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WRITTEN STATEMENTS

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Lord Keen of Elie	Advocate-General for Scotland and Ministry of Justice Spokesperson
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Baroness Sugg	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for International Development
Baroness Vere of Norbiton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Minister of State, Home Office
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

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Written Statements

Wednesday, 8 January 2020

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government: Departmental Update

[HLWS19]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: My Rt Hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (Robert Jenrick) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

Troubled Families allocations

On 5 January I announced up to £165 million of new funding for the Troubled Families Programme for 2020-21. This funding will provide intensive support for some of the most vulnerable families and place the programme on a stable footing for the future. It will help more families to get early, practical and coordinated support to transform their lives for the better, with key workers working with the whole family to address their needs holistically rather than responding to each problem, or single family member separately.

This funding will also help local authorities and their partners to work together to reduce demand and dependency on costly, reactive key public services. The latest evaluation results show that as a result of the Troubled Families programme, two years after joining there were a third fewer children going into care, a quarter fewer adults going to prison, 15 per cent fewer juvenile convictions and 11 per cent fewer claiming Job Seekers Allowance.

Pets in privately rented accommodation

As part of the steps the government is taking to secure a better deal for renters, I have called on landlords to make it easier for responsible tenants to have well behaved pets in their homes while recognising landlords' rights to protect their properties from damage. Pets bring a huge amount of joy and comfort to people's lives, but some families can't experience this because they rent their homes privately. We will publish a revised model tenancy agreement shortly, which can be used as the basis of lease agreements, to remove restrictions on responsible tenants with well-behaved pets.

Rogue landlord enforcement

I have awarded more than 100 councils across England a share of over £4 million to crack down on criminal landlords and letting agents through the Private Rented Sector Innovation and Enforcement Grant Fund. This builds on £2.4 million awarded in January 2019 and will continue the government's ongoing work to make the private rented sector fairer and stamp out criminal practices for good. Most landlords provide decent homes for their tenants, but a small minority persist in breaking the law, making tenants' lives a misery by offering inadequate or unsafe housing. The grants support a range of projects to enable councils to make the best use of their enforcement powers and include trialling innovative

ideas, sharing best practice and targeted enforcement where we know landlords shirk their responsibilities. The Government is committed to helping good landlords to thrive, and ensuring that hard-working tenants across the country get the homes they deserve - creating a housing market that works for everyone.

High Streets package

At the heart of this new government's mission is a commitment to supporting places and communities that have been overlooked and undervalued for far too long. We will make an immediate start on levelling up across the regions and I am reorganising my department to relentlessly focus on these places so that we can deliver real change for communities through our £3.6 billion Towns Fund, announced by the Prime Minister in July 2019. It will support an initial 100 town deals across England and which includes £1 billion for the Future High Street Fund.

The Future High Streets Fund aims to renew and reshape town centres in a way that improves experience, drives growth and ensures future sustainability. Last week we released over £1 million of additional funding, on top of £13.5 million already invested in local authorities, to further support places developing detailed business cases of their original proposals.

In addition to this funding I also announced that the High Streets Task Force, established to provide hands-on support to local areas, will be piloting interventions, products and services in 20 places in early 2020 before rolling out expert, training and data offer across the country later in the year. The places benefitting from being part of this pilot will be a mixture of local authorities, Business Improvement Districts and community groups. The Task Force is also holding an open recruitment for a Board Chair to provide expert leadership to this programme.

My department has also launched a survey to consult on the proposed register of empty commercial properties, to improve transparency of ownership on the high street and make it easier for businesses or community groups to make use of vacant commercial properties and identify landlords. The consultation exercise will remain open until 9 February 2020, after which we will consider responses and decide how to proceed.

Cold Weather Fund

This Government is committed to tackling homelessness and rough sleeping within the term of this parliament. To this end, on 23 December I announced the allocation of £263 million in funding to local authorities designed to support the delivery of services to tackle homelessness. This is an increase in overall funding for local authority homelessness services of £23 million on the previous financial year.

My department is also funding many additional rough sleeping services across the country this winter through our £10 million Cold Weather Fund. In recognition of the level of interest in the fund we have announced a further £3 million available to all local authorities in England.

This will enable us to build on the successes of the fund so far by increasing outreach work further and extending winter shelter provision to support rough sleepers off the streets this winter. These announcements underline our commitment to tackling homelessness and rough sleeping and will ensure local authorities are given the resource they need to make this a reality in local areas.

Housing First

My department announced recently that 200 people have so far been housed through the Housing First pilot, underway since 2018 in Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Liverpool City Region and West Midlands Combined Authority areas. The Housing First approach offers permanent affordable housing to rough sleepers with multiple complex needs as well as wrap-around support to ensure that they are able to maintain their tenancies and provide the support that they need to recover from mental health issues, substance misuse and the physical effects of living on the streets.

Community pubs

On the 22nd of December I announced a £1.15 million fund that will assist an estimated 100 communities to either own their local pub or benefit from new, pub-based community services and facilities. This funding will also create valuable new jobs and volunteering opportunities. Pubs run by the community and for the community help bring people closer together. Importantly, they are a space for older, vulnerable and more isolated residents to access important local services and feel part of their communities.

The £1.15 million fund will support pubs through two key programmes, £650,000 will be allocated to the second 'more than a pub' programme. More than a pub provides small grants and specialist advice for community groups at the start of their journey to community ownership. It also supports groups later in the process who require specialist professional advice with larger grants and loans to help with business planning, conveyancing, architectural help or financial advice.

£500,000 will be allocated to Pub is the Hub to enable a range of projects providing new, pub-based community services from post offices and shops to libraries and allotments. This will increase the services available in rural and remote communities and help sustain pubs as community assets and businesses.

New Year Honours List

[[HLWS18](#)]

Earl Howe: My Rt. Hon. Friend the Paymaster General and Minister for the Cabinet Office (Oliver Dowden) has made the following statement to the House of Commons:

On Friday 27 December 2019 at 22:30, the Cabinet Office published the New Year Honours List 2020 on GOV.UK. As part of this publication a version of the honours list was published online which contained address details of the 1,097 recipients. This was done in error. The document was accessible for approximately 40

minutes, and was available to those who had already accessed the information for a further 150 minutes via the original web link.

This incident was a result of human error. The Honours and Appointments Secretariat is responsible for managing and publishing the Honours lists. The New Year 2020 honours round was the first to use a new IT system from which a report was downloaded to create a file for publication.

The sensitivities around address data had been identified as a risk and previous versions of the file prepared for publication had not included address data. As part of the final checking process, further amendments were made to the file and a version of the file, including address data, was mistakenly sent for publication.

The team was made aware of the error at 23:00 on 27th December and the link was removed from the Cabinet Office web page within 10 minutes. It took a further 150 minutes to close the link to the document and remove the page altogether. In this intervening period those who opened the link or had the web page address could still open the document.

The immediate concern following the publication of this information was to ensure that there was no increased risk to any individuals and that their security was being appropriately managed. The Cabinet Office worked with the police and relevant authorities to identify any potentially high risk cases and put in place any necessary actions. Over 48 hours, the Department made contact with all affected individuals to inform them of what had taken place, provide contact details and to apologise for this incident. Chief Constables were briefed through the National Police Chiefs' Council, and local forces made assessments for all recipients.

The Department has worked with the relevant organisations to ascertain the extent of the access to the data. We have no evidence that data has been exploited by a third party, or shared more widely though we continue to be vigilant.

The Government has been informed by the police and other agencies that there is no information to suggest an increased risk in relation to any persons as a result of this data breach. This is not to underestimate the concern this incident may have caused for individuals. On behalf of the Cabinet Office I apologise unreservedly for any distress or inconvenience caused.

Appropriate management action will be taken in response to this incident. Changes have already been made to ensure the relevant IT system generates reports containing only data that is suitable for publication, removing the scope for further human error. I have also instructed the Government Digital Service to improve their processes to ensure all access to data can be removed much more rapidly when required.

The Department reported the matter to the Information Commissioner on Saturday 28 December 2019 and will cooperate fully with its on-going inquiries. In addition, I am announcing today an independent review of data

handling practices within the Cabinet Office. This review will focus on process, culture, policy and practice within the Department. It will establish whether appropriate controls are in place around the storage, sharing and

deletion of personal data, including learning lessons from this case. More information on this review will be published shortly.

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