

POLICY BRIEF

Performance, Finance and Customer Focus Overview Scrutiny Committee

29 June 2022



GOVERNMENT POLICY, LEGISLATIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NEWS

Finance/Funding

[Cultural venues to receive £128 million to improve access to arts and culture](#)

Cultural venues including museums, galleries and public libraries are to benefit from up to £128 million of funding to help improve accessibility to the arts and safeguard their futures. Organisations are now being encouraged to submit expressions of interest to receive support.

The Cultural Investment Fund covers the following three streams:

- A £30.8 million [Cultural Development Fund](#)
- A £20.5 million [Libraries Improvement Fund](#)
- A £60.3 million [Museum Estate and Development Fund](#) (MEND)

[Grant fund launched to support women's reproductive wellbeing in the workplace](#)

Applications are open for funding grants of between £200,000 and £600,000 for the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector who specialise in women's wellbeing services. The funding will ensure women experiencing reproductive issues – such as the menopause or pregnancy loss - are better supported to remain in, or return to the workplace throughout their careers.

[Government commits £300 million towards preventing youth offending](#)

The government have committed to investing £300 million over the next 3 years to support every council across England and Wales to prevent youth offending. The funding will allow local authorities to intervene early when teenagers display signs such as poor school attendance, troubles at home, and a history of substance abuse, which are known to be factors that often drive young people into crime. Through 'Turnaround', a new early intervention scheme backed by £60 million, local Youth Offending Teams will be given extra funding to connect children and teenagers to targeted, wraparound support. Ministers will also set out plans in due course to improve how funding is targeted to local authorities, to ensure funding reaches areas who need it most and to ensure local authorities' interventions are effective.

[Phase I of the Youth Investment Fund: successful grantees](#)

Phase I of the Youth Investment Fund, delivered by BBC Children In Need, has granted up to £12 million to 418 youth organisations across England. Plymouth has secured just under £64k for three projects: Creative Curiosities, Barnardo's and the Mount Batten Centre.

[Places of Worship Protective Security Fund open for applications](#)

Mosques and Muslim faith schools have been given access to £24.5 million for security measures to protect their places of worship and schools. In addition, £3.5 million is available for other faith communities through the government's [Places of Worship Fund](#). Applications are now open and all places of worship that feel they are vulnerable to hate crime are encouraged to apply. This scheme runs alongside the Jewish Community Protective Security grant, which was renewed this year.

Customer/Community/Wellbeing

[Faster information for victims of domestic abuse](#)

Under new guidance, which the Home Office will [consult on](#), the police will be required to disclose information on perpetrators more quickly. The Police will have 28 days to disclose the information, down from the current guideline of 35 days meaning victims and potential victims would have information that could be critical to their safety sooner.

[New protections for rape victims available at more Crown Courts](#)

More victims of rape and sexual offences will be spared the stress of being cross-examined in court under a measure rolled out to a further 14 locations, including Plymouth.

New non-fatal strangulation offence comes into force

Non-fatal strangulation was made a specific offence as part of the government's landmark Domestic Abuse Act. The practice typically involves a perpetrator strangling or intentionally affecting their victim's ability to breathe in an attempt to control or intimidate them. The new offence will also apply to British nationals abroad. It means perpetrators can be prosecuted in England and Wales for offences committed overseas – ensuring there is no escape for abusers.

Responses to super-complaint report: A duty to protect: Police use of protective measures in cases involving violence against women and girls

In August 2021 HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), the College of Policing and the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) published a report in response to the [super-complaint submitted by the Centre for Women's Justice](#) on the police use of protective measures in cases involving violence against women and girls. The report made a series of recommendations to the police, the Home Office, the National Police Chiefs' Council, and the Ministry of Justice to do more to help ensure all measures are used as efficiently and effectively as possible. These bodies have now published their responses to the recommendations and actions in the report: [A duty to protect](#).

Lowest paid workers to be given flexibility to top up their pay under government reforms

Britain's lowest paid workers will be given the flexibility to boost their income through extra work, under new plans set out by the government. The proposals will widen the ban on exclusivity clauses, which restrict staff from working for multiple employers, to contracts where the guaranteed weekly income is on or below the Lower Earnings Limit of £123 a week.

Millions of most vulnerable households will receive £1,200 of help with cost of living

Millions of households across the UK will benefit from a new £15 billion package of targeted government support to help with the rising cost of living, the Chancellor has announced.

- Almost all of the eight million most vulnerable households across the UK will receive support of at least £1,200 this year, including a new one-off £650 cost of living payment.
- Universal support increases to £400, as the October discount on energy bills is doubled and the requirement to repay it over five years is scrapped.

Further details can be found [here](#).

Eligibility for Community Ownership Fund expanded

More community groups will be able to rescue prized local assets, such as sports clubs, music venues and historic buildings, following the expansion of levelling up funding. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has published the [prospectus](#) for the second round of its £150 million Community Ownership Fund. The prospectus sets out updated, widened, eligibility criteria. This includes removing the requirement that assets have had a use within the last 5 years and will now consider any asset which has had a previous community use, massively expanding the projects eligible to apply. Applicants who have a minimum of a 15-year lease on an asset would now also be considered for funding. Previously, leases were restricted to a minimum of 25 years.

Ofsted-style' inspections and unlimited fines for failing social landlords

The Regulator of Social Housing will have stronger powers to issue unlimited fines, enter properties with only 48 hours' notice and make emergency repairs under the Social Housing Regulation Bill introduced to Parliament on the 8 June 2022. In a major reset of power between tenants and landlords, residents will be able to demand information and rate their landlord as part of new satisfaction measures. The Bill will form a key part of the government's mission to level up across the country and deliver on the people's priorities.