



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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House of Commons Written Answers

Internet: Safety

Emma Hardy (Labour) [83920] To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, whether racist abuse and disinformation will be within the remit of the Government's planned online harms regulatory system.

Caroline Dinenage: The new online harms regulatory framework will require companies to put effective systems and processes in place to protect UK users. The Online Harms White Paper set out an indicative list of harms which will be in scope of the new regulatory framework. Further details will be included in the full government response to the consultation, which we will publish later this year.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-01/83920>

Crime Prevention: Churches

John Hayes (Conservative) [78502] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking is taking to prevent crimes against churches.

Kit Malthouse: The Government is committed to cutting crime, and is investing in prevention to ensure that every opportunity is taken to stop unnecessary crimes from happening. The Government is committed to protecting churches from hate crime through the Places of Worship Protective Security Funding Scheme. The 2020-21 round launched on 16 June with an uplift to £3.2 million- double the amount awarded last year. Over the last four years we have awarded 183 grants worth approximately 3 million to places of worship across England and Wales - with 76 churches receiving funding.

The Government has an established programme that provides those responsible for crowded places including churches with high quality advice and guidance to ensure appropriate measures may be taken to reduce their vulnerability. Free advice from the National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO) for crowded places includes specific advice for places of worship.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-07-22/78502>

Information about the Places of Worship Protective Security Funding Scheme, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/places-of-worship-security-funding-scheme>

The guidance referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/820082/170614_crowded-places-guidance_v1b.pdf

Hezbollah: Fundraising

Nicola Richards (Conservative) [82637] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of Hezbollah's ability to raise funds within the UK.

James Brokenshire: The Government does not comment on intelligence matters. Hizballah is a proscribed terrorist organisation in the UK and is designated under the Terrorist Asset-Freezing Act 2010.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-08-28/82637>

Scottish Parliament Written Answers

Coronavirus: Church services

S5W-31321 Jamie Greene (Conservative): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide an update on whether it is considering relaxing the restrictions on the maximum number of people allowed to attend church.

Aileen Campbell: On the 20 August, we reviewed the current restrictions limiting the number of people allowed to attend a place of worship. Giving consideration to Scotland's broader position regarding virus suppression and to minimise overall harm and ensure transmission of the virus continues to be suppressed, it was decided on balance to maintain the current limit of 50 people in line with two metre physical distancing guidelines.

I refer the member to the answer to question S5W-31084 on 18 August 2020 detailing the reasoning behind the current restriction on numbers.

We remain committed to ensuring that these restrictions last no longer than is necessary and we will consider them again, on 10 September, as part of the next three weekly review set out in the Framework for Decision Making. ...

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5W-31321>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5W-31084>

Coronavirus: Marriage and Civil Partnership

S5W-31431 Liam McArthur (Liberal Democrat): To ask the Scottish Government further to the comments by the First Minister on the wedding sector on 26 August 2020 (Official Report, c. 25), whether it will provide an update regarding the advice on the limit on the number of people who can attend a marriage ceremony or civil partnership registration.

Ash Denham: At present, we are advising that no more than 20 people should attend a marriage ceremony or civil partnership registration, provided they can be accommodated safely with physical distancing in the chosen venue. Receptions and celebratory events related to a marriage or civil partnership, along with any other celebratory events, remain subject to the restrictions on gatherings in the Health Protection Regulations and in guidance. These will be reviewed again on 10 September.

Our position will continue to be kept under careful review and we will continue to consider ways to permit marriage ceremonies and civil partnership registrations to take place safely. Any further changes to the current limit on numbers will depend on public health advice.

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5W-31431>

The comments referred to above can be read at

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=12763&i=115428#ScotParlOR>

Scottish Parliament Motion

S5M-22636 Liam Kerr (Conservative): Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill – That the Parliament believes that hate crimes are a blight on society in Scotland and must be dealt with robustly; notes that the right to freedom of expression is the cornerstone of democracy and must never be compromised; believes that the significant number of responses to the Scottish Government consultation on its proposed Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill highlight the significant and valid concerns that the Bill would be an attack on free speech, and urges the Scottish Government to accept these criticisms, remove its proposed Bill and immediately begin work with stakeholders and others to draft the legislation that is needed to tackle hate crime in Scotland, while not threatening to make free speech a crime.

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-22636>

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Israel

See the House of Commons written answer “*Hezbollah: Fundraising*” that has been included in the Home Affairs section above.

Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee

Papers for meeting of 10 September 2020

pp15-24: information about PE1803: Right to Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS)

https://www.parliament.scot/S5_PublicPetitionsCommittee/Submissions%202020/PublicPapers10September2020.pdf

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Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Assisted Dying Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2592>

Education (Assemblies) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2579>

Genocide Determination Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2621>

Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2608>

Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2584>

Scottish Parliament

Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill

<https://beta.parliament.scot/bills/hate-crime-and-public-order-scotland-bill>

Post-mortem Examinations (Defence Time Limit) (Scotland) Bill

<https://beta.parliament.scot/bills/post-mortem-examinations-defence-time-limit-scotland-bill>

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Consultations

** new or updated today

Getting Married: A Consultation Paper on Weddings Law (closing date 3 December 2020)

<https://www.lawcom.gov.uk/project/weddings/#weddings-consultation-paper>

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The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC029438