

# Political Affairs Brief

*A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community*

Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

SCoJeC

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## Home Affairs

### UK Parliamentary Questions

#### Food: Kosher and Halal Meat

**Lord Stoddart of Swindon:** To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Henley on 30 November (WA 433-34) concerning kosher and halal slaughtered meat, whether, in their discussions with the food industry, they will raise the right of the majority of people to be informed about whether meat has been slaughtered in accordance with religious beliefs.[HL5101]

**The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Lord Henley):** I refer the noble Lord to the answer I gave him on 30 November (Official Report, col. WA433-34). I can again confirm that we believe people should know what they are buying in shops and when they are eating out and that this includes those who wish to know whether meat has been obtained from an animal slaughtered in accordance with religious beliefs. Our discussions with the food industry have looked at the need to inform all consumers, regardless of whether they have a religious requirement for meat to be prepared in accordance with their religious beliefs or not.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101216w0001.htm#10121655001108>

#### Slaughterhouses

**Mr Charles Walker:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what legal requirements are placed on abattoirs and slaughterhouses with regard to the stunning of animals prior to bleeding out; and if she will make a statement. [29153]

**Mr Paice** [*holding answer 7 December 2010*]: Slaughterhouse operators are responsible for the welfare of animals at the time of slaughter. The rules governing animal welfare at slaughter and killing are set out in the Welfare of Animals (Slaughter or Killing) Regulations 1995, as amended (WASK). Under this regulation it is an offence to cause or permit an animal avoidable excitement, pain or suffering. There are also specific requirements that must be followed on handling, stunning, slaughter or killing of animals. In particular:

anyone carrying out any of these tasks must have the knowledge and skill to do their job humanely and efficiently;

all slaughtermen must be competent and hold a registered licence;

in every slaughterhouse a competent person must be given authority to take action to safeguard welfare; and

only permitted methods may be used to stun or kill animals.

Schedule 12 of WASK sets out the detailed requirements that apply where

animals are slaughtered by a religious method to meet Jewish and Muslim religious beliefs. These requirements ensure all slaughter by a religious method is undertaken in licensed slaughterhouses (approved premises), and Official Veterinarians of the Food Standards Agency Operations Group monitor and enforce the rules set out in the Regulations daily.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101216/text/101216w0002.htm#10121651000101>

## BBC

### **BNP leader Nick Griffin wins court contempt battle**

BNP leader Nick Griffin has fought off a bid to have him declared guilty of contempt of court. The verdict brings to an end an 18-month battle over its membership rules. The Equality and Human Rights Commission had accused him of failing to comply with an order to remove potentially racist clauses from his party's constitution. But the High Court rejected its bid to seize BNP assets. Mr Griffin said he had won an "against the odds" victory.

The BNP has already scrapped its "whites-only" members rule following a court challenge from the equality watchdog. But the commission was concerned the party's new constitution would discriminate against people once they had joined up - in particular clause requiring party members to oppose "the integration or assimilation of...indigenous British". ...

*To read the full news report see*

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-12014807>

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## Israel

### UK Parliamentary Question

#### Israel

**Lord Hylton:** To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will make representations to the government of Israel regarding the hunger strike in Ramleh Prison by Shaykh Jamal Abu-al-Hayja and Amid Ghulma.[HL5136]

**The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Howell of Guildford):** The UK will continue to monitor the situation with regard to all Palestinian prisoners in Israeli prisons. We call on the Israeli Government to take immediate action to ensure that all cases are reviewed by a court in accordance with fair procedures, and that detainees' rights are upheld. All Palestinian prisoners should have access to a fair trial, and Israel should ensure that it acts always in accordance with international law. We shall continue to raise our concerns with the Israeli authorities and issue statements when appropriate.

We also continue to call for the release of Gilad Shalit, detained by Hamas in Gaza for over four years now, without access to the Red Cross or his family.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101216w0001.htm#10121655001118>

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## Relevant Legislation \*\* New or updated

### UK Parliament

#### **Daylight Saving Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/daylightsaving.html>

#### **Fixed Term Parliaments Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/fixedtermparliaments.html>

#### **Identity Documents Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/identitydocuments.html>

#### **Localism Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/localism.html>

#### **\*\* Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/parliamentaryvotingsystemandconstituencies.html>

Notice of amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldbills/026/amend/ml026-vi.htm>

#### **Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/policereformandsocialresponsibility.html>

### Scottish Parliament

#### **Certification of Death Bill**

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/58-CertDeath/index.htm>

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## Consultations \*\* new or updated

#### **\*\* closes today**

**Equality Act 2010 - Performance of the Public Sector Equality Duties in Wales**  
(closes 17 December 2010)

<http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/equality/equalityact2010/?lang=en>

#### **\*\* closes today**

**Prevent Review** (closes 17 December 2010)

<http://preventreview.homeoffice.gov.uk/>

**Equality and Human Rights Commission: Draft Code of Practice on Further and Higher Education** (closes 31 December 2010)

[http://live.ehrc.precedenthost.co.uk/cgi-bin/generate.pl?page\\_id= sx0666i4b&save=screen](http://live.ehrc.precedenthost.co.uk/cgi-bin/generate.pl?page_id= sx0666i4b&save=screen)

**Charity Commission for England and Wales: Views on Future Strategy**

(closes 14 January 2011)

[http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/RSS/News/pr\\_strategic\\_review.aspx](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/RSS/News/pr_strategic_review.aspx)

**Improvements to Criminal Justice Statistics** (closing date 18 February 2011)  
<http://www.justice.gov.uk/consultations/statistics-cp171110.htm>

**National statistics, published by the Department of Health about the experience of black and minority ethnic patients** (closes 18 February 2011)  
[http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH\\_121762](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_121762)

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