

Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

SCoJeC

Contents

Home Affairs

Holocaust

Israel

Relevant Legislation

Consultations

Home Affairs

House of Commons Written Answer

Schools: Meat

John Spellar (Labour) [190757] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what discussions his Department has had with Lancashire County Council on the Council's ban on halal and kosher meat in school meals.

Nadhim Zahawi: The department has had no discussions with Lancashire County Council with regards to their ban on halal and kosher meat in school meals. The government sets out required minimum standards for school food in the School Food Standards to ensure that children are served healthy, nutritious meals at school. The standards do not specify food requirements in terms of cultural and religious needs.

Headteachers, governors and their caterers are best placed to make decisions about their school food policies, which includes acting reasonably to provide choices that take account of cultural, religious and special dietary needs. Schools that choose to arrange their school meals through a local authority or another catering organisation may wish to take this into consideration. Schools may consider providing both halal and non-halal or kosher food each day, or ensuring that dishes are clearly labelled to allow pupils to select the appropriate choice.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-11-13/190757/>

Scottish Parliament Oral Answers

Hate Crime

1. Tom Arthur (SNP): To ask the Scottish Government what it is doing to tackle hate crime. (S5O-02570)

The Cabinet Secretary for Justice (Humza Yousaf): Hate crime has hugely damaging effects on victims, their families and communities, and we must all play our part in challenging it. We are doing a number of things as part of our ambitious programme of work to tackle hate crime and build community cohesion. That includes the recent launch, on 14 November, of our consultation "One Scotland: Hate Has No Home Here", which will inform the content of modernised

hate crime legislation that is fit for the 21st century.

In addition, on 26 September, our campaign to tackle hate crime was launched in partnership with Police Scotland. The campaign aims to encourage witnesses to report hate crime and sends a clear message that hatred and prejudice will not be tolerated in Scotland.

Our consultation is open to all individuals, communities and organisations, and it will inform future legislation to address identified needs and afford sufficient protection for those who need it. I hope that everyone with an interest will participate in the consultation process. ...

Liam Kerr (Conservative): Lord Bracadale's expert review recommended that statutory aggravators rather than stand-alone offences should continue to be the core method of prosecuting hate crimes in Scotland. Why does the Scottish Government appear to be departing from that recommendation?

Humza Yousaf: We are not. We are going to consult on Lord Bracadale's recommendations. We still think that statutory aggravators are the right way to go. I do not know from where the member's question stems. If it is about misogyny, we will consult and take views on that. The views that come back to us may well suggest that the issue of misogyny, which is deeply ingrained in our society and our institutions, may be looked at outwith the hate crime framework. I will wait to see the consultation responses, and I will shortly meet Engender and other organisations that are vocal on the issue.

We are definitely consulting on the statutory aggravator that Lord Bracadale thought was the best approach to tackling hate crime. However, I will wait for the consultation responses on misogyny to come back before we undertake detailed consideration and define the best approach to tackling that issue.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11794&i=106683#ScotParlOR>

The consultation referred to above can be read at

<https://consult.gov.scot/hate-crime/consultation-on-scottish-hate-crime-legislation/>

Information about the campaign to tackle hate crime, referred to above, can be read at

<https://onescotland.org/campaigns/hate-crime-campaign/>

Lord Bracadale's review, referred to above, can be read at

<https://tinyurl.com/yaw2aqps>

Hate Crime

6. Patrick Harvie (Green): To ask the Scottish Government whether it expects to legislate on hate crime during the current parliamentary session, following the end of the consultation process in 2019. (S5O-02575)

The Cabinet Secretary for Justice (Humza Yousaf): Our intention is to legislate on hate crime during the current parliamentary session. However, before doing so, it is essential that we have heard the voices of communities so that we are sure that the legislation we introduce is relevant, appropriate and fit for the 21st century.

Balancing new legislation with rights to free speech and civil liberties is also essential and we need to look carefully at the outcomes of our consultation—which is open to all individuals, communities and organisations—so that our legislation addresses identified needs and affords sufficient protection for those who need it. I hope that everyone with an interest will participate in the consultation process.

Patrick Harvie: I certainly agree that we should encourage everyone to participate in the consultation and I recognise the importance of that process. However, it is pretty much a decade since the arguments were first made for a comprehensive approach to hate crime

instead of the piecemeal approach that we had seen before then, so the commitment to legislation during this parliamentary session is welcome.

I have a question about one of Lord Bracadale's review recommendations. He concluded that specific measures in relation to anti-immigrant sentiment would not be needed because that was already covered under racial grounds. Does the Scottish Government yet have a view on that? We have clearly seen an uptick in anti-immigrant and other far right sentiment, and it seems that a case can be made for some specific measures so that those matters can be dealt with as a distinct strand of hate crime.

Humza Yousaf: I am not the only one in this chamber who is the child of an immigrant. Many of us have seen that rise in anti-immigrant sentiment right across Europe, so Patrick Harvie's point is an important one to make.

In terms of the specifics of whether there should be a statutory aggravator, for example, for anti-immigrant prejudice, there is a section in the consultation that allows for an open, general question on what other issues we need to consider.

I will keep an open mind on the issue that Patrick Harvie raises. I have not taken a view one way or the other. The issue has been raised with me previously. As I say, there is a section in the consultation that allows for additional points to be raised. I encourage the member and others who have an interest in this particular question to respond positively to the consultation.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11794&i=106688&c=2130057#ScotParIOR>

Scottish Government Fol release

Meeting between John Swinney and Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/foi-18-03044/>

Schedule of documents

<https://tinyurl.com/ya4mgla8>

Documents 1 and 2

<https://tinyurl.com/y8efy885>

Documents 3 and 5

<https://tinyurl.com/yd4nxj8o>

Documents 5, 6 and 7

<https://tinyurl.com/y9xnpbov>

TOP

Holocaust

Scottish Government Fol releases

Grant funding to the Holocaust Educational Trust

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/foi-18-03249/>

List of all the schools who attended visit to Auschwitz

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/foi-18-03257/>

Related documents

<https://tinyurl.com/ybdnxvuf>

TOP

House of Commons Oral Answers

Palestine Refugees

4. **Layla Moran (Liberal Democrat):** What recent representations her Department has made to the (a) EU and (b) World Bank on funding for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine refugees in the near east. [907728]

The Minister of State, Department for International Development (Alistair Burt): The UK has made official-level representations to the EU and World Bank over the past three months on the position of UNRWA. We will continue to work with UNRWA and our international partners to help ensure essential services are maintained, despite the United States' withdrawal of funding.

Layla Moran: Given that President Trump can now in no way be considered an honest broker in this matter, is it not time that Britain stepped up to the plate and led? Will the Government consider hosting a donor conference to make up the shortfall in funding? Further, will they support my Palestinian statehood Bill, which I will be introducing to the House later today?

Alistair Burt: On the hon. Lady's second point, she will be aware that the recognition of Palestine remains a matter for the United Kingdom's judgment in the best interests of peace and the peace process, and we hold to that. On support for UNRWA, we continue to work with other donors and urge them to step in to assist in filling the gap in funding. We have done that with other states and we are doing that with the EU and the World Bank. We will continue to do so. We have increased our contribution this year to £57.5 million to help vulnerable Palestinians in relation to health and education. We will continue to support UNRWA.

Stephen Crabb (Conservative): In June last year, UNRWA discovered a major terrorist tunnel under two of its schools in Gaza. What support can the UK give to UNRWA to ensure that its neutrality is not violated, and that its resources do not get misappropriated?

Alistair Burt: Bearing in mind UNRWA's particular position, particularly in Gaza, we know—I have discussed this with senior directors at UNRWA—it is absolutely essential that it maintains the integrity of its operation. When others have abused that in trying to disguise schools as places where terrorist activity could be hidden, it is essential that it deals with that. We will continue to give it every support in finding that out.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-11-21/debates/532D3FE2-315A-4701-87B2-81B43DC6EBAF/PalestineRefugees>

Topical Questions: Department for International Development

Tom Pursglove (Conservative): Last year, Members across the House welcomed DFID's £3 million of funding aimed at bringing Israelis and Palestinians together. Will my right hon. Friend update the House on the allocation of the funding for those projects to help to bring these groups together?

The Minister of State, Department for International Development (Alistair Burt): This invaluable programme is now up and running. It is working in Israel and the Palestinian territories to bring together young leaders and connect them, to work together on reducing tensions on inter-religious sacred sites, and to help to tackle a neglected tropical disease, leishmaniasis, by working co-operatively together.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-11-21/debates/2630B35B-A23C-4EC8-8447-0339CE6872D8/TopicalQuestions#contribution-3164D051-6A40-4FE8-BD8E-7A97637EBCB7>

House of Commons Written Answer

Palestinians: Females

Richard Burden (Labour) [191273] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, whether her Department is supporting the Arab Women's Enterprise Fund initiative in the Occupied Palestinian Territories; and if she will make a statement.

Alistair Burt: DFID funded the Arab Women's Enterprise Fund (AWEF) in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs) between October 2015 and March 2018, and currently funds the programme in Jordan and Egypt. DFID continues to monitor the sustainability and impact of AWEF in the OPTs.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-11-14/191273/>

TOP

Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Holocaust (Return of Cultural Objects) (Amendment) Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/holocaustreturnofculturalobjectsamendment.html>

Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/marriageact1949amendment.html>

Online Forums Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/onlineforums.html>

Organ Donation (Deemed Consent) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/organdonationdeemedconsent.html>

**** Palestinian Statehood (Recognition) Bill**

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/palestinianstatehoodrecognition.html>

Sponsor: Layla Moran (Liberal Democrat)

Scottish Parliament

Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Scotland) Bill

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/108681.aspx>

TOP

Consultations ** new or updated today

Reform of the legal requirements for divorce (closing date 10 December 2018)

<https://consult.justice.gov.uk/digital-communications/reform-of-the-legal-requirements-for-divorce/>

The future of civil partnership in Scotland (closing date 21 December 2018)

<https://consult.gov.scot/family-law/the-future-of-civil-partnership-in-scotland/>

2021 Census: Outputs Strategy Consultation for Northern Ireland (closing date 9 January 2019)

<https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/consultations/dfp/2021-census-outputs-strategy-consultation-for-northern-ireland-document.pdf>

**** Extremism in England and Wales** (closing date 31 January 2018)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/extremism-in-england-and-wales-call-for-evidence>

Draft guidance to challenge bullying in schools [Wales only] (closing date 15 February 2019)

<https://beta.gov.wales/draft-guidance-challenge-bullying-schools>

One Scotland: Hate Has No Home Here (closing date 24 February 2019)

<https://consult.gov.scot/hate-crime/consultation-on-scottish-hate-crime-legislation/>

TOP

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