

# Press release: Pioneering property programme drives efficiency savings across the public sector

Councils and government agencies from the early phases of the Cabinet Office and Local Government Association's One Public Estate (OPE) programme have worked in partnership to raise over £25 million in capital receipts and deliver £7.7 million in running cost savings since its inception in 2013.

Speaking today at the launch event for the latest round of OPE funding in Liverpool, Ben Gummer, Minister for the Cabinet Office, encouraged councils to apply for the next round of funding allocations, which opens on 7th April 2017.

Ben Gummer, Minister of the Cabinet Office, said:

Seeing such substantial savings being delivered from the very first councils that participated in One Public Estate is hugely encouraging. These councils have raised millions of pounds through initiatives that not only deliver capital receipts, but also increase efficiency and improve public services.

There is enormous potential for these savings and public benefits to be even greater, and I encourage councils to work on bids for the next round of funding.

OPE is a joint initiative run by the Cabinet Office and the Local Government Association, which encourages councils to work with central government and the wider public sector to use land and property to boost economic growth, unlock regeneration, and create more integrated public services.

Councils apply to the programme to receive funding and both practical and technical support to help solve issues and deliver ambitious transformational projects.

The total number of councils participating in OPE is over 250 – almost three quarters of all councils in England. OPE remains on track to achieve the ambition of 95% of councils on the programme by 2018.

Lord Porter, LGA Chairman, said:

I'm really pleased to see the continued expansion of One Public Estate.

The programme has made great strides up and down the country supporting our councils to work more collaboratively with our

central government partners, ensuring public land and property is put to the best possible use for our communities.

I hope to see all councils on the programme by 2018.

## **Further information**

One Public Estate is a national programme initially launched in 2013.

It is jointly delivered by the Government Property Unit within the Cabinet Office and the Local Government Association. It supports joint working across central and local government to use land and property to boost economic growth, unlock regeneration, and create more integrated public services. It encourages public sector partners to share buildings, transform services, reduce running costs, and release surplus and under-used land for development. Partnerships joining the programme will receive funding and both practical and technical support from our team to help solve issues and deliver ambitious transformational projects.

To find out more about the programme, email [onepublicestate@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:onepublicestate@cabinetoffice.gov.uk).

On 27 January the Cabinet Office and Local Government Association announced that a further 79 councils would join the One Public Estate (OPE) programme.

The latest funding round means that by 2019/20 the partnerships on OPE expect to:

- create 44,000 jobs
- release land for 25,000 homes
- raise £415 million in capital receipts from land and property sales
- cut running costs by £98 million

The funding will support public sector partnerships to work collaboratively on land and property initiatives, generating new jobs and homes, creating more joined up public services to local communities, and delivering savings for the taxpayer.

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## **Business rates**

I have been lobbying the government along with other MPs to do more to alleviate high business rate increases hitting some firms in our areas under the revaluation proposals. The government has offered substantial rate relief to many small businesses, but there remain numerous businesses that will experience rises in their rates bills at a time when they can ill afford the extra money.

Today the Communities and Local Government Secretary announced that he is working on a scheme with the Chancellor to offer more help, which will be welcome.

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## [Press release: Home Secretary appoints Cressida Dick as next Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police](#)

Ms Dick was appointed by Her Majesty the Queen following a recommendation from the Home Secretary. The views of the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, were considered by the Home Secretary as part of this recommendation.

Working with the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) and partners across the criminal justice system, Cressida Dick will be responsible for overseeing the Metropolitan Police's crucial work preventing crime, bringing offenders to justice and continuing to ensure an effective national response to the ongoing threat of terrorism.

It is the largest police force in the United Kingdom, with more than 43,000 officers and staff and a budget of over £3 billion.

Home Secretary Amber Rudd said:

Cressida Dick is an exceptional leader, and has a clear vision for the future of the Metropolitan Police and an understanding of the diverse range of communities it serves. I am delighted Her Majesty has agreed my recommendation after a rigorous recruitment process which highlighted the quality of senior policing in this country.

Cressida now takes on one of the most demanding, high-profile and important jobs in UK policing, against the backdrop of a heightened terror alert and evolving threats from fraud and cyber crime. The challenges ahead include protecting the most vulnerable, including victims of sexual abuse and domestic violence. Her skills and insight will ensure the Metropolitan Police adapt to the changing patterns of crime in the 21st century and continue to keep communities safe across London and the UK.

She is absolutely the right choice to lead the Metropolitan Police as this government continues its work to reform the police, and I look forward to working with her to make a real difference to policing in the capital.

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said:

Cressida Dick will be the first female commissioner of the Met in its 187-year history, and the most powerful police officer in the land. She has already had a long and distinguished career, and her experience and ability has shone throughout this process. On behalf of all Londoners, I warmly welcome Cressida to the role and I very much look forward to working with her to keep our capital safe and protected.

This is a historic day for London and a proud day for me as Mayor. The Metropolitan Police do an incredible job, working hard with enormous dedication every single day to keep Londoners safe, so for me it was absolutely essential that we found the best possible person to take the Met forward over the coming years and I am confident that we have succeeded.

Responding to her appointment, Ms Dick said:

I am thrilled and humbled. This is a great responsibility and an amazing opportunity. I'm looking forward immensely to protecting and serving the people of London and working again with the fabulous women and men of the Met.

Thank you so much to everyone who has taught me and supported me along the way.

Minister for Policing and the Fire Service Brandon Lewis added:

Cressida brings impressive skills and extensive experience to her new role as Metropolitan Police Commissioner. This was a tough recruitment process, but she demonstrated very clearly that she is the best person to take on this demanding role and I look forward to working with her.

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**Research and analysis: ACRE advice:  
application for a trial of GM**

## [Salmonella Typhi \(16/R48/01\)](#)

This document is the Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment (ACRE's) advice to government in considering a request from Oxford Vaccine Group (16/R48/01). The application is for a deliberate release of genetically modified Salmonella Typhi for research and development purposes.

ACRE is satisfied that the trial will not have an adverse effect on human health or the environment.

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## [Business-as-usual not an option with future global food security in jeopardy, cautions UN agency](#)

22 February 2017 – Warning that diminishing natural resources and a changing climate have put humankind's future ability to feed itself "in jeopardy," the United Nations underlined today that while the planet still has the potential to produce enough food, "major transformations" are needed to make production sustainable and to ensure that all of humanity benefits.

In The Future of Food and Agriculture: Trends and Challenges report, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) highlights that while "very real and significant" progress in reducing hunger has been achieved over the past 30 years, these have often come at a heavy cost to nature.

"Almost half of the forests that once covered the Earth are now gone. Groundwater sources are being depleted rapidly. Biodiversity has been deeply eroded," noted the report.

"[As a result,] planetary boundaries may well be surpassed, if current trends continue," added FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva, underlining the gravity of the situation.

With global population estimated to reach 10 billion by 2050, world-wide demand for agricultural products could be pushed by as much as 50 per cent above current levels, intensifying pressures on already-strained natural resources.

At the same time, the report argues, greater numbers of people will be eating fewer cereals and larger amounts of meat, fruits, vegetables and processed food – a result of an ongoing global dietary transition that will further add to those pressures, driving more deforestation, land degradation and greenhouse gas emissions.

According to FAO, without a push to invest in and reorganizing food systems, far too many people will remain hungry in 2030 – the year by which the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aim to eradicate chronic food insecurity and malnutrition.

“Without additional efforts to promote pro-poor development, reduce inequalities and protect vulnerable people, more than 600 million people would still be undernourished in 2030,” the report noted.

In fact, the current rate of progress would not even be enough to eradicate hunger by 2050, it added.

#### ***Climate change will affect every aspect of food production***

On top of these challenges, climate change adds a new level of complexity. Its increasing impacts are leading to greater variability of precipitation and increasing the frequency of droughts and floods.

RELATED: Drought drives food price spike in East Africa, UN warns

In the midst of this multifaceted issue, the UN agency is advocating for a shift to more sustainable food systems that make more efficient use of land, water and other inputs, and for sharply reducing the use of fossil fuels in agriculture.



Empowering small-scale farmers and providing them better access to information, markets and technologies is key to ensuring future food security. Photo: FAO

Reducing fossil fuel dependency will also help cut agricultural green-house gas emissions, conserve biodiversity, and reduce waste, it added.

Furthermore, investments in agriculture and agri-food systems, as well as in research and development, are needed to sustainably boost food production and help producers better cope with water scarcity and other climate change impacts.

#### ***The social dimension to food security***

Also in the report, FAO has called for preserving and enhancing livelihoods of small-scale and family farmers, and ensuring access to food for the most vulnerable.

Amid the core challenge of having to produce more with less, it has underlined that the twin-track approach is needed to immediately tackle undernourishment, and that pro-poor investments in productive activities – especially agriculture and in rural economies – could sustainably increase income-earning opportunities of the poor.

RELATED: UN agency urges support for small farmers to help them not just get

by, but thrive and feed others

In addition to boosting production and resilience, it is equally important to create food supply chains that better connect farmers in low- and middle-income countries to urban markets.

“Major transformations in agricultural systems, rural economies and natural resource management will be needed if we are to meet the multiple challenges before us and realize the full potential of food and agriculture to ensure a secure and healthy future for all people and the entire planet,” read the report.

“Business-as-usual” is not an option.