

POLICY BRIEF

Performance, Finance and Customer Focus Overview Scrutiny Committee

12 September 2022



GOVERNMENT POLICY, LEGISLATIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NEWS

Government

[New appointments to ministerial team at Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.](#)

- Rt Hon Greg Clark MP as Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
- Paul Scully MP as a Minister of State at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. He remains as Minister for London.
- Marcus Jones MP as a Minister of State at the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

Local Government

[Flexible use of capital receipts for transformation projects: letter to council leaders](#)

The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities has written to Council Leaders setting out the intent of the capital receipts flexibility programme 2022-2025 and the revisions made in August 2022 to clarify qualifying disposals. The letter sets out the [updated direction and statutory guidance](#) to extend the freedom for local authorities to use eligible capital receipts to fund the revenue costs of projects that deliver ongoing savings or improved efficiency.

[Government launches new Public Sector Fraud Authority](#)

Government Efficiency Minister Jacob Rees-Mogg has launched the new Public Sector Fraud Authority, setting a target of £180 million of identified fraud benefits in the first 12 months. The Public Sector Fraud Authority will be made up of counter fraud and data experts, using best-in-class tools and advanced analytics to help departments and public bodies protect public money.

Finance/Funding and Welfare

[Better mental health support for people in crisis](#)

A £150 million investment over the next three years will bolster NHS mental health services, better support people in crisis outside of A&E and enhance patient safety in mental health units.

[New package of support to help over 50s jobseekers back into work](#)

The government has announced new measures to tackle unemployment amongst the over 50s on benefits. Jobseekers over the age of 50 will have more one-to-one support at jobcentres to help them get into, and make progress in, work; boosting their earnings ahead of retirement.

[One in four families get first government Cost of Living Payment](#)

Almost one in four families across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland will get £326 sent directly to them from 14 July, with the second instalment of £324 sent later this year as part of the government's £37 billion support package.

Community Safety

[Safer Streets Fund continues to make streets safer](#)

£50 million awarded through the Safer Street Fund to tackle violence against women and girls and make streets safer. This is the fourth round of funding from the Safer Street Fund and takes the total awarded through this fund and the Safety of Women at Night Fund to £125 million.

Environment

[Plans to bolster UK energy security set to become law](#)

The landmark Energy Security Bill, announced as part of the Queen's Speech, has been introduced into Parliament. The Bill outlines 26 measures to reform the energy system to protect consumers from unfair pricing; leverage private investment in clean technologies and building a homegrown energy system and; ensure the safety, security and resilience of the UK's energy system.

Housing and Homelessness

[English Housing Survey 2020-21 reports](#)


DLUHC has added English Housing Survey 2020-21 reports on: energy, feeling safe from fire, housing quality, leaseholders, older people's housing, private rented sector, social rented sector; plus factsheets on regional housing trends and overheating.

Transport – Investment

[Sutton Harbour is getting £3 million of repair and maintenance](#)

Plymouth's lock gates need repairs to continue protecting hundreds of homes and businesses from flooding, and providing access to the marina and fish quays. The work, which is scheduled to take place from mid-September 2022 until early April 2023, will ensure the effectiveness of the tidal barrage and its ability to maintain water levels in Sutton harbour for another decade.

OPEN CONSULTATIONS

Date of publication	Committee/Department	 GOV
18 July 2022	The Review of Electricity Market Arrangements (REMA) has launched a consultation on a range of options to address the combined challenges of responding to higher global energy costs, the need to further boost energy security, and to move the UK to a cleaner energy system. The consultation can be found online	Closes at 11:45pm on 10 October 2022.
15 July 2022	The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) has announced the launch of their formal user consultation to draw in views and feedback from all users of the Indices of Deprivation to help shape any future publication. Plans for an update to the Indices are yet to be formally announced. The consultation will be live until 23 September 2022.	The consultation will be live until 23 September 2022.
16 July 2022	The Government has launched a public consultation on what social and environmental causes should benefit from more than £700 million of dormant assets funding in England. The consultation closes at 11:45pm on 9 October 2022.	Closes 9 October 2022