

Weekly Political Update

21st September 2015

Television

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Item	Summary
<p><u>Written question on Government discussions with providers of Video on Demand regarding access services</u></p> <p><u>Written question on progress made in the provision of access service on Video on Demand services</u></p>	<p>Ian Austin MP (Labour, Dudley North) asked the Department for Culture, Media and Sport what recent discussions it has had with providers about improving the availability of access services to on-demand broadcasting content for people with sensory loss.</p> <p>In response the Minister of State responsible for broadcasting, Ed Vaizey MP (Con, Wantage) said that:</p> <p>“Officials are undertaking a series of meetings with content providers, platform operators and other participants in the supply chain of Video on Demand services, to better understand why the provision of access services for on demand content is limited. The information derived from these meetings will be used to develop a target that we would expect to see reached by mid-2016.”</p> <p>Ian Austin also asked the Department what recent assessment it has made of progress in making available access services to on-demand broadcasting content for people with sensory loss since 2013.</p> <p>In response Ed Vaizey said that the Government have been monitoring progress of the provision of access services for Video on Demand (VoD) content since 2013 through engagement with the Authority for Television on Demand (ATVOD), platform operators and content providers.</p>

Access to Sports Grounds

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Item	Summary
<p><u>Government highlights ‘inexcusable’ lack of progress for disabled</u></p>	<p>A joint report from the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department for Culture Media and Sport has highlighted the</p>

<p><u>people reported in the inclusive and accessible stadia report</u></p>	<p>frustrations of disabled sports fans across the UK in their ability to access sports stadia.</p> <p>The report, <u>The Inclusive and Accessible Stadia Report</u>, highlights a number of problems that disabled people have when accessing sports grounds, including ‘a lack of disability awareness among stewards and staff, particularly when dealing with hidden impairments’.</p> <p>The only finding directly relevant to hearing loss is that the report found that few of the clubs survey said that they provided hearing loops within their facilities.</p> <p>The report was the subject of an <u>oral question in the House of Lords</u>. During this debate the Labour Spokesman for Culture, Media and Sport, Lord Stevenson of Balmacara, asked the Government to recognise that ‘disability is often taken to be physical disability, but there is a large number of people who enjoy sport who are ambulant physically disabled people’ and asked that the Government consider both deaf and blind people in responding to the report.</p> <p>Responding for the Government Baroness Neville-Rolfe said that sharing best practice around hearing loops was vitally important.</p>
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Charity Law

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<p><u>Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Bill finish its passage through the House of Lords</u></p>	<p>The Government’s Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Bill has received its third reading in the House of Lords. During the debate the Labour Party Spokeswomen for the Cabinet Office, Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town, tabled an amendment which would have subject all charities who raise funds of more than £1m a year to be the subject of statutory regulation relating to their contact with individual donors.</p> <p>Speaking to the amendment Baroness Hayter said that the death of Olive Cooke had ‘brought to light the unacceptable behaviour of a number of the big fundraising charities and the inadequacy of the current scheme of self-regulation.’ She withdrew her amendment without a vote, but said of the Labour party position:</p>
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“It is clear that we do not yet know the best way forward, although I think that everyone accepts, including the big charities and the new chair of the Fundraising Standards Board, who appeared before Bernard Jenkin’s committee [The Public Administration Committee], that membership of the board must become compulsory and that the board, which should be independent of the charities it regulates, must in some way have more power than naming and shaming, which is open to it now. There is also general agreement that the weak and unsatisfactory fundraisers’ code must be beefed up. Furthermore, it seems obvious that such powers are bound to entail some role for the Charity Commission, either via a portal, whereby the standards board can report misbehaviour to the commission for subsequent investigation and statutory action, or via such a board being commissioned, licensed or authorised by the Charity Commission, such that there is a degree of statutory oversight to ensure independence and the board would have to satisfy the commission that the code and its procedures were robust and fit for purpose, and will work independently of its regulated community.”

Speaking for the Government the Parliamentary Secretary for the Cabinet Office, Lord Bridges of Headley, said that he did not support the amendment and that the Government “take the view that charities should have the opportunity to redeem themselves and that they are capable of putting their own house in order and making self-regulation work so as to restore and protect the public trust and confidence on which they depend, as well as to show...that they are fulfilling the responsibilities that charitable status confers.”

He added that the Government’s preference remains for self-regulation, but that Ministers will engage on the issue when the Bill reaches the House of Commons and Sir Stuart Etherington, CE of NCVO, has published his review of charity fundraising.

The Bill passed its third reading in the House of Lords without a division and will now be subject to scrutiny in the House of Commons. No date has yet been set for the Bill’s second reading in the House of Commons.

Parliamentary terms

Early Day Motion (EDM)

Early Day Motions are formal motions for debate submitted by MPs in the House of Commons. There is usually no time available to actually debate an EDM, but they are useful for drawing attention to specific events or campaigns and demonstrating the extent of parliamentary support for a particular cause or point of view. MPs register their support by signing individual motions.

Oral Parliamentary Question (OPQ) and Written Parliamentary Question (WPQ)

Parliamentary Questions are used by both MPs and Peers to question Ministers in the House of Commons and the House of Lords. They are used to seek information, and Ministers are obliged to explain and defend the work, policy, decisions and actions of their departments, oral questions can also be used to make political points. Parliamentary questions are a vital tool in holding the Government to account. The Prime Minister answers oral questions from the House of Commons every Wednesday at midday.

Debates

Both the House of Commons and the House of Lords hold debates in which Members discuss government policy, proposed new laws and current issues. All debates are recorded in a publication called 'Hansard' which is available online or in print.

All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG)

All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) are informal groups composed of politicians from all political parties. They provide an opportunity for cross-party discussion and co-operation on particular issues. All-party groups sometimes act as useful pressure groups for specific causes helping to keep the Government, the opposition and MPs informed of parliamentary and outside opinion.

Select Committees

House of Commons Select Committees exist to scrutinise the work of government departments. Most committees have about 11 members and reflect the relative size of each party in the Commons. They conduct enquiries on a specific issue, and gather evidence from expert witnesses. Findings are reported to the Commons, printed, and published on the Parliament website. The Government then usually has 60 days to reply to the committee's recommendations.

Written ministerial statements

Government ministers can make written statements to announce:

- The publication of reports by government agencies
- Findings of reviews and inquiries and the government's response
- Financial and statistical information
- Procedure and policy initiatives of government departments

Private Members' Bills

Private Members' Bills allow backbench MPs or Peers to introduce their own legislation. There are three types of Private Members' Bills introduced into the House of Commons:

- **Ballot Bills:** A ballot is held at the beginning of each parliamentary year the 20 MPs whose names come out top are allowed to introduce legislation on a subject of their choice.
- **Ten Minute Rule Bills:** The sponsoring MP is given a slot in which they may make a speech lasting up to 10 minutes in support of his or her bill
- **Presentation Bill:** a Member is not able to speak in support of it and it stands

UK Council on Deafness are indebted to Action on Hearing Loss and other organisations that have allowed the sharing of their internally produced information relating to policy and Parliamentary activity, with the wider membership. Any views and comments do not necessarily represent the UKCoD view. The information source should always be researched and/or contacted if you require more detailed information