John
 Stewart, rh Bob
 Stewart, Iain
 Streeter, Sir Gary
 Stride, rh Mel

Sturdy, Julian
 Sunderland, James
 Swayne, rh Sir Desmond
 Syms, Sir Robert
 Thomas, Derek
 Timpson, Edward
 Tolhurst, Kelly
 Tomlinson, Justin
 Tracey, Craig
 Tugendhat, Tom
 Vara, Shailesh
 Vickers, Martin
 Villiers, rh Theresa
 Walker, Sir Charles
 Wallis, Dr Jamie
 Warburton, David
 Warman, Matt
 Watling, Giles

Webb, Suzanne
 Whately, Helen
 Wheeler, Mrs Heather
 Whittaker, Craig
 Whittingdale, rh Mr John
 Wiggins, Sir Bill
 Wild, James
 Williams, Craig
 Williamson, rh Sir Gavin
 Wood, Mike
 Wragg, Mr William
 Wright, rh Jeremy
 Young, Jacob
 Zahawi, rh Nadhim

Tellers for the Ayes:
Michael Tomlinson and
Scott Mann

NOES

Abbott, rh Ms Diane
 Abrahams, Debbie
 Ali, Rushanara
 Ali, Tahir
 Allin-Khan, Dr Rosena
 Amesbury, Mike
 Anderson, Fleur
 Antoniazzi, Tonia
 Ashworth, rh Jonathan
 Barker, Paula
 Beckett, rh Margaret
 Begum, Apsana
 Benn, rh Hilary
 Betts, Mr Clive
 Black, Mhairi
 Blackford, rh Ian
 Blackman, Kirsty
 Blake, Olivia
 Blomfield, Paul
 Bradshaw, rh Mr Ben
 Brennan, Kevin
 Brock, Deidre
 Brown, Alan
 Brown, rh Mr Nicholas
 Bryant, Chris
 Buck, Ms Karen
 Burgon, Richard
 Byrne, Ian
 Byrne, rh Liam
 Cadbury, Ruth
 Callaghan, Amy
 Cameron, Dr Lisa
 Campbell, rh Sir Alan
 Carmichael, rh Mr Alistair
 Chamberlain, Wendy
 Champion, Sarah
 Chapman, Douglas
 Clark, Feryal
 Cooper, Daisy
 Cooper, rh Yvette
 Corbyn, rh Jeremy
 Cowan, Ronnie
 Crawley, Angela
 Creasy, Stella
 Cruddas, Jon
 Cummins, Judith
 Daby, Janet
 Davey, rh Ed
 David, Wayne
 Davies-Jones, Alex
 Day, Martyn

De Cordova, Marsha
 Dhesi, Mr Tanmanjeet Singh
 Docherty-Hughes, Martin
 Dodds, Anneliese
 Doogan, Dave
 Dorans, Allan
 Duffield, Rosie
 Eagle, Dame Angela
 Eagle, Maria
 Eastwood, Colum
 Efford, Clive
 Elliott, Julie
 Elmore, Chris
 Esterson, Bill
 Evans, Chris
 Farry, Stephen
 Ferrier, Margaret
 Fletcher, Colleen
 Flynn, Stephen
 Fovargue, Yvonne
 Foxcroft, Vicky
 Foy, Mary Kelly
 Gardiner, Barry
 Gibson, Patricia
 Glendon, Mary
 Grady, Patrick
 Grant, Peter
 Green, Kate
 Green, Sarah
 Greenwood, Lilian
 Griffith, Nia
 Gwynne, Andrew
 Haigh, Louise
 Hamilton, Fabian
 Hamilton, Mrs Paulette
 Hanna, Claire
 Hardy, Emma
 Hayes, Helen
 Healey, rh John
 Hendrick, Sir Mark
 Hendry, Drew
 Hillier, Dame Meg
 Hobhouse, Wera
 Hodgson, Mrs Sharon
 Hopkins, Rachel
 Hosie, rh Stewart
 Huq, Dr Rupa
 Hussain, Imran
 Jardine, Christine
 Jarvis, Dan
 Johnson, Kim

Jones, Darren
 Jones, Gerald
 Jones, rh Mr Kevan
 Jones, Ruth
 Jones, Sarah
 Kane, Mike
 Keeley, Barbara
 Kendall, Liz (*Proxy vote cast by Mr Pat McFadden*)
 Khan, Afzal
 Kinnock, Stephen
 Kyle, Peter
 Lake, Ben
 Lavery, Ian
 Leadbeater, Kim
 Lewell-Buck, Mrs Emma
 Lewis, Clive
 Linden, David
 Lloyd, Tony
 Long Bailey, Rebecca
 Lucas, Caroline
 Lynch, Holly
 MacAskill, Kenny
 Madders, Justin
 Mahmood, Mr Khalid
 Mahmood, Shabana
 Malhotra, Seema
 Maskell, Rachael
 Mc Nally, John
 McCarthy, Kerry
 McDonald, Andy
 McDonald, Stewart Malcolm
 McDonald, Stuart C.
 McDonnell, rh John
 McFadden, rh Mr Pat
 McGinn, Conor
 McGovern, Alison
 McKinnell, Catherine
 McMahan, Jim
 Mearns, Ian
 Miliband, rh Edward
 Mishra, Navendu
 Monaghan, Carol
 Moran, Layla
 Morden, Jessica
 Morgan, Helen
 Morgan, Stephen
 Morris, Grahame
 Murray, Ian
 Murray, James
 Newlands, Gavin
 Nichols, Charlotte
 Norris, Alex
 O'Hara, Brendan
 Olney, Sarah
 Onwurah, Chi
 Oppong-Asare, Abena
 Osamor, Kate
 Osborne, Kate
 Oswald, Kirsten

Owatemi, Taiwo
 Peacock, Stephanie
 Pennycook, Matthew
 Perkins, Mr Toby
 Phillips, Jess
 Pollard, Luke
 Powell, Lucy
 Qaisar, Ms Anum
 Qureshi, Yasmin
 Reed, Steve
 Rees, Christina
 Reeves, Ellie
 Reeves, Rachel
 Reynolds, Jonathan
 Ribeiro-Addy, Bell
 Rimmer, Ms Marie
 Rodda, Matt
 Russell-Moyle, Lloyd
 Shah, Naz
 Sharma, Mr Virendra
 Sheppard, Tommy
 Siddiq, Tulip
 Slaughter, Andy
 Smith, Alyn
 Smith, Cat
 Smith, Jeff
 Smyth, Karin
 Sobel, Alex
 Spellar, rh John
 Stevens, Jo
 Stone, Jamie
 Stringer, Graham
 Sultana, Zarah
 Tami, rh Mark
 Tarry, Sam
 Thewliss, Alison
 Thomas-Symonds, rh Nick
 Thompson, Owen
 Thornberry, rh Emily
 Timms, rh Stephen
 Turner, Karl
 Twist, Liz
 Vaz, rh Valerie
 Wakeford, Christian
 Webbe, Claudia
 West, Catherine
 Western, Matt
 Whitehead, Dr Alan
 Whitford, Dr Philippa
 Whitley, Mick
 Whittome, Nadia
 Williams, Hywel
 Wilson, Munira
 Winter, Beth
 Yasin, Mohammad
 Zeichner, Daniel

Tellers for the Noes:
Marion Fellows and
Richard Thomson

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendment 22 disagreed to.

The Deputy Speaker then put forthwith the Questions necessary for the disposal of the business to be concluded at that time (Standing Order No. 83F).

Clause 58

APPEALS RELATING TO AGE ASSESSMENTS

Motion made, and Question put, That this House disagrees with Lords amendment 24.—(Tom Pursglove.)

The House divided: Ayes 300, Noes 221.

Division No. 227]

[7.32 pm

AYES

Afolami, Bim
 Afriyie, Adam
 Aiken, Nickie
 Aldous, Peter
 Allan, Lucy
 Anderson, Lee
 Anderson, Stuart
 Andrew, rh Stuart
 Ansell, Caroline
 Argar, Edward
 Atherton, Sarah
 Atkins, Victoria
 Bacon, Gareth
 Bacon, Mr Richard
 Badenoch, Kemi
 Bailey, Shaun
 Baillie, Siobhan
 Baker, Duncan
 Baron, Mr John
 Baynes, Simon
 Bell, Aaron
 Benton, Scott
 Beresford, Sir Paul
 Bhatti, Saqib
 Blackman, Bob
 Bone, Mr Peter
 Bottomley, Sir Peter
 Bowie, Andrew
 Bradley, Ben
 Brady, Sir Graham
 Brereton, Jack
 Bridgen, Andrew
 Brine, Steve
 Bristow, Paul
 Britcliffe, Sara
 Browne, Anthony
 Bruce, Fiona
 Buchan, Felicity
 Burghart, Alex
 Burns, rh Conor
 Butler, Rob
 Cairns, rh Alun
 Carter, Andy
 Cartledge, James
 Caulfield, Maria
 Chalk, Alex
 Chishti, Rehman
 Choqe, Sir Christopher
 Churchill, Jo
 Clark, rh Greg
 Clarke, rh Mr Simon
 Clarke, Theo
 Clarke-Smith, Brendan
 Clarkson, Chris
 Clifton-Brown, Sir Geoffrey
 Coffey, rh Dr Thérèse
 Colburn, Elliot
 Collins, Damian
 Courts, Robert
 Coutinho, Claire
 Crosbie, Virginia
 Crouch, Tracey
 Daly, James
 Davies, David T. C.
 Davies, Gareth
 Davies, Dr James
 Davies, Mims

Davies, Philip
 Davison, Dehenna
 Dinenage, Dame Caroline
 Dines, Miss Sarah
 Djanogly, Mr Jonathan
 Docherty, Leo
 Donelan, rh Michelle
 Dorries, rh Ms Nadine
 Double, Steve
 Dowden, rh Oliver
 Doyle-Price, Jackie
 Drax, Richard
 Drummond, Mrs Flick
 Duncan Smith, rh Sir Iain
 Dunne, rh Philip
 Edwards, Ruth
 Ellis, rh Michael
 Ellwood, rh Mr Tobias
 Elphicke, Mrs Natalie
 Eustice, rh George
 Evans, Dr Luke
 Evennett, rh Sir David
 Everitt, Ben
 Fabricant, Michael
 Farris, Laura
 Fell, Simon
 Firth, Anna
 Fletcher, Katherine
 Fletcher, Mark
 Fletcher, Nick
 Ford, Vicky
 Foster, Kevin
 Fox, rh Dr Liam
 Frazer, rh Lucy
 Freeman, George
 French, Mr Louie
 Fuller, Richard
 Garnier, Mark
 Ghani, Ms Nusrat
 Gibb, rh Nick
 Gibson, Peter
 Gideon, Jo
 Glen, John
 Goodwill, rh Sir Robert
 Gove, rh Michael
 Gray, James
 Grayling, rh Chris
 Green, Chris
 Green, rh Damian
 Griffith, Andrew
 Griffiths, Kate
 Grundy, James
 Gullis, Jonathan
 Halfon, rh Robert
 Hall, Luke
 Hammond, Stephen
 Hancock, rh Matt
 Harper, rh Mr Mark
 Harris, Rebecca
 Harrison, Trudy
 Hart, Sally-Ann
 Hart, rh Simon
 Hayes, rh Sir John
 Heald, rh Sir Oliver
 Heapey, James
 Heaton-Harris, rh Chris
 Henderson, Gordon

Henry, Darren
 Higginbotham, Antony
 Hinds, rh Damian
 Hoare, Simon
 Hollinrake, Kevin
 Hollobone, Mr Philip
 Holloway, Adam
 Holmes, Paul
 Howell, Paul
 Huddleston, Nigel
 Hudson, Dr Neil
 Hughes, Eddie
 Hunt, Jane
 Hunt, rh Jeremy
 Hunt, Tom
 Jack, rh Mr Alister
 Javid, rh Sajid
 Jenkin, Sir Bernard
 Jenkinson, Mark
 Jenkyns, Andrea
 Johnson, Dr Caroline
 Johnson, Gareth
 Johnston, David
 Jones, Andrew
 Jones, Fay
 Jones, Mr Marcus
 Jupp, Simon
 Kawczynski, Daniel
 Kearns, Alicia
 Keegan, Gillian
 Knight, rh Sir Greg
 Knight, Julian
 Kruger, Danny
 Kwarteng, rh Kwasi
 Lamont, John
 Latham, Mrs Pauline
 Leigh, rh Sir Edward
 Lewer, Andrew
 Lewis, rh Brandon
 Lewis, rh Dr Julian
 Loder, Chris
 Logan, Mark
 Longhi, Marco
 Lopez, Julia
 Lopresti, Jack
 Loughton, Tim
 Mackinlay, Craig
 Mackrory, Cheryllyn
 Maclean, Rachel
 Mak, Alan
 Malthouse, rh Kit
 Mangnall, Anthony
 Marson, Julie
 Mayhew, Jerome
 Maynard, Paul
 McCartney, Jason
 McCartney, Karl
 McPartland, Stephen
 McVey, rh Esther
 Menzies, Mark
 Merriman, Huw
 Metcalfe, Stephen
 Millar, Robin
 Miller, rh Mrs Maria
 Mills, Nigel
 Mitchell, rh Mr Andrew
 Moore, Damien
 Moore, Robbie
 Mordaunt, rh Penny
 Morris, Anne Marie
 Morris, James
 Morrissey, Joy

Mortimer, Jill
 Morton, Wendy
 Mullan, Dr Kieran
 Mumby-Croft, Holly
 Mundell, rh David
 Murray, Mrs Sheryl
 Murrison, rh Dr Andrew
 Nici, Lia
 O'Brien, Neil
 Offord, Dr Matthew
 Opperman, Guy
 Parish, Neil
 Patel, rh Priti
 Penning, rh Sir Mike
 Penrose, John
 Percy, Andrew
 Philp, Chris
 Pincher, rh Christopher
 Pow, Rebecca
 Prentis, Victoria
 Pursglove, Tom
 Quince, Will
 Raab, rh Dominic
 Randall, Tom
 Redwood, rh John
 Rees-Mogg, rh Mr Jacob
 Richards, Nicola
 Richardson, Angela
 Robertson, Mr Laurence
 Rosindell, Andrew
 Rowley, Lee
 Russell, Dean
 Rutley, David
 Sambrook, Gary
 Saxby, Selaine
 Scully, Paul
 Seely, Bob
 Shapps, rh Grant
 Shelbrooke, rh Alec
 Simmonds, David
 Skidmore, rh Chris
 Smith, Chloe
 Smith, Greg
 Smith, Henry
 Smith, rh Julian
 Smith, Royston
 Solloway, Amanda
 Spencer, Dr Ben
 Spencer, rh Mark
 Stafford, Alexander
 Stephenson, Andrew
 Stevenson, Jane
 Stevenson, John
 Stewart, rh Bob
 Stewart, Iain
 Streeter, Sir Gary
 Stride, rh Mel
 Sturdy, Julian
 Sunderland, James
 Swayne, rh Sir Desmond
 Syms, Sir Robert
 Thomas, Derek
 Timpson, Edward
 Tomlinson, Justin
 Tracey, Craig
 Tugendhat, Tom
 Vara, Shailesh
 Vickers, Martin
 Villiers, rh Theresa
 Walker, Sir Charles
 Wallis, Dr Jamie
 Warburton, David

Warman, Matt
 Watling, Giles
 Webb, Suzanne
 Whately, Helen
 Wheeler, Mrs Heather
 Whittaker, Craig
 Whittingdale, rh Mr John
 Wiggin, Sir Bill
 Wild, James
 Williams, Craig

Williamson, rh Sir Gavin
 Wood, Mike
 Wragg, Mr William
 Wright, rh Jeremy
 Young, Jacob
 Zahawi, rh Nadhim

Tellers for the Ayes:
Michael Tomlinson and
Scott Mann

NOES

Abbott, rh Ms Diane
 Abrahams, Debbie
 Ali, Rushanara
 Ali, Tahir
 Allin-Khan, Dr Rosena
 Amesbury, Mike
 Anderson, Fleur
 Antoniazzi, Tonia
 Ashworth, rh Jonathan
 Barker, Paula
 Beckett, rh Margaret
 Begum, Apsana
 Benn, rh Hilary
 Betts, Mr Clive
 Black, Mhairi
 Blackford, rh Ian
 Blackman, Kirsty
 Blake, Olivia
 Blomfield, Paul
 Bradshaw, rh Mr Ben
 Brennan, Kevin
 Brock, Deidre
 Brown, Alan
 Brown, rh Mr Nicholas
 Bryant, Chris
 Buck, Ms Karen
 Burgon, Richard
 Byrne, Ian
 Byrne, rh Liam
 Cadbury, Ruth
 Callaghan, Amy
 Cameron, Dr Lisa
 Campbell, rh Sir Alan
 Campbell, Mr Gregory
 Carmichael, rh Mr Alistair
 Chamberlain, Wendy
 Champion, Sarah
 Chapman, Douglas
 Clark, Feryal
 Cooper, Daisy
 Cooper, rh Yvette
 Corbyn, rh Jeremy
 Cowan, Ronnie
 Crawley, Angela
 Creasy, Stella
 Cruddas, Jon
 Cummins, Judith
 Daby, Janet
 Davey, rh Ed
 David, Wayne
 Davies-Jones, Alex
 Day, Martyn
 De Cordova, Marsha
 Dhesi, Mr Tanmanjeet Singh
 Docherty-Hughes, Martin
 Dodds, Anneliese
 Donaldson, rh Sir Jeffrey M.
 Doogan, Dave
 Dorans, Allan

Duffield, Rosie
 Eagle, Dame Angela
 Eagle, Maria
 Eastwood, Colum
 Efford, Clive
 Elliott, Julie
 Elmore, Chris
 Esterson, Bill
 Evans, Chris
 Farry, Stephen
 Ferrier, Margaret
 Fletcher, Colleen
 Flynn, Stephen
 Fovargue, Yvonne
 Foxcroft, Vicky
 Foy, Mary Kelly
 Gardiner, Barry
 Gibson, Patricia
 Glindon, Mary
 Grady, Patrick
 Grant, Peter
 Green, Kate
 Green, Sarah
 Greenwood, Lilian
 Griffith, Nia
 Gwynne, Andrew
 Haigh, Louise
 Hamilton, Fabian
 Hamilton, Mrs Paulette
 Hanna, Claire
 Hardy, Emma
 Hayes, Helen
 Healey, rh John
 Hendrick, Sir Mark
 Hendry, Drew
 Hillier, Dame Meg
 Hobhouse, Wera
 Hodgson, Mrs Sharon
 Hopkins, Rachel
 Hosie, rh Stewart
 Huq, Dr Rupa
 Hussain, Imran
 Jardine, Christine
 Jarvis, Dan
 Johnson, Kim
 Jones, Gerald
 Jones, rh Mr Kevan
 Jones, Ruth
 Jones, Sarah
 Kane, Mike
 Keeley, Barbara
 Kendall, Liz (*Proxy vote cast*
by Mr Pat McFadden)
 Khan, Afzal
 Kinnock, Stephen
 Kyle, Peter
 Lake, Ben
 Lavery, Ian
 Leadbeater, Kim

Lewell-Buck, Mrs Emma
 Lewis, Clive
 Linden, David
 Lloyd, Tony
 Lockhart, Carla
 Long Bailey, Rebecca
 Lucas, Caroline
 Lynch, Holly
 MacAskill, Kenny
 Madders, Justin
 Mahmood, Mr Khalid
 Mahmood, Shabana
 Malhotra, Seema
 Maskell, Rachael
 Mc Nally, John
 McCarthy, Kerry
 McDonald, Andy
 McDonald, Stewart Malcolm
 McDonald, Stuart C.
 McDonnell, rh John
 McFadden, rh Mr Pat
 McGinn, Conor
 McGovern, Alison
 McKinnell, Catherine
 McMahon, Jim
 Mearns, Ian
 Miliband, rh Edward
 Mishra, Navendu
 Monaghan, Carol
 Moran, Layla
 Morden, Jessica
 Morgan, Helen
 Morgan, Stephen
 Morris, Grahame
 Murray, Ian
 Murray, James
 Newlands, Gavin
 Nichols, Charlotte
 Norris, Alex
 O'Hara, Brendan
 Olney, Sarah
 Onwurah, Chi
 Oppong-Asare, Abena
 Osamor, Kate
 Osborne, Kate
 Oswald, Kirsten
 Owatemi, Taiwo
 Paisley, Ian
 Peacock, Stephanie
 Pennycook, Matthew
 Perkins, Mr Toby
 Phillips, Jess
 Pollard, Luke
 Powell, Lucy

Qaisar, Ms Anum
 Qureshi, Yasmin
 Reed, Steve
 Rees, Christina
 Reeves, Ellie
 Reeves, Rachel
 Reynolds, Jonathan
 Ribeiro-Addy, Bell
 Rimmer, Ms Marie
 Rodda, Matt
 Russell-Moyle, Lloyd
 Shah, Naz
 Sharma, Mr Virendra
 Sheppard, Tommy
 Siddiq, Tulip
 Slaughter, Andy
 Smith, Alyn
 Smith, Cat
 Smith, Jeff
 Smyth, Karin
 Sobel, Alex
 Spellar, rh John
 Stephens, Chris
 Stevens, Jo
 Stone, Jamie
 Stringer, Graham
 Sultana, Zarah
 Tami, rh Mark
 Tarry, Sam
 Thewliss, Alison
 Thomas-Symonds, rh Nick
 Thompson, Owen
 Thornberry, rh Emily
 Timms, rh Stephen
 Turner, Karl
 Twist, Liz
 Vaz, rh Valerie
 Wakeford, Christian
 Webbe, Claudia
 West, Catherine
 Western, Matt
 Whitehead, Dr Alan
 Whitford, Dr Philippa
 Whitley, Mick
 Whittome, Nadia
 Williams, Hywel
 Wilson, Munira
 Winter, Beth
 Yasin, Mohammad
 Zeichner, Daniel

Tellers for the Noes:
Marion Fellows and
Richard Thomson

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendment 24 disagreed to.

Lords amendment 23 disagreed to.

Clause 62

IDENTIFIED POTENTIAL VICTIMS ETC: DISQUALIFICATION
 FROM PROTECTION

*Motion made, and Question put, That this House
 disagrees with Lords amendment 25.—(Tom Pursglove.)*

The House divided: Ayes 296, Noes 219.

Division No. 228]

[7.44 pm

AYES

Adams, rh Nigel
 Afolami, Bim
 Afriyie, Adam
 Aiken, Nickie
 Aldous, Peter
 Allan, Lucy
 Anderson, Lee
 Anderson, Stuart
 Andrew, rh Stuart
 Ansell, Caroline
 Argar, Edward
 Atherton, Sarah
 Atkins, Victoria
 Bacon, Gareth
 Bacon, Mr Richard
 Badenoch, Kemi
 Bailey, Shaun
 Baillie, Siobhan
 Baker, Duncan
 Baron, Mr John
 Baynes, Simon
 Bell, Aaron
 Benton, Scott
 Beresford, Sir Paul
 Bhatti, Saqib
 Blackman, Bob
 Bone, Mr Peter
 Bottomley, Sir Peter
 Bowie, Andrew
 Bradley, Ben
 Brady, Sir Graham
 Brereton, Jack
 Bridgen, Andrew
 Brine, Steve
 Bristow, Paul
 Britcliffe, Sara
 Browne, Anthony
 Bruce, Fiona
 Buchan, Felicity
 Burghart, Alex
 Burns, rh Conor
 Butler, Rob
 Cairns, rh Alun
 Carter, Andy
 Cartledge, James
 Cates, Miriam
 Caulfield, Maria
 Chalk, Alex
 Chishti, Rehman
 Chope, Sir Christopher
 Churchill, Jo
 Clark, rh Greg
 Clarke, rh Mr Simon
 Clarke, Theo
 Clarke-Smith, Brendan
 Clarkson, Chris
 Clifton-Brown, Sir Geoffrey
 Coffey, rh Dr Thérèse
 Colburn, Elliot
 Collins, Damian
 Courts, Robert
 Coutinho, Claire
 Crosbie, Virginia
 Crouch, Tracey
 Daly, James
 Davies, David T. C.
 Davies, Gareth
 Davies, Dr James
 Davies, Mims

Davies, Philip
 Davison, Dehenna
 Dinenage, Dame Caroline
 Dines, Miss Sarah
 Djanogly, Mr Jonathan
 Docherty, Leo
 Donelan, rh Michelle
 Dowden, rh Oliver
 Doyle-Price, Jackie
 Drax, Richard
 Drummond, Mrs Flick
 Dunne, rh Philip
 Edwards, Ruth
 Ellis, rh Michael
 Ellwood, rh Mr Tobias
 Elphicke, Mrs Natalie
 Eustice, rh George
 Evans, Dr Luke
 Evennett, rh Sir David
 Everitt, Ben
 Fabricant, Michael
 Farris, Laura
 Fell, Simon
 Firth, Anna
 Fletcher, Katherine
 Fletcher, Mark
 Fletcher, Nick
 Ford, Vicky
 Foster, Kevin
 Fox, rh Dr Liam
 Frazer, rh Lucy
 Freeman, George
 French, Mr Louie
 Fuller, Richard
 Garnier, Mark
 Ghani, Ms Nusrat
 Gibb, rh Nick
 Gibson, Peter
 Gideon, Jo
 Glen, John
 Goodwill, rh Sir Robert
 Gove, rh Michael
 Gray, James
 Grayling, rh Chris
 Green, Chris
 Green, rh Damian
 Griffith, Andrew
 Griffiths, Kate
 Grundy, James
 Gullis, Jonathan
 Halfon, rh Robert
 Hall, Luke
 Hammond, Stephen
 Hancock, rh Matt
 Harper, rh Mr Mark
 Harris, Rebecca
 Harrison, Trudy
 Hart, Sally-Ann
 Hart, rh Simon
 Hayes, rh Sir John
 Heald, rh Sir Oliver
 Heapey, James
 Heaton-Harris, rh Chris
 Henderson, Gordon
 Henry, Darren
 Higginbotham, Antony
 Hinds, rh Damian
 Hoare, Simon
 Hollinrake, Kevin

Hollobone, Mr Philip
 Holloway, Adam
 Holmes, Paul
 Howell, Paul
 Huddleston, Nigel
 Hudson, Dr Neil
 Hughes, Eddie
 Hunt, Jane
 Hunt, rh Jeremy
 Hunt, Tom
 Jack, rh Mr Alister
 Javid, rh Sajid
 Jenkin, Sir Bernard
 Jenkinson, Mark
 Jenkyns, Andrea
 Johnson, Dr Caroline
 Johnson, Gareth
 Johnston, David
 Jones, Andrew
 Jones, Fay
 Jones, Mr Marcus
 Jupp, Simon
 Kawczynski, Daniel
 Kearns, Alicia
 Keegan, Gillian
 Knight, rh Sir Greg
 Knight, Julian
 Kruger, Danny
 Lamont, John
 Latham, Mrs Pauline
 Leadsom, rh Dame Andrea
 Leigh, rh Sir Edward
 Lewer, Andrew
 Lewis, rh Brandon
 Lewis, rh Dr Julian
 Loder, Chris
 Logan, Mark
 Longhi, Marco
 Lopez, Julia
 Lopresti, Jack
 Loughton, Tim
 Mackinlay, Craig
 Mackrory, Cherilyn
 Maclean, Rachel
 Mak, Alan
 Malthouse, rh Kit
 Mangnall, Anthony
 Marson, Julie
 Mayhew, Jerome
 Maynard, Paul
 McCartney, Jason
 McCartney, Karl
 McPartland, Stephen
 McVey, rh Esther
 Menzies, Mark
 Merriman, Huw
 Metcalfe, Stephen
 Millar, Robin
 Miller, rh Mrs Maria
 Mills, Nigel
 Moore, Damien
 Moore, Robbie
 Mordaunt, rh Penny
 Morris, Anne Marie
 Morris, James
 Mortimer, Jill
 Morton, Wendy
 Mullan, Dr Kieran
 Mumby-Croft, Holly
 Mundell, rh David
 Murray, Mrs Sheryll
 Nici, Lia

O'Brien, Neil
 Offord, Dr Matthew
 Opperman, Guy
 Parish, Neil
 Patel, rh Priti
 Penning, rh Sir Mike
 Penrose, John
 Percy, Andrew
 Philp, Chris
 Pincher, rh Christopher
 Poulter, Dr Dan
 Pow, Rebecca
 Prentis, Victoria
 Pursglove, Tom
 Quince, Will
 Raab, rh Dominic
 Randall, Tom
 Redwood, rh John
 Rees-Mogg, rh Mr Jacob
 Richards, Nicola
 Richardson, Angela
 Robertson, Mr Laurence
 Rosindell, Andrew
 Rowley, Lee
 Russell, Dean
 Rutley, David
 Sambrook, Gary
 Saxby, Selaine
 Scully, Paul
 Seely, Bob
 Shapps, rh Grant
 Simmonds, David
 Skidmore, rh Chris
 Smith, Chloe
 Smith, Greg
 Smith, Henry
 Smith, rh Julian
 Smith, Royston
 Solloway, Amanda
 Spencer, Dr Ben
 Spencer, rh Mark
 Stafford, Alexander
 Stephenson, Andrew
 Stevenson, Jane
 Stevenson, John
 Stewart, rh Bob
 Stewart, Iain
 Streeter, Sir Gary
 Stride, rh Mel
 Sturdy, Julian
 Sunderland, James
 Swayne, rh Sir Desmond
 Syms, Sir Robert
 Thomas, Derek
 Timpson, Edward
 Tolhurst, Kelly
 Tomlinson, Justin
 Tomlinson, Michael
 Tracey, Craig
 Tugendhat, Tom
 Vara, Shailesh
 Vickers, Martin
 Villiers, rh Theresa
 Walker, Sir Charles
 Wallis, Dr Jamie
 Warburton, David
 Warman, Matt
 Watling, Giles
 Webb, Suzanne
 Whately, Helen
 Wheeler, Mrs Heather
 Whittaker, Craig

Whittingdale, rh Mr John
 Wiggin, Sir Bill
 Wild, James
 Williams, Craig
 Williamson, rh Sir Gavin
 Wood, Mike
 Wragg, Mr William

Wright, rh Jeremy
 Young, Jacob
 Zahawi, rh Nadhim

Tellers for the Ayes:
Steve Double and
Scott Mann

NOES

Abbott, rh Ms Diane
 Abrahams, Debbie
 Ali, Rushanara
 Ali, Tahir
 Allin-Khan, Dr Rosena
 Amesbury, Mike
 Anderson, Fleur
 Antoniazzi, Tonia
 Ashworth, rh Jonathan
 Barker, Paula
 Beckett, rh Margaret
 Begum, Apsana
 Benn, rh Hilary
 Betts, Mr Clive
 Black, Mhairi
 Blackford, rh Ian
 Blackman, Kirsty
 Blake, Olivia
 Blomfield, Paul
 Bradshaw, rh Mr Ben
 Brennan, Kevin
 Brock, Deidre
 Brown, Alan
 Brown, rh Mr Nicholas
 Bryant, Chris
 Buck, Ms Karen
 Burgon, Richard
 Byrne, Ian
 Byrne, rh Liam
 Cadbury, Ruth
 Callaghan, Amy
 Cameron, Dr Lisa
 Campbell, rh Sir Alan
 Campbell, Mr Gregory
 Carmichael, rh Mr Alistair
 Chamberlain, Wendy
 Champion, Sarah
 Chapman, Douglas
 Clark, Feryal
 Cooper, Daisy
 Cooper, rh Yvette
 Corbyn, rh Jeremy
 Cowan, Ronnie
 Crawley, Angela
 Creasy, Stella
 Cruddas, Jon
 Cummins, Judith
 Daby, Janet
 Davey, rh Ed
 David, Wayne
 Davies-Jones, Alex
 Day, Martyn
 De Cordova, Marsha
 Dhesi, Mr Tanmanjeet Singh
 Docherty-Hughes, Martin
 Dodds, Anneliese
 Donaldson, rh Sir Jeffrey M.
 Doogan, Dave
 Dorans, Allan
 Duffield, Rosie
 Eagle, Dame Angela
 Eagle, Maria

Eastwood, Colum
 Efford, Clive
 Elliott, Julie
 Elmore, Chris
 Esterson, Bill
 Evans, Chris
 Farry, Stephen
 Fellows, Marion
 Ferrier, Margaret
 Fletcher, Colleen
 Flynn, Stephen
 Fovargue, Yvonne
 Foxcroft, Vicky
 Foy, Mary Kelly
 Gardiner, Barry
 Gibson, Patricia
 Grady, Patrick
 Grant, Peter
 Green, Kate
 Green, Sarah
 Greenwood, Lilian
 Griffith, Nia
 Gwynne, Andrew
 Haigh, Louise
 Hamilton, Fabian
 Hamilton, Mrs Paulette
 Hanna, Claire
 Hardy, Emma
 Hayes, Helen
 Healey, rh John
 Hendry, Drew
 Hillier, Dame Meg
 Hobhouse, Wera
 Hodgson, Mrs Sharon
 Hopkins, Rachel
 Hosie, rh Stewart
 Huq, Dr Rupa
 Hussain, Imran
 Jardine, Christine
 Jarvis, Dan
 Johnson, Kim
 Jones, Darren
 Jones, Gerald
 Jones, rh Mr Kevan
 Jones, Ruth
 Jones, Sarah
 Kane, Mike
 Keeley, Barbara
 Kendall, Liz (*Proxy vote cast*
by Mr Pat McFadden)
 Khan, Afzal
 Kinnock, Stephen
 Kyle, Peter
 Lake, Ben
 Lavery, Ian
 Leadbeater, Kim
 Lewell-Buck, Mrs Emma
 Lewis, Clive
 Linden, David
 Lloyd, Tony
 Lockhart, Carla
 Long Bailey, Rebecca

Lucas, Caroline
 Lynch, Holly
 MacAskill, Kenny
 Madders, Justin
 Mahmood, Mr Khalid
 Mahmood, Shabana
 Malhotra, Seema
 Maskell, Rachael
 McCarthy, Kerry
 McDonald, Andy
 McDonald, Stewart Malcolm
 McDonald, Stuart C.
 McDonnell, rh John
 McFadden, rh Mr Pat
 McGinn, Conor
 McGovern, Alison
 McKinnell, Catherine
 McMahon, Jim
 Mearns, Ian
 Miliband, rh Edward
 Mishra, Navendu
 Monaghan, Carol
 Moran, Layla
 Morden, Jessica
 Morgan, Helen
 Morgan, Stephen
 Morris, Grahame
 Murray, Ian
 Murray, James
 Newlands, Gavin
 Nichols, Charlotte
 Norris, Alex
 O'Hara, Brendan
 Olney, Sarah
 Onwurah, Chi
 Oppong-Asare, Abena
 Osamor, Kate
 Osborne, Kate
 Oswald, Kirsten
 Owatemi, Taiwo
 Paisley, Ian
 Peacock, Stephanie
 Pennycook, Matthew
 Perkins, Mr Toby
 Phillips, Jess
 Pollard, Luke
 Powell, Lucy
 Qaisar, Ms Anum
 Qureshi, Yasmin
 Reed, Steve
 Rees, Christina

Reeves, Ellie
 Reeves, Rachel
 Reynolds, Jonathan
 Ribeiro-Addy, Bell
 Rimmer, Ms Marie
 Rodda, Matt
 Russell-Moyle, Lloyd
 Shah, Naz
 Sharma, Mr Virendra
 Sheppard, Tommy
 Siddiq, Tulip
 Slaughter, Andy
 Smith, Alyn
 Smith, Cat
 Smith, Jeff
 Smyth, Karin
 Sobel, Alex
 Spellar, rh John
 Stephens, Chris
 Stevens, Jo
 Stone, Jamie
 Stringer, Graham
 Sultana, Zarah
 Tami, rh Mark
 Tarry, Sam
 Thewliss, Alison
 Thomas-Symonds, rh Nick
 Thompson, Owen
 Thomson, Richard
 Thornberry, rh Emily
 Timms, rh Stephen
 Turner, Karl
 Vaz, rh Valerie
 Wakeford, Christian
 Webbe, Claudia
 West, Catherine
 Western, Matt
 Whitehead, Dr Alan
 Whitford, Dr Philippa
 Whitley, Mick
 Whittome, Nadia
 Williams, Hywel
 Wilson, Munira
 Winter, Beth
 Yasin, Mohammad
 Zeichner, Daniel

Tellers for the Noes:

Liz Twist and
 Mary Glindon

Andrew, rh Stuart
 Ansell, Caroline
 Argar, Edward
 Atherton, Sarah
 Atkins, Victoria
 Bacon, Gareth
 Bacon, Mr Richard
 Badenoch, Kemi
 Bailey, Shaun
 Baillie, Siobhan
 Baker, Duncan
 Baron, Mr John
 Baynes, Simon
 Bell, Aaron
 Benton, Scott
 Beresford, Sir Paul
 Bhatti, Saqib
 Blackman, Bob
 Bone, Mr Peter
 Bottomley, Sir Peter
 Bowie, Andrew
 Bradley, Ben
 Brady, Sir Graham
 Brereton, Jack
 Bridgen, Andrew
 Brine, Steve
 Bristow, Paul
 Britcliffe, Sara
 Browne, Anthony
 Bruce, Fiona
 Buchan, Felicity
 Buckland, rh Sir Robert
 Burghart, Alex
 Burns, rh Conor
 Butler, Rob
 Cairns, rh Alun
 Carter, Andy
 Cartlidge, James
 Cates, Miriam
 Caulfield, Maria
 Chalk, Alex
 Chishti, Rehman
 Chope, Sir Christopher
 Churchill, Jo
 Clark, rh Greg
 Clarke, rh Mr Simon
 Clarke, Theo
 Clarke-Smith, Brendan
 Clarkson, Chris
 Clifton-Brown, Sir Geoffrey
 Coffey, rh Dr Thérèse
 Colburn, Elliot
 Collins, Damian
 Courts, Robert
 Coutinho, Claire
 Crosbie, Virginia
 Crouch, Tracey
 Daly, James
 Davies, David T. C.
 Davies, Gareth
 Davies, Dr James
 Davies, Mims
 Davies, Philip
 Davison, Dehenna
 Dinenage, Dame Caroline
 Dines, Miss Sarah
 Djanogly, Mr Jonathan
 Docherty, Leo
 Donelan, rh Michelle
 Dowden, rh Oliver

Doyle-Price, Jackie
 Drax, Richard
 Drummond, Mrs Flick
 Dunne, rh Philip
 Edwards, Ruth
 Ellis, rh Michael
 Ellwood, rh Mr Tobias
 Elphicke, Mrs Natalie
 Eustice, rh George
 Evans, Dr Luke
 Evennett, rh Sir David
 Everitt, Ben
 Fabricant, Michael
 Farris, Laura
 Fell, Simon
 Firth, Anna
 Fletcher, Katherine
 Fletcher, Mark
 Fletcher, Nick
 Ford, Vicky
 Foster, Kevin
 Fox, rh Dr Liam
 Frazer, rh Lucy
 Freeman, George
 French, Mr Louie
 Fuller, Richard
 Garnier, Mark
 Gibb, rh Nick
 Gibson, Peter
 Gideon, Jo
 Glen, John
 Goodwill, rh Sir Robert
 Gove, rh Michael
 Gray, James
 Grayling, rh Chris
 Green, Chris
 Green, rh Damian
 Griffiths, Kate
 Grundy, James
 Gullis, Jonathan
 Halfon, rh Robert
 Hall, Luke
 Hammond, Stephen
 Hancock, rh Matt
 Harper, rh Mr Mark
 Harris, Rebecca
 Harrison, Trudy
 Hart, Sally-Ann
 Hart, rh Simon
 Hayes, rh Sir John
 Heald, rh Sir Oliver
 Heapey, James
 Heaton-Harris, rh Chris
 Henderson, Gordon
 Henry, Darren
 Higginbotham, Antony
 Hinds, rh Damian
 Hoare, Simon
 Hollinrake, Kevin
 Hollobone, Mr Philip
 Holloway, Adam
 Holmes, Paul
 Howell, Paul
 Huddleston, Nigel
 Hudson, Dr Neil
 Hughes, Eddie
 Hunt, Jane
 Hunt, rh Jeremy
 Hunt, Tom
 Javid, rh Sajid

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendment 25 disagreed to.

Clause 64

IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL VICTIMS OF SLAVERY OR
 HUMAN TRAFFICKING

*Motion made, and Question put, That this House
 disagrees with Lords amendment 26.—(Tom Pursglove.)*

The House divided: Ayes 291, Noes 214.

Division No. 229]

[7.55 pm]

AYES

Adams, rh Nigel
 Afolami, Bim
 Afriyie, Adam
 Aiken, Nickie
 Aldous, Peter
 Allan, Lucy
 Anderson, Lee
 Anderson, Stuart

Jenkinson, Mark
 Jenkyns, Andrea
 Johnson, Dr Caroline
 Johnson, Gareth
 Johnston, David
 Jones, Andrew
 Jones, Fay
 Jones, Mr Marcus
 Jupp, Simon
 Kawczynski, Daniel
 Kearns, Alicia
 Keegan, Gillian
 Knight, rh Sir Greg
 Knight, Julian
 Kruger, Danny
 Kwarteng, rh Kwasi
 Lamont, John
 Leadsom, rh Dame Andrea
 Leigh, rh Sir Edward
 Lewer, Andrew
 Lewis, rh Brandon
 Lewis, rh Dr Julian
 Loder, Chris
 Logan, Mark
 Longhi, Marco
 Lopez, Julia
 Lopresti, Jack
 Mackinlay, Craig
 Mackrory, Cherilyn
 Maclean, Rachel
 Mak, Alan
 Malthouse, rh Kit
 Mangnall, Anthony
 Marson, Julie
 Mayhew, Jerome
 Maynard, Paul
 McCartney, Karl
 McPartland, Stephen
 McVey, rh Esther
 Menzies, Mark
 Merriman, Huw
 Metcalfe, Stephen
 Millar, Robin
 Miller, rh Mrs Maria
 Mills, Nigel
 Moore, Damien
 Moore, Robbie
 Mordaunt, rh Penny
 Morris, James
 Morrissey, Joy
 Mortimer, Jill
 Morton, Wendy
 Mullan, Dr Kieran
 Mumby-Croft, Holly
 Mundell, rh David
 Murray, Mrs Sheryll
 Nici, Lia
 O'Brien, Neil
 Offord, Dr Matthew
 Opperman, Guy
 Parish, Neil
 Patel, rh Priti
 Penning, rh Sir Mike
 Penrose, John
 Percy, Andrew
 Philp, Chris
 Pincher, rh Christopher
 Poulter, Dr Dan
 Pow, Rebecca
 Prentis, Victoria

Pursglove, Tom
 Quince, Will
 Raab, rh Dominic
 Randall, Tom
 Redwood, rh John
 Rees-Mogg, rh Mr Jacob
 Richards, Nicola
 Richardson, Angela
 Robertson, Mr Laurence
 Rosindell, Andrew
 Rowley, Lee
 Russell, Dean
 Rutley, David
 Sambrook, Gary
 Saxby, Selaine
 Scully, Paul
 Seely, Bob
 Shapps, rh Grant
 Simmonds, David
 Skidmore, rh Chris
 Smith, Chloe
 Smith, Greg
 Smith, Henry
 Smith, rh Julian
 Smith, Royston
 Solloway, Amanda
 Spencer, Dr Ben
 Spencer, rh Mark
 Stafford, Alexander
 Stephenson, Andrew
 Stevenson, Jane
 Stevenson, John
 Stewart, rh Bob
 Stewart, Iain
 Streeter, Sir Gary
 Stride, rh Mel
 Sturdy, Julian
 Sunderland, James
 Syms, Sir Robert
 Thomas, Derek
 Timpson, Edward
 Tolhurst, Kelly
 Tomlinson, Justin
 Tomlinson, Michael
 Tracey, Craig
 Tugendhat, Tom
 Vara, Shailesh
 Vickers, Martin
 Villiers, rh Theresa
 Walker, Sir Charles
 Wallis, Dr Jamie
 Warburton, David
 Warman, Matt
 Watling, Giles
 Webb, Suzanne
 Whately, Helen
 Wheeler, Mrs Heather
 Whittaker, Craig
 Whittingdale, rh Mr John
 Wiggin, Sir Bill
 Wild, James
 Williams, Craig
 Williamson, rh Sir Gavin
 Wood, Mike
 Wragg, Mr William
 Wright, rh Jeremy
 Young, Jacob
 Zahawi, rh Nadhim

Tellers for the Ayes:
 Steve Double and
 Scott Mann

NOES

Abbott, rh Ms Diane
 Abrahams, Debbie
 Ali, Rushanara
 Ali, Tahir
 Allin-Khan, Dr Rosena
 Amesbury, Mike
 Anderson, Fleur
 Antoniazzi, Tonia
 Ashworth, rh Jonathan
 Barker, Paula
 Beckett, rh Margaret
 Begum, Apsana
 Benn, rh Hilary
 Betts, Mr Clive
 Black, Mhairi
 Seely, Bob
 Blackford, rh Ian
 Blackman, Kirsty
 Blake, Olivia
 Blomfield, Paul
 Bradshaw, rh Mr Ben
 Brennan, Kevin
 Brock, Deidre
 Brown, Alan
 Brown, rh Mr Nicholas
 Bryant, Chris
 Buck, Ms Karen
 Burgon, Richard
 Byrne, Ian
 Byrne, rh Liam
 Cadbury, Ruth
 Callaghan, Amy
 Cameron, Dr Lisa
 Campbell, rh Sir Alan
 Carmichael, rh Mr Alistair
 Chamberlain, Wendy
 Champion, Sarah
 Chapman, Douglas
 Clark, Feryal
 Cooper, Daisy
 Cooper, rh Yvette
 Corbyn, rh Jeremy
 Cowan, Ronnie
 Crawley, Angela
 Creasy, Stella
 Cruddas, Jon
 Cummins, Judith
 Daby, Janet
 Davey, rh Ed
 David, Wayne
 Davies-Jones, Alex
 Day, Martyn
 De Cordova, Marsha
 Dhesi, Mr Tanmanjeet Singh
 Docherty-Hughes, Martin
 Dodds, Anneliese
 Doogan, Dave
 Dorans, Allan
 Duffield, Rosie
 Eagle, Dame Angela
 Eagle, Maria
 Eastwood, Colum
 Efford, Clive
 Elliott, Julie
 Elmore, Chris
 Esterson, Bill
 Evans, Chris
 Farry, Stephen
 Fellows, Marion
 Ferrier, Margaret
 Fletcher, Colleen
 Flynn, Stephen
 Fovargue, Yvonne
 Foxcroft, Vicky
 Foy, Mary Kelly
 Gardiner, Barry
 Gibson, Patricia
 Grady, Patrick
 Grant, Peter
 Green, Kate
 Green, Sarah
 Greenwood, Lilian
 Griffith, Nia
 Gwynne, Andrew
 Haigh, Louise
 Hamilton, Fabian
 Hamilton, Mrs Paulette
 Hanna, Claire
 Hardy, Emma
 Hayes, Helen
 Healey, rh John
 Hendry, Drew
 Hillier, Dame Meg
 Hobhouse, Wera
 Hodgson, Mrs Sharon
 Hopkins, Rachel
 Hosie, rh Stewart
 Huq, Dr Rupa
 Hussain, Imran
 Jardine, Christine
 Jarvis, Dan
 Johnson, Kim
 Jones, Darren
 Jones, Gerald
 Jones, rh Mr Kevan
 Jones, Ruth
 Jones, Sarah
 Kane, Mike
 Keeley, Barbara
 Kendall, Liz (*Proxy vote cast
 by Pat McFadden*)
 Khan, Afzal
 Kinnock, Stephen
 Kyle, Peter
 Lake, Ben
 Lavery, Ian
 Leadbeater, Kim
 Lewell-Buck, Mrs Emma
 Lewis, Clive
 Linden, David
 Lloyd, Tony
 Long Bailey, Rebecca
 Lucas, Caroline
 Lynch, Holly
 MacAskill, Kenny
 Madders, Justin
 Mahmood, Mr Khalid
 Mahmood, Shabana
 Malhotra, Seema
 Maskell, Rachael
 Mc Nally, John
 McCarthy, Kerry
 McDonald, Andy
 McDonald, Stewart Malcolm
 McDonald, Stuart C.
 McDonnell, rh John
 McFadden, rh Mr Pat
 McGinn, Conor
 McGovern, Alison
 McKinnell, Catherine
 McMahon, Jim
 Mearns, Ian
 Miliband, rh Edward

Mishra, Navendu
 Monaghan, Carol
 Moran, Layla
 Morden, Jessica
 Morgan, Helen
 Morgan, Stephen
 Morris, Grahame
 Murray, Ian
 Murray, James
 Newlands, Gavin
 Nichols, Charlotte
 Norris, Alex
 O'Hara, Brendan
 Olney, Sarah
 Onwurah, Chi
 Oppong-Asare, Abena
 Osamor, Kate
 Osborne, Kate
 Oswald, Kirsten
 Owatemi, Taiwo
 Peacock, Stephanie
 Pennycook, Matthew
 Perkins, Mr Toby
 Phillips, Jess
 Pollard, Luke
 Qaisar, Ms Anum
 Qureshi, Yasmin
 Reed, Steve
 Rees, Christina
 Reeves, Ellie
 Reeves, Rachel
 Reynolds, Jonathan
 Ribeiro-Addy, Bell
 Rimmer, Ms Marie
 Rodda, Matt
 Russell-Moyle, Lloyd
 Shah, Naz
 Sharma, Mr Virendra
 Sheppard, Tommy

Siddiq, Tulip
 Slaughter, Andy
 Smith, Alyn
 Smith, Cat
 Smith, Jeff
 Smyth, Karin
 Sobel, Alex
 Spellar, rh John
 Stephens, Chris
 Stevens, Jo
 Stone, Jamie
 Sultana, Sarah
 Tami, rh Mark
 Tarry, Sam
 Thewliss, Alison
 Thomas-Symonds, rh Nick
 Thompson, Owen
 Thomson, Richard
 Thornberry, rh Emily
 Timms, rh Stephen
 Turner, Karl
 Vaz, rh Valerie
 Wakeford, Christian
 Webbe, Claudia
 West, Catherine
 Western, Matt
 Whitehead, Dr Alan
 Whitford, Dr Philippa
 Whitley, Mick
 Whittome, Nadia
 Williams, Hywel
 Wilson, Munira
 Winter, Beth
 Yasin, Mohammad
 Zeichner, Daniel

Tellers for the Noes:

**Liz Twist and
 Mary Glindon**

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendment 26 disagreed to.

Lords amendment 27 disagreed to.

Clause 71

ELECTRONIC TRAVEL AUTHORISATIONS

Motion made, and Question put, That this House disagrees with Lords amendment 40.—(Tom Pursglove.)

The House divided: Ayes 298, Noes 216.

Division No. 230]

[8.7 pm

AYES

Adams, rh Nigel
 Afolami, Bim
 Afriyie, Adam
 Aiken, Nickie
 Aldous, Peter
 Allan, Lucy
 Anderson, Lee
 Anderson, Stuart
 Andrew, rh Stuart
 Ansell, Caroline
 Argar, Edward
 Atherton, Sarah
 Atkins, Victoria
 Bacon, Gareth
 Bacon, Mr Richard
 Badenoch, Kemi
 Bailey, Shaun
 Baillie, Siobhan
 Baker, Duncan
 Baron, Mr John
 Baynes, Simon
 Bell, Aaron
 Benton, Scott
 Beresford, Sir Paul
 Bhatti, Saqib
 Blackman, Bob
 Bone, Mr Peter
 Bottomley, Sir Peter
 Bowie, Andrew
 Bradley, Ben

Brady, Sir Graham
 Brereton, Jack
 Bridgen, Andrew
 Brine, Steve
 Bristow, Paul
 Britcliffe, Sara
 Browne, Anthony
 Bruce, Fiona
 Buchan, Felicity
 Buckland, rh Sir Robert
 Burghart, Alex
 Burns, rh Conor
 Butler, Rob
 Cairns, rh Alun
 Campbell, Mr Gregory
 Carter, Andy
 Cartledge, James
 Cates, Miriam
 Caulfield, Maria
 Chalk, Alex
 Chishti, Rehman
 Chope, Sir Christopher
 Churchill, Jo
 Clark, rh Greg
 Clarke, rh Mr Simon
 Clarke, Theo
 Clarke-Smith, Brendan
 Clarkson, Chris
 Clifton-Brown, Sir Geoffrey
 Coffey, rh Dr Thérèse
 Colburn, Elliot
 Collins, Damian
 Courts, Robert
 Coutinho, Claire
 Crosbie, Virginia
 Crouch, Tracey
 Daly, James
 Davies, David T. C.
 Davies, Gareth
 Davies, Dr James
 Davies, Mims
 Davies, Philip
 Davison, Dehenna
 Dinage, Dame Caroline
 Dines, Miss Sarah
 Djanogly, Mr Jonathan
 Docherty, Leo
 Donaldson, rh Sir Jeffrey M.
 Donelan, rh Michelle
 Double, Steve
 Dowden, rh Oliver
 Drax, Richard
 Drummond, Mrs Flick
 Duncan Smith, rh Sir Iain
 Dunne, rh Philip
 Edwards, Ruth
 Ellis, rh Michael
 Ellwood, rh Mr Tobias
 Elphicke, Mrs Natalie
 Eustice, rh George
 Evans, Dr Luke
 Evennett, rh Sir David
 Everitt, Ben
 Fabricant, Michael
 Farris, Laura
 Fell, Simon
 Firth, Anna
 Fletcher, Katherine
 Fletcher, Mark
 Fletcher, Nick
 Ford, Vicky
 Foster, Kevin

Fox, rh Dr Liam
 Frazer, rh Lucy
 Freeman, George
 French, Mr Louie
 Fuller, Richard
 Garnier, Mark
 Ghani, Ms Nusrat
 Gibb, rh Nick
 Gibson, Peter
 Gideon, Jo
 Glen, John
 Goodwill, rh Sir Robert
 Gove, rh Michael
 Gray, James
 Grayling, rh Chris
 Green, Chris
 Green, rh Damian
 Griffith, Andrew
 Griffiths, Kate
 Grundy, James
 Gullis, Jonathan
 Halfon, rh Robert
 Hall, Luke
 Hammond, Stephen
 Hancock, rh Matt
 Harper, rh Mr Mark
 Harris, Rebecca
 Harrison, Trudy
 Hart, Sally-Ann
 Hart, rh Simon
 Hayes, rh Sir John
 Heald, rh Sir Oliver
 Heapey, James
 Heaton-Harris, rh Chris
 Henderson, Gordon
 Henry, Darren
 Higginbotham, Antony
 Hinds, rh Damian
 Hollinrake, Kevin
 Hollobone, Mr Philip
 Holloway, Adam
 Holmes, Paul
 Howell, Paul
 Huddleston, Nigel
 Hudson, Dr Neil
 Hughes, Eddie
 Hunt, Jane
 Hunt, rh Jeremy
 Hunt, Tom
 Javid, rh Sajid
 Jenkin, Sir Bernard
 Jenkinson, Mark
 Jenkins, Andrea
 Johnson, Dr Caroline
 Johnston, David
 Jones, Andrew
 Jones, Fay
 Jones, Mr Marcus
 Jupp, Simon
 Kawczynski, Daniel
 Kearns, Alicia
 Keegan, Gillian
 Knight, rh Sir Greg
 Knight, Julian
 Kruger, Danny
 Kwarteng, rh Kwasi
 Lamont, John
 Latham, Mrs Pauline
 Leadsom, rh Dame Andrea
 Leigh, rh Sir Edward
 Lewer, Andrew
 Lewis, rh Brandon

Lewis, rh Dr Julian
 Lockhart, Carla
 Loder, Chris
 Logan, Mark
 Longhi, Marco
 Lopez, Julia
 Lopresti, Jack
 Loughton, Tim
 Mackinlay, Craig
 Mackrory, Cherilyn
 Maclean, Rachel
 Mak, Alan
 Malthouse, rh Kit
 Mangnall, Anthony
 Mann, Scott
 Marson, Julie
 Mayhew, Jerome
 Maynard, Paul
 McCartney, Jason
 McCartney, Karl
 McPartland, Stephen
 McVey, rh Esther
 Menzies, Mark
 Merriman, Huw
 Metcalfe, Stephen
 Millar, Robin
 Miller, rh Mrs Maria
 Mills, Nigel
 Moore, Damien
 Moore, Robbie
 Mordaunt, rh Penny
 Morris, Anne Marie
 Morris, James
 Morrissey, Joy
 Mortimer, Jill
 Morton, Wendy
 Mullan, Dr Kieran
 Mumby-Croft, Holly
 Mundell, rh David
 Murray, Mrs Sheryll
 Nici, Lia
 O'Brien, Neil
 Offord, Dr Matthew
 Opperman, Guy
 Paisley, Ian
 Parish, Neil
 Patel, rh Priti
 Penning, rh Sir Mike
 Penrose, John
 Percy, Andrew
 Philp, Chris
 Pincher, rh Christopher
 Poulter, Dr Dan
 Pow, Rebecca
 Prentis, Victoria
 Pursglove, Tom
 Quince, Will
 Randall, Tom
 Redwood, rh John
 Rees-Mogg, rh Mr Jacob
 Richards, Nicola
 Richardson, Angela
 Robertson, Mr Laurence

Rosindell, Andrew
 Rowley, Lee
 Russell, Dean
 Rutley, David
 Sambrook, Gary
 Saxby, Selaine
 Scully, Paul
 Seely, Bob
 Shapps, rh Grant
 Simmonds, David
 Skidmore, rh Chris
 Smith, Chloe
 Smith, Greg
 Smith, Henry
 Smith, Royston
 Solloway, Amanda
 Spencer, Dr Ben
 Spencer, rh Mark
 Stafford, Alexander
 Stephenson, Andrew
 Stevenson, Jane
 Stevenson, John
 Stewart, rh Bob
 Stewart, Iain
 Streeter, Sir Gary
 Stride, rh Mel
 Sturdy, Julian
 Sunderland, James
 Swayne, rh Sir Desmond
 Syms, Sir Robert
 Thomas, Derek
 Timpson, Edward
 Tolhurst, Kelly
 Tomlinson, Justin
 Tracey, Craig
 Tugendhat, Tom
 Vara, Shailesh
 Vickers, Martin
 Villiers, rh Theresa
 Walker, Sir Charles
 Wallis, Dr Jamie
 Warburton, David
 Warman, Matt
 Watling, Giles
 Webb, Suzanne
 Whately, Helen
 Wheeler, Mrs Heather
 Whittaker, Craig
 Whittingdale, rh Mr John
 Wiggin, Sir Bill
 Wild, James
 Williams, Craig
 Williamson, rh Sir Gavin
 Wood, Mike
 Wragg, Mr William
 Wright, rh Jeremy
 Young, Jacob
 Zahawi, rh Nadhim

Tellers for the Ayes:
Michael Tomlinson and
Gareth Johnson

NOES

Abbott, rh Ms Diane
 Abrahams, Debbie
 Ali, Rushanara
 Ali, Tahir
 Allin-Khan, Dr Rosena
 Amesbury, Mike

Anderson, Fleur
 Antoniazzi, Tonia
 Ashworth, rh Jonathan
 Barker, Paula
 Beckett, rh Margaret
 Begum, Apsana

Benn, rh Hilary
 Betts, Mr Clive
 Black, Mhairi
 Blackford, rh Ian
 Blackman, Kirsty
 Blake, Olivia
 Blomfield, Paul
 Bradshaw, rh Mr Ben
 Brennan, Kevin
 Brock, Deidre
 Brown, Alan
 Brown, rh Mr Nicholas
 Bryant, Chris
 Buck, Ms Karen
 Burgon, Richard
 Byrne, Ian
 Byrne, rh Liam
 Cadbury, Ruth
 Callaghan, Amy
 Cameron, Dr Lisa
 Campbell, rh Sir Alan
 Champion, Sarah
 Chapman, Douglas
 Clark, Feryal
 Cooper, Daisy
 Cooper, rh Yvette
 Corbyn, rh Jeremy
 Cowan, Ronnie
 Crawley, Angela
 Creasy, Stella
 Cruddas, Jon
 Cummins, Judith
 Daby, Janet
 Davey, rh Ed
 David, Wayne
 Davies-Jones, Alex
 Day, Martyn
 De Cordova, Marsha
 Dhesi, Mr Tanmanjeet Singh
 Docherty-Hughes, Martin
 Dods, Anneliese
 Doogan, Dave
 Dorans, Allan
 Duffield, Rosie
 Eagle, Dame Angela
 Eagle, Maria
 Eastwood, Colum
 Efford, Clive
 Elliott, Julie
 Elmore, Chris
 Esterson, Bill
 Evans, Chris
 Farry, Stephen
 Fellows, Marion
 Ferrier, Margaret
 Fletcher, Colleen
 Flynn, Stephen
 Fovargue, Yvonne
 Foxcroft, Vicky
 Foy, Mary Kelly
 Gardiner, Barry
 Gibson, Patricia
 Glendon, Mary
 Grady, Patrick
 Grant, Peter
 Green, Kate
 Green, Sarah
 Greenwood, Lilian
 Griffith, Nia
 Gwynne, Andrew
 Haigh, Louise
 Hamilton, Fabian

Hamilton, Mrs Paulette
 Hanna, Claire
 Hardy, Emma
 Hayes, Helen
 Healey, rh John
 Hendry, Drew
 Hillier, Dame Meg
 Hoare, Simon
 Hobhouse, Wera
 Hodgson, Mrs Sharon
 Hopkins, Rachel
 Hosie, rh Stewart
 Huq, Dr Rupa
 Hussain, Imran
 Jardine, Christine
 Jarvis, Dan
 Johnson, Kim
 Jones, Darren
 Jones, Gerald
 Jones, rh Mr Kevan
 Jones, Ruth
 Jones, Sarah
 Kane, Mike
 Keeley, Barbara
 Kendall, Liz (*Proxy vote cast
 by Mr Pat McFadden*)
 Khan, Afzal
 Kinnock, Stephen
 Kyle, Peter
 Lake, Ben
 Lavery, Ian
 Leadbeater, Kim
 Lewell-Buck, Mrs Emma
 Lewis, Clive
 Linden, David
 Lloyd, Tony
 Long Bailey, Rebecca
 Lucas, Caroline
 Lynch, Holly
 MacAskill, Kenny
 Madders, Justin
 Mahmood, Mr Khalid
 Mahmood, Shabana
 Malhotra, Seema
 Maskell, Rachael
 Mc Nally, John
 McCarthy, Kerry
 McDonald, Andy
 McDonald, Stewart Malcolm
 McDonald, Stuart C.
 McDonnell, rh John
 McFadden, rh Mr Pat
 McGinn, Conor
 McGovern, Alison
 McKinnell, Catherine
 McMahon, Jim
 Mearns, Ian
 Miliband, rh Edward
 Mishra, Navendu
 Monaghan, Carol
 Moran, Layla
 Morden, Jessica
 Morgan, Helen
 Morgan, Stephen
 Morris, Grahame
 Murray, Ian
 Murray, James
 Newlands, Gavin
 Nichols, Charlotte
 Norris, Alex
 O'Hara, Brendan
 Olney, Sarah

Onwurah, Chi
 Oppong-Asare, Abena
 Osamor, Kate
 Osborne, Kate
 Oswald, Kirsten
 Owatemi, Taiwo
 Peacock, Stephanie
 Pennycook, Matthew
 Perkins, Mr Toby
 Phillips, Jess
 Pollard, Luke
 Powell, Lucy
 Qaisar, Ms Anum
 Qureshi, Yasmin
 Reed, Steve
 Rees, Christina
 Reeves, Ellie
 Reeves, Rachel
 Reynolds, Jonathan
 Ribeiro-Addy, Bell
 Rimmer, Ms Marie
 Rodda, Matt
 Russell-Moyle, Lloyd
 Shah, Naz
 Sharma, Mr Virendra
 Sheppard, Tommy
 Siddiq, Tulip
 Slaughter, Andy
 Smith, Alyn
 Smith, Cat
 Smith, Jeff
 Sobel, Alex

Spellar, rh John
 Stephens, Chris
 Stevens, Jo
 Stone, Jamie
 Sultana, Zarah
 Tami, rh Mark
 Tarry, Sam
 Thewliss, Alison
 Thomas-Symonds, rh Nick
 Thompson, Owen
 Thomson, Richard
 Thornberry, rh Emily
 Timms, rh Stephen
 Turner, Karl
 Twist, Liz
 Vaz, rh Valerie
 Wakeford, Christian
 Webbe, Claudia
 West, Catherine
 Western, Matt
 Whitehead, Dr Alan
 Whitford, Dr Philippa
 Whitley, Mick
 Whittome, Nadia
 Williams, Hywel
 Wilson, Munira
 Winter, Beth
 Yasin, Mohammad
 Zeichner, Daniel

Tellers for the Noes:

Mr Alistair Carmichael and
 Wendy Chamberlain

Question accordingly agreed to.

Lords amendment 40 disagreed to.

Lords amendments 28 to 39, 41 and 42 agreed to.

Motion made, and Question put forthwith (Standing Order No. 83H), That a Committee be appointed to draw up Reasons to be assigned to the Lords for disagreeing to their amendments 5 to 20, 22 to 27, 40 and 52 to 54.

That Tom Pursglove, Scott Mann, Paul Holmes, Chris Clarkson, Holly Lynch, Chris Elmore and Stuart C. McDonald be members of the Committee;

That Tom Pursglove be the Chair of the Committee;

That three be the quorum of the Committee.

That the Committee do withdraw immediately.—(*David T. C. Davies.*)

Question agreed to.

Committee to withdraw immediately; reasons to be reported and communicated to the Lords.

Louise Haigh (Sheffield, Heeley) (Lab): On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. In yesterday's debate on P&O Ferries, the Secretary of State for Transport confirmed that both he and the Business Secretary had written to P&O Ferries with a deadline of 5 pm today asking a number of questions about whether it had committed a criminal offence and whether a criminal prosecution would be proceeded with against it. Obviously, that deadline has passed. P&O Ferries has responded and the Government have published its response, but I am seeking your guidance as to whether the Government are planning to make a statement on what action they will now take against P&O Ferries, whether they will be proceeding with a criminal prosecution, and what action they will take to ensure that this does not give a green light to bosses all over the world that they can come to this country and trample roughshod over hard-fought-for British workers' rights.

Madam Deputy Speaker (Dame Rosie Winterton): I am grateful to the hon. Lady for her point of order and notice of it. I have received no notice from Ministers that they intend to make a statement on this matter, but I am confident that the House and Ministers on the Front Bench will have heard the point of order she has raised.

Mr Alistair Carmichael (Orkney and Shetland) (LD): On a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. Yesterday, in the same debate on P&O Ferries, I said that a spokesperson for the UK Chamber of Shipping had said in an interview on Radio 4

"that he was 'content and very confident' that P&O had acted properly."—[*Official Report*, 21 March 2022; Vol. 711, c. 75.]

The UK Chamber of Shipping has asked me to point out that it had in fact said that it was

"content and very confident that P&O will have put procedures in place to ensure that the individuals that are going to be in control of those vessels would be familiar with the ships and the systems and would be competent to operate those vessels in a safe manner."

I am happy to make that clear. Given the enthusiasm of the Chamber for its position being properly understood, it would probably be its wish that I should point out to the House that in that same interview the spokesperson for the UK Chamber of Shipping was asked in relation to different matters whether he condemned the manner in which this was done and he said:

"I can't comment on the conduct of it".

When the interviewer said that he must have an opinion, he said,

"I would be speculating so I can't possibly comment."

Then, when he was told that usually when more than 100 people have been sacked, the Government have to be told 45 days in advance, he again said, "I can't comment." It is curious therefore, that in relation to the contentment and confidence about the safety measures he did seem to be quite happy about that. Today, the UK Chamber of Shipping tells me that it does not condone the actions of P&O. That of course is very different from the full-throated condemnation that we might have hoped for, but I am sure that the House will want to be made aware of the position.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I thank the right hon. Gentleman for his point of order. I am sure the House will be grateful that he has corrected the record and, at the same time, made clear the other information that he wished to add to what he said previously. The record is corrected and I am sure we are all grateful for that.

Business without Debate

DELEGATED LEGISLATION

Madam Deputy Speaker (Dame Rosie Winterton): With the leave of the House, we will take motions 4, 5 and 6 together.

Motion made, and Question put forthwith (Standing Order No. 118(6)),

SANCTIONS

That the Russia (Sanctions) (EU Exit) (Amendment) (No. 4) Regulations 2022 (SI, 2022, No. 203), dated 1 March 2022, a copy of which was laid before this House on 1 March, be approved.

That the Russia (Sanctions) (EU Exit) (Amendment) (No. 5) Regulations 2022 (SI, 2022, No. 205), dated 1 March 2022, a copy of which was laid before this House on 1 March, be approved.

That the Russia (Sanctions) (EU Exit) (Amendment) (No. 6) Regulations 2022 (SI, 2022, No. 241), dated 8 March 2022, a copy of which was laid before this House on 8 March, be approved.—
(David T. C. Davies.)

Question agreed to.

PETITION

VAT and fuel duty on petrol and diesel

8.25 pm

Patricia Gibson (North Ayrshire and Arran) (SNP): I rise to present a petition on VAT on petrol and diesel from residents of North Ayrshire and Arran. As the cost of living spirals and fuel costs in turn spiral to an all-time high, the squeeze on living standards is greater than it has been since the 1970s.

The petition states:

The petitioners therefore request that the UK Government immediately and urgently reduces VAT on fuel and/or fuel duty to ease the pressure on households, businesses and essential road users and to help keep inflation in the single figures.

Following is the full text of the petition:

[The petition of residents of the constituency of North Ayrshire and Arran,

Declares that there is an urgent need to address the ongoing spiralling fuel prices across Scotland and the UK, with the cost of petrol and diesel in the UK hitting an all-time high as the average cost of filling up a typical family car has broken through the £90 barrier for the first time ever; is concerned that motoring organisations have warned of “unbelievable financial pain” as fuel prices climb at unprecedented rates with oil prices reaching over \$130 a barrel; is mindful that these rising costs will quickly feed into the cost of living as hauliers pass on extra costs to customers and there is genuine concern that inflation could reach 10% this year resulting in the biggest squeeze on living standards since the 1970s; understand that whilst fuel duty has remained at 57.95 pence a litre for the last 1 years, motorists pay an additional 20% VAT of 12p on that fuel duty effectively paying a tax on a tax of every litre of fuel bought before the cost of extractions, purchase, shipment and forecourt sales are added, which also incur VAT; appreciates that the Treasury is raking in billions as VAT on fuel costs at forecourts rockets and other prices rise, accelerating rising inflation.

The petitioners therefore request that the UK Government immediately and urgently reduces VAT on fuel and/or fuel duty to ease the pressure on households, businesses and essential road users and to help keep inflation in the single figures.

And the petitioners remain, etc.]

[P002722]

NHS Capital Spend and Health Inequalities

Motion made, and Question proposed, That this House do now adjourn.—(David T. C. Davies.)

8.27 pm

Lucy Allan (Telford) (Con): It is a great privilege to secure this debate and to have the excellent Minister responsible for hospitals, my hon. Friend the Member for Charnwood (Edward Argar), on the Front Bench for it. I wish to speak about an issue that has been uppermost in the minds of my constituents for the past nine years, causing much anxiety and uncertainty. All MPs want better health for their constituents and better access to healthcare. That is all the more true for MPs who represent communities that experience the highest levels of deprivation.

As the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care set out earlier this month in an important speech at the Royal College of Physicians, the poorer a person is, the greater the proportion of their life spent in poor health will be. He referred to the 20-year difference in healthy life expectancy between the richest and poorest communities. If someone lives in an area in the bottom decile for deprivation, they can expect to have 20 fewer years of healthy life than someone who lives in an area in the most affluent decile. If someone is poor, not only is their life expectancy lower, but more of their life is spent in ill health.

Telford has some of the poorest communities in England. In our area, 30,000 people live in the bottom decile for deprivation, and the impact is seen in health outcomes across every measure. The Secretary of State was therefore right to say that

“poor health is economically destructive and socially unjust.”

I applaud him for focusing attention on this issue.

If Members look at a map of areas of deprivation in the whole of Shropshire, they will see in Telford, splashed in red, a cluster of 18 lower super output areas in the bottom decile for deprivation. That compares with only two such areas in the whole of the rest of the county. On every health measure, people in Telford have worse outcomes than people in Shropshire. For example, cancer incidence, cancer mortality and later-stage diagnosis are all much higher in Telford than they are in Shropshire. In Shropshire, the mortality rate is 8% below the national average, whereas in Telford it is 15% above the national average.

The problem in Telford is getting worse, not better. This is what we should be talking about in Telford, but we do not. Instead, for the last nine years, the health bodies in Shropshire—the clinical commissioning group, the hospital trust, the sustainability and transformation plan, the integrated care system—have all been talking about a capital spending plan that was once called “Future Fit” but is now referred to as a hospital transformation plan. This plan is expensive and controversial.

The Government made £312 million available to Shropshire health bodies to improve Shropshire’s healthcare, which was great news. The local health bodies set about coming up with a plan. The plan they devised involved a brand-new, state-of-the-art, cutting-edge critical care centre, which was to be built in the west of the county,

in Shrewsbury. The plan was controversial because it proposed that Telford's A&E, in the poorer, urban east of the county, become an urgent care centre, and that Telford's women's and children's specialist centre relocate to Shrewsbury. In effect, the greater part of this significant sum of taxpayers' money would be invested in Shrewsbury, and specialist services would be removed from Telford, a rapidly growing new town to which people come in their thousands every year to build a better life.

Among the reasons given for choosing Shrewsbury as the location for this new specialist centre was that the consultants and management would rather live and work there than in Telford, and that it would make recruitment easier. Perhaps the initial decision makers, who are long gone, thought they could ride out the criticism. They talked of twisting the arm of local clinicians, but they overlooked something fundamental. Telford has a unique identity and demographic. It is a rapidly growing new town in an area that has historically been perceived as the poor relation of the affluent shires. Telford is made to feel like a town of incomers, surrounded by a rural hinterland to which it does not belong.

Given Telford's history, identity, and demographics, concerns should have sounded loud and clear about the plan, under which an area with significant deprivation lost out in NHS healthcare investment to its more affluent neighbour. But nobody wanted to listen. No one wanted to hear. My greatest frustration as Telford's MP was that I could not get the voice of the communities that I represent—the communities with the fewest years of healthy life—heard. I was talked at, talked over, dismissed and disregarded. The plan was going ahead, and that was that.

I know that all politicians will want shiny new hospitals in their constituency, and that this desire may trump proper concern for improving the health of disadvantaged communities in neighbouring constituencies. I also know that the Labour leader of Telford and Wrekin Council, Councillor Shaun Davies, exploited the situation politically and deliberately misled local people by claiming that all A&E services would be closed in Telford thanks to a Tory Government. I therefore understand health bodies' scepticism when politicians try to make a case. However, the partisan behaviour of some local politicians does not mean that all reasonable objections to the plan should be ignored; but that is what happened here. Nobody would listen to a contrary view.

The data is clear. If local decision makers had been driven by considerations of healthcare need and health inequality, as they should be, the plan would not have been formulated or proposed in the way that it was. What followed was predictable: there were protests, petitions, angry public meetings, endless futile private meetings and marches. There was legal action, and there were pages of newsprint at every election and by-election—at parish council elections, borough council elections, and three general elections. On every leaflet that came through every door, anger and rage was whipped up against the Government by those who sought to profit electorally, as year after year, ordinary people were told that they would lose all their A&E services to their better-off neighbours.

The decision makers could not, or would not, distinguish between confected political outrage and genuine concerns about their plan. They ploughed on regardless, but they

did not get far. Nine years on, nothing has been built, and costs have spiralled. As of July 2020, the plan was £221 million over budget—and that was when inflation was below 1%; no one knows what the price tag would be today.

Last month, local health bodies were still talking about how they were

“continuing to work closely and collaboratively with NHSE and our local health system partners...continuing to explore the outputs of the public consultation”—

which had been held four years ago, back in 2018—

“continuing to develop more detailed plans and continuing to develop business cases.”

Nine years on, this is where we are: continuing on the same path, immune to changing circumstances and continuing to ignore the underlying health inequality across our area. So much management time, so many consultants, so many accountants, and so many highly paid staff tied up year after year, involved in a massive distraction project. They were not able to articulate how my constituents would benefit or to focus on what really matters—patient care, patient safety, and improving the health of people in the poorest areas.

I am very grateful to the former Secretary of State who, in 2019, made it clear that Telford would have a local A&E 24/7 with same-day emergency care. I am grateful, too, to the current Secretary of State for his help in getting confirmation of that position earlier in the year. This is a significant win and I am grateful for it. Ministers have always been willing to listen, including my hon. Friend the Minister for Health, who is on the Front Bench tonight.

It is now clear that the project cannot happen anywhere close to budget, and given all the other significant challenges that we face in delivering healthcare in Shropshire, this costly plan from a different era has run out of road. My plea to NHS England now is to call time. After nine years, all organisations are doing things differently. The NHS is doing things differently; it has evolved and moved on. It is no longer about increasing hospital capacity, but about tackling the causes of poor health.

This plan does not address increasing demand for healthcare. It does not address improving access to healthcare for those who need it. The plan is treating the symptoms, not the causes. It is time to tackle the causes of poor health. The NHS recognises this and the Health Secretary is prioritising this, so local health bodies in Shropshire cannot go on ignoring this.

The NHS website says it very clearly. It says that health inequalities are

“the preventable, unfair and unjust differences in health...that arise from the unequal distribution of social...and economic conditions...which determine the risk of people getting ill...and impact on their ability to prevent illness and their ability to access treatment when ill.”

The NHS today cares about prevention. It cares about keeping people out of hospital and delivering more care and more services close to those with the greatest need. It is not about pumping more and more money into shiny new buildings in areas miles away from the county's most deprived communities.

The overall health ecosystem in Shropshire faces many challenges. Plans for its future need to be considered in that context. The hospital trust has been in special measures since 2018. Senior management have come

[Lucy Allan]

and gone at record rates. Repeated critical incidents are declared—three in the past months—because A&E is overwhelmed.

This is the same trust that, in one day last week, had waiting times to unload ambulances that added up to the equivalent of 25 ambulances and paramedic teams being off the road for a day. This is the same trust that has the Ockenden maternity review, reporting next week, into poor and negligent care resulting in death, injury and trauma to women and their children, and it is the same trust that did not listen to them.

In spite of these challenges, our health leaders devoted their time to the unaffordable business cases and strategic outline plans for this undeliverable project. I do not blame the current postholders, who are trying their best, but there is someone, somewhere in NHS England who needs to take stock. This is an Alice in Wonderland plan—more and more money being funnelled into a capital project that does not solve the healthcare challenges and does not deliver on NHS objectives.

I take this opportunity to ask NHS England to think again; maybe the Minister can kindly help to get that message through. I understand that sunk costs and time will be written off, but this plan is at least £221 million over budget and does not address the health needs of those whose health is poorest. It must be time to focus on patient care, patient safety, prevention, diagnostics, access to primary care and tackling preventable conditions early so that people can live more healthily for longer.

As an MP, how am I to ask my constituents to pay more for the NHS, if all they see is more and more of their cash being shovelled into a state-of-the-art building the other side of the county? It is those same constituents who experience the worst health outcomes, the lowest life expectancy and the most years in poor health, not just in Shropshire, but nationally. How can we plan to spend more than a billion pounds and make no mention of how we are improving their health and their access to healthcare?

I have two asks of the Minister. First, I ask him to stand firm on the agreed £312 million budget for this transformation plan and, if there is an extra £221 million down the back of the sofa—I am assured by Treasury that there is not—to use the additional capital spend, if available to Shropshire, to improve health and access to healthcare where it is needed most, on local diagnostics, screening and prevention services, so that we can narrow the gap of healthy life expectancy. Secondly, I ask him to confirm for the record that, whatever the outcome of this nine-year saga, Telford, with its cluster of 18 areas in the bottom decile for deprivation, will have a local, 24/7 A&E, capable of same-day emergency care.

This Government are rightly committed to prevention and tackling health inequalities, and I welcome that. Local health bodies should focus on that too, particularly when embarking on significant capital spend projects. They must be able to say how the poorest communities with the poorest health will benefit before just expecting more and more of taxpayers' cash.

Madam Deputy Speaker (Dame Rosie Winterton): I call the Minister, Edward Argar.

8.42 pm

The Minister for Health (Edward Argar): As ever, it is a pleasure to be here at the end of the day for the Adjournment with you in the Chair, Madam Deputy Speaker—I may jest slightly, but these Adjournment debates are hugely important, as you know, because they give an opportunity to raise matters of genuine local importance to Members of this House, as my hon. Friend the Member for Telford (Lucy Allan) has done.

With that in mind, I congratulate my hon. Friend on securing this debate, and on her passion and commitment to her constituents. She has raised these issues consistently in this House, both in the Chamber and in Westminster Hall debates, and I pay tribute to her for that. She is a strong and passionate campaigner on behalf of her Telford constituents, and they are extremely lucky to have her as their Member of Parliament.

Occasionally, as a Minister, one may catch one's breath slightly when one sees an Adjournment debate in my hon. Friend's name on this subject in the Chamber, because one knows she will press her constituents' points hard, which is exactly what she is here to do. That is why they have wisely elected her three times now to this place. I know her determination on behalf of her local hospital and her constituents, and I gently say to her local trust that it ignores or dismisses that at its peril—something I have learned doing this job for two and a half years. I hope she will feel that I have never ignored or dismissed the points she has raised.

I will turn to the national picture on capital spend before turning to my hon. Friend's specific points. This Government are prioritising capital spend in the NHS to transform and improve healthcare outcomes for people and to put health financing on a sustainable footing. We are building new hospitals, upgrading those that have reached or are reaching the end of their life and tackling backlog maintenance and RAAC—reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete—challenges in hospitals. We are also improving the mental health estate, investing in technology, the digitisation of the NHS, elective recovery and research and development.

It is our firm belief that health services will need to do things more efficiently and differently from before, and for that reason the DHSC's capital budget is set to reach its highest real-terms level since 2010: £32.2 billion for the period 2022-23 to 2024-25. My hon. Friend mentioned the importance of improving our diagnostics facilities. This Government are proud to have invested £2.3 billion in the community diagnostic centres programme. Some £5.9 billion of capital investment will be provided for the NHS to tackle the backlog of non-emergency procedures and to modernise digital technology to tackle waiting lists, including £2.1 billion for the innovative use of digital technology, and £1.5 billion for new surgical hubs, increased bed capacity and equipment to help elective services to recover, including surgeries and other medical procedures, as well as the community diagnostic centres that I have referred to previously. Based on increasing demand and patient convenience, the CDCs aim to carry out the range of diagnostic tests required for a patient in as few visits and in as few locations as possible, and they genuinely have the potential to improve health outcomes.

My hon. Friend talked about health disparities particularly in the context of her own constituency, sitting within our country but also within the county of

Shropshire. She is right to say that health disparities across the country are stark and have been further highlighted and exacerbated by the pandemic. We are determined to address the long-standing health disparities that exist in many areas, be they in access to services, health outcomes or people's experience of their local health service. To that end, later this year we will publish a health disparities White Paper setting out actions to reduce the gap in health outcomes between different places and communities across the country so that people's backgrounds do not dictate their prospects for a healthy life ahead of them. This will mean looking at the figures for preventable killers such as tobacco and obesity as well as wider causes of ill health and access to the services needed to diagnose and treat ill health in a timely, accessible way. This will be a cross-system endeavour relying on close working with the NHS, wider health and care services, and across local and central Government. I welcome any thoughts my hon. Friend has in her local context as we develop that White Paper.

Let me turn to my hon. Friend's two specific points relating to her health and care system. She highlighted her campaign to retain a 24/7 A&E local in Telford. As she said, in 2019 my right hon. Friend the Member for West Suffolk (Matt Hancock) made his decision, which still stands, for the Future Fit programme to proceed, but also, crucially, for an A&E local to be in place in Telford. It is very important that I put this on the record. The success of my hon. Friend's call—the fact that that was agreed to—is down to her campaigning work on behalf of her constituents. I suspect that without her, it may not have happened. The fact that it has, as I believe was confirmed by my right hon. Friend the current Secretary of State in a letter to her recently, is testament to the success of her campaign, regardless of some of the more misleading views that have been

spread around in the course of this process. She has succeeded. She has campaigned for her constituents and she has won on this point, and I pay tribute to her.

On my hon. Friend's second key point about the Future Fit programme more broadly, and the budget available to it, she will be aware that as of this month £1.1 million has been made available to the trust to continue the development of that programme as part of the £6 million-worth of early funding agreed in late 2020. NHS England and NHS Improvement continue to work with her local trust to develop the business case for that programme, and we still wish them to go ahead with it. We want them to work to come up with the right solution for the local community, and we remain committed to that. My hon. Friend asked a very specific question about that. It will have to follow the usual business case approvals process.

We are clear that the £312 million that my hon. Friend alluded to remains, as it was at the outset, the maximum amount currently allocated to that programme. It reflects the original allocation and continues to be the allocation, so I encourage her trust to continue working with NHS England and NHS Improvement to develop a scheme and a programme that matches that budget for the benefit of everyone's constituents in Shropshire and in Wales, who this hospital also serves.

I look forward to continuing to work with my hon. Friend and other hon. and right hon. Members from Shropshire and Wales on the future of services at Shrewsbury and Telford. I conclude by once again paying tribute to my hon. Friend for her passion, her determination and her perseverance on behalf of her constituents.

Question put and agreed to.

8.49 pm

House adjourned.

Westminster Hall

Tuesday 22 March 2022

[GRAHAM STRINGER *in the Chair*]

Midas Financial Solutions Collapse

9.30 am

Mr Alistair Carmichael (Orkney and Shetland) (LD): I beg to move,

That this House has considered the matter of the people affected by the Midas Financial Solutions collapse.

It is a pleasure, as ever, to serve with you in the Chair, Mr Stringer, and I am grateful to the Backbench Business Committee for allowing time to bring the matter before the House. I do so for a number of reasons, some to do with the people directly affected by the collapse of Midas Financial Solutions, but also because the case brings to us bigger issues that require attention and, potentially at some point, reform.

Another reason for bringing the matter to the House is that I know from my constituency casework that, bad though the situation around Midas Financial Solutions is, it is far from the only case. I have another such constituency case, although I will not refer to it as criminal proceedings are still live and it would therefore be improper to do so. However, the position of those investors in Midas Financial Solutions Ltd who took the legal action against Sense, the principal of Midas Financial Solutions, remains highly unsatisfactory.

Related to that position, it appears to me that the workings of the Financial Conduct Authority, and before it the Financial Services Authority, require close parliamentary scrutiny, particularly the inability to focus on the needs of the consumer, rather than the various other professional parties that come within its ambit. It is worth reflecting that, in this case—which forced the FSA to act in 2014, although it had been aware of much of it beforehand—it took until 2020 and court action by 95 of the investors for the FCA to apologise in writing. That illustrates the obstruction that seems to lie at the heart of much of the complaint handling by the FCA.

Finally, there are issues around the future pattern and shape of regulation. The law as it stands leaves us, effectively, with two tiers of protection, and I suggest that that requires to be addressed.

Today's debate is the latest junction in a road that has represented six years of casework for me. I have been consulted with, worked with constituents who have lost tens of thousands of pounds—some have lost hundreds of thousands of pounds—and engaged with people throughout the north-east of Scotland, as well as Orkney and Shetland, as Midas Financial Services Ltd was based in Aberdeen. The managing director was Alistair Greig, who was convicted of fraud involving £13,281,671.25. For his role in the fraud, he was sentenced to 14 years' imprisonment, which was reduced on appeal to 10 years. The fraud ran from August 2001 to October 2014.

The pretence at the heart of the fraud—that money was being placed in short-term deposit schemes with Royal Bank of Scotland for fixed periods—was essentially fairly simple, but this turned out to be, bluntly, a Ponzi scheme. We are not focusing on RBS today, but I will mention in passing that one of my constituents rather

dryly observed that throughout the scheme RBS had demonstrated a quite remarkable lack of curiosity. The prosecutor at the trial said that Greig had used the funds from Midas Financial Solutions (Scotland) Ltd “as his own personal slush fund.”

My constituents would prefer not to be named, as Shetland is a small community and it is not difficult to work out who has lost sums of this sort. I have worked closely with the group that organised and corralled the 95 investors to raise legal proceedings, and I pay tribute not just to my constituents, who have been dogged in their pursuit of the action, but also Colin Stewart, who was one of the main actors in bringing the group together.

We have to bear in mind that the sums involved are massive—tens or hundreds of thousands of pounds—and represent life savings or perhaps an inheritance. These are not investment bankers in the City of London who are just taking a bit of punt with last year's bonus. These are massive amounts of money to the people involved, and it is money that none of the people to whom I have spoken could afford to lose. One of my constituents remains £80,000 out of pocket to this day.

I pay handsome tribute to some of the legal practitioners involved. Robert Morfee was the solicitor when I first became involved, and more recently it has been Philippa Hann, who has prosecuted the case for her clients in a way that reflects very well on the best traditions of the legal profession. My constituents have been very fortunate to have her on their side.

Alistair Greig operated as an appointed representative, which is a term of art, of Sense Network Ltd, a network of financial advisers. As I said earlier, this was actually a Ponzi scheme operated by Alistair Greig. The true nature of the scheme was eventually exposed by a whistleblowing notice in August 2014, leading to enforcement action against Midas and Mr Greig by the Financial Conduct Authority in September 2014. That investigation revealed that 279 members of the public had contributed £12.8 million to the scheme, but that only £379,000 remained at that point.

Proceedings were taken by 95 claimants against Sense as the principal and supervisor of Midas. They were unsuccessful both at first instance and on appeal, on the basis that it was held that the obligations of Sense for its appointed representative were strictly limited to the exact terms set out in the appointed representative agreement between them, which included which product providers Midas could use. Where Midas used a different product provider, that was held to fall outside the responsibility of Sense, despite the fact that the claimants were not made aware of that nor could they have discovered it from any publicly available source.

I want to labour this point for a second, because it is material. The FCA, and before it the FSA, made it clear in everything it ever said to members of the public that they should check the status of the people with whom they were doing business—there are online registers available for ready inspection. However, the truth of the matter is that whether or not the actions of the appointed representative are covered, as they should be by having a principal such as Sense Ltd, is something that someone coming in off the street to invest their money cannot know. Indeed, that ran to the very heart of the difficulties faced by those who invested with Midas Financial Services.

[*Mr Alistair Carmichael*]

It was also disclosed in the course of the court proceedings that there were good reasons for Sense, the Financial Services Authority and the Financial Conduct Authority to know that Alistair Greig was dishonest and was not fit and proper to be registered and authorised by them. In fact, it was revealed that the Yorkshire Building Society had found him to be selling mortgages under false pretences. The management of Sense Network was aware of that but allowed Mr Greig and his firm to continue as an appointed representative of Sense Network.

The effect of the court's decision was to create a two-tier system of protection for UK investors. The court upheld that the private contract between the principal and the appointed representative, not the publicly available information on the FCA register, defines the business for which the principal is responsible. Even though the customer would not know what the arrangement is between the principal and the AR, that arrangement will govern the acts for which the principal is responsible. As a result, the customer will be in the dark and potentially at risk—more so than if they had done business with the principal directly. Where the advisor is not an appointed representative but is directly authorised by the FCA, the consumer will be protected in relation to the business that it is permitted to undertake and which is listed in the publicly available register. If Midas had been directly authorised, the claimants would have been protected.

The judgment is relevant to any appointed representative acting outside its private agreement with its principal. The fact that the investment in this case was a Ponzi scheme is irrelevant to the decision that the judge made and the consequences for the general public. Any client of an appointed representative advised in relation to anything that falls outwith the agreement with the principal will leave the client without protection entirely, without their knowledge. In the Midas case, obviously the staff at Midas did not inform the claimants that the advice fell outside the agreement with their principal. One wonders whether they would have even understood the significance of it had they done so. The judgment now leaves consumers at the mercy of unscrupulous ARs acting in breach of their private agreement with their principal, for which the principal avoids liability despite the law providing for it to seek damages from the AR for breach of that contract. The principal can take action against the appointed representative, but the customer—the consumer—cannot.

As well as taking the court action, the claimants took a complaint to the FCA about the failure of its predecessor, the Financial Services Authority, to take steps to prevent Mr Greig from operating in the financial services sector. The process for authorisation requires a test to ensure that those accessing the public are fit and proper individuals. The test requires honesty, competence and capability, together with financial soundness. The regulator had three opportunities to identify Mr Greig as dishonest and to remove him from the industry before he was able to defraud it. The regulator did not uphold the complaints in respect of the first two opportunities, but it did expect that it should have taken further steps.

The judgment of the complaints commissioner overseeing the work of the FCA, which was published on 27 May 2020, is significant, and I want to draw the House's

attention to two parts of it. The first relates to section 348 of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000, which details the policy on sharing information. The commissioner states:

"I have queried the FCA's position on this, and it has explained that, while the general criteria by which decisions were and are made are not covered by s348, explaining how they were applied to a particular case is likely to involve breaching s348 because it may disclose confidential information received by the FCA."

The protection in section 348 is all about protection for the FCA and those who are authorised, not protection for consumers. That is what I suggest requires some attention. The commissioner concluded:

"The view of section 348 is problematic, because it makes it hard to understand why the regulator has made decisions, and can lead to an erosion in public confidence. In your"—

that is, the claimants'—

"response to my preliminary report, you argued that you ought to be able to see any unpublished policies applying at the time in order to be able to respond. I have considerable sympathy with your point of view, but the fact is that for regulatory reasons the FCA considers that detailed policies of this kind should not be published. I invite the FCA to consider whether it might be more open about the historic policies of the FSA, but that is as far as I can go."

As far as I am aware, it has never made any such explanation.

In relation to the information provided by the Yorkshire Building Society, the commissioner is blunt:

"I recognise that you—and many others—might be surprised to learn that the FSA considered that reports suggesting mortgage fraud should not necessarily be followed up. I was surprised when I learned this. The fact that a major building society felt it necessary to remove advisers from its panels because of concerns about their integrity might be seen as a good reason for the regulator to make significant further inquiries."

That was information that went to the FSA in 2008. It did not act then, and did not act when further information was given to it in 2012. As a consequence, the activities of Alistair Greig were allowed to continue unchecked for at least six years. When Greig's activities were eventually exposed, legal action was taken. Although the complainants were unsuccessful, it was held that there was eligibility as—I have lost the term of art; as a collective investment scheme, which would open the door to compensation under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

Most of those who suffered loss as a consequence of the activities of Alistair Greig were able to avail themselves of that, and many have been compensated in full. The fact is, however, that that route only came to light as a consequence of the legal proceedings that were taken by Colin Stewart and the 94 other investors. They would never have been able to make that claim to the FSCS, but for the fact that they took the court case, even though that was ultimately unsuccessful. The 95 are still out of pocket to a collective tune of £2 million in legal fees. My constituent has been left with an £80,000 shortfall for the money he invested. It seems wrong to me that, even where the FCA is entitled to make ex gratia payments, for fairly opaque reasons in this case, it has refused to do so. I call on the FCA, and hope the Minister will also use his office to impress on it the unsatisfactory nature of that.

Quite apart from the legalities, if the FCA acted so badly and inadequately that it had to issue a letter of apology in June 2020 to the people who had invested, but will not do anything to make good the losses

sustained by my constituents and others in exposing conduct, which the FCA should have exposed, something has gone badly wrong. It is in that sense that the House should now have an interest.

It is clear to me from my dealings with Midas and other cases that the regulation of the financial services sector is enormously complex—far too complex for people entering the sector in good faith, with no experience or understanding of how it works—and it is not consumer-friendly. It is focused on protecting those charged with its regulation and the bodies that are regulated, rather than the consumers, who will ultimately be left out of pocket when it all goes wrong. That is what has happened with Midas Financial Solutions, and that is something that the Government now need to consider with some urgency.

We have spoken elsewhere in the House about the attitude that fraud is somehow a victimless crime—it is not as direct as housebreaking or crimes of violence. My constituents who are tens of thousands of pounds of their savings and hard-earned cash out of pocket would not agree with the assessment that fraud is a victimless crime. We pay the Financial Conduct Authority a lot to regulate, and we deserve better.

Tulip Siddiq (Hampstead and Kilburn) (Lab): Just to clarify, the right hon. Gentleman said that the legal costs were nearly £2 million, whereas the figure I found was £1.5 million. Is he contesting the official figure or does he have further information?

Mr Carmichael: I was given the figure by my constituents—of course, it was a collective action. Even if it was £1.5 million, it is still chunky money in terms of being left out of pocket and it still hits particularly hard. There is the financial and also the emotional cost to those who had to take the action to make the FCA do its job.

Tulip Siddiq: I absolutely agree with the right hon. Gentleman: it is a chunky figure, regardless of whether it is £1.5 million or £2 million. I just wanted to clarify whether he had additional information that I had not received. I thank him for his answer.

Mr Carmichael: I have struggled this morning to resist the temptation to be drawn down into the weeds. I have had six years of dealing with this matter. The complexities, technicalities and minutiae are incredibly involved. I have learned more about the regulation of financial services than I would have believed possible or desirable, but the message for the House is fairly clear: the system is not working. It has left my constituents and others significantly out of pocket. But for the fact that they were prepared to take legal action, every one of the 279 investors would have been out of pocket. For that reason, the system requires further scrutiny by the Department.

Mr Stringer, I have taken rather longer than I intended. I await the Minister's reply with interest.

9.53 am

Jim Shannon (Strangford) (DUP): Thank you, Mr Stringer, for allowing me to speak on this issue. I congratulate the right hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland (Mr Carmichael) on bringing it forward. As always, he set the scene very well for his constituents,

who have lost out, and he was passionate in asking for answers to the questions he put forward. It is pleasing to see the Minister in his place. He always comes with a positive attitude to these issues. He understands them well and we look forward to his response. Hopefully, he can address some of the issues we have.

It is also a pleasure to see the shadow Minister, the hon. Member for Hampstead and Kilburn (Tulip Siddiq), in her place. Like others, I want to put on record my thanks to her for her hard work and endeavours to bring home her constituent, Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, and others. That campaign has been marvellous. We all admire the hon. Lady very much, and we see her perseverance. If she is adding her weight to this debate, I am sure that will be enough to push it over the line—no pressure on the Minister. Again, I thank her so much.

The case of Midas Financial Solutions is disturbing to the extreme. My heart goes out to all those hard-working people who trusted a financial adviser and have lost their money. That was very well illustrated by the right hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland. From a 22-year-old to two people who have died, there appear to be almost 200 victims. Some of them lost a few thousand, but that was all they had. Those people invested thinking that it would make their money last for their old age. Unfortunately, it did not. Others lost almost £500,000. I have a number of questions for the Minister, but one is whether the families of those who died get compensation.

The sheer scale of the Ponzi scheme is mind-boggling, yet the shortcomings and the evidential base are well documented. People are out of pocket. In debates on other issues, the Minister has tried hard to respond, but we need to ensure that the investors who are most out of pocket—I think 95 is the final figure—can be reimbursed. What can be done to ensure that lessons are learned from what we are bringing to the attention of the Minister and the Government?

When I read the background to the case, one thing became glaringly obvious: the FCA managed to wash its hands of the entire scheme until a judge in the civil case underlined the fact that this was truly an investment scheme and therefore should be accepted into the Financial Services Compensation Scheme. Why did it take a civil case to bring this within the FCA scheme remit? What steps do we need to take to ensure that this does not happen to anyone else and that people can access the scheme, which is designed to help, without having to fund a civil case? It is not always possible for ordinary folk who have already lost the bulk or all of their moneys to pursue a legal case. They must feel frustration; they look to the Government and the system to protect them and to ensure that their investments are okay, ever mindful that there are some in this world who would take advantage of people trying to build something for their future.

My next point runs on from that. It is grossly unfair that those 95 people must pay from their limited recoup to cover legal fees of £1.5 million—or perhaps £2 million, as the right hon. Gentleman said.

Mr Carmichael: I can actually give the hon. Gentleman the figure now: it is £1,903,619.92.

Jim Shannon: There we have it. The hon. Member for Hampstead and Kilburn and I now know that the figure is £1.9-odd million in legal fees. They will pay

[Jim Shannon]

that out of the same amount as those who did not pay into the court case will receive. We can understand the frustration of those who paid for these things to be chased up, given that others have the advantage of not having paid. There is an anomaly. Some lost out, but the legal fees then follow. Surely, the public purse should have paid, rather than people who have already lost every penny of their savings.

The head of a regulated company unscrupulously and fraudulently stole millions of pounds to furnish his lavish lifestyle. His own wife has been instrumental in helping the victims, and that is one of the good things that has come out of this, but her husband stole from his customers. Why has the body set up specifically to look into these things been so behind the door in fulfilling its role? How can we ensure that this loophole is removed so that people have full help and assistance in future? There are lessons to be learned that we can use for the future. We need to ensure that people who invest in these pension schemes do not find themselves out of pocket when the time comes.

The background article I read in *The Courier* highlighted the fact that the warning signals regarding this man were ignored or overlooked by the FCA. If they had not been, that may have prevented more people from being duped. What is being done to prevent these things from ever being overlooked again? People want the assurance and the confidence when they invest that the company they are dealing with is safe and secure. What has been learned by the Government and the Minister? What legal measures will be put in place to ensure this does not happen again?

I conclude by thanking the right hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland for bringing the debate forward. It is important that these issues are debated in Westminster Hall or the main Chamber. The right hon. Gentleman has been involved in these issues on behalf of others in the past, and we have spoken in many debates together. Our job is always to illustrate examples where, unfortunately, things have gone wrong, but I respectfully say to the Minister that his job and that of the Government is to ensure that these things do not happen again.

Through the debate, we are seeking not only to get justice for the right hon. Gentleman's constituents and hundreds of others who have lost out, but to ensure the Government close the gaps in support for victims and in the regulation of the system. What has been done legislatively to ensure this does not happen again? This failing has ruined the lives of hundreds of people, when it could have been prevented. It is turning some people's comfortable retirement into purgatory, and we must address that now.

10.1 am

Richard Thomson (Gordon) (SNP): It is a pleasure to serve once again under your chairmanship, Mr Stringer, and to follow the hon. Member for Strangford (Jim Shannon). I wondered at points if he was looking over my shoulder at some of the things I was planning to say, so I will just have to find a different way of expressing them. I commend the right hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland (Mr Carmichael) for his determination in pursuing justice, truth and better outcomes and to prevent such things from occurring again, which he has demonstrated throughout his pursuit of this issue.

The main villain of the piece is obviously Alistair Greig, the managing director of Midas Financial Solutions. After the scale of his dishonesty was revealed in court, he was dubbed by the *Aberdeen Press and Journal* as the "king of the swindlers". He defrauded over 180 victims, or 297 according to the Financial Conduct Authority, of close to £13 million. Most, but not all, were from the north-east of Scotland, and it was one of Scotland's largest ever fraud cases, taking over two years to investigate.

Many investors—business people, retirees and young people starting out in life—were told their investments had grown, which encouraged them to invest even more, all the time believing that their money was safely tucked away and gathering interest. The only problem, as we now know, is that it was not. Their investments were not growing in the sense that we might understand; rather, they were unwittingly part of a Ponzi scheme, using the deposits of later clients to repay earlier deposits with interest and therefore burnishing the outward reputation of the scheme.

Self-evidently, all fraud is dishonest, but what really takes the breath away is the sleekit nature—don't worry, *Hansard*, I will send a note later about "sleekit"—of how this particular fraud was perpetrated. In setting himself up as a gatekeeper, Greig pretended that he had access to a special deposit account at the Royal Bank of Scotland. That was pitched as being beyond the means of ordinary investors to access, except through him. He said that he could make that opportunity available to his more valued customers, taking people in with that confidence trick.

Greig exploited his existing, justified reputation and long-established relationships, including with those he worked beside and those he knew socially and professionally. One person close to the investigation said Greig

"pitched the interest rate at somewhere between plausible and too good to be true."

He exploited those relationships to draw in further unwitting investors.

In the north-east of Scotland and, I am sure, in other parts of these islands the personal relationship still counts for a great deal, as does personal trust, a personal referral and word of mouth. It is that that makes this scheme so particularly invidious, given the way that it managed to spread through so many investors. I have no doubt that this case has directly and indirectly resulted in illness and great distress, contributed to people's early deaths and caused divisions between families where recommendations to invest were made from one family to the other.

What did Greig get out of it himself? He spent the money on classic cars, exotic holidays and VIP days at Wimbledon and the British grand prix, living a lifestyle few of us could ever dream of, all off the back of other people's hard-earned money. It is quite something to reflect that it took 95 victims to bring a civil case against Mr Greig before they were able to secure a single penny of compensation.

May 21 2020 is an auspicious date in these events, because that was when the criminal case came to a conclusion at the High Court in Edinburgh and Lord Tyre sentenced Greig to 14 years' imprisonment. In his sentencing remarks, Lord Tyre observed that Greig was "guilty of committing a fraud on an enormous scale."

The thing about committing a fraud on an enormous scale is that the overwhelming evidence that persuaded the jury to convict him unanimously did not just appear instantly but accumulated over time, in full sight of those who should have been offering protection to the consumers involved. It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that those investors were very poorly treated by the public bodies that should have been looking out for them. In particular, the financial regulators had three big chances to halt this.

The first opportunity was when Greig was removed from a panel of building society mortgage advisers after concerns were raised over his personal integrity. Accord Mortgages, which was part of the Yorkshire Building Society, threw him off their panels after accusing him of mortgage fraud in 2008. That was the first opportunity to investigate Greig's fitness to practise. Had that concern been acted on then, he could have been removed quite legitimately from being involved in any kind of controlled function, looking after investors' money. According to the FSA, that information was shared with the relevant internal stakeholders, but the matter was not further investigated and the FSA closed its record on 10 April 2008, giving the reason that the risk was mitigated.

In investigating the complaint, the FCA declared in its decision letter of 26 April 2019 that, reflecting on this, it was

"satisfied that the way in which the Authority dealt with the email was reasonable, proportionate and in line with the risk appetite at that time."

The buzzwords radiate off the page, but it is quite clear that something went badly amiss in failing to appreciate the significance of why Greig was removed from the panel. Fundamentally, either Greig was a fit and proper person or he was not. Sadly, and now far too late, we know the answer to that question. In fact, only two of Greig's documented victims had money invested in his scheme before the FSA missed this first opportunity and we can all see what would have been avoided had more stringent and proportionate action been taken to effectively mitigate that risk.

The second opportunity came after Mr Greig lied—there is no other word for it—to the Financial Services Authority in an email. As part of an application for a CF30 designation, which is an authorisation from the authority to give advice and to deal with and arrange investments on behalf of a customer, he claimed:

"I can confirm I have never been removed from a mortgage panel."

That was when Greig was reapplying for a status that he had voluntarily withdrawn just a few months earlier, in December 2011. To give some credit, the application was referred to what was called a non-routine team within the regulator because of the intelligence already held on Greig dating back to 2008. Before that application was determined by the case officer, Sense, the appointed representatives, withdrew it, citing an internal movement of staff as the reason. Prior to closing the case, the intelligence officer concerned compiled a detailed intelligence report. It stated that no determination had been made of Mr Greig's honesty, integrity and reputation to hold the designation to deal with clients' money, and that a full assessment should take place in the event of future applications being received. Again, even at this juncture, either Mr Greig was a fit or proper person or he was not. Sadly, and again far too late, we now know the answer to that.

The third and most serious opportunity to halt the scheme was in October 2012. An email was received by the Financial Conduct Authority from a whistleblower about what appeared to be deposit taking by one of Midas's employees. A case was opened and referred to the unauthorised business department, which analysed the case and came to the conclusion that the activity in question was carried out by Midas rather than the individual. Given that Midas was an appointed rep of Sense, an authorised entity, the unauthorised business department took the view that this was a case to be taken forward by the supervision department. In February 2013, a referral email was sent to the firm contact centre, whatever that is, copying in the supervision team—there are plenty of emails flying about—explaining the unauthorised business department's decision and stating that no further action would be taken by them. While the standard procedure at that point would have been for the contact centre to open a case and then allocate it to the supervision department, no case was ever opened: it fell between the cracks.

It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the regulator seriously dropped the ball there. In doing so, its negligence allowed the scheme to continue until 2014; it missed a huge opportunity to prevent significant harm being perpetrated by someone it had already had two opportunities to halt, knowing that he was unfit to steward the finances of others.

As the right hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland said, some measure of compensation was paid out six years on. However, not all investors have got their money back. In some cases, that is because compensation is capped at £85,000, under the Financial Services Compensation Scheme. Sadly, some people lost a great deal more than the £85,000 threshold. While the primary guilt here lies with Mr Greig, and Greig alone, that does not absolve the regulators of their manifest failings in this case. Nor does his lengthy custodial sentence restore the finances or heal the hurt of those victims affected.

It is understandable that, having been let down by the regulator and short-changed by what the safety net compensation scheme was likely to yield, investors would seek redress where they could. Although their pursuit of the Sense Network was unsuccessful, it is obvious that the judges who sat on the case had sympathy with the action. Lord Justice David Richards, alongside Lord Justice Hamblen and Mr Justice Snowden, said in July 2019:

"It is accepted, at least for the purposes of this case, that the appellants have been the victims of a callous fraud. On any footing they have suffered severe losses."

I agree with what the right hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland and the hon. Member for Strangford have said: it is manifestly unfair that the 95 of Greig's victims who brought the civil case in order to unlock some measure of compensation are receiving the same compensation as those who did not—given that they have taken on the burden of legal costs for every victim. That is not to begrudge anyone who got compensation who was not involved in the legal action; simply, it has created two classes of victim. In anyone's eyes, that is surely wrong. It raises the question of why on earth it was necessary to pursue the civil case in order to enable access to the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

I have drawn some conclusions from this case. In my view, the regulators are not there to protect people from their own greed or recklessness, but I defy anyone to say

[Richard Thomson]

that those who were the victims in this case could be guilty of either of those vices. Bluntly, they were ordinary folk, looking for the best home for their savings in a turbulent financial environment, who had the great misfortune to be directed towards someone who had become thoroughly unworthy of their trust. There is an issue to be examined here: the individual investors, who could see the outward respectability of Midas and saw it as an appointed representative of a presumably respected financial services group, which was regulated with the industry, where everyone presumably had the appropriate professional indemnity insurance in place, were entitled to feel, even by association, that their money was in safe hands.

However you choose to slice and dice this, Mr Stringer, it is clear that the regulation has failed. Whether you view that as a systemic failure or, more charitably, as a series of individual and isolated failures, the system should surely, at all stages, have been much more resilient—even to somebody as determinedly dishonest as Mr Greig proved himself to be. It exposes our financial services regulation as being prescriptive, box-ticking and silo-orientated—big on paperwork and self-assurance. Despite, no doubt, the best efforts of some within the organisation, it was also, sadly, desperately short on effectiveness.

Economic crime accounts for 40% of all crime in this country, yet only 1% of our crime-fighting resources are devoted to tackling it. Research from Spotlight on Corruption shows that the Government spend just 0.042% of GDP to tackle economic crime, despite its costing the UK at least the equivalent of 14.5% of its annual GDP. The National Crime Agency budget has declined, in real terms, by 4.5% over the past five years. Bluntly, if we are to create a regulatory environment within which investors can operate with assurance—no matter how big or small they happen to be—the Government must be absolutely committed to making it work and funding it appropriately.

Those affected have, sadly, now received all that they are ever likely to. While Greig is the guilty party, I am bound to say that others also carry some culpability. The regulation of institutions—big and small—has fallen sharply over recent years. However, without more effective regulation, Midas investors are unlikely to be the last to be taken advantage of by the deeply unscrupulous. I look to the Minister to answer on how we can make that regulatory environment safer for all of us who invest.

10.17 am

Tulip Siddiq (Hampstead and Kilburn) (Lab): It is a pleasure to serve under your chairmanship, Mr Stringer. I thank the right hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland (Mr Carmichael) for securing this important debate, and for the work he has done to highlight how his constituents, and others in north-east Scotland, were affected by the Midas Financial Solutions Ponzi scheme, and the overall awful impact that fraud has on communities across the country. It was a powerful and insightful speech, and I learned a lot about the background of the case. Even though I had done some reading on it, I learned a lot more of the details, and the more I learn about them, the more alarming the case seems.

Fraud is an incredibly serious crime. It can destroy lives and tear communities apart. The hon. Member for Gordon (Richard Thomson) rightly pointed out that the tragic thing about the Midas case was that many of the victims knew each other, and even convinced others to invest. That is known as affinity fraud, which results in whole communities not only losing money but feeling guilty over having brought friends and loved ones into the scams. For the people affected who are watching today, I want to say that they have no reason to feel guilty. The only person responsible for this horrendous crime is Alistair Greig, and I hope the people affected know that.

It was heartbreaking to read about the victims of Greig's fraud. Every Member who spoke on this, and so powerfully, has said that. I came across one story of an individual who invested their life savings in Midas to pay for their sister's long-term dementia care and lost everything. To make matters worse, despite Midas being closed down at the end of 2014, the victims had to wait until July 2019, and the judgment of the Court of Appeal, before they were able to access the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

Victims have been put further out of pocket after being forced to pay the legal costs for the various court cases, which we have already had a bit of a discussion on today. The hon. Member for Strangford (Jim Shannon) and I have both mentioned the huge amount of legal costs. That is something that no one should have to go through. That is why I was taken aback by the comments made by the Business Secretary last month when he suggested that fraud is a lesser crime, not experienced by people in their day-to-day lives. The Business Secretary should say that to Norman Masson, a self-employed builder who told the High Court in Edinburgh during Greig's trial that he fell victim to fraud that caused him severe anxiety, losing over £30,000 that he was going to use to help his daughter with a mortgage deposit; or to 69-year-old Mark Ansell of Durris who is no longer able to retire, having been conned out of his savings by Greig.

I am also worried about the fact that reports of fraud are up by 33% in 2021. Despite that, the Crown Prosecution Service has cut the number of specialist fraud prosecutors by more than a quarter over the past six years, from 224 at the end of 2015 to 167 by the end of 2021. Does the Minister wish to comment on that? Indeed, the Government's former Minister for Counter Fraud, Lord Agnew, stated in his resignation letter that the Government's record in tackling fraud is "lamentable" and that they have little interest in the consequences of fraud to our society. It was a shocking admission from the former ally of the Prime Minister.

There are many questions that the Government must answer about the specific warnings leading up to the collapse of Midas. Why were so many warning signs ignored? The hon. Member for Gordon said that in July 2012, Greig lied to the then FSA in an email, in which he wrote:

"I can confirm I have never been removed from a mortgage panel."

That outright falsehood could have been easily disproven by some very basic investigative work.

Another missed opportunity came when a whistleblower, Richard Evans of Banff-based Structured Financial Planning, contacted the FSA to raise concerns in

October 2012. For reasons that are difficult to fathom, the FSA still failed to intervene at that point, despite being told directly that something was wrong. If regulators and law enforcement agencies had acted when they first saw evidence of foul play, much of Greig's fraudulent activity could have been prevented and a lot of the people affected could have been spared.

Greig was taking cheques from people, putting them into a private bank account and then spending it like it was his own money. It is frankly shocking that at no point did enforcement agencies question why £13 million had been paid into his account by hundreds of different people; that should have been a red flag. As the hon. Member for Strangford said, Greig's victims deserve to hear how the Government have learned from these failures. What reassurance can the Minister provide to the public that his Government are taking concrete steps, working with regulators and enforcement agencies, to prevent a crime on the scale of the Midas fraud ever happening again?

Finally, I shall pick up on the point raised by the right hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland on the lack of clarity about the nature of the contractual relationship between regulated advisers and appointed representatives. As the right hon. Member pointed out, Midas was an appointed representative of another firm, Sense Network Ltd. That meant that Sense was able to avoid liability for the losses that Midas had incurred, which seems grossly unfair, and I wonder whether the Minister wants to comment on that as well. As seen both in the Midas case and the Greensill scandal last year, the complexity of those contractual relationships is putting the public and taxpayers' money at risk.

In July 2021, the Treasury Committee reported on lessons from Greensill Capital. It recommended that:

"The FCA and HM Treasury should consider reforms to the appointed representatives regime, with a view to limiting its scope and reducing opportunities for abuse of the system."

Could the Minister please explain why, despite the fact that Midas's abuse of the appointed representatives regime first came to light almost seven years ago, the Treasury has still not brought forward proposals for reforming the system? Does he have plans to reform the system?

The Midas scandal demonstrates that fraud is an incredibly serious crime, which can have devastating consequences for victims and their communities. I want to finish by asking the Minister a few questions. I am sure he will answer them properly because he is diligent when it comes to detail.

Does the Minister recognise that fraud is indeed a serious crime, and does he recognise how much it affects our constituents? Does he recognise that fraud and error under the Chancellor have cost taxpayers an estimated £11.8 billion? Will he tell us what we all want to know: what are his Government doing to protect the public from fraudsters? We are all constituency MPs, even if we have a Front-Bench role, and we want to protect our constituents from fraud. Will the Minister help us by outlining plans to do that?

10.25 am

The Economic Secretary to the Treasury (John Glen): It is a privilege to serve under your chairmanship, Mr Stringer, and I join others in congratulating the right hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland (Mr Carmichael) on securing today's debate.

Before I get into the matter at hand, I want to acknowledge the role that my opposite number, the hon. Member for Hampstead and Kilburn (Tulip Siddiq), has played over the past six years in championing the case of her constituent, Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe. We all have constituents in need, but the hon. Lady's consistent advocacy has been very effective, and I want to pay tribute to her publicly.

In acknowledging that this is an extremely challenging case, which has caused great misery to many investors who were misled, I recognise, too, the broader context of a financial services sector that is a great success in this country. However, the debate and the points made in it have raised a number of issues that I want to respond to specifically. If hon. Members are patient, I will get into the mechanics of the appointed representative regime, how it is working and what lessons we learn from this.

Fraud is a crime that damages trust between individuals and across society—I would say it casts a shadow across the economy—and tackling it is a priority for the Government. Our efforts are focused on reducing vulnerabilities, catching the criminals responsible and supporting the victims of these despicable crimes. As the hon. Member for Strangford (Jim Shannon) said in his welcome remarks, those crimes cause considerable distress to individuals and have a catastrophic effect on families and communities.

We are working closely with industry regulators and consumer groups to consider additional legislative and non-legislative solutions. I will say more about that in a moment, but first I will set out the Government's position on this specific case. As hon. Members no doubt appreciate, there are limits to what I can say, but Mr Alistair Greig perpetrated a large-scale fraud over several years, much of it accurately depicted by Members this morning. He lied to those who trusted him with their pensions and life savings, and caused enormous suffering.

Midas was founded by Mr Greig in 2006 and it carried on a financial advisory business based in Aberdeen. In 2007, it became an appointed representative of a firm called Sense Network Ltd, and the Treasury understands that much of its business was mortgage advice. Mr Greig used his senior position in the firm and its relationship with Sense to convince his clients that he was investing their hard-earned money in high street accounts with RBS.

I want to pick up the point made in passing by the right hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland on the culpability of RBS. In all these tragic cases, it is incumbent on all parties to examine their processes. I think the right hon. Gentleman mentioned that RBS had—

Mr Carmichael: A lack of curiosity.

John Glen: A lack of curiosity. I cannot know whether that is the case, but I say as a Minister that it is important that every business reflects on its responsibilities in cases of this sort.

Clearly, what Mr Greig said about where he was putting that money proved not to be the case. Instead, he was operating what we can all acknowledge was a Ponzi scheme. It went well beyond the scope of Midas's appointed representative arrangement with Sense, the principal firm, and accepted deposits without proper authorisation. Instead of investing on behalf of clients

[John Glen]

who had trusted him with their savings, he transferred the money to his personal account and used it to fund the lavish lifestyle that has been spoken about this morning. His fraudulent activities were halted only when the Financial Conduct Authority intervened in 2014, following contact with a concerned investor. When the FCA became involved, the scheme included 279 members of the public, whose investments have not been repaid. They had paid £12.8 million and were owed a total of £13.6 million. Following the conclusion of a legal case involving some of the investors and Sense, the Financial Services Compensation Scheme declared Midas to be in default, following which the scheme was able to start accepting claims from investors and begin paying compensation to eligible claimants.

Although I am pleased that the scheme was uncovered and stopped by the FCA and that the FSCS has been able to compensate for a significant proportion of what was lost, I recognise that the scheme will have caused great pain to those involved, and I condemn unreservedly the actions of the man responsible. In seeking to understand the case, it is worth while for me to unpack the appointed representatives regime, which has been mentioned by the right hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland and others. It is the key policy area that is thrown into focus by this case.

As Members will know, under the UK's regulatory approach to financial services, a firm must be authorised by either the FCA or the Prudential Regulation Authority in order to carry out a regulated activity. Authorised firms can also appoint other firms to act as appointed representatives for certain regulated activities, but it is worth noting that deposit taking, which Mr Greig was carrying out, is not an activity allowed under the regime, and I will say more about that in a while. In such relationships, the authorised principal firm must ensure that its appointed representatives are complying with all relevant regulatory requirements set out by the FCA. Mr Greig was a director of Midas Financial Solutions, which was a firm that was permitted to carry out the regulated activity of providing investment advice because it was an appointed representative of Sense Network, a financial advice firm that is authorised directly by the FCA.

The FCA's investigation found that Mr Greig deliberately concealed his fraudulent operation from Sense Network, the firm that had regulatory responsibility for Midas. Unfortunately, all firms—whether directly authorised or appointed representatives—can be susceptible to individuals deliberately acting in a fraudulent manner, which is what happened. It was a shocking case of fraud. Greig was operating a scheme for which his firm was not authorised, and he hid the scheme from Sense Network.

Mr Carmichael: I have a question that I hope the Minister will answer in the next sentence or two. How would any individual investor know the extent of the authorisation and the relationship between the principal and the AR? This does not conform to any other aspect of the law of agency.

John Glen: I hope I am coming to that point. The right hon. Gentleman addresses the core point, which is about the comfort that the appointed representative

regime provides to the consumer, and the Treasury and FCA are taking steps to ensure that use of the appointed representative regime is not open to abuse.

The relationship between a principal firm and the appointed representatives, including what regulated activities it covers, should be available to the public. That will now be a regulatory requirement, and the FCA is taking steps to improve the information that is available to the public by clarifying what the appointed representative firm is authorised by the principal—in this case, Sense—to undertake and what it is therefore not authorised to undertake. That will give consumers clarity on what activities they can legitimately discuss with the appointed representative firm and ensure that they know there is regulatory oversight.

As we know, Sense was not found to be at fault in its role as a principal, as Mr Greig was acting outside the Sense-Midas agreement. The right hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland has spoken about the role of the principal, and the hon. Member for Hampstead and Kilburn asked what the Treasury is doing about this issue, following the Select Committee report last summer. We are undertaking a review of the appointed representative regime and examining how consumers are protected when dealing with an appointed representative and not directly with the authorised firm.

On 3 December, we published a call for evidence on the regime as a whole. At the same time, the FCA published a consultation paper on proposals that will strengthen the oversight that principals have over their appointed representatives, or ARs, and the information available to consumers on the FCA register when dealing with these firms. That call for evidence is essentially gathering information from interested parties and it closed a few weeks ago on 3 March. The Treasury and the FCA are working together to consider the responses, and to set out the next steps in due course and as urgently as we can.

I will also speak a little bit about the role of the FCA, which, as the House will be aware, is an independent regulator, and of the Financial Services Compensation Scheme. The FCA took steps to investigate Midas and Alistair Greig in relation to the activity of accepting deposits without the necessary authorisation and subsequently referred the matter to the police, who launched a successful criminal investigation. The FCA took civil action to stop the activity and obtain compensation for victims, securing agreements to repay over £1.3 million in October 2015. As a result of the proceedings, the FCA recovered approximately £380,000, which has been distributed to victims. Mr Greig was charged by Police Scotland and sentenced to 14 years in jail in April 2020 for fraud.

Although the FCA took action and the subsequent police action led to Mr Greig being prosecuted and sent to prison, I acknowledge the point made in the complaints commissioner's report that the Financial Services Authority, which was the predecessor to the FCA, should have taken more action, more swiftly and more effectively. It is right, therefore, that the FCA, the successor organisation to the FSA, apologised for that.

Let me just say something about the Financial Services Compensation Scheme, which is the UK's compensation scheme of last resort. It pays compensation to consumers when authorised financial firms fail and a relevant regulated activity has been undertaken. The FSCS carries out its compensation function within the rules set by the

FCA and the PRA. The FSCS first became aware of claims against Midas in December 2019, when lawyers representing claimants approached the FSCS, and it declared the default in March 2020. By August 2020—so, just a few months later—it had processed 197 claims and paid out £9.6 million in compensation.

In order to aid investors claiming compensation, the FSCS, using data collected by the FCA, was able to pay compensation to 175 investors without those investors actually needing to make a claim. It also ran a media campaign targeting the Aberdeen area to ensure that all investors were aware that they could claim compensation from the FSCS, recognising the sensitivity with respect to named constituents that the right hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland mentioned.

On that note, I will take this opportunity to say that the FSCS is still accepting claims against Midas, so I encourage anyone who thinks that they may be eligible to get in touch with the FSCS. Some Midas investors brought a claim against Sense as Midas's principal, which is the point the right hon. Member made, and I understand that some of those investors are disappointed that the compensation they received from the FSCS did not cover their legal costs.

As set out in the FCA's rules, the FSCS covers losses suffered by a customer caused by the firm in connection with its regulated activities. It does not, however, extend to covering legal costs in pursuing a regulated firm, especially where the firm is not even a party to those legal proceedings.

Mr Carmichael: I am grateful to the Minister for giving way; I see that he is on the last sheet of his speech and I think that we are coming to the very heart of the matter here.

Access to the FSCS was only an option because of the action taken by the 95 against Sense. Quite apart from that, the FCA has a power to pay ex gratia payments. It has not done so, even though it has apologised for the shortcomings in the actions of the FSA. This point was considered by the Commissioner, who declined to order an ex gratia payment, drawing a parallel with damages and saying it would

“clearly undermine Parliament's intention to provide the regulator with some protection”.

What is more important to the Government here? Is it providing the regulator with protection or the consumers with protection?

John Glen: The Government work closely with the FCA. As I have said, we are taking very seriously the implications of this case and the relationship between the principal and the appointed representative, as well as the apparent lack of clarity over what consumers know to be covered by that delegated authority of the principal to the appointed representative. The right hon. Gentleman is referring to the relationship between two entities: the FSA and the FCA. The FCA acknowledges the FSA's prior failings to do the job as it should have. The right hon. Gentleman is asking me to comment on the eligibility of the victims to access the FCA compensation scheme, which is clearly something that is governed by its protocols. I hope we can learn from this very sad case that, going forward, we will bring more clarity to the appointed representative regime and more clarity to consumers. Of course, consumer care is important.

However, we also have to recognise that the FCA is responsible for around 51,000 authorised firms. Of course, the role of some of those authorised firms in acting as principals for appointed representatives needs examination: as I have set out, the Treasury and the FCA are undertaking that. It would be pretty impossible for every appointed representative to undergo the same sort of supervision as an authorised firm—that would expand the scale of the FCA's responsibilities. We have to make sure that authorised firms' responsibilities to their appointed representatives are more effective.

I think that I have expressed with clarity that this has been an extremely challenging case for everyone involved. I acknowledge unequivocally that Mr Greig's fraudulent scheme will have caused great misery to the investors he misled, and it is absolutely right that he was brought to justice. I am pleased that so many of those who made losses have been compensated by the FSCS, and I hope they can now put it behind them.

The Government are not complacent about this. I have gone into some detail about the lessons that we need to learn. We will work alongside other financial authorities to counter fraud and ensure that cases such as these are prevented wherever possible and that, where they do occur, they are dealt with appropriately.

It will always be the case that the Government will need to work with regulators to create an environment that protects consumers while allowing firms to operate. What we have to do—and, since the new chief executive came in about 17 months ago, work has been going on urgently at the FCA to do this—is to undertake a transformation programme to allow the FCA to examine risks across the authorised firms and act more effectively than its predecessor organisation, the FSA, did in this particular case. I hope that is helpful to the House this morning.

10.43 am

Mr Carmichael: It is more than 20 years since I left legal practice, no doubt to the relief of many. The further I get from it, the clearer it becomes that we should never confuse law with justice. It seems that we have exposed some fairly fundamental points here today. The system of regulation has been inadequate, which is why the Government now speak about changing it. The actions of the Financial Conduct Authority—the body set up by Parliament to protect consumer interests—have been woefully inadequate; that is why it has apologised. The people who have paid the cost of the inadequacy in regulation and the conduct of the body set up by Parliament are not Parliament, the Financial Conduct Authority or the taxpayer, but the constituents who were defrauded in this way.

The intention of Parliament was clearly that people should be protected from this sort of behaviour and, if they were not protected, for there to be some compensation. The Financial Compensation Authority has wriggled like worms on the end of a hook for years over this, continuing to deny any responsibility or liability. I think that is wrong, and our constituents deserve better. The limited compensation that people have received was only given because of the actions taken by the 95 claimants. It strikes me that there are very strong parallels here with the sub-postmasters and sub-postmistresses who took legal action to expose the scandal around Horizon.

[Mr Carmichael]

At the end of the day, it is a question of not only law or justice, but the culture and the relationship between the citizen and the state. I am afraid that, as things stand, the citizens are being short-changed by the state, and that is not something with which we as parliamentarians should be satisfied.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved,

That this House has considered the matter of the people affected by the Midas Financial Solutions collapse.

10.46 am

Sitting suspended.

Men's Health Strategy

11 am

Graham Stringer (in the Chair): Nick Fletcher will move the motion and I will then call the Minister to respond. There will not be an opportunity for the Member in charge to wind up, as is the convention in these 30-minute debates.

Nick Fletcher (Don Valley) (Con): I beg to move,

That this House has considered the potential merits of a men's health strategy.

It is a pleasure, as ever, to serve under your chairmanship, Mr Stringer. Although this is only a 30-minute debate, I would still like to extend my thanks to the Backbench Business Committee for granting the time to discuss this extremely important issue. I am pleased that the Minister for Health and Social Care, my hon. Friend the Member for Lewes (Maria Caulfield), will respond, given her very positive contribution to the Westminster Hall debate on prostate cancer earlier this month. I am confident that she will give a positive response today.

Over the past year, the all-party parliamentary group on issues affecting men and boys, which I chair, has continually heard from a range of national and international experts that there is a need for an improved focus on and a far more co-ordinated and strategic approach to men's health in England. This approach has been adopted elsewhere, in countries, such as Australia and Ireland, which have their own men's health strategies, as does the World Health Organisation in Europe. We all agreed that there are serious challenges in men's health.

It is important to place on the official record that nearly one in five men do not live until they are 65, with an increasing gender age gap; that 13 men take their own lives every day; that men in some parts of Kensington and Chelsea live 27 years longer on average than those in some parts of the north; that one man dies of prostate cancer every 45 minutes; that nearly 6,000 men die an alcohol-related death every year; and that two thirds of men are overweight or obese.

The troubling matter for me is that the situation is not improving but seems to be getting worse. The time has come for the Government to take a fresh and strategic approach that is in keeping with their positive levelling-up agenda and their What Works approach to policy making. The Government approach to men's health is based on individual conditions and is disease-based. However, as well as not having the impact that we would hope for, such an approach looks only at the outcomes of poor men's health, not at the causes. To me, that is key.

We need to address and prevent the underlying causes and barriers that have a negative effect on men's health, while also making the health system more responsive. For instance, if we continue to address suicide, alcoholism and obesity as separate issues, we will fail to see that they are often a result of similar circumstances. Why are men who live in economically disadvantaged areas dying from a whole range of illnesses far earlier than men who live in wealthy areas? There is no innate biological reason for that. We need to strategically join the dots on the causes, not place the outcomes in separate buckets labelled condition A, B or C, as is currently the case.

A men's health strategy would ask more questions of the health sector. What of the gender age gap? It is a well-known fact that women live longer than men. Why is that? It was not always so. This is not something that we should just shrug our shoulders at and accept as normal. I want all men to have a long life and for those lives to be lived in a state of wellbeing. I am sure that nobody in the country would disagree with that ambition.

Another issue is that despite making up 75% of all suicides, men make up only 34% of those referred for specialist therapy. Why is that? Is it because they are not being referred or because suicidal men are not accessing the health system in the first place? It could be a combination of the two, of course, but why are men not getting the support they need, and what is being done to address that? We need to look at this at a systemic level. Of course, men need to adapt and help themselves, but the final responsibility has to be on society and the health system to change to help men.

During the APPG's evidence sessions, the experts raised a number of points that struck home. When I visit my GP, which is thankfully rarely, I always notice how few other men of working age are there. We have to work out why and address that. Is it hard to get time off work? Are GP opening hours flexible enough? Do men fear that their bosses or workmates will raise questions about whether they are healthy and fit enough to do their job? Do they just get on with it? It could be all or none of those reasons.

Campaigns to encourage men to access the health system are necessary and welcome, but deeper issues need to be addressed. We also need to ensure that we do not look at men's health from a negative perspective. Our approach should be based on the needs of men and boys, rather than on men and boys having to accept what they are given. That is the positive What Works approach taken by a number of men's health strategies around the world. I hope that the Government can draw comfort from the fact that they do not need to start from scratch in devising a strategy, because strategic work is already being done in Ireland, Australia and elsewhere.

In addition, a host of leading men's health experts and charities in the UK are ready and able and want to help the Government. The Government should look at the great work that is being done on men's health in Leeds—everything good in life starts in Yorkshire. The Government could also harness the knowledge, expertise and help provided by a number of great, growing and pioneering organisations that support men's health, including, to name a few, Andy's Man Club, UK Men's Sheds, Prostate Cancer UK, Lions Barber Collective, Men Walking and Talking, MANvFAT, Mates in Mind, Football Fans in Training, and Black Men's Health UK.

In addition to their great work, all of those organisations know that men do talk and take action on their health when the right environment is created. Many of those initiatives also prove the importance of taking support to where men are, not to where it is thought that they should go—many experts have made that point. I am sure that those organisations are all on stand-by to help the Government, as are a number of health bodies, such as the Men's Health Forum and the Patients Association, which support the proposal to create a strategy, with the former leading a national campaign.

Since becoming a Member of Parliament in 2019, I have been struck by how the Government are taking a fresh, constructive and positive look at all policy areas. Old ways of thinking are no longer taken as read. We can see that in the field of women's health, where the Government are introducing a strategy for the first time, which I am sure all of us in the House support. To be clear, that is not a reason in itself for a men's health strategy, but it does signal the need to have a consistent, cross-Government approach that takes into account specific, gender-based aspects affecting the health of women and men. Without a change in policy, it would be incumbent on the Government in the coming months to explain, with hard evidence, why and how their current approach is improving men's health.

My concluding point is that a men's health strategy would benefit not just men and boys but the women and girls with whom they share their lives and society. They all have fathers, uncles, brothers, cousins. This is a strategy for the nation as a whole. It would also be cost-effective, saving the health service millions of pounds in treating illnesses, and helping employers in reducing sickness levels. It is a win-win situation and would lead to a healthier, happier and more productive society for all. The Government have an ideal opportunity, with the coming White Paper on disparities, to start the ball rolling, and I am confident that they will take it. I look forward to hearing the Minister's comments on this incredibly important issue.

11.9 am

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (Maria Caulfield): It is a pleasure to serve under your chairmanship, Mr Stringer. I thank my hon. Friend the Member for Don Valley (Nick Fletcher) for securing this important debate, which provides us with an opportunity to discuss the health issues that affect men across the country. Although I am passionate about tackling the health inequalities that women face, there is no doubt that men also face specific issues.

I thank my hon. Friend for his work as chair of the APPG on issues affecting men and boys. It does a huge amount of work in this area and its report, "The Case for a Men's Health Strategy", is compelling reading. I thank him and all the members of the APPG for their work on that. He has discussed with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care the potential merits of a men's health strategy, and further meetings are planned as part of an ongoing discussion.

I do not want to generalise and put people in different categories, but there is a difference in the way in which women and men access the healthcare system. More than 100,000 women replied to our call for evidence. They told us that they often access healthcare but feel that they are not listened to and that it is a challenge to get the services they want. Men, on the other hand, often do not access healthcare services at all, and that is a significant barrier. They do not come forward for a variety of reasons, and my hon. Friend touched on some of them, including ease of access to services and sometimes the attitudes of employers or colleagues on seeking help. There are different barriers that certainly make a difference. It is true that the average male life expectancy in the United Kingdom is below that of women, although women spend a greater proportion of their lives in ill health and disability.

[Maria Caulfield]

We also know that male and female life expectancy differs depending on where they live. We are absolutely passionate about ending that. It should not matter where someone lives or where they come from. Everyone should have the same health outcomes. A man in Blackpool can expect to live over 10 years less than a man in Westminster. We will publish our health disparities White Paper later this year to seek to address the gaps in life expectancy for men and women. I am particularly keen that the issues my hon. Friend has raised today are looked at as part of the health disparities White Paper, because he has provided some stark statistics that absolutely need to be tackled if we are to improve outcomes for men in particular.

The Department is already taking action to address conditions that affect men in particular, including suicide, heart disease and cancer, and other risk factors such as smoking. Although I do not want to generalise, we know that some men are less likely than women to seek help or to talk about suicidal feelings, and they can be reluctant to engage with health and other support services. Men are around three times more likely to die from suicide than women, and suicide prevention requires co-ordinated action and a national focus on men's low uptake of services to help with suicide prevention more broadly.

Over the coming year we will review the suicide prevention strategy for England and focus on high-risk groups, including middle-aged men. I encourage the APPG to take part and scrutinise that to make sure that it addresses the very important issues that my hon. Friend has raised. We are making funding available. Almost £5.5 million is available this financial year through a suicide prevention grant to support the voluntary sector in particular.

I was interested to hear about the work in Yorkshire. My hon. Friend is right that part of the failure of NHS services to reach out to men is that we often expect men to come to those services. Organisations such as Men's Sheds, where services can be brought to men, are often more effective, so I very much take his point and it is something that we need to look at.

Heart disease is one of the leading causes of death in men. The long-term plan is committed to several key ambitions to improve outcomes for individuals with cardiovascular disease, including enhanced diagnostic support in the community. I hope that our community diagnostic centres will bring healthcare into communities so that men are able to go for tests, screening and appointments slightly more easily than at present. Our ambition is to prevent 150,000 heart attacks, strokes and dementia by 2029, and we hope that our initiatives will improve outcomes for men.

Although smoking rates have fallen consistently across the population, the rates for men remain consistently higher than those for women. Men, however, generally report more success when they attempt to stop smoking, but it is still the case that smoking rates are higher for men than for women. We are undertaking an independent review of our tobacco control policies, led by Javed Khan. The review will make a set of policy recommendations that will give us the best chance to reduce smoking and achieve the Government's smoke-free 2030 ambition. Again, I encourage the APPG to look at that work and to feed into it.

Finally, I will touch on cancer, because we know that lung cancer outcomes in particular are poorer for men than for women. We are trying to target our diagnostic services towards high-risk groups. One of our most successful areas has been our targeted lung health checks, which took place in 23 locations last year, with a further 20 being rolled out this year. We are using low-dose CT scans and are targeting, in particular, individuals who have smoked for a long time, those in high-risk groups and those in high-risk areas of the country. We are seeing remarkable success rates, with lung cancer being identified at stages 1 and 2 when it would otherwise have taken months for those individuals to show symptoms. Those checks will seek to improve the lung cancer outcomes for men.

Nick Fletcher: I believe that a lot of smoking, obesity and alcohol problems stem from men being lonely. Many years ago, there was an advert that said that "You're never alone" with a certain brand of cigarette. I think that many men use those things as comforts and to pass the time. When men are feeling low, they might drink or go to the fridge. The men's health strategy should look at that, and take an overarching view of all the issues, bringing them together. Clubs such as Andy's Man Club are a fantastic place for men to talk and to feel valued and part of society, so that they do not feel lonely. When men do not feel lonely, perhaps they do not need to reach for those items that otherwise help them get through the day. I take on board what the Minister said about getting GP and health services to those clubs—that would be a fantastic thing to do. We should then automatically see a reduction in the issues that we are testing for now, such as cancer. However, I do also welcome the centres that the Minister has spoken about.

Maria Caulfield: My hon. Friend is absolutely right. Although we are focusing on trying to diagnose lung and prostate cancer as early as possible, encouraging men to come forward and making them aware of the signs and symptoms, he is right that prevention—reducing smoking, alcohol and obesity—will help keep men healthier for longer. He is right that if men are lonely or do not feel like they have other avenues to meet people and get involved in society, they will reach out to smoking or drinking. Often, gambling is a way to meet people down the betting shop; a racecourse near me is very popular indeed. Men do have a different way of dealing with their emotional problems. They will not often talk about them, but meeting other people is a way of coping with some of the issues they face.

I have touched on several separate issues, which is exactly what my hon. Friend said we should not be doing. However, there is a golden thread running through all of them. The health inequalities for some groups of men, whether in life expectancy, life outcomes or accessing healthcare, are different from the issues and challenges that women face. We should not be dismissive of that, because those challenges are equally important.

I want to reassure my hon. Friend that the health issues facing men are being taken seriously. He has met the Secretary of State already and will be having further meetings. I think that today's debate, in addition to our previous debate on prostate cancer, is the start of the conversation about how we improve outcomes for men.

There are specific issues that they face, but there are also common threads that run through those issues. If we do not tackle those, we will not improve the overall health and life expectancy of men. I look forward to working with my hon. Friend further and to taking up some of the challenges that he has raised.

Question put and agreed to.

11.19 am

Sitting suspended.

School Rebuilding Programme

[MRS MARIA MILLER *IN THE CHAIR*]

2.30 pm

Mary Kelly Foy (City of Durham) (Lab): I beg to move,

That this House has considered rollout of the School Rebuilding Programme.

It is a pleasure to serve under your chairship, Mrs Miller. I am grateful that this debate has been granted as it is of great importance to my constituency and, I imagine, that of every Member here today.

Shortly after I was elected to represent City of Durham in 2019, one of the first items that came across my desk was a letter from Andy Byers, headteacher at Framwellgate School, inviting me to visit the school to see for myself the condition that it was in—and I was appalled.

Framwellgate School was built in the 1960s and, sadly, it shows. The school is too small, and cannot grow to meet the needs of an expanding pupil population and changing curriculum. It is spread across multiple blocks and has no social space for pupils. An increasing number of pupils need more specialist provision and more space. The upper floors have no disabled access and are not compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. I have not even mentioned that the site is extremely prone to flooding.

However, as frustrating as it was to see the learning environment for pupils in my constituency, it was even more frustrating that Framwellgate School had already been approved for a rebuild in 2009 under the previous Labour Government, who recognised the poor condition of the school and its potential impact on the education of young people in Durham. Sadly, in the year after the coalition Government came to power, plans for a rebuild were promptly scrapped by the then Education Secretary, the right hon. Member for Surrey Heath (Michael Gove). Now, 12 years after it was first allocated for a rebuild, the school has been overlooked for two rounds of funding under the current scheme, despite many of the issues that first made it eligible for a rebuild getting worse. Framwellgate School's case is truly a desperate one.

I applied for this debate because the problems are not limited to a single school. I have had almost identical discussions as those with Mr Byers with the headteachers across the constituency. I have spoken extensively with Mr Hammill at St Leonard's, which is similarly overdue a rebuild. The roof is in a shocking condition. Like Fram, it has extremely limited disabled access, and the very fabric of the building is completely inefficient. On top of that, one primary school head wrote to me with a shocking analysis of her school:

"Our school is in a dreadful state—the classrooms are poorly ventilated and are freezing in winter and boiling in summer. Our junior yard is not stable, tree root damage is prolific, our drains block regularly, we have ever increasing cracks in the walls and the floors, leaks under the floor and from the roof in some places, rising damp, a lifting hall floor.... I could go on!"

I cannot imagine how frustrating it must be for educators, pupils and parents who share the same goal of wanting every child to have the best possible start in life, only for their efforts to be limited by the poor condition of many of our schools. Whenever I have

[*Mary Kelly Foy*]

visited a school in Durham, I have been struck by the dedication and passion of the staff, and the inquisitive and talented pupils.

I have witnessed at first hand the role that our schools play in the community and the effort that they put into the wellbeing of children in Durham. Yet, when the Minister hears stories of flooded classrooms, overcrowded schools, rising damp and poor ventilation, can they honestly say that the pupils at those schools are learning in the best possible environment? Ministers are always happy to talk about levelling up in the vaguest possible terms, but they cannot claim to have come close to levelling up the north-east until the children in our region have the same life chances as those in the wealthiest regions. That can be done only by transforming the infrastructure and resources across our region, and much of that has to start in our schools.

Mike Amesbury (Weaver Vale) (Lab): My hon. Friend is making an excellent speech. Of course, the Levelling Up Secretary of State is the same person as the Education Secretary who vandalised our schools up and down the country, and cancelled the Building Schools for the Future programme. Will my hon. Friend confirm that that was vandalism and levelling down at its worst?

Mary Kelly Foy: I had not realised it was the same Secretary of State. Given his agenda to level up, I would have thought that if he understood what was going on in schools, he would start to rebuild them. That would be an excellent start, especially in the north-east, which is very much in need of levelling up, whatever that might be.

The state of Framwellgate School and St Leonard's in Durham is the perfect yardstick for the Government's pledge to level up the north-east. Given that Framwellgate was first selected for a rebuild under the previous Labour Government more than a decade ago, can the Minister honestly say that education has improved in the City of Durham? The Government cannot even commit to rebuilding a school that the Labour Government pledged to rebuild in 2009.

We have had 12 years of Conservative Government, and the condition of many of our schools continues to deteriorate. The school is not asking for a lot—only for what it was promised. In comparison, let us consider the case of Belmont Church of England Primary School and Belmont Community School, which were allocated funding for a new, state-of-the-art joint campus under the then Labour-run Durham County Council. That goes to show the difference that Labour makes when we are in power.

Before I go on, I extend an invitation to the Minister present or to the Minister for School Standards, when he watches the debate later: come to Durham, please. Let me show them the condition of some of the schools in Durham, such as Framwellgate School, so that they can see for themselves the conditions that many of our children have to learn in and many of our staff have to work in. If it rains the night before, though, they might want to bring their wellies.

I will speak about the roll-out of the school rebuilding programme more broadly. I have a number of concerns, many of which have been expressed to me by headteachers

in Durham. The first is the lack of transparency in the first stages of the programme regarding how and in what order funding is awarded, and the difficulties that that has caused to schools. After consulting headteachers in Durham last year, I called for a list ranking the conditions of all applicant schools to be published, so that each school could see where they were in the queue for a rebuild and their need compared with that of other schools.

That would combat the growing concern among headteachers that schools in electorally advantageous constituencies are being targeted for building projects. Such concerns are driven by the lack of transparency in the process, with unclear criteria and unpublished condition data collection reports. That is not helped by the superficial nature of CDC surveys, which are simply not fit for purpose. I know for a fact that Framwellgate School felt it necessary to invest in its own intrusive surveys to demonstrate the issues of electrics, drainage and so on, and to show its extreme need.

In addition, many heads are frustrated at having to apply to the condition improvement fund to carry out refurbishments, repairs and maintenance when they are held to account by the Department for Education for not maintaining their buildings or the site, while also trying to avoid limiting funding opportunities for a new build. I have been told explicitly by one headteacher that the two schemes conflict and the process is not joined up.

Heads point out that they could apply for and receive funding to repair the roofs of their school, only to find a year later that they had been successful in their school rebuilding programme bid. That has meant, potentially, a massive waste of public money, especially if the amount of CIF investment will turn a school that is in need of a rebuild into one that is fit for purpose. Schools continue to age and decline, reducing the impact of maintenance funding. Countless schools have exceeded the life of their buildings, resulting in the Government throwing good money after lost causes when it could go towards a new build.

The final issue that has been raised with me in my discussions with headteachers is that, even when headteachers are successful with a bid, they will receive an off-the-shelf school with little scope for a joined-up approach that meets the specific needs of the school or the community. With that in mind, I have some questions for the Minister about the design of schools under the programme.

First, how much scope is there for schools and communities to input into the design of a school and can other funding from local authorities, such as that resulting from the sale of land, be incorporated? Secondly, what have the Government learned from the pandemic about ensuring adequate ventilation and air-cleaning in buildings, and will that learning be incorporated into the design of new builds? Similarly, what have they learned from the pandemic about supporting teachers with the technology that they need, and how will such technology be incorporated into new buildings? Finally, how does the Government's school rebuilding work tie in with their work on achieving net zero and their manifesto commitment on retrofitting public buildings?

The Government will no doubt point to the size of the rebuild programme and will argue that it is simply not possible immediately to fund a rebuild for every

school in need. However, there must be recognition that the decision to scrap the Building Schools for the Future scheme has meant that schools that were already in need of rebuild are still in desperate need, while schools that previously could have waited for work are now in similar states of disrepair, creating an even greater need across the country. It will therefore be of little consolation to my constituents in Durham to hear that a school on the other side of England will receive a rebuild while their local school fails and falls further into disrepair, damaging the life chances of the children who attend it.

I truly hope that the Government listen to the concerns of Members present here today, and ensure that every child in Durham—indeed, every child across the country—has access to a school building that is fit to learn in.

2.42 pm

Peter Gibson (Darlington) (Con): It is a pleasure to serve under your chairmanship today, Mrs Miller, and to be called to speak. I congratulate the hon. Member for City of Durham (Mary Kelly Foy), my fellow County Durham colleague, on securing the debate.

The Government are determined to help people to receive the best possible start in life, creating a level playing field by transforming the education system to ensure that people gain the skills they need to fully unleash their potential. A key part of achieving that is delivering great school buildings that ensure that tens of thousands of pupils and their teachers have a sustainable learning environment, and that deliver value for money for the taxpayer.

It is an incontrovertible fact that the last Labour Government built a huge number of schools, including many that I attended as a child. In the general election of 2017, when I stood as a candidate in Redcar, I visited my primary school, my junior school, my secondary school and my two colleges in the hope of having photographs taken outside of them, and every single one has been demolished and rebuilt in the space of the last 20 years. However, many of these new schools are now suffering, having been locked in private finance initiatives that leave them hamstrung.

Under these schemes, a contractor takes responsibility for constructing new school premises and/or refurbishing existing ones. The relationships that these deals have fostered between contractors and schools is akin to a zero-sum game, with the more investment that schools receive translating into less profit for the contractors. PFI firms would rather do nothing and continue to profit than fulfil their repair duties.

With the first schools built under PFI contracts due to be handed over to local authorities soon, we are already seeing problems arising, with schools potentially being handed over in a run-down state and contractors failing to finish vital improvement works before their contracts expire. The Department for Education is rightly supporting those schools, but it is important that we recognise that this is the legacy of a Labour Government that did not consider the future impact of their actions. It is welcome that this Conservative Government took the decision to ditch all new PFI projects all together in 2018.

The Government have a well thought-out plan for the future of school buildings. I welcome the Prime Minister's 10-year school rebuilding programme, our commitment to rebuild 500 schools in England and the transformation

that that will bring to the education of thousands of pupils. It is welcome that the details of the first 100 projects have now been announced and that the first commenced in autumn 2021. Those initial rebuilds will create modern education environments, providing new facilities, from classrooms and science labs to sports halls and dining rooms.

We are also demonstrating our commitment to levelling up all regions of the UK, with 32 of the latest projects announced being based in the midlands and the north-east. Our investment of £2 billion in the school rebuilding programme comes on top of the Government's £1.8 billion in 2021 for school repair and upgrade projects. That funding brings the total amount allocated for improving school conditions since 2015 to £11.3 billion.

In Darlington, we have seen investment of more than £4 million in schools, including The Rydal Academy, Heathfield Primary School, Haughton Academy, Marchbank Free School, Longfield Academy, Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College, Mowden Infant School, Corporation Road Community Primary School, Mowden Junior School, Hummersknott Academy, Abbey Infants' School and Abbey Junior School.

More than £10 million is also being invested to support school sports and swimming facilities in England, and will be distributed through Sport England. That targeted investment for selected schools will build on existing funding to help schools open their facilities outside school hours and encourage pupils to be more physically active. Alongside that, the Government have plans for a £1.5 billion pot of investment over five years to transform the further education college estate. I am also glad that £2.8 billion of capital investment is being provided across the 2021 spending review period to help establish institutes of technology across the country. I wholeheartedly welcome that funding, which will make a real difference to school conditions.

While we have an Education Minister here, I want to press her on one point relevant to my constituency. Our amazing special education facility of Beaumont Hill Academy in Darlington has sought for many years to take over the empty, abandoned former Sure Start centre to expand its teaching facilities for a growing cohort of children. I have pressed multiple Education Ministers on the issue, but do not seem to be able to break the deadlock. Will the Minister advise what more I can do to help ensure that Beaumont Hill can gain access to this presently abandoned property, which is serving no useful purpose to the taxpayer?

The Conservative Government continue to create a level playing field for students: increasing funding for education, establishing education investment areas in places such as mine in Darlington and now ensuring that students have the environment they need to thrive. I look forward to supporting my ministerial colleagues as we continue this work, which I know will give pupils in Darlington a better start in life.

2.48 pm

Rachael Maskell (York Central) (Lab/Co-op): It is a pleasure to serve with you in the Chair today, Mrs Miller. I thank my hon. Friend the Member for City of Durham (Mary Kelly Foy) for bringing forward today's important debate. I could not help but notice that the majority of MPs in the room are also MPs in the north of the country who desperately need investment in our education system.

[*Rachael Maskell*]

The estates of many schools in York are in need of capital investment. Tang Hall Primary Academy, which was at the very top of the list in 2010 for Building Schools for the Future funding, is still yet to be rebuilt. The school had to introduce a new uniform that included hoodies and mittens for the children to be warm enough in their classes, but also recognise that in the summer the classrooms rapidly turn into greenhouses that are too hot to work in. It is schools like this that need to be rebuilt to ensure that our children get the best possible education.

We have Carr Junior School, where I have been shown the leaky pipes and the need for investment that has yet to come forward, or Millthorpe School, where they are constantly dodging pieces of masonry falling from the buildings. Many of our schools need that capital investment, but today I want to highlight the plight of All Saints Roman Catholic School, a split-site secondary school. The school provides an outstanding environment for children to learn, due to its special ethos and the dedication of the teaching staff. However, the school itself is another story altogether. Parts of the school date back over 300 years, as Mary Ward determined that girls should be able to access education. The Bar Convent museum adjacent to the school maps its journey from 1686, and part of that school is still in use today. It is well worth a visit to the museum, but clearly a school should not be a museum, it should not be a building site and it should not be unsafe.

When it comes to funding, the school is under the Catholic diocese of Middlesbrough but is the only school in York outside of the academies system. It therefore has segregated funding, which, due to its being the only school, is based within the diocese of Leeds. However, as it is the only school there is no flexibility around that funding, meaning that it cannot be joined with other funding to bring about capital rebuilding projects. Indeed, most of it is being absorbed by patching work, bringing in repairs. Patching in and of itself, however, is no solution at all.

There must be a whole new build for the school. The school has applied for the school rebuilding programme and has a new site where it could be developed. Further, it will recover much of the funding with the capital receipts from the sale of its current site. Therefore, on an economic basis, it really needs investment. The disrepair of the sites is really astounding. I have had the tour with the estates team at the school; it is taking ever more of their time just to try to keep the site safe, which is a major challenge.

Both sites have public access, one to a public cemetery in the middle of the school site. There is no segregated outdoor space, and in fact you have to pass through the school car park, which is the only play area for the children as well, among the teachers' cars. That is completely inappropriate. The other site is on a public right of way towards the racecourse. Needless to say, the behaviour of inebriated racegoers poses a risk, as they urinate on their way back to the city through the school premises, so the safeguarding risks need to be taken into account in the programme for rebuilding schools. Teachers also constantly have to move between the school's two sites down a snickelway at the back of the schools. Of course, in the winter dark, they often do not feel safe as they pass through those streets between lessons.

The school is old. Its masonry is falling off, and any repair needed is highly expensive. That is partly because the school is in a conservation area, in the sight of the York Walls; it has to reach an aesthetic standard to be considered appropriate, so a walkway repair that would normally cost about £5,000 would be £11,000 at the cheapest. The portico, which needs to be replaced, adds nothing to education or the school environment but costs the school £20,000. That is just patching work. We could also talk about the guttering system, which has to meet a particular standard, and other aesthetic features of the school because it is a heritage site.

I witnessed holes in the floor of the school gym—in fact, when I went around, there was a new hole where the feet of children playing sport had gone through. Where there are ceiling tiles, they have been falling as well. The cost of the floor repair alone is £60,000—even more for the whole gym. Clearly, this is just sending good money after bad, or bad money after good, to try to address the serious repairs that are needed.

The school needs new boiler systems. The fire alarm needs replacing as it cannot be heard throughout the site. The school is cramped; the corridors are so narrow that a wheelchair cannot pass through. There is currently a wheelchair user at the school, and they are really worried about how they will be able to access their education. The stairways are winding staircases where it is difficult to pass people—they were designed for servants. It is totally inaccessible and there is no facility for lifts in such a place.

There is much ingress of water in the school. As we will probably hear repeatedly this afternoon, flooding is common and there are a lot of residual plumbing issues. I have to say, the stench in some of those corridors turns one's stomach, and unfortunately, that is the environment in which the children have to work. The dining facility is so small that each child can spend only six and half minutes at lunch, so they are not even getting the social space they so desperately need. The labs date back to the middle of the last century and are unsuitable for science today. The domestic science kitchens date back half a century and need replacing. Some of the teaching areas are in former aircraft hangars, which are too cold in winter and too hot in summer. Lessons take place in stables, no longer fit for horses, yet children learn there, including using steep stairs to the hayloft. Is that what the Government envisage as a suitable learning environment?

The sixth-form block will cost £40,000 just to be re-clad. Again, because it is in a heritage area, it has to be either re-clad or taken down. If it is taken down, there will be no sixth form at the school. Even to enter the sixth-form block, students have to descend a very steep path, which is dangerous when icy and pretty inaccessible. No one knows what the next challenge will be, but each morning the estates team worries about what the next cost will be for the school. None of that adds to the children's education and none of them can realise the ambition that the school has for them.

It is not an environment conducive to learning. I cannot believe that there is a more urgent case on the Minister's desk. The new build proposed would end those challenges and enable All Saints to focus on excellence, and the very special environment that teachers bring to pupils, many of whom struggle, to help them flourish. Just imagine what they could achieve if they

had a school that was designed for the modern age. My plea is that the Minister takes back the story of All Saints and enriches the school rebuilding programme to replace the school with a new school facility that those pupils and teachers deserve.

2.57 pm

James Daly (Bury North) (Con): It is a pleasure to serve under your chairmanship, Mrs Miller, and to take part in a debate that has been brought by the hon. Member for City of Durham (Mary Kelly Foy), who is a fantastic campaigner for her area. I am at risk of plagiarising the speeches so far—not the political bits, but the talk of the schools and the underlying reasons that this is such an important debate.

As constituency MPs we have the opportunity to talk about not only national policies but the amazing work happening in schools in our areas. I am here to talk about a school whose motto is “Inspire to make a difference”, and that is Derby High School in my constituency, which I visited last week. When we talk of inspiration, as the hon. Member for York Central (Rachael Maskell) said, it is provided not only by the teachers and committed staff, but by the facilities—or lack of them—in a school.

The school was built in the late 1950s and, apart from two relatively small capital investments, there has been no investment in the structure of the building since 1959. Children are having lessons in classrooms with buckets next to them—for when rain comes through the roof, which has crumbled and fallen in again. It is not unusual for masonry to fall into the classroom, so that children have to go elsewhere. Their learning is taken away from them because they cannot sit in a classroom.

Some of the science labs go back to the 1950s. Compared with other schools in my area, which have been lucky enough to have new building investment, the difference is plain. The school is too small for the number of pupils. Thanks to its great reputation and where it sits, it is oversubscribed and has to deal with all sorts of issues. The corridors are small, as the hon. Member for York Central mentioned. It is not a safe and secure environment.

I was lucky enough to speak last week with the senior leadership team, the staff and the kids, who were absolutely wonderful. They had produced a video to convince me and others of the work that was needed. They appreciated everything that was done, but would at least like the opportunity to have facilities to inspire them and those that follow them at the school, to ensure that they can achieve their potential.

The best bit of my job—I think we would all agree with this—is meeting people in my constituency who inspire me on a daily basis and reinforce to me the reasons why I became a Member of Parliament. It has nothing to do with a political badge. I am motivated by what motivates them.

Lynn Provoost, who is part of the senior management team at Derby, took my breath away by articulating with members of staff what could be achieved in that school. She said that they

“work with young people to believe they can achieve, so they are capable of making a difference to this world”,

and that what they do in the school is for the good of the town, not just for Derby.

We do not talk enough about the central role of schools within the community. They are the providers of education; that is their primary role. But Derby High School is at the centre of a community. It is a wide, varied, happy and brilliant community. In that school, 26 different languages are spoken. There are all sorts of ideas about how things could be improved. I have worked on and, thankfully, been part of a successful bid for “Institute of Technology” status, which the Minister knows all about, involving Bury College and the University of Salford. It is about creating the conditions for training opportunities to be put in place to ensure that young people from my area achieve their potential, and it is for pupils aged 16 and onwards.

The school has gone out of its way to ask the University of Salford and other educational providers whether they can develop an academy or facility to offer post-16 pupils the skills training that we are seeing being put at the forefront of Government policy. The school is innovative in finding different ways to maximise its potential. It is looking at how it can improve its offer in terms of special educational needs and development.

There is brilliant teaching and support there, but there is no room for the extra facility that could get to the heart of the levelling up we have been talking about. Forgive me for repeating it again, but this is a brilliant school. It has all the potential in the world—all the drive, all the passion. It has everything that a successful education provider and community asset has, but it is housed in a building that is too small, is falling apart and has no investment for all sorts of reasons. We need to change that.

I would like to talk about the partnership potential in some of the issues we are talking about. The English Cricket Board is running an urban cricket programme. Members of Parliament can go to the ECB and at least try to work in partnership. I have had talks with the ECB regarding investing £350,000 in an urban cricket facility in my constituency. I was hoping that it would be at Gigg Lane, but for various reasons it may not be there. In my area, kids love playing cricket but there are no facilities. Not only is there potential in what the Government are doing by investing billions into schools rebuilding, but by working with partners we can increase and improve those facilities.

I think others in this room were at the same event when the Lawn Tennis Association talked about looking to invest huge sums of money into grassroots tennis facilities. Certainly, for a school like the Derby school, that will be most welcome. We have heard that the Football Foundation is looking to invest in 3G and 4G pitches and is identifying school playing fields throughout the country that could benefit. I have had the opportunity to speak to the foundation about that, and I am sure other Members have.

I had a political speech written out. I was going to make some political points, but I will not make them. I shall repeat what I said at the start of this debate. “Inspire to make a difference” is not exactly a catchy line, nor what many people believe us politicians do. We can create the circumstances and opportunities for those people in our constituencies, such as Lynn Provoost and all the brilliant teachers at all the brilliant schools in my area, to change young people’s lives, but they must have the correct facilities.

[James Daly]

Derby High School has been nominated as part of the current round of the rebuilding schools programme. I hope that the excellent Minister will take away the message that an investment in Derby is an investment in young people and my town and has the potential to change the world.

3.4 pm

Catherine West (Hornsey and Wood Green) (Lab): I beg your indulgence, Mrs Miller, as I was on Westminster Bridge, so I was late to the debate. I know that everybody in this room would like to put on the record their thoughts for the survivors who were on the bridge this afternoon. Many of us who were MPs at the time will remember the terrible events, and the experience of being in the Chamber that day five years ago.

I also thank the hon. Member for Bury North (James Daly), whom I follow, because I could not agree with him more about the cricket. That is the theme of my short remarks about the sports hall for Highgate Wood School. It is a very mixed local authority school, with some proud alumni, including the journalist Robert Peston, who some people might know from the ITV show, "Peston". It has the worst sports hall I have ever seen.

The Minister's colleague from the other place, Baroness Barran, was very indulgent and gave me 20 minutes by Zoom in January. I want to use this further opportunity to make the case for the school that we all have in our constituencies that takes every child. When a child falls out of another school, this is the school that picks them up. This school has a big heart and is very community-minded. It takes children with a range of special educational needs, who are just hanging in there in mainstream education. It also teaches GCSE at year 11.

There are more girls than boys in this school. As a great champion for young women, Mrs Miller, you will agree that it is important that girls at particular times of the month have a decent place to change. The current facilities in the sports hall at Highgate Wood School are completely unacceptable. "Dickensian" is the only word I could use to describe the prison-like toilets and changing room facilities and the serious problem with water ingress and subsidence. The appalling changing and toilet areas can be very off-putting for girls in particular.

The school currently has a number of bulge classes, once again being a school with a very big heart. When we had the bulge that happened in London schools around 2006 or 2007, it immediately said, "We can do this: we can have more classes." It was able at the drop of a hat to provide more classes. There are 270 students in each year, which is way above the 240 students that the school is built and designed for, yet that was the school that said, "Don't worry—we will become a several-form entry school." That is why I am here today—because the 1,600 pupils at Highgate Wood School deserve better.

The local authority has a lot of dilapidated Victorian primary schools, which it is currently rightly prioritising, but in terms of secondary schools, I have never seen a worse set of facilities for the basic provision of sport. We know the importance of sport post-covid. The hon. Member for Derby talked about the Lawn Tennis Association and the importance of inner-city cricket. Why cannot inner-city kids learn cricket the same way—

James Daly: It would be an honour to be the hon. Member for Derby, but I am the Member for Bury North talking about Derby School. One of the important things about Derby is that we have seen, with the potential threat to Derby County football club, how sport in every possible way has the ability to inspire people of every age group, including at school, and that the opportunity to participate is so important. Does the hon. Lady agree?

Catherine West: Of course I agree with that. I thank the hon. Member for the clarification on the Derby and Bury boundary. While I am talking about boundaries, I will conclude with the comment that many Members will know my right hon. Friend the Member for Tottenham (Mr Lammy). My local government area shares Tottenham, Hornsey and Wood Green. Sometimes Hornsey and Wood Green slightly miss out, because the Tottenham side of the constituency tends to have on paper certain indices of deprivation. As many Members who have different borough boundaries and different arrangements for which children go to which schools will be aware, Highgate Wood School takes a number of children from the Tottenham area. It is a very mixed school and the best in education. It is rated a "good" school by Ofsted, despite the dilapidated facilities for sports provision.

I hope the Minister will make the case for that school, because it is being a good citizen. We all know that during covid, our schools had to pull together. They had to do more than they would normally do. I hope that we can reward the schools that make the effort, take in the difficult children to educate and try somehow to be as ambitious as possible. That includes ambitious on a really high level of sports teaching, and also in providing the teaching of PE teachers, which is what this school does. It provides teaching for PE teachers, but has the worst facilities that I have ever seen.

I hope that the Minister will give due regard to these remarks and work with the local authority to provide the necessary funding for up-to-date and correct facilities for Highgate Wood School.

3.10 pm

Katherine Fletcher (South Ribble) (Con): It is a pleasure to serve, probably for the first time, under your chairmanship, Mrs Miller. I congratulate the hon. Member for City of Durham (Mary Kelly Foy) on securing this important debate, one that speaks to the value placed on education and the environment that surrounds pupils. I had the privilege of being educated at an amazing state school, but it had ivy growing in the windows and across the ceiling—that always felt like a juxtaposition. While it has been the launchpad for the things that I have achieved in life, and hope to still achieve, there was a sense of being slightly unloved in a portacabin at the back of the grounds, heated only by a gas heater. The only thing that it achieved for me was creating an early entrepreneurial spirit; I used to take bread and butter in and make toast on the gas heater at the back of maths class—perhaps the Health and Safety Executive would not enjoy that.

I have attended this important debate to highlight a couple of points. First, I thank the Minister and the Government; Tarleton Academy in west Lancashire is an early recipient of the £50 million condition improvement

fund. It has received funds to rebuild the school. I have gone around the school and the stories that we have heard today are absolutely spot on; there is water running down the walls of a 1950s construction at Tarleton. The school is fighting a constant battle. To say that Lesley Gwinnett, the executive head—who is wonderful—and her team were ecstatic to get the money is to underplay it.

I visited Tarleton Academy, and I hope the Minister will take into account a couple of points. Interestingly, in contrast to the stories told by the hon. Member for City of Durham, Tarleton Academy found the expectation of leadership engagement in the school-build programme to be very high—considering they are focused on their educational duties. They were not complaining, but they raised the point that it was a lot to expect them to make sure that they got the school that they needed and wanted for the community. In genuine gratefulness, they fed back whether that could be a consideration in future roll-outs. They sorted themselves out in the local community, through their own skill and hard work, but it was a point that they wanted to make. There is a fine balance between getting an identikit box and having something that people can engage with.

The other point I will make is similar to those that other hon. Members have made about sports facilities. Tarleton Academy is in a series of different vintage buildings, some of which are 1940s Nissen huts. However, because it is in such a community-minded village as Tarleton, the swimming pool, which is in a separate bit, is used by the community and the 1940s hut, used for educational purposes, is also used by the air cadets. There is a sports hall that is used by the community and there is a big piece of grass at the back that is primed for a 3G astrotrurf pitch.

Lancashire is a desert for sports provision. The nearest astrotrurf pitch to Tarleton is at Bamber Bridge, and that is a 35-minute drive away. I have been working with Football Foundation and speaking to Sport England because the community want that sports pitch. There is a real drive from Betty at Tarleton Corinthians to either get a 3G pitch that they can share with the school at their site, or a 3G pitch at the school that Tarleton Corinthians can share. I appreciate that may be something that the Minister does not have at her fingertips, but can she consider that?

Finally, I have one question on a theme that was addressed by the hon. Member for Hornsey and Wood Green (Catherine West). Penwortham Girls' High School is the only non fee paying girls' school for seniors in the whole of Lancashire's educational system. Although I am slightly biased having attended a state girls' grammar school, that really did give me a boost, and it is part of the overall provision that is possible. The gym in that school is very decrepit, and while the school is not in need of either a rebuild or a CIF despite its age, its sports facilities are in a very difficult state and its staff are finding it very challenging to find a process through which they can target that kind of sub-school rebuild activity. I promised them wholeheartedly that I would raise this matter with the Government.

In summary, as many Members have said, having the right building is absolutely vital to how pupils see themselves and how they can engage in the maximum amount of learning. It is wonderful that the Government are looking beyond some of the issues that PFI has

caused to celebrate the educationalists in west Lancashire at Tarleton Academy, and I hope that in her response, the Minister will be able to say how we can help future cricketers. As a final aside, Lancashire county cricket club has decided that Farington is where it wants to put its training centre. While Derby to Bury is probably an hour's drive, Bury to Penwortham is only about 35 or 40 minutes, so if the budding cricketers my hon. Friend the Member for Bury North (James Daly) mentioned want to come to South Ribble, they will find a very warm welcome there.

3.16 pm

Stephen Morgan (Portsmouth South) (Lab): It is a pleasure to serve under your chairship, Mrs Miller, and I thank my hon. Friend the Member for City of Durham (Mary Kelly Foy) for securing this important debate. I know she has been robustly interrogating Ministers on this issue, as well as that of school transport. She is a credit to her city and her constituents, but sadly, the decay of our school estate is a national challenge. The chorus of cross-party voices raising individual cases today and at Education questions last week demonstrates the gravity of the problem we now face up and down the country.

Today, we have heard from a number of speakers on a range of issues affecting our nation's schools. All spoke with passion about the contribution that schools make to communities and constituencies across the country. My hon. Friend the Member for City of Durham is a tireless champion and a strong voice for her constituency schools—schools that are not compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, with issues with roofs, ventilation, heating, and rising damp. This is important, because we want the very best for our children and our communities. My hon. Friend then went on to helpfully describe the broader points about the Government's school building processes, specifically the CDC surveys, and the off-the-shelf nature of builds.

From my hon. Friend the Member for York Central (Rachael Maskell), we heard the story of All Saints—falling masonry, heating and ventilation problems—and the complexity of funding programmes and the barriers that creates, especially in a historic city and heritage area such as York. My hon. Friend the Member for Hornsey and Wood Green (Catherine West) covered a range of issues facing her constituency, and the importance of investment in school sports. I hope she will be in her place for tomorrow's debate on the importance of physical education in the curriculum, in which a number of those issues will also be raised.

The fact is that our school estate is crumbling. According to the Department for Education's own conditions survey, one in six schools in England requires urgent repair, and more than 1,000 had elements that were at risk of urgent failure. The 1960s is a more representative era of our school estate than either of the past two decades. Millions of children are now passing through a school estate that is not fit for purpose, which has been a political choice of successive Conservative Governments. As we have heard, within weeks of taking office in 2010, the Tory-Lib Dem coalition cancelled the Building Schools for the Future programme. Of the 715 school rebuilding projects planned when that programme was scrapped, just 389 were rebuilt by its successor, the priority school building programme.

Catherine West: The shadow Minister is making an excellent speech. Does he agree that even the Secretary of State for Levelling Up said in a press interview that the worst thing the Government had done was cancel the Building Schools for the Future programme in 2010?

Stephen Morgan: I thank my hon. Friend for that intervention. The Labour Government of the past should be proud of its achievements in improving schools across our country. I know that Conservative Members also mentioned the significant investment that took place under the last Labour Government; long may that continue when we elect the next Labour Government.

Once all the schools are complete, we will still be 178 schools short of the programme's original 715. Even schools that are lucky enough to get contractors on site face significant issues, as we have heard. A school in my constituency found that the work was of shockingly low quality, creating a number of serious defects that pose a risk to students and teachers. I know that colleagues have similar stories.

I am certain that the Minister will tell us proudly about the extra funding announced last year, but I suspect even she knows that that rings hollow compared with the scale of the task before us. She will know that capital spending has decreased by 25% in cash terms, and by 40% after adjusting for inflation, which continues to rise, in addition to a decline in basic needs spending. Two years of late decisions in awarding funding under the condition improvement fund have left schools in limbo and delayed up to 1,000 improvement projects.

Although the existence of the school rebuilding programme demonstrates that Ministers are at least dimly aware of the challenge presented by our crumbling school estate, even a cursory glance shows that the programme is grotesquely inadequate. Ministers said that the programme will partially or fully rebuild 500 schools over the next 10 years. Yet the Department's own 2019 conditions survey found that almost 4,000 schools—17% of the entire school estate—are in need of immediate repair, so the number of schools covered by the programme is woefully inadequate and completely arbitrary. That is why I believe that Ministers created a postcode lottery on school repairs, which they know will not clear the backlog.

In the meantime, dedicated teachers and parents are left to make do with leaking facilities, dangerous wiring or allegedly temporary cabins that were built a decade ago. Well-meaning right hon. and hon. Members come to this place, caps in hand, to plead with Ministers on the merits of individual schools. Colleagues across the House are understandably desperate to support schools in their patches, as we have heard so powerfully in the debate, but that is no way to build a school estate that supports the next generation.

Our aspiration for the quality of the school estate should be to match and to enable the ambition of young people in this country, but the disrepair of the school estate is now approaching national crisis status. The total cost of repairs is now eye-watering, and a decade of inaction from the Conservative Government means that it is rising every day. The real cost is to our children's education; a generation has now passed through schools that are not fit for purpose. Sadly, children are once again an afterthought for this Government.

Is the Minister satisfied that the Government's school rebuilding programme matches schools' need? Will she publish a full regional breakdown of the data on grade and priority of repair that was collected as part of condition data collection 1? How many applications have been received for the latest round of the school rebuilding programme? Of those applications, how many fell into the C, D and X grades identified in the condition data collection 1 programme? How will the Government prioritise urgent repairs for schools that bid unsuccessfully for the next round of the school rebuilding programme? How many representations have Members made to the Minister, and how has she taken account of them in the programme's bidding process?

Schools are worrying more about their energy bills this year, so can the Minister explain how the condition data collection 2 process will support the transition to net zero? Will it pay particular attention to the inadequacies of ventilation demonstrated during the pandemic? Finally, ahead of tomorrow's fiscal event, has the Department made any formal representations to the Chancellor for new funding for repairs to the school estate?

3.24 pm

The Minister for Higher and Further Education (Michelle Donelan): I echo those who have said what a pleasure it is to serve under your chairmanship, Mrs Miller. I congratulate the hon. Member for City of Durham (Mary Kelly Foy) on securing the debate. I am also a constituency MP, and I recognise many of the challenges that hon. Members have raised.

Good-quality buildings are absolutely essential to support high-quality education so that pupils gain invaluable knowledge and skills, as well as the qualifications that they will need to unlock their futures. All pupils deserve to learn in an effective and safe environment, which is why the school rebuilding programme is a priority for the Government. I will talk about the details of the hon. Member's specific schools later on, and I am sure I can arrange a meeting with her and the Minister for School Standards, my hon. Friend the Member for Worcester (Mr Walker). On the hon. Member's question of when we will publish the details, we will publish nominations of schools after the selection process this year. We cannot comment on individual schools at this stage while the process is live, but I assure her that we will publish that.

The Prime Minister announced the new school rebuilding programme in June 2020 as part of the plans to build back better. We have confirmed the first 100 schools in the programme as part of the commitment to 500 projects over the next decade, tackling the school buildings most in need of replacement or significant refurbishment. The programme will transform the education of hundreds of thousands of pupils around the country, including many pupils who attend the schools that have been referenced. Children and teachers will continue to benefit in the decades to come. The programme will replace poor condition and ageing school buildings with modern facilities.

All new buildings delivered through the programme will be net zero carbon compliant and more resilient to the impact of climate change such as flooding and overheating, contributing to the Government's ambitious carbon reduction targets. We achieved a significant milestone in September, with a number of these first

projects having already started on site. An example of that is West Coventry Academy. The expansive school site consists of 17 blocks with significant condition needs across it, including integrated buildings. All existing blocks were demolished and replaced by a new teaching block, including a new sports hall and swimming pool.

The programme represents a substantial investment in our schools in both the midlands and the north, with 70 of the first 100 projects included in those regions. I know the hon. Member for York Central (Rachael Maskell) mentioned that the majority of Members present in the debate are from northern constituencies.

Catherine West *indicated dissent.*

Michelle Donelan: I said the majority. Working closely with the construction sector, the programme will also invest in skills—a point made by my hon. Friend the Member for Darlington (Peter Gibson), supporting construction jobs, investing in efficient technologies and enhancing productivity and skills, all of which will help drive up growth and build back better from the covid-19 pandemic. The school rebuilding programme is the successor to the priority school building programme. PSBP1 was announced in 2012, and PSBP2 was announced in 2014. The PSBP has rebuilt and refurbished those buildings in the very worst condition across the country, covering over 500 schools. Two schools in the city of Durham have benefited from the priority school building programme, alongside five additional schools across the county of Durham. At one of those schools, West Cornforth Primary School, the school community has been delighted to say

“goodbye to the old and hello to the new!”

They have settled into their new school building, which is a fantastic success story in the hon. Member for City of Durham’s region. Bishop Barrington Academy said:

“There is a very positive feel about the direction we are moving in. We have a wonderful, new, multi-million pound building that we have exciting plans for... We believe strongly that our students deserve the very best and the facilities that we provide at Bishop Barrington are certainly world class.”

We are working hard to improve how we deliver and how we innovate where possible. We are at the forefront, using modern methods of construction to deliver school buildings and investing in the industry to support innovation, and we are increasing our adaptation of standardised designs, moving towards a platform approach of construction and off-site manufacturing.

Mike Amesbury: I am unashamedly going to make a plea for another northern school—County High School in Leftwich, which the Minister might be familiar with. It is desperate, like a lot of schools, for community sports facilities, working in partnership with us. Beyond today, I would like to meet the Minister about that project, to help move things forward.

Michelle Donelan: As the hon. Member knows, I attended the school in question, although I have not been back for many years. I will pass on the meeting request, and I am sure that either the Minister for School Standards or the Minister for the School System would be delighted to meet him to discuss the specifics of that school.

As I have said, we are committed to delivering net carbon in operations solutions for the new buildings covered by the Department for Education—a point raised by various Members, including the hon. Member for City of Durham. Every new school built will have a low energy use, better performance and environments with natural ventilation. They will be resilient to longer-term climate change and will improve the landscape and outdoor facilities. Key components of our strategy include increasing insulation, better air tightness, green roofs and energy-generating solar panels, flood-resistant drainage systems and low carbon emissions, all of which will help tackle the numerous problems referenced today.

We moved at pace to prioritise the first projects—the first 100 in the last year—so that we could begin to tackle some of the poorest conditions on the school estate in this country. The first 100 selected for the school rebuilding programme were prioritised either because they have buildings of specific construction types that require replacement or because they have buildings with the highest condition needs. We will, of course, subsequently publish the full nomination at the end of the process, as well as the methodology for prioritisation, which was a point raised by the hon. Member for Portsmouth South (Stephen Morgan).

Two schools in County Durham have been selected for the new programme: Sugar Hill Primary School and Woodham Academy. Work is ongoing to complete the feasibility study on both projects, with construction expected to start early next year. The Department is committed to running a fair and transparent process—a point made by a few hon. Members—for prioritising projects for the school rebuilding programme. As I have said, we will publish the prioritisation of the two rounds in due course.

The school estate in the constituency of my hon. Friend the Member for Darlington has received substantial investment. As he said, that is levelling up in action and is helping the next generation. I listened to and understood his points about Beaumont Hill Academy taking on an individual building. He is an assiduous campaigner and has raised the issue with previous Ministers responsible for the school estate. I am confident that the Ministers for the School System and for School Standards will be happy to meet him to discuss that in detail.

The constituency of the hon. Member for York Central has received substantial investment—more than £1.5 million—for condition allocations. We will announce shortly the schools that have passed the bar in the nomination process, so I ask her to be patient in waiting to see whether her schools are on the list. I am sure that other Ministers in the Department will be happy to speak to her, although at this stage they will be limited in what they can say.

My hon. Friend the Member for Bury North (James Daly) is another keen campaigner for the schools that he represents, particularly his high school, which sounds extremely impressive. I am sure that he will have a visit from a Minister shortly, if he has not already had one. I heard the concerns he raised and will pass on his excellent representations to my ministerial colleagues.

As I have said, the first 100 schools were prioritised using the data available to the Department. That was to ensure that the programme commenced swiftly and that the work could begin as soon as possible on the first projects, ensuring safe buildings for our children. That minimised the burden on the sector.

Carla Lockhart (Upper Bann) (DUP): I know that education is a devolved issue, but will the Minister join me in commending and congratulating the DUP Education Minister in Northern Ireland, Michelle McIlveen, on her announcement yesterday of £749 million of capital investment for more than 20 schools? Portadown College and Killicomaine Junior High School in my constituency are on that list.

The Minister will know the importance of schools being very much in the heart of their communities. A school in my constituency faces imminent closure, much to the despair of the community. I oppose the closure. If there is any learning here in GB on schools being right in the heart of their community, will she share it with me, and will she also ensure that the Lurgan campus of the senior high school does not close?

Michelle Donelan: Obviously, I cannot comment on specific schools and, as the hon. Member points out, education is, of course, devolved. Nevertheless, I absolutely praise any educational investment and specifically investment in schools. I agree with her about the power of education and a good school, and I am sure that the Minister for School Standards would be only too happy to meet her to discuss exactly what we are doing here in England, to see whether there are any learnings that will help her.

Last year, we consulted on the approach to prioritise the remaining places in the programme, so that we could take account of the views of the sector in developing a longer-term approach to prioritisation. We wanted that approach to be fair, robust and capable of being consistent with comparisons between schools, while as far as possible minimising the burden on the school sector.

The public consultation started in July 2021 and ended in October 2021, and it took place alongside a number of consultative events. The consultation sought views on the objectives of the programme, the factors that should inform prioritisation, and the process and evidence of the data to be used. As part of that, we were keen to test how additional evidence of need could be gathered and assessed, and we recognised that data collected by the condition data collection does not provide a complete view of the condition needed within a school. For example, as it is a visual survey, it cannot be used to identify any structural weaknesses.

We received 205 responses in total from a wide range of stakeholders, including large representative bodies, as well as feedback from our online engagement events. I thank all Members and their constituents for contributing to the consultation. The primary goal of the consultation was, of course, to seek views on how we can effectively prioritise the funding available and, obviously, please all hon. Members in this House. We asked questions about the objectives of the programme, the school characteristics that we would consider to inform prioritisation, the delivery of the programme and the impact on individuals with protected characteristics.

The Department held a number of sessions with different stakeholders, and the consultation put forward three broad approaches to prioritising schools for the future programme. The majority of respondents—60%—put the lead approach as their first choice for prioritising school funding. This involved a light-touch nomination process, whereby responsible bodies can request that we consider a school's condition data collection, alongside

the ability to submit supplementary professional evidence of severe need that was not captured in that data. We have now implemented that approach.

We also consulted on how we would compare different schools that need to be rebuilt. This includes asking whether respondents agreed that we should prioritise schools based on severity of need, rather than simply on volume of need across the site. This is the approach that we took in the first two rounds of the programme, and it has the benefit of ensuring that the programme would not simply favour larger schools. We also plan to continue to prioritise schools with the higher intensity of need.

We have made our plans for future selection rounds based on experience of the first two rounds of the programme and the feedback from the consultation. Guidance for responsible bodies has been published on gov.uk, to support them to nominate schools for the programme and to provide additional evidence of severe condition, which is needed for the current round of specialist resource provision.

Rachael Maskell: I raised the issue of safeguarding in relation to All Saints School and the fact that there is public access to the grounds. How are such issues taken into account when considering the priorities?

Michelle Donelan: Of course, safeguarding is always fundamental when we consider school estate and schools in general. I am sure that the Minister for School Standards will meet the hon. Member as soon as possible within the next few weeks to discuss the particular issue of safeguarding. It is concerning that it has been raised in this House and it needs to be treated with sensitivity and urgency, so I will ensure that that happens.

Catherine West: Did the consultation give any weighting to schools that have been particularly generous in taking children in response to unexpected demand? There have, for example, been bulge classes. Therefore, given the sheer number of students, the impact of not having, for instance, good sports provision affects more children. Has any weighting been given to the fact that some schools are more generous than others? Some school governing boards say, "Yes, we'll meet the challenge", but others are a little more selfish and say, "No, we won't," with their school buildings experiencing less wear and tear as a result. The school fabric can end up looking very tired if there are an extra 30 children in every single year in a school of 1,600 children.

Michelle Donelan: We are trying to prioritise the state, standard and condition of the school, so that this is done purely on need. As the hon. Member pointed out, taking additional pupils will produce further wear and tear, deteriorating the school estate. That would show in the evidence of how that school is performing against the standard. I am confident that that would have been picked up, and it can be looked at in detail once the nomination process has been published.

We also set out the expectation that the programme is looking to select schools in very poor condition that need refurbishing, and we are ensuring the best investment for the limited number of places in the programme. Our plan is to allocate places in the programme based—we have laboured this point today—on the condition of the buildings. We will continue to monitor the cases brought

to our attention throughout the prioritisation process. Where necessary, we will of course modify our approach to selecting schools, to ensure that the most urgent building needs are prioritised. We have also reserved the right to add schools to the programme in exceptional circumstances. I urge hon. Members to continue to communicate concerns to Ministers in the Department.

On 3 February, we published our response to the consultation, alongside opening the process for nomination to the programme. Later this year, we intend to select schools provisionally for up to 300 of the remaining places in the programme, reserving some places for the future. Local authorities, academy trusts and voluntary aided school bodies have been able to nominate schools that they consider appropriate for the programme, using the online portal. The nomination process is now closed, but professional evidence of severe need may be submitted until the end of the month.

Framwellgate School Durham, a secondary academy with the Excel Academy Partnership and referenced by the hon. Member for City of Durham, has continued to highlight the need for rebuilding. We will consider carefully the nominations made to the programme. Many schools will likely receive a visit from our technical teams over the coming months. I hope that the hon. Member appreciates that the process for selecting schools is ongoing, so, as I said, I cannot comment on the success of individual cases, but I hope that that reassures her that her school is certainly in the mix.

Schools selected will be informed that they have been provisionally allocated a place on the programme. Projects will enter the delivery stages over the coming years. We plan to publish the long list of nominations in due course.

Improving the condition of the school estate is a priority for the Government. As I have said, in addition to the rebuilding programme the Department provides annual capital funding to schools and to those responsible for school buildings to maintain and improve the condition of their schools, particularly given wear and tear. We have allocated £11.3 billion for that purpose since 2015.

We expect to allocate condition funding for the 2022-23 financial year this spring, to answer the hon. Member for Portsmouth South. The responsibility for identifying and addressing conditions concerns in schools lies with the relevant local authority, the academy trust or the voluntary aided school body. They may prioritise available resources and funding to keep schools open and safe, ensuring that day-to-day maintenance checks and minor repairs happen.

Local authorities, large multi-academy trusts and large voluntary aided bodies such as dioceses receive an annual school condition allocation to invest in their schools. In the 2021-22 financial year, Durham County

Council was allocated more than £7 million in SCA funding—a substantial sum—and the council is responsible for prioritising the funding across all its maintained schools, to ensure that they remain safe and operational. Small academy trusts, small voluntary aided school bodies, and sixth forms and colleges are instead able to bid into the condition improvement fund. The outcome of that latest round should be published later in the spring.

Investing in our school building project is vital to delivering world-class education and training, so that pupils gain the invaluable knowledge, skills and qualifications that they need to succeed. That is exactly why the Government have committed to 500 places over 10 years in the school rebuilding programme, alongside significant annual investment in improving the condition of schools across England. The programme will support levelling up by addressing significant poor conditions across the estate, underpin high-quality education, grow jobs and drive greater efficiency in delivery.

I thank all hon. Members present today, including the hon. Member for City of Durham, who raised this important issue and secured the debate. As we all know, education can be transformative and is vital to our levelling-up agenda. The Government are committed to ensuring that the very bricks and mortar are there to help deliver and facilitate that education.

3.45 pm

Mary Kelly Foy: I will be brief. I thank all hon. Members who have taken part today and I am glad that we have had a constructive debate. It is great to hear about the new schools being built in County Durham. Unfortunately, none of those are in my constituency, but I am sure that the staff and children of Bishop Auckland and Sedgefield will be delighted. I welcome the fact that the criteria and the weightings will be published, because that is what heads have been asking for and they would like to know why those schools were chosen over theirs. I would be delighted to meet the Minister to discuss Framwellgate School Durham, and I hope that that invitation will also be extended to those interested headteachers. Finally, I hope that future bids by City of Durham schools are successful so that the children and educators in my constituency can have the best possible learning environment.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved,

That this House has considered rollout of the School Rebuilding Programme.

3.47 pm

Sitting suspended.

Sibling Sexual Abuse

4 pm

Mrs Maria Miller (in the Chair): I will call Wera Hobhouse to move the motion and then I will call the Minister to respond. There will not be an opportunity for the Member in charge to wind up, as is the convention for a 30-minute debate.

Wera Hobhouse (Bath) (LD): I beg to move,

That this House has considered the matter of tackling sibling sexual abuse.

It is a pleasure to speak under your chairmanship, Mrs Miller. This is a hugely difficult and harrowing subject. I begin by thanking all those who have worked on the sibling sexual abuse project: Rape Crisis England and Wales; the University of Birmingham; the University of the West of England, Bristol; West Mercia Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre, and Somerset and Avon Rape and Sexual Abuse Support. I also recognise the fantastic work of Fleur Strong, Dr Peter Yates and Tanith McCulloch, two of whom are here today.

The relationship between siblings is one of the most important we will ever form in our lives. There are many different forms of sibling relationship: biological, step, half, adoptive and social. In all those contexts, siblings share an enduring bond. When that relationship goes wrong and one sibling sexually abuses another, it can have devastating, lifelong consequences.

There is no universally accepted definition of sibling sexual abuse. That lack of consistency and clarity contributes to the challenges in identifying this form of abuse. A 2020 definition states:

“Sibling sexual abuse consists of sexual acts initiated by one sibling towards another without the other’s consent, by use of force or coercion, or where there is a power differential between the siblings.”

It occurs when both children are under 18; it can be between brother and sister, sister and brother, brother and brother, or sister and sister. We must distinguish sibling sexual abuse from other forms of child sexual abuse. We are not talking about adult abusers, nor should we conflate sibling sexual abuse with peer-on-peer abuse or child sexual exploitation, which occur outside the home.

It is also critical that we do not view sibling sexual abuse through an adult gender violence lens. The reasons that children sexually harm siblings are complex and different from those associated with adult violence. In many cases, the child who harms is a victim and has experienced neglect, witnessed domestic abuse or experienced some form of childhood trauma. We cannot judge children’s harmful sexualised behaviour without first understanding the context of the family situation they are living in, and we cannot assume that someone will become an adult sex offender because of their behaviour as a child.

I will refer to sibling sexual abuse, siblings who have harmed, and siblings who have been harmed, which are the terms recommended by experts. This is a type of abuse that affects thousands of children, adults and families. Its impact on the entire family is not only devastating but lifelong. As one survivor said:

“It is not just the abuse. It’s the family ramifications, too, that can last for years and tear survivors away from the family.”

Sibling sexual abuse has been described as a hand grenade going off in the family. One adult who was harmed as a child said:

“I have been fumbling around in the dark for so many years trying to understand myself, my reactions, relationship difficulties. Feeling the way I do about myself—totally inferior with nothing to offer anyone. Worthless, in other words.”

As chair of the all-party parliamentary group for the prevention of childhood trauma, I am well aware of the lifelong consequences facing these children. Childhood trauma is at the root of many mental illnesses and other lifelong impacts on achievement, employment and quality of relationships. If it is unrecognised, children will take their trauma into adulthood and, through their traumatised behaviour, pass it on to their children. Those who experience childhood trauma are twice as likely to develop depression and three times as likely to develop anxiety disorders. The child who has harmed often has to deal with the dichotomy of their actions as a child and who they are now as an adult.

In cases of sibling sexual abuse, multiple layers of educational, societal, economic and health impacts affect the whole family. Sibling sexual abuse is unlike other forms of child sexual abuse. The child who has been harmed and the child who has harmed are not only both children, but children of the same family. One affected parent said:

“We are the parents of a much-loved adult who was sexually abused by his older brother as a child. The abuser, also our much-loved child, committed suicide last year, following investigations by Social Services as to whether he constituted a risk to his own young son. No evidence was found. The revelation of the abuse has caused our family to fall apart.”

Parents are often faced with the “double dilemma” of trying to support both of the children involved, dealing with school, social services, children’s services and police investigations, as well as unaffected siblings, friends and extended family. Some parents never accept that abuse has or is still taking place. Many families instinctively close ranks, never sharing what has happened with anyone outside the family.

Research by Rape Crisis England and Wales suggests that parents would be more likely to come forward if they knew that their harming child would not be criminalised. Domestic abuse in the home is a significant factor in families where sibling sexual abuse takes place, suggesting that children are reflecting behaviour that they have witnessed. The situation is complex and requires a family response. One child has been harmed by another; that in itself is difficult to come to terms with, but both children need support.

We have known about the risk to children from sibling sexual abuse for years. In fact, it has been confirmed by Home Office-funded research. From 2020 to 2022, Rape Crisis England and Wales has worked in partnership with two universities and rape crisis centres on a groundbreaking project to support victims and survivors of recent and historical sibling sexual abuse. The project is the largest Government-funded project on sibling sexual abuse in the UK to date. It is funded by the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice, and it is the first England and Wales-wide project on the subject.

Research shows that sibling sexual abuse is the most common form of child sexual abuse in our homes. Estimates suggest that a child is three to five times more likely to be abused by their sibling under the age of 18

than by a parent or adult living in their home environment. The Minister will appreciate the difference between prevalence and reported incidence. However, the sibling sexual abuse project has, for the first time, put together a national picture of reported incidence in England and Wales. Using freedom of information data provided by 20 police forces, the project identified over 10,000 recorded incidents of intrafamilial sexual offences and assaults where the victim was under 18 between 2017 and 2020. Of those, nearly 2,500—24%—were recorded as a sibling relationship. Nearly a quarter of incidents of intrafamilial sexual offences reported to the police are sibling sexual abuse, yet there is systemic silence.

Local and national safeguarding policies and strategies do not name, measure or prioritise sibling sexual abuse. No targets are set; no data is gathered. The Home Office's 2021 tackling child sexual abuse strategy, which it describes as its

"whole-system response to all forms of child sexual abuse,"

does not even acknowledge the existence of sibling sexual abuse. This is the thing that we really need to talk about today—the need for an acknowledgement of the existence of sibling sexual abuse in our strategies.

It is almost unbelievable that an entire strategy on child sexual abuse not only fails to recognise the primary type of child sexual abuse in our homes, but fails even to acknowledge its existence. Worse still, the Home Office's systemic blind spot is cascading down and compromising other national and local safeguarding policies and strategies. Of the more than 80 child safeguarding boards that published annual reports in 2021, zero mentioned sibling sexual abuse. According to a survey of 700 frontline professionals conducted by the national project on sibling sexual abuse, sibling sexual abuse is significantly less recognised within general society than child abuse where the perpetrator is an adult.

There is ongoing stigma around sibling sexual abuse. That is not surprising: it goes against our very concept of childhood. It completely challenges societal and professional thinking on child sexual abuse. In some cases, sibling sexual abuse survivors have stated that they do not recognise themselves as survivors of child sexual abuse, because of the way that society, the Government and sexual violence organisations communicate what child sexual abuse is. Even worse, they do not seek help. Rape Crisis England and Wales has heard of professionals minimising the abuse because they do not know how to respond, exaggerating the abuse in order to gain access to children and young people's statutory services, or catastrophising the abuse. All three reactions are detrimental to children, young people and their families.

How can we make things better? How can we help to safeguard thousands of young children and properly support survivors to seek help? I hope that the Minister will agree that the first step is to acknowledge sibling sexual abuse. She might respond by saying that the Government's child sexual abuse approach already includes sibling sexual abuse, because it is a form of child sexual abuse. Unfortunately, that is not the case. That is not what survivors think, it is not what rape crisis centres think, and it is not what 700 professionals think.

The Home Office's own documents focus only on adult abusers in the home, despite the Home Office's own evidence stating that something is wrong. Things must change. The only thing that will make things better for thousands of families is acknowledgement

that sibling sexual abuse exists. This is about language. It is about five simple words that must be included in every document aimed at tackling child sexual abuse: "brother", "sister" and "sibling sexual abuse". Will the Minister commit to updating the Home Office's 2021 tackling child sexual abuse strategy to name and appropriately respond to sibling sexual abuse as the most common form of child sexual abuse in our homes? That is in line with research funded by the Home Office itself, so I hope that she will offer me her reassurances.

Criminal justice is not the answer to tackling sibling sexual abuse; we need health and education to work together and take a trauma-informed approach. We must reassure families that they are not dealing with this alone and properly equip professionals so that they can offer the support that is needed. That will mean proper, age-appropriate sex and relationship education in schools, something for which we Liberal Democrats have been asking for a long time. It is important for children to understand that sometimes harm can come from children, so that they come forward when it happens and they understand that it is wrong.

Will the Minister also speak to her colleagues in the Department for Education and the Department of Health and Social Care to ask them to update their safeguarding and commissioning approaches to children, in order to respond properly to intrafamilial abuse and, specifically, sibling sexual abuse? Until now, this issue simply has not been addressed properly. Children are being let down by the status quo. If the Home Office will not believe its own paid-for evidence, who and what will it believe?

4.13 pm

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Rachel Maclean): It is a pleasure to serve under your chairmanship, Mrs Miller. I thank the hon. Member for Bath (Wera Hobhouse) for tackling this extremely difficult subject and for doing so in such a sensitive and constructive way. I, too, pay tribute to the victims and their families who have suffered from this horrific experience. It is an unimaginable trauma. We are absolutely committed to doing everything we can to deal with it and to tackle it.

I appreciate that the hon. Lady gave me some challenges and pre-empted some of what I was going to say, but let me set out what we are doing from the Home Office side. I hope that will assure her that we are taking this issue seriously, but I am always happy to work with her on the specific points she has raised.

In that spirit, let me start by saying that the hon. Lady rightly referenced the tackling child sexual abuse strategy, which we published just over a year ago. That strategy sets out our commitments to drive action across every part of Government and all agencies—education, health, social care, industry and civil society, some of which she mentioned. The strategy specifically recognises the issue of sibling sexual abuse. It is important that we recognise that it is an atrocious form of sex abuse and has its own individual characteristics, as she set out. It is right that we understand it, which is why we have funded the research that she referenced.

Jim Shannon (Strangford) (DUP): Is the Minister aware of the survey of New England colleges and universities that found that 15% of females and 10% of

[Jim Shannon]

males have reported some type of sexual experience involving a sibling? It also established that one in seven under-age children who have watched porn are more likely to engage in sexual experimentation with their sibling. Does the Minister believe that we must work harder to protect children from the dangers of online porn in order to tackle sibling sexual abuse, and will she confirm that, through the Online Safety Bill, this kind of sexual activity will be stopped?

Rachel Maclean: I strongly agree that we must do more to protect children when they are viewing pornographic content online. That is precisely what the Online Safety Bill will do. There are many advocates in this place—including, if I may say so, you, Mrs Miller—who have done extensive work to ensure that we toughen up enforcement powers so that young children, and women and girls, are not exposed to this disgusting content before that is appropriate.

We know that sibling sexual abuse and child sex abuse are horrific, and that these crimes destroy lives. That is why we are determined to leave no stone unturned in our effort to protect children and bring perpetrators to justice. The hon. Member for Bath is absolutely right to say that sibling sex abuse is likely to be one of the most common forms of intrafamilial sex abuse, but it remains under-reported right across the country. During a three-month snapshot survey in 2020, the Internet Watch Foundation logged 511 self-generated child sex abuse images and videos that involved siblings, with 65% of cases involving direct sexual contact between the siblings in just that one period. That is equivalent to approximately five to six images or videos per day.

We know that it can take a long time for children to feel comfortable and confident to tell anyone about the sexual abuse that they have been subjected to. It is particularly difficult, as the hon. Lady highlighted, where the sexual abuse takes place in that family environment. It is crucial to ensure that children and young people have a strong understanding of healthy relationships, boundaries and privacy, and that they are able to recognise and report abuse or concerns about their safety. That is why we completely agree with the hon. Lady and her colleagues that relationships, sex and health education across the curriculum is a statutory requirement across the country. We have been rolling that out across primary and secondary settings. It is crucial that frontline professionals working with children and young people have the skills and confidence to identify all forms of sexual abuse and are able to respond effectively.

The hon. Lady referred to the first ever national conference on sibling sexual abuse, which took place recently and was facilitated by Rape Crisis England and Wales, funded partly by the Home Office. The conference brought together frontline professionals and practitioners to learn from national and international best practice on responding to sibling sexual abuse. That is precisely why the conference was funded and set up by the Home Office—because we wish to know more and to learn from the findings. We are continuing to fund the centre of expertise on child sexual abuse, to drive a co-ordinated response to child sexual abuse across the country.

4.19 pm

Sitting suspended for Divisions in the House.

5.59 pm

On resuming—

Rachel Maclean: I will pick up where I left off, by highlighting the work we are doing through the centre of expertise on child sexual abuse to drive a co-ordinated response across the country. That centre of expertise has produced invaluable research and resources to support frontline professionals working in education and children's social care, including a knowledge and practice overview on sibling sexual abuse, which is designed to help professionals think through the issues and challenges raised by sibling sexual abuse.

That work is further supported by the child sexual abuse response pathway tool, which aims to ensure that professionals are clear about their roles and responsibilities and have access to high-quality, evidence-based resources to support them in their practice and decision making. Guides and templates recently published by the centre aim to empower professionals so they can confidently spot the signs and indicators of child sex abuse, talk to children in a safe and supported space, and provide wider support to parents and carers. The centre has also specifically provided training to supervising social workers and designated safeguarding leads in 11 pilot sites to improve the identification of, and response to, sexual abuse within schools.

I am sure the hon. Member for Bath will welcome the news that in January we launched the harmful sexual behaviour support service for education and safeguarding professionals. That work is helping to build confidence and support professionals in addressing all forms of sexual abuse, including sibling sex abuse. That service is delivered by the South West Grid for Learning in partnership with the Marie Collins Foundation, and I put on record my thanks to that group.

Wera Hobhouse: We all need to work on this together, and I am very pleased to hear about the work the Home Office is doing, but may I challenge the Minister again on what she has said about the Home Office's 2021 report on tackling child sexual abuse? Sibling sexual abuse is only referenced in that report once, at the end, and is only referenced in relation to research, not as abuse that must be actioned as the most common form of child sexual abuse in the home. Can I ask again whether the Minister will commit to ensuring that, when the report is updated, sibling sexual abuse will be highlighted as the most common form of child sexual abuse and something that should be prioritised immediately?

Mrs Maria Miller (in the Chair): Order. Before the Minister responds, let me clarify that, as a result of the delay caused by the votes, this session will finish at about eight or nine minutes past 6, so that I can put the Question before 10 past.

Rachel Maclean: Thank you for your guidance, Mrs Miller. I thank the hon. Lady for her intervention and her remarks, and I am keen to work constructively with her in the spirit in which she has approached this subject. We both agree that this is a vitally important topic, so I am very happy to have a further meeting with

her at which we can discuss these vital issues and try to identify where we need to do more. We start from the premise that there is more the Home Office and all our partners need to do on this issue.

The hon. Lady is right to highlight the prevalence of sibling sexual abuse. The reason I am responding as I am is that, although she is right to say that sibling sexual abuse has distinct features, there are also themes in common. It is important that we consider safeguarding of children, but we recognise that there are multiple presentations of these horrifying and disgusting crimes. I will work with the hon. Lady to arrange a meeting at which we can have a deep dive into this work. I thank her for everything she is doing, because I recognise that she is championing victims in a very important way.

I will briefly reference the Online Safety Bill, in responding to the hon. Member for Strangford (Jim Shannon). The Bill was published last week and will, for the first time, place a duty on tech companies to proactively do more to keep children safe online. That is why we continue to fund the Internet Watch Foundation to deliver public awareness and education campaigns around self-generated indecent imagery.

Let me turn to the issue of support for children and victims and survivors of sibling sexual abuse. The hon. Lady has recognised the many barriers that make it extremely difficult for children to talk about what is happening to them in that family situation. Some may not be aware that what is happening is abuse. Sometimes it starts very young, and if that is all the victim knows, it is incredibly hard for them to tell their story. We must be clear that children and young people will always be supported in telling their story. We have heard from victims and survivors who have come forward with horrific experiences—no one can listen to those stories without feeling affected and wanting to help—so it is crucial that specialist support is provided to help victims and survivors to process the devastating impacts of the

abuse they have suffered and to move forward with their lives. That is why we are increasing investment in specialised victim and survivor support services throughout the country, including specialist support for victims of sibling sexual abuse.

I have already referred to it, but it is worth reminding the House that we have provided significant funding for Rape Crisis England and Wales to run a new and groundbreaking project to support victims and survivors of recent and historic sibling sexual abuse. This two-year project is the largest Government-funded project on sibling sexual abuse to date across England and Wales, and it is generating some extremely interesting findings that we will continue to review, from the Home Office side and with the hon. Lady. That funding has supported the delivery of a national toolkit developed to support victims and survivors of sibling sexual abuse, a national training framework to support non-recent victims of sibling sexual abuse, and academic research to strengthen our understanding of this form of abuse.

We will not shy away from this often stigmatised and sensitive issue. We are determined to work across Government with victims and survivors to ensure that they get the support they need to rebuild their lives. I again thank all Members of the House who have contributed to this important debate. I also thank the families, the victims and survivors, and their loved ones, who have come forward to attend this debate and also helped us in our work in Government to formulate the right policy response to them. I assure colleagues that we are firmly focused on protecting children from all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse, including sibling sexual abuse. The Government's message is clear: we will confront these crimes wherever and whenever they occur, and we will use every lever available to us to keep children safe.

Question put and agreed to.

Parental Leave and Pay

6.7 pm

Kirsten Oswald (East Renfrewshire) (SNP): I beg to move,

That this House has considered parental leave and pay.

It is a pleasure to serve under your chairship, Mrs Miller. Among OECD countries, the UK has the second lowest payment rates for maternity leave, which is something the TUC has regularly highlighted. Less than a third of gross average earnings are replaced by maternity pay, and despite lengthy maternity leave entitlements, full-time equivalent paid maternity leave lasts for only 12 weeks.

In 2020, the Petitions Committee recommended that the treatment of maternity allowance and statutory maternity pay in universal credit should be equalised. At present, recipients of universal credit awarded maternity allowance end up no better off, because of a pound-for-pound clawback. Under the tax credit regime that universal credit replaced, maternity allowance was disregarded in full in calculating awards, as statutory maternity pay is now.

Not surprisingly, figures obtained by Maternity Action under freedom of information provisions show a drop of 45% between 2016 and 2021 in the number of employed parents who claim maternity allowance. In fact, up to 85,000 parents have been denied maternity support as a result of Conservative Government policy, and the Department for Work and Pensions has been asked today, in a letter signed by Maternity Action, the Fawcett Society, the National Childbirth Trust and the Women's Budget Group, to assess the reasons for this 45% fall.

In 2020, the New Economics Foundation found that self-employed people take just six weeks of parental leave and that one in six take no days of parental leave at all. That same year, the Petitions Committee recommended that parental benefits available to self-employed birth parents should be extended to self-employed adoptive parents, and that parental leave and pay should be offered to special guardians. In 2021, the Women and Equalities Committee urged the UK Government to extend redundancy protection to pregnant women and new mothers in this parliamentary Session. However, we are still waiting.

If the UK Government were serious about supporting parents and tackling child poverty, they would address this issue. They would address the exclusion of so many families from the protection and support that they need to give their children the best start in life. Instead, not only do we have seafarers who appear to enjoy none of the protections of UK employment laws but we have delivery drivers, taxi drivers, catering and retail workers, and so many other people whose employment rights are being rolled back to the 19th century.

I pay particular tribute to the work of the Independent Workers Union of Great Britain, which has highlighted the position of taxi drivers, whose contracts are often deactivated by web-based employers without due process. The union very reasonably asks how drivers can enforce rights to parental leave and pay, or tackle pregnancy and maternity discrimination, if the laws on which their contracts rest are so grossly unfair. That is where a Parliament should step in but, unlike other countries, the UK has continued to dither and delay. The Prime Minister promised an employment Bill to address fears

that workers' rights would be watered down post Brexit, so I have to ask the Minister, where is the employment Bill? When will we see it?

I commend the work of Maternity Action in this field. It presented an action plan to end pregnancy and maternity discrimination at work to the UK Government. That was endorsed by a wide range of organisations and trade unions. I am keen to hear from the Minister why Maternity Action has been removed from the pregnancy and maternity discrimination advisory board—for what looks to me simply like revealing that it continues to support the aims of its action plan.

One of the questions facing us today is whether P&O's sacking of 800 workers and the hustling of many of them out of their workplace has been a wake-up call on employment matters for the UK Government. Will the Minister restate his commitment to an employment Bill, or will we see expectant and new parents become just the latest group of workers to be thrown under the Brexit bus? In contrast to that, the SNP Scottish Government are committed to delivering fair work where they have the opportunity to do so. They are doing everything they can to support parents through that challenging time and beyond.

The reality is, however, that employment law and most of social security remain reserved to Westminster, so we must see action in this place. We must see extended legal protection against redundancy for pregnant parents, for those on shared parental and adoption leave, and for new parents for up to six months after their return to work. In particular, I want to hear from the Minister about increasing maternity leave to one year, and setting maternity pay at average weekly earnings for the first 12 weeks, and at 90% for 40 weeks or £150, whichever is lower. As I am sure the Minister will be aware, for parents who are looking at this, the detail is incredibly important.

I want to hear from the Minister about increasing shared parental leave from 52 to 64 weeks, with the additional 12 weeks to be the minimum taken by the father. I want to hear his view on introducing a principle of "use it or lose it" to encourage fathers to take paternity leave, while protecting maternity leave if it is not taken, and on increasing the statutory weeks allowed and the weekly rate of paternity pay to 100% of average weekly earnings for one week, and 100% for two weeks or £150, whichever is lower.

In all of this, where there is a will to make progress, it can and has been made. The Parental Bereavement (Leave and Pay) Act 2018 had cross-party support to create statutory bereavement leave for parents following the death of a child up to age 18. The successful amendment moved by my hon. Friend the Member for North Ayrshire and Arran (Patricia Gibson) permitted an additional two weeks' statutory paid leave for parents who experienced a stillbirth. We can build on that kind of progress. My hon. Friend has now published a Bill proposing paid bereavement leave for all employees who lose a close family member. My hon. Friend the Member for Lanark and Hamilton East (Angela Crawley) proposes a Bill seeking at least three days of paid leave for anyone who suffers a miscarriage and to extend leave to those experiencing a miscarriage before 24 weeks. I urge the Minister to signal his support for both Bills.

I am pleased that some employers lead the way on parental leave issues. I give credit to them, including the John Lewis Partnership, which is the first UK high

street retailer to introduce 26 weeks' equal parenthood paid maternity and paternity leave. It offers 14 weeks' full pay and 12 weeks' half pay to all mums, dads and adoptive parents who have been with the company for a year. As a result, it found a significant increase in the take-up of what was paternity leave, but is now called co-parent leave.

I also give credit to the Chartered Management Institute, which surveyed its members' attitudes towards and awareness of parental leave and shared parental leave, and on the confidence in dealing with those issues by their direct reports. It found that 71% of managers would be confident providing advice and about paternity leave, but that dropped to just 48% for shared parental leave. It concludes that better guidance is needed to help organisations to train managers to deliver those policies more effectively. Obviously, what we do here underpins an awful lot of that. I certainly agree with the Chartered Management Institute on the need for better guidance and training.

Fundamentally, it is up to the UK Government, who control those levers, to take action to strengthen the protections against pregnancy and maternity discrimination, including for the self-employed or those in precarious work, and to fix the flaws in parental support to better support both parents and children. I am keen to hear from the Minister what the UK Government's plans are in that regard and, in particular, where the missing employment Bill is and when we can expect to see it.

6.15 pm

Jim Shannon (Strangford) (DUP): I congratulate the hon. Member for East Renfrewshire (Kirsten Oswald) on introducing this debate so well, as she always does. I chose to speak in this debate because it is something I have a particular interest in. I support the hon. Lady and the hon. Member for Lanark and Hamilton East (Angela Crawley) in their quest on this issue and on maternity leave, which the hon. Member for Lanark and Hamilton East brought to the main Chamber last Thursday. It is a worthy topic.

Parental leave is something that many employers do not seem to want to speak about. The hassle of finding someone else to do the job can be off-putting, yet when a parent is distracted due to issues with their children, their full attention is not on their work. We hope that this debate will raise awareness of this issue—we said it in the Chamber the other day and we will say it again today. The Minister understands the issues very well; it is great when we have issues to bring to his attention where we do not have to persuade too hard. I do not mean to be condescending; I just mean that he understands the issues, so it is easier to seek his assistance.

I have learned over many years that an engaged person working achieves much more than a distracted person. While many of us may be loth to tell others of problems at home, it is essential in a team that we know what is happening. Let me give an example from my office. I like to think I am a caring employer—I think my staff would confirm that, not because I say it, but because they would say it. One of my staff was not working to their usual standard. I noticed that something was wrong. After years of engaging with others, we get a feeling for what things are, and it was obvious to me that something was not right.

This staff member is a lady, and I am always conscious that for some things I may not be the person to speak to. The office manager is a lady, so I asked her to ascertain if all was okay. It turned out that she was in the process of splitting from her fiancé. She had been going with him for some time and had been engaged for a certain period of time, and she simply needed space and understanding. The office manager was able to handle that. We bond together well as a team—we understand things, we see things and we look out for one another, and that is the way it should be. I was able to give that staff member the space. The lesson my staff and I learned in the office is that information and sharing is key to a good working environment, but it has taken many years to grasp that concept—the very thing that the hon. Member for East Renfrewshire referred to.

A happy worker is a good worker. I understand that not all employers can offer flexibility to ensure a parent can collect their child a few days a week and work from home to build up the child's security. However, it is imperative that the Minister and the Government step up and begin to put in place parameters, not simply to relieve workers' stress but to offer support to employers to make parental leave accessible in every profession. It is the employees who are looking for that, but the employers need to be helped along the way. What we are looking for from the Minister is a system whereby the employers can help.

Currently, shared parental leave is at the lowest rate for 10 years—that is quite worrying, and I found the figures hard to understand. That does not mean that parents need it less. The fact is that the mental health of our children has never been worse, and that is due to covid. I am aware from my constituency, as every other Member here will be from their own constituencies, of the rising number of children in secondary and primary school who experience mental health issues that have arisen through covid. With no contact with their peers, the stress and anxiety build up and that becomes an absolute problem. That is all the more reason to make sure that parental leave and pay are in place.

The Government have carried out a piece of work on parental leave and pay entitlement, and we must now see how we can factor that into working life. A poll carried out by *The Mirror* a number of years ago cited the fact that many parents were refused parental leave and instead had to take a sick day when an issue arose with their child, which goes on their record. That is quite harsh, and I hope that it can be addressed. That is not the way things should be, and we must undertake to ensure that employers' obligations are known and that there is a system in place to allow our small business employers the financial support to enable them to do right by their staff.

I conclude with one more comment, as I am conscious that there will soon be Divisions in the main Chamber. Being a parent is an absolutely wonderful calling. Those who have children will know that, even though our children may at times make us pull our hair out—looking at my head, I have pulled out more hair than most, but that is by the way. However, I want to quote one mother who spoke to me, because her comments were really important:

“I am expected to work like I have no children and parent like I have no job”—

[Jim Shannon]

it is about those two things, being a parent and doing the job, and trying to do the two together—
“and I just fail at both.”

I do not think she does fail—I know she does not. She is a very good mother to her children, and she is also very good at the job she does. She does not fail; we are failing her. For that reason, things need to change, and that is why I support what the hon. Member for East Renfrewshire has put forward.

6.22 pm

Angela Crawley (Lanark and Hamilton East) (SNP): It is truly a pleasure to serve under your chairship, Mrs Miller. I speak in this debate as someone who took parental leave only a matter of weeks ago, on the birth of my son, Hudson. I also speak as an employer, and I want to extend my best wishes to my caseworker Craig and his wife Jen on the birth of their son, Ben, this week—he is also taking parental leave.

I stand here as an employer and a parliamentarian. Parental leave covers maternity, paternity and adoption leave, as well as shared parental leave. That seems like a lot of things, but what are we actually discussing? Welcoming a new baby home is a time filled with joy, but also a time filled with hard work and sleepless nights, as I can attest. Parental leave is necessary to adjust to the realities of parenting, and it allows time for practical issues, such as recovery after giving birth, health visits and vital bonding and development.

Too often, parents are forced to go back to work more quickly than they would like because of financial constraints. That is a balance that many parents have to make, but too often the assumption is that women will take the leave and the father will return to work. In the modern economy, we also find that mothers are often earning more than their partners, and although they would like to stay at home for longer, financial constraints mean they are forced back to work.

As we know, there is a gap when a mother takes more than a year off work. As you will know only too well, Mrs Miller, from your extensive work on this issue with the Women and Equalities Committee over many years, there is already a gender pay gap, and it is exacerbated by the fact the parental leave policies that exist, not just here in the UK but in other countries, prevent parents from making these choices, because fundamentally it comes down to the economics of who can afford to take that time off.

Parental leave is good for parents, children and business, but the UK Government are not going far enough to ensure that the entitlements are guaranteed for workers. We have heard that the full rate of maternity pay often applies for only 12 weeks and that many self-employed people take as little six weeks, with some taking no leave at all. There is also a failure to offer adequate parental, paternity and shared parental leave, which further compounds the maternity and pregnancy discrimination that so many women face in the workplace, and adds to the gender pay gap, pay inequalities and, eventually, pension inequalities.

We need to consider the rounded impact on women, their families and their household incomes. But this is not just about women; it is also about fathers and other

partners, and about people being able to spend time with their families, while knowing that their work is valued and respected, and that their job will be there to go back to—too often, that is not the case. We have already heard about job insecurity and non-permanent contracts and that, sadly, only the privileged few can afford to take extensive periods of leave.

As the Minister knows only too well, I have—like a broken record—made an extensive case for miscarriage leave, shared parental leave and neonatal leave, and for a fundamentally radical overhaul of workplace policies, statute and protections to allow workers to take the leave that they should be due during this life event, alongside the many other life events that people encounter. We need to adapt workplace policies and protections so that workers can adapt their lives and continue to be valued members of their workforces.

As we have heard, many industries are failing to protect or even provide the most basic leave, and many parents are falling through the net. The sad reality is that only legislation can fix that. I would love to be able to say that all workplaces would adopt comprehensive policies to address such issues, but the Minister and I know that that is not the case, even though it makes good economic sense to address the systemic problems in workplace culture that contribute to discrimination and pay disparity.

Much of that work could be done through the employment Bill. As I have said repeatedly—I am sure the Minister is tired of my voice over the last fortnight—we must address the need to reform UK employment protections and law. However, there is a danger that much of the detail would be lost in an overwhelming employment Bill, so I am keen to hear when the Bill will be introduced and how the Government intend it to tackle these workplace protections. The Government appear to have shelved the Bill, and there is no clear timetable for its introduction—I hope the Minister will feel free to correct me if it is forthcoming. I ask once again that parliamentary time be made available for the Bill. Will the Minister confirm that it will include improvements to parental leave and pay, measures on pregnancy and maternity discrimination, and—I have to get this in again—paid miscarriage leave?

It is clear that reform is well overdue. The current system allows too many parents to fall through the net. The Minister has listened attentively, but we need action, so I urge him to do all he can to introduce the employment Bill urgently, ensuring that it is robust in its protection of workers' rights.

6.28 pm

Justin Madders (Ellesmere Port and Neston) (Lab): It is a pleasure to see you in the Chair, Mrs Miller. I congratulate the hon. Member for East Renfrewshire (Kirsten Oswald) on securing this important debate and on her comprehensive introduction. It is clear that she is a passionate advocate for the many people who want to see great improvements in parental leave and pay.

As the hon. Lady and other Members outlined, there are a number of different types of parental leave, but I will focus on shared parental leave. It was originally designed to encourage more fathers to take leave after the birth of their child by allowing new parents to share up to 50 weeks of leave and up to 37 weeks of maternity

pay in the first year after the child is born. As we have heard in the debate, from our constituents and from leading employment and equality groups, however, shared parental leave just does not do what it says on the tin. The scheme is not working for parents, and take-up rates remain woeful. In February last year, data provided by the Minister in a written answer to a parliamentary question indicated that take-up in 2019-20—the scheme's fifth year—was just 3.6%, which is far short of the Government's 25% target. That is simply not good enough.

We now know that things got worse during the pandemic: the use of shared parental leave fell for the first time since the scheme was launched. A study by EMW Law found that just 11,200 couples applied to use the scheme in 2020-21, which was a 17% fall on the previous year, when a record 13,100 couples applied. EMW's analysis found that 598,000 women took maternity leave in the last year, indicating that just 2% of women who took some form of parental leave actually used shared leave. That is right—just 2%. That is a damning statistic. It is not surprising, therefore, that the UK is ranked only 34th out of 41 OECD countries for its family-friendly policies by UNICEF. It is also not surprising that leading groups such as Maternity Action, the Fawcett Society, the National Childbirth Trust, the Royal College of Midwives, the TUC and the Women's Budget Group have all called on the Government to urgently rethink the scheme.

The Women's Budget Group, an independent organisation that monitors the effect of Government policies on men and women, has called the scheme complicated and said that, because leave was shared, the onus on taking parental leave still fell more on women than men, because men tend to earn more and their salary would be harder to sacrifice at a time when families have great costs. Earlier this month, a Royal College of Midwives motion at the TUC women's conference called for a shake-up in parental leave so that it works better for both parents.

Ros Bragg, the director of Maternity Action, a maternity rights charity, said:

"Shared parental leave was brought in six years ago now and it's clear that it's not working—take up is woeful. Our advice lines are full of parents who want to share parental leave, but confusion around the rules means that they are completely baffled. Add that to the low level of pay on offer and the system seems almost designed to put parents off sharing leave, rather than encourage it."

The organisation is saying the scheme is not working because the shift to more equal parenting that it was supposed to promote is not happening. That does appear to be the case. We just have not seen the transformation in the take-up of parental leave by fathers that we would have hoped for. The scheme certainly needs reconsideration.

I will give the Minister and the Government a compliment—something that is rare for me—because they have spent millions of pounds on promoting the scheme. However, I am afraid that what we have heard is that it is too complicated and it is poorly understood by both employers and parents. The low rates of pay are a disincentive and workers do not qualify—for example those in agency work, on zero-hours contracts and, of course, the self-employed. We should be very clear that all those groups of workers deserve the same parental rights as everybody else.

When faced with all this evidence, it is hard to conclude that the Government are serious about employment rights and protections. They are not doing enough to address the real barriers in the way of shared parental leave. There was a Government consultation on high-level options for reforming family-related leave and pay, including a right to neonatal leave, pay for parents of premature or sick babies, and proposals to encourage transparency around flexible working and parental leave policies. That was launched back in July 2019, nearly three years ago, and we still have not seen the Government's full response to it. They have only published a response to the proposals on neonatal leave and pay. The rest—we are told—will be reported on in due course.

As we have heard, the greatly heralded employment Bill is still to materialise. I am sure the Minister will tell us once again that it will appear when parliamentary time allows, which is a frustration to many. It is clear that the policies we need to support families are not good enough. They are not available to all workers, and they are not working sufficiently for those who are able to access the schemes. Parents and families deserve better, frankly. If the Government are keen to see the societal shift to equal parenting that we want to see, and if they want to tackle the gender pay gap, I urge them and the Minister to look at Labour's Green Paper on a new deal for working people.

Mrs Maria Miller (in the Chair): Before I call the Minister, I should clarify that we are due to finish this session at 7.7 pm. I am sure the Minister will want to give the mover of the motion a couple of minutes at the end, if he is going to fill all that time.

6.34 pm

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Paul Scully): It is a pleasure to serve under your chairmanship, Mrs Miller. I congratulate the hon. Member for East Renfrewshire (Kirsten Oswald) on securing this debate. I will indeed give her many more minutes than that, should she wish to fill the time.

We are committed to ensuring that employed parents have the right support available to them, so that they can balance family commitments with staying in employment. That is why our parental leave and pay entitlements are so important. I thank those who have taken part in today's debate for their thoughtful and insightful comments, as well as their repeated engagement with this important issue.

I am pleased to say that this Government have support in place for both employers and employees on parental leave, to guide employers to do the right thing by their staff and to protect employees when they need to take time off. We have a range of leave entitlements that employed parents or parents to be may be eligible for, depending on their circumstances, which I will briefly set out. As a Government, we are committed to delivering a number of changes for new entitlements in this space, including making it easier for partners to take paternity leave, introducing neonatal leave and pay, and extending pregnancy and maternity discrimination protections.

This Government are committed to supporting the participation and progression of parents in the labour market, ensuring that it is fair and works for them. We

[Paul Scully]

are delivering this commitment through our framework of parental leave and pay entitlements, which are generous and flexible. Those entitlements support families whatever their circumstances or whichever stage of life they are in—from bonding with their child at birth, to grieving the loss of a child.

Parents have access to a range of leave and pay entitlements in their child's first year, giving working families more choice and flexibility about who cares for their child and when. Our maternity leave entitlement is generous. To qualifying employed women, we offer 52 weeks of maternity leave, of which 39 are paid, which is more than three times the EU minimum requirement. For self-employed women and those who are not eligible for statutory maternity pay, maternity allowance is available. Both of those maternity payments are designed to provide a measure of financial security to help women to stop working towards the end of their pregnancy and in the months after childbirth, in the interests of their own and their baby's health and wellbeing.

We recognise that fathers and partners play a crucial role in the first year of their child's life, through supporting the mother and developing a relationship with the child. Paternity leave arrangements enable employed fathers and partners who meet the qualifying conditions to take up to two weeks of paid leave within the first eight weeks following the birth of their child or placement for adoption. We recognise, however, that paternity leave could be improved, so we made a manifesto commitment to make it easier for fathers and partners to take it. We will announce how we will be doing that in due course.

Shared parental leave and pay, which has been mentioned, provides parents with flexibility over their child's care in the first year. It challenges the assumption that the mother will always be the primary carer and enables working parents to share up to 50 weeks of leave and up to 37 weeks of pay in the first year of their child's life. That enables mothers who want to return to work early to do so, and it enables fathers and partners to be their child's primary carer if that is the parents' wish. When we introduced the scheme in 2015, we forecast take-up of between 2% and 8% of eligible couples. We now know that the take-up is broadly in line with those initial estimates and has increased each year. To help make shared parental leave more accessible, we launched a new online tool last year, which allows parents to check their eligibility and plan their leave.

We are currently evaluating shared parental leave, as has been said, and we will publish our findings in due course. Clearly, a lot of work has gone into that evaluation, including commissioning and interrogating information collected through large-scale representative surveys of employers and parents, and a consultation on high-level options for reforming parental leave and pay. We also commissioned a qualitative study of parents who have used the scheme, and those various data sources will help us to better understand the barriers and enable parents to take shared parental leave.

Admittedly, the analysis of the data has taken longer than originally expected, as we pivoted necessarily to prioritise work on supporting parents through the covid-19 pandemic, including ensuring that parents and individuals returning from parental leave could access the coronavirus

job retention scheme. However, the evaluation remains important for the Government, and we will publish our findings in due course.

Turning to adopters, the Government are full of admiration for adopters who provide stable, loving homes to children who are unable to live with their birth parents. We recognise that it is crucial to the success of an adoption placement that an adopter takes time off work to care for and bond with their child. That is why employed adoptive parents have broadly the same rights and protections as birth parents. Adoption leave is a day one right, in line with maternity leave, which enables employed parents to take up to 52 weeks off work when they adopt a child.

We are also aware that that more needs to be done to support parents whose children are in neonatal care. In March 2020, following a Government consultation on the issue, we committed to introducing a new entitlement to neonatal leave and pay. Neonatal leave and pay will apply to parents of babies who are admitted into hospital up to the age of 28 days and who have a continuous stay in hospital of seven full days or more. Eligible parents will be able to take up to 12 weeks of paid leave on top of their other parental entitlements, such as maternity and paternity leave. Neonatal leave will be a day one right, meaning that it will be available to an employee from their first day in a new job.

As well as ensuring that parents have the leave and flexibility they need during this period, it is just as important to ensure that they are protected against discrimination and do not suffer detriment for taking that leave. That is why we are extending pregnancy and maternity discrimination protection for those returning from periods of eligible parental leave. We will ensure that the redundancy protection period applies from the point the employee informs the employer that she is pregnant and for six months after a mother has returned to work. We will also apply that protection to those taking adoption leave and shared parental leave.

Of course, our support for employed parents goes beyond the first year of a child's life. We recognise that for a whole range of reasons, parents of school-age children need support in caring for their children throughout the various stages of their childhood and teenage years. To enable parents to offer that support, all employed parents are entitled to 18 weeks of unpaid leave for each child up to the child's 18th birthday once they have completed 12 months of service with their employer. Employees also have access to time off for dependants, which provides a reasonable amount of unpaid time off work to deal with an unexpected or sudden emergency involving a child or dependant. In recognition of the particularly tragic circumstance of losing a young life before they have even had the opportunity to reach adulthood, we also introduced a new statutory entitlement to parental bereavement leave and pay. That entitlement gives all employed parents who meet the eligibility requirements a right to take up to two weeks off work in the 56 weeks following the death of their child.

Obviously, I appreciate the work done by the hon. Member for Lanark and Hamilton East (Angela Crawley) on extending that entitlement further. It is not something at which we are looking at this moment in time, but I will always enjoy continuing to discuss this issue and looking at what we can do for parents, because it is a tragedy to suffer a loss at any time. At the moment, we

have drawn the line following the clinical measure of 24 weeks, but we also have other work in train that enables greater flexibility for all employees, including those who are employed parents. Although not a replacement for leave, having access to flexible working arrangements can be a really important tool to enable employees to balance work and family responsibilities or to support those in employment who experience a really difficult life event.

We have taken forward our manifesto commitment to consult on making flexible working the default unless employers have a really good reason not to do so. That consultation contained measures that would increase the availability and support the uptake of flexible working arrangements, including whether to extend the right to request flexible working to all employees from their first day of employment. That consultation closed on 1 December; we are now reviewing the 1,600-odd responses received, and will issue our response in due course. The consultation also introduced plans for a future call for evidence on the subject of ad hoc flexible working, through which we want to explore how non-contractual flexibility works in practice.

As we have heard, when it comes to helping employers understand how to be sympathetic and supportive to their employees, one of the most important tools is guidance. As an example of that, we recently commissioned a significant update of the guidance on managing a bereavement in the workplace, which includes a new section on supporting employees after a miscarriage before 24 weeks of pregnancy and offers examples of best practice. That guidance can be found right now on the ACAS website.

Another example is the flexible working taskforce, which is a partnership across business groups, trade unions, charities and Government Departments that shares knowledge and best practice on all forms of flexible working and takes on discrete pieces of work. Over the past 18 months, that taskforce has produced advice and guidance to support employers who may be interested in introducing hybrid working arrangements for the first time. Advice published by ACAS in July set out the key legal and practical issues associated with this way of working, and a practical guide offering top tips to businesses on how to effectively implement hybrid working was published independently by taskforce members in December, as part of our approach to support employers and employees to have conversations about what is happening in their lives and what support they need.

Employers are best placed to understand their own people and to develop a solution that works for the individual, as we heard from the hon. Member for Strangford (Jim Shannon) when he talked about happy employees being more productive employees. Clearly, there are great examples of companies treating their employees with compassion and going beyond the statutory minimum. That approach is valuable to the employer as well as to the employee, through the increased loyalty of employees.

I would like to reassure the hon. Member for East Renfrewshire. She asked about employment measures, but I am afraid that not much has changed since we last spoke about this, because Her Majesty has not yet told

us the legislation for the next Session, since we have not finished this one. Nevertheless, the Government are committed to building a high-skilled, high-productivity and high-waged economy that delivers on our ambition to make the UK the best place in the world to work and to grow a business. We will continue to do that by championing a flexible and dynamic labour market. As we build back better, we will bring forward employment measures to make it easier for people to enter and remain in work as soon as parliamentary time allows. The hon. Member for Ellesmere Port and Neston (Justin Madders) can tick away on his employment Bill bingo when we do so.

I reiterate the Government's commitment to support parents in the workplace and to enable them to be where their families need them while staying in employment. I have highlighted some of the broad range of support that the Government have in place to support parents through different life events, but employers also have an important part to play, because they know their employees. A supportive workplace brings benefits to both the employee and the employer, including on productivity and wellbeing. Once again, I thank the hon. Member for East Renfrewshire and everyone else for their contributions to this important debate, working hard to support parents in the workplace.

6.46 pm

Kirsten Oswald: I, too, am grateful to everyone who has spoken in the debate. It is an important issue, and thinking about all the people across these islands who are affected by it probably brings that home.

As the hon. Member for Strangford (Jim Shannon) pointed out, we could probably speak about this a good bit more, but it is pressing to speak about it now. People face a cost of living crisis that makes the need for action all the more urgent, and we cannot get away from where I started today: among OECD countries, the UK has the second lowest payment rates for maternity leave. The hon. Member for Ellesmere Port and Neston (Justin Madders) set that out well, including the poor levels of take-up at present.

We are simply not where we should be with parental leave and pay. My hon. Friend the Member for Lanark and Hamilton East (Angela Crawley) explained clearly the impacts of that shortfall on individuals and households.

I am grateful for the tone with which the Minister always approaches such matters, but I do not think that there is any getting away from the fact that we are not where we need to be on action to deliver fairness and proper support. In conclusion, if the UK Government will not deal properly with this and deliver the employment Bill that we have long been promised to achieve fair work across all these issues, including parental leave and pay, they should devolve employment matters so that we can deliver fair work for ourselves.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved,

That this House has considered parental leave and pay.

6.48 pm

Sitting adjourned.

Written Statements

Tuesday 22 March 2022

BUSINESS, ENERGY AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

Postmasters: Compensation

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Paul Scully): As the House is aware, the Post Office Horizon scandal, which began over 20 years ago, has had a devastating impact on the lives of many postmasters. The High Court Group Litigation Order (GLO) case against the Post Office brought by 555 postmasters exposed the Horizon IT scandal which had seen many postmasters forced to “repay” to Post Office sums which they had never received. Many were dismissed, prosecuted and even imprisoned.

The Government have long considered unfair the unequal treatment received by members of the GLO and their non-GLO peers. I am therefore pleased to announce that the Chancellor will make additional funding available to give those in the GLO group compensation similar to that which is available to their non-GLO peers.

Because they had signed a “full and final” settlement of their court case in 2019, postmasters in the group were ineligible to apply to the Historical Shortfall Scheme (HSS) which their legal action had established. So despite winning the case, the group was left worse off than the other affected postmasters for whom they had blazed the trail. Each postmaster in the group received an average of around £20,000.

To enable the GLO Group to undertake litigation against Post Office they secured funding from litigation funders Therium. Following extensive work to ensure the full compensation went to the postmasters, I am pleased that Therium have agreed to waive their rights to any claim on this compensation.

I plan to return to the House in due course to announce our next steps.

[HCWS705]

INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Trade Policy Upgrade

The Secretary of State for International Trade (Anne-Marie Trevelyan): The Government are today, 22 March 2022, announcing that the Secretary of State for International Trade (Anne-Marie Trevelyan) has written to the Trade Remedies Authority (TRA) to call in the TRA’s reconsideration of the UK’s steel safeguard measure (TF0006).

In September 2021, the TRA launched a reconsideration of their recommendation on 14 product categories as set out below. This follows the TRA’s recommendation on the steel safeguard in June 2021 to keep the safeguard for 10 product categories. The Government accepted

this recommendation and also extended the safeguard on a further five, to allow for industry to appeal the TRA’s recommendation. The called-in reconsideration will consider the 14 product categories under review and other matters, such as the grouping of product categories as set out in the letter to the TRA which will be available on their public file.

The Government have decided to call in the reconsideration due to the strategic importance of the steel sector to the UK. The TRA will provide assistance in the case and provide a report setting out their findings for the Secretary of State to consider.

Interested parties who wish to contribute to the called-in reconsideration should continue to contact the TRA.

Goods to which the Reconsideration Relates		
Product number	Product Category	Commodity Codes
1	Non-alloy and other alloy hot rolled sheets and strips	7208 10 00, 7208 25 00, 7208 26 00, 7208 27 00, 7208 36 00, 7208 37 00, 7208 38 00, 7208 39 00, 7208 40 00, 7208 52 10, 7208 52 99, 7208 53 10, 7208 53 90, 7208 54 00, 7211 13 00, 7211 14 00, 7211 19 00, 7212 60 00, 7225 19 10, 7225 30 10, 7225 30 30, 7225 30 90, 7225 40 15, 7225 40 90, 7226 19 10, 7226 91 20, 7226 9191, 7226 9199
4	Metallic coated sheets	7210 20 00, 7210 41 00, 7210 49 00, 7210 61 00, 7210 69 00 20, 7210 69 00 80, 7210 90 80, 7212 20 00, 7212 30 00, 7212 50 20, 7212 50 30, 7212 50 40, 7212 50 61, 7212 50 69, 7212 50 90, 7225 91 00, 7225 92 00, 7225 99 00, 7226 99 10, 7226 99 30, 7226 99 70
6	Tin mill products	7209 18 99, 7210 11 00, 7210 12 20, 7210 12 80, 7210 50 00, 7210 70 10, 7210 90 40, 7212 10 10, 7212 10 90, 7212 40 20
7	Non-alloy and other alloy quarto plates	7208 51 20, 7208 51 91, 7208 51 98, 7208 52 91, 7208 90 20, 7208 90 80, 7210 90 30, 7225 40 12, 7225 4040, 7225 40 60
12	Non-alloy and other alloy merchant bars and light sections	7214 30 00, 7214 91 10, 7214 91 90, 7214 99 31, 7214 99 39, 7214 99 50, 7214 99 71, 7214 99 79, 7214 99 95, 7215 90 00, 7216 10 00, 7216 21 00, 7216 22 00, 7216 40 10, 7216 40 90, 7216 50 10, 7216 50 91, 7216 50 99, 7216 99 00, 7228 10 20, 7228 20 10, 7228 20 91, 7228 30 20, 7228 30 41, 7228 30 49, 7228 30 61, 7228 30 69, 7228 30 70, 7228 30 89, 7228 60 20, 7228 60 80, 7228 70 10, 7228 70 90, 7228 80 00
14	Stainless bars and light sections	7222 11 11, 7222 11 19, 7222 11 81, 7222 11 89, 7222 19 10, 7222 19 90, 7222 20 11, 7222 20 19, 7222 20 21, 7222 20 29, 7222 20 31, 7222 20 39, 7222 20 81, 7222 20 89, 7222 30 51, 7222 30 91, 7222 30 97, 7222 40 10, 7222 40 50, 7222 40 90
16	Non-alloy and other alloy wire rod	7213 10 00, 7213 20 00, 7213 91 10, 7213 91 20, 7213 91 41, 7213 91 49, 7213 91 70, 7213 91 90, 7213 99 10, 7213 99 90, 7227 10 00, 7227 20 00, 7227 90 10, 7227 90 50, 7227 90 95
17	Angles shapes and sections of iron or non-alloy steel	7216 31 10, 7216 31 90, 7216 32 11, 7216 32 19, 7216 32 91, 7216 32 99, 7216 33 10, 7216 33 90
19	Railway material	7302 10 22, 7302 10 28, 7302 10 50
21	Hollow sections	7306 61 10, 7306 61 92, 7306 61 99
25B	Large welded tubes	7305 19 00, 7305 20 00, 7305 31 00, 7305 39 00, 7305 90 00

Goods to which the Reconsideration Relates

Product number	Product Category	Commodity Codes
26	Other welded pipes	7306 11 10, 7306 11 90, 7306 19 10, 7306 19 90, 7306 21 00, 7306 29 00, 7306 30 11, 7306 30 19, 7306 30 80, 7306 40 20, 7306 40 80, 7306 50 20, 7306 50 80, 7306 69 10, 7306 69 90, 7306 90 00
27	Non-alloy and other alloy cold finished bars	7215 10 00, 7215 50 11, 7215 50 19, 7215 50 80, 7228 10 90, 7228 20 99, 7228 50 20, 7228 50 40, 7228 50 61, 7228 50 69, 7228 50 80
28	Non-alloy wire	7217 10 10, 7217 10 31, 7217 10 39, 7217 10 50, 7217 10 90, 7217 20 10, 7217 20 30, 7217 20 50, 7217 20 90, 7217 90 20, 7217 90 50, 7217 90 90

[HCWS708]

JUSTICE

Personal Injury Reform: Consultation Response

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice (James Cartlidge): My hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice (Lord Wolfson of Tredegar) has made the following statement:

I announce today the publication of Part 2 of the Government's response to the 'Reforming the soft tissue injury ('whiplash') claims process' consultation paper on www.gov.uk.

In November 2016, the Government published a consultation that set out proposed measures to tackle the number and cost of road traffic accident related personal injury claims. This consultation covered both legislative proposals for tackling the number and cost of whiplash claims, and a 'Call for Evidence' on several related issues.

The Government response was split into two parts, with Part 1 covering the primary and secondary legislative measures which made up the Whiplash Reform Programme, and Part 2 covering the 'Call for Evidence'. Part 1 of the response was published in February 2017, but a decision was taken to defer work on Part 2 to enable focus on developing and implementing the significant whiplash reform measures.

Now that the whiplash reforms have been successfully implemented, it is appropriate to revisit the issue of publishing the deferred Part 2 Government response. The newly published response includes a summary of stakeholder views and specific analysis of the responses received on issues relating to credit hire, rehabilitation, early notification of claims, recovery of disbursements, Insurance Fraud Taskforce actions, and consideration of a Barème scheme. It also details the next steps to be taken in relation to these topics.

In considering the responses received, we have acknowledged that these were views provided in 2016, and that in some areas, developments in the sector have altered the position considered in the 'Call for Evidence'. We will continue to monitor several of the areas identified and remain open to working with specific stakeholder groups to develop and implement industry-led solutions to issues in areas such as rehabilitation and credit hire.

The consultation response paper can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/reforming-the-soft-tissue-injury-whiplash-claims-process>.

[HCWS707]

LEVELLING UP, HOUSING AND COMMUNITIES

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

The Minister for Levelling Up Communities (Kemi Badenoch): On 18 January 2022,¹ I announced to the House that the Secretary of State was minded to intervene at Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council ("the authority") and to appoint Commissioners to take over functions associated with the governance and scrutiny of strategic decision making, and of those relating to the appointment and dismissal of statutory officers.

At the same time, I sought views on how best to improve political stability in the authority's leadership and to move towards a four-yearly election cycle.

These proposals followed the publication of a "Value for Money Governance" review by the authority's external auditor, Grant Thornton, issued to the authority on 3 December 2021. The review makes 45 wide-ranging recommendations, three of which are statutory recommendations, and in my view provides considerable evidence that the authority has failed to comply with its best value duty over a number of years. This is a requirement set out in the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, with regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

The Governance review paints a deeply troubling picture of mismanagement and of ineffective scrutiny and accountability arrangements at the authority. While the review recognises the recent progress made under the Interim Chief Executive, Kim Bromley-Derry CBE DL, it also notes how, historically, senior officers and members have been unable to make the changes required to move away from the past.

While the Secretary of State is encouraged by the "green shoots" of progress described in the report, his view is that the risk of progress stalling or slowing is significant. He believes the proposed intervention is necessary and expedient to secure compliance with the best value duty.

As part of my announcement in January, I invited the authority to make representations about my proposals to formally intervene on or before 11 February 2022.

Representations were received from 15 parties: the authority, its Conservative Councillor Group, an independent Councillor, three MPs, eight residents and one residents' group. With one exception, all the representations supported the intervention and the proposal to appoint Commissioners.

The authority welcomed the support of the Department with its improvement, and stated that it looked forward to working with Commissioners and developing a clear improvement plan. In relation to elections, the authority confirmed that it is in the process of developing an action plan which includes consultation and engagement activity.

The Conservative Group and the independent Councillor pledged to work with the Commissioners. Residents were universally supportive of the intervention and keen to see real improvement in the authority's services.

While two MPs supported intervention, one was opposed, citing the need for the progress made by the Council's new senior leaders not to be undermined by Commissioners. *Best value intervention in Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council*

Following consideration of these representations, the Secretary of State has decided to proceed with the proposals announced on 18 January.

Appointing Commissioners for Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council the Secretary of State has decided to appoint two Commissioners with a proven record of leadership, transformation and strong governance, and the specific expertise that will be relevant to their functions.

The Governance review recognises that it is the interim Chief Executive Officer, Kim Bromley-Derry CBE DL, that has been driving change within the authority since his arrival in August 2021. It is for this reason that the Secretary of State has decided to appoint Mr Bromley-Derry as Managing Director Commissioner, a role which will enable him to continue the work that he has already begun, and to provide the authority with the consistent leadership capacity that it needs to continue its recovery. I would also like to thank Mr Bromley-Derry's employers, McLaren Construction Group, for enabling his appointment.

Kim Bromley Derry CBE DL (Managing Director Commissioner)—Kim has more than 35 years of public sector experience, including eight years as Chief Executive of the London Borough of Newham. He was also Director of Children's Services at both the London Borough of Newham and South Tyneside Council and a Children's Services Director at Leicester City Council. Kim was appointed Interim Chief Executive of Sandwell Council in August 2021 after being temporarily released from his role as Group Director for strategic partnerships at McLaren Construction Group. Kim has also been President of the Association of Directors of Children's Services and chaired the Government's Libraries Taskforce.

Jim Taylor (Assistant Commissioner)—Jim served for six years as Chief Executive of Salford City Council prior to his retirement in 2021. He also fulfilled the role of Interim Chief Executive of Trafford Borough Council simultaneously from July 2018 to February 2019. Prior to this Jim was the Chief Executive of Rochdale Council having also served as Director for Children's Services at Tameside MBC. In June 2021 Jim was appointed by the Secretary of State to undertake an external assurance review of governance at Slough Borough Council.

The Commissioners have been appointed for two years from 22 March 2022 to 22 March 2024, or such earlier or later time as we determine. We are clear that the directions should operate for as long, and only as long, and only in the form, as necessary.

The Commissioners will be asked to provide their first report within the next three months. Further reports will be provided every six months, or as agreed with the Commissioners.

I want to be clear that most decisions will continue to be made by the authority; the intention being that Commissioners will only use their powers as a last resort if they are dissatisfied with the authority's improvement processes.

Commissioners will work collaboratively with Emma Taylor, Chief Executive of Sandwell Children's Trust and Mark Gurrey, the Department for Education's children's services adviser and Chair of the Council's

improvement board for children's services. This will ensure that the improvements overseen to date through the Department for Education's statutory intervention continue to be made.

I would also like to thank the LGA for the continued support it has provided to the authority, most recently through a Corporate Peer Challenge.

As with other interventions led by my Department, the authority will be directed to meet the costs of the Commissioners. The fees paid to individuals are published in appointment letters which are available separately on www.gov.uk. I am assured this provides value for money given the expertise that is being brought, and the scale of the challenge in councils requiring statutory intervention.

Conclusion

The Government will continue to work closely with the political, business, and cultural leadership of Sandwell, and is committed to making sure the residents of Sandwell have what they need from their local council, including confidence in its governance and service delivery.

I have published the directions and explanatory memorandum associated with this announcement at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/proposed-intervention-at-sandwell-metropolitan-borough-council>.

[HCWS706]

NORTHERN IRELAND

Northern Ireland: Change to Terrorism Threat Level

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Brandon Lewis): MI5 has lowered the Northern Ireland-related terrorism threat level in Northern Ireland from "SEVERE" to "SUBSTANTIAL".

The decision to change the threat level is taken by MI5, independently of Ministers.

This is a systematic, comprehensive and rigorous process, based on the very latest intelligence and analysis of factors which drive the threat.

The fact that the threat level is being lowered from where it has been since September 2010 is a testament to the Government's ongoing commitment to protecting the peace process and tackling Northern Ireland-related terrorism, as well as the tremendous efforts of the Police Service of Northern Ireland and MI5 for their hard-won gains over the past decade that have helped to make Northern Ireland a safer place to live and work.

Despite the change in the threat level, terrorism remains one of the most direct and immediate risks to our national security and to communities in Northern Ireland. There remains a small group of people determined to destabilise the political settlement in Northern Ireland through acts of terrorism.

"SUBSTANTIAL" means that a terrorist attack is likely and might well occur without further warning.

As ever, the public should remain vigilant and report any concerns they may have to the police.

The Government, police and intelligence agencies will continue to work tirelessly to address the threat posed by terrorism in all its forms. The threat level will be kept under constant review.

[HCWS704]

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**not later than
Tuesday 29 March 2022**

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