



HOUSE OF LORDS

Liaison Committee

3rd Report of Session 2019–21

Review of House of Lords investigative and scrutiny committee activity in 2019–20

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Liaison Committee

The Liaison Committee advises the House on the resources required for select committee work and allocates resources between select committees; reviews the select committee work of the House; considers requests for ad hoc committees and reports to the House with recommendations; ensures effective co-ordination between the two Houses; and considers the availability of Lords to serve on committees.

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Review of House of Lords investigative and scrutiny committee activity in 2019–20

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1. In June 2019 we published our report on House of Lords committee activity in the second year of the 2017–19 session.¹ We noted then that the exceptionally high levels of committee activity in the first year of that session had continued throughout the second year. The period since then has seen a succession of major changes, punctuated by the prorogation and Dissolution of Parliament in the second half of 2020, and more recently by the rapid move to virtual working in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Implementing the review of committees

2. In July 2019 we published the report on our 18-month review of House of Lords committee activity, the most comprehensive review of the committee structure that had ever been undertaken.² This report included a large number of recommendations, all of which were agreed to by the House when the report was debated in October 2019. The report proposed the start of a significant change in the positioning of our committees to begin to put in place a thematic approach designed to ensure more effective scrutiny of all the major areas of public policy. One of the key principles guiding our recommendations was that the committee structure should be comprehensive. House of Lords committees had developed piecemeal over the previous five decades, and the lack of a guiding logic for the overall committee structure had resulted in significant scrutiny gaps. The principal policy areas that had suffered from a lack of detailed scrutiny were social affairs and public services, including health and education. Our review therefore recommended a number of measures to fill these gaps, chief among them being the appointment of a new sessional committee on public services, with terms of reference which require it to consider public services, including health and education. The Public Services Committee was duly appointed by the House in February 2020.³
3. To address scrutiny gaps further, we recommended a small number of changes to the existing titles and remits of some sessional committees. These came into effect on 22 October and 29 October 2019.⁴ Some areas of public policy, including energy and the environment, and home affairs, are currently addressed principally through our European Union committee and its sub-committees. The report ‘ring-fenced’ the EU Committee and its sub-committees, leaving them unchanged, but acknowledged that further work in this respect would be required by the Liaison Committee in the months ahead. The first phase of this restructuring, following a report by

1 Liaison Committee, *Summary of House of Lords investigative and scrutiny committee activity in 2018–19* (5th Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 369)

2 Liaison Committee, *Review of House of Lords Investigative and Scrutiny Committees: towards a new thematic committee structure* (6th Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 398)

3 HL Deb, 13 February 2020, cols [2348–2349](#)

4 HL Deb, 22 October 2019, cols [492–494](#) and HL Deb, 29 October 2019, cols [872–884](#)

the Procedure Committee which was agreed to by the House,⁵ took place at Easter 2020, and resulted in the reduction of the number of EU sub-committees from six to four, and the establishment of a new sub-committee on International Agreements.

4. Our intention during the review was that the evidence gathered for it would result in the House not needing to wait years for another comprehensive review but could instead respond flexibly, on an ongoing basis, to new developments and the constant technological and societal change which is re-shaping the world in which we operate. Recommendations within the report were designed to bring more flexibility and responsiveness to changing circumstances for committees, allowing them to engage with the emerging policy issues of the day, without losing any of the quality and depth of research for which Lords' Committees are well-known. The most vivid early illustration of this more flexible approach was the appointment of a new cross-cutting COVID-19 committee,⁶ which met for the first time in June 2020.

Virtual committee meetings

5. The emphasis on flexibility supported by the review of committees has proved particularly important in responding to the remote working arrangements necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic. On 16 March the Prime Minister announced that people should work from home where possible, and the following day Senior Deputy Speaker and Liaison Committee Chair Lord McFall of Alcluith agreed proposals for “streamlining and prioritising services for investigative and scrutiny committees.” These included encouraging a greater use of agreement of committee reports and other key documents by correspondence, the prospect of moving to paperless “circulations” of documents, and using video-conferencing facilities when these were available.
6. Before April 2020 there had never been a virtual House of Lords committee meeting. Members, and most witnesses, had to attend meetings in person. Committees in both Houses needed to start meeting quickly during lockdown, not least to scrutinise the emergency legislation needed. Virtual committee proceedings involve considerable additional effort. As is the case in the Chamber, in order to run virtual committee proceedings in an orderly manner they have to be far more structured and choreographed than they normally would be. Staff have spent a considerable amount of time reviewing procedures and issuing successive sets of guidance, and the small Committee Technology Unit has worked tirelessly to support the changes, which have included the electronic-only publication of reports for committees across the House.
7. Feedback from Committee Chairs shows that virtual committee proceedings are considered by members to have been a success. Statistically there was only a slight dip in the number of meetings during the first three months of virtual proceedings, and between 21 April and 12 June 107 virtual committee meetings were held.

5 HL Deb, 17 March 2020, [cols 1388–1389](#)

6 Liaison Committee, [A COVID-19 Committee](#) (1st Report, Session 2019–21, HL Paper 56)

Improved internal communications

8. To assist the more comprehensive approach to committee activity, the Liaison Committee agreed that its Chair should convene a committee Chairs' Forum. This Chairs' forum has, for the first time, provided a mechanism for committee Chairs to ensure that effective scrutiny of all major public policy areas is taking place, identifying any gaps in scrutiny or committee remits, addressing any overlap, and providing a potential avenue for the wider membership of the House to make committee Chairs and the Liaison Committee aware of particular issues. The Forum is also intended to help ensure that committees can respond quickly to societal and technological changes, as well as ongoing public policy developments. The Forum has already met four times and has proved helpful as committees have adapted to virtual meetings.
9. Another welcome innovation recommended by the Liaison Committee review was the production of a regular newsletter to inform members of the House about committee activity. This newsletter, *From the Horseshoe*, is now produced regularly by the Committee Assistant to the Liaison Committee, and has been well received across Parliament.

CHAPTER 2: SESSIONAL COMMITTEE ACTIVITY AND IMPACT

Communications and Digital Committee

10. The Committee published its report on public service broadcasting in the age of video on demand in November 2019.⁷ The growing popularity and large budgets of subscription services such as Netflix and Amazon Prime Video prompted the Committee to ask what future there was for UK public service broadcasters (PSBs). Witnesses agreed that PSBs are a crucial part of the UK creative industries. However, the Committee concluded that PSBs need to do more to include people from diverse backgrounds in their commissioning processes and behind the camera in order to appeal to all audiences.
11. The Committee found that the UK TV production sector is a national success story: UK crews and studios are in demand from across the world. This has contributed to cost inflation, which the Committee recommended should be addressed by changes to tax relief and to the apprenticeship levy. Other recommendations focused on updating regulation to ensure that PSBs can adapt to the changing landscape, including regulation on advertising and how channels and apps are displayed. The Committee recommended a new, more transparent method for setting the BBC licence fee.
12. The inquiry received a good level of media attention—particularly the oral evidence sessions with Netflix⁸ and Sir Lenny Henry.⁹ Despite being published in the run-up to the general election, the report was covered by a range of major news outlets. The Government said that the report will help to inform Ofcom’s major review of PSB.¹⁰
13. In February 2020 the Committee began an inquiry into the future of journalism. The inquiry is focusing on how digital technologies are changing the production and consumption of journalism, how journalists can be supported to adapt to those changes and how the profession can become more trusted by the public. The Committee has heard evidence on the changing consumption of news, training of journalists, media literacy and local journalism.¹¹

Constitution Committee

14. The Constitution Committee continued its scrutiny of bills to deliver Brexit. It reported twice on the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill,¹² making recommendations on the powers for ministers, the scrutiny

7 Communications and Digital Committee, *Public service broadcasting: as vital as ever* (1st Report, Session 2019, HL Paper 16)

8 Oral evidence taken before the Communications and Digital Committee, 22 August 2019 (Session 2017–19) [QQ 186–195](#)

9 Oral evidence taken before the Communications and Digital Committee, 11 June 2019 (Session 2017–19) [QQ 124–130](#)

10 HM Government, *Government response to report Public Service broadcasting: as vital as ever* (12 February 2020) <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/55/documents/690/default/> [accessed 1 July 2020]

11 Communications and Digital Committee, ‘The Future of Journalism’, (February 2020): <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/28/the-future-of-journalism/> [accessed 1 July 2020]

12 Constitution Committee, *European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill: interim report* (2nd Report, Session 2019, HL Paper 21) and *European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill* (1st Report, Session 2019–21, HL Paper 5)

mechanisms for them and the treatment of the case law of the Court of Justice of the EU law. It published reports on eight other bills.¹³ These included the fast-tracked Coronavirus Bill about which it raised concerns about the use of delegated powers, the need for parliamentary scrutiny of them and potential effects on civil liberties.

15. The Committee published the third report of its inquiry into the legislative process. *The Passage of Bills through Parliament* examined the effectiveness of Parliament’s scrutiny of bills, the time available for considering legislation, information accompanying bills, and public understanding of and engagement with the legislative process.¹⁴ The Committee found that the introduction of an evidence-taking stage for bills that start in the House of Commons had strengthened Parliament’s scrutiny of bills and enabled greater public engagement with the legislative process. The Committee concluded that it was unsatisfactory that no such process existed for bills starting in the House of Lords and recommended that the House of Lords takes evidence on bills that start there. The Committee found that the quality of explanatory materials accompanying bills varied considerably and recommended that the proposed Legislative Standards Committee should scrutinise such documents for their quality and consistency.
16. The Committee began an inquiry on the Fixed-term Parliaments Act 2011, taking evidence on its workings in the context of pressure from across the political spectrum for the Act to be amended or repealed.¹⁵
17. The Committee held annual evidence sessions with the Lord Chancellor,¹⁶ the Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales,¹⁷ and the President and Deputy President of the Supreme Court.¹⁸

Economic Affairs Committee

18. The Economic Affairs Committee published *Rethinking High Speed 2* in May 2019. The Committee found that the costs of HS2 appeared to be out of control and that Northern Powerhouse Rail—a programme of northern rail infrastructure improvements—would deliver greater benefits to northern cities than HS2. It recommended that the northern section of HS2—the second phase of the project—should be combined with Northern Powerhouse Rail and treated as one programme, allowing for investment to be prioritised where it is most needed. The Committee recommended that the Government

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- 13 Constitution Committee, *Courts and Tribunals (Online Procedure) Bill* (21st Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 373); *River Authorities and Drainage Bill* (22nd Report, Session 2019–21, HL Paper 375); *Sentencing (Pre-consolidation Amendments) Bill [HL]* (23rd Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 382); *Birmingham Commonwealth Games Bill [HL]* (25th Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 399); *Northern Ireland (Executive Formation) Bill* (26th Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 404); *Pension Schemes Bill [HL]* (2nd Report, Session 2019–21, HL Paper 22); *Terrorist Offenders (Restriction of Early Release) Bill* (3rd Report, Session 2019–21 HL Paper 23) and *Coronavirus Bill* (4th Report, Session 2019–21, HL Paper 44)
 - 14 Constitution Committee, *The Legislative Process: The Passage of Bills through Parliament* (24th Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 393)
 - 15 Constitution Committee, ‘Fixed-term Parliaments Act 2011 inquiry’,: <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/14/fixedterm-parliaments-act-2011/> (accessed 13 July 2020)
 - 16 Oral evidence taken before the Constitution Committee, 1 May 2019 (Session 2017–19), [QQ 1–17](#) (Rt Hon David Gauke MP, The Lord Chancellor)
 - 17 Oral evidence taken before the Constitution Committee, 3 April 2019 (Session 2017–19), [QQ 1–12](#) (Rt Hon Lord Burnett of Maldon, Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales)
 - 18 Oral evidence taken before the Constitution Committee, 4 March 2020 (Session 2019–21), [QQ 1–12](#) (Rt Hon Lord Reed of Allermuir, President of the Supreme Court; Rt Hon Lord Hodge, Deputy President of the Supreme Court)

changes its plans for HS2 in order to save money, including removing the redevelopment of Euston from the first phase of the project and assessing whether Old Oak Common in west London could operate as the terminus for the full line.¹⁹ The report was debated in the House of Lords in January 2020.²⁰

19. In July 2019, well before the COVID crisis, the Committee published *Social care funding: time to end a national scandal*. The Committee found that around half of all public funding is focused on the working-age population, causing the older population to rely on support from family and friends. The report recommended an immediate investment of £8 billion a year to bring care quality back to previous levels and to reduce pressure on unpaid carers and local authorities. It recommended that a basic entitlement to free personal care should be universally available in the next five years; a cap on accommodation costs; and that social care should be funded largely from general taxation. The Committee concluded that the adult social care workforce required higher pay and a structure which better reflected their skills.²¹
20. In January 2020 the Committee began an inquiry on the economics of Universal Credit. It is examining whether Universal Credit is meeting its original objectives, whether the policy assumptions reflected in its design are appropriate for different groups of claimants and the extent to which Universal Credit meets the needs of claimants in today’s labour market and changing world of work.²² The Committee intends to report in July 2020.
21. In January 2020 the Committee held follow-up evidence sessions on its report on HS2 and on its 2016 report *Building more homes*.²³ The Committee also held annual evidence sessions with the Governor of the Bank of England and the Chancellor of the Exchequer.²⁴

Finance Bill Sub-Committee

22. The Economic Affairs Finance Bill Sub-Committee published *Off-payroll working: treating people fairly in April 2020*.²⁵ The report considered the proposed extension of the off-payroll working rules to the private sector (delayed until 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic) and urged the Government to address the proposed rules’ “inherent flaws and weaknesses”.
23. The Sub-Committee’s inquiry, which was delayed from its usual timetable due to political events, attracted over 700 written submissions, many from individual contractors who would be affected by the proposed rules. The COVID-19 lockdown meant that a planned evidence session with the

19 Economic Affairs Committee, *Rethinking HS2* (6th Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 359)

20 HL Deb, 23 January 2020, [col 1187](#)

21 Economic Affairs Committee, *Social care funding: time to end a national scandal* (7th Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 392)

22 Economic Affairs Committee, ‘The economics of universal credit’: <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/31/the-economics-of-universal-credit/> [accessed 13 July 2020]

23 Oral evidence taken before the Economic Affairs Committee, 28 January 2020 (Session 2019–21) [QQ 14–21](#) and [QQ 1–13](#); Oral evidence taken before the Economic Affairs Committee, 4 February 2020 (Session 2019–21) [QQ 10–17](#), and [QQ 1–9](#)

24 Oral evidence taken before the Economic Affairs Committee, 11 February 2020 (Session 2019–21) [QQ 1–12](#) (Governor of the Bank of England); Oral evidence taken before the Economic Affairs Committee, 19 May 2020 (Session 2019–21) [QQ 1–15](#) (Chancellor of the Exchequer)

25 Finance Bill Sub-Committee, *Off-payroll working: treating people fairly* (1st Report, Session 2019–21, HL Paper 50)

minister responsible for the draft Finance Bill, Jesse Norman MP, could not take place; evidence was instead provided by correspondence. The report was widely covered in mainstream and specialist media outlets, with 50 articles written about the report in the week following publication, and a steady stream of further reports thereafter. The report was published in time for the Finance Bill's second reading in the House of Commons. It was referenced by many MPs in the subsequent Commons stages, with much discussion of its recommendations in the Public Bill Committee.

24. The Government sent its response on 26 June 2020.²⁶ Its main concession to the report's recommendations was to re-evaluate how Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs calculates the cost to business of the new rules.

European Union Committee

EU Select Committee

25. In January 2019 the European Union Committee was mandated to scrutinise Brexit-related treaties (in other words, new international agreements entered into by the UK to replace existing EU agreements post-Brexit). This work continued throughout the year, with the Select Committee and its sub-committees producing a total of 15 reports within the deadlines laid down in Part 2 of the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010 (the CRAG Act).
26. The most substantial of these was the Committee's report on the UK-South Korea trade agreement, which was published on 22 October 2019.²⁷ The unusual events around the prorogation of Parliament meant that the Internal Market Sub-Committee, which undertook scrutiny of this agreement, had more time to complete its work than the CRAG Act normally allows, and it took the opportunity to invite written submissions from experts in the field.
27. Drawing on its experience of treaty scrutiny, as well as the recommendations of other committees, including the Constitution Committee, in June 2019 the Committee published a 'lessons learned' report on treaty scrutiny.²⁸ In March 2020 the Committee's responsibility for scrutiny of international agreements was confirmed in its updated and expanded terms of reference. The new International Agreements Sub-Committee first met in April.
28. On 10 January 2020, just one day after it was reappointed post-election, the EU Select Committee published a detailed analysis of the revised UK-EU Withdrawal Agreement and Political Declaration.²⁹ The aim of the report was to inform the parliamentary debates on the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill, which paved the way for UK withdrawal from the EU to take effect on 31 January 2020.
29. Under section 29 of what became the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Act 2020, the EU Committee was given a new statutory function, extending until the end of the post-Brexit transition period, to report on any

26 HM Government, *Government response to off-payroll working: treating people fairly* (1 July 2020): <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/1873/documents/18378/default/> [accessed 16 July 2020]

27 European Union Committee, *Scrutiny of international agreements: treaties considered on 21 October 2019* (1st Report, Session 2019, HL Paper 6)

28 European Union Committee, *Scrutiny of international agreements: lessons learned* (42nd Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 387)

29 European Union Committee, *Brexit: the revised Withdrawal Agreement and Political Declaration* (1st Report, Session 2019–21, HL Paper 4)

EU legislative proposal that, in the view of the Committee, raises matters of “vital national interest” to the UK. The first such report, analysing the EU’s draft negotiating mandate for the forthcoming EU-UK future relationship negotiations, was published on 5 March.³⁰ The Act requires a debate to be held within 14 sitting days of publication, and a wide-ranging debate was held on 16 March, just a week before the lock-down.

30. The Select Committee has continued to promote interparliamentary dialogue, the Chair and Committee engaging in a busy programme of engagement with stakeholders in Brussels, Strasbourg, Paris and Berlin. The Committee has also continued to scrutinise all aspects of UK withdrawal from the EU, taking evidence from negotiators on both sides—on the UK side Rt Hon Stephen Barclay MP, the former Brexit Secretary, and Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, and also the EU’s Chief Negotiator, Michel Barnier.

EU Energy and Environment Sub-Committee

31. The Sub-Committee had a particularly busy year. It revisited the EU ‘landing obligation’ (essentially, a new obligation on fishers to land all their catches, rather than dumping unwanted fish at sea), following up its work of the previous year and raising concerns about the first six months of implementation.³¹ It considered a proposal from the European Parliament to establish new rules on the labelling of vegetarian food.³² It continued to examine departments’ preparations for a ‘no deal’ Brexit.³³ It conducted an inquiry on EU access to the UK’s fishing waters post-Brexit.³⁴ It gathered evidence to support its scrutiny of the European Green Deal, a significant new policy package with implications for the UK as a third country³⁵; and it examined EU proposals on setting fishing limits and reforming the Common Agricultural Policy.³⁶
32. After some negotiation the Sub-Committee secured a meeting with the European Commission to discuss its findings on the landing obligation. The Chair attended an inter-parliamentary conference on agriculture and climate change, which in turn enhanced the committee’s inquiry and scrutiny work. The Chair also liaised with his counterpart conveners of the relevant Scottish Parliament committees to inform the committee’s inquiry work.

30 European Union Committee, *Report pursuant to section 29 of the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Act 2020: Council Decision authorising the opening of negotiations with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for a new partnership agreement* (8th Report, session 2019–21, HL Paper 32)

31 European Union Committee, *The EU fisheries landing obligation: six months on* (43rd Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 395)

32 Correspondence from Lord Teverson, Chair of the EU Energy and Environment Sub-Committee to the Rt Hon Robert Goodwill MP, 24 July 2019: <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/lords-committees/eu-energy-environment-subcommittee/veggie-tubes/LT-to-RG-veggie-tubes-24-07-19.pdf>

33 EU Energy and Environment Sub-Committee, ‘No deal preparations: energy and environment’; <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/lords-select/eu-energy-environment-subcommittee/inquiries/parliament-2017/no-deal-preparations/> [accessed 13 July 2020]

34 Correspondence from Lord Teverson, Chair of the EU Energy and Environment Sub-Committee to George Eustice MP, Secretary of State DEFRA, 13 March 2020: <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/346/documents/1366/default/>

35 EU Energy and Environment Sub-Committee, ‘European Green Deal’; <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/59/european-green-deal/publications/> [accessed 13 July 2020]

36 EU Energy and Environment Sub-Committee, ‘Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)’; <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/285/reform-of-the-common-agricultural-policy-cap/> [accessed 13 July 2020]

33. The Sub-Committee also instigated and led an ambitious cross-committee project to deliver a joint programme of work examining aspects of climate change ahead of the UK hosting a UN climate conference, COP26.³⁷ This project was interrupted by dissolution and then by COVID-19, but even its partial delivery showed the potential for committees to work together, and increased awareness of climate change issues among the public and some Members of the House.

EU External Affairs Sub-Committee

34. In 2019 the Sub-Committee relaunched an inquiry into the impact of Brexit on future UK-EU international development cooperation.³⁸ After a series of interruptions, the Sub-Committee wrote a detailed letter to the Secretary of State for International Development in March 2020, outlining key findings and recommendations.³⁹ The Secretary of State subsequently offered to appear before the Sub-Committee in person to discuss the issues raised.⁴⁰
35. The Sub-Committee contributed to the cross-committee initiative to examine aspects of climate change, in the context of plans for the COP26 conference, holding a one-off evidence session on climate change and its impact on international development.⁴¹
36. In June 2019 a Sub-Committee member attended the joint meeting of parliamentary committees on the Lancaster House Treaties in Paris. This Anglo-French dialogue on defence is held twice annually, alternating between Paris and London, with representatives of the House of Lords, the House of Commons, the French Assemblée Nationale and the Sénat. In March a Sub-Committee member represented the House at the Interparliamentary Conference on the EU's Common Foreign and Security and Common Security and Defence Policy in Zagreb. This was the first time the Sub-Committee had attended an interparliamentary conference in an observer capacity, following the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

EU Financial Affairs Sub-Committee

37. In May 2019 the Sub-Committee visited Brussels to speak to UK and EU policymakers, European trade associations, and think tanks, focusing on the future of financial regulation post-Brexit.
38. From July to October 2019 the Sub-Committee held a further inquiry into the details of the UK-EU financial settlement and the status of the UK's financial obligations to the EU in the absence of an agreement. The Committee's report concluded that while it would be difficult to enforce the UK's financial obligations in any international court or tribunal, this did not mean that these obligations do not exist.⁴²

37 EU Energy and Environment Sub-Committee, 'Climate Change and COP26': <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/77/climate-change-and-cop26/> [accessed 13 July 2020]

38 EU External Affairs Sub-Committee, 'International Development after Brexit': <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/12/international-development-cooperation-after-brexit/> [accessed 13 July 2020]

39 Correspondence from Baroness Verma, Chair of the EU External Affairs Sub-Committee to Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP, Secretary of State, DfID, 6 March 2020: <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/207/documents/1014/default/>

40 Correspondence from Anne-Marie Trevelyan, Secretary of State, DfID to Baroness Verma, Chair of the EU External Affairs Sub-Committee, 3 April 2020: <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/588/documents/2325/default/>

41 Oral evidence before the EU External Affairs Sub-Committee, 12 March 2020 (Session 2019–21) [QQ 1–9](#)

42 European Union Committee, *Brexit: the financial settlement* (2nd Report, Session 2019, HL Paper 7)

39. From November 2019 to March 2020 the Sub-Committee focused on the future of financial services after Brexit. The Sub-Committee’s detailed letter⁴³ to the Chancellor emphasised the need to stabilise the future UK-EU relationship in financial services, while also making the most of post-Brexit opportunities. In particular, the Sub-Committee recommended regular and structured dialogue between the UK and the EU, that the Government should delegate more powers to the financial regulators after Brexit. The Sub-Committee also recommended targeted adjustments to the regulatory regime.
40. Throughout the year, the Sub-Committee held one-off evidence sessions, including a public evidence session with Mark Carney (in his capacity as UN Special Envoy for Climate Action and Finance) on the proposed EU green finance taxonomy.⁴⁴ The Sub-Committee also regularly held private briefings with senior policymakers on a potential ‘no deal’ Brexit and on the future relationship negotiations on financial services.

EU Home Affairs Sub-Committee

41. The Sub-Committee’s main piece of work in 2019 was its report on *Brexit: refugee protection and asylum policy*, published in October 2019.⁴⁵ The inquiry focused on how Brexit could affect the UK’s asylum system, bilateral cooperation on asylum and migration, and the possible implications of a ‘no deal’ Brexit. As part of the inquiry, the Sub-Committee visited Oslo to learn more about how Norway collaborated with the EU on asylum and migration management.
42. The report recommended that the UK should not curtail the rights and protections afforded to refugees in the UK after Brexit, in particular (and picking up issues frequently debated in the House more widely) the rights of unaccompanied migrant children to reunite with their families. It also emphasised the need for continued bilateral cooperation on asylum between the UK and individual EU states, and for the Government to plan for contingencies in the event of failure to reach agreement with the EU on these issues.
43. In January the Chair visited Brussels to present the report in person at a meeting of the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee of the European Parliament.
44. In early 2020, as part of its preparations for the restructuring of the EU Committees, the Sub-Committee held a series of public and private meetings with academics, senior law enforcement officers and civil servants, to explore the key security and criminal justice issues that will arise in the EU-UK future relationship negotiations. The Sub-Committee’s findings were captured in a ‘legacy note’ for its successor, the new Security and Justice Sub-Committee.

43 Correspondence from Lord Sharkey to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the future of financial services after Brexit, 27 March 2020 <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/476/documents/1873/default/>

44 Oral evidence before the EU Financial Affairs Sub-Committee, 18 March 2020 (Session 2019–21) [QQ 1–12](#)

45 European Union Committee, [Brexit: refugee protection and asylum policy](#) (48th Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 428)

EU Internal Market Sub-Committee

45. In a short inquiry into the impact of Brexit on the space industry in June 2019⁴⁶, the Sub-Committee took evidence from The Aerospace Corporation, Vaeros Ltd and the Center for Space Policy and Strategy, following up issues it had discussed with a roundtable panel and the Minister for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation, Sam Gyimah MP, in the previous year. This allowed the Sub-Committee to keep a watching brief on the impacts of Brexit on a sector in which the UK has routinely outperformed the global industry.
46. In the autumn and winter, the Sub-Committee carried out a longer inquiry into the potential impacts of an EU proposal to bring an end to seasonal clock changes. The Sub-Committee heard from representatives of various sectors, including experts on road safety, farming groups, and representatives of the airline industry, as well as from several national governments. The Sub-Committee's report was published in February 2020.⁴⁷ The report found that much more evidence would be needed for the Government to make a decision regarding the end to seasonal clock changes. The Committee noted that a time border would have considerable practical implications for firms and citizens in Northern Ireland, disrupting well-established ways of doing business and organising daily life. The Committee recommended that the Government should undertake preparatory work, including by reviewing or commissioning relevant research on how clock changes might affect a range of issues, from health and road safety to trade. The Government should then devise a strategy for consultation to ensure that an evidence based decision could be made on the time arrangements for the UK.
47. In early 2020 the Sub-Committee undertook a short inquiry into the UK-EU negotiations on a 'level playing field', and in particular on State aid rules, concluding the inquiry remotely in March 2020.⁴⁸ As part of the inquiry, the Sub-Committee actively sought input from the devolved administrations and legislatures, as well as local enterprise partnerships across England, with a view to identifying the potential regional impacts of changes to rules on how aid can be granted to businesses, as well as other elements of the level playing field, such as workers' rights.
48. The Sub-Committee also used this inquiry to gather evidence about how a level playing field on environmental protections might affect the UK's climate and environment goals, with a view to contributing to further work by the EU Committees on COP26 later in 2021.

EU Justice Sub-Committee

49. In early 2020 the EU Justice Sub-Committee undertook a series of one-off evidence sessions across its remit, designed to inform the work of its successor committees. In February the Sub-Committee revisited its considerable work on citizens' rights, focusing on the situation of vulnerable EU citizens

46 EU Internal Market Sub-Committee, 'Inquiry into the impact of Brexit on the space industry': <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/lords-select/eu-internal-market-subcommittee/inquiries/parliament-2017/brexit-space/> [accessed 13 July 2020]

47 European Union Committee, *Clock changes: is it time for change?* (5th Report, Session 2019–21, HL Paper 15)

48 EU Internal Market Sub-Committee, 'Level playing field and state aid': <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/55/level-playing-field-and-state-aid/> [accessed 13 July 2020]

resident in the UK, with witnesses from charities and NGOs working in the sector.⁴⁹

50. Two further evidence sessions in February considered consumer protection, with a range of witnesses from consumer rights organisations and the legal profession⁵⁰, and Brexit’s impact on future UK/EU cooperation on family law.⁵¹ In March, in a joint session with the EU Home Affairs Sub-Committee, members discussed progress in negotiations between the UK and the EU towards securing an agreement on security and law enforcement, with witnesses from academia and from the National Police Chiefs Council.⁵² This important work has been taken up by the new Security and Justice Sub-Committee. In its last meeting before the lock-down and the Sub-Committee restructuring, the Sub-Committee discussed the Government’s decision to withdraw from the international agreement establishing the Unified Patent Court (which would have had a seat in the City).
51. The various meetings outlined above all fed into the preparation of a substantial ‘legacy note’, which will form the basis for work by the successor committees.

International Relations and Defence Committee

52. The Committee published its report *The UK’s relationship with the Pacific Alliance* in May 2019.⁵³ It identified the members of this regional integration initiative—Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru—as having open economies and representing maturing markets for UK goods and services. As part of the inquiry, the committee held a roundtable with the ambassadors of Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru, and heard evidence from a leading academic.
53. In October 2019 the Committee took evidence from witnesses including Alistair Burt, former Minister for the Middle East, and Lord Lamont of Lerwick on tensions between Iran and Saudi Arabia and the role of the UK in the region.⁵⁴ The committee exchanged letters with the then Minister for the Middle East, Dr Andrew Murrison MP, emphasising the importance of supporting the Iran nuclear deal and maintaining constraints on Iran’s nuclear programme.⁵⁵
54. In October 2019 the Committee took evidence from witnesses including the Government’s Euro–Atlantic Security Policy Unit⁵⁶ and the then President

49 Correspondence from Lord Morris of Aberavon, Chairman of the EU Justice Sub-Committee to the Rt Hon. Michael Gove MP on the position of UK nationals in the EU: <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/lords-committees/eu-justice-subcommittee/CWM/LMtoMG-UKCitizensRights-110220.pdf>

50 Oral evidence before the EU Justice Sub-Committee, 11 February 2020 (Session 2019–21) [QQ 1–8](#)

51 Oral evidence before the EU Justice Sub-Committee, 25 February 2020 (Session 2019–21) [QQ 1–11](#)

52 Oral evidence before the EU Justice Sub-Committee and the EU Home Affairs Sub Committee, 3 March 2020 (Session 2019–21) [QQ 1–11](#)

53 International Relations and Defence Committee, *The UK’s relationship with the Pacific Alliance* (8th Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 386)

54 Oral evidence taken before the International Relations and Defence Committee, 4 September 2019 (Session 2017–19) [QQ 1–10](#)

55 Correspondence from Baroness Anelay of St Johns to the Rt Hon Andrew Murrison MP, Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa, 8 October 2019: <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/lords-committees/International-Relations-Committee/Iran-Saudi%20Arabia%20Relations/Baroness-Anelay-Letter-to-the-Minister-for-the-Middle-East-8th-October-2019.pdf>

56 Oral evidence taken before the International Relations and Defence Committee, 23 October 2019 (Session 2019) [QQ 1–12](#)

of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly⁵⁷, ahead of the NATO Leaders' Meeting. The Committee wrote to Christopher Pincher MP, then Minister of State for Europe and the Americas. It identified key challenges for the alliance as burden-sharing and capacity shortfalls, Russia and arms control, Turkey and consultation between allies, and EU–NATO co-operation.⁵⁸

55. The Committee launched its call for evidence for the inquiry *The UK and Sub-Saharan Africa: prosperity, peace and development co-operation* in July 2019 and began taking oral evidence in January 2020.⁵⁹

Public Services Committee

56. A new Public Services Committee was established following a recommendation in the 2019 Liaison Committee review.⁶⁰ The new Committee first met in February 2020. In early March 2020 it held a seminar with representatives of think tanks and universities to discuss public-service delivery and which subjects the Committee might investigate.
57. The Committee then began an inquiry into public services: lessons from coronavirus.⁶¹ Witnesses in the inquiry have included regulators, civil servants, academics and leaders of charities. Sessions have attracted welcome media attention, with a meeting with the Ofsted Chief Inspector and the Children's Commissioner widely covered. The Committee aims to report in October 2020. In the mean time it will work with the Select Committee Engagement Team to engage hard-to-reach public service users.

Science and Technology Committee

58. The Science and Technology Select Committee in May 2019 published *Forensic science and the criminal justice system: a blueprint for change*.⁶² The report made recommendations to address issues with funding and regulation that are hampering the effectiveness of forensic science and limiting the development of new techniques. The report was cited by members of the forensic-science sector as the most thorough and important analysis of the issues. It was anticipated that a bill would be introduced by the Government which would provide an opportunity to implement some of the recommendations, but this was not forthcoming.
59. The Committee undertook a short inquiry into *Science research funding in universities*.⁶³ The report, published in July 2019, highlighted the multiple pressures on university finances and how these affect research budgets. The

57 Oral evidence taken before the International Relations and Defence Committee, 30 October 2019 (Session 2019) [QQ 13–25](#)

58 Correspondence from Baroness Anelay of St Johns to the Rt Hon Christopher Pincher MP, Minister of State for Europe and the Americas, 4 November 2019: <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/lords-committees/International-Relations-Committee/correspondence/Letter-from-Baroness-Anelay-to-Christopher-Pincher-MP-November-2019.pdf>

59 International Relations and Defence Committee, 'The UK and Sub-Saharan Africa: prosperity, peace and development co-operation',: <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/11/the-uk-and-sub-saharan-africa/> [accessed 13 July 2020]

60 Liaison Committee, *Review of House of Lords Investigative and Scrutiny Committees: towards a new thematic committee structure* (6th Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 398)

61 Public Services Committee, 'Public services: lessons from coronavirus',: <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/311/public-services-lessons-from-coronavirus/> [accessed 13 July 2020]

62 Science and Technology Committee, *Forensic science and the criminal justice system: a blueprint for change* (3rd Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 333)

63 Science and Technology Committee, *Science research funding in universities* (4th Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 409)

Committee maintains a watching brief on issues affecting research, including in the context of Brexit and coronavirus.

60. In July 2019 the Committee began a major inquiry: *Ageing: Science, Technology and Health Ageing*.⁶⁴ The Committee heard a wide range of evidence, including from leading researchers about the potential to improve health in old age using new treatments, technologies and behaviours. The Committee heard from practitioners about deploying technologies and encouraging behaviour change. The Committee worked with the Select Committee Engagement Team to assemble a panel of older people to help shape the scope of the inquiry, and to seek evidence from elderly people and representative groups. The Committee aims to report in autumn 2020, after the completion of an inquiry into the science of COVID-19.⁶⁵

64 Science and Technology Committee, ‘Ageing: Science, Technology and Health Ageing’; <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/1/ageing-science-technology-and-healthy-living/> [accessed 13 July 2020]

65 Science and Technology Committee, ‘The science of COVID-19’; <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/293/the-science-of-covid19/> [accessed 13 July 2020]

CHAPTER 3: SPECIAL INQUIRY COMMITTEES

Select Committee on Democracy and Digital Technologies

61. The Committee was appointed in June 2019 “to consider democracy and digital technologies”.⁶⁶ The Committee received 83 written submissions to its call for evidence, 102 written submissions in total, and heard oral evidence from 66 witnesses across 26 evidence sessions.
62. On 29 October and 5 November 2019, the Committee held a Digital Surgery in collaboration with The Politics Project. The first surgery took place with pupils and the second with teachers involved in the provision of digital literacy. The Committee discussed with pupils how they used social media, how they knew information was trustworthy and how they learned about politics online. The second surgery was held with six teachers from across the country who had responsibility for teaching politics at different educational levels. The Committee asked about where political education and digital literacy sat within the curriculum, the constraints on the teachers’ time and what support they sought from the Government. The Committee also hosted a workshop to discuss the challenges regulators face in adapting to the digital environment in collaboration with the journal *Political Quarterly*.
63. After being re-established in the new Parliament, the Committee took a large amount of evidence up to the Easter recess. The Committee often held multiple meetings and held up to six panels each week. This reflected the broad nature of the Committee’s remit and the rapid pace of change in the policy area. The Committee’s evidence schedule culminated in hearing from the relevant regulators and technology companies. The Committee took evidence from Ministers in a virtual session after an initial postponement due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
64. The Committee set up its own Twitter account ([@HLDemoDigital](#)) in order to engage with stakeholders and commentators and raise the profile of the Committee’s work. The Committee’s Twitter account received over 1,000 followers and a video of the Chair describing the Committee’s work received over 5,600 views.
65. The Committee published its report *Digital Technology and the Resurrection of Trust* on 29 June 2020.⁶⁷ The report opened with a Chair’s Foreword, in which the Chair discussed a pandemic of misinformation and disinformation that risked undermining representative democracy in the UK. The report focussed on a collapse in public trust in democratic institutions and looked at how large technology platforms could be effectively regulated. In all, the Committee made 55 recommendations to the Government, including a complete reform of electoral law to make elections fit for the digital age, that inaccurate advertising should be restricted during an election period by a regulatory committee made up of experts, and that Ofcom as the Online Harms regulator should have the powers and resources to audit algorithmic recommending systems by technology platforms.

66 HL Deb, 13 June 2019, [col 525](#)

67 Democracy and Digital Technologies Select Committee, *Digital Technology and the Resurrection of Trust* (Report of Session 2019–21, HL Paper 77)

Select Committee on the Social and Economic Impact of the Gambling Industry

66. Gambling is a popular activity: half the adults in this country gamble each year. It can also be a dangerous activity, since it can be highly addictive. A third of a million people are problem gamblers, two million people, mainly family and friends, are affected by this, on average one person a day commits suicide.
67. The Committee was appointed on 13 June 2019⁶⁸ to consider the social and economic impact of the gambling industry. A major challenge was to attempt to reconcile these two sides of the coin: to recommend better regulation of the industry in order to attempt to reduce the impact of problem gambling, while not diminishing more than necessary the enjoyment of the great majority.
68. The Committee issued a Call for Evidence on 27 June 2019⁶⁹, and received 89 items of written evidence, and a further 39 items of supplementary evidence. The programme of oral evidence was inevitably disrupted by the prorogation and dissolution, but the Committee heard 56 witnesses in the course of 20 meetings. They came from the whole range of interests: the industry, which has been under attack in recent years; the Gambling Commission which is the regulator; academics and other experts; those treating problem gamblers; and the problem gamblers themselves, their families and friends. Members held a very moving private meeting with the families of problem gamblers who had committed suicide, and a public meeting with some of them.
69. The members of the Committee produced a unanimous, lengthy report which included a number of major recommendations.⁷⁰ These are mainly aimed at protecting gamblers who currently are at risk from marketing activities of the industry which are designed to circumvent such controls as there already are.
70. It is now recognised that problem gambling, like drug or alcohol addiction, is a health issue. Currently there are two problem gambling clinics in the country, though the Government has undertaken to open more within the next three years. The Committee has made recommendations to the NHS to provide more and better treatment. It has recommended further restrictions on advertising, especially on football grounds; raising the minimum age for the purchase of lottery tickets to 18; restrictions on online gambling, now one of the major issues, but one which barely existed in 2005 when the Gambling Act was passed; and the creation of a Gambling Ombudsman for resolution of disputes between the gambling operators and gamblers.
71. All the main political parties included in their manifestos undertakings to review the Gambling Act, or to replace it. The Committee thinks this is unnecessary. Most of the recommendations can be implemented without primary legislation; some by secondary legislation, the majority by a strengthening of the licence conditions of the operators and the codes of practice governing them, which are mandatory. The Gambling Commission

68 HL Deb, 13 June 2019, [col 524](#)

69 Select Committee on the Social and Economic Impact of the Gambling Industry, *Call for Evidence* (1 July 2019): <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/lords-committees/Gambling-committee/Gambling-Call-for-evidence.pdf> [accessed 13 July 2020]

70 Select Committee on the Social and Economic Aspects of the Gambling Industry, *Gambling Harm - Time for Action* (Report of Session 2019–21, HL Paper 79)

already has power to do this; it also has power to fine offenders, and ultimately to withdraw their licences. The Committee has therefore made clear that it does not intend its recommendations to be placed in a folder marked “awaiting the Government’s review”—a review which has yet to begin. They can and should be implemented now.

Select Committee on Food, Poverty, Health and the Environment

72. The Committee was appointed on 13 June 2019 to “consider the links between inequality, public health and food sustainability”.⁷¹ The Committee focused its remit to examine three key issues: growing obesity rates, rising food insecurity, and the damage that is sustained to the environment by the current system of food production.
73. The Committee issued a Call for Evidence on 25 June 2019⁷², and received 86 items of written evidence, and a further 9 items of supplementary evidence. They heard from 56 witnesses over the course of 16 evidence sessions. The Committee heard from a wide range of witnesses, including: food policy experts; public health academics; poverty charities; representatives from local authorities and locally led food and health initiatives; representatives from the Scottish and Welsh Governments; and witnesses from the food manufacturing, retail and agriculture sectors.
74. Following the announcement of lockdown measures due to COVID-19, Leeds Council supplied the Committee with several presentations and briefings that were included in the Committee’s report, as their planned visit to to learn more about a number of initiatives led by Leeds Council and local partners to tackle food insecurity in the area was unable to take place.
75. The secretariat also held a series of phone calls with individuals who had experienced food insecurity following the cancellation of a Committee session due to the COVID-19 lockdown. The testimonies of these individuals on the significant hardships faced by people who cannot access enough food for themselves or their families have been reflected throughout the report.
76. The Committee was told that the food system—the production, manufacture, retail and consumption of food—is failing. Significant numbers of people are unable to access the food they need, let alone access a healthy diet. Billions of pounds are spent each year by the NHS treating significant, but avoidable, levels of diet-related obesity and non-communicable disease. Although diet-related ill health affects all sectors of the population, its effects are felt more acutely in deprived areas, and considerable health inequalities persist. The food industries, manufacturers, retailers and the food services sector, perpetuate the demand for less healthy, highly processed products. This not only impacts on public health, but also inhibits efforts to produce food in an environmentally sustainable way.
77. The Committee was told repeatedly of the need for ‘whole system change’. The Committee’s report identifies the points in the food system where changes can and should be made.⁷³ The Committee has made recommendations

71 HL Deb, 13 June 2019, [col 525](#)

72 Select Committee on Food, Poverty, Health and the Environment, *Call for Evidence*: https://www.parliament.uk/documents/lords-committees/Food-poverty/Call_for_evidence_FPHE.pdf/ [accessed 13 July 2020]

73 Select Committee on Food, Poverty, Health and the Environment, *Hungry for Change: fixing the failures in food* (Report of Session 2019–21, HL Paper 85)

that aim to address issues relating to: people’s ability to access food and the impact on diet of living in poverty; the efficacy of existing Government food programmes; the factors that influence consumer behaviour; the availability of less healthy foods; and food production and the natural environment.

78. The Committee was clear, however, that to ensure long-term, sustainable progress can be realised, a clear, overarching vision for what the food system should achieve is also required, underpinned by robust governance and accountability. The Government’s National Food Strategy (announced by DEFRA last year) is a positive and universally welcomed step in the right direction but delivery of the strategy is likely to require cross-departmental co-ordination and a dedicated system of oversight to bring about a tangible change to the way food is produced, purchased and consumed. The Committee has, therefore, recommended the establishment of an independent body, responsible for strategic oversight of the food system, and for advising the Government, and reporting to Parliament, on the progress in the delivery of the National Food Strategy.

Select Committee on the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013

79. The Committee was appointed on 13 June 2019⁷⁴ to undertake post-legislative scrutiny of the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013. The Act modernised the system of electoral registration in the UK, moving away from the ‘household’ system—whereby a single ‘head of household’ was responsible for registering all of its inhabitants—to one where individuals were responsible for their own registration, known as individual electoral registration (IER).
80. The Act also enabled the introduction of a simple online registration system where voters could apply to be registered with a simple identity verification process. It provided for reform of the annual canvass, the process by which electoral registration officers (EROs) maintain and update their registers by confirming the details of registered electors every year. It also brought in a range of administrative reforms to elections, including the extension of the Parliamentary election timetable from 17 to 25 days. The Act was implemented in 2014–15 and has since been tested by an unprecedented sequence of major electoral events in a short period, including three UK Parliamentary general elections and the referendum on the UK’s EU membership. The time was therefore ripe for an assessment of how its provisions have performed.
81. As well as being introduced to modernise the system of elections in the UK, the Act was also intended to tackle fraud by increasing the security of the registration system, and so—as well as assessing how effective this had—the Committee also took the opportunity to assess wider issues of fraud and how these were being addressed, including the current Government’s proposals to bring in mandatory voter identification. Whilst the Committee did not take a position on the merit of voter ID, they urged the Government to work carefully and cooperatively with partners on its implementation, taking measures to ensure that it did not have a negative impact on registration or voter turnout. The Committee also recommended that voter ID should not be introduced for the first time at a general election.

74 HL Deb, 13 June 2019, [cols 523–524](#)

82. The Committee issued an initial call for evidence in July 2019⁷⁵ and, following the interruption caused by the 2019 UK Parliamentary general election, took the opportunity to issue a further call for evidence in January 2020⁷⁶, asking in particular for submissions on the conduct of the election. A total of 42 submissions were received across the two calls for evidence. The Committee also heard from a total of 30 witnesses across 16 oral evidence sessions. Witnesses included officials from the Cabinet Office, the Association of Electoral Administrators, academic specialists in electoral administration, and representatives of youth and BAME organisations.
83. The Committee concluded that, while the new system of registration had largely worked well, there continued to be a major burden on administrators, particularly at election times, and that further steps were necessary to ease this burden and ensure the efficient and effective running of elections. Such steps include the introduction of an online registration checking tool, enabling voters to check whether they are already registered and thus reduce the large volume of duplicate applications that are received at election times.
84. The Committee also expressed concern that, while accuracy of registers had improved somewhat, their completeness—the proportion of eligible electors included on registers—had not improved since the Act was brought in. The Committee urged the Government to bring forward measures to improve completeness, including options for ‘automatic’ or ‘assisted’ registration, by which voters are either added to the register automatically or prompted to register when they undertake other transactions, such as online applications for other public services. The Committee also called for reform of the “invitation to register” process in the annual canvass, finding that the two-stage process was cumbersome for administrators and confusing for electors.
85. The Committee heard evidence on the continuing under-registration of particular demographic groups, including young people and BAME voters. It recommended that the Government should publish targets to improve registration rates among these groups and work with partners to reach these targets.
86. Finally, the Committee noted the urgent need for reform and consolidation of wider electoral law, which is currently overly complex and difficult to interpret. It urged the Government to bring forward the recent proposals for reform published by the Law Commissions at the earliest opportunity.⁷⁷

75 Select Committee on the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013, *Call for Evidence*: <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/lords-committees/electoral-registration-act/Call-for-Evidence-final-24-07-2019.pdf> [accessed 13 July 2020]

76 Select Committee on the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013, *Further Call for Evidence*: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld5801/ldselect/downloads/ERA-Act-further-call-for-evidence-FINAL.pdf> [accessed 13 July 2020]

77 Select Committee on the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013, *An electoral system fit for today? More to be done* (Report of Session 2019–21, HL Paper 83)

CHAPTER 4: SECONDARY LEGISLATION COMMITTEES

Delegated Powers and Regulatory Reform Committee

87. During the reporting period (2019/20 financial year), the Delegated Powers and Regulatory Reform Committee (DPRRC) met seven times and published 23 reports. It considered 32 bills (30 Government bills and 32 Private Members' bills).
88. In contrast to the previous reporting period, Brexit-related legislation did not feature prominently until the beginning of the 2019–21 session. In June 2019, during the 2017–19 session, the Committee reported on the Rivers Authorities and Land Drainage Bill.⁷⁸ Given its length and complexity, the Committee expressed surprise that it was a Private Members' bill (albeit supported by the Government) and reported “an exceptional number of criticisms”.⁷⁹ These included a concern that although the bill made provision for new river authorities to be set up anywhere in England, the Government had had in mind only one such authority (for Somerset). The Minister had explained in the House of Commons that “the reasons for creating this wider opportunity for other people to come forward was to avoid the political difficulty of what is called a hybrid bill”.⁸⁰ The Committee regarded this as a “ploy” to avoid having to pass a hybrid bill and deprecated “the subversion of those procedures”.⁸¹ The bill did not conclude its passage before the session ended.
89. It is the practice of the Committee to report before committee stage of a bill, usually after second reading. On occasion, the Committee has departed from this practice. Sometimes it has reported whilst a bill is still in the House of Commons because, in the case of a number of substantial Brexit-related bills introduced in the earlier part of session 2017–19, of their “exceptional constitutional significance”.⁸² On other occasions, it has been because of the speed with which a bill is taken through the Houses. This was the case with the Northern Ireland (Executive Formation etc.) Bill where the pace, coupled with significant amendments made in the House of Commons, meant that the Committee had to report the day between committee and report stages in the House of Lords and in anticipation of amendments to be tabled at report stage.
90. Session 2019–21 saw the resurgence of Brexit-related legislation. The Committee's first report of the session was on the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill.⁸³ This was another example where a bill was taken exceptionally quickly. As a result, and at considerable speed, the Committee reported on the House of Commons version of the bill in order to meet the timetable in the House of Lords. While the Committee had a

78 Delegated Powers and Regulatory Reform Committee, *Rivers Authorities and Land Drainage Bill* (54th Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 370)

79 Delegated Powers and Regulatory Reform Committee, *Rivers Authorities and Land Drainage Bill* (54th Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 370), para 2

80 Delegated Powers and Regulatory Reform Committee, *Rivers Authorities and Land Drainage Bill* (54th Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 370), para 10

81 Delegated Powers and Regulatory Reform Committee, *Rivers Authorities and Land Drainage Bill* (54th Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 370), para 14

82 Liaison Committee, *Summary of House of Lords investigative and scrutiny committee activity in 2018–19* (5th Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 369), para 88

83 Delegated Powers and Regulatory Reform Committee, *European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill* (1st Report, Session 2019–21, HL Paper3),

number of criticisms of the bill, it acknowledged that the delegated powers memorandum provided by the department engaged with the Committee’s “known concerns” from earlier Brexit legislation.⁸⁴ Other Brexit-related bills included the Fisheries Bill, a successor to the Fisheries Bill on which the Committee had reported in session 2017–19. The Committee welcomed the Government’s acceptance of a recommendation in the Committee’s previous report relating to consultation and power to sell rights to use English fishing opportunities.⁸⁵ In its report on the Private International Law (Implementation of Agreements) Bill, the Committee was critical of provision allowing ministers to implement international agreements relating to private international law by statutory instrument rather than by Act of Parliament, and recommended that clause 2 should be removed from the bill,⁸⁶ a recommendation with which the Constitution Committee agreed.⁸⁷ The Government did not accept the recommendation. In taking the stance it did, however, the Committee was described in debate as having “increasingly come to stand as a crucial protector of the role of Parliament”.⁸⁸

91. Other bills considered by the Committee in the current session, and before the end of the reporting period, included: the Pension Schemes Bill, the Birmingham Commonwealth Games Bill, and the Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Bill. The second two of these were re-introductions, having been previously introduced during session 2017–19 (and in the case of the Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Bill also in the 2019 session). The Birmingham Commonwealth Games Bill introduced in the current session was largely the same as the previous version but included a change which reflected a recommendation by the Committee on the earlier bill. The Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Bill was identical in substance to earlier versions but had not been the subject of a Committee report.

Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments

92. The Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments (JCSI) is comprised of seven members from each House and seeks to ensure that the legal drafting of statutory instruments laid before Parliament is complete, appropriate and does not exceed the powers set out in the Act under which the instrument is made. Under Standing Order 72 of the House of Lords Standing Orders relating to Public Business, no motion to approve an affirmative instrument can be moved until the JCSI has reported on it. The Committee is supported by a team of Counsel from both Houses, including three House of Lords Counsel. House of Lords Counsel advise on affirmative instruments, including assisting departments by providing pre-laying scrutiny.
93. The following information relates to the 2019/20 financial year. In 25 reports, the JCSI considered 558 instruments (including instruments subject to, and

84 Delegated Powers and Regulatory Reform Committee, *European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill* (1st Report, Session 2019–21, HL Paper 3), para 2

85 Delegated Powers and Regulatory Reform Committee, *Fisheries Bill [HL]* (6th Report, Session 2019–21, HL Paper 27), para 6

86 Delegated Powers and Regulatory Reform Committee, *Private International Law (Implementation of Agreements) Bill [HL]; Birmingham Commonwealth Games Bill [HL]; Government Response; Pension Schemes Bill [HL]; Government Response; Prisoners (Disclosure of Information About Victims) Bill* (8th Report, Session 2019–21, HL Paper 40), para 5

87 Constitution Committee, *Private International Law (Implementation of Agreements) Bill [HL]* (5th Report, Session 2019–21, HL Paper 55), para 27

88 HL Deb 13 May 2020 [col 766](#)

those not subject to, a parliamentary procedure), of which 79 were drawn to the special attention of the Houses.

94. In addition, the Committee published two Special Reports. The first (Fourth Special Report of session 2017–19)⁸⁹ was published in May 2019 and set out the Government’s response to the Committee’s Third Special Report⁹⁰ of the same session which concerned how the Government had acted in response to issues raised by the JCSI. In the Third Special Report, the Committee had concluded that the analysis of Government responses indicated that “the Committee’s scrutiny has had a positive and substantial impact on secondary legislation so far this Session” but that there was “room for improvement”.⁹¹ The Committee said: “We look to the Government to ensure that there are no instances where a recommendation is simply ignored, and we remind the Government that the Committee, and the Houses, expect Ministers, during debates on instruments, to respond to any issues raised by the Committee”.⁹² On behalf of the Government, the Leader of the House of Commons, then the Rt Hon. Andrea Leadsom MP, said that the Committee had “played a significant role in allowing Parliament to effectively scrutinise” the many Brexit instruments laid in the previous months and “to ensure a functioning statute book when the UK leaves the EU”. Mrs Leadsom said that she was “keen to see a reduction in the number of SIs containing errors” and that she would remind ministers that they should address points raised by the JCSI in debate.⁹³
95. In February 2020, the JCSI published a Special Report setting out the response of the Statutory Instrument Hub of the Government Legal Department to the Committee’s 19th and 21st reports of session 2017–19 in which a point was raised about provisions in SI 2018/230 and SI 2018/437 which provided for the service of documents by post and the application of section 7 of the Interpretation Act 1978 to the term “proper address”.⁹⁴

Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee

96. During 2018, the remit of the Committee was extended by the House to include a new sifting function in relation to certain instruments—proposed negative instruments—laid under the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018. Act. At the same time, the Committee was given power to appoint sub-committees and to co-opt members to serve on the sub-committees to enable it to enlarge its capacity to meet the increased workload caused by a combination of the new sifting function and the anticipated Brexit-related instruments. The sub-committees, Sub-Committee A and Sub-Committee B, were appointed in October 2018. They met weekly until 30 April 2019 when, because of the fall in numbers of Brexit-related instruments, scrutiny work reverted to the SLSC. During the reporting period (financial year

89 Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments, *Government Response to Third Special Report* (Fourth Special Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 357 and HC 2188), Appendix.

90 Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments, *Government Response to parliamentary scrutiny of statutory instruments* (Third Special Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 311 and HC 2057)

91 Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments, *Government response to parliamentary scrutiny of statutory instruments* (Third Special Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 311 and HC 2057) paras 7 and 8

92 Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments, *Government response to parliamentary scrutiny of statutory instruments* (Third Special Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 311 and HC 2057) paras 7 and 8

93 Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments, *Government Response to Third Special Report* (Fourth Special Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 357 and HC 2188), Appendix., *op cit.*

94 Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments, *Transparency and Accountability in Subordinate Legislation* (First Special Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 18, HC 77).

2019/20), therefore, the sub-committees were in existence for only the first month of that period. In that time, Sub-Committee A met three times and published three reports, covering 36 statutory instruments (13 affirmative and 23 negative instruments) and four proposed negative instruments. Sub-Committee B met twice and published two reports, covering 22 statutory instruments (14 affirmative and 13 negative instruments).

97. Whilst the sub-committees were active, the SLSC met only infrequently. After the sub-committees were suspended, the SLSC resumed its usual weekly meetings and, from May 2019 to the end of March 2020, the Committee met 25 times and published 30 reports. These reports covered 445 statutory instruments (124 affirmative and 321 negative instruments), ten treaties subject to scrutiny under the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010 (CRAG), 19 proposed negative instruments, a Public Bodies Order—the draft Public Bodies (Abolition of Public Works Loan Commissioners) Order 2019⁹⁵—and the Draft Census (England and Wales) Order 2020 which contains both affirmative and negative elements. 34 instruments (13 affirmative and 21 negative instruments) and one treaty were drawn to the special attention of the House, along with the Public Bodies Order and the Draft Census (England and Wales) Order 2020. In all cases where the Committee has recommended that a proposed negative instrument should be upgraded to the affirmative procedure, the Government has accepted the recommendation.
98. In addition to drawing instruments to the special attention of the House, the Committee includes in its reports information paragraphs where an instrument is of interest, is topical or follows an unusual process. During the reporting period, the SLSC (along with the sub-committees in April 2019) published 118 information paragraphs. In order to assist the House, instruments about which information paragraphs have been published (as well as instruments drawn to the special attention of the House) are identified by an italicised note in House of Lords Business. The Committee also publishes, as appendices to its reports, correspondence with ministers and additional information provided by departments to supplement an instrument’s Explanatory Memorandum.
99. In undertaking its scrutiny work, the Committee relies principally on the Explanatory Memorandum accompanying an instrument and other explanatory documentation such as the impact assessment, if provided. On occasion, however, the Committee will invite a minister to give oral evidence. In May 2019, Nadhim Zahawi MP, then Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families at the Department for Education, attended the Committee to ask questions about the Children’s Homes etc. Inspection Fees, Childcare fees, Adoption and Children Act Register (Amendment) Regulations 2019 (SI 2019/835), an instrument which, amongst other things, made provision in relation to the Secretary of State ceasing operation of the Adoption Register.⁹⁶ In February 2020, the Committee heard evidence from the Rt Hon. Esther McVey MP, then Minister of State for Housing in relation to the Homes and Communities Agency (Transfer of Property etc.) Regulations 2020 (SI 2020/31) which concerned the disposal of surplus public land for housing. The Committee reported on the instrument on the

95 Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee, *3rd Report* (3rd Report, Session 2019, HL Paper 11)

96 Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee, *49th Report* (49th Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 366)
See also *50th Report*, (50th Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 371).

ground of inadequate explanatory material but also raised questions about the performance of the Public Land for Housing Programme 2015–2020.⁹⁷

100. Other notable reports included those on the controversial Universal Credit Managed Migration, published in July⁹⁸ and September 2019,⁹⁹ which, as with many of the Committee’s reports, was referred to in debate in the House.
101. Until recently, the Committee had responsibility for the scrutiny of treaties laid under CRAG.¹⁰⁰ In October 2019, the Committee reported on an agreement between the UK and the United States on access to electronic data for the purpose of countering serious crime.¹⁰¹ Amongst other things, the report drew attention to the Minister’s acknowledgement, prompted by a question asked by the Committee, that, although the risk of a UK citizen’s data being used which involved crimes that could result in the death or transfer to the Guantanamo Bay detention facility was “very limited”, it was “theoretically possible”.
102. In addition to publishing reports on instruments, it is the practice of the Committee to publish a report at the end of each session setting out its observations on matters relating to its terms of reference, along with activity statistics. Because of the length of the 2017–19 session, the Committee published an interim report in April 2018 and a second interim report in June 2019.¹⁰² A third report was published in September 2019,¹⁰³ when it was thought that Parliament had been prorogued and the session had ended. Following the decision of the Supreme Court about the prorogation, a fourth report was published in October 2019.¹⁰⁴ A shortened version of an end of session report was published in relation to session 2019 in November 2019.¹⁰⁵
103. From time to time, the Committee engages in correspondence with the Government about overarching issues, often subsequently featuring in the Committee’s end of session reports. In March 2020, for example, it published a report, prompted by scrutiny of two instruments which reinstated measures that had lapsed as a result of sunset provision (one by 11 months and the other by 11 years). In its report, the Committee set out the correspondence with the relevant departments, using the opportunity to urge the Government to ensure that all departments had a mechanism for monitoring sunset provision so that lapses did not occur.¹⁰⁶

97 Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee, *6th Report* (6th Report, Session 2019–21, HL Paper 25).

98 Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee, *58th Report* (58th Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 415)

99 Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee, *59th Report* (59th Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 419)

100 The responsibility now rests with the EU International Agreements Sub-Committee.

101 Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee, *3rd Report* (3rd Report, Session 2019, HL Paper 11)

102 Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee, *51st Report* (51st Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 376)

103 Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee, *60th Report* (60th Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 420)

104 Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee, *62nd Report* (62nd Report, Session 2017–19, HL Paper 426)

105 Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee, *4th Report* (4th Report, Session 2019, HL Paper 17)

106 Secondary Legislation Scrutiny Committee, *7th Report* (7th Report, Session 2019–21, HL Paper 30)

CHAPTER 5: JOINT COMMITTEES

Joint Committee on Human Rights

104. Important reports in 2019 included the Joint Committee’s September 2019 report on *The right to family life: children whose mothers are in prison*.¹⁰⁷ Before publishing its October 2019 report on *Democracy, freedom of speech and freedom of association: threats against MPs*, the Joint Committee took evidence from the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Cressida Dick.¹⁰⁸ The Joint Committee also took evidence from Google in the course of its inquiry into the implications of digital technologies for the right to privacy. This report was also published in October 2019.¹⁰⁹
105. In March 2020 the Committee launched an inquiry into the Government’s response to COVID-19: human rights implications. Given the uncertainty around the COVID-19 emergency, the inquiry has no end date, but a substantial report is expected in September 2020.

Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy

106. The Joint Committee published its report *Revisiting the UK’s national security strategy: The National Security Capability Review and the Modernising Defence Programme*¹¹⁰ in July 2019. Witnesses included the former Chief of the Defence Staff, Lord Houghton of Richmond. The report concluded that uncertainties about the implications of the change in direction and influence of the US and China, combined with the UK’s departure from the EU, would require the UK to chart a more nuanced course. It concluded that the Government needed to steel itself to make the difficult choices that it has sidestepped for too long, including on defence funding.
107. The Joint Committee held a private roundtable on societal resilience and began inquiries on biosecurity¹¹¹ and 5G infrastructure.¹¹² These inquiries were terminated by the dissolution of Parliament. On 19 May 2020 the Joint Committee launched a new inquiry into biosecurity and national security.¹¹³

107 Joint Committee on Human Rights, *The right to family life: children whose mothers are in prison* (Twenty-Second Report, Session 2017–19, HC 1610, HL Paper 411)

108 Joint Committee on Human Rights, *Democracy, freedom of expression and freedom of association: Threats to MPs* (First Report, Session 2019, HC 37, HL Paper 5)

109 Joint Committee on Human Rights, *The Right to Privacy (Article 8) and the Digital Revolution* (Third Report, Session 2019, HC 122, HL Paper 14)

110 Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy, *Revisiting the UK’s national security strategy: The National Security Capability Review and the Modernising Defence Programme* (Fourth Report, Session 2017–19, HC Paper 2072, HL Paper 406)

111 Joint Committee on National Security Strategy, ‘Biosecurity and human health: preparing for emerging infectious diseases and bioweapons inquiry’; <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/joint-select/national-security-strategy/inquiries/parliament-2017/biosecurity-human-health-inquiry-17-19/> [accessed 13 July 2020]

112 Joint Committee on National Security Strategy, ‘Ensuring access to ‘safe’ technology: the UK’s 5G infrastructure and national security inquiry’; <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/joint-select/national-security-strategy/inquiries/parliament-2017/access-to-safe-technology-inquiry-17-19/> [accessed 13 July 2020]

113 Joint Committee on National Security Strategy, ‘Biosecurity and national security’; <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/316/biosecurity-and-national-security/> [accessed 13 July 2020]

APPENDIX 1: ACTIVITY INDICATOR DATA BY FINANCIAL YEAR

	2015/16 (Joint Committees)	2016/17 (Joint Committees)	2017/18 (Joint Committees)	2018/19 (Joint Committees)	2019/20 (Joint Committees)
number of committees/ sub- committees	20 (3) ¹¹⁴	20 (2) ¹¹⁵	19 (2) ¹¹⁶	20 (3) ¹¹⁷	24 (3) ¹¹⁸
number of committee meetings	406 (29)	533 (39)	430 (26)	567 (45)	386(25)
number of committee members	238 (23)	295 (16)	229 (16)	245 (22)	281 (21)
number of witnesses giving oral evidence	857 (77)	1,120 (95)	778 (77)	939 (119)	638(35)
number of written submissions received	1,270 (208)	1,791 (284)	917 (327)	1,377 (229)	1,040(167)
number of reports published	27 (2)	59 (11)	44 (7)	65 (15)	58 (11)
number of printed pages of reports	1,394 (220)	3,957 (551)	2,395 (298)	3,075 (541)	2,224 (495)
resource expenditure outturn	£3,790,216	£3,954,294	£3,873,109	££4,211,649	£ 4,498,871 ¹¹⁹

¹¹⁴ Including JCHR, Joint Committee on the Draft Investigatory Powers Bill and JCNSS. Excluding Joint Committee on the Palace of Westminster

¹¹⁵ Including JCHR and JCNSS. Excluding Joint Committee on the Palace of Westminster and the Select Committee on the High Speed Rail (London - West Midlands) Bill

¹¹⁶ Including JCHR and JCNSS

¹¹⁷ Including JCHR, JCNSS and Joint Committee on the Draft Registration of Overseas Entities Bill. Excluding Joint Committee on the Draft Health Service Safety Investigations Bill, Joint Committee on the Draft Parliamentary Buildings Bill and Joint Committee on the Draft Domestic Abuse Bill

¹¹⁸ Including JCHR, JCNSS and Joint Committee on the Draft Registration of Overseas Entities Bill. Excluding Committee on the Draft Domestic Abuse Bill. Artificially high due to the late publication of 3 Special Inquiry Reports

¹¹⁹ Provisional figure for the resource outturn

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF INVESTIGATIVE SELECT COMMITTEE REPORTS PUBLISHED IN 2019/20, INCLUDING DATE OF GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Committee	Title	Publication date	Government response received
Communications and Digital	Public service broadcasting: as vital as ever	5 November 2019	12 February 2020
Constitution	European Union (Withdrawal) (No.5) Bill	4 April 2019	None required
Constitution	Parliamentary Scrutiny of Treaties	30 April 2019	8 July 2019
Constitution	Courts and Tribunals (Online Procedure) Bill	7 June 2019	None required
Constitution	Rivers Authorities and Land Drainage Bill	10 June 2019	None required
Constitution	Sentencing (Pre-consolidation Amendments) Bill [HL]	13 June 2019	None required
Constitution	The Legislative Process: The Passage of Bills Through Parliament	8 July 2019	28 October 2019
Constitution	Birmingham Commonwealth Games Bill [HL]	8 July 2019	None required
Constitution	Northern Ireland (Executive Formation) Bill	10 July 2019	None required
Constitution	Sessional 2017–19	4 November 2019	None required
Constitution	European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill: interim report	5 November 2019	None required
Constitution	European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill	14 January 2020	None required
Constitution	Pension Schemes Bill [HL]	13 February 2020	None required
Constitution	Terrorist Offenders (Restriction of Early Release) Bill	20 February 2020	None required
Constitution	Coronavirus Bill	24 March 2020	None required
Economic Affairs Committee	Rethinking High Speed 2	16 May 2019	19 July 2019

Committee	Title	Publication date	Government response received
Economic Affairs Committee	Social care funding: time to end a national scandal	4 July 2019	Due 4 September 2019, no further date agreed for a response
EU Energy and Environment	The EU fisheries landing obligation: six months on	16 July 2019	2 October 2019
EU Financial Affairs	Brexit: the financial settlement	23 October 2019	29 January 2020
EU Home Affairs Committee	Brexit: refugee protection and asylum policy	11 October 2019	16 March 2020
EU Internal Market	Brexit: road, rail and maritime transport	21 May 2019	20 July 2019
EU Internal Market	Clock changes: is it time for change?	11 February 2020	9 April 2020
EU Select	Scrutiny of international agreements; treaties considered on 3 April 2019	4 April 2019	None required
EU Select	Scrutiny of international agreements; treaties considered on 9 April 2019	10 April 2019	None required
EU Select	Scrutiny of international agreements; treaties considered on 30 April 2019	1 May 2019	None required
EU Select	Scrutiny of international agreements; treaties considered on 14 May 2019	15 May 2019	None required
EU Select	Scrutiny of international agreements; treaties considered on 11 June 2019	12 June 2019	None required
EU Select	Scrutiny of International Agreements: Lessons Learned	27 June 2019	None required
EU Select	Scrutiny of international agreements: treaties considered on 9 July 2019	10 July 2019	None required

Committee	Title	Publication date	Government response received
EU Select	Scrutiny of international agreements: treaties considered on 23 July 2019	24 July 2019	None required
EU Select	Scrutiny of international agreements: treaties considered on 9 September 2019	10 September 2019	None required
EU Select	Scrutiny of international agreements: treaties considered on 7 October 2019	08 October 2019	None required
EU Select	Scrutiny of international agreements: treaties considered on 21 October 2019	22 October 2019	None required
EU Select	Brexit: the revised Withdrawal Agreement and Political Declaration	10 January 2020	9 March 2020
EU Select	Scrutiny of international agreements: treaties considered on 21 January 2020	22 January 2020	None required
EU Select	Scrutiny of international agreements: treaties considered on 29 January 2020	30 January 2020	None required
EU Select	Scrutiny of international agreements: treaties considered on 4 February 2020	5 February 2020	None required
EU Select	Scrutiny of international agreements: treaties considered on 11 February 2020	12 February 2020	None required
Intergenerational Fairness and Provision	Tackling intergenerational unfairness	25 April 2019	22 July 2019
International Relations	Rising nuclear risk, disarmament and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty	24 April 2019	4 July 2019
International Relations	Pacific Alliance	26 June 2019	4 September 2019

Committee	Title	Publication date	Government response received
Joint Committee on Human Rights	Youth detention: solitary confinement and restraint	18 April 2019	5 July 2019
Joint Committee on Human Rights	Good Character Requirements: Draft British Nationality Act 1981 (Remedial) Order 2019 – Second Report	9 July 2019	17 October 2019
Joint Committee on Human Rights	Proposal for a draft Fatal Accidents Act 1976 (Remedial) Order 2019	16 July 2019	None required
Joint Committee on Human Rights	The right to family life: children whose mothers are in prison	9 September 2019	Delayed
Joint Committee on Human Rights	Democracy, freedom of expression and freedom of association: Threats to MPs	18 October 2019	Delayed
Joint Committee on Human Rights	The detention of young people with learning disabilities and/or autism Second Report of Session	1 November 2019	Delayed
Joint Committee on Human Rights	The Right to Privacy (Article 8) and the Digital Revolution	3 November 2019	15 April 2020
Joint Committee on Human Rights	Draft Jobseekers (Back to Work Schemes) Act 2013 (Remedial) Order 2019: Second Report	13 March 2020	None required
Joint Committee on Human Rights	Draft Human Rights Act 1998 (Remedial) Order: Judicial Immunity: Second Report	20 March 2020	None required
Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy	Revisiting the UK's national security strategy: The National Security Capability Review and the Modernising Defence Programme	21 July 2019	4 November 2019
Joint Committee on the Draft Registration of Overseas Entities Bill	Joint Committee on the Draft Registration of Overseas Entities Bill	20 May 2019	8 July 2019

Committee	Title	Publication date	Government response received
Regenerating Seaside Towns and Communities	The future of seaside towns	4 April 2019	5 June 2019
Rural Economy	Time for a strategy for the rural economy	27 April 2019	3 July 2019
Science and Technology	Forensic science and the criminal justice system: a blueprint for change	1 May 2019	5 July 2019
Science and Technology	Science research funding in universities	8 August 2019	8 October 2019