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Weekly Public Affairs Report: Friday 24th May 2019

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Written Questions - Monday 20th May

1 Bill Wiggin (North Herefordshire):

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the UK leaving the EU on the UK's contribution to tackling climate change. [Transferred] (255288)

10N Vernon Coaker (Gedling):

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the efficacy of legally binding targets for reducing air pollutants; and if he will make a statement. (255655)

11N Vernon Coaker (Gedling):

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when he plans to introduce the Environment Bill; and if he will make a statement. (255656)

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmquestionbook/nog190520.pdf>

Written Answers – Monday 20th May

Climate Change

Henry Smith: [253562]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of the UK leaving the EU on the UK's contribution to tackling climate change; and if he will make a statement.

Chris Skidmore:

Leaving the European Union will not affect our ambitious domestic emissions reduction commitments, as they are enshrined in UK law in the Climate Change Act(2008). The UK is a global leader in this area; between 1990 and 2017, the UK reduced its emissions by over 40% while growing the economy by more than two thirds, and we remain committed to delivering the outcomes of the Paris Agreement.

Air Pollution: Schools

Mr Steve Reed: [253578]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent steps his Department has taken to reduce air pollution around schools.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Our Clean Air Strategy sets out measures to reduce emissions of pollution, improving public health.

The Government has put in place a £3.5 billion plan to improve air quality and reduce harmful emissions.

The Mayor of London is responsible for air quality in London. Local authorities are best placed to target action to improve local air quality. Defra's Air Quality Grant Programme provides funding to local authorities for projects in local communities to tackle air pollution and reduce emissions which may include action targeting schools. Defra has awarded over £60 million in

funding since the air quality grant started in 1997, including £3 million in 2018/19.

Heathrow Airport: Noise

Ms Harriet Harman: [254062]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to aircraft noise nuisance, which communities will receive compensation and noise insulation as a result of the third runway at Heathrow airport; and on what criteria that decision was based.

Jesse Norman:

The Airports National Policy Statement sets an expectation that, in addition to controlling and reducing aircraft noise impacts, an applicant for development consent for a Northwest Runway at Heathrow Airport will be required to commit appropriate resources to mitigate the impacts of aircraft through noise insulation programmes for both private homes and public buildings.

It notes that Heathrow Airport Ltd (HAL) has publicly committed, following third party assessments, to provide full acoustic insulation for residential property within the full single mode easterly and westerly 60dB LAeq (16hr) noise contour of an expanded airport; and to provide a contribution of up to £3,000 for acoustic insulation for residential properties within the full single mode easterly and westerly 57dB LAeq (16hr) or the full 55dB Lden noise contours of an expanded airport, whichever is the bigger. In addition, HAL has committed to deliver a programme of noise insulation and ventilation for schools and community buildings within the 60dB LAeq (16hr) contour.

The geographical areas that the scheme could cover is dependent on flight paths for an expanded Heathrow Airport. Preparations for the airspace change process are complex and will take some years to work through.

In considering the case for expansion the Department commissioned a review of strategies adopted by international airports to mitigate the impact of airports on residents. In considering the scheme proposed by HAL the review found the schemes to be comparable to those on offer in other countries.

<https://qnadailyreport.blob.core.windows.net/qnadailyreportxml/Written-Questions-Answers-Statements-Daily-Report-Commons-2019-05-20.pdf>

Written Questions – Tuesday 21st May

22 Hugh Gaffney (Coatbridge, Chryston and Bellshill):

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on the effect of air pollution on public health. (256368)

28N Paul Farrelly (Newcastle-under-Lyme):

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that the UK's carbon footprint is not exported to countries with weaker targets in place. (256232)

47N Dr David Drew (Stroud):

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) consultation (CAP1775), what recent discussions he has had with the CAA on the potential introduction of (a) compulsory registration by model aircraft enthusiasts with the CAA, (b) registration fees, (c) age restrictions and (d) competency requirements. (256218)

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmquestionbook/nog190521.pdf>

Written Answers – Tuesday 21st May

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Andrew Rosindell: [254767]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps the Government is taking to reduce greenhouses gases to zero by 2050.

Chris Skidmore:

The Government is convinced of the need for urgent action on climate change, which is why we asked the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) for advice last October on the implications of the Paris Agreement for the UK's long-term emissions reduction targets, including on setting a net zero target.

The CCC published their advice to Government on 2 May 2019. It sets out a path for the UK to become the first major economy to legislate to end our contribution to global warming entirely. We are studying the CCC's comprehensive, ground-breaking report, and are committed to responding in due course.

Aviation: Waste

Paul Girvan: [253705]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps his Department is taking to reduce (a) disposable and (b) non-recyclable waste on aviation services arriving to or departing from the UK.

Jesse Norman:

The majority of airlines are privately owned and the responsibility of disposable and non-recyclable waste reduction on services arriving to and departing from the UK is a matter for the companies concerned.

The Government has adopted a target of zero avoidable plastic waste by the end of 2042. The Aviation Strategy consultation paper highlights examples of best practice in waste reduction. As the Department continue to develop this strategy, it will be working with the aviation industry to help set out ambitions and share best practice to reduce levels of plastic waste

produced by the sector still further, in order to ensure that the Government is able to achieve its 2042 goal.

Aviation: Fuels

Paul Farrelly: [255293]

To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what recent assessment he has made of the merits of introducing fuel duty or VAT on aviation fuel.

Robert Jenrick:

Members of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), including the United Kingdom, are prevented from taxing international aviation fuel, or any proxies for fuel, under the Chicago Convention. However, Air Passenger Duty – which raised £3.4 billion in 2017-18 – ensures that the air travel sector contributes to the cost of public services.

Economic Situation: Air Pollution

Wera Hobhouse: [911016]

What assessment the Government has made of the economic effect on vulnerable people of air pollution.

Robert Jenrick:

We are determined to tackle air pollution and reduce its impact on public health and the environment.

The government has committed £3.5bn to improve air quality for the entire population.

Emissions of toxic Nitrogen Oxides have fallen by almost 29% since 2010 and are at their lowest level since records began, but there remains more to do.

Written Questions – Wednesday 22nd May

5 Catherine West (Hornsey and Wood Green):

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether his Department will make an assessment of the potential merits of a establishing a citizens assembly on tackling climate change. (257072)

20N Paul Farrelly (Newcastle-under-Lyme):

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department plans to improve the consistency of pollution monitoring throughout the UK. (256944)

21N Paul Farrelly (Newcastle-under-Lyme):

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he plans to (a) ensure that ambient air pollution is treated as an occupational health issue and (b) adopt a workplace exposure limit for diesel engine exhaust emissions. (256945)

22N Paul Farrelly (Newcastle-under-Lyme):

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to ensure that the UK adopts the World Health Organisation's exposure limits for the main pollutants. (256946)

28N Dr David Drew (Stroud):

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, for what reasons the British Model Flying Association was not consulted on proposals to register model flying enthusiasts. (256908)

29N Zac Goldsmith (Richmond Park):

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential requirement for public funding to contribute to the construction of Heathrow's third runway. (256994)

30N Zac Goldsmith (Richmond Park):

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent assessment he has made of the effect of a target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050 on the expansion of Heathrow Airport. (256995)

31N Zac Goldsmith (Richmond Park):

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Department plans to restrict the operation of regional airports to meet UK climate change targets. (256996)

32N Zac Goldsmith (Richmond Park):

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the potential effectiveness of the level of the proposed penalty to be imposed on Heathrow airport in the event that it does not increase the number of passengers using public transport to access the airport by the time a third runway is operational. (257091)

33N Zac Goldsmith (Richmond Park):

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions he has had with (a) the Health and Safety Executive and (b) Public Health England on the effect on health of aircraft noise. (257092)

34N Mr Gavin Shaker (Luton South):

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what estimate he has made of the financial effect of the forthcoming Drone Registration Scheme on model flying clubs. (256993)

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmquestionbook/nq190522.pdf>

Written Answers - Wednesday 22nd May

Air Pollution

Vernon Coaker: [255655]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the efficacy of legally binding targets for reducing air pollutants; and if he will make a statement.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

Targets play an important role in driving action to reduce emissions from pollution sources to improve air quality. This is why we have committed to setting a new long term target for PM2.5 in our Clean Air Strategy, in addition to meeting our 2020 and 2030 emissions ceilings under the EU National Emission Ceilings Directive. We will publish evidence soon on what action would be needed to meet WHO guidelines.

Heathrow Airport: Railways

Andy McDonald: [254200]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 30 April 2019 to Question 249315 on Railways, how many proposals for a Southern Rail Link to Heathrow were received following his market-led proposals invitation of 20 March 2018, how many of those proposals remain under active consideration by his Department; on what dates he last (a) met and (b) corresponded with the promoters of schemes under active consideration; and when he plans to announce the process for selecting a preferred developer.

Andrew Jones:

30 market-led proposals were received in response to the Call for Ideas launched in March 2018. Due to commercial confidentiality we are not able to disclose details of meetings or correspondence with particular proposals. The Department responded to those proposals in December 2018 and

continued engagement with 10 proposals which had the potential to be financially credible without government support.

Separately to the Call for Ideas, a Southern Rail Link to Heathrow Market Sounding was also launched in March 2018. Following the publication of the Market Sounding Report in December 2018 the Department has been working to further develop and clarify the outcomes we want to be delivered from this project and consider appropriate commercial and procurement models. This work will be made available to the market by the summer along with further engagement opportunities.

Andy McDonald: [254201]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 30 April 2019 to Question 249314 on Railways, what assessment he has made of the effect of (a) a Western Rail Link to Heathrow Airport and (b) a Southern Rail Link to Heathrow Airport on the level of emissions of (i) greenhouse gases and (ii) other atmospheric pollutants in relation to (A) the existing configuration and (B) the addition of the North West Runway at London Heathrow Airport.

Andrew Jones:

When developing the Airports National Policy Statement (ANPS), the Government considered the environmental impacts of airport expansion, including surface access, in its assessment. The ANPS is clear that a new Northwest Runway will not receive Development Consent unless it can demonstrate compliance with air quality and climate change obligations.

Specific assessment of air quality and climate change impacts associated with the proposed Western and Southern Rail Links will form part of the required environmental assessments accompanying any development consent application. Both schemes are intended to support travel mode shift from road to rail, therefore supporting air quality and climate change targets.

Andy McDonald: [254202]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, pursuant to the Answer of 30 April 2019 to Question 249314, what (a) meetings, (b) correspondence and (c) other engagement his Department has had with (i) local authorities, (ii) the Mayor of London and (iii) the aviation industry on Western and Southern Rail Access to London Heathrow Airport since the publication of the Nicholls-Agilia reports on 19 December 2018.

Andrew Jones:

My Department has continued to actively engage with many parties in the interest of passengers and communities including Local Authorities, Transport for London and representatives of the aviation industry since the publication of the Market Sounding Findings Report published in December 2018.

<https://qnadailyreport.blob.core.windows.net/qnadailyreportxml/Written-Questions-Answers-Statements-Daily-Report-Commons-2019-05-22.pdf>

Written Questions – Thursday 23rd May

4 Dr David Drew (Stroud):

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps he (a) has taken and (b) is planning to take in response to the recommendations on planting trees made by the Climate Change Committee in its report Net Zero – The UK's contribution to stopping global warming, published in May 2019. (257400)

8 Dr Alan Whitehead (Southampton, Test):

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what guidance on the functions of Ofgem relating to climate and environment priorities he plans to include in the Strategy and Policy Statement relating to the functions of Ofgem, published in August 2014.(257385)

41N Zac Goldsmith (Richmond Park):

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions he has had with (a) the Health and Safety Executive and (b) Public Health England on the effect of aircraft noise on mental health. (257579)

42N Zac Goldsmith (Richmond Park):

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions he has had with (a) the Health and Safety Executive and (b) Public Health England on the effect of aircraft noise on the health of communities under proposed flight paths. (257580)

43N Stephen Timms (East Ham):

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how the members of the Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise were selected. (257395)

44N Stephen Timms (East Ham):

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he took to secure political impartiality when selecting members of the Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise; and if he will make a statement. (257396)

45N Stephen Timms (East Ham):

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how many members of the Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise are (a) supporters of political parties other than the Conservative party; (b) women; (c) from ethnic minorities and (d) below retirement age; and if he will make a statement. (257397)

46N Stephen Timms (East Ham):

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what criteria he used in selecting members of the Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise. (257398)

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmquestionbook/nog190523.pdf>

Written Answers – Thursday 23rd May

Climate Change

Bill Wiggin: [255288]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the UK leaving the EU on the UK's contribution to tackling climate change.

Chris Skidmore:

I refer my hon Friend to the answer I gave to my hon Friend the hon. Member for Crawley (Henry Smith) to Question 253562.

Schools: Pollution

Alex Sobel: [256345]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department took to alert (a) schools and (b) nurseries to pollution episodes in England during April 2019.

Alex Sobel: [256346]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps the Government is taking to protect children in (a) schools and (b) nurseries from pollution episodes.

Alex Sobel: [256347]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what guidance his Department issued to (a) schools and (b) nurseries on protecting children from pollution episodes in England in April 2019.

Nick Gibb:

Outdoor air quality is a responsibility of local authorities. The Department does not currently monitor air quality in schools, nurseries or other educational

institutions. Where there are concerns about air quality, a local authority must prepare an air quality action plan. The Department has recently published 'Building Bulletin 101 Ventilation of School Buildings', which provides guidance on achieving good indoor air quality in new and refurbished schools.

Air Pollution

Hugh Gaffney: [256368]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care on the effect of air pollution on public health.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Secretary of State has regular meetings with his counterpart at the Department for Health and Social Care and they discuss air pollution and public health most weeks.

Environment Protection

Vernon Coaker: [255656]

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when he plans to introduce the Environment Bill; and if he will make a statement.

Dr Thérèse Coffey:

The Environment Bill will be introduced early in the second Session of this Parliament.

Aviation: Exhaust Emissions

Bill Wiggin: [255289]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent steps he has taken to reduce carbon emissions in aviation.

Jesse Norman:

In December 2018, the Government published a green paper consultation on its new aviation strategy, Aviation 2050. The strategy proposes a comprehensive approach to tackling aviation's carbon emissions, taking into account the UK's domestic and international obligations to ensure that aviation contributes its fair share to action on climate change. The white paper will be published later this year and will take into account recent advice from the Committee on Climate Change.

The Government supports a range of measures to achieve its 2050 vision of reducing aviation carbon emissions, including efficiency improvements in technology, operations and air traffic management, use of renewable fuels and market-based measures.

Recently, the Government extended eligibility for rewards under the Renewable Transport Fuels Obligation (RTFO) to aviation fuels, and is making available up to £20 million of matched capital funding to projects that will produce low carbon waste-based fuels to be used for aviation and Heavy Goods Vehicles through the Future Fuels for Flight and Freight Competition (F4C).

The UK was instrumental in reaching agreement on the global carbon offsetting measure for aviation (CORSIA) in 2016 and continues to be actively involved in negotiating for a scheme that is environmentally effective and robust. The green paper also states that the UK will encourage ICAO to agree a long term emissions reduction goal at its 41st Assembly in 2022.

Model Aircraft: Registration

Dr David Drew: [256218]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) consultation (CAP1775), what recent discussions he has had with the CAA on the potential introduction of (a) compulsory registration by

model aircraft enthusiasts with the CAA, (b) registration fees, (c) age restrictions and (d) competency requirements.

Jesse Norman:

Department for Transport Ministers and officials have regular discussions with the CAA, including on the Drone Operator Registration Scheme and competency testing requirements, which will apply from November 2019. These will apply to all unmanned aircraft below 250g, including drones and model aircraft.

These are part of a package of measures to address the safety and security challenges that unmanned aircraft pose. They will help law enforcement agencies to tackle the misuse of such aircraft effectively, alongside new Police powers to be introduced in the forthcoming Drones Bill.

<https://qnadailyreport.blob.core.windows.net/qnadailyreportxml/Written-Questions-Answers-Statements-Daily-Report-Commons-2019-05-23.pdf>

Written Answers – Friday 24th May

Model Aircraft

Alberto Costa: [255347]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the effect of the forthcoming Drone Registration Scheme on aero modellers flying of small air vehicles that are not drones.

Ms Nusrat Ghani:

The Drone Operator Registration Scheme will apply from November 2019 and is one of several new measures to address the safety and security challenges that unmanned aircraft pose. It will help law enforcement agencies to tackle the misuse of such aircraft effectively, alongside new Police powers, which will be introduced in the upcoming Drones Bill.

In response to the Department's 2018 consultation on unmanned aircraft, the Government stated that any alternative approach for model flyers must be achieved without imposing undue burden on the state and the taxpayer, whilst also being efficient and enforceable, without compromising the integrity of the policy. Any blanket exemption from registration and competency tests for aero modellers, or having the associations register their members into the registration scheme, will not meet these criteria.

<https://qnadailyreport.blob.core.windows.net/qnadailyreportxml/Written-Questions-Answers-Statements-Daily-Report-Commons-2019-05-24.pdf>

What's On
27th-31st May 2019

N/A