



House of Commons

Wednesday 26 February 2025

Votes and Proceedings

The House met at 11.30 am.

Prayers

- 1 **Questions to (1) the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland
(2) the Prime Minister**
- 2 **Statement: Grenfell Tower Inquiry: Phase 2 report (Secretary Angela Rayner)**
- 3 **Vehicle registration offences (review): Motion for leave to bring in a Bill (Standing Order No. 23)**

Ordered, That leave be given to bring in a Bill to make provision for a review of certain offences relating to vehicle registration marks; and for connected purposes;

That Sarah Coombes, Chris Bloore, Antonia Bance, Mrs Sureena Brackenridge, Sonia Kumar, Shaun Davies, Gurinder Singh Josan, Jacob Collier, Sarah Edwards, Paul Waugh, Rachel Taylor and Leigh Ingham present the Bill.

Sarah Coombes accordingly presented the Bill.

Bill read the first time; to be read a second time on Friday 7 March, and to be printed (Bill 188).

- 4 **Business of the House (Today)**

Ordered, That, at today's sitting, business in the name of the Leader of the Opposition shall be treated as being taken on an allotted day provided under paragraph (2) of Standing Order No. 14 (Arrangement of public business); such business may be entered upon at any hour and may be proceeded with, though opposed, for up to six hours after the start of proceedings on the Motion for this Order; proceedings shall then lapse if not previously disposed of; and Standing Order No. 41A (Deferred divisions) shall not apply.—*(Lucy Powell.)*

- 5 **Opposition Day (5th allotted day)**

(1) Family businesses

Motion made and Question proposed, That this House regrets the Government's decision to introduce a cap on Business Property Relief, meaning that some family businesses passed down upon death will face Inheritance Tax for the first time in 50 years; further regrets the Government's other economic policies that will damage family businesses, namely raising employers' National Insurance contributions, reductions to business rates relief, making employers potentially liable for third-party harassment, the powers in the Product Regulation and Metrology Bill [Lords] that would allow the Government to ban pubs from selling pints, and the provisions in the Employment Rights Bill for guaranteed

hours which will make flexible working harder to achieve; and therefore calls on the Government to support family businesses which provide employment for almost 14 million people, and contribute more than £200 billion in taxes each year, by lifting the cap on Business Property Relief, not implementing the increases to employers' National Insurance contributions and business rates, and powers to change units of measurement, and to stop the progress of the damaging Employment Rights Bill.—(*Mel Stride*.)

The Deputy Speaker announced a time limit on backbench speeches (Standing Order No. 47(1)).

Question put.

The House divided.

Division No. 107

Ayes: 108 (Tellers: Sir Ashley Fox, James Wild)

Noes: 313 (Tellers: Kate Dearden, Martin McCluskey)

Question negatived.

(2) British Indian Ocean Territory

Motion made and Question proposed, That this House regrets the reported multi-billion pound cost of the UK-Mauritius deal; notes the risk the deal presents to the UK's strategic interests; further notes that it was a policy choice, not a legal necessity, and the concerns held by Chagossians over the Government's failure to engage comprehensively with them; and calls on the Government to—

(1) lay before this House a chronology of the negotiations between the UK Government and the Government of Mauritius, since 4 July 2024;

(2) confirm whether the account of Prime Minister Ramgoolam given to the Mauritius National Assembly on 4 February 2025 is correct that (a) there has been a change in the sovereignty arrangements over Diego Garcia from those previously agreed, (b) changes have been made to the terms of the lease on Diego Garcia, and (c) changes have been made to the costs of the deal since it was first agreed and announced in the UK-Mauritius joint statement on 3 October 2024;

(3) confirm from which departmental budgets the costs of this deal will come and what they will be, including whether any of the proposed increase in defence spending, as announced by the Prime Minister on 25 February, will be used to pay for this;

(4) explain what involvement the Attorney General has had with this deal;

(5) set out the negotiating objectives established by the Prime Minister's Special Envoy for BIOT negotiations and the reasons the Government sought to accelerate negotiations and conclude them before the Mauritian elections.—(*Priti Patel*.)

The Deputy Speaker announced a time limit on backbench speeches (Standing Order No. 47(1)).

Joy Morrissey claimed to move the closure (Standing Order No. 36).

Question put, That the Question be now put.

Question agreed to and Main Question accordingly put.

The House divided.

Division No. 108

Ayes: 147 (Tellers: Sir Ashley Fox, James Wild)

Noes: 298 (Tellers: Martin McCluskey, Kate Dearden)

Question negatived.

6 Business of the House

Motion made and Question put forthwith, That, at this day's sitting, Standing Order No. 41A (Deferred divisions) shall not apply to the Motion in the name of Lucy Powell relating to Estimates (Liaison Committee Recommendation).—(*Chris Elmore.*)

Question agreed to.

7 Estimates (Liaison Committee Recommendation)

Motion made and Question put forthwith (Standing Order No. 145(3)), That this House agrees with the Report of the Liaison Committee of 25 February: That a day not later than 18 March be allotted for the consideration of the following Estimates for the financial year 2024–25: Department of Health and Social Care; Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office; and Department for Business and Trade.—(*Chris Elmore.*)

Question agreed to.

8 Statutory Instruments: Motions for Approval

(1) Motion made and Question put forthwith (Standing Order No. 118(6)), That the draft Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits) (England) (Amendment and Transitional Provision) Regulations 2025, which were laid before this House on 13 January, be approved.—(*Gen Kitchen.*)

Question agreed to.

(2) Motion made and Question put forthwith (Standing Order No. 118(6)), That the draft Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018 (Scottish Adult Disability Living Allowance) (Consequential Modifications) Order 2025, which was laid before this House on 13 January, be approved.—(*Gen Kitchen.*)

Question agreed to.

9 Public petitions

A public petition from residents of the village of Furneux Pelham, North East Hertfordshire, relating to repairs to Whitebarns Lane in Furneux Pelham was presented and read by Chris Hinchliff.

10 Adjournment

Subject: Child Maintenance Service (Ian Sollom)

Resolved, That this House do now adjourn.—(*Kate Dearden.*)

Adjourned at 8.35 pm until tomorrow.

Other Proceedings

Lords Messages

11 Great British Energy Bill

The Lords agree to the Great British Energy Bill with amendments to which they desire the agreement of the Commons.

*Printing of Lords Amendments***12 Great British Energy Bill**

Lords Amendments to the Great British Energy Bill to be considered tomorrow, and to be printed (Bill 189) with Explanatory Notes (Bill 189–EN).

*Explanatory Notes to Bills***13 Space Industry (Indemnities) Bill**

Explanatory Notes to the Bill to be printed (Bill 25–EN).

*Changes to Notices Given***14 Public Body Ethnicity Data (Inclusion of Jewish and Sikh Categories) Bill**

Order for Second Reading on Friday 7 March, read and discharged.

Bill to be read a second time on Friday 16 May.

15 Registration of Death (Religion) Bill

Order for Second Reading on Friday 7 March, read and discharged.

Bill to be read a second time on Friday 16 May.

*General Committees: Reports***16 Fourth Delegated Legislation Committee**

Valerie Vaz (Chair) reported the draft Flood Reinsurance (Amendment) Regulations 2025.

17 Fifth Delegated Legislation Committee

Dr Andrew Murrison (Chair) reported the draft Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Amendment) (Provision of Information) Order 2025.

General Committees: Appointments

The Speaker appoints the Chair of General Committees and members of Programming Sub-Committees, and allocates Statutory Instruments to Delegated Legislation Committees.

The Committee of Selection nominates Members to serve on General Committees (and certain Members to serve on Grand Committees).

18 Data (Use and Access) Bill [Lords] Committee

Members: Callum Anderson, Steff Aquarone, Danny Beales, Chris Bryant, Victoria Collins, Kate Dearden, Kirith Entwistle, Peter Fortune, Warinder Juss, Sonia Kumar, Alice Macdonald, Alex McIntyre, Ben Obese-Jecty, Jon Pearce, Joe Robertson, Dr Ben Spencer and Mohammad Yasin

19 First Delegated Legislation Committee (draft Non-Domestic Rating (Levy and Safety Net) (Amendment) Regulations 2025)

Members: Juliet Campbell, Sam Carling, Lewis Cocking, Ben Coleman, Tim Farron, Mr James Frith, Jodie Gosling, Helen Grant, Gen Kitchen, Jim McMahon, Peter Prinsley, David Simmonds, Vikki Slade, Dr Marie Tidball, Harpreet Uppal, Mike Wood and Yuan Yang

20 Second Delegated Legislation Committee (draft Immigration (Biometric Information etc.) (Amendment) Regulations 2025 and draft Immigration and Nationality (Fees) (Amendment) Order 2025)

Members: James Asser, Antonia Bance, Lorraine Beavers, Sarah Bool, Jade Botterill, Natalie Fleet, Tracy Gilbert, Chris Kane, Afzal Khan, Katie Lam, Ben Maguire, Seema Malhotra, Keir Mather, Tom Rutland, Lisa Smart, Bradley Thomas and Matt Vickers

21 Third Delegated Legislation Committee (draft Food and Feed (Regulated Products) (Amendment, Revocation, Consequential and Transitional Provision) Regulations 2025)

Members: Alison Bennett, Jess Brown-Fuller, David Burton-Sampson, Nesil Caliskan, Deirdre Costigan, Pam Cox, Ashley Dalton, Dr Allison Gardner, Jeremy Hunt, Dr Caroline Johnson, Brian Leishman, Abtisam Mohamed, James Naish, Taiwo Owatemi, Jake Richards, Dr Neil Shastri-Hurst and Gregory Stafford

22 Fourth Delegated Legislation Committee (draft Double Taxation Relief and International Tax Enforcement (Belarus) (Revocation) Order 2025 and draft Double Taxation Relief (Russian Federation) (Revocation) Order 2025)

Members: Alex Ballinger, Daisy Cooper, John Cooper, Gareth Davies, Marsha De Cordova, Anna Dixon, Imran Hussain, Clive Jones, James Murray, Charlotte Nichols, Gareth Snell, Blake Stephenson, Tony Vaughan, Christian Wakeford, Imogen Walker, James Wild and Sean Woodcock

Select Committees: Reports

23 Energy Security and Net Zero Committee

(1) *Industrial strategy for clean power*: Oral and written evidence, to be published (HC 712);

(2) *Correspondence from the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero*: Written evidence, to be published;

(3) *Department for Energy Security and Net Zero 2024–25 Supplementary Estimate Memorandum*: Written evidence, to be published;

(4) *Retrofitting homes for net zero*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 453);

(5) *UKAEA Pension Schemes 2024–25 Supplementary Estimate Memorandum*: Written evidence, to be published;

(6) *Work of the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 396)

(Bill Esterson).

24 Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee

Reforming the water sector: Oral evidence, to be published (HC 588) (Alistair Carmichael).

25 Environmental Audit Committee

Work of the Office for Environmental Protection: Oral evidence, to be published (HC 730) (Mr Toby Perkins).

26 Health and Social Care Committee

* This item has been corrected since publication. See the Votes and Proceedings relating to Thursday 27 February 2025.

(1) *Pre-appointment hearing for the position of Chair of NHS England*:

(i) First Report, with written evidence, to be printed, with the formal minutes relating to the Report (HC 743);

(ii) Oral evidence, to be published (HC 743);

(2) *Adult Social Care reform: The cost of inaction*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 368);

(3) *Correspondence from the Minister of State for Care*: Written evidence, to be published;

(4) *Department of Health and Social Care 2024–25 Main Estimate Memorandum*: Written evidence, to be published;

(5) *The work of the Care Quality Commission*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 562) (Layla Moran).

27 Human Rights (Joint Committee on)

(1) *Proposal for a Draft Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023 (Remedial) Order 2024*: First Report, to be printed, with the formal minutes relating to the Report (HC 569);

(2) *Human rights and the proposal for a “Hillsborough Law”*: Government Response: First Special Report, to be printed (HC 739);

(3) *Correspondence to the Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology relating to the Data (Use and Access) Bill*: Written evidence, to be published;

(4) *Forced labour in UK supply chains*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 633);

(5) *Mental Health Bill*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 601)

(Sir Desmond Swayne).

28 Northern Ireland Affairs Committee

(1) *The Government's new approach to addressing the legacy of the past in Northern Ireland*: Oral and written evidence, to be published (HC 586);

(2) *Correspondence from the Secretary of State relating to the Identity and Language (Northern Ireland) Act 2022*: Written evidence, to be published;

(3) *Correspondence from the Secretary of State relating to scoping work on the merits in and support for the transition to disbandment of paramilitary groups*: Written evidence, to be published;

(4) *Northern Ireland Office 2024–25 Supplementary Estimates Memorandum*: Written evidence, to be published;

- (5) *The operation of the Windsor Framework*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 491);
- (6) *The surveillance of journalists and press freedoms in NI*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 650)
- (Tonia Antoniazzi).

29 Procedure Committee

- (1) *Status of independent Members of Parliament*: Oral evidence, to be published (HC 534);
- (2) *Proxy Voting: Review of arrangements introduced in the 2024–25 Session*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 489)
- (Cat Smith).

30 Scottish Affairs Committee

- (1) *GB Energy and the net zero transition*: Oral evidence, to be published (HC 459);
- (2) *Correspondence with the Minister of State for Trade Policy and Economic Security regarding the UK Internal Market Act 2020*: Written evidence, to be published;
- (3) *Problem drug use in Scotland follow-up: Glasgow's Safer Drug Consumption Facility*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 630);
- (4) *Scotland Office and Office of the Advocate General for Scotland 2024–25 Supplementary Estimate Memorandum*: Written evidence, to be published
- (Patricia Ferguson).

31 Speaker's Conference

- Speaker's Conference on the security of candidates, MPs and elections*: Oral and written evidence, to be published (HC 570) (The Speaker).

32 Statutory Instruments (Joint Committee on)

- Fifteenth Report, to be printed, with the formal minutes relating to the Report (HC 291-xv) (Sir Bernard Jenkin).

33 Transport Committee

- Buses connecting communities*: Oral evidence, to be published (HC 494) (Ruth Cadbury).

34 Treasury Committee

- Lifetime ISA*: Oral and written evidence, to be published (HC 607) (Dame Meg Hillier).

35 Women and Equalities Committee

- (1) *Tackling non-consensual intimate image abuse*:
- (i) Fourth Report, to be printed, with the formal minutes relating to the Report (HC 336);
 - (ii) Written evidence, to be published (HC 336);
- (2) *Equality at work: Paternity and shared parental leave*: Oral and written evidence, to be published (HC 502);
- (3) *Community cohesion*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 340);
- (4) *Misogyny in music: Follow up*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 573);
- (Sarah Owen).

36 Work and Pensions Committee

(1) *Pensioner poverty: Challenges and mitigations*: Oral and written evidence, to be published (HC 465);

(2) *Correspondence from the Minister of State relating to the reappointment of Stephen Brien as Chair of the Social Security Advisory Committee*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 402);

(3) *Department for Work and Pensions 2024–25 Supplementary Estimate Memorandum*: Written evidence, to be published;

(4) *Safeguarding vulnerable claimants*: Written evidence, to be published (HC 402) (Debbie Abrahams).

Sir Lindsay Hoyle

Speaker

Westminster Hall

The sitting began at 9.30 am.

Business appointed by the Chairman of Ways and Means (Standing Order No. 10(6))

1 Implementation of the Online Safety Act 2023

Motion made and Question proposed, That this House has considered the implementation of the Online Safety Act 2023.—(*Sir Jeremy Wright*.)

The Chair announced a time limit on backbench speeches (under the authority of the Chairman of Ways and Means and Standing Order No. 47(1)).

Resolved, That this House has considered the implementation of the Online Safety Act 2023.

2 High street bank closures and banking hubs

Resolved, That this House has considered high street bank closures and banking hubs.—(*Ian Lavery*.)

The sitting was suspended between 11.30 am and 2.30 pm (Standing Order No. 10(1)(b)).

3 Government policy on high street rental auctions

Resolved, That this House has considered Government policy on high street rental auctions.—(*Jessica Toale*.)

4 Government support for future skills programmes at universities

Resolved, That this House has considered Government support for future skills programmes at universities.—(*Ed Davey*.)

5 Government support for high street businesses

Motion made and Question proposed, That this House has considered Government support for high street businesses.—(*Matt Vickers*.)

The Chair announced a time limit on backbench speeches (under the authority of the Chairman of Ways and Means and Standing Order No. 47(1)).

The sitting was suspended between 5.26 pm and 5.41 pm for a division in the House (Standing Order No. 10(3)).

At 5.45 pm, the Motion lapsed (Standing Order No. 10(14)).

Sitting adjourned without Question put (Standing Order No. 10(14)).

Adjourned at 5.45 pm until tomorrow.

Ms Nusrat Ghani

Chairman of Ways and Means

Papers Laid

Papers subject to Negative Resolution

1 Financial Services and Markets

Unauthorised Co-ownership Alternative Investment Funds (Reserved Investor Fund) Regulations 2025 (SI, 2025, No. 216), dated 25 February 2025 (by Act), with an Explanatory Memorandum (by Command) (Emma Reynolds)

2 Income Tax

Income Tax (Exemption of Scottish Adult Disability Living Allowance) Regulations 2025 (SI, 2025, No. 212), dated 25 February 2025 (by Act), with an Explanatory Memorandum (by Command) (James Murray)

3 Local Government

(1) Draft Barnsley (Electoral Changes) Order 2025 (by Act), with an Explanatory Memorandum (by Command) (The Speaker)

(2) Draft Bradford (Electoral Changes) Order 2025 (by Act), with an Explanatory Memorandum (by Command) (The Speaker)

(3) Draft Wakefield (Electoral Changes) Order 2025 (by Act), with an Explanatory Memorandum (by Command) (The Speaker)

4 Prevention and Suppression of Terrorism

Proscribed Organisations (Name Change) Order 2025 (SI, 2025, No. 210), dated 24 February 2025 (by Act), with an Explanatory Memorandum (by Command) (Secretary Yvette Cooper)

Other papers

5 Housing, Communities and Local Government

(1) Construction Products Reform Green Paper (by Command) (CP 1278) (Secretary Angela Rayner)

(2) UK Government Response to the Grenfell Tower Inquiry Phase 2 Report (by Command) (CP 1248) (Secretary Angela Rayner)

6 National Audit

Report by the Comptroller and Auditor General on Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government: Local government financial sustainability (by Act), to be printed (HC 691) (Clerk of the House)

7 Science, Innovation and Technology

Digital Inclusion Action Plan: First Steps (by Command) (CP 1267) (Chris Bryant)

8 National Health Service

Report and Accounts of Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust for 2023–24 (by Act) (Secretary Wes Streeting)

9 Town and Country Planning

Explanatory Memorandum to the Improving planning performance: Criteria for designation (updated 2024) (by Command) (Matthew Pennycook)

Withdrawn papers

10 Town and Country Planning

Explanatory Memorandum to the Improving planning performance: Criteria for designation (updated 2024) (laid 4 December 2024)

SPEAKER'S CERTIFICATES

VOTING BY PROXY (STANDING ORDER NO. 39A)

(Variations to existing arrangements appear in **bold**.)

Member	From	To	Proxy
Kate Osborne	27 February	21 April	Kim Johnson
Ian Murray	29 January	22 May	Chris Elmore