



MINUTES

Session 2026-27

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the 2nd Meeting, held at 10:30am on Tuesday, 2 June 2026

Present: Lord Anderson of Ipswich
Lord Bach
Baroness Bertin
Baroness Buscombe
Baroness Cash
Lord Dubs
Lord Foster of Bath (Chair)
Baroness Hughes of Stretford
Lord Moraes
Lord Tope

Advisers in attendance: Dr Ben Brindle (specialist adviser)

1. Apologies and notices

Apologies were received from Lord Hogan-Howe.

2. Settlement, Citizenship and Integration Inquiry: Chair's draft report

The Committee considered the Chair's draft report. Amendments were agreed.

a) Retrospection

Baroness Buscombe moved the following amendment:

Leave out the following paragraphs (129-131):

Any retrospective change would be manifestly unfair—and may be unlawful—towards migrants, who have planned their lives around the current system and made significant long-term decisions, such as career, housing, and family life decisions with the expectation that they would be able to qualify for ILR under the current rules. This is egregious in the case of migrants on the Hong Kong BN(O) visa route, given that previous Government statements had assured BN(O)s that they would have a route to British citizenship without any such requirements.

The UK's reputation would be adversely impacted by retrospective action, which will likely make the UK a less attractive destination for highly skilled migrants in the future.

Any changes to ILR rules should not apply retrospectively to individuals who are already on a qualifying route. While the Government may not support the previous Government's decision to open certain visa routes, that decision has already been made. Many migrants made significant long-term decisions with the expectation of acquiring ILR after five years.

and insert:

While it is unusual to apply such changes retrospectively, in this case we support the Government's decision to apply changes to the route to settlement retrospectively, due to the unprecedented and severe challenges already confronting the NHS, housing supply, the criminal justice system, welfare system and public services generally.

Question put, that the amendment in the name of Baroness Buscombe be agreed to.

The Committee divided:

Content	Not Content	Abstention
Baroness Bertin	Lord Anderson of Ipswich	Nil
Baroness Buscombe	Lord Bach	
Baroness Cash	Lord Dubs	
	Lord Foster of Bath	
	Baroness Hughes of Stretford	
	Lord Moraes	
	Lord Tope	

The amendment was therefore disagreed to.

b) Extension of ILR qualifying period

Lord Anderson of Ipswich moved the following amendment:

Leave out the following paragraph (paragraph 111):

While we note the concerns and risks raised in evidence we have received, we support the Government's proposals to extend the baseline qualifying time for Independent Leave to Remain to 10 years, to 15 years for those on work visas below RQF 6, and to 20 years for refugees on the core protection route. This would retain appropriate incentives and disincentives for migrants to come to the UK, appropriate deterrent for those seeking asylum, and limit the fiscal impact of migration and asylum on the UK economy.

and insert:

Extending the qualifying time to ILR risks undermining integration by reducing affected migrants' security of status—this would limit their ability to make long-term employment, family, and housing decisions. In addition, the high cost of immigration application fees and the Immigration Health Surcharge for migrants risks increasing

poverty among low-income migrants. In some cases, those who are unable to afford to renew their status may fall out of legal status, increasing the size of the unauthorised migrant population if they do not depart the UK.

The Government's proposal of a 20-year settlement route for refugees with reviews of their refugee status every 2.5 years risks compromising integration and undermines opportunities for refugees to make long term decisions regarding work, family or other aspects of life.

We do not support the Government's proposals to extend the baseline qualifying time for Independent Leave to Remain to 10 years, to 15 years for those on work visas below RQF 6, and to 20 years for refugees on the core protection route. The Government should instead explore the option of retaining the 5 year baseline qualifying time for Independent Leave to Remain, while separating Independent Leave to Remain from access to public funds. Migrants with ILR could remain subject to the No Recourse to Public Funds condition until they have resided in the UK for 10 years and/or obtained British citizenship.

Question put, that the amendment in the name of Lord Anderson of Ipswich be agreed to.

The Committee divided:

Content	Not Content	Abstention
Lord Anderson of Ipswich	Baroness Bertin	Nil
Lord Bach	Baroness Buscombe	
Lord Dubs	Baroness Cash	
Lord Foster of Bath		
Baroness Hughes of Stretford		
Lord Moraes		
Lord Tope		

The amendment was therefore agreed to.

c) Eligibility criteria for ILR

Lord Bach moved the following amendment:

After paragraph 136, insert:

Eligibility for ILR should still (with appropriate exemptions) be dependent on meeting minimum requirements such as no criminal convictions, certain financial criteria, and English language proficiency.

Question put, that the amendment in the name of Lord Bach be agreed to.

The Committee divided:

Content	Not Content	Abstention
Lord Anderson of Ipswich	Baroness Bertin	Nil
Lord Bach	Baroness Buscombe	
Lord Dubs	Baroness Cash	
Lord Foster of Bath		
Baroness Hughes of Stretford		
Lord Moraes		
Lord Tope		

The amendment was therefore agreed to.

d) Exemptions to mandatory income requirements

Baroness Buscombe moved the following amendment:

In paragraph 201, leave out:

Migrants on maternity leave and those with long-term illnesses or disabilities should be exempt from meeting the mandatory requirement of having an income of £12,570 for three to five years. This exemption should also cover unpaid carers.

Question put, that the amendment in the name of Baroness Buscombe be agreed to.

The Committee divided:

Content	Not Content	Abstention
Baroness Buscombe	Lord Anderson of Ipswich	Baroness Bertin
Baroness Cash	Lord Bach	
	Lord Dubs	
	Lord Foster of Bath	
	Baroness Hughes of Stretford	
	Lord Moraes	
	Lord Tope	

The amendment was therefore disagreed to.

e) Abolition of the Life in the UK test

Lord Bach moved the following amendment:

Leave out the following paragraph (260):

The Committee views the Life in the UK test as a woefully imperfect tool that inevitably cannot truly assess a person's commitment to this country. However, we reiterate the recommendations from our 2022 letter. The Home Office should refocus the test on British values and practical aspects of living in the UK, and the

test should not be multiple choice. Instead, it should involve more open-ended questions that more accurately demonstrate knowledge and engagement with life in the UK. Alongside reforms to the test, the Home Office should introduce courses which can be completed as an alternative to the test, facilitate the learning and absorption of British culture and values. Assessment for these courses should be based on the course providers' judgement of whether the individual has engaged with the course appropriately, and be similar in style and delivery to the driving speed awareness course.

and insert:

The Committee views the Life in the UK test as a woefully imperfect tool that inevitably cannot truly assess a person's commitment to this country. The Government should abolish the test, and replace it with a mandatory course, which facilitates the learning and absorption of British culture and values. Assessment for these courses should be based on the course providers' judgement of whether the individual has engaged with the course appropriately, and be similar in style and delivery to the driving speed awareness course.

Question put, that the amendment in the name of Lord Bach be agreed to.

The Committee divided:

Content

Lord Bach
Lord Dubs
Lord Moraes

Not Content

Lord Anderson of Ipswich
Baroness Bertin
Baroness Buscombe
Baroness Cash
Lord Foster of Bath

Abstention

Baroness Hughes of
Stretford
Lord Tope

The amendment was therefore disagreed to.

The Committee agreed to consider and agree the final report at the following meeting alongside the summary.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the previous meeting and Forward Work Programme

The Committee approved the Minutes of the previous meeting and considered its Forward Work Programme.

4. Any other business

5. Date of next meeting

The Committee would next meet on Tuesday 9 June 2026 at 10:30am in Committee Room 3.

4 June 2026