

ADEPT: Parliamentary monitoring July 2020

This document is tailored to provide a monthly overview of key activity, debates, questions, reports, PMQs, speeches and bills relevant to the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport.

Key dates

1 July: Deadline contained in Withdrawal Agreement for transition extension request
 8 July: Fiscal event – post-pandemic budget statement
 21 July – 8 September: Summer recess
 17 September – 12 October: Party conferences
 31 December: Brexit extension period ends

Devolution deals

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
03/07/20	Speech	MHCLG	Local Government Association annual conference 2020: Minister for Regional Growth and Local Government's speech (Simon Clarke) here
09/07/20	Written question	MHCLG	<p>County Councils: Written question - 67824 Sally-Ann Hart (Hastings and Rye): To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to include proposals on the county council tier of local government in his forthcoming devolution White Paper. [67824]</p> <p>Mr Simon Clarke (Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland): Building on the success of our directly elected city region Mayors, our English Devolution and Local Recovery White Paper will set out our plans for expanding devolution, creating more elected Mayors in England, giving them and existing Mayors the powers they need to lead economic recovery and long term growth, and more unitary local authorities with stronger town and parish councils to deliver sustainable local services.</p> <p>We intend to publish the White Paper in Autumn 2020. here</p>
16/07/20	Written question	MHCLG	<p>District Councils: Devolution: Written question – 73072</p> <p>Layla Moran (Oxford West and Abingdon): To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what recent discussions he has had with representatives from the District Councils' Network on the forthcoming Devolution White Paper. [73072]</p>

			<p>Holding answer received on 16 July 2020</p> <p><u>Mr Simon Clarke (Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland)</u>: I regularly meet with representatives from the District Councils Network, including via the Economic Recovery Working Group. This group has discussed a number of themes pertaining to the English Devolution and Local Recovery White Paper in recent months, and will continue to do so. here</p>
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Digital – Broadband & mobile

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
13/07/20	Written question	MHCLG	<p>Digital Technology: Infrastructure: Written question - 71051</p> <p><u>Chi Onwurah (Newcastle upon Tyne Central)</u>: To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how much of the £900 million for shovel ready projects will be spent on digital infrastructure in (a) 2020-21 and (b) 2021-22. [71051]</p> <p><u>Mr Simon Clarke (Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland)</u>: Through the Getting Building Fund we are investing £900 million in a wide range of infrastructure projects to stimulate job creation, and support economic recovery. We have provided all Mayoral Combined Authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships with a funding allocation and are working with them over the coming weeks to agree the projects which the Fund will support so that delivery can get underway as soon as possible. here</p>

Economic recovery & renewal

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
30/06/20	Press release	PM office	<p>'Build build build': Prime Minister announces New Deal for Britain here</p>
30/06/20	Written question	DfE	<p>Technology: Coronavirus: Written question - 56206</p> <p><u>Alexander Stafford (Rother Valley)</u>: To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans he has to introduce retraining programmes in (a) the renewable energy sector and (b) other clean technologies sectors for people that may be unemployed after the covid-19 outbreak. [56206]</p>

			<p><u>Gillian Keegan (Chichester):</u></p> <p>Apprenticeships will have an important role to play in creating employment opportunities, particularly for young people, and supporting employers in all sectors to access the skilled workforce they need to recover and grow post-Covid-19. They can also help people re-train and re-enter the workforce.</p> <p>Employers are at the heart of our reforms to apprenticeships, designing high-quality standards that deliver the skills that they need. Standards developed by the renewable and clean energy sectors include: dual fuel smart meter installer, commercial energy specialist and power engineer.</p> <p>Additionally, the Engineering Construction Industry Training Board (ECITB) is undertaking work on a number of initiatives to support the energy, and wider engineering sector. This includes: scholarships that are focused on helping young people into areas of growth in the industry during the economic recovery period; connected competence to identify and facilitate transferrable skills, so that training doesn't need to be replicated within the industry; and 'Train to retain' allowing existing graduates to be retained and ultimately reskill them according to emerging industry requirements.</p> <p>The ECITB is also developing a programme for those at economic risk due to COVID-19 impacts on their part of the industry. This will be similar to the work ECITB and EDF collaborated on for workers at Cottam coal-fired power station, helping them transition from established parts of the energy sector into growth areas.</p> <p>We continue to work with further education providers and employers to ensure they deliver the skills our workers and economy need. We are looking to support employers of all sizes, and particularly smaller businesses to take on new apprentices this year. We will set out further details in due course. We will also ensure that there is sufficient funding to support small businesses wanting to take on an apprentice this year. In addition, we have launched a new online Skills Toolkit to</p>
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			<p>provide free high quality digital and numeracy courses, the skills most sought after by employers.</p> <p>Alongside wider adult skills reforms, the government is providing £2.5 billion (£3 billion when including Barnett funding for devolved administrations) over the course of the Parliament, for a new National Skills Fund to help adults learn new skills and prepare for the economy of the future. here</p>
01/07/20	Press release	Defra	<p>Government announces £40 million green jobs challenge fund: here</p>
01/07/20	Press release	Defra	<p>Economic Situation: Coronavirus: Written question - 63229 Mr Barry Sheerman (Huddersfield): To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to ensure that economic recovery after the covid-19 outbreak focuses on (a) tackling climate change and (b) skills creation in low carbon industries. [63229]</p> <p>Kemi Badenoch (Saffron Walden): The Coronavirus is the biggest threat this country has faced in decades. Alongside the focus on supporting the economy, the Government continues to take its environmental responsibilities very seriously.</p> <p>We are committed to meeting our climate change targets, including net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.</p> <p>The UK is a world leader in clean growth. Spring Budget 2020 reinforced the UK's strong track record in this area with at least £800m for carbon capture and storage, over £1bn of further support for ultra-low emission vehicles, at least doubling funding for energy innovation, and tax measures to encourage greater energy efficiency and tackle plastic waste.</p> <p>We have created Skills Advisory Panels to help local areas understand their current and future skills needs, including in low carbon industries, and to tailor provision accordingly. We will assess the impacts of potential interventions against their contribution to our environmental goals, including our climate change and air quality targets. here</p>
07/07/20	Written Statement	DCMS	<p>Support for arts, culture and heritage sector: Written statement - HCWS345 here</p>

08/07/20	Press release	Treasury	Chancellor's Plan for Jobs to help the UK's recovery here
08/07/20	Briefing documents	Treasury	Chancellor's Economic Statement - A Plan for Jobs – briefing documents here
08/07/20	Debate	HoC - Treasury	Economic update – debate here
08/07/20	Debate	HoC - Treasury	The Economy – debate here
14/07/20	Written question	MHCLG	<p>Local Government Finance: Coronavirus: Written question - 70322</p> <p>Jon Trickett (Hemsworth): To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what fiscal plans he has to help mitigate reductions in local authorities business rates revenue as a result of the covid-19 outbreak. [70322]</p> <p>Mr Simon Clarke (Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland): On the 2 July my Department laid a written statement on a wide-ranging package of further financial support to ensure local government can continue to fulfil its essential role in the national response to COVID-19. This includes a commitment to support the sector through an apportionment of irrecoverable business rates losses between central and local government, to be agreed at the Spending Review. The Government has also announced that the repayment of collection fund deficits arising in 2020-21, for example because of a reduction in local revenue from business rates, will be spread over the next three years rather than the usual period of a year, giving councils breathing space in setting budgets for next year. here</p>
20/07/20	Speech	Defra	George Eustice speech on environmental recovery: 20 July 2020 here
21/07/20	Press release	PM Office/DfT	PM commits £350 million to fuel green recovery: here
23/07/20	Written question	BEIS	<p>Economic Situation: Sustainable Development: Written question - 74776</p> <p>Abena Oppong-Asare (Erith and Thamesmead): To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what plans he has to promote green jobs and investment as part of the economic recovery from the covid-19 outbreak. [74776]</p> <p>Kwasi Kwarteng (Spelthorne): In his speech of June 30, my Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister made clear that in recovering from COVID-19, we must build back greener. This year alone, the government has set out billions in ambitious support for our low-</p>

			<p>carbon economy and green jobs. In the Chancellor's economic update on July 8, over £3 billion investment was announced to decarbonise the UK's buildings and transform energy efficiency in homes. This investment could support up to 140,000 green jobs.</p> <p>In addition, on 30 June, the Prime Minister announced the £40m Green Recovery Challenge Fund. This will help to restore nature and tackle climate change while also creating up to 3,000 jobs and safeguarding up to 2,000 others in conservation organisations and suppliers.</p> <p>These recent announcements build on investments outlined in the Spring Budget to support our low-carbon economy and green jobs including £1 billion for ultra-low emission vehicles including for charging infrastructure and plug-in grants and £800 million to capture carbon from power stations and industry. here</p>
23/07/20	Speech	HoL / Defra	<p>Environmental sustainability and resilience for a clean and green recovery</p> <p>Statement by Lord Goldsmith at the High-Level Panel at Chatham House's Global Forum on Forest Governance: here</p>
27/07/20	Written question	MHCLG	<p>Community Assets: Non-domestic Rates: Written question – 76597</p> <p>Jon Trickett (Hemsworth): To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what the cost to the public purse would be of introducing Business Rates Relief on community assets. [76597]</p> <p>Mr Simon Clarke (Middlesbrough South and East Cleveland): My department does not hold information on the business rates collected by local authorities from individual ratepayers. Nevertheless, many assets of community value, such as pubs, public halls and sports grounds, will benefit from the business rates holiday and therefore pay no rates in the current financial year. Assets of community value may also be eligible for other reliefs, including small business rate relief. In total, the additional reliefs provided in response to the coronavirus pandemic, combined with existing measures to reduce the burden of business rates, will save ratepayers over £23 billion over the next</p>

			five years. here
28/07/20	Written question	BEIS	<p>Economic Situation: Coronavirus: Written question – 76919</p> <p>Simon Baynes (Clwyd South): To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department is taking to ensure (a) a green and (b) a resilient recovery from the covid-19 outbreak. [76919]</p> <p>Kwasi Kwarteng (Spelthorne): In his speech of June 30, my Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister made clear that in recovering from COVID-19, we must build back better, build back greener, build back faster, and to do that at the pace that this moment requires. At my Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer 's economic update on July 8, the Government set out the next stage in our plan to support the UK's recovery from the pandemic.</p> <p>We are taking action to support a Green Recovery in every sector including: over £3 billion to transform energy efficiency in homes and public buildings; over £1 billion support for ultra-low emission vehicles; £800 million to capture carbon from power stations and industry; £640 million in Nature Climate Fund; and £100 million for research and development into Direct Air Capture technologies.</p> <p>We will continue to build on this and deliver a stronger, greener, more sustainable economy after this pandemic. here</p>
28/07/20	Speech	Treasury	HM Treasury: Speech by Steve Barclay, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, on how the Treasury can drive government change (28 July 2020) here
30/7/20	Press release	LEP Network	LEPs Five Point Plan proposes a 'ground-up' recovery here

Energy projects – local authority

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
13/07/20	Written question	HoL - BEIS	<p>Wind power: Cornwall</p> <p>Lord Berkeley: To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to engage with the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership to ensure that the proposed floating offshore</p>

			<p>windfarms are built off the coast of Cornwall. [HL6201]</p> <p>Lord Callanan: Floating offshore wind presents an exciting opportunity to support the UK's low carbon ambitions, whilst maintaining a leadership position in offshore innovation. The Department, alongside the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government are in regular contact with the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership, including in regard to their plans to transform the existing Wave Hub asset, off the coast of Cornwall, into a test site for floating offshore wind technologies.</p> <p>The Government recently consulted on the forthcoming Contracts for Difference allocation round, due to open in 2021, and included questions on measures to support floating offshore wind. The Contracts for Difference approach could support the commercial build out of offshore zones in the Celtic Sea. here</p>
15/07/20	Written question	BEIS	<p>Economic Situation: Written question – 70436</p> <p>John McNally (Falkirk): To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps the Government is taking to use the UK's potential economic recovery from the covid-19 outbreak to accelerate a transition to a carbon neutral economy. [70436]</p> <p>Kwasi Kwarteng (Spelthorne): In his speech of June 30, the Prime Minister made clear that in recovering from COVID-19, we must build back better, build back greener, build back faster, and to do that at the pace that this moment requires. Our economy must be greener, more sustainable, and more resilient.</p> <p>The UK has shown that growing our economy and cutting emissions can be achieved at the same time. We have grown our economy by 75% while cutting emissions by 43% over the past three decades. The UK has over 460,000 jobs in low carbon businesses and their supply chains and many of the actions we need to take to reach our target of net zero emissions by 2050 will support jobs and growth across the UK.</p>

			<p>The Government announced an ambitious support package for our low carbon economy at the Spring budget, including £800m fund for Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) and £1bn in support for ultra-low emission vehicles infrastructure. In his 30 June speech, my Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister announced further measures including up to £100m of new funding to research and develop Direct Air Capture (DAC) technology; a Green Recovery Challenge Fund of up to £40m to kick start a programme of nature-based projects to address the twin challenges of halting biodiversity loss and tackling climate change ; and, recommitting to planting 30,000 hectares of trees every year by 2025.</p> <p>On July 8, my Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer delivered an economic update setting out the next stage in our plan to support the UK's recovery from the pandemic. The Government announced an additional £3 billion green investment to create thousands of green jobs and upgrade buildings. This includes £50m to demonstrate innovative approaches to retrofitting social housing at scale, to start the decarbonisation of social housing over 20/21; a £2 billion 'Green Homes Grant' to help people improve the efficiency of their homes accelerating progress towards net zero, while supporting jobs and reducing energy bills; and, £1 billion investment over the next year in a new Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme to upgrade public sector buildings, including schools and hospitals, making them fit to help meet net zero with energy efficiency and low carbon heat measures.</p> <p>We will continue to build on this even further and deliver a stronger, greener, more sustainable economy after this pandemic. The Government will continue to set out further measures as part of its green agenda in the run up to COP26 in November 2021. here</p>

Environment – 25 year environment plan/Bill

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
30/06/20	Written question	Defra	<p>Environment: Coronavirus: Written question - 62273</p> <p>Sir Edward Davey (Kingston and Surbiton):</p>

			<p>To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effect of the covid-19 lockdown on the UK's natural environment; and if he will make a statement. [62273]</p> <p><u>Rebecca Pow (Taunton Deane):</u> Our efforts to keep coronavirus under control have had follow-on impacts on our natural environment. It is too early to draw detailed conclusions about the impacts of the lockdown, but some trends are developing. The unprecedented changes in living and working patterns during the coronavirus outbreak are likely to have had an effect on air pollution and could potentially lead to short-term improvements in air quality. It has been encouraging to see reports that some of our wildlife, including our common mammals and ground nesting birds, may be doing well, venturing into areas where they would not normally be seen. It is similarly encouraging to see reports of wildflowers blooming on roadside verges and land that has not been mown during the lockdown. Defra will continue to research and develop our understanding of the longer-term implications from these unprecedented changes in living and working patterns. This will ensure we apply that learning to delivering the Clean Air Strategy, 25 Year Environment Plan, the Environment Bill and our approach to the Government's Net Zero commitment. here</p>
30/06/20	Written question	Defra	<p>Nature Conservation: Finance: Written question - 64898</p> <p><u>Lilian Greenwood (Nottingham South):</u> To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the resourcing needed to ensure that the proposed Local Nature Recovery Strategies are (a) of a high standard and (b) cover the whole of England.</p> <p><u>Rebecca Pow (Taunton Deane):</u> The Government undertook an Impact Assessment of the Biodiversity Net Gain and Local Nature Recovery (LNR) Strategy provisions in the Environment Bill which was published on 15 October 2019. My officials are continuing to work with counterparts in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and to engage stakeholders to refine our estimates and</p>

			<p>work towards a more comprehensive assessment of resources required to ensure delivery to a high standard. The Environment Bill requires that, collectively, LNR Strategies cover the whole of England. Here</p>
30/06/20	Written question	Defra	<p>Nature Conservation: Finance: Written question - 64897 Lilian Greenwood (Nottingham South): Lilian Greenwood (Nottingham South): To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans he has to publish a strategy that will set out how a national nature recovery network is to be established. [64897]</p> <p>Rebecca Pow (Taunton Deane): Our 25 Year Environment Plan marked a step-change in ambitions for wildlife and the natural environment. It committed the Government to establishing a nature recovery network in England and developing a new strategy for nature, setting out how we will implement our international commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).</p> <p>The coronavirus outbreak has impacted on our plans. Key international meetings to develop global biodiversity targets, including the CBD Conference in China (originally planned for the end of 2020), have been postponed. At the same time, many of our stakeholders no longer have the capacity to engage on the strategy at the moment.</p> <p>This means that we have slowed the process of drafting the strategy so that we have extra time to engage with stakeholders, and properly reflect on the emerging international framework. We expect the main CBD Conference of the Parties to be rescheduled for some time in 2021 and will update our domestic plans once this is finalised.</p> <p>Although work on the strategy has been delayed, we are bringing forward policies and funding now that will deliver real change for nature and to establish a Nature Recovery Network (NRN).</p> <p>Our Environment Bill lays the foundation for the NRN. It sets the framework for at least</p>

			<p>one legally binding biodiversity target. It establishes spatial mapping and planning tools to inform nature recovery. It also creates duties and incentives, such as biodiversity net gain, to drive change on the ground.</p> <p>These measures will complement our plans for new funding for nature announced in March this year. Here</p>
01/07/20	Written question	Defra	<p>Environment Bill: Written question - 63516 Marco Longhi (Dudley North): To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will hold discussions with the Leader of the House on ensuring that there is parliamentary time to enable the Environment Bill to receive Royal Assent before the end of the transition period. [</p> <p>Rebecca Pow (Taunton Deane): I would like to thank my honourable friend for his work on the Committee scrutinising the Environment Bill so far and I share his anticipation for the Bill's return. I would like to assure him that the Government is working to resume the Bill's consideration as soon as the parliamentary timetable allows us to do so. I and my department are in close contact with counterparts in the Leader's and Whips' Offices as to the resumption of scrutiny of the Bill. here</p>
21/07/20	Written statement	Defra	<p>Contingency Fund Advance – Office for Environmental Protection: Written statement - HCWS401 Made by: George Eustice (Secretary of State)</p> <p>Defra has sought a repayable cash advance from the Contingencies Fund of £215,000.</p> <p>The requirement has arisen because there is an urgent requirement to proceed with setting up the Office for Environmental Protection (OEP) in advance of Royal Assent of the Environment Bill.</p> <p>Under Managing Public Money rules, expenditure to make preparation for the delivery of a new service prior to Royal Assent requires an advance from the Contingencies Fund. The cash advance will pay for essential set up expenditure on public appointments, minimal staff recruitment to begin, and essential services that are needed for establishing for the</p>

			<p>OEP. The need to spend now in advance of Royal Assent is driven by the necessary timelines associated with recruitment, procurement and set up which are expected to take several months. This will ensure that the OEP can be brought into operation and begin exercising its statutory functions as soon as practical after Royal Assent of the Environment Bill.</p> <p>Parliamentary approval for additional resources of £215,000 for this new service will be sought in a Supplementary Estimate for Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Pending that approval, urgent expenditure estimated at £215,000 will be met by repayable cash advances from the Contingencies Fund. here</p>
24/07/20	Written question	Defra	<p>Environment Protection: Written question - 74558</p> <p>Mr Jonathan Lord (Woking): To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent progress he has made on implementing the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan. [74558]</p> <p>Rebecca Pow (Taunton Deane): In June the Government published its second 25 Year Environment Plan Progress Report. This second report describes where progress has been made towards achieving the long-term vision of the plan. It also highlights the challenges that still remain in improving the environment within a generation and which we are committed to addressing.</p> <p>In the last 12 months we have taken significant steps forward in delivering our environmental commitments outlined in our 25 Year Environment Plan. We became the first major economy to legislate for net zero and underlining our commitment to achieving this target, we launched a consultation on bringing forward the end to the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles to 2035, or earlier if a faster transition appears feasible, including hybrids for the first time. We have also taken action to conserve our marine environment, including by designating the third tranche of 41 new Marine Conservation Zones in May 2019. We are also investing £640</p>

			<p>million in a new Nature for Climate Fund to support woodland creation and peatland restoration. Action under each of the goal areas of the 25 Year Environment Plan is set out in the report.</p> <p>A major step in implementing our environmental ambition has been bringing forward the first Environment Bill for more than 20 years to help leave the environment in a better state than that in which we found it. The Bill, alongside our strengthened Agriculture and Fisheries Bills, sets a new legal foundation for government action to improve the environment. It will place the environment at the heart of Government policy making and ensure that this Government – and future Governments – are held to account if they fail to uphold their environmental duties, including meeting net-zero by 2050, and wider long-term legally binding targets on biodiversity, air quality, water, and resource and waste efficiency established under the Bill. here</p>
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Environment – Air quality

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
01/07/20	Written question	HoL / Defra	<p>Air Pollution and Road Traffic- HL5880 Lord Taylor Of Warwick: To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to prevent traffic congestion and air pollution from rising above pre-COVID-19 levels. [HL5880]</p> <p>Lord Goldsmith Of Richmond Park: Air pollution poses one of the biggest environmental threats to public health. Our ambitious plans to decarbonise transport, improve air quality and support more active forms of travel have not changed, including the £3.8 billion we are already investing to clean up our air. Our recent rapid call for evidence will ensure we can fully understand the impact that coronavirus is having on changes in air pollution emissions, concentrations and exposure.</p> <p>The decision to manage congestion in towns and cities is ultimately one for the relevant local highways authority, and they are considering a range of measures to encourage and retain active travel. To</p>

			<p>support this, on 9 May the Government announced a £2 billion package of funding for active travel over the next 5 years from the £5 billion buses, cycling and walking funding announced by the Prime Minister on 11 February.</p> <p>Local authorities already have a range of powers to take action to reduce pollution from road vehicles. Through the Environment Bill we are improving co-operation within the Local Air Quality Management framework to widen the range of bodies that play a role in improving local air quality, including neighbouring local authorities and relevant public bodies, ensuring action is taken by all key players to tackle pollution sources and to improve air quality locally.</p> <p>Additionally we are working hard to implement our World leading Clean Air Strategy, which focuses on reducing broader emissions beyond road transport. here</p>
20/07/20	Written question	Defra	<p>Air Pollution: Pollution Control: Written question - 73998 Olivia Blake (Sheffield, Hallam): To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will bring forward legislative proposals to establish a statutory target to meet World Health Organisation standards for fine particle air pollution by 2030. [73998]</p> <p>Rebecca Pow (Taunton Deane): The Environment Bill establishes a legally binding duty to set a target for PM 2.5 , in addition to a long-term air quality target. As part of that work we have explored progress that will be made towards WHO PM 2.5 guidelines on a national level under a range of scenarios, and a report on this was published in July 2019. We are committed to setting challenging targets and following an evidence-based process, seeking advice from a range of experts, in addition to giving consideration to the World Health Organization 's air quality guidelines.</p> <p>The targets will be set in secondary legislation at the end of this process. It would not be an effective approach to policy making to commit in primary legislation to achieving a target, without</p>

			giving due consideration to its achievability and the measures required to meet that target. Stakeholders, Parliament and the public will have the opportunity to comment on, and input into, the process of developing this target. here
22/07/20	Written question	HoL / Defra	<p>Environment Bill: Coronavirus: Written question - HL6575</p> <p>Baroness Ritchie Of Downpatrick: To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have received about the potential merits of amending the Environment Bill in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. [HL6575]</p> <p>Lord Goldsmith Of Richmond Park: The Government is working with a wide range of stakeholders, including businesses and environmental non-governmental organisations (NGOs), on how the Environment Bill can support our goals to build a fairer, greener, more resilient recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. The Secretary of State met with chief executives of six leading environmental NGOs on 11 May, 8 June, and 9 July, to discuss the Government's environmental ambitions including the Environment Bill and the opportunities relating to the recovery from the crisis. here</p>
24/07/20	Written question	Defra	<p>Air Pollution: Urban Areas: Written question - 75466</p> <p>Charlotte Nichols (Warrington North): To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what plans he has to improve air quality in towns and city centres. [75466]</p> <p>Rebecca Pow (Taunton Deane): Our Clean Air Strategy sets out an ambitious programme of action to reduce air pollution from a wide range of sources in our towns and cities. We have also put in place a £3.5 billion plan to tackle roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations. Our Environment Bill makes a clear commitment to set a legally binding target to reduce fine particulate matter and enables greater local action by ensuring responsibility for tackling air pollution is shared across local government structures and with relevant public authorities. We are also strengthening the ability of local authorities to tackle smoke emissions from</p>

			<p>domestic solid fuel burning, which is a major source of fine particulate matter.</p> <p>Under the Local Air Quality Management Framework, local authorities review and assess local air quality and are required to declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) if local monitoring indicates exceedance of legal air quality standards and objectives, and are then required to develop an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) to address the exceedance.</p> <p>Warrington Borough Council (WBC) has declared two AQMAs in the district, both for exceedances of the NO2 annual mean. As part of its AQAP, WBC is encouraging uptake of low emission vehicles and active travel. Defra has this year awarded £87,350 from the Air Quality Grant to WBC to run an electric taxi scheme. here</p>

Environment – climate change & net zero

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
30/06/20	Press release	BEIS	Boost for renewable heat projects as government confirms tariff extension here
01/07/20	Written question	HoL / BEIS	<p>Climate Change: Coronavirus: Written question - HL5899</p> <p>Lord Brooke Of Alverthorpe: To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on climate change . [HL5899]</p> <p>Lord Callanan: While it is clear that an economic slowdown caused by Covid-19 is likely to have an impact on emissions both domestically and globally, it is too early to know the likely size of the impact and the long-term implications. Domestically, Covid-19 has had a significant short-term effect. For example, BEIS statistics estimate that road fuel sales in the 12 weeks since the 23 March were 48 per cent below the preceding eight weeks, and electricity consumption has also reduced. Renewables have regularly been providing more than 50% of our power and we recently went 67 days without using coal for electricity generation. Internationally, the International Energy Agency estimate global CO 2 emissions will fall by around 8% this year, but then rebound with economic recovery.</p>

			<p>These reductions are likely to be short-term. The fundamental need for the world to act urgently to decarbonise remains. Global emissions need to fall rapidly year on year in line with the Paris Agreement goal. That is why we set out ambitious plans at the Budget, and will be focusing on continuing to develop our net zero strategy in advance of COP26 – including through strengthening our plans for decarbonisation in key sectors. The Government will also continue to lead work on the international economic recovery, striving to deliver a UK and world economy which is stronger, cleaner, more sustainable and more resilient after this crisis. Through our COP26 and G7 Presidencies, we will work with our international partners to increase climate ambition and address the linked challenges of public health, climate change and biodiversity. here</p>
01/07/20	Written questions	BEIS	<p>Climate Change: Coronavirus: Written question - 63399 Alan Brown (Kilmarnock and Loudoun): To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if the Government will make it its policy to prioritise meeting climate change targets as part of a green economic recovery from the covid-19 outbreak. [63399]</p> <p>Kwasi Kwarteng (Spelthorne): As we recover from COVID-19, the Government intends to deliver a UK economy which is cleaner, more sustainable and more resilient. The UK was the first major economy to legislate our 2050 Net Zero target last year and tackling climate change should be at the heart of our economic recovery.</p> <p>In delivering the UK's net zero target, we are looking to position the UK as a world leader in low carbon technologies, services, and systems. The UK has a strong base to grow from there are almost half a million jobs in low carbon businesses and their supply chains across the country and low carbon exports are already worth billions of pounds each year. here</p>
01/07/20	Oral question	HoL	<p>Committee on Climate Change: Progress Report Baroness Hayman: To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the Committee on Climate Change Reducing UK Emissions: 2020 Progress Report to Parliament, published on 25 June.</p>

			<p>Baroness Hayman (CB): My Lords, I beg leave to ask the Question in my name on the Order Paper and declare my interests as set out in the register.</p> <p>Lord Callanan (The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy): My Lords, the Government welcome the committee's comprehensive and wide-ranging report and agree with it that tackling climate change should be at the heart of our economic recovery. The actions we need to take to achieve our world-leading net-zero target can help to deliver a stronger, cleaner and more resilient United Kingdom following this pandemic. The Government will publish their full response to the CCC by 15 October, as required by the Climate Change Act. More here</p>
03/07/20	Speech	BEIS	<p>Alok Sharma speech – COP 26: Resilience in light of COVID: Climate Action on the Road to COP26 here</p>
06/07/20	Written question	BEIS	<p>Energy: Conservation: Written question - 65189 Ben Lake (Ceredigion): To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether it remains his policy to invest £9.2 billion to improve the energy efficiency of (a) homes and (b) public buildings. [65189]</p> <p>Kwasi Kwarteng (Spelthorne): Tackling climate change and reaching our legally-binding emission reduction targets continue to be a top priority for the Government.</p> <p>We remain committed to our aspiration for as many homes as possible to reach Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C by 2035 where practical, cost-effective, and affordable. Improving the energy efficiency of existing homes will play a critical role in delivering our greenhouse gas emission reduction targets, including Net Zero by 2050 as well as lifting households out of fuel poverty.</p> <p>We continue to enable greenhouse gas emission reductions in public buildings through the Public Sector Energy Efficiency Loan Scheme, and the fund for England will stand at £385 million by the end of 2020/21.</p> <p>BEIS remains committed to energy efficiency and decarbonising buildings, in line with the Manifesto commitment to invest £9.2 billion in low carbon buildings. The funding decisions are a matter for my Rt. Hon. Friend Mr</p>

			Chancellor of the Exchequer. here
07/07/20	Press release	BEIS committee	What should the Government's priorities be at the COP 26 UN climate summit? here
07/07/20	Speech	BEIS	Speech by COP26 President Alok Sharma at the virtual fourth Ministerial on Climate Action (MoCA), co-convened by the EU, China and Canada (7 July 2020) here
10/07/20	Letter to BEIS committee	BEIS	Letter from Alok Sharma MP, Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, regarding Net Zero Government here
13/07/20	Written question	BEIS	<p>Renewable Energy: Heating: Written question - 70384</p> <p>Grahame Morris (Easington): To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, if he will make it his policy to include heat pumps in the Green Homes Grant. [70384]</p> <p>Kwasi Kwarteng (Spelthorne): In his Summer Economic Update, my Rt. Hon. Friend Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer announced a £2bn Green Home Grant scheme that will support homeowners and landlords in England to improve the energy efficiency of their properties, reducing energy bills and carbon emissions, and supporting a green economic recovery. The funding will be spent on paying for accredited tradespeople to install a range of measures, for example insulation, to improve the energy performance of their homes. Further detail on the range of measures will be announced in the coming days, before the scheme's full launch. here</p>
13/07/20	Written question	Defra	<p>Countryside: Climate Change: Written question - 70945</p> <p>Dame Cheryl Gillan (Chesham and Amersham): To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will make an assessment of the implications for his policies of the CPRE report, Greener, better, faster: countryside solutions to the climate emergency and for a green recovery, published in July 2020. [70945]</p> <p>Rebecca Pow (Taunton Deane): I had the pleasure of speaking at the launch of the CPRE report, Greener, Better, Faster in which the countryside is at the heart of a green recovery and a source of climate change solutions. While the world is rightly focused on tackling the immediate threat of coronavirus, other great global challenges such as climate change and biodiversity loss have not gone away. The Government remains committed to being a world leader on tackling the</p>

			<p>environmental crises we face.</p> <p>As we develop our mitigation plans, we will need to manage trade-offs with our other objectives, for example, balancing land use change for mitigation purposes (e.g. planting trees) with enhancing the natural environment and improving food security.</p> <p>Our Environmental Land Management (ELM) scheme is the cornerstone of our new agricultural policy. Founded on the principle of “public money for public goods”, ELM is intended to provide a powerful vehicle for achieving the goals of the 25 Year Environment Plan and commitment to net zero emissions by 2050, while supporting our rural economy. Farmers and other land managers may enter into agreements to be paid for delivering the following public goods: clean air; clean and plentiful water; thriving plants and wildlife; reduction in and protection from environmental hazards; beauty, heritage and engagement with the environment; mitigation of and adaptation to climate change.</p> <p>Mitigation of and adaptation to climate change are important goals of the 25 Year Environment Plan and important objectives of ELM. ELM could support this through providing funding for land management activities that reduce greenhouse gas emission and sequester carbon. Adapting to the inevitable changes in our climate is also vital. While we continue to reduce our contribution to climate change, we are also taking robust action to improve the resilience of our people, economy and environment. here</p>
14/07/20	Written question	BEIS	<p>Infrastructure: Greenhouse Gas Emissions: Written question - 69685</p> <p>Nickie Aiken (Cities of London and Westminster): To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what steps his Department has taken to ensure that infrastructure projects support the Government's commitment to bring greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. [69685]</p> <p>Kwasi Kwarteng (Spelthorne): The Government is committed to reduce UK greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. Reaching this target will end the UK's contribution to global</p>

			<p>warming.</p> <p>Our decisions on infrastructure will help us to deliver net zero. At the Spring Budget we announced an ambitious support package worth over £2bn for low carbon infrastructure, including £800m fund for Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) and £1bn in support for ultra-low emission vehicles. In addition, my Rt. Hon. Friend the Prime Minister recently announced plans for 4,000 new zero-emission buses and a new plan for cycleways as part of upgrades to transport infrastructure.</p> <p>The replacement of traditional gas and electricity meters with smart meters is a vital national infrastructure upgrade that will enable a more flexible energy system, without which modelling for the Committee on Climate Change estimates the costs of delivering net zero emissions by 2050 could be up to £16 billion higher each year. We have been working with industry to re-mobilise smart meter installations after the disruption caused by COVID-19, and last month confirmed a new four-year policy framework which will take effect from 2021 to drive a market-wide rollout of smart meters across Great Britain. here</p>
20/07/20	Written question	Treasury	<p>Economic Growth: Carbon Emissions: Written question - 72157</p> <p>Sir Edward Davey (Kingston and Surbiton): To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential effect of the measures announced in his summer economic update on the (a) UK's net zero emissions target and (b) Paris climate agreement; and whether he will make a statement. [72157]</p> <p>Our world-leading Green Book guidance provides a robust framework for assessing the impact of interventions on achieving our environmental goals.</p> <p>As part of the Plan for Jobs, the Chancellor announced over £3 billion of new funding for green buildings, including a £2 billion Green Homes Grant scheme to upgrade people's homes and £1 billion to improve the energy efficiency of public sector buildings.</p> <p>This accelerates our progress towards net zero, saving the equivalent of up to 0.6 MtCO₂e</p>

			per year, which is roughly equivalent to taking up to 270,000 cars off the road. here
21/07/20	Written question	Treasury	<p>Government Securities: Environment Protection</p> <p>Alexander Stafford (Rother Valley): To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what steps he is taking to use green gilts to help the Government achieve net zero by providing the capital for (a) roadside charging infrastructure, (b) renewable energy and (c) retrofitting homes with efficient appliances. [73152]</p> <p>John Glen (Salisbury): The government has been carefully considering the potential issuance of a UK sovereign green bond and will keep this under review. In considering new policy, the government engages with a range of stakeholders, including foreign governments, in order to be fully informed of different viewpoints.</p> <p>The government published its Green Finance Strategy last year, which includes the ambition to align private sector financial flows with clean, environmentally sustainable and resilient growth, and strengthen the competitiveness of the UK financial sector. The government continues to support the financial services sector and firms in their capability, competitiveness and the transition to net zero, including through the recently launched Green Finance Education Charter and work with the Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures. here</p>
23/07/20	Written question	BEIS	<p>Carbon Emissions: Written question - 75435</p> <p>Alex Sobel (Leeds North West): To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, whether the proposed Energy White Paper will include an assessment of the role of flexibility in meeting net zero climate targets. [75435]</p> <p>Kwasi Kwarteng (Spelthorne): My Rt. Hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has set out his intention to publish the Energy White Paper this Autumn.</p> <p>The Energy White Paper will address the transformation of our energy system as we deliver net-zero emissions by 2050. We have taken clear actions to enable flexibility</p>

			through our Smart Systems and Flexibility Plan, including reforming markets so that they properly reward flexibility, removing barriers for flexible technologies, and investing in flexible innovation.ve provided 30,000 48 sheet and 96 sheet advertising slots per week. here
27/07/20	Written question	HoL - Treasury	<p>Government Departments: Procurement: Written question - HL6758</p> <p>Lord Berkeley: To ask Her Majesty's Government when they intend to set out further details of their planned review of The Green Book; and what steps they are taking to ensure (1) that they effectively consider their target to reach net-zero emissions by 2050 in undertaking that review, and (2) that all Government departments treat reaching that target as a priority. [HL6758]</p> <p>Lord Agnew Of Oulton: The Government's review of the Green Book - the government's core guidance on how to develop and appraise schemes against government objectives – is currently ongoing.</p> <p>An updated Green Book will be published later in the year, and early findings will inform the allocations process at the Spending Review in Autumn.</p> <p>The review is focused on ensuring that the guidance is consistent with the Government's ambition to level-up opportunity across the country, and it is also considering more broadly how project approval decisions are being made and looking at what clearer guidance and support to practitioners can be provided.</p> <p>The Green Book currently provides a framework for valuing the costs and benefits of interventions, including with regards to climate change mitigation and other environmental impacts. The guidance requires that environmental impacts for projects and programmes are assessed and that legal commitments such as net-zero must be considered as part of appraisal.</p> <p>Tackling climate change is a priority for the Government. The UK was the first major economy in the world to legislate for net zero, increasing the ambition of our commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions under the Climate Change Act 2008. The</p>

			Government is committed to meeting that challenge. here
28/07/20	Written question	Defra	<p>Imports: Carbon Emissions: Written question - 76653</p> <p>Jeremy Hunt (South West Surrey): To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to help reduce the amount of carbon dioxide emissions associated with goods imported into the UK. [76653]</p> <p>Rebecca Pow (Taunton Deane): The latest figures show carbon dioxide (CO 2) emissions associated with imported goods fell by 1% between 2016 and 2017, and by 16% between 2007 (when they peaked) and 2017.</p> <p>The latest figures published are at: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uks-carbon-footprint but they focus on greenhouse gas emissions rather than just CO 2 emissions.</p> <p>The Government's Resources and Waste Strategy for England sets out its ambition to move from a make, take, use, throw linear economic model to a more circular economy which will reduce our carbon footprint from imported emissions through increasing repair, re-use, remanufacture and other waste prevention activities.</p> <p>The Environment Bill includes measures that will help consumers to make purchasing decisions that support the market for more sustainable products. It contains powers to introduce clear product labelling, which will enable consumers to identify products that are more durable, repairable and recyclable and will inform them on how to dispose of used products. here</p>
30/07/20	Written question	HoL - BEIS	<p>Renewable Energy: Written question - HL6889</p> <p>Lord Lilley: To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has made of the domestic value added as a proportion of the total cost of capital investment in renewable energy capacity installed in the last five years, and in particular of the domestic value added as a proportion of the cost of (1) electric photo voltaic panels, (2) heat pumps, (3) batteries for electric cars, (4) wind turbines, generators and gear boxes, (5)</p>

			<p>wind turbine blades, and (6) platforms and legs for offshore wind turbines. [HL6889]</p> <p>Lord Callanan: The Government has not made an assessment on this basis. However, in 2019, the Department commissioned a consortium to provide analysis on future energy innovation needs and to produce the Energy Innovation Needs Assessments. These include information on potential Gross Value Add, domestic and export growth opportunities of different technologies in the UK's future energy system.</p> <p>The Energy Innovation Needs Assessments are available on the GOV.UK website. here</p>
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Environment – Waste

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
30/06/20	Written question	Defra	<p>Textiles: Recycling: Written question - 62630 Anthony Mangnall (Totnes): To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if his Department will make an assessment of the potential merits of requiring that consumer information is provided to promote the sale of durable, repairable and recyclable textiles. [62630]</p> <p>Rebecca Pow (Taunton Deane): The Government committed in the Resources & Waste Strategy to support ecodesign standards for products and to improve labelling schemes, as well as to address challenges in the textiles sector. We are seeking powers in the Environment Bill that will enable the Government to mandate the provision of relevant information to help consumers make more sustainable purchasing decisions. This information must be relevant to a product's impact on the natural environment and can include information relating to a product's durability, reparability and recyclability, as well as its recycled content. The textiles sector remains a priority area for potential future regulations, including but not limited to making use of those powers. here</p>
07/07/20	Written question	HoL - Defra	<p>Domestic Waste: Recycling: Written question - HL6061 Baroness Crawley: To ask Her Majesty's Government when they estimate the recycling rate for waste from British households will exceed the former EU</p>

			<p>target of 50 per cent; and whether, following the UK's withdrawal from the EU, they have dropped that target. [HL6061]</p> <p>Lord Goldsmith Of Richmond Park: The Government is committed to exceeding the 50% target for recycling household waste and this target remains in legislation. The Government has not prepared an estimate of when the UK will exceed this target. The latest UK recycling rate published in March 2020 showed that the UK recycled 45% of household waste in 2018.</p> <p>The Government has also committed to recycle 65% of municipal waste in England by 2035 and set out measures to achieve this target in the Resources and Waste Strategy and the Environment Bill. here</p>
10/07/20	Written question	Defra	<p>Beverage Containers: Recycling: Written question - 67808</p> <p>Charlotte Nichols (Warrington North): To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will bring forward the date for the Deposit Return Scheme to be introduced.</p> <p>Rebecca Pow (Taunton Deane): The Government committed in its manifesto to introduce a deposit return scheme (DRS) for drinks containers. We are seeking powers to do so in the Environment Bill. Since consulting on its introduction in 2019, the Government has been developing proposals for a DRS using further evidence and ongoing engagement with stakeholders. The Government plans to undertake a second consultation on a DRS in early 2021. In preparation for that consultation, we are currently reviewing the proposed timeline for its introduction. here</p>
13/07/20	Written question	Defra	<p>Beverage Containers: Recycling: Written question - 69511</p> <p>Paul Maynard (Blackpool North and Cleveleys): To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, when he plans to introduce a Deposit Return Scheme for plastic bottles. [69511]</p> <p>Rebecca Pow (Taunton Deane): The Government committed in its manifesto to introduce a deposit return scheme (DRS) for drinks containers. We are seeking powers to do so in the Environment Bill . Since consulting on its introduction in 2019,</p>

			<p>the Government has been developing proposals for a DRS using further evidence and ongoing engagement with stakeholders. The Government plans to undertake a second consultation on a DRS in early 2021. In preparation for that consultation, we are currently reviewing the proposed timeline for its introduction. here</p>
16/07/20	Written question	Defra	<p>Waste: Exports: Written question - 73144</p> <p>Olivia Blake (Sheffield, Hallam): To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will implement a ban on the exportation of (a) plastic waste and (b) other types of UK waste. [73144]</p> <p>Rebecca Pow (Taunton Deane): Recognising the difficulties experienced by some countries in managing imports of plastic waste, the Queen's Speech on 19 December 2019 included a commitment to ban the export of plastic waste to countries that are not members of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. The Environment Bill includes a power which will enable us to deliver on this commitment and we will consult on the date by when the ban should be in place. The Bill also includes a power to introduce electronic tracking of waste to help tackle waste crime here in the UK and prevent illegal waste from being shipped abroad.</p> <p>The export of UK waste for disposal is generally prohibited. The Government has no plans to ban the export of other wastes. We are keen to promote UK-based recycling and export less waste to be processed abroad. Where the UK cannot currently recycle materials economically, exports can help ensure those materials are recycled in recipient countries. While there is a legitimate global market for secondary materials, it must be and is subject to strict regulatory requirements. here</p>
24/07/20	Written question	Defra	<p>Waste Disposal: Crime: Written question - 74557</p> <p>Mr Jonathan Lord (Woking): To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to tackle waste crime. [74557]</p> <p>Rebecca Pow (Taunton Deane): Waste crime blights both local communities and</p>

			<p>the environment and we are committed to tackling it. We have given the Environment Agency an extra £60 million to tackle waste crime since 2014.</p> <p>Our Resources and Waste Strategy (RWS) sets out our approach to preventing, detecting and deterring waste crime. The Environment Bill takes forward a number of these measures, including powers to introduce the mandatory electronic tracking of waste and enhanced enforcement powers for regulators and local authorities. The RWS is available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/765914/resources-waste-strategy-dec-2018.pdf</p> <p>In January 2020, the Joint Unit for Waste Crime (JUWC) was launched - a taskforce dedicated to tackling serious and organised criminality in the waste sector, including large-scale illegal dumping and false labelling of waste . It brings together the EA, the National Crime Agency, the police, HMRC, Natural Resources Wales and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency in a UK-wide effort to share intelligence and resources. To tackle the growing trend in criminal waste networks, the new unit will conduct site inspections, make arrests and prosecutions and, upon conviction, push for heavy fines and custodial sentences. here</p>

Industrial strategy & local industrial strategies

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
			No updates

Local government funding

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
02/07/20	Press release	MHCLG	Comprehensive new funding package for councils to help address coronavirus pressures and cover lost income during the pandemic: here
22/07/20	Written question	HoL / MHCLG	Local Government Finance: Written question - HL6643

			<p>Baroness Thornhill: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether work has been postponed on (1) plans to introduce 100 per cent business rate retention, and (2) the Fair Funding Review; and what steps they are taking to progress reforms to local government finance. [HL6643]</p> <p>Lord Greenhalgh: In April the government announced that it would not be implementing the Review of Relative Needs and Resources and the planned increase to the rate of business rates retention in 2021-22. This decision was taken to allow councils to focus on meeting the immediate public health challenges posed by the pandemic. As the local government finance system moves into a more stable position, we will engage with our partners in local government on a suitable timetable for continuing consultation and subsequently implementing a reform package. here</p>
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Planning

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
02/07/20	Written question	MHCLG	<p>Planning: Reform: Written question - 64882 Tracey Crouch (Chatham and Aylesford): To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment his Department has made of the compatibility of proposed planning reforms with measures contained in the Environment Bill [64882]</p> <p>Christopher Pincher (Tamworth): The planning system has a vital role to play in enabling the delivery of housing and to support sustainable economic growth and renewal, and we want to see better planning for nature, in a way that's more efficient as well as effective. In March, the government signalled its intention to modernise our planning system, ensuring it supports the delivery of homes that local people need and creates more beautiful and greener communities. Since then, we have developed a number of planning regulation easements to support businesses to operate through Covid-19, such as enabling restaurants, cafes and pubs to offer a takeaway and delivery service and removing specific publicity requirements for planning applications. We have recently</p>

			introduced a Bill to parliament with further measures to help businesses to resume and to support economic recovery, and will continue to work across government to investigate options for broader regulatory reform to support sustainable economic growth and renewal, and to protect and conserve the environment. here
06/07/20	Debate	HoLs	Business and Planning Bill. Debate 2 nd reading here
14/07/20	Committee	HoL	Business and Planning Bill here

Transport – automated & electric vehicles

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
			No updates

Transport – Investment strategy

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
01/07/20	Written evidence	DCfT	CIT0164 - Coronavirus: implications for transport Written evidence submitted by the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning & Transport here
07/07/20	Written question	HoL - MHCLG	Local Government: Infrastructure and Public Transport: Written question - HL6081 Lord Porter Of Spalding: To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to give councils long-term, devolved infrastructure and public transport budgets. [HL6081] Lord Greenhalgh: The Government is committed to levelling up the country and giving communities more control over how investment is spent so that they can decide what is best for them. The forthcoming White Paper on devolution will set out the framework for future local growth funding, ensuring budgets are devolved to the right spatial level to unleash the potential of our regions and deliver on levelling up. In 2020/21, the Government is allocating over £1.7 billion for local highways maintenance and improvements to local highways authorities in England, outside London, through the Transport Infrastructure Investment Fund. We will also provide £4.2 billion from 2022-23 for five-year funding settlements for eight Mayoral Combined Authorities, building on the success of the Transforming Cities Fund, as set out in the Budget earlier this year. here

07/07/20	Report	HoC Briefing Library	Active travel: Trends, policy and funding report here
08/07/20	Press release	DfT	On the road to a sustainable future: Net Zero Transport Board paves the way for a green recovery. here

Transport – Sub-national Transport Boards (STBs) – (eg TfN, TfSE)

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes
30/06/20	Press release	TfN	Commitment to “building back” welcomed as TfN reiterates calls for a Northern Infrastructure Pipeline: here
15/07/20	Press release	TfN	Transport for the North pleased to see NIC focus on real benefits: here
20/07/20	Policy paper	DfT / TfL	Terms of reference for the government led financial review of Transport for London. here
21/07/20	Press release	TfL	Empowerment must be next for the North's ‘one voice’ on transport. here

Brexit – BEIS, Defra, MHCLG, & committees

Date	Type	Organisation	Notes