



House of Commons

Wednesday 13 December 2023

Votes and Proceedings

The House met at 11.30 am.

Prayers

- 1 Questions to (1) the Minister for Women and Equalities
(2) the Prime Minister**
- 2 Statements: (1) Government response to the LGBT Veterans Independent Review
(Dr Andrew Murrison)
(2) Afghan resettlement update (Johnny Mercer)**
- 3 Government of Wales (Referendum on Devolution) Bill: Presentation (Standing Order No. 57)**

Mr Rob Roberts presented a Bill to make provision for a referendum on devolution in Wales; to provide that no further such referendum may take place within twenty five years; and for connected purposes.

Bill read the first time; to be read a second time on Friday 26 January 2024, and to be printed (Bill 137).
- 4 Immigration and Nationality Fees (Exemption for NHS Clinical Staff) Bill: Presentation (Standing Order No. 57)**

Mr Rob Roberts presented a Bill to exempt NHS clinical staff from the requirement to pay fees under section 68 of the Immigration Act 2014; and for connected purposes.

Bill read the first time; to be read a second time on Friday 26 January 2024, and to be printed (Bill 138).
- 5 Welfare Benefits (Adequacy, Debt and Deductions) Bill: Presentation (Standing Order No. 57)**

David Linden presented a Bill to require the Secretary of State to report to Parliament on the potential merits of prohibiting the making of deductions from certain social security benefits within the first six months of a claim, of restricting the making of deductions in cases where a claimant is at risk of hardship, of reducing the maximum proportion of a claim that may be deducted, and of changing the priority order in which debt repayments are recovered by deductions; to require the Secretary of State to report to Parliament on the adequacy of the rate at which social security benefits are paid; to require the Secretary of State to publish a strategy for increasing the availability of free debt and money advice for people claiming social security benefits; and for connected purposes.

Bill read the first time; to be read a second time on Friday 2 February 2024, and to be printed (Bill 49).

6 Finance Bill: Second Reading

Motion made and Question proposed, That the Finance Bill be now read a second time.

Amendment moved, to leave out from 'That' to the end of the Question and add 'That this House, while approving the changes to taxation of tobacco in the Finance Bill and full expensing being made permanent, declines to give the Bill a Second Reading because it fails to make a much-needed reduction in VAT for the hospitality and tourism sectors, and fails to introduce measures through the tax system that would help alleviate poverty.'—(*Drew Hendry*.)

7 Deferred Divisions

The Deputy Speaker announced the results of the Divisions which had been deferred to this day (Standing Order No. 41A).

(1) Representation of the People (Northern Ireland)

That the draft Representation of the People (Overseas Electors etc.) (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2023, which were laid before this House on 23 October, in the last Session of Parliament, be approved.

Division No. 29

Ayes: 325

Noes: 154

Question agreed to.

(2) Retained EU Law reform

That the draft Equality Act 2010 (Amendment) Regulations 2023, which were laid before this House on 7 November, be approved.

Division No. 30

Ayes: 464

Noes: 11

Question agreed to.

(3) Police

That the draft Representation of the People (Overseas Electors etc.) (Amendment) Regulations 2023, which were laid before this House on 23 October, in the last Session of Parliament, be approved.

Division No. 31

Ayes: 324

Noes: 186

Question agreed to.

8 Finance Bill: Second Reading (resumed)

The House resumed the debate.

Question put, That the Amendment be made.

The House divided.

Division No. 32

Ayes: 46 (Tellers: Steven Bonnar, Gavin Newlands)

Noes: 296 (Tellers: Amanda Solloway, Mark Fletcher)

Question negatived.

Question put forthwith (Standing Order No. 62(2)), That the Bill be now read a second time.

The House divided.

Division No. 33

Ayes: 291 (Tellers: Amanda Solloway, Mark Fletcher)

Noes: 54 (Tellers: Steven Bonnar, Gavin Newlands)

Question agreed to and Bill read a second time.

9 Finance Bill: Programme

Motion made and Question put forthwith (Standing Order No. 83A(7)), That the following provisions shall apply to the Finance Bill:

Committal

(1) The following shall be committed to a Committee of the whole House—

(a) Clause 1 (capital allowances: permanent full expensing etc for expenditure on plant or machinery);

(b) Clause 2 and Schedule 1 (new regime for research and development carried out by companies);

(c) Clause 21 and Schedule 12 (Pillar Two);

(d) Clause 25 (rebate on heavy oil and certain bioblends used for heating);

(e) Clause 27 (interpretation of VAT and excise law);

(f) Clauses 31 to 34 and Schedule 13 (tax evasion and avoidance);

(g) any new Clauses or new Schedules relating to the subject matter of the Clauses and Schedules mentioned in paragraphs (a) to (f).

(2) The remainder of the Bill shall be committed to a Public Bill Committee.

Proceedings in Committee of the whole House

(3) Proceedings in Committee of the whole House shall be completed in one day.

(4) The proceedings—

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

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

TABLE

Proceedings

Clauses 1 and 2 and Schedule 1; any new Clauses or new Schedules relating to the subject matter of those Clauses and that Schedule

Time for conclusion of proceedings

2 hours after the commencement of proceedings on the Bill.

Proceedings

Clause 21 and Schedule 12; Clauses 31 and 32 and Schedule 13; Clauses 33 and 34; any new Clauses or new Schedules relating to the subject matter of those Clauses and those Schedules

Clauses 25 and 27; any new Clauses or new Schedules relating to the subject matter of those Clauses

Time for conclusion of proceedings

4 hours after the commencement of proceedings on the Bill.

6 hours after the commencement of proceedings on the Bill.

Proceedings in Public Bill Committee etc

(5) Proceedings in the Public Bill Committee shall (so far as not previously concluded) be brought to a conclusion on Thursday 18 January 2024.

(6) The Public Bill Committee shall have leave to sit twice on the first day on which it meets.

(7) When the provisions of the Bill considered, respectively, by the Committee of the whole House and by the Public Bill Committee have been reported to the House, the Bill shall be proceeded with as if it had been reported as a whole to the House from the Public Bill Committee.

Proceedings on Consideration and Third Reading

(8) Proceedings on Consideration shall (so far as not previously concluded) be brought to a conclusion one hour before the moment of interruption on the day on which those proceedings are commenced.

(9) Proceedings on Third Reading shall (so far as not previously concluded) be brought to a conclusion at the moment of interruption on that day.

Programming committee

(10) Standing Order No. 83B (Programming committees) shall not apply to proceedings in Committee of the whole House, to proceedings on Consideration or to proceedings on Third Reading.—(*Scott Mann.*)

Question agreed to.

10 Statutory Instruments: Motions for Approval

Motion made and Question put forthwith (Standing Order No. 118(6)), That the draft York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority Order 2023, which was laid before this House on 7 November, be approved.—(*Scott Mann.*)

Question agreed to.

11 Public petitions

(1) A public petition from residents of Audlem in the constituency of Eddisbury relating to parking charges in Audlem was presented and read by Edward Timpson.

(2) A public petition from residents of the constituency of Crawley relating to the proposed West of Ifield development was presented and read by Henry Smith.

(3) A public petition from residents of the constituency of Barrow and Furness relating to Ulverston Library was presented and read by Simon Fell.

12 Adjournment

Subject: Flooding on the River Severn catchment area (Daniel Kawczynski)

Resolved, That this House do now adjourn.—(*Scott Mann*.)

Adjourned at 5.08 pm until tomorrow.

Other Proceedings

Lords Messages

13 National Insurance Contributions (Reduction in Rates) Bill

The Lords agree to the National Insurance Contributions (Reduction in Rates) Bill without amendment.

General Committees: Reports

14 Fifth Delegated Legislation Committee

Sir Gary Streeter (Chair) reported the draft Digital Government (Disclosure of Information) (Identity Verification Services) Regulations 2023.

15 Sixth Delegated Legislation Committee

Derek Twigg (Chair) reported the Draft Higher-Risk Buildings (Keeping and Provision of Information etc.) (England) Regulations 2023.

General Committees: Appointments

The Speaker appoints the Chair of General Committees and members of Programming Sub-Committees, and allocates Statutory Instruments to Delegated Legislation Committees.

The Committee of Selection nominates Members to serve on General Committees (and certain Members to serve on Grand Committees).

16 First Delegated Legislation Committee (Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing (High-Risk Countries) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2023 (SI, 2023, No. 1306))

Members: Debbie Abrahams, Bim Afolami, Tonia Antoniazzi, Paula Barker, Jack Brereton, Kevin Foster, James Grundy, Fabian Hamilton, Trudy Harrison, Paul Howell, Robert Langan, Ian Lavery, James Morris, Mary Robinson, Tulip Siddiq, Alison Thewliss and Edward Timpson

17 Second Delegated Legislation Committee (draft Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2024 and draft Biodiversity Gain Site Register (Financial Penalties and Fees) Regulations 2024)

Members: Paul Blomfield, Fiona Bruce, Alun Cairns, Dr Lisa Cameron, Dan Carden, Ruth Edwards, Michael Fabricant, Barry Gardiner, Mary Glendon, Chris Loder, Marco Longhi, Rachael Maskell, Matthew Pennycook, Rebecca Pow, Maggie Throup, Mrs Heather Wheeler and Beth Winter

18 Third Delegated Legislation Committee (draft Online Safety (List of Overseas Regulators) Regulations 2024)

Members: Adam Afriyie, Saqib Bhatti, Ben Bradley, Richard Burgon, Sarah Champion, Chris Evans, Mr Louie French, Mr Marcus Fysh, Nick Gibb, Peter Gibson, Andrew Lewer, Carol Monaghan, Lloyd Russell-Moyle, Alec Shelbrooke, Cat Smith, Jeff Smith and Suzanne Webb

19 Fourth Delegated Legislation Committee (draft National Minimum Wage (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2023)

Members: Andy Carter, Samantha Dixon, Steve Double, Rosie Duffield, Mr Philip Dunne, Mrs Paulette Hamilton, Kevin Hollinrake, Eddie Hughes, Justin Madders, John Penrose, Tom Randall, Ms Marie Rimmer, Alex Sobel, Jane Stevenson, Richard Thomson, Shailesh Vara and Mike Wood

20 Fifth Delegated Legislation Committee (draft Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 (Amendment of List of Safe States) Regulations 2024)

Members: Simon Baynes, Mr Ben Bradshaw, James Daly, Simon Fell, Colleen Fletcher, Darren Henry, Rachel Hopkins, Stephen Kinnock, Mr Jonathan Lord, Alan Mak, Scott Mann, Joy Morrissey, Sarah Owen, Chris Stephens, Alistair Strathern, James Sunderland and Michael Tomlinson

21 Sixth Delegated Legislation Committee (draft Immigration (Health Charge) (Amendment) Order 2023)

Members: Duncan Baker, Rob Butler, Neil Coyle, Sarah Edwards, Sir Michael Ellis, Colleen Fletcher, Sally-Ann Hart, Dame Meg Hillier, Gareth Johnson, Stephen Kinnock, Scott Mann, Keir Mather, Dr Kieran Mullan, Jess Phillips, Tom Pursglove, Greg Smith and Matt Vickers

22 Sixth Delegated Legislation Committee (draft Higher-Risk Buildings (Keeping and Provision of Information etc.) (England) Regulations 2023)

Members: Caroline Ansell, Jo Gideon and Dr Matthew Offord discharged and Mark Jenkinson, Joy Morrissey and Holly Mumby-Croft nominated in substitution.

Select Committees: Reports

23 Culture, Media and Sport Committee*

(1) *Gambling regulation:*

(i) Second Report, to be printed, with the formal minutes relating to the Report (HC 176);

(ii) Written evidence, to be published (HC 176);

*This item has been corrected since publication. See the correction in the Votes and Proceedings relating to Thursday 14 December 2023.

(2) *Pre-appointment hearing for Chair of the BBC Board:*

(i) Third Report, to be printed, with the formal minutes relating to the Report (HC 383);

(ii) Oral and written evidence, to be published (HC 383)

(Dame Caroline Dinenage).

24 Environmental Audit Committee

(1) *Seeing the wood for the trees: the contribution of the forestry and timber sectors to biodiversity and net zero goals: Government Response to the Committee's Fifth Report of 2022–23: First Special Report*, to be printed (HC 406);

(2) *Small modular reactors in the transition from fossil fuels*: Oral and written evidence, to be published (HC 281);

(3) *Heat resilience and sustainable cooling*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 279);

(4) *Prospects for UNFCCC COP28*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 185);

(5) *Enabling sustainable electrification of the UK economy*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 278)

(Philip Dunne).

25 European Scrutiny Committee

(1) Third Report, to be printed, with the formal minutes relating to the Report (HC 166-iii);

(2) *Correspondence with the Foreign Secretary relating to the Withdrawal Agreement Joint Committee and Trade and Cooperation Agreement Partnership Council*: Written evidence, to be published

(3) *EU Entry/Exit and the UK border*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 169);

(Sir William Cash).

26 Health and Social Care Committee

(1) *NHS dentistry: Government Response to the Committee's Ninth Report of Session 2022–23: First Special Report*, to be printed (HC 415);

(2) *Work of the Department 2023–24*: Oral and written evidence, to be published (HC 384);

(3) *Correspondence from the Home Secretary*: Written evidence, to be published;

(4) *Correspondence from the Minister of State for Social Care and Minister of State for Health and Secondary Care*: Written evidence, to be published;

(5) *Correspondence from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Mental Health and Women's Health Strategy*: Written evidence, to be published;

(6) *Men's Health*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 139)

(Steve Brine).

27 Home Affairs Committee

(1) *Migration and Asylum*: Oral evidence, to be published (HC 408);

(2) *Correspondence from the Minister for Housing and Homelessness and the Minister for Veterans' Affairs relating to plans for resettling eligible Afghans in the UK*: Written evidence, to be published;

(3) *Correspondence with the Permanent Secretary relating to follow-up from the evidence session on 29 November*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 356)

(Dame Diana Johnson).

28 Human Rights (Joint Committee on)*

(1) *Ministerial Scrutiny: Human Rights*: Oral evidence, to be published;

(2) *Accountability for Daesh crimes (formerly Daesh Inquiry)*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 179);

(3) *Correspondence from Lord Bellamy KC relating to the Arbitration Bill*: Written evidence, to be published;

(4) *Correspondence from the Equality and Human Rights Commission relating to the Equality and Human Rights Monitor*: Written evidence, to be published;

(5) *Correspondence from the Minister of State for Crime, Policing and Fire and the Minister of State for Justice relating to the Criminal Justice Bill*: Written evidence, to be published;

(6) *Correspondence from the Minister of State for Crime, Policing and Fire and the Minister of State for Justice relating to the Victims and Prisoners Bill*: Written evidence, to be published;

(7) *Correspondence from the Minister of State for Immigration relating to the Brook House Inquiry report*: Written evidence, to be published;

(8) *Human rights at work*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 181);

(9) *Correspondence with the Minister of State for Security relating to the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 (Remedial Order) 2023*: Written evidence, to be published

(Ms Harriet Harman).

*This item has been corrected since publication. See the correction in the Votes and Proceedings relating to Thursday 14 December 2023.

29 Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee

(1) *Electoral Registration*: Oral evidence, to be published (HC 58);

(2) *Correspondence with the Secretary of State relating to oral evidence to the Committee on Financial Distress in Local Authorities*: Written evidence, to be published.

(3) *The Finances and Sustainability of the Social Housing Sector*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 56);

(Clive Betts).

30 Northern Ireland Affairs Committee

PSNI data breaches: Oral evidence, to be published (HC 47) (Sir Robert Buckland).

31 Science, Innovation and Technology Committee

(1) *Governance of artificial intelligence*: Oral and written evidence, to be published (HC 38);

(2) *Work of the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology*: Oral evidence, to be published (HC 39);

(3) *Cyber resilience of the UK's critical national infrastructure*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 422);

(4) *Insect decline and UK food security*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 326)

(Greg Clark).

32 Statutory Instruments (Joint Committee on)

Sixth Report, to be printed, with the formal minutes relating to the Report (HC 36–vi) (Jessica Morden).

33 Statutory Instruments (Select Committee on)

Third Report, to be printed, with the formal minutes relating to the Report (HC 35–iii) (Jessica Morden).

34 Transport Committee

Accessible transport: legal obligations: Oral evidence, to be published (HC 82) (Iain Stewart).

35 Treasury Committee

- (1) *Sexism in the City*: Oral evidence, to be published (HC 240);
- (2) *Tax Simplification*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 229) (Harriett Baldwin).

36 Welsh Affairs Committee

Responsibilities of the Secretary of State for Wales: Oral evidence, to be published (HC 334) (Stephen Crabb).

37 Women and Equalities Committee

- (1) *Work of the Minister for Women and Equalities*: Oral evidence, to be published (HC 393);
- (2) *Correspondence from the Minister for Sport, Gambling and Civil Society relating to the Independent Review of Women's Football*: Written evidence, to be published;
- (3) *Correspondence from the Secretary of State for Business and Trade relating to the UK-Gulf Cooperation Council free trade agreement*: Written evidence, to be published;
- (4) *Correspondence with the Home Secretary relating to the Istanbul Convention*: Written evidence, to be published;
- (5) *Correspondence with the Minister for Skills, Apprenticeships and Higher Education relating to the Disabled Student's Allowance*: Written evidence, to be published;
- (6) *Sexism and inequalities in sport*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 130);
- (7) *Work of the Equality and Human Rights Commission*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 332) (Caroline Nokes).

38 Work and Pensions Committee

- (1) *Safeguarding vulnerable claimants*: Oral evidence, to be published (HC 146);
- (2) *Benefit levels in the UK*: Written evidence to be published (HC 142);
- (3) *Correspondence with Lisa Wilkinson and Amalgamated Holdings Wilkinson Limited relating to Wilko pension deficit*: Written evidence, to be published;
- (4) *Correspondence with the Information Commissioner relating to the Data Protection and Digital Information Bill*: Written evidence, to be published;

(5) *Correspondence with the Minister for Pensions relating to Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP)*: Written evidence, to be published;

(6) *Correspondence with The Pensions Regulator relating to Wilko pension scheme*: Written evidence, to be published;

(7) *Correspondence with the Secretary of State relating to the Data Protection and Digital Information Bill*: Written evidence, to be published;

(8) *Defined benefit pension schemes*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 144);

(9) *Norton pension schemes and the Fraud Compensation Fund*: Part of the written evidence, to be published (HC 145);

(10) *People and skills and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 147)

(Sir Stephen Timms).

Lindsay Hoyle

Speaker

Westminster Hall

The sitting began at 9.30 am.

Business appointed by the Chairman of Ways and Means (Standing Order No. 10(6))

1 Withdrawal of copper wire telecommunications networks

Resolved, That this House has considered the withdrawal of copper wire telecommunications networks.—(*Mr Alistair Carmichael*.)

The sitting was suspended between 10.49 am and 11 am.

2 Sexual harassment of surgeons and other medical professionals

Resolved, That this House has considered the matter of sexual harassment of surgeons and other medical professionals.—(*Rosie Duffield*.)

The sitting was suspended between 11.21 am and 2.30 pm (Standing Order No. 10(1)(b)).

3 Provision of broadband for rural communities

Motion made and Question proposed, That this House has considered the matter of provision of broadband for rural communities.—(*Chris Loder*.)

The sitting was suspended between 3.56 pm and 4.22 pm for divisions in the House (Standing Order No. 10(3)).

At 4.26 pm, the motion lapsed (Standing Order No. 10(6)).

4 The Community Ownership Fund and the former bingo hall in Kettering

Resolved, That this House has considered the Community Ownership Fund and the former bingo hall in Kettering.—(*Mr Philip Hollobone*.)

5 UK military action in Iraq and declassified documents from 1998

Motion made and Question proposed, That this House has considered the matter of UK military action in Iraq and declassified documents from 1998.—(*Neale Hanvey*.)

At 5.56 pm, the Motion lapsed (Standing Order No. 10(14)).

Sitting adjourned without Question put (Standing Order No. 10(14)).

Adjourned at 5.56 pm until tomorrow.

Eleanor Laing

Chairman of Ways and Means

Papers Laid

Papers subject to Affirmative Resolution

1 Health Care

Draft Anaesthesia Associates and Physician Associates Order 2024 (by Act), with an Explanatory Memorandum (by Command) (Andrew Stephenson)

2 Sanctions

Iran (Sanctions) Regulations 2023 (SI, 2023, No. 1314), dated 11 December 2023 (by Act), with an Explanatory Memorandum (by Command) (Anne-Marie Trevelyan)

Papers subject to Negative Resolution

3 Government Resources and Accounts

Government Resources and Accounts Act 2000 (Estimates and Accounts) (Amendment) Order 2023 (SI, 2023, No. 1360), dated 12 December 2023 (by Act), with an Explanatory Memorandum (by Command) (Laura Trott)

4 Immigration

Immigration and Nationality (Fees) (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulations 2023 (SI, 2023, No. 1359), dated 11 December 2023 (by Act), with an Explanatory Memorandum (by Command) (Secretary James Cleverly)

5 Social Security

Social Security Additional Payments (Third Qualifying Day) Regulations 2023 (SI, 2023, No. 1352), dated 11 December 2023 (by Act), with an Explanatory Memorandum (by Command) (Mims Davies)

Other papers

6 Health Professions

Report and Accounts of the Health and Care Professions Council for 2022–23, with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General (by Act), to be printed (HC 244) (Secretary Victoria Atkins)

7 Home Office

No Place to Hide: Serious and Organised Crime Strategy 2023–2028 (by Command)
(CP 992) (Secretary James Cleverly)

8 International Development

Sixty-fourth Report of the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom to the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, for the year ended 30 September 2023 (by Act) (Mr Andrew Mitchell)

9 National Heritage

Government Indemnity Scheme: Statement to Parliament on the level of outstanding liabilities under the Scheme for the six-month period ending 30 September 2023 (by Act) (Sir John Whittingdale)