

Political Affairs Brief

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

SCoJeC

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Community Relations

Communities and Local Government

Government is committed to tackling inequality and disadvantage wherever it exists

... John Denham has today published Tackling Race Inequality: A Statement on Race. ... Across Government, efforts to raise incomes, reduce poverty and promote inequality - whether through the minimum wage, Sure Start or housing - has made a real difference to the lives of the most disadvantaged, including those from BME communities.

However, there is still much to do. There are still areas of concern, especially in school exclusions and stop and search. Alongside these old challenges there are new and emerging trends affecting White and BME people. There is a growing Black and Asian middle class - they are now coming up against the old problems in new settings. Research shows that people whose surname suggests they are from a BME background find it harder to get an interview when applying for a job. In education we know that Chinese and Indian students in particular do better than the average in schools whilst White working class boys appear to be lagging behind. ...

Enforcing the strong legal framework - The new Equality Bill will modernise, streamline and strengthen the existing legislative framework, helping people to understand their rights and further reduce inequality and discrimination.

The Bill acknowledges the wider context in which race inequality must now be tackled. Instead of addressing the needs of different groups separately, it will require all public services to offer a decent service to everyone - regardless. And it will mean more of a focus on outcomes - not processes. For the first time, public bodies will have to take class into account and consider what action they can take to tackle entrenched socio-economic disadvantage.

Leadership - Communities and Local Government will work with those charged with inspecting public bodies to make sure that services are complying with their duties and obligations. CLG will continue to challenge other Government Departments and public bodies to promote race equality in everything they do.

Targeted work - where certain groups face specific challenges targeted work is needed in response. The REACH role modelling programme is addressing low achievement and low aspirations amongst young black boys, work is going on in schools to improve poor white boys progress and help particular groups overcome specific challenges, where needed. ...

To read the full press release see

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/1432659>

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UK Parliamentary Questions

Israel

Richard Burden: To ask the Solicitor-General what meetings the Attorney-General had during her visit to Israel in January 2010 at which the subject of the operation of the law of universal jurisdiction in the UK in relation to the possibility of Israeli officials, politicians or military personnel being arrested if they travel to the UK was discussed. [310075]

The Solicitor-General [*holding answer 11 January 2010*]: The matter was raised with the Attorney-General in meetings she had with Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon and Minister of Justice Yaacov Ne'eman on 5 January. In addition the issue was discussed at a meeting the Attorney had in Ramallah on 6 January with the Independent Commission on Human Rights and representatives from the Addameer Prisoners Support and Human Rights Association.

Richard Burden: To ask the Solicitor-General if she will place in the Library a copy of the speech by the Attorney General to the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in January 2010 on the operation of the law of universal jurisdiction in the UK in relation to the possibility of Israeli officials, politicians or military personnel being arrested if they travel to the UK. [310077]

The Solicitor-General [*holding answer 11 January 2009*]: A copy of the Attorney General's Lionel Cohen Lecture at Hebrew university is available on the website of the British Embassy in Israel: <http://ukinisrael.fco.gov.uk/en/> and I will arrange for a copy to be deposited in the Library of the House.

Mr. Marshall-Andrews: To ask the Solicitor-General what (a) groups and (b) individuals the Attorney General met on her visit to Israel on 5 January 2010. [310435]

The Solicitor-General: On 5 January 2010 the Attorney General met with Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon and Minister of Justice Yaacov Ne'eman with accompanying officials. She also met with the President of the Supreme Court, Dorit Beinish and had an informal lunch with other Justices of the Supreme Court. Additionally she met with the Professor Menahem Ben-Sasson, President of Hebrew university and delivered a lecture to an audience of students, faculty members and media at the university. The following day she had further meetings in Ramallah with the Palestinian Minister of Justice AH Khashan and Attorney General Ahmad Al-Mughani, Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Council Dr Jallad, as well as representatives from the Independent Commission for Human Rights and representatives from Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association.

Mr. Marshall-Andrews: To ask the Solicitor-General whether the Attorney General's recent visit to Israel was arranged before 12 December 2009. [310436]

The Solicitor-General: Yes. The Attorney General was fulfilling a commitment to deliver the Lionel Cohen Lecture for 2009 at Hebrew university. This lecture was originally scheduled for June 2009, but was rearranged following the postponement of a visit at that time.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100113/text/100113w0010.htm#10011367000114>

Relevant Legislation ** New or updated

UK Parliament

**** Children, Schools and Families Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/childrenschoolsandfamilies.html>

notice of amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmbills/008/amend/pbc0081301a.19.html>

**** Constitutional Reform and Governance Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/constitutionalreformandgovernance.html>

notice of amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmbills/004/amend/pbc0041301a.223-229.html>

Crime and Security Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/crimeandsecurity.html>

**** Equality Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/equality.html>

Committee Stage, House of Lords

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200910/ldhansrd/text/100113-0003.htm#10011365000347>

and

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200910/ldhansrd/text/100113-0011.htm#100113108000147>

includes discussion of the definition of "religion or belief"

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200910/ldhansrd/text/100113-0003.htm#10011365000339>

amendments to be moved in Committee

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200910/ldbills/020/amend/am020-ira.htm>

Scottish Parliament Subordinate Legislation Committee:

Legislative Consent Memorandum Report

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/subleg/reports-10/sur10-02.htm>

**** Flood and Water Management Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2009-10/floodandwatermanagement.html>

Public Bill Committee amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmbills/009/amend/pbc0091401m.111-117.html>

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Consultations ** new or updated

Protection of Vulnerable Groups Implementation: Consultation on Significant Draft Secondary Legislation, Guidance and Regulatory Impact Assessment (Scotland only) (closes 2 February 2009)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/children-families/pvglegislation/Consultation09>

Communities and Local Government: Creating a Single Equality Scheme for 2010 – 2013 (closes 28 February 2010)

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/corporate/pdf/987402.pdf>

Proposal to amend the Licensing Act 2003 to simplify the procedures for Licensing Statements; Interim Authority Notices; and Temporary Event Notices (closes 9 February 2010)

http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/consultations/6498.aspx

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