

Special Inquiry Committee Proposals for 2024

Proposals submitted by 6 September 2023

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SPECIAL INQUIRY COMMITTEE PROPOSALS

Proposal 1: Letter from Lord Alton of Liverpool

A review of the Government's policies on and responses to the crime of genocide 75 years after the adoption of the Genocide Convention

Description of proposal

The proposed inquiry is to review His Majesty's Government's policies on and responses to the crime of genocide in light of the upcoming 75th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Genocide Convention). The review is to consider the His Majesty's Government's mechanisms to monitor early warning signs of genocide and to facilitate comprehensive responses, including in accordance with the duty to prevent genocide in Article I of the Genocide Convention.

The inquiry is to consider the current His Majesty's Government's approaches to monitoring and analysing early warning signs, the frameworks for analysis used by His Majesty's Government, and the practices for engagement and responses. The inquiry is also to look into the issue of investigating and prosecuting genocide in the UK, including under the principle of universal jurisdiction.

The inquiry is consider the good and bad practices and identify recommendations to improve the current approaches to ensure that His Majesty's Government is equipped to effectively identify situations at risk of atrocity crimes and respond accordingly.

Purpose of inquiry

The inquiry would provide a comprehensive analysis of His Majesty's Government's mechanisms for monitoring and facilitating effective responses to genocide and other atrocity crimes, identify any shortcomings and provide recommendations for improvement.

Relevant Member experience

The proposed inquiry could make the best of the knowledge and experience of Members of the House by engaging them to participate in the inquiry and share their expertise. Members of the House with particular expertise on these issues include:

Baroness Kennedy of The Shaws K.C., Baroness Butler-Sloss K.C., Lord Carlile K.C., Lord Brennan K.C., Lord Pannick K.C., Lord Forsyth, Lord Marlesford, Lord Campbell of Pitternween, Baroness Helic, Lord Hannay of Chiswick, Lord Hope of Craighead, Lord Wood of Anfield, Lord Collins of Highbury, Baroness Hodgson, Baroness D'Souza, Lord Hannay

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

It is envisaged that officials would be invited to submit evidence in a focused session. Witnesses could be drawn from some of the following departments, and submissions sought from others:

- Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
- Department of Defence

- Department of Justice

Former or current House of Lords Ministers could be asked to give evidence, including:

- Baroness Northover
- Baroness Warsi
- Lord Howell of Guildford
- Baroness Anelay
- Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon

10-month time frame

The proposed special inquiry committee is capable of being completed in one year with an attempt to finalise it within a shorter period of time. The inquiry will conduct between 5 and 10 expert witness sessions of up to 2 hours per session. The witnesses will include experts from the above-identified departments, legal academics and practitioners, and others with relevant expertise.

Additional comments

The inquiry could also involve a public call for evidence from individuals or groups with relevant expertise to ensure that the inquiry is as comprehensive as possible to significantly contribute to the debates on the topic.

ALTON OF LIVERPOOL

Proposal 2: Letter from Lord Kamall

A review of the UK's international role in addressing issues pertaining to refugees and internally displaced persons

Description of proposal

At the end of 2022, UNHCR estimated that the number of people forcibly displaced has reached 108.4 million, including over 35.3 million refugees. UNHCR estimates that in 2023, 117.2 million people will be forcibly displaced or stateless. Furthermore, based on the current trajectory, the coming year may produce more conflicts, crises, and situations that will force further displacement. As such, there is an ever-growing need to consider and introduce new approaches to responding to the issue.

The inquiry is to review and consider the UK's international role in addressing issues pertaining to refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) how this role could be strengthened.

The inquiry will consider the global situation of refugees and IDPs, focusing on the drivers of such migration, the number of refugees and IDPs, their origin and post-migration location, trends and forecast.

The inquiry will consider the role the UK plays internationally to address the issue, how it compares to other countries, and how the UK could play a more proactive and leading role.

The inquiry will also explore how the UK could work with other countries to ensure a more predictable and equitable responsibility-sharing, recognising that a sustainable solution to refugee situations cannot be achieved without international cooperation (as per the Global Compact on Refugees). This will include exploring whether a COP-style approach to the issue could be adopted, how this could be achieved and whether there is political will to do so.

Purpose of inquiry

The inquiry will identify how the UK could play a more pro-active role in addressing issues pertaining to refugees and IDPs and identify a model for international cooperation on the issue.

Relevant Member experience

The proposed inquiry could make the best of the knowledge and experience of Members of the House by engaging them to participate in the inquiry and share their expertise. Members of the House with particular expertise on these issues include:

Lord Dubs, Lord Alton of Liverpool, Lord Coaker, Baroness Kennedy of The Shaws K.C., Lord Carlile K.C., Lord Brennan K.C., Lord Forsyth, Baroness Helic, Baroness D'Souza, the Lord Bishop of Durham, Lord Hope, Baroness Lister

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

It is envisaged that officials would be invited to submit evidence in a focused session. Witnesses could be drawn from some of the following departments, and submissions sought from others:

- Home Office

- Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Former or current House of Lords Ministers could be asked to give evidence, including:

- Lord Murray
- Baroness Williams of Trafford
- Baroness Anelay
- Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon

10-month time frame

The proposed special inquiry committee is capable of being completed in one year with an attempt to finalise it within a shorter period of time. The inquiry will conduct between 3 and 5 expert witness sessions of up to 2 hours per session. The witnesses will include experts from the above-identified departments, legal academics and practitioners, and others with relevant expertise.

Additional comments

The inquiry could also involve a public call for evidence from individuals or groups with relevant expertise to ensure that the inquiry is as comprehensive as possible to significantly contribute to the debates on the topic.

KAMALL

Proposal 3: Letter from Lord Frost

Birth rate and demography

Description of proposal

The decline in fertility rates in the UK, and indeed across the West, is beginning to attract more comment. Its policy implications cross a number of normal Departmental boundaries and would therefore be particularly appropriate for a special committee.

The committee could explore issues such as the following:

- Causes of the decline of the birthrate—decline of religion, changes in individuals' expectations, housing policy, changes in family structure, and much more;
- Implications of differential fertility rates in different sections of the UK population;
- The policy implications of the change in age structure of the population for education, pensions, and so on
- The extent to which immigration can compensate for declines in the birth rate, and if so over what scale;
- What, if any, measures have been tried and proven successful in similar countries to encourage increases in the fertility rate, and whether such measures are desirable.

Purpose of inquiry

The aim would be to assess whether the decline in the birth rate and the associated change in demographic structure warrants higher-level political and economic attention; and, if so, to normalise discussion of it so that it is not left to the fringes of politics with all its associated consequences.

Relevant Member experience

It is a classic multidisciplinary enquiry—social affairs, economics, migration, experience to be learned from other countries, and much more—in which the range of knowledge available in the Lords would be a huge advantage: indeed it is hard to think of other bodies in the UK that could pursue such an enquiry.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

See above.

10-month time frame

Yes.

FROST

Proposal 4: Letter from Baroness Hodgson of Abinger and Baroness Stedman-Scott

Childcare in the UK

Description of proposal

Getting affordable childcare in the UK is a huge problem. It is one of the main reasons why women fall out of, and remain out of, the workplace. Women and men are more or less equal in the workplace until the woman has a baby and then too often the strain of finding childcare and holding down a competitive job is too much, causing women to either leave their jobs or to not apply for promotion. Childcare is often enormously expensive, and many women feel that it is not worth going back to work when most of her pay will go on childcare. This is an enormous contributory factor to the ‘glass ceiling’ for women and impacts on the UK’s equality agenda. No less importantly, the situation is holding back the economy of the UK and in particular women’s economic power.

At the same time, 2022 Public First polling found that 78% of parents with young children say they would like to spend more time with them but cannot afford to, and over 60% would support a flexible childcare budget, as Canada and France have introduced, which they could choose how to spend.

We would like the Committee to consider:

- What the childcare landscape in the UK looks like
- How accessible and affordable is childcare in the UK and what can be done to make this better
- How other countries address this situation—in particular Australia, Canada, Finland and the EU
- Other approaches and methods of funding to make childcare more accessible
- What employers can do to help, eg. by providing on-site childcare facilities and allowing greater flexibility in career trajectories so parental breaks are less stigmatised
- The situation for single parents
- How to resuscitate the au pair scheme that was derailed by Brexit
- Groups that are particularly impacted
- Could childcare be made tax deductible
- How could childcare policy provide more genuine choice for either parent to look after children themselves at certain points in the family life cycle where that is their genuine preference.

Purpose of inquiry

To be clear about the current state and availability of childcare, to identify sustainable solutions that can be delivered locally or nationally, to make recommendations to Government that will improve the current situation.

Relevant Member experience

Many members of the House are parents and have experienced problems with childcare, the inflexibility of employers and rigid career expectations: their deep understanding of these issues will enable them to generate innovative thinking both practically and financially to improve the situation.

Many other Peers will also have experience and knowledge of the topic. They will have specialist knowledge of the professions and will know the difficulties for younger parents as they seek to advance their careers while facing problems with childcare.

At the other end of the income scale, we have peers with knowledge of social services and those in receipt of Universal Credit and other welfare payments and will be very aware of the childcare issues for people in poorly paid jobs.

Lastly, we also have peers with extensive business experience who will be able to make a significant contribution from an economic and commercial perspective.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

- Women & Equalities
- Education
- Employment/Economic Activity
- Health (many mothers are employed in the NHS)
- Economy
- Families and Children

10-month time frame

Definitely.

Additional comments

This is a hugely pressing issue for parents, and especially women, in the UK. It also could have a direct impact on the Economy.

This proposal is supported by Baroness Altmann, Baroness Andrews, Baroness Boycott, Baroness Burt of Solihull, Baroness Butler-Sloss, Lord Colgrain, Baroness Deech, Lord Bishop of Durham, Baroness Eaton, Baroness Fall, Baroness Finlay of Llandaff, Baroness Fraser of Craigmaddie, Baroness Grey-Thompson, Baroness Harris of Richmond, Baroness Janke, Baroness Jolly, Lord Lucas, Baroness Morgan of Cotes, Baroness Meyer, Baroness Newlove, Baroness Northover, Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne, Baroness Primarolo, Lord Sandhurst, Baroness Sater, Lord Shinkwin, Lord Strathcarron, Baroness Watkins of Tavistock and Lord Young of Cookham.

HODGSON OF ABINGER and STEDMAN-SCOTT

Proposal 5: Letter from Baroness Kidron and 7 co-proposers including Baroness Benjamin, Lord Bishop of Gloucester, Baroness Harding of Winscombe, Baroness Healy of Primrose Hill, Lord Knight of Weymouth, Lord Laming and Lord Russell of Liverpool

Childhood views of social mobility

Description of proposal

Despite repeated attempts to change the trajectory of children born into less affluent families, it stubbornly remains that the household a child is born into is the best indicator of their life chances.

The Childhood Views of Social Mobility Inquiry would undertake a broad look at the successes and failures over the last two decades, of public policy that impacted on children's social mobility. To consider the current climate and make recommendations that focus on childhood social mobility.

The importance of this inquiry is underlined by the Government's own recent research that indicates that the UK is behind other developed countries in this area and is not improving.¹

A distinct feature of the inquiry would be to gather views of children and young people themselves.

Purpose of inquiry

There is broad political agreement that social mobility is desirable, but rather less agreement about how to get there. Looking at two decades of success and failure will allow the inquiry to take an evidential approach to what does and doesn't work. Focusing on the voices and experiences of children is likely to add a powerful dimension that will motivate Parliament and the media to look at this issue from a child's perspective.

Children and young people do not have electoral capital, so while issues around childhood have wide interest, it is often the case that public policy (from all parties) favours the interest of older voters. This inquiry would give the House the opportunity to impact one of the key areas of under-explored public policy, and in doing so make a valuable contribution to the lives of children and young people across the UK.

This issue is of particular importance in a post-pandemic context, in which young people suffered considerable setbacks to their emotional, social and educational development. How to understand and remedy the specific harms and inequalities of the last few years with those over the previous two decades will be of particular concern to the inquiry.

Relevant Member experience

This inquiry necessarily needs to consider a wide range of subjects of great concern to the House. There is a strong feeling that children must be given equality of opportunity and it is likely that many colleagues will take the opportunity of such an inquiry to engage, during the period of inquiry and with the resulting report.

¹ Social Mobility Commission, 'State of the Nation 2022: Chapter 2—Mobility outcomes': <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/state-of-the-nation-2022-a-fresh-approach-to-social-mobility/state-of-the-nation-2022-chapter-2-mobility-outcomes> [accessed 12 September 2023]

There is also a desire from the House leadership and membership that young people engage with our work and with politics and public policy. Giving them a voice in the inquiry will be a unique and, I believe, welcome opportunity to participate.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

Education, Health, Housing, Welfare, Digital and Justice will be focus areas for the inquiry. This is a necessarily interdepartmental issue, and whether interdepartmental policy is working will be one consideration of the inquiry.

10-month time frame

Yes. The desk research into public policy will be done at the first opportunity and will set out the key areas of interest. The work with children and young people will be done contemporaneously and their views on the same areas of policy will be sought.

Additional comments

I have a great deal of experience of running deliberative juries with young people, so this is not a new area for me. However, it is not often done in the context of the House of Lords and think it will bring a great deal of lived experience and power to this important debate.

Worth noting that the House of Lords last had a social mobility Committee in the 2015/16 session.

**KIDRON, BENJAMIN, HARDING OF WINSCOMBE, HEALY OF PRIMROSE HILL,
KNIGHT OF WEYMOUTH, LAMING, RUSSELL OF LIVERPOOL and + RACHEL
GLOUCESTER**

Proposal 6: Letter from Lord Hastings of Scarisbrick

The Criminal Cases Review Commission & Miscarriages of Justice

Description of proposal

The appalling case of Andrew Malkinson's gross injustice and mistreatment by police, the CPS, prosecution as a whole, courts and the comprehensive failure of the CCRC to do its job of intelligent review of faulty forensic data, which it was fully aware of for over a decade, held a man entrapped in prison for 17 years and even when the case was settled in 2022, his conviction was not squashed for a further year. This case has flagged what so many know about both the CPS and the CCRC—they run on the easy assumption of guilty until proven innocent and not innocent until proven guilty. Further, exposes into the CCRC have shown up its lazy part time and dismissive culture. Our justice system is now notoriously known as an injustice system and it persists in obstructing appeals by hiding access to conviction data and instead acts a gravy train for public prosecutors and barristers to push through convictions, especially for those on legal aid, in the near certain outcome that they will be jailed and so a case is notched up as resolved. This cannot be allowed to continue in the name of the Crown let alone the gross over representation of black boys and men in the system held in excessive remand because of a CPS assertion of likely risk—unproven and yet accepted by courts because the proposition of true and fair justice has so solidly been abandoned and has broken down. We need to urgently take evidence from the agency Appeal who assisted Mr Malkinson and other campaign agencies and question the CCRC including those who remain alive on the founding vision of its existence from the mid-1980s and why it has been so dilapidated to this day. We need to understand if this is purely about funding or more realistically about a political and judicial culture that is abandoning justice for incarceration and trashes the value of human freedom for those who cannot expensive legal cover. Our prisons are bursting—last week just 50 places were available across the whole of the UK to house new convicted prisoners—yet they are too often full of people awaiting trial who are no serious violent threat to society and of people held against both common justice and fair process such as the near 3000 still held inside on IPP convictions despite the fact that it is no longer criminal law !! They need appeal review but the broken system that held Malkinson inside, with no justice, persists. Time to flush it out and start a mature parliamentary dialogue of huge public interest.

Purpose of inquiry

The Inquiry wants to get behind the culture of malaise and non-professionalism at the CCRC and needs to hear other cases of neglect. The Government in their election manifesto 2019 promised a Royal Commission on the Criminal Justice System. The Queens Speech 2019 stated the same. Nothing has happened. We need to examine what urgent steps are required in the public interest to restore trust in justice.

Relevant Member experience

The House is stocked full of not just legal experts but also Peers who speak on and campaign on criminal justice matters. The former Chief Inspector of Prisons, Lord Ramsbottom, was deeply grieved at the failure of the Government to commence the promised Royal Commission. This short special enquiry will honour his legacy.

Cross-cutting Departmental boundaries

YES—Ministry of Justice and the Home Office primarily and the Treasury on funding the CCRC

10-month time frame

YES—so much is already in the public domain—it need assessing, collating and being given fresh impetus through some witness cases plus a direction of travel for improved public justice.

HASTINGS OF SCARISBRICK

Proposal 7: Letter from Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

Fungal health, security and prosperity

Description of proposal

The proposal is to review the role of fungi in the UK's overall security agenda. This would include:

1. **food security**, the role that fungi might play in developing sustainable agriculture for enhanced crop yields, and the threat of reduced yields arising from a damaged soil and leaf microbiosphere;
2. the **biological security** threat, including to human health, arising from fungal disease and fungal antimicrobial resistance;
3. the **implications of climate change** for the UK in both food and biological security as regards fungi;
4. the **current and future state of fungal diversity** as a part of the broader issue of biodiversity in the UK environment; and
5. the possibilities for the bioscience sector in increasing the **understanding of the threats and opportunities** of healthier and more productive interactions between humans and fungi.
6. This inquiry would complement existing strategies and reports while addressing gaps and omissions in the food security and biosecurity landscapes. For instance while the *UK Biological Security Strategy (2023)* contains 39 instances of the word “antimicrobial” (including its references), its focus is almost entirely on antibiotics.² The words “fungal”/“fungus”/“fungi” and “antifungal” do not appear once.

This inquiry would provide cross-cutting insights into this priority area through a unique fungal lens which remains deeply underappreciated and unexplored. According to World Health Organisation data, “fungal infections receive less than 1.5% of all infectious disease research funding”;³ however, fungal infections cause 1.7 million deaths per annum globally.⁴ This lacuna in our biosecurity preparedness should be addressed.

Human interactions with fungi are not all doom and gloom. Though we are at risk from certain pathogenic fungi, we also benefit hugely from the role of mycorrhizal fungi in agriculture. As the Royal Horticultural Society points out:

‘Mycorrhizas are fungal associations between plant roots and beneficial fungi. The fungi effectively extend the root area of plants and are extremely important to most wild plants, but less significant for garden plants where the use of fertilisers and cultivation disrupts and replaces these associations.’⁵

2 HM Government, *UK Biological Security Strategy*, CP 858 (June 2023): https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1173779/UK_Biological_Security_Strategy.pdf

3 World Health Organisation, *WHO fungal priority pathogens list to guide research, development and public health action* (2022): <https://apps.who.int/iris/rest/bitstreams/1474282/retrieve>

4 Katharina Kainz, Maria A. Bauer, Frank Madeo, and Didac Carmona-Gutierrez, ‘Fungal infections in humans: the silent crisis’, *Microbial Cell*, vol. 7(6) (2020), pp 143–145: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7278517/>

5 Royal Horticultural Society, ‘Mycorrhizal fungi’: <https://www.rhs.org.uk/biodiversity/mycorrhizal-fungi> [accessed 12 September 2023]

No policy document has outlined an appreciation for the state of the UK soil microbiosphere or stimulated specific study into how it is being affected by fertilisers or biocides. By using the unique convening power of a Special Inquiry Committee, relevant experts can be asked to contribute to a landmark document to inform future research priorities and environmental targets.

The inquiry could also consider the current and potential applications of engineering biology in the fungal space to address food production and soil amendments. This would align with and bolster the *UK's International Technology Strategy (2023)*, which highlights engineering biology as a priority research area.⁶

To return to the threat of fungi, the *UK Food Security Report (2021)* does mention fungal pathogens, though only 3 times in 322 pages; climate change is specifically highlighted as a driver of this threat:

“Warmer temperatures can also encourage fungal diseases such as potato blight (in combination with higher relative humidity)”⁷

There is a need for a concerted consideration into how UK food and biological security will be affected by climate change and pollution arising from widespread fungicide use. A Special Inquiry Committee is uniquely well placed to explore this complex yet crucial issue, drawing upon the wealth of expertise in UK academia, industry, and Civil Service.

Purpose of inquiry

The principal aim is to identify the risks and opportunities presented by fungi in Britain, across sectors, and to put issues around fungi more at the centre of policy and political thinking. Expert consultation would enable the production of a report which would bolster existing strategies, particularly regarding biosecurity and food security (as explained above), addressing gaps in these strategies to ensure the security of Britain in an age of shocks.

This inquiry directly addresses all three aspects of the “Triple Planetary Crisis” as defined by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change: climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss.⁸ It explicitly seeks to: understand how climate change will affect fungi and their role in food and biological security; the threat posed by fungicide use & pollution on antifungal resistance in agriculture and health; and the role of both of these drivers on the loss of soil microbes include mycorrhizal fungi key to food security.

The inquiry works towards several UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): SDG2 (“Zero hunger”), by considering food security implications of fungi in the UK; SDG3 (“Good health and well-being”) by considering the health & biosecurity threats of fungal disease and antifungal resistance to the UK; SDG 13 (“Climate action”) by explicitly considering the impact of climate change on the aforementioned outcomes in the UK; and SDG 15 (“Life on Land”) by considering the state of fungal biodiversity in the UK microbiosphere.

6 HM Government, *The UK's International Technology Strategy*, CP 810 (March 2023): https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1144576/uk-international-technology-strategy-web-version.pdf

7 Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, *UK Food Security Report 2021* (16 December 2021), p 139: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1077015/United_Kingdom_Food_Security_Report_2021_19may2022.pdf

8 UN Climate Change, ‘What is the Triple Planetary Crisis?’: <https://unfccc.int/blog/what-is-the-triple-planetary-crisis> [accessed 12 September 2023]

Relevant Member experience

The House of Lords is replete with Peers whose experience would be invaluable in evaluating the contributions of relevant interdisciplinary experts. There are a considerable number of Peers who have worked towards establishing closer links between academia and Government, translating research into policy. Their ability to convene relevant stakeholders, as well as their professional networks, would be helpful to gathering the best evidence. In addition, many experts in medicine, health, agriculture/ecology, and existential threats sit in the House of Lords. This investigation could draw upon their wealth of experience in these areas to produce a suitably considered report.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

As this proposal considers the role of fungi in both health and agriculture, as well as innovation opportunities in these spaces and the impact of climate change, it is inherently cross-departmental and interdisciplinary. This proposal would draw on the expertise of stakeholders in multiple Government departments, including (but not limited to):

- the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC);
- the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA);
- the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT);
- the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ);
- the Department for Business and Trade (DBT);
- the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO).

Notably, valuable input could be received from transdisciplinary and cross-Governmental agencies such as the Office for Life Sciences (DHSC and DSIT), the Government Office for Science (DSIT), the Animal and Plant Health Agency (DEFRA)

10-month time frame

Yes, a meaningful inquiry into this topic can be carried out by the end of November 2024. Through 20 x 1-hour sessions, the Committee would be able to gather evidence from experts across the Government departments listed above; academia; the third sector (civil society organisations); and industry.

Additional comments

The topicality of this inquiry cannot be denied—it directly addresses all three aspects of the “Triple Planetary Crisis” as defined by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change: climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss.⁹

Urgent action on food security and depletion of soil microbes has been urged repeatedly: by religious leaders;¹⁰ the UN’s Food and Agriculture Organisation¹¹

9 UN Climate Change, ‘What is the Triple Planetary Crisis?’: <https://unfccc.int/blog/what-is-the-triple-planetary-crisis> [accessed 12 September 2023]

10 Sadhguru and Mati—The Dalai Lama said yes, added by Conscious Planet Bangla: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7O3DbzS-d10> [accessed 12 September 2023]

11 Maria Semedo, added by Conscious Planet: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJeOijUhf2g> [accessed 12 September 2023]

and World Food Programme¹²; Prime Ministers of India¹³, Barbados¹⁴, Antigua & Barbuda¹⁵, Palestine¹⁶ *inter alia*; and the populace at large.

There has never been a more important time for such a Committee to be formed.

This proposal is supported by Lord Browne of Ladyton and Baroness Willis of Summertown.

BENNETT OF MANOR CASTLE

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- 12 David M Beasley, added by Conscious Planet: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rNyx6cxT3oQ> [accessed 12 September 2023]
- 13 Shri Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, added by Conscious Planet: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RWgofBcjXhM> [accessed 12 September 2023]
- 14 Hon'ble Mia Mottley, Prime Minister of Barbados, added by Conscious Planet: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hjwwWHzXhMI> [accessed 12 September 2023]
- 15 Gaston Brown, added by Sadhguru—channel official in Russian: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YxiWcayW1fM> [accessed 12 September 2023]
- 16 Dr. Mohammad Shtayyeh, Prime Minister of the State of Palestine, added by Conscious Planet: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vKU_GIZosG8 [accessed 12 September 2023]

Proposal 8: Letter from Lord Altrincham

How to encourage better performance of UK pension savings and more investment into the UK economy and UK infrastructure.

Description of proposal

Over recent months, and during the passage of the Financial Services and Markets Bill through Parliament, there have been calls for UK pension funds to play a more active role in investing in the UK economy. This topic will likely become more important given public expectations for the renewal of infrastructure, social housing, transportation and energy at a time of fiscal constraint.

In parallel there has been concern about the performance of pension funds, a perceived aversion to risk and a caution around long term investment which may have arisen partly as a response to regulation and partly because of the complexity of this area of savings.

The inquiry would look at the overall performance of UK pension savings, allocation of pension savings to growth and allocations to the UK economy. It would consider whether pension trustees have become too cautious on behalf of beneficiaries. It would consider how to make UK infrastructure projects more attractive to UK pension funds. It would consider tax incentives around the pension sector and regulatory constraints to investing in the UK. It would ask whether the taxpayer receives good value for pension tax relief as well as the investment taxpayers make in private pension provision.

The introduction of auto enrolment has brought millions of new savers into pensions over recent years and legislation in the coming months aims to extend automatic enrolment to lower earners and younger workers which will serve to broaden even further private sector pension saving in the UK. With broad participation in private sector pensions this is a good time to consider the overall balance of saving and long term investment in the UK.

There may also be legislation to expand the remit of the Pension Protection Fund, Pension Super Funds, Pension consolidators and Master Trusts, and these too could form part of the inquiry.

The inquiry would look at pension reforms in Australia, Canada, Sweden and the Netherlands and consider some of the advantages of transparency in US pension saving.

Purpose of inquiry

The inquiry would aim to identify regulatory and structural changes that might improve performance of UK pension savings and increase investment of UK pension savings into the UK for the future retirement security of all UK retirees and for the wider benefit of the UK economy.

Relevant Member experience

There are Peers across the house who have relevant experience of pension provision, the social distribution of retirement resources, asset management and investment and in economic growth.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

The proposal addresses retirement savings very broadly and infrastructure needs across almost all of Government but should be neutral as between different investment priorities.

10-month time frame

Yes. This is a narrow question of public importance which might make a shorter inquiry possible with written submissions and 10 one hour evidence sessions.

Additional comments

The Financial Services and Markets Bill reflects some important changes in financial supervision in the UK and repatriation of powers from the EU with a UK growth objective, a good time to consider UK domestic savings and investment. The short timetable House of Lords public inquiry report and debate format could suit this type of question quite well.

ALTRINCHAM

Proposal 9: Letter from Lord Lilley

How to handle future pandemics

Description of proposal

We need to learn the key lessons of the Covid pandemic long before the official inquiry reports. Moreover, a Lords Special Committee could examine past experience without assigning blame for anything that was or was not done in the past as the Hallett inquiry seems intent on doing. Our Committee should approach it more like the accident reports following an airplane accident—“how can we avoid these problems in future?” A specific area of inquiry should be—how should parliament deal with such situations in future; if government needs to implement (sometimes draconian) measures with immediate effect and change them frequently, how should Parliament scrutinise them in an effective and timely manner; should the Lords be able to suggest (non-binding) amendments; and what should be the legal basis of regulations—should legislation be UK wide for simplicity and to avoid cross border problems? Complementary to that the inquiry should consider how necessary compulsion is, rather than persuasion and spontaneous precaution taking, to achieve compliance with measures needed to limit infection?

Purpose of inquiry

- (a) Prepare government and parliament to handle future pandemics in a more timely way than the Hallett inquiry and provide the sort of report already prepared for the Swiss and French authorities.
- (b) To enable Parliament to examine its own procedures to be ready for similar challenged in future.
- (c) To examine the extent to which statutory compulsion is necessary to achieve compliance with laws to combat infection, rather than persuasion or spontaneous compliance.

Relevant Member experience

The House has an unrivalled wealth of talent in the medical, scientific, civil service and business areas who could contribute in a much less judicial way than adopted by the Hallett inquiry.

The House alone has the expertise to examine its own procedures.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

This crosses boundaries between our procedural and subject Committees as well as a variety of different departments

10-month time frame

Yes. The Swedish and French inquiries were completed in months.

This proposal is supported by Baroness Deech, Lord Forsyth of Drumlean, Lord Frost, Baroness Lea of Lymm, Baroness Noakes, Lord Shinkwin, Baroness Watkins of Tavistock and the Viscount Trenchard.

LILLEY

Proposal 10: Letter from Lord Boswell of Aynho*Loneliness and sustained connexions in society**Description of proposal*

I am wondering whether in the light of post-pandemic experiences we might explore theses of loneliness and sustained connexions in our society. Having been bereaved almost five years ago just short of our Golden Wedding, I give thanks daily for three daughters who work as a team, plus a network of carers who support me, and also for the internet and an online existence, but remain conscious that many others in similar situations may lack the resources or communications skills to play any continuing role or have any sense of agency in their existence.

BOSWELL OF AYNHO

Proposal 11: Letter from Baroness Lister of Burtersett

The inclusion and involvement of ‘expertise by lived experience’, particularly among marginalised groups such as people living in poverty, in policy debates and policy-making and implementation at local and national level.

Description of the proposal

There is growing acknowledgement in civil society, academia and government of the value which the expertise borne of lived experience can bring to policy debates and policy making. For instance, the Public Service Committee’s report on lessons from covid noted that ‘the pandemic has shown that designing public services without consulting the people who use them embeds fundamental weaknesses such as inequalities of access ... [and that] Involving user voice in service design increases the resilience of those services’ (2020). Yet actual practice remains very patchy and too often is tokenistic or even exploitative. There is nevertheless much to be learned—positive and negative—from the examples that do exist including a number of Poverty Truth Commissions set up in local authorities and Scotland’s establishment of ‘experience panels’ to inform social security policy and practice.

The inquiry would interrogate the value of the expertise of lived experience both through its investigation into current examples of attempts to include such expertise in policy and practice development and through the process of investigation itself, which would pay due attention to evidence from those whose expertise is rooted in lived experience. The inquiry would be of great symbolic as well as practical importance and the process could be almost as important as the outcome. The aim would be to take evidence from relevant organisations (including those who have supported members of marginalised groups in such processes) and from groups of people with relevant lived experience, as well as from policy-makers. It is hoped that the evidence received would signpost a small number of fruitful visits to relevant organisations or projects.

Purpose of inquiry

- (1) An overview of the extent to which lived experience is being taken on board at present in policy and practice development and the difference that it makes in terms of both process and outcomes.
- (2) Lessons to be learned from (i) best practice that is found to exist and (ii) asking people with lived experience about how they might be better included in policy-making and practice.
- (3) Practical recommendations for building the expertise of lived experience into policy making and implementation.

Relevant Member experience

The proposal would be able to draw on the experience and knowledge of Members who have been involved in policy-making notably former civil servants, ministers and local authority leaders. It would also draw on Members’ knowledge—both direct and through their work in APPGs—of a wide range of marginalised groups including: people with experience of poverty; disabled people; people with learning difficulties; Gypsies, Romas and Travellers; refugees and asylum-seekers; domestic abuse survivors; people with experience of the criminal justice system and children. Experience of participatory approaches in international development would also be valuable.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

The proposal is inherently cross-departmental because it applies to policy-making in any department affecting marginalised groups. These are groups whose lives are particularly affected by national and local policy and who are likely to use a range of public services. Moreover, it has implications for democratic engagement and for what has been noted as a diminished trust in politics and the political classes as it would address underlying relations between government and the public, which cross departmental boundaries

10-month time frame

Yes. I would envisage it taking both written and oral evidence including from members of marginalised groups such as those involved in the Changing Realities project. It might also involve a small number of visits identified from the written evidence. It would also be very useful to learn from the experience of international development. The experience built up in the Committee Office through the Public Services Committee taking evidence from those with lived experience of public services could be helpful.

Additional comments

- (1) Such a committee might need to seek advice at the outset as to how to engage with members of marginalised groups themselves in taking forward this inquiry.
- (2) While the inquiry would focus on processes and could learn from the experiences of a wide range of marginalised groups (emphasised by a number of colleagues supporting such an inquiry), I recognise that in practice, if established, the committee might want to consider narrowing its scope if the scope of the proposal is considered to be too wide.

This proposal is supported by Baroness Altmann, Lord Brooke of Alverthorpe, Lord Bishop of Gloucester, Baroness Healy of Primrose Hill, Baroness Hollins, Lord Bishop of Manchester, Baroness Neuberger, Baroness Stroud and Baroness Thornhill.

LISTER OF BURTERSETT

Proposal 12: Letter from Lord Macpherson of Earl's Court

Managing transitions between Administrations

Description of proposal

This proposal is for a Special Inquiry Committee to consider the arrangements for managing the transition between Administrations and to make recommendations where appropriate. To be clear the Committee would consider all possible scenarios following the election and would not assume a change of political control.

The work of the Committee would focus on issues such as the training available for potential new Ministers and induction for new MPs; the arrangements for allowing pre-election contact between Permanent Secretaries and Opposition spokespersons; possible roles for the Office of Budget Responsibility and the National Audit Office; the timing of handovers; the preparations within political parties to ensure they are ready to govern quickly and effectively; how transitions are managed in other countries with similar constitutional arrangements (e.g. New Zealand and Canada) as well as Scotland, Wales and Local Government; preparations within the Civil Service including the role of the Cabinet Office and the Cabinet Secretary; how Departments might best organise to ensure the speedy implementation of the new Governments priorities; the implications of a possible hung parliament for any pre-election arrangements and managing negotiations for coalition government if that became the reality.

Purpose of inquiry

The Inquiry would seek to make recommendations to facilitate the smoothest transition of power in all possible scenarios following an election so as to ensure that any new Government is able to function effectively as quickly as possible.

Relevant Member experience

Many Members of the House have experience of Government transitions whether as politicians, senior civil servants, special advisors or working in external organisations dependent upon clear effective governance. That experience has not hitherto been engaged in future planning so that Parliament has been largely excluded from any discussion.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

The proposal addresses all policy areas, all departments and all political parties. It considers how government can continue to function at moments of transition.

10-month time frame

The work of the committee can be completed by end of November 2024. The Chair of the Committee may decide to deliver a Report before a General Election.

MACPHERSON OF EARL'S COURT

Proposal 13: Letter from Baroness Gohir

Minority Ethnic Female Domestic Homicide Rates

Description of the proposal

Black, Asian and minority women are over-represented in female domestic homicides. According to the ONS data the number of domestic homicides where the victim was female and the suspect was male (i.e. partner, ex-partner or family member) for the three-year period ending March 2019 to March 2021 was 260. The data was combined for the three-year period to account for the year-to-year variability in the volume of homicides.

As ethnicity is not always recorded by police forces or not recorded accurately, Muslim Women's Network UK lists femicide victims from racialised minority communities on its website.¹⁷

A basic search on this database for the same three-year period (after eliminating cases where the suspect was not an ex-partner / partner or family member) shows the following (percentages are based on 260 total female victims in the three year period):

- Black: 15 victims (6%)—make up 4% of the population
- South Asian: 26 victims (10%)—make up 9% of the population
- Other: 8 victims (3%)—make up 2% and of population
- Total minority: 49 victims (19%)—however make up 18% of the population

Population data based on 2021 Census.

It's clear from this crude analysis that minority ethnic women homicide victims are over represented. The data for Black women is particularly alarming. The numbers above could potentially be higher as the data used only includes details of victims named in the media.

We must uncover what is contributing to this over representation. In South Asian communities, government policies have focused on tackling certain types of abuse such as forced marriage, honour-based abuse and FGM. However, the majority are domestic abuse victims and killed by partners or ex-partners and crimes not forced marriage or HBV linked.

The inquiry could also consider:

- Actual /accurate annual numbers of minority ethnic domestic homicide victims
- Structural barriers
- Whether there is sufficient awareness of specialist services within minority communities
- Whether government funding for specialist services is accessible / adequate

¹⁷ Muslim Women's Network UK, 'Say her name': <https://www.mwnuk.co.uk/say-her-name> [accessed 12 September 2023]

- Whether safe accommodation and appropriate is accessible
- How poor mental of victims is contributing to not asking for help and the deaths (due to suicide) / barriers to accessing counselling services
- How financial dependency is a contributory factor e.g. significant numbers of Muslim women may not be in legally recognised marriages causing financially dependency exacerbated by not being able to obtain a religious divorce and how these issues can be addressed.
- Contributory factors when other male family members are perpetrators e.g. sons, grandsons etc., (rather than assuming it is only due to honour because of stereotypes) such as considering how poor mental health of men is contributing to some domestic homicides e.g. Black men tend to have the poorest mental health and women are likely to be carers. Could poor mental health care be also contributing to domestic homicides?
- Data is crucial for identifying inequalities—why is ethnicity data not collected /not recorded accurately and not always accessible when it is recorded (domestic homicide rates, suicide rates by ethnicity etc). How can this be rectified to improve accountability?

Purpose of the inquiry

Finding out:

- Up to date accurate data on female domestic homicide victims broken down by ethnicity
- Data gaps about ethnic minority domestic homicide victims and why these gaps exists
- What factors are contributing to the higher domestic homicide rates of minority women and how are these factors are connected
- How current public policy is failing minority ethnic domestic abuse victims
- How current practices and policies need to change to reduce domestic homicide rates of minority ethnic women

Relevant Member experience

Members in the following disciplines would provide crucial insights:

- Law (Barristers, solicitors, judges, policing)
- Health—particularly women’s health and mental health (men and women)
- Women’s Charity sector—particularly violence against women and girls
- Minority communities—particularly black and Asian women
- Experts in local govt and housing

Some of the members have been Ministers in the Home Office, Health Dept and MoJ and been Women’s Ministers.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

Systemic inequalities that are likely to be contributing to the over representation of minority ethnic female domestic homicide victims. The following departments can play a key role in reducing domestic homicides of minority ethnic women:

- Department of health
- Home office
- Ministry of Justice
- Department of Housing and Local Communities

10-month time frame

Given the interest this inquiry would generate, there will be sufficient numbers of stakeholders wishing to contribute. Due to the focus on minority communities it will not be too broad to run over the suggested time-table.

Additional comments

Some further background reading that confirms the over representation of minority women in homicide rates can be found in a briefing by the Vulnerability Knowledge and Practice Programme¹⁸. Although this was a Home Office funded project, it was Covid focussed and does not go into sufficient depth and am not aware of any follow up. There is an opportunity to build on this.

I was looking through previous inquiries, I could not see one focussed on minority ethnic women. However, I may have missed it. Although their concerns can and are raised in broader inquiries, I feel it is important to have an inquiry focussed on them in this case so that sufficient time can be given to uncover all connecting contributing factors and recommendations made across departments. For example, even within the women's charity sector the over representation of Black and South Asian women domestic homicide victims has not received sufficient attention beyond more funding is needed for specialist services, which alone does not provide the solution nor tackles root issues. This inquiry is likely to receive wide interest including from the media.

GOHIR

¹⁸ Vulnerability Knowledge and Practice Programme, *Domestic Homicide Project Spotlight Briefing on Ethnicity* (June 2022): <https://www.vkpp.org.uk/assets/Files/VKPP-DHP-Ethnicity-Spotlight-Briefing-June-2022.pdf>

Proposal 14: Letter from Lord McColl of Dulwich

The Obesity Crisis

Description of proposal

An inquiry committee is needed to establish the scientific facts, costs, and possible solutions to help solve the crisis in the NHS. The committee will try to determine the factors leading to the increasing waiting lists and resulting costs relating to the worsening obesity crisis.

The Scale of The Problem

This will include an analysis of the actual expenditure on the many preventable diseases estimated to cost as much as £40 billion per year. These diseases include 4 million with type II diabetes costing the NHS £10 billion per year; the same number of pre diabetic citizens, heart attacks, strokes, hypertension, and cancer (£7.6 billion per year); dementia (£23 billion a year and expected to triple by 2040); joint replacements (897 million per year); and Covid made more lethal by obesity (£4–5 billion increase to frontline services). All these conditions have a much wider and growing cost to society than what the NHS is current spending. All these conditions are either caused by or worsened by obesity.

Despite people facing the prospect of a premature death from the lethal complications of obesity, many have been confused by several powerful groups. This will need detailed scrutiny by the committee into the role of the food industry and many authorities who for many years have advocated a low-fat diet. Much of the information provided by such groups is contrary to the scientific fact that when fat enters the duodenum it releases a hormone which delays the emptying of the stomach leading to satiety which reduces obesity.

The Role of Sugar and Fat in the British Diet

Fat is what gives food its good taste and a low-fat diet is tasteless. The committee may wish to ask the food industry if they regret adding large quantities of sugar in order to entice people to eat their low-fat products. Further questions might seek the reasons for condemning whole milk and butter for low fat alternatives such as margarine which contains several unwelcome chemicals such as the antifreeze polyethylene glycol. The role of processed food will need to be explored along with the alleged addition of chemicals to stimulate appetite.

Providing Correct Information

The committee needs to establish the extent to which obese people been lulled into a false sense of security by repeated reassurances that the subject is multifactorial and too difficult to solve without an in-depth exploration of genetics and epigenetics etc. While the intention behind this is positive, those suffering from obesity must be given the agency and information to explore personal treatment outcomes. The committee needs to establish how the role of an individual's diet as opposed to genetics, epigenetics and any other medical condition could cause obesity. This will best inform obese individuals.

Prevention is always better than cure. Exploring these policies would reduce disease amongst the 40 million obese and overweight population, cut waiting lists and reduce the growing and unsustainable costs to the NHS every year.

Purpose of inquiry

The aims of the inquiry should be threefold:

- (1) Explore the role of the food industry in perpetuating the obesity crisis.
- (2) Identify how best to inform over 40 million obese and overweight citizens how to make lifestyle changes to relieve a growing and unsustainable burden on the NHS.
- (3) Enact a preventative strategy for the obesity crisis.

Relevant Member experience

The House has many experienced members who are well placed to inform the next steps to tackle this crisis. This includes fellows of the Royal Society, Professors of Science and Medicine, Statisticians and inter alia.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

The obesity crisis demands a cross-governmental approach that aligns with the key interests of several Departments. Discussions will include the Department of Health, the Treasury, the Department for Business and Trade and the Department of Education, all of whom will have important contributions to make.

10-month time frame

Yes, it is capable of so doing. When I chaired a national inquiry into services for disabled people, we completed the work within the year despite frequent interruptions and obstructions.

Additional comments

Other guidance could also be explored throughout the inquiry such as restoring the former practise of postponing operations until the patient's weight was reduced to appropriate levels. This would not only help manage the waiting lists but also incentivise many of the 40 million obese and overweight UK citizens and make operations much safer.

MCCOLL OF DULWICH

Proposal 15: Letter from Lord Foulkes of Cumnock

Overseas Territories and Home Dependencies

Description of proposal

This Committee would look at the Constitutional position of the Overseas Territories and the Home Dependencies (Channel Islands and Isle of Man) and consider whether they should be offered independent status, become an integral part of the UK with representation in the UK Parliament (Like the French DOMs) or some other new status or remain as at present. They would all be asked for their views and evidence taken virtually from the OT's and, if appropriate by a visit or visits to the Home Dependencies.

Purpose of inquiry

The Inquiry would make recommendations which would clarify and improve the constitutional status of each of the territories.

Relevant Member experience

Many Peers have direct experience in advising the Governments of the territories.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

The Foreign Office has responsibility for the OTs and the Home Office for the Home Dependencies.

10-month time frame

Yes.

FOULKES OF CUMNOCK

Proposal 16: Letter from Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbots

Planning the UK's Demographic Future

Description of proposal

To investigate the need for, and value of, a cross Governmental body—possibly constituted along the lines of The Office for Budget Responsibility—which would undertake independent transparent evidence-based analysis of the trade-offs inevitable in population change and which would report at least annually to Parliament.

Purpose of inquiry

To discuss and analyse how best to respond to the concerns of the two thirds of the population who, according to recent polling by British Polling Council member People Polling, believe Britain is overcrowded—particularly about the future delivery of public services, the availability of housing, the maintenance of social cohesion, continuing food and water security, and the impact on our ability to meet our climate change goals. Also, to get ahead of the intensification of these issues given that the Oxford Migration Observatory now estimates further population growth of some 9 million people by 2045.

Relevant Member experience

The Members of the House have a range of skills and experiences which makes the House uniquely well equipped to undertake an investigation of this sort.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

All parts of government are impacted by population change but no part of government is tasked with providing any strategic overarching analysis. Existing bodies tend only to look at the impacts of these changes on the economy, not holistically.

10-month time frame

Yes. The Committee is not likely to provide all the answers but it will begin a conversation—for too long successive governments have been reluctant to encourage public discussions and debate about our demographic future. Successive governments have presented the public with a series of faits accomplis, which has led to the polarisation of views and the creation of a toxic atmosphere.

Additional comments

No doubt some Members of the Liaison Committee may think this a “risky” project. Indeed, in terms of the “Westminster village” it may be. But outside the “village” more than 60% of the population across all age groups, social grades, regions and voting preference at the 2019 General Election, believe it is an issue that needs discussion. Failure to do so will increase disillusionment with our system of government.

This proposal is supported by Lord Bridges of Headley, Lord Brooke of Alverthorpe, Viscount Craigavon, Baroness Deech, Baroness Eaton, Lord Horam, Lord Lamont of Lerwick, Lord Lilley, Lord King of Bridgwater, Lord Leigh of Hurley, Lord Lisvane, Lord Mackenzie of Framwellgate and Lord Rooker

Supporting letter from Lord Mackenzie of Framwellgate

The present economic state of the country is the result of increasing pressure on the nation's resources which is added to by an annual increase in population growth. It seems to me that a light needs to be shone on these factors in an objective and transparent way, producing clear and independent recommendations for policy makers.

I can think of no better vehicle for such probing research than a Special Committee of the house of Lords.

HODGSON OF ASTLEY ABBOTTS

Proposal 17: Letter from Baroness Bertin

Prevention of preterm birth (PTB)

Description of proposal

A special inquiry into why so little progress is being made in the prevention of preterm birth. In 2017, when the PTB rate was 8%, a pledge was made to reduce PTB rates to 6% by 2025. The latest data suggests we have risen from rates of 7.4% in 2020 to 7.6% in 2021. Based on current knowledge, and assuming all measures were perfectly implemented, it is estimated that only a 0.5% reduction could realistically be achieved. Not only do recent figures show increase in preterm births they also show a deepening ethnic disparity—with babies from Black and Asian ethnic groups being most at risk.

Each year in the UK 56,000 babies are born preterm, of these 1,000 die and 6,000 have lifelong disability. Even preterm children without disability are more likely to have behavioural problems, special educational needs and numeracy problems. The cost of PTB on the UK economy is also significant. Based on data from 2006 PTB costs the public sector £2.946 billion per annum. It is estimated that prolonging each preterm birth by one week would save 1 billion.

This inquiry would explore the lack of research and education in this important area as well as the minimal involvement of the pharmaceutical industry. Reproductive health receives about 2% of the health research budget per annum. The field does not appeal to enough scientists or research orientated doctors—who are understandably attracted to the greater funding available in other areas of biological research. This arguably hinders progress in the area of obstetrics. In addition pharmaceutical companies avoid developing drugs for use in pregnant women due to potential liabilities and historic failures. This lack of research and development means there are very few therapeutic targets for any form of drug development. The inquiry would explore both these issues in depth, as well as the wider issue around ethnic disparity.

Purpose of inquiry

The Inquiry would consider how best to approach reducing preterm birth rates today. It will consider that about 85% of PTB occurs in women with no relevant history. This means that the only way to reduce PTB is by screening all pregnant women.

Spontaneous preterm labour (sPTL) is responsible for 50–70% of PTB and iatrogenic reasons account for the remaining 30–50%. As 85% of PTB occur in women with no relevant history, the Inquiry would want to explore whether a screen and treat package of care, which involves screening all pregnant women for pre-eclampsia [PE] and preterm labour [PTL], can reduce the PTB rate. PE screening is performed at 12 weeks of gestation at the time of Down's syndrome screening with screen positive women offered 150mg aspirin, which reduces preterm PE by 60%. PTL screening uses transvaginal ultrasound cervical length measurement at the time of the 20-week anomaly scan and those with a cervical length of <25mm offered progesterone (400mg), which reduces the risk of sPTL by 44%. Over 90% of women agree to both screening tests and compliance is good with both treatments. However, these “screen and treat” packages have not been introduced due to a lack of objective real-world evidence of efficacy. One of the main aims of the inquiry would be to encourage the Government or future

Government's to pilot this approach on a significant level in order to justify a larger scale roll out.

Relevant Member experience

Preterm birth and better obstetric care in the UK is an issue raised frequently in the House of Lords. This issue, alongside ethnic disparity within health outcomes is an area we can boast deep knowledge. I have not formally approached members yet for support but would hope that a mix of medical expertise sitting alongside members who understand the societal implications of improving these outcomes would make for a powerful and impactful committee.

Cross-cutting Departmental boundaries

It is clear there are many factors that can increase the rate of PTB, not least our socio-economic background and ethnicity. The trajectory whereby Black and Asian ethnic groups are more at risk cannot be allowed to continue unchecked.

This inquiry would be an opportunity to highlight that a whole system public health and educational approach could be beneficial. It could also be vital in underpinning the science and research needed to make any real progress. It would seek to understand the benefits of a greater emphasis on research in pregnancy and reproduction to the health of the nation today and the future.

10-month time frame

Yes. I believe it is a very tight area of focus and this could be achievable.

BERTIN

Proposal 18: Letter from the Lord Bishop of Leeds

Reinvigorating multilateralism to achieve global progress

Description of proposal

The defining issues of our time—climate breakdown, the war in Ukraine, mass migration and food insecurity—can only be tackled through global cooperation. And yet, despite an unprecedented context of multiple global threats, the multilateral architecture which has driven global progress against extreme poverty, infectious diseases, and human rights violations is facing challenges. The UK Government’s tilt away from multilateral to bilateral aid funding should be further examined in this context.

In recent decades, the acceleration of global development has been driven by multilateral funding and delivery mechanisms which have often proved highly effective in driving international development. The Center for Global Development’s Quality of Official Development Assistance tool has all top five slots taken by multilaterals.¹⁹ Not only do these development multilaterals demonstrate a feat of global cooperation; they are also major drivers of global change. For example, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria has saved an estimated 50 million lives since its inception in 2002, and is highly rated by the Independent Commission for Aid Impact.

2025 will see the replenishment of key multilateral development institutions such as the Global Fund and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. 2030 marks the deadline for the Sustainable Development Goals, which cannot be achieved without strong global cooperation. And this is a wider trend in global cooperation: a Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference will take place in 2026; COPs will take place to discuss climate breakdown throughout the next decade.

To seize the potential of these moments, global cooperation will be needed. And yet in 2022, the Global Fund did not reach its replenishment target for the first time, and the NPT Review Conference failed to reach a consensus. At a time when the UN will mark on 10 December 2023 the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, there is growing trend to question the very universality of human rights. Just as global cooperation is most needed, it seems to be most at risk.

The UK has historically been a leader in the multilateral order, driving progress on human rights and international development. If the UK steps back from this role, the impacts on global international norms will be wide-ranging, and the Government’s stated goal to act as ‘Global Britain’ will be at risk.²⁰

An inquiry would be able to tackle the following:

- Exploration of measures necessary to reinvigorate the multilateral order, ahead of key global goals in the next decade
- The impact of the tilt towards bilateralism on communities and countries across the globe

19 Center for Global Development, ‘What does the UK’s new development strategy mean for the UK’s multilateral budget and role’: <https://www.cgdev.org/blog/what-does-uks-new-development-strategy-mean-uks-multilateral-budget-and-role> [accessed 12 September 2023]

20 HM Government, ‘Global Britain: delivering on our international ambition’: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/global-britain-delivering-on-our-international-ambition> [accessed 12 September 2023]

- The intersections between multilateral architectures which will allow governments to tackle cross-cutting areas of policy
- The multilateral and bilateral solutions to climate change, global military stability, human rights violations, and international development
- How does the West include countries from the ‘Global South’ in conversations about the future of multilateralism
- Examination of and categorisation of the current challenges to a rules based liberal international order

Purpose of inquiry

The Government’s *Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy* outlined a deepening of bilateral relationships in development, trade and defence.²¹ An extended review of this approach is needed to examine the benefits and challenges of this approach, and explore how best to build upon the successes of the multilateral order of the early 21st century, particularly in driving progress on the Millennium and Sustainable Development Goals.

The implications for UK foreign policy of a global and national shift away from multilateralism are significant politically, economically and for global progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. An inquiry would examine the implications of the shift for UK foreign policy, and look for steps which the UK can take to reinforce global cooperation to further national and international interests.

As the Center for Global Development points out, ‘the best multilaterals are a highly effective way to spend your aid budget [...] they get finance to countries where it’s most-needed; achieve ownership by recipients; evaluate their programmes effectively; and are transparent in their work. Still, bilateral support can be important, not least politically.’²² There is clearly a balance to weigh up, but it is not clear that the Government has assessed the impact of a global decline in multilateralism—and the UK’s role within this context—in a cross-departmental review.

The inquiry could explore:

- The fundamental ethical and global political implications of multilateralism as an approach, and its relevance to the challenges facing the world and the UK
- The impact of multilateralism: its successes and failures, and how to learn from these

21 HM Government, *Global Britain in a Competitive Age: the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy*, CP 403 (March 2021): https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/975077/Global_Britain_in_a_Competitive_Age- the Integrated Review of Security Defence Development and Foreign Policy.pdf and HM Government, *Integrated Review Refresh 2023: Responding to a more contested and volatile world*, CP 811 (March 2023): https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1145586/11857435_NS_IR_Refresh_2023_Supply_AllPages_Revision_7_WEB_PDF.pdf

22 Center for Global Development, ‘What does the UK’s new development strategy mean for the UK’s multilateral budget and role’: <https://www.cgdev.org/blog/what-does-uks-new-development-strategy-mean-uks-multilateral-budget-and-role> [accessed 12 September 2023]

- The impact of a tilt away from multilateralism on-the-ground in communities affected by the shift, including marginalised communities in some of the most deprived and challenging settings on earth
- The specific moment in which the UK finds itself—the intersecting issues of climate, a global refugee crisis, and other global challenges—and how to best address this with the global community
- The fundamental question of how the UK presents to the world in the multilateral context, and the benefits of being viewed as a world leader on multilateral agreements
- How best to reinvigorate the global multilateral order, making it fit for the present moment and current challenges; and consider how to face geopolitical challenges to effect global change

Civil society groups from international development advocates to those campaigning for recognition for nuclear test veterans have witnessed the weakening of multilateral institutions with alarm. The architecture responsible for a period of relative global progress in many areas is slipping, with impacts across the board. An inquiry would allow for a wide-ranging review of the existing and possible future impacts of this move, and propose methods both international and national for a new era of global collaboration.

Relevant Member experience

Particular expertise on global cooperation has been evident in the recent special inquiry on artificial intelligence in weapon systems and has also been demonstrated in the scrutiny of recent legislation with a global outlook, including the Illegal Migration and National Security Acts. The expertise of parliamentarians with particular links among communities most affected by the global shift in the multilateral order will also be useful.

The inquiry would benefit from the expertise of senior advocates for development, former military personnel, former government ministers and civil servants, faith leaders, and those with expertise in global trade. The inquiry will particularly benefit from the unique breadth of experience represented across the whole House, rather than being confined to a single department or interest area. An inquiry would support the work of the International Relations and Defence Committee in particular, and draw on the expertise of its members.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

An inquiry on this topic would draw in all departments which work collaboratively across borders. The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and the Ministry of Defence will be principally engaged with this topic, but challenges in the multilateral order also draw in the Departments for Business & Trade, Energy Security & Net Zero, and Science, Innovation & Technology.

In the House of Commons, a White Paper on the Sustainable Development Goals is currently under the early stages of development. The preamble to the call to evidence states that ‘many countries, particularly those in the Global South, point to erosion of global cooperation, and erosion of trust.’²³ This is not only true in

23 Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, ‘UK international development white paper: call for evidence’: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-international-development-white-paper-call-for-evidence/uk-international-development-white-paper-call-for-evidence> [accessed 12 September 2023]

the sphere of development; it is evident across the whole global multilateral order. It is vital that work on this topic is not piecemeal and siloed into departments, but recognises that this is a shift across the board.

The global picture is complex. It is clear that what happens in one place has consequences elsewhere. For example, Russia's brutal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine—a sovereign state—constitutes an attempt to shape a new international order in which liberal and democratic rules and principles give way to autocratic ones. But, the conflict itself has provoked a change in the supply of and market for oil and gas which in turn has impacted on the choices made by India, China and South Africa. Blocking access to grain from Ukraine means that places such as Sudan—now facing a redundant harvest in 2024 in the midst of a civil war—will face a massive humanitarian food crisis which will, in turn drive further mass migration. And this will shape popular politics in Western Europe in relation to immigrants and nationalist protectionism.

It is impossible to consider the non-proliferation regime without considering its implications on trade; tackling climate change will require global scientific cooperation; promoting human rights will need international consensus-building on asylum and migration. Work risks becoming siloed in departments, rather than examining the broader trend and its wider impacts. A special inquiry would allow for a cross-cutting approach to interrogate the trend across all internationally-facing departments.

10-month time frame

Yes: the scope of the inquiry can be flexible, and the aims set out above could be covered in this time-frame.

Additional comments

The Anglican Communion is truly global, with 42 autonomous and independent-yet-interdependent national, pan-national and regional churches in communion with the See of Canterbury. As the lead Bishop for Foreign Affairs in the House of Lords, I hear from members of the Communion from across the world who are at the sharp end of the decline in global momentum for causes such as the ending of extreme poverty. This inquiry is not only an exploration of the role of Britain within a changing world, but an expression of urgent need across the globe for renewed momentum in tackling some of the defining issues of the 21st century.

+ NICHOLAS LEEDS

Proposal 19: Letter from Lord Ravensdale

Social Mobility

Description of proposal

I attended an inner-city primary school and a comprehensive school in the Midlands which included children from a wide range of backgrounds. I saw too many children from deprived backgrounds fail to meet their potential at school, which then followed through to later life. This tragedy of lost potential, and its implications for wider society is a fundamental issue for the UK and one that merits in depth consideration by Parliament.

Social mobility was last considered by the House of Lords in a special inquiry committee in 2015. It remains a defining issue for the UK because, compared to other countries, the most disadvantaged in the UK are less likely to climb the income ladder and the economically advantaged tend to stay at the top. It is therefore a critical issue for the government to consider in meeting its aspirations to build a fairer society in the UK.

Since the last inquiry, there have been a number of developments which have exacerbated the situation, including the Covid-19 pandemic and recent rises in inflation. These developments and the changes to the national situation mean that it is time for the House to consider this critical issue for the nation once again.

Purpose of inquiry

The inquiry would aim to use the expertise within the House to investigate the reasons for low social mobility within the UK and provide focussed recommendations to government to help remedy the situation.

Relevant Member experience

Because the factors and determinants of social mobility are so wide ranging, from education through to welfare, from tax policy through to regional investment, the broad expertise in the House is ideally suited to tackling this question.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

The determinants of social mobility are fundamentally cross cutting and cover a wide range of policy areas, from education through to welfare, from tax policy through to regional investment.

10-month time frame

Yes—this is a focussed topic area for which an inquiry could be completed by the end of November 2024.

RAVENSDALE

Proposal 20: Letter from Baroness Morgan of Cotes and 2 co-proposers including Baroness Blower and Lord Clement-Jones

The consequences for education in England of the likely impact of Artificial Intelligence on work, teaching and learning

Description of proposal

Artificial intelligence is developing exponentially and is already having a significant impact on the way the world works.

Matt Warman MP carried out a review last year for the Prime Minister on the future of work, with particular regard to AI and automation. Prof Christopher Pissarides is currently reviewing the future of work and wellbeing for the Institute of the Future of Work. This inquiry would draw on their, and other analyses, in understanding the likely impact and pace of change in the UK labour market.

The UK is struggling with productivity. Our ability to compete globally, whilst moving to a sustainable future for every part of the country, requires us to maximise the potential of our human talent. Our education system needs to meet this challenge whilst allowing each of us individually to lead fulfilling lives.

This proposal would examine what changes are needed to our education system in the light of this significant rapid external change. It would also look at how the deployment of AI within education can help, whilst mitigating any potential difficulties.

The committee would particularly focus on the post-16 phases from schools to FE, HE to general adult skills. It would have regard to statutory schooling but would look to build on the recent inquiry into 11–16 education.

There should be particular focus on:

- The likely impact of AI on labour market trends and skills needs over the next twenty years.
- The agility of education institutions and qualifications to respond to changing demands and equips learners to thrive in the future.
- The opportunities to use AI to assist teaching, learning, assessment and accreditation.
- How to ensure that UK based education technology business can use this new technology to grow and flourish with appropriate support from the Government, including the Department for Education.
- The mitigation of AI related risks such as algorithmic bias, data privacy, online misinformation, and plagiarism.
- The impact of embedded technology deployment on staff and students, particularly those from more disadvantaged backgrounds. This would include how the technology can augment teachers' professional practice and avoid deskilling them. It would need to then reflect on any necessary changes to initial training and professional development.

The committee would be expected to make recommendations to government, institutions and technology companies.

Purpose of inquiry

The inquiry would try to suggest how we use AI for good in education and in doing so equip people to prosper in a highly dynamic labour market where deskilling and reskilling for new careers will become the norm—partly as a result of the widespread deployment of AI technology.

Relevant Member experience

Members of the House have an expert knowledge of schooling, skills and the productivity challenge facing the UK economy. Peers' expertise cuts across schools, further education, higher education and careers where this topic is dominating discussion.

Members of the House are also engaged, in a professional capacity, in the development of AI and its application in many sectors of industry. This has been shown in recent inquiries, the work of the Communications committee and has recently been referenced by the Lords Speaker. Other Members of the House are expert in the ethical questions raised for society by the development of artificial intelligence

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

This inquiry sits at the critical intersection between the Departments for Education, Work and Pensions, Business and Trade and Science, Technology and Innovation.

10-month time frame

This committee will need to build on work done elsewhere on the future of work, on the school curriculum and wider education systems, and on AI regulation. By drawing on such evidence from the outset it is feasible to synthesise their thinking and produce coherent recommendations in the time available.

Additional comments

The understanding of AI and its effects are critical to the success of the UK in the upcoming decades. We must avoid the mistakes of the past, such as the late engagement in the understanding of the effects and risks of Social Media, seek to ensure that public policy keeps up with technological change and its effect on the economy. Being at the forefront of this technology requires a root and branch review of its uses throughout the UK. This must start with education and preparing our children and young people to manage and make positive use of AI.

This proposal is supported by Lord Baker of Dorking, Lord Knight of Weymouth, Baroness Morris of Yardley and Lord Willetts

MORGAN OF COTES, BLOWER and CLEMENT-JONES

Supporting letter from Lord Baker of Dorking

Artificial Intelligence is going to change how everything is taught and how everything is learnt. It is very important that a strong framework is established to secure this. The Department for Education will be working on one, but I am not satisfied that it has the best understanding of digital skills and training in education. The number of Digital (combined Computing and ICT) GCSE Entries since 2015 has dropped by over 43%. This is a result of the cancellation of one of the only two GCSEs available and the remaining GCSE—Computer Science—is studied by only 13% of students in our 11–16-year-old schools. It is

not a popular exam because the curriculum is far too academic and not practical. The examining body responsible for the exam has virtually disowned it and agrees it needs a complete overhaul.

This is such an important subject that the House of Lords should be given the opportunity to formulate its own views by drawing upon the expertise of a number of Members. It is vital for the findings of this Committee to appear before the next election so that each Party can consider the recommendations it will make. The House of Lords really must provide our Members with this great chance of commenting upon and influencing the future education system of our country.

BAKER OF DORKING

Proposal 21: Letter from Lord Lansley and 8 co-proposers including Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle, Baroness Hooper, Lord Lancaster of Kimbolton, Lord Marland, Lord Randall of Uxbridge, Lord Swire, Lord Waverley and Lord West of Spithead

The Economic, Trade and Environmental Development of the British Overseas Territories

Description of proposal

The Members listed above join in proposing an Inquiry into the economic, trade and environmental challenges and opportunities facing the British Overseas Territories (OTs) and how HMG should support them. The White Paper of 2012 and subsequent Joint Ministerial Councils have focused mainly on the constitutional status of the OTs, judicial issues, and the security and defence context. In recent years, however, for a number of reasons, the challenges facing the OTs have increased. These reasons have included the loss of trade opportunities with the EU post-Brexit; the effect of the pandemic on tourism; climate change impacts including the threats of extreme weather events, habitat loss, and serious effects to marine and coastal environments from climate changes.

The Inquiry would enable the scale and importance of the OTs to be recognised, including for example, that the OTs account for 90% of the UK's responsibility for biodiversity under the Convention on Biological Diversity. It will also detail the costs and challenges of EU trade offers, including £16m annual additional cost to the Falkland Islands for EU tariffs for Squid.

This Inquiry is timely, especially in regards to the Trade and Cooperation (TCA) review in 2024; in relation to further trade deals (especially as the OTs were omitted from key provisions in the UK's accession to the CPTPP) and given the imperatives of climate change adaptation affecting all the OTs (with dramatic impacts for some of the OT environments). It will seek to identify how HMG should support the OTs, including in international fora, in deploying development aid, in the TCA review, in meeting climate mitigation and adaptation obligations, and in preventing the loss of precious biodiversity globally.

We are confident that this Inquiry with this remit at this time would be welcomed by the UK Overseas Territories Association (UKOTA). Representatives of the OTs meeting at the Joint Ministerial Council (JMC) this November will be able to offer initial material for the Inquiry. It will then be an important source of recommendations to be taken up at the JMC likely to take place in late 2024.

Purpose of inquiry

The Inquiry would seek to identify and quantify objectively the extent of the Economic, Trade and environmental challenges facing the OTs; and in doing so, also to seek political solutions and opportunities to be realised by the OTs themselves and/or by the United Kingdom government.

Relevant Member experience

There are several members of the House of Lords with relevant knowledge and experience including:

- Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle, with extensive environmental and biodiversity interests.

- Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park, recent minister in the FCDO with responsibility for the OTs.
- Baroness Hooper, APPG OTs,
- Lord Lancaster of Kimbolton who has visited all but two of the OTs and is Honorary Colonel of the Cayman Islands Regiment
- Lord Lansley, former Trade Department official and former member of the International Agreements Committee
- Lord Marland, Chair of the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council
- Lord Collins of Highbury
- Lord Randall of Uxbridge, Chair of the Overseas Territories Conservation Foundation
- Lord Swire, former FCO Minister with responsibility for the OTs; and Deputy Chair of the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council
- Viscount Waverly, Co-Chair of Trade and Investment APPG
- Lord West of Spithead, Tristan da Cunha (Gough island mice eradication) and in Caribbean territories Joint Interagency Task Force East (counter drug smuggling) involvement for 2 years.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

The lead responsibility for OTs is in the FCDO. This inquiry would also include policy relevant to the Department of Business and Trade, the Cabinet Office (so far as TCA review is concerned), DEFRA regarding Climate change and Biodiversity issues and Department for Energy Security and Net Zero regarding energy industries and decarbonisation. The Department of Transport and the Marine management branch are also included regarding shipping and maritime issues with the OTs. Given the significance of the marine zones around the OTs, Government Departments involved in the national maritime security strategy (FCDO, MOD, DTp, HO, and DEFRA) would all have relevant interests.

10-month time frame

It can be completed within several months as the intention is not that the inquiry should include extensive visits to The Overseas Territories. The required experience can be found largely among Peers and Parliamentarians as well as among representatives from the OTs themselves. We would anticipate several evidence sessions which would include evidence on economic challenges—including one on tourism, one on marine, fishing and related issues, one on shipping and maritime (Red Flag) interests and a further one on development challenges, including aid receipts and priorities for development aid. There would be one or more evidence sessions on trade, dealing with the trade relations in the UK's new trade agreements and further sessions on OT access to EU markets under the TCA. Perhaps the most substantial evidence sessions, including NGO participants as well as stakeholders in the OTs, would be on environmental and biodiversity challenges. This inquiry would also offer a focus for the OTs to arrange for their Representatives to give evidence in person if possible (but remote participation is

obviously available too) to provide evidence—on the range of issues—to the Select Committee and we can be flexible with the timings of this.

Albeit that the last Joint Ministerial Council (JMC) took place in May 2023, the next JMC is expected to take place this November. In total, we anticipate a requirement for 10–12 evidence sessions. We know that the OTs will welcome the chance to contribute evidence, including in oral evidence sessions. A report in 2024 would contribute to the next JMC in 2024 as well as towards the negotiating mandate for the TCA review.

This way, a report of the committee could be in draft before summer recess 2024. Depending on the timing of a Dissolution, a report could be produced from June onwards at relatively short notice.

Additional comments

It is important for the Liaison Committee to be aware that the Inquiry would focus on three specific issues relating to the OTs and would not be extended to the constitutional status of the OTs nor their security and defence; both of which have been the subject of regular Government statements and debates.

The British Overseas Territories Association are aware of the bid.

**LANSLEY, BENNETT OF MANOR CASTLE, HOOPER, LANCASTER OF
KIMBOLTON, MARLAND, RANDALL OF UXBRIDGE, SWIRE, WAVERLEY and
WEST OF SPITHEAD**

Proposal 22: Letter from Viscount Hanworth and 5 co-proposers including Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted, Lord Davies of Brixton, Lord Lucas, Lord Ravensdale and Viscount Stansgate

The Education, Supply and Deployment of Mathematicians in the U.K.

Description of proposal

Of late, there has been a growing consciousness amongst politicians and others of the need to train more mathematicians and to enhance the mathematical skills of our working population.

The Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak, has proposed that all students should study mathematics up to the age of 18. This would require a considerable increase in the number of teachers of mathematics in schools as well and the redeployment of teachers of other scientific subjects. The question arises of which mathematical subjects should be taught and at what levels.

The realisation of this ambition will depend on the graduation from our universities and colleges of an increasing number of mathematicians. However, unless steps are taken to avert it, there is likely to be a decline in the numbers of maths graduates. This will be an inevitable consequence of the closure of and the shrinkage of maths departments in universities.

In one university, the so-called “pure” mathematicians have been dismissed and the teaching has been reoriented towards Actuarial Science and Data Analytics. Other universities may follow this precedent.

The competition amongst universities has allowed some departments of mathematics to expand at the expense of others, causing their numbers of students to fall below sustainable levels. The closure of such departments will result in an overall reduction in the number of math graduates. The committee will look for ways of remedying this situation.

The committee will also look at the manner of teaching mathematics; and it will examine how the subject might be made more attractive to students at all levels. It will determine whether there has been a sufficient response to the opportunities provided by the advent of the microcomputer.

It is notable that there have been few recent initiatives aimed at reforming and developing the mathematics syllabus in secondary schools. The dearth of new initiatives contrasts with the vigour of the so-called School Mathematics Project, which attempted, in the 1960’s, to modernise the school mathematics syllabus. The project faltered; and its residue is barely detectable in the contemporary British syllabuses.

Nowadays, the examination boards are owned mainly by large publishing corporations. They are motivated to preserve the syllabuses that are served by their textbooks.

The committee will seek to draw comparisons of the mathematics education in Britain with that of other countries; and it will ask whether some of their methods might be adopted profitably in Britain.

The enquiry will seek to understand how qualified mathematicians are deployed throughout the economy. It will seek to identify those areas that would profit from an increased availability of mathematical talent.

The remuneration that a qualified mathematician is offered can affect their choice of a profession. It is questionable whether the current levels of remuneration are sufficient to attract them into education, where their talents are much needed.

Purpose of inquiry

This enquiry should serve to emphasize the importance of fostering mathematical skills in support of Britain's growth and prosperity. It should serve to highlight our successes and failures in fostering a culture of mathematics and it should seek to compare Britain in this respect with other nations.

Relevant Member experience

There is a limited number of Peers with professional scientific and mathematical skills and experience. The co-sponsors of this proposal are amongst those who do have the necessary experience. Additional committee members with the relevant interests and experience will be sought. The topic is one of prime importance to our national prosperity and our international competitiveness. The generality of Peers are well placed to judge such matters.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

The generality of the civil service, including H.M. Treasury, will be interested to learn of the availability of persons with competent mathematical skills and of the prospect for increasing their availability. These matters will be of particular interest to Departments that mediate scientific matters, such as the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, the Department for Business and Trade, the Department for Education, the Ministry of Defence, the Department for Transport and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and to many of the numerous agencies with which they work.

10-month time frame

The proposed enquiry should be capable of uncovering some compelling evidence and of reaching significant conclusions within the available time.

Additional comments

We would like to draw the attention of the Liaison Committee to a document that has been solicited from the London Mathematical Society, which offers further evidence in support of the proposed enquiry. That document has been transmitted together with the present submission.

**HANWORTH, BOWLES OF BERKHAMSTED, DAVIES OF BRIXTON, LUCAS,
RAVENSDALE and STANSGATE**

Proposal 23: Letter from Lord Robathan

The consequences of Covid Lockdowns

Description of proposal

The lockdowns in the UK have had immense consequences for this country, in debt, the economy, education, health treatments and societal impact. The Hallett Inquiry is going to take several years (and a huge amount of money) before reporting. There needs to be a sensible and relatively swift report on the impact of lockdowns, which the people of this country deserve to be able to examine. The government and opposition parties would rather sweep their behaviour in 2020 and 2021 under the carpet.

Purpose of inquiry

Preventing another panicked reaction such as we saw in 2020 and ensuring we do not lock down society again.

Relevant Member experience

We do not need medical opinions but a critical and forensic examination of the facts—at which many peers are past masters.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

Health/economy/education/etc

10-month time frame

Absolutely. We need to assemble the facts, which are already in the public domain and make a judgement on the costs and benefits of the lockdown policy, which were never presented to Parliament. Without prejudice.

ROBATHAN

Proposal 24: Letter from the Lord Bishop of Leicester

The Need for a Strategy for Cultural and Social Integration in the UK

Description of proposal

The 2021 census revealed the increasing level ethnic, religious and cultural diversity across the UK, with the proportion of people identifying as Muslim and Hindu increasing as well as the proportion of the population in the Asian, Black, Mixed and Other umbrella categories for ethnicity. The Reciprocal Diversity Index score for England and Wales has increased from 2.02 in 2001 to 5.14 in 2021.²⁴ Diversity is not just a social fact of large metropolitan areas: the number of neighbourhoods with very high levels of diversity (a score 30 or more on the Reciprocal Diversity Index) has increased from 342 (1%) in 2001 to 1,578 (4.4%) in 2011 and 2,201 in 2021 (6.2% of neighbourhoods).

Irrespective of what immigration policies are pursued, it is important that UK residents and citizens of all religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds are supported to live well together.

The proposed inquiry would explore the outcomes, areas for improvement and barriers to implementation of previous governments' strategies or programmes of work which have sought to facilitate social cohesion and cultural integration including:

- The 2018 Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper and 2019 Action Plan
- The 2016 Casey Review into opportunity and integration
- The 2012 report Creating the Conditions for Integration

The inquiry would also explore how these national government strategies have differed from those pursued by devolved administration (e.g. the 2018 New Scots Strategy) and with what differing outcomes.

The inquiry would also establish:

- The changes in the demographic and social landscape since these strategies were developed and whether these have created
 - In particular, the record numbers of migrants arriving in the UK and strong public opinion on both sides of the immigration debate (with suggestions of a referendum on immigration being included in the Conservative Party's next manifesto) suggests a need for decisive action and strategic leadership
- What measures can be used to evaluate the success of a strategy for social and cultural integration
- Areas (of social life, public policy or geographic areas) which warrant greater attention to ensure good community relationships

²⁴ Catney, G., Lloyd, C. D., Ellis, M., Wright, R., Finney, N., Jivraj, S., & Manley, D., 'Ethnic diversification and neighbourhood mixing: A rapid response analysis of the 2021 Census of England and Wales', *The Geographical Journal*, vol 189(1), (2023), pp 63–77: <https://rgs-ibg.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/geoj.12507>

- This could include policing, education, integration of refugees, availability of ESOL programmes, online misinformation and social media, access to legal aid
- Predictions of which areas may require greater attention in the next 10-15 years based on demographic trends and geopolitical events
- What research exists as to how those cultural and social integration in those areas can best be achieved
- Where responsibility for each of these areas should be best placed (i.e. Governmental department, devolved administrations, local authorities) and how to ensure joined-up working where these responsibilities are shared

Purpose of inquiry

The inquiry would seek to raise awareness of the need for a cross-departmental strategy to support social and cultural integration and how this strategy should filter down into the practice of frontline professionals, whether in policing, local government, the health service or education.

It would also seek to establish a framework for what good practice would look like and how it could be measured, so that the record of this and future Governments can be properly assessed.

The inquiry would also seek to evaluate the successes, learnings, and areas for improvement of previous strategies developed by successive governments so that this knowledge can be easily transferred and built upon, and shared with other public bodies whose work touches upon community integration and cohesion, such as local authorities and devolved administrations.

Relevant Member experience

The cross-cutting nature of such an inquiry would benefit from the expertise of many Members of the House, including academics, lawyers, policy-makers, faith-leaders, diplomats and those with experience of living and working in other countries. Members of the House who live in different parts of the UK can also speak to the extent of integration and different approaches taken by those councils or devolved administrations. Finally, there will be Members of the House who were involved in developing the aforementioned strategies for integration and community cohesion and who can therefore speak to the principles and evidence behind them as well as the outcomes and learnings therefrom.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

Although community cohesion and integration sit mostly with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, it also brings into scope the work of:

- The Home Office—given the relevance of policies around immigration, refugees and asylum seekers, policing, and countering extremism
- The Department for Education—as targeted provision is made for recent migrants, and because Citizenship/ PSHE lessons, Religious Education, Geography and History all play a part in helping children and young people understand the world around them and the different communities within the UK

- The Department for Culture, Media and Sport—part of DCMS’ mission is to “enhance the cohesiveness of our communities”, specifically through the cultural and creative industries, and sport. In addition, how online spaces are used, monitored and regulated has implications for the relationships between different members and groups in society
- The Department of Health and Social Care—as targeted provision is made for recent migrants but also the NHS is highly reliant on employing staff from outside the UK, and is therefore an important means of integrating those new arrivals
- The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office—geopolitical events and trends have a bearing on migration patterns but can also affect relations between individuals from different countries of origin once they are in the UK. Therefore, how we engage on an international level with other countries m
- The Government Equalities Office—given its responsibility for equalities legislation

10-month time frame

The proposed inquiry can be completed within a year, as it will be able to draw upon previous reports by the APPG for Social Integration and gather further submissions from a call for evidence sent to charities, think tanks and public bodies with the relevant experience and expertise.

+ MARTYN LEICESTER

Proposal 25: Lord Foulkes of Cumnock

The need for a Written Constitution

Description of proposal

The Constitution of the UK consists of various Acts, conventions and precedents. There is no codified and comprehensive written constitution as in other countries. Recent events have illustrated how it is easy for a Prime Minister to ignore conventions and precedents and how difficult it is for Parliament or the Courts to constrain such action.

There has been a great deal written about this but no coherent examination with proposals how it could be achieved.

Purpose of inquiry

The Inquiry would be to make a proposal as to what action would be needed to agree a Constitution which codified existing conventions and precedents into an Act of Parliament which would outline the relative responsibilities of the Executive, Parliament and the Judiciary.

Relevant Member experience

The Lords is full of constitutional lawyers, other constitutionalists, former MPs and Ministers with an unrivalled knowledge of this issue.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

This covers all Departments of State.

10-month time frame

Yes.

It needs to be completed before the next General Election.

FOULKES OF CUMNOCK

Proposal 26: Letter from Lord Foster of Bath

The Rural Economy

Description of proposal

The Special Select Committee, building on the work of the 2019 Special Select Committee on the Rural Economy, more recent reports (including “making the Most out of England’s Land) and Government announcements (such as those contained in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill), will seek to identify measures to help the development of Rural Economies.

In particular, it will consider whether or not the Government’s “Unleashing Rural Opportunity” (6th June 2023) provides an adequate response to the needs of rural economies.

So much has changed significantly since the Select Committee report on the rural economy of 27th April, 2019. The cost-of-living crisis is exacerbating issues facing rural communities and businesses as have issues arising from leaving the European Union, the Pandemic, and the war in Ukraine.

Over the last 12 months or so there have been White Papers or Policy Statements relating to such key issues as Skills and Jobs, Adult Social Care Reform, Build Back Better (including on High Streets), Heat and Buildings, and Net Zero. Each of these has a specific rural dimension but little sign of the recognition of that in the policy proposals.

Concern has been expressed that the needs of (and opportunities from) rural areas risk being overlooked on issues ranging from the infrastructure to enable de-carbonisation, and affordable housing to the delivery of public transport and access to quality and choice in post-16 education. And, while we now have more details about the shape of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund there’s no reference to a replacement for the LEADER programme

Similarly, some have expressed concern that the levelling Up and Regeneration Bill fails to address the need to “level up” between Urban and Rural areas.

So, another Committee should consider the important issues facing the rural economy, rural residents and businesses again in the light of the current circumstances and consider whether or not “Unleashing Rural Opportunity” provides an adequate response.

Purpose of inquiry

The inquiry would aim to bring to the attention of Government and policy makers the needs of rural communities and business in the light of then current circumstances and to reflect on the opportunities to grow rural economies and enhance the wellbeing of rural communities.

In the light of so much policy development and so much change in the wider policy context there is a clear need to draw Government and policy makers back to the needs of rural communities and businesses and to seek answers as to how their current and proposed policies will address those needs.

Relevant Member experience

There is a vast degree of knowledge and experience in the membership of the House in respect of issues impacting on rural areas as witnessed in the membership of the previous Select Committee and the subsequent debate in the House.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

The issues referred to in the description of the proposal is by its very nature cross-departmental and the need for a cross-departmental approach to “rural issues” is fundamental.

10-month time frame

Yes, able to be completed by November 2024 if able to commence by mid-January 2024.

This proposal is supported by Lord Carrington, Lord Colgrain, Lord Curry of Kirkharle, Lord Dannatt, Lord Bishop of Exeter, Baroness Mallalieu, Lord Taylor of Goss Moor and Baroness Young of Old Scone.

FOSTER OF BATH

Supporting letter from the Lord Bishop of Exeter

I am indeed happy to lend my name to Lord Foster’s proposal. Last month I was granted a QSD on the ‘Housing Crisis in Rural and Coastal Communities’ and that remains a profound concern of mine. As the bishop of one of the largest rural dioceses in England, which is coterminous with the county of Devon, I am conscious of how interconnected issues of transport, healthcare, community care, education and housing all are. The so-called ‘Levelling Up’ agenda often ignores the urban-rural divide. There has to be a holistic, helicopter approach to these issues and I think Lord Foster’s proposal would make an excellent means of drawing these concerns into conversation and coherence.

+ ROBERT EXETER

Proposal 27: Letter from Baroness Valentine

To understand how government can work across departments with local stakeholders to deliver on levelling up

Description of proposal

To truly level up the UK, it requires government to work effectively across different departments. This inquiry will investigate the most and least successful examples of cross-governmental support and coordination to deliver on levelling up.

This will include examining past levelling up funding opportunities, such as the Town Deal programme or the Levelling Up Fund, as well as the Levelling Up Partnership pilots that took place in Blackpool, Blyth and Grimsby.²⁵ It will also look at the conditions for success in places that have been the most successful in leveraging funding for levelling up, as well as more broadly as successful place-based regeneration programmes.

Given the ambition outlined in the 2023 Spring Budget, whereby His Majesty's Government announced twenty new 'Levelling up Partnerships' which will 'bring the collective power of Government to provide bespoke place-based regeneration in a further twenty of England's areas most in need of levelling up over 2023–24 and 2024–25'²⁶, it is crucial to understand what works and what doesn't when national government departments work together closely with specific places to level up and provide bespoke support, and the conditions that may be needed in order for initiatives to be successful.

This will also be useful in the context of the new devolution deals, to further our understanding of the types of powers that might be best devolved to the Combined Authority Level, and how this might impact smaller and typically 'forgotten' places that fall within the combined authority area, as well as those areas that do not have a devolution deal.

Purpose of inquiry

- To understand how cross-departmental working works in practice in the context of levelling up
- To ensure that Levelling Up Partnerships, and other related levelling up programmes, are successful for local places and people.
- To achieve a better understanding of the various funding pots, how they relate to each other and how they can be streamlined.
- To build our understanding of any conditions that might need to exist for levelling up to be a success.
- To understand which levelling up powers should be devolved as part of the new devolution deals, and how this impacts smaller, typically 'forgotten' places.

Relevant Member experience

Many members of the House will have knowledge and experience of local leadership, local government, place-based regeneration and devolution. Because

²⁵ Supplementary written evidence from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to the House of Lords Liaison Committee ([RST0007](#))

²⁶ HC Deb, 16 March 2023, [col 48WS](#) [Commons written ministerial statement]

this subject crosses departmental boundaries it would draw on multiple skill sets in the membership of the House.

Cross-cutting Departmental boundaries

The proposal is relevant to all departments, with a particular focus on the following departments:

- Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
- Transport
- Education
- Health
- Work and Pensions
- Business and Trade

The nature of place-based regeneration is that it is holistic and socio-economic, and cuts across particular themes and areas. This proposal will be particularly focused on how cross-departmental working works in the context of levelling up.

10-month time frame

Yes.

VALENTINE

Proposal 28: Letter from Lord Walney

UK's Future Nuclear Skills Needs

Description of proposal

Spanning the military and nuclear sectors, the Special Inquiry Committee on the UK's Future Nuclear Skills Needs would seek to assess the 1) scale of the skills challenge created by the upturn in nuclear activity and future ambitions in the UK 2) the adequacy of the responses from government and the private sector to meet the challenge to date, and 3) make recommendations to meet any projected shortfalls.

This committee would be formed at a critical moment for civil and military nuclear power in the UK and internationally, given:

- (a) the projected growth in the civil nuclear sector, defence requirements to renew the Royal Navy's fleet of submarines,
- (b) the commitment to replace the UK's warhead, currently underway, and
- (c) additional military nuclear commitments created by the recent AUKUS agreement to produce nuclear submarines for the Australian Navy in collaboration with Australia and the United States of America

Purpose of inquiry

There is currently a significant lack of coordination between the civil and military nuclear sectors, to the detriment of an issue where it is widely acknowledged that considerable growth in skills capacity is needed over and above established measures. No combined oversight exists despite several major initiatives being implemented across government and the private sector, and despite civil and nuclear skills being highly porous and overlapping in terms of skills requirements and personnel.

The government has acknowledged and attempted to address this with the creation of a Nuclear Skills Taskforce in April of this year reporting jointly to the Ministry of Defence and the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, but there is no oversight and assessment mechanism that spans this area, nor has any existing committee shown the capacity even to look at either the military or civil nuclear part of it in isolation.

The inquiry would thus be uniquely positioned to provide the first credible and detailed independent assessment of the total nuclear skills challenge, assess the adequacy of current measures in place in the public and private sectors to meet that challenge, and put forward recommendations for improvement.

Relevant Member experience

The House contains a wealth of expertise on the nuclear sector, and more generally on effective mechanisms to build national and regional skills bases. This includes ministerial experience on both sides of the House, those with regulatory expertise, and others with the experience of leading skills standards bodies and regional industrial growth strategies.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

As noted above, this committee would be the first to give holistic parliamentary oversight and assessment to the combined nuclear skills challenge that spans both

the defence and civil sectors, the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence and Department of Energy Security. The government itself has recognised the need to build more institutional capacity and create a culture to work more effectively across departmental boundaries to meet this challenge. The special inquiry committee could make a major contribution to that and make recommendations on further developments.

10-month time frame

Yes, the suggested timescale seems appropriate for an inquiry of this kind, which is at once significant in scope, urgent in the need for scrutiny, and enduring in effect—the build programmes will last for decades.

WALNEY

Proposal 29: Letter from Baroness Boycott and Baroness Jenkin of Kennington

Ultra Processed Foods

Description of proposal

We propose that an enquiry into the health effects and regulation of Ultra-Processed Food is urgently required and that this is independent of food industry influence.

- Diet related disease has overtaken tobacco as the leading cause of early death, contributing to 22% of all deaths globally.
- There is now a large and growing body of robust scientific evidence that the foods that cause these diseases are products formally known as Ultra-Processed Foods or UPFs.
- There is a formal scientific definition of UPF but they can be defined as foods typically wrapped in plastic which contain additives not found in a domestic kitchen. They are usually made by a small number of transnational food corporations.
- Hundreds of independent peer reviewed studies published in leading medical journals have shown that UPFs are strongly associated with weight gain but also cancer, metabolic disease (like type 2 diabetes), inflammatory disease (like Crohn's disease), cardiovascular disease (strokes and heart attacks), anxiety/depression, dementia and early death from all causes.
- In the U.K. we are facing an emergency of diet related disease particularly in our children who are shorter and heavier than in any equivalent country—this stunting and obesity is because children and adults in the UK eat more UPF than any other country apart from the USA.
- These foods comprise 60% of the U.K. diet on average and around 30% of children get more than 80% of their calories from UPF.
- Some UPF is obvious junk (fast food, fizzy drinks, confectionary) but now almost all of our staple foods are ultra-processed: bread, cereal, snacks and frozen food. Much of it is sold as healthy or useful for weight loss.
- UPF harms the body in a number of ways. It is typically soft and calorie dense and is consumed so quickly that the body's internal mechanisms that determine fullness can't keep up.
- Many of the additives are directly harmful including emulsifiers, non-nutritive sweeteners, modified starches and migrant molecules from the plastics.
- It is formulated so that for many people it has addictive properties.

At the moment we have no effective regulation of the sale or marketing of the food associated with diet related disease and as a result young people in particular are exposed to marketing constantly in their games, music apps, social media, video content, transport tickets, television, radio and on billboards.

Importantly UPF is the most affordable available food for many people. Policies are urgently needed which improve the availability of real food to people who are disadvantaged.

The companies that make and sell UPF have a huge influence over food policy in the UK. Most of the major charities and institutions that produce reports about policy are funded by industry.

The British Nutrition Foundation is a ‘public-facing charity which exists to give people, educators and organisations access to reliable information on nutrition’. It describes itself as a ‘sounding board for policy development’ and has held contracts with numerous government departments, focusing on nutrition policy, communications and school food education. Members of it sit on government advisory groups but it is funded by most of the major UPF companies including Coca-Cola, Nestlé, Mondelez, PepsiCo, Mars, Danone, Kerry and Cargill.

Similarly BiteBack 2020, Diabetes UK, The British Dietetic Association, Cancer Research UK and The British Heart Foundation are all food industry funded.

Most importantly most of the members of the government scientific advisory committee on nutrition (SACN) who produced a recent report on UPF declared conflicts with UPF companies like Cargill, Coca-Cola, Nestle, Mars and McDonalds amongst others. This report acknowledges the harms of UPF but proposed a watch and wait policy rather than any action.

Purpose of inquiry

The enquiry would aim to establish the facts of what this food does to our health.

This would be the only enquiry to bring together the independent evidence in a way that has real heft and the possibility of implementing well evidenced proposals free of the influence of the food companies.. There is growing public support for these measures and it is industrial influence which stands in the way.

The need to properly understand and tackle diet related ill health is urgent. Despite years of policies (such as curbing junk food adverts during children’s TV), these have recently been delayed—there are no effective policies in place which limit diet related disease. Even the recent sugar tax caused the addition of huge quantities of artificial sweeteners to the national diet which the WHO has reported are no safer than sugar.

Other national governments are way ahead on implementation of UPF regulation. Brazil, Canada, Chile, Ecuador, France, Israel, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay all encourage, via national dietary guidance, labelling or other mechanisms, limiting ultra-processed food intake among their citizens.

The World Health Organisation and UNICEF, the United Nations’ Children’s Fund, both recognise the importance of addressing ultra-processed food consumption for ending childhood obesity. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization also recommends limiting UPF consumption, as does the American Heart Association dietary guidance for cardiovascular health.

The evidence shows that policies should be implemented which approach the problem of diet related disease and the corporations who profit from it much as the problem of tobacco was tackled.

- Effective warning labels—good evidence from central and south America shows that harmful food can be labelled in a way that is clear to consumers, well evidenced and gives them the choice about whether to buy it.
- Putting advice on cutting down UPF intake in our national nutrition guidance.
- Limitations on marketing of UPF especially to children
- Improving access to fresh healthy food
- Changing institutional food in hospitals, schools and prisons.

Relevant Member experience

The enquiry will have to cover a wide range of topics which will draw on the strengths of the house: individual health, public health, children's health, commerce, trade, procurement, supermarkets, government relationship to farming, advertising, industrial relations. As the National Food strategy made clear, food crosses many departments. It is therefore highly complex, an issue that a Lord's committee could begin to address.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

The proposal would cover the following departments: Defra/the Health Department/Competition/Trade/Education/Business/Treasury.

10-month time frame

Yes, it would.

Additional comments

This is an urgent issue which has been subject to delay and obfuscation, mainly by the food companies.

A relevant example is the recent government report (SACN) as compiled by scientists who were in receipt of funding from the major food companies—such as Nestle/Cargill/Kellogg's. A full list of names can be provided if wanted. The food system has steadily been getting worse and the impacts of diet related health declining. This work should be urgently undertaken.

BOYCOTT and JENKIN OF KENNINGTON

Proposal 30: Letter from Baroness Valentine

Utilising the apprenticeship levy to:

- *Create skills, training and employment opportunities across the UK and,*
- *Tackle the rising number of young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET)*

Description of proposal

The number of young people who are NEET is on the rise, with data published by the Office for National Statistics in August showing that there are now 84,000 more 16–24-year-olds than there were last year who are NEET, totalling 749,000 from April to June 2023. This means that across the UK, among 16–24-year-olds, one in 10 are NEET.²⁷

Giving young people opportunities to gain the skills they need to find good work is a critical part of the government’s Levelling Up agenda and addressing inequalities in communities across the UK. In addition, research shows that more than £3 billion of the Apprenticeship Levy has gone unspent²⁸, suggesting that it may not be fit for purpose. There is also a large budget that goes back into the Treasury that could be used to address the rising number of young people who are NEET.

This inquiry would examine the interconnectedness of the government’s Levelling Up agenda and the Finance Act 2016 to ensure that they enable employers to create skills, training and employment opportunities across the UK and tackle the rising number of young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET).

Purpose of inquiry

Highlighting the interconnectedness in legislation such as the Finance Act 2016 and the Levelling Up agenda to ensure that they are fit for purpose in their current form in helping to address the rising number of young people who are NEET and build communities that provide young people with opportunities to learn new skills and gain employment.

Relevant Member experience

Many members of the House have a passion for supporting young people’s transition into the world of work and have experience in leading businesses that are large employers.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

Part of the purpose of the inquiry will be to understand if and how the government’s levelling up agenda can help with creating skills, training and employment opportunities for communities in need. This will create cross-departmental working including:

- Department for Education

27 HM Government ‘NEET levels 16 to 24 year olds’: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/neet-statistics-annual-brief/2022> [accessed 12 September 2023]

28 The Progressive Policy Think Tank, ‘Over £3 billion in unspent apprenticeship levy lost to Treasury ‘black hole’ new data reveal’: <https://www.ippr.org/news-and-media/press-releases/over-3-billion-in-unspent-apprenticeship-levy-lost-to-treasury-black-hole-new-data-reveal> [accessed 12 September 2023]

- Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
- Department for Work and Pensions
- Business and Trade

10-month time frame

Yes.

VALENTINE

Proposal 31: Letter from the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury

Vision and Effectiveness of UK Asylum and Refugee Policy

Description of proposal

We are facing a global migration crisis, and the most recent Illegal Migration Act was passed at speed, without pre-legislative scrutiny, and providing a very short-term response to what is a long term and complex problem. It is also the second Act on asylum and refugee policy in as many years, both of which faced serious concern and criticism within Parliament and from charities who support refugees and asylum seekers.

This Committee would aim to move beyond kneejerk reactions to the issue of refugee and asylum policy and focus on finding lasting and practical solutions to the challenges faced, based on more detailed discussion of current and possible future policies, having reached a consensus first on the UK's overall aims and vision for asylum and refugee policy.

The Committee would seek to answer the question: *what would a good or successful UK asylum and migration policy look like, and how do we get there?*

It would attempt to foster a cross-party consensus around what 'success' would look like, and what our overall vision and aim is as a country with regard to the support of refugees and asylum seekers. From that position it would seek to examine the policy options that could help us reflect this vision and work towards it in reality. This would involve assessment of refugee and asylum policies in recent years, including the most recent Illegal Migration Act. The Committee would also consider alternative or additional approaches to addressing the current crisis—which the government consistently maintained were not presented during the passage of the recent Act, but were. There would need to be consideration the domestic and international situations, perhaps covering topics such as those listed below over the series of sessions.

(1) *What does 'good' or 'successful' look like for UK asylum and refugee policy?*

- Include consideration of (not exhaustive):
- Experience of refugees and asylum seekers arriving here—protection, safety, hope
- Speed and accuracy of decision making
- Experience of local communities—how well the increased demand for services is managed
- Level of integration—language, participation in local community
- Relations / cooperation with international partners, international leadership
- Longevity—is it sustainable for increased refugee flows in future?

(2) *How do we get there?*

Consider current and future policy options in the following areas (not exhaustive):

Domestic situation

- Home Office decision making—backlog, triaging system for applications
- Inadmissibility and detention arrangements
- Removals agreements
- Accommodation—particularly minimum standards
- Treatment of vulnerable people e.g. pregnant women, children, modern slavery victims
- Integration
- Safe routes—the government said that development of further safe routes would accompany the Illegal Migration Act, so this would be an opportunity to assess options for these in detail.

International situation

- Updating/adding to the 1951 Refugee Convention—sharing of global responsibility, support for countries who take more refugees
- Cooperation to target human traffickers—international force to hunt down traffickers at source
- Aid and development—impact of decisions here on forced migration flows
- Climate change—predictions and likely impact

Purpose of inquiry

During the passage of the Illegal Migration Act there was considerable cross-party support for my amendments calling for a ten-year strategy for refugees and human trafficking, the purpose of which was to encourage the government to take a longer-term, internationally collaborative and holistic view of migration policy. There were a number of comments from other Peers highlighting the value that such a strategy would have in helping to foster some consensus and a common vision on the migration crisis, and to encourage a more rational and evidence-based debate.

This Committee would seek to help to bring about some consensus on what our overall vision is as a country for refugee and asylum policy, and to define what a successful policy would be in light of this vision. It would then provide a space for the key elements of refugee and asylum policy, domestically and in the international context, to be examined sequentially, looking at current policy and possible alternatives/future policies in each case, and keeping in mind the whole picture to ensure that approaches are complementary to each other and promote the overall aims and vision. The Committee would hope to encourage current and future policymakers to make decisions based on the wisdom and experience of the past and our reasonable expectations about the future, all grounded in a common vision of the ultimate goals, and with a view to the whole domestic and international picture.

Relevant Member experience

There are a number of former ministers in the House of Lords who have direct experience of previous migration policies, as well as a number of members who have personal experience of being refugees or asylum seekers in this country, or of supporting those who are. Their wisdom was heard to a degree during the passage of the Illegal Migration Act, but a Committee on refugee and asylum policy would allow more detailed and systematic consideration of their experience and a more comprehensive assessment of where we are as a country on migration policy, and what the options are for future action.

Cross-cutting Departmental boundaries

Asylum and refugee policy is an inherently cross-departmental issue, and one which the Foreign Office, Treasury, DLUHC and others need to be involved with as well as the Home Office to ensure that policy is not siloed. Forced migration flows are affected by conflict, climate change and international development, and the arrival of refugees in the UK affects, among many other things, housing, healthcare, and education provision. It is essential to look at the impact of asylum and refugee policies in the round in all of these areas, and to consider the impact of policy actions in other areas, such as a decision to cut international aid, on forced migration flows.

10-month time frame

Yes, the first few sessions could be spent discussing part one of the question, the overall aims and vision of UK asylum and refugee policy. Then the remainder of the sessions could work through each specific area of policy as the bullet points above suggest, covering both domestic and international elements, to address part two of the question. The number of topic areas covered here, and the level of detail considered for each one, could be varied depending on time available, the particular experience of the committee, or real-time developments in policy/the UK situation.

+ JUSTIN CANTUAR

Proposal 32: Letter from Lord Balfe

What is the optimum standard of Clean Air and what factors including but not restricted to, Health, emissions, traffic control, costs and the balance of public good should be used to determine this

Description of proposal

A higher standard of environmental conditions for air quality has been very much in the news recently. The findings of a Coroner that air quality contributed to a Child's death. The controversy over ULEZ in London and different traffic restriction measures in a number of big cities such as Cambridge and Oxford and a general feeling in the community supported by medical evidence that clean air is good for a longer and healthier life all point to the need to try and explore a public policy consensus.

Purpose of inquiry

A report looking at the Medical, social and environmental factors that could help policy makers strike a balance between the competing views as to what is an acceptable balance between those who believe that State interference has gone **too** far in this area and should **be** curtailed and those who believe that the greater good is best served by an element of further regulation.

Relevant Member experience

We have a wide range of expertise and views in the House that could contribute to a report. The Medical profession would be able to contribute expertise on the effect of ingesting impure air when bodies and especially children are developing. The impact of long standing exposure to contaminated air through smoke and asbestos is well known but there are many other factors. There are a number of Members of the House who will wish to contribute to the debate about the limits of State intervention. There are factors of cost and the impact on the budgets of low-income families. The committee may wish to also consider the appropriateness and costs of scrappage schemes.

Lawyers will have views as to how watertight legislation can be drafted in areas such as this where scientific knowledge is rapidly advancing. Persons with a public service background will have experience of dealing with the lobbyists to be convinced and also how to persuade Government that this is an issue worthy of addressing. It may be useful to remember that The Clean Air Act was introduced by a Conservative MP and passed with a broad consensus of political and public opinion

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

A large number of Government Departments would be involved including Transport, Levelling up, Justice, Home Office and Health. There would certainly be a need for a Cabinet Committee chaired by a non departmental Minister to build a consensus.

10-month time frame

Yes, if they organise themselves properly and agree a work plan and tie table at an early meeting. This sort of inquiry could meander along for years but the most important thing is a firm steer from the top.

Any additional comments

I am happy to add to this submission, but I consider I have covered the main points.

BALFE

POST-LEGISLATIVE SCRUTINY PROPOSALS

Proposal 33: Letter from Lord Hope of Craighead

Children and Social Work Act 2017—post-legislative scrutiny

Description of proposal

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 is an Act to make provision about looked after children; to make other provision in relation to the welfare of children; and to make provision about the regulation of social workers.

The Act has four main purposes:

- Improving decision making, and support for looked after and previously looked after children in England and Wales.
- Improving joint work at the local level to safeguard children and enabling better learning at the local and national levels to improve practice in child protection.
- Promoting the safeguarding of children by providing for Relationships and Sex Education in schools.
- Enabling the establishment of a new regulatory regime specifically for the social work profession in England.

Purpose of inquiry

This was a major piece of legislation in an important area where all sides of the House contributed to its final form. 6–7 years on is a good time to pause and reflect on progress so far.

Relevant Member experience

This is an area that the House has many members with strong knowledge of and interest in the subject area, from all sides of the House.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

The Department for Education is responsible for Child protection in England. Local safeguarding arrangements are led by three statutory safeguarding partners: the local authority, the integrated care board and the police.

(Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales each have their own child protection systems and laws to protect children)

10-month time frame

Yes.

HOPE OF CRAIGHEAD

Proposal 34: Letter from Lord Hope of Craighead*Deregulation Act 2015—post-legislative scrutiny**Description of proposal*

The Deregulation Act 2015 is an Act to make provision for the reduction of burdens resulting from legislation for businesses or other organisations or for individuals; make provision for the repeal of legislation which no longer has practical use; make provision about the exercise of regulatory functions; and for connected purposes.

The Deregulation Act provides for the removal or reduction of burdens on businesses, civil society, individuals, public sector bodies and the taxpayer. These include measures relating to general and specific areas of business, companies and insolvency, the use of land, housing and development, transport, communications, the environment, the regulation of child trust funds, education and training, alcohol, sport and entertainment, the administration of justice, public authorities and legislative reform. The Act also provides for a duty on those exercising specified regulatory functions to have regard to the desirability of promoting economic growth. In addition, the Act repeals legislation that is no longer of practical use.

Purpose of inquiry

To assess the impact of the legislation. Trying to address the problem of over regulation (and in the past gold plating of EU derived regulation) has been an aim of successive governments of all parties. Assessing the success of this legislation and its “promotion of economic growth” aspirations 8–9 years on would be of great assistance in framing any future legislation.

Relevant Member experience

Regulation is an area that the House has very strong member engagement in on all sides with much experience. That experience is end to end, as it includes the framing and drafting of regulation, its implementation having regard to legal challenges and political implications.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

The Cabinet Office leads on this legislation, with provision extending to Business, Education, Health and Transport.

10-month time frame

Yes. The Chair will however need to limit the scope of a big topic.

HOPE OF CRAIGHEAD

Proposal 35: Letter from Lord Lipsey

Election Law

Description of proposal

In part post-leg scrutiny following Elections Bill and the Electoral Commission report on local elections 2023. Does the law protect democracy by stopping fraudulent voters? Or damage it by reducing turnout?

Purpose of inquiry

An all-party consensus on the effects of the act, free from partisan considerations. A future government might well amend Act relying on our proposals.

Relevant Member experience

We have members really expert in electoral law and electoral matters e.g. Lord Reynard, Lord Hayward.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

Whole of Government matter.

10-month time frame

Easy peasy. Much evidence already coming out e.g. electoral commission.

Additional comments

Ideally would be chaired by a non-party Peer—perhaps a Judge.

This proposal is supported by Baroness Altmann, Baroness Golding and Baroness Meacher.

LIPSEY

Proposal 36: Letter from Lord Blunkett and 17 co-proposers including Baroness Buscombe, Lord Clement-Jones, Lord Farmer, Baroness Fraser of Craigmaddie, Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town, Lord Hunt of Kings Heath, Baroness Janke, Baroness Jenkin of Kennington, Lord Lucas, Baroness Ludford, Lord Macdonald of River Glaven, Lord McConnell of Glenscorrodale, Baroness Morris of Yardley, Lord Reay, Lord Sandhurst, Lord Strasburger and Baroness Thornhill

Gender Recognition Act 2004—post-legislative scrutiny

Description of proposal

The Gender Recognition Act was regarded as world-leading when it came into force.²⁹ There is now a growing and diverse public sentiment that it needs reviewing to address contemporary realities. Those interested in scrutinising the GRA include both devolved governments and the UK official Opposition party, as well as numerous outside bodies. A select committee to hear expert evidence would be timely. The number of those describing themselves as transgender now creates an entirely new legislative challenge in relation to gender recognition.

The GRA addressed entitlement to both marriage and pensions, and to privacy around a “change of sex”. We now have equal marriage and equal pension rights for both sexes in the UK, so that the additional rights the GRA grants are now limited to the right to change one’s birth certificate along with some privacy rights. Arguments have been advanced that (particularly in view of the changes in society over the last 20 years) the requirements of the GRA should be relaxed, to make it much easier to obtain a certificate.

Others argue that the GRA, particularly when taken in conjunction with the Equality Act, has created uncertainty as to the rights of women to exclusively female spaces and events. The use of the terms “sex” and “gender” in the legislation, sometimes interchangeably, sometimes with differentiation intended, creates further confusion.

There is a clear need for evidence-gathering and discussion as to how best to provide for the original intentions of the GRA, and to regulate its interactions with other legislation, in the context of today’s liberal and diverse society.

All the requirements of and phraseology used in the GRA need re-evaluation. Attitudes and understandings have changed, so that, for example, the nature of the panel requirement, the diagnosis of “gender dysphoria” and the implied meaning of “living in the acquired gender”, all require re-examination in the modern context. Some issues involving the GRA have assumed greater significance over the last 20 years, such as the interaction of the Act with child protection and data gathering measures, and the procedures to be followed by people who are known as “detransitioners”.

Purpose of inquiry

To provide a base of evidence and argument on which proposals for improvements to the GRA could be based.

To propose improvements in the GRA both from the point of view of the people it seeks to serve and wider society.

²⁹ House of Commons Library, Gender recognition and the rights of transgender people, Research Briefing, [Number 08969](#), July 2020

To identify any deleterious consequences of the GRA and any proposed mitigations, and consider solutions.

To enquire into the interaction of the GRA with the Equality Act protected characteristics of sex, and sexual orientation, and to propose how such interactions should be reflected in the GRA.

To explore the interaction of the Act with other legislation in particular as to how sex and gender are recorded, and how and when it may be reasonable for the histories of people before they obtained a certificate under the GRA to be linked to their current identity.

Relevant Member experience

Numerous Members of the House have expressed an interest in issues of sex and gender in recent years. Members of the House have great expertise in this area, legal expertise in particular, and a large number of Members have expertise in other areas that will be discussed, such as health, education, sport, human rights and prisons.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

This proposal addresses areas of policy across a number of government ministries and departments, including (but not limited to) the Attorney General's Office, Cabinet Office, Department for Culture, Media, and Sport, Department for Education, Department for Work and Pensions, Department for Health and Social Care, Home Office, Ministry of Justice, Government Equalities Office, the devolved administrations, and the Civil Service.

10-month time frame

Yes.

Additional comments

In 2024 it will be 20 years since the passing of the Gender Recognition Act (“an Act to make provision for and in connection with change of gender”). This anniversary would be an appropriate time to consider whether it has achieved what it set out to achieve, whether there have been adverse consequences and how these might now be mitigated. There is still confusion about the legal effect of a Gender Recognition Certificate and post-legislative scrutiny would shed light on this.

The Government recently consulted on Gender Recognition Act reform and has now further simplified the process of applying for a Gender Recognition Certificate and reduced the cost, but given all that has happened since then (The Scotland GRR Bill, use of s35 of The Scotland Act, more open nature of debate and its evolution into a mainstream party political issue across the UK), the landscape has undergone significant change since that consultation.

In conclusion, whilst the issues around the GRA are undoubtedly controversial, they are of particular relevance to society and require attention. A Lords scrutiny committee would approach them with much-needed objectivity and the stature that conveys authority on the findings and conclusions.

Lord Blunkett supported the passage of the Bill through the House of Commons.

Baroness Buscombe, Lord Clement-Jones and Lord Hunt of Kings Heath supported the passage of the Bill through the House of Lords. When Jack McConnell was First Minister of Scotland, his Cabinet successfully proposed to the Scottish Parliament that they give legislative consent under the Sewel Convention for the UK Parliament to legislate on gender reform on its behalf.

***BLUNKETT, BUSCOMBE, CLEMENT-JONES, FARMER, FRASER OF
CRAIGMADDIE, HAYTER OF KENTISH TOWN, HUNT OF KINGS HEATH,
JANKE, JENKIN OF KENNINGTON, LUCAS, LUDFORD, MACDONALD OF RIVER
GLAVEN, MCCONNELL OF GLENSCORRODALE, MORRIS OF YARDLEY, REAY,
SANDHURST, STRASBURGER and THORNHILL***

Proposal 37: Letter from Baroness Berridge and 4 co-proposers including Baroness Lawrence of Clarendon, Baroness O’Loan, Lord Thomas of Gresford and Lord Wolfson of Tredegar

Inquiries Act 2005—post-legislative scrutiny

Description of proposal

The Inquiries Act 2005 establishes the framework for the establishment and operation of Statutory Public Inquiries, the number and complexity of which have increased considerably since its passing. Many—most—have attained a high degree of public visibility and have resulted in a considerable number of often far-reaching recommendations prompting significant legislative, regulatory and administrative response.

The Inquiries Act was subject to post-legislative scrutiny in 2014, with the resulting report highlighting a number of matters where, in practice, the operation of the Act was in need of further reflection. Little appears to have changed as a result. Given the increasing trend to request and initiate public inquiries under the Act the need to revisit the Act to ensure it operates effectively and efficiently is palpable. The underlying concerns that should be subject to scrutiny relate to five discrete areas.

The first is length. Given their increasing complexity, some recently established inquiries run for prolonged periods. Whilst it is important to be thorough, it is also important to be timely in responding to pressing concerns, particularly when there may be a need for legislative change.

The second is methodology. Despite being described as concerning ‘inquiries’, the process is—ultimately—not one of inquiry but of quasi-judicial determination in the light of evidence adduced in public session. Whether this is the optimal approach to explore complex and multifaceted questions in an ‘enquiring’ manner is a matter of debate. Indeed, the process in practice can appear to be quasi-accusatory at times, raising questions concerning both equality of arms and the powers of the Chair in relation to the direction of the Inquiry, the evidence to be presented, the witnesses to be called and process of determination.

The third is cost, which is intimately linked to the previous two points, and is further linked to the potential range of core participants, which has grown exponentially as the breath and scope of some public inquiries has broadened. The process provided for in the Act concerning the role of core participants, seems ill-suited to some public inquiries, given their limited opportunities for participation.

The fourth concerns responding to recommendations. There is no vehicle for ‘follow-up’ or scrutiny of the response to recommendations. The length of inquiries may be partly responsible for this. When Reports and Recommendations come many years after the events in question, it may become increasingly difficult to find the necessary legislative time in the face of completing priorities, for example.

A fifth concerns the need to ensure better provision and streamlining of the processes of Inquiries. As each is independent, there is a lack of common infrastructure and central support, which leads to delay, duplication and additional cost.

The result is that Inquiries under the Act are increasingly complex, lengthy, expensive, less focussed on inquiring as to determining or apportioning responsibility—which itself inevitably discourages open rather than defensive reflection by those offering evidence.

Purpose of inquiry

The purpose would be (a) to follow-up on the 2014 Post Legislative scrutiny and (b) to update and build on its analysis in the light of the experience of subsequent Public Inquiries under the Act to consider whether the Act provides an adequate framework for conducting processes focussed on inquiring into issues of national concern which are sufficiently swift, questioning, reflective and cost effective. It will also consider whether appropriate means of follow-up to inquiry recommendations are effective and adequate, given the public interest and financial investment in public inquiries.

Relevant Member experience

The presence of former senior judiciary and previous chairs of inquiries and reviews makes the House of Lords the best forum to look at these matters. Many members may have had experience of participation in public inquiries as witnesses. The issue of former Government Ministers giving evidence and any impact on the Ministerial Code makes Noble Lords the best forum to look at these matters. Most will have experience of considering whether public inquiries should be established in response to various incidents, concerns or thematic subjects. All will have experience of responding to the recommendations of public inquiries. There is, then, considerable knowledge, experience, and interest in all phases of the process of initiating and responding to statutory public inquiries within the House.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

A board range of departments act as sponsors of public inquiries and the Cabinet Office plays a major coordinating role. It is, then, a proposal which is potentially of overarching and general significance. A special committee of the House of Lords would be the best forum to take evidence from numerous departments that have been involved in Inquiries and how they have responded to Inquiry recommendations.

10-month time frame

Yes.

**BERRIDGE, LAWRENCE OF CLARENDON, O'LOAN, THOMAS OF GRESFORD
and WOLFSON OF TREDEGAR**

Proposal 38: Letter from Lord Hope of Craighead

Modern Slavery Act 2015—post legislative scrutiny

Description of proposal

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 is an Act to make provision about slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour and about human trafficking, including provision for the protection of victims; to make provision for an Independent Anti-slavery Commissioner; and for connected purposes.

The Act is in seven parts.

Part 1 consolidates and clarifies the existing offences of slavery and human trafficking whilst increasing the maximum penalty for such offences.

Part 2 provides for two new civil preventative orders, the Slavery and Trafficking Prevention Order and the Slavery and Trafficking Risk Order.

Part 3 provides for new maritime enforcement powers in relation to ships.

Part 4 establishes the office of Independent Anti-slavery Commissioner and sets out the functions of the Commissioner.

Part 5 introduces a number of measures focussed on supporting and protecting victims, including a statutory defence for slavery or trafficking victims and special measures for witnesses in criminal proceedings.

Part 6 requires certain businesses to disclose what activity they are undertaking to eliminate slavery and trafficking from their supply chains and their own business.

Part 7 requires the Secretary of State to publish a paper on the role of the Gangmasters Licensing Authority and otherwise relates to general matters such as consequential provision and commencement.

Purpose of inquiry

To assess the impact of the legislation, especially the effectiveness of Parts 4, 5 and 6. There continues to be considerable public comment and interest in these important areas.

Relevant Member experience

The House has a number of members with a deep knowledge of, and interest in, these areas, in all groupings across the House.

Cross-cutting departmental boundaries

The Home Office leads on modern slavery eradication, working closely with law enforcement, the criminal justice system, business, civil society, local government and the health and welfare sectors, and also with international partners.

10-month time frame

Yes.

HOPE OF CRAIGHEAD

Proposal 39: Letter from Lord Boswell of Aynho

Modern Slavery legislation

Description of proposal

I am wondering if it is now time to analyse the overall impact of the M/S legislation, its practical impacts and any unintended consequences (eg in driving the practice further underground).

BOSWELL OF AYNHO

APPENDIX 1: DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Baroness Altmann

No relevant interests declared in relation to proposal 4

No relevant interests to declare in relation to proposal 11 and 35

Lord Altrincham

No relevant interests to declare

Baroness Andrews

No relevant interests to declare

Lord Alton of Liverpool

I am a Patron or Trustee of several charities that have helped victims of genocide and crimes against humanity and advocated on their behalf, including the Coalition for Genocide Response established in October 2019.

I am a vice chair of the APPGs on Burma, Rohingya, Hazaras, Uyghurs, Yazidis, Sudan and South Sudan, genocide and international law, justice and accountability.

In 2022, I co-authored a book on genocide, entitled 'State Responses to Crimes of Genocide. What Went Wrong and How to Change It', published by Palgrave Macmillan.

Lord Baker of Dorking

I am the Chairman of Baker Dearing Educational Trust which promotes University Technical Colleges (state-funded secondary schools under the Academies programme). I am a member of the one-year Special Inquiry Select Committee on Education 11-16 which is reporting in November/December this year.

Lord Balfe

No relevant interests to declare

Baroness Benjamin

Vice President of Barnardo's who are doing a review into children in care and how they end up involved with the judicial system. Working with First Star which helps children who have been in care to go to University.

Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle

Receives research support from British Society for Antimicrobial Chemotherapy (BSAC), as part of a training scheme for which two students receive a stipend.

Baroness Berridge

No interests declared

Baroness Bertin

The idea for the inquiry has come from Professor Mark Johnson, who is a lead Consultant Obstetrician on the High Risk Pregnancy Team at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital. He is also a Consultant in General Medicine, Endocrinology and Diabetes. He was the lead obstetrician for the birth of my third baby.

Baroness Blower

Former General Secretary of the NUT, the predecessor union of the NEU

Lord Blunkett

No relevant interests to declare

Lord Boswell of Aynho

No relevant interests to declare

Baroness Bowles of Berkhamsted

Has a degree in Chemical Physics with Mathematics. She has used her mathematics as a Patent Attorney in electronics and in other engineering fields. She has used mathematics in all aspects of her career. She became a Chartered Patent Attorney and a European Patent Attorney in 1981.

Baroness Boycott

No interests declared for for proposal 4

Chair of Feeding Britain

Trustee of The Food Foundation

Trustee of Veg Power

Vice Chair of Peers for the Planet

Lord Bridges of Headley

Senior Adviser to the Group Executive Chairman, Banco Santander, Madrid, Spain

Lord Brooke of Alverthorpe

I've an interest in world population growth and it's impact on climate change

No interests declared in relation to proposal 11

Lord Browne of Ladyton

No interests declared

Baroness Burt of Solihull

No interests declared

Baroness Buscombe

I was HMG's Opposition Spokesman in the House of Lords for the passage of the Gender Recognition Bill in 2004

Baroness Butler-Sloss

I am on the children APPG chaired by Tim Loughton MP. I was President of the Family Division of the High Court and tried family and children cases for about 35 years

Lord Archbishop of Canterbury

I participated in the passage of the Illegal Migration Act, including tabling my own amendments calling for a ten-year strategy for refugees and human trafficking, requiring international collaboration and a longer term view on the issue of migration. This proposal is motivated by the same desire as my amendments, to see refugee and asylum policy that is evidence-based and effective, not siloed or isolationist, and up to the challenges we face in this area, now and in the years to come.

Lord Carrington

I am a farmer and landowner in Bucks and Lincolnshire. I am an active member of the Country Land and Business Association and a member of the National Farmers Union. I am a member of the recently formed Rural Economy Research Group chaired by Baroness Mackintosh of Pickering.

I am a member of several rural focussed APPGs including APPG for Rural Services; APPG for Rural Business and the Rural Powerhouse; APPG on Conservation, Places and People and APPG on Healthy Homes and Buildings.

Lord Clement-Jones

Chair of the governing council of Queen Mary University of London (unpaid)

Lord Colgrain

Please see register of interests

Viscount Craigavon

No relevant interests to declare

Lord Curry of Kirkharle

Please see register of interests

Lord Dannatt

I run the family arable farm in Norfolk

I am a Past President of the Royal Norfolk Agricultural Association (My wife is President in 2024).

I was Chair of the Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance 2021–2023.

Lord Davies of Brixton

Lord Davies of Brixton has a B.Sc. (Econ) of the University of Hull from 1966 and an M.Sc. of the London School of Economics from 2006. He became a Fellow of the Institute of Actuaries (FIA) in 1974. He was a Member of the Greater London Council/Inner London Education Authority (GLC/ILEA) from 1980 to 1985 and Leader of the ILEA from 1981 to 1983.

Baroness Deech

Campaigned successfully for childcare at Oxford University in the 1970s and 1980s

Lord Bishop of Durham

Co chaired the Archbishops’ Commission on Families and Households—the report, ‘Love Matters’ makes comments on childcare.

Baroness Eaton

No relevant interests to declare

Lord Bishop of Exeter

No interest declared

Baroness Fall

No relevant interests to declare

Lord Farmer

No relevant interests to declare

Baroness Finlay of Llandaff

No interests declared

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean

No interests declared

Lord Foster of Bath

No relevant interests to declare

Lord Foulkes of Cumnock

No relevant interests to declare

Baroness Fraser of Craigmaddie

As CEO of Cerebral Palsy Scotland I am particularly interested in the needs of children with cerebral palsy and their families.

Lord Frost

No relevant interests to declare

Lord Bishop of Gloucester

Anglican Bishop for Prisons and President of the Nelson Trust, both of which involve contact with people of lived experience

Baroness Gohir

Founder and CEO of the Muslim Women’s Network UK which operates a national helpline and counselling service which deals with domestic abuse victims from Black, Asian and minority communities. I also wrote a report on Muslim women’s experience of the Criminal Justice System.

Baroness Golding

No interests declared

Baroness Grey-Thompson

No relevant interests to declare

Viscount Hanworth

Viscount Hanworth (Stephen Pollock) is an Emeritus Professor of Computational Statistics and Data Analysis of the University of Leicester. He is an academic mathematician who continues to be engaged

in mathematical research and in the creation of material for teaching mathematics.

Baroness Harding of Winscombe

No relevant interests to declare

Baroness Harris of Richmond

No relevant interests to declare

Lord Hastings of Scarisbrick

I was the founder and Chair of Crime Concern at the Home Offices appointment from 1988 to 2009; I then merged Crime Concern with the Rayner Foundation to form CATCH22 in 2009 where I remain the Vice President. I was a Commissioner for Racial Equality for 9 years (longest serving) in the 90's into the 2000s and I served on the first Metropolitan Police Committee. I am a monthly prison visitor to six estates and actively support incarcerated men to bring their cases to review where injustice seems likely.

Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town

No relevant interests to declare

Baroness Healy of Primrose Hill

No relevant interests to declare

Baroness Hodgson of Abinger

No relevant interests except for being a parent who experienced the childcare issues.

Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts

I have published two pamphlets on this subject area: 1) Britain's Demographic Challenge (2017) 2) Overcrowded Islands? (2020) and put forward a Private Members' Bill entitled "Office for Demographic Change Bill" which was debated in February 2022.

Baroness Hollins

No relevant interests to declare

Lord Hope of Craighead

No relevant interests to declare

Baroness Hooper

Membership of all Overseas Territories All Party Parliamentary Groups

Lord Horam

No relevant interests to declare

Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

No relevant interests to declare

Baroness Janke

My knowledge and experience of the subject relates to my time as a Councillor and subsequent Council Leader

Baroness Jenkin of Kennington

No relevant interests to declare

Baroness Jolly

No relevant interests to declare

Lord Kamall

I have no direct relevant interests but have recently been in touch with a charity helping Afghan refugees to discuss how I could support their work.

Baroness Kidron

Chair of 5Rights Foundation a charity that works at the intersection of law, rights and digital technology across the globe, with, and on behalf of, children and young people. Commissioner on Lancet Commission on Mental Health, collating evidence on anxiety, addiction and behavioural disorders associated with digital use—with a specific focus on children.

Lord King of Bridgwater

No relevant interests to declare

Lord Knight of Weymouth

I chair, pro bono, the E-Act Multi Academy Trust educating 18,000 children in 28 state maintained schools.

I also have a paid role as chair of the Council of British International Schools, an association of 300 private schools around the world;

A client of my business is Nord Anglia Ltd which operates around 90 independent international schools globally.

Director of Century-Tech Ltd, using AI to teach school age children across the curriculum

Director of Macat International Ltd, using AI to assess and train for critical thinking

Director of Educate Ventures Research Ltd, providing thought leadership and advice on AI in education

Chair of E-Act Multi Academy Trust

Chair of Council of British International Schools

Director of Suklaa Ltd, providing advice to a range of education and technology clients

Member of the qualification committee of Pearson plc.

Lord Laming

No relevant interests to declare

Lord Lamont of Lerwick

No relevant interests to declare

Lord Lancaster of Kimbolton

Honorary Colonel of the Cayman Islands Regiment

Lord Lansley

No relevant interests to declare

Baroness Lawrence of Clarendon

Please see register of interests

Co-participant in the undercover policing inquiry

Baroness Lea of Lymm

No relevant interests to declare

Lord Bishop of Leeds

No relevant interests to declare

Lord Bishop of Leicester

As Bishop of Leicester, I serve one of the most ethnically and religiously diverse cities in England and one where unrest between different religious groups last September attracted significant media and political attention. I am also trustee of St Philips' Centre, our local interfaith centre.

Lord Leigh of Hurley

I am the Chairman of the Finance Bill Sub-Committee

Lord Lilley

No relevant interests to declare

Lord Lipsey

Chaired Committee on opinion polls. Interested in the subject wearing various past hats—e.g. advisor to Jim Callaghan, journalist and commissioning polls

Baroness Lister of Burtersett

Hon president of Child Poverty Action Group, co-chair of APPG on Poverty and an officer/member of a number of other relevant APPGs. I am also a patron of various relevant organisations including JustFair. I sat on a relevant independent commission—the Commission on Poverty,

Participation and Power, half of whose members had experience of poverty, some years before I entered the Lords. I was also a member of the Select Committee on Citizenship and Civic Engagement.

Lord Lisvane

No relevant interests to declare

Lord Lucas

No relevant interests to declare

Baroness Ludford

President of 'Liberal Voice for Women'

Lord Macdonald of River Glaven

Please see register of interests

Lord Mackenzie of Framwellgate

No relevant interests to declare

Lord Macpherson of Earl's Court

No relevant interests to declare

Baroness Mallalieu

No interests declared

Lord Bishop of Manchester

I have worked extensively promoting "lived experience" most recently as chair of the Manchester Homelessness Partnership Board since its inception.

Lord Marland

No interests declared

Lord McColl of Dulwich

I have no other interest than the anti-obesity advocacy I have conducted in the House of Lords. I have made many contributions on this subject in PQs, debates, and the media over many years.

Baroness Meacher

No relevant interests to declare

Baroness Meyer

No interests declared

Baroness Morgan of Cotes

No interests declared in relation to proposal 4

I chair the Careers & Enterprise Company and the Board of the East Midlands Institute of Technology in relation to proposal 20

Baroness Morris of Yardley

Chair and Adviser to the Birmingham Education Partnership

Baroness Neuberger

Chair of Independent Age (focus on older people living in poverty)

Chair of both University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and Whittington Health NHS Trust, in both of which we try to listen to the voices of patients with long term ne complex conditions.

Chair of the Walter and Liesel Schwab Charitable Trust, which helps asylum seekers into university education and also, obviously, listens to their lived experience.

Baroness Newlove

I'm vice chair of the APPG early years and childcare

Baroness Noakes

No relevant interests to declare

Baroness Northover

No relevant interests to declare

Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne

I have considerable experience on Child's Rights matters in the UK and internationally as a former director of Save The Children, earlier as consultant to Dr Barnardos, Thomas Coram and Girl Guides and Scouts etc

Current chair of AMAR foundation which offers health and education to refugees and IDPs internationally

Baroness O'Loan

Please see register of interests

Baroness Primarolo

No interests declared

Lord Randall of Uxbridge

Trustee (Director) of the United Kingdom Overseas Territories Conservation Forum

A member of the Council of the RSPB who work extensively in the Overseas Territories

Joint Chair of the APPG for Biodiversity in the Overseas Territories

Lord Ravensdale

I am a project director with Atkins, an engineering consultancy

Lord Reay

No relevant interests to declare

Lord Robathan

No relevant interests to declare

Lord Rooker

Former Minister of State (Home Office) for Asylum and Immigration (2001-2002)

Lord Russell of Liverpool

Governor of Coram, and was previously a Trustee of Coram (between 2009 and 2018)—and has been working with children's charities for over 35 years.

Lord Sandhurst

Member, Justice and Home Affairs Committee

Baroness Sater

No relevant interests to declare

Lord Shinkwin

No interests declared

Viscount Stansgate

I am Vice President of the APPG on AI

A graduate of Keele University.

An elected Member of the Inner London Education Authority from 1986 to 1990.

In 2011, he was appointed Director of Parliamentary Affairs for the Royal Society of Biology after spending two decades in a similar role for the Royal Society of Chemistry. He is also President of the Parliamentary and Scientific Committee and a Trustee of the Foundation for Science and Technology. He was elected to the House of Lords (unopposed) in July 2021.

Baroness Stedman-Scott

I have been a Minister at The DWP and spent 30 plus years running an organisation that helped people to overcome many issues including accessing childcare

I am a member of the Public Services Committee

Lord Strasburger

No interests declared

Lord Strathcarron

No interests declared

Baroness Stroud

Chair of the Social Metrics Commission, The Poverty Strategy Commission and the Race Equality Commission where we take evidence from those with lived experience as well as experts.

Lord Swire

Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (South East Asia/Far East, India and Nepal, Latin America, Falklands, Australasia and Pacific, Commonwealth) between September 2012 and July 2016 with responsibility for some of the Overseas Territories plus the Commonwealth as an institution. Additionally, covered for the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, James Duddridge who was Minister for the Overseas Territories, when he was on sick leave.

Deputy Chairman of the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council

Lord Taylor of Goss Moor

No interests declared

Lord Thomas of Gresford

No relevant interests to declare

Baroness Thornhill

No relevant interests to declare

Viscount Trenchard

No relevant interests to declare

Baroness Valentine

Place Director, Business in the Community

Lord Walney

I am a former Member of Parliament for Barrow and Furness which is the home of the UK's shipyard that constructs nuclear submarines.

I have a registered interest in a social value consultancy that is employed by Rolls Royce Submarines to advise on ways it can grow its workforce.

Baroness Watkins of Tavistock

Please see register of interests

Chair a quality committee for Outcomes First which is a business that provides schools and some residential care for children with special needs—ceasing the role at the end of this year 2023

Non-executive Director, NHS England

Lord Waverley

Chairman, Emerging Markets Business Council, International Trade Council (ITC)

Non-executive Director, International Centre for Trade Transparency Ltd (data management and monitoring company) (unremunerated but member does have a shareholding)

Director GoGlobal Trade Ltd (technology portal), person with significant control of a company (PSC) and shareholder

Lord West of Spithead

Vice President of the Falkland Island Association and supporter of the Gough Island project.

Lord Willetts

A visiting professor at King's College, London and a lay member of the Council of the University of Southampton

Baroness Willis of Summertown

No relevant interests to declare

Lord Wolfson of Tredegar

No relevant interests to declare

Lord Young of Cookham

Had an oral question on the subject, and supported related amendments to the LURB Bill.

Baroness Young of Old Scone

Chair of the Woodland Trust

A Commissioner on the Commission on Food, Farming and the Countryside

A full list of Members' interests can be found in the Register of Lords' Interests:
<https://members.parliament.uk/members/lords/interests/register-of-lords-interests>