

Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

Scottish Council of Jewish Communities

SCoJeC

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House of Commons Written Answer

Coroners: Bradford

John Grogan (Labour) [199781] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the policy is of the Bradford coroner on the use of digital scans to establish cause of death rather than tradition post-mortems; and how many times such scans have been used in (a) 2017 and (b) 2018 to date.

Edward Argar: The use of digital scans to establish cause of death is a matter for individual coroners who decide how to proceed in light of guidance from the Chief Coroner. The guidance can be found on his website at:

www.judiciary.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/guidance-no-1-use-of-port-mortem-imaging.pdf

The figures for the number of post mortems held in 2017 which involved less invasive techniques are available at:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/706047/coroners-statistics-2017-csvs.zip.

Bradford is in the West Yorkshire (western) coroner area, in which 267 less-invasive post mortems were conducted in 2017.

Annual coroner statistics are collected at the end of the year. Statistics for 2018 will be published in May 2019.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-06/199781/>

House of Commons Library

Counter-extremism policy in English schools

<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7345/CBP-7345.pdf>

House of Lords Library

Commission on Religious Education, Religion and Worldviews: The Way Forward

<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/LBP-2018-0130/LBP-2018-0130.pdf>

Office of the Schools Adjudicator

Determination: Pardes House Primary School

... 1. ... an objection has been referred to the adjudicator by an individual (the objector), about the admission arrangements (the arrangements) for Pardes House Primary School, a voluntary aided school with a Jewish religious character for boys aged 4 to 11, for September 2019. The objection is to aspects of the faith-based oversubscription criteria in the arrangements. ...

Summary of Findings

52. Applicants who wish to be considered under faith-based oversubscription criteria must demonstrate that they observe “Orthodox Jewish practice” in matters such as “lifestyle and daily practice.” I have not been provided with evidence that these “religious activities” have been specifically “laid out” in guidance on admissions by the school’s religious authority. Indeed, the school’s religious authority states that it has not provided such guidance. Therefore, the religious activities are not covered by the exception in paragraph 1.9 (i) of the Code to the prohibition on taking into account a parent’s activities. It is a breach of the Code for them to be included in the arrangements.

53. The faith-based oversubscription criteria require a “commitment” to Orthodox Judaism. It is possible to hold different understandings as to what such a commitment entails. The religious practice requirements themselves are also, in some respects, able to be understood in different ways. The oversubscription criteria are therefore not objective as required by paragraph 1.8 of the Code. Furthermore, I consider that the way in which a commitment to the faith is to be demonstrated also does not meet the Code’s requirements for objectivity.

54. I do not uphold the part of the objection that argues that the arrangements are unreasonable and do not comply with equalities legislation.

55. The request on the SIF [Supplementary Information Form] for applicants to give details of synagogue membership and provide a copy of their Kesubah is in breach of paragraph 2.4 of the Code, as this information does not have a direct bearing on decisions about oversubscription criteria. ...

60. By virtue of section 88K(2) the adjudicator’s decision is binding on the admission authority. The School Admissions Code requires the admission authority to revise its admission arrangements within two months of the date of the determination unless an alternative timescale is specified by the adjudicator. In this case I specify a deadline of 28 February 2019.

To read the full Determination see

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/761307/ADA3380_Pardes_House_Primary_School_Barnet_3_December_2018.pdf

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Israel

House of Commons Written Answer

Palestinians: Overseas Aid

Ian Austin (Labour) [200567] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, pursuant to the Answer of 28 November 2018 to Question 194657, whether the Memorandum of Understanding between her Department and the Palestinian National Authority was extended beyond 31 March 2016; and if she will place copies of all ministerial correspondence with the Palestinian Authority extending and amending that agreement in the Library.

Alistair Burt: A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) setting out the

commitments in the overall development partnership between DFID and the Palestinian Authority (PA) was in effect from July 2011 to March 2016, and was not extended beyond that point. Copies of correspondence relating to the extension of that MoU prior to March 2016 have been laid in the Commons library. Since then, DFID and the PA have signed separate MoUs on an annual basis, specifically linked to the governance arrangements for our programme of financial assistance to the PA.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-12-10/200567/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-11-22/194657/>

The correspondence referred to above can be read at

http://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2018-1181/MoU_MC_DFID_PA_2014.pdf

The most recent Memorandum of Understanding is not available online. A poor quality photocopy of the MoU signed in December 2016 is available at

<https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/420372/response/1024976/attach/html/3/F2017%20254%20Disclosure%201.pdf.html>

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Alistair Burt: UK condemns terrorist attacks in the Old City of Jerusalem and close to Beit El settlement. Our thoughts are with the victims and their families. This cycle of violence must stop.

<https://twitter.com/AlistairBurtUK/status/1073473451128705025>

General Court of the European Union

The General Court dismisses the action brought by Hamas against the decisions to maintain the freezing of its funds as an entity involved in acts of terrorism

On 27 December 2001, the Council of the European Union adopted a common position and a regulation with a view to combatting terrorism. Those measures order the freezing of the funds of persons and entities entered on a list established and regularly updated by decisions of the Council. On the same day, the Council adopted its first decision establishing that list. By that decision, the Council included the Hamas movement on the list of those whose funds were to be frozen and it has remained on that list from then on. Hamas challenged its retention on that list and requested the General Court of the European Union to annul the acts of the Council related thereto.

By judgment of 17 December 2014, the General Court found that the acts challenged were based on factual imputations derived from the Press and the Internet, and held that those acts should have been based on elements which had been concretely examined and confirmed in decisions of national competent authorities within the meaning of the Common Position.

The General Court therefore annulled the acts challenged, while temporarily maintaining their effects in order to ensure the effectiveness of any possible future freezing of funds. The effects of the measures were to be maintained for a period of three months, or, if an appeal was brought before the Court of Justice, until that appeal is closed. ...

By its judgment today ... the General Court dismisses Hamas' appeal concerning the acts of the Council adopted between 2010 and 2014 and in 2017. ...

The General Court observes, contrary to Hamas' submissions, that holding on to power

following elections, the political nature of an organisation or its participation in a government do not constitute grounds for avoiding the application of the rules in the Common Position. It adds that since Hamas is not a Sovereign State, it cannot rely, in support of its claim, on the principle of non-interference to try to annul the decisions of the Council. ...

Regarding the alleged violation of its right to property by the decisions of the Council, the General Court considers that the measures for the freeing of Hamas' funds are neither disproportionate nor intolerable, especially as they do not violate its fundamental rights, since the aim pursued by such measures is to counter threats posed by terrorist acts on international peace and security. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2018-12/cp180203en.pdf>

To read the full judgment (only available in French) see

<http://curia.europa.eu/juris/document/document.jsf?jsessionid=9CC1786F46A44891FBDB227C6AF63533?text=&docid=209117&pageIndex=0&doclang=FR&mode=req&dir=&occ=first&part=1&cid=1954236>

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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>

Scottish Parliament

Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Scotland) Bill

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

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Consultations ** new or updated today

**** closes in 7 days**

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>

Connected communities – Tackling loneliness and social isolation (Wales) (closing date 15 January 2019)

<https://beta.gov.wales/connected-communities-tackling-loneliness-and-social-isolation>

The Macpherson Report: Twenty Years On (closing date 16 January 2019)

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/home-affairs-committee/inquiries/parliament-2017/macpherson-report-twenty-years-on-inquiry-17-19/>

Extremism in England and Wales (closing date 31 January 2019)

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

Racial harassment in higher education (closing date 15 February 2019)

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/inquiries-and-investigations/racial-harassment-higher-education-our-inquiry>

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/>

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